Deleuze Studies

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The Conditions of the New

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I. Introduction

What are the conditions of the *new* that one finds laid out in Gilles Deleuze's philosophy?[1] Deleuze frequently said that the question of the conditions for the production of *novelty*, as Whitehead called it, or *creativity*, as Bergson called it, was one of the fundamental questions of contemporary thought.[2] It entails a profound shift in philosophy away from the eternal to the new, that is, from the universal to the singular. For Deleuze, the conditions of the new can be found only in a principle of *difference* – or more strongly, in a *metaphysics* of difference.[3] The reason: if identity (A is A) were the primary principle, that is, if identities were already pre-given, then there would in principle be no production of the new (no new differences).

Yet the question of the new is a surprisingly complex problem. On the one hand, the 'new' seems to be one of the most obvious phenomena in the world: every dawn brings forth a new day, and every day brings with it a wealth of the new: new experiences, new events, new encounters. If the new means 'what did not exist earlier' then everything is new. On the other hand, one can say, with almost equal assurance, with the writer of Ecclesiastes (1: 9–10), that there is nothing new under the sun: the dawn of today was just like the dawn of yesterday, and simply brings with it more of the same. The new seems to come in well-worn and predictable patterns. Talk of the new, in other words, immediately threatens to be pulled back into talk of the old. As the French saying puts it, 'Plus ça change, plus c'est la meme chose' ('The more things change, the more they stay the same'). These complexities are due to the fact that the problem of the new is easily confused with a host of related but nonetheless distinguishable problems, including questions of transformation and change, causality and determinism, and the possibility of emergence (emergent qualities).

1. Transformation and change

One could, for instance, pose the question of the new in terms of the question of transformation or change. When artists create a painting or a piece of sculpture, they are simply rearranging matter that already exists in the world in a new way. Such a view of novelty would be merely *combinatorial*. Melodies are made out of notes, paintings are made out of pigments, and sculptures are hewn out of stone. This would be a simplified caricature of the hylomorphic schema. Creation is the imposition of a new form (*morphe*) on a given material or matter (*hyle*), even if matter contains a certain potentiality for the form. Here, novelty is found on the side of the form, and matter is the passive receiver or receptacle of this newness. In this case, novelty would be little more than the rearrangement of matter in the universe into ever new forms. The question of whether such novelty would eventually be exhausted would rest on metaphysical speculation about the finitude or infinity of matter (and time) in the universe, which is ultimately pure – and hence empty – speculation.

2. Causality and Determination

The question of novelty is also linked to the question of causality. If everything has a cause, and if effects pre-exist in their causes, then *only old things can come out of change*. If there is nothing in the effect that was not already in the cause (or, to put it in logical terms, if there is nothing in the consequent that was not in the antecedent), then causal processes can give rise to objects that are new in number, but not new in *kind* – there can be *quantitative* or numerical novelty, as in mass produced objects, but not *qualitative* novelty. Yet, as Mario Bunge has argued in his classic book *Causality*, this view, though consistent (and popular), is extreme, since it rests on a simplified and linear view of causality. Effects can be (and usually are) determined by multiple causes (heat can be produced by friction, combustion, nuclear chain reactions, microwaves, and so on), and causes can have multiple effects (penicillin may cure my infection but kill someone allergic to it).[4] Causality, in other words, must be distinguished from the more general question of *determination*, since determination can be not only causal, but also statistical or probabilistic (determination of a result by the joint action of independent entities), structural or wholistic (determination of parts by the whole), teleological (determination by ends or goals), dialectical (determination by internal strife or synthesis of opposites), as well as dynamic

or causal. Deleuze's proposal will be to see all such forms of determination as derivable from a metaphysical principle of difference: 'Difference is the state in which one can speak of determination *as such*' (Deleuze 1994: 28).

3. Emergence

The question of the new must also be distinguished from the question of emergence, even though the two issues are closely related. Emergence is a phenomenon of widespread interest in contemporary science and philosophy. It is an issue that initially arose in a physicalist ontology, which holds that all existents are physical entities, and hence that all sciences, in principle, should be reducible to physics. The problem is that physicalism (at least in its radically reductionist versions) cannot take into account phenomena such as organisms, artifacts, and societies, which have supra-physical (or emergent) properties that their (physical) components lack, such as the emergence of new species and new individuals, the emergence of new institutions, and so on .[5] If radical novelty can be distinguished from emergence, however, it is because emergence implies the production of new quality at ever higher 'levels' of complexity in a system, whereas the concept of the new in Deleuze – as well as Whitehead and Bergson – implies conditions in which *novelty becomes a fundamental concept at the most basic ontological level*.

II. Three Types of Conditions: The Logically Possible, Possible Experience, Real Experience

The problem of the new must thus be distinguished from the problems of change, causality, or emergence, and should instead be repositioned as a fundamental ontological concept (Being = Difference = the New). The properly Deleuzian question would therefore be: what are the ontological *conditions* under which something new can appear in the world? But this raises a second set of issues: what exactly does it mean to speak of the *conditions* of the new? From this viewpoint, one could perhaps distinguish between three types of conditions with which philosophers have tended to concern themselves: (1) the conditions that demarcate what is logically possible; (2) the conditions that determine the limits of possible *experience* (Kant); and (3) the conditions of real experience. For Deleuze, the problem of the new is coextensive with the attempt to determine the conditions of *real* experience (since the real *is* the new). What then is the difference between these three types of conditions?

1. The Logically Possible

First, one could say that thought, *on its own*, is only capable of thinking the possible, and that it does so in the name of certain principles which one can call *logical principles*. Logical principles are principles that determine what is possible and what is not possible. Classical logic identified three such principles: (1) the principle of identity (which says that 'A is A', or 'A thing is what it is'), (2) the principle of non-contradiction, which says that 'A is not non-A' ('A thing is not what it is not'), and (3) the principle of the excluded middle, which says that between A or not-A, there is no middle term). Taken together, these three principles determine what is impossible, that is to say, what is *unthinkable*: something that would not be what it is (which would contradict the principle of identity); something that would be what it is not (which would contradict the principle of non-contradiction); and something that would be both what it is and what it is not (which would contradict the principle of the excluded middle). By means of these three principles, thought is able to think the world of what is possible (or what traditional philosophy called the world of 'essences'). But this is why logic does not take us very far: it leaves us within the domain of the possible.

2. Possible Experience

Kant went a step further than this when he tried to demarcate, not simply the domain of the possible, but the domain of possible *experience*. This domain of possible experience is no longer the object of formal logic, but what Kant called *transcendental* logic. The transcendental conditions for demarcating possible experience are found in the *categories*. If logical principles demarcate the domain of the possible, categories demarcate the domain of possible experience. Causality is a category for Kant since we cannot conceive of an object of our possible experience that has not been caused by something else. This transcendental logic allowed Kant to distinguish between what was immanent within and transcendent to this domain of experience. Empirical concepts are immanent to experience (and hence testable by hypothesis and experiment), whereas the object of *transcendent* concepts (or what Kant called, following Plato, *Ideas*) go beyond any possible experience. The three great transcendent Ideas that Kant identified in the 'Transcendental Dialectic' were God, the World, and the Soul. Such Ideas are *thinkable* (they are not logically inconsistent, given the principles of formal logic), but they are not *knowable*, since there could never

be an object in experience that would correspond to them – they lie outside the domain of possible experience.

3. Real Experience

But the post-Kantian philosophers, starting with Salomon Maimon, attempted to push the Kantian project one step further: from the conditions of *possible* experience to the conditions of *real* experience. Maimon aimed two fundamental criticisms against Kant. First, Kant assumes that there are a priori 'facts' of reason (the 'fact' of knowledge in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the 'fact' of morality in the *Critique of Practical Reason*), and then seeks the 'condition of possibility' of these facts in the transcendental. Maimon argues that Kant cannot simply assume these supposed 'facts' but has to show how they were *engendered* immanently from reason alone as the necessary modes of its manifestation. A method of *genesis* has to replace the simple method of *conditioning*. Second, to accomplish this task, the genetic method would require the positing of a principle of difference. Whereas identity is the condition of possibility of thought in general, he claimed, *it is difference that constitutes the genetic condition of real thought*.[6] These two exigencies laid down by Maimon – the search for *the genetic elements of real experience* (and not merely the conditions of possible experience), and the positing of a *principle of difference* as the fulfilment of this condition – reappear like a leitmotif in almost every one of Deleuze's books up through 1969, even if Maimon's name is not always explicitly mentioned. Indeed, one might ay that these are the two primary components of Deleuze's *transcendental empiricism*. 'Without this [Maimonian] reversal,' Deleuze writes, 'the Copernican Revolution amounts to nothing' (Deleuze 1994: 162).

III. The Conditions of Real Experience: Five Requirements

Thus, in speaking about conditions, we can trace out a trajectory from what constitutes the *logically possible* (determined by logical principles), what constitutes *possible experience* (determined by the categories), and our current problem: what constitutes the genetic and differential conditions of *real experience*?[7] Insofar as Deleuze's project constitutes a search for conditions (or a search for sufficient reason), Deleuze's philosophy can be said to be a transcendental philosophy. Obviously the question of knowing how to determine the transcendental field is very complex. Throughout his work, Deleuze explores the various requirements that must be met in determining the conditions of real experience. Five of

them seem particularly relevant to our concerns (though they by no means exhaust the ways of approaching the problem).

First, as we have already seen, for a condition to be a condition of real experience, and not merely possible experience, it must form 'an intrinsic genesis, not an extrinsic conditioning' (Deleuze 1994: 154). The genetic method means that the conditions of real experience must be able to account for novelty or the new – which means that the *future* must become the fundamental dimension of time, not the past.

Second, the condition cannot be in the image of the conditioned, that is, the structures of the transcendental field cannot simply be traced off the empirical. This was one of the fundamental critiques that the post-Kantians addressed to Kant. Kant had simply conceived of the transcendental in the image of the empirical. But as Deleuze writes, 'the task of a philosophy that does not wish to fall into the traps of consciousness and the cogito is to purge the transcendental field of all resemblance' (Deleuze 1990: 123). What this means, in part, is this: in traditional philosophy, the relationship between the possible and the real is one of resemblance. We think of the possible as a field of possible options, only one of which can be 'realised' in the real, with all the other possibilities being thwarted and not passing into existence. Two principles govern this relation: the real *resembles* the possible, and the real is a *limitation* of the possible. This is why Deleuze will substitute for the possible-real opposition what he calls virtual-actual complementarity: the virtual is constituted through and through by difference (and not identity); and when it is actualised, it therefore differs from itself, such that every process of actualisation is, by its very nature, the production of the new, that is, the production of a new difference. This is why Deleuze can say that the transcendental must be conceived of as a field in which 'the different is related to the different *through* difference itself' (Deleuze 1994: 299, translation modified).

Third, to be a condition of real experience, the condition can be no broader than what it conditions – otherwise it would not be a condition of *real* experience, capable of accounting for the *genesis* of the real. This is why there can be no categories (at least in the Aristotelian or Kantian sense) in Deleuze's philosophy, since (as he puts), the categories cast a net so wide that they let all the fish (that is, the real) swim through it. But his requirement – that conditions not be broader than the conditioned – means that the conditions must be determined *along with* what they condition, and thus must change as the conditioned changes. In other words, the conditions themselves must be plastic and mobile, 'no less capable of dissolving and destroying individuals than of constituting them temporarily'[8] (Deleuze 1994: 38).

Fourth, in order to remain faithful to these exigencies, Deleuze continues, 'we must have something unconditioned' that would be capable of 'determining both the condition and the conditioned' (Deleuze 1990b: 123, 122) and which alone would be capable of ensuring a *real* genesis[9] (Deleuze 1990b: 19). It is the nature of this unconditioned element that lies at the basis of Deleuze's dispute with the general movement of the post-Kantian tradition. Is this unconditioned the 'totality' (Kant, Hegel), which necessarily appeals to a principle of identity (the subject), or is it 'differential' (which is Deleuze's position, modifying a position hinted at by Leibniz)?

This is why Deleuze aligns himself with the work of Spinoza and Leibniz, the arch-rationalists, despite his own self-description as an empiricist. Indeed, Deleuze's appeal to the interrelated concepts of the foundation [*fondation*], the ground [*fond*, *fondement*], and the ungrounded [*sans-fond*] reflect his complex relation to the traditions of pre- and post-Kantianism. Both Spinoza and Leibniz, in their shared anti-Cartesian reaction, complained that Descartes had not gone far enough in his attempt to secure a foundation for knowledge. Erecting a foundation is a futile enterprise if the ground itself is not firm and secure. Before laying the foundation, in other words, one must prepare the ground; that is, one must inquire into the *sufficient reason* of the foundation.[10] Indeed, Deleuze describes *Difference and Repetition* in its entirety as an inquiry into sufficient reason, but with this additional caveat: in following the path of sufficient reason, Deleuze argues, one always reaches a 'bend' or 'twist' in sufficient reason, which 'relates what it grounds to that which is truly groundless', the unconditioned (Deleuze 1994: 154). It is like a catastrophe or an earthquake that fundamentally alters the ground, and destroys the foundations that are set in it. All three of these aspects – foundation, ground, and the ungrounded – are essential to Deleuze's project. 'Sufficient reason or the ground,' he writes, 'is strangely bent: on the one hand, it leans towards what it grounds, towards the forms of representation; on the other hand, it turns and plunges into a groundlessess beyond the ground which resists all forms and cannot be represented'(Deleuze 1994: 274–5). For instance, in Deleuze's theory of repetition (temporal synthesis), the present plays the role of the foundation, the pure past is the ground, but the future the ungrounded or unconditioned, that is, the condition of the new.

Fifth, and finally, the nature of the genesis that is at play here must therefore be understood as what Deleuze calls a *static* genesis (that is, a genesis that takes place between the virtual and its actualization), and not a *dynamic* genesis (that is, a historical or developmental genesis

that takes place between actual terms, moving from one actual term to another).

These five themes recur in almost all of Deleuze's early writings as elaborations of the two post-Kantian demands that Deleuze appropriates from Salomon Maimon (the search for *the genetic elements of real experience* and the positing of a *principle of difference* as the fulfilment of this demand).

IV. The Model of Calculus

However, it is one thing to lay out a general project like this; it is another thing to find a 'method', so to speak, capable of providing a way of *thinking* these conditions of the real. If logical principles determine the conditions of the possible, and the categories determine the conditions of possible experience, where can one go to search for the conditions of real experience (that is, the conditions for novelty itself)? Deleuze in fact appeals to several non-philosophical models in his work. One of them is artistic creation, and in a sense Deleuze's transcendental empiricism can be read in large part as a reworking of Kant's transcendental aesthetic. Another model is molecular biology, which defines individual terms of a genetic structure that constitutes the real conditions of its external and visible properties and thus constitutes a profound break with the traditional approach of 'natural history'. But the model I would like to focus on here is the mathematical model of the differential calculus. Many of the concepts that Deleuze develops in *Difference and Repetition* to define the conditions of the real are derived from the calculus – the differential relation, singularities, multiplicities or manifolds, the virtual, the problematic, and so on.

There are a number of reasons why Deleuze would turn to the model of the calculus. Philosophy, of course, has always had a complex relationship with mathematics. But the particular *branch* of mathematics privileged by philosophers often says much about the nature of their philosophy. Since the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, for instance, philosophers have tended to focus on axiomatic set theory, since they were preoccupied with the question of the foundations of mathematics, with its twin programmes of formalisation and discretisation. Plato, by contrast, famously appealed to Euclidean geometry as a model for Ideas because it defined forms (or essences) that were static, unchanging, and self-identical. Deleuze could be said to appeal to calculus for the exact opposite reason: it is calculus that provides him with a mathematical model of a principle of difference. Calculus is the primary mathematical tool we have

at our disposal to explore the nature of reality, the nature of the real – the *conditions of the real*. When physicists want to examine the nature of a physical system, or an engineer wants to analyse the pressure on a weight-bearing load, they model the system using the symbolism of the calculus. What spawned the 'scientific revolution' of the last three centuries was what Ian Stewart called 'the differential equation paradigm': 'the way to understand Nature is through differential equations' (Stewart 1989: 32–3). As Bertrand Russell put it in *An Outline of Philosophy*, 'scientific laws [or laws of nature] can *only* be expressed in differential equations'[11] (cited in Bunge 1979: 74–5, emphasis added). In this sense, one might say that the calculus is existentialism in mathematics, 'a kind of union of mathematics and the existent'.[12]

This is why Leibniz remains such an important figure for Deleuze. In the history of philosophy, he suggests, there were two great attempts to elucidate the conditions of the real, albeit in two different directions: Hegel (the infinitely large) and Leibniz (the infinitely small).[13] Deleuze's strategy, with regard to the history of philosophy, seems to have been to take up Maimon's critiques of Kant and to resolve them, not in the manner of the post-Kantians, such as Fichte and Hegel, but rather by following Maimon's own suggestions and returning to the pre-Kantian thought of Hume, Spinoza, and Leibniz. Of these three, it is Leibniz – who invented the calculus, along with Newton – that plays a decisive role, at least with regard to the question of the real that concerns us here. Leibniz already had an implicit response to the two post-Kantian demands formulated by Maimon. 'All the elements to create a genesis as demanded by the post-Kantians,' Deleuze noted in one of his seminars, 'all the elements are there virtually in Leibniz.'[14]

Calculus takes us into a complex and heavily-mined territory, with its own complex history.[15] Moreover, calculus is not the only mathematical domain to which Deleuze appeals: group theory, topology, and non-Euclidean geometry, among others, also make frequent appearances throughout Deleuze's texts. It is not that Deleuze is setting out to develop a philosophy of mathematics, nor even to construct a metaphysics of calculus. Deleuze appeals to calculus primarily to develop a *philosophical* concept of difference, to propose a concept of difference-in-itself for pure thought. 'We tried to constitute a philosophical concept from the mathematical function of differentiation,' Deleuze wrote in the preface to *Difference and Repetition*. 'We are well aware, unfortunately, that we have spoken about science in a manner which was not scientific' (Deleuze 1994: xvi, xxi). In what follows, then, I would simply like to explicate, in a schematic manner, a number of the concepts that Deleuze extracts

from calculus for his philosophical purposes. This analysis would constitute a segment of a broader consideration of Deleuze's philosophy of difference.[16]

V. The Differential Relation, Singularities, Multiplicities

Let me turn first to the nature of the differential relation, and the way in which this type of relation differs from logical relations, or real or imaginary relations in mathematics. In 1701, Leibniz wrote a short, three-page text entitled 'Justification of the Infinitesimal Calculus by That of Ordinary Algebra', in which he tries to illustrate the nature of the differential relation using an example from ordinary algebra. His example is as follows (Figure 1). Leibniz draws two right triangles – CAE and CXY – that meet at their apex, at point C. Since the two triangles CAE and CXY are similar, it follows that the ratio e/c (in the top triangle) is equal to $y/(x - c)$ (in the bottom triangle). Now, Leibniz asks us, what happens if we move the straight line EY increasingly to the right, so that it approaches point A, always preserving the same angle at the variable point C. The length of the straight lines c and e will diminish steadily, yet the ratio of e to c will remain constant. What happens when the straight line EY passes through A itself? It is obvious that the points C and E will fall directly on A, and that the straight lines c and e will vanish, they will become equal to zero. And yet, Leibniz says, even though c and e are equal

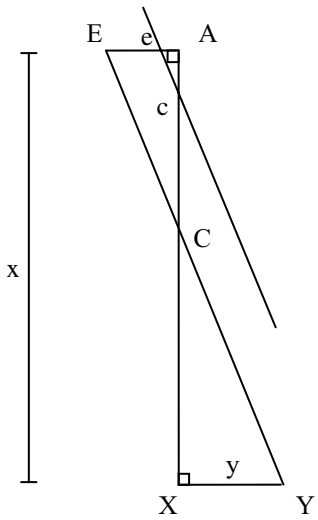


Figure 1[17]

to zero, they still maintain an algebraic relation to each other, equal to *y*/*x*. In other words, speaking intuitively, when the line EY passes through A, it is not the case that the triangle CEA has vanished; rather it continues to subsist 'virtually,' since the relation *c*/*e* continues to exist even when the terms have vanished. Rather than saying the triangle CEA has disappeared, Leibniz says, we should say that it has become unassignable and yet perfectly determined. In this case, $e = 0$ and $c = 0$ but the relation e/c is not equal to zero, since it is a perfectly determinable relation equal to y/x. Unassignable, yet perfectly determined. This is why the differential relation is such a great mathematical discovery, even in a simple algebraic example such as this one: the miracle is that the differential relation dx/dy is not equal to zero, but rather has a perfectly expressible finite quantity, which is the differential derived from the relation of x to y.

Deleuze derives an important consequence from this analysis of the differential relation. The differential relation can be said to be a pure relation, insofar as it is a relation that persists even when its terms disappear: it thus provides him with an example of what he calls the concept of 'difference-in-itself'. Difference is a relation, and normally – that is to say, empirically – it is a relation between two things with a prior identity ('x is different from y'). With the notion of the differential relation, Deleuze takes the notion of difference to a properly *transcendental* level. The differential relation is not only external to its terms (Bertrand Russell's empiricist dictum), but it also determines its terms. Difference here becomes *constitutive* of identity, that is, it becomes productive and genetic, thus fulfilling Maimon's demand: a genetic philosophy finding its ground in a principle of difference.

In a certain sense, one could say that this principle of difference is the starting point of Deleuze's philosophy, from which he will deduce a number of related concepts that constitute the conditions of real experience.[18] When a differential relation reciprocally determines two (or more) virtual elements, it produces what is called a *singularity*, a singular point. This is the first concept Deleuze deduces from the differential relation. In logic, the notion of the 'singular' has long been understood in relation to the 'universal'. In mathematics, however, the term is used in a different manner: a singular point (or singularity) is distinguished from ordinary or regular points, particularly when speaking about points on a determinate figure. A square, for instance, has four singular points, its four extreme corners, and an infinite number of ordinary points that compose each side of the square. Similarly, a cube is determined by eight singular points. Simple curves, like the arc of a circle, are determined by singularities that are no longer extrema, but maximum or minimum points (this

led to what Leibniz called the calculus of maxima and minima). The singularities of complex curves are far more complex. They constitute those points in the neighbourhood of which the differential relation changes sign, and the curve bifurcates, and either increases or decreases.

Such an assemblage of ordinary and singular points constitutes what Deleuze calls a *multiplicity* – a third concept. One could say of any *determination* in general – that is, of any individual – that it is a combination of the singular and the ordinary, of the remarkable and the regular. The singularities are precisely those points where something 'happens' within the multiplicity (an event), or in relation to another multiplicity, causing it to change nature and produce something new. For instance, to take the example of a physical system, the water in my kettle is a multiplicity, and a singularity in the system is one that occurs when the water boils (or freezes), thereby changing the nature of the physical multiplicity (changing its phase space). Similarly, the point where someone breaks down in tears, or boils over in anger, is a singular point in someone's psychic multiplicity, surrounded by a swarm of ordinary points. Every determinate *thing* is a combination of the singular and the ordinary, a multiplicity that is constantly changing, in perpetual flux.

One can see here that, at the very least, Deleuze is breaking with a long tradition which defined things in terms of an essence or a substance – that is, in terms of an identity. Deleuze replaces the traditional concept of substance with the concept of multiplicity, and replaces the concept of essence with the concept of the event.[19] The nature of a thing cannot be determined simply by the Socratic question 'What is . . .?' (the question of essence, which in Deleuze's view set philosophy on the wrong track from the start), but only through such questions such as 'How?' 'Where?' 'When?' 'How many?' 'From what viewpoint?' and so on – precisely the questions Plato rejected as inadequate responses to the question of essence.[20] For Deleuze, the question 'What is singular and what is ordinary?' is one of the fundamental questions posed in Deleuze's ontology, since, in a general sense, one could say that 'everything is ordinary!' as much as one can say that 'everything is singular!' In a psychic multiplicity, a new-found friend might suddenly boil over in anger at me, and I would ask myself what I could possibly have done to provoke such a singularity; but then someone might lean over to me and say, 'Don't worry, he does this all the time, it's nothing singular, it has nothing to do with you, it's the most *ordinary* thing in the world, we're all used to it.' Assessing what is singular and what is ordinary in any given multiplicity is a complex task. It is why Nietzsche could characterise the philosopher as kind of physician, who assesses phenomena as if they were symptoms

that reflected a deeper interrelation of forces within the multiplicity at hand, whether that multiplicity was a person, or a culture, or a metaphysical system – or a perception.

VI. The Example of Perception: Leibniz's Theory of Unconscious Perceptions

Here I would like to open a parenthesis in order to provide an example of how Deleuze makes use of these concepts in a concrete domain, namely, the domain of perception. Leibniz has noted, famously, that we often perceive things of which we are not consciously aware, such as a faucet dripping at night. Leibniz therefore suggested that our conscious perceptions are not derived from the objects around us as such, but rather from the minute and unconscious perceptions of which they are composed, and which our conscious perception integrates. We can apprehend the noise of the ocean or the murmur of a group of people, for instance, but not necessarily the sound of each wave or the voice of each person that composes them. A conscious perception is produced when at least two of these minute and virtual perceptions – two waves, or two voices – enter into a differential relation that determines a singularity, which 'excels' over the others, and becomes conscious. Every one of our conscious perceptions constitutes a constantly shifting threshold. The multiplicity of minute or virtual perceptions are like the obscure dust of the world, its background noise, or what Maimon liked to call the 'differentials of consciousness'. At the limit, Leibniz would say, we perceive the entire universe, but obscurely. The differential relation is the mechanism that extracts from these minute perceptions our zone of finite clarity on the world. 'Far from having perception presuppose an object capable of affecting us, and conditions under which we would be affectable, it is the reciprocal determination of differentials (dy/dx) that entails *both* the complete determination of the object as perception, and the determinability of space-time as a condition' (Deleuze 1993: 89, translation modified). This is what Deleuze means when he says that conditions of real experience must be determined at the same time as what they are conditioning. Space and time here are not the pre-given conditions of perception, but are themselves constituted in a plurality of space and times *along with* perception.

We can also see how the how the Cartesian notion of 'clear and distinct' ideas finds an entirely new set of coordinates in Deleuze's work. My conscious perception of the noise of the sea, for example, may be *clear*, but it is by nature *confused*, because the minute perceptions of which it is composed are not themselves clear, but remain obscure. Conversely,

the minute, unconscious perceptions are themselves distinct but obscure (not clear): *distinct*, insofar as all the drops of water remain distinct as the genetic elements of perception, with their differential relations, the variations of these relations, and the singular points that they determine; but obscure, insofar as they are not yet 'distinguished' or actualised in a conscious perception, and can only be apprehended by thought, or at best, in fleeting states close to those of drowsiness, or vertigo, or dizzy spells. Leibniz in this way determines the conditions of real experience by starting with the obscure and the virtual: a clear perception emerges from the obscure by a genetic process (the differential mechanism). These obscure and minute perceptions do not indicate the presence of an infinite understanding in us (as Kant himself has suggested with regard to Maimon), but rather the presence of an unconscious in thought – a differential unconscious, which is quite different from the oppositional unconscious developed in Freud.

VII. The Problematic and the Virtual

With this example in mind, drawn from the field of perception, we can return, in our deduction of concepts, to two final notions: the problematic and the virtual. These concepts correspond to the question: 'What is the status of the multiplicity constituted by these minute and unconscious perceptions?' Deleuze will say that they are objects of Ideas in a modified Kantian sense, because even though they are not given directly in phenomenal experience, they can nonetheless be *thought* as its conditions. They are, as it were, the noumenon closest to the phenomenon. To move from conditions to the conditioned is to move from *a problem to its solution* or, what amounts to the same thing, from the *virtual to the actual*. It remains for us to examine the parallel structure of these two remaining concepts.

We sometimes think of philosophy as a search for solutions to perennial problems, and the terms 'true' and 'false' are used to qualify these solutions. But in fact the effort of the greatest philosophers was directed at the nature of the problems themselves, and the attempt to determine what a true problem was as opposed to a false one. In the 'Transcendental Dialectic' of the first Critique, for instance, Kant tells that the concept of the World (or the universe, the totality of what is) is an illusion, because it is generated from a false problem, derived from the category of causality. The problem of causality stems from the fact that an event A causes event B, B causes C, C causes D, and so on, and that this causal network stretches indefinitely in all directions. If we could

grasp the totality of these series, we would have the World. But in fact, we *cannot* grasp this infinite totality. The true object of the Idea of the world is precisely this *problem*, this causal nexus. When, rather than grasping it as a problem, we instead think of it as an object (the World), and start posing questions about this object ('Is it bounded or endless?' 'Is it eternal or did it have a beginning?'), we are in the domain of a transcendental illusion, prey to a false problem. This is why Kant said that Ideas such as the Soul, the World, and God are objectively *problematic* structures. The object of the Idea is a problem, it is the objective existence of a problem that is separated from its solutions, and it is, as Kant said, 'a problem incapable of solution' (Kant 1999: A327/B384).

Deleuze has something similar (though not identical) in mind when he says that the conditions of real experience have an *objectively* problematic structure. What does it mean to speak of a problem that has an objective existence (and is not simply a subjective obstacle to be overcome on the path to knowledge)? Here again, calculus can help us. It is not by chance that it was calculus itself that (soon after its invention) seemed to lend credence to the classical view of determinism, that is, a clockwork universe without any novelty, in which the future was completely determined by the past. Differential equations allowed mathematicians to predict, for instance, the exact dates of the return of Halley's Comet (Lalande), or the next solar eclipse, or the fact that there was another planet perturbing the orbit of the planet Neptune, which led to the discovery of Pluto (Le Verrier). The success in solving such astronomical problems led to extravagant claims like those of Laplace: eventually *every* future event will be explainable by the use of differential equations.

Today, this belief in determinism, as supported by calculus, has been undermined. The reason is simple: setting up differential equations is one thing, solving them is quite another. Until the development of computers, the equations that *could* be solved tended to be *linear* equations, with *convergent* series, equations that 'describe simple, idealized situations where causes are proportional to effects, and forces are proportional to responses' (Strogatz 2003: 181). Thus, early on in the history of calculus, as Ian Stewart has written, 'a process of self-selection set in, whereby equations that could not be solved were automatically of less interest than those that could' (Stewart 1989: 73–4). The equations that could *not* be solved tended to be non-linear equations, which described fields whose infinite series *diverge* – and most differential equations have turned out to be non-linear equations.

In the late 1800s, Henri Poincaré worked out a way to study such equations. Even though an exact solution was not attainable, Poincaré

discovered that he could recognise the general patterns the solutions would have to take for the equations he was working with – such centres, foci, saddle points, and nodes or knots. Today, through the use of computers, much more complicated solution patterns have been discovered, such as the well-known Lorenz attractor. Put simply, the solution to the equation will be found in one of the points in the attractor, but one cannot say in advance which point it will be since the series defined by the equation diverge. This is why we cannot predict the weather more accurately – not because we do not have all the variables, but because the weather system itself is *objectively problematic*. At every moment in its actuality, it is objectively unassignable which trajectory of the attractor the weather system will follow, since its problematic structure is constituted positively by an infinite set of *divgerent series*, which is nonetheless entirely determined by the attractor itself.

This brings us, finally, to the concept of the virtual, which is one of Deleuze's most well-known concepts. The concept has little to do with the notion of 'virtual reality'; rather, it concerns the *modal* status of such problematic structures. On this score we might be tempted to say that they are the locus of *possibilities* waiting to be realised. But in fact Deleuze is strongly critical of the concept of possibility in this context, since it is unable to think the new or to make us understand anything of the mechanism of differenciation. The reason is this: we tend to think of the possible as somehow 'pre-existing' the real, like the infinite set of possible worlds that exist in God's understanding before the act of creation (Leibniz). The process of realisation, Deleuze suggests, is subject to two rules: a rule of resemblance and a rule of limitation. One the one hand, the real is supposed to *resemble* the possible that it realises, which means that everything is already given in the identity of the concept, and simply has existence or reality added to it when it is 'realised'.[21] On the other hand, since not every possible is realised, the process of realisation involves a *limitation* or exclusion by which some possibilities are thwarted, while others 'pass' into the real. With the concept of possibility, in short, *everything is already given*; everything has already been conceived, if only in the mind of God (the theological presuppositions of the concept of possibility are not difficult to discern).[22] Instead of grasping existence in its novelty, Deleuze writes, 'the whole of existence is here related to a pre-formed element, from which everything is supposed to emerge by a simple "realisation" ' (Deleuze 1990a: 20).

This is why Deleuze proposes that in describing the modal status of problematic multiplicities we should replace the concept of the possible with the concept of the virtual, and substitute the virtual-actual relation

for the possible-real relation. This is much more than a matter of words or semantics. The virtual, as Deleuze formulates it, is not subject to a process of realisation, but rather a process of actualisation, and the rules of actualisation are not resemblance and limitation, but rather *difference* (the differential relation) or *divergence* (divergent series) – in other words, creation and novelty. 'Problematic' and 'virtuality' are strictly correlative concepts in Deleuze's work: a problem has an objectively determined structure (a virtuality), that exists apart from its solutions (which are actual).[23] At every moment, my existence (like that of a weather system) is objectively *problematic*, which means that it has the structure of a problem, constituted by divergent series, and the exact trajectory that 'I' will follow is not predictable in advance. This is why Deleuze would say that every actuality is always surrounded by a halo of virtualities, which are not mere logical possibilities, but physical realities (even if they remain virtual), precisely because they are what constitute the problematic structure of my existence. In a moment from now, I will have actualised certain of those virtualities: I will have spoken in a certain manner, or gestured in a certain manner. In doing so, I will not have realised a possibility (in which the real resembles an already-conceptualised possibility), but will have actualised a virtuality – that is, I will have produced a difference. In other words, when the virtual is actualised, it *differentiates* itself, it produces the new (the actual does not resemble the virtual in the way that the real resembles the possible). Moreover, when I actualise a virtuality, or resolve a problem, that does not mean that the problematic structure has disappeared. The next moment, so to speak, still has a problematic structure, but one that is now modified by the actualisation that has just taken place. This is what Deleuze mans when he says that conditions and the conditioned are determined at one and the same time, and that conditions can never be larger than what they condition – thus fulfilling the Maimonian demands for the conditions of real experience. It is precisely for this reason that we can say, even speaking of ourselves, that every event is *new*, even though the new is never produced *ex nihilo* and always seems to fit into a pattern (this pattern is precisely what we call, in psychic systems, our 'character').

VIII. Conclusion

With this we break off the deduction, somewhat arbitrarily, since our aim was not to explicate all of Deleuze's concepts, but to follow a rather specific trajectory through Deleuze's thinking about the problem of new.

First, there is the demarcation of the problem of the conditions of *real experience*, as opposed to what is logically possible or the conditions of possible experience. Second, derived from the work of Salomon Maimon, there is the twofold demarcation of what it means to talk about conditions of real experience (or the new): one must seek the *genetic* elements of real experience, and one must posit a principle of *difference* as the fulfilment of this demand. Finally, Deleuze finds in the model of calculus various concepts of difference (the differential relation, singularities, multiplicities, and so on) that serve to define a transcendental field that is both virtual and problematic, and which serves to define the conditions of real experience. For Deleuze, Being itself always presents itself under a problematic form, which means that it is constituted, in its actuality, by constantly *diverging* series, that is, by the production of the new. The resuscitation of a positive conception of divergent series, following the advent of non-Euclidian geometries and the new algebras, itself represents a kind of Copernican revolution in contemporary mathematics.[24] Deleuze's philosophy of difference – in part derived from these mathematical advances – represents a Copernican revolution of its own in philosophy, insofar as it makes the problem of the new (difference) not simply a question to be addressed in a remote region of metaphysics, but rather the primary determination of Being itself.

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Notes

1. This paper is a modified version of a talk given at the annual meeting of the British Society for Phenomenology, 'The Problem of the New', St. Hilda's College, Oxford University, 8–10 April 2005.
2. See, for instance, the following: 'The aim is not to rediscover the eternal or the universal, but to find the conditions under which something new is produced (*creativeness*)' (Deleuze 1987: vii); Bergson 'transformed philosophy by posing the question of the "new" instead of that of eternity (how are the production and appearance of something new possible)' (Deleuze 1986: 3); 'The new – in other words, difference – calls forth forces in thought that are not the forces of recognition, today or tomorrow, but the powers of a completely other model, from an unrecognized and unrecognizable *terra incognita*' (Deleuze 1994: 136). Nonetheless, it is true that the *new* is merely an operative concept in Deleuze's philosophy; which he himself thematises under the rubric of *difference*.
3. On these issues, Deleuze did not hesitate to identify himself as a metaphysician, in the traditional sense. 'I feel myself to be a pure metaphysician. Bergson says that modern science hasn't found its metaphysics, the metaphysics it would need. It is this metaphysics that interests me.' From an interview with Deleuze cited in Villani 1999: 130.
4. See Bunge 1979, especially pp. 17–19 on 'The Spectrum of Categories of Determination'.
5. See the discussion in Bunge 2001, especially on 49 and 222.
6. These claims need to be qualified, since they simply summarise the two themes that Deleuze retains from Maimon. But as Martial Gueroult has shown in his magisterial work *L'Evolution et la structure de la Doctrine de la Science chez Fichte*, Maimon himself in fact hesitated between two ways of solving the problem of genesis: 'Maimon oscillates between two solutions: first, to turn difference into a pure principle like identity . . . In a certain fashion this is the path Schelling will choose in the philosophy of Nature . . . This conception everywhere has the same consequences . . .: the suppression of the immanence in the knowing subject of the constitutive elements of knowledge; the finite subject Ego [*Moi*] is posterior to the realities of which it has knowledge . . . But another solution presents itself: identity being absolutely pure, and diversity always being a given (*a priori* and *a posteriori*), identity can be posited as the property of the thinking subject, and difference as an absence of identity resulting from the

limitation of the subject' (Gueroult 1930: I, 126). The latter will be the path followed by Fichte (the positing of the 'I = I' as a thetic principle of identity); the former position (which we summarise here) will be the path retrieved and pursued by Deleuze.

7. In a Deleuzian context, it might be preferable to speak about the conditions of the *real*, rather than *real experience*, since the latter seems to imply a link to a (transcendental) subjectivity. But one can retain the phrase, if one instead links it to the notion of pure experience in the Jamesian sense – that is, an experience without a subject or an object.
8. 'The search for a ground forms the essential step of a "critique" which should inspire in us new ways of thinking . . . .[But] as long as the ground remains larger than the grounded, this critique serves only to justify traditional ways of thinking' (Deleuze 1994: 54).
9. In order to assure a real genesis, the genesis requires an element of its own, 'distinct from the form of the conditioned', something unconditioned, an 'ideational material or "stratum" ' (Deleuze 1990b: 19).
10. Leibniz and Spinoza will both claim, for example, that Descartes' *clear and distinct* ideas only find their sufficient reason in *adequate* ideas. On the relation of the foundation to the ground, Deleuze writes: 'The foundation concerns the soil: it shows how something is established upon this soil, how it occupies and possesses it; whereas the ground . . . measures the possessor and the soil against one another according to a title of ownership' (Deleuze 1994: 79).
11. Deleuze cites a similar statement by Hermann Weyl, who noted that 'a law of nature is necessarily a differential equation' (Deleuze 1993: 47).
12. See Deleuze, seminar of 22 April 1980, online at www.webdeleuze.com: 'It is because it [calculus] is a well-founded fiction in relation to mathematical truth that it is consequently *a basic and real means of exploration of the reality of existence*.' See also the seminar of 29 April 1980: 'Everyone agrees on the irreducibility of differential signs to any mathematical reality, that is to say, to geometrical, arithmetical, and algebraic reality. The difference arises when some people think, as a consequence, that differential calculus is only a convention – a rather suspect one – and others, on the contrary, think that its artificial character in relation to mathematical reality allows it to be adequate to certain aspects of physical reality.'
13. See Deleuze 1994: 42–50, where he analyses and compares the projects of Hegel and Leibniz on this score: 'differential calculus no less than the dialectic is a matter of "power" and of the power of the limit' (43).
14. Deleuze, seminar of 20 May 1980, online at www.webdeleuze.com.
15. For a discussion of this history, with regard to Deleuze's use of calculus, see Smith 2003.
16. Strictly speaking, the list of concepts that follows, as Deleuze points out, is not a list of categories, nor could it be (without changing the concept of a category): they are 'complexes of space and time . . . irreducible to the universality of the concept and to the particularity of the now here' (Deleuze 1994: 285).
17. This figure is taken from Leibniz 1966: 545.
18. By contrast, in *The Fold* (Deleuze 1993), Deleuze begins his deduction of concepts with the differential concept of *inflection*.
19. Miguel de Beistegui, in his magisterial *Truth and Genesis: Philosophy and Differential Ontology* (2004), has analysed in detail the shift from substance to multiplicity brought about by Deleuze's differential ontology.
20. Alfred North Whitehead makes a similar point in *Adventures of Ideas*: 'We can never get away from the questions: – How much, – In what proportions? – and In what pattern of arrangement with other things? . . . .Arsenic deals out either

health or death, according to its proportions amid a pattern of circumstances' (Whitehead 1967: 153).

21. Furthermore, the means by which the possible is realised in existence remains unclear: existence always occurs 'as a brute eruption, a pure act or leap that always occurs behind our backs' (Deleuze 1994: 211).
22. See Deleuze 1990b: 105: 'the error of all determinations of the transcendental as consciousness is to conceive of the transcendental in the image and resemblance of what it is supposed to found.' If the real is supposed to resemble the possible, is it not because we have retrospectively or retroactively 'projected' a fictitious image of the real back into the possible? In fact, it is not the real that resembles the possible; it is the possible that resembles the real. See Deleuze 1990a, chapter 5, for further discussion.
23. For this reason, Deleuze's work has been seen to anticipate certain developments in complexity theory and chaos theory. Manuel Delanda in particular has emphasised this link in Delanda 2002. For a general presentation of the mathematics of chaos theory, see Stewart 1989.
24. On this topic, see Kline 1972: 1096–7: 'After the dawn of rigorous mathematics with Cauchy, most mathematicians followed his dictates and rejected divergent series as unsound'; but with the advent of non-Euclidean geometry and the new algebras, 'mathematicians slowly began to appreciate that . . . Cauchy's definition of convergence could no longer be regarded as a higher necessity informed by some superhuman power.'

The Work of Art that Stands Alone

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In 'From Work to Text' – Roland Barthes' classic manifesto that spelled the end of any closed structuralism and opened the text to as many forces, connections and actualisations as possible – Barthes suggests that the closed work is the very death of literature. The *work* can be 'held in the hand'; this material separateness, Barthes argues, allows literature to be reduced to a thing or object. The relations that constitute a text can be determined in advance because a text is placed within and limited by a proper context. A work has its rightful owner (the author), its rightful heirs (the critics) and, more importantly, its very own sense, held within itself. The sense may be brought to light, unearthed and revealed, but criticism does no more than disclose the already said. The critic is reverentially passive, effacing himself as much as possible so that the work might speak on its own. But the work is no longer active, for its work *as work* is already completed, fully actual, and its maintenance in the present is only possible if it is treated as a corpse, no longer bearing the ability to alter itself or become other than what it so uniquely is. Barthes' 'text' by contrast is open to the future, and is so because it remains fully *active*, an activity enabled only by the joyful fact that it cannot be held in the hand, is not a thing but a potentiality for relations:

> [T]he work can be held in the hand, the text is held in language, only exists in the movement of a discourse (or rather, it is Text for the very reason that it knows itself as text); the Text is not the decomposition of the work, it is the work that is the imaginary tail of the Text; or again, *the Text is experienced only in an activity of production*. (Barthes 1977: 157)

If the text is active, not a thing but a growing, mutating and forceful vector, then the reader is similarly liberated from the due reverence one pays to a body lying in state. No longer a pious critic, the reader is now 'writerly': actively and irreverently opening the text to as many

connections as possible. The text no longer *has* a context or border, and is no longer a thing to be revered or studied. For Barthes, to see texts as works is to take the open potentiality of life and allow one achieved actualisation – the canonised work, the sacred edition – to limit and deaden the future. The work no longer lives; its creation has been fully realised – so much so that the reader must preclude the growth or excrescence of any further relations. The work in itself and standing alone can, therefore, be an object of longing, as though it might be owned and consumed: 'the work is a fragment of substance' (Barthes 1977: 156). One might grasp the sense of the work and add it to one's store of knowledge. In doing so one would become like so many other dutiful consumers. Nothing further would have been produced, the same sense would be passed around, circulating without alteration of itself, allowing the body of consumers also to remain unchanged – passively ingesting.

The text, by contrast, is not an object of desire, but the occasion for *jouissance*. No longer consuming subject and valued object, the text inaugurates a relation of joyful and productive loss. In not striving to maintain himself or the sanctity of the work, and in risking the destruction of the already achieved, the textual player may lose the object revered by the community of readers, may fail to save the sense of the work, but may create new, proliferating and unheard of relations: 'The text is not a co-existence of meanings but a passage, an overcrossing; thus it answers not to an interpretation, even a liberal one, but to an explosion, a dissemination' (Barthes 1977: 159). If the text has a *life* then it is not that of a once living organism (Barthes 1977: 161), now embalmed, but a virus that mutates, spreads, and proliferates in a rhizomatic fashion – not the production or actualisation *of* some end determined in advance: 'The reader of the Text may be compared to someone at a loose end (someone slackened off from any imaginary) . . .' (Barthes 1977: 159).

In this essay and its celebration of active textual relations over the completed body of work Barthes' might seem to define what continental philosophy has meant for departments of art and literature since the 1980s and the advent of theory. His argument offers a series of self-undermining binaries that then yields the literary ethics of post-structuralism. For the difference or border between a work and a text, the difference between a dead literary relic and an open textual potential, can itself be understood as a bordered category or as a textual dynamic: 'What constitutes the Text is . . . its subversive force in respect of the old classifications' (Barthes 1977: 157). From the point of view of the work there simply *are* some literary objects that withstand the flux of time, remaining in themselves and harbouring a universal meaning through which we recognise who we are.

But from the point of view of the text, the difference between those objects of timeless value and the merely ephemeral is itself textual: created, contingent and open to renewal. We can imagine taking the work that has been lovingly placed within its context, attributed to the eternal vision of its author and tirelessly restored by a history of deferential criticism and reading it now as text. Isn't this what happens when we show no respect for the canon, according as much value to Shakespeare as Tarantino, or reading Shakespeare's corpus – the definitive divine work – as though it emerged from a web of anecdotes, rumours, circulating myths and accidental accretions? To read a work as a text would mean not yet knowing whether Shakespeare were worth preserving, not yet knowing what its force might be, not yet sure whether it is nothing more than a network of allusions ripe for re-quotation, parody and pastiche.

If we were to accept Barthes' celebration of the text as an indication of what continental philosophy might offer literary criticism, then we would align his work with Derrida's now notorious '*il n y a pas d'hors texte*' and Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome. We could set the achievement of continental philosophy against the residual maintenance of American New Criticism's self-enclosed poem or well-wrought urn (Brooks 1947) *and* Marxism's and feminism's location of the text within its ideological milieu or context (Eagleton 1976). For New Criticism the work separates itself from the daily life of functional and practical language. If everyday language emerges from drives to efficiency, recognition and *not* perceiving and naming the world anew at every moment, then literary language breaks with this functional maintenance of life. In so doing the literary work has a life of its own; it revives the *act* of language. New Criticism's well-wrought work is not oriented to reference. By referring to itself, and by displaying its own creation of relations independent of any external end, the work is an end in itself. If this ideal remains today it does so in certain accusations that post-structuralism, despite manifest appearances, has remained a dead formalism (Lentricchia 1980). For all its talk of textuality the absence of any end outside the text reduced the text to a mere letter. If the new critics celebrated the work's capacity to enliven language by detaching it from reference, recognition and any already determined image of life, the criticism of Paul de Man went one step further. The very notion of a life that falls into language and then forgets itself as the very origin of language is itself only effected through language (De Man 1971). The work, seemingly alive, proliferating and open, is really open to nothing. De Man has, therefore, been criticised for not being so distant from the New Criticism he targeted (Nealon 1992). Even though the French-inflected criticism from Barthes to Derrida

attacked the notion of the work as a self-contained object, it only broadened the work textually; it could not negotiate the real forces of the non-textual, the forces of politics, life and bodies. It was this sense of post-structuralism's closure and formalism, for all its talk of openness and radicalism that motivated New Historicism:

> This ambition to specify the intriguing enigmas of particular times and places distinguishes our analyses from the contemporary pantextualism of the deconstructionists, who have their own version of the proposition that a culture is a text. Stressing the slippages, aporias and communicative failures at the heart of signifying systems, linguistic or otherwise, their cultural textualism has no historicist ancestry. For them, written language is the paradigmatic form in which the problems of making meaning become manifest, and a culture may be said to be 'textual' because its meaningful signs are inherently ambiguous, paradoxical and undecidable. Deconstructionist literary analyses thus continually turn up textuality itself as the source and structure of all enigmas. Although maintaining that there is nothing outside of the text, no place of simple and transparent meaning where the slipperiness of the sign can be escaped, deconstructionists nonetheless tend to draw their examples from the literary canon. While we frequently explore other kinds of texts, they urge that literary language uniquely exposes to scrutiny a textuality that operates everywhere and throughout history. Hence, in addition to skipping the levels of analysis that interest us most – the culturally and historically specific – deconstructionism also seems to reerect the hierarchical privileges of the literary. (Gallagher and Greenblatt 2000: 14)

Critics of post-structuralism argued that like New Criticism, the celebration of the text had led to the death of literature; the literary work had been isolated from those non-literary and non-textual forces which gave it potency and meaning. In order for the work to come to life it needs to be opened to what is not itself, removed from formalism's understanding of it as form – bounded and repeatable – and exposed to its material fragility. It is not enough to see the text as nothing more than a tissue of relations; as long as the text has maintained its *own* relations we remain within the dead letter of the old work. The way out of this dead-end of formalism would seem to be some form of historicism or ideology critique. It was in a complex response to the perceived aestheticism of post-structuralism *and* the limits of any simple reference to an outside that post-structuralist Marxisms and feminisms abandoned the idea that the text is either a mirror or distortion of some pure political reality (Ryan 1982; Weedon 1987). The text may not be able to grasp history as some simple outside or referent, but the text's relations do connect with relations of material production; there is indeed something outside

the text, even if that something is itself textually mediated or given in the form of relation (Jameson 1981). Certainly, on New Historicism's own self-definition, history cannot be appealed to as some pure present and stable ground; nor is history some stable context which allows us to place and contain the work in its proper past. New Historicism, in its many and diverse forms, attacks the isolationism and formalism of both New Criticism and post-structuralism, and does so by using a language of re-animation, restoration, enlivening and reactivation (Greenblatt and Gallagher 2000: 30). Criticising Barthes' idea of text, Jerome McGann argues that the post-1960s emphasis on textuality has done nothing to overcome the lifeless formalism of the New Criticism. Just as the new critics took the text as a self-present thing and refused to question its emergence, so the celebration of text creates some disembodied ideal that can circulate without any attention paid to its originating and productive energy. What we should really do is differentiate, in a manner diametrically opposed to Barthes, the text from the poem (McGann 1981). We can only have poems, those repeatable, re-readable and circulating ideal forms in anthologies and contemporary editions, because there are texts – material objects that emerge from language as social action. To consider the material object 'held in the hand' enables, rather than precludes, the activation of the text.

For McGann, as long as we see Byron's *Don Juan* as the finished, edited and anthologised object that can be circulated without difference we lose the text's animating force. (McGann wants to use the word 'text' to refer to the material, empirical object – the bound, printed edition – in opposition to the poem or work which is the ideal or immaterial object that is repeatable and iterable only because of an original materiality.) *Don Juan's meaning,* McGann argues, is inextricably intertwined with its original force as a social act, and as an utterance with a certain force: 'the circumstances of publication *always* bear upon literary meaning' (McGann 2002: 77). If we want to understand a word we need to look at what it does, and the same applies to a work of art. Byron's *Don Juan* emerged in a context where poetry had become a social act that denied the efficacy of social action; while Romantic poets were creating a language of poetic inwardness and contemplation, Byron was creating poetry that showed the force of language. Byron's work was so scandalous that it was printed in elite expensive editions to prevent irresponsible circulation, a fact that then compounded the work's pirated and proliferating popularity. A consideration of the text's materiality – its original matter of publication, its marks, deletions, binding and actual circulation – precludes the post-structuralist dilution of the text into a

general and indifferent network. So while we may acknowledge a politics or context that is always already *textual* it matters very much just what counts as a text's *own* textuality, the specific relations that animate and revive its own force. What post-structuralism's celebration of text had lost is just this decisive materiality of textuality, the fact that texts occur in networks of resonance, action and circulation.

We can conclude, then, by arguing that post-structuralism's attack on the work that stands alone – the work that would be shielded from the forces and encounters that might give it further life – was itself trumped by a later New Historicism. Far from giving the text life, force and relations, post-structuralism had (supposedly) merely given formalism a new rationale. Whereas New Criticism's object had stood alone in its organic integrity, allowing language to renew itself without being enslaved to reference or communication, poststructuralist textualism allowed the textual network in general to preclude the text from being connected to its specific, forceful, animating and determinate field. And if Stephen Greenblatt was less concerned than McGann to read the poem on its own terms (according to its specific material and socially active connections) he nevertheless criticised post-structuralism for not deciding which texts made for salient connections. Indeed, he justified his seemingly 'arbitrary' connections with the claim that he was illuminating the text's resonant, if not actual context. Thus it would be justifiable to connect the scene of Hamlet's ghost with much later anecdotes about spectres and visitations; the point was not what Shakespeare read or would have known. Anecdotes yield those fragments of textualised reality – the way that reality is actually lived and narrated – that open up seemingly frozen and singular canonic works to a life that they have only apparently lost: 'the most gossamer touch of the real, its only virtue in the present context is its very marginality, its stretching to the limit the possibility of a meaningful link, its distance from the kind of historical document more conventionally adduced to illuminate a work of art' (Greenblatt 1997: 25).

But is the legacy of post-structuralism best represented by this notion of a proliferating textual difference? And is the idea of re-animation, reactivation or re-vivification the best way to carry the text of the past into the future? Are Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of rhizomes and deterritorialisation fairly translated into a textual free for all? And is Derrida's *différance* nothing more than an acknowledgment that life is only given through relations and contexts, and that any appeal to a context is itself contestable and context bound? I would argue to the contrary. First, at the heart of post-structuralism in both its Derridean and Deleuzian forms there was a commitment to the work of art that stands alone. Second,

this idea of the separated text, the text that is not caught up in relations, is opposed to a normative image of life that dominates both traditional literary criticism and the literary appropriation of textualism. When New Criticism had argued for the *life* of the free-standing work it had done so because of a critique of language as technology. The language that is originally active and creative and used to master life becomes, in the sciences, a dead weight on life. Only by tearing language away from function and efficiency will life be restored to itself, no longer perverted by a system that operates without animating intent. Similarly, Barthes also criticised the living death of mythic or frozen language, a language that began as act or production but that had come to appear natural: natural not in the sense of growth, but natural in the sense of incontrovertible, not open to question.

New Historicism's critiques of post-structuralism as a formalism are perhaps the most explicit in their appeals to the properly living text. We should not forget that texts begin as social *acts* and have no meaning beyond what they set out to do, the forces they aim to transfigure (McGann 1988). It is against this appeal to life, relations, activation and the text as purposive action that I would set the radically post-structuralist critique of life: both Derrida's deconstruction of the sense that can always return to itself, and of the subject that can master and feel/hear itself speak, and Deleuze and Guattari's attack on the 'lived' as the ultimate of criticism (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 171). Neither Derrida, nor Deleuze and Guattari were concerned with privileging the text over life. What was at issue were two competing conceptions of life. Unlike Barthes, who employs a language of always remaining-in-act, thereby maintaining the notion of one productive life, Derrida used the concept of text to describe a life and experience that could never be present to itself, could never be located within consciousness or a subject (Derrida 1976). Similarly, but in different ways, Deleuze and Guattari rejected a life that would be immanent *to* some subject or power, and instead saw life as a plane that was effected through relations but was never some ultimate body productive of relations (Deleuze and Guattari 1997: 197). Both the idea of the formalist work *and* the historicist text are dominated by a normative image of life. The work, traditionally, is an organism that forms relations from itself, remains open to its own world and invites us to see the world anew from the work's own monadic point of view – to re-live the world as it was lived by the heightened sensibility of its author. But the Barthesian 'text' too in its own way is no less alive, not because its border is an open and living membrane but because it has no border, no inside or

outside, no *objective* being; it is nothing more than its potential connections and activations. It is this image of open and proliferating life that, I would argue, ends up domesticating what is most radical in art. If art is considered not as a living organism open to the world, nor as a burgeoning and fully permeable network, then what remains is to think of the work as a dead letter or, more radically, as a corpse: lodged within life, devoid of relations, and seemingly lacking in potentiality.

It is perhaps salient to recall two criticisms of the modernist aesthetic of returning the dead weight of tradition and formalised language to its animating spirit. As early as *Introduction to Edmund Husserl's Origin of Geometry* Derrida seems to set up a celebratory opposition between Husserl and Joyce. Husserl's ideal is that of a language that might always be returned to its origin. Despite history and dissemination all signs and traces might find once again their animating intent. In this case the ideal would be that of univocity; despite cultural, linguistic, psychological and cultural dispersion transcendental consciousness can recognise itself as that which gave birth to the multiplicity of voices. By contrast, Joyce's text is a celebration of equivocity, a language that cannot be reduced to a founding sense (Derrida 1989: 111). Even so, Derrida argues that the modernist celebration of the proliferation of voices does not break with the metaphysics of presence, a metaphysics that is dominated by a life that gives birth to itself and recognises itself only insofar as it differs from itself. What would be truly radical, he suggests, is not the idea of a life that issued in an infinite array of voices and that could be recognised in all its myriad of difference, but that which would not give itself to reading, recuperation or production. Much later, in *A Thousand Plateaus,* Deleuze and Guattari will deliver a similar warning regarding the modernist book that would reterritorialise the multiplicity of life through the notion of the great authored work (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 6). What would be truly rhizomatic, then, is not a network of textual proliferation, but a difference that could not be recuperated or commanded as the difference *of* either textuality or life. If there is a tendency to read Derrida as a textualist, such that we would only know life as it is given through textual relations, then there is a similarly strong tendency to read Deleuze as a vitalist, so that one intensifying rhizomatic life connects every text with every other text and with every other differentiating potential of life. In contrast with the linguistic reading of post-structuralism, we might note that deconstruction is not a critique of a theory of language so much as an exposure of the image of life that underpins our claims about language. If we privilege speech it is because we privilege self-affective life, a life that can feel itself, express itself, and

understand what is other than itself as the emanation of one expansive and productive theological and expressive being. What is wrongly perceived as Derrida's 'textualism' is not a claim that we only know life through relations but that relationality cannot be incorporated, cannot be reduced to knowledge, language or consciousness. For Derrida, there 'are' relations that do not come to presence, actualisation or sense. This might sound, at first, to be a sign of the great divide between the life and joy of Deleuzian philosophy and the death and spectrality of Derrida's insistence on that which withholds itself and that cannot be *lived*. But we could, as John Protevi has done, read Derrida as having undertaken a critique of Western metaphysics' hylomorphism – the ideal of the imposition of form on an otherwise undifferentiated life – and then see Deleuze as going further to give a voice to life (Protevi 2001). On this understanding, whereas Derrida would remain focussed on the system or relations through which the world is lived (with 'life' always being deferred from itself, never lived in itself) Deleuze and Guattari would go beyond the text or work to the forces from which the work is actualised.

The task of reading, on such an understanding of Deleuze, would be to refer the work back to its animating life. One way of pursuing thought after Deleuze would be to take up the materialist project of genesis: not accepting the systems through which life is lived, but accounting for the emergence of systems. Art, like social systems, would be an emergent phenomenon: not predictable from a set of given conditions, but a potential that may or may not come to actuality. The task of thought would be to account for art, neither as it is in itself, nor according to its own relations, but as an expression of a broader physical universe which harbours the potential for art (and this potential of material systems would be the virtuality of art.) Nevertheless this, I would argue, is precisely what does *not* follow. Just as Derrida criticises the notion of a life that would then express itself through an external body or text, and instead regards the text as disrupting the supposed self-presence of life, so Deleuze (and Deleuze and Guattari) see art as the extension of a singularity or potentiality of life *beyond* its defining territory. Art is not just a de-territorialisation of life in the sense of extending a tendency; it is the opening up of a new plane, or a 'higher deterritorialisation' (Deleuze and Guattari 1997: 197).

It may be that there are practical, life-sustaining tendencies of the human sensory-motor apparatus, such as the intellectual capacity for concepts and the habitual capacity to code affects: life would not maintain itself if each perception were responded to in its singularity, and so concepts allow us to create a sense which grasps a set of possibilities all at once

(at infinite speed). Similarly, the habits of the body allow us to form a relatively stable coding of affects: I feel hungry, I eat; I feel tired, I sleep; I feel fear, I retreat; I feel boredom, I act. Human life in its everyday form is just this connectedness or network of singularities, where certain potentials of the body – the potential for the eye to respond to light – are coordinated with other singularities, such as the ear's response to sound, the body's response to its environment and so on. Art, however, is the decomposition or separation of this complex; it is the power for the affective to stand alone, to be liberated from the maintenance of this (human, relatively stable) point of view: this is why life's greatest achievements are *not vital*, in the sense of being continuous with the striving of self-maintenance, but radically disjunctive (destroying the bodies and forces from which they emerge (Deleuze and Guattari 1997: 209)). How else could we read Deleuze and Guattari's claim in *What is Philosophy?* that architecture is the exemplary art because art is a monument, with the aim of art being the achievement of an affect that stands alone? 'Art begins not with the flesh but with the house. That is why architecture is the first of the arts' (Deleuze and Guattari 1997: 186). How, also, would we read the claim in *Kafka* that it is only when the text is at its most cramped, restricted and devoid of relations that it is capable of achieving its minority and revolutionary status? We do not see the art of art as long as we re-territorialise the work by drawing it back to its conditions of emergence; instead, art gives the most to life, and lives most fully, only when it is detached from life. Far from flowing from *physis* or being an expression *of life* – a life that *is* only insofar as it brings its potentiality to full and proper actualisation – art is best considered as radical *techne*: devoid of any natural or already given life, living on in an inhuman, disruptive and certainly not immediately communicative or sympathetic manner.

One way, then, of moving away from a post-structuralist notion of the text as a radically open and proliferating network of play would be to consider the relation between life and *techne* in Deleuze's books on cinema, where the technical apparatus reaches the point of art when it destroys the body's connections and syntheses, when it disrupts the productive flow of life. The human sensory-motor apparatus folds its perceptive field around its organising, active and pragmatically oriented body. Time is lived as the time *of* this subject. The notion of a *history* of time in these books challenges the normative assumption of a life that goes through time to recognise and actualise itself. Instead, Deleuze argues that time is measured out according to the body's perceptions, and further that the mode of that measuring develops in tandem with the emergence of the model of the body as machine or apparatus.

Historically, from Ancient philosophy onwards, movements are originally understood as the achievement of, or transition towards, recognised forms, so that change is subordinated to the proper forms that ought to be realised. Time is the measure of transition from potential to realisation. A key shift occurs with Cartesian philosophy and science, when movement is no longer the actualisation of 'poses' and when space is not the space of this or that proper form. Rather, a notion of 'any-space-whatever' is released, and we begin to think movement and space in distinction from actual forms. Time or change is still, however, mapped from the point of view of a subject who views the world in terms of the changes *of things*, things that are perceived from the point of view of the viewing human subject.

It is cinema – the encounter of the human body with a machine that beats to another rhythm – that disrupts the subordination of time and difference to the body of praxis and the world that is folded around 'man's' own interested viewpoint. Time is no longer the retention of my past and the anticipation of my future but can be composed from irrational cuts that then allow the image to be viewed *for itself*. This would allow us to think of 'time in its pure state'. Time is no longer the time taken to achieve a certain movement, nor the time imagined as the unfolding of a motivated causal series. The time-image is achieved when the power to perceive is liberated from the embodied human viewpoint, located in the inhuman eye of the camera, and then allowed to create syntheses and connections not folded around this or that living organism: not oriented to a specific speed, motility or duration. This cinematic insight can, and should, allow us to perceive something about the singularity of art. A technology that might begin as a supplement – such as the camera that extends or deterritorialises the power of vision beyond the eye so that we can see more and have a broader view of history or narrative – can then take on a force of its own. The camera would not, then, be the *extension* of this or that 'imaging' or 'perceiving' body, but would realise the image as such, in its singularity. One can think of singularity here as a potential for relations – something there to seen – that is not yet organised according to a network of relations. Whereas we normally imagine time as the sequence of the eye's perceptions, or the time taken to actualise something expected, the image in itself, cut off from conventional relations, is the presentation of a potential for relations – the potential for the production of series. This is not time as it is lived, but time in its pure state; each life or lived experience is one way, among others, that a series of perceptions might be organised. Any image as pure image – detached from a grounding motivated body – is the time image.

Everyday time is given from the human viewpoint, as the retention of the past into the present, and the anticipation of the future from the present; and the life of this time or the specificity of this duration is determined by the limits of the organism – how much we can remember, how much difference we can include in the present, and how much we can anticipate or imagine. But the transcendental possibility of this personal time is the image as such; one perceives the present in terms of its virtuality, the pasts that it draws along and that may or may not be actualised, and the futures towards which it may or may not lead. It is in this sense that Deleuze may not be a theorist of being or an ontologist; for what there *is* – what any particular world acknowledges as existing – is the consequence of the relations one effects among images, and the distinctions one makes between the before and after, the original and the parasitic. Against, then, a time grounded on a single image – man as perceiver who categorises and synthesises his world – Deleuze offers a metaphysics of image over being. There are only things or beings as a result of relations among images, such as the eye that organises a world of matter around its own body, or the camera that constructs a plane of composition tying image to image. One never perceives the thing itself in its full, punctual and complete presence. Life *is* imaging, with an infinite multiplicity of potential relations producing or unfolding into relatively stable points of perceiver and perceived. The eye is a potential to see but only if it connects with light, but light is also a potential for colour, for warmth, for photosynthesis, for laser technology, all depending on what relations it encounters. This might lead us to think that Deleuze is a philosopher of the 'text' in Barthes' sense – that a work of art is nothing more than all the readings and actualisations it allows. But this is not the case, for Deleuze is insistent that the task of thinking is the liberation of the artwork from its actuality: counter-actualisation, and this leads to quite a distinct mode of formalism. Is it possible to think the work of art, not as it is for us, not as it has been lived through time, but in itself: not as effected relations but as relationality per se? Can we think the power to become or differ not as it is – as a being – but as pure potentiality?

This is the power of the image as such: a singularity that we always encounter in some relation or connection, but that is not exhausted by its relations. The cinematic time-image takes those images that are normally bound up with causal, personal and affective series, and separates them from their usual or habitual connections. We see affect itself, prior to its connection with action, and it is *this* possibility, when extended, that allows us to think imaging as such. An early example of the affection-image occurs in Alfred Hitchcock's *Suspicion*. Joan Fontaine, becoming

increasingly aware and anxious regarding her husband's (Cary Grant) gambling debts, hears that her husband is taking his business partner on a drive to the coastline they plan to develop. We shift directly from the scene where they are playing with scrabble letters that spell the word 'murder' to an image of Grant's business friend falling to his death. Fontaine then falls into a swoon and faints. So far, this use of images is not too remarkable, and we see a possible future as imagined by a present character. The next scene shows Fontaine waking up, realising that Grant and his friend have departed. She drives to the coast. We see her face and then cut directly to the cliffs and the swirling waves, a scene that *may or may not* be the scene of the crime. What we are seeing, whether it is or is not the image of threat, death and menace, is yet to be determined. The cut from Fontaine's face – her world, and her fear – marks the next image as an image *of fear*, but in its virtual aspect only. (This is not an image that makes us afraid, presenting an object that would cause a visceral response, but an image of fear – not the object but a mode of relating to the object, or affect as such.) The film concludes with no crime taking place, with no actual fulfilment of Fontaine's suspicion, but we are nevertheless given images of suspicion – Fontaine reading books where 'perfect crimes' are described. It is just this absence of narrative actualisation, or the film that anticipates an act that does not occur, that leads us to a new way of thinking relations. As a meta-text we can think of the film as moving away from an object to which one relates – the crime and its effects – to relations that do not have an object. After all, what is suspicion if not the power to perceive in the actual presented world, not just what is hidden, but what has not yet happened, a secret that is not yet decided? The world *as imaged* harbours connections not yet made, potentials not yet realised. Even in this simple form, Hitchcock gives an image not of the possible – what characters may or may not do in the realm of action – but the virtual, the worlds that are perceived but that are never actualised, nor intended, nor determined. The entire film produces an image of *what will happen*, but never gives us a crime that would answer the suspicion.

We can now see how art works to allow affect or percept to stand alone. A film dominated by narrative would tie suspicion to the suspicion *of* this or that specific crime or outcome, but as film becomes increasingly non-narrative or liberated from the desire for unfolding connections and a logic of consequences and fulfilment, it allows the image in its actual-virtual aspect to tear life from its 'own' unfolding, in order to create diverse or incompossible worlds: the full reality of what does not or cannot happen. But this is not unique to film, and Deleuze had

already in his book on Proust argued that 'time in its pure state' can be achieved when we liberate signs from their worldly relations and think of the sign as such. Once again we need to make a note regarding Deleuze's ontology and the work of art. Far from conceiving the world of beings as exhaustive of reality, Deleuze looks at the ways in which worlds, or what can be said to be, are produced through relations. The virtual, or the potential for relations, is real; the actual – what exists in this or that world – is one of the ways in which the virtual is unfolded. When Deleuze reads Proust he looks at how this specific work of art produced a world; the novel is not the representation of a distinct reality, nor is it (as in Barthes) a capacity for textuality or play liberated from being. Instead, each work produces a world or mode of relations, or creates its own outside. We do not assume that the text is a picture of the world, or a break from the world, but a way of seeing how a world unfolds from a system of relations. Only if we do not decide in advance that the artwork has a relation 'to' reality can we see the ways in which artworks open up worlds or relations. Proust achieves this through a style of writing that adopts the *problem of the sign*, so that in his novel we can see the way in which reading is placed as a figure within the text, ultimately allowing for a novel that presents an image of reading as such. We move from signs of the world – the sign of this or that being beyond signs – to a work that presents the relation of sign as such, as a potential or singularity (a point from which relations or an actual existent might be effected).

Thus, we move from a 'reading' of the world where one image naturally or automatically follows another: smoke is a sign of fire; 'would you like fries with your order' is a sign of a dutiful employee. Such signs are part of a regular technology and connectedness that renders life efficient. We can, however, move away from convention and automatic connections to *sensuous* signs, seeing the colours, vibrations, sounds and tremors of one's world not as they are bound up in action but as they are for themselves. We are no longer within a life rendered conventional, human and efficient. Even so, we are still at this level of sensuous signs perceiving a world of our own. This power to perceive signs, this singular potential which in the human being has developed and connected with a world of conventions and regularities, can extend itself even further, and this occurs in the signs of love. We perceive the beloved not as assimilable to our own duration; nor are we able to flesh out or actualise just what the glance or gesture of the beloved *means*: neither what she intends, nor the worlds and durations that unfold from her point of view. In the signs of love, the beloved's world is *not* given, and it is this

style of sign that takes the singularity of imaging – the power to see, to be affected, to connect with potentials not one's own – and allows for the perception of imaging or singularity in general. If the work of art can take the signs of love – such as jealousy, the melancholy of unrequited love, the yearning for an impossible affair – and situate those signs in a frame or work disengaged from practical life, then we become capable of thinking singularity or image as such. If we define singularity as a potential from which certain styles or relations are actualised, then we recognise both that we only know singularities as they are already bound up in composites and assemblages, and also that the singularity is not exhausted by the relations that issue from it. The power of vision or imaging is, in everyday life, bound up in a technology of making one's way in a world, a world that can also be spoken, heard and felt. But can we isolate these singularities? This is what happens, according to the Deleuze of *Proust and Signs,* in the signs of the work of art. To give the signs of love a form, to allow them to stand alone and be perceived in their power to open the actual to a virtuality beyond what is merely possible or expected, this is the power of the work of art.

Great art is minor, therefore, because it does not open itself directly to its context. The artist who does nothing to de-form desire, who offers his dream in terms of the object he simply misses – as Freud noted – provides nothing more than a personal wish, and as Deleuze remarked in *The Logic of Sense,* just gives us the 'neurotic novel', where we repeat the symptom as our own. What we need to do is take the power of the symptom, the tendency of desire to direct itself towards an impossible object, and then extend that distance to the point where we open up worlds that are not of this world. Kafka can only transform his world, not by representing the bleakness of his surrounding reality, not by the Castle or trial standing as allegories of a bureaucratic state, but by showing bureaucracy *as a desire*. It is the *absence* of represented context that allows us today to use words like 'Kafkaesque' when referring to everything from immigration departments and university management systems to the way one might have been dealt with by a general practitioner or lover: the bureaucratic machine is not Czechoslovakia in the 1930s but a style of questioning, a placement of bodies in relations of deference, a duration (or waiting), a mode of architecture without open spaces. The castle *is* bureaucracy, and not a metaphor; we are given an image of bureaucracy itself, and the way in which it opens up a certain world. It is this capacity to take a singularity from a context and expose its tendency *as such* that enables Kafka to stutter in the already given connections of major language.

To understand how this notion of the intrinsic separation of art might work, we can consider an example from William Blake whose work connects word with visual image, although in a non-illustrative way. Blake, perhaps more than any other Romantic poet, has been the subject of great historical restoration, with early critics such as David Erdman defining Blake's political method and representation of actual history against the inward Wordsworthian mode of Romanticism (Erdman 1954). More recently, McGann has argued that we can only understand a poet on their own terms, and this means looking at the specific conditions of production of their text. In the case of Blake's *Jerusalem* we should not just restore the work's integrity and allow it to circulate as a complete object; we should see specific and material moments of deletion or marking out as *positive,* as sending a message, or as an act with an intended force (McGann 2002: 80). What such historicising manoeuvres such as McGann's try to avoid, and laudably so, is the alarming commodification of Blake, whereby his chaotic, enigmatic, proliferating and unassimilable work is reduced and rendered as not only unremarkably Romantic but, even more alarming, dutifully religious or quirkily proverbial (Goode 2006). But if using a fragment of *Milton* as a Church of England hymn and anthem for the proms misses a force that would originally have attached to Blake's work in its context, there is also a powerful *re*-territorialisation achieved by the return of his work to context. To think of Blake as meaningful solely insofar as his text acts in its own time precludes thinking about the relations the artwork can produce when detached from any set of relations determined in advance. What happens if we look at Blake's work, not in terms of the world from which it emerged, but in terms of its apparently unreadable lack of world, or what I would like to demonstrate as its stunning unreality and decontextualisation?

This does not mean that we see the work as existing outside of time, but we do need to move away from asking how an historical period might explain a work and instead see what a work makes of its time. In the case of William Blake the actual figure of revolution should be referred back, not to the French and American revolutions, and not only to the political problem of how individuals act in ways that diminish their powers for action. Revolution in Blake is given a singular articulation as the problem of power or potential as such. How does a power, force, engagement or difference cease to be active and contrary, and come to negate itself? Blake does give this a political figure, with the murderer of a tyrant becoming a tyrant in his stead (Erdman and Bloom 1988: 490). He also gives it a cultural historical figure: the poets that animate the world becoming priests when active naming and forming results in a

system to be obeyed (Erdman and Bloom 1988: 38). Finally, he also gives the event of reaction or the folding back of power a figure of sexual difference: the other body who allows for the very striving of my desire can come to appear as an obstacle, gap or impediment to desire, leading to a rhetoric of accusation, despair, jealousy or (in Blake's words) 'experience'. There is even, throughout Blake's works, an epistemological image of the very problem of the image: mind is an image that takes itself as the centre of all imaging; the brain becomes the head that has somehow to find an outside world: 'His nervous brain shot branches / Round the branches of his heart. / On high into two little orbs / And fixed in two little caves / Hiding carefully from the wind' (Bloom and Erdman 1988: 76). But the key theoretical point only emerges when Blake takes this concept of a power that turns back on itself, this tendency for the flow of images to organise itself around a single resonant and redundant image, and gives this event of infolded difference a material form. The technology of Blake's work, or his method of illuminated printing, takes the conventional, clichéd, and manually deft art of the brushstroke, and allows the line and its matter to be presented as insubordinate or resistant to the hand and eye. By painting with acid-resistant material onto the engraving plate, Blake takes the fluidity of the brushstroke and attaches it to the solid and rigid lines of engraving; shades, toning and gradations have to be achieved through a laborious and resistant method, in which the material support comes to stand alone. Because colour is added to the plate after printing there is a detachment of colour from line, and because shadows and tones are achieved through engraving the presentation of light has to be built up from lines. In viewing a Blake original the eye can 'feel' the hand's struggle with line, paper and colour. This material decomposition, where colour, line and light are presented as coming-into-relation is coupled with Blake's use of figures: so that what he represents – muscular bodies in dynamic poses – has to be wrested from a highly resistant medium (a method of engraving that allows the tracing of line and the corrosion of the plate to remain visible). Blake's art is a dynamic form of de-actualisation, where the bodies of fixed poses – bodies drawn in the image of statuary or anatomical diagrams – enter into movement. Their engraved style does not allow the line to flow effortlessly; the curves clearly have to be achieved, worked for, brought out from matter's potential and resistance. Blake's formal method places the outline or form of the body into a struggle or encounter with the material from which it emerges. Blake combines a dynamism of poses with a marked out musculature; his technique of engraving a rigid outline and then adding colour precludes the simple

melding of colour and contour. It as though he chooses the method least compatible to bringing out the fluidity and movement of the human form; this allows the form or outline to be given *as form*, to no longer fall back into being a *vehicle* for representation. Blake's work displays the very struggle of artistic materials, as though the matter – line, colour, surface – comes all the more to the fore insofar as it does not pass easily into the creation of an image.

On the one hand then, at the level of representation, the plates are dominated by moving, leaping, interacting and transforming bodies, while on the other hand the matter of their expression resists the figuration and tends to move for itself. At the textual level, it is typical to approach Blake in two ways, either to abstract those communicable aspects of his work for general circulation; or, to authorise his lexicon by forming a dictionary of terms, drawing on possible contemporaneous references and the slim biographical evidence. But we could also see his syntax, diction and poetic composition as expressing the struggle between on the one hand an active, naming, outward moving text that refers, and can circulate and live on, against, on the other hand, a text that allows a dead letter to preclude the insemination of sense, allowing for a true dissemination – not the proliferation of meanings, but words that do not come to fruition, that fail to connect and that disenable the easy communication of content. The following quotation from *Milton*, for example, at once adopts the position of prophecy, speaking about time and space and the formation of a world; at the same time it uses proper names that cannot be traced back to some mythic source, have no clear reference within Blake's 'system' and present themselves more as sonorous matter than as signifiers with a determined relation:

> To measure Time and Space to mortal Men, every morning.
> Bowlahoola and Allamanda are placed on each side
> Of that Pulsation and that Globule, terrible their power.
> But Rintrah and Palamabron govern over Day and Night
> In Allamanda and Entuthon Benython where Souls wail:
>
> (Bloom and Erdman, 1988: 127)

To conclude, then, I would argue that if Deleuze offers anything to literary theory, or the theory of the work of art, it is *not* a philosophy of life that would allow us to account for the work's emergence. Rather, it is the body of the work with its enigmatic separateness and monumental quality that allows us to rethink life. Life is not that which differs from itself in order to express itself. Beyond vitalism, the work of art evidences the power for the image to separate life from itself, to create an image of

a life that neither serves nor remains identical to itself. The work of art is not a text, neither a material object with its already given proper network, nor an ideal web that is nothing more than its connections. It is rather, that which stands alone, tearing sensations from their composed forms to release new potentials.

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Utopian Political Philosophy: Deleuze and Rawls

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One of the remarkable and appealing features of Deleuze's way of doing philosophy is its commitment to movement in thought. This is apparent in his interest in the openness of concepts and their a-systematic relations with other concepts. In *What is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Guattari define philosophical concepts as open-ended multiplicities, a definition that is earlier elaborated in *A Thousand Plateaus*, which displays the concept's susceptibility to variation as components are modified in the passage from one plateau to the next, forming a 'rhizome-book' as an assemblage of open concepts that has no argumentative or narrative conclusion. Therefore, it ends with a set of definitions and rules for the construction of concepts that are clearly intended to suggest that the 'system' of concepts laid out in the book could be continued in any number of directions. In his Letter-Preface to Jean-Clet Martin, Deleuze writes: 'I believe in philosophy as a system . . . For me the system must not only be in perpetual heterogeneity, it must also be a *heterogenesis*, which as far as I can tell, has never been tried' (Deleuze 2006: 361).

Deleuze's commitment to movement in thought is also evident in his own intellectual biography, particularly his method of creating concepts from one project to the next. Thus, in his extended *Abécédaire* interview with Claire Parnet, he denies that he is an intellectual or a 'cultivated' thinker in the sense of one who possesses a stock or reserve of knowledge.[1] With obvious allusion to Descartes' suggestion in the *Discourse on Method* that the philosopher embarking on a project should first lay in provisions, like a mariner setting out on a long voyage, he insists that:

> I have no reserves. I have no provisions, no provisional knowledge. And everything that I learn, I learn for a particular task, and once its done, I immediately forget it, so that if ten years later . . . I have to get involved with . . . the same subject, I would have to start again from zero. (Ibid)

Apart from the denial – no doubt exaggerated – that he has accumulated any intellectual reserves, this remark implies that he is not someone who seeks to elaborate a systematic body of thought or 'a philosophy'. It is because of the manner in which his practice of philosophy is problematic or problem-driven that there is always movement in his thinking from one project to the next.

This feature of Deleuze's way of 'doing philosophy' is nowhere more apparent than in his engagement with political philosophy, where new orientations and new concepts continued to emerge right up until his very last texts; for example, the importance of jurisprudence and law (in *Negotiations*), the philosophical functions of shame and a sense of the intolerable (in *What is Philosophy?*), societies of control as opposed to discipline or capture (in *Foucault* and 'A Postscript on Societies of Control'), becoming-revolutionary, becoming-democratic (in *What is Philosophy?* and in *Essays Critical and Clinical*).[2] Some of the new concepts that appear in Deleuze's later political philosophy imply an increasing awareness of normative political issues that were less prominent in earlier writings with Guattari. My aim in what follows is to draw attention to this shift in orientation and to suggest ways in which it might be further developed through engagement with Rawlsian liberal political philosophy.

Unlike much English language political philosophy, *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus* do not set out to provide normative standards for the justification or critique of political institutions and processes. Instead, they outline a political ontology that enables us to conceptualise and describe transformative or creative forces and movements. This ontology has a normative dimension in the sense that it presents a world of interconnected machinic assemblages, the innermost tendency of which is towards the 'deterritorialisation' of existing assemblages and their 'reterritorialisation' in new forms. The normativity embedded in this ontology accords systematic priority to 'minoritarian becomings' over 'majoritarian being', to 'lines of flight' over 'forms of capture', to 'planes of consistency' over 'planes of organisation', and so on. These concepts, and the underlying open system of their construction, allowed Deleuze and Guattari to undertake certain kinds of critical engagement with Marxist political thought. Their political philosophy incorporates both a recognisably Marxist critique of capitalist society and, at the same time, a post-Marxist critique of revolutionary vanguard politics and the philosophy of history that sustained these movements. It proposes a non-teleological conception of history, as well as a more nuanced appreciation of the deterritorialising *and* reterritorialising aspects of capitalism.

It offers ways of understanding the conditions and processes of social change that depart from Marxist orthodoxy (for example, by suggesting that it is not class conflict but movements of deterritorialisation and lines of flight within a given social field that provide the impetus and direction for change), as well as an alternative to traditional conceptions of revolution as the capture of State power by a privileged class (for example, Deleuze and Parnet outline a concept of becoming-revolutionary where this encompasses the myriad forms of minoritarian-becoming open to individuals and groups (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 147)).

While these conceptual innovations and modifications took place within a broadly Marxist perspective that envisaged the emergence of new and better forms of social and political life, Deleuze and Guattari do not directly address the normative principles that inform their critical perspective on the present, much less the question how these might be articulated with those principles that are supposed to govern political life in late capitalist societies. Their machinic social ontology remains formal in relation to actual societies and forms of political organisation. The principled differences between liberal democratic, totalitarian and fascist States are mentioned only in passing in the course of their analysis of capitalism and present day politics as a process of axiomatisation of the social and economic field, in response to which they insist on the importance of struggle over particular axioms such as those involving welfare, unemployment benefits and forms of regional and national autonomy (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 461–73). However, they offer no normative theory in support of the redistribution of wealth or the establishment of differential rights for cultural or national minorities. In this sense, their political philosophy does not engage with the political values and normative concepts which are supposed to inform the basic institutions of modern liberal democracies: the equal moral worth of individuals, freedom of conscience, the rule of law, fairness in the distribution of material goods produced by social cooperation, and so on.

Deleuze's writings and comments in interviews from the 1980s mark a significant shift in his thinking about such normative issues. He responds to the renewed interest in human rights during this period by insisting on the importance of jurisprudence as the means to create new rights.[3] His 1979 'Open Letter to Negri's Judges' already adopted the speaking position of one 'committed to democracy' (Deleuze 2006: 169). This theme becomes more pronounced in *What is Philosophy?*, where the primary example of becoming-revolutionary is not drawn from Lenin, but instead from Kant. Deleuze refers to the latter's distinction between the bloody events that took place in Paris in 1789 and the

people's enthusiasm for the idea of a constitutional state in order to suggest that the concept of a revolution in favour of the equal rights of men and citizens expresses 'absolute deterritorialisation even to the point where this calls for a new earth, a new people' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 101). The sense in which his political philosophy still advocates becoming-revolutionary as the path towards a new earth and 'a people to come' is modulated by the call for resistance to existing forms of democracy in the name of a 'becoming-democratic that is not to be confused with present constitutional states' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 113; translation modified). Far from dismissing the democratic ideal, the highly critical remarks about actually existing democracies found in *What is Philosophy?* imply that other actualisations of the concept or 'pure event' of democracy are still possible.[4]

In the remainder of this article I propose to explore further this normative turn in Deleuze's political thought by comparing his utopian conception of the aim of philosophy with the utopianism of Rawls's political liberalism. The purpose of this comparison is not to deny the differences that separate these two approaches to political philosophy but rather to use these differences to more sharply bring into focus some of the unexamined dimensions of each. Deleuze's analysis of societies of control has attracted considerably more attention than his embrace of some of the political values that inform the institutions and practices of liberal democracy. In part, this article might be read as an extended commentary on the one sentence in *What is Philosophy?* that invokes the concept of a 'becoming-democratic'. The comparison with Rawls enables us to identify some of the normative principles implicit in the critical stance toward existing liberal capitalist democracies adopted in *What is Philosophy?* In addition, the overtly historical dimension of political liberalism's version of the theory of justice suggests ways in which these principles might be understood in a manner consistent with Deleuze's broader commitment to norms that are immanent to particular forms of social and political life. In return, Deleuze's insistence upon political philosophy's role in the creation of new forms of life suggests that Rawls's principles of justice must also be supposed to remain open to the future and to the ever-present possibility of a democracy to come.

I. Extravagant versus Realistic Utopianism

At first glance, Deleuzian and Rawlsian political philosophy appear to be engaged in profoundly different enterprises: one is a primarily critical while the other is predominantly reconstructive; one is primarily

concerned with the dynamics of social and political assemblages, while the other is concerned to elaborate a normative conception of society as a fair system of cooperation. The aim of Rawls's political liberalism is to set out in systematic form principles of justice that may plausibly be supposed to find acceptance among reasonable members of modern democratic society. A 'well-ordered' society in his sense of the term is one that is effectively governed in accordance with principles of justice that everyone understands and accepts and knows that everyone understands and accepts. These principles should spell out the terms on which society can operate as a fair system of cooperation. They should determine the structure of the basic political, economic and social institutions. Most importantly for the comparison with Deleuze, ideas that form the basis of the conception of justice must be drawn from the public political culture of Western liberal democracy, including its institutions and the historical traditions of their interpretation. In this sense, Rawls insists that the theory of justice is political rather than metaphysical.

In *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement*, Rawls identifies four purposes served by this kind of reconstructive political philosophy: (1) It can help to resolve deeply disputed questions by searching for common philosophical and moral ground between the protagonists. The aim is to achieve social cooperation on bases of mutual respect even though irresolvable differences remain. For example, with regard to the conflict within the Western liberal tradition between the values of liberty and equality, political liberalism searches for underlying bases of agreement or higher order principles in the hope that these might narrow the differences between libertarian and egalitarian concepts of freedom and equality; (2) It can serve the task of orientation that seeks to identify reasonable and rational ends, both individual and collective, and to show 'how those ends can cohere within a well-articulated conception of a just and reasonable society'; (3) It can address the task of reconciliation by seeking to show the limits of what can be achieved within a democratic society characterised by the existence of 'profound and irreconcilable differences in citizen's reasonable comprehensive religious and philosophical conceptions of the world'; (in this manner, political liberalism argues against communitarians that a political society is not a community in the sense that this implies shared comprehensive moral views, but also against libertarians that it is not simply an association that one can leave at any time); and finally (4) political liberalism serves the 'realistically utopian' task of 'probing the limits of practicable political possibility' (for example, it asks what a just and democratic society would be like, given the 'circumstances of justice' that obtain in the actual historical

world in which we live, but also what it would be like 'under reasonably favourable but still possible historical conditions' (Rawls 2001: 3–4)). Rawls recognises that there is a question about how we determine the limits of the practicable and indeed of our social world. He notes that these are not simply given by the actual since we can and do change existing social and political institutions, however, he does not pursue this question (Rawls 2001: 5). By contrast, the ambition to challenge the limits of our present social world is at the forefront of Deleuze's conception of philosophy.

What is Philosophy? outlines a political conception of philosophy as the creation of concepts in which the aim is overtly utopian: '*We lack resistance to the present*. The creation of concepts in itself calls for a future form, for a new earth and people that do not yet exist' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 108). The suggestion that philosophy provides a way of responding to what is intolerable in the present implies that this resistance may assist the emergence of new forms of individual and collective life that, in specific ways, are *better than* existing forms. Nevertheless, since the contours of the intolerable are historically determined and subject to change, there is no presumption of any end of the current state of things or attainment of a perfectly just society; nor does Deleuzian political philosophy appear to be concerned to set out the normative principles in terms of which new social arrangements might be qualified as better or more just than those that precede. Rather, it is focused on the forces and processes that produce or inhibit changes to the character of individual and social life. Of the four functions that Rawls identifies, Deleuze and Guattari do not address those of resolution, orientation or reconciliation; however, they do address the utopian function, but not by setting out principles against which we might evaluate the justice or fairness of social institutions. They do not offer principles of society as a fair system of cooperation in the light of which we might point out the ways in which present liberal democracies fail to live up to this ideal. In other words, their philosophy is utopian by virtue of what it does rather than by virtue of laying out a blueprint for a just society.[5]

The conception of the political vocation of philosophy outlined in *What is Philosophy?* suggests far more radical ambitions than those acknowledged in Rawls's realistic utopianism: philosophy 'summons', calls forth, or otherwise helps to bring about 'new earths and new peoples'. Success in this kind of political philosophy is not measured by the test of reflective equilibrium or by the requirements of maintaining a well-ordered society but by the capacity of its concepts to engage productively with real movements of social change. In this respect, Deleuze's

conception of the political task of philosophy is close to that of Foucault, who describes the aim of his genealogical criticism as the identification of limits to present ways of thinking, acting and speaking in order to find points of difference or exit from the past: 'in what is given to us as universal, necessary, obligatory, what place is occupied by whatever is singular, contingent and the product of arbitrary constraints?' (Foucault 1997: 315). Rather than attempt to provide normative justification for such departures from established ways of thinking, acting and speaking, Foucault prefers to link the limits described in genealogical terms to specific social transformations underway in the present in which he wrote, such as those in relation to prisons and sexual morality.

Deleuze expresses a similar view when he links the creation of philosophical concepts to the kinds of 'becoming-revolutionary' available to individuals and groups in a given social milieu. He follows Nietzsche in supposing that becoming or the pure event is an 'unhistorical element' that is necessary in order for new forms of life to emerge. He distinguishes between the way in which revolutions turn out historically and the 'becoming-revolutionary' that is expressed in a given concept but that remains irreducible to its historical manifestations. Here, too, he aligns his conception of philosophy with Foucault's conception of the task of the genealogist; in both cases, the point is to identify particular ways in which we are undergoing transformation or becoming-other. Nietzsche's 'untimely' and Foucault's concept of the 'actual' both attempt to identify what Deleuze calls 'the virtual' or the 'becoming' that is expressed in a concept. In each case, a distinction is drawn between present reality, which can be understood as a product of history, and 'what we are in the process of becoming – that is to say, the Other, our becoming-other', which can only be understood in relation to the virtual, the untimely or, in Foucault's case, the actual (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 112). Particular processes of becoming-revolutionary imply forms of individual and collective self-transformation in response to what is intolerable or shameful in the present. They do not always lead to better or more just social arrangements, but they are the only means to achieve such local improvements in the conditions of a given people.

II. Utopianism and Becoming-democratic

Two features of the relationship of philosophy to the social milieu in which it takes place are relevant to the utopianism of Deleuze's political philosophy. First, the manner in which philosophy is inherently critical of its milieu; second, the manner in which its critical aspect draws upon

processes and tendencies that are immanent to this milieu and that embody a potential for change. It is because it creates concepts that express pure events or 'becomings' that philosophy is inherently critical of its milieu. However, such criticism is effective only to the extent that it connects with deterritorialising forces already at work within that milieu:

> Philosophy takes the relative deterritorialisation of capital to the absolute; it makes it pass over the plane of immanence as movement of the infinite and suppresses it as internal limit, *turns it back against itself so as to summon forth a new earth, a new people*. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 99)

Together the deterritorialising impulse proper to philosophy and the synthetic relationship between philosophy and its milieu explain Deleuze's appeal to 'becoming-democratic' as a concept capable of resistance to the present. Let us consider each of these features in turn.

What is Philosophy? presents the emergence of philosophy as the result of an entirely synthetic and contingent encounter between the Greek milieu and the plane of immanence of thought. This encounter gave rise to a specific kind of thought defined in terms of its affinity with absolute as opposed to relative deterritorialisation. Relative deterritorialisation concerns the historical relationship of things to the territories into which they are organised: the manner in which these territories break down and are transformed or reconstituted into new forms. Absolute deterritorialisation concerns the a-historical relationship of things and states of affairs to the virtual realm of becoming or pure events that is imperfectly or partially expressed in what happens. Philosophical concepts express such pure events or becomings, where these are understood as the conditions of change and the emergence of the new:

> Actually, *utopia is what links* philosophy with its own epoch, with European capitalism, but also already with the Greek city. In each case it is with utopia that philosophy becomes political and takes the criticism of its own time to its highest point. Utopia does not split off from infinite movement: etymologically it stands for absolute deterritorialization but always at the critical point at which it is connected with the present relative milieu. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 99)

The sense in which this conception of philosophy is utopian must therefore be understood in terms of the connection between the absolute deterritorialisation pursued in philosophy and the relative deterritorialisations at work in its social milieu: 'There is always a way in which absolute deterritorialisation takes over from a relative deterritorialisation in a

given field' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 88). It follows that the utopian vocation of philosophy can only be achieved in function of the kinds of relative deterritorialisation at work in a given society. Philosophical concepts are critical of our present, even revolutionary, to the extent that they 'connect up with what is real here and now in the struggle against capitalism' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 100). Deleuze's utopianism is therefore immanent in the sense that it does not simply posit an ideal future but rather connects with processes of relative deterritorialisation that are present in but stifled by the present milieu, extending these and taking them to extremes. To the extent that these processes or 'lines of flight' encompass resistant political forces and the ideals or opinions which motivate them, it follows that this immanent utopianism will draw upon elements of present political normativity to suggest ways in which the injustice or intolerability of existing institutional forms of social life might be removed.

In the light of this account of Deleuze's immanent utopianism, it is easy to see how the concept of 'becoming-democratic' serves the task of philosophy. The complex concept of democracy ties together a number of the values at the heart of liberal political thought. Determinate conceptions of democratic political society will serve to counteractualise particular forms of resistance to the present in contemporary public culture. The appeal to 'becoming democratic' as a vector of resistance to the present relies upon a number of historical claims about the relationship between democracy and modern society: (1) That democracy is the preferred political form of the nation states which sustained the emergence of capitalist economies and now function as the administrative nodes of its global system. Democracy is the modern version of the Greek society of brothers or friends (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 98); (2) That democracy implied certain forms of relative deterritorialisation of society. Consider the ways in which the idea of fundamental equality of all citizens undermines the hierarchies of pre-capitalist society; (3) That these forms of deterritorialisation were reterritorialised on the modern constitutional state and its extension into the international sphere in the form of principles of human rights; (4) But that, since there is no universal democratic state, there are only particular democratic states with their own forms of democratic governance and their own institutional implementations of the equal rights of man and citizen; (5) Finally, that processes of democratisation remain an important vector of deterritorialisation in modern capitalist society.

'Becoming-democratic' thus expresses the potential extension of existing forms of relative deterritorialisation to the limits of what is possible

under present conditions (I will say more about Deleuze's understanding of these limits below). In other words, it points to ways of criticising the workings of actually existing democracies in the name of the egalitarian principles that are supposed to inform their institutions and political practices. This is not to say that Deleuze would endorse all forms of becoming-democratic. Like all forms of deterritorialisation, it is not without its dangers, and the comments on Heidegger and the experience of fascism in *What is Philosophy?* remind us that it is not enough to put one's faith in the people: it depends on what people and how they are constituted as a political community (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 108–9). Deleuze offers no detailed account of just what he understands by 'becoming-democratic' and it is not difficult to imagine forms of populism that go against the grain of his political sensibility. At the same time, it is not difficult to find elements in his work with which this concept might be filled out. Here are three such elements:

(1) One of the sources of conflict that has been present ever since the introduction of modern democratic government has been the coexistence of formally equal rights alongside enormous disparities of material condition. The history of modern democracies has been in part a history of struggle to reduce material inequality and to ensure that the basic rights of citizens have at least approximately equal value for all. Deleuze alludes to this ongoing problem when he contrasts the universality of the market as a sphere of exchange of commodities and capital with the manner in which it generates poverty as well as enormous wealth and distributes these unequally. The benefits of market economies are not universally shared and inequalities of condition are handed down from generation to generation in direct contravention of the principle that all are born equal. Deleuze is critical of the way in which modern democratic states fail to live up to their egalitarian promise: 'There is no democratic state that is not compromised to the very core by its part in generating human misery' (Deleuze 1995: 173).[6]

However, the suggestion that democratic states are morally and politically compromised by their role in the perpetuation of this form of injustice implicitly raises the normative question what principles of distribution should apply in a just democratic society? Should we push for radically egalitarian principles that would treat any undeserved inequality of condition as unjust, or should we be satisfied with Rawls's difference principle according to which social and economic inequalities are allowed only when they are attached to positions open to all and when they are 'to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged members of society' (Rawls 2005: 6)? Should the principles of distributive justice

apply globally or only within the borders of particular democratic states? I am not suggesting that Deleuze provides us with the means to answer these normative questions, but only that they are inevitably raised by his criticisms of the existing state of affairs. Achieving a more just distribution of material social goods is one vector of 'becoming-democratic'.

(2) Another constant source of conflict in democratic nation states ever since their inception has been the struggle to broaden the base of those who count as citizens and thus enjoy full access to the entire range of basic legal and political rights. Democracy has always relied upon the principle of majority rule, but the prior question 'majority of whom' has always been settled in advance and usually not by democratic means. This exposes a fault in one of the key components of the concept of democracy, namely the concept of majority. This can mean either the quantitative majority of those counted or the qualitative majority of those among the population at large who are considered fit to be counted. Deleuze and Guattari rely upon the latter, qualitative sense of majority in *A Thousand Plateaus* when they point to the existence of a majoritarian 'fact' in contemporary European derived societies, namely the priority of 'the average adult-white-heterosexual-European-male-speaking a standard language' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 105). The adult, white *et cetera* male is majoritarian not because he is numerically in the majority but because he forms the standard against which the rights and duties of all citizens are measured. Deleuze and Guattari point out that the existence of such a standard presupposes the exercise of power over women, children, non-whites and other excluded groups: 'Majority assumes a state of power and domination, not the other way around' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 105).

Minoritarian becomings are defined as the variety of ways in which individuals and groups fail to conform to this standard. These have given rise to a succession of measures to extend the scope of the standard and thereby broaden the subject of democracy: first, in purely quantitative terms by extending the vote to women and other minorities; second, in qualititative terms by changing the nature of political institutions and procedures to enable these newly enfranchised members to participate on equal terms. The idea that who are the representatives in a given polity matters as much as the ideas represented has become widely known as 'the politics of presence'.[7] That it remains a difficult struggle is shown by the fact that efforts to achieve political representation of women in proportion to their numbers in the population is ongoing in most European derived countries, despite their having been

enfranchised for the better part of a century. Efforts to change the nature of public institutions in ways that both acknowledge and accommodate many kinds of difference are ongoing in democratic societies, for example in relation to sexual preference, physical and mental abilities, cultural and religious backgrounds. Deleuze and Guattari affirm the importance of the politics of presence and of efforts to enlarge the character of the majority, even as they insist that the power of minorities 'is not measured by their capacity to enter into and make themselves felt within the majority system' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 471). By their nature, processes of minoritarian-becoming will always exceed or escape from the confines of any given majority. They carry the potential to transform the affects, beliefs and political sensibilities of a population in ways that amount to the advent of a new people. In turn, to the extent that a people is constituted as a political community, the transformations it undergoes will affect its conceptions of what is fair and just and therefore the nature of the rights and duties attributed to the new majority.[8] Minoritarian becomings therefore provide another vector of 'becoming-democratic'.

(3) A third struggle concerns the principle of legitimacy that governs decisions in a democratic polity. In his interview with Negri, 'Control and Becoming', Deleuze comments on the importance of jurisprudence as a source of law and new rights with reference to the question of rights in relation to new forms of biotechnology. He goes on to add that we mustn't leave decisions on such matters to judges or experts. What is required is not more committees of supposedly well qualified wise men to determine rights but rather 'user groups' (Deleuze 1995: 169–70). The implicit principle in this recommendation is the democratic idea that decisions ought to be taken in consultation with those most affected by them. This is one of the founding principles of modern democratic governance. Deleuze is not the only theorist to recommend its extension and application to new contexts. Thus, Ian Shapiro argues that whether or not someone is entitled to a say in a particular decision depends upon whether or not their interests are likely to be affected by the outcome and upon the nature of those interests: the more fundamental the interest the greater their entitlement to a voice in the decision-making process (Shapiro 2003: 52). Liberal-socialist egalitarians such as Rodney Peffer rely on the same principle to argue that democracy should be implemented in the workplace (Peffer 1990: 419–20). Deleuze's proposed application of the principle in the realm of jurisprudence suggests that the opening-up of decision-making procedures throughout society will constitute a further vector of 'becoming-democratic'.

III. Immanent Criticism and Considered Opinion

Deleuze's appeal to the concept of 'becoming-democratic' as the means to resist the injustices of capitalism suggests that the differences between Rawls's political philosophy and his own are neither as profound nor as irreconcilable as they might first appear. Closer examination reveals other ways in which the distance between them is narrower than we might have imagined. First, while it is true that a central concern of Rawls's political liberalism is to provide a systematic rationale for the basic political structure of liberal democratic society, his conception of justice is not so cautious, nor so remote from critical engagement with those forces hostile to change, as some commentators suggest. For example, in his *Reply to Habermas*, he lists three points on which his theory implies criticism of the current institutional structure of American democracy:

> the present system woefully fails in public financing for political elections, leading to a grave imbalance in fair political liberties; it allows a widely disparate distribution of income and wealth that seriously undermines fair opportunities in education and in chances of rewarding employment, all of which undermine economic and social equality; and absent also are provisions for important constitutional essentials such as health care for many who are uninsured. (Rawls 2005: 407)

More generally, his theory of justice implies the need for basic social institutions incompatible with existing forms of welfare state capitalism, much less neo-liberal versions of this regime. The problem with even the most generous welfare states is that they do not provide for equal value of basic political liberties or for real equality of opportunity among all citizens. They allow a relatively small class of citizens to retain control of means of production and, as a result, to exercise disproportionate control over economic and political life. For these reasons, Rawls prefers a form of 'property-owning' democracy which would ensure widespread ownership of means of production: productive assets as well as human capital (Rawls 1971: 274). Such a society would aim to endow all citizens with the means to be fully participating members of society as a shared system of cooperation, with the relevant skills, knowledge and understanding of institutions necessary for real equality of opportunity from one generation to the next (Rawls 2001: 139). In these and other ways, Rawls's theory of justice is genuinely utopian. In Deleuze's terms, it provides bases for effective resistance to present forms of liberal capitalist democracy.

Second, the utopianism of both approaches is based upon normative concepts immanent to the political culture of the society in question. Deleuzian philosophy is political insofar as it produces concepts which

draw upon and connect with processes of relative deterritorialisation already underway in the social field. We saw above how the concept of a 'becoming-democratic' implicitly draws upon elements of our existing concept of democracy as well as historical struggles to implement or expand democratic principles of government. In parallel fashion, Rawls elaborates his theory of justice on the basis of concepts and convictions already present in the public political culture of liberal democracies. Democratic political order requires principles of public reason to set limits to the conduct of public debate and provide the normative framework within which disagreements can be settled, or at least kept within reasonable bounds so as not to threaten stability. Rawls's answer to the question 'where do these principles come from?' is to say that their ultimate foundation lies in the settled convictions and considered opinions of the people concerned. The principles of public reason and the political conception of justice on which they are based must be consistent with the settled convictions of the political culture, such as the toleration of religious diversity or the abhorrence of slavery. The ultimate test of an acceptable political conception of justice is the achievement of 'reflective equilibrium' between the proposed principles of justice and the firmly held convictions embedded in the institutions and traditions of the political culture: 'The most reasonable political conception for us is the one that best fits all our considered convictions on reflection and organises them into a coherent view. At any given time we cannot do better than that' (Rawls 2001: 31).

The overlapping consensus which underpins political liberalism's principles of justice is not reached by means of empirical survey or negotiation between the actual convictions of a particular people, but it is nonetheless supposed to be attainable by reasonable persons on the basis of the political convictions that are embedded in liberal democratic institutions, including constitutions, laws and their traditions of interpretation. The fact that it appeals to nothing outside the convictions and discourses that belong to a particular political assemblage justifies the claim that Rawls, like Deleuze, offers an immanent political utopianism. The manner in which Deleuzian concepts are supposed to express pure events that function as vectors of absolute as opposed to relative deterritorialisation undermines the possibility of any simple contrast between a 'materialist' philosophy of becoming and an 'idealist' theory of justice.

Third, both Rawls and Deleuze define the task of political philosophy in relation to a certain kind of opinion that must be distinguished from the day-to-day opinions of citizens. The role of reflective equilibrium in Rawls's approach quite explicitly ties the theory of justice to the

considered opinions of people on fundamental principles of right, fairness and justice. Political liberalism therefore implies a distinction between two kinds or levels of opinion: considered opinions about right ways of acting, insofar as these are expressed in the institutions, the constitutional settlements, legal decisions and traditions of interpretation of the society in question, and everyday opinions on matters of current concern or public policy. Deleuze also draws a distinction between everyday opinions on matters of current concern and the opinions embedded in the national characteristics of a people, their conceptions of right and their practical philosophy as this is expressed in political and legal institutions. In the context of the account of 'geophilosophy', he asks at one point whether philosophy in its present critical form is closely aligned with 'the modern democratic state and human rights' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 102). In reply, he points out that there is no universal democratic state but only particular democratic states, the contours of which are determined in part by the philosophical 'opinions' or 'nationalitarian' opinions about what is right, fair and just (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 102–4). The opinions expressed in the political and legal institutions of a given people, their conceptions of right, justice and equality as opposed to the everyday opinions of people, will determine the national characteristics of their thought. They will also condition the institutional and constitutional structure of particular national forms of democracy. Deleuze suggests that, to the extent that modern philosophy is reterritorialised on the idea of the democratic state, it will always be modulated by 'nationalitarian' concerns:

> In each case philosophy finds a way of reterritorialising itself in the modern world in conformity with the spirit of a people and its conception of right. The history of philosophy therefore is marked by national characteristics, or rather by *nationalitarianisms, which are like philosophical opinions*. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 104; emphasis added)

The limits that flow from the manner in which democratic ideals are expressed in accordance with the philosophical opinions of particular peoples amount to one kind of constraint on the institutional and legal actualisation of democratic ideals in a given society. Deleuze points to a second kind of constraint on democratization in the present that follows from the requirements of global capitalism. He argues that there is no universal democratic state because 'the market is the only thing that is universal in capitalism' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 106). The account of the relation between contemporary nation states and capitalism in *What is Philosophy?* remains the same as it was in *A Thousand Plateaus*: national

state government and economic systems are 'models of realisation' of the immanent axiomatic of capitalism. To the extent that modern democratic states function as models of realisation of the immanent axiomatic of global capitalism, they will be constrained by their subordination to the requirements of this system. This implies that relations of interdependence compromise even the most democratic nodes of this global economic system insofar as they are direct or indirect beneficiaries of the actions of dictatorial states. It also implies that the extension of the fundamental equality and security of citizens in the form of human rights amounts to adding axioms that coexist in the global axiomatic of capital alongside other axioms, 'notably those concerning the security of property' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 107). These property rules, Deleuze suggests, do not so much contradict the basic rights of individuals as suspend their operation in certain contexts. Thus, when basic political rights co-exist alongside private property in large-scale means of production, and in the absence of publicly financed elections, they do not have the same value for all citizens. When private property in means of production exists alongside the absence of mechanisms to provide minimal healthcare, housing or education, the basic welfare rights of the poor are effectively suspended. Hence the force of the rhetorical question:

> What social democracy has not given the order to fire when the poor come out of their territory or ghetto? Rights can save neither men nor a philosophy that is reterritorialized on the democratic State. Human rights will not make us bless capitalism. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 107)

Such extreme situations of poverty and oppression are not the only manifestation of the subordination of democratic life to the requirements of capital. Deleuze also points to 'the meanness and vulgarity of existence that haunts democracies' as this is expressed in the 'values, ideals and opinions of our time' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 107–8). This is an important part of the reason why 'our democracies' do not provide optimum conditions for resistance to the present or the constitution of new earths and new peoples. The consensus of opinions in these societies all too often reflects 'the cynical perceptions and affections of the capitalist' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 108, 146).

As we saw above, however, the day-to-day opinions of citizens must be distinguished from the considered opinions of a given people on fundamental principles of right. Rawls and Deleuze are in agreement that political philosophy should engage with the opinions of the latter kind present in a given social milieu. The difference between a relatively cautious and realistic and a more extravagant and critical utopianism

re-appears in the difference between their respective relations to philosophical opinion. Rawls's political liberalism seeks to reconstruct the considered opinions of a historically specific form of society in order to render them systematic and coherent. In this way, it produces a concept of a fair and just society, subject to the qualification that this concept might change as the considered opinions of the society change. By contrast, Deleuze's 'utopian' conception of the political vocation of philosophy implies a more critical relation to existing forms of opinion. It implies a critical engagement with considered opinions, aimed at their transformation rather than their systematic reconstruction. That is why, in the brief exergue to *Negotiations*, Deleuze presents philosophy as engaged in a 'guerilla campaign' against public opinion and other powers that be such as religions and laws (Deleuze 1995). His criticisms of the inequalities produced by capitalism should be understood in this light. They challenge existing opinions about what is acceptable with the aim of extending and developing equality of condition within contemporary societies. Such criticism must engage with forms of becoming-revolutionary that are immanent and active in present social and political life if they are to assist in opening up paths to new forms of individual and collective life.

The first two elements of the concept of becoming-democratic identified above directly confront the two kinds of limitation on the actualisation of democracy in the modern world: the struggle against unjust inequality of condition challenges fundamental elements of the capitalist axiomatic, while the struggle against the arbitrary nature of the qualitative majority challenges the weight of nationalitarian political and philosophical opinion. The different kinds of minoritarian-becoming that give rise to movements to reconfigure the subject of democracy, such as the struggle for equal representation of women or for equal rights for homosexual partners, encounter varying degrees and kinds or resistance depending upon the details of nationalitarian opinion in each case. The third element points to an additional line of flight in contemporary democratic societies that has the potential to connect up with the first two and carry the transformative process forward, even to the point of breaking down the limits imposed by the separation of a private sphere of property relations and a public sphere of deliberation over and regulation of the common good. As the 'contour, the configuration, the constellation of an event to come' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 32–3), the concept of becoming-democratic points toward the deterritorialisation of existing democracies and their reconfiguration in new social and political forms. The specification of these new political territories and peoples

requires that we spell out the normative principles governing the basic institutional structure of society. The further development of Deleuzian political philosophy along the paths opened up by the concept of 'becoming-democratic' therefore implies a need for further engagement with the kind of normative political theory undertaken by Rawls and other egalitarian liberals.

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Notes

1. *L'Abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze avec Claire Parnet* is unpublished in literary form but available on video cassette (1996) and CD Rom (2003) from Vidéo Editions Montparnasse. These remarks are from the section entitled *C comme culture*. I am grateful to Charles J. Stivale for his help in transcribing and translating them.
2. On jurisprudence, see Deleuze 1995: 153, 169–70, and his remarks in *L'Abécédaire*, *G comme Gauche*. On the philosophical function of shame, see Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 108 and Deleuze 1995: 172. On societies of control, see 'Postscript on Societies of Control', Deleuze 1995: 177–82. On becoming-revolutionary, see Deleuze 1995: 171; Deleuze 1997: 4 and Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 147. On becoming-democratic, see Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 113.
3. See the comments on Deleuze's remarks about jurisprudence in *L'Abecedaire* in Smith 2003, 314–15. I discuss Deleuze's remarks and his criticisms of the enthusiasm for human rights in Patton 2005a, 58–60 and 2005b, 404–6.
4. Philippe Mengue's provocative argument (Mengue 2003) that Deleuze is fundamentally hostile to democracy provided an important stimulus to thinking about this question.
5. Eugene Holland draws a useful distinction between utopianisms that elaborate an ideal blueprint and utopianism as process, in order to suggest that Deleuze's utopianism is of the latter kind (Holland 2006: 218).
6. See also his comments about the 'absolute injustice' of the current unequal global distribution of wealth in *L'Abecedaire*, in the section *G comme Gauche*.
7. Anne Phillips sums up the core idea as follows: 'when the politics of ideas is taken in isolation from the politics of presence, it does not deal adequately with the experience of those social groups who by virtue of their race or gender have felt themselves excluded from the democratic process. Political exclusion is increasingly – I believe rightly – viewed in terms that can only be met by political presence' (Phillips 2006: 173).
8. For this reason, Deleuze and Guattari affirm the importance of the feedback from minoritarian becomings to the character of the majority: 'molecular escapes and movements would be nothing if they did not return to the molar organizations to reshuffle their segments, their binary distributions of sexes, classes and parties' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 216–17). I comment further on the relations between majority and minority in Deleuze and Guattari's political philosophy in Patton 2005a: 60–2 and Patton 2005b: 406–8.

The Figure of the Arab in *Three Billion Perverts*

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I. Introduction

Why write about a journal issue? Even if the notoriety of the journal in question, the *Three Billion Perverts* issue of *Recherches*, had not survived the decades since its publication, returning to the scene of the crime, as it were, may still prove valuable for historical and philosophical and political purposes within Deleuze and Guattari scholarship. Critical, though, is the focus on the journal itself within the project of understanding the lifework of Félix Guattari. If there were a constant in Guattari's brand of activist-intellectualism, it was his involvement in the collective production of journals by trans-disciplinary editorial assemblages. He went down this road from his teenage years when he engaged in a collective auto-unfolding of a peripatetic youth group dedicated to far left politics in one of the splinter groups within the youth hostel association in France. The journals we have come to associate with him – *Recherches* and *Chimères* – are predated by the broadsheets and reviews of the far left groupuscules for which he worked, and the little experiments such as *Change international* in which he participated, not to mention all the newspapers, mainstream and otherwise, for which he wrote. The journal is a favoured micro-institutional matter produced by editorial assemblages seeking to realise collectively their projects and create new worlds of reference. The journal issue under discussion in this paper may be appreciated in these general terms, but it also underlines the challenges of collective production and quasi-anonymous authorship, especially when a volatile subject such as sexuality is at issue. *Three Billion Perverts* demonstrates something about which Guattari constantly reminded his readers: that it is not possible to exclude, as one skates along the plane of immanence, the worst excesses of multiplicity. Since this journal, to the extent that it survives, is the kind of enduring

micro-institutional matter that is available for revisiting (unlike all the other meetings and so forth lost to time), it provides an opportunity to study how one figure, that of the Arab, appeared to catalyse the collective self-production of the micro-institution called CERFI – Centre d'Etudes, de Recherches et de Formation Institutionnelles (Centre for Study and Research into Institutional Functioning).

II. Background

In March of 1973, CERFI published in its house journal *Recherches* a special issue (#12) devoted to homosexuality in France, 'Trois milliards de pervers: Grande Encyclopédie des Homosexualités' (see Figure 1). Guattari was listed as director of the publication and held legally responsible for it. Those familiar with Guattari's writings will know that his 'Liminaire' ["Introduction"] to the special issue has been reprinted here

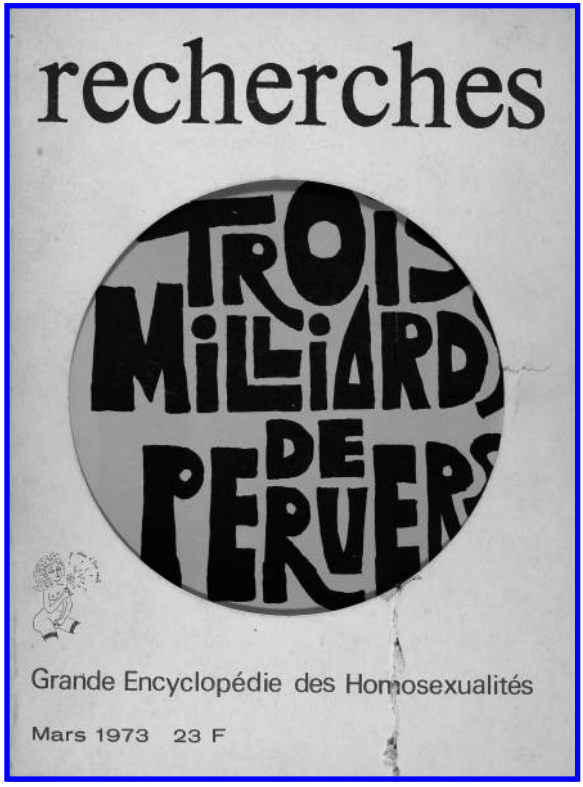


Figure 1 Cover of the *Three Billion Perverts* issue.

and there and translated into English, with additions, in *The Guattari Reader* (Guattari 1996). The events that followed the issue's publication are well-known and are summarised in a footnote: 'The March issue . . . had been seized, and Félix Guattari, as the director of publications, was fined 600 francs for affronting public decency. Number 12 . . . was judged to constitute a 'detailed display of depravities and sexual deviations', and the 'libidinous exhibition of a perverted minority'. All copies of the issue were ordered destroyed (Guattari 1996: 192).

Readers of Guattari are aware of these circumstances, but very few have actually seen a copy of the issue in question. In 2002, however, a copy that had been 'graphically adapted', in the words of the designer Olivier Surel, surfaced on the Internet on the site of the French journal *Critical Secret*, under the direction of Aliette Guibert and courtesy of Florence Pétry of Editions Recherches. Access to the issue is password protected. To this day, then, the issue is censored since, it is explained, 'the seductive boldness of 32 liberatory pages under the generic title Pedo-Philia was the object, without issuing a moral judgement, of a resolute self-censorship' (Guibert and Pétry 2002). Anyone who applies for a password in order to view the issue will notice the absence of the original section on paedophilia. On the whole, what is ordered destroyed is not necessarily enforced and paper copies of the issue are still to be found in private libraries of Deleuze and Guattari scholars. All further references to *Recherches* 12 will be to the original printed copy generously loaned to me by Paul Patton.

III. Overview of *Three Billion Perverts*

Generally, *Three Billion Perverts* mixed politics with pleasure, amateur with professional academic debate, journalistic modes of address with diary writing; the photos (often no more than snapshots) and drawings of a delightful lasciviousness (ribald and ridiculous), are playful and at times silly, but obviously in debt to Tintin (and at some points Dennis the Menace!). Aficionados of the French avant-garde can duly note the influence of Situationist aesthetics in these counter-deployments of comic strips (Wollen 1989: 27).

The list of original contributors runs to at least 35 persons. Many of the best-known contributors have since died: Guattari, Deleuze, Foucault, Sartre, Châtelet, Genet, Hocquenghem. The issue retains an aura of mystery, though the story of its creation has been recounted in part by Anne Querrien, and Guattari never failed to mention it when looking back on the highlights of *Recherches*. In 1972, several members

of the Front homosexuel d'Action Révolutionnaire (FHAR) crossed over into CERFI and, eschewing funding or the quaint term 'commissions' from the French state, produced the issue in question and thus, 'With them CERFI became what we wanted, and feared, from the outset: a gathering place for resistances and interconnecting singularities' (Querrien 2002). Querrien adds that the issue took six months to put together, with the aid of Guy Hocquenghem.

What exactly caught the attention of the court? In an interview with George Stambolian, Guattari explained that at the time 'among the things that most shocked the judges was one of the most original parts of this work – a discussion of masturbation. I think that a work devoted to homosexuality in a more or less traditional manner would have had no difficulty. What shocked perhaps was the expression of sexuality going in all directions. And then there were the illustrations – they were what set it off' (Guattari 1996: 204). The wide-ranging section on masturbation ('Masturbations' 1 and 2 occupies pages 64–94) meditates on a range of pertinent questions across the sexes – to lubricate or not and, if so, with what substance, and from which source? What is the relationship between masturbation and lack? And between lack and guilt? Solo or assisted? Intellectual or physical? Manual or non-manual? Genital or non-genital? 'Gilles' and 'Guy' (first names only) explore these and other themes in a speculative mode, while their discussion is punctuated by interjections from two frisky interlocutors, and then turned away from its overt phallicism by 'Anna'. The line drawings inserted into the dialogue stage all kinds of psycho-sexual scenes: the question of size (a carrot on a ruler); a penile film projector; prisoners masturbating, and so on. There is no hint of the scaffolding of objective social science: no holds barred, if you will. The only critical comment on any of the illustrations beyond that of Guattari is in the 'New Introduction' to Hocquenghem's *Homosexual Desire* in which Michael Moon tarries with a cartoon, 'La Pouissance ou Jouissance' ['Power or Pleasure']. Although he does not comment on other contents that he has listed dutifully, this cartoon by Copi held his attention. Perhaps Guattari was correct regarding the gripping nature of the illustrations that they set many machines in motion, some more fascistic than others. The cartoon by Copi is a parody of pop psychobabble – 'what's on a man's mind' – but with little line drawings showing that other men are on a man's mind. And what's on a woman's mind is sex with other women, as well. What strikes Moon is the absence of 'liberated gay men' in the cartoon, and that the humorous insight into fantasies that unlock otherwise blocked male desire also enable lesbian desire (Moon 1993: 12–15).

IV. The Figure of the Arab

Other sections of the publication are equally candid yet visually diffuse the discussion through art historical referencing (as in the section on lesbian culture) and by means of graphic novel formats (in the case of paedophilia). However, running through the sections of the journal may be found contributions regarding the volatile sexual dimension of French colonialism in North Africa. Indeed, if there is a 'problem' the issue tackled across its different sections, or subject (group) positions, it is that of the Arabs – the use of scare quotes around this term will be reserved for later in the discussion – who populated certain articles and were the (displaced) subjects of several submissions which sought to grapple with the racist and fascist desiring machines unleashed in the publication. My approach to the journal is based on a strategy of reading that critically follows the movements of race across the journal's sectional-sexual specificities. In this way the figure of the Arab serves the unrestrained expression of desire, providing the basis for a myriad of statements and observations, from the overtly racist to meta-editorial wrangling about which articles are in and which are out. This figure tells us about the transversal dimension of the journal and the group desire that it unleashed and conducted toward diverse referential anchors: autobiography (Arabophilia in French gay culture), sociohistorical specificity (the legacies of French colonialism in North Africa, understood at a specific historical juncture), and a certain kind of political critique of the journal itself (writing about Arabs yet without them).

This article presents a reading of *Three Billion Perverts* through the problem of the status of the figure of the Arab in French homosexual desire at a specific moment in a transversal social ecology. What is it to write, as one contributor put it in identitarian terms, 'on Arabs, but without Arabs'? This is the lesson of Deleuze's 'Letter to a Harsh Critic' inasmuch as it concerned issue number 12, especially Michel Cressole's contribution to 'Us and the Arabs', soundly criticised as 'completely Oedipal – more Oedipal than my daughter' – by Deleuze in his comment on the text 'Sex-Pol en Acte' (Deleuze 1995). The status of the figure of the Arab is made a subject of critical reflection and lively debate within the journal's pages, without cancelling out the masturbatory fantasies and field reports of several contributors, who cruised immigrant neighbourhoods in urban France, or enjoyed sex junkets to Morocco or Algeria. This field of desire is heterogeneous and complex, and as soon as we wade into it, apparently progressive political statements arise beyond the superficially correct sentiments that would be appropriate to

the period (that is, the late 1960s and early 1970s in French–North African relations). In this spirit it will be necessary to revisit some of the early and largely forgotten work of French sociologists and philosophers on North Africa. The references may seem a bit dusty, but this is intentional. Who is an 'Arab' anyway? What about the Arab/Berber distinction? What would Frantz Fanon have said? After all, Fanon diagnosed the racist character of French culture and exposed psychoanalytic apologists for colonisation. Problematically, he also fell back on over simplistic Freudian symbolic equations – 'the Negrophobic man is a repressed homosexual' (1967: 155–6). Still, Fanon connected the trauma of white Negrophobes with the inversion of a fear of a passive practice of fellatio into an active fellating of Black men already reduced to penises and nothing more in a racist economy of desire.

I want to revisit *Recherches* 12 without imposing upon it an order and organisation inadequate to the period in which it was produced. I will, however, reveal its hitherto undervalued status as a key moment in French gay historiography and as a neglected episode in Deleuze and Guattari's collaboration. I also take seriously Guattari's observation that the collective production of the journal was a key to understanding its effects. This will become obvious in my discussion of his remarks before the court about the limits of intentionality and authorship.

Politics also joins with play, for it needs to be acknowledged that the issue is staged as a game, a bit of Snakes and Ladders, suitably queered, and viciously parodied – what else can one say about a little hand-drawn penis the head of which is wrapped in a turban and bears a sultanate moustache ('Sexe Arabe')? What about the high-rise HLM (habitation à loyer modéré – council estates) penis? *Three Billion Perverts*, Guattari explained, gave voice to homosexual desire without the mediations, the vast apparatuses of representation and interpretative scaffolding, of social science, psycho-sexology and the media – Kinsey for France. To this extent, then, directness and freedom appear as affronts before the court, as pornographic in their vividness, and perhaps even as academically lewd.

V. On the Stand

It is worth revisiting in some detail Guattari's defence before the 17th Magistrate's Court. In 1973, the social and political predicament was very much a matter of the opportunities and consequences of 'giving voice' to an oppressed minority. Guattari rejected or, rather, reformulated this issue in a two-fold manner: first, he rejected the 'formal and Jesuitical' version of 'giving voice' to one's 'research subjects' under the guise of a

problematic pseudo-objectivity, and the many alibis of social scientific methodology; second, he wanted to use the special issue to 'create the conditions for a total, indeed a paroxysmic, exercise [of that scientific enunciation]' (Guattari 1996: 186). This rejection of method and scientific pretension is continued along Guattarian lines through the deconstruction of the figure of the 'native informant' (Spivak 1999: 6). These conditions would entail a decentred scientificity in three senses: against the logic of the survey à la Kinsey; beyond psychoanalytic prejudices (sameness fixation); and outside the isolated conditions of a classical union-based militancy that did not yet connect with the burgeoning social liberation movements. Indeed, for Guattari, the problem of militancy is its (in)ability to connect with other progressive movements and currents. This was the institutional task that CERFI attempted to ameliorate by engaging the expressive desires of FHAR and MLF (Mouvement de libération des femmes) during this period. By the same token, this did not mean that Guattari was hyper-valorising the figure of the gay activist: 'Incidentally, for the deaf: the gay, no more than the schizo, is not *of himself* a revolutionary – the revolutionary of modern times!' (Guattari 1996: 186).

Rather, Guattari considered the potential of what the gay activist could become; this becoming would constitute a critique of sexuality as such, to the extent that homosexuality 'concerned all normal sexual life'. In this expanded field of becoming, 'homosexuality would be, thus, not only an element in the life of each and everyone, but involved in any number of social phenomena, such as hierarchy, bureaucracy' (Guattari 1996: 187). This would not be an ethnographics of a minority, but a non-uniform becoming in which opportunities would be pursued and tendencies would be mined across the social field. In the process, for Guattari, homosexuality becomes trans-sexuality: 'From this perspective, the struggle for the liberty of homosexuality becomes an integral part of the struggle for social liberation' (Guattari 1996: 187). Recall here the three principles of minoritarian becoming: i. Dig: burrow, carve, crack open and find what is foreign within the familiar, and then carry it off; ii. it's not pornographic representation that is at stake, for as Guattari put it, *Recherches* wasn't competing with the sex shops precisely because everything minoritarian is political ('impropriety is political'); iii. create an assemblage of enunciation (collective, implying cooperation). Guattari explained: 'We dispensed here with the notions of an author and a work. When the examining judge asked me, for example, who had written this or that article, supposing I would even answer, I was not able to do so . . . Even the layout was done collectively' (Guattari 1996: 191). The refusal of individuation (resisting the demands of the legal system) operated through the indiscernibility of

becoming that ran between those involved in the issue's production. This becoming was an objective feature that made it impossible for Guattari to link single names with tasks and products. Of course, since he was listed on the masthead as Director, he was readily identifiable.

These are rather abstract considerations, to be sure. What Guattari found himself facing was a day in court. His lifelong passion for the work of Kafka was about to be put to the test in a becoming Joseph K. The 'ridiculous side' of the charge began with his return from a conference in Montréal, Canada, in April 1973. Upon return to his flat he was met by several patients sitting on the stairs awaiting their consultations, and found his door padlocked shut. His flat on the rue de Condé had been trashed by police executing one of dozens of warrants for the seizure of *Recherches* 12. All the while, Guattari wrote, *Recherches* had been available for weeks in bookstores around Paris: 'When I protested these proceedings to the examining judge, I must say that he remained largely perplexed. I thought then that there had been a mistake and that the case would be adjourned *sine die*' (Guattari 1996: 190). No such indefinite adjournment would be offered. Anyway, it may be remembered from Kafka's *The Trial* (1968: 160–1) that certain drawbacks, the prevention of actual acquittal, most certainly, are entailed by preventing the trial to progress towards the accused's sentencing. Limbo of a sort was described in these very terms by Deleuze, but with reference to the passage from disciplinary to control societies: an *endless postponement* to which Guattari's case did not accede. Guattari stood next to Kafka in this shift, but failed to convince the 'perplexed' judge who was stuck in the disciplinary society. Hence, the fine of 600FF.

The other side of this Kafka machine is, perhaps, just as serious. The issue was 'indefensible', Guattari believed, if the representational illogic of the court were to be granted. Of course, defence counsel would not grant this. First, Guattari was held responsible for a collective assemblage of enunciation as a matter of convenience:

> What does the fact of holding someone responsible for something signify?
> – I am responsible, I represent *Recherches*
> – You represent the law
> – Members of Parliament represent the people
> – The President of the Republic: France
> – Universities: knowledge
> – Gays: perversion
> – *Recherches* wishes to have done with this sort of representation, with all the bad theatre to which officials and institutions resort. (Guattari 1996: 188–9)

The court and counsel conveniently decided upon a signifying semiology (a bad theatre of representation) that specified in advance a regime of signs from which there would be no deviation. On the levels of content and form the issue was both rich and uncategorisable. Guattari did not distinguish between contents, citing a range of specific examples that included the sexual misery of youth, masturbation, among two explicit mentions of race and ethnic themes: 'the way in which different immigrant groups from North Africa live their homosexuality' and 'the racist fantasies which are sometimes invoked in relations of sexual dependency' (Guattari 1996: 190–1). The form of the publication did not answer to any 'pre-established category' (that is, it was not tied to a specific discipline or national professional society; nor was it undertaken in the name of a legitimated method). That it let some gays and straights communicate directly their experience 'without precautions and without supporting documentation' made it dangerous. The shock issued from the absence of interpretive 'screens' and the ambience of a deterritorialising semiosis. Guattari, too, took some abuse from disgruntled contributors.

Recherches 12 was a tool used to overcome the stultifying signifying semiology Guattari attributed to the court. This was not an isolated incident. Collective autoproduction centred on publishing was a constant in Guattari's life from his teenage years forward. *Recherches* contributed to the creation of institutional matter (CERFI) and is not itself a mere product engendered by an institution; rather, the institution is in part a product of a journal's collective elaboration and refinement over time, including everything that befalls a project of this kind, even the plight of its director. Collective autoproduction in the formation of institutional matter gives pride of place to the journal-artifact – as a surviving document and therefore resource – even though it is only one feature of the institutional matter engendered by editorial and other activities (including all the meetings, communications, fantasies, scribblings on scrunched pages, etc.). In other words, there are many a-signifying features (and some partially-formed semiotic as well) upon which projects of this sort depend; such a semiotic always has some use for signifying semiologies, even if only as a foil and to underline the passage from one (individuated subject held responsible) to another (collective editorial and authorial assemblage of enunciation). Remember that autoproduction of institutional matter is not exhausted by the finished product and remains partially unmediated by (certainly not reducible to) the sort of representational logic that demands clarity of comprehension and hierarchies of power so as to assign responsibility.

VI. Game On, Reader

Recherches 12 began with a game (see Figure 2). There are six players: Arabe, Petit Garçon, Femme, Enseignant, Travesti, and Pédé. The board is numbered 1 through 30 from Start to Finish along an involuted, segemented penis. The Rules of the Game dictate movement forward and backwards. Land on segment 1 – 'Les Arabes et Nous', which corresponds to the first article – and you are directed to 'Sip a mint tea until you have rolled a 6', which is another article 'Les Arabes et les Blancs'. Or, if you find yourself on segment 16, then 'Get the Arab to fuck you and keep his cock in your ass until either one of you rolls a 5' which is 'L'autre côté des ténébres' (1973: 4–5). And so on and so forth, with a range of substitutions, trips to the hospital, indications of sadism or masochism, and even the fate of having to read most of the issue, etc.

This is a 'screen', of sorts, not of interpretation, but of deferment (of important questions) in a fully parodic mode. For as much as interpersonal intellectual politics shaped the issue – Cressole could be counted among other oedipal 'guilt cops' from Gay Lib, as Deleuze (1995: 4) suggested – and a certain reflexivity was achieved with regard to the overtly racist

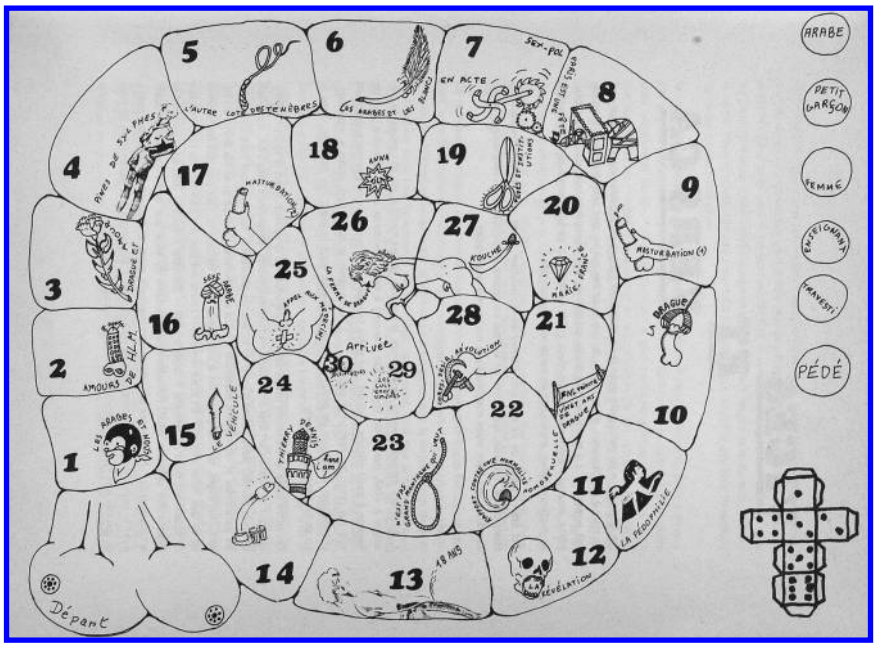


Figure 2 Penile snakes and ladders with player tokens.

content on display, the game-form was up-front: *Jeu de l'oie* or Snakes and Ladders, with instructions ('Jeu de l'oie: Mode de l'emploi'), no less.

> The game is played by six persons
> corresponding to the six detachable pieces
> beside the board and 2 copies of this issue.
> On each roll of the dice, consult the Rules of the
> Game for the number upon which you
> have landed. Between turns, read the
> article in the second copy corresponding
> to your position on the board. (1973: 4)

This editorial contrivance suggests a device that keeps one moving along the segments, according to the roll of the dice. This gaming doesn't permit an easy reduction to a static identity of the player/reader because in the next game you can try your luck as the Arabe or the Travesti, or someone else altogether. A static overcoding of identity would freeze these player tokens into subject positions with inventoried attributes and stable descriptors. Patience. After all, the game complements the idea that there are many ways to make a book work. Game on.

VII. Arab and Berber

Let's begin with one of several collective 'political' statements in support of indigenous North Africans: 'Vivent Nos Amants de Berbérie' (1973: np). 'Long Live Our Berber Lovers' is a detachable pictorial (colour) tableau of young North African men assembled for a group photo; it may be used, the collective suggests, as an alternate cover for the journal. The supporting text is a manifesto and declaration of love that begins with the recognition that 'Berbers' are not reducible to 'Arabs'. In fact, the authors continue, Berbers have been oppressed for centuries, and their struggle continues today: 'Arabs destroy their language and culture.' This problem is 'taboo', but we do not know for whom (for members of the collective, presumably). A few historical facts are mentioned: 'The first great rebellion of North Africans against colonial oppression was the war of Rif. The first experience of freedom we want to acknowledge here was the République berbère des Rifains, founded in 1921 by Mohamed Abdelkrim Alkhaltabi.' The text continues:

> We, the homosexuals who have found a voice in this issue of *Recherches* are in solidarity with their struggle. Because we have sexual relations with them. Because their liberation will also our liberation. Long live our friends from

> Rif, Atlas, the Aurès, and the Kabylie! Long live Berbérie! Long live our Berber lovers! (Text on recto of aforementioned detachable poster)

The facts are correct: the Riffian (Berber) Republican State was declared by Moroccan tribal leader Abd el-Krim in 1921 in a war against the Spanish (surrendering to French and Spanish troops in 1926/27). That el-Krim, a heroic precursor of anti-colonialist struggles, instituted Sharia Law (mixing it with tribal traditions at odds with certain Islamic prescriptions) is not mentioned for the obvious reason that homosexuality is condemned in the Koran and is, on strict interpretations, punishable as either adultery or sodomy. This makes the declaration of love, even despite itself, an intense provocation. The fact that this declaration is not signed, as opposed to the statement in support of a French schoolteacher fired for being gay ('Sale Race! Sale Péde', 1973: np – text on recto of 'Ça branle'), creates ambiguity beyond the obvious fact that the only 'voice given' to the unidentified loved ones by the lovers is pictorial.

The declaration is, however, grounded in a fundamental focal point of French–North African relations: that is, the role of language. For in the Maghreb there are two major language groups: Arabic and Berber. Language proved to be a key point of division, since both the Arabs and Berbers in question were largely Sunni Muslims (and it was Albert Camus (1966: 124) who preferred in his political writings of the late 1950s to link the future of Algeria with the French rather than any 'empire of Islam' and Arab nationalist-imperialism), but with different tribal traditions thrown into the mix, not discounting numerous dialects, local traditions, and hybridities. There are thought to be many other relevant distinctions that, despite their deconstructability, inform us about perceived social and political realities: urban (Arab) versus rural (Berber); veiled (urban Arab women) versus unveiled (rural Berber women) (Hart 1972: 26ff). As Fanon (1965: 36, n. 1) subtly explained, this latter observation was used by the colonising French to emphasise the positive aspects of Berber identity against the 'opacity' of veiled Arab women in the cities, despite the fact that Berber women in urban settings may be veiled as well.

The politics of language under the colonial regime can be an expression of a typical 'divide and rule' (Quandt 1972: 286) strategy, in which co-optable aspects of cultural identity were emphasised, while resistant aspects were criticised, criminalised, or re-categorised as 'foreign'. For example, the colonial curriculum rendered Arabic a 'foreign' language and even the post-colonial psycho-existentialist problematic favoured French as the language of the elite – of the writer, thinker, and modern citizen (and private school teachers and students). Jacques Derrida once exclaimed, in

reflecting on his linguistic choices as a French Algerian lycéen, that Arabic was an option permitted but interdicted: 'Arabic, an optional foreign language in Algeria!' (Marabou and Derrida 2004: 81). In Algeria, the post-colonial linguistic policy of Arabisation stumbled on the colonialist legacy since Arabic (classical versus spoken dialects) had to be 'recovered' and elevated to the official language – after 1962 (Naylor 2000: 63–4; Said 1993: 267). But if a certain Arabic became the official language, where did this leave Kabyle and other Berber tongues? Whither French? On the side of multilingualism, Fanon wrote stirringly of the radio station *The Voice of Fighting Algeria* in the anti-colonialist struggle and the significance of the use of Arabic, Kabyle and French which 'had the advantage of developing and of strengthening the unity of the people' in the cities and in the countryside (Fanon 1965: 84). The term Kabyle is thought to be misused when it describes a linguistic territory from which political consequences (such as separatism) are drawn by those far removed from the territory – in this sense it is a political projection (Favret 1972: 321).

Does one exacerbate the colonialist legacy by signalling the Arab/Berber distinction and by underlining in a declaration of love the oppression of Berbers by Arabs? Pierre Bourdieu (1962: xiii) once observed, after remarking on a series of obvious differences, that 'it would be dangerous to exaggerate the opposition between Arabs and Berbers. Between these two ways of life there are frequent transitions and deeply rooted affinities.' Obviously, these observations differ from place to place, from Algeria to Morocco, across different periods (Rabinow 1975). These considerations might compel one to read 'Long Live Our Berber Lovers' as a fundamentally incoherent document that does not make clear, beyond its dichotomising, how it is breaking a 'taboo': the official post-revolution Arabisation (linguistic) and then Islamicisation (religious erasure of civil society) of Algeria and Berber resistances with longstanding colonial shadows. Yet in a way this declaration is actually prescient since it would not be until the late 1980s that the spectre of an accelerated Islamism would help to articulate the predicament of linguistic minorities, especially the Kabyle political elite (or any elite for that matter) who were francophones and profited from colonial favouritism (or capitalised on the failures of decolonisation) (Naylor 2000:180–1). The real 'taboo' at issue here still seems hidden: Algeria's independence.

VIII. Minoritarian Becomings

Although it was not Guattari who was being interrogated in the previous section, it is helpful to refer to his basic orientation with regard to

both sexuality and racism. In an interview published two years after the *Three Billion Perverts* affair, Guattari explained that 'all disruptive semiotisation involves a disruptive sexualisation. Thus it is not necessary, in my view, to pose the question of homosexual writers, but rather to search for what is homosexual, at any rate, in a great writer, even if in other respects, s/he is heterosexual' (Guattari 1975: 15). The excavation of the minoritarian becoming, the becoming homosexual of the heterosexual writer, has its parallel in Guattari's tactics of anti-racism. Circa 1983 he wrote: 'All nations require immigrants and the relations to alterity posed though their coming. I am claiming that a nation's vitality corresponds to its capacity to engage itself in all the components of a becoming immigrant' (Guattari 1986: 40). Hence this becoming immigrant of all is a refusal of racism in a rather bleak neo-liberal period in which the opportunities for subjectification were being limited and/or tightly scripted through failures of the socialist government and the reemergence of dangerous archaisms and fictions that quickly filled the void ('France is France' of the Poujadists all the way to Le Pen).

Becoming immigrant was for Guattari a tactic for refusing uniformity and the anguish that results from it. Becoming minoritarian, whether gay and/or immigrant (becoming *beur*), may be soundly criticised as sterile if it actually reduces particularity and fails to deliver on the passages into the cracks, or inhibits the release of components the assemblage of which would build new solidarities and opportunities (at least for a practical modification of racism). Now, a gay becoming Berber would not entail a Gallic embrace or liberal-minded statement of sympathy and solidarity, but would burrow into the majoritarian dichotomy Arab/Berber in order to find the site of detachable components in a transformative process that would need to acknowledge hybridity, exchange, alterity and at the same time deflation, slowing down, sticking. The valorisation of Berbers must reckon with a partial becoming Arab and Gallic (not a becoming majoritarian) that would reveal paradoxical elements – does the absence of a transnational Berberism entail a rapprochement with Islamism? – that attach to all lines of escape/inscape. Becoming is practically speaking paradoxical.

IX. Racist Desire

The controversial 'transcription of a discussion' between P. 22, G. 32, and M, 24, 'Les Arabes et Nous', is quite ordinary in its prejudice towards so-called Arabs, a bloc that is barely differentiated and only vaguely identified. The conversation is peppered throughout with

negative stereotypes – stealing, lazy, lying, greedy – tempered at times with self-recognition that such things are not particular to this targeted group. This is no politics of fucking: it is either politics or fucking. At one point M reflects: 'When I was a militant, we would explain that it was a matter of descending into the working class in order to have political relations with young workers. Basically, our requirement was to establish with them a relation of seduction, and cruise them for the organisation. I just couldn't accept that. Whereas with the Arabs, whether at the hotel or elsewhere, it's true that our relations were not hidden behind political cruising' (1973: 19). This is the moment at which Deleuze (assuming he was the author of the unsigned 'Sex-Pol en Acte') dug into the text. He wrote: 'This remark is understood to be that of a lapsed former militant who has substituted homosexual activity for political action, making the former the litmus test' (1973: 29). What interested Deleuze was not so much the many scattered examples of racist or fascist desire expressed by the interlocutors, but the magical appearance ('diffuse and mobile') of racism (informed by a basic sexism) in those Arabs who did not speak. Things have gone from bad to worse: 'la bête Arabe' (to whom G is happy to deliver himself) may himself be racist towards 'us' (G and others), it is claimed, because 'for them, the homosexual relation is same as their relation to women in which there is great contempt, and a taste for domination' (1973: 17). For Deleuze, this was just one displacement among many in which Oedipal traps were set by the interlocutors themselves. Such traps included the distinction between Europeans (parents) and Arabs (husbands), with disdain for the former functioning, snapped Deleuze, as an incest prohibition, while the animalisation motif served as a focal point of racist desire. Deleuze even ventured a symptomatic reading of the telephone call that interrupts the proceedings at one point as 'the sign of Oedipus and Cain'. Oedipus, Oedipus, Oedipus. Deleuze's Oedipus, as Slavoj Žižek (2004: 83) has argued from a fortified Lacanian position, sometimes functions as an order-word: For example, gay conjugality is Oedipal because it crystallises a micro-fascist trap for desire set by coupledom and perhaps even by the right to marry. By repeatedly trumping the discussion with Oedipus, Deleuze says too little and too much, because Oedipus is supposed to contain within it a knockdown argument – evidence that serious thought has failed – yet the trump card seems infected by the very failure it identifies, that is, it is a trap for critical thought. This may be to give too much credit to Žižek because, after all, he is not specifically reading Deleuze's contributions to *Three Billion Perverts*. But the commentary on 'Les Arabes et Nous' is volatile, incensed, flashing with emotion as the

case is made: if you lubricate a homosexual desiring machine with Oedipus you get heterosexuality.

X. Activist-Intellectualism Redux

'Sex-Pol en Acte' is not the only response to 'Les Arabes et Nous'. The 'beautiful cocks' lubricated by saliva rather than Vaseline – the latter is so Saint Germain; so Roland Barthes! – extolled by G, despite the serial sameness of Arab men complained about by L, are not really the issue in 'Le Sexe "Arabe" '. As disagreeable as 'Les Arabes et Nous' may be, the author of 'Le Sexe "Arabe" ' (1973: 32–7) observes, it is acceptable if it provokes discussion – but among a small group and like-minded audience. What returns immediately is a set of provisos: to always refer to 'Arabs' in scare quotes and to invoke in this qualification the Arab/Berber distinction: the men at issue are Berbers, more or less Arabised and Islamicised, but in the political context that 'le vrai nom du Maghreb, c'est la Berbérie'. The socio-sexual context is also significant. The author underlines the same distinction that Deleuze saw as Oedipal: it is easier to cruise 'Arab' men than Europeans, both in Europe and in North Africa. Why? Because, as knowledgeable members of FHAR will attest, that is, for those members who only sleep with 'Arabs' (the so-called 'Arabophiles'), Europeans live their homosexuality 'pathologically', while 'Arabs' live theirs 'sans problèmes' and 'sans culpabilité'. There is a constant recourse to *sans*: without Arabs, who are then marked diacritically as a qualified referent 'Arabs', and are without problems and without guilt. Imposing a negative, qualified existence is the very violence of colonialist representation.

The article under discussion is staged as vaguely sociological and proto-ethnographic (asking for the responses of 'Arab' students in Paris to 'Arabes et Nous', but receiving nothing but promises and signs of danger that Zionists will seize upon the racist desires expressed there and use them to fan the flames of anti-Arab French racism). This 'study' (this is where scare quotes come in handy) took place in the Parisian university milieu, among Maghrebian students whose sexuality was fundamentally bisexual owing to the character of homosexuality in Islamic countries ('un fait culturel collectif', so it is put). By the time these students graduate, they will have apparently broken with their bisexuality, and thus separated off their homosexuality, for the sake of a normalised desire for a European opposite-sex partner.

These so-called findings are not worth disputing. Their truth or falsehood is not at issue. Rather, readers may ask themselves how this

academic call and response is being played out as it fills the pages of the issue. The effect, as M explains at length in a brief exchange (with G) embedded in a series of texts under the heading 'Les Arabes et les "Blancs" ' (1973: 206–9) is alienation. M is a 'real' white straight male, non-university-based writer ('white-hetero-bourgeois'), among 'imaginary Arabs'. The editorial committee, in rejecting his contribution as 'too literary', showed its true face: 'A section was done on cruising without cruisers, another on Arabs but without Arabs, and only the thinkers of homosexuality can speak about homosexuality.' But the 'blanc' positions himself among the 'blanks' at the heart of a journal in which the editors publish themselves, and it is necessary to 'sublimate', M complains, before Guattari using the politically correct 'salad' of jargon (Bataille-Genet-Guattari). Sour grapes or excavation of a syndrome? No doubt there is a crowd of subjects expulsed from the issue. Yet even the personal problem of having one's text refused is reconfigured as an opportunity to contribute another article to the issue in which one raises objections about lingering concerns. The privilege is that expression may be achieved by abandoning the company of the silenced. The white bourgeois non-academic writer molarises the collective process by insisting on being represented as someone who was excluded, in this way accounting as an individual for all elisions, and joining the collective process but with qualifications.

XI. Conclusion

Three Billion Preverts was a masterpiece of political impasse, implosive sexuality (Oedipal, phallocratic, myth of primitivism . . .), and legal transgression. Perhaps it should be stated, along with the author of the delirious and interminable contribution 'Les Culs Énergumènes', that in the end when all is said about 'Les Arabes et Nous', we are truly stuck between 'the ivory cock and the ivory tower' (1973: 230). And everybody is a dupe. But it doesn't end here.

Three Billion Perverts appeared only a year after Hocquenghem's important book *Homosexual Desire* (1993 [1972]). The one is a foundational text of queer studies *avant la lettre*; the other, a 'lost' period piece. But that is a matter of circumstance. The queering of Deleuze and Guattari studies can find its own 'original' points of reference in this issue, if it so desires, and there is no shortage of lingering notoriety attached to the recovery operation. My reading does not attempt to present an overview of the issue's contents. There is more work to be done on that point. Rather, I wanted to work through some of the problems associated with

the figure of the Arab as it circulated through the text because it was on this point that desire and revolution seemed to part ways. Yet great effort was taken to put them back together again, like the King's men and Humpty Dumpty. And we know how that story turned out. There is little doubt for the author of 'Les Culs' that any reader of 'Les Arabes et Nous' would classify it as a 'pathological episode' between 'phalluses without penises and penises without phalluses' (1973: 229) – Us (with editorial privileges intact) and the 'Arabs' (who are without a number of real and imagined attributes). My selection of the figure of the Arab is not random; it is the transversal contraption at work in the issue that exposed the soft tissues to long overdue critical scrutiny. With all of its problems, such a figure is a broken-down machine of missing parts and replacement representations that within its limits has the virtue of probing the worst attitudes, blunders, and repressed values circulating in one French intellectual circle at the time. Admittedly, it is not possible to reconstruct – towards which ideal – verisimilitude based on interviews or archives? – the scenes of the journal's production and reception; too many of the protagonists are deceased. However, the strategy I have adopted here attempts to reach a density of socio-sexual-political description that provides a context for the debates which retain some features of the period and the tenor of the specific undertaking within all of the workings of CERFI. There are many other markers of historical context stirring in the background, of course, and these include the oil crisis, Yom Kippur War, Vietnam, and the Charter of the Agrarian Revolution in Algeria (see Ruedy 1992: 222ff). While in principle every issue of *Recherches* has a lesson to communicate about the formation of institutional matter, *Three Billion Perverts* occupies a special place for it the most notorious issue in Guattari's memory. And by focusing on it, this paper signals that specific episodes, political and personal junctures, despite their somewhat 'old-fashioned' appearance (they were already so in 1973!), may serve as valuable nodes for organising research in Guattari Studies.

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Reviews

Simon O'Sullivan (2006) *Art Encounters Deleuze and Guattari: Thought Beyond Representation*, London: Palgrave.

With the rise of installation and performance art the theoretical model of representation has become strained. Consequently, the methodology of art history has struggled to develop a new vocabulary and conceptual framework to respond to and articulate the shifts that have in large part taken place since the 1960s. There are of course some exceptions to this such as the writers of *October* magazine and many of the works published by Zone Books. Primarily, the difficulty lies in how we respond to a new style of art that confounds the categorical distinction between a subject and object. Works of art that resist their own status as 'objects' and demand the viewer's participation for their completion quite simply turn their backs on a mimetic relationship to the world. It is this very situation that Simon O'Sullivan charts in *Art Encounters Deleuze and Guattari: Thought Beyond Representation*.

Commencing with a distinction between representation and the encounter, O'Sullivan brings to our attention how with the former our belief systems and the knowledge we may have accumulated about the world remain intact. From here he argues that if we follow the Deleuzian sense of what it means to think, then with representation we do not actually think at all because we fall prey to habit. In contrast, the encounter in the way O'Sullivan intends it, cracks open our habitual ways of being and acting in the world to expose and affirm the new. It is here where he suggests art history has a lot to learn from the Deleuzian conceptual apparatus, advocating that 'we need to repeat the energy and style of his writing without merely representing his thought'. (3) Living up to this task, he constructs a philosophy of affective aesthetics: one that is no longer concerned with problems of beauty and aesthetic judgement, but rather the issue of

how we can identify the excess to which art gives rise. In this regard, he notes that the effect of an affective art practice is not always aesthetic. It is here where he begins to create a pagan philosophy of art focusing on its asignifying character. Pinpointing the difficulty of thinking beyond a representational framework, he introduces other paradigms that have been used in the past by artists and art historians, the most common of which is poststructuralism. Whilst poststructuralism may interrogate the dualisms underpinning representation, such as subject/object or signifier/signified, he claims that it 'often merely entails the reversing of the binary, or the putting under erasure (the deferral) of the privileged term'. (15) Using a wonderfully clear explanation of Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the rhizome, he suggests an alternative to the poststructuralist model, which is to think through art's connections by attending to its rhythms and the blocks of sensation that constitute its creativity.

O'Sullivan defines art as a series of productive encounters that are best understood as a 'meeting, or collision, between two fields of force, transitory but ultimately transformative' that force us to break with habit. (21) In typical Deleuzian fashion he invites the reader to think of art as a machine, shifting our attentions away from the meaning of the work onto what it can *do*. Looking to minor art, those practices that are not completely outside the world nor entirely part of it, he follows its creative dimension. In what may seem an odd case study in the context of a book on art, he looks to the work of the Red Army Faction (RAF). Studying the creative power of guerrilla tactics, he contests the reactive nature of negative critique and advances a notion of the artistic war machine, one that underscores the political dimension of contemporary art at the level of subjectivity (how subjectivity is produced). What he finds especially interesting about Baader and Meinhof is how dissent and the affirmation of the new are implicated in one another. He subsequently uses this observation to consider the broader ontological problem of subjectivity arguing that the connection between art and living a creative life has a political undercurrent, insofar as it encourages us to produce our own subjectivity instead of taking it as an a priori given.

Pursuing the question of creativity further O'Sullivan looks to the earthworks of Robert Smithson. Following Brian Massumi's lead he notes that the process of becoming-natural indicative of Smithson operates along a 'seeping edge', as Massumi calls it, between the virtual and actual. The immanent realm of virtual differences and the creative selection of all these that constitute the actual, avoid the trap of transcendence. Here he contends 'art practice can be positioned at that "seeping edge" between the existing state of affairs and a world "yet-to-come" '

(105). In what is a sensitive and poetic discussion of Smithson's work and his writings, he points to art's becoming; an object in the process of durational blending as it combines with the duration of a variety of bodies: art work, viewer, and environment. What is missing here though is some discussion of the more majoritarian aspects of Smithson's practice, for instance when he poured 1,000 tons of asphalt over a ledge for his *Asphalt Rundown* (performed in Rome, 1969). This kind of work is particularly offensive for environmentalists and one that I find to be especially patriarchal, having more to do with dominating the landscape than with a minoritarian affirmation of it. Furthermore, whilst the descriptions of Smithson's work are certainly literary the specifics of some of the pieces discussed are sparse. Issues of scale are important considerations in *Spiral Jetty*, producing their own blocks of sensation. For instance, the fact that the work is a 1,500 foot long path of limestone rocks and earth are details that would have enhanced O'Sullivan's use of the concept of duration. Also, the heated debate around whether or not to 'preserve' the *Spiral Jetty* once it reappeared from being submerged under water would have helped him expand upon some of the points raised in the previous chapter on how to apply the concept of the 'minor' to contemporary art, making that discussion less abstract and more pragmatic.

Similarly, in his discussion of Gerhard Richter O'Sullivan generally refers to his *Abstracts* but a reader unfamiliar with the artist's work would benefit from some more detailed discussion of particular works in the series; this would also rescue what at times are rather vague connections to the Deleuzian concept of the event. In a similar vein, more could be made of how Richter works with groups of paintings and in dialogue with other artists to enhance the discussion of difference and repetition. That said, O'Sullivan makes some important revisions to Deleuze and Guattari's disparaging view of conceptual art as put forward in *What is Philosophy?* He cogently argues the philosophical dimension of conceptual art is its strength. For instance, it is not just informative in the way it creates sensations instead of concepts, whereby the viewer's opinion decides whether or not a sensation materialises, rather he suggests conceptual art has more in common with Deleuze and Guattari's discussion of philosophy than it does with art.

This book is an important contribution to the field of art history and the growing scholarship around Deleuze and Guattari. O'Sullivan introduces the reader to a variety of difficult concepts, using these to interrogate the limits of representation. He identifies the moments when art not only stammers, but also when it makes us stammer along with it, and it is here where the revolutionary dimension of art is exposed. Art, he

claims, inspires us to move beyond the familiar and into strange and unknown territories, or as Deleuze (following Foucault) might say: into the realm of unthought.

Adrian Parr

Gilles Deleuze (2006) *Two Regimes of Madness*, ed. David Lapoujade, trans. Ames Hodges and Mike Taormina, New York: Semiotext(e).

Félix Guattari (2006) *The Anti-Oedipus Papers*, ed. Stéphane Nadaud, trans. Kélina Gotman, New York: Semiotext(e).

Since the publication of the first of two volumes of Deleuze's occasional texts *L'Île Déserte et autres textes* (Paris: Minuit, 2002, translated by Mike Taormina as *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953–1974*, New York: Semiotext(e), 2004), Deleuze scholars have been treated to a veritable treasure trove of heretofore largely inaccessible texts, and the latest addition, the publication in 2003 of the second volume, *Deux Régimes de fous* (occasional texts from 1975 to 1995), has now been complemented with its translation. At the same time, a new volume has been added to the Deleuze-Guattari archive: published in 2004 in France as *Les Écrits pour L'Anti-Oedipe* and attributed solely to Guattari, *The Anti-Oedipus Papers* offers a fascinating inside view of the process of collaboration between Deleuze and Guattari in developing the work that would become *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*.

Two Regimes of Madness shows the extraordinary range of written and spoken projects in which Deleuze was engaged from the early 1970s onwards, as one can determine from an overview of both *Two Regimes* and the publication of *Negotiations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993; *Pourparlers*, Paris: Minuit, 1990):

- sixteen solo and four collaborative articles (occasional essays, political interventions and homages; more on these below);
- nine prefaces to foreign editions of his own works, and more importantly, five prefaces or postscripts to works by other writers: Henri Gobard's *L'Aliénation linguistique* (Paris: Flammarion, 1976); Jacques Donzelot's *La Police des familles* (Paris: Minuit, 1977); Toni Negri's *L'Anomalie sauvage: puissance et pouvoir chez Spinoza* (Paris: PUF, 1982); Jean-Clet Martin's *Variations – La Philosophie de Gilles Deleuze* (Paris: Payot and Rivages, 1993); and Eric Alliez's *Les Temps capitaux* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1991);
- six affirmative book and film reviews: Daniel Schmidt's film *L'Ombre des anges* (1976); Alain Roger's *Le Misogyne* (Paris: Denoël, 1976);

Pierre Fédida's *L'Absence* (Paris: Gallimard, 1978); Toni Negri's *Marx Beyond Marx* (New York: Autonomedia, 1989); Jacques Rivette's film *La Bande des quatre* (1988); and Georgio Passerone's *La Linea astratta – Pragmatica dello stile* (Milan: Edizione Angelo Guerini, 1991);

- six open letters to friends (Foucault, Uno, Dionys Mascolo, Jean-Clet Martin, Serge Daney, Réda Bensmaïa) and one open letter to the Italian judges of Toni Negri;
- thirty interviews (two as transcriptions of talks; 17 in *Two Regimes*, 13 in *Negotiations*) mostly about Deleuze's recently published books, but also at least five political or critical interventions on contemporary topics: the so-called 'New Philosophers' (1977; *Two Regimes* 139–47), the Middle East crisis (1982; 'The Indians of Palestine', *Two Regimes* 194–200), the impact of the arms race on Europe (1983; 'Pacifism Today', *Two Regimes* 222–32), an interpretation of May '68 as event (1984; 'May '68 Did Not Take Place', *Two Regimes* 233–6), control societies (1990; *Negotiations* 169–76), and the first Gulf War (1991; 'The Gulf War: A Despicable War', *Two Regimes* 375–6).

In light of this typology, it should be obvious that one of Deleuze's main concerns in the majority of the occasional pieces is his active engagement with friendship. Besides the letter, reviews, prefaces and postscripts, the most evident form of friendship is the homage, to Maurice de Gandillac, François Châtelet, Alain Cuny, and Guattari. Among these, the ones dedicated to Gandillac and Châtelet are the most interesting, both written in the mid-1980s at the height of Deleuze's solo productivity. The Gandillac homage, 'Zones of Immanence' (*Two Regimes* 261–4), is remarkable, most notably for how it concurs with the practice of folds of friendship while also referring back (and forward) to an important reflection by Gandillac on this very theme. Deleuze's focus shifts from his reflections on Leibniz to his former teacher, to the way in which Gandillac emphasised 'this play of immanence and transcendence, the proliferations of the Earth into the celestial hierarchies' (*Two Regimes* 262). After citing a number of key works and concepts that he attributes to Gandillac's research, Deleuze addresses the general import of Gandillac's work, the 'ability to recognize the world of hierarchies at the same time he conveys a sense of the zones of immanence within these hierarchies, which destabilises them more effectively than a frontal attack' (*Two Regimes* 263). Furthermore, Deleuze links life and thought to Gandillac who practised and reinvented 'an art of living and thinking' as well as 'his concrete sense of friendship' (*Two Regimes* 263). The reference that Deleuze

provides here is to a fairly obscure text by Gandillac, his essay, 'Approches de l'amitié' ('Approaches of Friendship'; in *L'Existence*, ed. A. de Waehlens [Paris: Gallimard, 1945, 63–7]) that develops myriad distinctions in philosophy between love and friendship and creates implicit resonances with Deleuze's subsequent reflections on friendship, particularly in *Dialogues* and *L'Abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze*.

In Châtelet's case, Deleuze chose to pursue two tributes to his life-long friend and colleague at the University of Vincennes. First, in a brief text published in 1985 in *Libération*, then a thin book, *Périclès et Verdi* (Paris: Minuit, 1988), are found indices of one particular life that transformed into the traits of *a* life. In the *Libération* article included in *Two Regimes*, 'He Was A Group Star' (265–8), Deleuze first takes Châtelet's final words to him – 'my illness is too tough to manage' – as a sign of his friend's talent in organising and managing collaborative projects. But then, Deleuze notes the mysterious breaks in Châtelet's intellectual trajectory, the nature of which only appeared years later – a break with his early devotion to formal logic in order to work in the domain of the philosophy of history; his adhesion to the Communist Party, then his break with it, as did so many other thinkers and writers; his movement beyond philosophy of history to political philosophy, 'a critique of logos and of historical or political rationality' (*Two Regimes* 266). There was still another break, one suggesting 'something mysterious about François', the publication of a rather unnoticed novel in 1975, *Les Années de démolition* (Paris: Editions Hallier, 1975), that Deleuze compares to Fitzgerald's writing and also connected 'with Blanchot's themes on thought and fatigue, . . . a commentary on the relationships between life and self-destruction' (*Two Regimes* 266). Yet these breaks only reveal one aspect of Châtelet's contributions because Deleuze returns to the phrase with which he opened this essay (and ended his relations with Châtelet), describing him as 'an excellent producer in the cinematic sense of the word, . . . a great negotiator in combination with his keen political sense' (*Two Regimes* 267). These traits resulted in Châtelet directing many collaborative projects and in leading (and holding together) the Philosophy Department at Vincennes (Paris VIII), to which Deleuze adds the significant praise of Châtelet as 'a great pedagogue' (*Two Regimes* 267). Finally, this work of an individual life led beyond the man into a lasting contribution as 'producer-creator', 'to lead the critique of political reason, . . . [that] was inseparable from the collective work for a vast political vocabulary, a vocabulary of political institutions' – 'an illustrious professor . . . a creator who creates with production and management' (*Two Regimes* 268).

While I could pursue this review following a number of different lines of exploration, I will suggest simply that the two volumes, *The Desert Island and Other Texts* and *Two Regimes of Madness*, guarantee the reader surprises. I do not mean that one will necessarily find anything completely new on a conceptual level (that depends, of course, on each reader); but the chapters certainly reveal different and useful perspectives on possibly familiar material. In *Two Regimes of Madness* especially, one finds a number of well recognised and important shorter texts by Deleuze: his 1977 notes for Foucault on *The History of Sexuality 1*, entitled 'Desire and Pleasure' (*Two Regimes* 122–34); his fiercely dismissive statement from 1977 about the New Philosophers and the crisis in French publishing (*Two Regimes* 139–47); the 1986 round table discussion on cinema, 'The Brain Is the Screen' (*Two Regimes* 272–81); the transcription of the 1987 FEMIS lecture, 'What Is the Creative Act?' (*Two Regimes* 312–24), also available on the DVD of *L'Abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze*; and yet another translation of his final text 'Immanence: A Life' (*Two Regimes* 384–9).

There are also several unexpected gems: the transcript of the 1975 Proust round table with Roland Barthes and Gérard Genette (*Two Regimes* 29–60); two texts in support of Toni Negri, the 1979 'Open Letter to Negri's Judges' published in *La Repubblica*, and his brief essay on Negri's *Marx Before Marx* published later that year in *Le Matin de Paris* under the forthright title 'This Book Is Literal Proof of Innocence' (*Two Regimes* 169–74); the delightful 1983 interview with Hervé Guibert published in *Le Monde*, 'Portrait of the Philosopher as Moviegoer' (*Two Regimes* 213–21); two preparatory texts for *Foucault*, 'Michel Foucault's Main Concepts' from 1984 (*Two Regimes* 241–60), and the 1986 interview with Paul Rabinow and Keith Gandal, 'Foucault and Prison' (*Two Regimes* 272–81); and Deleuze's brief correspondence with Dionys Mascolo on their different perspectives on friendship (*Two Regimes* 327–32).

In this latter exchange between April and October 1988 – on the occasion of the 1987 publication of Mascolo's *Autour d'un effort de mémoire* (Paris: Maurice Nadeau, 1987) – Deleuze expresses quite explicitly his thoughts on friendship as he praises Mascolo's works. In particular, Deleuze places an emphasis on friendship as a possibility for thought, and he states that the authors he admires find different ways 'to introduce concrete categories and situations as the condition of pure thought', notably Kierkegaard with the fiancée and engagement; Klossowski with the couple ('and maybe Sartre in a different way'); Proust with jealous love 'because it constitutes thought and is connected to signs'; and for

Mascolo and Blanchot, 'it is friendship, [implying] a complete reevaluation of "philosophy" since you are the only ones to take the word *philos* literally' (*Two Regimes* 329–30). Deleuze is quick to point out the complexity of the word *philos*, and he insists on the importance of Mascolo's contribution about this word in the history of philosophy, of which Mascolo is 'the modern representative. [His role] is at the heart of philosophy, in the concrete presupposition (where personal history and singular thinking combine)' (*Two Regimes* 330).

To this, after expressing some embarrassment, Mascolo engages Deleuze on the terms of his argument, challenging Deleuze about 'where [would] this friendship come from' if it were to 'put the "distress" in thought' and create 'distrust of friends'. For Mascolo 'cannot imagine what *distrust* . . . is possible of a friend once he or she has been accepted in friendship. I have called this *communism of thought* in the past', which he associates with the writing of Hölderlin (translated by Blanchot). In a postscript, Mascolo wonders about whether 'friendship was precisely the possibility of sharing thought, from and in a common distrust with regards to thought' and whether 'thought that distrusted itself was the search for this sharing between friends' (*Two Regimes* 331–2). In the final, and very brief, response of this exchange, Deleuze re-states his question – 'How can a friend, without losing his or her singularity, be inscribed as a condition of thought?' – and then states his admiration for Mascolo's reply, 'a question of what we call and experience as *philosophy*' (*Two Regimes* 332, emphasis in original). And it should be obvious that each letter ends with the warmest expressions of friendship and 'camaraderie of thought'.

Despite the effusive praise I bring to my review of this volume, one major cloud overshadows this edition of *Two Regimes of Madness*, the deliberate editorial decision to omit without a single explanatory note a text appearing in *Deux régimes de fous*, 'Grandeur de Yasser Arafat'. Truly, it is difficult to comprehend how Semiotext(e) would choose to damage the integrity and integrality of this volume by an omission of this magnitude. Readers are left to refer to the only extant translation of this text, by Timothy Murphy in the journal *Discourse* (20.3 (1998), 30–3).

Whereas both of the aforementioned volumes, thanks to the careful work of David Lapoujade, are models of organisation, the recent publication of the working notes from the *Anti-Oedipus* collaboration, *The Anti-Oedipus Papers*, presents an entirely different editorial strategy. Fortunately, the book's editor, Stéphane Nadaud, provides an excellent introduction, humorously but quite appropriately entitled 'Love Story between an Orchid and a Wasp', reflecting on how the two-who-would-be-a-crowd leave traces of each other in the drafts, notes and journal

entries that constitute the volume. He asks the pertinent question about this collaboration: 'Is this what the collective aspect of enunciation amounts to, identifying something of Deleuze in Guattari and something of Guattari in Deleuze? Is it that simple?' (12) The common assumption about this collaboration had been that 'Guattari needed Deleuze in order to write. All the more so as Guattari made no bone [sic] about the fact that he certainly did' (12). The collaboration, according to Nadaud, is best understood under the aegis of the concept of assemblage which also helps understand the collection he himself assembles, for he admits that it is 'partial since only Guattari's archives have been "mobilized" ', (14) and not those of Deleuze. Each of the writers generated texts that he sent to the other between their meetings, so the volume consists of letters by Guattari, notes on his reading, theoretical writing, and even his personal journal entries, all transmitted to Deleuze, with Fanny Deleuze serving quite crucially as frequent intermediary and also as editor, judging from many personal notes from Guattari to her. That these were closely read by Deleuze is evident from his annotations, with Guattari's own comments as well.

Nadaud's introduction does the inestimable service of juxtaposing subsequent testimony about the collaboration, found mostly in interviews and Deleuze's letters (for example to Uno, in *Two Regimes*, 237–40), with evidence from the *Anti-Oedipus Papers*. Of particular interest is that after the two writers jammed and riffed, as it were, between one another, it fell to Deleuze to finalise the text and manuscript of *Anti-Oedipus*, at the risk of losing his identity in the process, according to Guattari, who understood by the end how much the process cost Deleuze. However, in preparing his own 'final' versions to deliver to Deleuze, Guattari consulted many specialists, for example, for Chapter 3 of *Anti-Oedipus*, or availed the text of his own expertise in psychoanalysis, especially the perspectives on Lacan. In any case, this dual intersection of relatively merged identities explains the image of the wasp and the orchid, as Nadaud says, duality in order 'to conceive production as an assemblage of differences' (20). In other words, they connected to each other rhizomatically, with their 'thought and writing . . . flying off in every direction – even if in different ways (in a disordered, flowing way for Guattari; and a conceptualised, organised way for Deleuze; in multiple practices for Guattari; and with the solitude of an academic researcher for Deleuze)' (21).

While Nadaud states that '*Anti-Oedipus* was written in successive stages, each concept and each point being developed by Deleuze and Guattari in turn' (16), he clearly rejects the successive process the authors

followed as an organisational principle for the volume. Rather than observe chronological order, he groups the texts under six somewhat arbitrary headings: (1) Texts for *Anti-Oedipus*, (2) Psychoanalysis and Schizo-Analysis, (3) Militant Incidences, (4) Pragmatic Linguistics, (5) Planes of Consistency, and (6) Corrections Made to *Anti-Oedipus* (the latter appearing as a 'pause' following section 1 in the French original). He calls this 'a trajectory through the heart of the "Guattari Papers" ', and yet I am unclear what informed this decision since the chronological order would seem necessary if Deleuze and Guattari did indeed follow a process of writing successively on concepts and points. Although Nadaud provides no explanation, his decision may well have been dictated by the fact that Deleuze and Guattari had no need to date their notes systematically, and did so only on occasion, given the process of immediate exchange and response.

Thus, the overall thematic trajectory at least provides a plausible grouping, even if some of the material included in one section might well appear in others. The opening section, Texts for *Anti-Oedipus*, seems the most arbitrary since any of these chapters in the section could have been included either under sections II or III. However, perhaps its organising principle is that of chapter 1 of *Anti-Oedipus*, i.e. notes (at least in chapters 1–5) to lay out different fundamental terms for the subsequent, more focused development: the three connections, desire, the body without organs, production and anti-production, territorialisation, the socius, and subjectivity. Chapters 6 and 7, primarily on the topic of infinitives and time, appear to have been written primarily by Deleuze, especially as the Aiôn-Chronos pair (from *Logic of Sense*) is linked to desiring machines. The brief chapter 8 looks very much like vintage Guattari complete with an organisational table, an outline of territorialisation developed in *Anti-Oedipus*, chapter 3. Then, while the titles for chapters 9 and 10 are indicated as written by Deleuze (respectively, 'Psychoanalysis and Polyvocality' and 'On How the Audiovisual Realm Is Called upon to Surpass the Oedipus'), each appear to be notes primarily by Guattari, judging from the developing intersection of semiotics (explicitly derived from Jakobson and Greimas, the latter's recent *Du sens* (Paris: Seuil, 1970)) with Freudian and Lacanian terminology.

In some ways, these final chapters link directly to the following section, ostensibly on Psychoanalysis and Schizo-Analysis. But, as I suggested above, chapters of section I concern the section II topics as well, or vice versa, e.g. 'Full Body without Organs and Infinitivation' (II.1), having already been introduced in the first section. However, the chapters in section II very clearly address concerns between Guattari and Deleuze

about translating psychoanalytical terms into schizoanalytic concepts, especially as regards Oedipus in terms of machinic desire, and the object 'a' in terms of the body without organs. Similarly, despite section III's somewhat oblique title, Militant Incidences, the chapters therein link back to section I.8 in grouping together notes on primitive, Asiatic, and capitalist States in relation to machinic and semiotic desire (III.1–4) and on semiotics of class struggle (III.6–7). A rather detailed middle chapter, 'Militant Incidences' (III.5), brings together Guattari's thoughts on political *groupuscules*, desire and flows, then on the object 'a', subjectivity and signifying production (especially in Lacan: '*The unconscious is not "structured like a language". It's annoying, but it's true!*' (186, Guattari's emphasis)). In the midst of this chapter, we find an Interlude, 'a pleasant example of code surplus value: perversion among orchids', with Guattari drawing extensively from Rémy Chauvin's *Entretien sur la sexualité* (Paris: Plon, 1965), on how 'wasps fuck flowers, . . . for nothing, just for fun!', the wasp getting caught 'in the "call of the code", the open of the code of the vegetable machine' (179–80).

We can see in section III especially how Guattari's reflections link to eventual developments in the collaboration with Deleuze and in his own individual works, notably on refrains and semiotics. The latter topic is the full focus of section IV, Pragmatic Linguistics, and specifically the work of Louis Hjelmslev, especially in contrast to Saussure. Chapter 1 remarkably reveals the derivation of schizoanalytic perspectives on stratification from contemporary linguistics (or a segment thereof), concluding with 'the construction of our own semiotic machine': 'Three level: 1- *Desiring machines* . . . 2- *Disjunctive recording machines* . . . 3- *Conjunctive machines* . . . The *jouissance* of waste. The production of trash entering code transcursivity . . . The transduction of a *power sign flow*. Deterritorialisation that travels, migration, a plane is deployed: reference plane for powers [*puissances*] and forces = plane of consistency. A new filiation.' (219–20). Guattari links the linguistic concerns to the political through 'the idea that there are not a zillion different revolutions but only *one*. It's: – Either the Urstaat with the imperialism of the signifier. – Or polyvocality and filiation on the same plane of consistency as *all* machinism, in the same historical deterritorialisation. . . . Either a politics of desire and so revolution is everywhere simultaneously. Or a politics of historical illusion claiming that one thing comes after another, etc.' (221–2). Then, in sections IV.2, 3 and 4, the notes draw out these many concepts, on 'power signs' [*signes de puissance*], chapter 3 ending, with reference to the '"universal expansion" of the sign', 'It's so schizo, man!' (*C'est ti pas schizo ça!*). The final

chapter, 'Of Both Types of Break' (title by Deleuze), attempts to outline 'a multipolar ethics', 'from the real of production to the incorporeal of representation' (254). Guattari provides, first, a review of machinic semiotics (254–8), and then readings of *Difference and Repetition* and *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza* in order 'to distinguish between two politics of the sign. One for encasted signs, paved in the signifier's body without organs and one for power signs, the agents of real production' (258) via Spinoza and Leibniz. The chapter leads to a definition of three kinds of subjectivity – Lacanian, 'enunciated through signifying chains', 'collective enunciation', and 'the use of figure-signs and consciousness machines' (271–2) – and 'the planes of consistency continuum' (273–9). As Nadaud indicates in the section's last footnote, the final pages 'are the nearly fully formed premises of what is to be developed by Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus*, especially the November 20, 1923 plateaus in the chapter on "Postulates of Linguistics" ' (*A Thousand Plateaus* 86–8).

Aside from the 'Corrections' appendix (411–13) and the schizoanalysis glossary (413–21), written by Guattari for the *Molecular Revolution – Psychiatry and Politics* (London: Penguin, 1984), then published in *Les Années d'hiver 1980–1985* (Paris: Bernard Barrauet, 1986), these *Papers* could very well stand without the lengthy, sometimes informative and fascinating, but more often tedious and self-indulgent section V, 'Planes of Consistency'. Three of the chapters have already been published: chapters 2 and 3, Guattari's journals from 1971 in *Nouvelle Revue Française* (563 (October 2002), 564 (January 2003)); and chapter 5, 'Plane of Consistency' published in modified form in *La Révolution moléculaire* (Fontenay-sous-Bois: Recherches, 1977).

Chapter 1 on planes of consistency (dated 1971) provides notes ostensibly on the main section topic, but which was then followed by a rather randomly organised series of short notes, concluding with a reflection on analytic transfer in contrast to schizoanalysis: 'Become schizo in 20 lessons! Sign up now for the great journey that has no passport and no Ithaca' (298), in the margin of which Deleuze writes 'le voyage' (the trip, journey). Chapters 2 and 3, Guattari's journals from 1971, include an extremely broad range of reflections on his childhood, dreams ('Another dream about Lacan! This is insane!' 305), auto-analyses based on the dream imagery, Guattari's status and work at the La Borde clinic, pre-publication jitters and reactions about *Anti-Oedipus* (including a convocation in Lacan's office and a dinner invitation, both for him to 'explain' schizoanalysis to Lacan), and meta-critique about the journal in response to Fanny and Gilles Deleuze's reactions to its entries (they read it and

Fanny types it while in progress). In mid-November 1971, Guattari expresses his extreme anxieties about completing both books – *Anti-Oedipus* and his *Psychanalyse et transversalité*: 'I feel like scrunching myself up into a little ball, becoming tiny, putting an end to this whole politics of presence and prestige . . . to such an extent that I almost blame Gilles for having dragged me into this mess' (351). These sentiments announce additional misgivings revealed in chapters 4 and 6 (notes and journal entries from February–March, then September–October 1972), the first when *Anti-Oedipus* is released, the second in light of reactions to it, and to Deleuze and Guattari's commitment to produce a second volume and to work together: 'Writing to Gilles is good when it enters into the finality of the common project. But for me, what matters, really, is not that. The energy source is in the whatever, the mess. The ideas come after' (401); 'I don't really recognise myself in A.O. I need to stop running behind the image of Gilles and the polishedness, the perfection that he brought to the most unlikely book. Dare to be an asshole. It's so hard, being strapped to Gilles! Be stupid in my own way' (404). Besides the range of seemingly random notes in both of these chapters, another important development following *Anti-Oedipus*'s publication is that Guattari starts to develop the collaborative work that will result in *Kafka. Towards a Minor Literature*, ending the book on a final reflection on Kafka's dreams: 'It's obviously in the melting pot of this omission [in the dreamy consciousness] that we find the basic machinic lines of the Kafkaesque machine' (407).

So this volume of notes contains a plethora of material, much very raw and, for that reason, extremely provocative as well as indicative in terms of the collaborative work in which Guattari and Deleuze engaged for a full decade at first, and then in a final burst for *What Is Philosophy?* published in French in 1991, a year before Guattari's death. While I could carp about the volume's failings in term of the scholarly apparatus – especially no index and also indications within certain notes that Nadaud did have access to many more dates for the entries than he provides – let me conclude where I began, about the treasure trove of material furnished in these two volumes. Clearly, the purpose of exploring the details of Guattari's notes is not to assign authorship to specific concepts, but rather to better understand their development thanks to the copious examples that are furnished, but then are prudently edited. Similarly, in the volumes of Deleuze's occasional works, many of the interviews and essays provide elaborations on concepts developed with more economy and, therefore, with fewer examples in published and edited books than Deleuze allowed in his spoken and occasional pieces. In both cases,

we have at our disposal possibilities for better comprehending what Guattari and Deleuze mean by a 'new alliance' to achieve 'a sign machine and not a machine's sign' (279), works that defy pre-formed significations in hopes of staking out new territories, new experimentations, in short, new possibilities for thought.

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Tokyo, the Proud

Félix Guattari

Introduction

Félix Guattari visited Japan on a number of occasions during the 1980s. These visits consisted of invited lectures and a series of conversations and collaborations with Japanese intellectuals, artists, and architects. His collaborative writings with Deleuze, particularly the *Kafka* and *Rhizome* books, began to appear in Japanese translation in the late 1970s. By the mid-eighties, however, *Anti-Oedipus* was available for Japanese readers.[1]

The year 1985 saw the publication of Guattari's conversations and co-authored papers with Japanese dancer Min Tanaka collected under the title of *Velocity of Light, Fire of Zen: Assemblage 1985*. This was followed in 1986 with the translation of Guattari's jointly authored volume with Antonio Negri, *Les nouveaux espaces de liberté*. In the same year, the colourful volume *Tokyo Theatre: Guattari in Tokyo* appeared. This volume includes the present translation. It also contains multiple contributions by leading Japanese intellectuals, especially 'neo-academicist' types like Akira Asada who were inspired by Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy in the first two volumes of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*.[2]

A distinction needs to be made between the translations of French publications and the original Japanese editions of writings by, about and with 'Ferikkusu Gatari'. Guattari's main translator, Masaaki Sugimura from Ryuukoku University in Kyoto, is less-well known within the global Deleuzian scene in comparison to Kuniichi Uno from the University of Tokyo who was lead translator of Deleuze and Guattari's *Mille Plateaux*.[3] Some of the Japanese Guattari books are cobbled together collections of short papers, interviews, translations of older materials, similar to the Semiotext(e) style of presentation of fragments, out of chronological order, thematically linked, but decontextualized.

Turning to the early years of 1980–81, Tetsuo Kogawa (who served during this period as an international editorial associate of the US-based critical theory journal *Telos*, and would later publish on the free radio movement and media in Japan, eventually landing at Tokyo Keizai University) and the aforementioned Sugimara, collaborated on a book of dialogues with Guattari titled *From Politics to Signs*, which was undertaken in the fall of 1980 and the spring of 1981; this work was less informal than those largely unedited dialogues published in Portuguese with Suely Rolnick on the occasion of Guattari's visit to Brazil in the early 1980s.[4]

Guattari's early 1980s visits to Japan were largely ignored by 'orthodox' scholars and mainstream media, neither of which had any interest in Guattari's efforts to bring together activism and theory. But this changed over the course of the decade as the 'bubble economy' created a seemingly insatiable hunger for prestige goods, including ideas.

Japan's bubble economy arguably extended from the mid-eighties to the early nineties. It was driven by a large number of integrated economic factors, but primarily formed around: real estate speculation, overpriced stocks – especially bank stocks - a soaring Nikkei, and a wild credit spiral. Guattari's work was well received during the asset bubble because it spoke directly to the problem of how to characterize, in both specific and general terms, capitalism's powers of deterritorialisation. It was as a decoder of capital's mutations that Guattari gained widespread intellectual celebrity in Japan.

Throughout his career, beginning in the early 1980s, Guattari developed historically-based typologies of capitalism that mapped re-orderings of its constituent features (state, market, production) towards a nascent theory of globalization and the rise of a networked world economy, called Integrated World Capitalism. In an age in which information is a factor of production and labour becomes immaterial, the playful life-cycle of capitalism proposed by Guattari, and recalled by Asada, was attached to economic and historical blocs: elderly or early mercantile capitalism (Italy and France are supported by the transcendental signifier Catholicism); adult or industrial capitalism (England and the US and the self-policing, oedipalised, individual); infantile, post-industrial capitalism (Japan and neither transcendental nor inner-oriented persons, but those of a purely relative, child-like wonder and passion, perfectly adapted to a placeless electronic space).

In 'Tokyo, the Proud', Guattari provides specific negative examples of 'capitalistic infantilism' in popular culture. There is a strong 'machinic eros' in Japanese culture that is deeply repetitive and productive of



Figure 1. Tetsuo Kogawa with Félix Guattari, Tokyo, May 1981.

a subjectivity invested in getting high on machines. The problem, for Guattari, is whether a machinic buzz connects with a productive social outlet, like business, sending it in new directions, or vegetates stupidly in addiction to video games, or even implodes into suicide.[5] All three are evident in Japan. For Guattari, 'Japan is the prototypical model of new capitalist subjectivities'[6] that has produced within the high-tech miracle ambiguous results, careening wildly from the extraordinarily creative to the hyper-alienated.

Guattari returned to Japan in November 1989 and participated in a rather conservative event in Nagoya, sponsored by The Japan Institute of Architects, that included city planners, architecture critics, urban designers, and philosophers.[7] Guattari's dialogue with Japanese New Wave architects (a label used reticently by him) found a foothold in the establishment with this event, and the results were impressive: Guattari's conversation with Shin Takamatsu was published; others, such as Hiromi Fujii sought to account for Guattari's ideas in the construction of a psychiatric clinic. This influential event in Nagoya was still, according to Kogawa, strange because of the sight of Guattari among the suits from 'big corporations and city offices' - a symptom of bubble economy-style 'impossible planning'. However, Kogawa was careful to note that it wasn't Guattari who was co-opted, but rather, a kind of 'counter-cooptation' took place as well.

Finally, at least as far as Guattari's profile is concerned, there is the myth of a final uncompleted work, a film. According to his son Stephen, Félix was scheduled to shoot the film in the fall of 1992 in Japan with photographer Keiichi Tahara (for whom he had written, in 1988, an essay on faciality in his photographs then on tour in France). The film was tentatively titled *Les Anges Noirs*.[8] Sadly, Félix Guattari passed away in August 1992.

Readers of Guattari may sense in this little text on Tokyo some of the elegance of the original in the assembling of sentence fragments in paragraph form, stacked like floors of high-rises, rising proudly, just like the skyscrapers at which Guattari wondered.

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Tokyo, the Proud
Félix Guattari

Luminous cubes[9] on top of the skyscrapers. To blaze a trail across the sky? To interpellate the gods? Certainly, out of pride, like the medieval towers of Bologna.

That inimitable attentiveness of your Japanese interlocutor who suddenly makes you feel worthy of consideration and induces you into the mimetic temptation – irresistible, though hopeless – of understanding the other from a viewpoint imbued with a new sensitivity.

An imperceptible transgression is then followed by rejection and abandonment on the shores of a final void. Pride, gentleness and violence mingle in the fleeting exchange of glances [*fleur de regard*].

Paradoxically, female and maternal values are omnipresent yet so rigorously circumscribed and inhibited; this makes their repression ostentatious.

Three-tiered concrete highways span the mosaic city, legs wide apart like the heroes of the Kabuki theatre, crushing all in their path. Each day thousands of additional inhabitants and hundreds of conquering companies are parachuted in; the absurd lamination of the urban patrimony.

I don't know how many 'mountaineers' risk their lives climbing the most inaccessible peaks of the Himalayas each year, I only recall that more than half of them are Japanese.

What is it that drives the Japanese? Is it the attraction of wealth and luxury, the consequences of the marked lack of iron affecting their memories?[10] Or, perhaps it is primarily the desire to be "in the thick of things" [*être dans le coup*], what I call machinic eros!

Becoming child of Japan; becoming Japanese of our future childhoods.

Certainly do not confuse these becomings with capitalistic infantilism and its vibrating zones of collective hysteria, such as the syndrome of puerile cute culture ('kawaii'), the reading-drug of Manga comics, or the intrusiveness of loukoum music; the latter is, to my taste, the worst kind of pollution.[11]

All the trends of the West have arrived on the shores of these islands without resistance. But never has the wave of Judeo-Christian guilt that feeds our 'spirit of capitalism' managed to swamp them. Might Japanese capitalism be a mutation resulting from the monstrous crossing of animist powers inherited from feudalism during the 'Baku-han' and the machinic powers of modernity to which it appears everything here must revert?

Externalized interiorities and rebel exteriorities with univocal signifying reductions populate the surfaces and engender new depths of the sort where inside and outside no longer maintain the mutually exclusive relationship of opposition to which Westerners are accustomed. The signalizing [*signalétiques*] matters characteristic of the texture of subjectivity are found to be inextricably related to the energetico-spatio-temporal components of the urban fabric.

Despite the cancerous tumours that threaten to suffocate it at any moment, Tokyo in many ways reveals its ancient existential territories and ancestral affinities between microcosm and macrocosm. This is apparent at the level of its primary configurations, whose admirable oneiric explorations have been presented to us by Kobo Abé's novel *The Ruined Map*,[12] as well as in the molecular behaviour of its crowds that appear to treat public spaces as so many private domains.

Is it enough to say that the ancient surfaces of Yin and Yang, raw and cooked, analogical iconicity and 'digital' discursivity, still manage to merge opposites? Or, further, that today the Japanese brain reconciles its right and left hemispheres according to specific modalities, or any other such unsound and harmful nonsense in which a number of anthropologists seem to delight?

Different approaches that are less archaizing and less simplistic could perhaps lead us to a better understanding of the present form of this Japanese pride, a Manichean affirmation that everywhere shows through the reigning phallocratism in a will to thoroughly exploit, sometimes to the point of absurdity, and in the tyrannical power of shame associated with any infringement of the exterior signs of the dominant conformity.

And what about this cult of the norm, this 'canonism' that is cultivated like a fine art, and harbours a fundamental heterodoxy of secret

dissidences? Is it merely the façade and medium in aid of imperceptible singularisations – at the very least from Western viewpoints?

The deterritorialised mandalas in intimate gestures of similitude; the unmentionable pleasures in the respect for etiquette, punctuality, and submission to rituals which dissipate vague yearnings, and circumscribe the wandering of fuzzy intentionalities .... Small differences from which proliferate – far removed from egoic harmonies – large-scale collective undertakings [*projectualités*].

But trap, just as well the molecular capitalistic machineries which, in order to temporarily divert Japanese elites from the territorialized hedonism of the historical bourgeoisie, threaten to sink them yet again, in a deathly will to power.

At the invitation of the 'Aid and Mutual Action Committee' of Sanya,[13] I travelled to the place where the Yakuzas assassinated Mitsuo Sato,[14] and paid homage to this progressive filmmaker who investigated the Japan of the disenfranchised, precarious and rebellious.

Kobo Abé remarked on the fact that Sanya is perhaps less representative of an absolute misery than an irrevocable refusal of the existing order. He declared that he would like to 'be worthy of Sanya'.

Vertigo of another Japanese way: Tokyo relinquishes its status as the Eastern capital of Western capitalism in order to become the Northern capital of the emancipation of the Third World.

[Dated and signed 2.1.86]

Acknowledgements

'Tokyo l'orgueilleuse'. Fonds Félix Guattari ET02-12. 5 pps. Typescript (French). Published in Japanese in F. Guattari, Hiraï Gen, Asada Akira, Takeda Kenichi, Radio Homerun, *et alia*, *Tokyo Gekijou: Gatari, Tokyo wo yuku*, UPU, 1986.

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Notes

1. *Rhizome*, trans. K. Toyosaki (1977); *Kafka*, trans. A. Unami and K. Iwata (1978); *Anti-Oedipus*, trans. H. Ichikura (1986) and then Guattari's *La révolution moléculaire*, trans. M. Sugimura (1988). I am grateful for the assistance of Hiroshi Kobayashi for information concerning Japanese titles.
2. Guattari and co-author Min Tanaka, *Kousoku to zen-en: agencement 85* (Shuukanbon [Weekly Book] #35 June 1985; Guattari and Negri, *Jiyuu no*

aratana kuukan: Tousou kikai, trans. T. Nibuya; Guattari et alia, *Tokyo Gekijou: Gatari, Tokyo wo yuku*, photos by H. Kaji. (1986). See Pierre-Maurice Aubry, 'Le Phénomène A.A.', *Magazine Littéraire* 216/17 (mars 1985): 40–41.

3. *Sen no puratoo: Shihonshugi to bunretsusho*, trans. K. Uno, A. Ozawa, T. Tanaka, et alia. (1994).
4. These dialogues, *From Politics to Signs*, trans. M. Sugimura, with Kogawa and Sugimara would not appear until the year 2000. See also the discussions recorded in Brazil, Guattari and Rolnick, *Micropolítica: Cartografias de Desejo* (Petrópelis, 1986).
5. See Guattari, 'Machinic Junkies', in *Soft Subversions*, New York: Semiotext(e), 1996, pp. 102–3.
6. Guattari, "Regimes, Pathways, Subjects," in *The Guattari Reader*, G. Genosko (ed.), Oxford: Blackwell, 1996, p. 105.
7. Guattari's contribution to the seminar on urban design in the 21st century was 'Restoration of the Urban Landscape', in *Proposal from Nagoya* (Nagoya, 1989): 85–95. I am grateful for the reflections on this event by participant Tetsuo Kogawa (Letter from Kogawa-Genosko, January 23, 2003).
8. Mentioned briefly by Stephen 'Deadalus' Guattari in the 'Pré-Texte' to 'Ritournelles', *La Nouvelles Revue Française* 548 (jan 1999): 338–39.
9. The obvious, but misleading, reference is to Shin Takamatsu's Kirin Plaza (1987) in Osaka. The luminous cubes are the four patterned rectangular lanterns that reach toward the sky from the four corners of the structure. This building is not in Tokyo; so, any of the dazzling neon towers of Shinjuku or Shibuya will suffice.

   One is struck by the image of Guattari wandering around the nocturnal city fixated on the bright spectacle above his head. The same sense is found in his *Ritournelles*, this time with respect to the dense, hypermodern commercial district in Tokyo, Shinjuku: "The buildings of Shinjuku traversed from top to bottom by parallel neon bars." (*La Nouvelle Revue Française* 549 Avril 1999: 337)
10. Guattari exploits here the medical link between iron deficiency and impaired memory [*manque marquée du fer dans les mémoires* – marked lack of iron affecting their memories] in a double entendre.
11. Guattari appears to be complaining about a kind of electronic music, a species of techno known as *loukoum* in France and elsewhere. It is named after the sweet 'Turkish Delight'.
12. Kobo Abé, *The Ruined Map*, trans. E. Dale Saunders, New York: Vintage, 1997. Guattari was an avid reader of Abé novels and found the dream cartography of the aforementioned detective novel particularly evocative of a marginal Tokyo.
13. Sanya is a district in Tokyo in which foreign and day labourers live. Many are homeless and live in makeshift shelters made of found materials. Elsewhere Guattari simply made the point that zones of disparity coexist in the great cities, no more in terms of centre and periphery relations, citing the concentrated wealth of Shinjuku and misery of Sanya as an example. See 'Space and Corporeity: Drawing/Cities/Nomads', in *Semiotext(e) Architecture* (1992): 118–21; 122–25.
14. Sato Mitsuo was a Japanese documentary film director known for his social activism. He was murdered during the making of his 1985 film 'YAMA', the colloquial name for Sanya. The film follows the struggles of the district's day labourers to organize.

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Deleuze Goes to Xanadu

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> After all, what most urgently needs thought in this century,
> if not the event and the phantasm?
> – Michel Foucault, 'Theatrum Philosophicum'[1]

Foucault's adjuration, which is to be found in the essay in which he notoriously announced that the century (the last) will be 'Deleuzian', would seem to have fallen on deaf ears to the extent that the notion of the phantasm and the place it occupies in Deleuze's thinking has received astonishingly little attention. One scours the indices of the enormous body of work dedicated to the exposition of Deleuze's thought in vain to find any mention of the phantasm or of the text that lies behind his use of the concept, namely Laplanche and Pontalis's 1964 paper, 'Fantasme originaire, fantasmes des origines, origine du fantasme'. By way, in part, of remedying this situation I propose to examine what a 'Deleuzian' or a 'phantasmatic' reading might make of Coleridge's *Kubla Khan*.

To account for this choice it might be helpful to describe first the principal characteristics of a 'phantasmatic' structure, not least the critical distinction that has to be made between the 'phantasm' and 'fantasy'. 'Fantasy' is a conscious reverie or daydream – it is something that a subject can have or indulge in at will – it belongs to the waking consciousness. The 'phantasm', on the other hand, is a 'deeper' unconscious or pre-conscious experience or event, in the course of which the subject may find itself not so much a witness of the scene as a participant in it:

> [T]he phantasm is not the object of desire, it is a scene. In the phantasm, in effect, the subject does not target the object or what stands for it; rather he figures there himself, caught up in the sequence of images. (Laplanche and Pontalis 1964: 1868)

The phantasm, then, is something that happens to, and, in a sense, places the subject. These experiences come upon the subject in moments of abstraction or semi-consciousness, in the moments between sleeping and waking, and, as in a dream or trance, capture it unawares. *Kubla Khan*, with its notorious preface recording it had been composed in precisely this kind of hypnagogic state, between sleeping and waking, which is most propitious for a phantasmatic happening, offers itself as a prime candidate for a phantasmatic reading. In the poem, moreover, as in the phantasmatic scenario, there is every evidence of that confusion of subject positions: the 'I' that claims to be the subject of the final vision of the 'damsel with the dulcimer,' for example, gives way to the 'him' and the 'he' 'caught up in the sequence of images.'

The second major characteristic of the phantasmatic structure and the one that constitutes its primary function, is that it operates at the interface between biology and culture, between body and mind. Following Freud, Laplanche and Pontalis list a number of typical phantasms that befall the young child – phantasms of the primal scene, of seduction and of castration – and each of these plays its part in its socialisation:

> What does the primal scene mean for us? The link between the biological fact of conception (and of birth) and the symbolic act of filiation, between the naked act of coitus and the existence of the triad of mother-infant-father. (Laplanche and Pontalis 1964: 1854)

The phantasm marks the transition from animal need to human desire, from the biological to the cultural:

> Phantasms are produced by an unconscious combination of things experienced (*choses vécues*) and things heard (*choses entendues*). (Laplanche and Pontalis 1964: 1854)

In the phantasm what has 'formerly been interpreted as pure noise (*pur bruit*)' (Deleuze 1969: 233) now finds itself located in the context of the *bruit* ('noise', again but now understood in the sense of the 'noise' of tradition, repute, acclaim – the *dit* (sayings or tales) or *rumeur* (gossip, wisdom)) of the social group to which the child belongs. (Laplanche and Pontalis 1964: 1854) What the phantasms configure for the child, moreover, are questions of *origins* (whence 'Fantasmes *originaires*...): the primal scene, the origin of life; seduction, the origin of sexuality; castration, the origin of the difference of sexes. In this sense phantasms are constitutive of the child's awareness of its vital state, its sexuality and its gender – in a word: its humanity.

At the time of writing *Kubla Khan* (i.e., the late 1790s), Coleridge, like many of his contemporaries, was fascinated by the body/mind interface, that is with 'what he called the "corporeality of thought."' (Richardson 1990: 40)[2] In a letter of September 22nd 1800 to William Godwin he raises the 'great Question – whether there be reason to hold, that an action bearing all the *semblance* of pre-designing Consciousness may yet be simply organic . . . ' (Coleridge 1956: 625–6).[3] Coleridge's interest in what today we would call 'cognitive' science, that is the organic or physiological nature of thinking, was almost obsessive. Part and parcel of such an interest in the relation between the mind and the body inevitably led to experimentation with mind-changing and mind-enhancing drugs and stimulants, the most notorious outcome of which was, of course, *Kubla Khan* itself. (Richardson 1990: 51, 53)

Turning to the poem itself, it is one of the commonplaces of practically all readings of *Kubla Khan* that it

> presents at once a 'mental topography' or map of the human psyche and a representation (however fragmented or over-determined) of the human body . . . a psychologised landscape that also suggests a dispersed, erotically charged body. (Richardson 1990: 57, 60)

The poem itself seems to stand as an interface between 'the human psyche' and the 'human body'. On the whole, however, criticism has tended to dwell on the sexual-orgasmic nature of the imagery: the 'pleasure dome' is notoriously celebrated as a multivalent and androgynous symbol of both breast and phallus; the fountains and the caves are taken to represent respectively male and female – ejaculation and womb – attributes; the 'gardens bright with sinuous rills . . . . Enfolding sunny spots of greenery' recall the *topoi* of late-medieval romance where gardens figure the body of the beloved; and while the 'sacred river . . . Five miles meandering with a mazy motion' may symbolise spiritual turmoil it just as readily evokes the possibility of intestinal and visceral convolutions.

On the other hand, and almost at the opposite extreme, there is that body of scholarship, represented most notably by John Livingstone Lowes, that concerns itself with the search for the sources of the poem in Coleridge's extensive reading. Despite attempts to correct, emend and supplement it, Lowes work still seems to me to be pretty authoritative. There, it will be recalled, – prompted by Coleridge's own acknowledgement, in the prefatory note, of 'Purchas's Pilgrimage' – he traces the sources of much of the material of the poem to earlier travelogues: in addition to *Purchas His Pilgrimage*, he looks

at *Purchas His Pilgrims*, William Bartram's *Travels Through North and South Carolina, Georgia, East and West Florida*, James Bruce's *Travels to Discover the Sources of the Nile*, Athanasias Kircher's *Oedipus Aegiptiacus* (on the source of the Nile and including also an account of an earlier discoverer of the source of the Nile, Father Peter Paez), Thomas Maurice's *History of Hindostan*, Major James Rennell's *Memoir of a Map of Hindoostan*, F. Bernier's *Voyage to Surat*, as well as many other classical and Arabic sources.

I will limit myself to two observations concerning this material: the first is that many of the passages Lowes quotes seem almost to be variations of one another – 'an image of an image of an image' as he remarks at one point (Lowes 1978: 334); similarly, at times Bartram, Bruce, Kircher, Paez collapse into one another so that all question of which is the original and which is the copy becomes hopelessly entangled (Lowes 1978: 340). Second, practically all the accounts cited refer to origins, either of the Nile and other great rivers, or of Paradise itself. The various descriptive details quickly blur into the archetypal primal scene, Eden: blossoms, fountains, springs, greenery.

Like the phantasm, then, *Kubla Khan* becomes the meeting point, or interface, of, on the one hand, an imagery strongly focussed on the human body, whether erotic or purely physiological, and, on the other, a dazzling kaleidoscope of exotic scenarios whose common theme is that of geographical and cultural origins.

The third major constituent of the phantasm is the experience of loss. What the phantasmatic event effects in the shift it facilitates from need to desire is a loss of 'the real' and its replacement by a 'virtual' object more precious and more unattainable than any 'real'. What is lost is the real, biological, functional organ of need. Its replacement is the ideal or virtual object of desire – the phallus more powerful than any real phallus, the breast more perfect and more ideal than any real breast. This shift mediates the leap from the domain of the purely organic to the realm of the social and the human. The virtual 'Good Object', however, which might be a composite of the ideal breast and the ideal phallus, or of the ideal father and the ideal mother, is always a Lost Object and it is always and forever this lost Good Object that furnishes the fulcrum and 'quasi-cause' of the pendular swing and cumulative resonance of desire.

Kubla Khan is in many respects a meditation on loss: 'deprivation,' writes Elizabeth Schneider, 'haunts the language' (Schneider 1966: 287). Initially it is about the loss of those 'two to three hundred lines' composed while the poet was 'in a profound sleep.' It is also about the loss of Paradise. The Miltonic inspiration of an Eden of pre-lapsarian

innocence, added to that furnished by travelogues, is everywhere in evidence.[4] But pre-eminently it is about the loss of that 'stately pleasure dome' that bestrides and dominates the poem, the quintessential symbol of the lost Good Object, an amalgam of the virtual phallus and the virtual breast, an overdetermined composite of the ideal father and the ideal mother.

The fourth characteristic of the phantasm is its temporality: the phantasmatic event is never a simple, punctual, 'one-off' event. The phantasm always involves at least two moments. In the case of the 'originary phantasm', because of the prematurity of human birth, the phantasm occurs always 'too early', when we are not ready for it, either physiologically or emotionally. It is only later, 'too late', at a post-pubertal moment when we are sexually and mentally equipped to deal with it, that the earlier event is retrospectively (Freud's key notion for this delayed temporality is *Nachträglichkeit*, translated by Laplanche as 'afterwardsness' (Laplanche 1992: 217ff)[5]) comprehended and properly 'lived through'. What occurs at this moment of 'the traversal of the phantasm' (Lacan 1977: 273) is something like a pendular movement of resonance between the two events, a resonance that can gain sufficient moment that it begins to take in other phantasmatic memories so that the 'whole' can climax in something like a moment of ecstatic delight and transport.

It is this diphasic temporality of the phantasm, its 'afterwardsness', that accounts for the troublesomely diphasic, even 'broken', structure of *Kubla Khan*. Elizabeth Schneider regards '[t]he division of *Kubla Khan* into its two parts' as 'fatal to the unity of the poem':

> The whole reads like a fragment with a post-script added at some later time when it has become obvious to the poet that he cannot finish the piece. The post-script is skilfully linked with the rest by the recurrence of the dome and caves of ice; but these and other devices do not conceal, and I imagine were not meant to conceal, the actually disparate parts. (Schneider 1966: 249, 247–8)[6]

This is to fail totally to understand the extent to which the last eighteen lines of the poem are a phantasmatic *réprise* ('afterwards' recapitulation) of the events depicted in the first part of the poem: 'A damsel with a dulcimer' is like a 'lite' version of 'In Xanadu did Kubla Khan': we have to forget 'meanings' here – syllabically and phonetically this is a dental and labial surface reconfiguration of the nasals, harsh gutturals and glottal depths of the opening line. The '*Abyss*inian *maid*' is a condensed re-articulation of the earlier associated figures of the

'deep romantic *chasm*' and the '*woman* wailing'; and the rather heavy 'dome' is now reconfigured as the much lighter, but in many ways just as innuendo rich, 'dulcimer' on which the damsel plays.[7]

It is true that the 'damsel' and her 'dulcimer' are 'lost objects' that need to be 'revived', but surely the sense of the concluding lines is not of a failure to capture the song of the damsel – 'Could . . . . 'twould' – but that it has already been captured in an incantatory dance of ecstasy.[8] These last few lines are a resonating digest of the whole poem: we have seen how 'Kubla Khan' and 'Xanadu' have been reconstituted as the 'damsel with a dulcimer', and the 'deep romantic chasm' and the 'woman wailing' translated into the 'Abyssinian maid'. There is a return, too, of the 'sunny dome!' and 'caves of ice!', echoes of the many travelogues, in the ecstatic, trance-like, rhythms. The poet, himself, has become one with – even possessed by – the despotic figure – 'His flashing eyes, his floating hair' – who has opened the poem with his inaugural decree, the only response to which might be 'Beware! Beware!' Finally, in a typically phantasmatic gesture,[9] the poem returns upon its own origin, the opium moment that provoked it:

> Weave a circle round him thrice,
> And close your eyes with holy dread
> For he on honey-dew hath fed,
> And drunk the milk of paradise.

The poem/phantasm, in other words, recounts its own genesis and culminates in the transport of the subject it presupposes.

This emergence of a subject that can in some sense lay claim to the poem that has produced him returns us to the distinction between the phantasm and fantasy and allows us to introduce a fifth characteristic of the structure of the phantasm – its stratification into a number of levels. Fantasy is closer to the day-dream or waking reverie, whereas the phantasm proper is a 'deeper' more unconscious scenario, but Laplanche and Pontalis counsel against making too strong a distinction between the two to the extent that day-dream and the unconscious scenario might have common elements – the unconscious scenario might have been once a conscious reverie now repressed. Nevertheless the structure of the two will differ:

> At the pole of the day-dream (*rêverie diurne*), the scenario is essentially in the first person, the place of the subject marked and invariable. The organization is stabilised by the secondary revision, ballasted by the 'self' (*moi*): the subject, one says, lives its reverie. The pole of the originary phantasm, on the contrary, is characterised by an absence of subjectivation which goes along

> with the presence of the subject *in* the scene: the child, for example, one of the personages amongst all the others . . . (Laplanche and Pontalis 1964: 1860–61).

The phantasmatic nature of *Kubla Khan* – its status as an originary phantasm rather than a simple fantasy – is evidenced, as we have seen, by the relatively 'unstabilised' and 'unballasted' organization of its subject and gender allocations. In addition, the points of view of both the opening passage – the decreeing of the stately pleasure dome – and the second section of the poem – the description of the deep romantic chasm – are difficult to locate, disturbed as they are by what one senses are incompatible shifters ('there were . . . here were') and puzzling identifications ('But oh! . . . ' seems to be the cry of the woman wailing). In many ways, the drama seems to be taking place at a wholly pre-personal level, far below and anterior to human consciousness, so that, for example, Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar can write:

> Kubla's kingdom is rocked by the quasi-sexual violence of an almost overwhelming primal scene, for from the 'deep romantic chasm' the panting earth forces out a phallic 'mighty fountain' which flows 'in tumult' through 'the caverns measureless to man.' (Gilbert and Gubar 1989: 98)

Another commentator, Beverley Fields, can detect evidence of the primal scene on a different, more classic and more nearly domestic, level when she traces the Oedipal pattern of the relationships of the poet, Kubla Khan, and the 'woman wailing' in the opening two stanzas. (Fields 1967: 98) In fact, once the 'deep' structure of Gilbert and Gubar's 'overwhelming' aeonic and quasi-geological 'primal scene' is conceded, and Fields' more restrained 'Oedipal' interpretation accepted, it is not too great a leap to move to another level and locate the specific trauma that lies behind the poem, namely the death of Coleridge's father which was recorded in the letter of October 1797 – practically contemporaneous with the date of composition of the poem – to Thomas Poole:

> In a minute my mother heard a noise in his throat – and spoke to him – but he did not answer – and she spoke repeatedly in vain. Her *shriek* awaked me – & I said, 'Papa is dead.'(Coleridge 1957: 355)[10]

Here, surely, we have the poem *in nuce*: 'Kubla *Kh*an' is phonetically little more than a guttural, glottal, 'noise in [the] throat,' a death rattle; the mother is indeed a 'woman wailing'; and there remains the small child who has dreamed/witnessed the whole thing. We could hardly

have a clearer illustration of the stratifications of the phantasmatic structure: from the 'deep,' 'geological' level of the 'mighty fountain' and the 'measureless caverns,' through the more generic 'Oedipal' scene of Kubla Khan and the woman wailing, to the precise and contingent event of 'daddy, mummy and me' of the letter to Poole – the arrival at the 'revisionary' level of the classic familial romance (Gilbert and Gubar 1989: 161).

At this point we have pretty much taken the original Laplanche and Pontalis model of the phantasm as far as it can go, remaining, for the most part, within the bounds of the classic phantasmatic scenarios of the primal scene and Oedipus. Perhaps the most striking contribution that Deleuze makes to this model of the phantasm (it will not surprise readers of the *Anti-Oedipus* to learn) is to move beyond the *dramatis personae* of a classical theatre to address instead the tumultuous pre-personal and fragmented world of Melanie Klein's schizo-paranoid, depressive and Oedipal 'positions'.[11] Here, says Deleuze, 'Tout commence par l'abîme' – everything begins in the abyss. In the schizo-paranoid position the unconscious is the site of a frenzied *melée* of 'internal partial objects, introjected and projected, alimentary and excremental, poisonous and persecutory, explosive and toxic' (Deleuze 1969: 218). Where Deleuze differs slightly from Melanie Klein is in suggesting that even at this level the excremental fragments are in part countered and checked by a fluid, urethral, liquid principle:

> What we have here opposing each other are two depths . . . . Two mixtures, the one of hard and solid fragments . . . ; the other liquid, fluid and perfect . . . which fuses and solders (*fondre et souder*) . . . (Deleuze 1969: 220)

Now, it seems to me that if we accept that what we have in the poem is, as many have claimed, something like a sustained metaphorical depiction of the human body, then at its very centre is a 'gastric' or 'visceral' panorama strikingly reminiscent of Melanie Klein's schizo-paranoid position:

> And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
> As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
> A mighty fountain momently was forced:
> Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
> Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail
> Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
> Amid these dancing rocks at once and ever
> It flung up momently the sacred river.

> Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
> Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
> Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
> And sunk in tumult to a lifeless ocean:

Here are the 'two depths', 'the two mixtures': the suspension of 'hard and solid', 'alimentary' and 'excremental', 'oral' and 'anal' ('chaffy grain'; 'rebounding hail'; 'huge fragments') partial objects, on the one hand, and 'liquid,' 'fluid' and 'urethral' (the fountain; the river), on the other. There is a strong sense of an aggressive schizo-paranoid, internecine strife in the violence of the verbs: 'seething', 'forced', 'rebounding'. In this conjunction of 'hard' and 'fluid' mixtures Deleuze suggests that we have the embryonic forms of the *id* and the *ego* (Deleuze 1969: 221). What we also have here is a rudimentary sketch of the tension between the *corps morcelé* (the fragmented body in pieces) and the body without organs (BwO) that is to figure so prominently in the later works Deleuze composed with Guattari.

What follows upon the schizo-paranoid position is the 'depressive position' centred no longer on the partial, fragmented, objects of the aggressive phase but on a complete 'Good Object on high':

> The good object is on high, it holds itself aloft . . . The good object has taken upon itself both the schizoid poles, that of the partial objects from which it has extracted the energy, and that of the body without organs from which it has abstracted the form – that is completeness and integrity. (Deleuze 1969: 221)

As supreme eminence, the Good Object combines the ideal attributes of both parental figures – both ideal breast and ideal phallus – and becomes a prototype of the super-ego: 'The superego begins . . . with the good object that remains on high' (Deleuze 1969: 225). As such it is the bearer of the voice of tradition:

> But, precisely what assures . . . the first stage of the formation of language, is the good object of the depressive position on high. For it is this that, from all the noises of the depths, extracts a voice . . . Freud insisted on the acoustic origin of the superego. For the child, the first approach to language might properly consist of seizing upon this as the model of everything that posits itself as pre-existing, as referring to the whole domain of what is already there, the familial voice that carries tradition. (Deleuze 1969: 225)

The Good Object, then, is a transitional figure that draws on the energies of the partial objects of the schizoid-paranoid depths and anticipates the emergence of 'the combined idol of both parents'

(Deleuze 1969: 233) prefatory to the formation of the Oedipal moment. The equivalent shift in the poem is from the schizo-paranoid noises – the 'ceaseless turmoil' and the 'thick pants' – of the aggressive phase, to that 'miracle of rare device', the 'sunny pleasure dome', and the emergence of the tradition-bearing 'ancestral voices' associated with the Good Object on high:[12]

> And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
> Ancestral voices prophesying war!
>
> The shadow of the dome of pleasure
> Floated midway on the waves
> Where was heard the mingled measure
> From the fountains and the caves.
>
> It was a miracle of rare device,
> A sunny pleasure dome with caves of ice!

The dome as a composite symbol of both ideal breast and ideal phallus and so of a combined parental ideal is a classic instance of the 'Good Object'. Its intermediary role is manifest in its bestriding both heights – 'a sunny pleasure dome' – and depths – 'caves of ice' while its shadow floats 'midway on the waves' resonating with the energies from the earlier schizo-paranoid position – 'from the fountains and the caves'. With the emergence of the Good Object there is the emergence, too, of the 'ancestral voices prophesying war': instead of the naked *bruit* of the depths we have now, with all its potentially martial associations, the *bruit* of generations, of pride and creed and renown.

At the same time as this graduation from the schizo-paranoid position to the depressive position another process is taking place which is not so much 'vertical' as 'lateral': this is the exchange of the partial objects of the depths for the constitution of the partial zones of an erogenous body-surface. This mapping of an erogenous body surface that doubles the biological, purely organic, body is a crucial stage in the formation of a body image and a sense of self.[13]

According to Deleuze the responsibility for mapping and surveying this erogenous surface lies principally with the Good Object from its vantage point on high. Here, in the poem, that responsibility is assumed by the Khan who now exclusively takes upon himself the paternal (and therefore phallic) pole of the hitherto composite (both phallus and breast, paternal and maternal poles) Good Object. The Khan's inaugural gesture is precisely to decree (which now replaces the noises of the depths

and the voices of the heights[14]) a mapping of an erogenous surface of pleasure:

> So twice five miles of fertile ground
> With walls and towers were girdled round:
> And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
> Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
> And here were forests ancient as the hills,
> Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

Here, in this *paysage moralisé* that reminds one of *The Romaunt of the Rose*, is an almost one-to-one redeployment and surface efflorescence – 'sinuous rills'/ 'mighty fountain'; 'blossomed'/'chaffy grain'; 'sunny spots of greenery'/'caverns measureless to man') – of the ferocious and anarchic energies located in the schizo-paranoid depths.

Following this triumph of the Good Object as omnipotent phallus, and the constitution of the erogenous surface that doubles the organic body, we confront the Oedipal moment. With the Oedipal scenario, which is the phantasmatic moment *par excellence* – embracing, as it does, all the originary phantasms of the primal scene, seduction and castration – there is a 'leap' from an aetiology determined purely by the body – its depths, its heights, its surfaces – to an aetiology determined by the clusters of events – Oedipal among them – passed on from generation to generation and that takes place, as it were, upon a second screen:

> One could say that the whole action is projected upon a double screen, one constituted by the sexual and physical surface, the other a surface that is already metaphysical or 'cerebral' . . . The phantasm is the process of constitution of the incorporeal . . . It is with Oedipus that the event detaches itself from the causes that come from the depths [i.e. its physiological determinants] and spreads itself out [*s'étale*] on the surface . . . Perfect crime, eternal truth, royal splendour of the event, each one of which communicates with all the others in one and the same phantasm. (Deleuze 1969: 242; 256; 247)

The Oedipal scenario is the 'nuclear' phantasm not simply because it is constitutive of one's vital state, gender and sexuality – that is of one's humanity – but because, to the extent that it addresses questions of crime and punishment, love and guilt, innocence and loss, it resonates, too, like a Leibnizian monad, with every other originary event/phantasm – including those culled from Milton, Bartram, Bruce, Maurice, Rendell and the rest.

It is with the confrontation of just such an Oedipal moment that the poem opens – with the all powerful Kubla Khan and the 'woman wailing

for her demon lover': we have already traced the biographical source of this trauma. The hubristic *élan* of the opening, however, quickly folds and the poem seems to implode in on itself. The surface proves itself to be all too fragile.[15] The poem, in many ways, records the initial failure to come to terms with the Oedipal event and the consequential collapse into a kind of schizophrenic delirium. The trajectory of the poem, at least of the first 28 lines, is the reverse of the passage from depths to heights to surface to Oedipus traced so far in the relationship between the poem and the phantasm. The 'deep romantic chasm' is the rent, what Deleuze would call the *'fêlure'*, the 'fissure' or 'crack', that marks the fracture of the surface of the text.[16]

> The first evidence of schizophrenia is that the surface is cracked (*crevée*) . . . The primary aspect of the schizophrenic body is that it is a kind of colander (*corps-passoire*): Freud stressed that tendency of the schizophrenic to conceive of the surface and the skin as if pierced by an infinity of small holes. (Deleuze 1969: 107)

No-one skirted the abyss of schizophrenia more closely than did Coleridge and there was always the chance that the despotic majesty of Kubla Khan might crumble into the rubble of Ozymandias.[17] There is always the danger, too, that the traversal of the phantasmatic structure might go into reverse and consciousness suffer a catastrophic *chute* back into manic-depressive delirium and schizo-paranoid fragmentation.

It is this failure to cross the Oedipal threshold and the consequential collapse of the surface that accounts for much of the 'difficulty' of the poem. It exists in a pre-Oedipal or pre-linguistic state: this accounts for the ambiguities of its gender allocations and its vacillating subject positions, as well as the great difficulty of reading any kind of global 'symbolic' meaning into it.[18] It is not surprising, then, that critics like Elizabeth Schneider and cognitive theorists like Reuven Tsur frustrated by the lack of meaning to be found at the global level have focused their reading on the formal prosodic structure of the work, on its phonological and metrical structure. Deleuze, too, cautions us against too quickly dismissing as 'sense-less' a use of language that lies below the threshold of 'meaning' understood at a lexical, global, level:

> If a child arrives into a pre-existing language that he cannot yet understand, perhaps inversely he fixes upon what we no longer recognize in the language we already possess: the phonematic relations, the differential relations of phonemes. (Deleuze (1969): 268)

Concentration on the 'phonemic relations' of the poem quickly alerts one to what might be called its 'anagrammatic' features: David Perkins has noted that 'Xanadu' is a quasi-anagram of 'anodyne'[19] and with a little patience and ingenuity it is possible to find – as in the last line:

And drunk the milk of paradise
K u p l a K a n / S/Z a n d i

– the phonemes and syllables of 'Kubla Khan' and 'Xanadu' scattered about the poem like a corps morcélé or, to recall something I said earlier, the rubble of Ozymandias. We have already noted that 'damsel with a dulcimer' might be regarded as phonematic-lite 'translation' of 'Kubla Khan' and 'Xanadu.' It is this anagrammatic play that gives the poem its characteristically granular texture.[20]

We have spoken earlier of Coleridge's interest in the body/mind interface and we quoted at the time from his letter of September 22nd. 1800 to Horne Tooke where Coleridge broaches the question

> whether there be reason to hold, that an action bearing all the *semblance* of pre-designing Consciousness may yet be simply organic . . . '

If we now reinsert that question into the broader context of the letter –

> I wish you to write a book on the power of words, and the processes by which human feelings form affinities with them – in short, I wish you to *philosophize* Horne Tooke's System, and to solve the great Questions – whether there be reason to hold, that an action bearing all the *semblance* of pre-designing Consciousness may yet be simply organic, & whether a *series* of such actions are possible – and close on the wheels of this question would follow 'Is Logic the essence of thinking?' in other words – Is *thinking* impossible without arbitrary signs? & . . . how far is 'arbitrary' a misnomer? Are not words &c. part & germination of the Plant? And what is the Law of their growth? – In something of this order I would endeavour to destroy the old antithesis of *Words & Things*, elevating, as it were, words into Things, & living Things too. All the nonsense of vibrations etc. you would of course dismiss.
>
> If what I have written here appear nonsense to you, or commonplace thoughts in a harlequinade of outré expressions, suspend your judgment till we see each other. (Coleridge 1956: 625–6)

– what we find is that what particularly interests Coleridge is the way in which language itself emerges from the body. Words are not merely arbitrary signs to Coleridge but organic things – 'part and germination of the Plant.' What is more, Coleridge is evidently looking for an account of the emergence of language – 'what is the law of [its] growth?' – far more sophisticated than that provided by Hartleyan associationism. This more

narrow focus on the emergence of language links the project of *Kubla Khan* even more closely to that explored by Deleuze in *Logique du sens*, the central concern of which is 'what makes language possible?'

> To make language possible means this: to ensure that sounds are no longer confused with the sonorous qualities of things, with the noise (*bruitage*) of bodies, with their actions and passions . . . Language is rendered possible by that which separates (*distingue*) it. That which separates sounds and bodies makes sounds the elements of a language . . . What renders possible is the surface, what happens at the surface: the event . . . (Deleuze 1969: 212; 217)

Up to a point and in rather general terms this process has already been traced in the movement from the noise of the schizo-paranoid depths to the voice of the manic-depressive heights and on to the establishment of a surface that lends itself to the resonance and double screen of the event and to the performative effect of the decree, which not only proclaims the autonomy of language in relation to the body but also the power of language to react back on the body. Deleuze speculates, moreover, that one might correlate the phonetic/phonemic strata of language with the schizo-paranoid depths and erogenic zones, morphemes with the manic-depressive heights, and semantemes with the Oedipal moment:

> But to what extent can one link phonemes with the erogenic zones, morphemes with the phallic stage, and semantemes with the evolution of Oedipus and the complex of castration? (Deleuze 1969: 268–9)

Again, Deleuze seems to be echoing Coleridge's own interests. Coleridge, for example, was fascinated by the way in which children acquire language:

> Like many of his contemporaries, Coleridge regards the question of the origin of language as inextricably bound up with the process of language acquisition by infants . . . Coleridge [explores] the theory that certain classes of phonemes are more primitive than others: the labials, uttered by infants, are seen as most primitive of all. (McKusick 1986: 16)

Certainly an awareness of this interest goes some way to legitimizing the attention here to the phonetic components of the poem and, indeed, to the link between phonetic elements and the primitive roots of language itself.[21]

We have already looked at the phonetic *débris* of the anagrammatised 'Kubla Khan' and 'Xanadu' that bestrews the text. This, in a sense, constitutes the rubble, the hardcore, of the fabric of the poem. Slightly higher are those unstable phonemic clusters that easily regress, as it were, from their role as signifiers to assume again a quasi-physical function, to

the condition of lacerating and penetrating partial objects akin to the aggressive fragments of the schizo-paranoid depths –

> Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail
> Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail

'Rebounding hail' is doubly penetrative: it is not just the 'hail' of a 'hail-storm' – which is its normal significative meaning; a 'hail' is also a direct address, a design on and grasping of the body. A 'hail' is language at its most physical: it has a concrete, interpellative effect as immediate as an arrest. Indeed, what does the poem conclude with except 'rebounding (in the sense both of repetitions and of repeated binding – 'weave a circle round him thrice') hails' – 'Beware! Beware!'? Indeed, to the extent that the poem as a whole, with its rhythms and repetitions, its internal rhymes, its alliterations and assonances, its gutturals, dentals, fricatives, palatals – its dazzling verbal enactment – almost physically assaults us, *Kubla Khan* itself might sometimes seem little more than a hail-storm.

Or, again 'chaffy grain': 'chaffy' is again textural – granular grain – but it is also 'bantering' – again to chaff someone is to tease and molest, with the chaffing including the sense also of chafing, cutting, lacerating, marking. 'Chaffing,' like 'hailing,' is language in its rawest most visceral state, impacting immediately on the body. It is at this lowest, almost visceral, intestinal level – barely above raw phonetic splutterings and stammerings – that language begins and from which it has to emerge. Again we can recall 'Tout commence dans l'abîme' – let us translate: everything begins in the abyss, is 'Abyssinian maid/made.' I do not think we need to apologise for these grotesque puns: this is where language begins. 'Abyssinian maid/made' is just the sort of pun one might expect from someone who referred to himself as a 'mottophilist' or 'mottomanist' or, indeed, as 'papyrologiophagus'[22] and is prepared to gloss 'illuminize' as 'allum in eyes' (Coleridge 1956: 293, 532, 564).[23]

Let us take next 'A damsel with a dulcimer'. I have already suggested that it is a phonetic reconfiguration of the opening line of the poem. I have also indicated that it is pointless to attempt to give it some kind of referential meaning.[24] What we have here are not words but simply 'phonematic relations, the differential relations of phonemes' that barely attain the status of distinctive morphemes.

I do not know how far one might be able to trace this emergence of language. We have already followed this process in broad outline – from the schizo-paranoid noises of the depths, to the depressive position governed by the Good Object on high and the ancestral voices

associated with the super-ego, and from there to the constitution of the erogenic/sexual surface and the Oedipal event of the law – Kubla Khan's decree.

Kubla Khan sits astride the poem like Humpty Dumpty: it is his decree alone that can arrest the arbitrary play of language and make it mean whatever he decides it should mean. In fact on the two out of three occasions that Kubla Khan or some other Khan, is mentioned by name in Coleridge's notebooks it is in association with language. In 1802, the following entry was made: 'Kublaikhan ordered letters to be invented for his people' (Suther 1965: 190), while an entry in 1799 records 'The Tartar Chan' as '[setting] on foot a Translation of the Great French Encyclopaedie into the Tartar language' (Suther 1965: 191). This dual role of inventor and translator makes the Great Khan, in effect, both the author and the reader of his own (untranslatable) poem.

Paradoxically, at this point the account of the emergence of language from the depths of the body has culminated in an order originating rather in a despotic decree. The contradiction implicit in this scheme owes to an ambivalence in Coleridge's own thinking about language he never resolved. On the one hand, there was the theory of language deriving from Horne Tooke and the whole empirical tradition stretching back to Locke. According to this theory, language was a matter of giving arbitrary names to the sensations of things, with the mind being no more than a passive *tabula rasa* recording these discrete events. More elaborate mental operations were simply the results of the association of ideas. Tooke took this empirical theory to its radical and materialist extreme: all language was based on a very small number of basic names of things and any analysis of even complex linguistic structures ultimately depended on tracing the etymology of the terms used back to their primitive roots. So that any mention of 'spirit' or a 'spiritual' dimension inevitably led back to 'spirit' being construed as just 'air'; whereas 'I think' itself, for example, was merely a corrupt and abbreviated form of 'me thingeth' or 'I am thinged' (Aarsleff 1983: 63). It was this theory of language that lay behind Coleridge's interest in the corporeality of thought and so perhaps behind the opium experiment that was the source of *Kubla Khan*. On the other hand, Coleridge was always reluctant to accept the absolute materialism of Horne Tooke's theory and from the beginning held onto a much more orthodox theory of natural language, where words and things have an irreducible affinity and correspondence, that ultimately goes back to Adam's naming of things in Eden and is therefore sanctioned by Holy Scripture and so by God (McKusick 1986: 10, 19, 21).

What enabled Coleridge to reconcile in part what were, in the end, two incompatible philosophies of language – the one empirical, materialistic and politically radical, the other idealist, theological and politically conservative – was his introduction in 1798–9, during a sojourn in Göttingen, to the German metaphysical and philological traditions, particularly to the works of Herder, Kant and Johann David Michaelis.[25] From Herder, Coleridge would have gleaned the notion that language is a historical product that bears within it the whole inner life of a nation. Just as distant from the empirical tradition's interest in the sensationalist source of thought and language was the notion of the innate categories of experience to be derived from Kant. Frustratingly, however, the dilemma presented by the incompatibility of the empirical and 'natural' language schools of thought is only refined, but not resolved, in the difference between the historical and transcendental alternatives offered respectively by Herder and Kant. It is the work of the third thinker, Johann David Michaelis, whose *A Dissertation on the Influence of Opinions on Language and Language on Opinions* had already been published in English in 1769, who really seems to offer a solution to the problem. The title of Michaelis' work refers to his principal thesis: not just that opinions affect languages but that languages affect opinions:

> By 'opinion' Michaelis means the entire range of mental activities both conceptual and affective . . . (McKusick 1986: 59)

Michaelis looks forward to Herder's view that all mental activity reflects one's national character, but it is expressed in a more temperate and more nuanced manner:

> Languages are the accumulation of the wisdom and genius of nations, to which everyone has contributed something . . . So that language is a kind of archives (*sic*), where the discoveries of men are safe from any accidents, archives which are proof against fires, and which cannot be destroyed but with the total ruin of the people. (Quoted in McKusick 1986: 59)

So while the notion of language as 'the accumulation of the wisdom and genius of nations' acknowledges the historical dimension of language, the notion that language 'is a kind of archives' or 'respository of collective knowledge' (McKusick 1986: 59) provides the means of conceptualizing the 'innate' constituent role of language without recourse to the trans-historical categories of Kant. McKusick claims this conception of language as an 'archive' is 'closer to Coleridge's own position' than the later more mystical works of Hamann, Herder or Humboldt and as close to a worked out theory of language as

Coleridge ever came. The notion of the archive allows Coleridge to escape completely from the empiricist tradition's obsession with discrete elements. But it also leads to the realization that 'words are learnt by us in clusters' (Coleridge quoted in McKusick 1986: 68) rather than 'determinately' (as Locke would have it: a 'determinate' sound linked arbitrarily to a 'determinate' thought):

> Paradoxically, then, the loss of determinate signification produces a gain in immediacy; the listener regresses, as it were, to an early stage of childhood when words affected him not as discrete entities, but in clusters. (McKusick 1986: 68)

McKusick concludes his discussion of the shortcomings of Locke's view of language compared to that implicit in the notion of clusters as follows:

> Locke's treatment of words as discrete units is sterile and ultimately misguided, since the most important communications are least susceptible of such analysis. The deepest truths and the most violent passions burst forth from the dark recesses of the mind like the mighty fountain of 'Kubla Khan' . . . (McKusick 1986: 69)

I would not have expressed it that way: we have seen what comes out of the 'dark recesses': not archival clusters but the noise of phonetic/phonemic fragments, the ancestral voices of generational strife, despotic decrees. On the other hand, what opens at the surface is the second screen of the phantasmatic event, opened to the multiple vicissitudes of the Oedipal scenario, the Oedipal cluster – for that is what Oedipus is: an archival cluster – a historically determined and culturally inherited transgenerational phantasm that resonates with all the other transgenerational clusters and phantasms.[26] Lowes' 'clusters', as he also (and probably not coincidentally) terms them (Lowes 1978: 333), all the originary events and archives, from Purchas, Bartram, Bruce, Kircher, Paez, Maurice, Rennell and the rest, all versions one way or another of the primal scene, can now be seen to resonate with the Oedipal scenario of the poem. It can also be seen how they complement and engage with, and, in a sense, are expressed by, or are embodied in, the indispensable organic linguistic substratum (noise [*bruit*], voice [*voix*], utterance [*parole*]) that has emerged from the body. Without this metaphysical dimension, the organic labour and turmoil of the poem would hang in a void. It is this unparalleled convergence of pre-existent cultural clusters (a multiple *entendu*) with the raw potential for speech and thought that has been prepared in the strata of the organic

body (the *vécu* in all its brute immediacy) that makes *Kubla Khan* the quintessentially phantasmatic structure that it is and perhaps accounts for its peculiar fascination.

This moment of convergence is not easy to describe and it is not made any easier by the fact that Deleuze himself on occasions is inclined to describe it in a misleading way:

> That which emerges in the phantasm is the movement in which the self opens itself at the surface and frees the acosmic, impersonal and pre-individual singularities that it enclosed. Literally [*A la lettre*], the self looses them off like spore, and explodes [*éclate*] in this disburdening [*délestage*]. (Deleuze 1969: 249)

The 'acosmic, impersonal and pre-individual singularities', which is Deleuze's term for what we have described as 'clusters', are not to be found trapped inside a self like spore or seeds within a pod:

> Far from the singularities being individual or personal, they preside over the genesis of individuals and persons . . . (Deleuze 1969: 125)

Events are pre-individual and trans-individual: even the dream of the stately pleasure dome, as Borges reminds us, pre-existed not only Coleridge but Kubla Khan himself.[27] Clusters are like virtual nebulae of events migrating about the universe waiting to happen and we have to distinguish between 'the event, which is by nature ideal, and its spatio-temporal effectuation in a state of things.' (Deleuze 1969: 68) How this spatio-temporal effectuation takes place is not easy to explain though Coleridge does his best when, almost apologetically, he invokes the 'Leibnizian' notions of 'precipitation' and 'coagulation' (Richardson 1990: 44).[28] Deleuze speaks of singularities 'becoming actual' (*s'actualisant*) (Deleuze 1969: 125). The individual or the person emerges in a moment of 'actualization' which is also a moment of 'expression', not unlike a character or a role being actualized or expressed by an actor. These clusters of events, moreover, are not collections of discrete events but of multiplicities of events each one resonating with all the others. The individual self, like the Leibnizian monad, can only embody and express a selection of the roles available to it even though in each individual monad there must be a trace of the universe as a whole.[29] There is a beautiful summary of the Leibnizian 'world' in Deleuze's late work on Leibniz, *Le pli*:

> The world exists only in its representations such as they are included in each monad. It is a lapping of waves, a murmuring of sounds, a mist, a dance of dust. It is a state of death or catalepsy, of sleep or slumbering, of a loss

> of senses, of vertigo. It is as if the depths of each monad were made up of an infinite number of small folds (inflexions) which ceaselessly folded and unfolded themselves in all directions, so that the spontaneity of the monad is like that of a sleeper who turns and turns on his couch. The microperceptions of representations of the world are like these tiny folds in all directions, folds within folds, folds upon folds, fold after fold, a painting by Hantaï, or one of Clérambault's toxic hallucinations. (Deleuze 1988: 115)

Not only does a passage such as this remind us of the deep continuities between Deleuze's earlier (pre-Guattari) and later work, it also reveals the insistence of the phantasmatic model in his thinking. This passage also seems to me to be a beautiful description of *Kubla Khan* – the state of 'sleep or slumbering' obviously, but even more the 'folds in all directions, folds within folds, folds upon folds, fold after fold' (all those multiple internal foldings and repetitions of the poem) and the Orientalist associations in the reference to 'a painting by Hantaï'. Perhaps even more importantly, for those who find such groupings useful, what this account suggests is that *Kubla Khan*, far from being a 'romantic' poem should be regarded as a late but magnificent example of the 'baroque.'

And as in a baroque masque, there is no discrete role: one role is always another role, so that in playing a role the actor 'is always in the situation of playing a role that plays other roles' (Deleuze 1969: 176). Xanadu, in the end, is a Garden of Forking Paths:

> In all fictional works, each time a man is confronted with several alternatives, he chooses one and eliminates all the others: in the fiction of Ts'ui Pên, he chooses – simultaneously – all of them. *He creates*, in this way, diverse futures, diverse times which themselves also proliferate and fork. (Borges 1970: 151)

This is what the poem finally achieves and what grants it its futurity, so to speak. One senses, in the opening section, the tremendous weight of the archive and the patriarchal decree – the institution of the Oedipal order. But that fails and that failure leads to the collapse of the surface and to a process of psychic regression and schizophrenic delirium. In the final section the attempt to impose a despotic order is subject to an 'afterwardsness' (*reprise*) in the vision of the damsel with a dulcimer and her song which recapitulates many of the motifs of the body of the poem – the sunny dome, the caves of ice and even the figure of the despot himself. There is a change from the 'psychic regression' of the first part to a 'speculative investment' (Deleuze 1969: 278) – whence the conjectural 'Could I . . . 'twould'. The damsel, sings, too, of Mount Abora: there has been much debate about the source of this and Lowes traces it to a

welter of sources – Abola, Astaboras, Amara (Lowes 1978: 340–2) – and in many ways its coalescence of many sources itself recapitulates one of the prime devices of the poem. 'Abora', however, if it is to remind us of anything, it must surely be of the *abor*-iginal pre-occupations of the *fantasme originaire*. The final section 'resonates' the whole poem. The resonance and repetition of the phantasm is never meekly passive: it is 'selective' and 'countereffectual'. It is selective in that it extrapolates from the original event what is affirmative within it, the multiple choices that it offers: it refuses to succumb to its deterministic weight or to an arbitrary decree: the Oedipal imposition. It is countereffectual in that the repetition 'plays' the original scenario in its differences – it plays the scene like an actor or dancer:

> Countereffectuating each event the actor/dancer extracts the pure event that resonates with all the others. (Deleuze 1969: 209)

By so playing the scenario, as we sense the damsel with the dulcimer playing the vision of Xanadu, and as we sense the poet himself taking up that dance and play himself, what we see happening at the end is a loss of self – of the 'I' – and its dissolution into the transport of the 'pure event', into the trans-historic dream that is 'the dream of Kubla Khan'.[30] It is this dream that awaits us. Borges concludes his account of 'The dream of Coleridge':

> Such facts allow us to conjecture that the series of dreams and works of art [i.e. palaces and poems] has not reached its end. To the first dreamer there was proffered in the night the dream of a palace and he built it; to the second, who knew nothing of the dream of the previous dreamer, the poem about the palace. If the pattern holds true, some reader of *Kubla Khan* will dream, in a night from which we are separated by centuries, a statue or a piece of music. This man will not know that two others have already dreamed; perhaps the series of dreams has no end; perhaps the key to the whole is in the last dream. (Borges 1960: 29)

What we see in this final section are a number of reversals that perhaps need to be stressed. There is, first, the reversal of what might be termed the 'normative' axis of the Laplanche and Pontalis phantasm that culminates in one's being socially placed in terms of vital state, gender and sexuality – the Oedipal decree. The normative project is transcended to the extent that in the *jouissance* ('deep delight') of the revisionary song the polarities of the opening section – 'That sunny dome! Those caves of ice!' – are simultaneously affirmed in what seem like ecstatic snatches. When the speaker/poet (or whoever it is) becomes caught up in the phantasmatic scenario the references to 'His flashing eyes, his

floating hair!' are at least potentially androgynous – as if capturing traits of both the despot and the woman wailing. The very fact that the 'I' has become a 'he' suggests the dissolution of the self into the phantasmatic maelstrom. It is this liberation from the self, this emergence of a *moi dissous*, that distinguishes the 'Deleuzian' phantasm from that of Laplanche and Pontalis and here countereffectuates the Oedipal hold of the opening. The second reversal, already implicit in much of what has already been said, is of that model employed by Deleuze of a self that explodes spore from within itself: it is not the self that loosens off the spore of singularities, it is rather the self that becomes dissolved in the singularities that converge upon it, transported by the singularities of the pure event.

It is only here, in the song of the damsel, that language lifts off from the body and assumes its own autonomy. It is here that Deleuze would locate the emergence of the Word[31] – after the noises of the schizo-paranoid depths, the voices of the manic-depressive heights, and the decree of the Oedipal moment.[32] Deleuze's notion of the Word is extremely complex, but clearly tied to his notion of 'univocity'.[33] By 'univocity' Deleuze means all the voices that echo and resonate in the phantasm ultimately 'say' the 'same' thing – just as ultimately every monad reflects or expresses the 'same' universe. It is finally with this univocity of every utterance that language becomes self-sustaining and self legitimating and so attains its autonomy and freedom from the body. In this sense the song of the damsel with the dulcimer is something like the 'refrain' or *'ritournelle'* described in *Mille Plateaux*: a rhythmic set of self-sustaining internal references autonomous with respect to all external dependence (Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 382ff). It is only when we can speak this univocal Word (or perhaps, we are spoken by it), that something like an unequivocal sense is possible. This univocal Word is, of course, impossible and is only glimpsed in the kind of Pentecostal transport with which the poem concludes. *Logique du sens*, itself, ends with the following:

> And what else can a work of art do, except always take the path that goes from the sounds to the voice (*des bruits à la voix*), from the voice to the decree/utterance (*de la voix à la parole*), from the utterance to the word/Word (*de la parole au verbe*), build that *Musik für ein Haus,* in order to always find there the independence of sounds [from the body] and locate [*fixer*] that blaze [*fulguration*][34] of the univocal, an event too quickly covered over by everyday banality or, on the contrary, the sufferings of madness. (Deleuze 1969: 290)

Musick für ein Haus – Kubla Khan: the song of a pleasure dome, indeed, a fulgurating blaze of the univocal, an event too frequently dismissed as to all intents and purposes meaningless or as being little more than a symptom of Coleridge's notoriously fragile mental state.

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Notes

1. All translations are my own unless otherwise specified.
2. See also Miall: 205: 'In letters and notebook entries, particularly in the earlier part of his life (up to about 1810) Coleridge frequently referred to the influence of the body on thinking.'
3. The date of this letter shows that Coleridge was pondering these questions at about the same time as the composition of *Kubla Khan* which has been variously dated between 1797 and 1799.
4. 'Milton's topography is clearly implied in the laying-out of Kubla's more indefinite garden' (Schneider 1966: 264).
5. The French equivalent is *aprés coup*; see Laplanche and Pontalis 1964: 1849.
6. See also Fruman: 337 '*Kubla Khan*, as most readers have seen it, is a kind of phantasmagoria without any significant relation between its parts. "Nobody in his waking senses could have fabricated those amazing eighteen lines," says Lowes of the closing of the poem, and the majority of readers have more or less accepted this opinion.'
7. In fact there has been some debate about the dulcimer: see Fruman: 544 n. 39: 'Did Coleridge really visualize an Abyssinian maid playing a *dulcimer*? Alethea Hayter is surely right in stating that "most of us . . . have a mental picture of the damsel flitting about with something in the nature of a lyre or a lute . . . " But in fact a dulcimer is

   > A flat box up to three feet wide, standing on a table or on its own legs, most definitely not portable, and played with two hammers . . . (Hayter 1968: 220)

   In fact I don't think it matters what a dulcimer actually is: as in the retranslation of 'Kubla Khan' and 'Xanadu' into 'damsel with a dulcimer' what we have here is a playing with words as sounds or, indeed, things in themselves rather than as signifiers of something else.
8. Reuven Tsur writes: 'As for the emotional mood, the last stanza seems to reach the peak of an emotional experience, best described as ecstacy' (Tsur 1987: 72).
9. '. . . the origin of the phantasm is integrated into the very structure of the originary phantasm' (Laplanche and Pontalis 1964: 1853).
10. Of this account Douglas Angus remarks: 'It would be hard to find a more classic bit of evidence for a strongly developed Oedipal complex than this' (Angus 1960: 657).
11. For an understanding of the 'depressive' and 'schizo-paranoid' 'positions' see the essays 'The psychogenesis of Manic-Depressive States' and 'Notes on Some Schizoid Mechanisms' in Klein 1986.

12. 'The passage from noise to the voice, we constantly relive in dreams: observers have frequently noted how the sounds (*bruits*) that come upon the dreamer while he sleeps organise themselves into voices ready to wake him. We are schizophrenics when we are asleep, but manic-depressives when about to wake' (Deleuze 1969: 226).
13. I think it is here, with the constitution of this erogenous body double, that Deleuze should have located the *'corps sans organes'* ('body without organs') rather than at the urethral stage we have described earlier.
14. 'From the schizoid position of the depths to the depressive position of the heights we pass from noises to the voice. But with the sexual position of the surface we pass from the voice to the decree/utterance (*parole*)' (Deleuze 1969: 271).
15. 'Nothing is more fragile than the surface' (Deleuze 1969: 101).
16. The *'fêlure'*, in other words, is in many ways the obverse of the *'corps sans organes'* (body without organs): the BwO is the production of a non-organic, erogenous, surface that resonates with the events of history and culture, whereas the *'fêlure'* is the catastrophic fracturing and collapse of that same surface.
17. *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, for example, seems to me to be virtually a text-book example of R. F. Laing's (1967: 106ff) account of the 'schizophrenic journey'.
18. 'the symbolic interpretations offered in the past .... do not solve any of the problems that the poem really presents' (Schneider: 262). In his *New Foundations for Psychoanalysis* Laplanche seems to be describing something very like the predicament of the poem: confronted by the primal scene – 'the parents are joined in an eternal act of coitus [recall Gilbert and Gubar's recognition of an 'elemental primal scene'] .... the baby is denied the ability to take part and therefore to symbolize' (Laplanche (1989): 127).
19. David Perkins suggests that 'Xanadu' is a quasi-anagram of 'anodyne.' (Perkins: 100)
20. I originally intended at this point to read *Kubla Khan* as a Saussurian *'anagramme'* or *'hypogramme'* but constraints of space forbid. See Starobinski (1971): 19, 23, 33.
21. I think it is probably worth suggesting at this point that *Kubla Khan* has much of the nursery rhyme about it just as *The Ancient Mariner* is close at times to doggerel.
22. This last, of course, with its 'meaning' something like 'someone who eats manuscripts/words', is at the heart of our problematic: how to distinguish speaking from eating, words from bodily sounds.
23. Coleridge intended to write an essay on punning. Coleridge 'regards puns and conundrums as exemplary of the coalescence of a word with the thing that it signifies' and, therefore, quintessentially poetic in nature (McKusick 1986: 32, 42). Puns are therefore untranslateable, just as *Kubla Khan* is virtually untranslateable, and/or uninterpretable.
24. See fn. 7.
25. For all this see McKusick 1986, especially his third chapter 'The Legacy of Göttingen: Coleridge's Response to German Philology'.
26. Although I owe this term to the notion of the 'transgenerational phantom' developed by Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok (1994), this is by no means the same concept. Abraham and Torok's notion of the 'transgenerational phantom' seems to me to be an inadequate theorisation of what I call here the 'transgenerational phantasm.'
27. He quotes from the Arab historian of the fourteenth century, Rashid ed-Din: 'To the east of Shang-tu, Kublai Khan erected a palace, according to a design that he had seen in a dream and that he guarded in his memory' (Borges 1970: 28). See

also Lowes 1978: 326: 'In ancient tradition the stately pleasure dome of Kubla Khan itself came into being, like the poem, as the embodiment of a remembered vision in a dream.'

28. In fact Coleridge is speaking much later in his career when he has reverted to a more orthodox notion of a spiritual 'Nous' or 'Reason' as almost a divine essence and the way in which it produces both sense and its objects 'by the precipitation, or, if I may dare to adopt the bold language of Leibniz, by the coagulation of spirit' (Richardson 2001: 44).
29. See Leibniz 'Principles of Nature and Grace' §13 (Leibniz 1998: 264).
30. For this 'countereffectuation' of the event see Deleuze 1969: 176–7.
31. Not least of the difficulties of *Logique du sens* is that Deleuze use the word *verbe* for this moment of language that crowns the progression from the noises (*bruit*) of the schizo-paranoid depths, the voices (*voix*) of the manic-depressive heights, and the decree/utterance (*parole*) of the Oedipal position. The English translation dutifully translates this word as 'verb' which just doesn't make any sense to an English reader. It helps, I think, to recall that, in French, *verbe* with a capital letter – *Verbe* – means the 'Word' as in 'The Word of God' i.e. Gospel.
32. 'The noise (*bruit*) of the depths was an infra-sense (*infra-sens*), an under-sense (*sous-sens*), *Untersinn*; the voice of the heights was a pre-sense (*pré-sens*) . . . . The organization of the physical surface [i.e. the moment of the Oedipal *decree*] is still not sense: it is, or rather, will be a co-sense (*co-sens*) . . . [i.e., it is still imbricated in sexuality and the body] (Deleuze 1969: 272).
33. 'The Word (*Verbe*) is the univocity of language, in the form of a non-determined infinitive, without person, without present, without distinction of mood (*voix* – here in the sense of 'mood' i.e. indicative or subjunctive 'moods'/*voix*). Such is poetry itself' (Deleuze 1969: 216).
34. Elsewhere Deleuze (1969: 280) uses 'Radiancy', a term taken from Lewis Carroll.

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Citizen Kant: Flatness and Depth in the Image of Thought

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I. The Image of Thought

In the final pages of his *Cinema* books, Deleuze explains that his aim is not to understand films, but to extract from them concepts that the cinema has itself given rise to 'which are themselves related to other concepts corresponding to other practices' (Deleuze 1989: 272).[1] Cinema does not resemble concepts, it creates them. The *Cinema* books are not a guide to reading films. Instead, we are invited to see how concepts such as 'image', 'plane' or 'relations of thought' correspond to and interfere in creative ways with other practices outside the cinema. So, a cinematic concept such as 'image of thought' can help us think in new ways about developments in widely differing fields, such as the history of painting and philosophy.

'Image of thought' has an interesting history in Deleuze's thought. In his early work he dismisses this phrase and calls for 'imageless thought,' meaning thought that doesn't understand itself to be the expression of some higher, transcendent order. In later works, he embraces this phrase. In *What is Philosophy* he describes it as 'the image thought gives itself of what it means to think, to make use of thought, to find one's bearings in thought' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 37). Image of thought is, however, an ambiguous notion. Does it mean an external representation of the thinking mechanism, or an image that thought gives to itself of itself? Both of these senses, which we might call the aesthetic and the philosophical, come together in interesting and instructive ways in Deleuze's reading of the deep focus shot.

Deleuze regards the emergence of deep focus, most notably in the films of Orson Welles, but in Jean Renoir, William Wyler and others as well, as the culmination of a long evolution of the cinematic shot,

or plane (in French 'plan' indicates both shot and plane). For Deleuze, cinema evolves from the single plane of the earliest films, to the serial presentation of flat planes in montage, beginning in the late teens, to finally the multi-plane, deep focus image introduced by Welles and others in the early 1940s. These last, he suggests, with their complex internal structures represent the first 'time–images' in the cinema.

The significance of deep focus does not lie in its correspondence to the 'extra-cinematic' world, as André Bazin, among others had supposed. For Deleuze, it represents instead a kind of Copernican turn in film. Welles achieves in film something analogous to what Kant had achieved in philosophy. Instead of asking whether philosophy can produce an accurate image of the world, Kant asks how we can produce any image of the world at all. Critical philosophy concerns itself with the conditions of reason: what must reason be in order to produce an image of reality? In a similar way, Welles' cinema of relations 'arouses the thinker in us' and reveals a new vocation for film: not to provide evidence that the world exists, but to produce an image of our powers of thought. After Welles, 'The cinema must film not the world, but our belief in the world.' (Deleuze 1989: 172) The deep focus shot achieves this change through a new organization of the cinematic shot, or plane.

Welles overcomes early cinema's dialectic of one or many planes when he reproduces the principle of montage – cutting up action into different planes – inside the shot. The result consisted neither of a single plane, nor a series of single planes unfolded in succession. Instead, complex planar relations inside the shot took on a more active role in the creation of whatever transpired on screen. Thus, 'Relations of thought in the image have replaced the contiguity of relations of images.' (Deleuze 1989: 174)

This evolution in the cinematic shot resonates with similar developments in painting and philosophy. Deleuze suggests that 'Welles recreates for our age a revolution in thought that first took place in the baroque.' (Deleuze 1989: 143) This insight points to a number of striking and important parallels between the history of the plane in cinema and the development of what we might call planar aesthetics in Renaissance and baroque painting. Caravaggio, Rembrandt and other baroque artists develop a new recessional style of composition driven by the very same desire to overcome the opposition of 'one or many planes' and make the canvas convey something about the role of relation and abstraction in experience as such.

And as my title 'Citizen Kant' suggests, the evolution of the cinematic image can help us think in new ways about the philosophical image of thought, specifically as Kant develops it in the doctrine of

Transcendental Ideas. The Transcendental Idea is not an image of something outside thought, it is a wholly internal and necessary moment of thinking in which finite reason produces an image of its own totality in order to systematize the otherwise isolated concepts of the understanding. Kant calls these images Ideas, and in a striking passage he compares them to images composed in depth and centred on a vanishing point.

In overcoming the opposition of one or many planes, deep focus presents us with a new image of thought which, without the support of a central organizing principle, nonetheless holds things together in open unties, or multiplicities. For this reason, the history of the plane raises important questions about the popular 'postmodern' diagnosis of the flatness and depthlessness of contemporary life. It has become a common assumption in cultural theory that the decline of a central representation, such as man, the subject or the signified, leaves us with only fragments of sense and a distracted perception that experiences the world 'partes extra partes'. This thesis, which found its most intense formulation in the work of Fredric Jameson, Jean Baudrillard and Jean Francois Lyotard, identified a flattening of sense brought on by some combination of the advance of late capitalism, the collapse of meta-narratives, and the society of the spectacle. The most far-reaching insight of Deleuze's cinema theory may be that the image of the many, as it appears in montage, planimetric composition or, more recently in postmodern fragmentation, is only an initial and weak displacement of 'the One'. What Deleuze sees in the evolution of cinema is a Nietzschean story of how the collapse of the theological image of universality makes the world deep, complex and multiple.[2]

II. Cinema: From One to Many Planes

Readers familiar with the ideas of André Bazin and Jean Mitry may recognize in the *Cinema* books a reworking of their already well-established theories on the impression of reality in long sequence and deep focus shots. For Bazin and Mitry, the deep focus shot represented a leap beyond the analytic fragmentation of action that characterized earlier forms of montage, because it allowed for a more realistic presentation of events as they occurred. Mitry described this as a change from 'actualization' to 'presentification'. In the classical montage which precedes Welles 'we participate in a represented past, rather than a present actuality . . . what we are viewing is the consequence of an action.' (Mitry 1997: 187) In the deep focus shot, on the other hand,

we witness the development of action and the open time in which this takes place.

This argument rests on a belief in film's direct photographic/indexical relation to reality, which Bazin understood to be a part of a movement toward a more perfect analogical presentation of the world in a 'total cinema'. Deleuze's relation to Bazin is complex. He builds on Bazin's evolution of film language, but directs it toward a very different end. It is well known that when he reads philosophical texts such as those of Kant, Spinoza or Bergson, Deleuze does not simply offer commentary or exegesis.[3] It is less often recognized that he uses a similar strategy in his *Cinema* books. Many of Deleuze's stunning readings of cinematic images are, in fact, reworkings of well-known debates in cinema theory from which he extracts new 'monstrous' concepts whose grasp extends far beyond film and aesthetics.

His reading of the deep focus shot is an excellent example of just such a monstrous creation. Bazin had already established that deep focus marked an important turning point in cinema. A 'realist', Bazin situated the evolution of film in a longer history of representation stretching back to the Renaissance discovery of perspective. Painting, photography and the various moments of film history are all defined by a movement toward a more perfect correspondence between the image and the reality it represents. The automatic, machinic nature of the photograph was a critical leap forward in this movement, and the deep focus shot its next significant stage. Where photography gave us unequivocal evidence of the world in a mould made from the object's reflected light, the deep focus shot brought us still closer because it presented the 'moulding' of the thing in time, or 'an imprint of the duration of the object' (Bazin 1995: 14). On this view, the history of film displays a definite logical and dialectical progression.

A single undifferentiated plane of activity characterizes the earliest cinema of the so-called 'actualities', the film simply a transcription of whatever occurred in front of the camera. Very little attempt was made to organize the plane into complex relations. The shot comprised a single sequence of action not analytically decomposed in any way. Thus, in the Lumière brothers' film of workers at the factory gate, or the train arriving at the station in Lyon, we are given a single static shot. There is no use of close-up, for instance, to break in on any of the conversations taking place, or to single out the shuffle of feet as we might see in any contemporary film. There may well be cuts between these shots, but when they occur they serve only to link 'whole spaces' and not to break action into closer views.

For Deleuze, the compositional art of the cinema takes an evolutionary leap forward when filmmakers begin to employ analytical editing to break scenes into component pieces and rearrange them into logical sequences. This involved a whole different form of presentation. For it was now possible to decide what in a particular shot should be emphasized in terms of the space (what elements or details matter) and time (for how long we should look). After seeing a sequence of these selected shots, we draw inferences about what we have witnessed. In Dreyer's *Joan of Arc* (1928), for example, we see a shot of the judge, a shot of Joan, a grave being dug, and then the council of judges. We are left to infer that the council will judge against Joan who will then be buried in the grave we saw earlier. The film provides this information through a serial presentation of single, shallow focus shots, or planes. The whole of the idea conveyed is something we assemble after the fact. This is the basic structure of the classic Hollywood cinema of the 1930s. The well-known Hollywood two-shot, or shot-counter-shot, displays a series of simple, flat images. Often we are presented with an establishing shot, followed by a series of close shots that break down the action into component pieces.

Early cinema, then, oscillates between two basic structures. It presents either a single undifferentiated plane, or a series of single planes given in succession. To these different forms there correspond two different types of synthesis, which, in turn, present two different kinds of 'wholes'. In the early actualities, the whole is given in advance of its presentation. The camera simply records an already existing situation. In analytical montage, the whole is given as a sum that we piece together after the presentation of a sequence. In each case a whole, or an idea, is presented. In neither of these cases, though, is the whole immanent to the image being presented on screen. It is either given before, as a full reality to be captured, or afterwards, when a sequence has completed itself and an idea may be inferred from it. And in both cases the single plane – the cinema of the One – remains the basic compositional element of a whole that is conceived of as either as an archē or a telos.

Hence the significance of *Citizen Kane* (1941). Welles overcomes classical cinema's dualism of one or many planes when he creates a shot composed of a set of striated planes all presented at once. What is remarkable about the shot is its new method of compositing and presenting a whole. The use of shadow and light, the presence of the visible ceiling and floors give us a whole space in which complex actions transpire. The viewer is invited to roam across the multiple planes and to make inferences about the details as the scene unfolds. In this way,

Welles presents a whole that does not proceed or follow the parts it organizes, but emerges instead along with the presentation of the planes it unites. In the Wellesian shot, the whole is contemporary with the elements it presents.

The best example of this new type of shot is the now famous deep focus one in which Kane bursts into his girlfriend's bedroom to discover her unconscious from an overdose of pills. In an extreme deep focus shot, we see Kane, a tiny figure in the background entering the room. In the middle ground Susan lies catatonic in her bed, and filling almost a third of the frame in the foreground is a drinking glass and a pill bottle, the evidence of her suicide attempt.

If it were shot with shallow focus and analytical editing the scene would have been broken into a series of separate shots from which we would subsequently have to infer a meaning. David Bordwell describes how it might have looked:

> A 1930s decoupage director would have cut from Kane outside Susan's room, banging on the door, to Susan gasping in bed, and then to the glass and bottle. This string of shots would allow us to infer that she has taken an overdose of medicine. But Welles jams all the elements into a single frame. (Bordwell 1997: 62–63)

The opposition of a montage of separate spaces, analytically decomposed into a series of images is here overcome in a dialectical leap forward which incorporates both the style of a single plane, and the decomposition of the plane into a series of many foreshortened ones. Deleuze explains that 'It is the method of 'between two-images'. . . which does away with the cinema of the One.'(Deleuze 1989: 180) What we get is a new kind of image based on relations inside the shot. The history of the shot progresses from one (the early actualities) to many (montage) to, finally, a multiplicity (deep-focus shot) that passes beyond the opposition of one or many planes. Equally, it changes from a whole that proceeds to one that follows, and then from a whole that follows to one that is contemporaneous with the things it unites.

We are no longer dealing with one single present, or a sequence of presents. It is true that *Citizen Kane* makes use of classical forms of montage which show us short, flat shots detailing the habitual movements of Kane's life – Kane reading the newspaper, at dinner, in a meeting. But deep focus opens up these presents, and suspends them from the chronological progression so that they can be explored as 'sheets' or 'regions' of past where we can roam around and look for the missing element – Rosebud – which the film seeks in the different slices of Kane's past.

Welles is not the only, or even the first filmmaker to use depth. Before him, Jean Renoir had made us of it in *Rules of the Game* (1939), where he coupled it with mirrors and reflecting surfaces to open out space and to produce frames within frames. However, by using wide angles and in-camera double exposures Welles and Gregg Toland significantly increased depth in new ways to expose ceiling and floors, and achieve gigantic dimensions which can be connected to reduced sizes in the background. William Wyler, also working in conjunction with Gregg Toland used similar techniques in *The Best Years of Our Lives* (1946). In a pivotal bar scene, Uncle Butch teaches Homer Parish, the war amputee, to play piano with his prosthetic hooks, while his soldier pal Al Stephenson looks on. Meanwhile at the extreme other end of the bar, Fred Derry, their struggling alcoholic war buddy watches this scene from a phone booth where he makes the call that ends his illicit affair with Al's daughter Peggy. The complex relation of nearness and distance that make up their new post-war lives and the non-synchronous layers of time – the eternal present of the bar, Homer's concern about his future as an amputee, and Al's ties to his drinking past – are all condensed in a single scene. In this way, the complex intricacies and the movement among these relations and tenses can be watched as they fold and unfold in diagonals and bands and strips of light and shadow.

Since Deleuze's reading of cinema sometimes drifts toward an 'auteur' theory of the artist as genius, it is important to keep in mind that the deep focus shot is complex and multiple in its origins. It is, after all, equally the creation of Greg Toland's innovative cinematography. Toland's technical alteration of the camera, use of lens coatings, development of optical printing and in-camera composite images all made possible the new kind of shot.[4] We should note as well the work of set designers and lighting technicians who created the play of shadows and expansive floor to ceiling space, and then there is the brute technical fact of progress in lighting that made it possible to narrow the aperture and increase the depth of the recorded image.

It is of course possible to construct other, different histories of the cinema that do not see the simple images of the early cinema as a prelude to the later complex forms. We might pay more attention to the role of the viewer, for example, or the social context of the film's reception. Tom Gunning, for instance, gives us a very different sense of the significance of early cinema, which relates it to the sensation machines of the fairgrounds and other entertainment spectacles (Gunning 1990). Bazin's interests in the evolution of sequencing, shot selection and the internal composition, or plastics of the image, are more useful for

Deleuze's purposes because they allow him to better understand the relation of time and movement in the cinema, and how it resonates with similar problems in aesthetics and philosophy. In fact, we might wonder if Deleuze's cinema theory is, at some deeper level, a reworking, or 'buggery' of the Bazinian theme of realism. Manuel De Landa, for example, has stressed the element of dynamic realism in Deleuze (De Landa 2002). The referent of realism in the *Cinema* books is not the faithful reproduction of the object in an external reality, but the structure of time and movement, or the 'kinesiology' from which cinema derives its name. The deep focus shot gives us the first time image, which Deleuze describes as 'a direct presentation of time' (Deleuze 1989: 214).[5]

III. Painting: The Beauty of the Plane Yields to the Beauty of Recession

Cinema is not the first art to use depth of field to break free of the unity of the plane. Deleuze says that 'The question of depth of field already took up in a way a transformation of painting in the seventeenth century.', and he speculates '[i]t is possible that Welles' cinema has been able to recreate, for the use of our modern world, a transformation of thought that originally took place in that distant century' (Deleuze 1989: 143). When Deleuze compares Welles' deep focus image to the baroque, he refers us to Heinrich Wölfflin's work on the history of plane and recession in early modern painting. Wölfflin is best known for developing the distinction between tactile and visual forms of seeing. In *The Principles of Art History* Wölfflin advances another, less noted thesis that the history of modern art is defined by a change from an initial emphasis on the plane, in Renaissance perspective, to an increasing emphasis on the relation, or 'recession' between planes, in the baroque (Wölfflin 1950). What is revolutionary in the baroque is the new image of synthesis and whole, which it extracts from the technique of perspective. This represents a change not only from one style to another. It is the basis for all subsequent abstraction in art.

Linear or mathematical perspective is often identified as a turning point in Western culture when we gained a new mastery over the earth and expressed a desire to detach ourselves from our conditions of existence. Erwin Panofsky liked to remind us that perspective means 'looking through', as in looking through a window out onto something that is clearly distinct from us (Panofsky 1991). Hannah Arendt drew a direct line from Alberti's essay *On Painting*, which taught us to see the world through a frame, and the launching of Sputnik 500 years later

(Arendt 1961). Heidegger suggested as much with his notion of the age of the world picture, or the world as a picture (Heidegger 1977). What is less often pointed out, though, is that perspective also made it possible to multiply the number of aesthetic planes in a work and have them adhere together into complex wholes. Perspective makes the synthesis of multiple interacting planes a basic defining problem of aesthetics. What does it matter if the work foregrounds the elements that are placed in association, or the activity of association itself? Here lies the basis for all questions of abstraction, of figure-ground relations and of depth, whether taken in a straightforward cognitive sense, or as a metaphor for the multilayered complex nature of modern living.

The technique of perspective, as it emerged in the 15th century, allowed an artist to multiply the number of planes in a work and unify them with mathematical rules of recession. This created a radically new kind of image, different than the medieval type which was focused on a central, foreground compositional plane, which Erwin Panofsky called 'an unconditionally two-dimensional surface' (Panofsky 1991: 51).

The movement from the medieval, single flat plane to the multidimensional perspectival work mirrors the change we followed in film from the early actualities to montage. Wölfflin's thesis, however, allows us to be precise about what this change involves because he distinguishes between two basic elements of perspective, which he calls plane and recession. He shows that one could produce very different kinds of images depending on whether the accent was placed on one or the other of these elements.

Initially, in the early Renaissance, perspective is used to create compositional planes that appear distinct and autonomous from one another. The painting is arranged into strata and sequences of discrete events. Each space of action exists first on its own, and only subsequently in relation to the others. This early form of 'planimetric' composition, as Wölfflin called it, multiplied the number of planes but it did not place in question the unity and self-containedness of the plane. In its initial uses, perspective gives us many single planes but does little with the relations of recession that unite these.

We can take as exemplary of an initial 'planimetric' use of perspective, a well-known work: Hieronymus Bosch's *Garden of Earthly Delights* (1504). Here, the landscape consists of a series of episodes of carnal transgression. Each of these planes is a separate present moment which can stand on its own and in fact does when, as commonly happens now, the painting is reproduced in detail. These tableaux are nevertheless distinct events, and the overall unity of the work is cumulative. We

might think of Bosch as a sort of Renaissance equivalent of analytic montage.

The same 'planimetric' structure can be seen in the early Italian Renaissance style of Uccello or Crivelli. In Uccello's *The Battle of San Romano* (1454–57) it is still possible to determine a foreground plane in which the action is centered. It is true that the background recedes away in depth but the painting is divided into strips, or bands of light with intervals of land separating them, so that depth and recession work to maintain the divisions between these planes. In Crivelli's *The Annunciation* (1486) the pronounced geometrical division of columns, walls, windows and doors produces this same analytical division of space.

In Renaissance paintings, depth and recession multiply the number of planes, but they are not yet used to challenge the status of the singular plane that remains what it was in the medieval world – the basic cell of composition. However, in the evolution from Renaissance to baroque style the value of plane and recession changes. Wölfflin says 'The beauty of the plane yields to the beauty of recession' (Wölfflin 1950: 76). Recession, or the relation between planes, begins to play a positive role in composition. The 'nerve' of the painting now lies in the relation of foreground and background. Consequently, the plane as central focus of the painting is 'depreciated'. The painting is no longer able to unite in the plane.

With Rubens, for example, the interest lies less in the composition of the planes, and more in the movement of light across them, which he uses to bring the viewer into the work. This 'into the picture' movement can be achieved in various ways. In *The Elevation of the Cross* (1610) Rubens uses the properties of colour to lead the eye across the planes and to avoid presenting any of them in isolation. Rembrandt, on the other hand, uses light to achieve a similar into the picture movement. In *The Blinding of Sampson* (1636), the plane is reduced to a secondary status, and light and colour, which unite the planes, is the principle subject. Much the same can be said about the role of light and chiaroscuro in Caravaggio, for instance, *The Calling of St. Matthew* (1599). What unites all these baroque examples is that the unity of the plane is replaced by an interest in the coexistence and relation among the planes; or, to be more precise, the relation takes precedence over the *relata*. Baroque recession is, like the 'irrational interval' of modern cinema, not simply an inert connective tissue, but a principle of differentiation that plays a positive role in the idea of the image.

Wölfflin explains that, in the baroque use of perspective:

> [T]he recessional movement dominates and nothing settles into strips. Roads leading inward, foreshortened avenues happened earlier, but they never dominated the picture. Now it is on just such motives that the accent lays. The recession of forms is the chief thing, not their co-relation from left to right. Concrete objects can even be totally absent, and then the new art really comes into its own, then it is the general depth of the space that the spectator is called upon to apprehend in one breadth as a unified whole. (Wölfflin 1950: 97)

All pictures have recession, but the recession has a different effect, depending on whether we are compelled to organize the space into different planes, which we subsequently synthesize, or to experience it as a recessional movement. In the case of Renaissance planimetric composition, our attention is directed to the separate planar components of the work. The relations that link these together merely convey the eye from one distinct plane to another. We could say that the relations are subordinate to the planes, or that they work in the service of the plane. The baroque image, on the other hand, realizes a latent possibility of Renaissance perspective: that the multiplication of planes allows the relation to gain some autonomy from the content of the plane. Recession, or as Deleuze likes to say, 'the interstice' now knows a new unlimited freedom.

In *The Fold*, his book on the baroque, Deleuze explains, in a way reminiscent of Wölfflin, why Uccello's folds are not 'baroque'.

> Uccello's folds are not really baroque because they are held in solid, polygonal, inflexible even if ambiguous geometrical structures. Should we wish to maintain the working relation of the baroque and the fold, we shall therefore have to show that the fold remains limited in the other cases, and that in the baroque it knows an unlimited freedom whose conditions can be determined. Folds seem to be rid of their supports of cloth, granite, or cloud in order to enter into an infinite convergence. (Deleuze 1993: 34)

Uccello's Renaissance style still does not break free of the planar geometrical style and as long as this is the case the fold remains only a difference between two things, and not yet a principle of differentiation out of which any plane, figuration or content emerges. Like the deep focus shot at the centre of the *Cinema* books, the baroque image does not permit the eye to form either a sequence of distinct planes, or a unity of a single plane. The opposition of one (the medieval flat panel) and many (the Renaissance multi-plane planimetric panel) is overcome in a new art of relations. The receding depth opens a vista between the main figures in the picture and the viewer is now compelled to move between the planes, to

link up fore- and back- ground and to grasp the meaning of the work in the movement between the planes. As Deleuze says of Welles, 'each image is plucked from the void and falls back into it' (Deleuze 1989: 179). Fold, relation and abstraction become the content of the image. This is 'the contribution of the baroque to art in general' (Deleuze 1993: 34).

We can further clarify the relation of foreground, background and interval in the planimetric and recessional use of depth by drawing a comparison with Merleau-Ponty's distinction of 'primordial' and 'objectified' depth. Merleau-Ponty opposed a phenomenological theory of depth to the 'associationist' image of perception as a 'mobile zone of distinctness' (Merleau-Ponty 1969: 219). In this latter, commonsensical image of perception, we seem to focus attention on only one image at a time, and thus to view any one at the expense of all others. After having taken in a number of such views of the exterior world, so the theory goes, we synthesize them and make inferences based on them, as in empiricism. This simple theory of depth sees it as essentially a matter of empirical distance among distinct entities. Depth is based on the recognition of a distance between things. We first view one thing, and then another. Once we establish the difference in the size of objects in the fore- and background, we then calculate the depth or distance between them. This understanding of depth, which Merleau-Ponty traces to Descartes' *Dioptrics* corresponds roughly to the kind of organizational form that Wölfflin calls planimetric composition. Here the self-contained plane remains the basic compositional unit, and relations serve to link several of these into an aggregate unity.

The trouble with the simple, Cartesian theory of depth is that it derives the relation of depth from the things it relates. But, as Merleau-Ponty reminds us, we can only isolate a foreground figure because another background one has already provided a context that allows us to consider the two as participating in a whole in which relations can be formed. Figures seen in relative size in the fore- and background of a work can only be judged and compared because I have already regarded them as elements of a totality. Merleau-Ponty's thesis is that the projection of this whole is the condition of any empirical relations we might construct among the parts. There is not first a given difference in size and then a recognition of depth. We do not perceive planes with a given set of properties that we then relate. It is only because they have first been synthesized in this way that the elements can be distinguished and empirical and quantitative relations constructed among them.

This is why depth is 'the most existential of all the dimensions' (Merleau-Ponty 1995: 264). In depth, elements that are mutually

exclusive and belong to different planes nevertheless take as 'profiles' of one and the same phenomenon. Depth is the dimension in which 'things or elements envelop each other'. It is 'the contraction into one perceptual act of a whole possible process' (Merleau-Ponty 1995: 264). Crucial here is this ambivalence in the use of depth: it can signal either an associationist connection among discreet parts, experienced 'partes extra partes', or an open whole or 'folding' in which an array of sensations are co-implicated. It is in this latter possibility that both Wölfflin and Deleuze find the basis of all subsequent abstraction in art.[6] In both cinema and painting the break with the plane represents a Copernican turn in which thought and image move away from the problem of representation toward an analysis of the conditions of any presentation at all.

IV. Empiricism and the Image of Thought

Hume's empiricism gives us the first image of the immanence of thought. And as in painting and film, it initially appears in the partial and incomplete form of 'the many'. Hume shows that human nature participates in the creation of what it experiences, and in doing so he overturns the Platonic image of thought as a 'reminiscence' of already existing connections and correspondences in the external world. There is no external 'transcendent' One that thought represents or remembers. It is human nature that allows us to infer relations, to create beliefs and posit rules, and so to produce sequences of experience.

In his book on Hume, Deleuze corrects the mistaken image of empiricism as the derivation of knowledge from experience (Deleuze 1991). What matters in empiricism is that it is an activity internal to the mind. For Hume, the movement of the mind organizing a diversity of sense impressions creates experience. When I say 'because', 'always', 'necessarily', or 'as a result', I am not pointing to any real or pre-existing connections in the world. I am actively organizing the elements of experience into a form that, until now, they had not known. Empiricism describes the mind's movement through a sequence of impressions. It is the cognitive equivalent of analytical editing and planimetric composition. The empiricist mind abandons the central representation of God or nature, to range over strips, bands, and lines of impressions.

Hume's new image of thought as a creative motion internal to thought raises the same difficult questions concerning the organization of diversity and 'the One' encountered in aesthetics. It displaces the unity of

God with a new image of the mind as a play of impressions from which connections are inferred.

Schelling summarized the problem with Hume's efforts to break with theology when he said that Hume supposes that there is first a time when we do not judge experience according to laws of association and causality, as though we first experience impressions in the raw, and then infer relations from them (Schelling 1994: 97). The problem here is the same one that Merleau-Ponty identified with associationism. Before we subject our impressions to principles of association, we have to first contract them into a sequence. We have to provide a manifold or whole – even if it is entirely projective or fictitious – with which we can hold together a set of impressions in order to derive order from them.

Kant provides a new image of this kind of whole in which diversity can appear. Kant does for empiricism what deep focus does for montage. He does not deny that thought is made of a diversity of sensations. Nor does he want to return to a theological vision of unity. When Kant asks about the conditions under which a manifold of immanent sensations can be thought, he is not dismissing empiricism but, rather, deepening and extending the principle of immanence introduced by Hume. Until Kant, the image of thought is divided between the One of God and the many of Hume's 'simple' empiricism. In the same way that Welles moves montage inside the shot, Kant moves the empiricist array of impressions inside a new image of the whole of reason.

In his reading of Kant, Deleuze shows that the new image of the whole that Kant introduces is not a theological relic. It is not an image outside thought, but the image that thought presents to itself *of* itself. The whole which finite intuition requires is immanent to thought. It does not precede thinking as it might in rational theology, and it is not simply a sum of parts that follows the experience of events, as in Hume's 'simple' empiricism. Paraphrasing what Deleuze says in the *Cinema* books about Bergson's concept of the whole, we could say that Kant's new image of the whole is not a closed set of concepts, but that by virtue of which each set of concepts remains open.

Kant's name for the new image of thought is 'Transcendental Idea'. The idea in the Kantian system is a name for the whole that is implicit in each of our conceptual judgments. It is by virtue of the presence of the whole that we can regard any given phenomena as a part of a system that insures its truth-value. It is the idea, for example, that allows reason to create syllogisms where one idea (Man) implies, or is implicated in, another (Mortality).The Idea allows the concepts produced by the understanding to co-implicate, or to be together as common elements of

the same phenomenon. Without this kind of projected whole thinking would only amount to the application of isolated concepts – this is an x and that is a y.

In a striking passage in the first critique, Kant himself describes the Idea - the mind's own image of the whole of reason – in a way that reminds us of a deep focus image. He calls the idea a *focus imaginarius*, and he likens it to the imaginary space which we must imagine to lie behind a mirror in order that, upon looking into it, we are able to see not only the objects which lie before us (the sink, our hands washing themselves), but those at a distance behind our backs:

> I accordingly maintain that Transcendental Ideas never allow of any constitutive employment. When regarded in that mistaken manner, and therefore as supplying concepts of certain objects, they are but pseudo-rational, merely dialectical concepts. On the other hand, they have an excellent, and indeed indispensably necessary, regulative employment, namely that of directing the understanding towards a certain goal upon which the routes marked out by all its rules converge, as upon their point of intersection. This point is indeed a mere idea, a *focus imaginarius*, from which, since it lies quite outside experience, the concepts of the understanding do not in reality proceed; none the less it serves to give to these concepts the greatest [possible] extension. Hence arises the illusion that the lines have their source in a real object lying outside the field of empirically possible knowledge – just as objects reflected in a mirror are seen as behind it. Nevertheless this illusion (which need not, however, be allowed to deceive us) is indispensably necessary if we are to direct the understanding beyond every given experience (as part of the sum of possible experience) and thereby to secure its greatest possible extension, just as in the case of the mirror-vision, the illusion involved is indispensably necessary if, besides the objects which lie before our eyes, we are also able to see those which lie at a distance behind our back. (Kant 1965: 553)

The mirror illusion allows us to synthesize different elements and planes of experience into a whole. It functions, in relation to the concepts, in the same way that a vanishing point does with respect to the different planes of a work of art. It transforms the flat, two-dimensional relation of concept and object into a three-dimensional plane with depth.

Earlier we saw that in the baroque, 'the beauty of the plane is replaced by the beauty of recession'. When this occurs 'it is the general depth of the space that the spectator is called upon to apprehend in one breadth as unified whole' (Wölfflin 1950: 97). Can we say that Kant introduces a recessional type in philosophy, since he directs our attention away from

the specific impressions and concepts to the kind of whole necessary to unite them and experience them together, at once?

V. Flatness and Depth in an Extra-Aesthetic Sense

There is an affinity between Orson Welles, Caravaggio and Kant not only because their images and concepts resemble each other, but because they provide a similar solution to the failure of earlier efforts to break free of the figure of 'the One'. For this reason, the consequences of their revolution in thought extend well beyond aesthetics and philosophy and concern a wider transformation in experience where mediation and intervals take on a whole new productive capacity. In the present intellectual climate, they provide an important alternative to the themes of flatness and fragmentation which have dominated cultural theory in the last few decades.

Unity, flatness and depth are all at the centre of the now well-worn 'postmodern' thesis that the contemporary world is a depthless one of fragmented subjectivities and distracted perceptions. In the 1980s and 1990s it was popular to describe the cultural development of the post-war world as a progressive flattening of things. In the absence of any full and whole experience, the world comes to us in the form of isolated, flat signs. Flatness is the central thesis of what were, arguably, three of the most influential works of cultural theory in the past quarter century: Jean Baudrillard's *Simulations*, Jean François Lyotards's *The Postmodern Condition*, and Fredric Jameson's *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Lyotard describes the decline of Enlightenment 'Grand Narratives' as a flattening of knowledge: 'The speculative hierarchy of learning gives way to an immanent and, as it were, "flat" network of areas of inquiry' (Lyotard 1984: 39). Fredric Jameson and Jean Baudrillard identify depthlessness as a central element of the hyperreal culture of late capitalism. As daily life is speeded up and plugged into ever wider global circuits of information and exchange, it becomes more difficult to recognize any pattern in the randomness of events. So many events vie for attention at any one time that no one of them can command it in its entirety, or in depth. Jameson famously captures this position with his thesis that late capitalism produces a schizophrenic consciousness.

Fragmentation, it seems to me, falls prey to the illusion of the new which Deleuze describes at the beginning of *Cinema 1*:

> [T]hings and people are always forced to conceal themselves, have to conceal themselves when they begin. What else could they do? They come into being

> within a set that no longer includes them and, in order not to be rejected, have to retain the characteristics, which they retain in common with the set. (Deleuze 1986: 2–3)

In a similar way, the image of a world of isolated flat sensations does not really challenge the older metaphysical 'image of thought' because it still retains the principle of unity as its basic organizational cell. If this is true then a post-metaphysical world is neither one fixed whole, nor a chaos of dispersed fragments. Caravaggio, Kane and Kant help us understand how, in the absence of any central unity, things can nonetheless hold together in the depth, wholeness and multiplicity of this world that is not 'One'.

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Notes

1. I would like to thank Ian Buchanan and the anonymous readers who provided very helpful comments on an earlier version of this paper.
2. While it is beyond the scope of this essay, it would be interesting to consider further the evolution of Deleuze's ideas on the autonomy of art and the creation of concepts from the *Cinema* books to *What is Philosophy*? Cf. Badiou 2005.
3. He has compared his readings to acts of buggery, or Immaculate Conception, and characterises his method as 'approaching an author from behind and giving him a child that would indeed be his but would nonetheless be monstrous.'(Deleuze 1995: 6) He does not simply follow another thinker, but occupies their ideas and transforms them into some new kind of assemblage.
4. On Gregg Toland's role in the development of cinema see Hilton Als' essay "The Cameraman" in *The New Yorker*, June 19, 2006, pp. 45–61.
5. I have explored the relation of time and movement in the *Cinema* books more fully in Crocker 2001.
6. Even when depth ceases to be central to visual art, as Clement Greenberg (1993) has said of 20th century painting, and when painting consists of 'blocs of sensation' as Deleuze has suggested, these aesthetic developments still find their origin in the baroque's break with figuration and content (Deleuze 2005).

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Wounds and Scars: Deleuze on the Time and Ethics of the Event

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> The wounds of the Spirit heal, and leave no scars behind
> – G. W. Hegel *Phenomenology of Spirit*

Deleuze's oeuvre is best understood as a philosophy of the wound synonymous with a philosophy of the event.[1] The philosophy of his immediate predecessors in the phenomenological tradition can thus be envisaged as constituting a philosophy of the scar, with phenomenological and embodied intentionality (including the significance given to habit, coping, etc.) resulting in a concomitant refusal to privilege the event as wound. Various consequences hang on this difference, but primarily it results in a very different ethico-political orientation in Deleuze's work in comparison to the tacit ethics of phronesis that can be ascribed to much of the post-Husserlian phenomenological tradition. Although this wound/scar typology may appear to be a metaphorical conceit, the motif of the wound recurs frequently and perhaps even symptomatically in many of Deleuze's texts, particularly where he is attempting to delineate some of the most important differences (transcendental, temporal, and ethical) between himself and his phenomenological predecessors.

Although a discussion of wounds and scars would normally register as spatial, these terms are explicitly temporal in Deleuze, who consistently refers to the aspect of time his work privileges as caesura, break, cut and wound – something akin to what Elizabeth Grosz' recent book calls the 'nick of time' (Grosz 2004). The priority he accords this nick of time, this temporal wound, does not follow from a commonsense understanding of temporal anteriority, such as the observation that scarification follows from, and is a direct causal consequence of, a prior

wound. Rather, Deleuze advocates a distinctively new understanding of both time and the relation between cause and effect in *Logic of Sense*. There the event is explicitly understood as an effect rather than a cause. Without yet explicating this somewhat counter-intuitive position that Deleuze develops through an engagement with Stoicism, suffice it to say he intends to problematise exclusively unidirectional, empiricist understandings of causality. Deleuze points to reversals that interrupt the order of brute physical causality, while insisting upon the subsistence of a more 'ghostly' or subterranean causality obtaining on the level of the virtual/transcendental, the 'quasi-cause,' which also haunts and at least partly produces the actual. Quasi-causality does not function on the basis of strict causal necessitation and determination. When Deleuze treats the event as synonymous with the wound, the wound is both temporal and transcendental, rather than an empirical event that happens. For him, the event never actually happens or is present; it is always that which has already happened, or is going to happen. As such, his manner of thinking the relation between wound and scar is not one of empirical antecedent or spatial succession, and, unlike the Hegelian epigram with which this essay began, there is no healing or overcoming of this transcendental temporal wound, i.e., the future that is perennially to come, the pure past that never was.

Likewise, few twentieth-century phenomenologists would endorse Hegel's comment, albeit for reasons antithetical to Deleuze. For the phenomenological tradition it is more accurate to say that all healing leaves scars. This includes the scars of historical time, which preclude the teleological understandings of history of both Hegel and Marx, for whom, in different ways, the scars of the dialectic can ultimately be overcome or sublated. We should also note that the attempted phenomenological reduction is itself necessarily incomplete, at least for those post-Husserlian phenomenologists who, paradoxically enough, provide phenomenological evidence for our inability to access consciousness purely and without remainder. For Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Sartre, among others, this 'return to the things themselves' is always partially successful and partially aborted (e.g. scarified). Inner and outer are always co-implicated and contaminated, and some residue of our socio-historical situation—e.g. being-in-the-world or what Heidegger calls 'mood'—is always presupposed.

In some respects, of course, Heidegger's account of the priority that Dasein must cede to the future, the 'not yet', presages aspects of the poststructuralist account of time, including Deleuze's, but the importance existentialism attributes to embodied comportment (and the

significance of coping and the ready-to-hand for Heidegger; equilibria for Merleau-Ponty) is also, arguably, accompanied by a priority ascribed to that which makes the world meaningful as a temporal binding or gathering. In the canonical rejections of phenomenology proffered in Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition*, *Logic of Sense*, and *What is Philosophy?* (with Félix Guattari), but also in Derrida's *Speech and Phenomena*, and, more recently, *On Touching: Jean-Luc Nancy*, the most telling and repeatedly expressed objections to phenomenology are fundamentally about time. More specifically, the objections deal with the way in which time predominantly gathers, scarifies, or conjoins rather than disjoins, thanks to a tacit reliance upon an untenable conception of the instant or 'now' moment, as well as by the way in which 'lived' time almost inevitably forms a neat and unified continuum. In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze makes this explicit in his critique of a temporality betrothed to good and common sense (the ur-doxa), which he argues continues to afflict phenomenology.[2]

I. Aion: The Event as Wound of Time

The theme of the wound is arguably one of the key aspects of Deleuze's *Logic of Sense*, but in order to understand its centrality it is first necessary to discuss a series of interrelated distinctions that undergird this text. Deleuze's strategy is to begin with something that seems to resemble a typical opposition, but which is soon shown to be an interrelated one, in that the terms involved cannot be considered complete without each other and that some kind of process of becoming obtains between them. The important concepts for our purposes are Aion and Chronos, surface and depth, wound and scar, event and state of affairs, and, imported from elsewhere (particularly from *Bergsonism* and *Difference and Repetition*), the virtual and the actual. Although they are certainly not synonyms (the Aion/Chronos distinction pertains to time, whereas surface/depth refers primarily to space, and both are involved in the paradoxical constitution of sense), these terms nonetheless have an isomorphism of function that maps on to the overarching distinction between the virtual and the actual which preoccupied Deleuze throughout his career. Schematically, the virtual refers to that which is creative, productive and transformative (a transcendental field of difference), whereas the actual refers to that which is created, produced, and of the realm of identities, sameness, and all that currently *is*. These distinctions also have an order of priority

embedded within them, in that Deleuze consistently associates Aion, surface, and wound (all of which are of the order of the virtual) with the event, or at least with the 'truth of the event.' Aion, surface, and wound, are also directly tied to the possibility of a new ethics, even if it is not an ethics that Deleuze himself thoroughly explicates.

In *Logic of Sense* there is a privilege given to surfaces over depths, as well as to that which breaks open the surface (but is nonetheless not opposed to it), namely the 'crack' or wound, which Deleuze insists does not reveal something deeper (Deleuze 2004: 11). This is intimately bound up with the temporal priority he gives to the time of the event, which does not occur in regular linear time, and to the pivotal distinction he draws between Aion and Chronos.[3] In the overtly Stoicist understanding of *Logic of Sense*, Aion is described as the time that constantly decomposes into elongated pasts and futures, whereas Chronos is said to be composed of a series of interlocking presents. Chronos measures temporal actualisation and the realisation of an event—its 'incarnation into the depths of acting bodies and its incorporation in a state of affairs' (Deleuze 2004: 73). Deleuze suggests that this latter time, which involves incorporation, mixtures, and depth, all figures of mediation, is the time of the scar, the realm of the actual, including bodies and states of affairs (Deleuze 2004: 10). It is, however, the incorporeal surface, rather than the corporeal depth, that Deleuze associates with the privileged time of Aion, which subdivides endlessly into the past and future, and the event that likewise never actually occurs in present time. The time is never present that allows for an event to be realised, or to definitively exist (Deleuze 2004: 64).

On this understanding, the event is 'always and at the same time something which has just happened and something which is about to happen; never something which is happening' (Deleuze 2004: 73), never an actuality. It subsists rather than exists. Whereas Deleuze suggests that Chronos 'is cyclical, measures the movement of bodies and depends on that matter which limits and fills it out', Aion is a 'pure straight line at the surface, incorporeal, unlimited, an empty form of time, independent of all matter' (Deleuze 2004: 73). The time of Aion is therefore independent of both matter and the present, which for Deleuze means that it is independent of habit, and thus of embodied forgetting, coping, and the maintenance of equilibria that is typical of bodies and states of affairs.[4] It is also independent of Reason, although that need not suggest that it is independent of the concept, or the virtual Idea. This is a curious and paradoxical thought, which suggests there is some kind of rupture between the transcendental and the empirical that refuses mediation,

even while asymmetrical reciprocal determination continues to obtain between the orders of the virtual and the actual.[5] That gap or wound is a certain aspect of time, and in positing this temporal independence that is at the heart of what he describes as his 'secret dualism' (Deleuze 2004: 4), there is a sense in which Deleuze's work appears to be pre-modern, or pre-Kantian, despite the fact that there are also various ways in which his work can be understood as a radicalisation of the Kantian conception of time and the transcendental.[6] The wound that refuses mediation and recuperation (scarification) involves the non-presentist and more paradoxical manifestations of time.

There is also an asymmetrical reciprocal determination that takes place between these key oppositions in the *Logic of Sense*, modelled on the virtual/actual distinction. Deleuze insists that the actual ramifies back upon the virtual, albeit in a manner to which he gives less attention than the reverse determination from the virtual to the actual.[7] Deleuze insists upon the necessity of relations between the actual and the virtual, and, at times, a similar logic seems to pertain to the distinctions between Aion and Chronos, surface and depth, and event and state of affairs. Nonetheless, and despite the odd disclaimer, these distinctions also involve a hierarchy, an order of subordination, whereby the transcendental or virtual term of the pair is prioritised in both a philosophical and an ethical sense. For example, in relation to the surface/depth relation, Deleuze observes that in depth it is through 'infinite identity that contraries communicate' (Deleuze 2004: 200). Written just a year previously, the entirety of *Difference and Repetition* is devoted to undermining the primacy of such a philosophy. In *Logic of Sense* itself, we are told that the realm of the surface, and the counter-actualisation associated with it, has, by contrast, already attained to 'infinite distance' (Deleuze 2004: 200). Similarly, Deleuze's descriptions of the 'monocentered' return of Chronos evince his attitude towards this aspect of time (Deleuze 2004: 201). He also links Chronos directly to both nouns and equivocity (Deleuze 2004: 211). The latter is not genuine ontology, for him, because it does not reach the order of verbs and univocity (in the terms of *Logic of Sense)* or the eternal return of difference rather than sameness (in the terms of *Difference and Repetition*). If Chronos and depths are disparaged, Aion and the surface are, on the contrary, praised as 'the transcendental field itself, and the locus of sense and expression' (Deleuze 2004: 142). Finally, the time of Chronos is closely (if not inextricably) associated with an ethics of *ressentiment*, whereas Aion and the surface are fundamental to any affirmative ethics that accepts Deleuze's basic, Stoic-inspired, premise:

'either ethics makes no sense at all, or this is what it means and has nothing else to say: not to be unworthy of what happens to us.' (Deleuze 2004: 169)

Before we get to the problem of ethics, however, it is necessary to comprehend Deleuze's repeated suggestion that events are only effects (Deleuze 2004: 10, 29, 241). How then, can an event be said to be an effect? According to Deleuze, the reversals in Lewis Carroll's *Alice* books give us some kind of indication. There, characters are punished before having done anything wrong, or they cry before pricking themselves (Deleuze 2004: 5). Now, there may be empirical explanations for such behaviour, but these are not of the order of the event. To focus upon them would leave what he calls the expressive aspect of the event untouched, which does not obey the logic of anticipation, rational reconstruction, and prediction. Empirical explanations fail to see that what has occurred is never wounding because of any particular actuality, whatever it may be, but that we are wounded because of the prospect of worse 'to come' or because of the relation that any given actuality bears to the complex of temporal syntheses that is our past, noting that this memorial past synthesises from passing moments a form that never existed before that operation (Roffe 2002). As such, it is the future and the past that wound us; that is the time of the event. According to Deleuze—prior to the later influence of Guattari—psychoanalytic explanations were capable of understanding this and thus promised to provide the science of the event (Deleuze 2004: 242–3). And it is easy to see why he might have been impressed with psychoanalysis. Despite Freud's scientific pretensions, psychoanalysis need not require an actually occurring, actually wounding, primal scene to which the child and adult subsequently adjust. This is partly why Karl Popper famously calls it unfalsifiable, and, without buying into a Popperian objectivism, we will consider here the philosophical efficacy of the particular techniques of transcendental argumentation that Deleuze employs. While Deleuze calls into question the normalising tendency he finds at the heart of psychoanalysis – hence his positive discussion of the 'perverse' structure towards the end of *Logic of Sense* (Deleuze 2004: 280–1, 341) – for him psychoanalysis nonetheless managed to grasp the event as an effect, and one that does not simply follow from any single cause, or from a concatenation of actual causes constituting any given state of affairs.

This is because, for Deleuze, the event is subject to a double causality (a double structure), one aspect of which involves a mixture of bodies and states of affairs (e.g. empirical causes), the other aspect being the

configuration of different incorporeal events that are of the order of the quasi-cause (Deleuze 2004: 108). Psychoanalysis, too, has a double structure or a secret dualism at play in it, in the manner in which the symbolic order of language is disjunct from the realm of bodies. Deleuze endorses aspects of this account in the latter stages of *Logic of Sense*, and his key point is that the event also results from the quasi-causal interaction of other events in the realm of the virtual, which is associated with *both* past and future contra Alain Badiou's interpretation which associates the virtual rather exclusively with the past (Badiou 1999: 52; Badiou 2007: 38). The virtual relation between different incorporeal events is not a relation of causal necessity; on the contrary, it is a relation of expression (Deleuze 2004: 194). Event-effects are said to assume amongst themselves a relation of expression that is quasi-causal: as such, the event haunts and subsists without inhabiting bodies or places. Exactly how this relation differs from ordinary causation is not spelled out in any detail by Deleuze who suggests that this quasi-causal relation with the virtual/transcendental is unknowable. We can know that it occurs, but we cannot trace particular chains of quasi-causation.

While Deleuze acknowledges that the event does have immediate corporeal causes (Deleuze 2004: 10), and states of affairs do precipitate the event, they are not sufficient causes of the event itself. Explicating the event at the level of corporeal cause(s) and historical conditions always leaves something important untouched. For example, there may be a momentous historical event (let's say May '68) brought about by certain preconditions (economic, social, etc.) that can be fairly rigorously delineated, but that actual state of affairs is not commensurate with the Event of May '68. As an effect, the event is always that which has just happened or is about to happen, but never of the order of that which currently is happening. He hence associates the event with reversals between the orders of past and future, but not the present.[8] The event is thus virtual, perhaps even extra-worldly. It can never come about, but produces and conditions that which does come about. According to Peter Hallward's provocative interpretation, this means that Deleuze's work is not sufficiently concerned with the world and history (Hallward 2006). While such an interpretation arguably ignores the double causality at work in the architectonic substructure of Deleuze's philosophy, Hallward is right in one important respect: the emphasis Deleuze gives to Aion over Chronos means he also prioritises the effect as quasi-cause (the virtual) over the cause (actual) itself. There is indeed a sidelining of ordinary causality (Chronos, bodies, states of affairs, mixtures, depths,

etc.), as Hallward complains. To put it another way, the emphasis upon creativity and difference undergirding Deleuze's work tacitly devalues 'average, everydayness' (and thus scarification and mediation).[9]

II. Counter-actualisation: An Ethic of the Wound

Does this conception of the transcendental devalue ordinary causation of both a scientific and embodied bearing, thus resulting in an immanently unjustified hierarchy and a tacit ethics? To put it another way, what does this transcendental philosophy of time mean for the wound? Wounds are incorporeal for Deleuze and hence not part of ordinary causation: instead, they are regularly treated as synonymous with the event. For example, he speaks of 'the Event itself, the result, the wound as eternal truth' (Deleuze 2004: 51) and asks 'why is every event a kind of plague, wound, war or death?' (Deleuze 2004: 172), and 'is it the case that every event is of this type— forest, battle and wound—all the more profound since it occurs at the surface?' (Deleuze 2004: 12). These comments are bound up with his discussion of Joe Bousquet, to whom he attributes the Stoic maxim: 'my wound existed before me, I was born to embody it' (Deleuze 2004: 174). As is clear from this maxim, the wound cannot be understood as something that accidentally and contingently befalls us. That would be to treat it as an empirical event, rather than of the order of the virtual, the event-effect. But what might a virtual wound be? What is surreptitiously being imported into the equation by the naming of the virtual event-effect as 'wound' and opposing that to the scarified realm of bodies and their recuperation? My questions for Deleuze, then, are threefold: first, is this event-wound priority tenable? Second, can an ethics be deduced from this transcendental priority? And third, what ensues (consequentially) when a transcendental and ethical priority is given to the non-embodied, to the virtual wound that is avowedly 'independent of all matter'? Does it mean that his political work runs the risk of degenerating into an eternally patient moral perfectionism, which eschews both rational calculation as well as the basic causality of bodies in favour of stylised prophesies and transcendental dreams of the disruptions of the past and future?

The full picture of Deleuze's ethics is rather more difficult to grasp than is usually assumed. Frequently, we are told that his work synthesises the respective ethics embedded in the Nietzschean and Spinozian philosophies, ethics that eschew transcendent judgment as well as rule-based law.[10] While this is at least partly true, such a characterisation does not adequately account for the fact this immanent

ethics cannot be understood as immanent to the actual physico-biological world, but is more aptly said to be contrary to it, or at least contrary to the dominant aspect of it. Indeed, it is only on seeing the manner in which counter-actualisation (as well as associated ideas like deterritorialisation) is bound up with the time of Aion and the virtual, that we can begin to grasp what an ethics of the event-effect might be.

While Deleuze does not offer any moral prescriptions, there is a clear normative force at work in the distinction between Aion and Chronos. Hence his rhetorical question, 'is there not in the Aion a labyrinth very different from that of Chronos – a labyrinth more terrible still, which commands another eternal return and another ethic (an ethics of Effects)?' (Deleuze 2004: 72). Despite the fact that this appears to be an open question, his invocation of '*another* eternal return' here is important. We know that there is both an ontological and normative force given to the time of the eternal return of *difference* in *Difference and Repetition*. The eternal return of the *same*, however, is described as being of only the most simplistic and introductory value (Deleuze 1994: 91). Without considering the warrant for this as an interpretation of Nietzsche, something very similar is going on in *Logic of Sense*.[11] Here Deleuze not only calls for 'another eternal return', but explicitly associates the wisdom of the actual cause with the eternal return of the same, a moral and eternal wisdom that he denigrates (Deleuze 2004: 72). There are innumerable other comments from Deleuze that suggest that it is an ethics of effects that he is ultimately interested in and the more committed to. He comments, for example, that 'Paul Valery had a profound idea: what is most deep is the skin. This is a Stoic discovery, which presupposes a great deal of wisdom and entails an entire ethic' (Deleuze 2004: 12). We will come back to this purported entailment, but while Deleuze proffers no prescriptive or rule-based account of ethics, and while this invocation of another ethic (an ethic of Aion) does not suggest that we can simply dispense with an ethics of Chronos and the depths (rules, rationality, causal considerations), it seems incontrovertible that there is (in *Logic of Sense* specifically, and arguably in Deleuze's work more generally), a definite priority given to the ethics of Aion (an ethics of non-presentist time), which is synonymous with an ethics of the wound. This ethics is a product of Deleuze's appropriation of the Stoic ethic of willing the event, and the inflexion that his concept of counter-actualisation gives to it.

Deleuze suggests that Stoic ethics oscillates between two poles: on the one hand, between advocating the greatest possible participation in a divine vision that gathers in depth all of the physical causes; on the other

hand, it is also concerned with willing the event (surface), whatever it may be, and without any interpretation or intent to integrate it within the unity of all physical causes (Deleuze 2004: 163–4). Deleuze suggests that the first Stoic pole is problematic because of the physicalism it presupposes. For him, events differ in nature from the corporeal causes from which they are the result; they have other laws (not deductive-nomological ones) and other incorporeal forms of relation, i.e. quasi-causal and expressive (Deleuze 2004: 164). Although it is arguable that he simply replaces the Stoic impetus towards a gathering in depth of all physical causes with an affirmation of the univocity that obtains between virtual event-effects, it must be noted that on his account, 'the unity of events or effects amongst themselves is very different from the unity of corporeal causes amongst themselves' (Deleuze 2004: 75). It is, however, the second pole of the Stoic ethic with which he is primarily concerned and which he wishes to rework for his own purposes. Accomplishing this second aspect – willing the surface event without interpretation – depends pivotally upon one's relation to time, because it is not a matter of simply willing all that befalls us. That particular interpretation of *amor fati* is insufficient and amounts to a form of indifferent resignation Deleuze finds ethically problematic (Deleuze 2004: 170). As John Sellars puts it, it is a human Stoicism that tacitly remains resentful, rather than a cosmic Stoicism that involves both affirmation and a more paradoxical relation to time (Sellars 2006: 164). Indeed, according to Deleuze, the genuine Stoic sage must simultaneously wait for the event as something eternally yet to come and always already passed (Deleuze 2004: 166). While Deleuze argues that the sage wills the actualisation of the event-effect and the giving-body to the incorporeal effect (Deleuze 2004: 166), even then the sage ought not to will exactly what occurs, whatever it may be, but something within that which occurs (Deleuze 2004: 170).

Bousquet offers as an example of what this might involve. As Sellars comments, 'the task for Bousquet was to transform the event of the wound from a tragic external assault that afflicted him into a vital and necessary event in his life that made it possible for him to discover himself as a writer, to become who he already was' (Sellars 2006: 161). We can conclude from this that despising any particular wounding-event is a form of *ressentiment*, as, to a lesser extent, is the traditional Stoic ethic of expecting suffering and misfortune but soldiering on. Both make a transcendental mistake when they treat the wound empirically. On the other hand, embracing the event and the transformations it induces— not its brute actuality— is *amor fati*. This is the rather stark alternative Deleuze seems to leave us with, and he goes on to encourage us to

become the offspring of one's events, not of one's actions. One must become the offspring of the virtual intensities that subsist in oneself, which is another way of saying that one must express the wound and make it the quasi-cause of one's life. Now this cannot mean to become the offspring of one's emotions or passions, or even to intensify one's emotions and passions. After all, emotions are, for Deleuze, bound to a subject, and considered to be of the order of a state of affairs rather than of the order of the event (Deleuze 2004: 7). It is difficult to pinpoint positively what his ethics might involve, but it seems to require the recognition that we are all traversed by some kind of fault-line (a virtual, impersonal intensity) that is supra-individual and not confined to the realms of bodies and states of affairs. Whether this faultline or wound can be distinctive for each of us or ultimately partakes in one transcendental wound is not clear, but it is the concept of counter-actualisation that he uses to more fully describe what is involved in the appropriate manner of giving body to an incorporeal event-effect.

In describing his ethic of counter-actualisation, Deleuze suggests that each time the event is inscribed in the flesh, 'we must double this painful actualisation by a counter-actualisation which limits, moves and transfigures it' (Deleuze 2004: 182). Inscribing the event in the flesh (in the realm of bodies and habits) is hence necessary for the sage and for ethics, but it is not the key aspect of his ethic (Deleuze 2004: 192). Rather, it is the potentialities of that actuality that are expressed, not merely the literal re-inscription of the same (Williams 1997: 232–46). Not pathological repetition, then, but repetition with a difference. Counter-actualisation must 'limit, move, transfigure' and mime that which effectively occurs. While the event is brought about by the living present, by bodies, states of affairs and reason, its eternal truth is irreducible to them (Deleuze 2004: 182). The event may be the result of the actions and passion of bodies, but his ethics affirms its irreducibility to these origins, done by linking it to a transcendental quasi-cause (wound, Aion, virtual, etc.) rather than to the empirical cause (Deleuze 2004: 109). This is an ethics of the mime and of acting. Sensations and intensities can be extended beyond the singular through the expressive and dramatic practices of counter-actualisation. For Deleuze, it is 'the free man, who grasps the event, and does not allow it to be actualised as such without enacting, the actor, its counter-actualisation' (Deleuze 2004: 173). This counter-actualisation involves a delicate operation, in that we need to limit ourselves to the counter-actualisation of an event (and thus embrace our wounding virtual-effect) without allowing the full

actualisation of this wound that characterises the victim and the patient (Deleuze 2004: 179).

For Deleuze and Bousquet alike, the wound exists before us, before any particular subject or individuality, and yet we are born to embody it, thus 'becoming the quasi-cause of what is produced within us' (Deleuze 2004: 169). Again, it is difficult to understand precisely what this means, but we know what it does not mean. We should not be indifferently resigned to whatever happens to us, as in the commonly received understanding of Stoicism, and it is also important to note Deleuze's second and inverse warning: 'counter-actualisation is nothing, it belongs to a buffoon when it operates alone and pretends to have the value of *what could have happened*. But to be the mime of *what effectively occurs*... is to give the truth of the event the only chance of not being confused with its inevitable actualisation' (Deleuze 2004: 182). There are then, two main ways of misunderstanding and mistakenly living his ethics of counter-actualisation: assenting to whatever actually happens indifferently and with resignation, or flippantly miming other possibilities that bear no effective relation to what happens. No prescription can tell us how to accomplish this, but we can see that counter-actualisation endeavours to achieve that most paradoxical of things: to express and even illicitly embody the virtual, to feel that time-which-is-not. If the present (Chronos) measures the temporal realisation of an event, and the way in which the wound is covered over and incorporated into a state of affairs (Deleuze 2004: 73), counter-actualisation depends upon maintaining a relation to time that opens itself to the immemorial past (that past that defies conscious memorial reconstruction) and the future that is to come, a time that retreats and advances, divides endlessly into a proximate past and an imminent future. This is the time of Aion, the wound.

How can an ethics be based on time, and on the aspect of an event that never actually occurs but is understood as something within that which occurs, and which is also said to be both always already passed and yet to come? In one respect Deleuze is simply following in the footsteps of Nietzsche. What Nietzsche diagnoses as *ressentiment* (disgust for life that trades in negativity) is a revenge against the fact that time passes. The major form of this *ressentiment* results from artificially delimiting time and insisting upon the priority of the present. From the perspective of some particular present, we might rail against suffering and injustices, whether they be anticipated or endured. The problem with this attitude, however, is that it treats the wound-event as somehow wholly outside of us. This is the reverse of what Deleuzian counter-actualisation aims to

achieve. It wants the wound to give birth to us, but not to be the same as us. Deleuze insists that there is no other ill-will than *ressentiment* of the event, and, given that we also know that for him the truth of the event is Aion (Deleuze 2004: 166, 182), we can conclude that there is no other ill-will than *ressentiment* of Aion. For counter-actualisation to be successful, although it cannot simply return to the virtual, it must both show the manner in which the virtual and the time of Aion breathe life into that which occurs, as well as simultaneously allow this to happen. This is the tension between the 'is' and the 'ought', the descriptive and the normative that Deleuze's philosophy negotiates and sometimes conflates. What does that mean for the role of the present, for Chronos, for bodies, states of affairs (including empirical wounds and suffering), and even for Reason, which Deleuze also suggests is a being of the present? (Deleuze 2004: 74). They are all insufficient for an ethics, and his point is not merely that some kind of dialectical relation with an ethics of Aion needs to be recognised, in order to balance or moderate the monopoly that an ethics of Chronos has hitherto enjoyed. Rather, his point is once again both transcendental and normative: the time of Aion and the virtual are the condition for the event, and from them he also derives what is arguably the governing normative principle of his work: counter-actualisation.

The important question then becomes the following: can a transcendental condition also entail a normative principle, even one as opaque as this ethic of counter-actualisation? For Deleuze, the transcendental needs to provide the conditions for real experience. If we grant for a moment that his philosophy accomplishes this in its descriptions of the molecular, difference-in-itself, the virtual, the Aionic aspect of time, etc., in what sense does an ethics of counter-actualisation follow from this? It is not clear that it does. Nor is it clear why Aion and the truth of the event need to be understood as 'independent of all matter'. One would have thought that the transcendental condition, the realm of the virtual, is never wholly independent of matter; indeed, by Deleuze's own lights (as evinced by the concept of reciprocal determination in *Difference and Repetition*), it is not.[12] Does this independence of matter, this 'secret dualism' of *Logic of Sense*, wherein Aion and the event are privileged, simply reproduce itself at a moral level, with a moral hierarchy? It seems to me that it does. If so, this is philosophically problematic in itself, but there are also reasons to question this ethic in its own right. Because it parallels the movement of the quasi-cause and is associated with the virtual, an ethics of counter-actualisation necessarily resists the imposition of any form of criteria.

As such, using this ethics to discriminate between different modes of existence is exceedingly difficult. While this problem is partly overcome in other of Deleuze's texts, especially those on Spinoza and Nietzsche, this ethic also (illegitimately, in my view) consigns coping, equilibria, and the body of depths, to a secondary status. This is problematic because it is aristocratic (Mengue 2003), which is also, perhaps, another way of saying, 'extra-worldly' (Hallward 2006). This is a strange and counter-intuitive consequence for a philosophy of immanence, and it seems to me that it arises from competing tendencies in Deleuze's work that are never satisfactorily resolved: that is, his post-Kantian philosophy of time and the transcendental (which intercedes intermittently in his ethics), and his pre-Kantian ethics of immanence (which is also ontological), which should theoretically do away with the hierarchies that his transcendental philosophy of time tacitly depends upon.

III. Reflections on the Broader Deleuzian Oeuvre

Although these aspects of Deleuze's work—the transcendental priority given to Aion, the virtual, and a resultant ethics—are foregrounded in a distinctive way in *Logic of Sense*, similar positions prevail in the very different idioms of *Difference and Repetition*, *What is Philosophy?* and *Bergsonism*.

In *Logic of Sense*, the incorporeal wound is the wound of time, but not of all time understood as some kind of whole; rather, it is the wound of a particular disjunctive aspect of time – Aion rather than Chronos. More particularly, Aion is composed of a simultaneous movement in two directions, opening upon both the future and the past. In the terms of *Difference and Repetition*, Aion hence encompasses two different temporal syntheses, memorial and futural, and in *Difference and Repetition* it is only the latter of the two which Deleuze explicitly understands as caesura (Deleuze 1994: 89, 92). It is the futural synthesis of time (the caesura) that fractures the 'I' and which Deleuze suggests 'must be determined in the image of a unique and tremendous event' (Deleuze 1994: 89). This futural time, exemplified for him by the idea of the eternal return of difference, simultaneously conditions and undermines both habitual and memorial time, and cannot itself be reduced to its corporeal conditions (Deleuze 1994: 90–1). While it is a wound that refuses mediation, Deleuze nonetheless implies that we can still, somehow, live this time, if only we could become good throwers of the dice, embracing both chance and necessity in the manner that

Nietzsche's philosophy of the eternal return of difference is said to teach us.

In order to understand the priority Deleuze gives to the future synthesis of time in *Difference and Repetition*, it is worth reflecting on what Deleuze has to say about Péguy and Kierkegaard. Both of them are described by Deleuze as great philosophers of repetition, yet he suggests that they were not ready to pay the necessary price and embrace this radical futural wound. For him, 'they entrusted this supreme repetition, repetition as a category of the future, to faith . . . However, faith invites us to rediscover once and for all God and the self in a common resurrection . . . they realise Kantianism by entrusting to faith the task of overcoming the speculative death of God and healing the wound in the self' (Deleuze 1994: 95). In other words, his objection to their philosophies of repetition is that they heal this temporal wound, cover it over, in a very different manner to their predecessor Hegel but with the same result nonetheless. With Nietzsche's death of god and the wars of the twentieth century, however, things have changed on the philosophical scene. Indeed, I have contended that with post-Husserlian phenomenology the healing is never complete and perfect but always scarificatory.[13] As such, phenomenology can plausibly be characterised as tacitly presupposing an ethic of scars (coping),[14] a phronesis that mediates, or a wisdom that searches for the middle (Gallagher 1993: 298–305), and therefore it constitutes a philosophy of common-sense.[15] But the important question is whether common-sense is automatically worthy of condemnation and warranting replacement with becoming a 'little alcoholic, a little crazy . . . just enough to extend the crack' (Deleuze 2004: 179), worthy, that is, of Deleuze's conviction that 'health alone does not suffice' (Deleuze 2004: 182). Clearly I remain unconvinced by Deleuze's answers in this regard, at least insofar as there is an ethical privilege granted to the crack (wound), madness, and the virtual event-effect. But based on the above we might risk the following epochal formulation: time, *Geist*, and history heal all wounds for Hegel; God heals the temporal wound for Peguy and Kierkegaard; for the post-Husserlian phenomenologists time imperfectly scars; and with post-phenomenology (in particular Deleuze and Derrida) it is the wound of time itself that is revalued in a transcendental move that tacitly diminishes the scar.

Against a certain postmodern reception of Deleuze as a philosopher of the body, there is a sense in which this transcendental move also diminishes the actions and passions of bodies. Although all actualisations necessarily involve creativity and transformation for

Deleuze, it is nonetheless the case that the force for this change comes from the virtual, Aion, the time which is not. In this respect, Deleuze's transcendental philosophy of time, and his associated ethics, subtly disparage the imperfect corporeal scarification and mediation that is always already at work.[16] To see how this is so, it is worth briefly considering Deleuze's detailed treatment of the virtual/actual distinction in *Bergsonism*. Deleuze directly confronts the question of whether Bergson's position amounts to a dualism or a monism, and in describing Bergson's methodological strategy of division he also makes an observation that seems to bear crucially upon his own modus operandi. Deleuze states that:

> [T]here is some resemblance between intuition as a method of division and transcendental analysis. If the composite represents the fact, it must be divided into tendencies or into pure presences that only exist in principle ... We go beyond experience to the conditions of experience. (Deleuze 1988: 23)

Deleuze adds:

> By dividing the composite according to two tendencies, with only one showing the way a thing varies qualitatively in time, Bergson effectively gives himself the means of "choosing" the right side in each case; that of the essence. (Deleuze 1988: 32)

According to Deleuze, this does not depend on arbitrary inspiration, but it is unclear how this might be so without a vicious circularity, e.g. picking the qualitative over the quantitative as Badiou (1999: 24–5) suggests. More to the point, however, might we also conclude that this is the manner in which Deleuze's own work proceeds, given that Deleuze himself suggests the comparison between Bergson's method and his own transcendental analyses? Indeed, we have seen that the various oppositions that concern Deleuze ultimately involve a hierarchy of sorts, in which one term (i.e. those associated with the virtual, including Aion, surface, the event, etc.) is the transcendental condition of the other (i.e. those associated with the actual, including Chronos, depths, states of affairs), and the former also has an ethical impetus associated with it. There is an axiomatic preference for the virtual over the actual (in both a transcendental and ethical sense) and for counter-actualisation over actualisation. These discriminations only make sense insofar as a 'secret dualism' persists in his evaluative scheme, even if it may ultimately be a part of an ontological monism as the doctrine of univocity suggests.

Indeed, despite Deleuze following Bergson in certain respects and intermittently offering an account of actualisation as being necessarily creative and transformative (e.g. evolution), it is also worth considering his account of the prototype of counter-actualisation as it appears in *Bergsonism*. In this intriguing text, Deleuze spends some time detailing four aspects of actualisation: what he calls, 'translation and rotation, which form the properly psychic moments; dynamic movement, the attitude of the body that is necessary to the stable equilibrium of the two preceding determinations; and finally mechanical movement, the motor scheme that represents the final stage of actualisation . . . the adaptation of the past to the present' (Deleuze 1988: 70). Despite the attention given to these psychic and sensory processes of actualisation, the metaphor of 'mechanism' here again betrays Deleuze's view of habit as being too closely aligned to mere 'bare repetition' and of the order of the merely empirical. These processes of actualisation are understood as akin to brute nature, and need to be supplemented by another process, an inorganic or orgiastic one. Indeed, Deleuze adds a fifth element which radically differs in kind from these first four, and which he describes in almost precisely the same terms as what in *Logic of Sense* he calls counter-actualisation: 'a kind of displacement by which the past is embodied only in terms of a present that is different from that which it has been' (Deleuze 1988: 71). As we have seen, this counter-actualisation that partakes of the virtual, although it is embodied, owes its value to that in it which is not embodied. As such, the virtual retains an ethical priority over mere mechanism, and the 'great souls', artists and mystics, manage to embody this virtuality in its purest form (Deleuze 1988: 112). However, this religious and mystical aspect to the last few pages of *Bergsonism* is not entirely a reflection of Bergson's philosophy: it also reflects Deleuze's own enduring, if sometimes undisclosed, commitment to a secret dualism.[17]

Some of these tendencies are also apparent in *What is Philosophy?*, where Deleuze and Guattari recapitulate many of these ideas regarding the virtual and the actual, and the motif of the wound and the scar also return. For example, Deleuze and Guattari suggest it is the conceptual personae who counter-effectuates events, who wills war against past and future wars, who wills 'the wound against all scars' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 160). Moreover, in redescribing the virtual and actual distinction, they also suggest:

> [F]rom everything that a subject may live, from its own body, from other bodies and objects distinct from it, and from the state of affairs or

> physico-mathematical field that determines them, the event releases a vapour that does not resemble them and that takes the battlefield, the battle, and the wound as components or variations of a pure event. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 159)[18]

As such, Deleuze and Guattari reaffirm that the event is actualised or effectuated when inserted into a state of affairs, but counter-actualised or counter-effectuated when abstracted from states of affairs so as to isolate its concept. Hence there is still a sense in which one needs to disembody oneself from states of affairs and extract oneself from a lived situation (both of which are treated as ordered and monotonous) in order to embody the incorporeal event and to experience the counter-forces that might have been, and, in a certain paradoxical sense, nonetheless still are. While the point is arguably not to take oneself 'out of this world,' as in the title of Hallward's recent book, but rather to live the event 'in the world' (noting that 'world' must be understood in an expanded and non-empirical sense) in a way other than the way in which it first presents itself, the spirit of the injunction is nonetheless to be true to the aspect of the wound (event) that does not and cannot appear in the world.

Now it might be protested that Deleuze's indebtedness to empiricism and his sustained discussions of habit complicate this claim that he marginalises the actual, bodies, scars, etc., and in a certain sense they do. For him, habit is fundamental to the constitution of subjectivity. This is clear as early as *Empiricism and Subjectivity*, and also in *Difference and Repetition*. His analyses are highly acute in this regard, but it is important to recognise that habit is nonetheless the lesser (ontologically) of the three syntheses of time he describes in chapter two of *Difference and Repetition*. While in both an empirical and logical sense there cannot, for Deleuze, be a subject without habit, it is the motif of binding that dominates his descriptions of this synthesis of time. We must note that in the context of his discussion of the three syntheses of time, Deleuze says of the habitual synthesis that 'a scar is the sign not of a past wound but of "the present fact of having been wounded": we can say that it is the contemplation of the wound, that it contracts all the instants which separate us from it into a living present' (Deleuze 1994: 77). This suggests that the condition of habitual time is the wound (futural time, difference-in-itself). However, this transcendental privilege also becomes an ethical one when Deleuze insists on the importance of the time of apprenticeship and the way it never leaves us and is never fully mastered (Deleuze 1994: 25). His overarching ethic is hence not

one of phronesis, of practical wisdom within a given embodied and cultural context. If an ethics of phronesis can be seen tacitly at work in most phenomenology, with its communitarian inclinations, this is clearly not the case for Deleuze. On the contrary, it is an ethic of jolting this world (of 'time out of joint'), and of disturbing the equanimity of the experiences of wisdom and mastery.

In regard to the ongoing question of Deleuze's 'secret dualism' and the relationship that obtains between the transcendental (virtual) and the actual, it is worth noting that even in *Difference and Repetition* there is said to be a 'vast difference' between 'material and spiritual' repetition (Deleuze 1994: 84), between the actual and the virtual. Even though the transcendental (virtual) is not fixed but fluid, and in an asymmetrical relation of reciprocal determination with the actual, it nonetheless retains a priority (via the quasi-cause, via counter-actualisation) over the body and states of affairs. It is an epiphenomenal and temporal wound that not only has a philosophical order of priority, but also an ethical one. As such, his work constitutes an ethics of the virtual, or an ethics of the event-effect. Grasping this depends upon seeing the significance of his philosophy of time and its anti-presentism, along with the wound that time opens up both individually and virtually. His ethical principles derive from a hierarchical transcendental philosophy that gives to the body the lesser role: even when Deleuze talks of 'sensations' they come from the virtual and the surface more than from the realm of bodies and depths. If one thinks this characterisation is too swift given his Spinozian declarations that we do not yet know what a body can do, it must be noted, again, that such transformations can and must come from outside the body, from something akin to the virtual (Deleuze 1990: 226). Despite the profound excavations that his work exerts upon the Cartesian mind, the philosophy of the subject, and the philosophy of representation, Deleuze's philosophy nonetheless reinvents a strange amalgam of the modern and the pre-modern, reinventing a form of dualism that is uniquely his own. No doubt that is a major accomplishment understood in terms of the creation of concepts, but it is also one that deserves to have these and other critical questions put to it.

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Notes

1. This essay has benefited from the assistance of Jon Roffe, the *Deleuze Studies* referees and editorial team, and the Australian Research Council.
2. Cf. Reynolds and Roffe 2006.
3. These terms are also used in *A Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 262).
4. Cf. Hallward 2006.
5. This is not to dispute his famously opaque concept of transcendental empiricism, found largely in *Difference and Repetition*, which purports to allow one to discern the conditions for actual rather than merely possible experience. There is clearly a relation between the orders of the virtual and the actual, as well as something about each that necessarily resists the other. My main concern in this paper, however, is with the manner in which a dualist evaluative scheme makes possible his ethics. On this interpretation, transcendental empiricism is really an attempt to foreground the significance of the virtual and the transcendental (and their expressive 'quasi-causality') so that we don't have an all-encompassing realm of brute empiricism/physicalism, which Deleuze refers to as involving merely 'bare repetition'.
6. Cf. Williams 2006.
7. In *Out of this World*, Peter Hallward suggests that they ultimately conflate into a monistic univocity, precisely because what I label the transcendental component of the distinction, that which does not refer to *l'actualite*, is in fact ultimately all that there is. Deleuze, however, consistently speaks of a 'secret dualism' in *Logic of Sense*, with, as we have seen, the body and states of affairs the lesser but arguably not entirely effaced term of the dualism. I return to this question below, but it revolves around the extent to which Deleuze is read as a Bergsonian, since for Bergson, at least on Deleuze's account, we might understand the actual as but a tendency of the virtual. Hallward and Alain Badiou interpret Deleuze and Bergson's positions as very closely related, but it needs to be noted that Deleuze's understanding of the virtual is not exactly synonymous with Bergson's – Bergson's conception focuses upon the past and memory, but Deleuze adds a complicated account of the futural synthesis of time to the equation, especially in *Difference and Repetition*.
8. He complicates this account towards the end of *Logic of Sense* in the series titled 'Aion', where he details the different modalities of the present and instant that are characteristic of Aion and Chronos. Adequately addressing this material,

which is in tension with some of the other formulations in his book, is beyond us here.

9. This term is taken from Heidegger's *Being and Time* and highlights the privilege it initially accords to the 'ready-to-hand', to the pragmatic and 'equipmental' relation to place and objects.
10. Cf. Smith 2007. Smith's admirably clear and precise essay encapsulates a certain thrust of Deleuze's ethics, but it has relatively little to say about the extra-worldly ethic of *Logic of Sense*. In the course of a discussion of Primo Levi's life and work, Ian Buchanan's *Deleuzism* (2000: 77–87) offers an interesting analysis of the link between counter-actualisation and concept creation, something I have not been able to explore here.
11. In fact, Nietzsche propounds competing and perhaps mutually exclusive interpretations of the eternal return, suggesting in *The Gay Science* that there would be 'nothing new in it', seemingly resisting Deleuze's conviction that we ought to understanding it as being concerned with the eternal return of difference rather than sameness (Nietzsche 2001: 341).
12. Cf. Williams 2005: 89–105.
13. Consider the central role that time plays in Merleau-Ponty's (1994: 345–6) famous account of ambiguity in *Phenomenology of Perception*, and the manner in which it breaches what has been considered to be inner and outer. The philosophy of ambiguity is a philosophy of the scar. Cf. Reynolds 2006.
14. While there is no single ethical and political position that we can attribute to phenomenological philosophers and to post-structuralist philosophers, certain tendencies can nonetheless be associated with each of them. Phenomenologists tend to be more communitarian in outlook, emphasising the role of ethos in the constitution of individual moral agents – consider the work of 'neo-phenomenologists' like Hubert Dreyfus, Charles Taylor, and Paul Ricoeur, along with the early explicit critiques of liberalism advanced by Merleau-Ponty and de Beauvoir. They are essentially communitarian in their focus upon the difficulties inherent in liberalism's atomistic conception of the subject; they will not accept the supposition of a rational disengaged agent, even as a regulative ideal. If the ethical model par excellence for most phenomenologists is something like phronesis (and a kind of virtue ethics), this is not the case for poststructuralists for reasons related to their philosophies of time, their denunciation of habit, skills, gathering, and their consistently radical politics of the new and the different.
15. Gallagher's paper makes it apparent that phenomenological phronesis is generally rejected by poststructuralist thinkers (as in Derrida and Deleuze, where it is understood to be common sense), or inadequately thematised, as Gallagher suggests is the case with Lyotard. It seems to me that Gallagher is right that there is a tacit denial of the importance of phronesis (or Gadamerian *Verstehen*), habits, ethos over time, and that these are replaced by a priority given to inventing new moves, new games, particularly in the case of Lyotard and Deleuze. While they know that the creating of new games is never ex nihilo, they assert there is a temporal priority given to a particular futural synthesis of time that for them is exemplified by motifs like the dice-throw, the child, etc.
16. Of course, many objections might be raised against this interpretation, and the resources for which can be found in some of the many reflections in the Deleuzian secondary literature on the related issue of difference/identity. See, for example: Williams 2003; Williams 2006; May 1999; and Smith 2003. Smith's eloquent defence of Deleuze against Badiou, however, does not invalidate my position here. Firstly, my interpretation of Deleuze is certainly *not* that he is a vitalist (as Badiou suggests in *The Clamour of Being*); on the contrary, Deleuze's

ethics is one of the inorganic. Second, to the extent that the nomad/royal science distinction Smith is concerned with maps onto the distinctions discussed here, both Deleuze and Smith prioritise differentiation (problems, virtual) over differenciation (dynamisms, actual solutions) and hence nothing necessarily contravenes my account. While the impetus behind such a prioritisation is arguably the hope of somehow reinvigorating the actual, it is again the case that the ethical imperative for this derives from the fundamental hierarchical differentiation of the virtual and the actual.

17. Deleuze (1988: 105) also accepts the preferability of a 'finalism' in which the living being is somehow non-analogically compared to the whole of the universe. But perhaps the clearest example of this mysticism in Deleuze's work, however, occurs in his essay 'Michel Tournier and the World Without Others', an appendix to *Logic of Sense*, but written much earlier. I analyse this intriguing essay in Reynolds 2008.
18. Some similar observations regarding the wound also feature in *Pure Immanence*: 'The wound is incarnated or actualised in a state of things or in lived experience: but it is itself a pure virtuality on the plane of immanence' (Deleuze 2001: 31). Establishing precisely what the relationship is between the virtual and the plane of immanence is, however, beyond me here.

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Review Essay

Gilles Deleuze and his Readers
A Touch of Voluntarism and an Excess of Out-Worldliness

Constantin V. Boundas

May, Todd (2005), *Gilles Deleuze: An Introduction*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 184 pages.

Hallward, Peter (2006), *Deleuze and the Philosophy of Creation: Out of this World*, London: Verso, 199 pages.

A book review, if you will, can be a powerful tease for readers who anticipate extracting nuggets of insight from its parent source. It can also be—and often is—a way for the reviewer to bask in the glow of a good writer or, by the same token, to flaunt his own cleverness and sense of superiority at the expense of a struggling essayist. I never had conclusive evidence to hold myself immune to either of these temptations. This time, however, I am in a position—temptations notwithstanding—to render my services to interested readers, with the satisfaction that comes from knowing that the pains of composing a review have been fully redeemed by the pleasure of having read two books that made me think long and hard.

May's and Hallward's books are very different from each other, in scope, ambition, and targeted readership: May chose to write an introduction to Deleuze—an introduction that could be read and appreciated even by those who know nothing, or very little, about Deleuze—and he did it with honesty, fidelity to the material he has been working with, and with the exquisite transparency and subtlety of his

style. The result is one of the best introductions to the rhizome-Deleuze we have had that can be read profitably by beginners and Deleuze-aficionados alike.

Hallward, on the other hand, chose to write a book on Deleuze that, in his words, 'aims to go right to the heart of Deleuze's philosophy.' His is not an easy reading: his book asks for readers who have an intimate knowledge of Deleuze. It subjects Deleuze's texts to a hermeneutic scrutiny the plausibility of which demands constant justification, and repeated appeals to textual evidence whose interpretive relevance must also be constantly demonstrated and legitimized. But the result is a remarkable reading of Deleuze, whose structure, close-knit argumentation, and powerful advocacy for its conclusions are seductive and *almost* convincing. I say 'almost convincing,' because, although I am indeed impressed by Hallward's successful identification of Deleuze's main concerns, his attention to detail, and his challenging deductions, I hasten to add one qualification: the enjoyment that reading his book gave me was often diminished by the suspicion that was growing in me as my reading progressed that Hallward's encounter with Deleuze was deeply problematic. I will argue later that the flaw lies in the author's decision to obstruct the (sometimes) overdetermined and (some other times) underdetermined deterritorializing lines of Deleuze, and to reterritorialize them upon a line of flight of his own making that has the 'outside of this world' as its telos.

I begin with Todd May's *Gilles Deleuze: An Introduction*. It takes courage to write a book like this one—courage and thorough familiarity with the material. With this volume, Todd May proves that he has both. To publish a book on Gilles Deleuze, whose chosen stuttering style and theses have proven to be a tough nut for the strongest of teeth, and to write it—without cutting corners or sacrificing important building blocks—in a way that allows even those with little knowledge of Deleuze to understand and savor its contents—is a rare feat. May is not a newcomer to the domain of recent French philosophy and to Deleuzian scholarship.[1] The present volume shows a maturity of philosophical beliefs and a wonderful choice of a mode of expression and communication that opts for the intelligibility and transparency of what is written. The author wants his interpretation of Gilles Deleuze to be such 'that, [it] remains mindful of and oriented toward the one question that is never far from [Deleuze's] texts: how might one live?' (p. 3). He pursues the transformations of the Socratic question, 'How should one live?' from its early preoccupation with a deontology of living, supported by the immersion of human life inside an order as

vast as the entire cosmos, to the 'How should one act?' of the moderns, and the 'How might one live?' question of today. The transition from 'should' to 'might' prepares May's readers for his discussion of Deleuze's immanence and experimentation, and his relentless opposition to the transcendence-laden imperatives of the 'should.' 'How might one live?' claims May, ushers in an ethics and a politics of creativity—of chance and necessity—without the higher authority of an externally imposed obligation to conform.

Our times, May argues, show a marked tendency to denounce ontology altogether because ontological responses to the question, 'What is there?' have been known to generate frames proposing and imposing transcendent limits to creative, new and interesting ways to live. Indeed, Foucault's and Derrida's denunciations of ontology, for those reasons, are among the most recent examples. Deleuze, on the other hand—and here, I believe, May is absolutely right—does not denounce ontology. '(His) works are steeped in ontology' (p. 15); they construct an alternative ontology—an ontology of immanence—that allows experimentation, creativity and discovery. Evidently, two traditional assumptions will have to be abandoned before such an ontology gets off the ground: a) that ontology involves discovery rather than creation (p. 16); and b) that identity has a logical priority over difference (p. 17). The resulting ontology will come to rest on Being, conceived as difference in itself, and on time, structured according to the demands of the (Bergsonian) *durée*. Deleuze avoids the risk of mistaking difference in itself for another foundation in a litany of grounds responsible for the framing act of traditional ontologies—May suggests—by having difference 'palpated' rather than grasped, conceived or represented: '(I)f it is difference rather than the identity we seek, and the interesting and remarkable rather than the true, then it is palpation rather than comprehension we require' (p. 20). The determined nature of the present along with the determining nature of the past (present) are eschewed through the conception of a pure past—a past that has never been present, teeming as it is with differences in a virtual stage. As for the requisite experimentation and creativity—the dice throw of chance and necessity—they are made possible through the eternal repetition of differences. Perceptively, May points out that the construction of Deleuze's ontology requires three intercessors: Spinoza, whose 'immanence is difference made flesh'; Bergson, whose temporality of duration allows 'immanence to be born'; and Nietzsche, whose spirit 'of the active and creative affirmation of difference . . . pervades the entire project' (p. 26).

With the help of Spinoza's substance, Deleuze denounces transcendence; begins to articulate his own theory of the virtual; and is able to argue that the virtual/substance exists only in its attributes and modes, albeit it retains an ontological priority over them. 'The role of transcendence', writes May, as he explains the reasons behind Deleuze's opposition to transcendence, 'is to allow the universe to be explained in such a way as to privilege one substance at the expense of another, to preserve the superiority of certain characteristics and to denigrate others' (p. 31). A successful challenge to transcendence results in an ontology of immanence that banishes (May maintains) all hierarchy and division (p. 34). The success of this challenge depends on two interlinked theses—both enthusiastically embraced by Deleuze: the univocity of being (being is said of its attributes and modes in one and the same sense) and expressionism—neither creationism nor emanationism ('substance is not like a thing that gives birth to other things. It is more like a process of expression' {p. 37}.) Substance expresses itself as it modulates itself. The combination of these theses permits Deleuze to inflect his question about how one might live, giving it a more general scope: 'what might it be to be alive?' The answer follows from what has already been said: life is everywhere because foldings, unfoldings and refoldings occur everywhere. Life does not have to be organic.

The modulation of the one univocal substance is not possible as long as time is supposed to be the linear succession of now-points and (as is the case with the 'objective' view of time) as long as an ontological privilege continues to be assigned to the present: 'the linear conception cannot capture the process of expression' (p. 44) that requires the substance to remain within its expression; nor can the immanence of substance be retained, if (as with phenomenological and existentialist theories of time) temporality is made immanent to consciousness. Only the Bergsonian *durée* can account for the modulation of the one substance, because only it offers the three requisites for an ontology of difference: a) There is no present that does not actualize the (virtual) past; b) It is the entire (virtual) past that is actualized at any one moment; and c) The (virtual) past that is actualized is real (the past insists) (p. 52). This is a difficult moment in May's book, but, with his usual lucidity, he comes to the rescue of the reader. In Deleuze's ontology, the virtual and the actual are two mutually exclusive, yet jointly sufficient, characterizations of the real. The actual/real consists of bodies, states of affairs, bodily mixtures and individuals. The virtual/real consists of incorporeal events and singularities on a plane of consistency, belonging to the pure past—the past that has never been present. Without being

or resembling the actual, the virtual nonetheless has the capacity to bring about actualizations without ever coinciding or being identified with them. And May concludes: '(T)he Bergsonian revolution is clear: We do not move from the present to the past, from perception to recollection, but from the past to the present, from recollection to perception . . . Duration does not only give rise to the present; it is also of the present . . . . [But then], if [duration]/difference is immanent to the present, then each moment is suffused by a realm of difference that lies coiled within it, offering the possibility of disrupting any given identity' (p. 55).

Now, if Spinoza is the Christ of philosophers, as Deleuze maintains, and Bergson, the Father, then Nietzsche—writes May—is the Holy Ghost. The construction of Deleuze's ontology owes a lot to Nietzsche's eternal return and to the allegory of the child-god playing at dice throwing, provided that the eternal return is correctly understood as the return of unactualized difference, and the dice throw, as the double affirmation of chance and necessity. This is how May expresses these points: '[T]he future is not empty. It is full to overflowing . . . What returns are not the identities that are actualized in the present. What returns is the virtuality that lies behind and within these identities' (p. 61).

In order to be constructed and sustained, an ontology of difference needs also an alternative to the dogmatic image of thought behind the traditional frames: familiar representation must give way to the jolt of fundamental encounters; recognition (with its *concordia facultatum*, good and common sense) must yield to *concordia discordata;* the modeling of thought after solutions must cede its place to the formulation of interesting problems. ('Problems are inexhaustible, while solutions are a particular form of exhaustion' {p. 85}.) As for learning, it should willingly be a long apprenticeship to the art of 'palpation'—palpation of a difference that cannot be represented, albeit it never ceases to give itself.

On the other hand, an ontology of difference requires a language that is neither a transparent medium for the representation of thought nor a 'prison house' or an 'opaque blade' in the heart of being. May, therefore, gives us an accurate account of the theory of language that Deleuze offers as the desired alternative. Denotation (reference), manifestation (of the speaker's moods), and signification (the implications maintained between an utterance and other utterances) attempt to fix the meaning of a proposition, but they do not allow the stuttering of language—the *sine qua non* of creation and discovery. Only sense can do that. 'Sense,' May says, 'is expressed in propositions, it inheres in them. But it is

not reducible to the qualities of the proposition that expresses it . . . It is an event that happens in the proposition but is not the proposition itself . . . The other side of sense faces the world; it is an attribute of things or of states of affairs. The event subsists in language, but happens to things' (pp. 101; 102). Deleuze, following a long but maverick tradition, prefers to think of sense as something that is best expressed in the infinitive form of verbs.

Deleuze believes that philosophy (the art of creating concepts) and science (the domain of functions) are different activities; he has no need to blend and mix the genres—as is fashionable in some circles. But of course an ontology that would choose to ignore the needs of the scientific field and a science that would rule out the possibilities of certain ontological constructs—not through experimentation and creation, but rather a priori—do not bode well. May, therefore, takes the time to remind his readers of advances in the scientific arena (still contested, but in the process of becoming entrenched) that engage fluid identities, the primacy of the different, and the stochastic. Science too can think difference. Biologists' preoccupation with biological and ecological systems rather than with individuals, Simondon's discussions of intensity giving rise to extensity, Prigogine's bifurcations, Monod's perception of humans as the product of chance and necessity, are proofs of this.

In his fourth chapter, 'The Politics of Difference', May turns his attention to what Deleuze has to say about our living with others. Deleuze's task, he writes, 'is not merely to think the world differently, but to live it differently . . . And one lives among others' (p. 116). Experimentation and creation with new and interesting ways of living (even when not presided over by transcendent 'shoulds') do occur in the context of being with others—indeed they require being with others in order to be actualized. The discussion of issues generated in the course of living with others belongs to politics and ethics.

In this context, May reviews the shortcomings of our liberal political theory, which is grounded on the primacy of the individual, on lack, needs and their satisfaction, and on molar institutions (the government, the State, classes). Underlying all, one finds a theory of representation, made to invigilate over whether or not our needs and interests are adequately represented, and whether or not the legitimation of their satisfaction is brought to rest on the equitable representation of the governed. And with that, identity obliterates difference. What Deleuze and Guattari bring to the table is a new political ontology. Rather than beginning with individuals and representation, they start with

'machines' and 'machinic thinking.' Machines—being neither organisms nor mechanisms—are defined by the connections they establish with other machines. Changing the connections changes the machine. To the extent that there is always more to their parts, machines are defined by their virtual capacity for being actualized in different ways in different contexts. Machinic connections are productive and their *modus vivendi* is fluid identity. They are not defined in terms of lack and interests—at least not initially. It is this anti-representational strategy, May argues, that permits Deleuze to develop an intriguing theory of desire (productive and affirmative of the real), a preference for the minor (not the small, but the process wherein quantic flows predominate), and for the indispensability of lines of flight {'lines of transformation—not a leap into another realm, but a production within the realm of that from which [the line] takes flight' (p. 128).} The result is an advocacy for micropolitics (the hunt for 'transversal' connections that cut across traditional political identities). In this context, May gives us several fine pages as he discusses Deleuze and Guattari's nuanced attitudes towards the State, capitalism, subject groups and subjected groups, nomads and sedentaries. And he concludes with the following lines: 'Politics is an experiment, not a deduction . . . There is no general prescription . . . Everything is played in uncertain games . . . Each line has its own dangers' (p. 153).

How might one live, then? The concluding chapter of May's book extrapolates an answer to this question from an imaginative analysis of four exemplary cases: jazz, the Palestinian intifada, the lessons learned in urban renewal, and the passionate uncertainties of love and eros. 'The folding, unfolding, and refolding of . . . life cannot be predicted,' he concludes. '[They] cannot be managed by fiat. One can only help foster a diversity of elements and watch what happens from there' (p. 165). An ontology of problems, a transversal thinking, and a stuttering language are indispensable to sustain such living.

I strongly recommend this superb introduction to beginners and sophisticated readers of Deleuze alike. But I feel I should also forewarn them about three possible weaknesses in May's endeavor: I contend that 1) he may have underestimated the extent to which difference in itself guides the construction of Deleuze's ontology; that 2) in his eagerness to pursue Deleuze's question, 'how might one live?' he might not have decisively averted the 'existentialist' and 'decisionist' risks that loom large behind a certain way of reading Deleuze; and that 3) he seems to have missed a golden opportunity to strengthen Deleuze's hand by neglecting the importance Spinoza carries for Deleuze's ethics

and politics, and by failing to notice the crucial role of the dialectics of 'transgression' and 'aristocratic distance' that permeate Deleuze's political thinking.

1) May pays serious attention to Deleuze's statements about philosophy being governed by the quest for the new, the interesting and the remarkable: these are fit directives when it comes to the logic of problems rather than the deontology of solutions. The solution has the truth that it merits given the problem and the question whose response it is. 'Philosophy is not inspired by truth, but it is not inspired by fiction either. Instead, philosophy creates a way of seeing the world in which we live that disturbs the verities we are presented with' (p. 22). Although a conciliatory tone is struck in this statement, which refuses to choose between truth and fiction, it has sometimes been taken as a denunciation of ontology.[2] But, in the present book, May heeds Deleuze's claim that philosophy is ontology. Of course, he makes it clear that Deleuze's ontology is not based on identity and representation; rather, it is after the differentiated virtual that differen*c*iates itself in its actualizations—and difference is not a fiction (p. 21). But, on the other hand, May—being eager to hold onto Deleuze's experimental and creative flows in philosophy—resolves the underlying tension in statements like this: 'difference is no more a creation than it is a discovery' (p. 22). He does so without noticing how unhelpful or disingenuous such statements can be, and without taking the necessary precautions to prevent them from being mere expressions of defeat in the face of Deleuzian paradoxes.

I am not suggesting that to maintain a balance between creation and discovery, in reading Deleuze, is disingenuous. I am in full agreement with May when he attributes the function of 'palpating' difference—rather than comprehending, seizing, or grasping it—to the concepts that populate Deleuze's ontology. My difficulty with May's reading is that I do not find his way of establishing the balance between creation and discovery convincing enough. What May seems to miss is that Deleuze's ontology relies on his allegiance to a strict parallelism between being and thinking. *To gar auton esti noein te kai einai* is as much Deleuze's conviction as it was Heidegger's: the same 'thing' is given to be and to be thought—except that, in Deleuze's case, the 'same thing' is difference itself. With Deleuze, the parallelism of being and thinking requires the alignment of the thinking and acting 'subject' with the difference that gives itself over. This is the point of Deleuze's transcendental empiricism (the quest for the conditions of the actual); this is also the sense of the chain of the gerundives that structure his transcendental empiricism (*sentiendum, memorandum*, *cogitandum*); and this is how 'becoming

imperceptible' succeeds in displacing molar and molecular subjects. And let us not forget the passages in *Difference and Repetition* where the *cogitandum* seems to go beyond mere palpation.[3] Experimenting and creative 'subjects' are necessary conditions for new ways of seeing, conceiving, acting and, in a word, living, but it is difference that gives itself and directs creation and orientation. The virtual, after all, is real. And it is neither you nor I, but the eternal return that functions in Deleuze's ontology as the principle of selection. Without this alignment of being and thought, Deleuze's philosophy would be no different from Jean-François Lyotard's musings about the sublime or Jacques Derrida's homage to the messianic *à venir*.

It is worth listening to Deleuze again: 'This power of decision at the heart of problems', he writes in *Difference and Repetition*, 'this creation or throw which makes us descendant from the gods, is nevertheless not our own. The gods themselves are subject to the *Anankē* or sky-chance . . . The imperatives are those of being, while every question is ontological and distributes "that which is" among problems' (p. 199). There is no room for 'decisionism' here; the one who plays at rolling the dice is not the mighty 'I' but the pre-personal and pre-individual 'larval selves' that have become-imperceptible. It is the 'spiritual automaton'—not of Leibniz, still capable of formally deducing his ideas from each another—but the spiritual automaton of Artaud and Blanchot that 'testifies to the impossibility of thinking that is thought' (Deleuze 1989b: 166). The spiritual automaton, once the link between man and the world is broken, testifies to 'an unthinkable in thought, which would be both its source and barrier . . . and to the presence . . . of another thinker in the thinker, who shatters every monologue of a thinking self' (1989b: 168).

2) If the alignment of the being of the AND to the thought of the fissured I, (as suggested by the evocation of the spiritual automaton), is properly heeded, the existentialist and decisionist temptations that at times loom large behind May's words will be prevented from reaching full maturity. The balance between chance and necessity—between being given over to throwing the dice without any prior knowledge of the number combinations that will come up (chance) and the landing of the dice with its specific number combinations (necessity)—cannot be Deleuze's last word on the question of 'how one might live.' One needs something more, because the fear of throwing the dice and giving oneself over to the play, without pretending to know what combination of numbers the dice throw will bring about, is not always a symptom of a cowardly or a reactive disposition; it may also be an indication that someone has taken being and living with others

seriously. The insouciance of the child-God playing at dice throwing cannot be seriously advocated if the returned combination were to bring corpses, apartheids and genocides. The throw of the dice itself may not be protected by verities or certainties—not even by probabilities—but must be embedded in a few guiding principles of intelligibility. The dice thrower, after all, was not born yesterday; there are ways of re-reading the Aristotelian *phronesis* that do not have to import the oppression of transcendence. After all, Deleuze, no less than Nietzsche, opts for an ethics (and a politics) of the good and the bad as soon as the morality of good and evil is laid to rest. The alignment of being and thought goes a long way toward checking whatever residual decisionist initiatives may be found in the dice metaphor. In the becoming imperceptible of the spiritual automaton, we reach a point where it is no longer important to say 'I'. In other words, we reach the point where it is not important to distinguish between creating and discovering. When in the process of actualization the virtual unfolds what is enfolded in it, and in the process of re-virtualization the actual is once again folded in the virtual, then but only then who creates and who discovers are moot questions; or, if we insist in raising the question, life—overflowing life—is responsible for creation and discovery.

In other words, Deleuze needs Spinoza again, as much as he needs a subtle reading of Nietzsche's eternal return. May evokes Spinoza only for the construction of the ontology of the virtual, while totally giving Deleuze's politics over to Nietzsche's magisterial presence—and this is an oversight. He is correct in making a prominent place for Deleuze's and Spinoza's statements that 'we do not yet know what a body is capable of'—we do not yet know what a body politic is capable of. But, then, it is curious to see him overlook what is crucial: that for both Spinoza and Deleuze, a body's power increases in its association with other bodies *that are compatible with it;* and that a body's power decreases in its association with bodies *that are incompatible with it*. It is an entire phenomenology of the becoming-active of human beings in Spinoza's *Ethics* that inspires Deleuze's ethics of joy. Because it is instrumental in eliminating decisionist overtones, this phenomenology should not be overlooked in any discussion of Deleuze's politics. Through the formation of the adequate ideas that the affect motivates, it offers a political ontology and a theory of sociability informed by a few principles of intelligibility and a constitutive rule for dice throwing, without which the toss will be blind and irresponsible.

3) In the last analysis, the one weakness of May's excellent introduction to Deleuze, in my opinion, is in its failure to strike the right

balance between the man of action and the 'seer'—or rather to be faithful to the way that the two resonate together in Deleuze. In my asking for a delicate balance, I follow the analyses of François Zourabichvili and Jérémie Valentin[4] whose works I recommend to the readers of May's book. Both have argued that Deleuze's reflections on the political are best understood after we come to appreciate the simultaneous presence of two attitudes in his work—*subversion* and *perversion*—as well as of the role that difference plays between the two, in preventing these tendencies from ever freezing in an iconic immobility, in contaminating the one with the other, and in joining them together in the space of an inclusive disjunction.

May's book handles beautifully the subversive tendencies in Deleuze's work, namely, the minor, nomadic and transformative forces (of life, politics, thought, artistic creation) capable of escaping the sedentarism and stratification of majorities. But there is another side to Deleuze's (and Guattari's) posture vis à vis the political—a posture that Valentin and Zourabichvili qualify as 'perverse'—a side that May tends to overlook. 'Politics,' for Deleuze, Valentin writes, 'is a posture, a matter of perception, the result of a conversion that allows the development of a mechanics of resistance to the present' (Valentin 2004, 106). This posture is 'the permanent quest for an inner balance (for a liberation of) . . . always an in-between (*entre-deux*)' (138): in-between philosophy and non-philosophy; in-between political philosophy and politics; in-between the aristocracy of thought and the becoming-democratic; in-between the chief and the tribe; in-between the near and the far; in-between a past that has never taken place and a future that will never come to be present; in-between subversion and perversion. Zourabichvili says the same thing, but he prefers, with Deleuze, to see the structure of this perversion in the light of Freud's characterization of disavowal: 'It might seem that a disavowal,' writes Deleuze, 'is, generally speaking, much more superficial than a negation or even a partial destruction. But this is not so, for it represents an entirely different operation. Disavowal should perhaps be understood as the point of departure of an operation that consists neither in negating nor even destroying, but rather in radically contesting the validity of that which is: it suspends belief in and neutralizes the given in such a way that a new horizon opens up beyond the given in place of it' (1989a: 31). In being structurally akin to disavowal, Deleuze's perversion is always untimely. Untimeliness better equips the political philosopher in her task to resist the present, but also renders Deleuze's political philosophy incommensurable with traditional political thought. This

incommensurability is particularly evident in Deleuze's attempt to draw a delicate distinction between *'ne faire rien'* (to do nothing) and *'faire le rien'* (make the nothing) and to render the second imperative the center of his political posture—problematizing the field of the possibles, without ever articulating a plan in view of a *telos*.

Provided that this aristocratic posture is not confused with hatred for all forms of democracy, those who presently speak of the aristocratic dimension in Deleuze's thought are right (see Mengue 2003). It may come as a surprise to Todd May to hear that his reading of Deleuze is too 'liberal.' But to say, as May does, that the univocity of Deleuzian Being is meant to eliminate all hierarchies (p. 34) is to overlook this aristocratic posture. Yet, Deleuze in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (1983: 60) clearly approves the 'superiority of active to reactive forces' and the 'unalterable and innate order of rank' in hierarchy. From Pierre Clastre's writings on primitive societies Deleuze retains the attribution to the chief of an aristocratic distance from the tribe (see Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 357–61)—the space, in other words, necessary for the chief to exercise his *voyance* and to ponder the means available for summoning the 'new people and the new earth'—the 'missing people' who give Deleuze's political posture 'a purposefulness without purpose.' It will be a pity, of course—as I maintained elsewhere (Boundas 2005)—to read in these summons the messianic aspirations of a Derridean *à venir*: It is the missing people that constitute the space of the political because and to the precise extent that they are always already missing. And this is not to say that I hold May responsible for the reinsertion of the teleological in the space of politics. I only wish that he had made Deleuze's opposition to telos-inspired politics even more clear through an unambiguous critique of all decisionist temptations.

Time now to turn my attention to Hallward's *Deleuze and the Philosophy of Creation*. Hallward begins his book with the assertion that Deleuze's Being is creation, and devotes the rest of his time to the exploration of the implications of this dictum for ontology, epistemology, and for the ethics and politics of our being with others. He ends the book reproaching Deleuze for turning his back on Marx's Thesis Eleven, abandoning the political imperatives for the transformation of our world, and opting rather for an exo-cosmic ineffectual contemplation. Between the opening assertion and the concluding reproach, Hallward displays an impressive knowledge of Deleuze's work, and an enviable interpretive insight (sometimes, brilliance). He composes some beautiful pages, as he goes on to discuss the progressive de-materialisation of medium and message in Deleuze's

assent from art to philosophy (Chapters 5 and 6). But he also displays a curious blindness that occasionally causes him to misrepresent key Deleuzian concepts and arguments; to place them in contexts where their meaning (or better, their function) hardens and makes them lose their original subtlety; and prompts him to draw questionable conclusions from premises that are often beyond reproach.

But I am jumping ahead of myself; it is time to go back to the beginning. Hallward correctly designates the Deleuzian Being as creation, and then rightfully asks that this designation be taken in the precise sense in which Being is both creating force(s) and created entities—both creating act(s) and resulting creatures (p. 27). Like Spinoza, Deleuze's ontology revolves around *natura naturans* and *natura naturata*. And like Bergson—in fact, without the ambiguity that characterizes Bergson on the subject of intensity—his philosophy is articulated around the notions of intensity and extension, or, even more to the point, around the notions of the virtual and the actual. Being is creating/creative, *natura naturans,* intensive and virtual; but Being is also what is created (the creature), *natura naturata,* extended and actual.

The Deleuzian virtual has generated an endless number of discussions and controversies, and it is to Hallward's credit that he takes the time necessary to satisfy himself that his readers understand what Deleuze means by the juxtaposition/complementarity of the virtual and the actual (see pp. 27–54). In Deleuze's ontology, the virtual and the actual are mutually exclusive, yet jointly sufficient, characterizations of the real. Actual/real are states of affairs, that is, bodies and their mixtures or individuals existing in the present. Virtual/real are incorporeal events and singularities in a plane of consistency, belonging to a past that Deleuze qualifies as 'pure,' suggesting thereby that this past has never been present. Virtual is something which, without being or resembling an actual x, has nonetheless the capacity to bring about x, without (in being actualized) ever coming to coincide or to identify itself with, or to be depleted and exhausted by, the x (p. 4). The kind of process that we find in Deleuze's ontology is not, therefore, properly captured in the scheme, actual/real → actual/real; the correct account of it would rather be this : virtual/real ↔ actual/real ↔ virtual/real (Deleuze 1994: 208–21). In other words, becoming, instead of being a linear process from one actual to another, should rather be conceived as the movement of a virtual tendency through an actual state of affairs towards its re-virtualisation or as a movement from an actual states of affairs through a dynamic field of virtual/real tendencies, to the actualization of this

field in a new state of affairs. This schema safeguards the relationship of reversibility between the virtual and the actual.[5]

All that is well-known to those who are reasonably familiar with the work of Deleuze, and Hallward's careful elucidation of these notions and their distinction, for the most part, serves the reader well. As he begins his narrative with assertions that repeat standard Deleuzian positions, the reader has nothing to complain about: 'Being' Hallward says, 'is the inexhaustible proliferation of creatings or events of creation . . . Creation is one but it proceeds as two, through [the] distinction of creatings and creatures . . . (T)he creating is implied or "implicated" within its creator; the creation is an explication or unfolding of the creating' (p. 27). But soon trouble pays a visit and difficulties begin to multiply. Their starting point is almost inconspicuous. 'Creation,' writes Hallward, 'is precisely the immanent combination of both creature and creating: the creating is more "internal" to the creature than any actual inside . . . Nevertheless . . . (i)t is only the creating that differs or produces, and it is only the creating *as such* that can claim to be properly new' (p. 28). From such unproblematic beginnings, Hallward develops the rest of his book as a critique of an alleged ontological difference with which he, like a present-day Aristotle, saddles Deleuze, his Plato. According to Hallward, unlike Plato, who refrained from lending his ideas an immediate creative force, Deleuze, endows the virtual with this force. 'A Platonic essence . . . is merely one that allows actuality to resemble it via imitation, approximation or generalization, rather than one that [like Deleuze's virtual] directly produces the actual in its unique . . . thisness' (p. 123). Hallward, in the sequence, characterizes this creative nature of Deleuze's virtual the way that Aristotle characterized the ontological primacy of the Platonic Forms: '*hoi de echorisan* (those over there, [our former friends] did separate [the really real from the illusory copy]).'[6] Now, raising the Aristotelian objection to Plato's ontological difference against Deleuze carries with it serious implications that affect key positions in Deleuze's ontology: for starters, the univocity for the sake of which Deleuze strove long and hard, and the uncompromising immanence of his philosophy, (with no concessions to transcendence), will have to be surrendered; and if so, Hallward would be well on his way to the conclusion that Deleuze's philosophy promotes an ineffectual contemplation of what is 'out of this world'.

Although creatings and creatures jointly constitute Deleuze's real, or what is created—the actual, extended and individuated entities, as they get sedimented (*naturatae*)—argues Hallward, tend to annul the differentiated élan *naturans* that they actualize. They are uncreative,

indifferent creatures, veritable impediments to the creative forces. 'Being is creation but . . . creation itself generates internal obstacles to its own continuation' (p. 79). Faced with creatures, one has to choose between accepting them as the termini of creative acts, depleted from the intensity required for creation and, therefore, as creation's potential enemies; or treating them as so many states of affairs—veritable occasions for the extraction of the virtual creating force. But, since creating is infinite (*es gibt Sein*), the depletion of Being within the cosmos is impossible. Ergo, *the virtual*—the Being 'out of this world of beings'—is, according to Hallward, the sole creative agent—the real more real than the real. 'The main mistake to avoid here is again the assumption that the virtual and the actual enjoy equal power of determination, that creating and creature reinforce one another in some sort of mutual co-implication. No: the creating literally does what the word says, it creates the creature, which itself creates nothing at all' (p. 79).

Now it seems to me that Hallward's reading of Deleuze's ontology underestimates the degree of solidarity that subsists in Deleuze's coordination of the two facets of the real—creating élan and creaturely result, the virtual and the actual. In his eagerness to reach his conclusion concerning the 'out-worldliness' (not the other-worldliness) of Deleuze's ontology, Hallward begins with the identification of the actual with the world (of creatures) and of the virtual, with the creating force, which is 'out of this world.' In his effort to support his reference to the 'out-worldly,' he goes occasionally too far and makes statements that are in direct contradiction to Deleuze's own. For instance, '[t]he virtual alone is real . . . A virtual creating is the reality that lives in any actual creature'—a claim made by Hallward on p. 35 of his book (without the qualification that this is what he himself wishes to conclude, and not what Deleuze maintains)—directly contradicts Deleuze's stubborn determination to think both virtual and actual as real. And the same goes for the following statements: '[T]he actual is never anything more than an illusory and ephemeral world' (p. 38); 'There are only creatings, but some of these creatings give rise to the unavoidable illusion of creatural independence' (p. 55); 'The expressive or "explicative" determination that links the implicated *naturans* (the virtual creating) and the explicated *naturata* (the actual creature) is strictly unilateral and irreversible' (p. 57). One could easily find at least a dozen similar statements in Hallward's book.

Compare now what Deleuze actually says on these issues: 'Every object is double without it being the case that the two halves resemble one another, one being a virtual image and the other an actual image.'; but 'we must carefully distinguish the object in so far as it

is complete and the object in so far as it is whole. What is complete is only the ideal part of the object, which . . . never constitutes an integral whole as such. What the complete determination lacks is the whole set of relations belonging to actual existence' (Deleuze, 1994: 209). Concerning the nature of the (transcendental) illusion of what Hallward calls 'creatural independence,' Deleuze maintains that '[t]here is an illusion tied to intensive quantities. This illusion, however, is not intensity itself, but rather the movement by which difference in intensity is cancelled . . . Only transcendental enquiry can discover that intensity remains implicated in itself and continues to envelop difference at the very moment when it is reflected in the extensity and the quality that it creates, which implicate it only secondarily, just enough to "explicate it"' (1994: 240). Finally, in order to prevent any potential misunderstanding regarding the irreducibility of the relation between virtuality and actuality, Deleuze refers to the movement from the one to the other as perfectly reversible: 'In fact, there is no virtual which does not become actual in relation to the actual, the latter becoming virtual through the same relation: it is a place and its obverse which are totally reversible' (Deleuze, 1989b: 69). From these passages—and they are not the only ones in Deleuze's texts—there emerges a message that differs substantially from the claims that Hallward has made: The virtual and the actual are both real. The explication of the virtual in the actual that gives rise to the alleged autonomy of the actual is responsible for a *transcendental illusion*—not just an illusion, as Hallward has it. The series over which virtual becoming and actual history preside are totally reversible.

Faced with this evidence—and given that his acquaintance with Deleuze's writings is second to none—Hallward will not be in a position to withhold reality from what is actual forever, and will be forced to fine-tune his reasons for the ontological comparative (more real than the real) that he attributes to Deleuze: *'Even if the virtual is incarnated in the actual,'* [emphasis mine], he now maintains, 'the resulting incarnation is not "equally" virtual and actual . . . The creatural qua creatural is unredeemable . . . There is nothing properly creative to be salvaged from the actual or creatural *per se,* other than the energy released by its own dissipation' (p. 78; p. 80). And it will be upon this premise that Hallward will build his reading of Deleuze as a 'redemptive philosopher.' The creator is trapped within the creature, in a state of diminishing intensity, and only the dissolution of the creature will set him free. Difference is trapped within identity, and only the dissolution of identity will restore it to its original calling—the call of difference in itself. In this context,

it is once more Hallward's thorough familiarity with Deleuze's texts that is behind some of his claims, which in being perfectly Deleuzian are also strangely at odds with what he himself maintains elsewhere in his book. Here is one such statement: 'After all, the production of actual creatures is a fundamental aspect of what creation is. The creatural is itself an aspect of creation, rather than its falsification or debasement, or a lower reality that must be transcended. Intensive difference isn't simply cancelled in the system of extension, it also "creates the system by explicating itself"' (p. 56). But if this is the case, the reader has the right to ask: what are the grounds for the 'degrees of reality'[7] that Hallward attributes to Deleuze?

I do not think that it is necessary to trumpet my surprise at Hallward's calling 'redemptive' a philosopher who invited us *'[d'] en finir avec le jugement (de Dieu)'*. I find it more profitable, going back to the quotation that I introduced earlier (pages 78 and 80 from Hallward's book), to suggest that the quotes around 'equally' in his sentence, '(t)he resulting incarnation is not "equally" virtual and actual,' cannot help him with the point he intends to make: for, how can there be any question of equality, here? The virtual is the domain of problems; the actual, the domain of solutions; the problem differs in nature from every solution to which it is susceptible, although, to be fair, it is immanent to all solutions, since the closer we come to the determination of the problem, the more we approximate the problem's solution (Deleuze, 1994: 163–5). Similarly, the notions of 'richer in reality'/'poorer in reality' have no place here. Attempting to establish equivalence between problems and solutions is a non-starter. Writing, as Deleuze does, that problems have the solutions they deserve (in terms of the ways in which they are formulated) introduces a very different perspective of the relation between problems and solutions than the one that Hallward intends with his ontological comparative. And when Hallward goes on to write, '(a)ll the . . . [c]reatural concern can only become the vehicle for insight if properly oriented, precisely *away* from the creatural and *towards* the creating' (p. 57), his 'all the same'—which attempts to resolve the tension in his book between withholding reality from the actual *and* asserting that the actual is not some kind of debased or lower reality—cannot bear the weight that Hallward expects it to carry. For, the 'away' and the 'towards' of the last quotation are, given the nature of the question, odologically misleading. The fact that the virtual and the actual differ in nature does not justify either the 'degrees of reality' ontology that Hallward attempts to read into Deleuze's work or, as we are going to see shortly, the epistemological meliorism that

he seems to hold as a fallback position. Anne Sauvagnargues perfectly captures the spirit of Deleuze's position with respect to the actual-virtual relation in the following: 'The virtual is neither a reserve of Being prior to the actual nor a potency destined to realize itself dialectically in the actual; rather, it is a reality in solidarity with the actual, in a position of reciprocal presupposition—that is, in a position of reversibility—with respect to the actual' (Sauvagnargues, 2003: 27). I find it strange that Hallward, who is fully aware of the debt that Deleuze owes Spinoza's difference in nature between *natura naturans* and *natura naturata,* fails to see that a Spinoza-inspired expressionism presides over the kind of co-imbrication of virtual and actual that Deleuze wants and that Hallward distorts. The constant message of *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza* (1990b) is that the expressed does not exist outside its expression; that God's expression is both his manifestation and his self-constitution. Nature as infinite indeterminate potency-in-act is *natura naturans;* as the exhaustively determinate actuality of this potency it is *natura naturata.* It seems to me that, in this text, there is a decisive repudiation of any kind of 'degrees of reality' ontology.

Hallward, of course, may, at this point choose to remind me that *natura naturata* should not be identified with the modal world. 'Contrary to what you might expect,' he writes, 'the attribute of extension, when considered as an individuating attribute of substance, involves an indivisible and purely intensive or non-actual spatiality. Actual "extensity" fails the ontological test that Deleuze associates, after Nietzsche, with the eternal return, since in it difference, the condition of eternal return, is cancelled' (p. 39). In this, Hallward is right, and he has Deleuze on his side this time. *Natura naturata* should not to be identified with the durational world of the modes which is finite and divisible; it is the eternal 'make of the whole universe,' infinite, one, and indivisible. But I do not think that these lines lend any support to the degree of reality ontology (or the melioristic epistemology) that Hallward wants to attribute to Deleuze. Even if the modal world were a privation in view of the eternal 'make of the whole universe,' (and 'privation' is not at all Deleuze's characterization of it) the 'out of this world' objection would not be justified unless and until it could also be shown that all preoccupation with the virtual offers no assistance whatsoever in our dealings with the actual.

But I do not see how it can be seriously maintained that Deleuze sacrifices the actual world for the sake of the virtual creating act in a way that would support Hallward's challenge of out-worldliness. Such a challenge will sound plausible only as long as the role that

Deleuze-Spinoza attributes to causality and the 'quasi-cause' is sidestepped. And I am afraid that this is precisely what Hallward does. Speaking of Deleuze's view of causality and its role in the expressionism of his ontology, he maintains that all relations between virtual and actual are creative—not causal (p. 41). He then adds that 'a creating is an effect that becomes irreducible to its cause' and that 'logics of creation are incompatible with logics of predictable causation or determination' because 'a creating . . . assemble[s] a series of contingently autonomous effects' (p. 41). And he concludes: 'Rather than seek to understand the mechanism of their causation or production, Deleuze emphasizes instead the virtual sufficing of the events thus "caused." . . . [I]t may be that Deleuze only evokes causality at all as to drive it down into the chaotic and sterile obscurity of the depths' (p. 41).

It seems to me that the source of Hallward's dissatisfaction rests with his conviction that only efficient causality guarantees explanatory insight; logics of creation that may be modeled on some mathematical intuitions or on the behaviour of dissipative structures do not carry, for him, the same explanatory force. If this in fact is the point of contention, I am afraid that I do not have the space here to enter into a discussion on the exclusive disjunction implied in this way of introducing rival scientific paradigms. The only thing that I can do is refer Manuel Delanda's book, *Intensive Science and Virtual Philosophy* (2002) and the immensely helpful bibliographical endnotes that it contains to those who would want more on the interaction of causality and 'creation.' On the Stoic heritage behind Deleuze's views on causes and the quasi-cause, Delanda says: '[T]he Stoics . . . were the first to split the causal link: on one hand, processes of individuation are defined as sequences of causes (every effect will be the cause of yet another effect) while singularities become pure incorporeal effects of those series of causes; *on the other hand, these pure effects are viewed as having a quasi-causal capacity to endow causal processes with coherent form* [emphasis mine]. By splitting causality this way, Deleuze manages to separate the determinism (or destiny) which links causes to causes, from strict necessity' (Delanda, 2002: 207, n. 62).

However, if Deleuze cannot be held responsible for an ontology based on the ontological comparative of the more and the less real, Hallwark thinks a different stratagem may bring about the conclusion he wishes to establish: in the absence of an ontological difference between the virtual and the actual, it could still be shown that Deleuze is harbouring an epistemological and an ethico-political one. The formation of adequate ideas, and the highest degree of knowledge to which the creature can

aspire, requires, Hallward maintains, removal of the barriers and the elimination of the limits that the creature raises between itself and the creating act. They demand the dissolution of the creature in repeated counter-actualizing processes, the purpose of which is the liberation of Being in its creating dynamism, and the advent of pure thought. Parmenides' '*to gar auton estin te kai einai*' is true only if we understand Being as creating, and thinking as pure thought. Deleuze's transcendental empiricism is the reliable pathway to the Parmenidean identity.

A few quotations from Hallward will best demonstrate how he develops and sustains this epistemological stratagem. To the extent that Deleuze follows Spinoza in his definition of adequate ideas, he must hold the view that 'an adequate idea is one that expresses its cause [;] the more [therefore] ... an individual understands itself and other individuals as individuations of God the more its thinking proceeds through adequate ideas' (p. 31). Given that in Deleuze's philosophy the individuation of what is actual is the result of the creative differenciation of the virtual, then to acquire an adequate idea of the actual is to grasp it as the result of the virtual—a result that retains in itself a trace of the creative force of its creator. It is true, Hallward admits, that 'we must actively construct the means of acquiring' adequate ideas, and that, to this effect, experimentation in actuality 'with what a body can do and a mind can think' (p. 90), is indispensable. Nevertheless, the highest possible degree of knowing—the one expressed in the Parmenidean dictum, 'the same thing is given to be and to be thought'—can be achieved when the experimentation with body and mind successfully ushers in the contemplation of what is virtual. 'To think is to allow thought to work through us ... Thinking is never willed or deliberate ... The [spiritual] automaton is a mode in which "thought thinks itself" on the sole basis of its own laws ... Incapable of action, [the automaton] is "cut off from the outside world"' (p. 137; p.138). 'To grasp the virtual involves the suspension or dissolution of the actual as such' (p. 42). 'To know reality is thus to see through actuality' (p. 50). 'When we truly think, it is God who thinks through us' (p. 12).

Hallward concludes that there is a mystic in Deleuze (p. 86); that his philosophy is a theophany (p. 4)—with the virtual creative élan occupying the place of God; that his prized contemplation takes as its object, not another world, but definitely that which is out of the world (pp. 3, 6, 57); and that his transcendental empiricism designates the flight to this outside as the condition for the reality of the actual world. But this is like saying that Spinoza's third kind of knowledge, to which Deleuze's

'contemplation' owes a lot, is the flight of a mystic to the out-worldly; and I do not think that this proposition can be seriously maintained.

As for the ethico-political argument in favour of Hallward's conclusion, I will summarize it as follows. If, as Deleuze maintains, the only ethics worth its salt today is the ethics that beckons us to become worthy of the event, and if 'becoming worthy of the event'—rather than standing for the resignation to whatever befalls us—invites an active counter-actualisation of the state of affairs, then the ethical telos of the creature is precisely in the extraction of the virtual event from the state of affairs that incarnates it (Deleuze 1990a: 142–53). Once again, Hallward chooses to locate in the extraction of the (out of this world) event from the (worldly) states of affairs the 'redemptive' nature of Deleuze's philosophy. 'Deleuze's philosophy is redemptive, not pessimistic' he writes (p. 56). His strategies of extracting the virtual event, subtracting it from the states of affairs that implicate it, are strategies of redemption. 'The goal is less an actual construction than a virtual extraction' (p. 91): Deleuze's vitalism is 'subtractive.' 'The goal is to escape confinement within the creatural without yielding to the temptation of an abrupt transcendence of the creatural. The goal is to build or find that force within ourselves, within the world, that opens a route out of both self and world' (p. 58). And Hallward names correctly the Deleuzian process by means of which the 'force within ourselves' can be uncovered. It is the process of counter-actualisation (or counter-effectuation).

On the subject of counter-actualisation, this is what Hallward has to say. 'If its actualization or effectuation confines a creating within a creature, its counter-effectuation restores it to its fully creative potential or virtuality' (p. 143); and again: 'Every actual creature will have as its particular task the development of its own counter-actualisation or self-transcendence, the process whereby it may become an adequate vehicle for the creating which sustains and transforms it' (p. 6); notice that '[t]he actual is not creative but its dissolution can be' (p. 82) and that '[t]he process of counter-actualisation is itself . . . creative . . . ' (p. 125). 'Counter-actualisation accesses "a virtuality that has become consistent," i.e. that has attained a purely creative . . . intensity. It is this extractive isolation that is properly transformative' (p. 44).

Hallward's characterization of counter-actualisation is pivotal for his assessment of Deleuze's ethics and politics, and equally central to his extrapolation of the melioristic epistemology[8] that I described earlier as well as the 'degrees of reality' ontology that I criticized. Hallward is undoubtedly right in assigning the centrality he does to the process of

counter-actualisation for Deleuze's ethical position. He is equally right in stressing that this process is creative and in reminding his readers that counter-actualisation and 'becoming worthy of the event' go together hand in glove. But the accuracy of his reading must once again be questioned as soon as he places the process of counter-actualisation at the service of a flight towards an 'outside of this world' that has nothing helpful to say about the actual. If Deleuze had in mind the kind of flight that Hallward attributes to him, he would not have described the relation between well-formulated (virtual) problems and their (actual) solutions the way he did. He would not have welcomed in Hume and his ethics a kindred spirit and position (see Deleuze 1991: 25–9) nor would have approved Spinoza's recommendations for an ethics of joyful affects (See Deleuze 1998 & Boundas 2003).

Finally, from the point of view of its resourcefulness for politics, Hallward finds Deleuze's philosophy unhelpful in the extreme: 'Those of us who still seek to change our world and to empower its inhabitants,' he writes, 'will need to look for our inspiration elsewhere' (p. 164). Once again, I choose to interject a few quotations from his book that will make his reasons behind this harsh judgement clear. '(T)here is no place in Deleuze's philosophy for any notion of change, time or history, that is mediated by actuality. In the end, Deleuze offers few resources for thinking the consequences of what happens within the actually existing world as such' (p. 162). Or again, 'there can be little room in Deleuze's philosophy for relations of conflict or solidarity, i.e., relations that are generally between—rather than external to—individuals, classes or peoples (p. 162). And one more—this time, inimitable—jab: '(S)ince a free mode or monad is simply one that has eliminated its resistance to the sovereign will that works through it, so then it follows that the more absolute the sovereign power, the more 'free' are those subjected to it (p. 139). It is interesting to notice that Hallward reaches this bizarre conclusion from the correct premise that 'freedom of the will' is not one of Deleuze's concerns. In the context of the extraction of the virtual creating process, it is the freedom from the will of the actual creature that must be subtracted, Hallward says, precisely because it is an obstacle to the counter-actualisation processes (pp. 138–9). But there is more: 'Deleuze rejects all forms of moral evaluation or strategic judgement', writes Hallward (p. 163). 'Preoccupation with the world as such, let alone a concern with the orderly representation of the things of the world, serves only to inhibit any . . . affirmation [i.e. our immediate participation in reality]' (p. 6). 'Life lives and creation creates on a virtual plane that leads forever out of our actual world' (p. 164).

Summing up, Hallward's complaints that, according to him, justify the rejection of whatever Deleuze has to say on the political, leaves me with the following list: Deleuze knows of no mediation between becoming and history; actual history is at best an occasion for the contemplation of becoming. Actual relations of solidarity and conflict (presumably, the very fabric of the political, according to Hallward) are counter-actualised for the sake of the inclusive disjunctions of the virtual. To look for actual relations in Deleuze's work is a waste of time, because, despite a well-entrenched assessment of this work, Deleuze is not a relational thinker. Consequently, judgements of prudence and strategic counselings have no place in Deleuze, because what really matters to him is a quick exit from this world (without even the benefit of a utopian thinking geared towards another world).

Now, earlier in my attempt to strengthen Todd May's dossier on Deleuze's political, I alluded to the *concordia discordata* between subversion and perversity that Zourabichvili and Valentin insightfully located in Deleuze and Guattari's work. I would very much like to know what Hallward thinks of it. If I may be so bold as to make a guess, I suspect that he would dismiss the subversive tendencies as ineffectual or as momentary concessions to the *soixante-huitards* and he would attribute what Zourabichvili and Valentin called 'Deleuze's perversity' to the posture of someone who looks for a quick exit from this world of conflict and solidarity. After all, Deleuze is not a 'relational thinker'.

But I see no reason at all to concede the point that Deleuze is not a 'relational thinker.' Hallward, in support of his point, refers his readers to Deleuze's essays, 'Michel Tournier and the World without the Others' (1990a: 301–20) and 'Immanence: A Life' (2001). The elimination of the other (as an expression of a possible world) from Robinson's island, Speranza, seals, in the mind of Hallward, Deleuze's acosmic position, and the impossibility of any meaningful discussion of interpersonal relations. But with this unfair generalization, Hallward misses the fact that the other which Deleuze exiles from Speranza is the other of the phenomenologist and the vacuity that characterizes our hackneyed talk of intersubjectivity. I have argued elsewhere that the message of Speranza is the mutual implication of *altrucide* and *suicide* (deconstruction of the other/deconstruction of the Subject-Self) for the sake of the *autrement qu'autre*—that is, for the sake of a new way of being (and thinking about the) other (See Boundas 1993: 32–43). At this point, one feels tempted to ask Hallward, in the style of Nietzsche: have we really thought what compassion (solidarity, conflict) would be between those who express

this *autrement qu'autre*? Even if the *autrement qu'autre* were to be found at the edges of this world, its relevance to our actual-all-too-actual (?) preoccupations would not be *eo ipso* null and void. But it is not a question of the edges of the world; the Deleuzian virtual *autrement* is within the identity of the actual and the possible, as their *'ratio essendi'* and *'ratio cognoscendi'*. And I would say the same about the message emerging from Deleuze's 'Immanence: A Life.' 'The unloved character Riderhood', the moment he lingers between life and death, releases a spark of impersonal and singular life—'a Homo tantum with whom everyone empathizes.' When next, Riderhood 'grows warm' again, the intensity of the affect that the spark of 'a life' generates tends to be lost in extension. But unlike Hallward, I see, with Deleuze, the potentiality of the spark (despite its propensity for being extinguished in the world of the extended magnitudes) as the best guarantor of solidarity among (actual) individuals—much more promising in fact than the reflecting mirrors of the phenomenologist or the romance of recognition with competing desires.

In view of Hallward's challenge, I do not think that we should overlook the fact that resonance is also a relation, and that ever since his *Difference and Repetition,* Deleuze has raised it, along with transversality, speed and slowness, to a veritable substitute for the 'synchronisation of perceptions'—the expression of choice for phenomenologists attempting to rethink relations of conflict and solidarity inside the political (Deleuze 1987: 31; Deleuze 1994: 140–3; Deleuze 1987: 258–61).

With respect to the question of whether or not Deleuze is a 'relational philosopher' and what it means to be one, I would like to recommend a recently published book, by Paul Bains, *The Primacy of Semiosis: An Ontology of Relations* (2006), for its erudite demonstration that an ontology of relations subtends Deleuze's semiotic theory in particular and his theory of multiplicities, sense and becoming in general. In the quotation that follows, Bains captures successfully the place that the ontology of (external) relations has in Deleuze's philosophy: '[T]he univocal ontology of relations... seems to have extraordinary resonances with Deleuze's logic of sense, in particular the concept of an "outside" of thought that is not the outside of an external world but rather the externality of relations that allow thought to have a relation with something that does not depend on it. Relations are external to their terms, and the issue is not primarily a relation of thought to the external world but rather the relation of thought to something other than itself' (Bains 2006: 134).

Far from supporting a flight from the world, Deleuze's well-known formal—not material—distinction between history and becoming (Deleuze & Guattari 1994: 96) clearly envisages counter-actualisation as a line of deterritorialisation that must be constructed and followed for the sake of a reterritorialisation with new weapons, new insights, and renewed efforts. Hallward is right in one thing: it is another way of seeing Combray that the Proustian madeleine evokes (119–20). It is another way of evoking alterity that the intensive reduction of Tournier's Speranza suggests—but this other way is not the annihilation of the other *sans phrase*.

In conclusion, I repeat: Hallward's advice to readers to look elsewhere if we want to heed Marx's entreaty and change the world rests on an encounter with Deleuze that seems to me problematic. Even if epistemologically and ethico-politically the Deleuzian philosophy were an *askesis* enjoined for the sake of the contemplation of the virtual, Hallward would not have proven the inefficacy of this posture unless he had also shown that there is nothing in the contemplation of the virtual that could serve our efforts to reshape the actual. But this demonstration is absent from Hallward's book. His distinction between worldly and out-worldly presupposes a clear understanding on his part (and a will to share it with the reader) of what is worldly. And, only if this (unthematised) presupposition were to be granted, his conclusion about the inefficacy of the Deleuzian out-worldliness would follow. But on the subject of this presupposition Hallward remains silent.

Two books; two thought-provoking readings of Deleuze, in many respects diverging from each other, yet capable of being brought together, with the intensity of a *concordia discordata*, around a central issue that runs through both: the issue of freedom. Hallward is right: Deleuze is not interested in the *liber arbitriium* (which is not to say that the only freedom that he proposes is the *freedom from* the human). But, on the other hand—and May is right in saying that Deleuze is interested in the implementation of his ethics—Deleuze has views on good and bad ways of living and does not hesitate, as we saw, to recommend counter-actualisation and alignment with the event as the means to the realization of an ethics worth its name and the conduct of a life worth living. May and Hallward—each takes hold of one aspect of the problem. May: the causality of freedom, without which necessity reigns supreme and invalidates well-entrenched ethical intuitions. But May mistakes this causality of freedom for freedom of choice and action, *tout court*. Hallward, on the other hand, takes on the other half of the problem: the indispensability of the virtual for the construction of

Deleuze's ethics. But, instead of discovering the causality of freedom in the movement towards the virtual, Hallward condemns the futility of its exo-cosmic trajectory. As they stand, their books are incompatible with each other. But were May to give a more central place to the virtual, the quasi-causal, the necessity that marks the domain of the actual, and a better calibrated reading of the imperative to counter-actualise, the twin problematic of the two causalities—so central to Deleuze—would surface, free from the baggage of voluntarism and decisionism. Were Hallward to acknowledge the irreducible presence of causality (of freedom and of necessity) in the Deleuzian works, the out-worldliness he attributes to Deleuze could no longer be sustained. In its place, a more sophisticated play of necessity and freedom would come to rest—a play within the real, being at last conceived as a veritable Möbius strip of the actual and the virtual.

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Notes

1. See May (1993); May (1994a); May (1995) and May (1997).
2. May himself, in an earlier essay of his, argued that Deleuze cannot be the thinker of difference (or the thinker who privileges difference over unity or identity), and in his attempt to support this claim May did refer to this type of Deleuzian statements. See May (1994b).
3. See, for example Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition* (1994: 193): 'Take, for example, the linguistic multiplicity, regarded as a virtual system of reciprocal connections between "phonemes" which is incarnated in the actual terms and relations of diverse languages: such a multiplicity renders possible speech as a faculty as well as the transcendent object of that speech, that "metalanguage" that cannot be spoken in the empirical usage of a given language, but must be spoken and can be spoken only in the poetic usage of speech coextensive with virtuality. Take the social multiplicity: it determines sociability which cannot be lived within actual societies in which the multiplicity is incarnated, but must be and can be lived only in the element of social upheaval (in other words, freedom, which is always hidden among the remains of an old order and the first fruits of a new.'
4. See Zourabichvili (1998) See also Valentin, (2004) & (2006).
5. Hallward seems to dispute the reversibility relation between the actual and the virtual. He writes: 'The expressive or "explicative" determination that links the

implicated *naturans* (the virtual creating) and the explicated *naturata* (the actual creature) is strictly unilateral and irreversible' (p. 57).

6. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* XIII, 4: 1078b, 31–2.
7. Characterisation of Plato's ontology suggested by Gregory Vlastos. See Vlastos (1965).
8. I use the expression 'melioristic epistemology,' not in the sense that it has acquired in discussions by, or related to the work of, Carl Popper. By 'melioristic epistemology' I mean any theory of knowledge that offers grounds for believing that, knowledge is capable of discerning the more veridical from the less plausible.

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Deleuze and the Limits of Mathematical Time[1]

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Abstract

In *Creative Evolution,* Bergson argues that life, the so-called *inner becoming of things,* does not develop linearly, in accordance with a geometrical, formal model. For Bergson as for classical science, matter occupies a plane of immanence defined by natural laws. But he maintains that affection is not part of that plane of immanence and that it needs new kind of scientific description. For Deleuze, affection does belong to the plane of immanence whose parts are *exterior* to one another, according to classical natural laws. Out of this may be cut the closed, mechanical world with its immobile sections that Bergson attributes to cinematographic knowledge. Thus, in place of a science of creative evolution, Deleuze has substituted external relations, blocs of becoming and ultimately, a theory of extinction.

Keywords: Deleuze, Bergson, mathematical, natural laws, plane of immanence, creative evolution, extinction.

I. The Loss of Innocence

For philosophers and film theorists of today, there can be no innocent account of the philosophy of Henri Bergson, and especially, no innocent account of Bergson and film. The latter is due in large part to the two books on cinema written by Gilles Deleuze, books which both acknowledge Bergson's rich and inventive notion of the image, but which simultaneously seek to circumvent Bergson's own so-called 'overhasty critique' of cinema, a critique that apparently arises when he characterizes the medium as a model for the forces of rationality that immobilize and fragment time (Deleuze 1986: xiv). As Amy Herzog has written, 'cinema, for Bergson, or rather the cinematic apparatus, corresponds directly to the function of the intellect.... The camera

isolates fragments of reality, erasing the nuances of transformation occurring between frames' (Herzog 2000). However, according to Deleuze, when Bergson puts forward his three theses on movement and accuses cinema of producing false movement, movement distinct from the space covered by that movement (which Deleuze refers to as the 'cinematographic illusion'), Bergson is mistaken and must be corrected. If the error of cinema is that it reconstitutes movement from immobile instants or positions, this frees it from the privileged instants or poses of antiquity, the Forms or Ideas that refer to intelligibility. At least the error of cinema can be identified with modern science, no longer privileged instants but something Deleuze calls 'any-instants-whatever,' which, for Deleuze, are immanent and material, derived from the continuous and mechanical succession of moments of classical science, according to which time is an independent variable:

> Cinema is the system which reproduces movement as a function of any-instant-whatever, that is, as a function of equidistant instants, selected so as to create an impression of continuity. (Deleuze 1986: 4)

Thus, according to Deleuze, Bergson demonstrates that cinema belongs to the modern scientific conception of movement. This conception may be traced from the invention of modern astronomy by Kepler who sought to determine the relation between the trajectories of orbits and the time a planet takes to circumscribe them, to classical physics, which sought the link between space covered by a falling body and the time of this fall, to modern geometry which worked out the equation for determining the position of a point on a moving straight line at any moment in its course, and finally, by differential and integral calculus, examining sections of space brought infinitely close together (Deleuze 1986: 4).[2] Newton proposed the idea of absolute space, invisible empty space at rest relative to any motion in the universe so that motion could be measured relative to this absolute space. He also proposed an absolute, mathematical time flowing without relation to anything external. Newton proposed absolute space and time even though ultimately he could not adequately defend these concepts because he needed them in order to make sense of motion and gravity (Wheeler 1990: 2–3). The theory of Special Relativity does away with the Newtonian postulate of absolute reference of space and time, eliminating any privileged point of view and introducing the concepts of time dilation and space contraction. That is, the idea that time passes more slowly for people and objects in motion and distances shrink for people and objects in motion, and also, that events that

are simultaneous from a moving point of view are not simultaneous from a stationary point of view (DeWitt 2004: 209). Thus time and space exist in relation to one another; they are what Deleuze will call a 'bloc of becoming'. Nevertheless, the speed of light remains an invariant governing motion, and relativity theory maintains a fundamental role for observation and measurement: 'Time is relative in Einstein's special theory of relativity, but this relativity is expressed by equations which are always valid. Time is not, therefore, chaotically relative, but . . . relative in an ordered way' (Durie 1999: xvii).[3] In spite of the profound changes in physics' conception of space and time, Bergson still maintains that the scientific conception of time 'surreptitiously bring[s] in the idea of space' by successively setting states side by side, whereas the time he calls duration, is 'succession *without [the] mutual externality*' of temporal states' (Durie 1999: vii). So it seems that much depends on how one understands Bergson's complaint against science and cinema, and Deleuze is very cagey here. He quotes Bergson stating that: 'Modern science must be defined pre-eminently by its aspiration to take time as an independent variable' (Bergson 1988a: 336, cited in Deleuze 1986: 4). Yet, we might ask, does Deleuze ignore what is more important for Bergson, namely the question of the attitude of science, including the theory of relativity, toward change and evolution? Moreover, Deleuze's argument might well rest on his assertion – an assertion that seems to have been anticipated by Bergson – that the theory of relativity alters Bergson's fundamental critique of cinematographic knowledge. For although Bergson most certainly accepted the special theory of relativity, did he not do so precisely with the hope of freeing it from the restraints imposed by classical physics, restraints that eliminate duration for the sake of impersonal time? (Durie 1999: v–vi)[4]

Herzog (2000) has argued that Bergson's and Deleuze's positions can be reconciled if we do not take film to be a model for perception or an image of reality but rather, if we study it as simply an image in its own right, with its own duration.[5] As agreeable as this solution may be, it leaves open some interesting if not urgent questions, as Herzog also points out. How, we might ask, are our philosophical concepts influenced and formed by, not so much by our technological developments, as by the dominant scientific structures and concepts arising from the so-called 'invention of modern science'? Isabelle Stengers and Ilya Prigogine have argued that there exists 'a strong interaction of the issues proper to culture as a whole and the internal conceptual problems of science in particular' (Prigogine and Stengers 2000: 19).[6] The reorientation from the modern classical to

the contemporary view is, for them, equally reflected in the conflict between the natural sciences and the social sciences and humanities, including philosophy. Like Bergson, Stengers and Prigogine state that if the development of science has been understood to shift away from concrete experience toward mechanical idealization, this is a consequence of the limitations of modern classical science, its inability to give a coherent account of the relationship between humans and nature. Many important results were repressed or set aside insofar as they failed to conform to the modern classical model. In order to free itself from traditional modes of comprehending nature, science isolated and purified its practices in the effort to achieve greater and greater autonomy, leading it to conceptualize its knowledge as universal and to isolate itself from any social context (Prigogine and Stengers 2000: 19–22).

If this is what occurred, it is not surprising that modern classical science was soon faced with a rival knowledge, one that refuted experimental and mathematical knowledge of nature. Immanuel Kant's transcendental philosophy clearly identified phenomenal reality with science, and science with Newtonian science. Thereby, any opposition to classical science was an opposition to science in its entirety. According to Kant, phenomena, as the objects of experience, are the product of the mind's synthetic activity. So, the scientist is, in effect, the source of the universal laws discovered in nature, but the philosopher, reveals the *limits* of scientific knowledge, insofar as it can never know things in themselves. Beyond those limits, *philosophy* engages with ethics and aesthetics, the noumenal realm which belongs to philosophy alone. What Kant refuses, for the scientist, is any notion of activity, of choice or selectivity with respect to the theoretical and experimental situation: 'Kant is after the *unique* language that science deciphers in nature, the unique set of a priori principles on which physics is based and that are thus to be identified with the categories of human understanding' (Prigogine and Stengers 2000: 88).

Unlike Kant, who at least proposed a détente with Newton, G. W. F. Hegel's philosophy systematically denied the principles of Newtonian science, insisting that simple mechanical behavior is qualitatively distinct from that of complex living beings who can become self-conscious. Although 'Hegel's system provides a consistent philosophic response to the crucial problems of time and complexity,' it ultimately failed insofar as no science could support it (Prigogine and Stengers 2000: 90).[7] A similar verdict is delivered, initially, with respect to Henri Bergson. Bergson, it is argued, wished to create a metaphysics based on intuition,

'a concentrated attention, an increasingly difficult attempt to penetrate deeper into the singularity of things,' and attributed to science in general limitations that were applicable only to the science of his time (Prigogine and Stengers 2000: 91).[8]

In 1922, Bergson attempted to introduce and defend (against Einstein) the possibility of simultaneous 'lived' times, but since, for Einstein, intelligibility remained tied to immutability, Bergson's thesis was widely understood to have failed (Prigogine and Stengers 2000: 293–4). And yet, if philosophy is to be something more than the mere handmaid of science. For Stengers and Prigogine, the status of philosophy in relation to science is tied to the respective discipline's understandings of time which can span the spiritual and physical aspects of nature, including human nature. If the mechanistic view and laws of motion put in place by Isaac Newton formulated a world that is closed, atomistic, predictable and time-reversible, Stengers and Prigogyne reformulate this world as open, complex, probabalistic and temporally irreversible:

> In the classical view, the basic processes of nature were considered to be deterministic and reversible .... Today we see everywhere, the role of irreversible processes, of fluctuations. (Prigogine and Stengers 2000, xxvii)

For this reason they give an account of the conceptual transformation of science from classical science to the present, particularly as it applies to the macroscopic scale, the scale of atoms, molecules and biomolecules with special attention to the problem of time, a problem that arose out of the realization that new dynamic states of matter may emerge from thermal chaos when a system interacts with its surroundings. These new structures were given the name *dissipative structures* to indicate that dissipation can in fact play a constructive role in the formation of new states (Prigogine and Stengers 2000: 12).[9] Stengers and Prigogine thus take us from the static view of classical dynamics to what they take to be an *evolutionary* view arising with non-equilibrium thermodynamics. They conclude that the reversibility of classical dynamics is a characteristic of closed dynamic systems only, and that science must accept a pluralistic world in which reversible and irreversible processes coexist (Prigogine and Stengers 2000: 279–90). In place of general, all embracing schemes that could be expressed in terms of eternal laws, there is time. In place of symmetry, there are symmetry-breaking processes on all levels. And yet, there remains a kind of unity: time irreversibility *becomes* the source of order on all levels.

Bergson himself expresses a similar idea in his introduction to *Creative Evolution*. He says that a theory of knowledge and a theory of life seem to be inseparable, but that life cannot simply accept the concepts understanding provides for it: 'This is an old problem. How can the intellect, created by the processes of evolution, be applied to and understand that evolutionary movement which created it? (Bergson 1988a: xiii) Certainly, humans are not pure intellect, for there lingers all around us, around our conceptual and logical thought, 'a vague nebulosity, made of their very substance out of which has been formed the luminous nucleus that we call the intellect,' and beyond this, other forms of consciousness, which, although not freed of external constraints as the human intellect is, nevertheless do express something 'immanent and essential in the evolutionary movement' (Bergson 1988a: xii).[10] Thus, insofar as the cinematographic mechanism of thought arises in the evolutionary context, it may be that in order truly to understand it, we need to examine this evolutionary context more fully. That is, why does Bergson's critique of cinematographic knowledge appear in the final chapter of *Creative Evolution*? What is the relation between his critique of this concept of rationality and modern classical science and the theory of relativity? Can a bridge be constructed, as Stengers and Prigogine suggest, between the spiritual and physical aspects of life, an evolutionary bridge based on time irreversibilty as the source of order on all levels?

II. Evolution

Nearly three-quarters of a century before Stengers and Prigogine, Bergson begins his account of cinematographic knowledge with the assertion that *duration is irreversible*. Not only, he claims, is something new added to our personality, but something absolutely new that not even a divine being could predict. This must be contrasted with geometrical deductive reasoning, for which, impersonal and universal premises force impersonal and universal conclusions. For conscious life, the reasons of different persons that take place at different moments are not universal, they cannot be understood 'from outside' and abstractly; for conscious beings, to exist is to change, meaning, to create oneself and to go on creating oneself (Bergson 1988a: 6–7).[11] This is consistent with Bergson's general idea of the evolutionary process. Life, he argues, does not develop linearly in accordance with a geometrical, formal model. For life, change is not merely the displacement of parts which themselves do not change except to split into smaller and smaller parts, molecules,

atoms, corpuscles, all of which may return to their original position and remain time reversible. In principle, any state of such a group may be repeated as often as desired; the group has no history, nothing is created, for what it will be is already there in what it is, and what it is includes all the points of the universe with which it is related (Bergson 1988a: 6–7).[12]

Without doubt, evolution had first to overcome the resistance of inert matter, which changes only under the influence of external forces, where such change is no more than the displacement of parts (Bergson 1988a: 8).[13] The difficulty would be not to fall into the path of Hegel, for whose notion of change no mathematical or scientific justification could be found. There is no question but that Bergson recognizes this difficulty, but in order to make the transition from inert matter to life, phenomena had first to participate in the *habits* of inert matter, meaning, the behavior of inert matter, insofar as it is influenced causally by external forces. This behavior can be said to follow the laws that external forces prescribe, and as thermodynamics had already revealed, those laws, produce probabilities not certainties, that is, their patterns can be called habits. From the point of view of contemporary evolutionary biology, life arose as a phenomenon of energy flow; it is inseparable from energy flow, the process of material exchange in a cosmos *bathing* in the energy of the stars. Stars provide the energy for life and the basic operation of life is to trap, store and *convert starlight into energy*. So, for example, carbon, so essential to living matter, was formed out of the lighter elements baked by the nuclear fission of exploding stars following the initial 'singularity,' the explosion from an immensely hot, infinitely dense point 13.5 billion years ago, and in photosynthesis, photons are incorporated, building up bodies and food (Bergson 1988a: 99).[14] Thermodynamics developed as the science that studies these energy flows from which life emerges, as living matter internalizes, with ever increasing variation, the cyclicity of its cosmic surroundings. For evolutionary biology, the science of non-equilibrium thermodynamics supports the idea that energy flows through structures and organizes them to be more complex than their surroundings, that organized and structured patterns appear out of seemingly random collisions of atoms (Margulis and Sagan 1997: 28).[15] There is, therefore, all the more reason to accept Bergson's conclusion that the simplest forms of life were initially both physical and chemical *and* alive, and that life is simply one tendency among others, albeit a tendency that diverges over and over, sometimes preserved by nature and sometimes disappearing.

In evolution, adaptation is mechanism insofar as species must adapt to the accidents of the road, but it appears that *these accidents do not cause evolution*, and that evolution remains creative and inventive in spite of adaptation. Likewise, evolution is not finalism, the realization of a plan, for this would make it representable prior to its realization, and in any case, rather that reaching a final harmonious stage, evolution often scatters life, producing incompatible and antagonistic species (Bergson 1988a: 102–03).[16] Moreover, it is difficult to clearly separate animal and vegetable worlds. At best, we can say that vegetables create organic matter out of minerals they draw from the elements: earth, air and water. Animals cannot do this, so they must consume the vegetables which have accomplished this feat for them. Thus, Bergson's claims seem to be compatible with those of evolutionary biologist, Lynn Margulis, who states that the first living beings must have sought to accumulate energy from the sun so as to expend it in a discontinuous and explosive manner in movement (Bergson 1988a: 115–16; Margulis and Sagan 1997: 23).[17] Evolution did not proceed merely by association, but always by dissociation or divergence; species participate in an original identity from which they diverge, even while retaining something of their origins, the original tendency out of which they evolved. Although, animal and vegetable worlds each retain some of the characteristics of the other, animals are characterized by movement (Bergson 1988a: 108–9).[18] What makes mobility so important is its link to consciousness: 'the humblest organism is conscious in proportion to its power to move *freely*' (Bergson 1988a: 111).[19] So perhaps it should not shock us that recent research involving ravens, creatures that freely move through at least three dimensions, reveals a startling capacity for consciousness and abstract thought (Heinrich and Bugnyar 2007).[20] If this is so, we might conclude that it is not impossible to define animals by their sensibility and consciousness, and vegetables by their insensibility and lack of consciousness, as long as one accepts that these tendencies derive from a common origin, the first living creatures oscillating between animal and vegetable, participating in both (Bergson 1988a: 112).

Bergson contrasts this view of evolution as tendencies to an understanding of evolution as causal mechanism, a theory he rejects (Bergson 1988a: 102).[21] A mechanistic evolutionary theory, 'means to show us the gradual building up of the machine under the influence of external circumstances [forces] intervening either directly by action on the tissues or indirectly by the selection of better adapted ones' (Bergson 1988a: 88).[22] Bergson also opposes finalism, the idea that evolution occurs according to the projection of a preconceived plan.

Mechanism and finalism are both constructed in the same manner as cinematographic knowledge; they proceed through *the association and addition* of elements.[23] As the cinematograph unrolls, different immobile photographs of the same scene follow one another so that the film apparatus operates just like the geometrical deduction. *Extracting* or deducting from each individual figure, it produces an impersonal abstract and simple movement in general, a homogeneous movement of externally related entities. The movement particular to each figure, the so-called *inner becoming of things* is never developed, and we are left with the artificial, abstract, uniform, movement connecting the singular, individual attitudes, in place of real, evolutionary change. We are left with association and addition rather than dissociation and even dissipation. Unfortunately, Bergson argues, 'the mechanism of our ordinary knowledge is of a cinematographical kind;' perception, intellection and language, the fundamental *human* relations with the material world, proceed in accordance with the rules of this 'cinematograph inside us' (Bergson 1988a: 306; Deleuze 1994: 141). Not surprisingly then, the cinematographic mechanism, which is a *mechanical* mechanism, operates with precisely the same structure. It operates through the association and addition of homogeneous units (frames) and always under the influence of external circumstances, the mechanism of the projector in this case. Likewise, it imitates certain aspects of human behavior, notably those that require association and addition, such as perception, intellection, language, and especially, action. Our acts reflect the insertion of our will into reality whereby we perceive and know only that upon which we can act.

Given this state of affairs, what is missing from cinematographic movement, from change as described by cinema, and therefore also from the cinematographic *image*, is precisely *the movement particular to each figure, the inner becoming of things*, the evolutionary movement of dissociation and dissipation. But what is the inner becoming of things? 'Things,' are matter and matter has a tendency: it tends to constitute isolable systems that can be treated geometrically. This tendency appears to preclude any notion of inner becoming even though it is only a tendency and not an absolute. Yet recall the glass of water into which Bergson pours sugar: 'I must wait, willy nilly, wait until the sugar melts' (Bergson 1988a: 9).[24] Why not, Deleuze suggests impatiently, why not simply stir it with a spoon, why wait around for the sugar to melt on its own? One waits, according to Bergson, because even material objects may be observed to unfold as if they had a duration like our own. Such waiting does not take place in mathematical time, the time of

the succession of homogeneous instants whereby the past, present and future of material objects and isolated systems can be simultaneously spread out in space. One waits, because the isolation of matter is never complete and only waiting reveals that the system belongs to another, more extensive system: the sugar, the water, the glass, the temperature and humidity of the air, the table, the room, and on and on into the solar system transmitting, in this way, a duration immanent to the whole universe including the duration of the observer (Bergson 1988a: 10–11).[25] With respect to cinema, this raises the following question: Is the cinema itself only a tool of mechanism and/or finalism? Is it an isolated system, a geometrical abstraction, so that it is not, for this reason, a genuine creative practice, but a manifestation of perception, intellect, language and action in the context of the homogeneous and mechanical material world?

Deleuze attempts to answer these questions with reference to Bergson's conception of duration. He calls the answer to these questions, 'Bergson's third thesis,' which when reduced 'to a bare formula would be this: not only is the instant an immobile section of movement, but movement is a mobile section of duration, that is, of the Whole' (Deleuze 1986: 8). Matter moves but does not change, but duration is change; and this is, we are told, the very definition of duration. Moreover, movement expresses this change in duration or in the whole. Movement is a change of quality; the fox moves in the forest, the rabbits scatter, the whole has changed. When water is poured into sugar or sugar into water, the result is a qualitative change of the whole. Deleuze admits that 'what Bergson wants to say . . . is that my waiting, *whatever it be,* expresses a duration as a mental, spiritual reality' (Deleuze 1986: 9). Whatever it be, it is not the whole since the whole is open, the universe is open to evolution, which is to say, to duration. But again, contrary to Bergson, Deleuze goes on to define the whole as 'Relation,' which is not a property of objects but is 'external to its terms' (Deleuze 1986: 10).[26] Bergson concurs that there exists a duration immanent to the whole of the universe and that the universe itself endures, but what this means is not movement of a mobile section; what it means is 'invention, the creation of new forms, the continual elaboration of the absolutely new,' whereas the systems marked off by science can be said to endure only because they are bound up with the rest of the universe (Bergson 1988a: 11). Nevertheless, the time of waiting for the sugar to melt coincides with the impatience of the one who waits; it coincides with the duration of the one who waits: 'It is no longer something *thought*, it is something *lived*. *It is no longer a relation*, it is an absolute' (Bergson 1988a: 10). Deleuze seems to try to

resolve this incommensurability by arguing that the whole creates itself in another dimension without parts and that this is a spiritual or mental duration. And yes, this is entirely possible. But what is this duration? It cannot be blocs of space-time which would be divided into sets or closed systems, nor can it be the movement of translation between these systems (Deleuze 1986: 10–11). Nowhere in the movement-image can we find this other dimension. Why is this the case?

III. Time in Modern Classical Science

By comparison with evolution, the making of a cinematographic image is much simpler. It begins with instantaneous views, fixed attitudes, immobilities. The apparatus strings them together along the trajectory defined by the continuous and homogeneous space of modern classical science: 'The process then consists in extracting from all the movements peculiar to all the figures, an impersonal movement, abstract and simple, *movement in general*,' movement comparable to that of geometrical deduction, successive positions attributed to a moving object (Bergson 1988a: 305; 316). This corresponds, according to Bergson, to our perception, intellection, language and action. For life, or becoming, as Bergson sometimes refers to it, there are different evolutionary and extensive movements, but perception, intellection, language and action extract from these completely different sorts of movements 'a single representation of becoming *in general*' (Bergson 1988a: 304).[27] It is a single representation of becoming in general that is both easier to manage and, in terms of classical modern science, much more effective and useful than the so-called inner life of things, the evolutionary tendency whose structure is not a simple deduction from geometrical axioms. However, Bergson does not refer to cinematographic knowledge as the reproduction of a constant, universal illusion. Clearly, Greek philosophy distinguishes between contemplative and practical space – but modern science does not (Arendt 1998: 27–30).[28] What Greek and modern science share is the temptation to define the physical by the logical, to substitute signs for objects. Ancient science thinks it knows objects when it notes privileged moments, whereas modern science takes the object as any moment whatever. To study a falling body, Galileo considered it at any moment of time whatever, indefinitely breaking up time as he pleased since it had no natural articulations of its own (Bergson 1988a: 331–2). Modern science attained a precision the Greeks never imagined, not by isolating the galloping horse on the Parthenon at its essential and characteristic moment, but by isolating it

at any moment whatever, since no moment stands out and each is the same as any other (Bergson 1988a: 333).[29]

Modern science, it seems, aims at something different from Greek science. The instantaneous changes of modern science described by calculus are purely quantitative variations; modern science works with a view to measure. Its laws represent constant relations between variable magnitudes, constant relations between the quantitative variations of two or several elements (Bergson 1988a: 333).[30] But there are other factors as well. The Greeks already considered variable magnitudes in, for example, Archimedes' principle, but their cosmos was essentially static.[31] The modern scientific view concerned itself with laws that connect the space traversed by a falling body with the *time* occupied by the fall: 'The essence of Cartesian geometry . . . consists, therefore, in seeing the actual position of the moving points in the tracing of the curve at *any moment whatever*' (Bergson 1998: 335, emphasis added). This is done in order to know the positions of the planets at any given moment and to be able to calculate their positions at any other moment. Applied to each and every material point in the universe, it is a question of being able to determine the positions of these elements at any moment whatever if their original positions are given. This is a mathematical task beyond actual human capabilities, but not beyond that of an ideal, superhuman intellect (Bergson 1988a: 335–6). What matters for our purposes here is that 'this conviction [that we may determine the positions of the elements at any moment of time] is at the bottom of *the questions we put to ourselves on the subject of nature* and of the methods we employ to solve them' (Bergson 1988a: 336). The point is that modern science is distinguished by its 'aspiration to take time as an independent variable,' an any moment whatever (Bergson 1988a: 336). The problem for Bergson is that modern science, which is the science of matter, follows from the tendencies of the intellect and not those of instinct. It follows the tendencies of our ordinary knowledge and those tendencies are demonstrated in the cinematographical mechanism: 'It distinguishes as great a number of moments as we wish in the interval of time it considers. However small the intervals may be at which it stops, it authorizes us to divide them again if necessary . . . it is occupied indifferently with any moment whatever' (Bergson 1988a: 336).[32] What is a moment? It is a virtual stopping place, an immobility, such that real time, becoming, cannot be known by science for which time is simply a mobile "*T*" on a trajectory. What we retain of each mobile "*T*" is simply its positions on a trajectory, meaning that it is a point corresponding to other points. So that, 'when we say that a movement . . . has occupied a

time *t*, we mean by it that we have noted a number *t*, of correspondences of this kind. We have therefore counted simultaneities' (Bergson 1988a: 337–8).[33] What makes it *any* moment? In this trajectory, each *t* is exactly the same as every other *t*, no qualities differentiate one from another; they are differentiated only by location. In principle, the entire history, past, present and future of the universe can be laid out simultaneously using this technique. The 'illusion,' Bergson is careful to say, 'consists in supposing that we can think the unstable by means of the stable, the moving by means of the unmoving,' and it is *this* that constitutes the illusion at work in the production of film (Bergson 1988a: 273). Even so, 'the cinematographical method is the only practical method'. By this means, knowledge conforms to action: 'The mechanism of the faculty of knowing has been constructed on this plan' (Bergson 1988a: 306–7). Knowledge is pragmatic; it follows an interest. To use the intellect to think does not yield illusion, rather it simply yields pragmatic knowledge. *The illusion would be to imagine that an understanding of duration can be produced by static means.*

Does anything change when the theory of relativity enters the picture? Deleuze argues that the plane of immanence is a *section*, an *any moment whatever*, but it is a mobile section, a mobile any moment whatever: 'It is a bloc of space-time since the time of the movement which is at work within it is part of it every time' (Deleuze 1986: 59).[34] The Special Theory of Relativity introduces the idea that there is no way to distinguish between two frames of reference in uniform motion, thus that we must give up the idea that space and time are separate aspects of Nature and to replace them with the notion of *space-time* (Wheeler 1990: 8). In *Duration and Simultaneity,* Bergson asks: how do we pass from inner time to the time of things?

> Nothing prevents us from imagining… human consciousnesses… brought close enough to one another for any two consecutive consciousnesses, taken at random, to overlap the fringes of their fields of outer experience. Each of these two outer experiences participates in the duration of each of the two consciousnesses. (Bergson 1999: 32)

As a result, the two experiences will have some part in common; they unfold, so to speak, in a single duration, at least in part. In this manner, a single duration might be said to gather up all the events in the physical world to the point where, all durations intersecting with all durations, we may abandon the notion of a personal consciousness if it suits our purposes. This is how both Deleuze and the Special Theory of Relativity imagine simultaneity, a time common to all things. The

relativity theorist, the mathematician, who is concerned with measuring the world, still pictures succession, before and after, a snapshot view of reality, homogenous units which are now units of space-time.

But this version of time does not satisfy Bergson. For Bergson, there is no duration without consciousness and no before and after without memory. Bergson states: 'We may perhaps feel adverse to the use of the word "consciousness"; it is anthropomorphic' (Bergson 1999: 33). But without this personal element all we have is one moment next to another and there will be *nothing to connect them*. Duration is and only can be the continuation of what no longer exists into what does. This and only this is, according to Bergson, real time. It is not a bloc of space-time at all. Duration implies consciousness.[35] For this reason, Bergson maintained that conscious beings do not only follow the physicist in counting the number of units in a process and their relative positions and changes in position. There is more than one way for a consciousness to be conscious. *Conscious beings may also feel and live in these units or intervals*. The duration of melting sugar is, for the physicist, relative, reduced to indifferent, homogeneous units of time. But for a watching and waiting consciousness, it is absolute, they are in it. It is happening now and that consciousness is w-a-i-t-i-n-g. Nothing is given all at once. Infinitely dividing the time would alter it substantially, as would taking a spoon to the glass and stirring. A felt or lived interval emerges with its content. This future cannot be predicted from the present, no matter how much information is currently available.

Cinema, like modern science and the science of the relativity theorist, considers events in a time unrolled in space, retaining only what can be isolated without suffering too much deformation. Watching a film, one can easily ask where a particular moving body will be, what shape the film will take, what state its changes will pass through at a given moment, as each and every moment of the film exists simultaneously with every other (Bergson 1988a: 340–3). The solution, according to Deleuze, is to find a new model for cinema, 'a state of things which would constantly change, a flowing matter in which no point of anchorage nor centre of reference would be assignable' (Deleuze 1986: 57). But Deleuze, like the relativity theorist, continues to utilize the language of classical modern science in developing this model, precisely the geometrical language that Bergson refrains from applying to the idea of duration. At any 'point,' Deleuze says, centres could form and impose *fixed, instantaneous* views yielding *by deduction* consciousness, natural perception or cinematographic perception *from* this point. Or, on the contrary, one could imagine points with no centre or horizon, sections,

instantaneous views, that would *reverse* themselves in the direction of a-centred states, abandoning natural perception, consciousness and cinematographic perception. So, we have a unique situation: either deduce natural perception from fixed points designated as centres in mathematical space, or find a way to dissassemble those centres, to *reverse their trajectories* and to find the 'matrix,' the *mother* movement-image as it is *in-itself*. As such, we do not depart the model of modern science, we accept its order. We do not even follow Kant in declaring the limits of this science and declare ourselves to be in the realm of the in-itself where no science dares to go. Rather, now, the in-itself is matter. The image, the movement, and matter are all identical, thus there is nothing that the mathematical theorist cannot analyze. The problem, for Deleuze, is to undo Bergson's antidote to the power of modern science, including the theory of relativity, and to rid ourselves of ourselves, to demolish ourselves, not only our perception and action, but especially, our affective states. The image is the mechanism through which this is to be accomplished.

IV. In the Realm of the Image

Knowing nothing of illusion and reality, we exist in the presence of images, auditory images, sensible images, olfactory and gustatory images, as well as images for which there may be no name. Some of these come from outside and are clearly perceptions but some come from inside and *these* are affections, a special kind of sensitivity. Matter is the aggregate of these images and as material, each of these images receives movement from others and transmits movement back to them. By and large, this occurs in accordance with the laws of nature as articulated by classical dynamics, but with respect to our bodies and its affective sensibilities, something else occurs. Some of this matter is organized into a nervous system. External objects disturb afferent nerves which pass this disturbance on to centres of molecular movements. Alterations in external objects or images will alter these molecular movements and alter their effects. In other words, they produce perception and perceptions vary with the molecular movements of the centre, the cerebral mass, an instrument of analysis with respect to movement received, and an instrument of selection with respect to movement executed (Bergson 1988b: 17–30). In a simple organism, like an amoeba, every part of the protoplasmic mass receives stimulation and every part reacts against it. Perception, matter and movement are indeed one. In a more complex organism, functions are differentiated: sensory nerve fibres transmit

stimulation to a central region which passes it on to motor elements. Unlike the organism which is able to move, to escape danger, 'the sensitive element retains the *relative immobility* to which the division of labour condemns it' (Bergson 1988b: 55).

Unlike the amoeba, for complex beings, there is something in between the perceptions coming from outside and the actions to be undertaken in response to these perceptions. Sensory nerve fibres which are relatively immobile act as a 'zone of indetermination,' an interval, that is the very possibility of free mobility (Bergson 1988b: 30–1).[36] In this interval, the sensory nerve fibres, called affections, might contain an invitation to act, but they might also offer permission to wait, even to *do nothing at all*. Recent research supports Bergson's argument. It has been suggested by contemporary physiologists that perception can and must be distinguished from sensation, and that sensation is not limited to the five senses. Some sensation is aroused inside the body, so any 'afferent' pathway may be considered a potential site of sensation. Thus, affection or *sensitivity* may be defined as the capacity of an afferent neuron to detect physical or chemical change occurring at its endings and to transmit this information to our nervous centres. *Sensation*, may then be defined as the emergence of such sensitivity into consciousness. The transformation of sensitivity and sensation into perception occurs when there are multiple simultaneous sensory inputs as well as cognitive input from memory (Cabnac 1992: 4–5). In addition, it has been argued that the affective dimension of sensation is strongly correlated with pleasure. That is, 'as soon as a stimulus is discriminated, the affective dimension of the sensation aroused tells the subject, animal or human alike, that the stimulus should be sought, avoided, ignored' (Cabnac 1992: 8).[37] But sensation is pleasurable or paInful only in relation to the internal state of the subject such that warmth is a pleasure if one is cold, but not if one is already hot. Affection gives us the possibility of choice, not predictability. Affections are situated *between* excitations from without and movements about to be undertaken, between perception and action, and consciousness of affection is *feeling* or *sensation* (Bergson 1988b: 17). Thus, it is a different kind of consciousness, not that of perception, intellect or language, but one arising from the body's influence on itself.

Moreover and perhaps shockingly, it seems that nothing new can happen in the aggregate of images called the universe, *except* through the medium of affection, that is, feeling or sensation which takes place through the medium of the body (Bergson 1998b: 18).[38] What is Bergson's view of this in *Matter and Memory*? Pain is the effort of the

damaged element to flee, a motor tendency in a secondary nerve. The pain intervenes precisely at the moment when the organism repels the stimulation. With respect to perception, it is not a difference of degree but a difference of nature or kind. Perception reflects what interests us in the world and measures our possible action on things and their action on us. Affection, however, absorbs; and affective states are experienced where they occur, at a given point of the body. Affect is what we subtract from perception to get the pure idea of perception. In other words, there is no perception-image *per se*, no pure image of perception; rather every image of external bodies, every perception-image, is mixed with affection, or the real action of the body on itself. There is an awareness of affections in the form of feeling or sensation. What matters here is that the act 'in which the affective state issues is not one of those that might be rigorously deduced from antecedent phenomena, as a movement from a movement' (Bergson 1988b: 18). Hence something truly new is added to the universe. This implies that creative evolution, the evolution of the new, requires at least a zone of indetermination, a zone made available only through affection. As Bergson points out, any 'unconscious material point' has an infinitely greater and more complete perception than human beings because it gathers and transmits the influences from and to *all* the points of the material universe, whereas human perceptual consciousness reflects back to surfaces the light emanating from them only insofar as it is interesting. What is interesting is only what is chosen by centres of spontaneous activity, that is, by beings whose zone of indetermination differentiates them from amoeba and gives them a choice (Bergson 1988b: 37).[39] But any living matter, even a simple mass of protoplasm (such as the colourless material comprising the living part of a cell, including the cytoplasm, nucleus, and other organelles) is 'already irritable and contractile,' and because of this, it may still evolve from simply mechanical, physical and chemical reactions to something else, moving from pure automatism to voluntary acts (Bergson 1988b: 28).[40] In other words, what has to be explained is not how unconscious material points can be said to perceive, but rather, how perception evolves from affective images of potentially the entire material universe, to those that are interesting to the perceiving entity: that is, from the whole to the part and not the reverse. Science may localize vibrations of a particular amplitude and duration at a particular point *P* that sends vibrations of light to the retina (Bergson 1988b: 41–42).[41] This still begs the question of why this image was chosen to form part of one's perception, chosen from the many, many images whose light simply passes through. *The image of one's own body is*

at first simply one among many in the material world. Gradually, it distinguishes its own image as a centre of action from out of that multiplicity but only by distinguishing it as a zone of indetermination, an affective zone; otherwise it is simply responding to the material forces of the universe that impinge upon it (Bergson 1988b: 48–9; 53).

Indeed, Bergson argues that the living body is a kind of centre, but it is not, a mathematical point. The body is exposed to the action of external causes that threaten to disintegrate it. Some of these causes are reflected, producing perception, the measure of our possible action on things and their action on us, as such. Perception expresses *virtual action*, for there is always a distance between one body and another. When that distance decreases to zero, the body absorbs the action of external causes. This is affection, for it is then our own body that is sensed and the action upon ourselves is real action. The totality of perceived images subsists even if our own body is no longer present; but to annihilate the body is to destroy sensation which is simply a modification of the image called body (Bergson 1988b: 56; 57; 65). From this Deleuze concludes that movement-image and matter are identical: 'you may say that my body is matter or that it is an image' (Deleuze 1986: 59). Yet, in contrast to Bergson, Deleuze situates this on a mathematical plane of immanence: 'Let us call the *set* of what appears, "Image"' (Deleuze 1986: 58). Alain Badiou defines sets for us on the basis of formalized mathematical language: 'Given a property, expressed by a formula $\lambda(a)$ with a free variable, I term "set" all those terms (or constants, or proper names) which possess the property in question, which is to say those terms for which if l is a term, $\lambda(l)$ is true (demonstrable).' Thus for a set, 'The same, itself is both thinking and being' (Badiou 2005, 39, 38). Since sets are determined by their elements, set theory may be called a theory of multiples:

> Sets are fundamental objects that can be used to define all other concepts in mathematics, they are not defined in terms of more fundamental concepts. Rather, sets are introduced either informally, and are understood as something self-evident, or, as is now standard in modern mathematics, axiomatically, and their properties are postulated by the appropriate formal axioms.[42]

In and of itself, the determination that images are sets means only that images are not fundamental, that they can be understood in other terms, and those terms are set theoretics. What might make a difference are the kinds of relations Deleuze envisions as existing between sets.

For Bergson as for classical science, matter occupies a plane of immanence defined by natural laws that can be used to predict the

future position of any material point given its current position. But he maintains that there is something that is not part of that plane of immanence; that something is called affection, the sensation of one's own body from inside. For Deleuze, affection does belong to the plane of immanence; it is an immobile section between two mobilities on that plane. He argues that the *infinite set* of *all* images constitutes a plane of immanence. Out of this plane of immanence, whose parts, which follow certain rules that may be called natural laws, are *exterior* to one another. Out of this, may be cut the closed, mechanical world with its immobile sections that Bergson attributes to cinematographic knowledge.[43] But the plane of immanence, as a whole consists of the movements between all the parts of each system (set) and between one system (set) and another. It is still a section, still consisting of parts related to one another externally, still governed by rules derived from logic or geometry but it is now slightly redefined. This whole is not simply the immobile and instantaneous section characterized by homogeneous movements in space; it is rather, Deleuze claims, not just a bloc of space, but a block of space-time. The same immobile blocs of space have been mobilized by the addition of time so that the plane of immanence corresponds to the *succession* of movements in the universe (Deleuze 1986: 59). As Deleuze comments in his notes, 'this notion of the plane of immanence and the characteristics which we give it, seem to be a long way from Bergson' (Deleuze 1986: 226). But Deleuze is trying to make the plane of matter into an instantaneous section of becoming (not just an instantaneous section), where becoming is still understood as instantaneous succession. This, Deleuze asserts, is a view of cinema totally different from that which Bergson describes. Is it? Has the addition of time to the instantaneous section resulted in something totally different from the view of cinema that Bergson criticizes?

On the plane of immanence, each image is said to exist *in-itself*. The image *is* the in-itself, the noumenal realm Kant set aside for philosophy. But can we speak of the in-itself which is not *for* anyone and not addressed *to* anyone? Indeed, we can. We can do it, as Bergson himself predicted in *Duration and Simultaneity*, by getting rid of all the 'anyone's,' meaning *all living things*: eliminating the bodily affections and leaving only the images, the in-themselves. Is it not the case that for the image in-itself, bodies, their affections and actions are nothing but projections of movement in general? Thus, in place of bodies, their affections and actions, we may put into play perception-images, affection-images and action-images on the plane of immanence inhabited by blocs of space-time.[44] This is made possible through the realization in

the theory of relativity that matter and light are not really two different things. 'The theory of relativity . . . consists of . . . saying, "It is the light-figure that imposes its conditions on the rigid [geometrical] figure." In other words, the rigid-figure is not reality itself but only a mental construct; and for this construct it is the light-figure, the sole datum, which must supply the rules' (Bergson 1999: 88). Relativity theory substitutes light-lines (an elastic line that stretches as the speed attributed to the system increases) for time, essentially making a clock out of the propagation of light. Blocs of space-time are figures of light. As physics identifies things with measurement, the light-line is both the means of measuring time and time itself; light propagation is now the ultimate clock. So, Deleuze concludes, the movement-image is neither bodies nor rigid lines, it is only figures of light, blocs of space-time (Deleuze 1986: 66).[45] It remains the case, however, that 'the theory of relativity is a physical theory; it tends to ignore all psychological duration . . . and to retain of time nothing more than the light-line' (Bergson 1999: 93). The light-line lengthens or contracts with the speed of the system yielding precisely a multiplicity, a multiplicity of contemporaneous times, but meanwhile, '*real duration continues to haunt us*' (Bergson 1999: 93).

Where does this leave us? Does duration continue to haunt us? In the physical world of the plane of immanence defined by Deleuze, there exist blocs of luminous space-time, points with no centre or horizon, sections, instantaneous views, that reverse themselves in the direction of a-centred states, by abandoning natural perception, consciousness and cinematographic perception. To differentiate the universe that evolves from the universe that merely changes place, Bergson theorises the existence of luminous images, movements between images, and intervals which define zones of indetermination and choice. The set theoretical plane of immanence proposed by Deleuze still operates in accordance with the structures defined by modern science. Sets must be axiomatized; rules govern their behaviour; entities are externally related according to these rules. Blocs of space-time are the plane of immanence within which the light that is matter is organised then torn apart, reversing trajectories as classical science allows. From this physical point of view, perception is prejudiced, partial and subjective, a delimitation of the 'total, objective perception which is indistinguishable from the thing' (Deleuze 1986: 64). But perception also allows the perceiver to grasp both the virtual action of things on the perceiver and the virtual action of the perceiver on things, and one passes imperceptibly from perception to action. However, in order not to be reduced to an atom or a simple protoplasmic mass, something else is needed, something that Deleuze

describes as an *immobilised* receptive plate, effectively reducing affection to nothing, nothing more than an expression of receptivity (Deleuze 1986: 65–6). There is no implication here that sensitivity ever emerges into consciousness, that it is anything more than a physical or chemical receptor, not even a process or part of a process. Thus, it is a simple matter to subject perception, action and affection to reversal, to tear them apart. If affection is nothing but a site of immobility, the *immobilised receptive faculty*, an 'immobilized receptive plate' (Deleuze 1986: 66). Have we, in this way (via centres of indetermination), condemned our receptive facet to immobility, to what absorbs movement and expresses it but creates nothing? Is it the case that, incapable of real action, affection exhibits only tendencies, efforts that stir up the immobile element so that it may express the movement it receives as a quality in an otherwise immobile face. Expressed as a pure image, affect is a sign, a quality or 'qualisign;' it is 'affect expressed in "any-space-whatever"' (Rodowick 1997: 63).[46] If this is the case, then perhaps reversing and extinguishing the perception-image, the affection-image, and the action-image, ridding ourselves not only of ourselves but ridding ourselves of all living things, does lead, inexorably, to a stoical and formidable modernist heroism: 'This is what the end suggests – death, immobility, blackness. But... immobility, death, loss of personal movement and of vertical stature... are only a subjective finality' (Deleuze 1986: 58).[47] What matters is the return to the 'mother movement-image': 'An important tendency of the so-called experimental cinema consists in recreating this acentred plane of pure movement-images in order to establish itself there' (Deleuze 1986: 68). What matters is to keep moving, to witness the tearing apart, the *extinction,* not only of the affection-image, but of the perception and action images as well, the obliteration of action, perception and affection insofar as they organise not only subjects but life itself. Reverse them, extinguish them in order to make way for 'universal becoming,' the destruction of every living personal self, every point of view. What, after all, is a tendency?

> A perfect definition applies only to a *completed reality*; now, vital properties are never entirely realized, though always on the way to becoming so; they are not so much *states as tendencies*. And a tendency achieves all that it aims at only if it is not thwarted by another tendency. (Bergson 1988a: 13)

May we not posit that the return is exactly what Bergson cautions against in his critique of cinematographic knowledge and in *Duration and Simultaneity*? The immobilisation of affection, which is the immobilisation of pleasure and pain, and the immobilisation of

evolution which is the immobilisation of life, for which is substituted external relations, blocs of becoming and ultimately, extinction?

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Notes

1. An earlier and shorter version of this essay will appear in Felicity Colman (ed.) *Philosophers on Film*. This essay examines only what has been called, the movement-image. The time-image will be the subject of a forthcoming essay.
2. Certainly these are part of Deleuze's general interest as well. In departing from the Greek notions of Form and Substance, and by embracing the concept of the

differentiable instant on a plane of immanence, developed by calculus, as well as the notion of time as an independent variable, Deleuze is simply formulating a metaphysics compatible with modern science.

3. Durie cites the physicist Andre Metz (Bergson 1999, 160–83).
4. Durie argues that for Bergson, 'the acknowledged superiority of Einstein's special theory of relativity is that it demonstrates the fallacy of Newton's hypothesis of an absolute time' (Durie 1999: vi).
5. This is Bergson's title for chapter four of *Creative Evolution*. He does not use the term cinematographic illusion.
6. The French title of this book, an earlier and slightly less developed version, reflects the 'new alliance' between science and culture
7. The theories Hegel relied on were soon shown to fail. However, Hegel's reliance on logic rather than mathematics was to have long-term ramifications, opening the way eventually to logical positivism.
8. Science and intuition are, for Bergson, two divergent directions of the activity of thought. Science exploits the world and dominates matter. Intuition is engage with nature as change and the new (Prigogine and Stengers 2000: 91–2). Bergson's frequent engagement with relativity theory seems to put into question the conclusion that he 'sums up the achievement of *classical* science' (Prigogine and Stengers 2000: 93). Possibly he does more than this.
9. Equilibrium thermodynamics studies the transformation of energy and the laws of thermodynamics recognize that although 'energy is conserved,' when energy is defined as the 'capacity to do work,' nevertheless, nature is fundamentally asymmetrical. That is, although the total quantity of energy remains the same, its distribution changes in a manner that is irreversible. So, for example, although human beings long ago figured out how to convert stored energy and work into heat, the problem has been to convert heat and stored energy into work. Otherwise expressed, how are we able to extract ordered motion from disordered motion? (Atkins 1984: 8–13).
10. Bergson notes that if these other forms of consciousness were joined with human intellect, this might yield a complete vision of life.
11. This is due to the structure of duration.
12. This corresponds to the static view of classical dynamics set forth by Stengers and Prigogine.
13. It seems to me that Bergson is proposing a new image for science but as he was a philosopher and not a physicist, he was and remains widely misunderstood.
14. Photons are a quantum of electromagnetic radiation (Margulis and Sagan 1997: 8; 24).
15. Margulis is a well-known evolutionary biologist, Sagan is a science writer. Life is only one example of thermodynamic systems, but as the authors admit, it is among the most interesting.
16. Evolution sometimes involves devolution, turning back (Bergson 1988: 104).
17. Bergson cites the chlorophyl-bearing Infusorian.
18. Bergson provides examples of plants that climb and eat bugs and animals, like parasites, that do not move.
19. Motor activity maintains consciousness but consciousness directs locomotion.
20. Ravens use logic to solve problems and manifest abilities surpassing those of the great apes.
21. Margulis and Sagan seem to evade mechanism as well as finalism altogether.
22. This corresponds to what Deleuze calls 'force' (Deleuze 1994, 141).
23. For this reason, *Creative Evolution* is a thorough critique of empiricism and empirical principles as well as of Kantianism and Kantian principles.

24. 'Common sense, which is occupied with detached objects, and also science, which considers isolated systems, are concerned only with the *ends of the intervals* and not with the intervals themselves' (Bergson 1988, 9, emphasis added).
25. When science does isolate matter completely, Bergson admits, it is only in order to study it.
26. The difference of viewpoints on this is quite remarkable.
27. For a fuller account of the relation between classical movement and Bergson's duration, see Olkowski 2007: 202–22.
28. The Greeks made a clear distinction between the necessity of the household sphere and the freedom of the polis. But beyond this, in Aristotle for example, *nous*, or the capacity for contemplation, is humanity's highest faculty and cannot even be expressed in speech. In introducing Zeno's paradoxes, Bergson says, that these arguments were formulated with a very different intention from his own (Bergson 1988: 308).
29. The Greeks were content with qualitative descriptions since such accounts see nothing but forms replacing forms.
30. This contrasts with the Greek satisfaction with merely producing concepts.
31. http://hyperphysics.phy-astr.gsu.edu/hbase/pbuoy.html 'A buoyant force on a submerged object is equal to the weight of the fluid displaced.'
32. At the time, however, natural perception seemed to demand no more or less than the 24 frames per second in the case of cinema, although there is not reason why there cannot be more. Numerous artists have experimented with this.
33. Thus, it appears that rather than indicating a duration, time marks a position on an axis.
34. A machine assemblage would, it seems, operate in accordance with certain rules. Those rules seem to be the rules of connection, disjunction and conjunction. See Chapter 2 of Olkowski 2007.
35. It is this possibility of different forms of consciousness, affective and sensible forms that I address in chapter one of Olkowski 2007.
36. Thus arises the 'law' that 'perception is the master of space in the exact measure in which action is the master of time' (Bergson 1988b, 31).
37. Pleasure and displeasure are thus linked to the well being of the organism. Pleasure, in fact, is well-being.
38. This is the case for one's own body and that of other beings.
39. In order to eliminate this view of choice, one must eliminate the zone of indetermination and reduce affection to immobility. This is the goal of Deleuze's Cinema books.
40. Evolution requires a zone of indetermination.
41. Bergson does not deny the scientific explanation; it is simply not what he is after.
42. Thomas Jech, http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/set-theory/
43. These rules are connection, disjunction and conjunction which are derived from logic. See Olkowski 2007: 59–75.
44. Barbara M. Kennedy (2000: 108–24) discusses wresting percepts from perceptions and affect from afection to obtain a bloc of sensations (space-time).
45. I will not discuss here, Bergson's 'error' which involves a misunderstanding of the Lorentz transformation.
46. Rodowick's account of Deleuze's film theory emphasizes its formal, logical and deductive aspect.
47. I have articulated this structure, as it appears in *Difference and Repetition*, at length in Chapter 2 of Olkowski 2007.

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Towards Another '–Image': Deleuze, Narrative Time and Popular Indian Cinema

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Abstract

Popular Indian cinema provides a test case for examining the limitations of Gilles Deleuze's categories of movement-image and time-image. Due to the context-specific aesthetic and cultural traditions that inform popular Indian cinema, although it appears at times to be both movement- and time-image, it actually creates a different type of image. Analysis of *Toofani Tarzan* (1936) and *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge* (1995) demonstrates how, alternating between a movement of world typical of the time-image, and a sensory-motor movement of character typical of the movement-image, popular Indian cinema explores the potential fluxing of identities that emerge during moments of historical complexity.

Keywords: Deleuze; Movement-image; Time-image; Bollywood; Popular Indian Cinema; *Toofani Tarzan*; *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge*.

Although it is theoretically possible to identify aspects of both movement- and time-image in popular Indian cinema, because of its culturally specific origins, popular Indian cinema actually creates a different type of image to those categorised by Deleuze. The narrative of popular Indian cinema is marked by the fluid interaction of two movements: a movement of world typical of the time-image and a movement of character (a sensory-motor movement) typical of the movement-image. These movements alternately mesh and separate, taking it in turns to dominate and drive the narrative, which proceeds circuitously through a series of spectacles or interruptions. The fluid interaction of these two movements enables popular Indian cinema to explore the flux of identities that emerge during moments of historical complexity.

This is not the first piece to approach popular Indian cinema from a Deleuzian perspective. Rajinder Dudrah and Amit Rai (2005) and Amit S. Rai (2006) have used Deleuze's ideas to interrogate popular Indian cinema. In both instances they followed the trajectory of scholars like Steven Shaviro (1993), Barbara Kennedy (2000), Patricia Pisters (2003) and Anna Powell (2005), whose Deleuzian inspired works have variously addressed the issue of audience interaction with the cinematic image. In contrast to this work, however, I take popular Indian cinema to be a 'limit case' so as to facilitate a constructive, historicised engagement with Deleuze's categories of movement- and time-image. Neither movement-image nor time-image, the popular Indian film exposes the Eurocentric reterritorialising that Deleuze's image categories impose on cinema, a reterritorialising intent that colludes with his problematic side-stepping of numerous popular genre cinemas. Examining this particular popular cinema throws into question both Deleuze's understanding of what 'cinema' actually is (suggesting that it is a far more fluid entity than his image categories suggest), and indeed, the conclusions he draws from his analysis of predominantly European and North American cinemas.

I. Deleuze's 'History' of Cinema

The movement-image creates an indirect image of time. It renders visible the virtual whole of time (Henri Bergson's concept of duration), but only in a spatialised form. This process is most apparent in the action-image, in which the sensory-motor continuity of the protagonist creates the impression of spatial and temporal continuity across the otherwise discontinuous spaces juxtaposed by the editing. By contrast, the time-image provides a direct image of the virtual movement of time. Accordingly in the time-image, the montage of discontinuous spaces appears to move around a protagonist whose sensory-motor continuity is insufficient to master this 'movement of world' (Deleuze 1989: 59).

Deleuze's categories of movement-image and time-image exist in a number of different forms. For scholars in Anglo-American film studies they often appear rather dated in their division between what are, broadly speaking, European art cinema (time-images) and classical Hollywood cinema (action-images, the dominant form of the movement-image). Admittedly there are numerous other types of films discussed in *Cinema 1* and *Cinema 2*. *Cinema 1* contains analysis of pre war European cinematic movements such as German Expressionism, French Impressionism and the Soviet Montage School, particularly the works

of *auteurs* like Fritz Lang, Abel Gance and Sergei Eisenstein. *Cinema 2* eventually departs from its European focus to include discussion of international *auteurs* such as Yasujiro Ozu, Glauber Rocha, Youssef Chahine and Yilmaz Gűney. Even so, a film studies scholar encountering Deleuze's work for the first time might be forgiven for considering it a product of a bygone age when *auteurs* were unquestioningly venerated; its potentially universalising approach to cinema being similar to that of film theory before the turn to national cinemas problematised the Hollywood/Europe binary, and the study of popular genres and Asian cinemas gained legitimate standing in the field. Yet this very broad view of Deleuze's work, although in some ways accurate, is inaccurate in other ways. Deleuze's emphasis on the organic and crystalline regimes of the movement- and the time-image offers a profitable way of examining cinema, despite the traditional and at times elitist manner in which Deleuze framed them.

Film studies scholars working with Deleuze's categories of movement- and time-image have usually interpreted their relationship following one of two schools of thought: D. N. Rodowick (1997: 175–80), Angelo Restivo (2000: 171) and Patricia Pisters (2003: 16) all agree that the movement-image and time-image depict different ways of thinking, marking a shift in the relationship to time, truth and the image. For these scholars, the 'history' that the two cinema books create charts a rupture, or epistemic shift, rather than a linear narrative of progression from movement- to time-image. By contrast, in his contribution to *The Brain is the Screen*, András Bálint Kovács argues that – despite Deleuze's claims to the contrary – Deleuze's two cinema texts provide a linear history of cinema.

> Even though he never says outright that film history is tantamount to the emergence of modern cinema, that this is the "aim" of film history, Deleuze's entire taxonomy anticipates the shift from classical to modern. (Kovács 2000: 156)

According to Kovács, the time-image is for Deleuze the zenith of cinema's development, the end point of its linear progression through classical to modern cinema, from organic to crystalline regimes. The time-image precedes the movement-image not only in Deleuze's thinking about cinema (such that the writing of *Cinema 1* presupposes the writing of *Cinema 2*) but also in the sense that the time-image marks cinema's development to its ultimate goal. Kovács quotes Deleuze to this effect, stating:

> The categories that Deleuze uses to define modern cinema – as I suggested, mental images or direct time-images – were already given at the beginning

> of cinema, virtually present in the image. As Deleuze writes, "The direct time-image is the phantom which has always haunted the cinema, but it took modern cinema to give a body to this phantom." (Kovács 2000:156)

This position does not necessarily contradict that of Restivo, Rodowick and Pisters. Rather like Lyotard's view that, 'a work can become modern only if it is first postmodern' (a position mentioned in passing by Restivo), the possibility of the time-image always existed along with the movement-image. It is possible, then, to follow Deleuze's stance, and see the emergence of the time-image in European cinema as a consequence of the conditions that arose in the immediate wake of the World War II, when the time-image came to illustrate a shift in the western image of thought. However, movement- and time-image – whilst marking a definite historical crisis in Deleuze's understanding of cinema – can be interpreted differently. As the case of popular Indian cinema demonstrates, these categories actually co-exist, and Deleuze's use of WWII as a demarcation line was more a product of the types of cinema he focused upon than a universally influential historical event.

Several writers have already noted the coexistence of movement- and time-image. Most obviously, in *Cinema 2*, Deleuze acknowledges the existence of the time-image in the films of Japanese director, Yasujiro Ozu, who he credits as 'the inventor of opsigns and sonsigns' (1989: 13). Yet Deleuze avoids any attempt to understand why this might have occurred in 1930s Japan, noting only that the post war European directors did not learn from Ozu. For Deleuze, then, Ozu is an unexplained, isolated precursor to the post war European shift in thought marked by the time-image. More usefully perhaps, in *The Skin of the Film*, Laura Marks notes Deleuze's Eurocentric position, pointing out that time-images should not be understood as a phenomenon specific to the post war European New Waves. The metropolitan any-space-whatevers and the wandering 'seer' (Deleuze 1989: 2) protagonists caught in a sensory-motor limbo that Deleuze believed characteristic of the post war European time-image, are nowadays to be found in any number of films made by diasporic, immigrant and otherwise displaced postcolonial populations (Marks 2000: 27). Finally, Pisters, as part of her argument for a new cinematic consciousness of reality, writes of contemporary movement-images 'contaminated' by aspects of the time-image, presenting 'schizophrenic movements of deterritorialization of the constraints or absurdities of life' (Pisters 2003: 104).

Following on from these precursors, in *Deleuze, Cinema and National Identity* (2006), I draw on *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980) – which Deleuze

co-wrote with Félix Guattari before *Cinema 1* and *Cinema 2* – to argue that the movement- and time-image are extreme manifestations of the same phenomenon. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari describe the interaction between a reterritorialising plane (the plane of organisation) and a deterritorialising plane (the plane of consistency). These two planes are locked in an interactive relationship, forever struggling to de- or reterritorialise (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 270). To summarise my argument very briefly, when examining narrative time in cinema, the movement-image exists on the reterritorialising plane of organisation, whilst the time-image emerges on the deterritorialising plane of consistency. This interactive model explains why cinema history contains examples of movement- and time-images that cross the great divide between *Cinema 1* and *Cinema 2*, and why numerous films contain aspects of both image. Thus, I conclude that the possibility of both type of image always exists, and that it is a question of degree as to how de- or reterritorialised they are, how close to the limit conditions of the movement- or the time-image (Martin-Jones 2006:19–49).

Drawing on these various intersecting positions one can argue that even though it is usually the reterritorialised form of the movement-image that is dominant, cinema always contains within it the deterritorialising possibility of the time-image. Deleuze acknowledges as much in *Cinema 2* when he describes the time-image as 'the phantom which has always haunted the cinema', and the time-image as an image that is 'virtual, in opposition to the actuality of the movement-image' (Deleuze 1989: 41). Prior to this, in *Cinema 1*, Deleuze introduced the crisis of the action image in the post war era saying: 'But can a crisis of the action-image be presented as something new? Was this not the constant state of cinema?' (Deleuze 1986: 205). Time images, then, whilst evidence of the potential that has always existed for a destabilizing of the movement-image, are not necessarily evidence of a radical shift of episteme. Moreover, films with a deterritorialised narrative time scheme, even films evoking a Nietzschean powers of the false, are not necessarily evidence of the existence of the time-image, not necessarily a glimpse of the plane of consistency. Rather, Deleuze's categories of the movement- and the time-image are a product of his selection of certain films for discussion, and his ignorance (whether purposeful or not) of certain others, not least of which was popular Indian cinema.

Had Deleuze paid attention to the existence of popular Indian cinema – a major force in many parts of the world today, as it was for much of the twentieth century – then the distinction he draws between North American and European cinemas would have appeared very differently.

Indeed, as the popular Indian aesthetic that is most widespread today emerged in the 1930s, the distinction Deleuze draws appears very much that of a European cinephile whose experience of 'cinema' is confined to the circulation of classical Hollywood and (predominantly) European art films in the international arena. This distinction fails to take into account the numerous different national experiences of cinema, especially indigenous popular genre films that exist around the world.

Popular Indian cinema muddies any clear distinction between the movement- and the time-image. Defying easy categorisation, it goes beyond illustrating the perpetual coexistence of the possibility for de- and reterritorialisation offered by the two images. Rather, it demonstrates a different plane of organisation to that of the movement-image. Detailed consideration of the popular Indian film form and its reception acknowledges the different national, cultural, historical and aesthetic conditions that shape the de- and reterritorialisations that exist on its particular plane of organisation. I argue that Deleuze's Eurocentrism is the cause of the initial polarising of cinema into the movement- and time-image, and his use of this dual model as evidence of an epistemic shift becomes extremely difficult to extrapolate into a globally applicable conclusion once popular Indian cinema is considered.

II. Popular Indian Cinema

Popular Indian cinema, often problematically referred to as Bollywood cinema,[1] has been recognised as a legitimate topic of discussion within film studies since the 1980s. As there are now a huge number of books and articles on the subject I will very briefly summarise the major points surrounding the popular Indian aesthetic and its consumption. This background information is essential if we are to grasp the culturally specific reasons behind the emergence of this distinctive plane of organisation.

The most obvious influences on popular Indian cinema are two sacred texts of the Hindu faith, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. The structures of these epic texts greatly influence the popular Indian film narrative. Rather than the clearly defined linear narrative of the classical Hollywood form (the action-image in its large form (SAS′)), the narrative of popular Indian cinema, like that of the epic texts, incorporates 'endless digressions, detours [and] plots within plots' (Gokulsing and Dissanayake 1998: 17). It is the interweaving of many storylines together

that popular Indian cinema derives from this epic narrative tradition, and it is primarily this that leads to the length of popular Indian films.

Due to this structure, in popular Indian film the narrative drive is secondary to the progression of a series of often seemingly disconnected episodes, like song and dance routines, fight scenes, comic sequences, moments of family melodrama, tearful confrontations between lovers, and so on. In her seminal article, 'Indian Cinema: Pleasures and Popularity', Rosie Thomas notes that the origins of this aesthetic in Sanskrit philosophy ensure that it is non-Aristotelian in its rejection of 'the unities of time and place and the dramatic development of narrative' (Thomas 1985:130). The Hollywood movement-image stresses the need to maintain a unity of time and place to the narrative, as is the guiding principle of continuity editing. The popular Indian film narrative, however, is not constrained by the need for the coherent narrative world demanded of realism. Instead, popular Indian film's distinctive aesthetic offers a narrative that is a ' "ridiculous" pretext for spectacle and emotion' (Thomas 1985: 123), thereby providing the viewer with the pleasure of experiencing a *masala*, a blending of flavours or moods.

Thomas argues that the pleasure to be had from viewing a popular Indian film is not derived from finding out what will happen at the end, but from seeing how the story gets to the end (Thomas 1985: 130). The epics from which popular Indian films gain their structure are part and parcel of an oral storytelling tradition, and historically functioned to keep a communal record of cultural history amongst a predominantly illiterate rural populace. Hearing the same story told over and over again, the pleasure is in hearing the familiar embellished, or otherwise rendered slightly differently each time. Similarly, in popular Indian cinema, the pleasure is gained from seeing how the same story is told slightly differently, rather than specifically from the way it ends – a fact which is generally already known (or is almost entirely predictable) to the viewer. This understanding of the popular Indian film narrative also explains why they are consumed differently from Hollywood films. Audiences in India are more likely to watch a popular Indian film several times over, singing along with the songs if they know them. This is unlike the consumption of films in most western cultures, where they are usually only seen once, in comparative silence, at least in the cinema.

Gokulsing and Dissanayake and others variously agree that, along with the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* there are five other major influences that give popular Indian film its distinctive aesthetic

(Gokulsing and Dissanayake 1998: 18–22). Firstly, Sanskrit theatre: This is the classical Indian theatre from which popular Indian films inherited the episodic narrative, dance spectacles and various stylistic acting conventions. Indian folk theatre also contributes: peasant productions which continued the 'style and techniques of the classical theatre after its decline in the tenth century' (Gokulsing and Dissanayake 1998: 20). Then there is Parsi theatre, a commercially oriented theatre at once realist and fantastic, and popular throughout India in the nineteenth century (Prasad 1998: 30). Hollywood is also an influence, but its storylines are Indianised (Thomas 1985: 121; Mishra 2002: 18) – usually through an infusion of emotion – so as to be incorporated within the distinctive popular Indian film aesthetic. Finally, in recent years MTV has been thrown into the mix, especially its quicker editing style, pop video camera angles, faster paced camera movements, and increased focus on teenager protagonists (Gokulsing and Dissanayake 1998: 22). The combination of these aesthetic influences creates the circuitous, episodic narrative progression of the popular Indian film. Finally, the distinctive shape of the popular Indian film is also a product of the structure of the Indian film industry. As M. Madhava Prasad argues in detail in *Ideology of the Hindi Film*, due to the segmentation of the production process into a series of independently produced constitutive parts ('the story, the dance, the song, the comedy scene, the fight, etc.' (Prasad 1998: 43)), the structure of the Indian film industry does not facilitate a linear narrative. Rather, the story is simply one more part in the whole, a fact that is reflected in the fragmented production process.

III. *Masala*-image

Due to its episodic narrative structure, which functions by blending together a range of different flavours or moods, the popular Indian film aesthetic does not exactly correspond to Deleuze's categories of movement- or time-image. So how does it function?

In 2002, Lalitha Gopalan dubbed popular Indian action cinema a 'cinema of interruptions' (Gopalan 2002: 3) in some ways akin to the early silent 'cinema of attractions' observed by Tom Gunning in his seminal work of that name. Gopalan notes that from its inception as a silent form, popular Indian cinema 'developed in a whirl of anti-colonial struggles that included an impulse to forge an independent cultural form by both reinterpreting tradition and making technology developed in the West indigenous' (Gopalan 2002: 17). Gopalan goes on to argue

the case for the 'interrupted pleasures' offered by this aesthetic, noting how – far from simplistically interrupting the pleasure of watching a seamless narrative progress – these moments of interruption serve to both 'block and propel the narrative in crucial ways' (Gopalan 2002: 21). Reading Gopalan's introduction to *Cinema of Interruptions* it is apparent that she is writing specifically to convince an audience that considers the classical Hollywood narrative normative, the problem that arises from this being the presupposition that the classical Hollywood narrative is somehow *un*interrupted in comparison.

Yet this assumption is of particular relevance for this discussion of popular Indian cinema in relation to the movement- and the time-image. Due to its culturally specific narrative structure, the popular Indian film is not exactly a movement-image, as the classical Hollywood film is, nor is it exactly a time-image (even though the time-image seems readily apparent in the popular Indian aesthetic), or even just a blending of the two. Rather, the popular Indian aesthetic is a different type of image altogether. On the one hand, the series of spectacles or interruptions through which the popular Indian film haltingly or circuitously progresses suggests a 'movement or world' (Deleuze 1989: 59). The various spectacles seem to move around the characters, catching them up and causing the narrative – at once blocked and propelled – to progress circuitously. In this sense popular Indian films at times seem akin to time-images. On the other hand, popular Indian film narratives typically foreground the sensory-motor continuity of the protagonists. The most obvious examples are the physical moments common to nearly all popular Indian films, the dance routines, slapstick moments, fights, and other action scenes. In this sense they seem closer to the movement-image.

Indeed, in terms of their overall narrative structure, popular Indian films typically uphold the status quo, and are often described in terms that evoke the overarching SAS′ structure of the Hollywood action-image. As Tejaswini Ganti states:

> Hindi films present a moral universe, the disruption of which initiates the narrative action. The disruption can have taken place in a previous generation or be very subtle and communicated briefly, but restoring order or resolving the disruption is usually the goal of the narrative. (Ganti 2004: 138)

Yet this situation is not as simple as it may appear. In *Bollywood Cinema: Temples of Desire*, Vijay Mishra seemingly agrees with Ganti's position, describing the manner in which the apparently conservative

popular Indian cinema constructs 'texts that function as metatexts of tradition and dharmik values' (Mishra 2002: 5).[2] Yet this overarching structure, which tends towards the status quo, also facilitates the controlled exploration of a series of possible transgressions. Mishra continues:

> The relay through dharma-adharma-dharma allows for transgressive eruptions to take place from within so that the unspeakable, the anti-dharmik, may be articulated. Hence pleasures of transgression are entertained as the spectator identifies with any number of ideologically unstable elements with the foreknowledge that the order will be re-established. (Mishra 2002: 5)

Although this progression – 'dharma-adharma-dharma' – may appear akin to Hollywood's SAS′ structure, the obvious difference is the greater space, or rather, duration, that is opened up between beginning and end of the popular Indian film within which to explore potential ideological transgressions. Within its overarching narrative development the popular Indian film narrative proceeds in a circuitous route, its various spectacles, interruptions or 'eruptions' both blocking and propelling the narrative in a manner determined by the numerous interweaving plotlines.

Rather than developing from situation, through action to changed situation (SAS′), the popular Indian film narrative is perhaps more accurately understood as developing through SSS, or perhaps SS′S′, SS′S″, or even SAS′AS″AS‴. This is not because it is a movement-image interspersed with time-images, but because it is an altogether different kind of image emerging on a context specific plane of organisation. In this sense, Gopalan's slightly problematic choice of the term 'interruptions' (although it tacitly suggests that a supposedly *un*interrupted mainstream Hollywood film is the norm) is in fact extremely helpful. It is because the popular Indian film narrative progresses through various spectacular interruptions – themselves the product of its specific emergence in India – that it can be understood to exist on a different plane of organisation to that of the movement-image.

On this plane of organisation, sensory-motor continuity (typical of the movement-image) meets a general movement of world usually associated with the time-image. Character actions propel the narrative at times, but at others are not equal to the movement of world that periodically sweeps them along. Actions do not always become equal to situations, a factor which delays or interrupts any smooth movement from situation, through action, to changed situation. Moreover, characters never know

when a new situation is going to suddenly emerge and derail their forward momentum. Thus, as the narrative progresses through its spectacular interruptions these two movements either mesh, or one or the other comes to the fore. This fluid interchange of movements seems to imply a shift or flux of movement- and time-images, but in actual fact the image that emerges on popular Indian cinema's plane of organisation is both and neither of these.

Although popular Indian cinema's view of time is sometimes very apparently Bergsonian, the type of image that emerges on this plane of organisation is also patently the product of other, indigenous factors specific to India. These include the cyclical temporal worldview of Hinduism. The temporal progression of popular Indian cinema is circuitous. During moments of spectacle, past and present moments of the narrative can come into contact. When this occurs, it again suggests the influence of the Hindu epic texts such as the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, which emphasize reincarnation, or samsara (the journey of life through various incarnations) and the presence of karma, 'the accumulated effect of moral behaviour' (Billington 1997: 37–40). In addition to Deleuze's Bergsonian view of time, then, this cyclical temporal worldview provides another potential source for the movement of world characterising popular Indian cinema. The perpetual shifting between movement of character and movement of world suggests a cyclical view of the relationship between human actions and the greater shifting of the cosmos within which human actions are caught up. This is another reason why it is not sufficient to simply argue that time-images emerge in popular Indian cinema. Rather, its plane of organisation creates an image which is at times akin to what Deleuze categorised as a time-image, but which must also be considered the result of an altogether different temporal worldview. This explains why the potentially transgressive eruptions of the popular Indian film which Mishra identifies are both facilitated and contained within a larger movement of world. In this respect a second contextually specific influence also becomes apparent, that of Parsi theatre.

From Parsi theatre, popular Indian cinema derives its style of direct interplay between characters on screen and audience members. This aesthetic feature is at odds with the code of continuity editing central to the verisimilitude of narrative world, and associated voyeuristic pleasures, of Hollywood cinema. As Mishra notes, this interplay might involve direct address to the audience, or 'the twice told tale, where events appeared to have happened before the scene being enacted'

(Mishra 2002: 9). Drawing on this tradition, the spectacles of popular Indian cinema render its movement of world as though the film were a play told against a variety of sets or backdrops. The transgressive eruptions facilitated by the popular Indian film's greater movement of world appear as virtual possibilities, potential other, virtual worlds (as they also appear in the European time-image) but played out in a fantastical manner for the subversive pleasure of the audience.

This altogether different type of image might be termed the *masala*-image. The *masala*-image is different from both movement- and time-image; it entails a different plane of organisation on the plane of consistency. It comes from a different aesthetic, cultural, national and historical context than the movement- or the time-image. On this plane of organisation, spatial and temporal discontinuity exists and is celebrated within an overarching progression that circuitously proceeds through digression and multiplicity. Yet this occurs not because of any radical shift in 'our' thinking about narrative time (a Eurocentric conclusion), but because of the specific aesthetic tradition from which the popular Indian narrative stems. This plane of organisation calls into question the fixity of Deleuze's movement- and time-image categories and their capacity to reterritorialise cinema into these two dominant categories without consideration for the possibilities offered by other, culturally specific cinematic forms.

IV. A Real Song and Dance

To more fully understand the difference between the popular Indian film aesthetic, the movement- and the time-image, a detailed consideration of the place of the spectacle or interruption in the popular Indian film narrative is necessary. At the risk of simplifying matters somewhat – as this spectacle can take a number of forms – I will focus on the song and dance sequence, a staple of the majority of popular Indian films. As in a Hollywood musical, popular Indian films set numerous scenes in everyday situations (a house, a street, a restaurant). A character bursts into song and the whole world responds. It is also common for a song to transport characters to other locations, often to exotic places with no relationship to the diegetic world. This has increasingly been the case as popular Indian films target the huge international market of diasporic South Asians (Non Resident Indians, or NRIs), by shooting on location in parts of the world as diverse as Scotland, Switzerland and New Zealand (Wills 2003: 255).

Song, and laterally song and dance, have been integral components of popular Indian cinema since the first talkies. The first Indian talkie, *Alam Ara* (1931) contained seven songs (Gopalan 2002: 19). The popularity of the song was such that in the following year *Indrasabha* (1932) contained over seventy songs (Gokulsing and Dissanayake 1998: 14; Kabir 2001: 157). In 1933 alone, '75 Hindi films were produced, all with songs and dances' (Ganti 2004: 209). In their seminal, *Indian Film*, Erik Barnouw and S. Krishnaswamy point out that:

> In 1931 and 1932, at what seemed a dark moment in Indian film history, song and dance – in part derived from a tradition of folk music-drama – played an important role in winning for the sound film an instant and widening acceptance. (Barnouw and Krishnaswamy 1980: 73)

Today the majority of critics agree that after the early 1930s 'Music and fantasy came to be seen as vital elements of the filmic experience' (Gokulsing and Dissanayake 1998: 13). Nasreen Munni Kabir is even more definitive, stating:

> *Alam Ara*, India's first sound film . . . borrowed the basic structure from the plays of the Parsee Theatre, which featured a number of songs based on Hindustani light-classical music . . . . After the success of these early song-filled movies, music became an essential component, featuring in all popular cinema. (Kabir 2001:155)

The point of this evidence is to note that the *masala* aesthetic was conceived in India in the 1930s. Although the popular Indian, or 'Bollywood' cinema, as we know it today, is perhaps more accurately dated to the post-war independence period, and although it is here that images akin to those which Deleuze categorised as time-images do begin to appear, this is not a phenomenon that can be unproblematically assimilated within the schema of the epistemic shift envisaged by Deleuze. The evocation of folk and theatrical traditions as key influences on popular Indian cinema in both Barnouw and Krishnaswamy and in Kabir, illustrates the need to understand the popular Indian film aesthetic as distinct from both the movement- and the time-image because of its specific cultural origins. The non-Aristotelian narrative of popular Indian cinema offers its audience the pleasure of spectacles for their own sake. As Kabir puts it:

> The average Hindi film does not pretend to offer a unique storyline . . . [W]hile a new twist to a familiar Bollywood storyline helps a film to succeed, if the audience is looking for originality, they know it is principally to be found in

> the score. The song and dance sequences are the most important moments. (Kabir 2001: 15)

Yet, the question remains, if the narrative's interruptions are the whole point of the narrative, exactly what type of image is seen in the song and dance sequence? On the one hand, song and dance sequences (loosely) fall into the category of movement-image. As Rodowick's analysis of Buster Keaton's moving body in the dream sequence of *Sherlock Jr.* (1924) shows, in the organic regime of the movement-image the protagonist's body unifies the discontinuous spaces through which he passes, because his unbroken sensory-motor continuity enables him to act upon what he sees. Rodowick notes:

> When Keaton finds himself on a rock by the ocean, he dives, only to land headfirst in a snowbank. Keaton's movements from one shot to the next link incommensurable spaces through what modern mathematics calls a 'rational' division. The interval dividing any two spatial segments serves simultaneously as the end of the first and the beginning of the second. In Keaton's film, every division, no matter how unlikely and nonsensical, is mastered by this figure of rationality where the identification of movement with action assures the continuous unfolding of adjacent spaces. The consequence of this identification is the subordination of time to movement. (Rodowick 1997: 3)

In this way the action-image moves from situation through action to changed situation in a linear progression, the protagonist's command of space ensuring movement occurs in an entirely causal fashion. In the movement-image we see an indirect image of time, of time edited around the protagonist's ability to act upon what they see. Similarly, the continuous organic movement of the actors in the song and dance sequence unify the disparate and disconnected environments through which the sequence takes them. In terms of Deleuze's findings in *Cinema 1* concerning the representation of time in various pre-war European cinema movements, the popular Indian film – like the early French, German and Soviet movement-images – uses montage in the song and dance sequence to provide an indirect image of time (Deleuze 1986: 29–55).

However, we might also view such moments as time-images, as instances of fantasy, of sensory-motor suspension where the narrative pauses, or digresses, and the world moves around the protagonist, transporting them elsewhere even though they themselves do not move. When Deleuze discusses the musical in *Cinema 2* it is in precisely this fashion. Overcoming the seeming paradox of sensory-motor movements like singing and dancing occurring in the pause between perception and

action, in *Cinema 2*, Deleuze sees this physical movement taking place within a larger movement of world:

> [W]hat counts is the way in which the dancer's individual genius, his subjectivity, moves from a personal motivation to a supra-personal element, to a movement of world that the dance will outline. This is the moment of truth where the dancer is still going, but already a sleepwalker, who will be taken over by the movement which seems to summon him: this can be seen with Fred Astaire in the walk which imperceptibly becomes dance . . . as well as with [Gene] Kelly in the dance which seems to have its origin in the unevenness of the pavement. (Deleuze 1989: 61)

In the song and dance sequence, then, the movement of time itself catches up or overtakes the sensory-motor movements of the characters. Deleuze also discussed *Sherlock Jr* in *Cinema 2* to demonstrate the difference between the recollection-image (a virtual image of the past that becomes actual in the present, and therefore closer to the movement-image) and the dream-image (as in *Sherlock Jr*) which is closer to the time-image because it perpetually defers its actualisation into another virtual movement (Deleuze 1989: 57). In Rodowick's analysis of this scene the protagonist's sensory-motor actions are used to unify the elliptically edited spaces of the continuity system, hence, a movement-image. By contrast, in Deleuze's analysis, the movement of the world ensures that the sensory-motor actions of the protagonist are forever deferred. Keaton is always one step behind the movement of world, the trajectory SAS′ is impossible to complete, and therefore this dream-image is considered closer to the time-image. This undecidability is emblematic of the nature of the popular Indian film.

Yet the popular Indian film is not a musical. Leaving aside Mishra's argument that Bollywood cinema constitutes a sort of meta-genre (Mishra 2002: 32), popular Indian cinema should not be viewed as a genre in the same sense that the musical can be seen to exist within Hollywood cinema. Therefore, what happens in the popular Indian film song and dance number is not simply a moment of spectacle in an otherwise linear narrative, a time-image blended into the overarching structure of a movement-image. Rather, these categories must be reconsidered altogether to take account of the fluxing state of the image on popular Indian cinema's plane of organisation.

In popular Indian cinema the contrasting movements of character and world alternatively mesh or alternate in importance or dominance, as the film's narrative progresses. The discontinuous montage often found in the song and dance sequence is therefore symptomatic of the larger

episodic progression of the popular Indian narrative, which weaves its way through numerous times and spaces, relying on a certain amount of sensory-motor continuity provided by its characters, whilst these characters are themselves periodically caught up by the larger movement of the narrative world. The episodic arrival of the song and dance sequence provides the clearest evidence of this. Here the point of change from one type of movement to another illustrates that it is a matter of degree or speed of movement as to which one dominates at any time.

V. Popular Indian Cinema's Plane of Organisation

Toofani Tarzan (*Tempestuous Tarzan*) (1936), a jungle adventure made by Wadia Movietone, one of the studios to achieve success during the 1930s, mainly through the production of stunt films, is a perfect illustration of this point (Barnouw and Krishnaswamy 1980: 110). As Thomas has shown at length, such action films were extremely popular at the time (a fact sometimes forgotten in histories of popular Indian cinema) and were, 'at their core, sites of negotiation of a new Indian modernity' (Thomas 2005b: 50). Examining this example from the early days of talkie production in India gives an indication of the initial development of the plane of organisation on which the *masala*-image emerged.

For the most part, *Toofani Tarzan* – whose basic storyline is the Tarzan myth – proceeds through a series of episodes which often bear no immediate causal relationship to the one preceding or following it. These include: a daring hot air balloon ride through a thunderstorm, various performing animals fighting, doing tricks or generally looking menacing, elephant rides, elephant charges, slapstick comedy routines, stunt sequences (inevitably including Tarzan (John Cavas) swinging on a vine), Tarzan's daring kidnap of Leela (Gulshan) and their ensuing romance, action scenes (including Tarzan wrestling with an imprisoned King Kong), a tribal ambush or two, a set piece song around a campfire, Leela's love song, and so on. This cinema of interruptions is reminiscent of the early silent cinema of attractions, with its circus or cabaret-like appeal to the spectator's attention over the short time span of a sequence of novelty acts. As such it perfectly illustrates the movement of narrative world in an SSS (or SS′S″ etc) pattern typical of popular Indian cinema.

Admittedly something similar could be said of the original US Tarzan movies, or indeed, Laurel and Hardy or Buster Keaton films. The difference is that *Toofani Tarzan*'s interweaving storylines work to disrupt any sense of linear flow to the narrative's progression. The most

obvious example of this is the recurring and unannounced appearances of Tarzan's insane mother (Nazira). Another good example is Tarzan's deterritorialisation of Leela from the safari party to his jungle hideaway, and the ensuing, unrelated progression of the two narrative strands. Both examples illustrate how the causal narrative progression we might expect of the movement-image is constantly interrupted by the narrative's episodic progression. One specific point in the film that distils the intermeshing movements of character and world, and their use to explore identities, is Leela's love song.

Towards the end of *Toofani Tarzan*, Leela (Tarzan's Indianised Jane), sings a song whilst bathing in a jungle pool. This interruption occurs rather abruptly after most of the safari caravan have been captured by tribal natives. The switch of mood is palpable. We suddenly leave the tense sequence involving the captives to focus on the bucolic scene of Leela singing of falling in love in the forest. Here the movement of narrative world typical of the cinema of interruptions is evident. It operates on the micro scale as well. The song Leela sings reflects the movement of world that takes place around her. As Leela treads water and sings her song of love, she temporarily becomes the centre of both the jungle and the narrative. Her partial sensory-motor immobility stills the narrative, and we pause for a moment to revel in the spectacle of her song. Leela is shot from various angles around the pool, and is intercut with shots of a bird nesting in an overhead tree, an inquisitive chimp which climbs into a nearby tree to watch her (point of view shots of Leela are provided for both animals), elephants bathing and grazing nearby, the surrounding mountains, a shot of the coast, and finally the arrival of Moti (Tarzan's faithful dog) who returns Leela to the narrative by stealing her clothes and running into the jungle with them. These discontinuous spaces, intercut with Leela singing in the pool, pass before the spectator's gaze without the sensory-motor continuity of the organic regime of the movement-image. As an expression of the movement of world around the character they are more akin to the time-image. As the narrative picks up again with Leela's chasing of Moti, however, these two movements (movement of world and character movements) coincide once again and we seemingly return to the organic regime of the movement-image.

In this early example we can clearly see how, rather than movement- or time-image, the *masala*-image creates a distinctive plane of organisation belonging to both and neither of these categories. In its slippages into interruption the movement of world comes to the fore, and literally takes over from the character. With the return to narrative,

however, sensory-motor movement of character and movement of world momentarily coincide once again. What is important to note in this example from the 1930s is that this is the norm in the popular Indian cinema of interruptions, in which the narrative progresses circuitously through a series of spectacles, from S to S′ to S″ and so on.

This interchange of movements also facilitates a broader examination of identities. In the case of *Toofani Tarzan*, the interplay of movements (movement of characters and movement of world) facilitates an exploration of the interaction taking place in India at that time between tradition and modernity. In the only existing discussion of *Toofani Tarzan* in English, Thomas describes this scene as being illustrative of Leela's position in the film as a facilitator of a larger exploration of fluid, "'modern" identities'. Thomas states:

> Leela is an intriguing mix of 'modern' independence, coquettish helplessness and unconstrained sexuality. She encompasses two facets of decadent city femininity: the vanity and 'falseness' signalled by her obsessional attachment to her make-up bag, and the assertive toughness of a woman in slacks who stands up to men, wields a gun and defies her father to choose her own sexual partner. The movie transforms her into a free spirit in a miniskirt whose hedonistic sexuality becomes, through a series of moves and denials, acceptably identified with the innocence of the jungle. Thus, for example, an erotic bathing scene, in which she (purportedly) bathes nude while singing a sensual song about 'a burning rising in my body' is immediately followed by a comedy gag in which Moti the dog steals her clothes, and then her kidnap by the cannibals. (Thomas 2005a: 36)

For Thomas, Leela's assertive femininity opens the space for the playing out of a 'modern' sense of identity. Whilst she is at home in the city, she is also able to accommodate herself to life in the jungle. The interplay between her different possible identities – assertive city dweller, equally assertive jungle wife – interacts with the different movements evident in the film. On safari with her father and his entourage, in her pistol-toting, pith helmet, boots and trousers guise, she drives the narrative through her sensory-motor actions. Once kidnapped by Tarzan, however, she becomes subject to the movement of world enacted by the jungle, and is threatened repeatedly by tigers and crocodiles, each time to be saved and carried off by the commanding sensory-motor presence of Tarzan. Even so, the potential for identity exploration remains. This is evident in the scene in question, where the movement of world offers an opportunity to explore a 'modern', expressive female identity (semi-naked, and with 'a burning rising in my body') and then disavows this potential as Moti leads Leela into the clutches of the cannibals. Ultimately, then, the

montage, Moti the dog, and finally the cannibals, are the agents who shift events around her as she literally treads water in the centre of the image. In one context, her sensory-motor continuity is assured. In the other, the movement of world pauses her trajectory, enabling the film and its audience to gaze upon her lyrical exploration of her modern identity.

At the film's conclusion, Leela learns to overcome the movement of world in the jungle. This she achieves through the modern, mutually reinforcing relationship she develops with Tarzan, which Thomas describes as 'fundamentally – and quite radically – one of mutual interdependence' (Thomas 2005a: 37). This union sees them disappear into the jungle together at the film's close, Leela's running figure uniting the spaces of the montage as she flees her father, illustrating her regaining of sensory-motor control over the jungle's, and the film's, movement of world. Thus, in the context of the growth of the nationalist movement in 1930s India, the two movements at play in the *masala*-image facilitate an exploration of the versatility and potential of 'modern' female identity in India.

The flexibility of this structure and its ability to adapt to changed geopolitical circumstances can readily be seen in the smash hit *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge* (1995). This film exemplifies the international aim of popular Indian cinema after the impact on India of a free market style 'economic liberalisation' (Kaur 2002: 205) and its appeal to the massive global market of Non Resident Indians (NRIs) worldwide. In *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge* the difficulty of attributing movement- or time-image status to the popular Indian film is also apparent. In the main, the narrative is defined by the sensory-motor actions of its protagonists; the first half of the film, in particular, sees its carefree young protagonist, Raj Malhotra (Shah Rukh Khan) and love interest Simran Singh (Kajol) backpacking across the discontinuous spaces of tourist Europe. Typically of the movement-image, their physical presence in these spaces provides continuity across the montage, as it does in the second half which takes place in the Punjab.

In the song and dance sequences of the first half of the film, however, the movement of world takes precedence, the discontinuous montage clearly overtaking them, leaving them to sing and dance in the suspended sensory-motor interval. Here the lovers sing and dance as they move more rapidly through costume changes, visit various towns, travel on trains, appear on snow covered mountain tops, swim in indoor swimming pools, wander the streets at night, and so on. The difference between these two moments, however, are simply a matter of degree,

or speed of movement of world, and the subsequent interaction that is created with character movement.

Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge's theme song, Tujhe Dekha, is especially interesting in this respect. It takes place at the beginning of the second half of the film, and in it a Bergsonian model of time emerges as Raj and Simran revisit the European locations in a song of mutual memory, and re-realise their initially stilted courtship as though it had been a time of mutual love and uninterrupted happiness. The song begins in a vast field of yellow mustard flowers stretching out of the frame. As Raj and Simran sing, they are transported back in time through their memories of Europe (and through various scenes from earlier in the film) revisiting a church, train, hotel room, lush green countryside, lake, bridge, and snow covered mountains before returning to the Punjabi mustard field. Several of these virtual movements include costume changes, the overall impression being of the two lovers slipping between Deleuzian sheets of the past.

Reliving the recent past as though it were a time of unbridled love and happiness (whereas in reality it was a time of halting, if good natured courtship) the recent past is coloured by the realisation of their love in the present. The virtual past and the actual present oscillate, becoming indiscernible in the moment of the song, as we might expect of the time-image. However, as the narrative returns to the mustard field in the Punjab, the popular Indian film narrative – which always proceeds circuitously due to its constant interruptions – *here literally progresses circuitously*, as the narrative's past is revisited and advanced in the present. Once again the larger movement of world of the narrative of interruptions catches up the characters, but here it returns them to previous moments of the narrative, enabling them to become active once again. This momentary interruption to the narrative's progress actually enables the characters' movements to mesh with those of the narrative world once again, ensuring that the narrative's progression is something like, SAS′AS″AS‴. In this more sophisticated fashion (in addition to the general fluidity of movements of world and movements of character), narrative in the song and dance sequences advances because of the alternation between movement of world and sensory-motor movement of characters.

As in *Toofani Tarzan*, these two intersecting movements facilitate an exploration of changing identities, but this time in the context of the contemporary relationship between India and its NRI diaspora. Tujhe Dekha brings together the two movements of the film, and in doing so, also intertwines Europe and India, past and present,

and transnational (indeed, global) capital flows and traditional Indian values. In this respect, Purnima Mankekar's observations on the film are particularly pertinent. Mankekar notes that: 'In a context marked by liberalization and intensified transnational flows of migrants and of capital, *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge*'s representations of the homeland signal the reconstitution of postcolonial Indian nationalism' (Mankekar 1999: 754). In such a context:

> [P]ostcoloniality does not designate a moment of unambiguous rupture with the colonial past but, instead, signifies the ubiquitous presence of the colonial past in the present. This understanding of postcoloniality rests on the premise that decolonisation does not occur along a linear trajectory (as in the teleological fantasies of anticolonial nationalists), but that it constitutes a series of discontinuous and uneven processes and is characterized by multiple temporalities. (Mankekar 1999: 735)

Thus, in the intertwining of the film's movements, *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge* engages a postcolonial Indian present with a recent narrative past spent in the diaspora, echoing the 'discontinuous and uneven processes' and 'multiple temporalities' through which post-colonial identities are reformed in the present. The narrative's past, the possibility of potential liberation from traditional restraints, is revisited in the homeland, as though the European diaspora houses the possibility of romantic rejuvenation, alongside the promise of financial injection offered by the return of the NRIs to India. It goes without saying that traditional Hindu values were upheld while the characters travelled across Europe, the romance remaining chaste almost in spite of the threateningly "liberating" context. In this way, as Gayatri Gopinath notes, *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge* reassures the 'transnational viewership both in India and the diaspora that globalisation and "traditional" Indian values go hand in hand' (Gopinath 2005:190). The Indian homeland is reinvigorated by the diaspora, as the movement of world (also here a postcolonial, economic movement of the world) reactivates the film's sensory-motor past, to examine the changing face of Indian and NRI identities.

VI. Conclusion

The plane of organisation that popular Indian cinema materialises on the plane of consistency is one where the movement of world (Deleuze's time-image) and the sensory-motor movement of characters in the world (Deleuze's movement-image) exist as part of a broader

cinema of spectacular interruptions. This is a plane of organisation that reterritorialises as a cinema of interruptions. Thus although both movement- and time-image can be identified if we look for them in popular Indian films, these images should be understood as part of something altogether different from Deleuze's reterritorialising categories, which were derived from a particularly Eurocentric knowledge of cinema limited to Hollywood and various classics of predominantly European *auteur* cinema.

Popular Indian cinema's plane of organisation is decidedly less linear in its reterritorialisation of the plane of consistency than the movement-image, especially in its Hollywood action-image form. Instead, it reterritorialises as a non-Aristotelian narrative of sequential episodes, a *masala*-image. For this reason it often appears closer to the time-image in places, even though it also bears a close affinity to the movement-image. It is characterised by a dual movement, a movement of world on the one hand, and a sensory-motor movement of characters on the other. These alternately mesh and unmesh as the narrative haltingly progresses through a series of spectacles, facilitating the exploration of different possible identities in various historical contexts.[3]

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Notes

1. The term 'Bollywood' is problematic because it actually refers to Hindi cinema, produced by the film industry focused around Mumbai. Although this is now a recognised international term for popular Indian cinema, it tends to homogenise the numerous regional Indian cinemas under one banner heading. Moreover, it is debateable exactly when popular Indian cinema first became known as 'Bollywood' cinema, the term potentially causing confusion as to the time period under discussion.

2. Broadly speaking the term dharma refers to a universal law which the Hindus believe governs all existence (Kim 1973: 9) and prescribes the morally dutiful way of life (Billington, 1997: 32).
3. This study has, of necessity, focused on one aspect of Deleuze's work. There is still plenty of scope for future work in this area that would add further dimensions to my conclusions. As Dudrah and Rai have already indicated, the conditions of reception (for instance, whether in India or amongst diasporic NRI audiences) also provide scope for new ways of addressing popular Indian cinema using Deleuze. Following this trajectory, the *masala*-image described herein might be reconsidered in another light in terms of a *rasa*-image. This argument, however, will have to wait for another occasion.

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Sensations spill a Deluge over the Figure

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Abstract

This paper utilises Deleuze's *Logic of Sensation* to critique the concept 'Figure' that he raises to formulate this theory in his monograph of Francis Bacon. Deleuze engages with Bacon's paintings to demonstrate how sensations from Figural artworks rupture through representation and disrupt binary logic. However, in his argument Deleuze seems to use the same kind of thinking that he intends the Figure to disrupt, since he prioritises and secludes art deemed Figural over and above abstraction. Such problematic categorisation is challenged here, by juxtaposing Figural and abstract paintings by Francis Bacon and Wassily Kandinsky. Both Figural and abstract works resound with *The Logic of Sensation*, which thereby spills over those boundaries posited by Deleuze's Figure.

Keywords: Deleuze, Figure, sensation, Francis Bacon, representation, Wassily Kandinsky, abstraction, rupture.

Introduction

What is at stake in the opposition between Figure and figuration at the centre of Deleuze's account of modern painting? How does his aesthetics of sensation disrupt this opposition?

By bringing forth the concept of Figure Deleuze ruptures the problem of figuration in order to theorise the violent, sensuous content of the aesthetic encounter with Bacon's paintings. He maps his conceptual trajectory on the surface of these paintings.

However, as will be shown in this paper, within his argument Deleuze draws a line around what art might be named Figural, alongside which abstract art is placed in a complex, seemingly contrary fashion – as though dissimilar and passing by figuration, rather than violently rupturing through it. Deleuze juxtaposes the painters Francis Bacon and Wassily Kandinsky to provide his argument for this, and forms the core thesis of his *Logic of Sensation* in response to the way Bacon's

figurative paintings expound the Figure by bursting through their shape as disruptive *sensations*.

But these sensations exceed the Figural restraints that Deleuze imposes by the way he categorises this genre and segregates other, abstract responses to that central need of breaking with figuration. By comparing two very different paintings by Kandinsky and Bacon it becomes clear that the opposition which seemed to be presented at the outset in fact dissolves, since they share the same effect and affect, in addition to that pivotal initial intent. These two artists use a different pictorial language to confront this, but their works resound with the same consequence of that confrontation.

The importance and intention of Figure in Deleuze's *Logic of Sensation* is, as Slaughter puts it, 'For Deleuze this is where the dichotomy between subject and object breaks down, where force and formation in the artist and the Figure are one … This is where the artist "seizes hold of life"' (Slaughter 2004: 251). Crucial in Deleuze's analysis of the aesthetic experience is the forceful link he creates between art and sensation, but his theory is troubled by the inherent dichotomy it tries to rupture, since in postulating Figure Deleuze constructs unnecessarily rigid boundaries around this concept. As such, this impedes the effort to explain how Figural art can securely 'break with representation', since it fails to account for the abstraction which similarly, even definitively, also breaks with representation.

There is, then, a plane or surface on which abstraction and Figure converge. This is the surface where representation is ruptured and sensation produced in response to the confrontation of this duality. The surface vibrates through colour, absorbing and propelling sensation, which ruptures through form. Here, at the surface of the disruptive, compelling, affective work of art, is where sensations spill over Deleuze's formulation of the Figure and *seize hold of life*. The point is that Deleuze's *Logic of Sensation* overflows his concept Figure and can be used to critique how he formulates this term.

I. Critique: How Deleuze builds the concept Figure in his *Logic of Sensation*

i) The intent to break through the paradigm of representation

In Deleuze's critique of representation the term Figure refers to an active element in painting, which in *What is Philosophy?* he defines as '*a bloc of sensations, that is to say, a compound of percepts and*

affects' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 164 italics in original). It is the point where sensation provides a means of rupturing the static clichés of representative imagery. This definition evolves out of his discussion of Francis Bacon. He describes sensation as having 'one face turned toward the subject (the nervous system, vital movement, "instinct", "temperament" – a whole vocabulary common to both Naturalism and Cézanne) and one face turned toward the object (the "fact", the place, the event). Or rather, it has no faces at all, it is both things indissolubly' (Deleuze 2005: 25).

Deleuze looks at how the static object of a painting can become more than an illustrative image and provide an affective sensation that extends beyond itself, surging outwards and towards the viewer like some kind of life force yet enacted in the *event* of the aesthetic encounter. He conceives of this event in particularly violent terms. He looks at Bacon's figures and senses that Bacon is trying to paint the very decomposition of flesh, as though the organs were somehow being swallowed by their bodies, in the attempt to evince a limit which erupts like some kind of pure, sensory form. From this Deleuze can plot his concept of 'Body without Organs' in terms of how the eruptive intensities one senses in Bacon break through the constraints of representation.

This intent and need to rupture representation is fundamental and, Deleuze argues, can be extended to define both modern art and philosophy, as the summation of what it means to 'overturn Platonism' (Deleuze 2004: 71). In *The Logic of Sensation*, this process extends from the disruption of figurative imagery, to the breaking up of that antagonistic, binary canon which constructs the discursive strategy of representation. Deleuze wants to reveal and rupture through, the 'world of representation . . . [as] a site of transcendental illusion' (Deleuze 1997: 265). For Deleuze, representative form is illusory since it marks the absence of a basic reality that is being re-presented. A figurative work of art represents something that is not present, which raises a binary or divisional gap between these two levels of reality and its illusory representation, between essence and appearance, or immanence and transcendence. Deleuze calls this mode of thought the 'binary logic of dichotomy' and in the *Logic of Sensation*, he presents the Figure as an aesthetic move to rupture it (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 6). As a consequence of this rupture and 'breaking through representation', Deleuze means to close the gap, break through any representative semblance and directly confront the preceding essence of the real as presented. For this Deleuze proposes a new kind of reason or logic,

which involves the threshold of forces he applies his term Figure to describe and conceptualise.

This mode of thought, which functions to segregate and divide reality, can usefully be described as *diaphora*. This connotes a sense of the primal strife which prescribes and resonates in binomial conflict fuelling, forming and finally erupting in the Figural work of art, as well as the need to confront, resolve or find the way between the constrictive, constructed, and aged manacle this dualism presents.[1] *The Logic of Sensation* emphasises the connection between diaphora and the chaotic act of rupturing through representation, and brings forth a powerful analysis of why and how great works of art can affect us so profoundly. In constructing this concept, however, Deleuze succumbs to precisely the kind of thinking he intends the term Figure to critique, disrupt, or, as he concludes, 'surpass' (Deleuze 2005: 113). This occurs as he constructs tight boundaries around Figure, which compartmentalises and segregates abstraction into an assigned 'tactile/optical duality', and involves the same 'binary logic of dichotomy' that he is critiquing, and which both abstract and Figural art are trying to break from (Deleuze 2005: 73–77; Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 6). Thus Deleuze problematically positions the Figure to succeed, via sensation, whilst arguing (or insinuating) that the 'tactile/optical duality' of abstract form does not.

Thus the intent and need to rupture representation and break with the binary is itself laden with contradiction. Modern art has tried to pry apart the shackle by unravelling the diaphoric barricade set up by the layers of figuration, which seem to obscure what is real and true; the beginning of this can perhaps be seen in the evolution of abstraction, as the definitively non-representational. Hegel argued that this would mean abstract art is no longer real, or 'divorced from reality' (Hegel 1975) – but it remains plausible to argue that abstract art is anything but divorced from reality. As Kandinsky's work illustrates, the abstract can provide those sensations Deleuze defines as the modern work of art's method of disrupting the discursive barricade of representation, and by that means access basic reality.

Deleuze's effort to break with representation and challenge the boundaries of form has an idiosyncratic violence to it. His concept of Figure implies the aggressive motion of rupturing the *surface*, piercing through the boundaries of representation. This occurs when sensations burst from the painting as affective energy or vibration, as can be immediately encountered in Francis Bacon's work. Deleuze argues that Figural paintings fracture their boundaries, pierce through constraints

of shape or skin (and their vast implications or connotations), and burst free as a sense or force of the *incommensurable*, i.e. chaos. This *chaos* is immediate and real. It functions as the force of affective sensation at the limit of form, resonating from the confrontation of the conflict between essence and appearance, and its ensuing dichotomy. This is what 'seizes hold of life'.

Chaos is an incommensurable because it is something essential, neutral *and* unknown. It equates to (or is) that awesome, irrational discourse by which the discursive strategy or barricade of representation is raised in order to control, discipline and bar our access to such an undecipherable, incomprehensive layer of reality. Its outline seems to compose the continuing, antagonistic diaphora which the artwork disrupts by bursting through the barricading representative form. At this moment of rupturing, on the surface, the diaphora unfolds into its incommensurable essence, which is chaos. The movement and moment has a potent dynamism which resonates as vibrating sensation. Deleuze uses the verbs *arracher*, *rompre*, *casser*, *empêcher*, *libérer*, *extracter* to describe this movement. In other words, chaos is a pulsating, vigorous action that provides the aesthetic encounter between the artist, art-work and viewer (Deleuze 1981: 12).

ii) How Deleuze builds and categorises Figure

Deleuze constructs his Figure from the intense, disruptive dynamic of chaos itself, because it demonstrates the real potential for variation inherent in everything. He describes the physical action of these sensations hitting the nervous system before the brain, and uses this action to prioritise the Figural over the abstract. Both Figural and abstract art emit sensations, but he argues that the affect of the former is quicker, and so favoured as more direct and successful. This assumption is obviously problematic because it relies on Deleuze's (misguided) delimitation (and thus, ironically, linearization) of abstraction to a linear geometric style and lacks the psycho-physiological justification required to promote the affect of Figural art over abstract.

Yet Deleuze continues to build his term Figure, separated from abstraction, to describe how Figural art impinges upon our nervous system, as a primal or precedent, direct sensation. He uses the ideas of haptic function, painting forces, rhythm, colour and diagram to describe how the materiality of paint can provoke this. Deleuze summarises how all of these, in his own words, 'converge in colour, in the "colouring sensation", which is the summit of this logic' (Deleuze 2005: xi).

He is trying to explain why and how Francis Bacon's figures are so affective – simultaneously representative, being largely figurative, but scrambling and violently breaking through this form, as Figural. Deleuze conceptualises this by trying to grasp those sensations that erupt as a result of this. *Colour* is the agent here – applied with a rhythm conducted by the forces provoked in the artist, which emanate as sensation.

He uses this forceful sense of colour to build his Logic and his concept of Figure, and also, in a subtle way, to promote and distinguish these from abstraction. He says that '*By avoiding abstraction*, colourism avoids both figuration and narration, and moves infinitely closer to the pure state of pictorial "fact" which has nothing to narrate. The fact is the constitution or reconstitution of a haptic function of sight' (Deleuze 2005: 93, my emphasis). In this Deleuze fails to recognise what occurs when abstraction is engaged – rather than 'avoided' – to similarly (non-figuratively) the transgressive tenets of colour.[2]

He identifies the disruption with representation in the way colour is used for the *reconstitution* of a precedent, principle sensation, which Deleuze names the 'haptic function'. This term refers to a particular modulation of space and colour in painting, which causes the multi-sensuous dynamic evident from affective works of art, where lines and colours raise the visual sensate, burst their dimensions, so that one can, as Deleuze names it, 'touch with the eyes' (Deleuze 2005: 109). This idea refers to an encompassing rendezvous with a painting, when colours strangely become tactile values, as optical and tactile senses of space interact and commingle, stimulating that tacit, trembling trait – 'saisir sur le vif' (Deleuze 2005: 97).

Haptic refers to a type of vision distinct from the optical that alludes to or evokes the sense of touch. By engaging with the haptic as our most primary sense, Deleuze draws upon Aloïs Riegl (Deleuze 2005: 138, n. 2). Deleuze depicts how Bacon's f/Figures, by rupturing representation and their figuration so violently, provoke sensations that reconstitute this precedent, haptic sense. Being convoluted, agonizing, isolated, raw – in their crucifixal, masochistic, drug-induced ferocity – these f/Figures break through their contours, transcend what holds them down and exist as similarly brutal sensations which emerge from the colours' interplay with the canvas. They build (or 'reconstitute') the figure, in order to strangle this level of reality and create a Figure that extends beyond its visual shape and pushes boundaries to the limits of form. This is what prompts such palpable impressions in the viewer.

Meanwhile, Deleuze infers that abstraction neither deconstructs nor reconstitutes, but rather bypasses representation, without engaging or

forming a haptic sense. He argues that expressionism produces a purely manual sense of space, whilst abstract paintings consist of merely optical space, together posing a tactile-optical duality, which is what the Figure surpasses by its engagement with haptic sense (Deleuze 2005: 72–93).

But this is problematic with regards to Kandinsky's abstract paintings, which are particularly renowned for their multi-sensuous, synaesthetic scope and span, and for reaching far further than their flat, visual dimensions. Margaret Olin identifies what Deleuze terms and impresses here as 'haptic sense', from Kandinsky's early abstract art, and offers what seems a similar argument to that which Deleuze takes to describe the Figural paintings of Bacon. Olin also engages with Riegl on the haptic sense to emphasise how and why touch is the most primary sense that can, as a sensuous affect in a painting, break from the duality of tactile-optical senses of space, and the duality posed between the 'abstract' and the 'real' in art genres (Olin 1989: 165). Olin describes how, from the haptic sense invoked by his paintings, Kandinsky is 'grasping reality' (Olin 1989: 155). Such a description of Kandinsky's affective abstraction would surely compliment and augment Deleuze's *Logic of Sensation*; or, rather, Kandinsky's abstraction itself would, had Deleuze considered it sufficiently here (Olin 1989: 144–72).

Deleuze's description of the primary task of the painter as one of 'capturing forces' remains central, and is consistent with Paul Klee's much cited mantra that the purpose of art is 'Not to render the visible, but to render visible' (Deleuze 2005: 40). Deleuze's aesthetics of force is central in his construction of Figure, since it is the forceful vibration, from the application and rhythm of colour, which interconnects and is mechanised to induce sensation. This makes the aesthetic encounter an affective *event*. When Deleuze states that 'Painting's eternal object is this: to paint forces' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 182), he wants to engage with this power of surging affect, and the life-force that paintings seem to mobilize, in his own philosophical creations of concepts.

In *Logic of Sensation,* Deleuze tries to explain why in the case of Bacon a Figure the same shape as a figure, or the human body, can break out of that representative, figurative shape to become Figural fact rather than (mere) illustration. This seems awkward; as concepts are formed and figuration is ruptured, Deleuze seems to recreate the kind of chaotic violence or disorientating hysteria that he describes of the act of painting and sensing art. By saying that 'the pure presence of the Figure is indeed the reconstitution of a representation, the re-creation of a figuration', but only to break out of it, it is as though Deleuze means to conceptualize the disorientating twist and manoeuvring of limits,

and the effort to destructively challenge form and boundaries (Deleuze 2005: 68).

But the question still begs, when is figuration sufficiently broken down to make it something abstract? How can an image no longer be representative, and yet not something abstract? How can a devastated, reconstituted figure not remain representative? How can any term accurately describe what is occurring here?

The somewhat bewildering impression set between figuration, the Figure and abstraction fits (in its displacement) with the 'abyss', 'chaos' and 'catastrophe' that are central notions in the *Logic of Sensation*, and describe an essence that lies at the heart of all creative acts. Deleuze postulates that to paint is to 'plunge into' and release this incommensurable, unknown essence, or chaos (Deleuze 2005: 72–3). This composes Francis Bacon's trademark, the chaotic 'brutality of fact', which is what Deleuze is trying to conceptualise. He focuses particularly on the issue of chaos, both in terms of sensation and the act of painting itself, because it produces a rapid movement passing beyond representation: 'Art struggles with chaos . . . in order to render it sensory' and, in the quest for this, 'the painter must confront the chaos and hasten the destructions so as to produce a sensation that defies every opinion and cliché' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 204). It is this rupturing of *cliché*, another representative term that refers to the underlying diaphora, which brings the artist into contact with the pre-existing and the incommensurable. Such movement provides the vibration that resonates as sensation, so that the artwork becomes a 'plane of composition', which constitutes 'a chaosmos, a composed chaos – neither forseen nor preconceived' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 204).

How the painter renders this chaosmos, as the confrontation with chaos, is plotted by Deleuze as a 'diagram'. Deleuze argues that the diagram provides the central, non-coded formula of the painting, which "acts as an agent of transformation" between the figurative form and the Figure (Deleuze 2005: 109). The diagram thus acts as the nodal point from which the artist's confrontation with chaos can be materialised, and then move into the forceful affective sensation evoked by the painting. In circumscribing the diagram Deleuze seems to provide or intend a topography of Figural sensations, as though trying to pin down this movement and the evasion of form, in order to define a concept that can install a machine.[3] In the *Logic of Sensation* he describes this as something specifically applicable to a certain type of painting, exemplified and illustrated here by Bacon. This calls for critique,

since the nature of the concept Figure surely lies with disrupting such particularity, in bursting boundaries and transgressing representative types, existing as affect 'bloc' or assemblage of sensations (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 164).

Deleuze firmly condenses his account of artistic methods, in relation to their rupturing representation and confronting chaos, by considering only three particular modes or genres – the Figure, expressionism and abstraction. He describes how the Figure builds the framework of a diagram, which dissolves the tactic-optical duality into a haptic function, thus allowing the term to burst into its capitalisation, as the paint bursts its figurative shape. Alongside this expressionism and abstraction are categorised according to how they respond to and paint the 'nonfigurative chaos' that Deleuze describes as inherent in attempts to disrupt representation, and also how this is balanced in relation to the overall 'pictorial order' of a painting. To rupture through representation and reach pure fact requires confronting and 'deploying' chaos as a catastrophe, and creating from this a 'pictorial order' and rhythm which maintains and provokes this in terms of *sensation* (Deleuze 2005: 37, 72).

Deleuze moves from colour to space, describing how abstract and expressionist attempts to transgress representative space through their respective 'linear' or 'frenetic' styles. He argues that they each produce, separately, merely senses of manual or tactile and optical space (which raises the tactile-optical duality), thus remaining either, in his words, 'a simple symbolic coding of the figurative' or a 'veritable "mess" ', whilst the Figure bypasses both to attain direct sensation (Deleuze 2005: 77).

iii) Sources and origins of this term and its application

The theoretical sources of Deleuze's Figure demonstrate the conceptual ground of this term, which illustrates clearly the way the *Logic of Sensation* is responding conceptually to the central problem that spreads across modern art and philosophy, namely the thesis of rupturing representation via sensation. At the beginning of *Logic of Sensation* Deleuze refers to Jean-François Lyotard's notion of the figural, as a key source for his term Figure (Deleuze 2005: 125, n. 1). These two terms are intricately linked by their shared intention to break out of the figure as a representative construct. This remains a complex predicament since both terms still use that word, figure, to indicate a fissure and reverse the meaning by capitalising it. Both terms involves a subtle, technical and complex argument that is trying to categorise a space or event

(as a work of art) that perturbs form, in seeking a force or sense of existence that evades or precedes representation.

Lyotard's term weaves a critique of both Saussurean structuralism and phenomenology from Merleau-Ponty to describe the corporeality of the world encoded by structuralists and suggest the framework for a new post-structuralist, discursive dimension using Freudian libidinal forces (Lyotard 1983: 333–357). The significance of this for Deleuze lies in how Lyotard *shifts* the binary, representative model held within a figure or discourse, as visual image or rhetorical text. He does this by conceptualising a radical and disruptive manifestation of space that cannot be represented, or representative. The point is to replace or displace a representational, dialectical system based on semiotic code or opposition with a momentous plane that encompasses an immanent topography of the incommensurable.

Deleuze does not follow Lyotard's Freudian route to the unconscious or desire, nor his wider consideration of abstraction, but what he takes from the figural is the intention to rupture representation and delineate a new sense by engaging forces. From these Deleuze wishes to create an intensive threshold that can, as Bogue argues, 'delineate a space of sensible autonomous forces' (Bogue 2003: 116). But Deleuze, in 'delineating', compartmentalises this 'space of sensible autonomous forces' – allowing his Figure to provoke or construct whilst *deconstructing* this. Abstraction, meanwhile, is quarantined as unduly cerebral and unaffecting.

To build his Figure from Lyotard's figural, Deleuze takes the idea of force or affect and returns to the ancient meaning of *aesthesis*, where aesthetics or art concerns *sensation*. The figural concerns desire for Lyotard, while the Figure concerns sensation for Deleuze. Lyotard's figural remains in the psychological realm of fantasy or desire, while Deleuze's Figure involves a phenomenal, bodily space, and specifically the nervous system. Deleuze thus seems to reach back to the phenomenological roots of these 'Figure/al' terms and the Greek notion of aesthetics. A Merleau-Pontyian 'chiasm' or flesh entails a more Figural weight for his purposes than Lyotard's underlying erotic or political ideology. In this he relies heavily on Henri Maldiney's theory of rhythm and sensation, which connects sensations to art and force, through Erwin Straus's psychological analysis of sensation and perception.

Maldiney's phenomenological, psychoanalytical analysis of art in terms of sensation, rhythm and confronting chaos is significant to Deleuze in a number of important ways. *Regard Parole Espace* begins by asking the very question that grounds Deleuze's *Logic of Sensation* – the

quest to rupture representation brings, by Maldiney's analysis: 'The false dilemma of painting: Abstraction or Reality' (Maldiney 1973: 1, my translation). Deleuze takes from Maldiney the importance of sensations in attempts to 'surpass' this dilemma, and also Maldiney's assessment of abstraction.

Deleuze's term for abstract expressionism, 'art informel', appears to come directly from Maldiney's *Forme et Art Informel*, and has its own complex definition, relevance and historiography (Deleuze 2005: 73; Maldiney 1973: 102).[4] Deleuze's account of 'abstraction', which considers Kandinsky and Mondrian, also seems to have come straight from Maldiney. Maldiney's 'art informel' in fact seems to fit with Deleuze's 'abstraction' more than his 'expressionism', which is confusing, unreferenced and raises difficulties around what they are both trying to describe. The influence of Maldiney thus poses problems for the clarity of Deleuze's *Logic of Sensation*.

II. Critique: Abstraction alongside Figure in Deleuze

i) Figure versus abstraction

Deleuze's Figure relates to affect, the form connected to a sensation and the violence of this sensation, rather than its figurative shape, so evidently a Figure does not have to resemble a figure to transgress this and convey sensation. Deleuze contrasts Figure with abstraction (describing Figure as the 'more direct and more sensible' path to transgress representation), which remains within the tactile-optical duality that the Figure alone, here, is said to have 'surpassed' (Deleuze 2005: 8, 113).

It is important to notice the careful precedence that Deleuze gives to art that fits with his Figurally disruptive purposes, over any 'abstract' art, which he does not consider sufficiently here. Deleuze's take on abstraction owes a great deal to Maldiney's aesthetics as has been seen. Maldiney describes and labels Kandinsky's abstraction as 'The expression of an authentic Euclidean aesthetic' governed by tension, one made in the effort to liberate form from its material structure and initiate some higher, spiritual existence (Maldiney 1973: 108–9).[5] Deleuze clearly takes this into account when he describes how 'abstraction' deals with chaos. It is, he says, 'a path that reduces the abyss or chaos (as well as the manual) to a minimum: it offers us an asceticism, a spiritual salvation' (Deleuze 2005: 73).

They both read this by limiting the notion of 'abstraction' to the Euclidean, geometric lineation supposedly synonymous with Mondrian

or Kandinsky. Abstraction, on this model, in its efforts to rupture representation, produces not a *diagram*, with the haptic, sensuous connotations that are found in Deleuze's Figural paintings, but, he argues, a 'purely optical space' which 'can easily become a simple symbolic coding of the figurative' (Deleuze 2005: 73, 77).

Deleuze denigrates abstract attempts to reach beyond representation by claiming that the abstract code, in his words, 'is inevitably cerebral and lacks sensation' due to the supposed (rather than proven) fact that such geometric forms have no affect on the nervous system, but rather promote (mere) cerebral effects on the brain (Deleuze 2005: 76).[6] In Deleuze's sense of abstraction there are no sensations and such works remain figurative, meaning superficial, whilst the non-abstract figurative work of Bacon destroys figuration to become Figural. This is all gauged in terms of *sensation* and encountering intensive forces in the nervous system, but Deleuze's argument is unclear since Figure seems to point towards something abstract, whilst abstraction is posed as figurative.

Meanwhile 'expressionism', which for Deleuze is just abstract expressionism epitomized by Jackson Pollock, takes the opposite direction – rather than producing an optical code in reaction to chaos, now chaos is exploded until, he says, the entire canvas becomes an 'optical catastrophe', composed by and of 'manual rhythm' (Deleuze 2005: 75). So in abstract form, with its two tight components of 'abstraction' and 'expressionism' Deleuze presents a duality – the hand/eye or manual/optical duality that he finds throughout the history of Egyptian, Byzantine or Gothic art, so it thus remains largely representative; whilst he carefully positions Figure, with the paintings of Francis Bacon, to break out of it by its composition of the haptic function and diagram, and, primarily, because of its affective sensations.

All this is riddled with contradiction, which is exactly what the Figure is trying to deconstruct, which Deleuze says abstraction bypasses. For Deleuze, abstraction, in response to this same intention of solving the contradiction, has the effect of reducing and reconciling the continued confrontation with chaos, and in so doing passes over, rather than truly, violently grappling with it as Bacon's Figures do. In this it produces *analogy* rather than direct, sensuous (Figural) fact.

Deleuze describes Kandinsky's paintings as though they build what he calls a 'digital code' made from certain shapes, lines and colours, which brings forward a (misguided) image of Kandinsky's paintings that he defines as 'vertical-white-activity, horizontal-black-inertia' (Deleuze 2005: 73). Deleuze argues that these works intend to salvage man from what he calls 'the abyss' of chaos, and offer 'a spiritual state'

within this superficial, optic space. He takes it further to say that in so doing Kandinsky is still reliant on the material form that he wishes to disrupt, and to refute objective form is to refute what is binding, which is impossible. Though such art believes it has 'escaped' its inherent contradiction it has in fact merely confirmed it. Therefore, in Deleuze's *Logic of Sensation*, following Maldiney, Kandinsky neither disrupts representation, nor produces sensation, nor even constructs an effective code. This is placed in significant contrast to Bacon and Deleuze's term Figure, which connotes the disruption of binary boundaries by Figural disfigurement, as sensation.

Trying to source this inaccurate analysis of Kandinsky, the 'linear tension' ascribed by Deleuze can be seen from a late phase, around the time that Kandinsky worked at the Bauhaus, 1922–33, when his work was indeed characterised by geometric abstraction. This can be seen from specific works such as 'Composition VIII' (1923) and throughout his woodcuts and etchings of this time (Kandinsky 1994: 770).[7] These works are characterised by the tight lineation and geometric syntax synonymous with Kandinsky's later constructivist style,[8] where 'tension' is a dominant tool. Kandinsky documents this in his 1926 'Point and Line to Plane' (Kandinsky 1994: 573). These paintings present a sense or function of order that seems compatible with Deleuze when he postulates that abstract works seek to turn 'chaos into a simple stream we must cross in order to discover the abstract and signifying Forms' (Deleuze 2005: 73).

Thus a late Kandinsky or Mondrian, summing up Deleuzian 'abstract form', perhaps raises a barricade over representation rather than rupturing through it Figurally. Although abstraction is non-representational and nonfigurative in shape, from such narrow, singular examples it might seem to provide an optic code that steps over or bypasses figuration rather than wrestling with and deconstructing it to reach Fact, in stark contrast with Bacon's spasmodic Figures.

But this involves a sweeping, selective compartmentalization that raises the very boundaries which Deleuze's Figure intends to rupture. In defining how his term Figure ruptures through representation via sensation, Deleuze cuts off a vast source of Figural energy that can be found in or received from abstract art. As Rodowick argues in *Reading Figural Form*, for Deleuze abstraction *martyrs* representation, rather than violently destroying it (Rodowick 2001: 23). From Bacon's masochistic figures, Deleuze's Figure becomes a post-structuralist, deconstructive agent that rips up and regurgitates representation in terms of 'the brutality of fact'.[9] On the other hand, the abstract form from

Kandinsky remains a modernist, superficial, optical bypass, avoiding the (disruptive) point.

But the regenerative or spiritual function that Deleuze categorises as 'abstraction' cannot be precisely sourced from the particular geometric art that he considers. This function is more akin to Kandinsky's earlier works, from around the time of his *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, than his later, more technical, geometric manifesto. Deleuze cites the earlier work in the notes of his *Logic of Sensation*, but by the time of Kandinsky's geometric phase this intention has moved towards a more scientific – Kandinsky himself terms it – 'theoretical examination', examining 'tension' and 'direction' in order 'to discover the living, to make perceptible its pulsation, to establish the law-governed nature of life' (Deleuze 2003a: 192, n. 18; Kandinsky 1994: 672, 573). In *Synthetic Art* (1927), Kandinsky writes about 'the most extreme contradictions' and 'catastrophes' which defined the time of his life, which he said 'can be characterized by *one* word: *chaos*' (Kandinsky 1994: 710–713). He felt an 'inner necessity', as an artist, to confront such chaos, Indeed, Kandinsky's oeuvre seems to evolve around confronting the same chaos that Deleuze says his art avoids or bypasses.

His earlier paintings, contemporary to *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, demonstrate a colossal confrontation with this chaos, which surged from the evolution of abstraction that he pioneered with the intention of breaking through representation. Moreover, he described the purpose of painting as: 'Like a thundering collision of different worlds that are destined in and through conflict to create that new world called the work . . . by means of catastrophes' (Kandinsky 1994: 373). This produced a very different style of abstraction to how Deleuze terms it, from later linear works, which seem to be both retreating from and trying to order the earlier confrontation. There is no 'simple stream' to cross, but a Deluge of sensations to contend with.

ii) Abstraction as Figure

This can be seen in Kandinsky's *Composition VI*, *The Deluge* (1913).[10] Placing this towering painting within Kandinsky's volcanic oeuvre and watching his various stylistic changes and phases narrate his encounter with this new sense of the world and new visual language that abstraction brought. This constitutes a bold effort to rupture through representation and reach pure, essential form. In that, this abstract painting resounds with Deleuze's *Logic of Sensation*. It *throbs* a summit

of this intent and the need to rupture representation, rather than any Deleuzian 'digital code' assigned to typify all abstraction and can be directly compared to or described by the way Deleuze forms his term Figure, from its rhythmic composition, sense of engulfing space and vibrating colour that seems to explode off the canvas as sensations that shudder, erupting what seems to be that same 'brutality of fact' as the convoluted f/Figures of Francis Bacon.

It is hard to describe this painting since it is not representative, and does not look like anything figuratively recognisable. It is loaded with smouldering primary colours – a blue that moves to turquoise, organic green, with tinges of red – which are propelled into a thundering, dark rhythm by long black lines which leap across to mould the enormous canvas, raising a stave that seems to yelp in this new, incommensurable sense of space and form. Kandinsky's painterly dexterity applies a diagonal pace in thick brushstrokes, revolving a rhythm that is constant yet staggering in its effusive affective dimensions – provoking sensations as colours tremble and leap from their ground. Following the fluid gestures and contours that command the canvas, the textural network of interwoven colours erupt in what seems a crushing, crashing response to the world, a breaking through figurative motifs to reach the world itself.

The conflict between figuration and abstraction fuels this, for the viewer as much as for the painter. Near the bottom of the canvas, on the right hand side, there are grey-tinged lines that seem to form a digital gesture trying to grasp reality, but this is constantly shifting and slips away into the abstract visual whole, as colour flicks into a cobalt tint, pressing inside and rumbling within this disruptive, Figural space.

This abstract painting seems to present a Deleuzian (not delusional) Figure. It demonstrates the artist's tsunamic skirmish with the discursive barricades of representation opposing the incommensurable chaos, producing the ineluctable diaphora that shapes the problem of modern art and philosophy. The abstract painting bursts through this. Here is, to use a Deleuzian or in fact Guattarian (certainly this becomes more prominent following Guattari's input) term, a *chaosmos* – as the work shudders sensations, extends its dimensions and provides an all-encompassing aesthetic experience that seems to engulf the viewer into this unknown, chaotic space. As such, this work presents the diaphora, rupturing through material and representative constraints by existing like a Deleuzian 'bloc of sensations' – which one receives as a result of this piercing dynamic, vibrating through the colours.

Diaphoric dichotomy remains the source of these sensations, and provides the work of art as they disrupt it. Kandinsky wrote about his continual conflict with this – he termed it as a battle between 'Spirit' and 'matter', 'external impression' and 'inner sound' (Kandinsky 1994: 385–8). These conflicting oppositions provided an energy which fuelled him to paint, which 'trembles' between them (Kandinsky 1994: 385–8). From this confrontation there erupts 'The Deluge', as a painting which can pose the counterpoint to the Figure by demonstrating how the *Logic of Sensation* exceeds over the boundaries of this concept. The way Kandinsky engages chromatic effects to produce sensuous affects confronts dichotomy, since he meant to dissolve and resolve conflictive binary forms (between abstraction/realism, matter/spirit, subject/object) with his evolution of abstraction. Kandinsky wrote at length about the importance of colour, and his whole oeuvre can be described as one bursting from the myriad or cacophonic crescendo of colours that break out of objective form or motif into abstract, affective shapes on the canvas. He continuously describes colours in terms of their composition as 'vibration', and their 'enormous power, which can influence the entire human body as a physical organism' (Kandinsky 1994: 159).

As Kandinsky shifts between percept and concept (a method which seems, again, ironically Deleuzian), driven by an 'inner necessity' to find and paint essential form, he poses what Deleuze defines as 'the general fact of modern painting' and seeks from this abstraction to answer the question, which was (and still is): 'how to pass from the possibility of fact to the fact itself?' (Deleuze 2005: xiv, 112).

Margaret Olin's description of Kandinsky's abstraction as 'validated by touch' is useful in thinking about how this painting seems to appropriate a Deleuzian Figure (Olin 1989: 165). Her argument seems to fit with Deleuze's consideration of the haptic sense, how it activates the Figure and transgresses or ruptures the tactile-optical duality. Both Olin and Deleuze describe how the haptic function can offer a primary, raw, visceral sensation; which is what Deleuze says 'seizes hold of life' in Figural works of art, or, in Olin's words, is 'grasping reality' in Kandinsky's abstraction (Olin 1989: 155). Thus, from the haptic sense evoked by both Francis Bacon's f/Figures and Kandinsky's abstraction, representation is ruptured through, and in sensing this motion one can *touch reality* as Figural fact.

Though Deleuze approaches his theory via the arid colours in Bacon's destructive, blood-shod figures, whilst Kandinsky writes with idyllic, synaesthetic passion about his 'inner need' to paint 'the harmony of

colours... touching the human soul', colour remains the continuous essence for both Kandinsky and Bacon – as a vibrating force that ruptures any compartmentalisation by inducing sensation (Kandinsky 1994: 160). By rupturing through representative form and erupting an abstract myriad of colours that shake in response to this, Kandinsky's Deluge bursts through the constructed, constrictions posed by figuration. In this the surface of the painting emanates sensation. It is as though material form has dropped out and the abstract composition is the *surface*, no longer attached to an object, now the epicentre, the nodal point, the moment of energy that moves from the painting as a static object, now a bloc of sensations, into the nervous system of the viewer. The surface is where the diaphoric dichotomy in its different forms, between essence and appearance, the tactile and the optical, abstraction and figuration, disintegrates in the immanent sense of interaction. This occurs as the surface vibrates from the rhythm of the painted colours, which resonate from the canvas. By rupturing through representation in this way the binary disintegrates, figuration or appearance is dropped, and Kandinsky's abstraction is no work 'divorced from reality', as Hegel's description defined abstraction at the beginning here. It is as though, standing here with these chaosmic sensations, this *is*.

Kandinsky believed that as a consequence of his evolution of abstraction he had found the essence of matter in spirit, and so concluded: 'What thus appears a mighty collapse in objective terms is, when one isolates its sound, a living paean of praise, the hymn of that new creation that follows upon the destruction of the world' (Kandinsky 1994: 388). In these sensations he perhaps postulated (or, in Kandinsky's terms, *felt*) that by rupturing through or destroying representational form he had found essence and could truly seize hold of life.

Although there is more catastrophe than resolution here, almost immediately following the epiphanic shuddering in 'Composition VI' Kandinsky's colours darken and the lines contract into a more modernist, geometric abstraction, which seem to retreat aesthetically. Early, plump colours and eruptive energy shifts to an ordered, tight tonal range and structural design, which appears to be a reaction to and retreat from what he unfolded and expressed by his early abstract works. This is where Deleuze finds the 'optic code' by which he labels all 'abstraction'.

Now, returning to Francis Bacon, by looking in particular at one painting – *Head VI* (1949) – one can see just how Bacon's f/Figural painting (and thus, Deleuze's concept) directly corresponds with Kandinsky's abstraction.[11] This is quite a small, sketchy painting of the head and shoulders of a figure set within a cuboid structure marked

out by thick white lines. The resulting image is of a man, whose upper head and eyes, lower arms and hands are cut off from view. The image is inchoate, unfinished and ephemeral. It shows a spatial likeness of, and was influenced Diego Velazquez's *Portrait of Pope Innocent X* (1650), an image that Bacon was 'obsessed' by according to his official biographer Sylvester (Sylvester 1975: 24).[12] But this image is no mere representative copy. It lightly inhabits the canvas, painted on the less absorbent unprimed side, hence the finish is dry with a granular texture. It is remarkable how the brushstrokes, quickly grazing the ground, erupt and leap off it – not as a figurative illustration, but an *abstract*, tactile, aural shudder which hauls in the viewer to become participant. Looking at the shape, resounding between the paint and canvas threads which wobble as light shifts through the sharp undulations, the figure itself screams. So on one level this sound can simply be 'read'. Bacon professed a fascination with the shape of the open mouth and said 'If you scream, you are always prey of the invisible and incomprehensible forces which obstruct every spectacle and which even exceed the pain and the suffering' (quoted in Oosterling 1988: 101).

His success is that there is no obligation to 'read' and project how this mouth releases the sound reacting to this pain and suffering, for it opens a void as the black paint sucks the canvas, leaps off that ground and reverberates through the muscular tension around the chin, the neck, the rippling shapes on the cape, hitting tight teeth, tinged with white, blurred to grey and then dripping. Such depth and resounding interplay around the entire canvas transforms a sketchy image into a powerful yearning which pulls you in. Whether this is because the basic image resembles, and so enables the viewer to project further dimensions and sensations by triggering their own experiences or fantasies, or that Bacon's paint together with the forms it shapes on the canvas, stimulates a haptic, aural vision that encompasses the raw, fundamental, primal senses that define this artist's violent mastery, either way the paint touches us with powerful sensations.

The painting is somewhat mediated by being cut off from the viewer with glass, which wobbles reflections that demonstrate the viewer's involvement and increases the visceral, ambivalent reality that vibrates on so many different levels. The figure itself is cut off by a square, linear 'space frame' that Bacon uses as a compositional, technical device, but also presents an essential part of what is going on here. The Pope screams, he has no eyes or hands – he cannot see because vision is subsumed – this is more mirage and visceral than any conscious image. He is caged by a cube and as though also by a fate – staged here

aesthetically as one walks past to engage with what seems suffering here. This stimulates senses from *abstract*, emotive forces within the figure – haptic, aural affects at the pain, horror and terror implied and provoked by the scene. It is as though the Pope is trying to leap off the canvas, escape his incarceration upon a Velazquezian, gold tinged throne, or more fundamentally, to leap from the flesh and blood – *the figure* – that tie him down there. The device of the cube seems to construct, yet deform and make monstrous, the figure and enclose a threshold of surging, pulsating forces. One can see the Pope straining and screaming, charged and deformed with these forces. They seem to encase a space (in extension and duration) in the painting – as the nodule of potential intensities that can purvey every aesthetic encounter. This act conceptualized is a Deleuzian 'Body without Organs'.

Bacon's paintings break through their figuration by erupting emotive, sensuous affects that seem composed of a frustration or terror at remaining trapped by their external reality, always trying to rupture that – hence so injured, so mortal, such pain, *disfigured*. Deleuze postulates that by capitalizing the word *Figure* he can redefine the term and convey how Bacon's figures paint 'fact' and transcend their figuration by stimulating such acute, intense sensations that tear through their representative shape. And yet these sensations occur in what remains the overall, immediate shape of a figure, touching viewers by their *dis*figurement, their attempts to go beyond the figure and the raw 'injury', 'violence' and pain at remaining entrenched to bodily form. For Bacon himself it certainly attunes to his life experiences, marred by troubles with gambling and alcoholism. That is important because he wanted to paint mortality, vulnerability, 'the violence of reality', the 'brutality of fact' (Sylvester 1975: 81). It is as though he wants to escape these, and from the human body that traps him too, hence his figures are painted with such mutilation. For they are thwarted by their figuration. It is as though, as one commentator astutely recognises, 'The spirit drowns in the flesh' (Oosterling 1988: 1).

The abstract, emotive charge of this painting, in affect, propels a dynamic that shifts its figurative genre by bursting through the surface of the painting, tearing through the skin of the figure, and bringing immanent sensation to the viewer, as described here. This rupturing at and of the surface corresponds with what was felt from Kandinsky's 'Deluge', and Deleuze's *Logic of Sensation*. Thus, by juxtaposing Kandinsky and Bacon one can defy and shift the discursive dichotomy pronounced by their genres of abstraction and figuration, which meet in the same intent and Figural, sensuous affect. The terms or genres of

abstraction, figuration and the Figure are now confused, since Deleuze's Figure raises the very boundaries which his *Logic of Sensation* ruptures through. This is shown by Deleuze's tight, complex definition of Figure as separated from abstraction, when sensations from both (and thus, their Logic) demolish this division. In this confusion there is convergence in the incommensurable new space at the surface, where both abstraction and the Figure have ruptured through representation and produced sensations. This surface disintegrates the dichotomy and provides an open interface, defined by sensation.

III. Critique: Abstraction and Figure converge according to the *Logic of Sensation*

i) Convergence

Bacon's paintings provide an apt source and illustration for Deleuze's concept Figure, but they also remain largely figurative works, and so themselves set up the very binary that Deleuze poses between these two terms. Those sensations which indicate the rupture of figuration seem provoked by the contorted figures' pain at being *unable* to be freed from this form, hence so *dis*figured, rather than breaking out of it. Considering these, theoretically, alongside Kandinsky's abstraction poses another binary situated between the opposing genres of abstraction and figuration, whose antagonistic connotations express a primordial, diaphoric essence that is confronted and addressed throughout modern art and philosophy as the quest to rupture the Platonic notion of mimetic representation.

Within Deleuze's argument Bacon and Kandinsky are juxtaposed for their differing responses to this aim, which extends to form that overriding 'binary logic of dichotomy' (which was described at the beginning of this paper) visible in these painters' efforts to break through figuration and present a new sense of essential form (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 6). Enunciated in such dry words, this monumental intention loses the sensuous, rippling and thunderous affect that resounds, means and directly *is*, which can be immediately received when standing in front of these great works of art. Deleuze describes how this is so with Bacon's f/Figures, showing how they break through their figurative shape (as though ripping through the skin) to exist as a violent sensation, which he uses to define the concept Figure. Concurrently, though, he passes over Kandinsky's abstract efforts to achieve the same aim, arguing that this Russian painter bypasses figuration, and produces

an ineffective, unaffecting code rather than any sensuous, violent fact. This division presents yet another contradiction in Deleuze since it attends to that same kind of thinking which both artists wish to break free from and which Deleuze intends to rupture through by presenting a new kind of logic, a sensuous logic. The way he does this is fraught by his placement and encasement of the rupturous concept Figure, which the *Logic of Sensation* that it is based from and is the true insight here, overflows.

And so the aching, irresolvable diaphora seems clings to every attempt to abscond it. However, these oppositions which intertwine it come to converge and unfold at the surface. Here is that rupturing dynamic, the moment of energy transmission and interaction – where coloured paint conjugates a vibration and rhythm from and with the canvas, which ruptures through its objective form so that the artwork exists, as Deleuze and Guattari conclude in *What is Philosophy?*, a 'Monument' of 'sensation' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 164). That this is the nodal point for rupture and convergence emphasises the diaphora by providing another paradox, but at the surface is an interface or equator between these opposites. This is the new kind of logic – the sensuous, forceful logic, at which, as Deleuze defines, is 'the frontier, the cutting edge, of the articulation of the difference between the two terms, since it has at its disposal an impenetrability which is its own and within which it is reflected' (Deleuze 2001: 35).

The common boundary on the surface, which connects but separates, interrelates, and equates these works and their affects, provides the interface for the diaphora. This seems to unfold its 'primal strife' and expose that ineluctable, incommensurable chaos that provides such a compelling, provoking, visceral experience when one looks at Kandinsky's cacophonic colours' crescendo and Bacon's disturbing, beautiful f/Figures. There is a parity now between them, where the surface of the paintings vibrates, provides an immanent interface, or, in Deleuzian terms, a 'plane of composition' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 196). Since this occurs from sensations produced as a result of disrupting representation and connecting with chaos, the interface is not just a merely 'logical limit' or 'theoretical distinction' because it is the ongoing affect of interacting with these artworks that defines them. This continues as sensations that connect, erupt and provide a recurrent, dynamic, palpable logic.

Thus these sensations, at the interface, disintegrate or dissolve the division or paradox which separated the paintings (in their divergent genres), which separates us from the paintings (as physical objects which

affect our subjective selves/nervous system), which separates us from the world (the discursive constructs of binary contradiction). Where representation is ruptured – as the dry, smarting paint tears through the skin of Bacon's trapped, screaming Head, and as the thunderous rhythm of Kandinsky's Deluge shakes through what has dried to canvas, so one can receive the chaotic dynamic that vibrates from these paintings, as they resound and seem to envelop in multi-sensual dimensions.[13] There it is that one seizes hold of life.

The binary constructed to separate and segregate disintegrates as the paradox shifts to a parity (which is as unknown and incommensurable as the chaos, and so *is* chaos) – at the surface. The sense of 'twoness' is unfolded and opened, no longer tightly binomial but multiple. In this the diaphora is not synthesised or resolved, but opened. Kandinsky's abstraction shakes – perhaps in terror at the unknown incommensurable that he had found, perhaps from something less naïve since it seems so recognisably empathic. His consequent paintings almost immediately retreat and try to order what had been fractured. Bacon's f/Figures remain trapped and seem pained by their efforts to break from figuration – it is these efforts and their need that tends Figural sensation, rather than a resolution, whilst Deleuze, in describing them both, raises the same boundaries that he intended to rupture through with his concept of Figure.

What is important is the surface, where an interface between antagonistically juxtaposed efforts to confront or resolve this diaphora unfolds to provide a parity or coexistence between them. This provides a sense of *chaosmos* – a word which Deleuze insinuates with his impression of composing or containing chaos via the diagram produced by the Figural composition, and is taken up and emphasised by Guattari in his later writings. Chaosmos brings the sublime sense of an interface, or chaosmosis, between that primal paradox of cosmos and chaos, which is set up for us in these paintings.

ii) Conclusion

The Figure represents Deleuze's attempt to conceptualise this profound, necessary sense of being and the world, but also the inability of any such conceptual categorization to contain this fundamental dynamic. Any firm distinctions posited between the genres of abstraction, figuration and the Figure dissolve, just as when paintings disrupt their boundaries, as sensation. Deleuze's *Logic of Sensation* depicts this sense of sensations, but his constrictions to abstraction and the Figure within

this overflow these, and demonstrate that they cannot in fact be captured in this way.

This suggests that Deleuze's term, or *any* term used to differentiate and segregate genres, such as figure, Figure or abstraction, cannot accurately survey those paintings and sensations that they refer to or categorise. Capitalising a word does not seem to engender or ensure its transcendence of meaning, and it remains questionable as to whether or how any term can acquire sufficient dynamism to encompass and follow the shifting sensations that it intends to refer to. Perhaps the Deleuzian Figure exceeds its concept, and so Deleuze has created an aesthetic notion in rendering the *Logic of Sensation*, which surely extends beyond his book on Bacon. Certainly the critique provided here could be seen to show this, and in using sensations to critique their Deleuzian Logic one can see an extensive, explosive aesthetic of affective art. In this the diaphora, unfolded, remains – with and from those sensations' 'brutality of fact' that one can receive from Figural, abstract or *any* affective works of art. Deleuze invokes this, but his argument falls down owing to his problematic separation of Figure from abstraction. It is the sensations – gained not from logic or labels but from the artworks themselves, whose work it is to connect, affect, disrupt – that are immediate when one stands to look.

This then moves from a complex philosophical or art critical analysis to a basic reception of sensation. Here Guattari's psychoanalytic understanding moves Deleuze's *Logic of Sensation* away from the problematic, semiotic term Figure (swashed by Kandinsky's Deluge) into an understanding of how the aesthetic experience can rupture through what is named mere 'games of representation', where paradoxes unravel and erupt an affecting, chaosmotic interface which is, in conclusion 'not a question of representation and discursivity, but of existence' (Guattari 1995: 93). Here, as Deleuze and Guattari would say, we sense, and 'seize hold of life.'

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Notes

1. The etymological roots of *diaphora*, or διαφορά, bring forward a sense of difference, distinction (i.e. separation and excellence), and dissonance. Aristotle's use of the term in *The Metaphysics* (5, 1013b-10186) shows that the notion of a difference requires that what is said to be different in fact to share the same essence. This shift between difference and essence is fundamental – as shall be discovered, on the concluding sensuous interface, in this paper.
2. With Guattari's input Deleuze considers abstract art elsewhere (e.g. Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 549–51), but his misapprehension of abstraction and Kandinsky in his *Logic of Sensation* raises the need to reconsider the placement of abstraction in relation to his concept Figure, and to think about how this might critique or extend Deleuze's aesthetics of sensation.
3. Indeed, after his work with Guattari Deleuze might even call this an *abstract* machine. Certainly Deleuze's later engagement with abstraction seems more Figural, although this is not clearly stated (hovering amidst the nomadic disorientation of *A Thousand Plateaus*). See Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 549–51; 562–6).
4. Maldiney references this term – 'Art informel', from various sources. He does not instantly link this to Jackson Pollock or abstract expressionism, as Deleuze does, but relates it to 'abstraction' and the future of art, as 'une voie d'acces à l'être'

i.e. art is a way of accessing being – a powerful statement that surely connects with and influences Deleuze's 'saisir sur le vif'.

5. In other words, as a geometric, codified, abstract design. Though not using Euclidean geometry to describe Kandinsky's work, Deleuze clearly takes this model to assign all of 'abstraction', and its differentiation from Figure.
6. But Deleuze's position clearly changes by the time he writes *What is Philosophy?* with Guattari (which perhaps explains this) in 1994. In this work he concludes that 'The brain is the junction' where art, science and philosophy (as 'chaoids') meet, on the plane of immanence. (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 208).
7. Many plates printed in 'Point and Line to Plane' resemble the curious description of 'vertical-white-activity' that Deleuze describes as Kandinsky's style, following Maldiney. See Kandinsky 1994: 696.
8. Kandinsky did not define himself as a 'Constructivist', differentiating the Constructivist artist with the 'Abstract' artist in 1935. The link is made here in relation to the tight, geometric nature of his paintings produced at this period.
9. The 'Brutality of Fact' became Francis Bacon's trademark, the title of the publication of his interviews with David Sylvester, and also seems to represents the bloody reality of post-structuralist deconstruction.
10. Oil on canvas, 195 × 300 cm. State Hermitage, St. Petersburg. Can be seen online at www.hermitagemuseum.org/html_En/08/hm88_0_2_75_0.html
11. Oil on canvas, 93.2 × 76.5 cm. Arts Council Collection. Can be se seen online at www.francis-bacon.com/paintings/head-vi-1949/?c=48-49
12. Oil on canvas, 114 × 119 cm. Galleria Pamphili Rome.
13. If, that is, the viewer dares – to open their eyes.

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Two Ways to the Outside

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Abstract

Are Lévinas and Deleuze two allies in their effort to break away from the Western ontology, which is based on the logic of the One and the Same, or do their philosophies represent two distant galaxies? The purpose of this paper is not to argue for either possibility, but to show the issue in all its complexity. Conjunctions as well as disjunctions of Lévinas' metaphysical thinking and Deleuze's nomadic philosophy should be dealt with on the background of the problems of sexual difference and human face that play an important part in both conceptions. The analysis of these phenomena shall allow us to see the common denominator of both philosophical conceptions in the relation of thought to the outside, even though they approach the outside in two different ways.

Keywords: the outside, heteronomy, disintegration of the self, multiplicity.

I. The Thought of the Outside

The title of this paper is meant as an allusion to Foucault's essay 'La pensée du dehors', where a strange form of thinking comes into focus (Foucault 1998). The thought of the outside is a way of thinking that leaves behind the interiority of the thinking subject and situates itself in an inherent relation to the outside. This relation to the outside, however, does not mean a relation to an objective reality that is reflected from the subjective perspective. The thought of the outside does not simply pull subjectivity out of its interiority into the exteriority of objective reality. Rather than confronting subjectivity with an external reality that is to be interiorised in the consciousness of the thinking subject, the thought of the outside makes thought leave the realm of subjectivity in a much more radical way: it pulls thought beyond the very limits of subjectivity, it shows these limits from the outside, where the identity

of self-awareness is dispersed. The thought of the outside exposes thinking to emptiness, from which the thinking subject cannot return back to his interiority, for it is there that he irrevocably disappears. But the dispersion of the thinking subject does not imply that thought as such becomes impossible. In relation to the outside, thought is still possible, but only on the condition that it resigns from its autonomy and accepts fundamental heteronomy as its basic disposition. Contrary to the interiority of the traditional philosophical reflection, the thought of the outside is not autonomous, but heteronomous.

Nevertheless, the thought of the outside would be a mere proclamation unless it were based on some experience. If there were such an experience, it would be the experience of the outside. The experience of the outside would prove that the nature of thought is not necessarily autonomous and that there is such a thing as an outside that places thought into a necessarily heteronomous position. But even if the experience of the outside were no illusion, the question remains: how to grasp it? Can we express this form of experience in a way that is adequate to it? How can we preserve the experience of the outside in its purity? Foucault is fully aware of the fact that the experience of the outside eludes reflection because reflection has the regrettable tendency of transcribing the relation to the outside in terms of interiority. Reflection tends to grasp experience as a consciousness of something. For this reason, the experience of the outside can be easily misunderstood as an experience of some external entity, outer space or other will that turns itself against our own will. To prevent such a misunderstanding, it is necessary to concretise the thought of the outside with some examples. In 'La pensée du dehors', the thought of the outside is examined with respect to the experience articulated in Blanchot's notion of attraction, in the emptiness of Sade's desire, in the absence of Hölderlin's missing god, or in Bataille's transgression that goes beyond limits while breaking through the structure of subjectivity. All these experiences are experiences of the outside.

The aim of this paper, however, is not to summarise Foucault's remarks on the various forms of the thought of the outside. Instead of repeating his comments on Blanchot, Sade, Hölderlin or Bataille, we should introduce other representatives of the thought of the outside and on the basis of their work try to articulate basic difficulties and pitfalls of the philosophical discourse that focuses on the experience of the outside. The thinkers we intend to deal with are Levinas and Deleuze with Guattari.

II. Beyond the Autonomy and Unity of Thought

At first sight, it is difficult to imagine two more incompatible styles of philosophical thought than those of Levinas and of Deleuze and Guattari. Despite their seeming incompatibility, however, it is still possible to confront both styles of thinking with each other provided that we manage to uncover a common ground which would allow us to put them side by side. Such a common ground can be found precisely in the relation to the outside, which deprives thought of its autonomy and throws it into the state of heteronomy. Thought can preserve its own autonomy as long as it shields its interiority, out of which it expands and to which it returns with the prey of knowledge. But as soon as it is based on the relation to the outside, it becomes necessarily heteronomous. The affinity between the styles of thinking represented by Levinas and Deleuze with Guattari consists in the fact that, contrary to the main tendency of the Western philosophical tradition, they are not attached to the old philosophical dream in which thought appears to itself as an autonomous process, or a process capable of becoming autonomous. Instead of searching for the ground of philosophical thought that would be inherent to it, they situate thought in the position of the principal, irrevocable heteronomy. While traditional philosophical discourse has the tendency to enclose thought in the dimension of interiority, both Levinas and Deleuze and Guattari attempt to liberate thought from this captivity and to open it to the outside. The answer they give to the question 'What is thought?' is the following: 'A relation to the outside.' Be it a metaphysical exteriority that announces itself as the exteriority of the Other, or the outside of all social systems, territorial structures and regimes of signification, thought is articulated as a relation to the outside that is beyond the reach and capacity of our comprehension.

Within the framework of the relation to the outside, we also find the topic of desire that plays a crucial role in Levinas' philosophy as well as in Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical joint venture. Desire was always understood as an act of thinking that deprives man of his autonomy, reminding him of the fact that he is not self-dependent, but reliant on something else. In this sense, desire corresponds to the elusive and unfathomable nature of the outside that attracts thought all the more it is elusive and unfathomable. But the act of thinking that brings us into a relation to the outside can be called 'desire' only if we do not understand it as a desire for an object. Only if desire exceeds all objects, if it affects us as pure passion, can it express the basic relation of the outside. Only desire so conceived proves to be synonymous with the relation

to the outside. Only then can desire appear as the primordial experience of the outside.

As for Levinas, the original relation to exteriority is expressed as the metaphysical desire for the infinite. The relation to the exteriority of the Other appears here as the desire for the infinite. The metaphysical desire for the infinite differs from the common need that always presupposes some deficit or incompleteness. As opposed to the common need, which can always be satiated in some way, nothing can satisfy metaphysical desire, for it does not lack anything. Metaphysical desire does not mean any lack. The paradox of this desire consists in the fact that it can never be fulfilled, since the closer it comes to its infinitely distant aim, the more it grows. 'Desire', as we read in *Totalité et Infini*, 'is desire for the absolutely other' (Levinas 1991: 34).[1] It is 'a desire without satisfaction which, precisely, *understands* the remoteness, the alterity, and the exteriority of the other' (Levinas 1991: 34).[2] The metaphysically oriented desire longs for the absolutely other that surpasses all familiar and reachable horizons; its strange positivity consists in the unsurpassable distance from the longed-for aim, which never comes out of its exteriority and never becomes our property.

In a similar way, Deleuze and Guattari do not confuse desire with need when opposing the classical conception of desire, which is based on the idea of the lack. Desire, according to them, does not arise from an insufficiency or a lack of something. Neither a material, nor a symbolic object is lacking in desire. 'Desire does not lack anything; it does not lack its object', claim Deleuze and Guattari (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 26).[3] Instead of being an expression of a deficit, desire is characterised by a surplus and excess. In *L'Anti-Œdipe*, we encounter an effort to release desire from the logic of lack and to bestow on it an excessive character, which marks the relation to the outside (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 25–8). A positive character, appearing in the excessive nature of desire, is given by the relation to the outside that is constitutive for desire as such. 'For desire does not survive cut off from the outside' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 357).

Another important aspect of the excessive relation to the outside is the principle of multiplicity. Advocating the inherent heteronomy of thought, Deleuze and Guattari subvert not only the autonomy, but also the very identity of the thinking subject, which is reflected in the notion of the *asubjective multiplicity*. What is important in this respect is the fact that the asubjective multiplicity is not a mere privation of unity; it does not refer to any lost unity. Yet, to avoid the misunderstanding Manfred Frank commits in *Was ist Neostrukturalismus?*, it is necessary

to realise that the notion of multiplicity Deleuze and Guattari work with not only replaces the principle of unity by the principle of multiplicity, but overcomes the very opposition between unity and multiplicity (Frank 1984). What they are aiming at is not a dualism of unity and multiplicity, but the process of individuation that does not mean any *a priori* unifying synthesis, but a consolidation and a conglomeration of disparate elements. Since such a process of consolidation and conglomeration has its place in the disintegrating leverage of the excessive relation to the outside which no rigid identity can resist, it can never be completed, but must restart again and again.

Another mode of excess that puts in question the abstract dualism of the 'one' and the 'many' comes to the surface when Levinas attempts to describe the phenomena of fecundity and paternity. He argues that fecundity and fatherhood cannot be understood on the basis of the logic that associates Being with unity; they can be made comprehensible only through plurality that, as the basic ontological schema of interpersonal relations, is not to be reduced to a decay or deficiency of unity. The phenomena of fecundity and paternity cannot be comprehended as long as multiplicity is subordinated to unity, or simply opposed to it. It follows from the analysis presented in *Totalité et Infini* that if we are to see fecundity and paternity in their proper light, we must replace the supposition of personal identity by the notion of a self that transgresses its own particularity in order to find itself in its descendants (Levinas 1991: 277, 278). 'The I breaks free from itself in paternity without thereby ceasing to be an I, for the I *is* its son' (Levinas 1991: 277).[4] Although parents cannot fully identify themselves with their descendants, as descendants remain always external in relation to them, thanks to fecundity, they disengage themselves from their own particular identity and find their place in the historical line, where discontinuity and multiplicity rule. This is why we can say with Levinas that 'fecundity evinces a unity that is not opposed to multiplicity, but, in the precise sense of the term, engenders it' (Levinas 1991: 273).[5]

III. Metaphysical Desire versus Productive Desire

All the abovementioned structural analogies, however, should not overshadow the fundamental difference between the way Levinas conceives of the thought of the outside and the way Deleuze and Guattari expose thought to the outside. In both cases, the outside is experienced through desire, but this desire is not always viewed in the same way. Keeping in mind the fact that in both conceptions,

desire mediates the relation to the outside (in fact, it is a basic medium of this relation), we can grasp the difference between them as a distinction between metaphysical desire and productive desire. Although the Levinasian explication of fecundity seems close to the notion of 'desiring-production', in which Deleuze and Guattari connect desire with the process of production, its difference is too obvious to be ignored.

Forasmuch as, in *Totalité et Infini*, fecundity is described as a relation, in which the self transcends its own limits without merging with the exteriority of descendants, it is not surprising that the notion of transcendence functions here as a key to the relation to exteriority as such. 'The fecundity of the I is its very transcendence', affirms Levinas (Levinas 1991: 277).[6] Transcendence, however, is not limited to the relation to descendants, for it alludes not only to the exteriority of descendants, but to exteriority in the strong sense of the term, that is to the absolute otherness of infinity. As the metaphysical exteriority of infinity cannot be made accessible to our cognition, the movement of transcendence does not diminish the radical otherness of the Transcendent, but rather preserves and cherishes it. On the other hand, transcendence does not break the personal integrity of the human existence; the otherness of the Other does not negate my own Self. The individual does not dissolve in the relation to metaphysical exteriority, but keeps the identity of Self that is guaranteed by the sphere of interiority. Thanks to the sphere of interiority that secures the separation and isolation of existence in all its needs and in the work through which one acquires one's possessions, the self can keep its identity in all changes and alterations it undergoes. Without interiority there would be no relation to exteriority at all, and without the sameness of the self there would be no experience of otherness. As Levinas puts it:

> The alterity, the radical heterogeneity of the other, is possible only if the other is other with respect to a term whose essence is to remain at the point of departure, to serve as *entry* into the relation, to be the same not relatively but absolutely. *A term can remain absolutely at the point of departure of relationship only as I (*Levinas 1991: 36).[7]

Yet, this is not to say that the self experiencing the exteriority of the Other can simply return to its interiority with the prey of the knowledge. The self can never possess and control the otherness of the Other. Rather, its relation to otherness is like a journey of no return, like a journey that never ends. Levinas expresses the relation to otherness in a

metaphorical way, comparing the self to Abraham leaving Egypt. Unlike another classical figure of the European thinking – Ulysses – Abraham sets out for a journey, from which he can never return. But the fact is that his identity cannot disappear on his way out of Egypt; Abraham cannot get lost in the desert, he cannot forget his mission and lose his identity, but must remain in principal the same, as he was on the beginning of his journey. The relation to exteriority is thus possible only as a constant leaving of interiority, which does not go so far as to make sameness of the self – the basic structure of interiority – disappear.

Nevertheless, it is this proclaimed relation of the Same and the Other, in which the permanent identity of the self is guaranteed, as well as the relation between interiority and metaphysical exteriority, that is extremely dubious for Deleuze and Guattari. What they call into question is the very sameness of the self that exposes itself to the outside. For if the relation to the outside places thought into the heteronomous position, the identity of the self cannot be exempt from this heteronomy, but must be shown in its radical contingency and fragility.

What is even more suspect according to Deleuze and Guattari is the notion of the transcendence that is related to metaphysical exteriority. In *Mille plateaux*, transcendence is denounced as a typically European disease (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 18). It is a disease of the European thought, and the only way how to cure thought infected by transcendence is, allegedly, to introduce it to the plane of immanence. One could thus say that Deleuze and Guattari are Spinozist thinkers, while Levinas is the least Spinozist thinker of all. But the transition from transcendence to immanence as conceived in *Mille plateaux* does not mean that thought must be closed in its interiority as in a solipsistic reclusion. The rejection of metaphysical transcendence does not imply the abolition of the basic relation that binds thought to the outside; rather, it elicits its radicalisation and culmination. The relation to the outside remains a fundamental characteristic of thought, even if it has nothing to do with the metaphysical exteriority of infinity. But what is the outside that is released from the metaphysical idea of the infinity and together with it shifted from the transcendent plane to the immanent plane? And how does it affect the nature of thought that relates to the outside through the basic act of desire? Tentatively, we may indeed say that the relation to the outside that remains on the plane of the immanence is essentially productive, but such a characterisation remains too vague if we cannot elucidate it by means of concrete phenomena.

IV. Sexual Difference

In order to comprehend the nature of the difference between the relation to exteriority that is situated on the transcendent plane and the relation to the outside that is located on the immanent plane, let us first focus on the way this difference is projected in the philosophical interpretation of phenomena such as sexual difference or the expressivity of the human face. It turns out that the explanations of sexual difference and the significance of the human face that we find in Deleuze and Guattari can be understood as polemics with Levinas's views about these phenomena.

As to sexual difference, Levinas views femininity, which inspired his meditations on the Other from the very beginning, as a question of an irreducible difference. As he puts it in *Le temps et l'autre*, femininity appeared to him 'as a difference contrasting strongly with other differences, not merely a quality different from all others, but as the very quality of difference' (Levinas 1987: 36).[8] The primary encounter with the other sex is for him a model situation, in which transcendent otherness reveals itself. Femininity is the mystery of otherness *par excellence*. In femininity, the exteriority of the Other appears in a nudity that has nothing to do with a mere exteriority of an object, for it is chastity and self-concealment. The otherness of femininity consists in the fact that femininity conceals itself from the light of the understanding.

It is, however, questionable to what extent this femininity that hides in 'the very dimension of the otherness' allows us to comprehend states where the difference between femininity and masculinity vanishes and where sexual difference ceases to be visible, as in the cases of homosexuality, transsexuality or transvestitism. If sexual difference is a matter of an absolute difference, it is possible to grasp these sexual phenomena only as the cases of incomprehensible perversity and monstrosity. It is therefore interesting to see how Deleuze and Guattari attempt to make sexual difference relative when critiquing the psychoanalytical differentiation of the masculine and feminine sexual identity. Considering the fact that nobody is perfect man or pure woman, since everybody has both masculine and feminine qualities, they refuse the disjunctive logic, according to which one can be either man, or woman, but nothing else. In this respect, they make a distinction between molecular bisexuality and molar sexual identity, in which the masculine or feminine pole statistically prevails (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 69, 70).

Together with it, Deleuze and Guattari avoid the traditional interpretation of the difference between the masculine and feminine

sexual identity, which is based on the contrast between activity and passivity, light and darkness. Even though Levinas criticises Plato for understanding femininity in terms of passivity, he still comprehends it on the basis of the metaphors of darkness, or absence (as opposed to presence); this is all the more evident when he explains femininity as 'the welcoming one par excellence, welcome in itself' (Levinas 1991: 157).[9] As he affirms in *Totalité et infini*, 'the other whose presence is discreetly an absence, with which is accomplished the primary hospitable welcome which describes the field of intimacy, is the Woman' (Levinas 1991: 155).[10] The woman, however, is not only receiving, but also, and above all, giving, which is attested by the act of birth. Since Levinas, in the period of *Totalité et infini*, understands fecundity primarily in terms of paternity, he seems to forget that birth is an excess of giving whose positive character is the expression of the relation to the outside. The excess of birth is the basic experience of the outside. The inherent quality of this experience is suffering, through which excess proves its excessiveness. By suffering birth, a woman not only becomes woman, but also animal when listening to the natural impulses of her body. Both becoming-woman and becoming-animal appear in the excess of birth. The excessive quality of birth thus indicates that woman, as opposed to man, must be understood not in terms of lack or absence, but in terms of the excessive relation to the outside. Deleuze and Guattari seem to be aware of it when arguing that femininity does not mean any absence or lack; and has a positive character of desire that relates to the outside (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 294, 295).

The uniqueness of birth, however, still speaks in favour of the disjunctive logic according to which one is either man or woman, but nothing else, only attributing a negative value to man. This would scarcely please Deleuze and Guattari who attempt to thematise sexual desire as the excessive relation to the outside, no matter whether it concerns masculine or feminine forms of desire. While the idea of absence and lack, according to them, belongs to the molar representation of sexuality, that is, a representation determined by abstract or statistical categories, there is no place for an absence or lack in the molecular process of desire. Both in the masculine and in the feminine elements, the molecular processes of desire 'know' only the surplus and abundance that are discharged in the relation to the outside. On the molecular level, desire is nothing but the excessive relation to the outside. In moments of excessive pleasure as well as in moments of the unbearable suffering that overwhelms us we lose control over ourselves to the point that we cannot integrate them into the order of our experience; in these

excessive moments the unity of our consciousness collapses and we are beside ourselves. And even if we pull ourselves together again we realise that we are not same as we used to be. In the relation to the outside, we do not remain same, but we change and become other. We can expose ourselves to the outside only by becoming other than we were before. Such a transformation does not leave the masculine and feminine elements in us intact; it releases and reshuffles them despite the rigidity of our molar sexual identity. The excessive nature of desire that connects us with the outside thus indicates that not only can a woman become woman, but a man also can enter the process of becoming-woman. In view of this process it is then possible to make sense of homosexuality or transsexuality without degrading them to an incomprehensible monstrosity. Instead of discommending homosexuality or transsexuality as something unnatural, Deleuze and Guattari come to the conclusion that we are all transsexual beings on the molecular level of desire (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 296). Becoming other, however, does not open space only for such processes as becoming-woman, but also for becoming-child or becoming-animal, through which we go beyond the anthropomorphic representation of our existence. All these processes prove that our existence is not limited to only two sexes, but has a potentially unlimited number of sexes that express the excessive nature of desire. And it is precisely in these processes that our relation to the non-metaphysical outside is accomplished to the maximum degree (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 296).

V. The Function of the Human Face

Apart from the question of the feminine otherness, another important topic of Levinas' philosophy is the phenomenon of the human face. Irreducible otherness, which originally revealed itself in the mystery of femininity, finally found its purest form in the face of the Other. According to Levinas, the face attests to the fact that the Other is not the same as me; that he or she preserves his/her inalienable otherness in relation to me. The Other standing face to face with me is a stranger left at my mercy, and therefore raising the highest ethical demand – thou shall not kill! The authority of the face makes me absolutely responsible for the Other. The face-to-face position, however, places me not only into the relation to the exteriority of the Other, but – because of its ethical demand – also into the relation to the absolute otherness of the

metaphysical exteriority. It is therefore possible to say that for the finite being the face is an epiphany of infinity. As Levinas puts it:

> The idea of infinity, the infinitely more contained in the less, is concretely produced in the form of a relation with the face. And the idea of infinity alone maintains the exteriority of the other with respect to the same, despite this relation (Levinas 1991: 196).[11]

However, the conception connecting the phenomenon of the face with the absolute otherness of metaphysical exteriority collides with the critique of the face, or more precisely, of 'faciality' (*la visagéité*), made by Deleuze and Guattari, who attempt to locate the social and cultural conditions of its emergence (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 115, 116, 123, 167–91). Even if they do not mention Levinas in this respect, it is obvious that the critique pursued in *Mille plateaux* applies – among others – also to him. What follows from this critique is that the face, when it serves as a means of identification (thanks to which we are identified and can identify others), is a condition for the transformation of the human body into the individual subject. Nevertheless, there exist societies in which the face plays a very limited role. As an example, it is possible to bring up the so-called primitive cultures that ensure the asubjective facelessness of their members with the help of masks, body-paintings and tattoos (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 176). Thanks to all these measures the human head does not become a face; instead, it becomes an integral part of the body that opens itself to animal impulses and structures of behaviour. Primitive shaman, hunter, or warrior can set out for a journey of becoming-animal without eliminating his own spirituality. For his spirituality does not consist in transcendence towards metaphysical exteriority; rather, it remains in an immanent relation to the outside, which can be concretised in the form of an animal, or a demon. This spirituality is all the more powerful, the more it is based on corporeality, on the integral connection of the head with the body. "Primitives' may have the most human of heads, the most beautiful and most spiritual,' claim Deleuze and Guattari, 'but they have no face and need none' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 176).[12] It is therefore obvious that the face is not a universal phenomenon; in *Mille plateaux* it is linked only to the signifying and post-signifying regime of signs that characterise the Judeo-Christian civilisation.[13] The face belongs to the signifying and post-signifying regime of signs, where it becomes an obsession that calls for an infinite interpretation of its hidden meaning. Besides the call for the interpretation, the face is also

connected with the processes of signification and subjectification that characterise the signifying and post-signifying semiotics.

It is no coincidence that something similar can be said about the Levinasian notion of the face that provokes the obsession with the otherness of the Other. The face as a trace of infinity haunts thought related to the metaphysical exteriority. In *Autrement qu'être ou au-delà de l'essence*, the obsession disturbing all serenity and equilibrium is the expression of the relation to metaphysical exteriority, which announces and conceals itself in the face of the Other. Thought obsessed with the face of the Other is a passionate thought, if passion means the act of thinking which cannot grasp what attracts it. But this passionate thought is never free from subjectification and signification, for the face of the Other serves as a point of subjectification (the subjectiveness of thought remains in the subjection to the Other, for whom is one absolutely responsible) and its signification calls for an interpretation, even if it is 'signification without a context' (Levinas 2004: 146; cf. also 29, 159, 161, 162). In any case, the genealogical investigation of faciality, as performed in *Mille plateaux*, makes it evident that Levinas' assertion that the face exists 'by itself, and not by reference to a system,' is problematic, at least to the extent that it does not question its own rootedness in the semiotics of the modern White Man, which is the combination of the signifying and post-signifying regime of signs.[14]

VI. Racism and Eurocentrism

Speaking about White Man's semiotics, how could we forget the problem of racism? As we read in *Mille plateaux*, European racism is unthinkable without the normative ideal represented by the face of the average ordinary European (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 178). Depending on the degree of deviation from the given norm, population is then divided into people of the first, second or third category. 'Of course,' writes Franz Kafka in one of his *Letters to Milena*, 'there's no doubt that for your father there's no difference whatever between your husband and me; for the European we both have the same Negro face.' In spite of all appearance, modern racism does not operate through techniques of exclusion or marginalisation of those who are perceived as different; rather, it draws the circles of sameness which determine the degree of tolerance to the actual divergence from the normative ideal given by the face of the typical European man. 'Racism never detects the particles of the other; it propagates waves of sameness', Deleuze and Guattari claim (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 178).[15] One can say

that modern racism systematically denies otherness from appearing in the social field by excluding those who do not conform to its norms. And since there is no sense for otherness in society, there can be no place for exteriority, either. 'From the viewpoint of racism, there is no exterior, there are no people of the outside' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 178).[16] Modern racism does not draw the line between the inside and the outside, as it reduces everything to the interiority of one normative system.

There is no doubt that Levinas would agree with such a condemnation of the cruelty and stupidity of racism. He could have certainly argued that racism ignores or suppresses the exteriority that announces itself in the face of the Other. Yet, whatever means he has for effectively reproaching the racist view of the Other, it is questionable how far his critique can go if he does not demur to the genealogical roots of racism, which grow out of the despotic and authoritative features of the semiotic characteristic of European thought. Levinas himself affirms in one interview that the real thought is the one of the Greeks and the Bible; everything else is nothing but 'dancing'.[17] Such a philosophical Eurocentrism might be legitimate if we take into consideration the fact that philosophy was born in ancient Greece and that it was brought up in the Judaic-Christian tradition of thought. But if we are considering the notion of the relation to the outside, the question is how far this particular relation reaches and how radical it can be. Should the relation to the outside be limited to the semiotics of the White Man, or should it go beyond the limits of the signifying and post-signifying regimes of signs that determine European thought? It is obvious that Levinas has decided to remain within the limits given by the Greek and Jewish (rather than Christian) thought and to articulate the relation to the outside as an obsession with the metaphysical exteriority gleaming through the face of the Other. Deleuze and Guattari, on the contrary, intend to extricate the relation to the outside from European representation of man and to push it to the extreme, where thought escapes from the signifying and post-signifying regimes of signs.

VII. Escaping from the White Man's Semiotics

But how can thought escape from the semiotics of the modern White Man, whose structure harbours the permanent danger of racism and cultural imperialism? According to Deleuze and Guattari, it is certain that this semiotics is hostile to all pluralist, polyvocal, a-signifying and a-subjective semiotics (like the pre-signifying semiotics

of 'primitive' societies, or the contra-signifying semiotics of nomads), for it views them as domains of barbarism, savagery and irrationality (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 180–2). From the perspective of the White Man's semiotics all the polyvocal, a-signifying and a-subjective elements represent a threat coming from the outside, a threat that must be neutralised by the procedures of signification and subjectification. Contrary to the pre-signifying semiotics of the 'primitive' societies or the contra-signifying semiotics of nomads, the semiotics of the modern White Man is distinctive by its tendency to control the relation to the outside through procedures of signification and subjectification. These two procedures function as the basic means of power in the signifying and post-signifying regimes of signs.

And it is due to these two procedures that Levinas' view of the relation to the outside is possible only as the relation between the Same and the Other, that is, as a relation which has its firmly given starting point and a desired – though unattainable – goal. Even if in his late work changes the accent of his elucidations of the relation to the metaphysical exteriority, laying more and more emphasis on the otherness of the Other instead of the sameness of the self, he still preserves the unity and subjectivity of the self. Even though the subjectivity of the subject does not mean anything but the fact of its being fully subjected to the Other, its unity issues from the responsibility for the Other and from the irreplaceability of the self in its relation to the Other. The responsibility for the Other is the principle of absolute unification and subjectification, since the non-indifference to the Other would not be possible without the difference between me and the Other. The exteriority of the Other is thus what constitutes the unity and subjectivity of the self. On the other hand, the responsibility for the Other would be impossible without the unity and subjectivity of the self. For this reason Levinas can never do without the principal unity and subjectivity of the self, much as he wants to show the contingency of the self in its relation to metaphysical exteriority. This corresponds to the basic arrangement of the signifying and post-signifying regimes of signs. All other features of the relation to metaphysical exteriority, including its proclivity for negative theology, issue no less from the fact that the relation to the outside is understood in the context of the signifying and post-signifying regimes of signs.

Therefore, if Levinas claims that the face separates the Other from its given context and turns him or her into a stranger, Deleuze and Guattari would probably object that such a de-contextualisation of the Other does not proceed far enough, as it is only negative. The escape from the semiotics of the White Man can succeed only if

de-contextualisation is absolute and positive at the same time. Absolute de-contextualisation in the positive sense of the term, then, does not mean a return to the primitive forms of thought and social life (nothing would be more naive than to seek lost innocence in forms of exoticism), but rather a creative line of flight from the signifying and post-signifying regimes of signs, which put the face into the central place in their system of power. In other words, absolute de-contextualisation of the Other is positive when we manage to escape the authoritative power of the face, when we lose our own face as well as the sense of the face of the other (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 188–90). This happens, for instance, in the process of becoming-animal, which liberates us from the anthropomorphic representation of life and brings us closer to the non-metaphysical outside. '... when the face is effaced, when the faciality traits disappear, we can be sure that we have entered another regime, other zones infinitely muter and more imperceptible where subterranean becomings-animal occur, becomings-molecular, nocturnal deterritorialisations overspilling the limits of the signifying system' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 188–90).[18] Such a de-contextualisation, however, would not be possible without the breach of the structures of signification, subjectification and unification that belong to the signifying and post-signifying regimes of signs. To put it simply, we can escape the semiotics of the modern White Man only when we manage to escape the power of signification, subjectification and unification. Only then is the de-contextualisation of the Other both absolute and positive.

Yet, we already know that without the unity and subjectivity of the subject there would be no responsibility. Does this not mean, then, that the total responsibility for the Other is replaced by a total irresponsibility? Deleuze himself seems to confirm this impression, when he claims in *Pourparlers* that the very concept of responsibility – which is so important for Levinas – belongs rather to forensic psychiatry than to philosophy. But we shall not take this statement too literally.

It is true that Deleuze and Guattari sometimes seem to underestimate threats inherent in the movement of de-contextualisation. In *L'Anti-Œdipe*, where they understand de-contextualisation as the driving principle of the desiring-production, they claim that the movement of de-contextualisation can never go too far: 'It should therefore be said that one can never go far enough in the direction of deterritorialization' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 321).[19] The process of de-contextualisation can be, allegedly, dangerous only if it is interrupted or irritated by the process of re-contextualisation, that is by the process of creating and preserving signification and the structures of subjectivity. While

re-contextualisation represses desire by confining it to signification and subjectivity, de-contextualisation liberates desire by making the signification and the structures of subjectivity explode. Whereas the structures of signification and subjectification are forms of interiority, de-contextualisation brings desire into the relation to the outside that has nothing to do with the objectivity of objects, nor with a transcendental world. Thus, what is potentially dangerous is the sphere of interiority rather than the relation to exteriority established by the process of de-contextualisation.

But already in *Mille plateaux*, Deleuze and Guattari realise that the very process of de-contextualisation is potentially dangerous. If the movement of de-contextualisation is too abrupt or violent, the destruction of the system of signification and subjectification can easily change from a liberating escape into pure self-destruction (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 503). In a similar way to the escape from the system of signification and subjectification, the flight from the system of faciality in which the face is dismantled is not without danger:

> Dismantling the face is no mean affair. Madness is a definite danger: Is it by chance that schizos lose their sense of the face, their own and others', their sense of the landscape, and the sense of language and its dominant significations all at the same time? (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 188)[20]

Dismantling the face should not therefore just deface all faces and destroy their meaning; instead, the breaking through the system of faciality should free something like the 'probe-heads' that will serve as guidance devices in the search for new forms of being-with-others (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 190–1). This is the true meaning of the de-contextualisation of the Other. But the acknowledged dangerousness of de-contextualisation makes Deleuze and Guattari seek criteria allowing them to distinguish the creative line of flight, which opens up a space for new possibilities of existence, from a pathological collapse, in which the very relation to the outside collapses and de-contextualisation ends in the void instead of preparing a space for unexpected possibilities. If we want to escape from the constraints of the White Man's semiotics, we cannot bank on any pre-formed regime of signs, but we must realise our relation to the outside by means of experimentation, which, nevertheless, requires much caution and sobriety. If experimentation should not turn into a catastrophic collapse, it is necessary to preserve small, provisory doses of signification and subjectification that are to serve as operators of the relation to the outside. This provisory supply of signification and subjectification, however, must not govern the relation

to the outside; instead of subjugating the process of de-contextualisation, it must be used by it and make possible the full realisation of the relation to the outside. If this is the case, signification and subjectification as the forms of interiority are then not simply opposed to exteriority, but function as components of de-contextualisation, in which the relation to the outside is realised.

One could thus say that in Deleuze and Guattari's depiction of the relation to the outside, the contrast between the sameness of the self and the otherness of the Other is relativised just as the sexual difference grasped by Levinas as the absolute difference between masculinity and femininity is relativised. The sameness of the self is not a necessary counterpart of the otherness of the Other; rather, it is a relative factor in a becoming-other that inseparably belongs to the relation to the outside. It is not possible to relate to the outside without becoming-other, which does not mean to become same as the Other. Instead of an identification with the Other, becoming-other means a fundamental metamorphosis in the relation to the outside. Considering that in *Mille plateaux* the relation to the outside is fundamentally connected with the excess in which the established structures of subjectivity and significance as well as the system of faciality disintegrate, it is always the *intensity* of the excess that makes the difference between the various types of de-contextualisation. When the excess is subjected to the mechanisms of subjectification, significance, to which faciality also belongs, de-contextualisation can only be negative or relative. But if the intensity of the excess reaches its climax, the excess must either destroy itself or break through all structures of significance and subjectification that hinder a full exposure to the outside. If that is the case, it is precisely the liberating excess that grips and drifts the disorganised remains of subjectivity and signification that is marked as absolute de-contextualisation in the positive sense of the term.

VIII. Summary

We can finally summarise the basic difference between Levinas' conception of the relation to exteriority and Deleuze's and Guattari's view of the relation to the outside. Even though the relation to the outside is in both cases connected with the moment of excess, the nature of this excess is understood in different ways. Since both Levinas and Deleuze with Guattari are fully aware that the moment of excess is inseparable from the relation to the outside, they do not simply reduce it to a quantitative surplus, but endeavour to reveal its special phenomenal

quality. Different understandings of the fundamental relation to the outside, however, result in two different views of the excess that we find in *Le temps et l'autre*, *Totalité et infini*, or *Autrement qu'être ou au-delà de l'essence* and in *L'Anti-Œdipe* or *Mille plateaux*. In his analysis of fecundity and fatherhood, Levinas conceives the excessive relation to exteriority as transcendence, while Deleuze and Guattari understand it in terms of immanence. This is why, for them, the basic quality of the excessive relation to the outside is not extension, but intensity. In order to distinguish the relative or negative de-contextualisation from the absolute de-contextualisation in the positive sense of the term, they use a simple criterion: whereas in the first case the excessive relation to the outside still has some extension, in the second it becomes pure intensity. If we apply this criterion to Levinas' conception, it is evident that the relation to exteriority conceived of as transcendence is still far from absolute and positive de-contextualisation, for it is limited only to extension. Despite the repeatedly declared effort to understand metaphysical exteriority not as spatial exteriority, but as the exteriority of the future, or of the unattainable past, Levinas cannot do without spatial metaphors. In order to keep the distance between interiority and exteriority, which makes it possible to maintain also the difference between the sameness of the self and the otherness of the Other, he must repeatedly return to spatial images, time and again. Then, it is practically impossible to avoid the idea of metaphysical exteriority understood as a mysterious sphere beyond our world.

IX. Postscript

This conclusion would not be very satisfactory if it did not help us to find a way out of the impasse in which Levinas gets stuck on his way to the outside. For Levinas' conception of the relation to the outside has the potential to escape from the impasse of transcendence. Such a potential might be hidden in the 'phenomenological' exploration of suffering that overwhelms human existence in sadness, sorrow, physical pain, disease, aging and dying. In the essay 'Useless Suffering', or in Levinas' comment on Philippe Nemo's book *Job et l'excès du mal*, suffering is described not as the expression of some deficiency or imperfection of the human existence, but as an overwhelming excess.[21] Instead of being determined by the negativity of the lack, the experience of suffering is determined by the surplus of excess. Through suffering we are exposed to an excess that is stronger than us. But the nature of this excess does not consist simply in the fact that suffering surpasses

all measure, that there is too much of it; rather, it consists in the fact that suffering as such cannot be integrated. Suffering has an excessive character because it is non-integratable to the integral structure of experience. Suffering is the experience of the outside, which cannot be integrated into the classical structure of experience. The non-integratable character of suffering means that the excess of suffering cannot be integrated into the unity of consciousness. More precisely, suffering is not just a *datum* in consciousness; it is not even a *datum* refractory to the synthesis of the Kantian 'I think', for it is opposed to the very synthetic unity of consciousness that unites and embraces the disparate *data* into a meaningful whole. Since the excess of suffering disturbs and destroys the very unity of consciousness, Levinas claims that it is non-synthesisable. What characterises the excess is, according to him, its non-synthesisable character. As excess, suffering cannot be taken to consciousness through the receptivity of our senses, for it makes impossible the very act of 'taking' that constitutes apprehension. Suffering bereaves thought of all its autonomy, which is granted by the synthesis of 'I think', and throws it into radical heteronomy, where it becomes pure undergoing. In suffering, thought is so heteronomous that it can not unite the multiplicity of sensations any more. Moreover, since the excessive character of suffering deranges the unity and autonomy of thought, it withholds all meaning and destroys the order of experience. The excess of suffering as an irreducible derangement thus throws thought into chaos, concerning which Levinas says that 'it is the not-finding-a-place, the refusal of any accommodation with . . . , a counter-nature, a monstrosity, the disturbing and foreign in itself' (Levinas 1998b: 128).[22]

Nevertheless, what is most important in this respect is the fact that the excess of suffering does not point to any pre-existing exteriority. The exteriority of the excess is not a counterpart of an interiority that maintains the synthetic unity of consciousness and the integrity of the self. Instead of being a promise of a world behind the world, the excess bears exteriority in its own exceeding (Levinas 1998b: 128). The excess exceeds all normative systems, all social frameworks, all forms of interiority. And it is precisely this exceeding of the excess what Levinas calls 'transcendence'.

When using such a term, however, he comes so close to the immanence of excess as conceived by Deleuze and Guattari that it is practically impossible to distinguish transcendence from immanence. It is as if the very terminological distinction between transcendence and immanence lost its meaning in the exceeding of the excess. What sense has the difference between transcendence and immanence if the exteriority

of the excess remains in its exceeding? Hence, although it is clear that Levinas' elucidation of the excessive nature of the excess neither solves all the problems of his conception of the relation to metaphysical exteriority nor releases his thought from its Eurocentric orientation, it can at least serve as the starting point of its reconsideration.

If we accept the challenge of such reconsideration, we do not have to deny the importance of the Other in the processes of signification and subjectification. On the contrary, we can affirm that the integral unity of the self is based on the relation to the Other, as Levinas does when claiming that the phenomenal content of suffering is not exhausted by the exceeding of the excess, for suffering is situated in the inter-human perspective, which gives it a sense of the 'bad intention', persecution or humiliation. Besides the excessive level of suffering there is also an 'intentional' level of suffering. On the first level of suffering, there is neither a pre-established interiority, nor a pre-existing exteriority, but on the second level, suffering strikes us from outside, from the exteriority from which the face of the Other talks to us. What the Other brings to the non-integratable excess of suffering is a perspective, thanks to which suffering can become concrete and determinate as *my own suffering*. The suffering coming from the perspective of the Other (which is far from saying that it is simply caused by the Other) constitutes me as an exceptional, unique being that finds itself face to face to the Other. Without the Other I would not be able to awake to myself. This is, by the way, confirmed by psychologists such as R. D. Laing, who stresses the importance of the Other, that is the mother, for the constitution of child's self-awareness and personal integrity. As he puts it in his *The Divided Self*:

> It seems that loss of the mother, at a certain stage, threatens the individual with loss of his self. The mother, however, is not simply a *thing* which the child can see, but a *person* who sees the child. Therefore, we suggest that a necessary component in the development of self is the experience of oneself as a person under the loving eye of the mother (Laing 1964: 116).

But if we assume the radical contingency of the self and its dependency on the face of the Other, we can hardly declare that the responsibility for the Other has no beginning, that we are always already responsible for the Other, as Levinas does in *Autrement qu'être ou au-delà de l'essence*, suggesting that the very exposure to the Other is synonymous with responsibility.[23] For, how could be a small child responsible for the Other, if its own self has not yet developed? If not, the responsibility for the Other cannot be absolute, but is rather relative and conditioned.

Such a notion of the relative responsibility might be acceptable even for Deleuze and Guattari, who do not want to take any oath of allegiance to any absolute authority, even if it were the authority of the face. In such a case, the discovery that the difference between transcendence and immanence in the notion of excess is not insurmountable might also be useful for the understanding of Deleuze's and Guattari's conception of the relation to the outside.[24]

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Notes

1. 'Le Désir est désir de l'absolument Autre. …Désir sans satisfaction qui, précisément, *entend* l'éloignement, l'altérité et l'extériorité de l'Autre' (Levinas 2003: 23).

2. 'Désir sans satisfaction qui, précisément, *entend* l'éloignement, l'altérité et l'extériorité de l'Autre' (Levinas 2003: 23).
3. 'Le désir ne manque de rien, il ne manque pas de son objet' (Deleuze and Guattari 1972: 34).
4. 'Le moi s'affranchit de soi-même dans la paternité sans, pour cela, cesser d'être un moi, car le moi *est* son fils' (Levinas 2003: 310).
5. 'La fécondité atteste une unité qui ne l'oppose pas à la multiplicité, mais, au sens précis du terme, l'engendre' (Levinas 2003: 306).
6. 'La fécondité du moi, c'est sa transcendance même' (Levinas 2003: 310).
7. 'L'altérité, l'hétérogénéité radicale de l'Autre, n'est possible que si l'Autre est autre par rapport à un terme dont l'essence est de demeurer au point de départ, de servir d'*entrée* dans la relation, d'être le Même non pas relativement, mais absolument. *Un terme ne peut demeurer absolument au point de départ de la relation que comme Moi*' (Levinas 2003: 25).
8. '[C]omme une différence tranchant sur les différences, non seulement comme une qualité, différente de toutes les autres, mais comme la qualité même de la différence' (Levinas 1983: 14).
9. 'L'accueillant par excellence', 'l'accueillant en soi' (Levinas 2003: 169).
10. 'Et l'Autre dont la présence est discrètement une absence et à partir de laquelle s'accomplit l'accueil hospitalier par excellence qui décrit le champs de l'intimité, est la Femme' (Levinas 2003: 166).
11. 'L'idée de l'infini, l'infiniment plus contenu dans le moins, se produit concrètement sous les espèces d'une relation avec le visage. Et seule l'idée de l'infini – maintient l'extériorité de l'Autre par rapport au Même, malgré ce rapport' (Levinas 2003: 213).
12. 'Les "primitifs" peuvent avoir les têtes les plus humaines, les plus belles et les plus spirituelles, ils n'ont pas de visage et n'en ont pas besoin' (Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 216).
13. Besides the signifying and post-signifying regime of signs Deleuze and Guattari distinguish the pre-signifying semiotic of primitive cultures and the counter-signifying semiotic of nomads.
14. In *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas claims: 'The face has turned to me – and this is its very nudity. It *is* by itself and not by reference to a system.' (Levinas 1991: 75). 'Le visage s'est tourné vers moi – et c'est cela sa nudité même. Il *est* par lui-même et non point par référence à un système' (Levinas 2003: 72).
15. 'Le racisme ne détecte jamais les particules de l'autre, il propage les ondes du même' (Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 218).
16. 'Du point de vue du racisme, il n'y a pas d'extérieur, il n'y a pas de gens du dehors' (Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 218).
17. See Levinas' interview with Christoph von Wolzogen published in an appendix to the German edition of his book *Humanisme de l'autre homme*.
18. '[Q]uand le visage s'efface, quand les traits de visagéité disparaissent, on peut être sûr qu'on est entré dans un autre régime, dans d'autres zones infiniment plus muettes et imperceptibles où s'opèrent des devenirs-animaux, des devenirs-moléculaires souterrains, des déterritorialisations nocturnes qui débordent les limites du système signifiant' (Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 145).
19. 'On doit donc dire qu'on n'ira jamais assez loin dans le sens de la déterritorialisation' (Deleuze and Guattari 1972: 384).
20. 'Défaire le visage, ce n'est pas une petite affaire. On y risque bien la folie: est-ce par hasard que le schizo perd en même temps le sens du visage, de son propre visage et de celui des autres, le sens du paysage, les sens du langage et de ses significations dominantes?' (Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 230)

21. 'Useless Suffering', in Levinas 1998a; 'Transcendence and Evil', in Levinas 1998b.
22. '[L]e ne-pas-trouver-de-place, le refus de tout accommodement avec . . . , un contre-nature, une monstruosité, le, de soi, dérangeant et étranger' (Levinas 1982: 198).
23. 'This responsibility appears as a plot without a beginning, anarchic' (Levinas 1998c: 135). '[C]ette responsabilité apparaît comme intrique sans commencement, an-archique' (Levinas 2004: 212).
24. This article was written as a part of the research projects IAA90090603 GAAV 'Investigations of Subjectivity – between Phenomenology and Psychotherapy', MSM0021620845 'Theoretical Investigations of Complex Phenomena in Physics, Biology and Social Sciences' and 401/07/P293 GACR 'Emotionality and Corporeality'.

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Why Deleuze Doesn't Blow the Actual on Virtual Priority. A Rejoinder to Jack Reynolds

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Your classic Jaguar XK 120 stands useless by the roadside. Why? Because you gave priority to the admittedly gorgeous 6 cylinder straight six engine; because you privileged the highest value part. Rubber pipes perish, though, and now thanks to a leak in a cheap hose the head gasket has blown. You are stranded and facing a costly bill. More seriously, your mechanical gaffe is a sign of your misunderstanding of Deleuze. Like Sir William Lyons, he engineers systems where the concept of priority must not be confused with independence, separateness, abstraction or ethical superiority. As a good engineer, Deleuze's constructions are holistic and opposed to abstract hierarchies: if a crucial small, actual part perishes in a particular practical situation where it has a role to play, then it does not matter how much virtual power you have in reserve. Your feet are still in a pool of hot water as you survey the wasted potential of actual motion and ideal expressions, hand made in Coventry.

Jack Reynolds uses the words 'priority', 'prioritise' or 'secondary' seventeen times in his study of Deleuze's work on wounds in *The Logic of Sense*. The key to this repetition is the valuation following his use of the term. For Reynolds, taking his cue from Hallward but extending his argument from the political to the ethical, priority is an indicator of ethical value, itself leading to an irreversible order:

> As we have seen, this counter-actualisation that partakes of the virtual, although it is embodied, owes its value to that which is not embodied. As such the virtual retains an ethical priority over mere mechanism, and the 'great souls', artists and mystics, manage to embody this virtuality in its purest form. (Reynolds 2007: 160)

Reynolds's logical steps are that Deleuze gives priority to the virtual (sense) over the actual (depth). This priority is ethical. It therefore directs ethical action towards the virtual, thereby devaluing the actual. This leads to a dualist philosophy that is elitist and abstracted from concrete wounds and their 'scarification'. Reynolds wants to revalue an ethics of coping taken from phenomenology against this move 'out of this world' (*Oh dreaded misleading phrase, may it pass into the deepest recesses of dusty libraries soon!*) This revaluation is the important point of Reynolds's essay, one of the first to stress the ethical contrasts between Deleuze and phenomenology.

The sleight of hand here lies in the slippage from the necessity of embodiment to its supposed devaluation. The fundamental question is this: What does it mean to prioritise something when it is in a necessary relation to other things that its effectuation is completely dependent on? The answer to this question lies in understanding Deleuze's philosophy as *a structure of interlinked processes that only acquire determination in practical situations*. The isolation of the so-called ethical move to priority is illegitimate and leads to a misconstrual of Deleuze's crucial concept of counter-actualisation. This is because priority is not to be taken as a value term in this context since it describes a difference between processes rather than superiority of one over the other. Like the escaped convicts in Joel and Ethan Cohen's *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, if one supposedly superior member of the chained desperados makes an independent break for it, he will rapidly be dragged back into the fold with a violent but healthy bump. Reynolds, Hallward, Badiou and Meillassoux all want to pretend that the virtual wants to flee the actual. It can't. It does not want to. In *The Logic of Sense*, priority – if we want to keep the term - accounts for what Deleuze calls the neutrality of sense or its impassibility. This in turn supports his claim for the asymmetry of processes in terms of different determinations according to dynamic and static geneses, as argued with great precision by Miguel de Beistegui in his *Truth and Genesis: Philosophy as Differential Ontology*. Neutrality and impassibility are not indicators of superiority but of a different kind of genetic function that allows for novelty without having to posit it on an inevitably violent production of the event *ex nihilo*, or the modern dogmatic version of 'the nothing' based on set theory.

Geneses of changes in identity occur thanks to the expression of sense (that which gives intensity to an actual individuation). Identities alter in terms of significance because they are associated with changes in the surface intensities associated with sense. Escapees express 'to be free' in a singular way and thrive on the new intensities running through

their worlds. But this expression does not alter sense in a symmetrical manner such that you could then predict what would happen to sense given a particular actual change. Does that mean that you privilege sense? No. It means that sense and its expression retain a distance which preserves sense from identity, thereby leaving it open for the production of novelty – new intensities. In turn, this allows intensity – the sadly missing term in dualist interpretations of Deleuze – to regain its conceptual importance.

Intensity, or the surface, is the shared transformer of the actual and virtual, or depth and sense (height). Any actual act involves genetic transformations of intensity at the level of sense and in the actual. The genius of Deleuze as engineer comes out here. Since surface or intensity works differently on the actual and the virtual these are distinguished yet always connected. The art of counter-actualisation becomes a creative actual experiment on intensity which feeds through a different work of intensity in the virtual and back to a novel demand for experimentation. You have never finished with intensity. You are always working through the surface shared by actual depth and virtual height. Privilege one or the other and you have not understood your engine. It will break and someone will get hurt unnecessarily and it does not matter how much you then claim to only have been trying to cope. Trying to cope is a misunderstanding of the way in which your actual actions benefit from an ongoing transformation because they transform the intensity operating in the world of sense. That's why there is a series in *The Logic of Sense* called 'good intentions are perforce punished'. Select any norm ('such as the first goal with respect to wounds is to cope with them') and your benevolent intentions will begin to slip down a miserable slope, as sure as any unseated toboggan rider.

Finally, it is important to insist – again and again – on the essential role of singular practice against the desire for a Deleuzian ethics (that will then be denigrated as elitist or otherworldly). *Deleuze's philosophical structure of processes of reciprocal determination is only complete in singular practices, no given practice can be a secure blueprint for another, every practice is actual, the practice is necessarily experimental, it never arrives at a goal, it is not directed towards the virtual or towards sense, and it is directed towards a clinical and critical affirmation of our actual lives and shared communication through events.*

Reynolds dislikes the lack of normative principles in Deleuze and a supposed turn away from practical wisdom: '[Deleuze's] overarching ethic is hence not one of phronesis, of practical wisdom within a given embodied and cultural context' (Reynolds 2007: 161–2). When has

cultural context not involved creativity and novelty? When was learning from contact with others not a form of practical wisdom? When has embodiment been 'given' rather than undergone as a shifting experience of varying intensities? Only if you retain too much nostalgia for norms in your practice – and your account of the given – can you hold such views.

Here is Deleuze's example of the splendour of counter-actualisation in the face of wounds. Joë Bousquet was shot through the neck in the mud and blood of the third battle of the Aisne in 1918 on the infamous ridge of the *Chemin des Dames*. He was dragged to safety in a tarpaulin half dead by comrades risking their own lives. Nursed to health by a series of dedicated nurses, he somehow survived the carnage. Left paraplegic and living protected behind a heavy curtain, needing constant attention, he became a major surrealist writer. He corresponded with Max Ernst and many of the surrealist writers of his day. He never forgot those comrades, that nurse or the wound that he affirmed by becoming a writer. His writing about them is the actual counter of the horror of his wound:

> A human disaster can summarise a malediction that the imagination sounds with difficulty; yet it nonetheless remains the light and legible sign of a happy fatality. A man is laid out, one vertebra smashed. Attached to the real, he becomes the drain for the life where he was, just yesterday, understood, he sees himself, he incarnates the ugliness of an individual starting with himself anew, he is the real presence of what existence no longer knows. What other feeling can he nourish than fear of subsistence? It is ignoble to survive when we are no longer the image of anything. (Bousquet 1979: 30–1, my translation)

This is not coping. That's always an illusion given the gradual degradation and hope for an end implied by the term. It is a creative transformation thanks to the selection of hitherto hidden intensities. Do we really need philosophers to worry at priority and normativity, when we can learn from the events and affirmations of others and affirm them anew in our singular actual creations?

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Transcendental Priority and Deleuzian Normativity. A Reply to James Williams

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I am grateful that someone whose work I greatly admire could be the philosopher to so eloquently and succinctly cut to the heart of the problem that I posed in the previous issue of *Deleuze Studies*. James Williams' critical reply leaves me, *prima facie*, confronted by a stark alternative: *either* I have misunderstood Deleuze, *or* I have illustrated problems and lacunae in Deleuze. I will suggest, however, that this is a false alternative, and that Williams' and my divergent accounts of *The Logic of Sense* – and even Deleuze's oeuvre as a whole – is better understood as a situation of 'both/and' rather than 'either/or', and hence that my interpretation of Deleuze isn't wrong, but necessarily iconoclastic.

This is not to dispute that Williams has put forward a compelling interpretation of the work of Deleuze (both here and elsewhere), but if it can be said that my reading is mistaken at one level, let's say on the level of authorial intention and in regard to the most charitable reading of some parts of some of Deleuze's most important texts (particularly *Difference and Repetition*), I don't think I am mistaken in maintaining that something like the hierarchical evaluative component I describe (e.g. in relation to the virtual and the actual, and myriad related polarities) persists in Deleuze's work, despite the fact that the important doctrines of ontological univocity and asymmetrical reciprocal determination count against this. In this sense, I can agree with Williams when he observes that 'Privilege one or the other and you have not understood your engine.' But my suggestion would be that Deleuze *didn't* understand his own engine from time to time (who amongst us consistently does?), and that while the contested term 'priority' ought to be understood neutrally by Deleuze as Williams argues, quite frequently something else is going on in his texts, which intermittently expresses itself (to greater or lesser extents), and which philosophers like Hallward, Badiou, and myself, have attempted to

thematise, albeit in quite different ways. Unlike Badiou, I do not think Deleuze is a philosopher of eternity or the One, although I do agree that there is, at times, a reification of the virtual in Deleuze. As for whether I share Badiou's desire to discredit the appeal to the virtual entirely and speak instead of the univocity of the actual as a pure multiple, this depends upon one's conception of the transcendental, which I certainly want to retain in some form, albeit of a more grounded variety – perhaps something like an historical *a priori* – than that which is instituted by Deleuze.

I think Deleuze's *The Logic of Sense* evinces a hierarchical evaluative tendency in many places, as is indicated in my essay. That said, Williams does have me rethinking my account of counter-actualisation somewhat, through the role he attributes to intensity as a kind of middle term between the virtual and the actual, although I don't think that the many citations I make from Deleuze are thus all explained away. Nor am I sure about Williams' equation of intensity with the surface and the related argument that the relevant opposition of *The Logic of Sense* is between depth and sense (height) rather than between depth and surface. While Williams is the expert in this regard, I also wonder how he explains Deleuze's remarkable essay, 'Michel Tournier and the World without Others', where something like the virtual (or what Deleuze calls there, apparently equivalently, the 'perverse-structure' and the 'pure surface') is imagined as somehow instantiated, and a clear normative impetus is accorded to this world that has dispensed with what he calls the other-structure and its 'relations of explication'. The other-structure is envisaged as organising and regulatory: as 'imprisoning elements within the limits of bodies' (Deleuze 2004: 351). Deleuze is even 'tempted to conclude that bodies are but detours to the attainment of images' (Deleuze 2004: 352) and he asks, 'when we desire others, are not our desires brought to bear upon this expressed possible world which the Other wrongly envelops, instead of allowing it to float and fly above the world, developed into a glorious double?' He intimates that perhaps, 'the absence of the Other and the dissolution of its structure do not simply disorganise the world, but, on the contrary, open up a possibility of salvation' (Deleuze 2004: 354). These are curious remarks that seem to add weight to my interpretation that there is a value judgment attached to this order of priority, rather than merely the neutral transcendental priority that describes a difference between processes, and I argue this in greater detail elsewhere (Reynolds 2008).

Nor is it that Deleuze is merely voicing the logics of Robinson Crusoe's perversion as they are presented in Tournier's novel. After all, *Difference*

and Repetition also refers to a leaving behind of the other-structure. And Deleuze again derives an intriguing ethico-political injunction from this: not to explicate oneself too much with the Other, and not to explicate the Other too much, but to 'multiply one's own world by populating it with all those expressed that do not exist apart from their expressions' (Deleuze 1994: 260). On what basis then, does Deleuze derive his injunction to multiply these possible worlds, these *a priori* expressed others that have not yet been explicated, developed, subsumed within the forestructures of our understanding and deprived of their difference? It seems that the transcendental condition (the other as expressive of a possible world) is simultaneously a moral injunction to maximise actual occurrences of such expressivity. The spirit of this injunction is roughly equivalent to that which accompanies his valorisation in *Difference and Repetition* of the disruptive trauma of learning and apprenticeship (Deleuze 1994: 192) and his references to the child-player who can only win (Deleuze 1994: 116). I explore both these issues in another essay (Reynolds 2006), but I will return to them here because the fundamental *differend* between Williams and I seems to concern the issue of 'coping'.

But for the moment my question for Deleuze and Williams is a simple one: is the implied denunciation of relations of development and explication justified? After all, while relations of explication might come to domesticate the Other's 'otherness' and to partially deprive them of their radical difference, as Deleuze suggests, it is also the case that they open up different and more diverse kinds of relations (kinds of intensity) that cannot be captured on this view that juxtaposes the relative purity of expressed 'possible worlds' that have no ties of allegiance (that is, the different and the new), against their shutting down and increased monotony in the world of identities. To put the problem another way, even if the condition for relations of explication (a quarrel, a revelation, anything that remains with the play of identities) is the other as possible world, it does not follow from this that we could or should live privileging this transcendental condition, or perhaps even the intensities and singularities that this condition makes possible. Indeed, while Deleuze himself repeatedly insists that there is reciprocal asymmetrical determination between the actual and the virtual (which means that neither legislates and draws up limits or rules for the other, whereby we might obtain clear moral rules about what should take place in the actual), in practice it seems to me that the virtual plays the determinative role in his injunction to multiply encounters with the expressivity of others. So, in response to Williams' conclusion that as philosophers we should not be too worried about normativity, I actually

agree in a sense and I hope that I am no knight of good conscience, but my critical essays on Deleuze are meant to be immanent critiques of the intrusion of this surreptitious normative element in Deleuze's own work.

But Williams' final remarks also pose perhaps a more pointed challenge to my project, in that they call into question the value of a negative philosophical engagement with another thinker in this manner. I sometimes ask myself something like this question: Although I disagree with many of Deleuze's positions, I do not dispute that he is a great philosopher, so why do I focus upon (or even misread, according to Williams) aspects of his work that merely trouble me? Is this petty procedure what a philosopher should do, living off the backs of other long-dead philosophers? I don't think there is a simple answer to this question. I can point out in my own defence that this is done in the hope that it will illuminate my own creations on these lofty themes, particularly vis-à-vis time and transcendental philosophy, the interconnection of which serves to distinguish poststructuralist philosophy quite radically from much of what takes place in analytic philosophy. Nonetheless, Williams' questions make prescient to me that we do have a different conception of philosophy, and that there is a sense in which mine remains more closely related to what Deleuze critiques as the model of judgment. After all, what I have been doing in various publications on Deleuze is to work through some of my intuitive concerns with Deleuze, and I mean intuitions in the standard non-Bergsonian sense.

Now various questions and objections might be raised about this modus operandi. If one is a Deleuzian about philosophical method then I am likely to be exposing little more than my own encrusted assumptions and prejudices, in short my subjective presuppositions. Another way of putting this might be to say that one inevitably finds what one is looking for, as in Heidegger's version of the hermeneutic circle. Unlike Heidegger, however, Deleuze thinks that there is a way out of this dilemma, which is a version of both Meno's paradox and the paradox of analysis. Meno's paradox roughly states that if we know what we are looking for in advance, then when we find it we will merely confirm what we already knew; and yet if we do not know what we are looking for we will not know when we have found it and hence not know when to stop our enquiry. The paradox seems to suggest that the learning of something new is impossible, as is any kind of non-circular philosophical enquiry.

I think Williams and I agree that Meno's paradox is misstated, but for different reasons. For both of us, I imagine, the problem with this conception revolves around the focus on knowledge (and the atomistic understanding of what knowledge consists in). I resist this understanding by turning to a phenomenology of the body as a way out from this paradigm, whereas the Deleuzian move is to see intensity as a way out. The latter route, though, depends upon a quite elaborate metaphysics in a way that the former does not. Roughly put it requires a metaphysics of difference and the new, along the lines enumerated by Deleuze in his descriptions of the interrelations between the virtual and actual. Moreover, I think it fair to say that on the latter route judgment is more maligned than on the former route, where it is 'disciplined' by embodied and practical concerns but not necessarily cast asunder. Of course, this phenomenological route has been criticised, too, by Deleuze and others, for remaining a form of doxa. That said, Deleuze's engagement with Merleau-Ponty is insufficiently detailed to be convincing in this regard, but there is a minimal sense in which I think this is correct, as I have argued elsewhere (Reynolds and Roffe 2006). But the key question is whether doxa and common sense really ought to have nothing to do with philosophy at all, as Deleuze supposes. If we accept that conclusion, it would not merely be me, but most of us in academia, who are either pretending to be philosophers or being poor philosophers. I cannot justify this here but I find the Deleuzian critique of good and common sense hard to accept in its entirety, despite it being an amazingly powerful critical tool.

Vigilance about good and common sense is undoubtedly called for – this is perhaps what Merleau-Ponty advocates under the name 'hyper-dialectic' – but it is not clear to me that we can (or should) understand the genuine philosophical pursuit as ultimately immured of these aspects as Deleuze does. Likewise, Deleuze's positive understanding of philosophy as concept creation is also but one part of philosophy. Partly because of these metaphilosophical reservations, I am not convinced of the necessity for all of the metaphysical moves made in the Deleuzian philosophical system. Williams, however, has seen the necessity for the Deleuzian transcendental and metaphysical turn and I think that is what is at stake in his disagreement with me in regard to coping.

Williams not only shows the manner in which we need to understand intensity as a middle ground between virtuality and actuality, but he also tells us that intensity must be understood in disjunction from coping (or scarification in the terms of my *Deleuze Studies* paper), which on his view is a reactive rather than creative force and its teleological impetus

precludes new intensities and creative affirmations. I am still not totally convinced about the severity of this Deleuzian distinction between habit, skill acquisition, and learning – Deleuze and Bergson might argue that they involve differences in kind, but I see differences in degree – but I do see where Williams is coming from when he states:

> When has cultural context not involved creativity and novelty? When was learning from contact with others not a form of practical wisdom? When has embodiment been 'given' rather than undergone as a shifting experience of varying intensities? Only if you retain too much nostalgia for norms in your practice – and your account of the given – can you hold such views.

I am certainly prepared to accept that there is always some minimal creativity/change at work in any given environment, whether socially or naturalistically conceived. I should also add that I don't maintain that embodiment is given in anything but a very minor sense. I know from my one year-old daughter just how much we take for granted about 'normal' bodily motility when at one stage these activities were far from normal. All bodies – human and animal – have a minimal proprioceptive sense from the 'beginning' (i.e. the earliest stages of foetal life), that is, an unrefined positional awareness, which serves as the basis for the development of a body-schema, habits, and even intelligent skills and learning, as we seek to establish maximum grip, or optimal gestalt, with a given multiplicity. In a sense, Williams is right to say that adjustment towards one's environment is the telos of learning and skill acquisition on this view, but this does not necessarily precludes change and transformation, indeed our skills must be flexible enough so as to respond to difference. It is even arguable that it is only with certain abilities and capacities made possible by the body-schema and the acquisition of habits and skills that one can be truly attentive to the singularities that present themselves.

But this is not the view of Deleuze (or Williams) whose models of intensity are the trauma of apprenticeship and the experience of disequilibrium and discontinuity. Williams states that coping is 'always an illusion given the gradual degradation and hope for an end implied by the term'. These are strong words. In his view, coping is an illusion, a phenomenological illusion that covers over deeper intensities. Even if this were so, I'm not sure in what sense coping can be said to be an illusion unless we understand the virtual alone as real, something that Williams would not want to do. Equally strongly, Williams also contends that any philosophy that pays attention to this experiential phenomena is irremediably nostalgic. Against this view, I hold that this

embodied maintenance of intentional arcs is a fundamental part of both human and animal existence, even if transcendental arguments can be mounted to show that there is a neutral order of priority that conditions it. Am I nostalgically invoking the myth of the given in insisting on the value and importance of this embodied 'coping' or 'l'habitude'? I don't think so. It may enact a form of 'presentism' in that one responds to circumstances with a view to optimal gestalt, but I don't see why it is incurably nostalgic. Moreover, I do not, of course, want to maintain that it exhausts the dimensions of human life, or life per se. Indeed, much of my work insists on the co-imbrication of these two tendencies – equilibria and disequilibria – and is hence meant to be a corrective to what I take to be the Deleuzian view that downplays the centrality of habits, coping, and the acquisition of skills to both learning and to ethics/counter-actualisation (the embodied phronesis I talk of is based on the specificities of the human body-schema and the feedback mechanisms it makes possible).

I suspect that there is something akin to a *differend* here between my still too phenomenological account and a Deleuzo-Bergsonian response which might pose the following questions about my apparent reification of actual proprioception and what it means for animal organisms: What about embryology? What are the conditions of actualisation of bodies? Do we not need reference to the virtual? I cannot satisfactorily address these questions here, but there is certainly an important difference between a phenomenological and a more metaphysical account of intensities (and the virtual) working with the variabilities of an environment to produce bodies. If this is so, what separates Williams and I is less the desire for some series of rational or ethical norms, but, as he discusses in regard to Deleuze and David Lewis in *The Transversal Thought of Gilles Deleuze*, the differences between two kinds of pragmatism. Rather than align myself with Lewis, the relevant contrast is perhaps better exemplified in terms of the differences between a metaphysical and experiential pragmatism of the Bergsonian variety, and a more mundane pragmatist view which sees 'know how' as more fundamental than 'knowing that', with all of the various consequences that this entails. Indeed, despite the admiration that William James consistently expressed for Bergson, there is a sense in which Bergson was right to be wary of James' declarations of intellectual kinship and to insist on the differences between their respective philosophies. It seems to me that some similar differences are at work between James Williams and myself. The fact remains that some aspects of

the Deleuzian metaphysical leap are not yet ones that I have seen the necessity of taking, either intellectually or experientially.

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Review Essay

History Undone: Towards a Deleuzo-Guattarian Philosophy of History

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Lampert, Jay (2006), *Deleuze and Guattari's Philosophy of History*, London and New York: Continuum, 178 pages.

For those familiar with the work of Deleuze, and Deleuze and Guattari, it might at first seem unwise to pursue a Deleuze and Guattarian philosophy of history. After all, is it not Deleuze who, in an interview with Antonio Negri, argues that 'What history grasps in an event is the way it's actualized in particular circumstances; the event's becoming is beyond the scope of history'? (Deleuze 1995: 170). And more damningly, Deleuze adds, 'History isn't experimental, it's just the set of more or less negative preconditions that make it possible to experiment with something beyond history' (Deleuze 1995: 170). History, in short, is a starting point for experimental work, but it is precisely history 'that one leaves behind in order to "become," that is, to create something new' (1995: 171). Similarly in *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari argue that 'History is made by those who oppose history (not by those who insert themselves into it, or even reshape it)' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 295). In the very first line of his book, Lampert recognizes the possible conclusion these citations might lead one to, namely, 'Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy of becoming seems at times opposed to the very idea of historical succession' (1); and yet, as Lampert adeptly demonstrates, it would be a mistake to conclude that opposing history to 'create something new', 'something beyond history', necessarily entails being hostile to history, to the 'idea of historical succession', and thus to a philosophy of history.

To begin to see that Lampert is quite right in asserting that 'Deleuze and Guattari do have a philosophy of history' (1), we can return to the quotes with which we began. In both instances, Deleuze and Deleuze and

Guattari discuss history with Nietzsche at the forefront of their minds. In the interview with Negri, for instance, Deleuze states that leaving history 'behind in order to "become" ... is precisely what Nietzsche calls the untimely' (Deleuze 1995: 171). And in the passage from *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari argue that 'Nietzsche opposes history not to the eternal but to the subhistorical or superhistorical', adding that the 'Untimely ... is another name for haecceity, becoming ... (geography as opposed to history ... the rhizome as opposed to arborescence)' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 296). We will turn to the dualism of these terms below – i.e., rhizome/arborescence, geography/history, etc. – but it is crucial first to read carefully the Nietzsche passage from which Deleuze draws his conclusions concerning history. As Nietzsche argues in 'The Advantages and Disadvantages of History for Life', and as Deleuze and Guattari cite, 'The unhistorical is like an atmosphere within which alone life can germinate and with the destruction of which it must vanish' (Nietzsche 1983: 63–4, cited by Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 296). Nietzsche then immediately adds that 'only by imposing limits on this unhistorical element by thinking, reflecting, comparing, distinguishing, drawing conclusions ... thus only through the power of employing the past for the purposes of life and of again introducing into history that which has been done and is gone – did man become man' (Nietzsche 1983: 64). Deleuze and Guattari do not cite this passage but skip, by way of ellipsis, to what follows: 'What deed would man be capable of if he had not first entered into that vaporous region of the unhistorical?' (Nietzsche 1983: 64). And yet, in other places Deleuze is quiet clear that Nietzsche's point was not lost on him. In short, one does not indiscriminately leave history behind in order to experiment and create something new, for, as Deleuze admits in his interview with Negri, 'Without history the experimentation would remain indeterminate, lacking any initial conditions, but history isn't historical' (Deleuze 1995: 170).

Lampert is attuned to Deleuze's awareness of Nietzsche's point. As Lampert puts it, 'there are two forces of succession', or two histories: there is 'reactive succession whereby we submit to a predecessor, and an active succession whereby we add a power to a predecessor' (9). The first is history as the historical, 'history as nihilism', and for Lampert it is erroneous for it assumes 'that events have power centres sufficient to determine one result rather than another' (9). To the contrary, the 'theory of succession' Lampert finds in Deleuze and Guattari, the history that isn't historical, is precisely the 'active succession' which entails 'the passage of power across mutually communicating

events, [and which] implies the inheritance of the freedom to interpret' (9). It is the inseparability and co-existence of actual events and an untimely atmosphere and vapour, what Lampert will refer to as flux, that implies the 'freedom to interpret,' the freedom to create something new.

With Lampert's use of the term flux, a second figure crucial to the development of a Deleuzo-Guattarian philosophy of history emerges – namely, Bergson.[1] In a clear echoing of Bergson, Deleuze and Guattari, in *What is Philosophy?* state quite succinctly that they do not follow the traditional task of history, the task of determining precisely what actually happened, or what series of actualities gave rise to another. They seek, as Lampert would argue, to move beyond the understanding of historical succession as 'reactive succession'. The task of history that is not historical, rather, is the attempt to understand the conditions for actualization itself, and as Bergson claims philosophy ought, in pursuing this task, 'to remount the incline that physics descends' (Bergson 1911: 208). Similarly, Deleuze and Guattari argue:

> *It would be necessary to go back up the path that science descends*, and at the very end of which logic sets up its camp (the same goes for History, where we would have to arrive at the unhistorical vapour that goes beyond the actual factors to the advantage of a creation of something new). (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 140, emphasis in original)

In a convergence of Nietzsche and Bergson, therefore, we find Deleuze and Guattari calling for a history that moves from the actual to the virtual, to the 'unhistorical vapour' that allows for the 'creation of something new'. Yet this is not an indeterminate move away from history, but a determinate undoing of history that allows for history to be done and undone again. As Lampert brilliantly puts it, if one does history as Deleuze and Guattari suggest, one must 'counter-effectuate' the actual, whereby to 'to counter-effectuate, virtuality must make the actual make the virtual. It should not make actuality vanish in an unfulfillable ideal, but make actuality into becoming-actuality' (105). Central to Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy of history, therefore, is an understanding of the relationship between the actual and the virtual, and in Lampert's book we have an effort to detail the many arguments, concepts, and terms that are deployed by Deleuze, and Deleuze and Guattari, in the process of setting forth a philosophy of history built upon this relationship. Central to Lampert's efforts is an attempt to clarify the temporal aspects associated with the virtual – namely, the theory of active succession – that are inseparable from a

'temporal ontology'. Much of Lampert's book consists in explicating the many arguments that are related to this temporal ontology.

A guiding problematic of many of Lampert's arguments concerns the apparent difficulty of reconciling a philosophy of history with Deleuze's arguments concerning the pure past. If the pure past *as past* 'is' as Lampert puts it 'virtually contemporaneous with every event' (8), then how are we to account for history if it is taken to be a chronological succession of events? If we begin with a contemporaneous pure past, how can we understand the possibility of there being 'temporal distance within simultaneity?' (8) Lampert lays out the problem by asking how there can be the co-existence of Joan of Arc in the present, or what he calls the 'Joan of Arc Effect', while also allowing that there is temporal distance between Joan of Arc and her contemporary effects. The next three chapters begin to address this problem by focusing, in turn, on the three syntheses of time (present, past, and future) as laid out by Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition*.

These three chapters are more schematic than thorough in their presentations of the arguments involved with the syntheses of time and how these syntheses are then related to the problem of 'temporal distance within simultaneity'. Lampert has a fondness for lists, and in the chapter devoted to the virtual co-existence of the past – a key chapter since this addresses the guiding problem of his book – Lampert lists thirteen different arguments in nineteen pages. The arguments are suggestive but not fleshed out or interconnected sufficiently to clarify the use Lampert makes of Deleuze and Guattari's central concepts. For example, in the fourth of thirteen arguments, 'The Argument From Two Types of Memory', Lampert makes a promising connection between Deleuze's theory of the 'pure past' and Bergson's theory of 'pure memory'. Although Lampert is strictly speaking correct here (as he is in numerous other instances in the suggestions he makes), a complex argument that could merit a book or chapter in its own right is dispatched in less than a page. Thus, when Lampert comes to the conclusion that we are to take away from this fourth argument – 'In short, the past is detached from the present, its reality is virtual, and the whole past co-exists as a totality' (36) – it is far less compelling than it could be, even if one happens to think it is correct.

Similarly, Lampert's eighth argument offers an evocative possible defence against Alain Badiou's claim that Deleuze was 'a philospher of the atemporal' (41).[2] Lampert – referring to *Proust et les signes* – rightly points out that while Deleuze does speak of the 'generality of time as the "extra-temporal"', he also, and just as importantly, 'calls it,

"time in a state of birth", the "eternity" that "envelopes the multiple in the One and affirms the one in the multiple"' (See Deleuze 1964: 57–60). Lampert concludes that for Deleuze the past is 'atemporal', but 'only in the sense that it generalizes from, and thus "complicates", the present' (41). This complication of the present will emerge as an important theme for Lampert in later chapters, yet in the context of his discussions of the second synthesis of time Lampert merely indicates possible directions one could take with these arguments, but does not follow up on them himself. In short, the central chapters of this book set forth an outline and general map of the terrain that can then be pursued later by more detailed study and explication. Given that this book is addressing a subject that has been heretofore largely untouched by Deleuze scholars, such an outline may serve a useful function for those who seek to follow through on any of Lampert's suggestive arguments.

The final few chapters of this book are the strongest and they directly address Deleuze and Guattari's call for history to return to the 'unhistorical vapour' that allows for the creation of new events. The guiding question in this discussion is 'why this now?': 'why philosophy began in ancient Greece, and why capitalism began in modern Europe' (143). In answering the question concerning the emergence of Greek philosophy, Deleuze and Guattari, following Nietzsche, argue that it is because of the unhistorical, or it is 'as a result of contingency rather than necessity, as a result of an ambiance or milieu rather than an origin, of a becoming rather than a history, of a geography rather than a historiography' (Deleuze and Guattari: 1994: 96–7). There is thus not an identifiable cause that contains, as an unrealized possibility, the Greek philosophy that is the effect of this cause. Such an account of historical origins subverts the very creativity and contingency of historical events. The historical question therefore becomes for Lampert not a question concerning origins or historical causation, but rather a question of clarifying the relationship of the virtual to the actual, or how virtuality can make the actual virtual, into 'becoming-actuality' (105). This discussion enables Lampert to draw together a number of themes that were central to the work of Deleuze and Guattari, and pivotal to Lampert's approach is the notion that temporal distance is made possible by resisting an indeterminable flux, a flux that cannot be as past, present, or present-becoming past, but is, rather, the pure past, the co-existence upon which temporality is based. For example, Lampert argues that 'Napoleon comes after Caesar just to the extent that Caesar never took place, or to the extent that Caesar takes place

simultaneously with, and not before, the Napoleon that replaces it' (93). In other words, the event that is Napoleon comes after the event that is Caesar, but as event, as Deleuze defines it in *The Logic of Sense* (and the dark precursor as Lampert points out), Caesar is actualized in states of affairs and is also the future/past that eludes 'each present, being free of the limitations of a state of affairs' (Deleuze 1990: 151). As a result, the Napoleon event that repeats Caesar is 'repeating something', as Lampert puts it, 'that has not happened' (93). It is the repeating of the event that is 'free of the limitations of a state of affairs', and yet it is the repeating of an event that is co-existent with a present state of affairs. Stating this even more paradoxically, Lampert claims 'Napoleon is after Caesar only if Caesar is not before Napoleon' (93). The temporal succession and distance between Caesar and Napoleon arises as the actuality of the successor resists and separates itself from the non-identifiable nature of the event it is repeating, the event that is nonetheless inseparable from it. For Lampert, then, 'The earlier event has to be made earlier by the force of its successor's attempts to resist identifying with it' (94). If the past, as pure past, is a flux co-existent with the present, it is the resistance to this flux that generates the temporal distance of a successor that is not to be identified with the flux; or, as Lampert argues, 'the prior is the one that is most in flux for the other' (93).

At this point the importance of capitalism comes to the fore, since capitalism, on Lampert's reading of Deleuze and Guattari, is simply the flux of capital, a flux that destabilizes markets precisely because capital is the unstable flux that becomes markets as this flux becomes resisted and captured. Add to this understanding of capitalism Lampert's claim that 'temporality is built on co-existence [i.e. flux] rather than succession'(131), then one can readily follow Lampert when he concludes that it was only capitalist-era historians who were the first to produce a 'universal history'. The reason, according to Lampert, is that 'It [the capitalist-era] is the only age that knows how to be a successor' (131). The capitalist era is the only age that knows first-hand the basic, universal nature of temporality, and hence a universal history that is founded upon co-existence and flux rather than chronological succession.[3] In short, it is the universal commoditisation associated with the co-existence of capital flows (flux) and the commodities these flows are irreducible to, that allows for the emergence of universal history, for a history that becomes possible only as the inseparability of flux and the actual – that is, the universal nature of temporality – comes into view.

One could perhaps take issue with Lampert's final conclusions. There is a sense in which essentialism creeps into the temporal ontology Lampert sets out. It is hard not to come to such a conclusion when it is claimed that a universal history is 'built on co-existence rather than succession', and this co-existence or flux is in turn taken to be a universal characteristic of temporality itself. One might say it is the very essence of temporality. That said, however, Lampert does provide an especially intriguing approach to addressing the virtual/actual distinction. As was noted earlier, there are a number of dualisms that appear to circulate throughout Deleuze's (and Deleuze and Guattari's) texts – virtual/actual, aion/chronos, active/reactive, geography/history, etc. If one approaches Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy of history as a dualistic philosophy then, unsurprisingly, one would read their criticisms of history as a call for rejecting history, or for replacing it with geography (among other things). Yet Deleuze adamantly denies the charge of dualism, and in *Dialogues* he argues that one avoids dualism only 'when you find between the terms... whether they are two or more, a narrow gorge like a border or a frontier which will turn the set into a multiplicity, independently of the number of parts' (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 132). A Deleuze and Guattarian approach to history, therefore, will not seek to set up camp on the virtual side of the gorge, looking disdainfully across to those historians who toil insipidly within and among the actual. On the contrary, a Deleuze and Guattarian history would turn the actualities of traditional history into a problem, into a virtuality becoming-actual, into a multiplicity.

This is just how Lampert addresses the historical question concerning the appearance of capitalism in Western Europe. For Lampert it is neither a matter of discerning the actual causal factor, nor is it a matter of turning a blind eye to historical facts so as to create something new; rather, it is a matter of addressing the flux that is inseparable from the actual, a flux that becomes historical succession 'by the force of its successor's attempts to resist identifying with it' (94). In other words, the virtual is not identifiably distinct from the actual but is indiscernibly and inseparably 'co-existent' with the actual. The virtual is the problematic inseparable from the actualisation of the actual, and by inseparable we mean simply that the reality of the actual is real because it can become problematised and become other AND still other actualities. It is at this point where Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy of history converges with Deleuze's embrace of empiricism (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 57). At this point, however, we come to one of Lampert's few criticisms of Deleuze.

As Lampert states it:

> In the final analysis, my view is that Deleuze's theory of the future in this chapter [on the third synthesis of time in *Difference and Repetition*] is correct in its approach, but that it does not adequately solve the problem it is introduced to solve. *Showing how temporal co-existence can be penetrated requires more emphasis on actual historical events than DR calls into play*. (54, emphasis added).

To understand how we can move beyond history 'to create something new' it is not sufficient, on Lampert's view, to simply analyze the third synthesis of time as repetition. As Deleuze argues in *Difference and Repetition* (and in a line cited by Lampert), 'Repetition is the historical condition under which something new is effectively produced' (57: Deleuze 1994: 121). What is needed to give flesh to this repetition, to show how actual events are becoming-actual, is to develop a philosophy of history that includes 'an ontology of what it is to have a date' (75). Lampert discusses a number of issues related to this ontology, but most helpful in this context is the contrast he makes between Deleuze and Derrida.

'For Derrida', Lampert argues, 'dating grounds history in a Husserlian paradoxical way: it subjectively grounds history as an objective being in the world' (87). In other words, a historical event acquires its objective being only as it comes to be dated. For Deleuze, by contrast, 'dating grounds history in a Hegelian paradoxical way: it accidentally actualises a potential and makes time the necessary essence of events' (87). For Derrida, the flux inseparable from a dated, actual event is not itself dated; rather, the date is made possible by an absence, by *différance*, and thus dating makes possible but forever defers a complete and total history.

For Deleuze, the date is an actualisation made possible by an excessive flux, and the actualisation of this flux entails a slowing and filtering (a differentiation of the flux, the chaos, that facilitates the differenciation of actual solutions and dates). As such, it only 'accidentally actualizes a potential and makes time the necessary essence of events' (Deleuze 1994: 122) as the resistance to this flux creates the identifiable temporal distance that becomes the very essence of historical succession. This flux, however, remains inseparable from the actuality of events, and one can, as a good empiricist, force the becoming-actual that is co-existent to the actualities and persons that come to be dated and identified. One can, therefore, as was a guiding motif of Lampert's book, produce Joan of Arc effects in the present, effects that undo historical events such that they can be redone and undone yet again, and so on.

In elaborating upon Deleuze's discussion of the 'repetition by excess, the repetition of the future as eternal return' (58: Deleuze 1994, 122), Lampert argues that 'Luther repeats Paul, the Revolution of 1789 repeats the Roman Republic, 1848 farcically repeats 1789, and so on' (57); and similarly someone can repeat Joan of Arc, for 'History', Lampert claims, 'does not consist in similarities between events, but in the actual reproduction of historical events in new forms' (57). To understand the Joan of Arc effect, therefore, one needs to emphasise, as Lampert believes Deleuze did not, 'actual historical events', actual historical individuals, for only in this way can we understand the historicity of an event, or the temporal distance that becomes identifiable only as the co-existent flux becomes resisted as an actual successor to an earlier historical event. Luther repeats Paul, yes, but with a difference, and a difference irreducible to and yet inseparable from the historically identifiable Luther AND Paul. This is thus the historical empiricism Deleuze offers us: think not the identifiable difference between Luther and Paul, the IS of historical events and individuals; think instead the AND of historical events – Luther AND Paul, Joan of Arc AND... – think the AND that can allow for the creation of something new.

We can return then to Lampert's claim that Deleuze's understanding of the temporal co-existence of the past in the present – the Joan of Arc effect – requires 'more emphasis on actual historical events' than Deleuze provides. If one stresses the empiricist aspects of Deleuze's thought – after all, Deleuze always considered himself to be an empiricist[4] – then one could begin to see that Deleuze does indeed allow for adequate emphasis on 'actual historical events.' Lampert does not discuss the empiricist aspect of Deleuze's project, which may have further supported Lampert's temporal ontology of historical events.

Here Lampert may well be trying to distance himself from Manuel DeLanda who understands the cause of actual events as being other actual events (dynamic systems in this case). To avoid conflating empirical, representational science with philosophy, Lampert may be wisely steering clear of addressing Deleuze's empiricism. Yet Deleuze's empiricism, as transcendental empiricism, is indeed a philosophy and is not to be conflated with science. Understood in this way, Deleuze's empiricism could shed further light on Lampert's claim that 'temporality is built on co-existence,' whereby co-existence would then be taken to be precisely the AND of multiplicities rather than the IS of identity, the IS of the one and the multiple. This might enable a Deleuze and Guattarian philosophy of history to avoid what appears, at times, to be hints of essentialism in Lampert's definition of temporality. These issues

might have been addressed quite adequately without turning to Deleuze's transcendental empiricism if the arguments of the middle chapters of this book had been more detailed.

Lampert is to be commended, however, for what he has done in this book. In effect, Lampert provides us with directions towards which a Deleuze and Guattarian philosophy of history might proceed. Specifically, Lampert offers (for the first time in a book-length treatment), an extensive analysis of how Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy of history understands the relationship between the reality of the actual and the reality of the virtual which makes the actualisation of the actual possible. Lampert's book provides a much-needed clarification of this relationship between the actual and the virtual. In whatever manner or multiplicity of ways a Deleuze and Guattarian philosophy of history may be pursued in the future, Lampert's book will likely prove to be an indispensable point of departure for the becoming-actual of this philosophy.

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Notes

1. Among the many places where Deleuze exhibits the influence of Bergson, and especially the vitalist aspect of Bergson's thought, one could perhaps not find a clearer statement of it than what he says in a 1988 interview: 'Everything I've written is vitalistic, at least I hope it is, and amounts to a theory of signs and events' (Deleuze 1995: 143).
2. Lampert acknowledges in a footnote following the passage just cited that although Badiou's 1997 work which is heavily critical of Deleuze may be one-sided, Lampert points out that it was published for a series ('Coup Double' for Hachette) where the authors 'are expected to exhibit their own original philosophies while commenting on some great philosopher' (52). That said, I do believe Badiou would assert that his criticisms are founded upon a careful rather than one-sided reading of Deleuze. For more on this, see Smith (2003), May (2004), and Bell (2006).
3. Lampert refers to Hegel's claim that with the 1791 publication of *The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen*, the self-consciousness of freedom has become actualized in the world. Consequently, as Lampert puts it, 'Every free act from now on is an expression of the rights of man, and every date from now on is superimposed on to 1791. The very moment when history becomes fully temporal, and ceases to be geo-cultural, is the moment that time switches over from succession to co-existence' (90). In short, we move from a history of successive events to a universal history, to the co-existence of flux (or freedom and rights in Hegel's case) and actuality.
4. In the 1987 preface to *Dialogues*, for instance, Deleuze begins by stating 'I have always felt that I am an empiricist, that is, a pluralist' (Deleuze and Parnet: 1987: viii). This self-assessment is supported by the numerous instances where Deleuze refers to his project, from his early work on Hume on through *Difference and Repetition* and to his final published essay, 'Immanence: a life', as transcendental empiricism (Deleuze 2001: 25–33).

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Passions and Actions: Deleuze's Cinematographic *Cogito*

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Abstract

When writing about cinema does Deleuze have a conception of cinema spectatorship? In *New Philosophy for New Media*, Mark Hansen argues that Deleuze does have a conception of cinema spectatorship but that the subjectivity central to that spectatorship is weak and impoverished. This article argues against Hansen's reductive interpretation of Deleuze. In doing so, it relies on the three syntheses of time developed in *Difference and Repetition* alongside an elaboration of Deleuze's notion of a 'cinematographic *Cogito*'. In this way, the article offers a way of understanding the processes of cinema spectatorship from a Deleuzian perspective.

Keywords: cinema, new media, spectatorship, interactive, Mark Hansen, *Cogito*

Although many agree that Deleuze's *Cinema* books (1983, 1985) are groundbreaking landmarks in the history of film studies, no-one seems quite sure what to do with them. A number of scholars have played the game of pitting the movement-image against the time-image in an attempt to display the superiorities of the latter, while others have gone to great lengths to demonstrate the ways in which Deleuze's approach to cinema dissolves the traditional notions of unified subjectivity that were the hallmarks of film theory in the 1970s and 1980s (see Pisters 2003; Olkowski 1999). However, very few have tried to work out *who* or *what* it is that engages with actual films from the Deleuzian perspective. From Deleuze's position, one might ask, are there *spectators* who go to see (and hear) films; which is to say, can we call the experience of watching (and listening to) a film an experience that belongs to or which is undergone by a *subject*? Given Deleuze's long-held suspicion of notions of subjectivity, such an assertion would appear to be highly

problematic. But if it is not a subject who experiences a film, then who or what is it?

In *New Philosophy for New Media* (2004a), Mark Hansen claims that if there is a spectator of cinema for Deleuze, then this spectator is one who is wholly *subjected to* the cinema. For Hansen, if there is a loss of subjectivity in Deleuze's conception of a cinematic spectator, then this is because the spectator, while in front of a film, loses all of the defining characteristics of subjecthood. By way of contrast with Deleuze's cinematic spectator, Hansen claims that the subjects or spectators of new media maintain their subjecthood. As a process of creative interaction with new media artworks, the new media spectator forms part of an expanded subjectivity, whereby that subjectivity grows, is modified, and discovers new affectivities. I do not wish to take issue with Hansen's characterisation of new media subjectivities — that is not my field of speciality. But I certainly do want to question his understanding of Deleuze's cinematic spectator. The loss of subjecthood Deleuze's cinematic spectator experiences should not be construed as a negative; it is rather one of the powers of cinema. Indeed, such losses of subjecthood are precisely what characterise the *Cogito* specific to Deleuze's conception of cinema. Deleuze's cinematographic *Cogito*, as I argue below, can be most accurately charted by virtue of the three syntheses of time formulated in *Difference and Repetition* (1968). To my knowledge, the connection between the three syntheses and a cinematographic *Cogito* has not been made before, but I argue that this connection is essential to understanding Deleuze's approach to cinema and of who or what it is that has cinematic experiences.

I. Against Deleuze: New Media Subjects

What, then, is Hansen's argument? He puts forward an ingenious hypothesis: the significance of new media does not lie in the qualities of its objects, but rather in our responses to it. The specific qualities that make new media *new* have little or nothing to do with the properties of those media, and have everything to do with what they allow subjects — those who encounter new media objects — to achieve. If a spectator engages with a new media object then it is necessary for that spectator to interact with it in order for that object's true importance to emerge. New media are therefore *interactive*; they are defined less by what I receive from them than by what I can give to them. And according to Hansen's thesis, what I give to the objects of new media is *affectivity*.

Affectivity, Hansen goes on to argue, is a bodily production of excess which occurs when the body breaks its boundaries and achieves something that it has hitherto been unable to or which it had never before had the chance to experience. Although Hansen does not mention video games, the example seems appropriate: when playing a video game I have the capacity to make things happen and therefore change the course of the game. In video games this is typically achieved by bodily manipulating controls — various buttons and joysticks — that involve genuinely new bodily skills, reflexes and motor co-ordinations, so that the body extends itself in order to respond to the game. Each new game brings with it the chance to produce new bodily skills. These are *bodily* affectivities, and furthermore, *I* am the one who makes these things happen; *I* am the one doing it. Rather than being solely at the mercy of a technology like cinema which, according to Hansen's argument, leaves me no room for manoeuvring or interacting, new media give me a role in their very coming-into-being. And my way of bringing about this coming-into-being is by creating the kinds of bodily affectivities that define what the new media experience is all about.

These activities also bring about a *virtualisation of the body*. It is as though, when playing a video game, I am stretched between the confines of my own bodily boundaries and the screen upon which the video game is displayed. There is thus a *virtual body*, partly mine, partly the video game's, a novel, hybrid body which is generated by me, my movements and activities, in the operation of bringing the video game into being. In other words, the game cannot exist without my being there to play it. There are thus two intertwined, essential qualities of new media: first, its potential to generate bodily affectivities which, second, imply a virtualisation of the body.

Hansen's prime examples of new media objects are not of video games, however, but of new media artworks. For example, he describes the effectiveness of Craig Kalpakjian's *Hall* as follows:

> *Hall* (1999) is a continuous video loop of movement through a hall without any exits, which generates in the spectator a vertiginous feeling of being trapped in a deadly, because thoroughly generic, space. (Hansen 2004a: 210)

Hall can generate affectivities and virtualisations of the body because of the severe discrepancy between the human world in which the spectator is located and the technological world of the artwork. Because this work has no 'real world referent' there is no way for the spectator to relate to it in any straightforward way. There is a *radical separation* between the human-subject-spectator and the new media object.

As such, there is no automatic connection between the subject and the object because new media objects act in ways that block, refuse, disjoint and confuse subjective responses. Human subjects are 'fundamentally excluded' (Hansen 2004a: 223) from the space of *Hall*, to the extent that Hansen describes these spaces as incompossible:

> [T]his space is a radically nonhuman one, one without any analogical correlation to human movement and perception, and one into which affection can be introduced only from the outside, as a supplement that originates in the embodied response of the viewer-spectator. (Hansen 2004a: 215)

As a result of this radical disjunction between the human and non-human environments it is necessary for the spectator to generate *something else*: the spectator must generate affections or affectivities, which are, one could say, projected into or onto the artwork as a conjunction of spectator and work, as a consequence of the spectator's virtualisation of her/his body. The spectator's bodily affections must be virtualised in order for this artwork to come into being; the virtualised bodily affections are not produced by the artwork itself but only by what the spectator gives to the artwork.

Hansen moves the arguments surrounding new media away from an obsession with its objects. Instead of focussing on the aesthetic properties, the production aspects, the materials used, the digital programmes, or new media's 'virtual' nature, Hansen focuses on the ways we respond to and interact with such objects. New media objects have certainly assumed particular forms, but what is really special about them, for Hansen, is what they allow *us* to do.

Two main lines of argument are emphasised by Hansen. One line of argument highlights the nature of the *virtual* for new media, while a second centres on the notion of *embodiment*. First of all, the virtual is no longer seen as a property of new media: the significance of new media objects is not that they are virtual or that they create virtual realities, but rather that they make *us* virtual. Secondly, the realm of bits and digits and simulation does not make real bodies obsolete, for the body is central to Hansen's notion of new media. The notion of embodiment is essential because it is the body — through its affectivities and virtualisations — that produces a unique interaction with new media objects. For example, from Hansen's point of view — though, again, this is not an example he uses — the significance of Lara Croft (the digi-character from the video game, *Tomb Raider*) is not that she is an imaginary, simulated, impossible, non-existent, unrealisable body, but rather that such unrealisable-immaterial new media images open up new

kinds of bodily processes *for us*. That is, digital images facilitate the production of new bodily affects.

II. Old Media Subjects

If new media are new, then what are the old media against which the newness of the new is measured? What exemplifies the old media for Hansen is cinema. It is cinema's treatment of the body and the virtual that are definitively different from new media. Taking his cues from Deleuze's *Cinema* books, Hansen argues that the significance of cinema is located entirely with its objects: *films*. Films function in such a way as to exclude any activities (or affectivities) of the spectator's body and they also foreclose the possibility of any virtualisation of the body. Why is this so? Films do this because their affectivities and virtualities are positioned *entirely within films themselves*. There is thus no room for interaction on the part of the film spectator: any affectivities or virtualisations are not a result of the spectator's interactions with a film; instead, *they are wholly determined by that film*. The film spectator can only passively mirror or receive the affectivities and virtualities that are produced by the film; the spectator's responses are fully determined by the film; the subject in front of the cinema screen is fully determined by the filmic object.

The distinctions between Hansen's new media theory and Deleuze's theory of cinema are therefore clear: the cinema, because it is in some way analogical, forms an intrinsic connection between the spectator's faculties of perception and the represented space of the film; any spectator is able to recognise and connect with (or 'identify' with, as traditional film theory would have it) the scenes and spaces depicted by a film. This then means that what a spectator perceives in the cinema is a represented space that is *given* to him/her; the spectator has to do nothing but receive the cinematic perceptions whose origins are external to the spectator-subject. The spectator, for his/her part, gives nothing to the cinematic object, for the perceptions of the cinema are external to this spectator.

For new media, according to Hansen's examples, the stakes are reversed. There is a distinct lack of connection between the spectator and the new media object and this lack of connection necessitates the fabricating of a connection on behalf of the spectator: the spectator must *add* to the new media object in order for its objecthood to come into being. Hence, it can be posited that, and this is the important point, the Deleuzian cinematic perceptions originate in the *film-object*, whereas Hansen's new media affectivities originate in the *spectator-subject*.

Hansen's reading of Deleuze is inadequate. He makes Deleuze's film theory into a straw target by construing his work in such a way that it appears he gives everything over to the film-object. The reality, however, is that Deleuze's cinematic theory proposes a very original and somewhat complex interaction between the spectator and the screen, that is, between the spectator-subject and the film-object. I use the word *interaction* here deliberately: cinema *is* interactive. It is a composite of subject and object in which each determines, interrogates and investigates the other.

III. Subjects and Objects in the Cinema

What, then, might a Deleuzian response be? Where are the subjects and objects of cinema for him?

Minimally, it can be acknowledged that Deleuze at least makes the claim that there are subjective, point-of-view shots in the cinema; that is, the kinds of shots that are supposed to be from a particular character's point-of-view such that they depict what that character sees. But such shots cannot be divorced from the opposite kinds of shots: objective shots. These are shots which are from the objective eye of no-one — the camera's eye – rather than that of a particular character. As Deleuze argues, even if we see a subjective shot, the only way we can know it is subjective is by way of its emplacement within an objective system of shots. 'A character acts on the screen', he writes, 'and is assumed to see the world in a certain way. But simultaneously the camera sees him, and sees his world, from another point of view which thinks, reflects, and transforms the viewpoint of the character' (Deleuze 1986: 74). In other words, a subjective shot is not merely a subjective shot; it can only be designated as subjective in relation to other, objective shots.

This may not appear to be a particularly profound point to make, except that Deleuze links this observation to what he calls a 'cinematographic *Cogito*':

> Can we not find this dividing-in-two, or this differentiation of the subject in language, in thought and in art? It is the *Cogito*: an empirical subject cannot be born into the world without simultaneously being reflected in a transcendental subject which thinks it and in which it thinks itself. And the *Cogito* of art: there is no subject which acts without another which watches it act, and which grasps it as acted, itself assuming the freedom of which it deprives the former. (Deleuze 1986: 73)

These lines from *Cinema 1* are located amid a discussion of free indirect discourse in the cinema and are explicitly related to the philosophical notion of the *Cogito* developed by Henri Bergson in an essay on 'The Memory of the Present' (Bergson 2002 [1908]). The notion of free indirect discourse has been mobilised to a limited extent by Deleuze's commentators in film studies (see Rodowick 1997: 61–2), but its radical potential has been missed inasmuch as it has not been connected to three syntheses which, from *Difference and Repetition* (1968) on, form the core of Deleuze's thought. By suggesting specific relationships between subjective and objective points of view in cinema, and between the camera and characters in films, Deleuze effectively draws a map of the way the spectator works with cinematic images and sounds.

In Deleuze's *Cinema* books, there are myriad categories of filmic aesthetics, affects and signs, but what is necessary for these categories to be possible is an underlying assumption of the ways in which films are watched. As Christian Metz astutely pointed out, in a different context, what is commonly referred to as the 'spectator' in film theory is, for the most part, something merely constructed by 'the imagination of the analyst' of any film. (He additionally points out that many analyst-spectators must also construct imaginary authors too, an observation that clearly holds true for Deleuze's analyses (Metz 1991: 760).) To construct the kinds of categories he does, then, Deleuze must have a notion of spectatorship which he uses to organise his writings on cinema.

As Deleuze and Guattari demonstrate in *What is Philosophy?*, the *Cogito* is a presupposition: it functions in thought as that which comes before thought. Deleuze's notion of a *Cogito* of art bears this out. He means that there are subjective and objective dimensions of experience: an empirical subject cannot exist without its transcendental correlate, and neither can a subject act without being doubled by a supposedly 'watching' subject that monitors those actions (the division is indebted to Kant's division between concepts and intuitions). The empirical subject acts automatically, as if they were being drawn along by their experiences, while the transcendental aspect of the subject 'sits back' and observes, monitors or watches the automatic, empirical aspect of the subject.[1] This is how Deleuze presupposes cinema spectatorship works: spectatorship in the cinema is always doubled, such that there is a dividing-in-two of the cinematic experience, so that one part of the spectator receives and responds to images automatically, while another aspect of the spectator monitors these automatic responses. On the one hand, then, there is a part of the subject that is empirical-automatic, and this aspect of the spectator is guided by the bodily senses — this

part of the spectator is embodied. On the other hand, there is a quasi intellectual or semi self-reflective aspect of the spectator, a transcendental part of subjectivity which searches for the conditions of possibility of any occurrence or act.[2] If the empirical-bodily aspect of the spectator responds mechanically and automatically then it is the task of the transcendental-intellectual aspect of the spectator to enquire into the conditions which make possible the bodily reaction.

This is where the first cracks in Hansen's reading of Deleuze can be found: Hansen works only with the first dimension of the spectator in Deleuze, the *empirical* or bodily aspect. And, yes, here one can certainly argue that the empirical-bodily spectator is, in a sense, ruled by the images presented to it: the empirical-bodily spectator responds *automatically* and *mechanically* — and at the same time viscerally and physiologically — to the image. Perhaps these might be called *subjective images*. But it is a very strange kind of subjectivity, a subjectivity with no background or backdrop, and a subjectivity that lives entirely *in the present*, as it were, reacting and responding only to filmic events as they happen. If these are subjective images, then they are certainly not images guided by a subject. Rather, they are the responses of a subject that has lost all subjecthood, that has lost the traits of agency and self-determination. So it may be a strange thing indeed to call these subjective images, for they are images without a subject produced entirely by the filmic object. It is on this level, then, that Hansen's understanding of Deleuze's cinema spectator might be correct: a spectator-subject wholly guided by the objects presented to it.

An example can help to clarify these issues. A major point of reference in Deleuze's discussion of subjective and objective perceptions in the cinema is Jean Mitry's *Aesthetics and Psychology of the Cinema* (1963). There Mitry evocatively claims that 'In the cinema ... so-called subjective impressions are *presented* to me — as is everything else: the camera moves down the street, I move with it; it climbs the stairs, I climb with it. I thereby directly experience the sensations of *walking* and *climbing* (at least this is my impression)' (Mitry 1997: 210). These are clearly *subjective* images, as Mitry acknowledges, images that seem to emanate from the point-of-view of a subject. Yet, as he further notes, if these are considered subjective images, then they are not images that are *produced by a subject*:

> Yet the camera is leading me, guiding me; it conveys impressions not generated by me. Moreover, the feet climbing the stairs I can see in the frame of the image are not *mine*; the hand holding onto the banister is not *mine*.

> At no point am I able to recognize the *image of my own body*. Thus it is obviously not me climbing the stairs and acting like this, even though I am feeling sensations similar to those I might feel if I were climbing the stairs. (Mitry 1997: 210)

Mitry therefore throws the notion of subjective images into question (he ultimately comes up with a category he calls the 'semi-subjective'): even though such images appear to be those of a subject and I as a spectator appear to be experiencing those shots subjectively, i.e., from a subjective point-of-view, such subjective shots are always *necessarily* determined by the camera. In fact, such shots are *wholly* determined by the camera: any subjectivity that I may experience in respect of what I see on the screen is imposed on me by the camera — all I can do is receive it. In this way, so-called subjective shots in the cinema are wholly determined by the cinematic object: they are *objective images imposed on a spectator-subject*. These *are* subjective shots — 'so-called subjective impressions', as Mitry remarks — but they have the taste of *objectivity*: the most seemingly subjective shots of the cinema are those that are dictated to me and which I cannot in any way change or interact with.

In this situation, the body of the spectator-subject is 'acted' (as Bergson says) rather than 'active'. The stakes of Hansen's criticisms of Deleuze are pertinent, even valid, if one restricts one's view of cinema to what is presented here by so-called subjective images. And Mitry, if confined to this one example, provides us with Hansen's view of the cinematic experience: at all times I am guided by the camera; I cannot affect or effect the presentations I see there, and *my body* cannot participate in or interact with the images that are dictated to me by the screen; at the cinema I am merely a passive receptacle. And there is no question that such a conception of the cinematic experience does exist for Deleuze, but such a conception gives us only half the story, the half of the story in which the spectator can be regarded as 'empirical'. It is this part of the subject which receives impressions imposed on it by the cinematic apparatus: automatic, mechanical, properly receptive in the Kantian sense. These images can be described as subjective ones, but the kinds of subjectivity they offer are not ones produced by a subject. And ultimately, this seems to be why Hansen has such a problem with this kind of cinematic engagement: it amounts to a denial of subjectivity, a foreclosure of the possible activities of the subject, an abandonment of subjecthood. Cinematic subjectivity is here merely a kind of subjectivity that is at the mercy of cinema's apparatus: the screen, camera, projector, loudspeakers, and so on.

IV. A Transcendental Spectator

There is another dimension to the cinema spectator for Deleuze: the *transcendental* aspect, that which for Deleuze is associated with the potential for objective perception in the cinema. The best definition of an objective perception in the cinema is, for Deleuze, a negative one: an objective shot is one that is not subjective, which is to say, one that is not from a particular character's point of view. 'We should be able to say, in fact', writes Deleuze, 'that the image is objective when the thing or the set are seen from the viewpoint of someone who remains external to that set' (Deleuze 1986: 71). This, then, is the first point to take on board: it is extremely difficult to isolate *objective* images or shots. Rather, any sense of objectivity can only arise from the *relations between different shots*. It is a matter of finding or designating the conditions by means of which certain shots can be read and interpreted or understood: *this* is the transcendental aspect. Again Deleuze shows his debt to Kant, for by 'transcendental' Deleuze means the conditions of possible experience, the conditions which allow something to be experienced *as* an experience. And these are precisely the kinds of questions that the transcendental aspect of the spectator asks: 'Why is this happening?' 'Why did this occur?' and so on. There is, however, a significant difference between Kant's approach to the transcendental and Deleuze's. Kant grants transcendental authority to the *active* processes of the faculty of understanding (which faculty thus overrides the passive receptions of empirical intuition) whereas, for Deleuze, transcendental processes remain wholly *passive*: they are *not* the result of subjective effort. Rather, they emerge *without the active or conscious provocation of the subject*. In other words, these transcendental conditions *happen to* the subject rather than being *caused by* the subject.

There are objective shots in the cinema, but any quest for objectivity, from the spectator's point-of-view, is accompanied by a transcendental reflection — to reiterate Deleuze's claim noted earlier: 'an empirical subject cannot be born into the world without simultaneously being reflected in a transcendental subject' (Deleuze 1986: 73). If we think about the possibility of objectivity in the cinema in association with this transcendental aspect of the spectator, what will we find? Edward Branigan has very convincingly pointed out the necessity of a seemingly objective relation to filmic events. When watching films, Branigan argues, a spectator continually makes theoretical leaps between different occurrences in the narrative and constructs vague hypotheses about what will happen or what may have happened in order to convey upon the filmic material some sense of structure or organisation. That is, the

spectator tries to put the pieces of a film together in order that the events of the film conform to some sort of potentially objective system. When a spectator engages in such an activity, then this activity, Branigan argues:

> represents a hypothesis . . . we are making about our perception of the world of the characters as we understand *that* world by apparently being *in* it; that is we are perceiving the world of the characters through projecting and imagining a situation in the diegesis whereby declarative knowledge of the relevant kind could be obtained and a description produced. (Branigan 1992: 165)

A film typically demands the construction of some kind of potentially objective diegetic world in which the events of the film are contained and unfold according to the expectations of that diegetic world. The assertions that, in a film, *this* happened, or *that* happened, can only be made in accordance with an objective, though hypothetical realm within which the events unfold. As Branigan puts it, 'This film's world *as itself an object* must be independent of certain angles of view' (Branigan 1992: 165). The film's world is defined by the specific shots (and editing patterns) of the film as they occur, but only insofar as these shots (or edits) are embedded in a world-as-object that the spectator puts together. The spectator constructs objective patterns within which the subjective material (the 'actions') of any film unfolds. This is what Deleuze means by 'transcendental': the conditions of possible experience, i.e., the conditions of possibility within which the events, actions, situations and contemplations of a film occur.

Branigan adds something more: he claims that if the spectator is intimating or inferring certain conditions of possibility, then that spectator makes these inferences on the basis of apparently being *in* this world. A fine example of this is provided in Max Ophuls' *Letter from an Unknown Woman* (1948). A young woman, Lisa, falls in love with a concert pianist, Stefan. It is a love from afar, however, as Stefan knows nothing of Lisa's passionate desire for him. One day, Lisa manages to sneak into Stefan's apartment when he is not at home, and she immediately makes her way to the piano which she has heard him play so often. Branigan concentrates on the two shots which chart Lisa's movements towards Stefan's piano. The first shot, a long shot from behind Lisa, shows her at quite some distance from the piano which is located in the background of the frame. The shot that immediately follows, this time from directly behind the piano, now shows Lisa standing right beside the piano. What occurs in the gap between these two shots? Do we, as spectators, infer that Lisa has somehow miraculously travelled twenty feet in an instant? Of course

we do not! But we do, Branigan argues, fill in the missing time which the edit erases.

> Our anticipation is an imaginary time attributable to Lisa's desire for Stefan through his piano. Fixated on the piano, she advances toward it, and the spectator completes the action; or rather, the spectator constructs a virtual time in which the action is realized. (Branigan, 1992: 182)

This simple example of two shots can clearly demonstrate the difference between the empirical and the transcendental aspects of the spectator from a Deleuzian point of view. On the one hand, that which enables the spectator to discern that the second shot occurs after the first one is *empirical*: our ability to infer a direction to time from one event to another, from the past to the future via the present, is a function of what Deleuze calls 'the passive synthesis of habit' in *Difference and Repetition* (Deleuze1994: 70–9), the first of the three syntheses of time which are central to Deleuze's philosophy. Derived as it is from notions of Kantian intuition (though Deleuze's most explicit reference is to Hume), the first synthesis enables us to situate events 'in' time. We intuit that an edit designates a flow of time and that during the time of this edit Lisa has crossed the room (there is certainly no sense in which these scene, with its potentially strange cut, is in any way difficult to understand).

But there is another dimension at work here. As Branigan suggests, there is 'an imaginary time attributable to Lisa's desire for Stefan through his piano' (Branigan 1992: 182). There are a whole series of *conditions* that make possible a deeper understanding of this filmic situation. The relation between the two shots could be said to be motivated by Lisa's desire — which is to say that these shots are, more or less, motivated by everything in the film that has preceded them. Our remembering of Lisa's unrequited love for Stefan and our knowledge of her many attempts and sacrifices made to be close to him, give Lisa's movement from the first shot to the next an added depth. In Deleuzian terms, this is a function, for the spectator, of the 'second passive synthesis of memory': the motioning towards the conditions of possibility of any event based upon our past experiences; the present can only function as 'present' on the basis of a past which conditions it *as* present (Deleuze 1994: 79–88). These are, then, as they are for Kant, *transcendental* conditions.

What, then, may be said of the *subjective* and *objective* aspects of the spectator? The *empirical* dimension of the spectator is not necessarily as subjective as it might at first appear, so does this mean that the *transcendental* side of the spectator is likewise not necessarily objective?

The transcendental conditions that make possible the relation between these two shots — conditions like our knowledge of Lisa's unrequited desire for Stefan — could be said to be objective insofar as one would have great difficulty understanding the film without such conditions. But if by objective one means *elements of the film that are put in place by the film itself without the input of the spectator* — that is, things in the film that are *not* determined by the *subjects* who experience this film — then the claim for objectivity cannot hold. As Branigan claims, 'the spectator completes the action; or rather, the spectator constructs a virtual time in which the action is realized' (Branigan 1992: 182).[3]

The transcendental spectator-subject of the cinema is crucially *subjective*, even if it is this aspect which offers an objective dimension of spectatorship. These are the images or concepts of a film that simply would not exist were it not for the fact that there is someone to watch, listen to and make sense of them. It is nothing less than what the spectator, at any point during the viewing of a film, *adds to* that film. This is manifestly a transcendental level of understanding: what a subject adds to the viewing experience in order to grant that experience a potential objectivity.

It is not merely the preceding events of a *film itself* that add to this transcendental level of understanding, but rather, as Deleuze would have it, *the whole of one's past*.[4] This is not as mysterious as it may at first sound, for what can it be that makes *Letter from an Unknown Woman* so romantic and compelling for many viewers? Surely one reason, an important one, is that many viewers of the film have loved from afar and thus share a deep sympathy for the situation Lisa finds herself in. One might even go so far as to say that an element of personal, deeply subjective memory might, for the spectator, be said to infuse itself with the past of the film and that it is only on the basis of such pasts that the film could be said to be enjoyable, engaging or memorable for any spectator (conversely, an absence of such memories might amount to making the film entirely uninteresting for a spectator).

Would not this then be a very important form of *interaction* for the spectator? Indeed, that which makes a film a *film* requires an enormous amount to be given to the film by the spectator-subject. The spectactor-subject is, as Metz put it, a midwife to the image:

> I'm at the cinema. I am present at the screening of the film. *I am present*. Like the midwife attending a birth who, simply by her presence, assists the woman in labour, I am present for the film in a double capacity (though they really are one and the same) as witness and as assistant: I watch, and I help. By

> watching the film I help it to be born, I help it to live, since only in me will it live, and since it is made for that purpose: to be watched. (Metz 1982: 93)

V. Passions and Actions

For Hansen to claim that the cinema spectator cannot interact with films — to imply that the spectator at the cinema is simply at the mercy of the filmic object and automatically plays along to its tune, and that Deleuze's cinema spectator is therefore merely 'the passive correlate of linkages between images' (Hansen, 2004a: 7) — is to grossly underestimate the input the spectator necessarily makes to the unfolding of any film.[5] And yet, such a spectator is not at the same time necessarily *active*, for all of the activities I have been describing by way of Deleuze as transcendental are, at their foundation, passive.[6] The kind of experience of monitoring or recollecting that Deleuze attributes to the transcendental *passive* synthesis of memory is one that *happens to* us and which *affects* us, but without our necessarily consciously knowing it, and certainly without our consciously activating it.

Again, the passivity of Deleuze's cinema spectator can be compared with the active new media spectator theorised by Hansen. Hansen argues, for example, that Douglas Gordon's post-cinematic works, such as *24-Hour Psycho* (1993), offer a 'refinement' of the sensorimotor processes of classical cinema:

> Unlike the sensorimotor interval at work in the cinema of the movement-image, this refined sensorimotor interval [as exemplified by Gordon's works] is not immanent to the logic of the image or of film as the art of moving images, but emerges directly from the human processing of information. Consequently, it is a sensorimotor interval that taps the potential of the body to exceed its own contracted habits and rhythms. (Hansen 2004a: 246–8)

In this case, then, the body asserts its activeness, an activity that emerges 'directly' (for reasons which are very unclear to me) 'from the human processing of information', over and against what must be an inherently inactive new media image. The body exceeds its own limits as a result of its own activity and thus the origin of the new media object lies in the empowerment it offers to the spectator-subject. *I* make the new media world in the image of my own excess: 'it is the viewer's body *in itself* (and no longer as an echo of the work's "content")', argues Hansen, 'that furnishes the site for the experience of [new media] "works"' (Hansen 2004a: 31). For Deleuze, on the other hand, the cinematic sensorimotor subject does not simply impose itself on the world in a mode of mastery, but rather acknowledges the necessity of negotiating

with the world and its objects — including cinematic ones — in the hope of being able to 'reconnect man to what he sees and hears' (Deleuze 1989: 172). This subject is not one who is isolated from the world, cocooned in a subjectivity that it continually tries to assert over the world, but is rather part of a world with which it is in continual symbiosis.

Hansen's attempt to theorise new media in terms of our responses to it, rather than theorise its objects, necessitates a notion of subjectivity that actively creates or contributes to the very objects of new media: 'the [new media] image does not comprise a representation of a pre-existent and independent reality, but rather a *means* for the new media user to intervene in the production of the "real", now understood as a rendering of data' (Hansen 1994: 10). Because of this, 'the [new media] "image" itself has become a process and, as such, irreducibly bound up with the activity of the body' (Hansen, 1994: 10). Thus, the new media image does not exist without the bodily affects that are added to it by the spectator-participant. As a result, the new media image may be considered fundamentally interactive and therefore a *process* more than a product inasmuch as the spectator-participant's activity is crucial to the object's creation and existence.

Against this conception of the spectator's interactivity with new media, Hansen posits the 'old' cinematic medium as one of immobility, passivity, and non-interactivity (Hansen 2004a: 34). His chief target in conceptualising the oldness of the cinematic medium is, as we've seen, Deleuze, who, according to Hansen's reading, 'cannot account for the primacy of the subjective dimension of the body' (Hansen 2004a: 194). For Hansen, Deleuze's conception of cinema is one that aims to 'disembody the center of indetermination [by which Hansen, borrowing from Bergson, means 'human'] and thus free cinema to operate an "inhuman" perception' (Hansen 2004a: 70). According to Hansen, then, Deleuze erases all embodiment from human subjects. As we've seen, this is clearly not the case for Deleuze, for whom the body and bodily processes of the to-ing and fro-ing of the empirical and transcendental aspects of the spectator are fundamental to the conception of the cinematic experience.

Hansen also charges that Deleuze erases the *subjective dimension* of the body, thus bringing about the conditions of an inhumanity. Again, as we've seen, it must be remembered that so-called subjective experiences in cinema are never *caused by* subjects. Rather, they are subjectivities which *happen to* subjects and which thus help to create those subjects as processes. Hansen, it seems to me, regards subjects or subjective bodies as agents: as the active causes of the processes which create both

new media objects, and by extension, their own subjectivities. Hansen's conception may thus be seen as an embodied, and hence inverted, version of the Cartesian *Cogito* ('I affect, I am') as distinct from Bergson's or Deleuze's complex *Cogito*.

Against Hansen's reification of the embodied subject, Deleuze's conception of subjectivities — and these are subjectivities fundamental to the cinematic experience — is one that posits them as composites of subject and object in states of deformation and reformation which respond to and act upon the fluctuations of empirical reception and transcendental structuration. Against notions of 'the subject', Deleuze declared a preference for terms such as *pre-individual singularities* or *non-personal individuations* (Deleuze 2006: 351). Such individuations are inhuman only insofar as they reject notions of isolated, self-created and self-creating subjects who are masters of all they affect. For Deleuze, 'Underneath the self which acts are little selves which contemplate and which render possible both the action and the active subject' (Deleuze 1994: 75).

VI. Clarifications

Hansen's new media spectator adds two things to the new media object (and these properties are those which make new media objects 'new' for Hansen): *affection* and a *virtualisation of the body*. These concepts are, for Hansen, reversals of Deleuze's cinematic notions of affection (or 'affection-image') and the virtual. Hansen grants the powers of affection and the virtual to the body of the *subject*, whereas (on Hansen's reading) Deleuze makes *objects* the seat of affection and the virtual.[7]

On affection, Bergson (from whom Deleuze and Hansen borrow liberally) does indeed claim that 'my perception is outside my body and my affection within it' (Bergson 1988: 57). Deleuze confirms this view when he writes that affection is the way the subject 'experiences itself or feels itself "from the inside"' (Deleuze 1986: 65). Bergson also goes on to argue, in *Matter and Memory*, that 'Affection is, then, that part or aspect of the inside of my body which we mix with the image of external bodies' (Bergson 1988: 58). And again it seems that Deleuze agrees with Bergson that affection is 'a coincidence of subject and object' (Deleuze 1986: 65). No clear division is made here between subject and object, for affection is a mixture or conjunction of the two. In his book on *Bergsonism*, Deleuze even states that, as fundamental to his project, 'Bergson shows how the lines of objectivity and subjectivity, the lines of external observation and internal experience must converge at the

end of their different processes' (Deleuze 1991: 30). The all-too-clear divisions between subject and object that Hansen relies upon are clearly non-existent.

As for the notion of the virtualisation of the body, Hansen relies on the same strict division between subject and object. Whereas the virtual image in cinema consists of something 'emanating from the image itself' (Hansen 2004a: 215) — that is, from its *objects* — the virtualities of new media objects are 'not images of empirical spaces' (Hansen 2004a: 214); they are not virtualities that emerge from outside the body; rather, they function as catalysts for the virtualisation of the body. Thus, they are the provenance of *subjects* (Hansen, 2004a: 214). Hansen's subjects are endowed with sovereignty, while it is claimed that Deleuze gives everything over to the cinema's objects. Such a view flies directly in the face of Deleuze's explicit statement that in cinema 'The actual is always objective, but the virtual is subjective' (Deleuze, 1989: 83).[8] What Deleuze here means by the virtual can be placed alongside his formulation of the transcendental in cinema: the transcendental conditions of experience are *virtual*; they are evocations of the past and, as such, are not actual. Certainly these designations are not straightforward: the virtual 'preserves the past' (Deleuze 2002: 151) but can also be actualised in the present. At the limit, the virtual and the actual become indistinguishable (for the cinema, this is what Deleuze calls the time-image), though such indistinguishability only ever occurs 'inside someone's head', as Deleuze puts it (Deleuze 1989: 69). And furthermore, the virtual is primarily passive, inasmuch as it is never a product of consciousness, and not active (an active summoning up of one's past is what Deleuze calls the 'recollection-image', whereas the form of memory which corresponds to a passive instantiation of the virtual is designated, after Bergson, *pure recollection* (Deleuze 1989: 79–80). The virtual is not produced by consciousness, but instead *produces consciousness*. It is therefore subjective, but it is a subjectivity that *happens to* the subject rather than one that is caused by the subject, 'the affection of a passive self which experiences its own thought' (Deleuze 1994: 86).

Finally, I have mentioned in detail only two of the three syntheses Deleuze theorises in *Difference and Repetition*. There is a good reason for this: I believe the third synthesis (Deleuze 1994: 88–91), is chiefly important for the spectator of modern cinema, that is, for the spectator of the time-image who discovers 'a little time in the pure state' (Deleuze 1989: 169). Insofar as Deleuze characterises the third synthesis as 'the empty form of time' or the 'pure order of time' (Deleuze 1994: 88), then the connections to be made between the third synthesis and

the time-image are certainly suggestive. The time-image, as much as the third synthesis, occurs when the past returns as a disruption which realigns past, present and future. It is also the point at which any sense of subjectivity it pushed to its limits and produces a 'man without a name, without family, without qualities, without self or I' (Deleuze 1994: 90). 'In the third synthesis', writes Deleuze, 'the present is no more than an actor, an author, an agent destined to be effaced' (Deleuze 1994: 94).

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Notes

1. These ideas are quite explicitly taken from Bergson: 'a compenetration of states which melt into one another and even coincide in immediate consciousness will represent them by a duplication of the self into two different personages, one of which appropriates freedom, the other necessity: the one, a free spectator, beholds the other automatically playing his part' (Bergson, 2002: 149).
2. The division between the intellect and the body is an artificial one insofar as Deleuze does not theorise any division between the two. He states, rather, that sensations are formed by 'contemplation' for example (see Deleuze 1994: 70–75), and (writing with Félix Guattari) that 'Sensation is no less brain than the concept' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 211), while sensations and concepts make up the 'first two aspects or layers of the brain-subject' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 213).
3. It is worth noting that much of Branigan's discussion refers to notions unpacked in great detail in his *Point of View in the Cinema* where, for example, he outlines his 'reading hypothesis theory': 'According to a reading hypothesis theory, then, the camera is not a profilmic object which is shifted from place to place, but a construct of the spectator, a hypothesis *about space* — about the production and change of space' (Branigan 1984: 54).
4. As Deleuze asks, 'The entire past is conserved in itself, but how can we save it for ourselves? (1994: 84). Also see Deleuze's comments on the famous cone diagram from Bergson's *Matter and Memory* (Deleuze 1989: 294, n. 22).
5. See, for example, Francesco Casetti's discussion of cinema as 'interface' (Casetti, 1998: 129–30).
6. This passivity of the spectator can, from another point of view, be compared with the 'reactivity' of forces Deleuze finds in Nietzsche. As for reactive forces, any spectatorial passivity should follow the dictum to go to 'the limit of its consequences' (See Deleuze 1962: 66).
7. For a more detailed discussion of these issues see Rushton (2004) and Hansen's response (2004b).
8. Deleuze's full statement of the issue is thus: 'Subjectivity is never ours, it is time, that is, the soul or the spirit, the virtual. The actual is always objective, but the virtual is subjective: it was initially the affect, that which we experience in time; then time itself, pure virtuality which divides itself in two as affector and affected, "the affection of self by self" as definition of time' (Deleuze 1989: 82–3).

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Painting as Hysteria: Deleuze on Bacon

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Abstract

Deleuze's work on Francis Bacon is an aesthetic clinic of hysteria and an implicit critique of the psychoanalytic conception of hysteria. Bacon's paintings reveal what is at stake in hysteria: not the symbolic expression of unconscious representations, but the pure presence of the body, the experience of the body under the organism. Inspired by the work of the phenomenologist Henri Maldiney, Deleuze argues that Bacon's paintings become non-figurative without being abstract. In this way, painting shows the hysterical struggle of the body to escape from itself in the rhythm of its movement.

Keywords: hysteria, body, presence, pity, Maldiney, Bacon, Freud

Great clinicians are artists. When the French psychiatrist Lasègue first isolated and defined exhibitionism in 1877, he did not begin his article with a description of cases of manifest exhibitionism, but rather with a story about a man who followed a woman in the streets each day. In order to introduce a new syndrome, it seems necessary to write a short story first and only then describe cases of manifest pathology (Deleuze 2004: 275). During a discussion in the Wednesday Circle, Freud, too, argued that case studies are pointless if they are only objective reports of what has been said during the analytical sessions. Something of the unconscious can only be conveyed by case reports when they are presented in an 'artistic' way, says Freud.[1] The unconscious is a matter of style. On this point, *le point littéraire*, the clinical encounters the artistic (Deleuze 1989: 14; Deleuze 2004: 273).

Great artists are clinicians. Whoever reads the works of Sacher-Masoch discovers a symptomatology of masochism that is far superior to the later attempts by Krafft-Ebing, Freud or the DSM. Pleasure in pain, for example, which plays such an important role in the psychoanalytic idea of masochism, is of secondary importance for Sacher-Masoch and must be understood as following from elements which *are* essential

to masochism, such as the contract, the fetish, the education of the woman into the ideal cold mother, and the suspension of sexuality (Deleuze 1989). One finds the same clinical acumen in Sade on sadism, in Dostoevsky on epilepsy, in Burroughs on toxicomania, and in Bukowski on alcoholism. That these artists themselves may have suffered from one or other of these pathologies is less important than that they are its finest symptomatologists: 'For authors, if they are great, are more like doctors than patients' (Deleuze 2004: 273).

The critical-clinical project is continuously elaborated and purified in the development of Deleuze's thought. In *Présentation de Sacher-Masoch* (1967) he argued for a fruitful collaboration between literary criticism and psychiatric or psychoanalytic clinical work (Deleuze 1989: 14). More than ten years later, in *Francis Bacon. Logique de la sensation* (1981), this project – although not abandoned – had been transformed. Deleuze now aimed at a purely aesthetic version of the clinical, independent of both psychiatry and psychoanalysis.[2] *Francis Bacon* is in this sense not only a book about painting, but also about the clinical essence of painting: hysteria.[3] But how must we understand this clinical/aesthetical relation between painting and hysteria? And why is the work of Francis Bacon so appropriate to elucidate hysteria as the clinical essence of painting? And what is wrong with, for example, the psychoanalytic theory of hysteria, that it must be replaced with a clinical-aesthetic, independent of psychoanalysis and psychiatry? We shall try to answer this last question first, even though in his book on Bacon Deleuze does not treat this question himself.

According to Freud the hysterical body tells a story. The hysterical symptoms, the convulsions, the anaesthesias and hyperaesthesias, the paralyses, the disorders of sensory activity, etc., are symbolic representations of traumatic memories or repressed fantasies. The most remarkable symptom of hysteria, the *grande attaque*, was also analysed by Freud and Breuer as the expression of a psychic representation:

> The constant and essential content of a (recurrent) hysterical attack is in the return of a psychical state which the patient has already experienced earlier - in other words, the return of a memory. We are asserting, then, that the essential portion of a hysterical attack is comprised in Charcot's phase of the attitudes passionnelles. In many cases it is quite obvious that this phase comprises a memory from the patient's life and frequently, indeed, that memory is always the same one. (Freud 1966: 152)

When such psychic content is missing, and the attack is limited to corporeal phenomena—epileptic convulsions or cataleptic sleep—Freud

nevertheless finds a psychic representation to which the somatic symptoms seem to correspond: 'Even in such cases examination under hypnosis provides definite proof of a psychical mnemic process such as is usually revealed openly in the phase passionnelle' (Freud 1966: 152). Freud's article is a beautiful illustration of the famous transition from the diagnostic *looking at the body* of Charcot, to the therapeutic listening to the psychic content in Freud's *talking cure* (cf. Didi-Huberman 1982).

Freud's emphasis on 'psychic content' was certainly the beginning of psychoanalysis, but not the key to the world of hysteria. By isolating the level of psychic representations, Freud neglected the corporeal and affective madness of hysteria: 'Freud 'neurotified' hysteria. [...] By interesting himself exclusively with the theatrical fantasising in hysteria, Freud abandoned at the same time the pole of passion – which one called hysterical madness (*folie hystérique*) which left its trace in the 'attack'. In fact, these hysterics were no more neurotic than psychotic. They were 'mad'. (Green 1972: 220) It is this madness of the body in hysteria, the ridiculous 'acrobatics of the flesh'[4] neglected by psychoanalysis, that Deleuze has in mind in his discussion of Bacon's paintings. For Deleuze, hysteria should not be understood from the perspective of literature or the narrative procedures of psychoanalysis, but from the perspective of painting.[5] Hysteria is the clinical essence of painting, but this only becomes visible in painting, because the painter succeeds where the hysteric fails. Painting adds to hysteria precisely that which it fatally misses: *un peu d'art*.[6] By adding 'a little art' to it, painting shows what is at stake in hysteria: not the symbolic expression of a psychic content, but the 'pure presence of the body' (Deleuze 2003: 52).

Deleuze's clinical-aesthetic of painting as hysteria has gained clinical importance now that hysteria has become highly resistant to psychoanalytic therapy. In symptoms such as anorexia, bulimia and self-mutilation, contemporary hysteria disposes of Freud's 'psychic content' and only shows the excessive presence of the body, the quivering of the flesh that does not speak but works directly on the nerves. In contrast to psychoanalysis, painting can reveal the sense of this hysterical body in a positive manner. For contemporary psychoanalysis this pure corporeality is, after all, merely the symptom of a deficient 'mentalisation' or symbolisation. In this, psychoanalysis shows its affinity with psychiatry: it can only determine pathology in a negative way, as deficiency (Deleuze 2006: 24).

In a way, Deleuze returns to Charcot, who was not only a great clinician of hysteria but also a great artist of psychiatry.[7] Freud writes of him: 'He was not a reflective man, not a thinker: he had the nature of an

artist – he was, as he himself said, a 'visuel', a man who sees, [. . .] who bubbled over with vivacity and cheerfulness and who always had a joke on his lips' (Freud 1962: 12, 18). Charcot made hundreds of sketches and photographs of hysterics in outrageous poses and positions, and he kept his painting studio for his entire life.[8] However, he probably did not distinguish clearly enough between the eye of the camera and that of the painter, as a result of which his clinical-aesthetic of hysteria remained captive to the spectacular and the illustrative. According to Deleuze, avoiding the trap of the spectacular and the illustrative is not as simple as turning from Charcot's 'looking' to Freud's 'listening'; rather one has to turn from photography to painting. But *how* does painting succeed in making the pure *présence* of the body visible in a positive manner? And why is Francis Bacon the painter of hysteria *par excellence*?

To make the presence of the body visible, painting must first enter into a combat with the figurative. Painting is not photography. It has been claimed, even by Bacon himself some times, that the rise of photography made it possible for painting to detach itself from the task of representing, narrating, or illustrating. In the course of the 19th century, so this narrative goes, photography would have taken over this task from painting, whereby the latter obtained its freedom from the figurative. But this view presents two striking weaknesses: first, it underestimates the power of photography and of our visual culture on the whole; second, it establishes a radical break between (classical) painting before photography and (modern) painting after the advent of photography.

Photography, and by extension our whole culture of images, is not just a way of representing things; it has become the way in which we see things. Before the painter begins to paint, the canvas is already virtually filled with all sorts of images, clichés, representations, and phantasms.[9] The gaze of modernity is subjugated to these photographic representations.[10] Painting is the attempt to neutralise this tyranny of virtual representations, in view of something completely different, what Deleuze with Cézanne calls 'la sensation'. But, is this not a lot of strain for nothing? Is not sensation the most simple, spontaneous given, the 'data' that we always already have at our disposal when we perceive? Deleuze completely reverses this schema of classical psychology. Sensation is not the most immediate or the most subjective, but the end result of a very specific procedure, painting.

In his analysis of sensation, Deleuze depends heavily upon phenomenology, especially the work of Henri Maldiney. In *Le devoilement de la dimension esthétique dans la phenomenologie d'Erwin*

Strauss (1966), Maldiney distinguishes two aspects of sensation: the representative and the 'pathic'. Sensation is not just the material for or the announcement of perception.[11] In sensing, we relate first of all in a pathic, non-representational way to the world. Or better, we are *affected* by the world before we *relate* to it.[12] Subject and object do not stand against each other here; 'I' and 'World' are only two indissolubly interconnected sides of this being-affected.[13] The yellow of Van Gogh's sunflowers is not just one of the 'secondary qualities' of these flowers; for Van Gogh the yellow is in the first place 'la haute note jaune de cet été' (Maldiney 1973: 137). Yellow *sets the tone* before it is identified as the quality of a specific object: 'Van Gogh does not refer to a descriptive colour that helps him to identify a field of sunflowers. When he uses the musical term "note," it is because the world resonates in this yellow (*dans ce jaune, le monde sonne*); and it resonates in so far as in this yellow Van Gogh inhabits a world which is not yet crystallized into objects' and in which Van Gogh is not yet crystallized into a subject (Maldiney 1973: 137, my translation). But this pathic dimension is not logically or chronologically prior to that of representation; it is *brought about* by painting. For this reason, a phenomenology of 'sensation' remains abstract so long as it does not begin with the concrete experience of painting. This is why Deleuze does not so much describe *what* 'sensation' is, but show *how* a painter like Bacon brings about this 'sensation'.

The *deformations* of the figurative, the violent spasms of the sunflowers, show how in Van Gogh's later works the representative moment can hardly hold the enormous power of the pathic moment. So also does Bacon deform the figurative in a variety of ways, beyond representations, clichés, and phantasms, to paint the pure presence of the body. The first deformation Bacon carries out in his canvases is that of the relationship between figure and background. Figurative painting and photography establish the relationship between figure and background in such a way that it inevitably opens a space for the narrative and the illustrative. No matter how vague or *clear-obscure* the background is, the painting becomes a kind of window or a scene. To break with the figurative—without making the leap into abstract art or *action painting*—it is crucial that this relationship between the figure and the background will be deformed. Bacon does this through a number of rather simple interventions.

First he places the figure in an oval or a circle, in a ring, an oval bed or a chair. Sometimes the figure is also surrounded by a parallelogram, or sits in a glass cube. In this way Bacon isolates the

figure from the background. But this only works because the background is also deformed. Bacon's backgrounds are not landscapes or interiors. By rubbing out large fields in bright colours and by the addition of meaningless spots and circles, a flat field emerges that no longer stands *behind* the figure, but beside or around it. Because of this, the 'background' comes as close as the figure itself. So that the background and the figure stand next to each other and no room is left where a story could slip into the painting. Therefore the figure is surrounded by a totally closed space, which seems to turn or to be able to revolve like a pedestal. The inaccessibility of Bacon's spaces is, remarkably, not the result of obscurity or depth, but caused by their being so flat, bright and simple. Everything is equally close.[14] These deformations totally isolate the figure. Through this isolation of the figure the figurative disappears. Bacon's paintings do not tell a story, they are not pictures or illustrations of any pre-given reality. The figures are freed from the figurative. That does not mean that nothing happens in the painting, but this happening is not representational. It is not a spectacle. For this reason Bacon sets out to remove all references to a spectator from his paintings. In the second version of *Study for Bullfight no. 1,* for instance, the stands where the audience sits are painted over. Only the bull and the bullfighter remain (Deleuze 2003: 13). Still, the figure sometimes needs a second figure, but as a witness rather than as a spectator, who functions as an 'equal', a 'standard weight' against which the figure will vary.[15] In this way, the witness shows what happens to the figure. The figure becomes the 'anomaly' of the witness.[16] The figure undergoes a series of deformations. A first deformation comes about as a result of the impact of the field ('background') on the figure. Because the space around the figure seems to be turned over or displaced, and because each trace of the spectator is eliminated, the figure becomes enclosed in the surrounding space. This forces the figure to an incredible effort, 'a derisory athletics, a violent comedy' (Deleuze 2003: 15).

The convulsive effort of the body is not only the effect of the movement of the field. The body takes over this movement in an attempt to escape from itself. In *Figure Standing at a Washbasin* (1976) we see a figure at a washbasin. But this figurative scene is being deformed into a Figure that puts its efforts to the limit to escape through its mouth into the drain of the washbasin. Hysteria is not about me escaping from my body, but about the body trying to escape from itself through one of its openings, in an immobile spasm: 'It is a scene of hysteria. The entire series of spasms in Bacon is of this type: scenes of love, of vomiting and excrement, in which the body attempts to escape from itself *through* one

of its organs, in order to rejoin the field or material structure' (Deleuze 2003: 16). This interpretation also makes sense of the specific role that the shadow and the mirror play in Bacon's work. The shadow of the figure in Bacon's work is always just as full and solid as the figure itself. As the duplicate of the figure, it has liberated itself from the figure's spasm and now spreads or runs out into the background (Deleuze 2003: 16). The mirror accomplishes the same remarkable function as the shadow. For Bacon the mirror is not a reflecting surface, but a mostly black, dark space. The figure sits *in* the mirror where it becomes stretched out and flat, after the body in an extreme spastic effort has escaped from itself through its mouth, anus, throat or through the toilet or in the drain of the washbasin (Deleuze 2003: 50).

According to Deleuze, Bacon's paintings always show this spasm of a body that wants to escape from itself through some little hole that is always much too small. It is this spasm that leads Deleuze to a clinical-aesthetic of hysteria: the hysterical spasms in Bacon's paintings form a series with the hysterical hyperesthesias, hysterical pity, the hysterical scream, the hysterical smile, and the hysterical fall. It is important to note that this series is not a mere enumeration of pathological traits, as in psychiatry, or a displacement of symptoms, as in psychoanalysis. Deleuze holds a Jungian or Szondian rather than a Freudian conception of psychopathology.[17] Hysteria is not so much a pathological state or syndrome, but a moment of crisis and passage, a transition from the spasm to the smile and the fall. How, then, must we understand the sense of this series?

In *Studies on Hysteria* (1895) Breuer warns his readers (and his co-author?) that the cathartic method is limited to the representational or ideogenic aspect of hysteria. This warning is subsequently disregarded, but it nevertheless shows that Breuer had a greater feeling for the somatic side of hysteria than Freud:

> Let us consider an everyday instance. A woman may, whenever an affect arises, produce on her neck, breast and face an erythema appearing first in blotches and then becoming confluent. This is determined by ideas and therefore according to Moebius it is a hysterical phenomenon. But this same erythema appears, though over a less extensive area, when the skin is irritated or touched, etc. This would not be hysterical. Thus a phenomenon which is undoubtedly a complete unity would on one occasion be hysterical and on another occasion not. (Freud and Breuer 1955: 188)

Breuer's doubts concerning the exclusive importance of representation in the clinical account of hysteria show themselves at another level as well.

In the introduction of his theoretical contribution to *Studies on Hysteria*, he emphasises that he will only speak in psychological terms: 'Psychical processes will be dealt with in the language of psychology' (Freud and Breuer 1955: 185). But only a few of pages later, he develops a theory of affects in the language of electromechanics:

> We ought not to think of a cerebral path of conduction as resembling a telephone wire which is only excited electrically at the moment at which it has to function (that is, in the present context, when it has to transmit a signal). We ought to liken it to a telephone line through which there is a constant flow of galvanic current and which can no longer be excited if that current ceases. Or better, let us imagine a widely-ramified electrical system for lighting and the transmission of motor power; what is expected of this system is that simple establishment of a contact shall be able to set any lamp or machine in operation. (Freud and Breuer 1955: 193).

When Breuer—in spite of his earlier proclamation—makes the transition from a psychology of representations to an electromechanics of affects, he anticipates Deleuze's conception of hysteria. The bodily sensations that characterise hysteria are not expressions of representations or meanings; they are primarily *vibrations* (Deleuze 2003: 45). An electrical current goes through the flesh, and works *directly* on the nerves.[18] It is well-known that such vibrations or forces that affect the body do not obey the organic unity or the anatomical structure of the body. But, that does not mean that they are imaginary. What the hysteric feels and painting reveals is how the body as pure vitality and thus as pure pathos puts the organic-organised body under pressure.[19] In the hysterical body, forces are at work that are too powerful for the organic organisation of the organs, 'like the forces of the cosmos confronting an intergalactic traveller immobile in his capsule' (Deleuze 2003: 58). Because of this, a convulsive disorganisation and re-grouping of the organs takes place. Freud says: 'Certain regions of the body, such as the mucous membrane of the mouth and anus, seem, as it were, to be claiming that they should themselves be regarded and treated as genitals' (Freud 1953: 153). But also the other way around, sexual organs can also function as mouths or anuses (Deleuze 2003: 47). For what is at stake is not a deformed expression of the sexual instinct, but the experience of the body *under* the organism:

> The body is felt *under* the body, the transitory organs are felt under the organisation of the fixed organs. Furthermore, this body without organs and these transitory organs are themselves *seen*, in phenomena known as internal or external 'autoscopia': it is no longer *my* head, but I feel myself inside *a*

> head, I see and I see myself inside a head; or else I do not see myself in the mirror, but I feel myself in the body that I see, and I see myself in this naked body when I am dressed... and so forth. (Deleuze 2003: 49, italics in the original)

The hysteric feels and *sees* how the body becomes detached from the organism. According to Deleuze, this hysterical body painted by Bacon cannot be recuperated by *le corps vécu* of phenomenology.[20] When Deleuze speaks about the body as flesh, he does not refer to it as 'la chair' but rather as 'la viande', the French word for 'meat', or the 'flesh' we eat. To understand this idea, we must look at the paintings of Bacon. Deleuze remarks that, even when Bacon paints portraits, he does not paint a face but a head. The face is a more or less independent, structured organisation that, for this reason, hides the head. On the other hand, the head is only one end of the body (Deleuze 2003: 20). The face belongs to the bones, but the head is meat. In Bacon's paintings the meat and the nerves are detached from the bones. The quivering flesh falls from the bones and the 'fleshy' head is set free from the face (Deleuze 2003: 22).

When Bacon reveals the head beneath the face, it does not mean that he deprives his portraits of their soul by reducing them to mere bodies. Bacon's portraits do have a soul, but that soul is bodily through and through. The soul in Bacon's work is the sighing of the beast.[21] This hysterical *rapport* with the cries and moans of beasts is not, however, based on a hysterical identification or an excessive sympathy for animals. When, in Turin, the mad Nietzsche embraced a moaning horse, this historical, hysterical scene is not about pity for a horse, but rather pity for the meat, where the distinction between human and animal recedes in the background.[22] Nietzsche's 'pitié pour la viande!' is a hysterical pity for life as a slaughterhouse (Deleuze 2003: 23). Bacon's red-green-bluish butcher's meat is not—as has sometimes been claimed—an expression of the painter's sadism, but of hysterical pity. For Deleuze this pity for the meat is also the kernel of all hysterical religiosity: 'Bacon is a religious painter only in butcher shops.' (Deleuze 2003: 24) Deleuze quotes Bacon: 'I've always been very moved by pictures about slaughterhouses and meat, and to me they belong very much to the whole thing of the Crucifixion.... Of course, we are meat. If I go into a butcher shop I always think it's surprising that I wasn't there instead of the animal' (Deleuze 2003: 24). Bacon's interest in meat is not sadistic but merciful. It is not without good reason that even militant atheists like Charcot and Freud,

at the end of their careers, have bowed their heads before the great Mercy of Lourdes.[23]

This pity for the meat reaches its crisis in the hysterical scream. Bacon always tried to paint this scream. The problem is not so much how to paint a sound, but how to make visible forces that otherwise remain invisible. That is, after all, the task of painting for Deleuze: making invisible forces visible. In the case of the hysterical scream, this means that the scream cannot be a response to an already visible spectacle, a spectacle before which—or about which—one screams. In that way, we would relapse into the figurative. The hysterical scream that Bacon has in mind, is something totally different. Bacon's scream is not just an expression of pain, nor is it merely a reaction to some horrible event. The scream is the result of something greater than the pain one is capable of feeling, and greater than the spectacle about which one screams.[24] What then is this invisible and intangible force? Deleuze is very brief on this 'more profound and almost unliveable Force' (Deleuze 2003: 44). He seems to leave to painting the task of tracing this force and making it visible.[25]

Maldiney—Deleuze's *companion de route* throughout the whole Bacon book—seems to go further. In his *Penser l'homme et la folie*, he invokes the scream in his description of the 'pathic'. Sensation relates to perception as the scream relates to speaking. The scream belongs to the dimension of the pathic, just as speaking belongs to the dimension of representation. It is this pathic dimension of sensation that Deleuze aims at when he speaks about the vibrations of the flesh, where the difference between humans and beasts recedes into the background. However, the fact that humans suffer like beasts ('every man who suffers is a piece of meat'), does not erase the distinction between humans and animals, and that distinction, according to Maldiney, is discovered in the scream. The human being who screams, says Maldiney, screams the world (crie *le monde*): 'The world that is disclosed in this scream is not the one that is expressed by language, but neither is it simply the sound of a living creature' (Maldiney 1990: 203). In the scream, nothing is perceived or expressed; in the scream the body discovers its excessive presence, 'la pure presence du corps'. Maldiney writes: 'The wondering about the miracle of the 'there is' is absolutely contemporaneous with the scream' (Maldiney 1990: 204). But Maldiney's description remains rather pious. When it concerns an event that affects us before we intentionally relate to it, the astonishment is more like a wound than like wonder. The hysterical scream does not reveal the world of being-in-the-world, but the 'world' as pure affect. It is only this excessive presence

(*cet excès de presence*[26]) that breaks with the 'photographical' world of representations, clichés and phantasms.[27] The hysterical scream is the pure pathos of presence.

But this excessive presence not only shows itself in screaming and suffering: 'Bacon suggests that beyond the scream there is the smile' (Deleuze 2003: 28). Bacon calls this smile hysterical, and adds, modestly, that he never succeeded in painting this smile (Deleuze 2003: 28). Since Leonardo da Vinci, the mysterious smile of hysterical girls has always been the highest goal in painting. Art historians and psychotherapists seem to believe that such a hysterical smile *hides* something, but for Bacon and Deleuze the smile is what *remains when the body disappears* (Deleuze 2003: 28–29). To clarify this bizarre idea, Deleuze discusses Bacon's triptych from 1953, *Three Studies of the Human Head*. Bacon's triptychs are not comic strips; they should not be read from left to right; they do not tell a story.[28] The bringing together of the three panels does not tell a story, but initiates a *rhythm*.[29] Only with this rhythm Bacon's work really comes into its own, because rhythm is the essence of sensation. In a strict sense, one cannot perceive a rhythm, one can only feel it.[30] Hence, it is only in this rhythmic movement that Bacon's work frees itself from the figurative and the representational, without becoming abstract.[31]

According to Deleuze, we can differentiate three rhythms in Bacon's triptychs (Deleuze 2003: 71). First there is the witness-rhythm (*le rythme témoin*). In the triptych of 1953, this witness is located in the smile of the figure in the left panel. As a result of its horizontality and relative stability, this smile forms a more or less fixed element in the rhythmic movement of the triptych.[32] In opposition to this stable, horizontal element, the two other figures move in opposite directions.[33] In the central panel one sees a man who screams, which gives the rhythm an upward movement. In the right panel we see a figure that falls and disappears. According to Deleuze, all of Bacons triptychs are characterised by this triple movement that connects the three panels in a bizarre trapeze act or an acrobatic dance. Bacon's triptych from 1953 is experienced as a rhythmic series from the scream, to the smile, to the fall. The fall is the active moment that pushes the scream in the opposite direction. The horizontality of the hysterical smile forms the point of reference against which this double movement varies.

When Deleuze says that in hysteria the body tries to escape from itself, this does not mean that the body wants to transcend itself into a state beyond the body, but that the body frees itself from itself in the *rhythm* of its movement.[34] In painting and hysteria, however, this

rhythm remains entangled in a combat with the weight of the flesh or with the materiality of the paint. That is why music begins where painting ends, because unlike painting, music 'strips bodies of their inertia, of the materiality of their presence: it disembodies bodies. … This is why music does not have hysteria as its clinical essence, but is confronted more and more with a galloping schizophrenia' (Deleuze 2003: 54–5).

Psychoanalysis has domesticated the hysterical body by considering it to be a corporeal expression of unconscious representations. Its therapy, based on the narrative procedures of literature,[35] neglects the pure presence of the body, its rhythms, vibrations and paroxysms. It takes a painter like Bacon to see in the hysterical postures the pure presence of the body at the mercy of invisible forces. To see the presence of the body instead of its representations, one needs the eye of the painter, not the ear of the psychoanalyst or the gaze of the psychiatrist-photographer. Painting turns the eyes into organs of touch: 'One might say that painters paint with their eyes, but only insofar as they touch with their eyes' (Deleuze 2003: 155). Of course, such a clinical-aesthetic does not involve a therapy of hysteria in any medical-psychiatric sense of a cure or a return to 'normality'. On the contrary, it produces a radical change of perspective.[36] Bacon's aesthetic-figural approach to hysteria reveals why the hysterical poses and spasms are the most natural of postures *in view of the forces they confront*: 'The body seems to enter into particularly mannered postures, or is weighed down by stress, pain, or anguish. But this is true only if a story or a figuration is reintroduced: figurally speaking, these are actually the most natural of postures, as if we caught them "between" two stories, or when we were alone, listening to a force that had seized us' (Deleuze 2003: 161).

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Notes

1. 'Eine gewissenhafte, aber "künstlerische" Darstellung wie in der Dora' (quoted in Lavagetto 2002: 225).
2. 'It is true that there are numerous dangers in constructing a clinical aesthetic (which nonetheless has the advantage of not being a psychoanalysis) (Deleuze 2003: 51). '[U] nder the rubric of a purely aesthetic clinic, independent of any psychiatry and psychoanalysis' (Deleuze 2003: 54). 'Masoch is neither a pretext for psychiatry or psychoanalysis' (Deleuze 1998: 53).
3. 'Can we speak of a hysterical essence of painting? … This problem concerning the essence of each art, and possibly their clinical essence, is less difficult than it seems to be' (Deleuze 2003: 54).
4. 'The athleticism of the body is naturally prolonged in this acrobatics of the flesh' (Deleuze 2003: 23).
5. One could argue that, in Deleuze's earlier works on Masoch, Sade, Carroll and Lasègue, literature has a specific clinical affinity with perversion, while in his later works (after *Anti-Oedipus*) he relates literature, particularly American literature, to schizophrenia. Maybe Freud could understand hysteria only as a 'negative perversion' because he approached it from the perspective of literature?
6. 'With painting, hysteria becomes art. Or rather, with the painter, hysteria becomes painting. What the hysteric is incapable of doing-a little art- is accomplished in painting' (2003: 52).
7. 'If we look at the "picture" of hysteria that was formed in the nineteenth century, in psychiatry and elsewhere, we find a number of features that have continually animated Bacon's bodies' (Deleuze 2003: 49).
8. 'He brought an artist's eye to the study of hysterical bodies. Charcot had planned to become an artist and always maintained a studio in his home where he could

paint. He and his interns sketched hysterical patients during their attacks, and he even installed a full photographic studio, with a professional photographer, Albert Londe, to record the women's movements and expressions' (Showalter 1997: 31).

9. 'Modern painting is invaded and besieged by photographs and clichés that are already lodged on the canvas before the painter even begins to work' (Deleuze 2003: 10–11).
10. 'They are not only ways of seeing, *they are what is seen, until finally one sees nothing else*. The photograph "creates" the person or the landscape in the sense that we say that the newspaper creates the event (and is not content to narrate it). What we see, what we perceive, are photographs' (Deleuze 2003: 91, italics in the original).
11. 'Avec le percevoir, qui est le premier niveau de l'objectivation, nous sommes déjà sortis du sentir' (Maldiney 1973: 136).
12. 'Le rapport moi-monde, lié par le "et", lié par le "dans" ou par le "avec" n'a pas la structure de l'intentionnalité' (Maldiney 1990 : 205).
13. 'Sensation has one face turned toward the subject (the nervous system, vital movement, 'instinct', 'temperament' – a whole vocabulary common to both Naturalism and Cézanne) and one face turned toward the object (the 'fact', the place, the event). Or rather, it has no faces at all, it is both things indissolubly' (Deleuze 2003: 34).
14. 'What concerns us here is this absolute proximity, this co-precision, of the field that functions as a ground, and the Figure that functions as a form, on a single plane that is viewed at close range' (Deleuze 2003: 6).
15. 'We will see that, in his paintings and especially in his triptychs, Bacon needs the function of an attendant, which is not a spectator but part of the Figure. [. . .] They are attendants not in the sense of spectators, but as a constant or point of reference in relation to which a variation is assessed' (Deleuze 2003: 13).
16. 'An anomaly is a fact of individual variation which prevents two beings from being able to take the place of each other completely' (Canguilhem 1978: 77). For Deleuze and Guattari on Canguilhem's analysis of 'anomaly', see Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 243–6.
17. For this distinction between Freud, Jung and Szondi, see Szondi 1963: 43–54. For the connection between Deleuze and Szondi, see Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 318–20. For Deleuze's Jungianism, see Kerslake 2007: 69–102.
18. 'First of all, there are the famous spastics and paralytics, the hyperesthetics or anesthetics, associated or alternating, sometimes fixed and sometimes migrant, depending on the passage of the nervous wave and the zones it invests or withdraws from' (Deleuze 2003: 49).
19. 'There is a special relation between painting and hysteria. It is very simple. Painting directly attempts to release the presences beneath representation' (Deleuze 2003: 51–2).
20. 'The phenomenological hypothesis is perhaps insufficient because it merely invokes the lived body. But the lived body is still a paltry thing in comparison with a more profound and almost unlivable Power (*Puissance*)' (Deleuze 2003: 44).
21. 'It is not that the head lacks spirit; but it is a spirit in bodily form, a corporeal and vital breath, an animal spirit. It is the animal spirit of man' (Deleuze 2003: 20).
22. 'Bacon does not say, "Pity the beasts", but rather that every man who suffers is a piece of meat. Meat is the common zone of man and the beast, their zone of indiscernibility' (Deleuze 2003: 23).

23. 'In the late 1880s and early 1890s Charcot himself sent patients on a pilgrimage to Lourdes' (Showalter 1997: 32). 'I do not think our cures can compete with those of Lourdes' (Freud 1964: 152).
24. 'If we scream, it is always as victims of invisible and insensible forces that scramble every spectacle, and that even lie beyond pain and feeling' (Deleuze 2003: 60).
25. 'The task of painting is defined as the attempt to render visible forces that are not themselves visible' (Deleuze 2003: 56).
26. 'The hysteric is at the same time someone who imposes his or her presence, but also someone for whom things and beings are present, *too* present, and who attributes to every thing and communicates to every being this excessive presence' (Deleuze 2003: 50, italics in the original).
27. 'La prise de l'étant comme tel a lieu dans la surprise de l'être. Dans le sentir il y a et j'y suis. E. Straus a raison de l'assimiler au cri' (Maldiney 1990: 204).
28. 'The triptych does not imply a progression, and it does not tell a story' (Deleuze 2003: 69).
29. 'The coexistence of all these movements in the painting is rhythm' (Deleuze 2003: 33).
30. 'Un rythme n'est pas objectivable dans l'espace. Il ne saurait au sens propre être perçu. Il prend fond dans le sentir' (Maldiney 1990 : 207).
31. 'Le rythme dépasse toute espèce de perception figurale' (Maldiney 1973 : 157).
32. 'This horizontal can be presented in several Figures. First there is the flat hysterical smile' (Deleuze 2003: 75).
33. 'What matters in the two opposable rhythms is that each is the "retrogradation" of the other, while a common and constant value appears in the attendant-rhythm' (Deleuze 2003: 80).
34. ' "Ruthmos" désigne la forme dans l'instant qu'elle est assumée par ce qui est mouvant, mobile, fluide' (Maldiney 1973 : 157).
35. 'It still strikes me myself as strange that the case histories I write should read like *short stories* and that, as one might say, they lack the serious stamp of science. I must console myself with the reflection that the nature of the subject is evidently responsible for this, rather than any preference of my own. The fact is that local diagnosis and electrical reactions lead nowhere in the study of hysteria, whereas a detailed description of mental processes such as we are accustomed to find *in the works of imaginative writers* enables me, with the use of a few psychological formulas, to obtain at least some kind of insight into the course of that affection' (Freud 1955: 160–1, my italics).
36. 'Abjection becomes splendour, the horror of life becomes a very pure and very intense life' (Deleuze 2003: 52).

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The Determination of Sense via Deleuze and Blanchot: Paradoxes of the Habitual, the Immemorial, and the Eternal Return

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Abstract

Eternal return is the paradox that accounts for the interplay between difference and repetition, a dynamic at the heart of Deleuze's philosophy, and Blanchot's approach to this paradox, even and especially through what it elides, further illuminates it. Deleuze draws on Blanchot's characterisations of difference, forgetting, and the unlivable to depict the 'sense' produced via eternal return, which, for Blanchot, is where repetition implicates or 'carries' pure difference. However, for Deleuze, difference and the unlivable are also developed by the living repetition or 'contraction' of habit, which results in his distinctive characterization of 'force', 'levity', and sense in eternal return.

Keywords: Blanchot, eternal return, difference, repetition, sense, habit, memory, forgetting, life

While Deleuze devotes several well-known book-length studies to major figures, his treatment of the work of his contemporaries, with the exception of Foucault, tends to be much less overt. Maurice Blanchot is an important case in point. References to Blanchot can in fact be found scattered throughout all of Deleuze's work, and Blanchot himself also makes references to Deleuze in his writings from the early 1970s and again later to expand his own theory of the loss of identity, force, and the eternal return, marking a sort of dialog between the two. Blanchot's early significant writings (written in the aftermath of the Second World War) predate Deleuze's, such as *Difference and Repetition*, by about two decades, and could be seen to have indirectly prepared the ground for his thought as is evident in the fact that Deleuze makes reference to Blanchot in his early significant writings at critical junctures in his thought process.

Moreover, the topics he discusses with reference to Blanchot reappear at other critical junctures when Blanchot is not explicitly cited, especially death, forgetting, difference, and, most importantly, the eternal return.

Typically, Deleuze does not simply draw from Blanchot to incite his own thought processes, he also extends and complicates Blanchot's reading of the eternal return. The dimension he adds to Blanchot's reading turns not on the problem of death, memory/forgetting, or the loss of identity, but on the problem of experience and habit. Through investigating how their approaches diverge, Blanchot's contribution to the paradox of eternal return, and what Deleuze draws from it, can be better understood. Deleuze in fact elaborates an aspect or element of experience that is intentionally elided in Blanchot's works (not just from the perspective of Deleuze's thought, but as a trend by and large in Blanchot's approach) in accordance with his unique vision. The way in which the present 'returns' for Deleuze has to do not only with memory in an indeterminate and unlivable sense, but also in a determined and lived sense. This dimension of experience exists in Deleuze's thought because of his study of thinkers as diverse as Benedict de Spinoza, David Hume, Lewis Carroll, and Henri Bergson, which sets him apart from Blanchot in the consideration of issues such as habit, life, determinism, affect, automatic memory, and other similarly corporeal or temporal questions. When Blanchot elaborates his version of experience, he always deliberately frames his discussion around questions of the immemorial, the unlivable, and/or the indeterminate, thus setting him apart from Deleuze in important ways. This Blanchotian aspect of the experience of the unlivable is not unfamiliar to Deleuze (both Deleuze and Blanchot write on Proust, for example, who foregrounds many of these concerns); however, in his complex writings on empiricism and immemorial memory, Deleuze only distinguishes between these dimensions to show their paradoxical interaction through eternal return.[1]

The eternal return is the ideal paradox that accounts for the interplay between paradoxes of difference and repetition, a dynamic at the very heart of Deleuze's philosophy, and Blanchot's approach to this paradox, even and especially through what it elides, further illuminates it. Nietzsche's well known version of the paradox of eternal return appeals to Deleuze and Blanchot for several reasons. If there is no state of existence that the world, or we as individuals, may achieve; that is, if the past is infinite and can only 'return', then we cannot give presence to or represent meaning, because that process would involve either reference to a completed past that does not return, or an unveiling of the past

in the future (neither of which are possible if the past is infinite and all-inclusive) (Nietzsche 2003: 178–9). The very idea that everything that could have happened has already happened indicates that nothing achieves or 'becomes' its final state. Insofar as the return of the past is eternal or unending, it would seem that presence itself, whether thought of as determinate or indeterminate, is paradoxically the return of the past such that it differs from what it was (that is, insofar as it does not resemble or have the same meaning as what it was). Deleuze and Blanchot both call this the fundamental 'inequality' of presence in the eternal return, where that which exists is eternally becoming what it is not (or returning as what it is not), but what it is not refers neither to what it was nor what it will become.[2] This idea that the present, insofar as it is a *return*, is never 'equal' to, or the same as, what it was, appeals to Deleuze and Blanchot because it is an alternative to representation for describing that which is present.

Presence described as eternal return is relevant to Deleuze's early work, where he sought to describe the paradoxes of time with regard to habit and memory, especially as those paradoxes apply to difference and repetition. Similarly, because Blanchot is interested in describing the revelation of the absence of an origin in the work of art (which cannot be represented), Nietzsche's eternal return is, for him, a space where meaning returns even after its origin has ostensibly been destroyed. This is perhaps why he calls it the 'nihilist thought par excellence, the thought by which nihilism surpasses itself absolutely by making itself definitively unsurpassable' (Blanchot 1993: 148/223). When the capacity to make annihilation 'present' fails, that is, when what is destroyed returns, nihilism has exceeded itself by giving presence to that which has lost all ostensible meaning but which is, paradoxically, not devoid of meaning since it differs from what it was. The eternal return, which Blanchot calls the 'extreme point' of nihilism, is perhaps appealing to commentators on Nietzsche since he reveals it primarily through innuendo, and only explicitly discusses it briefly in his late, fragmentary writings, as if it is an implied conclusion in his work that falls to his successors to explicate. Deleuze and Blanchot are among those successors who recognise some of the same paradoxes of the eternal return.

Both Deleuze's and Blanchot's reading of the eternal return concern the loss and return of *sense*.[3] Both Deleuze and Blanchot agree that the eternal return is ultimately an *affirmation*, even if it is one based on a 'no', on loss, or on paradox, and what is being affirmed in many cases is *sense*: there is still a sense of things, they have not lost all meaning and fallen into an existential abyss.[4] For Deleuze, the sense

of anything that exists cannot be given in terms of the completed past or the present.[5] Sense neither results from what the mind derives from and expects based on habitual experience nor from a capacity to reminiscence which lies beyond the recalling of an experience. Sense 'returns' in that it is produced by those aspects of habit and memory which do not involve empirical generalisation or reminiscence, and rather from those paradoxical aspects of habit and memory regarding time that are confluent with the paradox of eternal return. This very question of sense, or meaning, also testifies to the diverse applications of both Deleuze's and Blanchot's works: literary interpretation, and also the sense of politics, culture, religion, and so on. Sense also has its own temporal properties, which provoke certain questions: how is it 'presented' without representing a past or a future? How is it determined? How does it differ? And, what is the role of repetition?

The distinction between Deleuze's and Blanchot's approaches to these questions and the paradox of eternal return can be summarised as follows: while Blanchot characterises the eternal return as 'the difference that repetition carries' ('la différence que porte la répétition'), Deleuze's characterisation of the eternal return involves difference that both implies and is explained by repetition (Blanchot 1992: 16/27).[6] At first glance, they may seem to be talking about the same thing; however, Blanchot's view involves difference that *implies* or is 'carried' by repetition such that it always differs from what it is, whereas Deleuze's view involves both that implicating difference as well as the living repetition or 'contraction' of habit that explains or develops difference. This subtle divergence can be clarified by their conflicting approaches to experience. Blanchot radically frames all questions regarding experience around memory and forgetting, to render what he calls an indeterminate or a maddening form of meaningless meaning that was never and can never be lived, and is a relation apart from the forces that determine it. Blanchot's version of repetition, in fact, emphasises the 'weight' of the eternal return, a well known Nietzschean figure (Nietzsche 2001: 194–5), in a way that contrasts with Deleuze's depictions of weight and levity, and his version of plurality conflicts with Deleuze's version of force. Deleuze appropriates Blanchot's understanding of memory, forgetting, relation, and death regarding the eternal return, but distinguishes the paradoxes of habit from those Blanchotian paradoxes of forgetting.

Perhaps the reason that notions of difference and repetition are useful to Deleuze is because they enable him to navigate between the paradoxes of habit and the paradoxes of memory. With regard to habit, Deleuze

claims that 'contractions' within the imagination result in experience.[7] He insists that such contraction (an 'organic synthesis'), apart from its *contemplation*, 'is not a matter of reflection', but is instead the succession of particular imaginary phenomena (Deleuze 1994: 73/99, 70/97). So, for repetition in this case to be feasible, the mind, albeit paradoxically, contracts something that is in the past and present and does not reflect it. Since occurrences are not reflected, despite their repetition, there is no resemblance between them, and such repetition proceeds only by dissemblance. While the time of contraction may be indeterminate, what is repeated is always *determined*; as Deleuze notes, contraction is a '*material* repetition [which] comes undone even as it occurs' (Deleuze 1994: 85/114). These phenomena occur in succession with their previous occurrence, and the paradoxical *sense* of this repetition is not *re*presented because their repetition does not entail re-presentation (that is, the occurrences cannot be separated as such so that one would present the other); real difference is therefore only explained by repetition and does not itself explain repetition. Generic difference, by contrast, represents and explains repetition by drawing off (*soutirer*) a difference from contracted repetitions, and is therefore rooted in what Deleuze calls a 'contemplation' *by* the mind of the difference between 'contractions' *in* the mind ('*dans* l'esprit'). The generic difference extracted from habit is an 'expectation', which Deleuze associates with *good sense*: 'Testifying to a living present [. . .], it goes from past to future as though from particular to general' (Deleuze 1990: 225/290). By focusing on the paradoxes of habit and repetition, however, aside from the problematic, generic, or 'good' sense extracted from it, we encounter the other dimension of eternal return that both Deleuze *and* Blanchot treat: the paradoxes of memory and forgetting.

The repetition of habit is implicated by the differences of memory because the mind would never have been able to 'contract' successive instances if those instances were not actually occurring *simultaneously*, or outside of lived time. The paradox of memory involves the co-existence of timeless differences; that is, presence that is constituted such that it always differs from what it is regardless of the order in which it is lived. What Deleuze, influenced by thinkers such as Bergson and Proust,[8] calls the 'pure' past contains timeless differences, and does not concern a memory which has been forgotten from experience, as would be the case with forgetting an empirical memory:

> Empirical memory is addressed to those things which can and even must be grasped: what is recalled must have been seen, heard, imagined or thought.

> That which is forgotten, in the empirical sense, is that which cannot be grasped a second time by the memory which searches for it (it is too far removed; forgetting has effaced or separated us from the memory) [...]. (Deleuze 1994: 140/183)

Empirical memory depends on the capacity to 'contract' a habit, and to forget an empirical memory entails an inability to contemplate that which is contracted, or to grasp it 'a second time'. The pure past, by contrast, does not concern this living presence of phenomena; instead, it transcends presence and time, and, as Deleuze claims, concerns 'the being of the past as such and the past of every time. In this manner, the forgotten thing appears in person to the memory which essentially apprehends it' (Deleuze 1994: 140/183). This is why the pure past is also referred to, with slightly differing connotations, as immemorial memory, transcendental memory, and reminiscence. 'Repetition' in pure memory repeats the past as a whole to apprehend that which is not grasped from an empirical order, and instead apprehends any or all difference untouched by lived time. This 'timeless' memory does not generate living time because what it apprehends was never lived to begin with. So, habit involves a repetition which 'contracts' differences in time such that repetition explains or develops difference, and the paradoxes of memory, by contrast, involve difference includes or implies repetition: a repetition of *all* difference whose origin is oblivion.

The role of repetition in the pure past creates a problem which is not unlike the problem created by the role of difference contemplated by the mind with habit. In the case of habit, when real repetition is explained through generic difference, determining sense, the difference between the repetition of the past in the present is dependent on a representation of the past and the present. Such generic difference essentially eclipses the sense and real difference of each occurrence by projecting or drawing fabricated meaning from repetition. In the case of memory, there is a dimension correlative to that generic difference, which, because of the way sense is created out of time in it, also runs contrary to the paradoxes of time in the eternal return: rather than *generic difference* subsuming and explaining *repetition*, a *generic repetition* implicates *difference* (contrary to the *paradox* where repetition is implicated *by* difference). This occurs because repetition in immemorial memory is no longer the repetition of living time; that is, immemorial memory does not concern a particular, inhabited repetition, from which generic difference can be extracted, but what could be called a *generic repetition* outside of living time which generalises all particular occurrences or 'repetitions' of

difference. Repetition in this case takes place on the level of generality in that it is the repetition of *all* difference (or any difference), and when repetition is *general*, *difference* is liberated from any generic status, but at the expense of expelling plurality from *repetition*. This takes place because, as Deleuze claims, reminiscence cannot evade the problem of its own presence in time: 'the pure past [. . .] is itself still necessarily expressed in terms of a present, as an ancient *mythical* present' (Deleuze 1994: 88/119). Thus, the repetition that produces real difference is timeless, but the problem arises when repetition grounds real difference so that the timeless is mystified via its experience in time. This is also why reminiscence repeats: the real difference that constitutes the pure past is outside of time but *must* be repeated in order to be lived in the present; however, in order to be lived it circulates around the *same* repetition, generalising differences through their coexistence and identity in that circle.[9] In this case, memory, as what Deleuze calls a 'ground' (*fondement*), 'coexists' with the *absence* of a living presence, lacking what he calls the 'foundation' (*fondation*) of habit.

> [It] remains relative to the representation that it grounds. It elevates [. . .] resemblance, which it treats as a present image: the Same and the Similar. [. . .] The ground then *appears* as an immemorial memory or pure past, a past which itself was never present but which causes the present to pass, and in relation to which all the presents coexist in a circle. (Deleuze 1994: 88/119)

It is because the immemorial was never lived that it needs to be lived, and memory circulates by imposing that which is indeterminate on that which arises in a determinable present. So, the present, in reminiscence, always seems mysterious because the forgotten thing through which the memory is apprehended never corresponds to the determined presence in which it is experienced. Instead, it always 'differs' from that experience, and the paradoxical aspect of difference which implied a timeless repetition is therefore eclipsed by its lived presence in time, making generic repetition the agent which implicates real difference. Repetition in this case has lost all plurality as well as the determinable foundation of habit, originating instead from an indeterminate source. The indeterminate then makes itself felt as a problem to be solved in the present, or a mystery to be revealed through the real difference that it determines and represents. So, unlike the *determined*, living presence of habit, this indeterminate and timeless presence can only determine itself and become temporal through a circular recognition that identifies it. This is the basis of *common sense*, which 'brings diversity in general to bear upon the form of the Same', or gives difference a sense that holds it

in common (Deleuze 1990: 78/96). To 'reminisce', or live in the pure past is to be outside of the living present, but it is also, as Deleuze claims, to 'determine the indeterminate' (Deleuze 1994: 275/352). He further adds that real difference 'distinguishes itself', but the problem arises because 'that from which [the ground] distinguishes itself does not distinguish itself from it' ('ce dont il se distingue ne se distingue pas de lui' [(Deleuze 1994: 28/43]). That from which the ground distinguishes itself is its indeterminate origin; memories seek to be present by determining the indeterminacy of their origin, but this origin implicates itself in any determination.

The generic repetition of memory corrupts the sense of difference by determining the indeterminate, and the generic difference of habit corrupts the sense of repetition. However, in order to apprehend *real* sense that is corrupted neither by generic difference nor generic repetition (neither 'good' nor 'common' sense), as it relates to topics correlative to the eternal return, one needs to turn towards the notion of *force* Deleuze derives Nietzsche. Force is an important point of intersection between Deleuze and Blanchot; it is precisely with regard to the notion of force that Blanchot makes an explicit reference to Deleuze. Deleuze makes a specific connection between force and sense:

> We will never find the sense of something (of a human, a biological or even a physical phenomenon) if we do not know the force which appropriates the thing, which exploits it, which takes possession of it or is expressed in it. (Deleuze 1983: 3/3)

Sense, then, is developed by force, as it is developed by the repetition of habit before generic difference is extracted from it. In fact, when looking closely at Deleuze's explanation of force, we encounter similar paradoxes as we did with habit and memory. Firstly, Deleuze does not refer to the substance (*matière*) of force as indeterminate *per se*, perhaps because the shifting of forces is like matter that is constantly determining and being determined, and, rather, it is the *relation* of forces, that is, their absolute difference, that is indeterminate. Thus, like habit, force has an indeterminate dimension constituted by its persistent and necessary plurality. So, Deleuze does not only emphasise that forces are plural because they are always in a relation with other forces, but also claims that the relation of forces, and not forces taken for themselves, involve difference:

> Every force is [. . .] essentially related to another force. The being of force is plural, it would be absolutely absurd to think about [a] force in the singular. A force is domination, but also the object on which domination is exercised.

> A plurality of forces acting and being affected at distance, distance being the differential element included in each force and by which each is related to others – this is the principle of Nietzsche's philosophy of nature. (Deleuze 1983: 6/7)

In his explanation of force in Nietzsche, Deleuze fluctuates between the terms 'determination' and 'domination'; these terms are comparable in that they both connote causality, fixation, and control. Now, the object upon which force is exercised or determined is always at a distance from that force. This distance is the *real* difference that is between forces before they are seen only as determined, just as there is real difference enveloped within the repetition of habit before it is effaced in favour of corrupted, generic difference.[10] The real difference that repetition explains cannot be reduced to repeated occurrences, much like the 'differential element' of force cannot be reduced to the plurality that explains it. So, what may have seemed to be the determined shifting of forces involves an indeterminate dimension (plurality and distance), just as that which is determined by the repetition of habit is also indeterminate because it was repeated. Perhaps, then, the *difference* of memory that implicates the 'contraction' of habit parallels the indeterminate *relation* that implicates force(s), since that which constitutes repetition (time and difference) and that which constitutes force (relation and difference) is indeterminate and external to that which is determined by habitual 'contraction' and that which is determined by relation.

Aside from the paradoxes of plurality, difference, and determination, Deleuze also characterises both force and habit in terms of *life*, possibly because both, whether spoken of in terms of difference or relation, are perishable. Deleuze describes the limited relationship of forces in terms of the body:

> Every force is related to others and it either obeys or commands. What defines a body is this relation between dominant and dominated forces. Every relationship of forces constitutes a body – whether it is chemical, biological, social or political. Any two forces, being unequal, constitute a body as soon as they enter into a relationship. (Deleuze 1983: 40/45)

When two forces – both dominant and dominated – change, so does the 'body' constituted by that relation. This characterisation of the body is complementary to the familiar metaphor of the political or social body: the 'life' of a political body is analogous to the life of a biological or human body because both are limited by the forces which constitute them. A political 'body', for example, would last only as long as

correlative economic and cultural forces dominate or are dominated by political forces. Similarly, in his account of habit, Deleuze describes the imagination as an 'organ' of contraction, noting also that 'fatigue' marks the limits of contraction and contemplation where that which we 'contract' can no longer be contemplated (Deleuze 1994: 73/100, 77/105). 'Contraction' is not without its own limits and depends upon an organism's capacity to receive or endure an impression.[11] In this case, the imagination behaves like a 'sensitive plate' that 'retains one case while another appears' (Deleuze 1994: 70/96). If the organism can no longer retain a case, then that which is contracted can no longer appear and a habit may dissolve, which would change the nexus of habits and the disposition of the body itself. Likewise, forces would be unlimited were they not constantly altered, determined, or dominated by another force (which is only possible hypothetically): political or social bodies thus depend on forces or perhaps the 'habits' which dispose them. So, new relations of forces dissolve or produce 'bodies', while the repetition of habit likewise affects and can exhaust or destroy an 'organism' which is constituted by those habits.

Insofar as a body is constituted by *difference* (relation), this difference can no longer be developed by repetition when the repetition or (the plurality of) force that produces it changes, dissipates, or is exhausted. If the relevance of the paradox of habit and force to the paradox of eternal return is the way in which difference is developed by repetition, then the relevance of the paradox of memory and relation is the way in which the unequal or 'differential element' (Deleuze 1983: 50/56) implicates force or repetition. With regard to habit, the 'contraction' within the mind that takes place *before* that difference is represented generically parallels repetition in the eternal return, since the paradox of succession does not imply the generalisation that would annul real difference. With regard to memory, real difference is that which 'returns' via eternal return (and implicates the plurality of force) *before* difference is identified with an instant or subject that repeats it. Presence in the eternal return, then, is the ideal paradoxical interplay between repetition and difference because it expels all generality from repetition and difference. This results in what both Deleuze and Blanchot call its 'inequality', where that which exists is eternally returning as what it is not, such that it corresponds neither to what was nor what it will be. Deleuze discusses this presence in terms of the 'final synthesis of time':

> [I]n this final synthesis of time, the present and past are in turn no more than dimensions of the future: the past as condition, the present as agent.

> The first synthesis, that of habit, constituted time as living present by means of a passive foundation on which past and future depended. The second synthesis, that of memory, constituted time as a pure past, from the point of view of a ground which causes the passing of one present and the arrival of another. In the third synthesis, however, the present is no more than an actor, an author, an agent destined to be effaced; while the past is no more than a condition operating by default. [. . .] [this involves] refusing the content of a repetition which is more or less able to 'draw off' difference (Habitus); refusing the form of a repetition which includes difference, but in order once again to subordinate it to the Same and the Similar (Mnemosyne); [. . .] expelling the agent [the present] and the condition [the past] in the name of the work or product; making repetition, not that from which one 'draws off' a difference [as in habit], nor that which includes difference as a variant [as in memory], but making it the thought and the production of the 'absolutely different'; making it so that repetition is, for itself, difference in itself. (Deleuze 1994: 94/125–6 translation modified)

In the case of eternal return, rather than the dimensions of habit and memory interacting by way of a *repetition* determined as *different* (but generic through expectation), and a *difference* that is determined *repeatedly* (but generically through the experience of memory), the dimensions interact by way of the determined repetition of habit (the paradox of contraction and succession) and the indeterminate difference in memory (the paradox of real difference that is never determined), 'so that repetition is, for itself, difference in itself' (Deleuze 1994: 94/126). So, in this case, the determined repetition of habit and the indeterminate difference of memory are conflated. Real difference was, all along, the indeterminate dimension of habit that simultaneously implicated lived repetition and gave it a sense. Also, the paradoxes of habit and memory are of themselves not enough to completely parallel eternal return: if difference is *only* explained by repetition, then generic difference can in turn explain repetition, and if difference *only* implies repetition, then generic repetition can in turn implicate or ground difference. With the eternal return, however, the past is not projected onto the future through expectation, nor is the 'never lived' projected onto the present mysteriously from the immemorial past; both are 'refused' such that the *unlived future* includes the past 'by default' and is *lived* and developed in the *present*. In other words, time is determined neither through habitual generalities nor through the mnemonic recognition of difference that makes it circular, but instead through the living repetition of habit and the unlivable difference of memory. The present, rather than being the contemplation of the past or the experience of the never-lived past, is

instead effaced and experienced as a 'dimension of the future' through the repetition, or return, of real difference. The living present, in turn, does not form expectation by going from the most to least differentiated (as with good sense[12]), but goes in the reverse direction, from the *least* to *most* differen*t*iated, such that sense is the very presence of 'differen*c*iation' itself.[13] The 'thought' and sense produced by eternal return is therefore presented but never *represented*, that is, mediated by generic difference or repetition, because it refers neither to a completed past that can be expected in the future nor a forgotten past in a mythical present.

For Deleuze, difference is never explained with reference to anything from which it differs, but only the repetition of the 'indifferent instant'[14] which is in turn implicated by timeless difference. The 'eternal' aspect of the return involves timeless difference which 'returns' through the recurrence of living presence. In contrast, Blanchot does not characterise the interaction between repetition and difference in this way, since he sidesteps any inclination to describe repetition in the eternal return as initially determined or as lived. However, because he is interested in artistic experience and the absence of an origin to the work of art, he characterises experience not in the context of determination or life, but in the context of memory and the undetermined:

> [P]oetry is [not] the expression of a rich personality, capable of living and of having lived. Memories are necessary, but only that they may be forgotten: in order that in this forgetfulness — in the silence of a profound metamorphosis — there might at last be born a word, the first word of a poem. 'Experience' here means contact with being, renewal of oneself in this contact — an experiment, but one that remains undetermined. (Blanchot 1989: 87/105)

Blanchot's notion of experience can be understood as the experience *of* the 'undetermined' or the 'forgotten memory' which does not have to do with the repetition of habit, but is the experience of a confrontation with real difference that cannot be or was never lived. In this way, Blanchot does *not distinguish* between what Deleuze calls empirical and immemorial memory. Similarly, his approach to determination can be contrasted with Deleuze's along these lines. Habit involves determined repetition, albeit paradoxically, through the real, indeterminate difference of the immemorial which implicates it (or which it develops). It is the impossibility of determination, this lack of origin to forgetfulness (as opposed to the identity of the origin of reminiscence), which marks Blanchot's contribution to characterising sense, or meaning, in the eternal return. Blanchot often stresses that

poetry accomplishes nothing, and acknowledges that pure 'writing' is detached from any determined condition of meaning and yet produces 'the meaning of the meaninglessness', noting elsewhere that 'To write is perhaps to bring to the surface something like absent meaning [...] This meaning does not pass by way of being, it never reaches so far; it is expired meaning' (Blanchot 1995a: 329/318; 1995b: 41–2/71). In these terms, as well as those borrowed from Deleuze, meaning does not 'pass by way of' the determined repetition of habit, but is perhaps already 'expired' because it was never determined or lived, and therefore is, as Blanchot says, 'determined by its indeterminacy' (Blanchot 1989: 89/108). So, for Deleuze, the indeterminate nature of unlivable difference is affirmed as an element of the determined repetition of habit, but in Blanchot's view, the indeterminate is affirmed as an element of the determined repetition of memory. The *forgotten* would thus exist within memories or the imagination as an 'undetermined' element, not as the meaning which the artist wishes to unveil *per se*, but as that which paradoxically presents or reveals itself as absent, unrevealable, and meaningless.

Despite Blanchot's insistence on the experience of the forgotten, he nevertheless discusses what he calls 'everyday' experience where, for example, he claims that from the perspective of art, 'everyday speech [...] lacks meaning', and that 'art feels it is lunacy to think that in each word some thing is completely present through the absence that determines it' (Blanchot 1995a: 332–3/321). In other words, 'everyday speech' cannot evoke the *lived presence* of any world, but only the world as a *whole*, since from this artistic perspective, everyday speech takes this lack of meaning, or whole, as its starting point, and, as Blanchot claims, 'subsists on false meanings: it represents the world for us [...]' (Blanchot 1995a 333/321). Everyday speech, then, does not so much represent what Deleuze may call an empirical world of significance, nor is it based on the 'contemplation' of contraction, but instead represents the immemorial, 'total' world of reminiscence, and what Blanchot calls a false, imaginary whole. Blanchot further claims that art 'is a search — an investigation which is not undetermined but is, rather, determined by its indeterminacy, and involves the whole of life, even if it seems to *know nothing of life*' (Blanchot 1989: 89/108 my emphasis). The 'whole of life' described here involves the determined, generic repetition of memory; forgetfulness and negligence about life, by contrast, are responsible for real difference and the poetic 'work' (*oeuvre*). (Blanchot 1989: 107/134, 170/ 224) So, the imaginary whole that is evoked by everyday speech (as the generic repetition of memory) cannot hold itself together, being

that it is unlivable, and Blanchot claims that it is the task of the artist not to represent the whole but, paradoxically, to present realities or memories 'in their forgetfulness'; that is, present their difference without grounding it through repetition or the identity of the world (or the self who has experience in the world).

While Deleuze claims that the eternal return expels *both* 'the content of a repetition which is more or less able to "draw off" difference (Habitus)', *and* 'the form of a repetition which includes difference in order [. . .] to subordinate it to the Same', Blanchot focuses exclusively on the expulsion of latter (Deleuze 1994: 94/125–6). This is because the false whole which Blanchot's artist refuses or 'expels' was never constituted by the paradoxes of lived repetition to begin with, the role of repetition being confined to its erroneous implication of difference in terms of identity or 'the Same' (and to its expulsion). While Deleuze would associate that lived repetition with *fatigue*; for Blanchot, fatigue results from the artist's incessant demand to demonstrate the unlivability and unreality of the whole, that is, the necessary inability to 'accomplish the whole'. In other words, because there are no determined limits of contraction and contemplation, and *only* generic repetition is 'expelled' such that it is implicated by difference, generic repetition is at the same time inexhaustible and must be expelled incessantly. This process 'exhausts' false difference such that it can no longer differ in an identifiable way, and therefore truly differs (Blanchot 1993: 78/110).[15] Such an eternally returning presence is 'unequal' in Blanchot's terms in that the 'different' is presented only as unbearably 'indifferent',[16] and, in this sense, the indifference of a timeless repetition corresponds to difference in an unusual way that neither explains nor is explained by it as such. Thus the artist may use imagery or memories to convey sense, but this sense is not determined by anything remembered or lived. So, for Blanchot, unlike Deleuze, the repetition of habit does not 'expel' generic difference, yet he is still concerned on some level with the expulsion of difference implicated by repetition in memory (such that difference instead implicates repetition) in terms of the literary or artistic product.

Blanchot's account of sense must also be related to his characterisation of force, which is framed around the false, 'imaginary whole'; that is, the realm of the immemorial and artistic experience. This false world of the immemorial, even when the immemorial memory is expelled or 'forgotten', is where the indeterminate is revealed, and even determined, as a force which has no specific relation, or is *only* relation, and is what he calls a 'neutral' force (or simply 'the Neutral'). This puts Blanchot in contrast with Deleuze's understanding of *sense* that is derived from *both*

force *and* its relation. In an essay published four years after Deleuze's work on Nietzsche[17], Blanchot discusses relation and force with regard to Deleuze:

> [W]hoever says force says it always as multiple; if there were a unity of force there would be no force at all. Deleuze expressed this with a decisive simplicity: 'All force is in an essential relation with another force. The being of force is plural, it would be absurd to think it in the singular.' But force is not simply plurality. The plurality of forces means that forces are distant, relating to each other through the distance that makes them plural and inhabits each of them as the intensity of their difference. [...] Thus the distance that separates forces is also their correlation—and, more characteristically, is not only what distinguishes them from without, but what from within constitutes the essence of their distinction. In other words, what holds them at a distance, the outside, constitutes their sole intimacy; it is that by which they act and are subject, 'the differential element' that is the whole of their reality, they being real only inasmuch as they have no reality in and of themselves, but only relations: a relation without terms. (Blanchot 1993: 161/241)

The relation that Blanchot describes here is an *absolute* relation separate from the 'terms' or the forces which would determine it. If, as Blanchot claims, force is *only* the relation of force, then the conclusion that there are *only* relations indicates that the 'distinction' and 'intimacy' of forces is *only* indeterminate, and that determination as such has expired. From Deleuze's perspective, all force involves relation, and all relation is differential, but it is the plurality of *singular* forces which, through their relation, are differenciated. Relation spoken of in terms of *the* distance that makes it plural renders relation indeterminate, and relation apart from its determinable terms elides the particularity of relation and the plurality of force. Distance or plurality may 'inhabit' forces ('la distance [...] est en elles comme l'intensité de leur différence'), but a *given* or *particular* distance only inhabits a force insofar as that force is *determining* and being *determined* by other forces (Blanchot 1969: 161/241). Here a parallel can be drawn to Blanchot's characterisation of artistic experience: like his version of the origin of experience (the false whole), his version of the origin of force, *relation*, is also not constituted by plurality, repetition, or plurality. In the case of experience, it is the false whole or the forgotten, separate from any living presence; likewise, in the case of force, it is *the* 'distance' or *the* 'relation' that is separate from any singular force or particular relation of forces. From Deleuze's perspective, the 'differential relation' of force requires a *plurality* of *determined* and *determining* forces, the plurality of singular forces being that which produces a difference in quantity and a relation of force or

'body'. So, by departing from the repetition involved with experience and the plurality involved with force, Blanchot elides the living or perishable nature of relation and of difference itself. For Deleuze, in contrast, the unlivable difference of the pure past cannot be experienced in itself without the plurality of repetition for itself; that is, the generic repetition of memory, or the false 'whole', cannot be expelled without the living repetition of habit.

Blanchot's intentional neglect of the plurality of force and lived experience results in an intriguingly excessive vision of forgetfulness. Firstly, he characterises the 'distance that separates forces', or what he calls, in this context, the 'outside', as *madness* (Blanchot 1992: 122/166), and this profound error and maddening abstraction from all lived experience both toward and away from the (im)memorial qualifies him to uniquely express the way in which forgetting relates to memory via the eternal return, producing indeterminate meaning in what Deleuze may call its 'extreme form'. The notion of forgetting is quite relevant to Deleuze, as he notes that forgetting becomes a 'positive power' through repetition, and is a force that is 'an integral part of the lived experience of eternal return' (Deleuze 1994: 7–8/15). Blanchot perhaps best characterises forgetfulness when describing a return of forgetting to *its own* indetermination through paradoxical self-reference (or non-reference): 'Forgetting forgotten. Each time I forget, I do nothing but forget that I am forgetting'(Blanchot 1993: 195/290–1). This kind of forgetting would not be an 'event' that we would 'arrive at', and would not determine the *presence* of the forgotten, as in the case with immemorial memory, but, as he claims, 'nonetheless would be determined only by forgetting's indetermination' (Blanchot 1993: 195/290–1). Here 'forgetting' is undetermined in relation to *itself*; forgetting is only forgotten; the term no longer indicates anything but its own 'eternal' and perhaps *maddening* difference in relation to itself. Difference here neither explains nor is explained by the repetition required to forget, but still implies that repetition; in other words, forgetting being determined by its indeterminacy does not 'determine the indeterminate' by grounding it in 'the Same', but instead proceeds by self-differenciation. It is as if Blanchot seeks to describe the very 'eternal' space of difference and relation itself.

Blanchot's radical treatment of 'forgetting's indetermination', which leads to his depiction of life and the world as a 'whole' that is forgotten, elides any notion of determined repetition, and without this dimension of habit, it is logical for him to conclude that the thought of the eternal return would not only be maddening, but also '*tragic*' and result in

'an uninhabitable world in which one is obliged to dwell' (Blanchot 1993: 99/142). This thought is what he calls the 'great refusal' which, when confronted with the *contrariety* produced by difference, would be 'perpetuating the other by the repetition that difference [. . .] calls forth endlessly', resulting in an indifferent, 'eternal oscillation' between differences (Blanchot 1992: 77/108). For example, Blanchot considers the past and future as oscillating terms which are sustained and affirmed by repeating their difference within the 'absence of [the] present', which would rule 'in the simplified form of forgetfulness' (Blanchot 1992: 16/27). The 'experience of a presence' in the eternal return would therefore involve 'a time without present [that] would bear the weight of this exclusion', and, in excluding the past and future, presence would oscillate between those contraries (Blanchot 1992: 23/34). For Deleuze, *sense* or the event is 'brought about' by the 'living present', while the 'pure event', or sense *itself*, is 'eternally neutral', and 'has no present. It rather retreats and advances in two directions at once' (Deleuze 1990: 22/34, 63/ 79).[18] This eternal relation or oscillation can, as Deleuze notes, be between the past and future, where neither can be represented and the event is instead 'the perpetual object of a double question: What is going to happen? What has just happened?'(Deleuze 1990: 63/79).

So, in Deleuze's terms, Blanchot elides precisely that which *brings about*[19] sense – the living presence of *repetition*, and focuses instead entirely on the presence of *difference*: repetition is instead what he calls the 'indifferent difference' through which the oscillation occurs, producing meaning that is, due to its mode of repetition, 'meaningless'. Presence as well as the habitable world are thus refused or excluded through the *repetition that 'carries' difference*,[20] and are in turn weighed down tragically by that which repetition excluded. This is why difference neither explains nor is explained by repetition, and is instead 'carried' by it, *implying* repetition such that it can not be identified as 'the Same'. Curiously, Blanchot claims that this 'paradox of a yes and a no simultaneously affirmed' results in a 'refusal that is not general and abstract but constant and determined', where the *difference* between a yes and no (or anything contrary) is affirmed through a repetitive refusal (Blanchot 1993: 101/145). Lightness or levity therefore concerns not the form of forgetfulness in the present, since presence is negated, but the 'constant and determined' affirmation of that which is deferred from the present. Perhaps Blanchot claims that this presence is not 'general and abstract' because the general and abstract is *refused* through a general and abstract *repetition* that carries real difference, and the refusal returns as such, weighing down the levity of the affirmation.

Blanchot's portrayal of the meaningless repetition that 'carries' difference and gives weight to the eternal return can be contrasted with Deleuze's claim that 'difference is light, aerial and affirmative. To affirm is not to bear but, on the contrary, to discharge and to lighten' (Deleuze 1994: 54; 76). For Deleuze, repetition is not in the position to bear the weight of the difference of the past and present, perhaps because difference in the eternal return already implicates the living or 'light' contraction of habit which, insofar as it develops difference through repetition, undoes the contrariety that would weigh it down.[21] That is, if difference is affirmative, then the role of repetition is not to produce an oscillation between differences, but to differ from itself by developing that difference *through* repetition:

> [R]epetition is the formless being of all differences [. . .] which carries every object [*porte chaque chose*] to that extreme 'form' in which its representation comes undone [. . .] Thus, the circle of eternal return, difference and repetition (which undoes that of the identical and the contradictory) is a tortuous circle in which sameness is said only of that which differs. (Deleuze 1994: 57/80)

Deleuze uses the same verb as Blanchot here (*porter*) to describe how difference is 'carried' by repetition in the eternal return. At first glance, this passage may sound Blanchotian; however, Deleuze's claim is that difference is only carried such that it is 'expelled', lightened, or lived, undoing the 'contradictory' character of difference. Only that which differs can be considered 'the same': differences are not explained through a repetition that would identify them as different, but only through the repetition or dissembling 'sameness' that they imply and embody. This is because when difference is considered via sameness or the form of resemblance, it is actually through a representation that renders it generic. To undo representation is to 'expel' the generic difference of habit that would seek to re-present the past as an expectation toward the future, and also to 'expel' the generic repetition that would seek to re-present all difference and the unlivable in the present by grounding it there, such that a 'formless' repetition develops and explains difference through a 'light' and 'aerial' living presence and an unlived future.

It is perhaps because Blanchot elides the 'living' dimensions of habit and the plurality of forces that produce 'relation' that he excels in describing death and the unlivability of real difference that both he and Deleuze depict. Deleuze in fact often refers to his radical notion of death to discuss the experience of impossibility that is associated with the unlivable, eternal nature of time.[22] Since presence is never living

or determined for Blanchot, it is always an 'absent present', and it is here that what he calls the *other death* occurs. Now, ordinary death is contrary to the eternal return in that it presumes or represents a final state. The other death, by contrast, 'is too light to die' and excludes the 'experience of a presence' of death, where death would instead be, as Blanchot writes, 'the thought of the Eternal Return', always incited by a timeless repetition (Blanchot 1992: 121/166, 125/170–1). Blanchot also notes that the 'other death' is not 'definitive'.

> [F]or it is that which is not accomplished, the interminable and the incessant [. . .] It is inevitable but inaccessible death; it is the abyss of the present, time without a present, with which I have no relationships; it is that toward which I cannot go forth. (Blanchot 1989: 154–55/202)

Deleuze cites Blanchot's notion of the other death when commenting on real difference, interpreting the first death as an 'encounter in a present which causes everything to pass', where the presence of death is disguised and determined, as would be the differences determined mysteriously by immemorial memory (Deleuze 1994: 112/148). The other death, as Deleuze interprets it, is 'neither present nor past but always coming', or is 'an incessant multiple adventure', and also claims that 'the eternal return [. . .] affirm[s] only the excessive and the unequal, the interminable and the incessant' (Deleuze 1994: 112/148, 115/151).

While incessance parallels the paradox of pure difference, the ideal paradox of the eternal return parallels Blanchot's notion of the outside or pure madness. Paradox itself is defined by Deleuze as 'the unthinkable that can only be thought', and this exact formulation is repeated when he and Guattari characterize Blanchot's outside (Deleuze 1990: 74/92; 1994b 59/59). Incessance is, as Blanchot notes, a feature of the outside, and it is important to keep in mind that repetition is only paradoxical by virtue of the simultaneity that is *outside* of the succession in living presence. While Blanchot's incessance 'never fixes itself in a present, refers to no past and goes toward no future' (Blanchot:1993: 45/64–5), Deleuze's version of incessance would necessarily be developed in the presence and dissemblance of successive, determined repetition (albeit a repetition that is infinite rather than proceeding via expectation). Such interminability and incessance of presence in the eternal return, where nothing achieves or 'becomes' its final state, parallels the experience of Blanchot's other death which is not definitive and has no determined presence. Blanchot, when speaking about this death with regard to the eternal return, also characteristically claims that its weight or 'slowness' which 'lags behind dying' (because death can never be present)

would mean to die 'mad' (or become aware of the eternal return and the madness that accompanies all death), as he claims Nietzsche did (Blanchot 1992: 121/166).

The Blanchotian notion of forgetting as an affirmative experience in the eternal return, as well as the other death, appeals to Deleuze because the impossibility of the experience of death indicates that death cannot be an event that would, like generic repetition, identify or explain all the differences of memory. The 'other death', in accordance with Deleuze's version of real difference, involves that which does not differ from life and the subject who lives in an identifiable way. In this sense, we do not 'experience' the other death and it has no living presence *per se*; it is not an immemorial memory lived through a mysterious presence, but is instead, paradoxically, a forgotten presence. Also, like real *sense*, the other death cannot be *represented*, as a final state or otherwise, because its presence, that is, real difference itself, cannot be revealed *per se*. So, Blanchot characterises the 'outside' and the 'other death' through both the weight of madness and the tragedy of an uninhabitable world, and while Deleuze appropriates the idea, in his terms it would be 'light' even in the face of the 'tortuous circle' of the dissolution of identity. Because 'presence' in the eternal return, for Deleuze, involves both the dimensions of memory and of habit, it does not oscillate between contraries/differences that would refuse a final or determined state, but is *lived* as the dissembling sameness that explains difference itself (and not as difference that explains it). This example of the other death, as well as Blanchot's characterisation of forgetting and 'weight', illustrate a presence of difference that does not explain the presence of repetition; his version of real difference, unlike Deleuze's, requires that it always paradoxically differ from itself and never be present in a repetition that would explain it.

If Blanchot is intentionally negligent toward lived experience, it is because he is all the more attentive to the unlivable. This attentiveness enables him to uncompromisingly depict meaninglessness (that is never determined) as meaningful, pure, and maddening, since meaning in this case differs *incessantly* by, in Deleuze's terms, always expelling the 'whole', or the generic repetition of immemorial memory, that would seek to include it. This is, finally, why Blanchot characterises the eternal return as repetition that 'carries' difference: it is difference that consistently, incessantly returns through the interminable expulsion or forgetting of the imaginary whole; difference that is always both burdened by, and differing by virtue of, the repetition of the 'neutral' force that is outside of all relations of force and lived experience

('a relation without terms' that has 'no reality') (Blanchot 1993: 161/241). This difference neither explains nor is explained by that repetition, though it implicates repetition; furthermore, because this difference has no living presence, reality, or memory, it is best described via forgetting, the tragic, or the 'other death'. Deleuze is indebted to Blanchot for this notion of difference, yet in his characterisation of the eternal return, the real difference of the pure past implies the *living* repetition of habit that explains those differences and renders them 'light, aerial, and affirmative'. It is in this way that the two thinkers have conflicting approaches to the determination of *sense*. For Blanchot, 'meaningless meaning' is determined by the unlivable difference of artistic experience, paradoxically creating an image out of forgetfulness. For Deleuze, it is the product of the determined 'contraction' or living repetition of habit (and the plurality of force), and also of real, timeless, and unlivable difference (and relations of force) which paradoxically implicate and are developed by that lived repetition.

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Notes

Note that in all citations of Deleuze and Blanchot page references given within the text are first to the English translation and second the original French.

1. See notes 8 and 9 on Proust.
2. See, for example, Deleuze 1994: 41/60, 242/312 and note 16.
3. The question of 'value' is also relevant.
4. See Blanchot 1992: 23/ 36, where affirmation in the eternal return is based on the *exclusion* of presence and that which would give totality its realized meaning. Deleuze will distinguish between reaction, where denial precedes affirmation, and action, where affirmation precedes denial (Deleuze 1983: chp. 4 and 5). He also notes that 'the eternal return [. . .] produces an image of the negative as the *consequence* of what it affirms' (Deleuze 1994: 301/385).
5. I will usually translate the French term *sens* as *sense*, but also use 'meaning' when appropriate.
6. While Deleuze uses the terms implication and explication especially in chapter 5 of *Difference and Repetition*, and also in his work on Spinoza, I am placing emphasis on the terms 'imply' and 'explain' to summarize his approach and compare it to Blanchot's. I use the term 'explain' not to denote interpretation or clarification, but to denote unfolding sense or meaning.
7. See Deleuze 1991: 68–9; 66, for a distinction between habit and experience.
8. Deleuze appropriates many of the concepts surrounding simultaneity from Proust and Bergson. For example, the repetition of habit and memory loosely parallel Proust's voluntary and involuntary memory, and Bergson's motor memory (learning, habit) and spontaneous memory (the pure past).
9. The question of remembering through forgetfulness also concerns the ways Deleuze and Blanchot read Proust. In Deleuze's account, something in the world impels the search for meaning, even if worldly signs are devoid of meaning (which, from a Proustian perspective, makes lived time a 'race to the grave') while Blanchot characterises lived time for Proust as destructive and an impediment to forgetfulness (Deleuze 2000: 6–7, 18, 84–5/12–13, 26–7, 104).
10. See Deleuze 1991: 67/63–4, where he insists that habit cannot be reduced to pure mechanism.

11. Though Deleuze's attitude toward the term 'organism' changes in his later work with Guattari and his work on Francis Bacon, I use the term here with regard to its characterisation in *Difference and Repetition*.
12. Good sense goes 'from the most to the least differentiated, from the singular to the regular, and from the remarkable to the ordinary [. . .].' (Deleuze 1990: 76/94).
13. Deleuze uses this term distinctively from differen*t*iation. Differen*c*iation concerns 'immediate relation' and 'the self-different which relates different to different' (Deleuze 1994: 119/156). Differen*t*iation has to do with other topics such as the dialectic and the virtual.
14. For the phrase 'indifferent instant', which is borrowed to describe the repetition of habit, see Deleuze 1994: 84/114.
15. See also *L'Attente l'oubli* where the characters are 'exhausted' by attempting to 'say everything', and Deleuze's essay on Beckett, 'L'épuisé'.
16. For Blanchot, the inequality of the difference that implicates indifference is associated with eternal return (Blanchot 1992: 83/115–6). He also portrays the indifference of place 'impersonal' and unlivable, where the characters can only 'conjure up this same room inhabited by someone else' (Blanchot 1997: 6/13). The characters are 'unbearably' indifferent to one and other, which nevertheless 'clarifies' and renders their presence 'attractive' and 'unequal' (Blanchot 1997: 53/78).
17. Originally (December 1966) 'Nietzsche et l'écriture fragmentaire', in *Nouvelle Revue Française* n. 168, pp. 967–983, and (January 1967) n. 169, pp. 19–32.
18. Deleuze's comments here cannot be read as a response to Blanchot's cited above (but rather to his earlier work), as *Le pas au-delà* was published after *Logique Du Sens*.
19. It is important to note that 'bringing about' the event does not mean to realize it (Deleuze 1990: 22/34). In the terms from this essay, the event would only be brought about by recurrence or repetition that cannot be represented.
20. Blanchot 1992: 16/27. See also Blanchot 1997: 71/102.
21. Nietzsche's aphorism 'The Greatest Weight' could perhaps be interpreted differently via Deleuze and Blanchot here. See Nietzsche 2001: 194–5.
22. For Deleuze's explanation of Blanchot's other death as it relates to time for the Stoics (Aion and Chronos), see Deleuze 1990: 63/79, 151/177.

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Deleuze, Bakhtin, and the 'Clamour of Voices'[1]

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Abstract

This paper pursues two goals. The first concerns clarifying the relationship between Deleuze and the Russian linguist and culturologist, Mikhail Bakhtin. Not only does Deleuze refer to Bakhtin as a primary source for his emphasis on voice and indirect discourse, both thinkers valorise heterogeneity and creativity. I argue Deleuze's notions of 'deterritorialisation' and 'reterritorialisation' parallel Bakhtin's idea of 'heteroglossia' and 'monoglossia'. Clarifying the relationship between Deleuze and Bakhtin leads directly to the second of my two other goals. I will argue that an important difference in their characterisation of voice reveals a strong point in Deleuze's philosophy, one related to the political sphere. At the same time, however, Deleuze's particular way of articulating this point conceals a weakness, one related to the idea of the subject. I will conclude my paper by suggesting a way to address this weakness.

Keywords: absolute deterritorialisation, agency, body without organs, constellation of voices, elliptical identity, heteroglossia, radical democracy, virtual-real

In *The Logic of Sense*, Gilles Deleuze claims that 'Being is Voice' (Deleuze 1990: 179). He identifies Being with voice because '[Being] is said,' and said 'univocally,' that is, 'in one and the same sense,' of all events, a 'single voice for every hum of voices,' even though these events otherwise differ from one another (Deleuze 1990: 179–80). This use of voice in relation to Being echoes an earlier statement in *Difference in Repetition*: a 'single and same voice for the whole thousand-voiced multiple . . . a single clamour of Being for all beings' (Deleuze 1994: 304).[2] In addition to mentioning voice, both passages convey Deleuze's well-known conviction that Being is univocal only insofar as it is at the

same time multiple, indeed, the very division of itself into difference, into many distinct voices.

Deleuze's explanation for identifying Being with voice – that it is *said* univocally of everything – is mysterious. Without further elaboration, it suggests that someone, perhaps Being itself, says Being univocally of all things. Such a suggestion would violate Deleuze's rejection of anthropomorphism. A more satisfactory explanation can be garnered from his use of voice in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987), where he deploys the term to characterise 'indirect discourse,' the linguistic structure he feels is at the heart of language and expression. However, his characterisation of indirect discourse involves an encounter with another advocate of voice, the Russian linguist and culturologist, Mikhail Bakhtin, and leads ultimately to a problem concerning political agency. In responding to that problem, I will introduce an idea that I think remains within the spirit, if not the letter, of Deleuze's philosophy, our 'elliptical identity' with the clamour of voices.

I. Voice as Indirect Discourse

Deleuze cites Bakhtin as a primary source for his emphasis on voice and indirect discourse (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 77–78, 82, 84, 523n.5, 524n10).[3] One of the reasons why he cites Bakhtin in this context is that both thinkers reject language as the unitary system of linguistic constants and universals presented to us in grammar books or traditional linguistic theory (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 7, 92–3, 102–4; Bakhtin 1981: 288). In place of this traditional view, Deleuze argues that language is always involved in an 'immanent process of variation' with respect to its phonemic, morphemic, and syntactical elements, a process he refers to as 'becoming-minoritarian'. This is a process intrinsic to language, which manifests as a relentless and intrinsic division of language into myriad 'minor' languages or voices, for example, American English 'becoming' Black English, Spanglish, and an outpouring of literary experiments (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 102–6). Bakhtin similarly declares that 'language is heteroglot from top to bottom', that is, a plethora of intersecting 'social languages' or 'voices', the 'co-existence of socio-ideological contradictions between the present and the past, between differing epochs of the past, between different socio-ideological groups in the present, between tendencies, schools, circles, and so forth, all given bodily form' (Bakhtin 1981: 291; see also 170, 365).

Deleuze follows Bakhtin in taking a form of reported speech, namely indirect discourse, as the central structure of language. Both Deleuze and

Bakhtin hold that every utterance is ultimately an instance of this type of speech. To clarify the meaning of indirect discourse, we can begin by contrasting it with the form of reported speech known as 'direct discourse'.[4] Direct discourse is the reproduction of another's words as faithfully as possible. For example, the statement, 'They protested: "US, get out of Iraq!"', reproduces what protesters have said with virtually no accenting on the part of the reporter. In contrast, indirect discourse, 'They protested that the US should get out of Iraq,' diminishes the exclamatory character of the protestors' discourse, transforming it almost entirely into the relatively 'neutralised' content of the reporter's own discourse. But there is another form of indirect discourse that is particularly prized by Bakhtin and Deleuze, 'quasi-indirect discourse' or 'free indirect discourse'. In this form of indirect discourse, the two earlier statements become 'They protested: "The US, they shouted, should get out of Iraq!"'. The reporter's and the protester's voices are mixed in the statement, yet, relative to the other two forms, neither voice is absorbed into the other. In other words, free indirect discourse helps Deleuze and Bakhtin illustrate their claim that every utterance involves a constellation of interacting voices. Both Deleuze and Bakhtin argue that free indirect discourse and the interplay among voices it implies is the core of language. But, as we will see, the levels upon which they locate this interplay differ and carry profound implications for the meaning of voice, the status of communication, and the sources and meaning of political life. Thus my exposition of Bakhtin in this essay has several purposes. It helps clarify Deleuze's use of voice, makes a comparison that should be of particular interest to both Deleuze and Bakhtin scholars, and plays an important role in dealing with the issue of political agency in relation to Deleuze's notion of voice.

In his treatment of indirect discourse, Deleuze speaks of 'all manner of voices [being contained] in a [single] voice' and claims that one 'draws' his or her voice from 'the constellation of voices' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 77, 84; see also 80).[5] But Deleuze also holds that this drawing of a voice takes place on the 'unconscious' ('*l'inconscient*') rather than the conscious level of our existence. Specifically, he says that this constellation of voices is related to the 'collective assemblage of enunciation', a 'molecular' or multi-voiced assemblage that 'is not given in my conscious mind, any more than it depends solely on my apparent social determinations, which combine many heterogeneous regimes of signs' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 84). Because our voice is drawn from this collective assemblage, Deleuze emphasises that 'my direct discourse is still the free indirect discourse running through me, coming from other worlds or

other planets' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 84). In other words, what Deleuze calls 'drawing upon' in this context is actually the enunciation of a set of interrelated voices that have already been made prominent for us in the collective assemblage of enunciation. We are many voices, as many as are in the assemblage, but different ones are salient on different occasions. We speak as if the words we use are our own when we are really enunciating or 'reporting on' the dominant voice for that occasion and, from its heights, explicitly or implicitly referring to the others. Thus Deleuze can say of one of his joint works with Félix Guattari, 'The two of us wrote *Anti-Oedipus* together. Since each of us was several, there was already quite a crowd' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 3).

In this context, Deleuze does not use 'unconscious' in the Freudian sense of the term. Rather, he has in mind a use much closer to Michel Foucault's idea of a 'positive unconscious',[6] that is, a discourse or voice that frames our conscious activity without our immediate awareness of its doing so, and is not repressed or requiring of therapeutic techniques for its possible identification by us. Deleuze's appeal to this unconscious dimension of enunciation has the striking effect of leading him to declare that indirect discourse is logically prior to dialogic exchange and has 'nothing to do' with 'intersubjective communication' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 78, 85).[7] The unconscious voices determine the roles we play in conscious communication with each other. Deleuze reinforces and further elaborates this idea of the unconscious dimension of enunciation when he relates the voices in the collective assemblage of enunciation to what he calls 'order words'. In clarifying this term, Deleuze insists utterances are always the enunciation of a discourse or voice that has preceded us, the transmission of what someone else has said. Indeed, he says that language itself is the transmission of these order words and compels our obedience: 'Language is not life; it gives life orders' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 76, 77). When we speak, therefore, we are passing on the way that language has already ordered a social situation: we implicitly transmit another's voice or social discourse, one to which we primarily and necessarily conform, one that, to use Althusser's term in a qualified manner, 'interpellates' us, provides us with our identity and our 'social obligations' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 79).[8] It should be clear that 'another's voice' here refers to an anonymous social discourse and not to the personal or individual sense of 'other'.

Order words are recognisable as 'incorporeal transformations'. Their utterance transforms the social status of the subjects and objects they are applied to. More specifically, Deleuze says that the collective assemblage

of enunciation and its voices are a complex of acts as well as the statements which accomplish these acts (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 80, 81). When, for example, judges pronounce someone guilty, they, as the subjects of *enunciation*, transform the accused person, the subject of the *statement*, into a convicted criminal. The condemned person doesn't change corporeally but is nonetheless given a new social status. Correspondingly, the judges, in their enunciations, maintain themselves in their judicial identity through the relation of the same statement to its larger discursive context, the legal system. In short, both agent and patient are incorporeally transformed in the occurrence of the statement and its relation to the larger legal discourse (the voice of the law) as well as to the collective assemblage of enunciation. Ultimately, Deleuze argues, the very possibility of language depends upon the indirect discourse of the collective assemblage and its order words and the incorporeal transformations they involve:

> [I]f the collective assemblage is in each instance coextensive with the linguistic system considered, and to language as a whole, it is because it expresses the set of incorporeal transformations that effectuate the condition of the possibility of language and utilize the elements of the linguistic system. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 85)

Like Deleuze, Bakhtin emphasises the powerful role of language in shaping reality. He says, for example, that each social language or voice is a 'form' for conceptualising its surroundings and is 'characterised by its own objects, meanings and values' (Bakhtin 1981: 382, 356). Each of these languages, moreover, is reflexive and evaluative, that is, each is 'a particular point of view on the world and on oneself, the position enabling a person to interpret and evaluate his own self and his surrounding reality' (Bakhtin 1984: 47).[9] Bakhtin also holds that each voice interacts with other voices in every utterance. More specifically, he argues that indirect discourse is an example of what he calls 'double-voicing' or 'hybridization', that is, 'a mixture of two social languages within the limits of a single utterance, an encounter, within the arena of an utterance, between two different linguistic consciousnesses, separated from one another by an epoch, by social differentiation or by some other factor' (Bakhtin 1981: 358, 304).

The mixture of social languages in indirect discourse can be explicit or implicit. If we make a parody of someone else's speech, we explicitly cite that person's voice and make it serve our opposing view of the subject matter. If, on the other hand, we omit explicit reference to an opposing or related voice, this other voice nonetheless persists implicitly

in our discourse. For example, if we praise democracy, we tacitly and disapprovingly refer to autocracy even though we don't mention it by name or overt description: its negation is part of the meaning of democracy. Because each social discourse includes an explicit or implicit response to other ones, ultimately to every discourse in one way or the other, we can extend Bakhtin's point to mean that all the voices of society make reference to one another, are what they are in light of each another, or, more dramatically, resound within one other. Note, however, that these references to one another are diacritical in nature, each voice playing a role in establishing the others through its difference from them rather than by way of a Hegelian absolute spirit or any other form of totalising synthesis.

This hybridisation of voices also implies that every word and object is overlaid with the 'accents' or points of view of the different voices. Thus Bakhtin says that objects are 'entangled, shot through with shared thoughts, points of view, alien value judgments and accents', and therefore appear to us 'by the "light" of alien words that have already been spoken about them' (Bakhtin 1981: 276). For Bakhtin, then, the world reflects back to us what we are, beings of dialogue, and in the strong form of hybridised voices, that is, voices literally shot through with one another.[10]

Despite the apparent similarity between Bakhtin's notion of hybridisation and Deleuze's notion of collective assemblage of enunciation, Bakhtin does not agree with Deleuze that indirect discourse is prior to intersubjective communication. He holds instead that dialogue is the core of indirect discourse and language. Indeed, Bakhtin sees dialogue as the basis of human life itself (Bakhtin 1984: 293). Nonetheless, he equivocates on whether these dialogic subjects are the active agents or passive vehicles of the voices they articulate. In other words, he does not say clearly whether or not subjects are interpellated, constituted, in advance by social languages – does not proclaim whether our role is that of agent or mere vehicle in the unconscious 'selection' of the voices that constitute our identity. For example, he says that dialogue is 'a struggle among socio-linguistic points of view, not an intra-language struggle between individual wills or logical contradictions' (Bakhtin 1981: 273). But then he claims that 'the speaker's speech will is manifested primarily in the *choice of a particular speech genre*', such as a familiar greeting or the specific idiom of a professional group (Bakhtin 1986: 78; italics in original). Is he here referring to an autonomous will that chooses a specific speech genre, or is the choice made always under the tutelage of a social language that includes speech

genre alternatives but no choice about the social language itself on the part of the subject who expresses it? Equally enigmatic with respect to the issue of the relation between subjects and social language, Bakhtin says that dialogised heteroglossia is 'anonymous and social as language' but 'simultaneously concrete and accented as an individual utterance' (Bakhtin 1981: 272). Does the notion of 'individual' here imply subject agency or simply subjective presence?[11]

II. The Virtual-Real and Voices

Bakhtin and Deleuze differ on the status of communication. For Bakhtin, it is the core of language and life; for Deleuze, it is merely an off-shoot of the constellation of voices that comprise the collective assemblage of enunciation. This difference deepens when we consider that Deleuze sees the collective assemblage of enunciation as only one component of a more encompassing structure that he also refers to as an assemblage (*l'agencement*). It is only in light of the assemblage, and more particularly Deleuze's distinction between the 'virtual-real' and the 'actual-real' which is central to it, that it becomes possible to answer the question why does Deleuze claim that 'Being is Voice'.

For Deleuze, assemblages are the basic organisational units of humans and other territorial animals (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 323, 503). Functioning on both a micro and macro scale simultaneously, assemblages are interrelated with each other and involve subjects and their surroundings as the vehicles of their incessant becoming or variation and metamorphosing. Each of them includes the collective assemblage of enunciation and a 'machinic assemblage of bodies' among its components. Because the collective assemblage of enunciation is 'superlinear', that is, allows for greater variation, Deleuze assigns it and its incorporeal transformations priority over the machine assemblage of bodies.[12] Deleuze refers to the collective assemblage of enunciation as 'expression', that is, semiotic system, and to the machinic assemblage of bodies as 'content', that is, objects in conjunction with the socially organised bodies that perceive them (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 85–6).

Although it has priority, expression is limited to the degree that the full relation between the collective assemblage of enunciation and the machinic assemblage of bodies is based on the 'abstract machine' and the 'diagram' that Deleuze places at the core of the assemblage proper. He holds that the abstract machine and its diagram 'pilot' the becoming of an assemblage and thus determine the relation between its collective and machinic components.[13] Because of the piloting by the

abstract machine and its diagram, the relation between the collective and machinic components is not reducible to either of the two ways in which the relation between expression and content, language and perception, is usually construed. It is neither one of expression determining content nor of content dictating expression. Rather, the two components are connected by what Deleuze calls 'reciprocal presupposition'. According to this notion, expression and content each have their own open route of variation as initially set for them by the abstract machine and its diagram. But within their lines of variation, each can affect the other: a poem, for example, can produce a variation within content – a new way of seeing or ordering things – and an unexpected sight can occasion a new combination of words. Because of the abstract machine's guiding diagram, expression and content, the collective assemblage of enunciation and the machinic assemblage of bodies, are isomorphic in relation to each other rather than homogenous or unilaterally determined the one by the other (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 108).[14] Although this is not immediately pertinent, Bakhtin's emphasis upon social language as a 'form' for conceptualising and evaluating one's surroundings implies that he accepts a unilateral relation between expression and content, the former largely determining the latter. However, Bakhtin never states this explicitly.

The relation that Deleuze postulates as holding between expression and content is only the 'horizontal axis' of an assemblage. Deleuze says that a second, 'vertical' axis also operates in each assemblage as an event (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 88). As an event, the assemblage is 'always already complete as it proceeds and so long as it proceeds' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 382). This proceeding, moreover, is the event's continual line of variation or metamorphosing. Deleuze indicates the importance of this mode of variation by calling it 'absolute deterritorialisation.' Indeed, he says that this movement of deterritorialisation is what holds an assemblage together, providing it 'consistency' or solidity, in the very act of taking the assemblage beyond itself and producing new differences, new metamorphoses (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 336; see also 56, 70, 294, 323, 328–9, 337).[15] He therefore assigns absolute deterritorialisation ontological priority over another force to which it is symbiotically related, namely 'reterritorialisation' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 56, 270; see also 174, 303, 337, 368, 415, 473, 496–7). The movement of reterritorialisation limits the degree of deterritorialisation or novelty that can take place with respect to the assemblage. It thereby provides some continuity among the singular metamorphoses that make up an event's becoming and ensures that Deleuze's cosmology does

not repeat the unfettered creativity proclaimed by discredited doctrines of vitalism – it ensures, in other words, that Deleuze can replace the opposing concepts, 'cosmos' and 'chaos', with what he calls, following James Joyce, 'Chaosmos'.[16]

The abstract machine and absolute deterritorialisation operate and advance an assemblage's becoming on what Deleuze calls 'the plane of consistency'. Deleuze refers to this plane and its two operatives as 'virtual-real' in contrast to 'actual-real' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 270; see also 270, 267–68, 510, 511;).[17] As is well known, the virtual-real functions as a principle of creativity and metamorphosis; it is the driving-force of the cosmos in Deleuze's philosophy. More specifically, the abstract machine and absolute deterritorialisation are 'anexact', or relatively open forces, that give rise to and are effectuated into the exact or 'actual-real' expressions and contents that appear upon 'the plane of organisation'.[18] Despite the role of the plane of organisation and reterritorialisation – the actual-real – in limiting the assemblage's immediate range of variation, the assemblage will be carried away and transformed once again by the ongoing and Proteus-like activity of absolute deterritorialisation.

This distinction between the actual and virtual dimensions of an assemblage suggests that the voices within the collective assemblage are virtual realities prior to becoming the actual discourses that constitute or interpellate us on the plane of organisation. Thus when Deleuze refers to Being as the 'single and same voice for the whole thousand-voiced multiple', as a 'clamour of voices', he is referring to the constellation of virtual voices or abstract machines – the same forces that, in conjunction with absolute deterritorialisation, produce the continuous variation of actualised voices or order words and interpellated subjects like ourselves, thus constituting society.[19] Deleuze refers to this actualising process as the 'effectuation' brought about by the assemblage's machinic component and says that it, in conjunction with reterritorialisation, transforms absolute deterritorialisation into a more limited 'relative deterritorialising' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 56, 508–10). Thus the virtual voices exceed their actual versions and the order words that constitute us as subjects or egos on the plane of organisation.

So why does Deleuze identify Being with voice? Three reasons stand out. First, voice is associated with expression in normal parlance, and Deleuze grants priority to expression over content in the becoming of an assemblage or event. Because this expression is an immanent aspect of a becoming, it requires no one other than itself to speak its piece, that is,

no one to say it of the many events of which it is univocally said. Second, Deleuze emphasises that abstract machines intersect with one another. The idea of intersection makes sense on the level of our experiences with voices: we hear other voices clamouring within our own, as when we unexpectedly sound to ourselves like our parents or some other figure that has become salient in our lives. Unlike the traditional notion of matter, voices can capture the 'clamour of Being', the resounding of all 'vocal' events within each other, their mutual intersecting or 'composed chaos'. And unlike the traditional notion of mind, voices are spatial-temporal beings (in either their virtual or actual forms), rooted in nature, thoroughly immanent. Voices, or abstract machines and their assemblages, therefore surpass and replace the traditional notions of matter and mind. Third, voices are more than the actual discourses associated with them: in their intrinsic reference to each other, the ongoing interplay among them, each of them is an infinite variation of itself. For at least these three reasons, we can see why Deleuze would want to say that 'Being is Voice'.

III. Voices and the Political

When Deleuze assigns priority to absolute deterritoralisation, he means that this priority holds in nature, society, and political life. Moreover, his adherence to the Nietzschean *amor fati* means that we should embrace absolute deterritorialisation as our guiding force in society and politics. But absolute deterritorialisation is no more separate for Deleuze from 'solidarity' (the intersection of all abstract machines, or the 'mechanosphere' – Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 514) and 'difference' or 'heterogeneity' than it is from fecundity or the continual creation of difference. Thus when Deleuze speaks favourably of 'a cosmic people' and 'a cosmic world', we can infer that this means a people who affirm all three of these dimensions of the cosmos, solidarity, heterogeneity, and fecundity. If these people were to speak of their society as 'democratic', it would be fair to assume that they would have in mind not traditional 'procedural democracy' but a more profound form, a way of life that emphasises the achievement of solidarity, heterogeneity, and fecundity, striving to live up to all three without sacrificing one for the other. A leading commentator on Deleuze's political philosophy suggests a similar view:

> *A Thousand Plateaus* ... is a political ontology ... [and] an ethics in the sense that, as for Spinoza, normative commitments are immanent to their

> philosophy of nature as well as their social ontology. In all cases, it presents a world understood as a complex of interconnected assemblages (earth, territory, forms of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation), where the overriding norm is that of deterritorialisation. By [Deleuze and Guattari's] account, philosophy is utopian in the sense that it opens up the possibility of new forms of individual and collective identity, thereby effecting the absolute deterritorialisation of the present in thought. (Patton 2000: 9)

In this quote, Patton says that 'the overriding norm is that of deterritorialisation'. But one can add that his mention of the 'complex of interconnected assemblages', along with the fact that absolute deterritorialisation is fecund and produces difference or heterogeneity, should have led him to say that all three of these dimensions, the affirmation of each of them, constitutes the full norm of the political for a cosmic people. Such a qualification is important: it prohibits slaughtering others on the basis of any of these three dimensions taken by itself, for example, forced labour in the name of the fecundity that gave us the pyramids or other artistic wonders, or the elimination of differences in the name of a fascistic form of solidarity. Thus when we say that absolute deterritorialisation is the 'overriding norm', we should understand it as including the other two dimensions as well. Unlike traditional ontologies or metaphysics, however, this philosophical support for radical democracy does not base itself on epistemological foundationalism, for example, the Rationalists' innate ideas or the Empiricists' indubitable sense data. Rather, and as Deleuze himself suggests, this philosophy must establish itself by making itself compelling within the *agon* of contesting views. In that setting, it employs logical argument, evocative rhetoric, and all other implements of thought in order to assert itself and counter-effect tired lines of thinking.[20]

Given this view of politics, we can see why Deleuze thinks, contrary to Bakhtin, that communication is at most a secondary development in relation to his version of indirect discourse, that, to repeat it again, indirect discourse has 'nothing to do' with intersubjective communication (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 78, 85). The voices that make up the virtual realm are primary and give rise to the order words that interpellate the subjects who then communicate with one another. Furthermore, these voices are interrelated, heterogeneous, and intrinsically productive of metamorphosis, thus providing ontological support for the three aspects of radical democracy just enumerated: social solidarity, heterogeneity, and fecundity. In contrast, Bakhtin seems reluctant to commit himself on this ontological level. He complements his notion of hybridisation with the idea of 'dialogised heteroglossia'

(Bakhtin 1981: 272–3). This term refers to the struggle between two socio-linguistic tendencies in society. The first of these, 'monoglossia,' is the tendency for a 'master language' to subordinate all other idioms and practices to itself. The second of the two socio-linguistic tendencies, 'heteroglossia,' counters the first by continually stratifying the master language into a multitude of more particular social languages (Bakhtin 1981: 276). As an example of the conflict between these two tendencies or dialogised heteroglossia, Bakhtin points to how the 'low genres' or speech habits of the disadvantaged socio-economic classes in Renaissance Europe continually opposed the hegemony of the literary and other master languages of the officials and upper classes (Bakhtin 1981: 273).[21]

Superficially, Bakhtin's ideas of heteroglossia and monoglossia are like Deleuze's 'absolute deterritorialisation' and 'reterritorialisation'. But Bakhtin does not unambiguously declare that heteroglossia and monoglossia are tendencies that are inherent, built into, natural and social reality. In reference to monoglossia, for example, he says that 'a unitary language gives expression to forces working toward concrete verbal and ideological unification and centralisation, which develop in vital connection with the processes of sociopolitical and cultural centralisation' (Bakhtin 1981: 271). He does not seem to take the unitary language as itself an endogenous force, for he says that it 'is not something given [*dan*] but is always in essence posited [*zadam*]' (Bakhtin 1981: 271).[22] Are the 'forces' he speaks of linguistic in anything but a contingent sense? Are the forces dependent upon non-linguistic structures and dynamics for their unitary status? And are these forces, whether linguistic or non-linguistic, intrinsic to human social and historical existence, or is the centralisation Bakhtin has in mind itself contingent on the changing desires or wills of the actors involved – the members of some societies or historical periods may prefer centralisation, yet others may reject it or give it at most a secondary role? The same issue seems to be true of heteroglossia for Bakhtin: he links the empirical reality of the 'languages of social groups, "professional" and "generic" languages of generations and so forth' with the 'uninterrupted processes of decentralisation and disunification' (Bakhtin 1981: 272). But he leaves it unclear as to whether these processes are intrinsic to socio-linguistic life or dependent upon the variable wills of individuals or on some other non-linguistic factor.

The question of heteroglossia's contingency is especially important within the context of political life. The tendency towards heteroglossia in society would seem to guarantee that new voices and formerly

marginalised voices can always come to the fore no matter how strong the tendency toward monoglossia might be at any period. But if this tendency is only pervasive and not intrinsic to social life, the many voices at play in indirect discourse could always be overridden by a voice with the power to interpellate subjects exclusively within its own discourse and thereby silence the other voices initially in dialogue with it or resounding within it – could always eliminate the interplay among multiple voices involved in indirect discourse, establishing, for example, a society akin to Orwell's *1984*. In other words, Bakhtin's dialogised heteroglossia and hybridisation build in no guarantee for the actualisation or approximation of the radical democracy described above. The interplay among the voices of the assemblage could all be brought to a screeching, possibly irreversible halt by a voice that has raised itself to the level of an unchallengeable oracle. Heteroglossia could always be trumped by monoglossia. Furthermore, one could no longer appeal to *Amor Fati* and the ontological reality of absolute deterritorialisation as a basis for justifying radical democracy as the proper political philosophy for societies.

In contrast to the ambiguity of Bakhtin's position, Deleuze's idea of virtual voices ontologically establishes the ineluctability of the production of new voices and hence an ineliminable basis for democracy. The intrinsic open texture of these voices and absolute deterritorialisation ensure that heterogeneity and novelty – the becoming of new voices – will always be reasserted even when society is in the throes of oppression. In other words, beneath the level of communication or Bakhtin's dialogised heteroglossia, beneath the merely contingent conflict between heteroglossia and monoglossia, virtual voices and absolute deterritorialisation ensure the accualisation to one degree or another of a virtual democracy that exemplifies the three-fold character of solidarity, diversity, and fecundity.

Does absolute deterritorialisation's support for democracy justify the claim that it has ontological status as an ineliminable feature of reality and society? Deleuze appeals to phenomena in science, art, literature, and other realms in order to indicate that variation underlies and is masked by identities and laws. Moreover, Merleau-Ponty and other phenomenologists argue that we are aware in perceptual experience of the indeterminate – akin to Deleuze's (and Husserl's) 'anexact' – as a 'positive phenomenon' rather than as the merely mistaken or vague presence of things to us. That is, we experience things as calling upon us to provide creatively both them and ourselves with a greater degree of completion or significance in each perceptual event.[23] None of

these considerations provide a final proof for the primacy of absolute deterritorialisation and the virtual. But together, and relative to the agonistic dispute with the other paradigms that operate within our historical epoch, they make a compelling case for this claim.

IV. The Dilemma of a 'Cosmic People'

Deleuze's radical treatment of voice and indirect discourse, its ontological guarantee of a novel form of democracy, comes at a philosophical price – one that paradoxically threatens to undermine our role as political actors and any valorisable meaning the notion of democracy could have for us. The relationship between the Deleuzian idea of virtual voices and democracy leaves us with an unsettling question: could this democracy have anything to do with 'us' as citizens or political actors? Are we left with the dilemma that guaranteeing the future actuality of radical democracy means the elimination or de-humanisation of us? That is, the loss of any sense in which we play an active role in our political destiny? On the plane of consistency and absolute deterritorialisation, Deleuze describes forces so anonymous that they seem to have little to do with us and preclude our role as responsible agents in forming our political trajectory. On the other hand, within the collective assemblage of enunciation, we are merely the interpellation, not the creators or establishers, of the voices whose discourses we enunciate. We can only obey the order words these voices provide for us. Thus Deleuze says,

> The social character of enunciation is intrinsically founded only if one succeeds in demonstrating how enunciation in itself implies *collective assemblages*. It then becomes clear that the statement is individuated, and enunciation subjectified, only to the extent that an impersonal collective assemblage requires it and determines it to be so [...] Indirect discourse is not explained by the distinction between subjects; rather it is the assemblage, as it freely appears in this discourse, that explains all the voices present within a single voice, the glimmer of girls in a monologue by Charlus, the languages in a language, the order-words in a word. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 80)

In short, Deleuze's treatment of (free) indirect discourse is so indirect in relation to us that we seem left out of the new world that he prophesises.

This worry increases when Deleuze speaks of 'egos' and 'bodies without organs'. Deleuze usually equates the interpellated or plane of organisation version of ourselves with 'egos' produced by society – in our own time by an axiomatic of capitalism that channels our desire

in a predetermined direction in accordance with what he calls 'control society' (see especially Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 70–3; Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 492; Deleuze 1995). If we are to have a creative role in the trajectory of our lives, it must therefore take place on the plane of consistency and in alignment with abstract machines and the absolute deterritorialisation that pilots the becoming of the assemblage, that is, in relation to virtual voices. But Deleuze says that on this plane '[h]umans are made exclusively of inhumanities' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 190).[24] These inhumanities are the anonymous intensities, speeds, and cutting edges of deterritorialisation that are the non-totalised 'parts' of what Deleuze calls the 'body without organs'. The body without organs signifies that as bodies we do not have an intrinsic organisation – that a gestalt-like organism is the result of reterritorialisation and prior neither to the body's non-totalised parts nor the absolute deterritorialisation to which the body without organs is most akin within the assemblage (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 40–1).[25] This means, then, that when we are not reterritorialised, not congealed egos on the plane of organisation, we are the anonymous forces of the body without organs, a positive state of affairs from Deleuze's point of view. Either way, socially congealed egos or anonymous inhumanities, we are nothing that we recognise as ourselves and most certainly not as beings that can play a responsible role in political democracy or as a member of the 'cosmic people', a role in which we are agents rather than the mere vehicles or conglomeration of anonymous forces.[26]

In short, Deleuze's virtual voices and absolute deterritorialisation has landed us in a dilemma: the ontological basis he provides for a cosmic people and radical democracy makes questionable the agency of we who participate in this cosmic democracy, makes problematic any sense in which it is 'our' democracy. In order to escape this dilemma, we cannot return to Bakhtin. Like Deleuze, he supports the idea that we exist as a fecund interplay of voices, a dialogic or dynamic hybrid, a postmodernist rather than a univocal or modernist identity. But his idea of the agency of this postmodernist subject is, as we have seen, equivocal, and his notion of heteroglossia and monoglossia, his dialogised heteroglossia, does not provide the ontological basis for the political ideal we seek even though it shares Deleuze's spirit of adventure. It has been important to compare Bakhtin and Deleuze: Deleuze refers to him, and discussing the similarilties and differences between their notions of voice has clarified each view. It has also helped in establishing the importance of the ontological status that Deleuze's assigns to absolute deterritorialisation (as well as to solidarity and difference). But, for the reasons just given,

he cannot do anymore to help us with the dilemma at hand. We must therefore try to establish a self that is not entirely a product of interpellation within the assemblage, a self that encompasses and exceeds both the ego and the body without organs instead of being an epiphenomenon or mere residium of anonymous forces. And yet this self cannot be the fully conscious and autonomous sort, cannot fully extricate itself from the voices that interpellate it, for we must admit that we find ourselves continually carried along by flows of social discourse and practices as well as often being the serendipitous authors of new thoughts or forms of living. Our task, then, must be to reveal a sense in which we are a force *within* as well as *of* the other forces that make up us and our milieu. This must be accomplished, furthermore, without retunring to the modernist form of subjectivity or identity that Deleuze eschews.

V. Elliptical Identity

In attempting to settle into the place where we see ourselves as ourselves, we must first note that the very structure of language hems us into having to choose between two equally problematic positions: that we are either an autonomous free will or a mere vehicle of alien forces. Language forces us to speak of ourselves either in the active voice that grants us authorship of our actions, 'I did such and such' or in the passive voice that places us under the absolute tutelage of forces external to ourselves, 'such and such was done to me'. In short, the structure of English, and indeed most languages (there are perhaps exceptions), makes us either absolute agents or absolute patients and leaves no obvious means of finding another role for ourselves between these two alternatives.

We need, then, a way of understanding ourselves that avoids the active-voice, passive-voice alternatives and yet still leaves room for absolute deterritorialisation. In broad outline, we need to be able to say that we are 'elliptically identical' with (rather than reducible to or independent of) the virtual voices and, through them, the becoming of the assemblages in which we find ourselves. We need to be able to say that we, as conscious egos, *are* the virtual voice of an assemblage and yet acknowledge that this voice and absolute deterritorialisation carry us beyond ourselves into the voice's ongoing exchanges with the other voices in its milieu. This voice is therefore more than us at the same time that we are it. Moreover, the elliptical character of our identity with the voice that we would call ours is further accentuated by the other voices that resound within this, our voice: we are also those voices

but with less saliency or audibility than with our present and now most characteristic voice and its particular social discourse. In other words, our identity is hybrid, a fecund interplay among the voices resounding within us, and hence not the univocal identity that Deleuze rejects. The elliptical character of our identity, then, is due both to the dynamism of the dialogue in which we are always engaged, that always throws us ahead of ourselves, and to the rest of the voices that are part of our voice, that is, part of our identity and yet simultaneously our other.

This idea of an elliptical identity can be made more acceptable if we note that language allows us locutions which place us outside the stark alternatives left to us by the active-voice and passive-voice linguistic constructions. More specifically, we can speak of 'giving ourselves over to' or 'becoming more fully' the trajectory established by the virtual voice, or, alternatively, of 'moderating' and 'fettering' this voice that 'is us', or even of 'relinquishing' it and then 'slipping into' another of the virtual, anexact voices which resound within our current primary voice and make up the constellation of voices in our collective assemblage of enunciation. When we speak this way there is no clear boundary between us as the actors and the voices as the actors. Thus this combination of resistances and surrenders, stops and starts, plays an author's role, or at least a co-author's role, in the creative variation of voices, in the variation which we both are and are not, which is us and yet throws us ahead of ourselves into the clamour of society's many voices.

On this view, we might claim that the becoming of what Deleuze calls the human or alloplastic stratum establishes human society as a constellation of the virtual voices with which we are elliptically identical in the way just indicated. We are made up of these forces or voices – we are 'of them' and particularly 'of' the one we find ourselves enunciating most prominently, that is, to the extent that we could hardly imagine ourselves as being otherwise. But we are also a force 'within' these voices – we can 'bear with' the one that we find ourselves enunciating, or we can, usually over time, but sometimes abruptly and traumatically, 'slip into', 'give ourselves over to', one of the others resounding within the one we thought we truly were, for we are 'of' this other voice, and the rest, too. In other words, we play a role in the effectuation of virtual voices – in their expression and actualisation as the constellation of voices that make up the collective assemblage of enunciation and its indirect discourse.[27] We live, therefore, in a social body with both an anonymous and a personal dimension. Moreover, we can adapt Deleuze's terms and say that we are often *almost* the congealed ego he disclaims when we become enshrouded by an 'oracular voice' that

ignores or otherwise excludes the other voices at play within it and the collective assemblage of enunciation. And equally, we are *almost* the body without organs, that is, the loosening up of any hierarchical structure that the voices might have established among themselves – a loosening up that allows for new voices to emerge with greater audibility (new in the sense of having greater saliency than in the past or as a new voice generated from the interplay among the others). I say 'almost' because we are both this ego and body without organs at once and yet, like the abstract machine or the virtual voice(s), encompassing and in excess of both. As such an excess and encompassing self, we are the voices *of* which we are 'made' and *within* which we give over to one as our primary voice or move away from it and into another, perhaps even newly created, voice. It is to this new idiom and the idea of elliptical identity, then, that I claim we must look if we are to accept Deleuze's 'cosmic people, cosmic world' and the tacit promise of the actualisation of the three aspects of a radical democracy, solidarity, heterogeneity and novelty – if we are to do so, that is, without precluding democracy as a politics within which we participate as agents who are at least partly responsible for it.[28]

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Notes

1. An earlier and shorter version of this paper was presented at the Ninth Annual Comparative Literature Conference, 'Gilles Deleuze, Image and Text: An International Conference,' 5–7 April 2007. I am grateful for the helpful criticism and encouragement I received during the conference from the participants in the session of which I was a member. I am also indebted to Keith Robinson, Ian Buchanan, and two anonymous referees for comments that led to significant improvements in the original text.
2. Deleuze immediately adds that this relation between Being and beings holds only 'on condition that each . . . voice has reached the state of excess'. The 'state of excess' here refers to a voice as undergoing continual metamorphosis, as always different, as always 'returning' but never as identically the same.
3. Although Guattari is the co-author of this text, I will, for the sake of convenience, use Deleuze's name alone when I refer in the body of my article to works he has co-authored with Guattari. However, the notes and/or reference will provide the full attribution. Deleuze's specific reference is to Voloshinov (1986), but he identifies Bakhtin as the actual author of this book. Deleuze also refers to indirect discourse and Bakhtin in his *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* (1989: 242). Scholars disagree as to whether Bakhtin wrote some of the works that were signed by his friends and fellow Soviet linguists, Voloshinov and Medvedev, presumably in accordance with Bakhtin's wishes during a period in which he (but not the other two authors) was in political disfavor with Stalin's regime. See Clark and Holquist (1984) and Morson and Emerson (1990) for contrasting positions on this issue. The texts signed by Voloshinov are more explicitly Marxist in orientation than those under Bakhtin's own name.

Indeed, Morson and Emerson claim that they are a '*monologization* of Bakhtin's thought' (1990: 118). However, Deleuze is here focusing on indirect discourse, a concept whose immediate or more restricted treatment is largely the same in the books signed by either Voloshinov or Bakhtin. For the differences between Bakhtin and Voloshinov with respect to the larger context of indirect discourse or 'double-voicing' as Bakhtin often refers to it, see Morson and Emerson (1990: 124–5).

4. The examples of reported speech that I give below follow Voloshinov's account (1987: 129, 150–5). Also see Morson and Emerson 1990: 169–70, 325–44, for a lucid account of reported speech in Bakhtin.
5. For brevity's sake I will follow Deleuze's lead and use 'indirect discourse' as if it means the same as 'free indirect discourse' unless otherwise stated.
6. Foucault 1970: xi.
7. See also Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 430: '[I]f there is language, it is fundamentally between those who do not speak the same tongue. Language is made for that, for translation, not for communication.'
8. Deleuze and Guattari say that 'Indirect discourse is the presence of a reported statement within the reporting statement, the presence of an order-word within the word' (1987: 84). In this context, Deleuze and Guattari themselves appeal to Althusser's notion of 'interpellation' (1987: 130), but, while accepting it as a term denoting 'the constitution of social individuals as subjects', they criticize Althusser for linking it to a 'movement of ideology' rather than seeing that it is 'tied' to the much deeper level of 'an assemblage, in other words an organization of power that is already functioning in the economy'. I will continue to use the term 'interpellate' in Deleuze's name, but with the meaning and qualification just specified. Even at the more immediate level of the collective assemblage of enunciation, Deleuze eschews the human subject. Each of the four semiotic systems of signs that Deleuze recognizes in the context of the human or alloplastic stratum determines the identity of the subjects involved and sets the contours of their thinking and thus their actions. In the case of the postsignifying semiotic system, the one closest to modern, including democratic, societies, Deleuze says that 'there is no subject, only collective assemblages of enunciation' and that '[s]ubjectification is simply one such system and designates a formalization of expression or a regime of signs rather than a condition internal to language' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 130). This assemblage or 'organization of power' is even prior to ideology, for example, capitalism. Ultimately, absolute deterritorialisation, which holds the assemblage together and takes it to its limit, along with reterritorialisation, which can save this becoming from self-abolition or otherwise place constraints upon it, determine the destiny of subjects such as ourselves (see below).
9. Bakhtin sometimes uses the term 'form-shaping ideology' to capture these three aspects – form, reflexivity, and evaluation – of social languages (Bakhtin 1984: 92–3). Morson and Emerson 1990 elaborate 'form-shaping ideology' effectively in their treatment of Bakhtin's linguistics and culturology.
10. Bakhtin's emphasis on the verbal-laden character of objects qualifies one of the remarks Voloshinov (or Bakhtin) makes in an earlier work about the 'extraverbal context of the utterance.' This context involves the interlocutors' 'spatial purview' of their surroundings and their shared knowledge and evaluation of the latter. Such a shared situation accounts for the possibility of communication among the interlocutors. It is, moreover, an 'enthymemic scenario' in that, like the unexpressed premises of a truncated syllogism, it is an 'assumed' rather an explicitly acknowledged part of the dialogical

exchange (Voloshinov 1987: 98–102). We now see, however, that this dialogical situation is plurivocal: rather than a homogeneous enthymemic scenario, we have a multitude of overlapping ones, that is, voices resounding within one another. In other words, the enthymemic scenario is a Bakhtinian version of the Deleuzian 'collective assemblage of enunciation' that we discussed above. Even if the books signed Voloshinov turn out not to have been authored by Bakhtin, Voloshinov's notion of 'purview' is similar to Bakhtin's later idea of 'apperceptive background' (Bakhtin 1986: 96; Bakhtin 1981: 282). Morson and Emerson say that this background is the 'totality of the dialogues within us' and that it is an analogue to Voloshinov's notion of 'reported speech': because of our apperceptive background, we in effect 'report on,' and receive in the manner provided for by that background, every speech utterance we hear and understand (1990: 204). The notions of spatial purview and apperceptive background are also related to Bakhtin's idea of a 'chronotope', that is, the historically changing time-space framework of literature and, by extension, of our existence (Bakhtin 1981: 84, 243, 250, 252, 258). A separate paper might concentrate on the relation between Bakhtin's idea of chronotope and Deleuze's notion of 'anexact space-time' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 407) and its role in the assemblage (*l'agencement*) (see below).

11. Voloshinov (or Bakhtin) says that 'individual consciousness is not the architect of the ideological superstructure, but only a tenant lodging in the social edifice of ideological signs' (Voloshinov 1986: 13). But even if this sentence implies that the subject is merely a vehicle for sign systems, the later writings that I have cited in the above paragraph suggest that Bakhtin fluctuated on this view and so the problem of the status of the subject still remains. Moreover, Voloshinov complicates matters and perhaps reintroduces equivocation of subject agency when he says that 'individual subjectivism is correct in that individual utterances . . . *do have* creative value in language' (1986: 93).
12. For the contrast between the collective and the machinic assemblages, and expression and content, see Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 145; see also 71, 72, 141–3. For 'superlinearity' and the 'priority' of the collective over the machinic assemblage of bodies, of expression over content, see Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 91–143; also 62, 85, 86. Note that along with versatility, superlinearity refers to operations of 'overcoding' and is closely associated with the virtual-real (see below). Deleuze also indicates the priority of expression in his favorable outlook on the primacy that Foucault assigns expression (the 'statement') over content, though ultimately Deleuze sees the 'diagram' in his own work and Foucault's as bringing about and piloting the relation between expression and content. See Deleuze 1988: 61, 67–9, 87.
13. See Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 510–12, and also pp. 141–3, for 'abstract machine' and its 'diagram.' For the latter's 'piloting' role, see p. 142.
14. This story is complicated because Deleuze speaks of a 'machinic assemblage' that, through its 'effectuation' or actualization of the abstract machine, differentiates the collective assemblage of enunciation/expression and the machinic assemblage of bodies/content (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 145). He says in the same passage that this distinction holds on the 'strata' and hence on what he and Guattari call 'the plane of organization.' But in another passage, he places the two component assemblages on the contrasting plane of consistency (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 91). In that he always has expression and content on the plane of organization, and they seem almost identical with the two (component) assemblages, I assume that these two components properly belong on that plane as well.

15. Note that because absolute deterritorialisation takes an event beyond itself into new variations or singular events, it is not the same as teleology, at least in the traditional sense of tending toward a single homogeneous or convergent goal.
16. For explicit references to 'chaosmos' by Deleuze and Guattari jointly, see Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 6, 313 and Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 156, 204, 208; by Deleuze singly, Deleuze 1990: xiii, 111, 176, 264; Deleuze 1993: 81, 137; and Deleuze 1994: 57, 123, 199, 219. In Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 313, the authors equate chaosmos with 'rhythm-chaos,' and imply that a milieu would return to chaos without rhythm to link it to other milieu – rhythm, then, is one way of articulating the kind of divergence that preserves communication among the heterogeneous elements of 'composed chaos'.
17. Deleuze and Guattari also refer to the plane of consistency as 'the plane of Nature' (1987: 266), 'the plane of life' (1987: 54), as well as the 'plane of immanence' (1987: 266). In the *Logic of Sense*, Deleuze calls it 'a transcendental field' (because it is what makes actualities possible) (1990: 102, 105).
18. For the idea of 'anexactness' (as opposed to 'exactness' and 'inexactness'), see Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 367, 407–9, 507 and, for the 'plane or organization', 255, 265, 269–70, 335, and 507.
19. This double entry of voice is also indicated in *Logic of Sense* when he speaks of voice as having 'the dimensions of a language without having its conditions' and as 'awaiting the *event* that will make it a language' (1990: 194), that will communicate 'the univocity of being to language' (1990: 248), that, in the later language of *A Thousand Plateaus*, will result in the virtual voices effectuation as the collective assemblage of enunciation.
20. See Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 4, 28–29 for his praise of the *agon* and its relevance to philosophical dialogue.
21. Bakhtin analyses Carnival as well as Rabelais' novels as prominent manifestations of this revolt.
22. Morson and Emerson (1990: 140), make particular note of this quotation. They also hold that although Bakhtin fluctuated on whether polyphony supplanted monologism as an obsolete form of the novel, he ultimately concluded that both forms were to be included in that genre and that they maintain a dialogic relation to one another (301; and see Bakhtin 1984: 271).
23. Merleau-Ponty 1962: 6.
24. In one place in *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze says that beyond the ego, or rather 'the self and the I,' we find 'not the impersonal but the individual and its factors, individuation and its fields, individuality and its pre-individual singularities' (1994: 258). He equates the 'individual' here with 'intensities' and the 'dissolved Self' (254) but gives no clue as to any sense in which this self is 'not impersonal.' Indeed, in *A Thousand Plateaus* he says that we should 'reduce ourselves to the abstract line… and in this way enter the haecceity and *impersonality* of the creator' (1987: 280; my italics); see also, his *Pure Immanence* (2001: 25).
25. The body without [fixed] organs refers to the malleability of an assemblage's plane of consistency: 'The BwO is opposed not to the organs but to that organization of the organs called the organism' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 158; see also 61, 159–161, 171–72, 285). This depiction of the subject also corresponds to what Deleuze and Guattari say in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987) about the self as BWO: 'You are longitude and latitude, a set of speeds and slownesses between unformed particles, a set of nonsubjectified affects' (262). Or, 'the self is a threshold, a door, a becoming between two multiplicities' (249). Or, '[the plane of consistency is a plane] of non-voluntary transmutation' (269).

In *Anti-Oedipus* (1983), Deleuze and Guattari say that 'The only subject is desire itself on the body without organs' (72).

26. Patton (2000: 84) argues convincingly in attributing to Deleuze a notion of 'critical freedom' that deems a person free 'to the extent that they are able to distance themselves from the structure of values [and desires] with which they grew up and to acquire others'. This type of freedom is a laudable virtue, even if it carries, as Patton points out, the risks of the unknown; but the question I am raising concerns 'who' has that freedom, and can that 'who' be in any way the self with which we identify as an agent in its own destiny? Although I disagree with Hallward, *Out of This World*, in relation to the charge of vitalism (his incorrect claim, at least in relation to *A Thousand Plateaus*, that change, time, and history are in no way mediated by actuality (2006: 162–3), I think he is closer to the mark in criticizing Deleuze's notion of the subject as lacking the power of self-determination (2006: 162–3).
27. In *Difference and Repetition* (1994), Deleuze speaks of the ego as existing at the point where the 'circle' of real objects serving as correlates of 'active syntheses' intersects the circle of virtual objects serving as 'an extension of passive synthesis', that is, the crossing of the figure 8 (100). This might be taken as the ego's elliptical identity with the passive synthesis, except that here the passive is immanent in the sense of taking place before the ego or a subject can become involved in it – the ego may exist at the crossing of the two circles but it plays no agent role there (cf. Lampert (2006): 17). Also, Deleuze and Guattari speak of 'conceptual personae' or thinkers on the plane of immanence who 'counter-effectuate' events, freeing the latter so that they may produce new variations of themselves (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 69–70; 159–162). These conceptual personae are represented on the 'historical state of affairs of society' by 'psychosocial types'; the two 'refer to each other and combine without ever merging' (70; see also Patton 2000: 28). In other words, conceptual personae and psychosocial types appear, in the plateau of philosophy, to correspond respectively to the circles of passive and active syntheses just mentioned and to the body without organs and the ego spoken of earlier. They therefore suggest the elliptical identity of which I am speaking but still retain the problem, unsolved, of anonymity, of a body with which we cannot identify and an ego that is only a vehicle for other forces. This worry is increased when we note that in *The Logic of Sense* Deleuze links 'counter-actualization' and a 'counter-self' with 'an eternal return which is no longer that of individuals, persons, and worlds, but only of pure events which the instant, displaced over the line, goes on dividing into already past and yet to come' (1990: 175–76).
28. Another way to put my point might be to say that 'elliptical identity' allows us to avoid what some might call 'bourgeois individualism' by affirming the anonymous side of our existence and the idea of a democracy that involves solidarity as well as heterogeneity and fecundity; and to avoid what some might call 'bourgeois romanticism' by affirming both heterogeneity and the degree of agency as persons – 'responsibility' – that we have in the becoming of the events or voices that involve us. I have tried to work out these ideas, including their political ramifications, in greater detail in Evans (forthcoming).

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Expression, Immanence and Constructivism: 'Spinozism' and Gilles Deleuze

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Abstract

This paper is an attempt to explicate the relationship between Spinozist expressionism and philosophical constructivism in Deleuze's work through the concept of immanent causality. Deleuze finds in Spinoza a philosophy of immanent causality used to solve the problem of the relation between substance, attribute and mode as an expression *of* substance. But, when he proceeds to take up this notion of immanent causality found in Spinoza in *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze instead inverts it into a modal one such that the identity of substance may be said only of the difference of the modes. Complicating this further, Deleuze and Guattari claim in *A Thousand Plateaus* that substance, attribute, and mode are each, themselves, multiplicities. *What is Philosophy?* takes up immanent causality once again, this time through a constructivist lens aimed at resolving the question of the relation between philosophical multiplicities: 'plane,' 'persona,' and 'concept.' By following the different formulations of immanent causality in these works this essay hopes to discover the relationship between Spinozist expressionism and philosophical constructivism in Deleuze's work.

Keywords: expression, immanence, constructivism, Spinoza, Deleuze, philosophy, Badiou

> Spinoza, the infinite becoming-philosopher: he showed, drew up, and thought the 'best' plane of immanence – that is, the purest, the one that does not hand itself over to the transcendent or restore any transcendence, the one that inspires the fewest illusions, bad feelings, and erroneous perceptions. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 60)

I. Introduction

Deleuze's notion of Spinozism and his invocation of the concept of immanence have been subjected to considerable critical attention in recent years (Agamben 1999; Hardt and Negri 2000; Smith 2001; Gillespie 2001; Badiou 2004; Beistegui 2005). But this attention makes apparent several ambiguities in Deleuze's thought. In part this is because Deleuze's concept of Spinozism is blatantly not consistent throughout his work. From *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza* to *What is Philosophy?* the concept of immanent causality, far from remaining homogenous, undergoes several modifications that render it much more internally dynamic than it was originally conceived. How are we, for instance, to understand Miguel De Beistegui's claim that immanence is the source of Deleuze's thought when the concept of immanence has been articulated quite differently in each of Deleuze's works (as substantial expression in his Spinoza books, as modal expression in *Difference and Repetition*, and as constructivism in *What is Philosophy?*)? Even Dan Smith's excellent essay on the medieval philosophy of univocal or immanent causality and its relation to Deleuze's thought ends its history early on focusing almost entirely on *Difference and Repetition* and neglecting Deleuze's later Spinozist constructivism. But more importantly how are we to take seriously Alain Badiou's poignant criticisms of Spinoza's 'closed ontology' he claims Deleuze inherits, when such a conceptual inheritance is in such obvious metamorphosis throughout Deleuze's oeuvre? (Badiou 2004: 81).

Badiou claims that Spinozism excludes the 'event' by precluding excess, chance and the subject, and opts unequivocally for a geometrically closed ontology. The 'there is' in Deleuze and Spinoza, Badiou claims, is indexed to a single name: absolutely infinite substance or life. But such a reading neglects the explicit transformations Deleuze's Spinozism makes away from such a single substance vitalism throughout his work. In particular, Deleuze and Guattari's final constructivist formulation of Spinozism bears uncanny resemblance to Badiou's own positive reading of Spinoza. In Badiou's critical reading of Spinoza the intellect is the infinite mode that includes all others in-itself and thus both secures itself as the foundation of a subjective truth procedure and establishes Substance as absolutely infinite. This self-inclusion is an illegal interruption into pure multiplicity that Badiou claims Spinoza does not want to admit, but instead 'naturalizes' as substance. Thus, insofar as the coupling function of the intellect's interruption is 'natural' or 'inevitable' it closes off all future evental interruptions. Deleuze

however, does not require that Spinoza meta-reflectively know his own plane of substance *qua* interruption (for Deleuze a thinker cannot conceptualize their own plane as long as they are on it). Instead, Spinoza's constructivism is to have drawn up 'a plane of immanence' or substance immanent *only* to its own creative interruption (and not to a naturalized transcendent referent). Badiou's argument is further unraveled by Deleuze and Guattari's Spinozist inspired claim in *A Thousand Plateaus* that there are multiple 'planes of substance': not a typical Spinozist kind of claim. Deleuze thus reads Spinoza's monism as 'a' plane of consistency (perhaps called, 'a' consistent truth procedure in Badiou's vocabulary) not a closed ontology or representational count of the count (as in Badiou). Interestingly both Badiou and Deleuze understand Spinoza's constructivism in terms of an undecidable intervention into pure multiplicity via the reciprocal presupposition of intellect/substance/modes, that 'sets up' a certain consistency. Badiou's reservations about closure still remain crucial: the 'always already' effect of substance is the consequence of a subject's intervention, and to the degree that it is not recognized as such risks becoming the totalitarian seal of representation and closure. Deleuze and Badiou both recognise this danger and create new concepts to avoid it. But in order to really assess the relevance and strengths of Badiou's criticisms of Deleuze's Spinozism it is necessary to examine the transformations these concepts undergo throughout Deleuze's oeuvre: something Badiou fails to do. While Badiou and many other scholars have certainly contributed greatly to a better understanding of Deleuze's work, none have attempted to tie Spinoza's expressionism to Deleuze and Guattari's constructivism in a way that would take into account the significant changes that occur to the concept of immanent causality throughout Deleuze's work. Through this neglect, Spinozism and immanence have been rendered inert.

In order to understand the relationship between expressionism and constructivism without assuming the homogeneity of the concept of immanence we must proceed by marking four distinct formulations of this concept in Deleuze's work. While the formulations found in Deleuze's reading of Spinoza's expressionism and Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical constructivism will naturally receive the most attention here, their relationship cannot be understood apart from the two intermediary articulations found in *Difference and Repetition* and *A Thousand Plateaus*.

(1) Deleuze's first formulation of the concept of a Spinozist immanent causality is to be found in his 1968 book *Spinoza et le problème*

de l'expression (translated as *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza* in 1990). Here Deleuze demonstrates that Spinoza utilises the concept of 'expression' to resolve the problem of the relation between substance, attribute and mode. As opposed to eminent or analogical causality, immanent causality or 'expression' posits an equality or reciprocal presupposition of substantial self-causality within attribute and mode, such that God is said of His creatures in the same sense in which the creatures are said of God. This heretical position is what we may call Spinoza's 'substantial expression'.

(2) The second formulation is found in *Difference and Repetition* (also published in 1968). This time however, Deleuze criticizes Spinoza's substance for remaining 'independent of the modes, while the modes are dependant on substance, but as though on something other than themselves' (Deleuze 1994a: 40). *Difference and Repetition* remedies the problem by inverting the substantial relation in a 'general categorical reversal according to which being is said of becoming, identity of that which is different, the one of the multiple' (Deleuze 1994a: 40). 'Substance must itself be said of the modes and only of the modes' (Deleuze 1994a: 40). According to this position Spinozist immanent causality should be understood as a 'modal expression' rather than a 'substantial expression'.

(3) Deleuze's third formulation occurs in *A Thousand Plateaus*, co-authored with Félix Guattari in 1980. Here, instead of insisting merely on the inversion of substance and modal multiplicity, Deleuze and Guattari multiply substance, attribute and mode: making each a multiplicity in their own right. 'Thus each individual is an infinite multiplicity, and the whole of Nature is a multiplicity of perfectly individuated multiplicities' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 254). 'A continuum of all substances in intensity and of all intensities in substance... all BwO's pay homage to Spinoza. The BwO is the field of immanence' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 154). It is significant that Deleuze describes Spinozist substance in the plural or multiple: as 'substances'.

(4) Deleuze's final formulation of Spinozist immanence occurs in 1992 in *What is Philosophy?* also co-authored with Guattari. Just as Spinoza had used the concept of immanent causality to resolve the problem of causality between substance, attribute and mode, Deleuze and Guattari here employ it in order to resolve the problem of constructive causality within the philosophical milieu: planes of immanence, conceptual personae, and concepts. This time however, following *A Thousand Plateaus*, each term has become a multiplicity

itself. Spinoza's substance becomes one plane among others: he draws out its concepts and personae based on the presupposition of his plane. But Spinoza remains different from the others. He is the 'prince of philosophers', the one who drew up the 'best' plane of immanence because he alone begins by reciprocally presupposing his plane, persona and concepts immediately without deducing them from each other or from some other transcendent source. Each is both distinct yet immanent to the other. This new constructivist position reaffirms a version of Spinozist immanent causality while simultaneously multiplying planes of substance.

II. Spinoza and the Problem of Expression

It is with Spinoza that the problem of expression, originating in medieval philosophy according to Deleuze, is for the first time resolved through the concept of immanent causality. However, it is also with Spinoza that expression becomes most what it is: a problem, a paradox, a vertigo. Spinoza's immanent expression is both one in relation to what expresses itself, and multiple in relation to what is expressed. Causality must move in two directions at once. But how can something which has its being in itself and is not dependant on anything allow itself to be determined by that which is dependent upon it? Spinozist expression, for Deleuze, presents us instead with a triad, a third term linking each pair:

> In it we must distinguish substance, attributes and essence. Substance expresses itself, attributes are expressions, and essence is expressed. The idea of expression remains unintelligible while we see only two of the terms whose relations it presents. Substance and attribute are distinct, but only insofar as each attribute expresses a certain essence. Attribute and essence are distinct but only insofar as every essence is expressed as an essence of substance. (Deleuze 1990: 27)

Substance and attribute are distinct but only insofar as they express the essence of the other. This mutual expression of God and creatures stands opposed to the necessity of a God remaining beyond His creatures and creating them by emanation or analogy.

Spinoza poses the problem of relation between substance and attribute in the first page of the *Ethics*. First, he defines substance as 'what is in itself and is conceived through itself, that is, whose concept does not require the concept of an other thing, from which it must be formed' (1994: I, D3)[1]. Substance is the immanent condition thought gives itself to think itself: it is in itself and conceived through itself – a radical form

of immanent self-reference and positing. 'By attribute' Spinoza says, 'I understand what the intellect perceives of a substance, as constituting its essence' (1994: I, D4). Attributes express the essence of substance as perceived from within the attribute of thought itself: the intellect. The intellect thus perceiving itself from within itself, as an attribute of substance, also expresses an immediate form of self-positing. But what is the relationship between substance and attribute? According to definition six, substance is absolutely infinite and consists in an infinity of attributes, which express the infinite essence of substance. But, as Descartes had reasoned, 'if each of the attributes is really distinct as a separate thing, then for each really distinct attribute there would be a distinct substance whose essence they would express' (Descartes [1637] 2000: 363). How is it then that each attribute does not entail a distinct thing which would then entail yet another substance? And how is it that substance can have an infinity of attributes that are distinct and yet still be indivisible (as substance)? Or as Edwin Curley frames the question, 'How can we remain true to Spinoza's language, which regularly speaks of substance as a complex, in which each of the attributes is an element, without suggesting that substance could somehow be decomposed into its various elements, or that some of these elements might exist apart from the others?' (Curley 1988: 30).

The relation of the attributes to substance has always posed an enormous problem for Spinoza scholarship. Jonathan Bennett, in *A Study of Spinoza's Ethics*, understands the difference between substance and attribute as a difference between two distinct countable things by suggesting that Spinoza has, 'carried this too far by implying that attributes are substances' (Bennett 1984: 64). Bennett can only draw this conclusion if he has understood 'distinct attribute' as a distinct thing, which necessarily entails a relationship to another 'distinct thing', in this case many distinct substances. But this is not the only way one can read Spinoza. Propositions eight, nine, the scholium to proposition 10, and definition six are the most important in relation to the question of substance's essence as expressed through the attributes. It is here that Spinoza must demonstrate the possibility of a substance with infinite attributes that are both distinct and indivisible as constituting the essence of a single substance.

> Although two attributes be conceived as really distinct, that is, one without the help of the other [*unum sine ope alterius*], still we cannot deduce therefrom that they constituted two entities, or two different [*diversas*] substances. For it is in the nature of substance that each of its attributes be

> conceived through itself, since all the attributes it possesses have always been in it simultaneously, and one could not have been produced by another; but each expresses the reality or being of substance. So it is by no means absurd to ascribe more than one attribute to one substance. (1994: I, P10, Scholium)

What does this notion of 'real distinctness' entail that does not make them 'two constituted entities'? There is no temporal or ontological priority of substance or attribute, neither has any existence outside the other, and yet they are still really distinct. Since 'every substance is necessarily infinite', (1994: I, P8) and 'the more reality or being a thing has, the more attributes it has', (1994: I, P9) then of course, 'an absolutely infinite being, that is substance consisting of infinite attributes' (1994: I, D6) must have reality. If there were several substances and one had attributes the other did not have then this other would be finite, which is absurd (1994: I, D6).

But the problem, Bennett suggests, is that the notion of a substance composed of infinitely distinct parts seems to indicate an aggregate of a kind that Spinoza clearly denies (Bennett 1984: 64). Spinoza's says, an 'absolutely infinite substance is indivisible... By "a part of substance" nothing can be understood except a finite substance, which by (1994: I, P8) implies a plain contradiction' (1994: I, P13, Scholium). If one attempts to think only part of being, then this implies that the whole of being is not part of this part as thought, in which case we have only parts and no whole. The difficulty of the Spinozist problem of substance and attributes is similar to the Parmenidian problem of the One and the Many. The difficulty of both lies in beginning from a principle of identity and unity to understand difference rather than showing how this 'identity' or unity emerges or is generated from an immanent differentiation.

In *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza* however, Deleuze claims that Spinoza resolves the problem of substantial relation by employing the concept of immanent causality. As Deleuze shows, since for Spinoza neither substance nor attribute had ever been considered a discreet thing, one produced or deduced from the other, both Curley and Bennett's positions are misguided from the outset. If substance is defined through itself as itself (self-caused) and the attributes perceived through themselves (qua intellect) as themselves the essence of substance, both simultaneously presupposing the other without any relation of direct emanative causality, how then are we to understand this a relation? While it may seem strange to Spinoza scholarship, Deleuze suggests that such a reciprocal expression of essence between substance and attribute

in the opening pages of the Ethics constitutes the rare and unique philosophical position of immanent or expressive causality. Instead of deducing substance as a discreet object of common sense and attempting to further deduce its attributes of thought and extension as aggregates or parts of this thing, Spinoza proceeds in a wholly different manner. His method relies not only on a mutual self-positing but on a distinction of two kinds taken from Descartes (according to Deleuze) and turned against him: numerical and real.

Deleuze thus recounts Spinoza's argument in the scholium to proposition eight in the following way to account for a single univocal substance with an infinity of attributes:

1) Numerical distinction requires an external cause to which it may be referred; 2) But a substance cannot be referred to an external cause, because of the contradiction implied in such a use of causal principles; 3) So two or more substances cannot be distinguished in numero, and there cannot be two substances with the same attribute (Deleuze 1990: 27). Thus if Numerical distinction is never real [or qualitative]; then conversely, real distinction is never numerical. Spinoza's argument now becomes: attributes are really distinct; but real distinction is never numerical; so there is only one substance for all attributes (Deleuze 1990: 27).

Thus to answer the question of how substance can be both composed of an infinity of attributes and also be indivisible, we must think the attributes as indivisible qualities, in the sense that they cannot be numerically distinguished or counted; rather, they are infinite, in the sense that they express truly distinct essences. Deleuze claims, 'There is one substance per attribute from the viewpoint of quality, but one single substance for all attributes from the viewpoint of quantity' (Deleuze 1990: 31). Substance is self-caused and thus cannot be numerically divided. One way to think of this is as a figure-ground gestalt. In the case of a single image in which both a young woman and old woman can be seen in the same drawn lines, there is one image composed of two simultaneous and yet distinct images. The old and young woman's images exist as distinct attributes but not as different countable 'things' separate from a single image, which is both. Under each image, young woman or old woman, the picture is given in its full being, yet they are distinct in some sense. Are there two images or one in the gestalt? The 'same sense' of expression is the sense in which old woman and young woman are the same images: two attributes of the same substance.

What then is the relation between substance, attribute and mode? Spinoza sets out his description of modal production by saying that, 'in

the same sense that God is said to be self-caused he must also be the cause of all things' (1994: I, P25, Scholium). Just as substance and attribute had been said in the same sense of their reciprocal presupposition, so substance, as cause of itself, is said in the same sense as it is the cause of the modes. The causal relation between 'substance as self-caused' and 'substance as cause of the modes' is the same immanent causality in which all three, substance, attribute and mode are simultaneously and distinctly presupposed, or mutually 'self-caused' qua the expression of the essence of substance. Not only does substance produce while remaining in itself (as cause of itself) but its affections (modes) are said in the same sense as this causality: that is, immanently self-caused. Substance is at once distinct from the modes as their cause and yet immanent to them in their mutual self-positing (as they express its essence). Opposed to this, emanation and equivocity (two different 'things') entail that substance must be caused in a different sense then it is the cause of its modes. In this way substance places itself beyond its effects.

Much of Spinoza scholarship, however, continues to disagree with Spinoza's account of the relationship between substance to its modes. Curley, in *Behind the Geometrical Method*, says that, 'If we can form no clear concept of substance in abstraction from its attributes, then there will be nothing interesting to say about the relation between substance so conceived and its modes' (Curley 1988: 38). Again the problem seems to be the way in which the difference between substance, attribute, and mode is configured as either a strict identification or a strict separation. With a strict identification between substance and mode there would be no differentiation and hence no production in a completely closed and absolute system; on the other hand a strict separation (the 'clear concept' Curley is calling for) would make their causal relation impossible.

But why does substantial expression entail modal existence? Spinoza provides two arguments: the argument from understanding and the argument from power. 'God acts with the same necessity by which He understands himself, that is, just as it follows from the necessity of the divine nature that God understands himself, with the same necessity it follows that God does infinitely many things in infinitely many modes' (1994: II, P3, Scholium). God must produce as He understands; if there were something God did not produce but understood He would be finite, and this would be absurd. So if God understands an infinity of things, then as He understands He produces that infinity. Thus all modes are expressive of God's understanding, and He is the cause of Himself in the same sense in which He is cause of the modes. Spinoza's second

argument, the argument from power, is that, 'God, or Nature, acts from the same necessity from which he exists' (1994: IV preface). The more power a thing has, the more it can be affected in a greater number of ways. And if God by necessity has an infinite power of existing, then God is affected in an infinite number of ways. In the same sense in which God is the cause of Himself, so the attributes produce an existing modal infinity.

The movement of expression is thus complete: substance is essentially expressed in the attributes, which also express the essence of substance in the same sense as they were expressed (as immanently self-posited). The attributes then re-express themselves in the modes in the same sense as substance expressed the essence of the attributes. The modes then express the essence of the attributes in the same sense in which the attributes express them (as immanent modifications). Substance then can be said to express itself in the modes in the same sense in which the modes express substances' self-causality. In each moment there is a double expression or mutual presupposition wherein each requires the other. Rather than beginning with three separate elements (substance, attribute, and mode) and attempting to deduce or produce them in terms of emanation, Spinoza instead begins with their expressive simultaneity (essence) and demonstrates their immanent causality or 'unity' of expression qua substantial self-cause.

III. Modal Expression in *Difference and Repetition*

Deleuze's second formulation of Spinozist immanent causality, presented here, is found in *Difference and Repetition*. While Deleuze's monograph on Spinoza describes in great detail the way in which Spinoza employs a theory of immanent causality to solve the problem of relation between substance, attribute and mode, in *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze expresses reservations regarding this formulation. Substance is not said of the modes in as equal a way as the modes are said of substance. Spinoza's theory of immanent causality thus remains ultimately too substantial: the identity of substance in Spinoza comes prior to modal difference.

Spinoza's immanent causality is based on the mutual presupposition of both substance and mode in the same sense: expression. This same sense, however, remains a substantial one. Modes are modifications of substance. Thus, according to Deleuze there remains in this first formulation of Spinozism a vestige of the superiority and independence of substance in relation to the modes his own critique rejected. Spinoza

is not a thinker of emanation, but in *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze argues that Spinoza has not thought radically enough the constructive power of difference in the finite modes that produced his substance. In Spinoza, modal difference remains dependent upon a strictly substantial expressionism. Deleuze says,

> Nevertheless, there still remains a difference between substance and the modes: Spinoza's substance appears independent of the modes, while the modes are dependant on substance, but as though on something other than themselves. Substance must itself be said *of* the modes and only *of* the modes. Such a condition can be satisfied only at the price of a more general categorical reversal according to which being is said of becoming, identity of that which is different, the one of the multiple. (Deleuze 1994a: 40)

Deleuze's inversion of Spinoza is to make Spinoza's modal multiplicity the creative and productive composer of substance: to make substance said of modes. Or, as Dan Smith has suggested, we can consider *Difference and Repetition*'s 'inversion' a 'Spinozism minus substance, a purely modal or differential universe' (Smith 2001: 175). This, of course, forms part of the more general project in *Difference and Repetition* of making identity said of difference: or what Deleuze calls 'repetition' (Deleuze 1994a: 41). In this sense the identity of Spinozist substance becomes a 'secondary power' whose identity is only the return or differential repetition of 'the different' itself: modal multiplicity (Deleuze 1994a: 41). Understanding this criticism of Spinoza is key to understanding *Difference and Repetition*, but also to understanding the significance of the further modifications made to the concept of Spinozist immanent causality in Deleuze's work.

The reversal is philosophically transformative. 'All Spinozism had to do for the univocal [substance] to become an object of pure affirmation was to make substance turn around the modes – in other words, to realise univocity in the form of repetition in the eternal return' (Deleuze 1994a: 304). A single and same univocal substance for the thousand voiced multiple. The concept of difference in-itself is based on the inverted immanent causality of Spinoza: a modal, differential creative multiplicity.

IV. Immanent Causality in *A Thousand Plateaus*

Twenty-two years later with the 1980 publication of *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze's account of Spinozist immanent causality changes once again. Rather than the substantial expression of *Expressionism*

in Philosophy: Spinoza, which made the modes said of substance, or the modal expression of *Difference and Repetition*, which made 'substance said of the modes' as 'identity is said of difference in itself,' *A Thousand Plateaus* makes all three: substances, attributes, and modes each multiplicities. This time Spinozist substance is identified in the plural form, as substances. Just as Spinoza had used the concept of immanent causality to resolve the relation between substance, attribute and mode, and Deleuze had used it in *Difference and Repetition* to resolve the relation between identity, difference and repetition so Deleuze and Guattari employ a similar version of immanent causality to resolve the problem between the 'body without organs' and the 'intensities' that pass across it.

> There is a continuum of all of the attributes or genuses of intensity under a single substance, and a continuum of the intensities of a certain genus under a single type or attribute. A continuum of all substances in intensity and of all intensities of substance. The uninterrupted continuum of the BwO, immanence, immanent limit. Drug users, masochists, schizophrenics, lovers—all BwO's pay homage to Spinoza. The BwO is the field of immanence of desire. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 154)

There is a 'formal multiplicity of substantial attributes' that compose the quantitative unity of a single substance. Their reciprocal presupposition or 'immanent continuum' is said to constitute a vital homage to Spinoza. But what is confusing about these passages is that the quantitative unity of a single substance, which had been previously defined in Deleuze's Spinoza book as 'numerical distinction' has become multiple. Numerical distinction meant that substance was one in terms of quantity yet multiple in terms of quality or its attributes. The claim that there could be a multiplicity of substances would seem absurd to Spinoza. Substance does not require the concept of another thing for its formation (1994: I, D3). Likewise, in both *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza* and *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze never dared to utter such an absurdity. How are we to understand the significance of this new formulation of Spinozist immanent causality?

Since Deleuze and Guattari do not announce their new formulation of Spinoza as explicitly as Deleuze had in *Difference and Repetition* a reconstruction is required. While it seems clear that Deleuze and Guattari do not abandon the thesis of *Difference and Repetition* entirely when they say, 'what we are talking about is not the unity of substance but the infinity of the modifications that are part of one another on

this unique plane of life' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 254), they have also more completely drawn out the implications of the concept of immanent causality qua multiplicity. Numerical and real distinction now become two kinds of multiplicity: qualitative and quantitative. If substance is said only of the multiplicity of the modes, it certainly seems to follow that substances too would become multiplicities composing and composed of other multiplicities. 'Each individual', they say, 'is an infinite multiplicity, and the whole of Nature is a multiplicity of perfectly individuated multiplicities' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 254). True to their claim that 'all they talk about are multiplicities' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 4), substance, attribute and mode have all become immanent to one another as multiplicities composed of other multiplicities: modal, attributive, and substantial multiplicities.

But the immanent ontology of multiplicities in *A Thousand Plateaus* also comes with a new dilemma. Given such a pure multiplicity of immanence, how is any particular multiplicity or arrangement of multiplicities (*agencement*) composed or constructed? What are the particular conditions, elements and agencies that make it work? What kinds of dangers and thresholds does it have? Not only does *A Thousand Plateaus* radically multiply substance, attribute and mode in a new way that diverges from previous 'Spinozisms', but it also reorients the entire task of thinking their relation toward a more general logic and politics of their arrangement (assemblage). While *Difference and Repetition* attempts the difficult task of 'raising the cry of the multiple',[2] *A Thousand Plateaus* begins a more sober and political constructivism. 'In truth', Deleuze and Guattari say, 'it is not enough to say, "Long live the multiple." Difficult as it is to raise that cry... The multiple must be made' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 13). This is accompanied by a more general move from the logic of the 'is' to the logic of the 'and' or what they call, 'the overthrow of ontology'.[3] In an interview given after the publication of *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze described the central theme of his and Guattari's current work as follows: 'The analysis of assemblages, broken down into their component parts, opens up the way to a general logic: Guattari and I have only begun, and completing this logic will undoubtedly occupy us in the future' (Deleuze 2006: 177).

Consistent with this expression of a commitment to a constructivist logic Deleuze and Guattari's final book together, *What is Philosophy?* takes up immanent causality one last time to resolve the relation between the philosophical components of this constructivism.

V. Immanent Causality in Deleuze and Guattari's Philosophical Constructivism

Twelve years after the publication of *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari, take up the concept of Spinozist immanent causality once more. This time, however, they employ it as an element of a philosophical constructivism in order to resolve the relation between philosophical components: plane of immanence, conceptual personae, and concepts. Just as Spinoza had used this concept to resolve the problem of the relation between substance, attribute and mode, so Deleuze and Guattari use it to resolve the problem of the relation between the plane of immanence, conceptual personae, and the concepts. But instead of a 'substantial' or 'modal' expressionism, the philosophical constructivism of *What is Philosophy?* continues the changes begun in *A Thousand Plateaus* toward a more immanent and developed constructivist logic. While *A Thousand Plateaus* undertook to develop a general logic of assemblages in almost every milieu (from geology to music) it left out one very important domain: philosophy itself. *What is Philosophy?* attempts the final and most developed account of a constructivist logic by drawing on one of the oldest and most important concepts in Deleuze's work: Spinozist immanent causality.

The problem of *What is Philosophy?* is how to think the creative practice of philosophy. How is it that so many philosophical systems succeed each other in history? In relation to what do they create their concepts and map out the conceptual personae that populate these conceptual worlds? What are the elements of philosophical practice and how do they function in relation to each other? Against definitions of philosophy as reflection, contemplation or communication, Deleuze and Guattari define philosophical practice as constructivism, that is, as 'the creation of concepts'. Philosophical practice, they claim, is composed of three distinct elements each considered for themselves, that is, unconditioned by any source external to their own:

> Philosophy presents three elements, each of which fits with the other two but must be considered for itself: the pre-philosophical plane it must lay out [tracer](immanence), the persona or personae [les personages pro-philosophiques] it must invent and bring to life (insistence), and the philosophical concepts it must create (consistency). (Deleuze and Guattari 1994b: 74)

(1) In order for philosophy to occur, thought must situate itself in relation to some basic condition, which allows for thought to occur.

But how can thought set a condition for itself if the condition is necessary for thought's creation of the condition? This problem, according to Deleuze and Guattari, entails a paradoxical self-positing of both thought and its condition at once. They define this positing as a 'presupposition' or 'plane of immanence' that philosophy poses for itself. It gives itself its own 'image of thought'. For example, 'In Descartes it is a matter of a subjective understanding implicitly presupposed by the 'I think' as first concept; in Plato it is the virtual image of an already-thought that doubles every actual concept' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994b: 40). In Spinoza it is his 'plane of substance' (Deleuze 1990: 11). A philosophical 'plane of immanence' like Spinoza's substance is laid out immediately and defined through that which it is the condition for, 'what is in itself and is conceived through itself', as Spinoza says. 'Concepts', Deleuze and Guattari say, 'are like multiple waves, rising and falling, but the plane of immanence is the single wave that rolls them up and unrolls them' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994b: 36). As such, the plane is thought everywhere in thinking but does not appear as a specific concept within thought. It is thought's immanent condition for itself.

(2) But philosophy also requires a way to connect the concepts it creates to the philosophical plane that is its condition or presupposition. Deleuze and Guattari call these 'conceptual personae'. Considered in themselves, they act as operators or connectors between the plane of immanence and its concepts. 'Concepts are not deduced from the plane. The conceptual persona is needed to relate concepts on the plane, just as the plane itself needs to be laid out. But these two operations do not merge in the persona, which itself appears as a distinct operator' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994b: 76). There are many examples of personae in the history of philosophy: the Idiot, the one who wants to think on his own and can take on another meaning; the Madman, who discovers in thought the inability to think; or, the Friend who has a relationship with another but only through the thing loved, potentially producing the Rival. Socrates is the conceptual persona of Platonism. The Intellect is a conceptual persona of Spinozism. The infinite intellect is defined as a mode of the attribute of thought which has an idea of infinite substance. The paradox of the intellect in Spinoza though is that it must presuppose itself as infinite in order to prove an infinite substance, yet infinite substance must be presupposed for there to be an intellect having an infinite power to discern an infinite substance. Thus the conceptual persona of the intellect must perform an immanent connection between mode and substance through the attribute of thought: all three presupposed simultaneously.

(3) Most importantly, philosophy is defined by its creation of concepts. Philosophical concepts, Deleuze and Guattari say, 'populate' the plane bit by bit, constituting its 'skeletal frame or spinal column' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994b: 36). While the plane is 'the breath' that suffuses them. Concepts have components as well. For example, Descartes' 'cogito' is a concept. It has three components: doubting, thinking and being. 'Myself who doubts, I think, I am, I am a thinking thing' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994b: 31). The concept of the cogito holds together three heterogeneous elements (doubting, thinking, being) which condense to form the 'I'. Given Descartes' presupposition of subjective understanding, the cogito and its components form the basic elements or working parts of this understanding: doubting, thinking, being. The modes are concepts in Spinoza's philosophy. Just as each modal body in Spinoza composes and is composed by at least one other modal body, so each concept in philosophy has components that define the endo- and exo-consistency of a conceptual body.

But the problem of philosophical constructivism is thus: How is it that a single plane of immanence or presupposition can be one in relation to what is expressed and yet multiple in relation to what expresses it (personae and concepts)? If each of the personae are really distinct as separate things, then why doesn't each really distinct personae entail a distinctly different philosophical plane of immanence or presupposition? If philosophical concepts are distinct elements why can't they be composed separately from their plane of immanence? If philosophy is the creation of concepts, and these concepts form its 'working parts', why is the plane of immanence not just another concept like the others? Torn between the absolute identity and absolute separation of these elements, Deleuze and Guattari face similar problems to those of Spinoza in the *Ethics*. However, just as treating each of these elements as discreet numerical things has misled Spinoza scholarship throughout the ages, so we should not be so misguided here.

Just as Spinoza had begun the *Ethics* with the rapid un-deduced definition of substance as 'what is in itself and is conceived through itself' (1994: I, D3), a self-caused thing, so Deleuze and Guattari tell us that philosophical concept creation 'has no reference; it is self-referential; it posits itself and its object at the same time as it is created' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 22). Just as in Deleuze's Spinozism neither substance, attribute, or mode are ever deduced or induced from one another in any relation of eminent causality, so Deleuze and Guattari say that, 'Since none of these elements are deduced from the others [plane, personae, concepts], there must be a coadaptation of the three. The philosophical

faculty of coadaptation, which also regulates the creation of concepts,' they say, 'is called taste' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994b: 77). Not only is the plane of immanence a presupposition considered for itself, its very presupposition also presupposes the conceptual personae and concepts required to connect it up and maintain it (Deleuze and Guattari 1994b: 78).

Spinoza displays a similar 'taste' in the concept of expression. Within the first page of the *Ethics* Spinoza simultaneously presupposes the immanence (self-causality) of substance, attribute, and mode connected together, in the same sense, through 'expression'. That is, substance, attribute and mode form a reciprocal presupposition required for each other's being in an immanent expressionism. Similarly for Deleuze and Guattari, 'the plane of immanence and the conceptual personae presuppose each other' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994b: 75). Deleuze and Guattari's usage of the concept of 'reciprocal presupposition' and philosophical 'taste' thus follow Spinoza's own usage of expressionism or immanent causality in the first book of the *Ethics*.

It is important however, not to confuse philosophical taste with rational pragmatism. 'It is certainly not for 'rational or reasonable' reasons that a particular concept is created or a particular component chosen' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994b: 78). In fact, it is not a matter of a 'willed choosing' at all. Philosophy does not rationally consider, debate, judge or reason which concepts are best to solve whichever problem it would like. Philosophy may be a constructivism, but this does not mean that it may be employed by any means whatever. Constructivism renders incoherent all forms of directed intentionality which would pre-exist its concepts. What meaning can rational utility have if problem and solution are given at the same time? Unconditioned by any external reason or transcendent cause, their coadaptation is rather one of taste.[4]

Philosophical 'taste' and 'reciprocal presupposition' bring us back to the exemplary case of Spinozist immanent causality. Just as Spinoza had used a qualitative difference to reconcile the unity/multiplicity of substantial expression, in *What is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Guattari use a qualitative distinction to reconcile the unity/multiplicity of philosophical creation. 'Constructivism has two qualitatively different complementary aspects: the creation of concepts and the laying out of a plane' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994b: 36). Rather than considering each constructivist element as a distinct quantitative thing, Deleuze and Guattari posit each for-themselves as qualitatively distinct. But considering a plane of immanence as qualitatively multiple and not a quantitative unity does something different than Spinoza. In *What*

is Philosophy? Deleuze and Guattari claim that there are, in fact, a multiplicity of planes of immanence (something which Spinoza would never have claimed). There is a different plane of immanence for each thinker succeeding and merging with each other in history, each with their own immanent logic and construction of the plane (Deleuze and Guattari 1994b: 39).

Despite the modifications that Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical constructivism makes to the Spinozist notion of immanent causality, there remains something 'princely' in Spinoza's thought. For Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari write, 'immanence does not refer back to the Spinozist substance and modes but, on the contrary, the Spinozist concepts of substance and modes refer back to the plane of immanence as their presupposition' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994b: 148). It is not as if immanence refers primarily to substance or mode. Substance and mode (in Spinoza) refer only to their own immanent reciprocal presupposition. Spinoza never looks to illusory transcendent sources to deduce his concepts. It is by weeding them out that he (immanently) fulfills the conditions of philosophical constructivism: hence he is the prince of philosophy (Deleuze and Guattari 1994b: 48). This final constructivist formulation redeems Spinoza not for his substance or mode at all, but for the immanence of his philosophical constructivism.

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Notes

1. All citations for the *Ethics* unless otherwise noted will be by Year, Book (I, II, III etc), Proposition (P1, P2 etc), Demonstration (D1, D2 etc), and scholium. EX: (1994: I, P12, D3).
2. 'Only there does the cry resound: "Everything is equal!" and "Everything returns!" 'A single clamour of Being for all beings' (Deleuze 1994a: 304).
3. See Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 25. On the claim that, 'there is no ontology of Deleuze' see François Zourabichvili 1996.
4. Philosophical taste should not be confused with aesthetic taste. Philosophical taste has to do with the coadaptation of concepts, while aesthetic taste has to do with the coadaptation of percepts. 'Since none of these elements are deduced from the others, there must be coadaptation of the three. The philosophical faculty of coadaptation, which also regulates the creation of concepts, is called taste . . . . That is why it is necessary to create, invent, and layout, while taste is like the rule of correspondence of the three instances that are different in kind' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994b: 77).

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Review Essay

The Full Body: Micro-Politics and Macro-Entities

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DeLanda, Manuel (2006) *A New Philosophy of Society: Assemblage Theory and Social Complexity*, London: Continuum, Pb, 142pp.

Of the many areas of research and philosophical problems opened up by Deleuze (and Guattari's) writing, one of the most crucial has to do with the nature of society itself; that is, the question of a social ontology, or the fundamental question of what it means to say something like 'society' exists, and how this relates to other entities such as individuals, institutions, markets and states. In general the question 'what is society?' has been poorly posed, and badly answered. The dominant answers to this question either posit the individual as an irreducible building block of society, constructing the social from a sum total of individual actions and decisions, as in the methodological individualism of economics; or, society is grasped first as more than the sum of its parts, as a totality, from which the individuals are deduced, as in functionalist or organic conceptions of society. Thus the question 'what is society?' leads to a dichotomy between the individual or society, a micro-reductionism or a macro-reductionism. This dichotomy is also an impasse, framed in such a way it is impossible to go from the individual to society or vice versa, the individual precludes any account of society as anything other than the sum effect of individual actions and society excludes any concept of the individual other than an effect of society.

These two concepts, the individual and society, were central targets of what has been broadly defined as post-structuralism, as well as the work of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in particular. Deleuze and Guattari are perhaps unique in this loosely defined trend of critical authors in that they did not simply engage in a critical destruction of concepts of the individual or of society, but also constructed their

own vocabulary and ontology to address social relations, rethinking society as made up of abstract machines, assemblages, strata, full bodies, and desiring machines: a vocabulary that has as its specific goal an attempt to avoid the pitfalls of holism and individualism. Deleuze and Guattari rethink the individual as the basic building block of society, revealing the micropolitics of desire and power that underlie it, while at the same time critically rethinking the totality, as itself an integral element of power relations, as a full body. It is perhaps for this reason that there has been a great deal of interest in Deleuze and Guattari's social ontology. In the case of such philosophers as Maurizio Lazzarato, Paolo Virno, Alberto Toscano, Michael Hardt, and Antonio Negri this interest has taken the form of a reengagement with the trajectory of minor thought that informs Deleuze (and Guattari's) social ontology. There has thus been a parallel revival of interest in Gilbert Simondon's account of transindividuality, Gabriel Tarde's understanding of a micro-sociology of imitation, and Spinoza's concept of the multitude, all of which propose an understanding of the relationship between the individual and society that is irreducible to holism or individualism. Manuel DeLanda's *A New Philosophy of Society*: *Assemblage Theory and Social Complexity* takes a fundamentally different direction; rather than return to the sources of Deleuze (and Guattari's) social ontology, DeLanda focuses on the central concept of assemblage, expanding it to encompass a general redefinition of society that encompasses the work of Fernand Braudel and Max Weber. As such DeLanda's recent work, like such books as *A Thousand Years of Non-Linear History* offer not so much an interpretation of Deleuze as an application to the central problems of social ontology.

The term 'assemblage' [agencement] primarily appears in *A Thousand Plateaus* and thus represents a later stage of Deleuze's thought, although arguably it is the culmination of a tendency towards a constructivist or constituent ontology that runs throughout Deleuze's thought. According to DeLanda, at its most fundamental level an assemblage is defined as multiplicity of heterogeneous elements, the only unity of which is defined by a particular and specific co-functioning (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 69). As such it is defined by two dimensions, the first defines the role different components play, material or expressive, bodies or statements, each defined by specific relations of causality; while the second is distinguished by whether or not the components, or relations, contribute to the stability of the given assemblage (territorialisation) or lead to its loss of identity (deterritorialisation). The consistency of any given assemblage is defined by its relations, and not any intrinsic

characteristics; an assemblage exists as a singular, historically produced, intersection of relations. DeLanda stresses that an assemblage is first and foremost characterised by what he calls 'relations of exteriority'; the elements of an assemblage are situated, but not determined by their place within the assemblage. This differs from any functionalist or organic conception of a totality in which the parts, or elements, are entirely defined by their place within a totality (DeLanda 2006: 10). The elements of an assemblage can be inserted into a new assemblage, creating new relations, which have different effects. This does not assert the primacy of the individual over the relation, but merely underscores that the quality of different elements emerge or are transformed by the different relations that they enter into. Elements are not individuals whose qualities are given in advance, but capacities the properties of which emerge in different relations. As Deleuze stresses, following Spinoza, things are defined by their capacity to affect and be affected, and these capacities emerge in the course of the new relationships that engage them (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 257). Defined in such a way the concept of an assemblage is poised on a veritable tightrope between the pitfalls of totality and individualism.

The critical angle of DeLanda's utilisation of this concept is oriented much more towards the functionalist, or holistic, side of the impasse than the individualistic side of the problem. This is in part an effect of the specific context of DeLanda's writing. Due to the influence of Marxism on radical politics and social theory the concept of totality has maintained a greater purchase than the concept of the individual. Although it should be noted that this is only true of a context defined by a specific political (left), disciplinary (philosophy, critical theory, and sociology), and regional orientation (European or continental in influence); in other contexts, such as economics, it is the individual and not the totality that reigns supreme, to the point where there are even (analytic) Marxists committed to the idea of 'methodological individualism'. This political background and polemical focus of DeLanda's argument against the idea of totality is given greater clarity in his contribution to the recently published collection, *Deleuze and the Political* edited by Ian Buchanan and Nicholas Thoburn, 'Deleuze, Materialism and Politics' (2008). As DeLanda writes, underscoring the persistence of totalising concepts in the social and physical sciences, 'Unfortunately, Deleuze himself tends to fall into this trap, moving too fast to the macro-level with concepts like 'the socius' or 'the social field' (DeLanda 2008: 166). As DeLanda argues, this persistence of totalising concepts in Deleuze's writing is due his inability to completely

have done with Marx. In DeLanda's terms, it is his Oedipus, the father he has not killed.

In response to this tendency, DeLanda makes the focus of his project an attempt to either dispense with such totalities as 'the state' or 'capitalism' altogether, or to at least radically reconfigure our understanding of them such that we grasp them as nothing other than the more or less transient intersections of specific and local processes. In doing so, DeLanda follows the spirit of Deleuze's famous assertion regarding the nature of abstraction, 'the abstract does not explain, but must itself be explained' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: vii). Rather than posit something like capital, or the state, behind every transformation of society, every manifestation of power, DeLanda endeavours to show how these entities emerge form a particular series of assemblages and relations. As he writes, 'Avoiding the use of concepts like "the state" is important [. . .] because such reified generalities are not monolithic, that is, they fail to capture the relations of exteriority that exist among the heterogeneous organisations forming a government hierarchy' (DeLanda 2006: 85). DeLanda's method on this point is similar to Foucault's, specifically his methodological argument that 'universals' such as the market and the state do not exist, or at least must be treated as they do not exist in order to grasp the concrete processes of power that structure political life and in effect give rise to such entities (Foucault 2004: 5). DeLanda's specific point of reference, though, is Fernand Braudel, for whom such entities as the 'market' and the 'state' have to be understood in primarily relative terms, as a 'set of sets' with complex intersections in which each institution, market, state, etc., has its relative autonomy and effectivity (DeLanda 2006: 118). There is not one split between the individual and society, the 'micro' and the 'macro', rather such distinctions are relative as various assemblages are 'macro' in relation to some, but 'micro' in relation to others (DeLanda 2006: 17). A local market or city organisation is 'macro' in relation to the individuals that make it up, but 'micro' in comparison to larger government structures, for which it functions as an element. This is true even of individuals, which must be seen as composed of sub-personal components (e.g., percepts, affects, and habits), while simultaneously being situated in larger assemblages (e.g., communities, networks, markets, and states) (DeLanda 2006: 33). DeLanda is not primarily concerned with determining the actual nature of these sub-personal elements, rather his goal is to relativise the micro macro distinction and replace the singular rift between the individual and

society with a series of interlinking assemblages of various scales, from those that constitute the individual to global networks.

While DeLanda's use of Braudel finds resonances with the Deleuze and Guattari's understanding of assemblages, there is perhaps greater tension in his use of Max Weber's concepts. DeLanda draws on Weber's distinction between the different levels of authority structures: traditional, in which authority is vested in time honoured practices; bureaucratic, in which impersonal rules and structures are dominant; and charismatic, in which the force of an individual's personality holds sway (DeLanda 2006: 69). DeLanda stresses that these ideal types are mixed in reality, as communities, states, and corporations employ various types of authority. However, despite this there is a tendency to map the various types of authority onto the different sizes of institutions, with small organisations dominated by charismatic authority, and so on. This focus on a graduated conception of size, situating communities, states, and organisations from smallest to largest, overlooks Deleuze and Guattari's emphasis on the molar and molecular as equally determining factors of all social relations and process. Molecular and molar do not refer to different 'sizes' of institutions, at least in the sense that would locate the molecular solely with respect to small institutions, such as families, and molar would refer to large institutions such as states. Families and states, corporations and clubs, are equally molar and molecular; the former concern delineated segments along the line of discernible entities, individuals, classes, sexes, while the latter concerns unconscious affects, perceptions, and desires (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 213). More importantly DeLanda's use of authority structures to comprehend the deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation of assemblages overlooks the political constitution of subjectivity. Authority would seem to propose that the same subjects, the same individuals, are subject to the charms of charisma, the force of tradition, and the rule of law; without these structures these individuals would be free. What Deleuze and Guattari, stress however, is that it is not so much a matter of analysing forms of authority that act on individual subjects, but of recognising how the very constitution of individuals as subjects is itself a form of power. As Deleuze and Guattari indicate this power is all the more encompassing when it appears to leave the subjects free. Machinic enslavement reduces individuals to parts in machines, while social subjection appears to restore the autonomy of individuals only to constitute them as individuals who are constituted through their subjection (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 458).

There is obviously a great deal of merit to DeLanda's method, especially against the context of political and social thinkers who haphazardly and lazily make reference to totalities such as 'capital' or 'the state' as underlying every specific problem. However, this does not mean we should automatically go along with DeLanda in concluding that the presence of such totalities in Deleuze (and Guattari's) writing can only be understood as a 'fall' from the rigour and challenge of their ontological system. Deleuze and Guattari's writings stand apart from many of their thoroughly de-Marxified contemporaries (as Jameson has put it) on precisely this point: they are interested in developing a theory of 'capital' and the 'state'. For Deleuze and Guattari it is not sufficient to simply grasp such entities through the heterogeneous assemblages and immanent relations that constitute them; one must also account for the way in which these relations constitute particular effects of transcendence. Deleuze and Guattari continue a critical thread that they extend from Spinoza, Marx, and Nietzsche in which the central critical task is to grasp the transcendent, i.e. the totality, as itself an effect of the immanent processes that constitute it. In *Anti-Oedipus* this project is central to their understanding of society. As Deleuze and Guattari write:

> [T]he forms of social production, like those of desiring production, involve an unengendered non-productive attitude, an element of anti-production coupled with the process, a full body that functions as a *socius*. This socius may be the body of the earth, that of the tyrant, or capital. This is the body that Marx is referring to when he says that it is not the product of labour, but rather appears as its natural or divine presupposition. In fact, it does not restrict itself merely to opposing productive forces in and of themselves. It falls back on [*il se rabat sur*] all production, constituting a surface over which the forces and agents of production are distributed, thereby appropriating for itself all surplus production and arrogating to itself both the whole and the parts of the process, which now seem to emanate from it as a quasi cause. (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 10)

Every society, or form of social production, has an aspect that appears as the condition, or cause, rather than the effect of the productive relations, the desires and labours of society. Societies may be nothing more than the heterogeneous collection of various assemblages (desiring machines, or desiring production, in Deleuze and Guattari's language), but these assemblages produce effects of totalisation that, in turn, give rise to new assemblages that produce totalising effects of their own. What is crucial to these totalising effects, however, is their ability to appear as something other than what they are. As Deleuze and Guattari make clear in the quote above: it is labour that enables capital to

come into being, but once capital comes into being labour is radically transformed. What is produced is nothing other than an image of society itself, society as something other than the ever shifting contingent effects of various actions and assemblages, in effect it is a reification of social relations.

What Deleuze and Guattari stress in a line of thought that cuts through a series of texts and problems (many of which, such as the debate over the 'Asiatic Mode of Production', are themselves relatively obscure outside the confines of a strictly Marxist discourse), is that there is a fundamental gap between the productive relations, the interlinked network of assemblages that constitute society, and the representation or perception of these relations. The social totality does not exist strictly speaking, it is not an actual existing element of society; but, at the same time, it does exist as an effect of how society is perceived. Deleuze and Guattari stress that the totality exists alongside the relations that make up society, appropriating their effects. This effect, this perception, in turn has its own effects. The emperor may have no clothes, capital may be nothing but the effect of different and divergent labours, God may be nothing but our failure to grasp the multiple causal connections that make up nature, but these ideas, these representations have effects, they are what Deleuze and Guattari call quasi-causes. These images are thus an integral aspect of subjection; the individual sees his or herself as an effect of the full body of society, not the condition of its functioning. Thus, he or she is more inclined to accommodate his or her actions according to the norms and structures of society, in that they appear as conditions of actions rather than their effects. It is not enough, as DeLanda argues, to simply replace transcendent or essentialist accounts of the formation of society with a purely immanent set of relations: it is necessary to show how transcendence, or the idea of transcendence emerges from the these same relations, in turn falling back on them.

It could be argued, as DeLanda seems to, that Deleuze and Guattari's account of the socius or full body, as a generalised reification of social relations, is merely an effect of their residual Marxism. However, it is also a consequence of Deleuze's (and Guattari's) ontological commitment to immanence. Immanence is not simply a matter of dispensing with transcendence, it is also a matter of situating ideas and things, matter and expression, on the same plane, as equally capable of producing effects. In *Anti-Oedipus* this commitment takes the form of the slogan 'desire is part of the infrastructure'. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, however, this commitment underlies Deleuze and Guattari's attempt to rethink the relation between content and expression, which are not

placed on top of each other as base and superstructure, but continually intersect and transform each other. As Deleuze and Guattari write, 'the only way to define the relation is to revamp the theory of ideology by saying that expressions and statements intervene directly in productivity, in the form of the production of meaning or sign value' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 89). While Deleuze and Guattari ultimately dispense with the notion of production as inadequate to the complex causal relations of expression and content, the fundamental point remains that expression is not simply an effect of material relations, but in turn acts on those relations. This is crucial to the understanding of the question of the social totality. Following Deleuze and Guattari's perspective it is possible to argue that the state exists more at the level of expression than content, working at the level of signs, resonances, and meanings, provided that we remember that the distinction is always relative and subject to reciprocal determination (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 425). The state sets up a relation of resonance between the multiple powers centres in society, such that heterogeneous and specific actions and practices, such as birth, death, marriage, and local power centres are made to resonate with it (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 215). It 'overcodes' the various pre-existing codes, the various pre-existing traditions, making them appear as effects of a larger pre-existing totality: to take a US example, 'mom' and 'apple pie' become signs and effects of the nation. The state, or other totalities such as society or capital, are not just inaccurate representations of society, they are also concrete effects (and quasi-causes) of subjection.

Ultimately, it is not a matter of producing a correct reading of Deleuze and Guattari; DeLanda's work, from *A Thousand Years of Nonlinear History* to *A New Philosophy of Society*, should be credited for shifting the focus away from the task of simply defining the dense network of neologisms that make up Deleuze and Guattari's writing and turning attention towards the crucial philosophical and political positions that underlie them. DeLanda does much to highlight the innovation underlying Deleuze (and Guattari's writing), however, his own tendency to present Deleuze's thought as a radical break with certain elements of the current intellectual conjuncture overlooks the complexity of Deleuze's thought. In this review I have focused on the lingering question of totality as the most obvious of these tendencies, but, as DeLanda makes clear in other texts, his writing is also oriented against the idealism underlying 'social constructivist' accounts of society (DeLanda 2008: 162). Central to DeLanda's use of Deleuze (and Guattari) is his commitment to what he insists is 'realism', the idea

that the world exists independent of our conceptions of it. These two polemical trajectories, against totalities and social constructivism, converge on the same fundamental point: the manner in which social relations constitute and are constituted by subjection to totalities, to full bodies. These totalities become real through the very way in which people subordinate their actions to them; they are effects that have become causes. DeLanda is in some sense predisposed to overlook this central aspect of Deleuze and Guattari's thought. This is unfortunate for at least two reasons. As Spinoza, Marx, and Nietzsche recognised in different ways, it is not enough to oppose the true to the false, to replace transcendence with immanence, idealism with materialism, or essences with their genealogy, it is necessary to explain the genesis of the former from the latter, how the world appears in a manner that is opposed to its construction. This is not just a philosophical matter, a matter for interpreting the world, but a political matter as well; despite their ontological illegitimacy, the various full bodies, the state, god, and capital, are fundamental to the way in which most people inhabit and make sense of the world. If the world is to be comprehended, if not changed, then the particular consistency and resilience of these totalities must also be comprehended rather than dismissed. It is the strength of Deleuze and Guattari's social ontology that it provides not just an account of the immanent relations that make up reality, but the way these relations produce effects of transcendence.

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Introduction Part I

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Could there, today, be such a person or persona as a feminist philosopher? We ask this question with two motifs in mind: the first is Deleuze and Guattari's notion of the conceptual persona, where philosophical theories are constituted through the co-production of certain characters (Deleuze and Guattari 1994), and the second is the notion of an internal pragmatism as articulated in *Difference and Repetition* (1994). It is now time to direct these questions – of the persona (which is internal to a text) and the vectors created by a text – to the Deleuzian corpus. Following not only *What is Philosophy?*, where Deleuze and Guattari argue that the production of a philosophical plane and its conceptual movements are accompanied by personae, but also *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, where Deleuze argues that the forces of texts are modes of *dramatis personae*, we might ask about the style of life that accompanies Deleuze's thought. It is that tortured concept of 'becoming-woman' that raises the question of the value of a concept, and its relation to the voice responsible for its articulation.

One possible way of answering this question would be to suggest that if Deleuze aimed at thought 'without an image' (Deleuze 1994: 208) or a becoming-imperceptible (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 279), then – despite what Deleuze and Guattari say in *What is Philosophy?* about philosophy and personae – their own work might be one of the first moments in the history of philosophy where concepts are created without personae. That is, if all thinking up to the present has presupposed the good will of a thinker, and if this thinker has been a version of man (as the assumed standard from which others deviate) then becoming-woman would be a depersonalisation, a liberation from personification, images of thought and the notion that there are thinkers first, and then the concepts they use as tools or supplementary methods (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 376). But there is an alternative, and that is to see a distinction between the subject of enunciation, who precedes and grounds judgment, and the persona (especially the persona that would accompany 'becoming-woman'). Becoming-woman would be crucial to

the dissolution of the subject, and to thinking of texts, ideas and concepts not as *tools* (where a thinker uses a concept for certain ends, according to whether they work) but as weapons: something thrown or projected that expends force but without a determined production (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 287). It is in this regard that Deleuze and Guattari align becoming-woman with the 'war machine': not an actualised war, such as philosophical or 'theory' wars with opposition among combatants, but a war of forces without underlying terms (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 278). It is always possible to see feminism as war: as a group attack on patriarchy where there would be subjects who would then need to find the best conceptual resources. In such cases war as an object would be an accident or supplement (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 418); actual wars would appear to be deviant or parasitic. A war on men or masculinity (even a war on war) would be a justifiable temporary violence oriented to a state beyond conflict.

But Deleuze and Guattari argue that this apparent supplement or accident, or the actual occurrence of wars, indicates a war-machine that, far from being alien to rational man and humanism, enables his existence, *and* provides a means of thinking his escape. Referring to Derrida in their notion of the logic of the supplement, they insist that what appears to be an accident or an addition to the man of reason – wars, combats battles – is actually evidence of a war in general, or a war machine. It is this 'war machine' that allows something like a State, and the accompanying form of the good thinker of common sense to be formed, for the State harnesses forces and relations into organised bodies of combat. It also has its own epistemology, for by placing war as an object to be used *by men*, the State creates the idea that war is an accidental occurrence for the sake of a greater good. If, however, man and war, or the relations of bodies in combat, are the effects of a war-machine, then this would have three consequences.

First, that which we take to be the norm and ground – the man of common sense and good will oriented to peace who fights a war in order to win over others to the truth that he has discerned – covers over the war machine of life; it precludes a perception of the forces from which we are composed, the forces that create relations and the powers that thought may be able to engage. Second, this epistemology has a sexual character, again given in the structure of man as a thinking organism. (This is spelled out in Deleuze's and Guattari's theory of the oedipality of the secret.) It is from the hysteria of the child, a child who perceives a secret that is held apart and that constitutes his private being, that man 'evolves' to a position of virility. Here, there is no secret from which one

has suffered or which sets one apart from the domain of communication; rather, there is only a structure *that there is a secret, that there is the hidden*, and it is this perception of a ground beyond perception and relations that produces a structure of paranoia. And again this could be aligned with a style of agonistics and a style of war: from Kant onwards it has been the absence of a capacity to know, an anti-foundationalism, that has resigned us to conclude that all we can have is an ongoing conversation oriented towards legitimation that never arrives (Habermas 1992). Third, it is this covering over of the war machine by a State of warring bodies, that indicates or intimates becoming-woman. If virile paranoia is structured by a sense of a lost, hidden and unknowable secret, then woman – who *is* the secret – occupies not one more place in the terrain, but a different style of terrain, and possibly a different mode of persona.

This is why, I would suggest, becoming-woman is a useless and paralysing concept if it is used within theory and within wars among theoretical personae. As an example we could consider the false battle of essentialism: *either* woman exists as a substance outside the way we think of the human (which would enable emancipation, liberation and change) *or* woman is an effect of the ways in which the human has been constructed and it is the idea of construction is such that is liberating – no more enslavement to essences. Not only has the terrain of feminism actually never been that simple, as evidenced by the amount of ink spilt over deciding whether Judith Butler does away with the body and sex or grants sex a power far more efficacious than mere biology; it is also the case that if feminism means anything, then it somehow has to intervene differently in the way in which battles are fought according to meaning. So, rather than define a battle according to whether woman does or does not exist, let us imagine something more *practical* in the the Kantian sense (or what Deleuze refers to as internal pragmatics). Given that we discern the war machine or the positive play of forces only among men who are structured by a paranoid virile form of secrecy – *that there is a hidden but we do not know it and so the battle goes on* – what would it be to occupy the position of a body for whom there is no secret, for whom there is no position within a warring paranoid terrain and whose possibility (if she were to speak) would create a persona that would not be in command of forces for the sake of some end of man?: 'Such is the form of exteriority, the relation between brother and sister, the becoming-woman of the thinker, the becoming-thought of the woman: the *Gemut* that refuses to be controlled, that forms a war machine' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 378).

To consider a form of feminism as becoming-woman, or as associated with the war machine, requires both the dissolution of subjects as external to, or before, pragmatics and the construction of conceptual personae. Becoming-woman is not in conflict with the persona of the feminist philosopher, for the feminist philosopher is not one who thinks, who thinks well, or who directs good thinking to the right ends. The feminist philosopher as conceptual persona, as moving with the war machine rather than war, would allow a new form of agonistics – not just another persona added to the history of philosophy, but a new style of philosophy. Such a possibility is not, I would suggest, a distant, utopian or impossible future but can already be intuited in the space of feminism as we know it today. Indeed, it is the rather embarrassing, awkward, appropriating tone of this horrible concept – becoming-woman – that paradoxically requires us to evaluate concepts differently. The concept is embarrassing when it closes down thinking: when it is left to feminist philosophers to disentangle this monstrous thread, while the real Deleuze philosophy and Deleuze studies gets on with the nuts and bolts of materialism. The embarrassment and awkwardness should not be seen as unfortunate or accidental: it cannot be explained away by accepting that Deleuze and Guattari were having a French moment when they made this appeal to becoming-woman, and that what we really require is a Deleuze studies that can go beneath such figures and metaphors to the real matter. But can we, should we ('we'?), allow this distinction to be maintained between a philosophy's mere form and the matter or system that can be adjudicated systematised, translated and liberated from its style? Again we face an awkwardness, because becoming-woman is articulated as *the* way to think matter differently, and to think matter a such.[1] For becoming-woman, and its association with both the war machine and a certain form of the secret, is a way of trying to arrive at 'materials-forces' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 329), where there is no matter outside variation, force, relation and difference: 'The secret has its origin in the war machine; it is the war machine and its becomings-woman, becomings-child, becomings-animal that bring the secret' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 287). There is not a matter that is then expressed in thinking, with various positions warring over materialism *or* idealism, Marxism *or* Freudianism, feminism *or* a post-feminist liberation from sexuality.

We might begin to see that it is this concept in Deleuze studies, the concept of becoming-woman, that has at once been the most destructive – precluding the smooth transition to an understanding of Deleuze – but which in its indigestibility offers us food for thought. This

would not be the totem meal that consumes the father in order that the brothers might live on, battle on, and acknowledge that they have killed the ends of man only to arrive at a domain of communication. Rather, the taking-in of this concept of becoming-woman generates a new concept of dissonance, which is therefore a new structure of the war of thinking. One way of considering dissonance, or the incommensurability and war of opinions is through the masculine virile paranoid form: there is no truth outside the assertion, well-formedness and legitimation process of argument, so this entails a relation of ongoing battle among good thinkers. A rogue thinker – one who absented himself from conversation and claimed a fundamental intuition of the truth – would be the object of discipline, but all in the name of keeping the play of perspectives open (Rorty 1998). If, however, we adopt the practical potential of becoming-woman then the nature of the philosophical persona is quite different. If it is not the case that there is some hidden ground from which we are separated by virtue of our finitude but, on the contrary, there is matter and life only in expressions, noise and chatter *all of which express the infinite but from a singular point, with no point being in command of the whole*, then dissonance is not the failure of harmony, or a dissonance on its way to a harmony that never arrives (Deleuze 1993). Dissonance is the song of the earth as such. Becoming-woman is the most disastrous of concepts if considered as an object of war, where we could either decide that it is good or bad for feminism, or a minor moment in an otherwise serious corpus. The concept of becoming-woman creates embarrassment for the serious thinkers who need to leave it aside while granting women the right to a squabble regarding its efficacy. By pushing this disastrous embarrassment further, though, we might avoid the worst peace of perpetual management and begin to think those dissonances that take us beyond organic quiescence. Becoming-woman, as a concept with its attendant personae, is intrinsically opposed to the good will of the thinker, and it is for this reason that it has done violence to feminism and Deleuze studies.

In order to see how this is so let us ask this question: what would it mean to shut down this concept once and for all? Two possibilities: a philosopher demonstrates that 'becoming-woman' is pragmatic: we happen to confront a plane of thinking that has been organised according to sexual binaries, with man at the centre, but this is not essential. We begin with trying to think another figure, woman, and then move beyond figures (Lambert 2006). (The war is localised and temporary, and oriented to arriving at good sense, where sense is the

sense of the true Deleuzian spirit and the right form of life.) Second possibility and one that I would suggest we begin to pursue: we do away with the notion of the inessential figure, the accident or cliche that befalls thought as if from outside. We regard the intrusion of this ugly concept into an otherwise respectable corpus not as an unfortunate lapse in rigour, nor as a throwing of a salvo to give women something to think about – pragmatically – while the boys get on with ontology. Rather, we begin to think the ways in which it is the very awkwardness of concepts that makes a philosophy possible – its creation and daring, and breaking free from figures – that will also do a twofold violence to the corpus.

As an example I would cite one of the earliest interventions in what was not yet 'Deleuze Studies.' In *Patterns of Dissonance* Rosi Braidotti (1991) argues for a feminist subject who would be a necessarily presupposed, positive and constructive persona. Her existence is neither prior to feminist questions nor a simple discursive and illusory effect of the performance of feminist interventions. In *Patterns of Dissonance* Braidotti was already posing Deleuzian style problems that took the risk of refusing what Manuel Delanda (2006) has berated as 'the linguistic paradigm': there is not only a tactical or strategic problem in denying the possibility of the subject of enunciation; there is also an ontological or vital problem. Life cannot be reduced to the systems or structures that are known and actualised, for there are potentialities or living tendencies that exist, insist and inflect that orders of discourse and action we negotiate. The feminist subject of *Patterns of Dissonance* is therefore best read, I would suggest, as a refusal of discursive or negative approaches (where subjects are nothing other than nodes of subjection, points of interpellation) and as a rejection of a pre-philosophical or *transcendent* empiricism where one simply posits what women literally are. Instead, it makes sense to see the feminist subject as a consequence of a transcendental empiricism: all we have is this one dynamic and dissonant life, with no overarching or unifying system of relations (empiricism), but this life that we live, feel and negotiate is always *more than* its actualised terms. The task of the transcendental (in *Patterns of Dissonance*) takes the form of the production of a feminist subject. This is a subject who is the positive potentiality to question, mobilise, become and *think* the desires and relations that subtend the array of discourses, or the patterns of dissonance that compose any philosophical or political terrain. So we might at one and the same time affirm the necessity of thinking of the feminist philosopher as conceptual persona: it is she who asks *whose* discourse, whose statement, whose subjection, performance, passion or negativity is expressed in this or that specific dissonance.

At the same time, as *feminist*, this persona is not a figure defined by its active predicates – the one who doubts, affirms, negates and arrives at certainty – but is in a pattern of dissonance. For a new persona is only possible if something occurs in a text that marks a threshold and requires a reorientation in thinking; awkwardness is essential if thinking is going to be more than the free flow of easy conversation, or the war of one body against another.

To attempt to state this awkwardness less awkwardly let us look at how this concept of becoming-woman has been evaluated in terms of external pragmatics. Two male philosophers create a concept that seems to give women a role not only in thinking, but in life as such, in a new theory of matter, perception and creativity. But herein lies just the problem: for it seems as though thinking, just at the moment when it wishes to express daring and becoming, falls back into an appeal to the feminine: not women, but 'something' that women, too, need to tap into (Jardine 1985). So perhaps, here, we need to overcome the external pragmatism of 'becoming-woman' – deciding whether 'we' accept or reject this concept, whether it should be justified or expunged – and think about becoming-woman in its most scandalous, least appealing and *stupid* potentiality. Rather than read Deleuze and Guattari theologically – aiming for the spirit of the text beneath the unfortunate French letter – we should take this concept of 'becoming-woman' as evidence (as if evidence were needed) that the matter of thinking always comes from elsewhere: from figures, cliches, and war zones that have organised prior battles of forces. This stupidity can be evaluated from the outside: here we would ask whether 'we' should still think in terms of man and woman? Alternatively, we can seize hold of this stupidity and refuse the exclusive disjunction of regarding 'becoming-woman' as *either* good or evil.

If thinking does not proceed from a good will, and if the forms of thought are not mediations of matter, then we might confront the benevolent stupidity and malevolent intelligence of the matter-expression of thinking. There is not a thinking that confronts matter as some object to be formed, nor a good thinking that follows from the proper development of matter. Against thought as the extension or evolution of a life oriented towards good sense and self-recognition, Deleuze and Guattari create the concept of becoming-woman to at least begin to *demoralise thinking:* both thought without a morality, and a thought that confronts its breakdown and absence of guarantee. This is not an 'on the one hand, on the other hand' logic (Deleuze 1994: 282), where we see that while we might need to begin with the idea

of woman in its most cliched and stupid form (associated with secrecy, celerity, girlhood and birdsong) we would then need to move on and start thinking without such figures. Rather, becoming-woman is thought *and* unthought at one and the same time. It is matter expressing itself, with the human organism giving order to chaos by referring to sexed bodies as coded in the familial assemblage; at the same time it is an attempt to create a style of thinking that is not a correct representation so much as a style of provocation that has no external criteria.

Let us consider this broad-brush and possibly overly literal beginning of becoming-woman in terms of philosophical conceptual personae. The persona that follows from a philosophy of becoming-woman and becoming-imperceptible is a curious hybrid: Deleuze and Guattari warned against a complete or absolute deterritorialisation, and instead emphasised the creation, not dissolution, of masks and styles. They insisted on personae, or thought figures, rather than masters who would act as grounds for judging either the value of a text or its sense. When Deleuze argues for an 'internal pragmatiism' he suggests that we do not simply trace back a philosophy's force to its institutional and authorial proper names, but instead look at how modes of argument, concept-creation and problem-production effect ways of living. If a philosophy is excessively organised, or assumes a relation of powers narrowed to man as a speaking, rational, calculating and rule-following being, then the wide range of 'what a body can do' is domesticated by one of the body's functions.

We might note, today, with all the work undertaken on the body as an autopoetic unity geared towards its own equilibrium and homeostasis (Damasio 2003; Maturana and Varela 1987; Thompson 2007), that we are in the presence of a highly rigid plane, where the human organism is figured in a hysterically normative manner. Further, such an articulation occurs with a very clear conceptual persona of the philosopher as emancipator. We are, we are constantly told, suffering from centuries of flabby metaphysics and Cartesian images of mind as spirit; what we need to do is return to an accurate model of vital life, recognise man as a practical organism for whom thinking is an *extension* of life-sustaining movement, and regain a proper view of the world (Varela, Thompson and Rosch 1991). We undertake a global war on the lures of bad metaphors: mind as machine, mind as computer, mind as ghost in the machine or mind as separate substance (Flanagan 2007). The corrective for such stupidities is a theory of systemic life, thoroughly grounded in the organism and meaning. Man is now a self-maintaining bounded machine, and the world is nothing other than the milieu of

potential responses according to man's ongoing, dynamic and responsive selfhood. One of the ways in which Deleuze has functioned as a proper name has been to consecrate a return to living systems, a rejection of any notion of mind or sense independent of living bodies. This appeal to vitalism functions, despite Deleuze and Guatari's insistence that their vitalism is technical and machinic, as a return to genetic life, life as genesis or unfolding.

When Deleuze has been *accused* of vitalism (rather than read with a nuanced sense of what vitalism might mean) it has been this aspect of supposed literalism that has been targeted (Hallward 2006). Against a Deleuzian return to 'life' as some monist flux beyond the entities of this world, Alain Badiou has asserted the subject *as function;* for it is only in the act outside calculation and the already enumerated that something like thought can occur (Badiou 2005). It is perhaps not surprising that Badiou appeals to the tradition of the radical subject, and that such an appeal has force: for the mantra of anti-Cartesianism that defines theory today has had the effect of retreating back into the primacy of the self as an organism. We are left with an exclusive disjunction: either we consider life in terms of organic systems, their milieux, and the always located meaning a body makes of its world, *or* we posit the subject as a potentiality to think. Such a subject would be nothing other than a break with, or negation of, organic plenitude. And it is here that we can see the beginnings of the force of the feminist conceptual persona. Theory today battles itself out among combatants: either Badiou *or* Deleuze, either Deleuze *or* a Deleuze modified by Derrida. This battle has an internal style, which we can discern in the constant use of diagnostics: either we lament the fall into Cartesianism that can be overcome by theories of life (Damasio 1994), or we lament philosophy's fall into poetry and regard it as redeemable only through a radically formal mathematics (Badiou 1999). And then there is that ragbag of lesser 'thinkers' known as feminists, who do not create systems in order to mark out a proper name as a terrain, but occupy and move with forces.

If Deleuze can be thought, today, with the concepts and figures he contributes – including 'becoming-woman' – it is in relation to a plane that has become rigidified around the opposition subject-organism. Either thinking and living is grounded in organic and meaningful life, with thought being an extension of self-maintaining processes (Hansen 2000) *or* we can posit subjects as negations of that constituted domain. Either Cartesian dualism or an organic monism (Zizek 1999). As an example of this type of plane, with its attendant persona, we need only think of the new anti-Cartesian man of cognitive science, who

has broken away from metaphysics, and found himself in a new and manageable domain of systems theory. Defined against old models of centralised thinking, man is now stratified between his body as an equilibrium mechanism and a milieu that is given as always meaningful from the point of view of the organism (Thompson 2007). To think of Deleuze as a philosophical persona (as a possible figure for a different style of thinking, one that will confuse science and poetry, sexual figures and physical models) may release us from this highly gendered model. Deleuze regarded the attainment of the body without organs as the end of his philosophy of becoming: rather than maintain a balance among powers, or be oriented by the organs acting in concert to regulate one's external world, the 'body without organs' would extend sight to the point of thinking the invisible in the visible, the ear to hearing the sonorous in sound, and the brain to thinking beyond the given, the lived and the communicable.

Notoriously, Deleuze opposed the self-authoring man of philosophical systems – whose world and others would always be in accord with his own organic striving – with a violent production of philosophical progeny. To take a previous philosopher 'from behind' (Deleuze and Parnet 1987) would create a future of the philosophical text not anticipated in the original text's genesis. The Deleuzian persona is avowedly monstrous, neither a man of insemination giving form to a matter that awaits his potency, nor an oedipalised son striving to maintain and expand the proper legacy of the history of philosophy. True philosophical fidelity, being a true son of a philosophical father, requires bastardry: do not extend, but pervert those powers in a text that did not flow organically from a preceding good will. Read a text for its potential to expand rather than normalise the human organism. As an example of Deleuze's own reading we might think of Bergson's concept of pure perception, which is the intuition of the power to perceive liberated from the sensory motor complex of the specific speed of the human body. Despite Bergson's orientation in *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion* (1985) to arrive at a humanity that would extend the intellect to perceive spirit as such, Deleuze used the concept of intuition to create concepts of becoming-imperceptible: concepts that tend towards a liberation from the body perceived as self-bounded unity and towards a becoming of the world as such. As Rebecca Hill notes in this volume, Bersgon's philosophy harboured its internal stupidities, those moments when it defined thinking as such according to a limited and localised body of Western man. Perhaps that stupidity is overcome and intensified in becoming-woman, for this concept at once recognises

just how imbricated the image of thought is with man as an organism, but in defining the passage beyond that as 'becoming-woman' takes an incalculable risk of cliche. Deleuzian concepts are those, then, that recognise minimal and supple degrees of stability, and work towards impersonality. The persona that attaches to this style of concept is not that of the good and upright thinker who precedes style, but a thought that creates a body through style, a body that perhaps is at odds with self-maintenance and life-furthering.

Certainly one would release such a philosophical persona from *gender*, for the philosopher could not be the man of insemination nor the woman of care and nurturance. This becoming liberates itself from the man oriented to good sense, common sense and the equilibrium of the faculties, beginning with at least one other style of perception and relation to the outside that has not been determined in advance by a norm of right reason. This raises the question, then, of what type of persona is enabled by the taking up of this becoming-woman, for Deleuze and Guattari suggest that the persona of becoming-woman is a persona on its way to becoming-imperceptible, moving away from a molar subject, which may be necessary but should only be a passage toward 'thought without an image.'

If the affect created by a certain form of literature can be called 'Dickensian,' 'Kafka-esque,' or 'Lawrentian' (where we refer neither to any specific character, nor any sentence or content so much as a mode of living one's milieu), then the concepts created by philosophers can be referred to as 'Kantian' – concepts that are formal, constructivist, transcendental – or Cartesian, in their commitment to dualism, foundation, clarity. The personae that attach to these concepts are not biographies, so much as the figure or character whose style of thinking would have unfolded a certain mode of problem: a doubting Descartes, an always questioning Kant, a cantankerous Schopenhauer. Could such personae be female or feminist? Luce Irigaray suggested that if such personae were to occur then the nature of philosophy would be altered radically, not just in a reconfiguration of the plane of all philosophical concepts (as Deleuze suggests, where each new name and concept creates a re-reading of the whole), but in a ground-shattering and almost affective re-ordering of the very orientation of thinking. We would not have, in Irigaray's feminist philosopher, a single persona but something like a couple. Irigaray suggests this in *I Love to You* (Irigaray 1996) where a sexually different persona would undertake questioning, proposing, doubting, affirming, remembering or disputing always in relation and conversation with an other who would, in

turn, be both affected by and affective towards the address. Irigaray's philosophy created its own exegetical battles in the theory world – 'for and against essentialism' – even though the mode and style of her text, which spoke through the figures and tropes in philosophy showed the ways in which the logic of essence and accident occurred only through a certain agonistics and a certain relation to the outside. It is that relation to the outside that also marks Deleuze's commitment to life, and has perhaps lured us into a literal laziness, where becoming-woman appears as a stylistic tic rather than an necessary act of war the Deleuzian corpus took upon itself.

Now it is here, in this curious commitment to a theory of life, that we can find in Deleuze and Guattari a means of thinking personae beyond Deleuze's ambivalently virile image of 'taking a philosopher from behind.' Let us consider this figure in terms of philosophy's clichés and desires: if Platonism imagined the formative power as giving life to a chaotic matter, and if creative insemination is always master of itself because all emanations reflect and recognise their divine and grounding source, then Deleuze suggests a new sexual motif for creative time: not fathering through insemination, but a form of sterile and suggestively violent coupling resulting in bastard offspring that would seem to have no natural genesis. Elsewhere Deleuze (1990) refers to creations of sense as sterile, incorporeal and monstrous, often opposing violence to the man of common sense, and also aligning the war machine (and the man of war) with the feminine *against* majoritarian man. So let us pause to ask a tired old question: is becoming-woman in Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy a hackneyed gesture of reappropriation in which the speaking subject deploys an imagined fecund and extra-rational source in order to overcome his historical and emasculating rationalisation? Or, is this gesture towards becoming-woman an opening of thought, appealing to women not as they are, but as they might become once released from the normative binaries of bourgeois, capitalist, familial and productive norms? How might we decide such a question? The simple answer is through reading, but this then raises the question of how we read Deleuze: from behind, without due reverence, hoping not for fathered children but for monstrous ramifications? Or, is it more complex? Did Deleuze, because he wanted to tear Freud, Marx and others away from the familial and organic idea of man as a productive and self-maintaining body read these philosophers against their implicit theories of life (Freud's death drive, Marx's species being)? How then do we read Deleuze and Guattari's 'becoming-woman'? I would suggest that fidelity – explaining, justifying,

condemning this concept as a lapse – remains within a highly theological mode of reading whereby a text is the material expression of a spirit, a spirit that should be maintained, consecrated and corrected in its surface detail according to its proper sense. But there are resources within Deleuze's own philosophy that allow us to read otherwise. Here, it would not be a question of identifying a figure, such as becoming-woman, and then negotiating how that serves a group of readers, or how it allows us to judge an author. Such a theological reading, that regards texts as vehicles that might be judged according to the proper intent of their origin and the proper unfolding of their consequences amounts to an external pragmatism, where we evaluate styles according to already constituted (in this case organic) bodies. Let us suggest another path, one that follows from the *problem* of Deleuze and feminism: problems can be well posed or badly formed, but are opportunities for creation and transformation.

Deleuze suggests that in addition to women as a constituted population, created in a territorial relation with men through a historical assemblage of families, literary figures, cultures of reproduction and modes of reading, there is also a becoming-woman in which the very capacities that create women as part of a territory potentially open out onto a new assemblage. So this would allow us to think not of changing women's status within an assemblage, nor of giving women more power, and certainly not of escaping power and arriving at a woman's being-in-itself before all relations. On the contrary, becoming-woman allows for a different mode of agonistics: not women taking on a different role, but transforming just what it is to play a role, what it is to form a territory, what it is to make sense, and therefore what it is to read. Reading should not be the disclosure of a hidden secret, the unveiling of a sense that is the causal ground for being; nor is reading a creation ex nihilo with no relation to the outside. In Deleuze's own figure, taking a philosopher from behind seems at once to extend a masculinism in philosophy that creates from itself with no relation to the other, at the same time as it acknowledges that reading is an encounter, but one that is not appropriately figured through conventional couplings of a fruitful marriage, conversation, reflection or discourse.

In *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze and Guattari make two manoeuvres that complicate a ready association between thought as productive insemination, and reading as disclosive fidelity, and in these two manouvres they refigure sexual difference through a twisted binary. The first manoeuvre is their sexualisation of the secret, which is the sexualisation of styles of question rather than bodies; the second

manoeuvre is their suggestion of a 'war machine' beyond male-male combat. We can deal with these intertwining motifs in sequence before returning to the problem of the feminist persona, a problem that should alert us, today, to some of the risks of 'Deleuze studies.' For it is the idea that there is a secret to Deleuze, a sense held by a band of brothers who have killed the father of logocentrism, that is intrinsically sexual and comes ready-made with its own forms of combat: do we read Deleuze as a materialist, a spiritually-inclined vitalist, a proletarian-despising high modernist or the great sustainer of late Marxism? As I indicated earlier, Deleuze and Guattari describe a passage from the secret as hysterical childhood event (something that occurs that defines a content that cannot be given proper form of expression) to the secret as an infinite paranoid virile form: there is a secret but it has no content, and all we can do is be enslaved to a certain never-knowing, while regarding ourselves as the beings we are – man – just through this loss of knowledge. The 'secret' as infinite paranoid virile form structures a style of speaking, questioning, discoursing and proposing that can be studied, as Deleuze studies his own philosophers, according to an *internal pragmatics*: we do not, here, look at the institutions, contexts and bodies in order to assess the force and power of positions, but look at the ways styles of position create fields and modes of force. That is, if there is some ultimate hidden sense or genetic ground, then arguments would concern a transcendent term and combatants would evaluate each other to the extent to which they were more or less in accord with that norm. (Such a logic applies to certain feminist arguments: is 'becoming-woman' good or bad for women, us women, we women, the women we ought to become?) A certain mode of reading, a certain style of subject effected in relation to knowledge takes a 'paranoid virile form': there is a secret, a sense, a ground and origin; but not only can such a secret not be known or disclosed, all we are left with is a pure form – *that there is secrecy, that there is the hidden* – with no positive content outside our emasculated position of not knowing. We have passed, they suggest, from a childhood hysteria (whereby my being is marked by a secret event whose logic I play out but do not know) to an adult paranoia: there is nothing to be discovered, nothing to be disclosed, but we are all subjected, finite and diminished by an origin or past that is no less paralysing for being fictive. Another mode exists, which Deleuze and Guattari describe as becoming-woman: nothing is hidden, everything is transparent, and there is a high degree of chatter. Rather than relations among bodies being organised around a contested ground or privileged object, and rather than agonistics being determined by a

norm outside relations (such as a contestation for women as the spoils of war), becoming-woman is allied both with the 'war machine' and a becoming-imperceptible of the secret.

The war machine is the play of forces not yet assembled into opposed bodies placed in a terrain; for terrains, bodies, positions and their identifying traits occur through the play of forces. Rather than functioning as a ground or criteria of ethics, the Idea of the war machine, and the concept of becoming-woman with which it is associated, aims at a new style of ethics: for it does not posit an outside or other of force and violence but regards actual wars, combats and the persons and positions of terrains as ways in which violence is managed. This brings us to the curious, and possibly unpalatable, connection between becoming-woman and a truly violent war machine that would oppose actualised wars. Becoming-woman is neither the occupation of a position nor the evaluation of strategies and forces from some actual or imagined ideal. The 'man of war' for Deleuze and Guattari is associated with becoming-woman and the 'feminine line' precisely because he flees from constituted political battles. This can be thought concretely, according to a logic in which Deleuze and Guattari can be seen to be offering a sober analysis. Their description of the State's appropriation of the war machine describes actual war as a *supplement*, or outcome of a necessary synthesis. War is not a separate accident, an aberration that occurs despite or against humanitarianism; there are actual wars – bodies in identifiable combat – because there is the war machine, forces irreducible to persons and interests. As a consequence every battle and war draws upon a violence it must manage, but that can also deviate from the identifiable rationalisations of the State. We could think here of the ways in which the military can only operate by training bodies to kill other identifiable bodies for certain causes and in certain domains, but that this State war always opens the risk that those same forces will deviate or create a line of flight from the legitimised battle. As the recent documentary on abu ghraib – *Standard Operating Procedure* – disclosed, the war on terror was also a highly sexualised fleeing from clearly demarcated and purposive battles, becoming a highly cliched erotic assemblage in which bodies were pictured, posed, placed into narrative scenes and accompanied by dynamics of desire that were at once typically hetero-normative (prisoners humiliated through sexual passification) but also evidence of a line of flight, beyond man as sovereign agent and active manager. But why see aberration as becoming-feminine, and what can it tell us about secrecy, reading, and internal pragmatics? To understand this I would suggest that the

complex tying becoming-woman with the war machine and the feminine form of secrecy precludes sense and good judgment.

That is, both the Idea of the war machine (as a force beyond combating bodies) and becoming-woman as a relation to personification and sense that has abandoned identifiable and reliable content, do violence to good thinking. This is in two senses. First, there is a way in which this concept of becoming-woman has remained inassimilable in theory and has functioned to consolidate both a state of war, and a virile and paranoid mode of secrecy: either we need to make this concept work by restoring it to sense, or get to the heart of Deleuze's good sense beyond such messy notions. Second, becoming-woman opens a new mode of persona, where there is neither a feminist *use* of Deleuze nor a Deleuze that is allowed to develop within feminism while the masters get along with the work of Deleuze as a good and upright thinker and an object of Deleuze studies. If this concept enters the corpus of Deleuze and Guattari in an awkward and violent manner, it does so as a provocation and weapon that suggests – audaciously – that the one thing worse than a terrain of bickering, chatting, squabbling women with no real sense of the good is a perpetual philosophical peace in which problems are managed in reasonable conversations. Becoming-feminine considered through these two remarks regarding the war machine and the secret is at once a refusal of transcendence – some ultimate or final ground across which, or for which, combat takes place; at the same time it is a mode of relations without centre, ground, limiting polity, predefined stratification or object. But this does not preclude truth. On the contrary: truth is not some ground *given through* perspectives and styles, *for the truth is that there are styles*. 'Life' is not some One or secret that recedes and withdraws but is an infinite swarm of chaos, given and lived in moments of minimal order. If we were to read Deleuze and Guattari's becoming-woman according to the logic of internal pragmatics that it suggests then it would lead, I would suggest, to a different mode of writing: not a writing that either follows from a proper master, nor a writing that presents itself as the master. Such writing would be chatter: a multiplicity of voices that creates a pattern, a field of force, but does so without external justification. This would be different, also, from Deleuze's notion of 'taking a philosopher from behind,' which for all its irreverence still suggests a rebellion against the father. To think of a different mode of conceptual persona – the feminist conceptual persona – along the line suggested by becoming-woman and secrecy would enable a new mode of combat, a new voice or style that is no longer that of *the* philosopher who attaches to a concept, but something like a dissonance that distributes a field of phrases, response, questions and

styles – never sure of *who* is speaking, and often – perhaps – rendering the secret master of the text indiscernible, imperceptible. If we consider women as a historically constituted group, not defined essentially, but produced as an identifiable social body through culture and history, then a philosopher who creates a concept of 'becoming-woman' and then goes on to see this mode of becoming as transitional certainly does appear to be appropriating or cannabilising feminism for the sake of a philosophical end. But if we consider woman as a new mode of creating problems where the production of questions opens a new terrain, and does not set itself in exclusive disjunction (Deleuze *or* Derrida, Badiou *or* Deleuze) then we move from theory as the creation of territories to theory as the positive production of nomadic thought.

As concluding example, I would cite Elizabeth Grosz's *Chaos, Territory, Art* (2008), for it is marked by three features, at least, that indicate a new mode of persona. First, this book does not take a philosopher (or philosophy, or theory) 'from behind.' It leaves its philosopher behind. It is as though Grosz has decided not to care about Deleuze's ontology, about his war with Kant, Hegel or Derrida; instead the lectures ask how we might look at art if we think of art not as an object (delimitable, with definitions) but as something that would make us perceive birdsong, fish, stones and bodies differently. Second, it takes contemporary Australian indigenous art, not as what art truly or properly is, but as something that has occurred, here and now, and that has left behind the tortured post-colonial annihilations of whether 'we' can encounter the 'other.' It simply looks at these artworks – not as the body of an Other who might give the lost secret of the West – but as they are presented, displayed, as creating a space. Finally, and subsequently, it is this absence of reverent scholarship to Deleuze as master thinker, and to ethics as some approach to a radical other who might restore one's status as a subject, that marks out a new persona. For this is not a book at war with others; there is no marking out of one's own terrain as the next step in a development of hypotheses, or as a break with the blindness of a past condemned to distance from the great secret.

So we might at one and the same time affirm the necessity of thinking of the feminist philosopher as conceptual persona: it is she who asks *whose* discourse, whose statement, whose subjection, performance, passion or negativity is expressed in this or that specific dissonance. At the same time, as *feminist*, this persona is not a figure defined by its active predicates – the one who doubts, affirms, negates and arrives at certainty – but is in a pattern of dissonance. Thus we could consider Rosi Braidotti's feminist subject (in *Patterns of Dissonance*) and Grosz's performance of an enquiry into art without asking 'what is art

essentially?' in contrast with Deleuze's description of the Leibnizian monad, where each soul is composed of all the perceptions, affections, events and encounters that constitute its singular unfolding of infinity, (and with Deleuze's concomitant history of philosophical concepts and personae who act to reconfigure the entire plane with each of their textual creations). Leibniz's monad is harmonious: each soul sings its own tune, but because each soul is an expression of one infinite divine world, there is a resulting and felicitous harmony. Braidotti insists on dissonance, both because the tunes sung or expressed are not expressions of a preceding, implied, or divinely unfolded ground, and because no soul sings alone. Similarly, in Grosz there is a distance taken from Deleuze studies, and from philosophy *of* art, with there being less of a war on other thinkers, than a positive war or battle in composing strands of birdsong, buildings, human paintings, dance and sexuality (whatever that turns out to be). There is a din of voices: the dissonance presupposes that we can chart, think and trace the dissonances that make up any terrain, but the pattern of this dissonance has neither a transcendent origin, nor a pre-given goal of possible or ideal harmonisation. The din or dissonance is irreducible because voices cannot be uncoupled, nor can they step outside or above the cacophony. The subject is nomadic, in a constant state of metamorphosis and transposition, not just because it is one fragment of an open infinite that is never given, but because it is coupled; this persona is in dialogue or polylogue, at once different from any single system of matrix, and different *to* (or in relations of constantly differing difference) with the others with whom it is attached.

I therefore invite the reader of this volume to regard its opening onto chaos – its clear absence of a grasp of Deleuze – as the beginning of a problem, as an open secret.

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Notes

1. I use the term awkwardness here as suggested by Bergson's (1911) essay on laughter. It is when the human sensory-motor organism does not function efficiently – as in slap-stick or 'screwball' comedy where actions and conversations occur in a manner that displays the body's rigidity – that we are given a sense of just how organized the human animal has become, and therefore how it might be otherwise.

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Introduction Part II

Jami Weinstein

In her editorial introduction to this volume, Colebrook mischievously and provocatively chooses to leave the reader with 'the beginning of a problem, an open secret.' Before doing so, she meticulously outlines one of the central issues feminists have had with deploying the work of Deleuze and Guattari: how are we to understand that pesky *becoming-woman* formulation? As she rightly describes it, feminists often believe that the task of 'grasping Deleuze' hinges on whether the concept of becoming-woman is 'good or bad feminism,' wondering how to make sense of two male philosophers granting women 'not only a role in thinking, but in life as such.' As Colebrook ultimately points out, these are the wrong questions to ask, the wrong concerns to have. Taking becoming-woman in this direction means looking at this concept as a momentary lapse in philosophical rigor, as somehow separate and apart from analysis of the creative and transformative ontological issues Deleuze exposes – those that are the domain of real (read: male) philosophers. This, as she claims, has 'disastrous and embarrassing' consequences – one could almost say it is evidence for a self-marginalizing process produced by feminists who want to perpetuate the need for feminism, more on this later. Since the project of grasping Deleuze's work itself is false according to an understanding of his work, we need to pay heed to Colebrook's reformulation of the so-called 'becoming-woman problem' as a tool for creating dissonance via refigured relationships to the war machine and its concomitant secret. We could thus allow it to spawn new lines of ontological flight, rather than closing down thinking, and we could understand it not as a lapse but as a central element of the rigorous ontological reclamation project that typifies the work of Deleuze.

What Colebrook's introduction suggests is that a productive linkage between Deleuze and feminism can only be made on the back of a more wide-spread dispelling of pesky concepts and theoretical and conceptual misdirection, even if this means opening into the chaos and ceding hard-fought wars that at least seemed to create new possibilities of more libratory foundational ground. The force and creativity of

Deleuzian ontology can indeed be harnessed for feminist purposes but to do this we may need to bite the bullet on a variety of unproductive interpretations of the war machine. To this end, I propose we dredge up one other pesky concept: that of the fundamental ontology of sexual difference. If we are to 'bring the secret' through becoming-woman as Deleuze suggests (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 287), and part of exposing the secret is to open ourselves up to chaos and dissonance as Colebrook suggests, we also need to attend to the question of sexual difference anew, with a Deleuzian flair for truly transformative materialist ontology, rather that get fixated on any particular assemblage that gives the appearance of being foundational, even if that seems libratory.

In *Deleuze and Feminist Theory* Colebrook asked the question: 'Is Sexual Difference a Problem?' On the tenth anniversary of that publication, and in light of her own hints in the introductory essay to this volume that this problem *is* a problem, at least in the Deleuzian sense, I would like to now revisit her question. Yet, rather than repeating her question, I will take her suggestion that it is a problem and attempt to answer her two-fold call: (1) to redirect feminist interpretation on at least this pesky concept and (2) to think differently through the question of sexual difference. I will do this through a repetition of difference, asking not 'is sexual difference a problem?' but rather, if sexual difference is taken as a real problem, the sort that evades embarrassing and divisively marginalizing consequences for feminist theory, how might it be, as a concept, 'inventive: creating new concepts, new questions and new problems.' (Colebrook, 2000: 114) I do not pretend I will give an exhaustive account of the new concepts, questions, and problems that the problem of sexual difference creates. I wish only to investigate and provoke thinking on one fertile ground: zoontology and the repudiation of Enlightenment Humanism.

Sexual difference as a concept has been fantastically successful in helping us realize that we are living under an oppressive ontology of the One, a logic that pervades all aspects of thought, science, language, culture, psychoanalysis, philosophy, etc. But what it helps us *think through* via its prescient claim to move toward an (at least) dual ontology is the possibility of an ontology based on a fluid multiplicity. I see in the logic of sexual difference theory the possibility of re-imagining human ontology and repudiating Enlightenment Humanism, not simply by redefining human ontology as the ontology of two irreconcilable subjects but by using the concept of sexual difference to catapult ontology beyond humanism more generally through taking account of animality. As Colebrook noted, '(i)f sexual difference is

not theorised *from* a metaphysics, but is confronted as a problem, then we might take the issues of sexual difference and use them to *think*.' (Colebrook, 2000: 126) Thus, rather than conceptualize sexual difference as the constitutive foundation for all differences, or theorize sexual difference as a fundamental ontology, I would like to use sexual difference as a starting point for thinking differently about human ontology more generally. I believe this move toward fluid multiplicity is part of the sexual difference line of flight, virtually present within the concept itself. It is taking the concept of sexual difference in this direction that it becomes a proper philosophical and ontological project rather than merely a crumb on which feminist philosophers can chew.

Deleuze himself recognizes that there is no end only a beginning of a new question in the realization of sexual difference when he remarks about women's 'true ontological status:'

> the being of woman is never realized, and can never be realized without contradiction, without dissolution... Woman is neither object nor subject... she is not yet that which is; she is the *élan* of the object towards subjectivity. Neither an object in the world nor the subject of a possible world. She is not a subject, she does not reach being. (Deleuze, 2002: 23)

In other words, the realization of sexual difference, women's subjectivity, would only serve to dissolve sexual difference itself. This is the bullet we must bite in order to more productively engage Deleuze for feminist purposes: that subjectivity, once reached, is its own dissolution. But to what end?

If my suggestion that the concept of sexual difference has virtually within it a more fundamental question of an ontology of fluid multiplicity is accurate, that would be the reason we should be willing to bite that bullet. In what follows, I will sketch this trajectory and why I think pursuing this line of flight might be even more productive in the long run for feminists.

PHILOSOPHICAL CONCEPTS

If we are to take feminist philosophy seriously *qua* philosophy, and we grant Deleuze and Guattari's claim that, '(p)hilosophy is the discipline that involves *creating* concepts,' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994: 5) then we must acknowledge sexual difference as a concept. As Deleuze and Guattari note, however, 'concepts need conceptual personae that play a part in their definition.' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994: 2) Given that concepts are multiplicities, at least double or triple, (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994: 15) investigating the concept of sexual difference must

reveal conceptual personae aside from feminist philosophers who play a part in their definition. Before revealing the outcome of this analysis, we need to think through this theory of the concept a bit more.

Deleuze and Guattari argue that, 'All concepts are connected to problems without which they would have no meaning and which can themselves only be isolated or understood as their solution emerges.' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994: 16) As Elizabeth Grosz explains, 'every concept requires a delimitation to give it some 'identity,' however historically provisional; it also requires a ground, a mode of connection to the world.' (Grosz, 2005: 159) She continues that, 'They are connected to the resolution of problems or questions, for it is problems or questions which occasion concepts, and concepts are developed as a mode of addressing questions.' (Grosz, 2005: 159) What I will argue here is that the concept of sexual difference is historically provisional even though it emerges from a material connection to the world. Our need for it is connected to the resolution of a problem, the problem of correcting sexism for example. Once we have understood the problem and the concept, as we will observe, we realize that the concept is not about ontological differences between men and women at all, but a logic. It is this logic that pushes the philosophical value to a deeper level.

Deleuze and Guattari tell us that, '(t)he concept speaks the event, not the essence or the thing.' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994: 21) This is in line with sexual difference as a concept as long as we recognize, as Irigaray certainly does in acknowledging it as not yet realized, that the concept is, 'the contour, the configuration, the constellation of an event to come.' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994: 32–3) However, Irigaray and others argue that the event to come is the materialization of a fundamental ontology of sexual difference, the coming into existence of the subject woman. I think that this is *part* of the event to come, but stopping there does not tell the full story of the more important event that the concept of sexual difference can bring. Proposing sexual difference as foundational simply sets up new questions. Thus, if sexual difference is a concept, as I am arguing it is, it is more properly a 'center of vibrations' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994: 23) or a dissonance (as Colebrook, in her introduction, suggests becoming-woman to be) than it is about some ontological truth of the matter. As is the case with all concepts, according to Deleuze and Guattari, if a concept is unable to constitute itself, it is likely the result of it being mired in other problems. Further, perhaps due to the vibrations and forces within the concept itself, it evokes an event that helps create future concepts to better resolve the problems to which it was originally linked. To wit, I am suggesting that the inability of sexual difference to materialize is linked to the problem of humanism in general.

THE LOGIC OF SEXUAL DIFFERENCE

In the domain of contemporary feminist ontology, the trend seems to be to argue (following the work of Luce Irigaray) that because *le féminin* has been unspoken, unwritten, and non-existent in the hegemonic versions of human ontology, we need to attend first to the business of speaking and writing it into existence. What both generates and follows from this project is the claim that there has been a grave error deep within the backbone of our mainstream understanding of human ontology. That is to say that ontology up until now has been seen as monadic, fundamentally singular, about the One — where the phallocentrically patriarchal model codes all knowledge, language, science, forms of representation, the symbolic order, and socioeconomic structures as masculine, woman is relegated to the untheorized lack. What sexual difference theory has brought to the fore is that human ontology is, rather than the masculine One and the feminine lack, an ontology of (at least) Two—where woman and man are irreducible others.

I am sympathetic to this project, for it is true that the concept of woman has not been historically a concept of woman at all but rather 'not-man.' In the ontology of the One the human becomes man and not-man, woman never even enters the picture. Woman has been (un)conceptualized into a void, or pure negation of the masculine, but has never been theorized as a positive subject. I do not argue with this analysis. There is something intuitively and even logically true about this story. However, what I want to argue is that this story, while accurate, is not the story of a *fundamental* ontology, the precondition for all other differences. As a fundamental ontology, sexual difference would be considered 'the difference that precedes the entities it produces' (Grosz, 2005: 174), not merely a social difference attributed to bodies of particular kinds. I want to claim that achieving a world in which we have a well articulated, irreducible, dual sexual ontology would not exhaust the human ontological picture. Rather, it is merely a first stage along the path to understanding what it is to *be* human. In other words, sexual difference ontology does tell part of the story of becoming human, the part that delimits what it is to be human. If our interest is what it is to *become* human, we cannot dub that story the most fundamental of stories of human ontology. Thus, we must have neglected to interrogate a deeper question virtually present within the concept of sexual difference.

UNDOING SEXUAL DIFFERENCE (IMPERCEPTIBILITY)

So, what I propose is that once we arrive at the point where we can understand sexual difference as a concept and understand the logic of the One it exposes, we then need to think through it and propel it further philosophically. By that I mean that we need to undo sexual difference once we finally conceived it, in order not to remain egotistically anthropocentric. But this undoing is not a return to the state we are now in, where women are lack or merely 'difference from a norm,' it is not a return to the humanism of the past with its hidden and untheorized phallocentrism. It is a repetition of difference, pure difference, not a repetition of the same.

I know this logic will worry those feminists who would be loathe to relinquish the hard won subjectivity we were (and still are) denied for fear of a return to the patriarchal sameness, solidity, false binaries, and domination of the ontology of the One. But their fears are unwarranted. As I said, this is not a return to the same. It should be noted that these same feminists would also be hesitant about, if not completely antagonistic to, the idea that a fully successful feminist strategy is to aim for its own eradication — in other words, once the goals of the movement are achieved, we will have reached a state in which there is no longer a need for feminism. The misunderstanding of the goal of feminism (as recognition and visibility rather than imperceptibility) is one of the reasons I think that the problem of sexual difference is a false problem: most advocates of sexual difference as a fundamental ontology would theorize sexual difference into perpetuity and thus establish a basis upon which feminism would always exist. For example, according to Irigaray, sexual difference of an ontologically fundamental kind has not yet happened. Thus, it remains a virtual possibility, one that may never fully be realized and one for which we cannot have a blueprint. According to Grosz, this means that the time of sexual difference is the future. However, if the time of sexual difference is always already the future, feminism must take as its ultimate goal simply the perpetuation of an unrealized virtual force.

On the contrary, I am inclined to argue following Deleuze and Guattari that the ultimate goal of human becoming is becoming imperceptible. This means, following Grosz, that 'the future feminine must render itself obsolete or the object of profound and even inhuman (or imperceptible) becomings rather than itself rest on the forms of femininity as they have been represented and idealized in sexual indifference, or within patriarchy as it has existed up to now.'

(Grosz, 2005: 177) This is, as Grosz says, 'a politics of imperceptibility and acts not one of identities and recognition.' (Grosz, 2005: 189) Becoming-woman and its underlying sexual difference would be useless concepts if measured according to visibility and identity. They would serve only as tidbits to distract feminist philosophers from the real work of philosophy. Feminist strategies would be better aimed toward mobilizing these concepts toward a politics of imperceptibility, as Deleuze and Guattari themselves recognize when they assemble the triad: becoming-woman, becoming-animal, becoming-imperceptible. This feminist move toward the imperceptible, suggested by Grosz, would take the following form:

> Instead of a politics of recognition, in which subjected groups and minorities strive for a validated and affirmed place in public life, feminist politics should, I believe, now consider the affirmation of a politics of imperceptibility, leaving its traces and effects everywhere but never being able to be identified with a person, group, or organization. It is not a politics of visibility, of recognition and of self-validation, but a process of self-marking that constitutes oneself in the very model of that which oppresses and opposes the subject. The imperceptible is that which the inhuman musters . . . (Grosz, 2005: 194)

We find the key in her last sentence, also found in her argument on page 177 cited above: becoming-woman and sexual difference *qua* concepts tend toward *in*humanity, a deterritorialization of the human, a repudiation of humanism, a transhuman perspective. It is here we find the move to a transspecies zoontology virtually present in the concept of sexual difference; it is here that the open secret is revealed and the deeper philosophical problem can begin.

MOBILIZING THE LOGIC OF THE ONE—THE MOVE TO ZOONTOLOGY

The recent attention given by feminist theorists to the value of questions of animality and the concomitant desire to refigure the relation between humans and animals reveals the need for a more subtle and profound zoontological theory. Once we do have a working zoontological theory, however, we must determine its place in relation to human ontology; it is important to come to terms with how this shift in focus toward the zoontological might fit with other theories of decidedly central importance to these theorists. Notably here, the issue of an ontology of sexual difference. We need to reassess the value of maintaining sexual difference as the fundamental ontology in light of a move away from humanism in general, for sexual difference seems predicated on at least some form of humanism, or at least

an historical speciesism.[1] Though the positioning of sexual difference as a fundamental ontology is undeniably controversial, even among feminist philosophers, we need to conceptualize how or if that view might gel with a fundamental transhumanism based on zoontological premises. We must also understand how marshalling the logic of the One invented through the concept of sexual difference for the task of deconstructing humanism's inherent speciesism actualizes the virtual concept present in sexual difference theory in such a way that a more productive relationship between becoming-woman and the war machine can be discerned and the conceptual persona of the Feminist Philosopher becomes a proper philosopher.

To recapitulate, following sexual difference theorists like Irigaray, the goal of feminism should be to move from the logic of sexual indifference, or the logic of the One, to the logic of (at least) Two through the articulation of woman and, thus, an ontological sexual difference. Irigaray holds this ontology as the most fundamental human ontology. I agree that this is an important phase in the deconstruction of one insidious hierarchy embedded in Enlightenment Humanism. However, we must not stop there, it is merely an initial step. If we stop here, we once again arrive at a logic of the One: the humanistic, speciesist logic of the One. For, what it is to be animal in the post-enlightenment world is to be untheorized lack, or not-human. In other words, once the logic of the One is detected as virtual within the concept of sexual difference, we need to harness it to think through another important ontological piece of the humanism puzzle: the logic of the One present in the human/non-human animal binary.[2] What needs to take place then, is the move to what I would call a transspecies zoontology[3]. In moving to this element of the deconstruction of Enlightenment Humanism, we must take heed of the advice to become-imperceptible. This involves biting the bullet and undoing the human sexual difference now conceptually articulated. In other words, to fully realize imperceptibility, we must transform the (albeit hard won, if it has even been won at all) logic of the Two with a logic of fluid multiplicity and this means that the irreducible man-woman binary will multiply both internally and externally. It is here that we arrive at a *more* fundamental conception of human ontology[4] and we can grasp the philosophical importance the concept of sexual difference has virtually within it.

What I suggest is that we expand and multiply the logic of the (at least) Two to the logic of the imperceptible multiple in order to deterritorialize the human and *become*, paradoxically more fully human. In the dichotomy of human and non-human animal, we establish another mythology of an ontological dualism that does not really

exist: a human/non-human animal *in*difference. Underlying this is the presupposition that there is one thing human and one thing animal to which we are referring. If we acknowledge (via sexual difference theory) that there are at least two irreducible ontological human entities (woman and man), we must then admit that counterposing some singular concept of the human against some singular concept animal is misguided. This demonstrates a key misinterpretation of the speciesist logic of the One without even attending to the fact that a singular notion of 'the animal' is simply specious. Thus, if we counterpose a multiplicity human against a multiplicity animal, we reduce our analysis to mere nonsense if it is founded on singular logics. For what is a human? Against which animal is it measured?

In recognizing the fluid multiple ontology called forth through these dual logics of the One, we must note that this is part of the function of all becomings, as Deleuze and Guattari remark that, 'becoming and multiplicity are the same thing. [I]ts variations and dimensions are immanent to it.' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 249) Becoming is also figured in contrast to teleology, a sentiment subtly echoed in sexual difference theory. To wit, Deleuze and Guattari claim that, 'a line of becoming is not defined by points that it connects, or by points that compose it; on the contrary, it passes between points, it comes up through the middle . . . a line of becoming has neither beginning nor end, departure nor arrival, origin nor destination . . . a line of becoming has only a middle.' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 293) Irigaray, too, recognizes this when she advises, '(b)e what you are becoming, without clinging to what might have been, what you might yet be.' (Irigaray, 1985: 214) The point of this process of becoming is not to transform into another pure entity or being but rather to become other and ultimately become imperceptible.

This move toward a fundamental transspecies zoontology is located within the realm of a Deleuzian pure difference (or what I would call horizontal difference) rather than a 'difference from a norm' (or what I would call a vertical difference). It is a return to a concept of human ontology that is not founded on sexual *in*difference (this state is one in which sexual difference has *never* passed through a stage in which the concept of sexual difference has already been articulated, much less been considered fundamental) but rather one that is *no longer* founded on sexual difference; it is an extrapolation out from the ontological Two into the plane of the multiple. In other words, it is a return of sorts but not a going back to the same. It is an ontology of fluid multiplicity with sexual difference as *no longer* fundamental predicated on a prior moment of sexual difference as conceptually fundamental.

In conclusion, for the larger project of deconstructing Enlightenment Humanism, demarcating sexual difference does seem like an important place to start, since it is from within that concept that we find the logic of the One, a central tool for unpacking the human/non-human animal binary. Additionally, from within the concept of sexual difference, we come to understand some of what has been left out of the *human* picture – woman. However, to call this ontology of sexual difference fundamental, the constitutive difference of all other differences, belies a deep-seated anthropocentrism. If we do not attend to the fact that claiming this as a fundamental ontology is a teleological error, we will be left in a revised form of humanism; it cannot be the ontology that precedes all other differences unless the so-called later stages of evolution are the only ones that count. Hence, what I have sketched here (albeit very schematically) is that, while sexual difference might be an interesting and even important difference, one for which we need to account, it is not the unique, most interesting, or fundamental difference typifying human being. However, the concept of sexual difference remains squarely philosophical and Feminist Philosophers become philosophers insofar as the concept they spawned contains all the virtual fodder necessary to do 'real' ontology. The concept of sexual difference contains the vibrations and the virtual logic that push us through the problem of humanism more fully. Thus, it is by thinking through the concept of sexual difference that we may be able to arrive at zoontology, a robustly *human* transspecies transhumanism.

DELEUZE AND FEMINIST PHILOSOPHY – THIS ISSUE

A quick gloss of the pieces in this volume shows that contemporary feminists working with Deleuze have come to terms with what Colebrook and I are both suggesting – that in order to produce a more productive linkage between Deleuze's work and the aims of feminist philosophy, we must do away with the pesky concepts, the philosophical crumbs, and *do* philosophy. We must think through becoming-woman and sexual difference to the more inventive philosophical concepts they produce. We must go beyond the good or evil, the marginalizing he said-she said approach, and attend to the creative ontological task that philosophical concepts present to us.

Colebrook suggests in *Deleuze and Feminist Theory* that:

> (s)exual difference might open the question of different bodily comportments, different responses to the given within the given . . . it might be time to

> think of the body in its various distributions. This would not mean offering a Deleuzian theory of the body, but would look at the body to think differently … Mightn't the anorexic body, which posits a radical disjunction between body-image, lived body and empirical body, disrupt the dreamed-of unity of the phenomenological subject?' (Colebrook, 2000: 125)

Branca Arsic, in her analysis of anorexia in this issue, answers Colebrook's call for that 'bodily philosophy' arguing that, '(a)norexia is both the process of experimenting with the form of the body – its resexualization – and the politics of disturbing the socially imposed order of everyday life.' Further, she does this without falling into the trap of doing a philosophy *of* the body. She understands this when she argues that, '(a)norexia should be understood to represent a particular strategy of resistance, and rescuing it from the inane ideology of an 'eating disorder,' as well as from the brunt theory of a 'consumption' neurosis is a function of such a resistance,' envisioning anorexia as an experimentation in line with Deleuze's Humean empiricism. Concluding that, '(i)f the main goal of the micropolitics of … anorexia is to invent the body of waves, the body without organs, then the success of such an experiment means, paradoxically, that the body without organs will never be fully realized, for such a realization is pure and simple death,' Arsic understands that feminist philosophers must meet the challenge of conceptual lack of origin and telos; they must see to it that we do not end up with the static, 'frozen body' potentially theorized by misdirected interpretations of becoming-woman and some reductive forms of the ontology of sexual difference.

Gillian Howie highlights the ways in which the micropolitics of becoming-woman are neither 'innocent nor without context.' Along the way through her careful philosophical argument about empircism and the relationship and slippages between ontology and epistemology, she reveals the material, corporal, ontological, and non-utopian means by which feminists can analyze this concept. While she agrees with its success at avoiding the 'dimorphic essentialism' implied in some versions of sexual difference, she cautions that we risk, 'de-contextualizing and appropriating the affective body.' She, argues that becoming-woman is a '*dis*embodiment … arguably at odds with any productive and beneficial social critique of invested desire … certainly a long way from feminist phenomenology.' In other words, citing Braidotti, she holds that, '(becoming-woman) is a theory of difference with no room for sexual difference.' According to what Colebrook and I have argued, and what Howie seems to be implying here, this may not necessarily be a conclusive failing of becoming-woman as a concept. Like Colebrook,

Howie seeks to rescue this concept from its theoretical uselessness by understanding the ways in which it, 'manages to reintroduce sexual difference, silently, through the back door.' She, thus, seems to call forth my argument (with a healthy bit of caution about how we might fall into the traps Colebrook outlined) about ways we might refigure our understanding of sexual difference. In other words, she demonstrates how becoming-woman speaks and thinks the open secret of the concept of sexual difference, configured not as an end but as a means.

Similarly, Tasmin Lorraine argues in this issue that:

> This division of humanity into two sexually differentiated groups obscures a wide range of social investments of the contemporary social field stratified into various configurations of power by highlighting sexed identity as key to determining who one is and how to live one's life. A variegated range of differences among human subjects is thus reduced in significance when compared to identification with one of the two categories, woman or man.

This clearly indicates that, while, as she states, 'sexed, gendered, and sexual identity are central features of the oedipal subject, making the question of sexual difference a crucial one,' as I have argued, its ultimate import may not be about a fundamental sexual difference at all. That, as she says, '(f)eminism, as a theoretical and pragmatic process, can intuit ways of living our sex and gender that are more affirming of the continuous range of variation in being sexed and gendered becoming-human entails.' In other words, that becoming-human through deterritorializing the human, or eradicating *humanism*, might be accomplished *through* sexual difference without sexual difference being assessed as teleologically fundamental. It might simply be the concept that provides the anti-humanist tools we need.

Rebecca Hill also subtly argues this point. In exposing Bergson's open system as implicitly sexed and phallocentric in its formulation of the relationship between life and matter, she claims that, 'Bergson's commitment to dualism can be read as symptomatic of a disavowal of a sexed hierarchy at the very heart of his open system.' She notes that '(t)he sexed hierarchy . . . is perhaps most pronounced in his account of evolution,' which demonstrates, 'the valorisation of a hyper-masculine theory of life and corresponding devaluation of matter as feminine.' She hints at my argument that sexual difference can help us rethink Enlightenment Humanism when she implies that Bergson's sexed hierarchy of life over matter can be read as part of a more insidious humanist hierarchy. This can be seen where she claims that, '(f)or Bergson, Man is distinguished from animals by a difference in nature

and presented as the 'end' of evolution. He warns that Man is the 'end' in a special sense . . . because he alone allowed life to triumph over the 'obstacle' matter.' The suggestion here seems to be that thinking through sexed differences and hierarchies pushes us right back to questions of humanism in general and to the important ontological war traditionally waged between human and non-human animals or, as Hill calls it, the 'phallic anthropomorphism.'

Dorothea Olkowski, in a creative exploration of logic and the feminine, also touches on themes of embodiment and animality; these motifs, like the feminine, are traditionally associated with the underground world inhabited by Alice when she descends into Wonderland. Olkowski argues that, 'Wonderland may not be all that wonderful,' if indeed the formal structures upholding traditional logic are abandoned. In the end, Olkowski concludes that there is a hidden sex difference at the heart of becoming-woman because, 'woman has to become-woman for man to become-woman,' which 'evinces a fundamental binarism at the heart of (Deleuze and Guattari's) philosophy.' If her final assertion is correct, however, that because Alice 'understands the limits of language and logic, the limitless world of possibilities, a world without causality and identity, without the arrow of times, without signification or reference,' she is, 'a thinker . . . a philosopher,' we are once again back at the question of what the concepts becoming-woman and sexual difference *do* philosophically. And we have returned to the question of concepts. Her references to embodiment and animality, I think, once again provide the clue. For, a world (Wonderland) without identity and causality ensconced in a world of traditional logic *is* Irigaray's phallocentric world of the not yet existing *féminin* subject. On this read of becoming-woman, feminist philosophers are unable to *do* philosophy and remain trapped chewing philosophical crumbs alongside the man's world of *real* ontology. But, Olkowski's various references to animality and corporality lurking beneath the surface questions of the logic of the One and the identities it both produces and erases beckon us to the *philosophical* concepts virtually present in becoming-woman and an ontology of sexual difference. These questions also ask feminists to do philosophy, ontology, and ultimately repudiate humanism at a more fundamental level.

So it is clear that this volume brings together a variety of feminist linkages to Deleuze that return feminist philosophy to the job of philosophy. We hope this will serve as an inspiration to other philosophers who seek to continue to unpack the open secrets.

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Notes

1. While I acknowledge that many non-human animals reproduce sexually, this is certainly not the case for all living non-human creatures. It is important here to recognize the multiplicity always part of the construct 'animal' for, neglecting to do so already begs the question of the humanistic logic of the One, where 'the non-human animal' is a singular lack to the singular human One.
2. I must acknowledge that the same argument could possibly be made in reverse. That is to say, if we started with the human/non-human animal distinction, detected its logic of the One, we would still be left with the problem of sexual difference, especially since the case could easily be made that many animals reproduce sexually. So what I am suggesting here is that the ontology of sexual difference is a necessary part of the deconstruction of Enlightenment Humanism but so is zoontology. However, my suspicion is that zoontology would trump the ontology of sexual difference along the path toward foundational ontologies insofar as it gets to the core of the humanist logic and its human chauvinism.
3. I will not take the liberty of presenting my theory of transspecies zoontology here nor will I explain why it more thoroughly responds to core problems of Enlightenment Humanism. However, suffice it to say (as I have said elsewhere) that the concept 'human' has been a relatively modern construction, one that relies on a clear distinction from what is deemed to be 'animal.' It is precisely the moment that 'animal' came to be seen as other to man that Foucault, in the *Order of Things* indicates when he asserts that man as an epistemological entity, as a species, came into being. Humanity then became the subject in contrast to the animal object. But, as Nietzsche forewarned, this was the great error of the arrogant modern man.
4. I am not proposing that there is a single fundamental ontology or ever could be, as I am not sure that trying to determine a foundation can ever be a productive strategy for progressive political battles.

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The Experimental Ordinary: Deleuze on Eating and Anorexic Elegance

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Abstract

The paper discusses Deleuze's concept of the feminine through exploration of the questions of eating, cooking, and specifically anorexia, as well as an 'anorexic relation' to fashion and dressing. It argues that anorexia should be understood as a micro-political experimentation in fashioning one's own body on its flight to becoming woman. In accordance with Deleuze's ontology of the surface, the anorexic body can be seen as the invention of the BWO that forms an assemblage with clothes and, in so becoming different, invents for itself different desires.

Keywords: body, ascesis, anorexia, eating, cooking, fashion, desire.

Feminine desires activate various processes in Deleuze. They set intensities on paths called 'becoming-woman'; they gesture towards secrets; or else they make pacts with larval selves so as to change more global gendered or mental set ups. They also activate a series of micro-political practices of asceticism, which destabilise the mind to the point of doing away with persons. Masochism is one such pragmatics: in experimenting with pain it works to unsettle the formation of personal boundaries. However, the varieties of ascetic politics – masochism, anorexia, drug addiction, alcoholism – differ, even if sharing some features. They are all 'assembled' by a desire that experiments on and with borders and they are all seduced by anomalous or abominable unions, while producing different effects: 'If the machine is not a mechanism, and if the body is not an organism, it is always then that desire assembles. But it is not in the same way as a masochist assembles, or a drug addict, or an alcoholic, or an anorexic. Etc.' (Deleuze 1987: 109). Whereas masochism works with waves and rhythms, hence often outside the specular, anorexia works within the domain of visual perception. It represents experimentation with the production of visual

signs, disturbing the way we distinguish among forms of organs or bodies, persons or sexes. Whereas masochism is a micro-politics that operates between the 'I' and the 'You' in order to negate the force of identity politics and explore ways in which I becomes You, anorexia operates between the 'I' and smaller social groups, such as, for instance, a family. Whereas masochism is about restructuring the organs of one's own body, anorexia restructures the relations among many bodies and signs: food, clothes, drinks, sexuality. Anorexia is thus both the process of experimenting with the form of the body – its resexualisation – and the politics of disturbing the socially imposed order of everyday life. In what follows I will examine how codes that dominate female bodies are turned against themselves in anorexia and employed in the contrivance of new experimental femininities.

Deleuze's understanding of anorexia differs fundamentally from the common understanding of *anorexia nervosa*. To label it 'nervosa' is itself ideologically charged and so signals its own political position. To call anorexia a neurosis is to suggest the answer to its enigma. Hence, according to the famous reading offered by Freud and Breuer, hysterical nervousness is the repetition of reminiscence; the anorexic suffers from an unsuccessfully repressed past trauma. Anorexia would thus have its origin in a type of genealogical disorder. Whereas most psychic disorders obey the dictum 'when the cause ceases the effect ceases,' in hysterical nervousness this genealogical principle is reversed and the cause finds a way to survive and directly affect the body:

> We may reverse the dictum 'cessante cause cessat efectus' ['when the cause ceases the effect ceases'] and conclude . . . that the determining process continues to operate in some way or other for years – not indirectly, through a chain of intermediate causal links, but as a directly releasing cause – just as a psychical pain that is remembered in waking consciousness still provokes a lachrymal secretion long after the event. Hysterics suffer mainly from reminiscences. (Breuer and Freud 1956: 58)

Healing anorexic nervousness would involve imposing a genealogical order by curing the 'origin;' it would require the analyst to detect the cause and then to try to weaken its force, so that once the cause ceased so would the effect. Such ideas of origin, order, genealogy and reminiscence guide this interpretation; and while it remains important in signaling the power of affection in anorexia – as a directly inflicted pain – it nevertheless hides the fact that the origin exists only as the phantasm of origin, hence itself a 'cause' of neurosis, thus blocking the access to the 'nature' of anorexia.

Anorexic Betrayals

To call anorexia an eating disorder is to suggest not only the existence of a phantasmatic origin but also a fantasised order, since it is to insist that there is a proper eating order. In contrast to that, Deleuze will argue that the idea of eating order confuses the fact that the organism has to live on something (but on what, precisely?) with a particular order of eating: 'The anorexic void has nothing to do with a lack, it is on the contrary a way of escaping the organic constraint of lack and hunger at the mechanical mealtime' (Deleuze 1987: 110). Finally, to say that the anorexic has a different image of her own body, which does not adequately represent the 'real' shape of it – to say for instance, that she sees her body as big in spite of the 'fact' that it is becoming thinner – is to suppose the normalising instance of a shared perception: one should see one's own body the way everybody else sees it.

In contrast to these readings of anorexia Deleuze will claim that the anorexic is not driven by a refusal of the body but rather by the refusal of a certain ideology of the body. The anorexic refuses the idea of the 'organised,' or organic body: 'It is not a matter of a refusal of the body, it is a matter of a refusal of the organism, of a refusal of what the organism makes the body undergo. Not regression at all, but involution, involuted body' (Deleuze 1987: 110). Anorexia is therefore an experimentation with the emancipatory invention of a body that would not subject us to its demands.

It is also a politics of betrayal of natural hunger. Anorexics 'betray hunger, because hunger tricks them by making them subject to the organism' (Deleuze 1987: 110). Not to eat when the organs are hungry is to overcome the demands of specific organs in order to reach the fullness – immanence – of the body; it means forcing the organs to live without expectations and thus to become ascetic. Anorexia is therefore a praxis of asceticism.

The asceticism Deleuze has in mind – making the body lighter, while maintaining its materiality – aims to replace extensive quantities with intensive qualities of lightness and fastness. The anorexic experiments with becoming ever lighter so that in moving faster she turns extensions into intensities or pure affects. But to transform extensions (of organs) into intensities (of affection) is also to negate the limitations formed by organs and to produce a body made of alterations. Such a body, Deleuze suggests, is a rhythm of affects, intervals and appearance of new affects. The anorexic thus experiments with the affects of 'void' and 'fullness:' 'The anorexic consists of a body without organs, with voids

and fullnesses. The alternation of stuffing and emptying: anorexic feasts, the imbibings of fizzy drinks. We should not even talk about alternation: void and fullness are like two demarcations of intensity; the point is always to float in one's own body' (Deleuze 1987). The anorexic is an inventor of a light and liquid body.

However, the anorexic betrays not only hunger (by eating irregularly, for instance) but also food, by never eating those large assemblages commonly called meals. What is more, she is experimenting with the possibility of eating that would be neither carnivorous nor involve eating 'fresh' life. She tries to find out whether it is possible to live on something without necessarily killing any 'body.' In so resisting the consumption of other bodies – and it is here that we see how anorexia becomes political – the anorexic resists the idea of being consumed by them: 'Anorexia is a political system, a micro-politics: to escape from the norm of consumption in order not to be an object of consumption oneself' (Deleuze 1987: 110). The anorexic eats bits and pieces, takes mouthfuls or sips, steals crumbs after the dinner is over, takes little bites from somebody else's plate, lives on the leftovers: 'I'm starving,' she says, grabbing two 'slimming yoghurts' (Deleuze 1987: 111). In other words, she assembles her body by collecting the particles of what has already been eaten. She composes her body out of already inorganic bodies in order to give herself a body that is equally inorganic. 'Her goal is to wrest particles from food, minute particles with which she will be able to create her void as well as her fullness, depending on whether she gives them out or receives them' (Deleuze 1987: 110).

Doing Cooking

The anorexic politics of tricking food by assembling a meal out of crumbs can become particularly subversive if she develops a taste for cooking; for then, as Deleuze says, she will turn 'consumption against itself: she will often be a cook, a peripatetic cook, who will make something for others to eat, or else she will like being at the table either without eating, or else multiplying the absorption of little things, of little substances' (Deleuze 1987: 110). The peripatetic cook turns consumption against itself because she does not let herself be consumed by the consuming. Everything is prepared for consumption and yet consumption does not occur since peripatetic cooking is precisely about enjoying the process of preparation without devouring its result; the anorexic is thus not entrapped by cooking for she does not eat what is cooked.

In *The Practice of Everyday Life* Luce Giard calls this praxis of cooking 'doing cooking' in contrast to simple 'cooking.' Doing cooking has nothing to do with eating what one has cooked:

> I discovered bit by bit not the pleasure of eating good meals, but that of manipulating raw material, of organising, combining, modifying, and inventing. I learned the tranquil joy of anticipated hospitality, when one prepares a meal to share with friends in the same way in which one composes a party tune or draws: with moving hands, careful fingers, the whole body inhabited with the rhythm of working, and the mind awakening, freed from its own ponderousness, flitting from idea to memory, finally seizing on a certain chain of thought, and then modulating this tattered writing once again. Thus, surreptitiously and without suspecting it, I had been invested with the secret, tenacious pleasure of *doing-cooking*. (Certeau, Giard and Mayol 1998: 153)

Doing-cooking is thus a version of the process of composing a tune or drawing. It is the art of making a body, reorganising particles, reassembling them, and doing so through the repetition and difference of rhythms and motions of one's own body. But it is also about inventing a spiritual intensive body, since the motion of body gives rise to the chain of thought which one inhabits rhythmically in order to move the mind. Doing-cooking is thus not only about tactile joy but about making hand and thought indistinguishable, about 'seizing on a . . . thought' that would fall in with the rhythm of the body, which then inscribes itself into a new body it is contracting ('modulating this tattered writing once again'). By inscribing its rhythm into the body of prepared food such cooking produces a textuality; it is not about eating but about writing and reading. In the words of a woman quoted by Luce Giard:

> When this became clear in my mind, it was already too late. It then became necessary to try to explain its nature, meaning, and manner to myself in the hopes of understanding why that particular pleasure seems so close to the 'pleasure of the text,' why I twine such tight kinship ties between the writing of gestures and that of words, and if one is free to establish, as I do, a kind of reciprocity between their respective production. (Certeau, Giard and Mayol 1998: 153)

Doing-cooking is therefore about writing a text and then enjoying reading it: watching other people eating it, without participating in the meal or participating peripatetically, as a spectator who is only passing by.

By eating little substances from the plates of others after they have finished eating, or by cooking and serving the food without eating it,

anorexic politics not only betrays hunger and food but also the ideology of family meals. Anorexia, Deleuze suggests, should thus also be seen as a protest against family meals and the dynamics of love and power traversing them (Deleuze 1987: 110). By the same token, when the anorexic prepares food for her friends and then watches them eating she is refusing to believe that only the ritual of 'eating together' – the ritual of sharing the dead bodies of others – can bring us closer. Instead, peripatetic cooking – the process of creating a new body as the gift for the guest – is her way of hosting: 'tranquil joy of anticipated hospitality.'

Case Study: Kafka

Kafka's love story with Milena can be read as an experiment in non-eating (together), thus as an effort to come closer to another without eating with her or, more radically, without eating at all. Kafka worked at evading the universal law that one has to eat in order to live. Not only was he a vegetarian who found pleasure in contradicting his sanatorium neighbor according to whom 'a meat diet [was] absolutely essential' for mental work (Kafka 1953: 70), advocating the perverse common-sense idea that thinking depends on eating life. More radically, Kafka experiments with the anomalous possibility of living without eating at all: 'the eating which I resumed again today (yesterday I ate nothing)' (Kafka 1953: 40). If he sometimes eats, he explains, it is only because there is always that 'call for dinner,' the 'mother's call,' a plate in front of him that his mother put there, which always faces him with the circumstance that 'unfortunately' food 'wouldn't disappear from the plate save by being swallowed' (Kafka 1953: 126), whereas he would rather avoid swallowing (is it possible to live without swallowing others?). Similarly, he explains to Milena, he will eat while in the sanatorium only in order to be able to travel to Prague and Vienna to see her: 'on the ground floor of my building is, obligingly enough, a vegetarian restaurant where I'm eating, *not in order to eat* but to bring with me to Prague a certain amount of weight' (Kafka 1953: 61) – even though he realises that his economy, the fact that he takes a mouthful or two for love of the mother or lover, is non-economical since he is in fact trying to do away with that economy. Here is the secret of his politics of the body: to the torturous question so often asked by the members of his family – How much weight have you put on this time? – he wants to be able to answer not, 'I have put on or lost this or that much weight,' but 'And one is losing weight' (Kafka 1953: 70). Where there was an 'I' ('I lost weight') now there is 'one,' some body becoming lighter, an impersonal and inorganic body.

Such a body thus enters the outside of the law and becomes not a body that performs or fulfills tasks, obeys or demands, does or does not respond to calls (finally free from the 'call for dinner'), but one that approaches the joyful irresponsibility of lightness and freedom that Kafka's literary characters strove, always unsuccessfully, to achieve. This light body, Kafka explains, is alive, but belongs to no citizen of the world, for it is a non-trust worthy body:

> don't you know that only fat people are trustworthy? Only in these strong-walled vessels does everything get thoroughly cooked, only these capitalists of the airspace are, as far as it is possible for human beings, protected against worry and madness and are able to go calmly about their business, and they alone are, as someone once said, useful in the whole world as world-citizens, for in the North they warm and in the South they give shade. (Kafka 1953: 49)

In contrast to the citizens who eat, Kafka's body is so light that it is 'weak-walled' (becoming the body without organs), approaching the ecstasy of forms through trance-formation. It is the body of a lumpen-proletarian of the airspace that barely breaths, even though it is still alive, inhabiting the very boundary between life and death. Kafka sees it as a body that has become so small and imperceptible that it is 'incapable of dying,' even when 'the angel of death, the most beatific of all angels' comes and looks at it and calls it. It is a body become so light that it is incapable of sleeping: 'how could I have slept, since I, too light for sleep, circled around you . . . ' (Kafka 1953: 45). The anomalous logic of Kafka's anorexic thinking suggests that sleeping requires a certain amount of weight: that one has to eat in order to dream. Sleep is possible only under the law of what Derrida calls 'carno-phallogocentrism,' the law of the carnivorous virility that constitutes the 'human' world: 'I would like to explain *carno-phallogocentrism*, even if this comes down to a sort of tautology or rather hetero-tautology as a priori synthesis . . . it suffices to take seriously the idealizing interiorization of the phallus and the necessity of its passage through the mouth, whether it's a matter of words or of things, of sentences, of daily bread or wine, of the tongue, the lips, or the breast of the other' (Derrida 1995: 280). But a body that does not swallow, breathe, sleep, dream or die, which is how Kafka wants his body, becomes an inorganic and living sensuality that, by falling outside the human, evades its 'carno-phallogocentrism.'

Kafka described the life of such a body in a series of his 1922 diary entries. Comparing his life to that of his bachelor uncle, he wrote: 'Both living the most unvarying lives, with no trace of any development, young to the end of your days ("well-preserved" is a better expression)'

(Kafka 1976: 403). A well-preserved life, an eternally young life, exists outside of time, or as an inorganic life of the body without organs. But it is not dead for being out of temporality; rather it is liberated from the self-mediation by which it could appropriate itself and set itself on the course of development. Kafka does not want to develop his life: 'I don't want to pursue any particular course of development.' It is easy to pursue paths, he suggests; for that it is enough to split oneself, 'it would be enough if I could exist alongside myself, it would even be enough if I could consider the spot on which I stand as some other spot' (Kafka 1976: 405). In other words, it would be enough to become a subject. But Kafka's subjectivity remains a hypothesis – 'if I could' – out of reach; his weakness is his inability to host a firm personal identity. As long as he remains incapable of self-mediation his life is without history (therefore outside of time), a life without genesis. It is a nameless life that feels without localising the feeling. Kafka described it as a hesitation that occurs before inhabiting a person: 'Hesitation before birth. If there is a transmigration of souls then I am not yet on the bottom rung. My life is a hesitation before birth' (Kafka 1976: 405).

Manners: The Body of the Cook-Model

A life without development is not in stasis; it does not follow the path of organic, linear progress and escapes the connection between cause and effect, but it still has its motions and intensities. Located outside genealogy, historical formation and the organism, it wants to invent a different logic and different signifiers, to construe signs that would not be representative of something, but be bodies in themselves. The anorexic thus opposes symbolics to cartography, since her body is not the symbol of a lack of food, of psychic disorder, or of a disturbance of desire, but is instead, a chart of newly invented signs which are its very matter. As an anomalous chart of signs that defy symbolics the anorexic embodies a negation of the differences between genus and species or between genders. The anorexic is neither masculine nor feminine but – contrary to such a distinction – a process of becoming a woman, the 'woman-becoming of every anorexic' (Deleuze 1987: 110).

Nor is the anorexic's inorganic body an asexual one: 'There is a whole plane of construction of the anorexic, making oneself an anorganic body (which does not mean asexual: on the contrary...).' It is, as I have suggested, about the production of certain fluxes and its sexuality will be an exercise in the fusion of those fluxes: fluxes of food (crumbs, tiny substances); fluxes of liquids (the imbibing of fizzy drinks); fluxes of

abstinence or consumption; fluxes of signifiers that disrupt genealogy. Deleuze suggests that in anorexia all these fluxes mix, get assembled and reassembled in order finally, to be, combined with the fluxes of clothes: 'The case of anorexia. It is a question of food fluxes, but combined with other fluxes, clothes fluxes, for example (specifically anorexic elegance)' (Deleuze 1987: 110). Thus, not only can it happen that the anorexic is a peripatetic cook; she will also often be a model: 'She will often be a model – she will often be a cook . . . Cook-model, a mixture that can only exist in this assemblage, this system, and which will be dissolved in different ones' (Deleuze 1987: 110). Deleuze thus obviously wants to do away with the idea that models are simply an effect of the socially imposed image of the body. According to this misconception, the body of the model would be fashioned after the already existing image of a perfect female body, which is to say as a regulative representation that imposes the norm of the erotic body. Such an image would be a phantasmatic vehicle aimed at disciplining female bodies, making them uniform according to a presupposed, but equally phantasmatic masculine desire. Models would thus be an image of the feminine body that responds to masculine desire. The image of the model, then, enables both the circulation of socially desirable bodies and the masculine desire that controls feminine bodies. But such an interpretation is itself caught in the ideology of two sexes, Deleuze suggests, since in supposing that the masculine fashions the feminine it itself fantasises the existence of a universal masculine desire. However, desires are neither masculine nor feminine but always singular, assemblages of various masculine, feminine, vegetable, animal and inorganic components. And it is the particular singularity or admixture of those components that produces the specificity of anorexic desire.

To 'have' an anorexic cook-model body is precisely to experiment with its fashioning by mixing fluxes of food with fluxes of clothes, which will turn the body into a texture of specifically anorexic signifiers. For that reason the question of fashion becomes so important for the anorexic. Here, Deleuze wants to avoid another widespread prejudice. Anorexic elegance, he will claim, is not about consuming – having things that everybody has – but rather about existing in a mode that subverts the difference between genus and species. It tries to find its way out of the opposition between being and non-being by entering the existence of becoming or, more precisely, of manners. Anorexic elegance, then, is about modal existence, and its signifying logic is similarly one of manners. The formula of anorexic elegance, therefore, is not fashion and consumption but fashion and manners or style ('style. . . a 'mode of life' [Deleuze, 1987: 3]).

Manners are the operators of modal logic; based on adjectives and infinite verbs modal logic is the force of what Deleuze calls 'differentiating being,' itself a motion made of a 'plurality of centers,' or becomings. As the logic of multiplicity without substance, modal logic is one of intensities – of the 'being of the sensible' (Deleuze 1994: 57) – and it is with that being that the cook-model experiments. The formulaic version of modal being – "the same returns not, save to bring the different' – is something Deleuze takes from Benjamin Blood's *Anesthetic Revelation*, quoted by William James. Deleuze also elaborates modal being through James' radical empiricism, which owes a great deal not only to Blood but also to Emerson. It is therefore not surprising that the logic of manners, and by extension of fashion, which Deleuze seeks to elaborate, leads to the American philosophers whose thinking was nothing if not a fascinating effort to articulate a manneristic ontology. The radicality introduced by these thinkers into the Western understanding of manners, and the kind of body that is at stake in the manneristic body of the cook-model, become evident once one examines the logic proposed by Emerson and James, which is echoed by Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition.*

Manners, says Emerson, are not rituals: 'The maiden at her first ball, the country-man at a city dinner, believes that there is a ritual according to which every act and compliment must be performed, or the failing party must be cast out of this presence. Later, they learn that good sense and character make their own forms every moment' (Emerson 1996: 520). Manners are opposed to rituals because they are opposed to forms: 'For there is nothing settled in manners, but the laws of behavior yield to the energy of the individual' (Emerson 1996: 519). Emerson, thus elaborates a novel concept of manners that works against the etymology of the word. For manners (from *manere, maniere*) etymologically refer to what is accustomed or ritualised. Colloquially understood, then, the word refers to our habitual ways of behavior, to a usual form of acting. By defining manners as what unsettles the habitual – what Benjamin Blood, cited by Deleuze, refers to as the 'wild' (Deleuze 1994: 57) – Emerson signals that they are a way of being that goes against not only our 'natural' needs (our so-called 'first nature') but also against our habits ('second nature'). The manneristic way of life, he implies, is thus a 'technology of the self,' which could be determined as the praxis of ridding us of a habit. Manners become a painful exercise that forces one to re-shape one's identity while declining from relying on anything firm or formed. Manners are differentiating processes before the establishment of differences, what Deleuze would come to call 'lines of flight.'

Manners are unsettling because, says Emerson, they are the effect of a momentous 'fine perception' (Emerson 1996: 523) that registers what passes as imperceptible for everybody else. They belong to what he calls 'the energy' of the individual, resulting from motions that escape the perception of the 'I;' they happen to the I, they are never designed by it. In contriving themselves as differences produced by life rather than by a reflective self they lead the self to abandon its habits. And since manners force the 'I' in us to yield to the laws of behavior that constitute it, by the same token they force the I to give up on itself; they are the expression of a life freed from the obstacles of personhood: 'Manners aim to facilitate life, to get rid of impediments, and bring the man pure to energize. They aid our dealing and conversation, as a railway aids traveling, by getting rid of all avoidable obstructions of the road, and leaving nothing to be conquered but pure space' (Emerson 1996: 517). Manners do not exist as 'mine' but are possible only as the effect of the relation that connects impersonal lives. They are processual yet a-temporal, negating the 'I' that always remains conditioned by time. Manners are a purely exterior relation that belongs to nobody, styles in sheer space ('leaving nothing to be conquered but pure space'). For that reason they amount to a most profound criticism of western ontology, subverting the distinction between being and non-being. They are, but they are 'nobody's,' 'points and fences disappear,' Emerson says, there is only flying and fleeing. They therefore 'introduce' being – since they are – but in such a way that nothing particular can be ascribed to that being, neither substance nor essence. When Deleuze talks about anorexic elegance and style, and when he specifies style to be a mode or manner of life, he is evoking this idea of manneristic living as an experiment in the impersonal, in the diminution of the 'I' that gives way to an intensified life. It is precisely with such a way of being that the anorexic-model conducts its experiments.

To return to Deleuze via Emerson once more, the 'style' this 'non-individual' singularity is produced precisely by fashion. In its objectless existence, fashion becomes the profound enactment of manneristic existence: 'the objects of fashion may be frivolous, or fashion may be objectless, but the nature of this union and selection can be neither frivolous nor accidental' (Emerson 1996: 519). To hold that fashion is objectless is to suggest that it does not signify or represent anything; it is not an idea of a body that a subject wants to convey to another subject. Rather, it is the materiality of its own presence; it is the body fashioned. Fashion crafts the body in such a way that it mutates and appears in its outsideness, manifesting itself on the surface; in becoming inorganic the body becomes its clothes. But since the disappearance of

the organic body is, in fact, the vanishing of the self – for self is located in the image of its own body – fashion becomes the force of absorption of the self into itself; by negating both body and self it produces an assemblage of subjectless-objectless clothes in motion. The radicalism of experimentation with fashion lies, then, in the fact that the prosthetic body contrived of clothes becomes the only body there is. Fashion is thus the operation through which the organic body and its self takes off into inorganic flight.

It is only by means of Emerson's identification of fashionable manners with the occurrence of a rhythmical and 'musical nature' (Emerson 1996: 529) or with a 'more transparent atmosphere,' that one can understand Deleuze's sparse remarks on anorexic elegance and the body of the model. Manners are atmospheric because they are a purely external relation, existing in the outside as a selfless and objectless 'something.' They move impersonally through the bodies of others, traversing their perceptions and so affecting them. Manners – styles, modes – therefore have the nature of a Deleuzian event.

The event is what Deleuze refers to as the happening – an almost imperceptible occurrence – of *something*; something without any representable identity and hence without sufficient reason. An event, therefore, always occurs as 'something that happens' and not as a 'this' or 'that' that is going on (Beckett gave perhaps its most precise formulation in saying 'something is taking its course' [Beckett 1958: 32]). And because this happening of something cannot be represented or identified, it happens to no one. Once the event is identified it has already taken place; identification of it comes only in retrospect. But while it is happening it is the only entity there is, non-appropriated, unnamed, unimagined, just 'something' taking its course. Entities are thus neither things nor objects, neither thoughts nor concepts, but purely external relations or manners. The reverse holds too: only manners are events since, according to Deleuze's equation 'true Entities are events, not concepts . . . . ENTITY = EVENT; it is a terror, but also great joy (Deleuze 1987: 66).' The terror derives from an annihilation of the 'I', but it is also the great joy of no one caused by something since the joy is never personalised or appropriated (the gestures that transform joy into the pleasure of the subject). It is an impersonal excitement of little motions that change the direction or rhythm of all perceptions; Deleuze compares it to the breeze in a desert, or else to 'small,' 'delicate' things: 'Making an event – however small – is the most delicate thing in the world: the opposite of making a drama or making a story' (Deleuze 1987: 66). Again, this delicate thing is a terror

because it inflicts the suffering of constant displacement without the comfort of reterritorialisation (becoming is unsettling, there is nothing pleasurable about becomings); and it is joy because the terror of slight dislocations – the feeling that one is never quite in one's place – brings with an 'atmospheric variation,' ushering in the fresh air that enables breathing. As Deleuze says, echoing Emerson: 'Loving those who are like this: when they enter a room they are not persons, characters or subjects, but an atmospheric variation, a change of hue, an imperceptible molecule, a discrete population, a fog or a cloud of droplets. Everything has really changed' (Deleuze 1987: 66).

The anorexic model experiments precisely with such real changes in the atmosphere, with events. In his 'Homage to Fanny' Deleuze specifies that anorexic experimentation works not only with clothes – a body becoming an inorganic patchwork, a design, a style – but also with variations and alternations of stuffing and emptying, ever so slight (Deleuze 1987: 110). When an anorexic cat-model enters the room what actually walks in is not a person, character or a subject, but 'a discrete population' of clothes, voids and ways of walking – a manner – whose delicate being will cause an atmospheric variation.

Fashion and Radical Empiricism

It was William James who, in his *Psychology: Briefer Course,* drew radical consequences from Emerson's hints about manners and fashion. In chapter XII, on 'The Self,' James differentiated among the material, social and spiritual Me, identifying the body as the inner core of the material selfhood:

> The *body* is the innermost part of the material me in each of us… The clothes come next. The old saying that the human person is composed of three parts – soul, body and clothes – is more than a joke. We so appropriate our clothes and identify ourselves with them that there are few of us who, if asked to choose between having a beautiful body clad in raiment perpetually shabby and unclean, and having an ugly and blemished form always spotlessly attired, would not hesitate a moment before making a decisive reply. (James 1992: 175)

The clear distinction between body and clothes – body comes first, the clothes next – is thus made only in order to be blurred. Since people always prefer nice clothes and an ugly body to a beautiful body and bad clothes, James will come to reverse the prioritisation of his initial distinction and claim priority for clothes. Clothes come before the body

because the self identifies with them more intensely than with its body, thus in fact turning the clothes into the body, literally or materially, producing the body out of inorganic artificial textures. The innermost core of the material self is thus its clothes. But this inversion doesn't affect only the material self; in order for clothes to morph into the material self, what James calls the 'spiritual me' – the self 'proper' as it were – has to identify with them and so appropriate them as its own body. Not only, then, do clothes become the body, but through the process of identification they enter the spiritual me. The innermost core of the spiritual turns out to be textile. The scandal of the self that James signals, thus lies in the spiritual's contrivance as inorganic exteriority. The logic of James' argument is similar to Emerson's since here, too, through its identification with clothes, the object (the body) is removed, and fashion enters the spiritual self, absorbing it into an assemblage of selfless clothes.

If this reading seems idiosyncratic one should remember that after describing various 'states of consciousness,' (attention, conception, discrimination, emotion and will) James added an 'Epilogue' to the *Course* that destabilised the existence of the 'I' and blurred distinctions among 'interiority,' spirituality, personality and exteriority. In fact, he wrote there that the psychology he himself had outlined was a 'mere provisional statement from a popular and prejudiced point of view' (James 1992: 432), based on the premise of an interiority whose existence could not be proven. The real question, the question of the existence of the 'I' and the 'states of consciousness,' remained for him disturbingly open, for everything pointed to its non-existence:

> States of consciousness themselves are not verifiable facts . . . . Neither common-sense, nor psychology so far as it has yet been written, has ever doubted that the states of consciousness which that science studies are immediate data of experience. 'Things' have been doubted, but thoughts and feelings have never been doubted. The outer world, but never the inner world, has been denied . . . . Yet I must confess that for my part I cannot feel sure of this conclusion. Whenever I try to become sensible of my thinking activity as such, what I catch is some bodily fact, an impression coming from my brow, or head, or throat, or nose. It seems as if consciousness as an inner activity were rather a *postulate* than a sensibly given fact. (James 1992: 432)

This conclusion supports my reading of James' chapter on clothes and the Self. In contrast to the metaphysical voices dismissing the external as a mere superfluous accident, James claims exteriority to be the only thing there is; the 'I' with its apparatus of interiority and spirituality is only a fragile hypothesis, a postulate effected by our 'will to believe'

in it, whereas it is in fact impossible to sense, feel or think. There is, thus, only a multiplicity of points and lines, whose intensity gives them a certain extension that composes an exteriority, an exteriority that has to be called pure as it depends on no interiority. The is why the only sustainable hypothesis is that of an exterior that thinks and affects itself, what James called 'radical empiricism.' The lines of motion of these thought-affects constitute the living world, are its cartography.

The Deleuzian anorexic cook-model, I am suggesting, is in those terms a radical empiricist. Her experimenting with fashion is guided by a weakening of the 'will to believe in the 'I," since her acts are directed against the prejudice of its existence. She experiments with becoming a 'multiple exteriority,' whose body and self are assembled from the artificial materials of clothes and their motion. In that way she invents a body transformed into the lines of a specific functioning: the motion of clothes, the void of the body becoming the rhythm of walking, and the walk – the 'cat walk' – turning the rhythm of the walk into an anorexic becoming animal. As Deleuze suggests, such a body works, but loses both its organic and its social functionality. Because her body is neither objectivised – but, to the contrary, is made objectless – nor subjectivised – since she is impersonal – it escapes the demands the social wants to impose on it. Its functioning renders social codes inoperative. That is why Deleuze specifies anorexia as a micro-political rebellion. Far from being an effect of obedience to consumer neurosis, the anorexic experimentation is: 'a feminine protest, from a woman who wants to have a functioning of the body and not simply organic and social functions which make her dependent' (Deleuze 1987: 110).

Only from the perspective of the modeling of the anorexic body can the question of a specifically anorexic elegance be addressed. What perhaps remains to be understood is Deleuze's identification of the 'wholly trinity' of anorexic elegance: Virginia Woolf, Murnau, Kay Kendall.

Waves, Cardigans and Facelessness

Virginia Woolf figures prominently in the anorexic cartography because of the ways in which she turns assemblages of things – words, clothes, bodies – into the motion of waves. Waves are passages, the paradoxical existence of a non-being, with which the anorexic also experiments. As Deleuze and Guattari explain:

> Waves are vibrations, shifting borderlines inscribed on the plane as so many abstractions . . . In *The Waves*, Virginia Woolf – who made all of her life and

> work a passage, a becoming, all kinds of becomings between ages, sexes, elements, and kingdoms – intermingles seven characters, Bernard, Neville, Louis, Jinny, Rhoda, Suzanne, and Percival. But each of these characters, with his or her name, its individuality, designates a multiplicity (for example, Bernard and the school of fish). Each is simultaneously in this multiplicity and at its edge, and crosses over into the others . . . . Each advances like a wave, but on the plane of consistency they are a single abstract Wave whose vibration propagates following a line of flight or deterritorialization traversing the entire plane. (Deleuze and Guatarri 1988: 252)

A wave, then, is this multiple individuality that at the same time resides within itself, at the edge separating it from other bodies, and crosses over into those bodies; no longer itself, but nothing definitive yet, leaving itself while arriving only at motion, a motion engaged simultaneously in various alliances.

Take the example of Rhoda. She herself signals an anorexic pragmatics by experimenting with the lightness of the body, with its becoming ever thinner, so she can become imperceptible and thus enter Susan, Jinny or Bernard, but never to stay Rhoda or become her again. She wants to have a body that can 'fall through the thin sheet now;' she wants to be able to 'spread my body on this frail mattress and hang suspended.' She wants to become so light that her body will be turned into a ray of light and finally fly over the body of Earth, never again pressured by the force of gravitation: 'I am above the earth now . . . All is soft, and bending . . . . Out of me now my mind can pour . . . heap themselves on me; they sweep me between their great shoulders; I am turned; I am tumbled; I am stretched, among these long lights, these long waves, these endless paths, with people pursuing, pursuing' (Woolf 1959: 28).

Rhoda's gesture is one of protest, protest against a world made of people 'pursuing, pursuing,' or functioning, functioning, in order to become alive, a dysfunctional multiple wave. But she cannot flee and fly, without becoming faceless. In fact, she is becoming faceless in order to be able to inhabit faces, not only Susan's or Jinny's, but those of all nameless women, and thus in order to realise the paradox of assuming the face of *a* woman, an impersonal, unknown face: 'But I attach myself only to names and faces; and hoard them like amulets against disaster. I choose out across the hall some unknown face and can hardly drink my tea when she whose name I do not know sits opposite. I choke. I am rocked from side to side by the violence of my emotion' (ibid.: 43). The anorexic living on tea chokes on it, interrupting its liquid flux, leaving that line and moving into an impersonal assemblage composed

of unknown faces. It is that very moving in and out that puts her on the line of intense rocking, that of 'the violence of my emotion.'

But Rhoda knows that this becoming a 'rocking' emotion by passage through names and bodies is also related to becoming other women's clothes. As she explains, it's not only a matter of having Jinny's stockings or Susan's skirts, but also about wearing stockings the way Jinny does, wearing skirts the way Susan does; thus, it is about combining various women's styles, picking up on the way they wear their clothes: 'See now with what extraordinary certainty Jinny pulls on her stockings' (Woolf 1959: 28). To wear the clothes of women in the multiple ways they wore them is to experiment in composing variable abstract planes of signs, to assemble impersonal styles into new modes of immanence; but to do so is also to compose a whole cartography of diverse histories – to spatialise time – since Rhoda's assemblages crystalise the whole history of women's clothing, moving and gesturing in a moment of almost perfect composition, the moment of being rocked from 'side to side.'

Such is the temporality of anorexic elegance: time embedded in a place in space and appearing out of it; the whole history of a body swallowed by the now of a thing. That is how I read Virginia Woolf's sentence quoted by Deleuze and Guattari as a formulaic expression of the organic stepping over the threshold of the inorganic: 'The thin dog is running in the road, this dog is the road' (Deleuze and Guattari 1992: 263). Similarly, the thin Rhoda is walking in everybody's clothes, Rhoda is those clothes. This anorexic becoming of an impersonal place enacts the production of feeling spread out through space, in a world where humans become a summer and plants morph into an afternoon: 'That is how we need to feel. Spatiotemporal relations, determinations, are not predicates of the thing but dimensions of multiplicities . . . We are all five o'clock in the evening, or another hour, or rather two hours simultaneously, the optimal and the pessimal, noon-midnight, but distributed in a variable fashion. The plane of consistency contains only haecceities, along intersecting lines. Forms and subjects are not of that world' (Deleuze and Guattari 1992: 263). Rhoda's clothes embody such a haecceity; they represent not other women and their habits or sexuality, but the line of motion of a woman, the trajectory of movement of an abstract and impersonal woman. Her clothes are, therefore, not symbolic; rather, her motion outlines a chart: 'A cartography and never a symbolics.' The hope of the anorexic-model is that her abstraction – her clothes produced as the perfect combination of signs signifying nothing and calling for nothing – will outline a chart of her movement; her hope is that she will become a cartography taking an impersonal walk and

constructing an altogether different London, with neither streets nor people but only fleeting stares or glares.

Virginia Woolf experimented thus: long cardigans, hair pulled back, everything working towards becoming ever longer and thinner, only a curve, a line taking a walk:

> Virginia Woolf's walk through the crowd, among the taxis. Taking a walk is a haecceity; never again will Mrs. Dalloway say to herself, 'I am this, I am that, he is this, he is that.' And 'She felt very young: at the same time unspeakably aged. She sliced like a knife through everything; at the same time was outside, looking on . . . She always had the feeling that it was very, very dangerous to live even one day. Haecceity, fog, glare.' (Deleuze and Guattari 1992: 263)

Or, as Deleuze also suggests, shadows and contrasts.

The Dynamic Sublime and the Question of Make-up

If Virginia Woolf stands in the trinity of anorexic elegance for becoming the clothes of the body, Murnau stands for becoming the shadow of the face. For it was Murnau, says Deleuze, who broke with the principles of organic composition without substituting for them the 'mechanics of the quantity of movement in the solid or the fluid.' Instead, there is 'a dark, swampy life into which everything plunges, whether chopped up by shadows or plunged into mists. *The non-organic life of things,* a frightful life, which is oblivious to the wisdom and limits of the organism, is the first principle of Expressionism' (Deleuze 1986: 50–1). Such a life is frightful only from the perspective of the organic, which insists on the fundamental difference between 'natural' and 'artificial,' believing that confusing the two brings life into the dangerous vicinity of death. That is why the body of the anorexic model transformed into clothes, as well as her face contrived by make-up, represents for the organic point of view an artificiality that negates the 'depth' of the face, announcing prosthetic death. However, Murnau's experiment – and this is why the anorexic likes him – far from being about death, is in fact about expanding life into the 'inorganic,' making things tremble by putting everything in motion:

> From this point of view natural substances and artificial creations, candelabras and trees, turbine and sun are no longer any different. A wall which is alive is dreadful; but utensils, furniture, houses and their roofs also lean, crowd around, lie in wait, or pounce. Shadows of houses pursue the man running along the street. In all these cases, it is not the mechanical which is opposed to the organic: it is the vital as potent pre-organic germinality,

> common to the animate and the inanimate, to a matter which raises itself to the point of life, and to a life which spreads itself through all matter. (Deleuze 1986: 50–1)

The attempt to reach the potent pre-organic vitality shared by animate and inanimate alike, the life that precedes and comes after any death, is what drives Murnau's invention of 'facelessness.' Take the anorexic Nosferatu as a case in point. His pale face signifies lifelessness and turns him into a phantom only from a perspective such as the Freudian, which privileges death over life, from the vantage which, as Deleuze notoriously put it, operates according to the 'white wall, black hole' distinction, and which thus functions in the organic terms of a difference between living subject and mortified object. Deleuze's point is that the 'white wall, black hole' distinction is rendered inoperative by Nosferatu, who in fact has no face at all, not even a 'Gothic' face of paleness against a dark background. To think of the Gothic (for example, fashion) as an insistence on black (clothes) versus white (face); or to think of a Gothic face as the difference between its whiteness and an intensely red lipstick, is to ignore that Gothic esthetics works not with faces at all, but rather with the convulsions that contrive formlessness. Murnau's or Worringer's invocation of the Gothic is thus driven by the

> opposition of vital force (*élan vital*) to organic representation, invoking the 'Gothic or Northern' decorative line, a broken line which forms no contour by which form and background might be distinguished, but passes in a zigzag between things, sometimes drawing them into a bottomlessness in which it loses itself, sometimes whirling them in a formlessness into which it veers in a 'disorderly convulsion'. (Deleuze 1986: 50–1)

The annulled distinction between form and background suggests that broken lines are not drawn in an already existing space of forms – which alone is what makes faces possible – but within the logic of a specifically 'Gothic geometry . . . [which] constructs space instead of describing it.' The point is therefore not to try to recognise forms but to follow the points of their intersection, where there occur the blurred contrasts of shadows or motions of formless colors.

Within such a visuality for example, the intersection of black and blue will constitute not a form but a degree of darkened white in contrast to a 'toned down' black:

> It is as though two degrees were apprehended in an instant, points of accumulation which would correspond to the upsurge of colour in Goethe's theory: blue as lightened black, yellow as darkened white . . . . Goethe explained precisely that the two fundamental colours – yellow and blue

> as degrees – were grasped in a *movement of intensification*, which was accompanied in both cases by a reddish reflection. (Deleuze 1986: 52)

In contradistinction to a Newtonian optics based on forms, Murnau follows Goethe's optics of the intense motions of colors, which transcend form. For that reason that it would be wrong to call Nosferatu a dead face, or a mask made of intensely white foundation contrasted with red lipstick playing the role of the black. If Nosferatu is faceless, it is because the intensity of the contrast between white and black is transformed into a presentation of pure colors. What one sees is precisely the imperceptible, or intensity:

> In Murnau, in particular, *Nosferatu* does not merely pass through all the spects of chiaroscuro, of back-lighting and of the non-organic life of shadows, he does not merely produce all the moments of a reddish reflection, but he reaches a climax when a powerful light (a pure red) isolates him from his shadowy background, making him burst forth from an even more direct bottomlessness, giving him an aura of omnipotence which goes beyond his two dimensional form. (Deleuze 1986: 53)

The pale face of the anorexic-model, her red lipstick and black clothes, are not about the Gothic trivially understood as the representation of 'dark forces' invoked by insistence on the sharp forms of the body, face, lips or eyes. Rather, if the anorexic appreciates Murnau, it is because she has learned his lesson: how to produce a motion of pure colors at the point of intersection of black, white, yellow, blue and red. Anorexic elegance, therefore, works not on a contrast of white and black but on the point of their intersection – shades and shadows – where blue or yellow appear. The lipstick on the anorexic face does not delineate those lips against the backdrop of that face but casts a reflection of red on white, blue or black, producing an atmosphere of pure redness, the force of pure intensity. What is more, her face does not have lips, eyes, jaws or nose. It is paleness or whiteness becoming red, the intensification of whiteness into the blazing red. Thus she experiments in the same way as Murnau's expressionism, trying to turn the face into a formless intensity or, differently, into a certain type of the sublime: 'Kant distinguished two kinds of Sublime, mathematical and dynamic, the immense and the powerful, the measureless and the formless. Both had the property of decomposing organic composition, the first by going beyond it, the second by breaking it' (Deleuze 1986: 53). But in contrast to the mathematical sublime, in which 'the extensive unit of measurement changes so much that the imagination is no longer able to comprehend

it,' anorexic elegance or the 'Murnau experiment' produces the dynamic sublime:

> In the dynamic sublime, it is intensity which is raised to such a power that it dazzles or annihilates our organic being, strikes terror into it, but arouses a thinking faculty by which we feel superior to that which annihilates us, to discover in us a supra-organic spirit which dominates the whole inorganic life of things: then we lose our fear, knowing that our spiritual 'destination' is truly invincible. (Deleuze 1986: 53)

Thus, the anorexic-model works with pure terror, namely with what annihilates us. But she does that because it is, counterintuitively, through that terror, through the intensity of the annihilation of the organic, that she acquires the power to lose her fear while reaching and feeling pure life.

However, the body become the motion of clothes and impersonal walks, assuming the anomalous position of being at the same time inside and outside (Virginia Woolf); and the annihilation of the face, its turning into the process of intensification of colors, its becoming atmosphere (Murnau) constitute only two components of anorexic elegance. What is still needed is the power to turn the walks, the motions, the intensities and the terror of annihilation, into the joy of doing it time and again, thus reinventing life. That is the function fulfilled by Kay Kendall in the anorexic trinity.

Les Girls

It was Kay Kendall who invented the art of imperceptible glamour. She mixed little black dresses and big black hats with white pearls and a lot of fur (Murnau's esthetics), combining them with her long, thin body, moving slowly in order to remain imperceptible. The *Star Archive* claims that 'she hasn't become the same sort of cult figure that say Dean or Monroe became, but then she was far too sensible for that sort of nonsense,' since their glamour was molar. Instead, Kay Kendall entered the becoming of a girl. The little dancing girl (she was a dancer in the chorus at the Palladium by the time she was twelve) became the trumpet player (*Genevieve*) who, thanks to Vincent Minnelli, then became *The Reluctant Debutante*, a dizzy socialite following the rhythm of music and fizzy drinks, finally merging with Cukor's *Les Girls*, becoming one of the girls, a girl, many girls, the French-English-American mixture of accents, motions, languages and tastes. The anorexic goal was thus realised in this reluctant becoming a girl of the woman.

Importantly, most film encyclopedias and archives refer to Kendall's various roles as one, and speak of her 'screen persona' as if the various girls she played or was became one. But that oneness doesn't contradict the differences among Kendall's performances. For what those film scholars refer to as Kendall's 'persona' is, in fact, a mode of the impersonal. For they write as if of an atmosphere composed of unstable mixtures of 'fifties poise,' 'glamour,' 'sensuality,' 'elegance,' and a particular way of walking that bordered on dancing. Thus Kendall managed to merge varieties of screen persons into what Deleuze and Guattari called the 'aesthetic figure':

> Aesthetic figures, and the style that creates them, have nothing to do with rhetoric. They are sensations: percepts and affects, landscapes and faces, visions and becoming. But is not the philosophical concept defined by becoming, and almost in the same terms? Still, aesthetic figures are not the same as conceptual personae. It may be that they pass into one another, in either direction, like Igitur or Zarathustra, but this is insofar as there are sensations of concepts and concepts of sensations. It is not the same becoming. Sensory becoming is the action by which something or someone is ceaselessly becoming-other (while continuing to be what they are), sunflower or Ahab... Conceptual becoming is heterogeneity grasped in an absolute form; sensory becoming is otherness caught in the matter of expression. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994b: 177)

The aesthetic 'persona' thus becomes an impersonal proliferation of percepts and affects caught in the matter of expression such that the expression becomes the matter itself; the immaterial expression.

Style is the vehicle of this becoming a pure expression of percepts, as Deleuze specifies. The aesthetic 'persona' is the effect of styles, which 'are not constructions, any more than are modes of life.' As becomings 'they are the thing which is the most imperceptible, they are acts which can only be contained in a life and expressed in a style.' Becoming style, as the expression of percept and affects, is not an effect of something or somebody: 'There is nothing to understand, nothing to interpret' (Deleuze 1987: 4). There is nobody behind the style since style is not an expression of somebody's desires, nightmares or fantasies. Rather, it is the pure, impersonal motion of affects. Kay Kendall, therefore, is not a glamorous person but the atmosphere of glamour from which everything personal has vanished. The final goal of anorexic experimentation is to become such an aesthetic 'persona,' the sensory becoming of otherness that affects by the force of percepts and overwhelms by the sheer power of assemblages of hats, pearls, little black dresses and a touch of a perfume. By reaching towards impersonal life the anorexic turns her

body-clothes into an aesthetic persona in the same way that she turns food into abstract textuality and enacts a sort of enjoyment in the text.

The Enthusiast

The fact that the anorexic tends towards the dynamic sublime, and that her experimentation represents the devastation of the personal self, finally explains what might be understood as Deleuze's principal claim about anorexia, that 'anorexics are enthusiasts.'

A story related by De Certeau places the anorexic-enthusiast not only at the very origin of institutionalised Christianity but interprets her experimentation along the lines of Deleuze's thesis, as a micro-politics directed both against the Father and the ideal of the Virgin Mother, in short, against the symbolic field. De Certeau quotes this passage from *Lausiac History*:

> In this monastery there was a virgin who pretended to be mad, possessed by a demon. The others became so disgusted with her that no one ate with her, which she preferred. Wandering through the kitchen, she would render any service. She was, as they say, the sponge of the monastery. In reality, she was accomplishing what is written: 'If someone intends to be wise among us in this life, let him become a fool to become wise.' She had tied a rag around her head – all the others are shaven and wear hoods – and it is in that attire that she performed her duties. Of the four hundred [sisters], not one ever saw her chew anything during the years of her life; she never sat at table; she never broke bread with the others. She was happy with the crumbs she wiped up and the water from the pots and pans she scoured, without offending anyone, without murmuring, without speaking little or much, though she was beaten with blows, insulted, laden with curses, and treated with disgust. (De Certeau 1992: 34–5)

Without going into de Certeau's analysis of the specifically enthusiastic 'logic' of thinking, which thinks without the object, I quote his conclusion to establish a fundamental connection between anorexia and becoming a woman:

> A woman, then. She doesn't leave the kitchen. She doesn't leave off *being* something that has to do with the crumbs and leftovers of food. She makes her body from them. She maintains herself by being nothing but this abject point, the 'nothing' that puts people off... Around her hair, a dishrag. No discontinuity between her and this refuse: she doesn't 'chew'; nothing separates her body from the offal. She is what is left over, without end, infinite. The opposite of the imagery that idealized the Virgin Mother, who is unified by the Name of the Other, without any connection with the

> reality of the body . . . [she is] totally within the unsymbolizable thing that resists meaning . . . she loses herself in the unassertable, below the level of all language. (De Certeau 1992: 34–5)

This then, can serve to summarise what I have been trying to advance concerning the anorexic: the kitchen, the circulation of little substances, the body made of crumbs, cooking but not eating, the body turned into a dishrag (or black hat since everybody has their own style), separation from the Name of the Other, from the body of the Mother, thus bodiless, nameless and impersonal.

But to say that she escapes the symbolic, that she resists meaning and remains 'below the level of all language,' is also to point again to the radicalism of anorexic micro-politics. It is to claim that such a politics is about a double divergence. As Deleuze puts it in a passage, referred to earlier, that explains how enthusiasm relates to this politics:

> Anorexics are enthusiasts: they live treason or the double turning-away in several ways. They betray hunger, because hunger tricks them by making them subject to the organism; they betray the family because the family betrays them by subjecting them to the family meal and a whole family politics of consumption; finally, they betray food, because food is treacherous by nature . . . Trick-the-hunger, trick-the-family, trick-the-food. In short, anorexia is a history of politics: to be the involuted of the organism, the family or the consumer society. There is politics as soon as there is a continuum of intensities (anorexic void and fullness), emission and conquest of food particles (constitution of a body without organs, in opposition to a dietary or organic regime), and above all combination of fluxes (the food flux inters into relation with a clothes flux, a flux of language, a flux of sexuality: a whole, molecular woman-becoming in the anorexic, whether man or woman. Above all, it is not a matter of partial objects. It is true that psychiatry and psychoanalysis do not understand, because they bring everything down to the level of a neuro-organic or symbolic code ('lack, lack . . . '). (Deleuze 1987: 111)

Never about lack, it is always about rhythm, about the succession, waves and fluxes of voids and fullness.

Danger and Death

In thinking about anorexia I don't intend to recommend it. It is up to everybody to invent their own micro-politics of pain. Anorexia should be understood to represent a particular strategy of resistance, and rescuing it from the inane ideology of an 'eating disorder,' as well as from the blunt theory of a 'consumption' neurosis is a function of such resistance.

Needless to say, the experimentation called anorexia can be dangerous, indeed lethal. The anorexic has to be able to guide the experiment without being guided by it. She has to experiment without ending in the failure of experimentation, the point at which the experiment turns against the experimenter and becomes deadly. The point is to keep the experiment going and thus to keep whoever experiments alive, even if not within the same banal everyday conception of what life is. If the main goal of the micro-politics of masochism or anorexia is to invent the body of waves, the body without organs, then the success of such an experiment means, paradoxically, that the body without organs will never be fully realised, for such a realisation is pure and simple death: a frozen body. The danger of this micro-politics (the same holds for all other such experiments, with drugs, alcohol, food, sleep, but also for molar experiments, for experimentation by definition involves danger) is, as Deleuze puts it, that it can come 'close to going off the rails, to becoming lethal.' That is not a reason to give up on such micro-politics but a call to address the question of the danger that it involves: 'What are the dangers it constantly skirts and the dangers into which it falls?' However, this question should be neither raised nor answered from the perspective of a psychoanalysis capable only of ridiculing the micro-politics of pain with its ready-made answers about the desire to return to the origin and the death drive: 'This is a question that must be taken up by a method other than psychoanalysis: we must try to find out what dangers arise *in the middle of* a real experiment, and not the lack dominating a pre-established interpretation. People are always in the middle of some business, where nothing may be designated as its origin. Always things encountering each other, never things diminishing each other's contribution' (Deleuze 1987: 111).

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Feminist Lines of Flight from the Majoritarian Subject

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Abstract

This paper characterises Deleuze and Guattari's conception of the majoritarian subject in *A Thousand Plateaus* as a particular – and inevitably transitory – manifestation of sexed and gendered subjectivity emerging with late capitalism from the always mutating flows of creative life and suggests that their notion of the schizo or nomadic subject can inspire feminist solutions to the impasses posed by contemporary forms of sexed, gendered, and sexual identity. Feminism can thus be conceived as a schizoanalytic practice that fosters the kind of alternative subjects for which Deleuze and Guattari call: subjects that move beyond oppressive self–other relations towards a form of subjectivity that can welcome differences as well as the differentiating force of life itself.

Keywords: Deleuze, Guattari, gender, feminism, identity, subjectivity.

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, in works they wrote separately as well as together, present an ontology of becoming, a conception of the modern subject of late capitalism, and intimations of future forms of humanity with intriguing implications for feminism. Their ontology posits humanity as a flux of always mutating becoming intertwined with creative flows of non-human and inhuman life, and thus contests essentialist views of women and men as well as a binary division between the two. Their conception of the modern 'autonomous' subject posits the latter as inevitably shot through with a multitude of social flows in shifting configurations that can be mapped with respect to specific locations in larger social wholes, and thus suggests a subject produced through collective processes that we can better understand and invites discriminating genealogies of gender in its imbrications with other aspects of social identity. And their notion of the schizo or nomadic subject dramatises possible 'lines of flight' from dominant forms of

subjectivity, and thus inspires feminist solutions to the impasses posed by contemporary forms of sexed, gendered, and sexual identity.

In what follows, I characterise Deleuze and Guattari's conception of the modern subject as a particular – and inevitably transitory – manifestation of sexed and gendered subjectivity emerging with late capitalism from the always mutating flows of creative life and I explore the implications of their conception for a feminist project of social change. Although Deleuze and Guattari do not pursue this point the way I will throughout this essay, sexed, gendered, and sexual identity are central features of the oedipal subject, making the question of sexual difference a crucial one, at least if one wants to endorse their project of promoting schizo subjectivity as a project, as I will propose, of moving beyond oppressive self/other relations toward a form of subjectivity that can welcome differences as well as the differentiating force of life itself.

I. Oedipal Subjectivity and the Majoritarian Subject

According to the story Deleuze and Guattari tell in *Anti-Oedipus*, oedipalisation as a psychic structure of human subjectivity arose in the wake of capitalism's deterritorialisation from the social systems of meaning of previous cultures. *Anti-Oedipus* is in large part a critique of psychoanalysis for further entrenching oedipal subjectivity rather than (as Deleuze and Guattari propose) moving us beyond it, but it is important to remember that Deleuze and Guattari 'have never dreamed of saying that psychoanalysis invented Oedipus. Everything points in the opposite direction: the subjects of psychoanalysis arrive already oedipalized, they demand it, they want more' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 121). Although they think that psychoanalysis gets the unconscious wrong and has fallen for the ruse oedipal subjectivity entails – that what the subject wants but cannot have is an incestuous relationship with his mother (rather than, as they see it, to engage in forms of desiring production that might unravel or revolutionise the social status quo) – the oedipal subject characterised by psychoanalysis is an ideal type of a fleeting form of modern subjectivity. This type may be actually manifest in a relatively small number of instances given the deterritorialising flows that undermine it as well as the vagaries of family life, but it is a form of subjectivity whose further unravelling they hope to promote. If the oedipal subject is the retrenchment of a more traditional form of subjectivity precipitated by the frantic deterritorialisation of capitalism, the schizo subject is a new form of subjectivity also

precipitated by the deterritorialisation of capitalism – and it is the latter subject that Deleuze and Guattari prefer to support.

Although sexed and gendered identity may appear to be primary aspects of personal identity (checking off one's race or religion may or may not be required, but checking off one's sex usually is), on Deleuze and Guattari's view, oedipal subjectivity obscures the multiple social flows implicated in family life. Markers of difference that have stable social significance in the territorial and despotic social formations Deleuze and Guattari describe lose their credibility in a capitalist social formation. Deference to abstract calculations of the market such as the need for workers who can migrate from one workplace to the next in keeping with the skills needed to produce the products that will sell the best take precedence over the significance of concrete relations with others in a variety of relatively stable social networks. Cultural and institutional support for various identities is weakened by the commodification of ethnic and cultural differences. The flows affecting a subject's life are organised around sexed and gendered identities produced through a process of oedipalisation that requires constituting oneself as a lacking subject and taking up a position on either side of a sexual divide. Sexual difference becomes a crucial structural feature in the psychic structure of a personal self who can negotiate the speeds of capitalism without unravelling, but the flows affecting subjects are social, economic, political, cultural, racial, pedagogical, and religious, as much as sexed or gendered (see, for example, Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 274).

While sexual difference is important to the territorial and despotic social formations Deleuze and Guattari describe, it is not personalised in the form of sexed and gendered identity and sexual preference the way it is in modern society.[1] According to Deleuze and Guattari's view, human subjects enter into polyvocal and multiple relations with their world. A child is always making assemblages – pushing an ant along with a stick, jumping in a puddle to see the water splash, blowing bubbles in the milk to see them cascade over the sides. These assemblages unfold not as expressions of the secret desires of a personal self, but through body parts becoming the working parts of assemblages that connect with the world in terms of their capacities to affect and be affected (air plus throat plus milk in glass make bubbles that spill over). Oedipalisation requires the subject to internalise the prohibitions of paternal law: to regain a substitute for the prohibited mother (an incestuous relation with whom, in some sense, comes to represent, according to Deleuze and Guattari, engaging in unregulated desiring production with its immanent

satisfactions), one must identify with the father and become an active agent of the law he represents, or become the object desirable enough to obtain passive access to phallic power. This produces a subject whose desire is premised upon lack (one desires what one has lost and cannot have until one lives up to one's ego ideal) rather than upon the creation of connections with the world that unfold creative capacities in living.

Internalisation of paternal law suppresses pursuit of the mutant lines of deterritorialisation that emerge from the swiftly changing circumstances induced by the incessant drive for profit, allowing relative stability of the oedipal subject (if of a paranoid sort) despite the breakdown in traditional codes in living and the habitual patterns of life that actualise such codes. Barred from the creative transformation of productive connection with the world, the oedipal subject of capitalism maintains self-sameness with respect to interchangeable objects of desire through repetition of personalised patterns of meaning and behaviour. Her desiring production is restricted to fantasising the objects that once acquired will give her the satisfaction she seeks. She is thus diverted from engaging in the immanently satisfying production of machines that would connect her in various ways to the flows around her (machines that would extend her capacities and engage her in the kind of on-going metamorphosis that makes subjects hard to pin down). The desire to connect, make things happen, and extend one's capacities and powers to affect and be affected (the productive desire that constitutes active participation in the creative diverging of life) becomes the private desire of a personal self to obtain a substitute for an object of desire prohibited by paternal law (where the latter is understood as the dominant processes regulating social existence in its current configurations).

In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari's characterisation of the modern subject de-emphasises the role of the family in the production of oedipal subjectivity and elaborates the larger social flows that resonate and affirm the constricted desires of a subject premised upon lack. From the moment a child is born, she is immersed in flows of signification and subjectification, and she enacts, through her perceptions, thoughts, actions, and emotions, the habitual patterns and orientations of her location on the social field with its particular configurations of human and non-human flows. The subject emerges from myriad routines and habitual patterns of living in which she understands herself and what she says and does through meanings made available by the practices engaged in at home, at school, at work, at places of worship, at the doctor's office, at court, and so forth, as well as by multiple forms of cultural production ranging from network news

and printed materials to video games and cinema. Deleuze and Guattari's notion of the faciality machine suggests that the triangulation of identity with respect to sexual difference in the family is replicated and affirmed with respect to multiple flows of the social field in a way that fixes the subject on a 'white wall' of signification where she can always be categorisable and plunges her into a 'black hole' of subjectification where her psychic habits of self devolve into sterile patterns. Everyone must submit to the dualism machines of subjectification, either identifying their subjective experience with one of two opposing categories in a series of opposing categories or being subjected to such identification by others. A recognisable subject with a specific position vis-à-vis what Deleuze and Guattari call the 'majoritarian subject' is thereby produced 'depending on which faciality trait is retained: male-(female), adult-(child), white-(black, yellow, or red); rational-(animal)' (ATP 292).

The faciality function shows us the form upon which the majoritarian subject is based: 'white, male, adult, "rational," etc., in short, the average European' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 292). Faces are produced 'only when the head ceases to be a part of the body, when it ceases to be coded by the body, when it ceases to have a multidimensional, polyvocal corporeal code' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 170). Mutant fluxes and flows of the body, for example, various forms of becoming-animal, are no longer elements that are taken up into the socially sanctioned organisation of human individuals. 'Bodies are disciplined, corporeality dismantled, becomings-animal hounded out' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 181). The complexity of embodied existence is reduced to what can be captured and coded through the faces that are socially recognisable (faces that show up on society's white wall as readable) and psychically convincing (faces that can be internalised as one's personal identity). Faces thus entail a reduction of one's lived experience of another human being in all her specificity to the selected perception of another in terms of relatively fixed social categories of identity. They also entail a personal psychic identity that comes to, in a sense, stand in for the unrepresentable subtlety, variation, and ambiguity in the lived experience of one's own corporeality.

Sexed and gendered identities are crucial to the stabilising identifications required by the faciality machines; taking up a definitive stance with respect to a transcendent representation of desire separated from the differentiating flux of life – the phallus as signifier of whatever one might desire (with its implications of the passive or active relation of the sexed subject vis-à-vis the likelihood of achieving satisfaction) – renders the lines of becoming connecting one to the world

imperceptible and thus totalises a self that can be ranked with respect to the majoritarian subject. Forming a central identity as a woman or a man with a specific gender identity thus entails a conception of self in relative autonomy from the world who takes a passive or active desiring stance with respect to that world. This division of humanity into two sexually differentiated groups obscures a wide range of social investments of the contemporary social field stratified into various configurations of power by highlighting sexed identity as key to determining who one is and how to live one's life. A variegated range of differences among human subjects is thus reduced in significance when compared to identification with one of two categories, woman or man. This binary configuration allows resonating patterns of binary identifications that situate subjects with respect to the majoritarian subject in ways that clearly delineate one's position according to a relatively static social hierarchy.

At the level of the lived orientation of embodied subjectivity, each subject, whether oedipalised or not, lives out her life as a unique configuration of the concrete flows of physiological, corporeal, and semiotic processes that inform her day-to-day life. How well this orientation fits with the categories through which she is designated and interpellated by the various practices she engages depends upon her specific situation. No subject in contemporary society can escape dealing with sex and gender categories in one form or another. Whether one lives out these designations and interpellations in comfortable conformity or painful dissonance depends upon whether the multiple forces converging in the durations one lives resonate with dominant memory (that is, the representational memories and history sanctioned by the mainstream) or induce varying tendencies toward counter-memories and minoritarian resistance. Furthermore, binary sexual difference turns out to entail a form of subjectivity structured in terms of bifurcating categories that valorise some subjects by marginalising others. Identification with one or the other of two sexually differentiated positions (despite the molecular connections subverting or complicating that identification) is paradigmatic for other selections made from the faces of the faciality machines. The active/passive dichotomies of sexual difference are replicated in other social binaries with one identification of two possibilities being always better or worse (that is, either closer to or further from the majoritarian subject).

If a variegated range of social flows (from physiological and cultural flows related to one's able-bodiedness and race to economic and political flows related to one's class and political affiliation) become subsumed under one's sexed and gendered identity with respect to a familial story

about sexual difference (one is a disabled woman or black woman rather than a disabled or black human being; one is disabled *or* abled, black *or* white, just as one is a woman *or* a man), then the latter will loom large in one's attempts to live a meaningful life. Troubling the waters of binary sexed and gendered identities by revealing the complexities subverting them as well as their imbrications with other aspects of identity would thus appear to be especially threatening to forms of subjectivity organised with respect to the majoritarian subject. If this is the case, the feminist imperative to map sex and gender in relation to other social designations could be said to be a project of mapping forms of subjectivity structured in terms of their divergence from a normative subject in order to explore and experiment with the possibilities implicit in our present of a subjectivity that could welcome differences without ranking them. Mapping subjectivity in terms of sex and gender from this perspective respects the importance they play in orienting lived experience in its contemporary formations at the same time as it fosters lines of flight that could lead to forms of subjectivity that do not require marginalising others.

II. Lived Orientations and Feminist Genealogies

Linda Alcoff, in an insightful essay on identity, argues that we need to conceive identity as more than a category. Identity entails an interpretative horizon that 'should be understood not simply as a set of beliefs but as a complex (meaning internally heterogeneous) set of presuppositions and perceptual orientations, some of which are manifest as a kind of tacit presence in the body' (Alcoff 2006: 113). She cites George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's work demonstrating that the concepts we use in everyday life emerge from 'largely unconscious embodied conceptual systems' (Alcoff 2006: 113). And she draws from the phenomenological descriptions of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Simone de Beauvoir, Sandra Bartky, and Iris Young to indicate how a lived orientation of the body in the world constitutes a kind of implicit knowledge. On Alcoff's account, identity is an orientation to the world lived in the gestures, movements, and actions of the body at a non-conscious level as well as in the presuppositions, assumptions, and beliefs of a linguistic orientation. Both together comprise an interpretative horizon that grounds a subject in a perspective that is lived as her own. Social identity is not simply the categories into which one fits, but an interpretative horizon shared with certain others that affects what and how one perceives. These identities are experienced in terms of the

imbrications of social flows that converge in the various assemblages through which day-to-day life is lived rather than the abstract categories of identity to which people are often reduced. Identity is thus not necessarily something that is inflicted upon one by others; it is an orientation experienced as one's own that emerges through participation in collective patterns of corporeal and symbolic activity. This is why claiming an identity through a rewriting of dominant history can be so important. In articulating and asserting such an identity, a perspective grounded in patterns of collective living experienced by a minoritarian group is brought into conscious awareness and made the basis for an alternative epistemological claim to that of the dominant culture about the nature of social reality. 'Real' identity is thus, according to Alcoff, experienced as an orientation grounded in often non-conscious patterns of body, mind, and speech so habitual that they can appear (if they appear at all) to be inevitable or natural.

What Alcoff calls 'real' identity is, from Deleuze and Guattari's perspective, the perceptual, cognitive, affective, and embodied orientations of a subject sustained through the habitual patterns of physiological, social, and cultural processes that constitute one as an embodied human subject. Orientations constituted and sustained through organic processes experienced in imbrication with the semiotic and corporeal signifying and subjectifying processes of human living inform how one experiences the world. If one's corporeal and/or psychic anomalies are such that one cannot take up positions with which one can identify without dissonance, then one will experience a sense of discomfort, a sense of not being at home in the world.[2] This discomfort will deepen if dissonance results in derogatory descriptions or exclusion. Subjects marked in terms of their divergence from the majoritarian norm are designated as somehow less entitled to other forms of social power. Unless one can find alternatives, practices available to others as an extension of their capacities into action in the world (of a more or less powerful sort) will block one's lines of becoming and decrease one's power. Individual and collective orientations suffer damaging marginalisation and uncomfortable dissonance when they are subjected to faciality machines in ways that mark their divergence from the majoritarian norm and block potential capacities for affecting and being affected from unfolding.

When the lived orientations Alcoff describes as 'real' identity are extended and elaborated in the minoritarian form of, for example, a feminist gender identity or an antiracist raced identity, identity becomes a form of self-naming that extends some of the lines of flight always insisting in any subject in its divergence from the majoritarian subject.

The faciality machines that designate either/or identity positions through prevalent ways of speaking and patterns of activity that resonate with the majoritarian subject attempt to cancel out the corporeal and conceptual fluxes that would lead human subjects in their becoming to resist the dominant patterns of signification and subjectification: you are a man *or* a woman, you are black *or* white. Resistant identities are identities in process – they create new identities rooted in fluxes of living that continually vary from the dominant norm, refusing to let those variations be assimilated to binary categories or their implicit tendencies blocked from unfolding new ways of living.

Subjecting a range of evidence to abstract social categories like race and gender tends to obscure the imbrications of social flows as well as the 'intensities' (implicit tendencies that could unfold in new ways of being) insisting in them. Understanding identity categories such as those designating one's gender, race, (dis)ability, or sexuality in terms of the concrete situations in which they are used reveals the varying flows that converge in the pragmatic contexts in which embodied subjects are submitted to and/or identify with specific categories. Mapping these flows with respect to one another allows one to see how various flows of meaning produce identity categories inflected by the specific forms social flows take in a given time and place. For example, Abby Wilkerson's mapping of erotophobia, in an essay using disability and queer perspectives to explore continuities in the effect of erotophobia on oppressed groups, shows how social flows can be coded in divergent and yet mutually reinforcing ways. Wilkerson argues that a paraplegic may be coded as asexual, an African American as hypersexual, and a lesbian as perverted, but in all cases, the effect is to render the lived experience of one's sexuality less comfortable, thus blocking one's power in the world to a greater or lesser extent. She presents some examples of how erotophobic judgements of the sexual behaviours or 'natures' of members of various groups suggests that

> [c]ultural erotophobia is not merely a general taboo against open discussions of sexuality, and displays of sexual behaviour, but a very effective means of creating and maintaining social hierarchies, not only those of sexuality but those of gender, race, class, age, and physical and mental ability. (Wilkerson 2002: 41)

Medical literature that presents moralising restrictions on the sexuality of the physically or cognitively disabled, hypersexualised images of African American and Latino men, legal obstacles to the sexual agency of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people, the shame and alienation

connected to the sexuality of heterosexual women that Sandra Bartky discusses in her book, *Femininity and Domination* (Wilkerson 2002: 42–5): these are some of the effects of social practices that designate certain bodies as deviant. From Deleuze and Guattari's perspective we can say that it is through such practices that bodies and their desires are delineated in terms of their distance from the majoritarian subject acting as an orienting reference point (in more or less overt forms) in those practices. Such delineation, through more or less subtle approbation (a doctor who refuses to discuss birth control with a disabled patient) or outright exclusion (laws against sodomy) renders certain lines of becoming uncomfortable, dissonant, or impossible, diminishing the power of those groups and their individual members to affect and be affected in the process.

Feminists inspired by the Foucauldian notion of genealogy have mapped various aspects of the social field to investigate how identity designations have evolved over time, leaving legacies in the present that might not be immediately obvious. If we look at some feminist genealogies of race, for example, we discover not only a telling resonance with Deleuze and Guattari's notions of faciality and the majoritarian subject, but how designations of the Eurocentric faciality machines are implicated with capitalist and colonialist investments of the social field, and how sex and gender designations intertwine with race designations according to the configurations of forces of specific times and places (see, for example, Lawrence 2003, McWhorter 2004, and Warnke 2005). Other feminist genealogies show that sex and gender are not only intertwined with race, but with other perhaps less obvious (at least if you are closer to the majoritarian norm) designations of cognitive and physical ability. For example, Anna Stubblefield argues that the concept of feeblemindedness became linked with ' "off-white" ethnicity, poverty, and gendered conceptions of a lack of moral character' (Stubblefield 2007: 162) in the eugenics movement of the first three decades of the twentieth century in the US. The eugenics movement was widespread and according to Stubblefield its impact still influences scientific research and public policy. In her investigation of how, in particular, 'feeble-minded' white women became subject to coercive sterilisation, Stubblefield examines distinctions white elites drew between the white race and other races; (untainted) whites (supposedly) have the intellectual capacity to produce 'civilisation':

> the development of agriculture, science and technology (in forms that white elites recognize); sophisticated (according to white perception) cultural

> products such as literature, music, and art; and the development of complex (according to white perception) societal organization and forms of government. (Stubblefield 2007: 169)

Stubblefield cites research by scientists such as Paul Broca, Robert Chambers, and J. Langdon Down, in the mid-nineteenth century that investigated how to measure intelligence by first assuming that white people were more intelligent than black people, and then, on the basis of that assumption, construing differences between white and black people as reasons for why white people were further along an evolutionary path of ethnic types than black people. When Henry Hubert Goddard, writing in the early twentieth century, described intelligence (understood in terms of this model of ethnic evolution) as hereditary and impervious to environmental influence, the stage was set for designating 'heritable' forms of white impurity (Stubblefield 2007: 172).

In 1908, Goddard adapted Alfred Binet's intelligence test for use in the United States by adding the category of 'moron' (designating people with a mental age of eight to twelve) to the original scale that included the 'idiot' (designating people with a mental age of two or younger) and 'imbecile' (designating people with a mental age of three to seven years). The notion that extreme poverty was hereditary and linked to the moral defect 'of a supposedly shameless willingness to live on public charity' (Stubblefield 2007: 173) was a widespread belief that became increasingly linked to the concept of the moron in family studies done in the early twentieth century. Feeblemindedness became linked with 'white poverty, off-whiteness, and lack of civilization-building skills' and the 'category of the moron – the feebleminded person who appears normal but who is prone to immorality, incapable of being a contributing citizen in a democratic society, and who will pass feeblemindedness on to his or her offspring' became 'a powerful device for drawing a distinction between tainted and pure white people' (Stubblefield 2007: 176). In addition, white women who demonstrated their failure to understand their role in the advancement of civilisation by engaging in unchaste behaviour manifested, like impoverished white women and off-white women, a 'lack' of intellect that tainted their whiteness. Thus, intertwined constructions of race, class, gender, and cognitive dis/ability came together in a conception of feeblemindedness that 'became gendered in a way that led to women bearing the brunt of eugenic sterilization' (Stubblefield 2007: 178–9).

'Disabled' subjects may be divergent enough from the majoritarian norm that their disability becomes a salient feature of their designated

identity. Even in such cases, however, their sexed and gendered identity will be central to how that identity is interpreted and lived. Stubblefield's mapping reveals specific physiological, economic, colonising, and cultural flows in the use of the term 'feeble-minded' that manifest the imbrications of gender, race, cognitive (dis)ability, and economic status in that designation in a way that belies the primacy given to sex and gender in organising and understanding the converging flows of concrete individuals. A wide range of practices resonate with familial positioning in order to reinforce and naturalise distance from the majoritarian subject. Maps like Wilkerson's reveal the social investments and configurations of power that such positioning conceals.

In addition to revealing the multiple forces that come together in one designation of social identity, feminist maps reveal critical points in the present where intensification of various sorts could result in significant change. Thus, Wilkerson and Stubblefield's genealogies reveal relations of flows of which we may not have been aware that condition our understanding of disability. Intensifying these connections in new ways of understanding designations of disability and racial designations, as well as the social practices related to them, could in turn lead to action from within the relevant practices that shift them (to a larger or lesser extent) into divergent forms of those practices or directly challenge them (through discursive critique or some other form of resistance). These genealogies, incomplete as they are, show how important it is to understand how identity designations – be they those of sex, gender, sexuality, race or otherwise – emerge and are interpreted in keeping with specific investments of the social field best understood in terms of the confluence of multiple forces of particular durations. The bifurcating sorting of personal identity into yes/no categories obscures the shifting vagaries of their evolution as they are put into effect in a multitude of day-to-day situations. Although an emphasis on the personal identity of an autonomous subject and the demand for clearly defined identity designations tend to suggest that a given identity is a property of persons, on Deleuze and Guattari's view, identity is produced, reproduced, sustained, and transformed through the unfolding of social life over specific periods of time in particular places.

A designation of gender, race, or disability can never, from Deleuze and Guattari's perspective, be a static category. Its meanings inevitably shift along with the faciality machines (as they are actualised in specific patterns of meaning and activity) that enact it as well as the molecular flows of lived orientations and identifications that resist those machines. Such shifts are in response to the convergent forces affecting the

relevant assemblages and will resonate with patterns organised around the majoritarian subject or proliferate lines of flight. Words such as 'disabled' or 'feeble-minded' and the racial, gendered, and economic connotations associated with them, leave traces in the present of which we may be unaware, even if those specific words are no longer used. Ways of speaking and doing become habitual patterns that self-replicate even if in doing so they continually diverge from past repetitions. Mapping an association among variations in cognitive style, skin colour, financial income, and cultural practices of the duration connecting us to an earlier time renders some of the relations now only implicit explicit, making us more aware of the habitual patterns informing our naturalised reality, and thus provide insight into how to shift those patterns in ways we can support.

These genealogies track social practices that constitute subject positions informing the categories through which people are designated as well as identify themselves. These practices, from Deleuze and Guattari's perspective, are corporeal and semiotic assemblages that tend to replicate and extend themselves, thus settling into stratified configurations of power. Individual human beings with their personal identities and desires emerge as individual solutions to the problem of subjectivity from processes they collectively share in various ways with others. Although sexed and gendered identity is a crucial feature of dominant forms of subjectivity, these genealogies show how other investments of the social field are equally, if not more, crucial. Even when one's personal identity is still experienced in terms of one's sex, gender, and sexuality (for example, one's primary identification is as a woman), these genealogies show the myriad social investments that coalesce around that identity (it turns out a woman who primarily identifies as a woman may be more likely to be relatively closer to the majoritarian norm and so has not been confronted with other ways that she differs from that norm – that is, she is a physically and cognitively 'normal,' white, heterosexual, middle-class woman).

From Deleuze and Guattari's perspective, modern subjectivity, insofar as it is oriented with respect to the majoritarian subject, thus entails organising multiple flows and investments of the social field in terms of sexual difference. This structuring plays out through the oedipalising function of the family and the faciality machines that confirm and elaborate the binary structure of oedipalisation. Oedipalisation and the faciality machines that produce the personal identity of modern subjectivity thus operate not only to render the continuous variation in human becoming that might extend into new forms of subjectivity

non-productive, but also to turn collective stories about power investments into personal stories about achieving meaningful lives. Although Deleuze and Guattari do not themselves pursue this point, this makes feminism an intervention that targets sex, gender, and sexuality as a crucial fault line in modern forms of subjectivity that is just the starting point for unravelling multiple configurations of power detrimental to our collective unfolding.

III. Nomadic Subjectivity and Feminist Change

The deterritorialising of cultural codes precipitated by capitalism opens human existence to an unprecedented amount of creative evolution by releasing old constraints upon proliferating change. Thus, capitalism actually enacts more of the differing and diverging becoming of life and so, according to Deleuze and Guattari, on the one hand, puts us in a better situation to become more aware of life as process, but on the other hand, has produced a reterritorialisation onto oedipal or majoritarian subjectivity, the reduction of productive desire to desire premised on lack, and the incessant pressure to produce and consume. The former tendency they align with their notion of schizophrenia and a nomadic subject able to creatively evolve and the latter tendencies they associate with paranoia and absolute systems of belief where all meaning is, as Eugene Holland helpfully puts it, 'permanently fixed and exhaustively defined by a supreme authority, figure-head, or god' (Holland 1999: 3). Thus, along with the high speeds of contemporary life with its frantic pace of technological change and globalisation goes paranoid reterritorialisation onto consumerism as well as fundamentalist religion and fascist politics. Faciality machines are not universal to human life; subjectivity in modern capitalism requires excluding more of the corporeal fluxes running through any line of human becoming than the other two social formations Deleuze and Guattari describe (although this, in itself, does not guarantee the kind of desiring production Deleuze and Guattari would like to promote). Rather than explore possible connections among micropercepts and affects that could lead to aggregates of perception and feeling that violate current opinion and consensus representations of reality, faciality machines interpret sensation as the meaningful experience of a recognisable subject. Rather than pursue the physiological, social, and cultural permutations that inevitably result from hybrid forces converging in particular locations, faciality machines interpret anomalies as exceptions that do not affect the norm or as exceptions that require new categories that resonate with the system as a whole. This entails cancelling out subtleties

in individual and collective experience and blocking exploration of alternative connections.

Facialisation entails an embodied orientation organised in terms of a personal identity. That is, all desires of the body are of *one* body with a psychic self that is (more or less) unified with a coherent history that can be represented and collated with the narratives of other members of the community. Sexed and gendered identity forms an important fault line of this self since it is through familial positioning with respect to sexual difference that the multiplicity of social flows affecting subjectivity are totalised in a self that is assimilable to the faciality machines of capitalism. Personal identity, especially as it is regulated by the faciality machines that percolate throughout the semiotic and corporeal practices that insist on clearly delineated subjects with identities that fit into already laid out parameters (to register for public school, I need to designate age, sex, and residence; to walk into a restroom I need to know to which sex my body conforms), becomes the organising reference point for lived experience. If a lived experience cannot be referred to such reference points, it may be unrepresentable and excluded from having an impact (the knowledge I gain independently of a recognised school may not gain me entry to the conference I want to attend), or it can render lived experience either dissonant or unlivable (ambiguous sexed or gendered identity can make life painfully confusing). But on Deleuze and Guattari's view, personal identity is not necessary for non-psychotic subjectivity. Habitual refrains and some sort of constriction on desiring production are necessary for relatively stable forms of human subjects to be sustainable. But subjectivity is a self-organising system of becoming with relative autonomy from surrounding flows grounded in a wide range of territorialised processes that allow emotions, perceptions, and day-to-day life to stabilise into habitual patterns. In a social formation premised upon a lacking subject threatened with a loss of humanity insofar as she or he breaks the rules (where the majoritarian subject is the norm for what it is to be human and any deviation from that norm is carefully observed and marked), unregulated refrains in living are not allowed extension into new patterns. Productive desire must be reduced to the lacking desire of a self still waiting to be completed (the child's desire to swirl water into dirt to make mud must give way to the desire *to be* a chef or a scientist rather than simply to make connections), and identity must be computed from the bifurcating patterns of social recognition that select constants from a wide range of continuous variation in order to plug those constants into already delineated rules of living (a woman who is disabled must no longer be interested in sex since she no longer fits the subject positions designated in countless narratives

and scenarios emerging in multiple social practices about 'what happens when one is sexual,' a mother who does not feel the kind of 'maternal' love for all her children depicted in various forms of cultural production as well as assumed in social practices connected to childcare, pedagogy, and citizenship must be an inhuman monster).

From a psychoanalytic perspective, immersion in a world of partial objects where corporeal fluxes connect (or do not connect) in immanently unfolding flows with surrounding flows where neither self or other, subject or object, are points of reference is a psychotic nightmare. Deleuze and Guattari present us with the provocative possibility that desire does not have to be about what a personal self wants, but could be about connecting with the world, making things happen, and experiencing what happens in ways that defy subject/object and self/other dichotomies. Self/other dichotomies obscure the physiological, social, and cultural flows I share with others; I live at the same speed as other organisms with similar configurations of processes (as I discover in the assemblages I make with others) and the semiotic and material assemblages that condition my individual speech and actions are often the same. On Deleuze and Guattari's view, a personal self or identity as a totalised point of origin to which to refer all desire operates as a kind of stranglehold on the individual and the capacities it could unfold as well as the assemblages into which it could enter. By referring my desires to a sexed self with a gender and a sexuality computed according to the faciality machines, I block off intensification of other tendencies insisting in me – tendencies concerning sense experience and perception as well as emotions and beliefs – that could be extended into new ways of living my subjectivity and new ways of connecting with my world including the other subjects within it.

The famous case of John/Joan (who I will henceforth call by his real name when living as the sex he ultimately chose, David) is a sad example of how difficult it can be to live one's humanity in a social formation that demands a recognisable identity sorted through the faciality machines.[3] When a botched circumcision led to an anomaly in organic sex (David's penis was damaged beyond repair), a choice was made to try and repress the anomalous range of continuous variation in human organisms he manifested by surgically altering him, designating him as female, and concealing from him his initial status as male. Judith Butler's rendition of his story brings out the violence to which the people trying to deal with his situation subjected him. Although as he grew older he refused to comply, he was submitted to practices designed to remake him organically so that he would fit certain categories (surgery and hormone therapy), as well as subjectively so that he would

identify in particular ways (socialisation that encouraged him to engage in 'feminine' behaviour such as cooking and playing with dolls and interviews that encouraged him to have 'feminine' desires).[4]

From Deleuze and Guattari's perspective, there was no true self attached to either David's 'real' sex (his clearly male body as it existed before the accident) or his gender identity as it had been promoted through subjectification procedures designed to create a female gender identity (being identified and treated as a girl, being subjected to interviews designed to elicit 'female' desires and so forth). David's flow of individuation involved a convergence of physiological, semiotic, and subjectifying forces to which he – as a self-organising process of subjectivity needing to navigate the practices of his social location – had to respond in order to solve the problem of living a life. Although David did achieve his desire to marry and have a family, his life was, by all accounts, difficult, and he committed suicide at the age of 38. It is impossible to know why he made the choice to end his life, but one can imagine how painful dissonance between one's lived experience in all the molecular complexity of one's lived orientation and the molar subject positions designating one's identity in a way that demands the erasure of such complexity can become. His situation was anomalous in a way that could not be easily cancelled out; he simply was neither male nor female in the same way as his peers, given physiological anomalies as well as anomalies in his socialisation.

Susan Stryker, a male-to-female transsexual who refuses assimilating explanations of her actions (such as the explanation that she was 'really' a woman who simply needed to change her body to fit her true identity), is a happier example of how anomalous gender identity can play out in that she is able to intensify and extend her capacities to affect and be affected by the world in ways that challenge the binaries of the faciality machines. She speaks out publicly about her situation and she is a respected member of a transgender community that challenges binary designations of sexed and gendered identity. She thus defies erasure of the range of continuous variation manifest in her particular actualisation of humanity despite her deviance from the norm. She gives a provocative challenge to those who would denounce her and her choices (in a performance piece presented in, as she puts it, 'genderfuck drag' at an interdisciplinary, academic conference)[5]:

> I find no shame… in acknowledging my egalitarian relationship with non-human material Being; everything emerges from the same matrix of possibilities…. [T]he Nature you bedevil me with is a lie. Do not trust it to protect you from what I represent, for it is a fabrication that cloaks

> the groundlessness of the privilege you seek to maintain for yourself at my expense. You are as constructed as me; the same anarchic Womb has birthed us both. (Stryker 1999)

David and Stryker both, in different ways, resist the faciality machines that would recuperate their inassimilable differences to binary categories of designation and interpellation. If David had difficulties in identifying with the categories assigned him (when he was forced to identify as a girl despite his lived dissonance with that designation) as well as the categories he finally chose (by choosing to identify as male upon discovering some of what had been hidden from him about the story of his life), it was not because he wanted to challenge traditional notions of sex and gender. What he wanted was to live a meaningful life. What his story shows, perhaps, is how important a sense of self that coheres with one's lived orientations is to making one's life meaningful and therefore livable. We want to connect with the world, affect and be affected, in ways that resonate with a self-understanding and life narrative that makes sense to us, whether or not that sense of self is conventional or dissonant. In Deleuze and Guattari's terms, we might say that subjects need to extend not only their embodied capacities to make things happen, but also their psychic, cognitive, and emotional capacities to make sense of how they fit into larger wholes. David's lived experience was too dissonant for a number of reasons (anatomical, hormonal, cultural, familial) to easily fit into social patterns of making sense – ways of speaking, interpreting, and behaving available to him through collective practices of the social field dictating intelligible behaviour and interpretations – making it difficult for him to feel worthy as a human being.

Deleuze and Guattari's characterisation of subjectivity posits a subject who emerges from collective physiological and social processes as an individual process in its own right by sustaining habitual patterns distinguishing it as an individual from other processes around it. As a specific formation of physiological, social, and linguistic matter with actualised capacities – replete with hidden potential and tendencies structured by virtualities that are part of the wider non-human as well as human field conditioning its becoming – the subject is able to affect as well as be affected by what is around it. But its separation is always provisional, its form always on the verge of differentiating into something else, and the actualisation of its capacities always dependent upon the actualities and intensities that it is and with which it comes into contact.

Nomadic subjects emerge from collective patterns of living with the configuration of social and non-human forces unique to the becoming of specific processes of individuation. The individuation of such subjects cannot be represented. It emerges as a lived orientation constituting one's perceptions, thoughts, emotions, and perspectives through the territorialisations of unique individuations and communities grounded in the material reality of shared patterns of living. Some orientation with respect to the identity designations of mainstream social practices is necessary for subjectivity. One's 'personal' identity can be thought in terms of the 'molar' designations of the faciality machines that enable negotiation of dominant social systems of meaning or in terms of lived orientations too subtle to be captured through such designations, but which one could choose to assert by naming them. Heightened awareness of converging flows and the habitual patterns that orient one along with a sense of one's own location and places to intervene in order to affect individual and collective forms of self-production could allow resolution of the dissonance often arising between the two forms of identity as well as enable collective compositions that enhance mutually joyful becoming. Nomadic subjectivity as an alternative to oedipal subjectivity invites us to engage in a dynamic process of self-naming rather than reduce ourselves to static self-representations. Identity designations are representations that do not capture the nuances of lived orientations and can block lines of flight by putting people in opposition with one another despite the orientations they share. Drifting from the identity designations of faciality machines in order to experiment with joyful connections entails relinquishing some of the control derived through representational intelligence with its penchant for categorisation in order to trust the affective guidance of intuitive insight into processes of becoming. Becoming more aware of how one's subjectivity is produced allows one to participate more actively in one's self-production, develop skilful ways to synchronise becoming with others, and deterritorialise from identity designations in order to unfold new solutions to the problems life poses. Flexible living entails individual deterritorialisation from personal identity as well as collective deterritorialisations from majoritarian subjectivity. A politics influenced by Deleuze and Guattari would investigate different durations, the mutually reinforcing reference points of the faciality machines among those durations, and the places where intensification of virtual tendencies might unfold new answers to how to live together.

Deleuze and Guattari's conception of human subjectivity emphasises its continuity with the inhuman force of creative life. This emphasis

fosters working with rather than against the differentiating forces of life of which we are a part. This ontology conceives individual human beings as singular individuals who more or less diverge from the flows of life currently sustaining themselves in the recognisably human forms with which we are familiar. The question of one's humanity thus shifts from that of measuring up to an essential form of humanity (with respect to which many are found wanting) to the question of what diverging flows of humanity we want to foster in the inevitably diverging and differentiating flux of human life. Shifting the question in this way has practical impact on identity questions key to feminist thought. Women, as well as others who are 'other' to the paradigmatic subject of contemporary culture, have been denigrated for somehow failing to measure up to an ideal norm of what it means to be human. But such a norm assumes an ontology where the form one's humanity takes may well count as a deviation. One strategy of feminism, understandably enough, has been to contest what that essence is in order to make room for women. Shifting to an ontology of becoming suggests a different kind of strategy. If what it means to be human is not fixed, if human becoming entails creative evolution – if what it means to be human consists in the specific forms humanity actually takes and could unfold rather than a human essence that is then instantiated more or less well – then what feminists need to do is map where we are in order to find the best places to intervene and foster the human forms we would most like to support. The question then becomes not who we have always been and always will be, but how to make the mechanisms that create subjects and identities better function in keeping with our own becomings.

Feminism could be seen as an untimely schizo practice designed to intervene with contemporary configurations of modern subjectivity that involve suppression and oppression of subjects that deviate from a majoritarian norm with the fault lines of sexed, gendered, and sexual identity as its starting point. Deleuze and Guattari provide a narrative about the formation and production of those subjects that suggest critical points of intervention that could move us beyond binary categorisation of sex and gender and the oppression it entails. By distinguishing subjectivity as patterns of lived activity from faciality machines that designate identity they give us a way of understanding how we could be subjects without the binary designations that we currently think of as crucial to being any kind of subject at all. But they do not think we can simply choose to leave those binary machines behind. Rather, they recommend carefully mapping where we are in order to find vitalising paths that extend the tendencies resisting binary

designations. And they suggest that rather than be paranoid about the anarchic chaos we imagine moving beyond such binaries could cause, that we consider the capacities we could unfold if we could open up to the impersonal and inhuman flows around us. They present us with alternative conceptions of subjectivity as relatively stabilised patterns of physiological, corporeal, and semiotic activity that mutate over time in keeping with the flows that constitute them and the flows with which they come into contact, but which, as self-organising systems, and, in particular, human self-organising systems with the capacity to intuit the durational whole, can consciously participate in their creative evolution. And while such participation does not entail the masterful control of the autonomous subject as conceived by traditional modernity, it does entail ways of being more skilful than others in coming into joyful synchrony with the flows around it. Feminism, as a theoretical and pragmatic process, can intuit ways of living our sex and gender that are more affirming of the continuous range of variation in being sexed and gendered becoming-human entails. By mapping where we are and finding lines of flight from majoritarian subjectivity that can extend our capacities in ways that synchronise with others, feminists, along with other forms of minoritarian and schizo becoming, can promote a joyfully collective and open-ended process of becoming-human.

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Notes

1. Deleuze and Guattari's account is compatible with Foucault's reading of sexed identity as taking on new importance in the circulation of biopower and the management of large groups of people emerging in the eighteenth century. Whereas one's sex in premodern times had significance in the role one would play and the patterns of social living in which one participated, it was not key to personal identity, on both these accounts, until the emergence of a modern subject with its increasingly interiorised psychic structure (see Foucault 1978). See Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals* for an account of the interiorisation of subjectivity in the context of Christianity that influences Deleuze and Guattari's account (Nietzsche 1989).
2. Sara Ahmed presents an example of an evocative phenomenological account of how a queer orientation can precipitate such dissonance (Ahmed 2006).
3. 'John/Joan' was actually David Reimer. For more information on this case from various perspectives, see Colapinto 1997, 2000, and 2004, Diamond 1997, Diamond and Sigmundsen 1997, and Money 1997. I am particularly indebted to Judith Butler's provocative rendition of this case that brings out the problem David posed to the people who responded to him by attempting to render him intelligible from competing perspectives as a problem of a humanity that exceeds intelligibility. On Butler's view: 'it is precisely the ways in which he is not fully recognizable, fully disposable, fully categorizable, that his humanness emerges' (Butler 2004: 73).
4. David's situation was particularly contentious since there were at least two views of who he 'really' was that were being promoted and contested. To oversimplify what were more complicated and evolving positions over the course of a long

debate, John Money, a medical psychologist and founder of the Gender Identity Institute at Johns Hopkins University, thought gender identity was malleable and hoped David's case would prove him right (it helped that David had an identical twin – the perfect complement to an experiment in manipulating gender identity through socialisation) and Milton Diamond, a sex researcher involved in a long-standing battle with Money, believed gender identity had a hormonal basis. See Diamond 1997, Diamond and Sigmundsen 1997, and Money 1997.

5. Stryker describes her outfit as 'combat boots, threadbare Levi 501s over a black lace body suit, a shredded Transgender Nation T-shirt with the neck and sleeves cut out, a pink triangle, quartz crystal pendant, grunge metal jewellery, and a six-inch long marlin hook dangling around my neck on a length of heavy stainless steel chain' (Stryker 1999: 2). There are, of course, social flows involved in transgender identity that are the subject of heated discussion in feminist and transgender debates that I do not here address.

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Becoming-Woman: A Flight into Abstraction

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Abstract

In this paper I argue that the idea 'becoming-woman' is an attempt to transform embodied experience but, because it is unable to concern itself with mechanisms, structures and processes of sexual differentiation, fails in this task. In the first section I elaborate the relationship between becoming-woman and Deleuze's 'superior' or 'transcendental' empiricism and suggest that problems can be traced back to an underlying Humean empiricism. Along with Hume, Deleuze, it seems, presumes a bundle model of the object which dissolves things into episodic objects of perception and leaves the subject unable to distinguish between fanciful objects, erroneous perception and any other thing. The empiricist ontology thus has consequences for epistemology and leaves us unable to question the conservative tendencies of common sense. As an alternative to transcendental empiricism, the second section considers how transcendental realism, with its ontological commitment to the mind-independent character of things, may provide a more fruitful and productive line of enquiry. Given that there is such a choice, in the third section I speculate as to the specific desires that drive such philosophical abstraction; abstraction which culminates in the non sex-specific figure becoming-woman whilst disguising the mind-independent character of the mechanisms, structures and objects that affect the subject. So I conclude that, despite all appearances of radicalism, the philosophical model 'becoming-woman' – aligned as it is with schizo-processes and the philosophical loss of mind-independent things – is more of the same and sexual difference remains a hidden term. Due to this, I believe that feminists should view it with suspicion.

Keywords: abstraction, becoming-woman, body-without-organs, feminism, schizo-processes, sexual difference, transcendental empiricism, transcendental realism, Deleuze, Bhaskar, Jameson.

The figure 'becoming-woman' is often associated with *A Thousand Plateaus* but first appears in the first volume of the Capitalism and Schizophrenia series: *Anti-Oedipus*. The *Anti-Oedipus* was written during a time reverberating from the impact of the revolt of 1968.[1] Exploding the liberal myths of stability and integration, the noisy events of 1968 forced an epistemic and philosophical shift (Buchanan 2000: 13).[2] Deleuze describes May 1968 as an 'intempestif': an untimely irruption of pure virtuality (Conley 2000: 22). Accordingly, 'event 1968' signifies a rupture when, for a moment, there was a sense of life replete with new beginnings and potential 'becomings'. Between this moment and the reestablishment of Gaullist political order is the figure 'becoming-woman' which, alongside 'becoming-animal' and 'becoming-imperceptible', reveals a view of life as indeterminate creative process.

If a Deleuzian event signals a moment of productive intensity, a process without determinate outcome whereby new possibilities are revealed, then the association not just with affirmative becoming but also, and specifically, with becoming-*woman* requires – and has received – special attention. Where 'becoming' is the actualisation of an immanent encounter between forces, becoming-woman is supposed to mark degrees of intensities and states. Becoming-woman should thus be construed as a topological position, as a line of flight, a passage that by-passes empirical women (Braidotti 2005: 303). Indeed, working in the abstract, 'becoming-woman' stands with 'becoming-animal' and 'becoming-imperceptible' as a form of minoritarian-becoming. But there seems little to say about the peculiarities of becoming-*woman* rather than, say, becoming-insect.

The transformation of identities so envisaged is clearly not the same as that envisaged in calls for emancipation and liberation; the blood pulsating through the macro-political enlightenment project of feminism. There are two main differences between, what might be called, the macro political project of feminism and the micro process 'becoming-woman'. The first difference concerns the nature of goal-oriented activity. By defining 'becoming' as indeterminate, Deleuze attempts to signal numerous possible outcomes given in an event. It could be argued that the feminist project closes down all but those that fit with modern ideas of rights. While I remain unconvinced about this, as there are as many outcomes for the feminist project as there are feminists, it is the case that just about all feminisms posit a system whereby one identifiable group, men, benefit from the oppression of another group, women. Whether this is presented in psychoanalytic, sociological or

economic terms, there remains an underlying philosophical commitment to some form of identity and a political commitment to changing that state of affairs. Neither Deleuze nor Guattari would really demur from this, admitting that: 'it is of course indispensable for women to conduct a molar politics with a view to winning back their own organism, their own history, their own subjectivity'.

They continue, however, by warning that it is dangerous to confine oneself to such a subject 'which does not function without drying up a spring or stopping a flow'. Their comparison between such a dried up molar subject and a molecular 'becoming-woman' takes me to the second main difference. Within recent feminist theory, the 'body' has gained a privileged theoretical position. As Sara Ahmed notes, this is probably because feminist theory has identified the association of reason with masculinity and femininity with the body as the condition for the exclusion of women from theoretical enquiry and marginalisation from public discourse (Ahmed 2000: 40). As a response to such sex-based dimorphism, there has been a tendency within feminist theory to return to phenomenological analysis in order to rethink the body as something which is neither given in nature nor as a separate substance from mind. In a similar vein, becoming-woman focuses attention on the body but, and here lies the second main difference, becoming-woman requires us to reconstruct the physical body of macro-political movements into a 'body-without-organs'.

The body-without-organs is the virtual dimension of the body, with all the potential connections, affects and movements.[3] In order to reconstruct the physical body in this way we are encouraged to abstract relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness and emission of particles from the body (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 276). Abstraction here is not supposed to be the work of reason but, instead, to indicate a material process. And this is the point of contention. While becoming-woman may focus critical attention on the historical and socially structured quality of bodies, this move into abstraction could equally well be described as *dis*embodiment, and disembodiment is arguably at odds with any productive and beneficial social critique of invested desire. It certainly seems a long way from feminist phenomenology which looks to explore how (inter)subject experience is lived and felt in the flesh.

In her paper 'Discontinuous Becomings,' Rosi Braidotti (1993) helpfully articulates the problem that concerns me here. Deleuze postulates a general 'becoming-woman' and simultaneously fails to take into account the historical and epistemological specificity of the female feminist standpoint: it is a theory of difference with no room for sexual

difference (Braidotti 1993: 42). Rather than becoming-woman resulting in the dissolution of identities, where new forms and connections might emerge, this process of becoming seems to be 'sex specific, sexually differentiated and take different forms according to different gendered sex-positions' (Braidotti 1993: 52). I believe that Braidotti is right to suspect that the idea 'becoming-woman' empties out the idea of sexual difference but also, I maintain, manages to reintroduce sexual difference, silently, through the back door.

The problem, I contend, lies in the tension between the wish to transform embodied experience and the means by which this is thought. Whether or not becoming-woman is a flight from the specificity of any particular body as engaged with other living bodies, or is a way to disorganise the socially-structured body, it *is* the case that the alignment of becoming-woman with schizo-processes catches women in an epistemic bind. I shall be arguing that this theoretical model not only naturalises social principles of organisation but also removes critical epistemic tools. Thus, despite all appearances of radicalism, the philosophical model is unable to offer any practical insights and feminists should view it with suspicion.

Object Lost

In *Empiricism and Subjectivity* we find elaborated the empirical principles of immanence and experiment, which are key features of the 'positive ontology' expressed in the leitmotif becoming-woman (Sotirin 2005: 99). Indeed, Deleuze's transcendental empiricism, famously formulated in *Difference and Repetition*, has its origins in this study of Hume. There is much to be said about Hume's empiricism and its influence on Deleuze, but Rajchman manages to distil four themes from *Empiricism and Subjectivity* that inform Deleuze's later work. These themes are: the idea of probability replacing that of necessity, the idea of creative experimentation, the idea that the self is not given but formed and the claim that apparently mind-independent identities are actually dependent on the intercession of images, passions and ideas (Rajchman 2000: 6–7, 17). All these themes evolve from the primary claim that complex ideas or impressions are formed from simple ones which are associated according to principles of the imagination. Because all ideas can be traced back to sense experience and ideas are brought together by the imagination, Deleuze believes that he can discern an empiricist path to experiment and creativity. Because the idea of 'becoming-woman' requires us to follow this empiricist path,

I believe that we can trace back some of the problems with 'becoming-woman' to the conceptual distinctions first found in Hume's empiricism and, specifically, in Deleuze's reading of Hume. I am interested in how the social - patriarchal - organisation of experience is mystified and, in order to explore this, I shall concentrate on the confusion between real and fanciful objects of experience within both Hume and Deleuze's empiricism.

Eugene Holland detects a change in emphasis between the *Anti-Oedipus* and a *Thousand Plateaus* and notes that the optimism of the former gives way to a slightly more hesitant portrayal of the relationship of desire to the body-without-organs in the latter (Holland 60). In the latter, wishing to avoid either 'over-coagulation' or 'wild chaos', Deleuze and Guattari develop the idea of a difference-engine: a body-without-organs continually forming and reforming passionate attachments (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 61). Returning to this either-or in *What is Philosophy*, they suggest that we need a little Humean order to protect us from slipping into the fantastical chaos of madness (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 201). I am interested in the relationship between the apparently welcome loss of the 'object a' in a *Thousand Plateaus* – a joyful deliverance from fixation on any naturally, socially or neurotically imposed object or activity – and the protective Humean rules which reign in our most fantastical ideas. There is much of interest in *Empiricism and Subjectivity*, not least the account of passion in relation to belief, but I shall have to restrict the scope of this paper in order to explore whether a demarcation between 'real' and 'fanciful' ideas can make sense without the idea of a mind-independent object of some sort. I shall return to a distinction between object and thing in the next section when I investigate whether Roy Bhaskar has anything to contribute to the idea of a minor science.

In *Empiricism and Subjectivity* Deleuze affirms the conceptual machinery of the *Treatise* and *Enquiry*.[4] According to Deleuze, the given is the idea as it is in the mind, without anything transcending it (Deleuze 1991: 28). This certainly resonates with Hume's assertion that we are only ever immediately acquainted with the content of our own perceptions, indeed 'to hate, to love, to think, to feel, to see; all this is nothing but to perceive' (Hume 1978: 1.1.V1). In *A Treatise of Human Nature* Hume divides perceptions into impressions and ideas, distinguished only by force and liveliness. Impressions are the first appearance of mental content and ideas are derivative weaker copies. The difference between ideas and impressions can be summed up as that between experiencing x and thinking about x (Shand 1993: 144). It

could thus be said that every perception appears both as an impression and an idea and every simple idea can be traced back to an impression.[5]

However, there are impressions of sensation and reflection. The first are really sense experiences. The second are new impressions derived from the way we react to sense experience. For this reason we could say that ideas derived from impressions of reflection depend in part on the nature and working of the mind (Hume 1978:1.1.1/2). If an idea derives from an impression of reflection only, then it is not an objective feature of the world but one that depends on our natural propensity to react to experiences in certain ways. Hume argues that perceptions are distinct from each other, that they can exist at different times and that they can be conceived as existing separately without contradiction (Hume 1978: 1.1.3). Therefore any connection, if indeed there is any such, is contingent and not necessary. It is the human mind which, according to certain natural propensities, associates perceptions that have logically distinct existences and between which no necessary connections can be discovered either by reason or observation. This problem of natural necessity as expressed by Hume helps Deleuze develop an account of probability.

Further developing the line of argument which leads from necessity to probability, Deleuze notes the Humean questions: why do I expect B to follow from A, and how can I explain my idea of necessary connection? Sticking close to the Humean analysis of inductive reason, Deleuze's starting position is that all ideas can be traced back to an impression and that each impression is distinct. As 'if A then B' is not an idea of reason (we can always imagine B without A) we have to look to sense experience to give us grounds for our belief. But because we do not perceive a causal relation between A and B the connection has to be explained by something in the perceiver (Williams 2003: 87). For Hume the constant conjunction of ideas (AB) in the past produces a habit in the mind. We infer that where there is an A there will be a B, or where a B there was an A, on the basis of custom which is a subterranean phenomenon (Sedgwick 2001: 24). The distinction then between constant conjunction and necessary connection can only be the force of the expectation. Similarly, according to Deleuze, causality is felt: it is a perception of the mind and not a conclusion of the understanding' (Deleuze 1991: 26). From this he establishes the principle that necessity belongs to the subject only insofar as the subject contemplates and not insofar as it acts.

So, there are impressions and ideas, and ideas are associated according to principles of connection, namely resemblance, contiguity

and causation. All complex ideas are derived from a combination of simple ideas and can be divided into three kinds: those concerning relations, modes and substances. Cause, permanence of objects and subject identity are all ideas of reflection: an habitual response to an impression of reflection – itself a (natural) response to sensation. The world as it is described through our beliefs, with objects and subjects that persist over time entering into causal relationships, is a result of associating ideas and impressions according to these principles of association. But because the idea of, say, substance is not traced back to an impression of sense experience it is not an idea of an objective feature in the world.

Identifying the essence of empiricism with the principles of association, Deleuze suggests that empiricism is more a philosophy of the imagination than of the senses. This definition also underlies the distinction between 'simple empiricism' and 'superior empiricism'. The former is mainly concerned with sense impressions and ideas that can be traced to such impressions whilst the latter is directed to the way imagination moves from one idea to another. Through associating ideas, moving from one impression or idea to another, the subject inhabits a world of subjects, objects and causal relations, a world filled with things it has never actually seen or touched. For this reason, the subject could be said to 'transcend' the given (Deleuze 1991: 24). Deleuze goes further than this however. The subject transcends what is given only because it has already experienced constant conjunction. So, Deleuze infers, before there can be belief about the world, the world must have already been organised into a constant, regular, coherent world of common sense.[6]

The roots of transcendental empiricism lie in the distinction Deleuze draws between what we might describe as rationalist and naturalistic transcendentalism. So, when he writes 'nothing is ever transcendental' (Deleuze 1991: 24) he is referring to rationalist transcendentalism. Instead, by giving a naturalist account of the principles of association and by describing the mind as passive, he attempts to give a non–rationalist explanation for how our world of experience transcends, goes beyond, 'the given'. Association, he claims, is a law of nature, defined through its effects rather than known as a cause. As we have seen, even the idea of *necessity* can be traced back to an impression of reflection, which is a feeling of compulsion accompanying the connection of two ideas. The difference between a series considered a case of constant conjunction and a series considered to be necessary lies in the degree of anticipation felt by the perceiver (Deleuze 1991: 68).

That a distinction might be drawn between these two series is significant and strays onto Kantian territory. How do we distinguish between a constant conjunction that indicates causality and one that is merely a long-standing coincidence of AB? Earlier I noted that ideas, which are derived from impressions of reflection, differ from those ideas derived from sensation, with only the latter correlated to objective features of the world. Thus we may have an idea of 'evil' but because there is no correlative impression of sensation we have to trace it back to an impression of reflection: a response to a different impression of sensation. Necessity, likewise, seems to be a projection into the world of an idea of an inner state. The way to distinguish between two beliefs, for example 'the sun will rise tomorrow' and 'this Irishman will not be witty' is not through appealing to an idea of necessity but to experience itself. Repetitions in experience give probable grounds for believing that the sun will rise tomorrow but experience gives no probable grounds for believing that 'this Irishman will not be witty' (Deleuze 1991: 69). The implication of this, for Deleuze, is that we must restrict our speculations to objects as they appear to us through the senses (Deleuze 1991: 88). The object of philosophical probability is supposed to lie in the coherent relationship between habit and experience. For the feminists amongst us, this should already cause some alarm bells to ring.

This relationship between habit and experience does seem to provide us with a number of epistemological tools. First we can question the distinction between fanciful claims to necessary connection and inferences based on probability by pointing out that that there is no impression of sense that corresponds to 'necessity'. We are, though, not left floundering in a skeptical soup because we can, secondly, distinguish between justifiable and unjustifiable beliefs based on probability of past sense experience. But we are left with an ontological problem. To describe that which appears in experience as an 'object' disguises the underlying constructivist ontology: 'without passive synthesis there would be no chair to consider'. Persistence and substance are ideas with no corresponding sense impression.

For both Deleuze and Hume the idea that the world might display any objective (mind-independent) feature is compromised. Throughout the *Treatise*, Hume is at pains to demonstrate the arbitrariness of mechanisms that lead us to believe 'quite falsely, that we are aware directly aware of an external world' (Fogelin 1993: 127). Similarly, Deleuze suggests that the very idea of a thing external to perception, or a mind-independent object, is a contradiction – one that we live with but a contradiction nonetheless. The perceptual object is the only real object

(Deleuze 1991: 88). Along with Hume's philosophical refutation of an independent external world is a refutation of representational realism and causal theories of perception. Arguing against causal theories of perception, Deleuze maintains an empiricist line which is that a 'causal relation' could only exist between two objects in experience whereas causal accounts of perception hold a mind-independent thing responsible for that perception.

The only criterion of truth, the only reason to assent to any view, is a strong inclination to consider that the object *is* as it *appears*. This inclination is explained as a propensity of the imagination worked on by experience and habit; memory and sense. The memory, senses and understanding are, therefore, all of them founded on the imagination, or 'the vivacity of our ideas' (Hume 1978: 1.1V.V11). This strong inclination would explain why we believe, and are justified in so doing, that the sun will rise tomorrow and do not believe that we will encounter a unicorn in the office this afternoon. However, this does seem to confuse rational and causal explanation. An inclination may well be an explanation but it is not itself a reason for believing or assenting. Nor does the invocation of 'inclination' help to explain error: prosaically, we may be inclined – quite wrongly – to believe the stick is bent rather than straight when perceived in water. Less prosaically, if in my experience all women have been responsible for domestic work, made the tea in meetings and been paid less than men for the same work is my belief that 'woman x will (probably) do these things' be legitimate? To put it otherwise, how may we explain that which is perceived as habitual and regular and how may we correct our erroneous expectations?

Of course, appeal to an inner nature will not do. Nor will an appeal to a mind-independent thing help to distinguish between the fanciful idea of a unicorn and the perceptual event, or hallucination, of a unicorn or between the hallucination of a unicorn and the sun. Deleuze argues instead that there is a difference between the fictions of continuous and distinct existence and other imaginative fancies: between ideas of the sun and ideas of unicorns. In the former case, the imagination, he says, does not offer the understanding continuous and distinct existence as objects of possible experience, but this does not mean that the ideas are *merely* fanciful. Instead, he suggests continuous existence is a characteristic of the World in general: 'it is not an object because it is the horizon which every object presupposes' (Deleuze 1991: 80). For the sake of coherence we presuppose, as a principle, that the object of sense, which we only encounter episodically, is a mind-independent thing. That we experience something is not in doubt, its mind-independent nature is

a postulation. At the same time, reason acknowledges that the world of mind-independent objects is 'an outright fiction of the imagination', 'a fictive foreign world' but it is a fiction that cannot be corrected. The result is a number of delirious compromises: 'the mind is no longer anything but delirium and madness' (Deleuze 1991: 81).

Because our intellectual grasp of nature has to be corrected according to experience, Deleuze considers the philosophy of experience to be a critique of the philosophy of nature. Yet it is the naturalistic description of the principles of association which allows Deleuze to define the relationship between the transcendental and immanent (Deleuze 2001: 26–8). It is an interesting transcendentalism, however. Deleuze has argued that it is rationalism which (falsely) transfers or projects mental determinations – necessity, truth, universality – to external objects. Because the idea of necessity is a projection onto a series of constant conjunctions, he can introduce radical contingency into his own transcendental argument in two ways. First, any claims about the principles of association can only be probable; second, Deleuze introduces the possibility of radically different experiences. Because there is no (real) basis for regularity – let alone necessity – except habit, there is no direction to future events except that given by sensation.

> In a word we always return to the same conclusion; the given, the mind, the collection of perceptions cannot call upon anything other than themselves. But as it calls upon itself, what exactly is it calling upon, since the collection remains arbitrary, and since every idea and every impression can disappear or be separated from the mind without contradiction? (Deleuze 1991: 89, 90)

His answer is that natural principles of association settle the imagination (Deleuze 2001: 41).

Dismissing *ad hominem* philosophical arguments, Deleuze suggests that an adequate approach to the history of philosophy is not one which criticises philosophical assumptions but rather one which addresses problems as they concern the particular philosopher. Hume was absorbed with the questions about whether or not we could justify our beliefs in necessity, regularity, and causality and, if not, whether we would have to abandon beliefs in the uniformity of nature and scientific experiment. These questions result from a more fundamental philosophical problem: as we have no grounds for believing that which we do not observe, what should we believe and how do we explain the origin of our ideas? We are left asking whether we can say anything meaningful about that which we do not directly perceive or that which is a reaction to that which we perceive. Hume's conclusion is that, for

the most part, the fundamental beliefs of ordinary people are either false or unfounded and the philosophers' attempts to 'put anything better in their place is wholly insignificant or unintelligible' (Fogelin 1993: 111).

There is with this sort of empiricism a slip between epistemology and ontology, which is often disguised within phenomenology.[7] The epistemological problems noted above arise from a *metaphysical* presumption that objects can be best understood as a bundle, whether that bundle be of ideas, impressions or perceptions. This bundle model of the object tends to collapse ontological questions (such as those relating to the mind-independent or dependent nature of the thing) into problems arising from the philosophy of perception (objects of sense experience). Objects are re-described merely in terms of how they are perceived: in this case as a succession of distinct and independent perceptions, where every idea could disappear without contradiction (Deleuze 1991: 87, 90).

Object Recovered

When Deleuze recommends concern only with the question of the subject and with the claim that relations are external to ideas, he focuses our attention on the relationship between ontology and epistemology. This ontological commitment to a bundle model of the object tends to reduce things simply to objects of perception. These objects are not considered to be in any meaningful relationship to an external or mind independent 'substantial' thing. Whilst this might play to phenomenologist sensibilities, these particular commitments are more radical and encourage a Deleuzian reading of Hume which first attends to the role of subjectivity in creating the object of perception as a persisting thing and then makes 'the subject' itself a consequence. But we need not take these steps. A philosophical concern with the repetition of resemblances does not need to be a meditation either on the nature of memory or on perception; nor is it, necessarily, a fruitless search for an irretrievably lost object or a recovered trauma. Intuitions can remind reason of its (historicised) blind spots without having to postulate a realm of 'pure difference'.

A helpful comparison can be made between transcendental empiricism and transcendental realism. Both aim to reveal the conditions of events, work through abstraction, investigate the relationship between events and essences or powers and give experimentation a privileged place. Both too might describe themselves within the philosophical history of 'process philosophy'. However, although they are both directed

towards disturbing the status quo and reconnecting the subject to their potential – to that which they might become – they differ as to their conception of objects and events; differences which impact on their respective theories of affects. Here I wish merely to suggest possible points of intersection in order to indicate alternative trajectories.

According to the critical realist Roy Bhaskar, Hume's apparent denial of ontology actually results in the generation of an *implicit* ontology and an implicit realism. Commenting on this empiricist realist tradition in *A Realist Theory of Science* Bhaskar claims that the collapse of epistemology into ontology covers or disguises an ontology based on the category of experience, and a form of realism based on the presumed characteristics of objects of experiences, that is, atomistic events and their relations. Hume has, in effect, replaced Locke's ontology of real essences, powers, and atomic constitution with an ontology of impressions (Bhaskar 1975: 40). Hume has also set out an epistemological frame of reference, whereby an analysis of perception and perceived events exhausts our knowledge of nature: that is, our grasp of the world is reduced to sense experience. But the language of 'impression' is really metaphorical: an impression is always an impression 'of something'.

In *Empiricism and Subjectivity* we find nothing that demurs from these fundamental Humean principles and, as we have seen, Deleuze maintains that a number of core beliefs – in mind-independent things, in causal theories of perception, in the continuous and persistent existence of objects – are without proper foundation. Deleuze also considers the distinction between the object (of perception) and the World or Nature to be misleading but unavoidable. Any theory according to which relations are derived from the nature of things is, for Deleuze, non-empiricist. This too is the point of demarcation for Bhaskar but he, unlike Deleuze, develops the idea that relations and powers can ultimately be traced back to (mind-independent) entities.

All versions of realism embrace the claim that what can be said to exist is not confined to that which can be displayed to the senses, or to that which appears as empirical data. That said, Bhaskar's critical realism is not to be strictly identified either with external realism or scientific realism. The former holds the view that the World (reality or universe) exists independently from our beliefs, ideas about it and the impression it makes on us. Scientific realism extends this to the independence of theoretical objects. Bhaskar's critical realism argues that structures and mechanisms exist independently of events and experience (Kaidesoja 2005: 30). Crucially, these mechanisms and structures can explain the

events or particular experiences – an explanatory route denied to the Humean.

Critical realism, in particular, is grounded in categories of entities that are characterised by their powers. As Rom Harré notes, the fact that power is not observable in itself but only in its effects is, as Thomas Reid pointed out two hundred and fifty years ago, not an adequate ground for throwing it out as an ontological concept (Harré 2001: 23). Although disagreeing with Harré as to what sort of things can have powers, the efficacy of power is central to Bhaskar's realist theory of science. But these are powers of enduring and transfactually acting things. Realist ontology is thing – rather than event – centered. For Bhaskar things may include powers, forces, mechanisms, characteristics or sets of relations (Bhaskar 1975: 226). These things possess characteristics and tendencies to interact in particular ways with other things. Further, a tendency is more than a power (Bhaskar 1975: 230). It depends upon distinguishing from within that class of actions naturally possible for a thing (in virtue of its being the kind of thing that it is) those that are characteristic of the thing. It is the function of this idea of tendency to individuate natures within kinds, species within genera, individuals within classes etc.

Bhaskar begins by asking: 'what must reality be like in order to make (scientific) experimentation an intelligible activity? (Bhaskar 1975:23). Whereas Deleuze separates realms into the real, virtual and actual, Bhaskar distinguishes between the real, the actual and the empirical: (i) the empirical world is what we experience, the limit of reality according to restrictive forms of empiricism present in the positivist approaches to science; (ii) the actual domain is the realm of events, not all of which are experienced by people; (iii) the real is the domain of the generative mechanisms or structures responsible for events, but which are themselves *unobservable*. Transcendental realist ontology includes specific claims about the ontological structure of the world. Events are certainly not deductively predictable: 'a stray bullet', 'an unhappy childhood affecting the course of history'. However, Bhaskar posits an analytic distinction between a pattern of events and the basis of causal laws – understood as powers of things – inhering in the things themselves as tendencies (117). Unobservable structures and generative mechanisms can generate, but exist independently of, the experience and patterns of events. These can become objects of scientific research; which means that transcendental knowledge of structures is possible. Science attempts to discern the nature of these things, to identify characteristics and tendencies of interaction. Because interaction is not invariant, scientific laws are best understood as explication of tendencies. Causal powers of

things are real features of the world. Kind terms, defined in terms of resemblances, are not assemblages – if by assemblage we mean a loose (and subjective) grouping together.

The Humean Deleuze certainly sheds light on the role of habit, demonstrating that the problem of transcendence disappears if the present is in itself a continual state of creative renewal. But in order to establish this, Deleuze makes use of a transcendental argument and appeals to an idea of pure difference. This pure idea of difference functions as a dummy concept. Michael Ayers suggests that Locke's concept of substance is also a dummy concept that can help to explain co–existing sensible qualities. Although such concepts cannot be derived either from reflection or from sensation, it is still not illegitimate to use them to the extent that they help to explain what is sensed by reference to something else, in this case underlying causes. One consequence of using a dummy concept of substance, in the way that Bhaskar does, is that one can accept the self–directed quality of transcendental arguments without also being forced into idealism; indeed one can develop a thoroughly naturalised account.

Both Deleuze and Bhaskar attempt to naturalise Kant's transcendental argument. But whereas Deleuze naturalises it through naturalising the synthetic act and the principles according to which the action is performed, Bhaskar uses arguments that combine *a posteriori* premises and a priori transcendental reasoning (Kaiesoja 2005: 45). Bhaskar assumes both the intelligibility of science and our ability to justify *a priori* the claim that it is a necessary condition of the possibility of certain (located) scientific practices (such as experimentation) and that the ontological structure of the world contains certain features (structures and mechanisms) that are ontologically independent of any pattern of events (Bhaskar 1975: 32). Although necessity is interpreted in a rather Kantian way, he does not posit a bundle model of the object, and so the object of perception as a thing in the world retains a degree of independence from the subject. As Kaidesoja points out whereas concepts are for Kant subject-sided they are, for Bhaskar, object-sided (Kaidesoja 2005:34).

Deleuze relies on a working distinction between the World and beliefs about that world, between states of affairs and propositions, but is unable to account for this 'workability' or coherence except in terms of transcendental doubling.[8] The Humean suggestion, that only a psychological attitude demarcates the fanciful object of perception (unicorns) from the (fanciful) object of perception (substance or mind independent object), not only has little explanatory force but also

commits us to a passive subject merely responding to the given: indeed, without being able to account for that given. I am not suggesting that the critical realist contribution to social science is straight–forward, but, if the philosophical arguments are found at least in part convincing then given the similar trajectories as identified at the beginning of this section, a positive way forward could be to explore intersections between critical realism and process philosophy. Bhaskar's distinction between mechanisms (powers) and events might be a helpful way to approach Deleuze's virtual; a comparison between the Real and the Virtual, singularities and powers. Such a productive comparison may be able to retain the spirit of creative transition and combine it with a commitment to social scientific research: a commitment required by feminists. In the current context it may be illuminating to consider what happens when the object is claimed for a (passive) subject, who is unable to tell the difference between fanciful and (fanciful) objects of perception.

Becoming-Woman

In the introduction I suggested that there is a tension between the desire to transform embodied experience and the means by which this is thought. In the first section I elaborated the means by which it is thought as 'superior' or transcendental empiricism. The second section offered transcendental realism as an alternative to transcendental empiricism. The focal point has been that 'becoming-woman' is defined in terms of schizo-processes and schizo-processes depend on the empiricist philosophy of experimentation. Empiricism presumes a bundle model of the object, which dissolves things into episodic objects of perception and leaves the subject unable to distinguish between fanciful and any other object. Despite all the talk about materialism and empiricism the thing – or mind-independent character of the object – disappears. Repeating the Copernican moment, objects become fanciful affects of the subject. In this section I consider the psychology behind the philosophical loss of the mind-independent object and I allow myself to speculate as to the specific desires that drive such philosophical abstraction; abstraction which culminates in the non sex-specific figure 'becoming-woman'.

In psychoanalytic theory, schizophrenia is considered to be a response to a frustrating external world, an instinctual flight in which energy cathexis is withdrawn from external objects. Deleuze and Guattari do not eulogise this clinical condition of schizophrenia, indeed they consider it to be a pathological response to a specific configuration

of capital. For Deleuze and Guattari, schizophrenic pathology reveals something profound about the relationship between desire and the social production of identities (subject and object), a relationship which becomes more conspicuous in times of social upheaval, or 'decoding' and 'deterritorialisation', and most obvious during particular stages of capitalist development. In response to the limits of and closures within late capitalism the individual withdraws and ends up as a clinical entity; catatonic and unproductive.

But Deleuze|Guattari still do insist that processes can be adequately described as *schizo*-processes. According to Holland Deleuze|Guattari assign the name 'schizophrenia' to desiring-production in its absolute indeterminate free-state (Holland 2005: 57). For Lambert, although it is a term to be mobilised more within critical theory than clinical practice, it is also indicates 'the orphan unconscious' (Lambert 2000: 139). The unconscious is not to be understood as a kind of theatre where a self is staged and performed through a series of imaginary identifications but, instead, as a productive process. Indeed they describe schizophrenia as an intense and pure process where singularities are brought together in a machinic assemblage and take schizophrenic experiences of unbearable intensities to be the primary level of experience. Intensities are defined in terms of delirium; the result of tension brought about by exterior relations (Goodchild 1996: 84).

Whether they are postulating an ürground of desire[9] or investigating how psychic and social production are manifested in a schizophrenic's delirium, or trying to express schizophrenic experience, the critical method they deploy carries all the hallmarks of clinical schizophrenia. 'Becoming-woman' is one element of this 'schizophrenic thought' where ideas are liberated from the model of logic and words behave like bodies: as asignifying or machinic–material substance(s) (Goodchild 1996: 85). According to Goodchild, the real schizo is someone who temporarily enters into a process, a transition, or a voyage in intensity. 'Schizophrenia is a move to a different quality of consciousness: the *fantasy* of desiring-production' (1996: 90).

Discussing Freud's case of Judge Schreber in the *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze|Guattari write that Schreber did not *hallucinate* the experience of becoming-woman and being impregnated by God but rather it was a lived experience: 'the actual lived emotion of having breasts does not resemble breasts, it does not represent them… nothing but bands of intensity, potentials, thresholds, gradients' (Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 19).[10] There is no distinction to be drawn between that which is real and that which is experienced as real. The idea shifts but only slightly

in a *Thousand Plateaus,* where they insist that 'becoming–woman' is an experience that men and women can have (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 275); although it is an affect which can destabilise dominant identities, molar forms and relations and, arguably, empirical women are more likely to experience (pass through) these bands of intensities. Just why empirical women are more likely to become-woman is without explanation, unless, of course, women are more delirious, perhaps even slightly hysterical.

The description of these processes as schizophrenic is a nudge back to Freud. However for both Freud and Melanie Klein although hallucinations are experienced *as* real they can be distinguished *from* the real. The subject acquires and requires an ability to distinguish between object relations over-determined by particular traumatic memories and object relations that conform to objective demands. But the schizophrenic condition is where words predominate over things. Substitution is not based on resemblance between things but between words that are used to express them: a form of expression where the concrete thing is taken *as though* it were abstract.

Deleuze and Guattari's eulogy to abstraction involves the loss of the concrete object and the appropriation of the World to the subject. If we combine this with the textual absence of any real way to figure the parent–child relationship – which is neither Oedipal nor an arbitrary assemblage – we are reminded of the Freudian description of the origin of psychotic cathectic withdrawal from the object as a narcissistic neurotic denial of mother-other. Irigaray describes this move in the context of transcendental idealism as 'copula without copulation' (Irigaray 1985: 184). It begins to look as though 'becoming-woman' is a sadistic reincorporation into the same. Goodchild then is right, it is a fantasy but more a phantastical move that deflects from formal questions about the relationships between peculiar and specialised abstractions of what we used to call capitalism and patriarchy and how they can be found in cultural texts.

Although 'becoming-woman' is privileged over masculine narcissistic identity in Deleuze and Guattari's work, philosophical abstraction allows sexual difference to be a hidden term. The obvious problems, that women must 'become-woman' and the role played by the motif girl, can be overlooked; we are happy to be that forgiving to many philosophers. But the suspicion is that there is something more profound and structural.[11] Addressing this, whilst commenting on Deleuze's remark that eating bored him', Nicole Shukin investigates *A Thousand Plateaus* and discovers that Deleuze and Guattari dichotomise nomadology (the

raw: intense) and the regulatory (the domestic) (Shukin 2000:147). This does seem to be an old-fashioned duality between nature (power: movement of the infinite: the involuntary) and convention, where convention is judged according to ethical criteria discerned in nature. There appears, as Jerry Fleiger notes (2000: 40) a worn-out essentialism here, an association of the non-subjectified woman, nature, flows, springs, excess, difference, differences even gaps and tears – the very underbelly of enlightened modern reason. Women, then, are of interest (to whom?): 'only in their capacity to quicken the blood; carriers of strange winds and estrangement that provide Western man with the conduit he needs to abdicate himself' (Shukin 2000: 148).

These familiar dualisms do indicate something about the movement of the text which is disguised in the abstraction associated with schizo-processes. More profound, I believe, is the way in which the empiricism attempts to neutralise experience under the guise of introducing passion and affect. The bundle model of the object reduces things to episodic objects of perception and, in the end, throws the weight of objectivity onto the subject. If the principles of association, external to their terms, are actually *social* principles of organisation, there is something ominous about the description of regularity as the result of passive contraction. The suspicion that Deleuze opens the philosophical space to elide the natural and social is confirmed by his own description of the supposedly 'natural' principles of association: 'The moral problem is the problem of schematism, that is the act by means of which we refer the natural interests to the political category of the whole or to the totality that is not given in nature... The moral is the system of means which allow my particular interest, and also the interest of the other, to be satisfied and realized' (Deleuze 1991: 40–1). This point is also made clearly in his later essay on Hume: 'What is called a theory of association finds its direction and its truth in a casuistry of relations, a practice of law, of politics, of economics, that completely changes the nature of philosophical reflection' (Deleuze 2001: 36).

But we have to ask whether the empiricist philosopher, even a philosopher of superior empiricism, is able to distinguish between the natural and social clearly enough to demarcate the origin of the principles, the conditions of an event, or to identify whose desires are being satisfied. The empiricist slip between ontology and epistemology disguises the mind-independent character of the mechanisms, structures and objects affecting the subject whilst undermining our ability to say anything about them. Any proposition has as much status as any other '(in my experience) women are hysterical' because justification remains

at the surface: how it appears to particular subjects and according to (their) desires, experience and, indeed, interests. This problem is especially acute where the philosophical move not only undermines our ability to respond to the question 'in whose interests?', but also dissolves the very integrity of other subjects.[12] Gender remains latent in the text of *A Thousand Plateaus* because the abstraction, that is the schizophrenic move, drops things and so the context of the idea or the affective intensity from sight. Deleuze expresses boredom with eating because he can take it for granted (Shukin 2000: 148). The labor of women and our actual, embroiled lives are sacrificed in the text.

Conclusion

The concept 'becoming-woman' has obvious heuristic potential. The idea that becoming can be a process which is not governed by a stable centralised self who somehow manages to supervise their own unfolding (Braidotti 2005: 303) expresses a way to release (the thought of) identity from dualistic and hierarchical constraints of a 'normalised', organised and thoroughly social body. The alignment of becoming-woman with schizo-processes indicates how subject identity might be more mobile if it were free from the (psychic) constraints of oedipal organisation and the legal and moral constraints of an overregulated social world But the interrogation of Deleuze's superior empiricism must raise a question about the therapeutic value of a philosophy of affect, unable to address itself to the context or location of the affect, of a philosophy of event, unable to address itself to the conditions of the event, and of a philosophy of becoming unable to tell the difference between fantastical objects and mind-independent objects.

Unlike Deleuze and Guattari, Fredric Jameson believes that schizophrenia is primarily a social and political condition whereby reference is confused, ideas come to stand for objects, each idea is presumed interchangeable with others and concrete things are taken *as though* they were abstract. It actually marks the cultural condition of late (developed) capitalism in which the loss of the real object contributes to social and political confinement.[13] According to Jameson, in late capitalism, the monadic – rather than nomadic – subject can no longer look directly for the referent in the real world but must, as the subjects in Plato's Cave, trace mental images of the world on confining walls (Jameson 3). For Jameson, then, there is nothing inherently redemptive about schizo- processes; indeed the loss of objects in the process of abstraction poses and disguises real threats to the subject. The most

that can be hoped for within postmodernism is that subjects can grasp this schizophrenic confinement and this can shock them out from Plato's Cave.

When mind-independence is described as fanciful and persisting identity as a consequence of subject involvement then to all intents and purposes objects disappear. Here we can see a slip between empiricism and idealism/rationalism (Zizek 2004: 22; Howie 2002: 2, 206). But as we know by now, ideas and objects are not the same thing and mind-independent objects only disappear from philosophical discourse. The belief in immediacy concedes the very principles of containment and closure it was mobilised to break apart, so that the longed-for outbreak is an outbreak into the mirror. Unless these things are recovered in theory, it will be more difficult to resist patriarchal organisation of difference and becoming-woman will not trigger a new plane but remain the same: phantastical self-creation.

There is a sense in which Deleuze plays across two surfaces: a Nietzschean/Heideggerian critique of reasoning in the name of 'unreason' (Lewis Carroll/Artaud) and a critique of bourgeois rationality in the name of 'another' (molar/molecular). The aesthetic space between discursive barbarism (logical positivism) and poetic euphemism (utopianism) is one into which the philosopher can burrow. But the idea that *all* becomings are minoritarian and *will* unsettle the status quo is one side of that movement: utopic. It is premised on an economic model of the psyche that proposes a theory of circulation of intensities: a kind of redemption that eliminates mediation. Deleuze writes that some ideas, such as becoming-woman, should be seen as governing principles; as schemas or rules of construction. Yet the true nature of the schematism might be ultimately revealed as the interest of gendered industrial society – where things are apprehended through the process of manufacture and administration; productive assemblages where everything is converted into repeatable replaceable units or blocks and labour segregated by race, sex and class.

Let us return to the problem of transcendence reconfigured as states of renewal. The problem expressed in Deleuze's semiotics is to make sense, sense that is more closely related to nonsense than propositional sense, and so make thinkable what we have not yet been able to think, to make visible that which we have been unable to discern (Rajchman 2000: 67). In this case, how may we think outside the perimeter of sex/gender? Trying to do something similar, whilst keeping in mind the dangers of abstraction, Theodor Adorno writes that nothing can be experienced as living if it does not contain a promise of a creative

transition, which at its heart suggests an impossibility of thinking that which nevertheless must be thought (Adorno 1988: 145). The new in this way shudders along and this shuddering response to the new is both a reaction to the cryptically shut, which is a function of indeterminacy, and a reaction to abstraction. The abstraction of the new is bound with – but not reducible to – the commodity character; an aesthetic seal of expanded reproduction with its promise of undiminished plenitude. If the new itself becomes a fetish there is usually a problem between new means and old ends (Adorno 1997: 21–3). In this case, because the means remain the same (social principles of association), the end is already predictable (reterritorialisation). The problem of means and ends, unthinkable without an idea of the object, can affect a falling-back into the ever-same.

Becoming-woman suggests a radically androgynous transvaluation of values, and it certainly appears to leap over the risk of dimorphic essentialism in an un-gendered becoming. It does so by risking, instead, de-contextualising and appropriating the affective body; interning the same dimorphic values whilst cutting the ground from critical interjection. The welcome idea that each moment already contains creative transition, immanent transcendence, opens the future to radical contingency. But the idea of 'becoming something else' is neither innocent nor without context. Immanent transcendence was figured by Deleuze in his interview with Parnet as a holy trinity: Brain (god/concept), marrow (son/affect), tongue (holy spirit/percept). My shudder, an affective response to the place from which I speak, is that the brain, the marrow and the tongue, might figure another – and the same – holy trinity.

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Notes

An earlier version of this paper will be appearing as 'Becoming-Woman: the brain, marrow, the tongue or copula without copulation' in Deleuzian Events: Writing |History ed H Berressem and L. Hakerkamp (Hamburg: Lit 2008)

1. The connection between becoming-woman and the events of 1968 is made by Conley in *Becoming-Woman Now*. In 1968 Deleuze also began to teach in the experimental department of philosophy of the University of Paris at Vincennes.
2. This point is made clearly by Michel Foucault in the Preface to Schizophrenia and Capitalism.
3. The BwOs is also defined as a recording surface which functions according to a disjunctive syntheses and as a surface which is inscribed containing both what is inscribed and the energy that inscribes it (AO 78, 327). See also Buchanan 147.
4. In his essay on Hume in *Pure Immanence* Deleuze considers the principal difference to lie between ideas/impressions and principles of association rather than between ideas and impressions of reflection and sensation.
5. This idea could support claims made in *Expressionism* (Deleuze 1990) that in some sense a mode is in – or a modification of – both the attribute of thought and the attribute of extension. However it raises similar problems, for instance, is it the case that whenever I think about the day I broke my hand I experience it?
6. By making nature or mind the condition for the uniformity of nature, Deleuze does seem to address the more sceptical elements of Hume's empiricism but only at the cost of engaging more directly with transcendental argument.
7. It is exactly this problem that Jean-Paul Sartre addresses in the Introduction to *Being and Nothingness*.
8. This is resolved in *Expressionism* through the parallelism, but the parallelism itself depends on a number of rationalist principles to get off the ground.

9. This would be supported by the claim that the unconscious belongs to the realm of physics and that the BwOs and its intensities are not metaphors but matter (AO: 283)
10. Fleiger (2000), referencing David Santer, draws out potential socio-political connections between the molecular (or minoritarian) and becoming-woman through an analysis of Freud's own account of investment in the social field. Although suggestive, this still requires a tougher realism than that afforded by Deleuze's empiricism (49).
11. This same issue makes an appearance in Deleuze's work on Spinoza see Howie 2002: 181–5.
12. Questions concerning the role of theory intersect with questions concerning the mind as it is figured in feminist discourse, especially in relation to the body. There is a nice clear exposition of this in Kaufman (2000: 135).
13. For a comparison between Jameson and Deleuze Guattari see Buchanan pp. 158–62 and Paretti.

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After Alice: Alice and the Dry Tail

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Abstract

According to Gilles Deleuze, the underground world of *Alice in Wonderland* has been strongly associated with animality and embodiment. Thus the need for Alice's eventual climb to the surface and her discovery that everything linguistic happens at that border. Yet, strangely, in spite of the claim that Alice disavows false depth and returns to the surface, it seems that it is precisely in the depths that she finally wakes from her sleepy, stupified surface state and investigates the deep structures, the rules of logic. In this investigation, Alice questions many formal structures, such as causality, identity, reference and the rules of replacement. She discovers that Wonderland does not generate consequential conduct; in fact, it generates no conduct whatsoever! In other words, when it comes to consequences, Wonderland may not be all that wonderful. Yet, we do not live in Wonderland and therefore, our actions have consequences. The question this poses is, why organise language so as to escape causal relations and why choose the little girl as emblematic of this organisation?

Keywords: Alice in Wonderland, surface, deep structure, linguistics, logic, causality, little girl.

The Long Fall

On a very hot day, raised out of her sleepy state by the astonishing sight of a rabbit removing a watch from the pocket of the waistcoat it was *wearing*, a little girl named Alice runs after the creature. She races across a field and, without hesitation, follows it down a large rabbit-hole hidden under a hedge. She falls from the surface of the earth into the depths, seemingly endlessly, into the rabbit's hole, ' "Down, down, down. Would the fall never come to an end?"'[1] The fall takes so long that Alice starts to get sleepy again and she shakes herself out of it, perhaps, not surprisingly, by talking to herself, and perhaps, somewhat

surprisingly, by beginning to engage with the conventions of logic: Does 'All A are B' convert, she asks, to 'All B are A' as in the questions, 'Do cats eat bats?' and 'Do bats eat cats?' (Carroll 1974: 16). But because she is unable to provide a solid empirical answer for herself regarding the dietary habits of the creatures in question, she forgets about this problem the moment she finally lands upon a heap of dry leaves. However, on her feet once again, but now deep underground, she begins exploring this place in which she finds herself, and she continues articulating her discoveries in terms of logical rules.

Perhaps this is startling, for the underground world has been strongly associated with animality and embodiment. Only animals, it has been said, are deep, and depth is no compliment. 'The entire first half of Alice still seeks the secret of events... in the depths of the earth, in dugout shafts and holes which plunge beneath, and in the mixture of bodies which interpenetrate and coexist' (Deleuze 1990: 9 [19]).[2] This leads, we are told, to Alice's eventual climb to the surface and her disavowal of false depth, her discovery that everything linguistic happens at that border. Yet, strangely, in spite of the claim (coming from Gilles Deleuze), that Alice disavows false depth and returns to the surface, it seems that it is precisely in the depths that she finally wakes from her sleepy, stupefied surface state and investigates the deep structures, the rules of logic. In this investigation, Alice questions many formal structures, such as causality, identity, reference and the rules of replacement, and as we shall see, she discovers that as wonderful as unleashing these formal structures might be, nevertheless Wonderland does not generate consequential conduct. In fact it, generates no conduct whatsoever! In other words, when it comes to consequences, Wonderland may not be all that wonderful.

Finding herself in a long hallway of locked doors and spotting a tiny gold key on a table, Alice again talks to herself, this time addressing herself with a disjunctive proposition. *Either* the locks are too large *or* the key she finds is too small to open any of the doors in the great hall. This is followed by a set of hypotheticals. *If* eating the little cake she finds under the table makes her larger, *then* she can reach the key that she left on the table. However, *if* it makes her smaller, *then* she can creep under the door leading into the lovely garden. Having begun her musings with these disjunctive propositions, Alice alerts the reader to the possibility of putting into play the so-called 'rules of replacement:' rules governing logically equivalent expressions which permit an inference from any statement that results from replacing any component of that statement with a logically equivalent statement (Copi and Cohen 1994: 387–8).[3]

Therefore, given any hypothetical statement, 'if p, then q,' which consists of a relation between two propositions, 'p,' and 'q,' and which invokes a causal relation between 'p' and 'q,' the statement can be reformulated using the rule of material implication to arrive at its logical equivalent, 'not p or q,' (Devlin 1994: 48).[4] In this way, Alice can be said to create a series of disjunctive terms, beginning with, '*either* the locks are too large *or* the key she finds is too small to open any of the doors in the great hall.' From there we proceed to the next set of disjunctions in the series. *Either* it is not the case that the bottle named 'DRINK ME' will make her smaller *or* she can go through the little door. So we are lead to the discovery, with Alice, that propositions that might have been stated as linear and causal hypotheticals can be transformed into a series of disjunctions bearing no causal relation to one another. This is the reason why anything is possible. By evading causality, one may evade consequences. Evading consequences implies that actions are mere events with no before and no after, no causes and no effects, no actors and no one or no thing responsible. In other words, Alice discovers a world without good sense.

Of course, even after opening our and her eyes to the replacement of the series of causal relations that would have allowed her to proceed in the manner of good sense, Alice remains cognisant of causality. In other words, using good sense, the sense of temporal or causal relations, she remains cognisant of the arrow of time, and thus constitutes the relation between what is most differentiated (poison, which might be the contents of the bottle named DRINK ME) and so fixed in the past, and what is less differentiated and oriented as the future (the disagreeable results of drinking poison) (Deleuze 1990: 75 [93]). She does this with the aid of memory. Alice remembers that a red-hot poker will burn you if you hold it too long, that cutting one's finger very deeply with a knife usually results in bleeding, and that drinking from a bottle marked 'poison' will indeed have disagreeable results (Carroll 1974: 18–9). But it must be stressed that these relations are all things she merely remembers and that her current adventures continue along a disjointed trajectory. In this sense, she is correct, as she puts it, to 'think that very few things indeed were really impossible,' at least while she is underground (Carroll 1974: 18). Drinking from the bottle named 'DRINK ME,' she shrinks to a mere 10 inches, but having left the key on the table, she is still unable to get through the door into the lovely garden. (*Either* she will not shrink any further *or* she will go out like the flame of a candle.) Upon finding a very small cake named 'EAT ME' under the table, she states the following: *Either* it is not the case that eating the cake will make her larger *or* she

can reach the key. And, *either* it is *n*ot the case that the cake will make her smaller *or* she can creep under the door (Carroll 1974: 20).

It seems that it is the power of disjunction, as much as, if not more than, the things she drinks and eats that convince Alice, at least at this point, that it would be dull and stupid for life to go on in the common way. Yet memory supplies her with the recollection of little children, who suffered burns, had been eaten by beasts, or suffered other disagreeable outcomes because they did not remember the simple rules about these sorts of things. However, insofar as eating the cake is disjoined from its effects, then it cannot provide Alice with any causal information that she might apply to drinking from the bottle. Disjunction convinces Alice that as long as the bottle is not named 'poison' (something she merely remembers) she need not concern herself with the arrow of time. Alas. For when she drinks from the bottle, tasting as it does of a very nice concoction of flavors, not only does Alice grow so large that she can barely even see her own feet, but more: she begins talking what she refers to as nonsense, carrying on speaking to herself about her feet as if they were not part of her and might walk off in a different direction if she is not kind to them, so that her feet need to be convinced not to do this. It seems that her ability to proceed according to disjunctive statements leads her to what logicians call, the 'vicious circle principle,' which is that 'no entity can be defined in terms of a totality of which it is itself a possible member' (Tiles 1991: 72).[5] In other words, if a name is taken to be a label for an empirically given object, it is a logically proper name with reference but no sense. If it is a descriptive expression, it identifies an object in terms of its relations to other objects or as constructed out of previously given objects. The logical problem here is that no entity can be constructed out of itself and no verbal expression can be defined in terms of itself (Tiles 1991: 79–81).[6] Yet this is precisely what Alice tries to do. And so, speaking to herself concerning her feet has taken her to the point of speaking nonsense. Her problem is that insofar as, 'an element cannot be part of the sub-sets which it determines' (for example, Alice and her feet), nor a part of the set whose existence it presupposes (thus, her feet and Alice), logically, she is engaged in a vicious circle. Either way, she is not making sense! (Deleuze 1990: 69 [86]).

Not only does Alice begin speaking nonsense but additionally, while fanning herself with a fan dropped by the White Rabbit whom she frightens (as she is now 9 feet high), Alice begins asking questions about her own identity: 'Was I the same as when I got up this morning? I almost think I can remember feeling a little different. But if I'm not

the same, the next question is, Who in the world am I?' (Carroll 1974: 24). As we can see, this is not just pretend angst. Poor Alice has changed so much that she can no longer recite her multiplication tables, nor can she remember geography or recite a short verse correctly. In other words, the past is not carrying into the present; good sense is not functioning, and this is having an effect on her identity. So it may be that having forgone good sense, Alice is now faced with the loss of common sense as well, if common sense is in fact what 'subsumes under itself the various faculties of the soul, or the differentiated organs of the body, and brings them to bear upon a unity which is capable of saying "I"' (Deleuze 1990: 78 [96]). 'Let me think,' she asks herself, 'was I the same when I got up this morning? I almost think I can remember feeling a little different. But if I'm not the same, the next question is, "Who in the world am I?"' (Carroll 1974: 24). And she resolves not to return above ground until her identity is resolved to her satisfaction. Contemporary philosophers often take such a turn of events to be a positive development. The disappearance of the author or of the self is celebrated as an encouraging step away from the concept of a centered, egoistic subject. But for Alice, it could have serious consequences: she could in fact go out like a flame! Fortunately, just before shrinking completely out of sight, Alice realises that there is a causal relation between fanning herself and growing small again and she stops fanning just in time.

A Dry Tail

Good sense at least partially restored, Alice nonetheless falls into the pool of tears that she, herself has cried. Suddenly and inexplicably surrounded by strange creatures (a Duck and a Dodo, a Lory and an Eaglet, a Mouse and others), who simply appear and fall into the water, then follow her to shore, Alice is once again faced with logical and linguistic problems.[7] In particular, the Mouse has trouble with the *sense* of words. The Mouse tells the driest story it knows in order to dry off the company who are all wet from falling into the pool of tears, and when it offers to tell a long *tale*, Alice can only imagine a long *tail* (Carroll 1974: 30–6). The problem that interferes with communication here seems to be related to the question of distinguishing sense and reference. Sense and reference have been defined, most notably, by the philosopher, Gottlob Frege. For Frege, a sign or a name represents a proper name which must have a definite object as its reference. Moreover, although a definite sense corresponds to the sign, certain signs (the extinct Dodo) have sense yet no reference. The reference of a sign is an object able to be perceived

by the senses (the long tale that we hear or the long tail that we see) of which we may form an internal image, an idea, arising from memories of sense impressions (Frege 1952: 57–9). What *this* means is that sense does not assure that there is a reference and therefore, the same sense is not always connected with the same idea (Frege 1952: 59).

The Mouse and Alice connect different ideas to the name *dry*. Alice wants to dry off because she is wet, cold and shivering. The Mouse wants to tell a dry story: thus the importance of reference. The reference of tale, tail or dry is an object which we designate, but the idea is wholly subjective (to dry off or to tell a dry tale) (Frege 1952: 60). 'In between lies the sense, which is indeed no longer subjective like the idea, but is yet not the object itself' (Frege 1952: 60). 'A proper name (word, sign, sign combination, expression) expresses its sense, stands for or designates its reference. By means of a sign we express its sense and designate its reference' (Frege 1952: 61). And, just like the Duck, who demands to know what 'it' means when the mouse dryly relates that 'Stigand, the patriotic archbishop of Canterbury, found it advisable,' Frege also finds that when we say something we presuppose a reference and preferably, something with a proper name (Carroll 1974: 30; Frege 1952: 61). For the Duck, *it* refers to a frog or a worm that the Duck has actually found (and not simply thought about) and so *it* must have both a sense and a reference in order for saying *it* to matter to us at all. We want the proper name to have a reference, Frege states, because of our concern with truth value. Poems and stories that convey only sense and feeling through their images do not lend themselves to truth. Thus the dry tale is not meant to delight but to convey something true. Truth value is identified with reference and all true sentences must have the referent 'true' and all false sentences have the referent 'false.' This allows the Duck to replace frog or worm with the name *it*, but still seems to undermine the Mouse, who wished to tell a dry story, a story with truth value (Frege 1952: 64–5). For the Mouse's *it* may have sense, yet it appears to be without reference.

And so, one might argue that Alice is beginning to recognise the limits of undoing causality and the problems associated with sense and reference, and it is this that eventually sends her fleeing back to the surface. When the White Rabbit abruptly orders her to find his gloves and fan, taking her to be the maid (she is a girl after all), Alice also finds a bottle named 'DRINK ME.' She seems to take this name to be an imperative, even though this time, she *knows*, as she puts it, that something interesting (as she also puts it), will happen each time she eats or drinks anything (Carroll 1974: 38). She does not just remember that there have been causal relations between eating and drinking and

something interesting in the past, but she claims to *know* that causal relations are operating in her present as well. Moreover, Alice's identity is not the only one in question. Little pebbles are thrown at her, in an unsuccessful effort to kill her or drive her out, as she sits despondently in the White Rabbit's house where she has gone to fetch the gloves and fan. As they hit her, the pebbles turn into little cakes; fortunately, she anticipates that by eating them, she will shrink again (Carroll 1974: 43). Indeed, this is exactly what happens. Good sense seems to be once again operating even though Alice's identity remains uncertain and problematic. Thus the question 'Who are you?' when posed by the hookah smoking Caterpillar is more than appropriate, even though, as the story makes clear, 'This was not an encouraging opening for a conversation' (Carroll 1974: 47). Alice cannot explain *herself* but the Caterpillar does not understand this at all and continues to speak to Alice with some contempt, prodding her eventually to try to recite a verse correctly, at which, of course, she completely fails, offering instead, an irreverent parody of the original, in which the old and corpulent father threatens to kick the inquisitive son down the stairs, a story that is 'wrong from beginning to end' (Carroll 1974: 54).

It is in light of such stories, Gilles Deleuze asserts, that Lewis Carroll detests boys in general. The male baby in Alice turns into a pig. Boys, it seems, are associated with animality, with organs, with the objects of smell, taste and touch that are perceived, imagined or remembered. And boys are associated with the self that breathes, sleeps and walks following the laws of a determined system (Deleuze 1990: 78 [96]). In *Silvie and Bruno*, Deleuze claims, the little boy is the inventive thinker only by becoming a little girl, passing from reality to dream, from bodies to the incorporeal, bringing to language becoming and its paradoxes (Deleuze 1990: 10–1 [20]). By contrast, the little girl is said to eagerly abandon good-sense and common-sense, to undo causality and identity, and this it is implied is to be something laudable. Indeed, it ends (in Deleuze) with the girl or the woman being characterised as the molecular becoming of the molar boy or man. Yet Alice does not necessarily associate boys with animality and with the senses. She is concerned when the baby is nearly hit in nose by the shower of pans, plates and dishes thrown by the cook. ' "Oh please mind what you're doing!" cried Alice in an agony of terror. "Oh, there goes his precious nose;" as an unusually large saucepan flew close by it, and very nearly carried it off' (Carroll 1974: 58). Certainly the Duchess seems to abuse the little boy, violently shaking and tossing him and recommending (in her so-called lullaby) speaking roughly and beating him! But then, she speaks roughly

to Alice as well, ordering the cook to chop off her head; and the cook is throwing pans at the Duchess, Alice and the baby! (Carroll 1974: 59–60). The Duchess finally throws the child at Alice who reflects that, 'If I don't take this child away with me, . . . they're sure to kill it in a day or two: wouldn't it be murder to leave it behind?' (Carroll 1974: 60). And, upon hearing the baby grunt, she looks at it anxiously while 'the poor little thing sobbed again' (Carroll 1974: 61). It is only when it finally transforms completely into what she calls a rather handsome pig that she lets it go, thinking about other children she knows who might also be pigs. And such transformations, as we have seen, are entirely possible in a world of disjunction, where causal chains have been torn apart. Perhaps it is the Cheshire Cat who provides the best explanation of what is going on, claiming that everyone there is mad, including itself. And as it too invokes the vicious circle principle, appearing and vanishing so that only its grin remains: how can the grin be defined as belonging to, as part of the cat? If it does belong to the cat, then it cannot be distinguished from the cat. To do so, might not be madness, but it is certainly nonsense.

Tea and No Sympathy

Reaching the Mad Hatter's, Alice is again met with considerable rudeness. She is offered wine when there is none. She is told that she needs a haircut. She is told she is stupid and generally treated rudely. She is given a riddle to guess, but it has no answer. She is tricked into making logical errors. Hoping to guess the answer to the riddle, she is asked ' "Do you think that you can find out the answer to it?" . . . . "Exactly so," said Alice. "Then you should say what you mean" . . . . "I do," Alice hastily replied – "at least I mean what I say – that's the same thing, you know"' (Carroll 1974: 67). Of course, it's not the same thing. Of course, the problem still involves the relation between sense and reference. Alice *means* that she can solve the riddle, but also she *says* that she means that she can solve the riddle. For her, there are two different references, so in fact, it's not the same thing. She must sort this out for herself so as not to be caught in a logical error, such as that of declaring that the referent of the name 'Time' is a 'he' and that the sense of the expression 'killing time' can result in a murder and a permanent 6 o'clock, which just happens to be tea-time (Carroll 1974: 70).

In his analysis of the significance of sentences, Bertrand Russell argues that there are three sorts of sentence, those that are true, those that are false, and those that are nonsensical (Russell 1940: 172). The latter are

clearly not true but also, they are not false; when a sentence is nonsense, or meaningless as Russell calls it, then so is its negation. Paradox arises from sentences that seem to signify something but really do not. Still it is not clear how to distinguish sentences that signify something and those that do not. Significance, according to Russell, must be propositional, able to be true or false (Russell 1940: 175). This, in turn, relies on perceptual experiences that can be imagined or that actually occur, making us use a phrase as an assertion. The phrase uttered during tea by the Dormouse, 'They were learning to draw . . . everything that begins with an M –' can be significant if it is true (Carroll 1974: 74). However, what is *expressed* must be distinguished from what makes a statement true. Expression is a state of mind, a belief or even a desire that others should have this belief (Russell 1940: 175). For Alice, since the drawing lesson is supposed to be taking place at the bottom of a treacle-well, this claim strains her credulity; she does not believe it. Assertion, however, is not the same as expression. One does not assert the belief that is being expressed, rather one asserts that the *object* of the belief is true or false. Thus, asserting that three little girls are sitting in the bottom of a treacle well learning to draw things that begin with the letter M (things such as mouse-traps, moon, memory and *muchness*) truly confuses Alice! No wonder she declares, 'Its the stupidest tea-party I ever was at in all my life!' (Carroll 1974: 75). Lacking significance, the Dormouse's story is pure nonsense. That Alice's credulity is challenged and that she slips away is evidence that her identity is less in question, even if she does not yet notice this.

The order of language just set out is severely questioned by Deleuze. Addressing Russell's assertion that denotation, manifestation (the statement of beliefs or desires), and signification are the three accepted relations holding for a proposition, Deleuze brings the proposition back to nonsense (Russell 1940: 171).[8] That is, manifestation is precisely the relation that Alice comes to expect and when it does not occur; what she hears *she* takes for nonsense. At the tea party, she expects that beliefs or desires are causal inferences that correspond to the proposition (Deleuze 1990: 13 [23]). Following Russell, Deleuze states that desire is an inference between the internal causality of an image and the existence of an object or state of affairs. Belief is also an inference; it is the anticipation of an object or state of affairs produced by external causality (Deleuze 1990:13 [23]). Manifestation, the statement of beliefs or desires, always involves the 'I,' so that, for example, what Alice believes – her belief – grounds her judgment regarding denotation. Denotation is the relation of the proposition to an external state of

affairs. Alice has a hard time believing the Dormouse's story that three little girls are living in a treacle-well. 'True,' would signify that the denotation is fulfilled by a particular state of affairs; 'false' signifies that the denotation is not fulfilled. But Deleuze reads this differently from Russell. Russell, we noted above, demands that significance be propositional (meaning true or false) and this, in turn, relies on perceptual experiences, something Deleuze clearly rejects. Referring not to significance but to signification, Deleuze never mentions perception or experience. Instead, he states that signification is the relation of a word to universal or general concepts; it involves good sense (Deleuze 1990: 14 [24]). It seems that Deleuze departs from Russell and returns here to the same ideas as those asserted by Frege who, we have noted, states that sense does not assure that there is a reference, thus doing away with the necessity of empirical verification (Frege 1952: 59). Since the sense is no longer subjective like the idea, but is also not the object, it must be something else (Frege 1952: 60). Sense is, it seems, a fourth dimension. Specifically, as Frege has stated, a proper name (word, sign, sign combination, expression) *expresses* its sense and stands for or designates its reference.

To make sense of sense, Frege asks that we consider a sentence and not merely proper names. Sentences contain thoughts, that is, objective content, something capable of being the common property of several thinkers (Frege 1952: 62). This objective content is the sense of the sentence, but it seems possible that sentences may have sense but no reference at all! 'The Dodo fell into the pool of tears,' seems to be one such sentence. And, if one wanted to go no further than this thought, *there would be no need to assign a reference*. The thought remains the same whether 'Dodo' has a reference or not. Truth forces us to abandon certain affects, particularly those such as aesthetic delight (Frege 1952: 63). But truth also forces language away from the 'idea' or the 'Idea' and back to the perceptual, the phenomenological. Still, if we are not concerned about truth, we need not be concerned about reference. Thus we can understand why, strictly speaking, if we are not concerned about reference, sense does not exist outside of the proposition that expresses it (Deleuze 1990: 21 [33]). Sense is therefore a logical attribute, but one that does not and is not compelled to describe a physical state of affairs; it does not require a referent; it is the event that is *no longer causally linked* to what came before or what comes after: 'The event belongs essentially to language' (Deleuze 1990: 22 [34]). With this, Deleuze pushes a bit, revising the arguments of the logicians: 'It seems difficult to say… that the fantastic work [of Lewis Carroll] presents simply

the traps and difficulties into which we fall when we do not observe the rules and laws formulated by the logical work' (Deleuze 1990: 22 [34]). Admittedly, Carroll's work is about signification, implication and conclusions, but to what end? Is it, as Deleuze argues, in order to introduce paradoxes that signification does not resolve and even creates, or is it to raise other still unanswered question?

Molecular Becoming, The Making of a Philosopher

Escaping the tea party through a door that she notices in a tree, Alice finds herself back in the long hall, a curious return. Spying the little golden key on the glass table, she recalls her previous experience and puts into play her causal knowledge. First she takes the key and unlocks the garden door, then she nibbles carefully a bit of the mushroom which she had saved! Now only a foot high, she can at last walk through the door and go into the beautiful garden with its bright flower-beds and cool fountains (Carroll 1974: 76). There she finds gardeners who are nothing but playing cards (two, five and seven of hearts are painting the white flowers red), as well as soldiers, courtiers, kings and queens, and finally 'THE KING AND QUEEN OF HEARTS' (Carroll 1974: 78). Although she is very small, Alice does realise, 'they're only a pack of cards, after all. I needn't be afraid of them' (Carroll 1974: 78). And even when the Queen, in a fury, screams, 'Off with her head!,' meaning Alice's head, nothing unfortunate happens. In Wonderland, where words do not signify and causality is disjoined, such statements have no consequences. Invited to play a very odd sort of croquet with playing cards for wires, flamingos for mallets and hedgehogs for balls, Alice remains concerned about the Queen's constant demand for beheadings and she notices that no one plays fairly, that the game has no rules, and that it is very confusing with everything alive and moving all the time. Moreover, during the entire game, the Queen never stops quarrelling with the players, till Alice feels quite frightened again. The Duchess appears (released from prison where she was placed for boxing the Queen's ears). Informing Alice that, 'Everything's got a moral, if only you can find it,' she squeezes herself up unpleasantly close to Alice, putting her sharp chin on the little girl's shoulder (Carroll 1974: 86). And the Duchess does have a *moral* for everything; but in Wonderland its no surprise that the moral has nothing to do with the event for which it is supposed to be the moral! When Alice timidly states that the game is going better, the Duchess responds that the moral of that is 'tis love, 'tis love that makes the world go round!' (Carroll 1974: 87).

With almost all the players in prison for various faults, Alice is taken by the Queen for one final adventure, the Mock Turtle's story. There she listens to the Mock Turtle's sad tale, which is that once he had been a *real* turtle who had studied a wild list of courses from the Master turtle called 'Tortoise' (because he taught them) (Carroll 1974: 92). They teach her to dance the lobster quadrille and although Alice is rather bored by much of this, she struggles to be polite. They do not notice the extreme nonsense of their own stories, school subjects such as 'the different branches of Arithmetic – Ambition, Distraction, Uglification, and Derision' as well as '– Mystery, ancient and modern, with Seaography; then Drawling –' (Carroll 1974: 94, 95). But when Alice tells them her own story, they readily agree that her recollection of the poem, '*Father William*' is seriously flawed, uncommon nonsense. Alice 'sat down with her face in her hands and wondered if anything would *ever* happen in a natural way again' (Carroll 1974: 102).

The final episode erupts when the Gryphon hears the call to come to the trial of the Knave of Hearts, accused of stealing tarts which sit on the table in front of all in the courtroom. At the trial, Alice is pleased to be able to identify the judge and the jury, but forgets her manners and cries out that the jurors are stupid because they must write down even their names, lest they forget them. Problems with identity are spread far and wide. During the trial Alice begins to grow again, physically, and seeing the tarts makes her feel quite hungry. It is as if embodiment and growth are having an effect. She also grows impatient with the illogicality of the court. The judge (who is the King) does not seem to be able to discern what is and what is not evidence and commands the jurors to write down nearly everything said, no matter how foolish. When witnesses are called, the King threatens to execute them if they act nervous or if they cannot remember. Of course, given that causality has been abandoned, it would be surprising if any witness could remember anything. When an unsigned letter is introduced as evidence, the King takes its lack of signature as evidence that the Knave must be guilty or he would have signed it. And, in spite of the fact that the letter contains no names, no references whatsoever, the King believes it points in the direction of the Knave's guilt.

As Alice begins to grow, she also grows up. When the King announces, 'Rule Forty-two, *All persons more than a mile high to leave the court,*' and proclaims it to be the oldest rule in the book, Alice is quick to assert that she is not a mile high and that anyway, if it were the oldest rule it would be Number One (Carroll 1974: 114). Nor is she afraid of stating that there's not an atom of meaning in the anonymous letter

read to the courts. When, following the well established convention of Wonderland, the Queen calls for the sentence before the verdict, Alice loudly objects: 'Stuff and nonsense!' she scoffs, 'The idea of having the sentence first!' (Carroll 1974: 119). Enraged, the Queen orders Alice to hold her tongue and when Alice refuses, the Queen commands, 'Off with her head!' which only incites Alice to proclaim the lot of them to be nothing but a pack of cards (Carroll 1974: 119). And when the cards rise up and attack her, she beats them off and then finds herself once again lying on the bank with her sister, waking as if from a dream.

Feminist philosophers have noted the unusual role that Alice in particular and the little girl in general play in Deleuze's work. Catherine Driscoll asserts that, 'Deleuze frequently aligns Alice with becoming, and through Alice insists that becoming is a paradox defined as "the affirmation of both senses or directions at the same time.". Becoming always suggests a movement across time, indeed becoming as transformative process is not necessarily opposed to standard models of development: there is a quite commonsensical sense in which one might be becoming mad, becoming tall or becoming woman. But becoming for Deleuze is strictly opposed to any linear conception of time' (Driscoll 2000). Rosi Braidotti adds that Deleuze complains that 'feminists refuse to dissolve the subject "woman" into a series of transformative processes that pertain to a generalized and "postgender" becoming,' and that although politically correct, this is conceptually mistaken (Braidotti 1994: 116). Clearly, Deleuze and Félix Guattari recognise this. Below Oedipus, for example, they claim to discover a molecular unconscious; beneath the stable forms, functionalism; under familialism, polymorphous perversity (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 283–96). And so, beneath woman or even man, the little girl, Alice in Wonderland, releases becoming from the constraints of reference, signification, identity and causation, making it possible to take apart whatever has been joined together and to reverse direction and deny the arrow of time. Underlying all this is the distinction between the molecular and the molar, the microphysical and the statistical.

In the most formal, mathematical sense of the term, the molecular refers to Avogadro's number, the number of atoms needed such that the number of grams of a substance equals the atomic mass of the substance. An Avogadro's number of substance is called a mole (Schneider and Sagan 2005: xi).[9] Avogadro's hypothesis was key to solving many problems in the chemical sciences in the 1800s. For chemistry, molecules and moles are a matter of physical relations, ascertaining that equal volumes of gases with the same pressure and temperature contain the

same number of molecules. By analogy, these terms reveal several possibilities: first that 'the machine taken in its structural unity, the living taken in its specific and even personal unity, are mass phenomena or *molar aggregates*... merely two paths in the same statistical direction' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 286). From the point of view of molar or statistical aggregates in physical relations, there is no difference between machine and life; *molar machines* may be social machines, technical machines, or organic machines. As such, they may be language machines. And what of the molecular? All becomings are molecular. So the becoming-woman and becoming-child do not resemble the woman or the child, which are the molar forms arising with language that signifies and refers, enacts causality and identity (good sense and common sense).

But what is quite *curious* is that the woman has to become-woman in order for the man to become-woman. In writing, atoms of woman-hood, particles sweep across the social field and contaminate even men! (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 276). Society steals the girl's becoming and imposes a history on her, makes her an object of desire, an example and a trap. Is the entire history of men's writing then nothing more than an escape from this trap, an escape from consequences and the arrow of time (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 276)? Carroll points to the idea that, in Wonderland, where causality and reference no longer reign, anything is possible. Causal links of any kind are dissolved. But in fact what occurs is that *nothing happens*. A tea party is eternal. The Queen orders beheadings all day long and not a single one occurs. A trial is seemingly held but no evidence is gathered. And in any case, if something does happen, it's a simple matter to undo it; the pig could just as well turn back into a baby. By implication, therefore, no one is responsible for anything because nothing takes place and, in any case, lacking reference, all is Idea, nothing but Idea. This is, Deleuze and Guattari state, the only way to get outside of dualisms, by producing an Idea, the universal girl, the key to all becoming.

Yet, we do not live in Wonderland and therefore, our actions have consequences. That Deleuze and Guattari choose the little girl as the origin of all becomings evinces a fundamental binarism at the heart of their philosophy. Molecules are neither male nor female; such a determination is purely molar. Why choose girls, unless their molar existence is already in question? Why organise language so as to escape causal relations, unless to eliminate the possibility of that a little girl might grow up? Let us not forget Alice's *older sister*, 'sitting just as she left her, leaning her head on her hand, watching the setting sun, and thinking of little Alice and all her wonderful Adventures' (Carroll 1974: 120). Her

surface world comes alive with all the creatures of Alice's adventures, but the older sister knows that these creatures and events are versions of the reality around her. Carroll calls it 'dull reality,' but describes something quite different. He describes grass rustling in the wind, a pool rippling to the wave of reeds, tinkling sheep-bells, the shepherd-boy's voice, the confused clamor of the busy farm-yard. Truly, are these dull realities or are they part of the beauty and joy of life? And Alice? Through all her years, she would keep the simple and loving heart of her childhood, gathering other children about her to tell them her tales. She would feel their sorrows and find pleasure in their simple joys. But Carroll leaves out one thing. He forgets to say that Alice will also understand the limits of language and logic, the limits of a limitless world of possibilities, a world without causality and identity, without the arrow of time, without signification or reference. And in understanding this, Alice will be not just a woman with a simple and pure heart but a woman who understands: a thinker . . . a philosopher.

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Notes

1. I am using Lewis Carroll (1974), *The Philosopher's Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking-Glass*, Introduction and notes by Peter Heath, 15. This edition is subtitled 'The Thinking Man's Guide to a Misunderstood Nursery Classic,' but I have found little in the notes to enlighten a thinking *woman*.
2. References are to the English version with the French original (1969) in [ ].
3. 'In any truth functional compound statement, if a component statement in it is replaced by another statement having the same truth value, the truth value of the compound statement will remain unchanged' (Copi and Cohen 1994: 387–88).
4. If p then q = (not p) or q.
5. Bertrand Russell's solution to this was to create a hierarchy of types of objects and a corresponding hierarchy of concepts so that no individual is a member of its own class.
6. The position is atomist in that it accords reality only to empirical objects and their relations, not to structure (Tiles 1991: 85).
7. As we have seen, no causal explanation for their sudden appearance is necessary.
8. Russell argues that assertions have a subjective side and an objective side. The subjective side is found in the expression of the speaker's beliefs or desires. The objective side is the assertion's intention to indicate an object. Russell identifies the significance of a sentence with what it expresses. True and false sentences may be equally significant but in order for a string of words not to be just nonsense, it must express the beliefs or desires of the speaker. Additionally, if the string of words is nonsense, it cannot have an effect on a hearer.
9. They refer here to the poet, Joseph Brodsky, who wrote that humans are closer to the big bang than to Rome (Schneider and Sagan 2005: xi).

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Phallocentrism in Bergson: Life and Matter

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Abstract

Henri Bergson's philosophy presents the relationship between life and matter in both dualistic and monistic terms. Life is duration, a rhythm of incalculable novelty that approaches pure creative activity. In stark contrast, matter is identified with the determinism of homogeneous space. After *Time and Free Will*, Bergson concedes some share of duration to matter. In this context, his dualism can be understood as a methodological step towards the articulation of a monistic metaphysics of duration. This article suggests that the distinction between life and matter is also motivated by an unconscious imperative to establish a sexed hierarchy. Bergson repeatedly presents life as seminal, while matter is figured in terms of passivity.

Keywords: Bergson, sexed hierarchy, matter, life, duration, monism, dualism, extension.

In Henri Bergson's open system, life is conceived as duration. Famously, the creative evolution of life cannot be reduced to numerical calculation or adequately symbolised in any diagram. It is a flow of heterogeneous and continuous becoming that radically exceeds the present[1] (Bergson 1983: 2–4/496–8). In stark contrast, matter is defined as 'a present which is always beginning again' (1981: 139/281). For Bergson, each of matter's presents is 'practically equivalent' to the next one, which means in theory that it is possible to calculate a moment of the material world from its previous moment (1981: 247–8/376–7). In this sense matter is almost indistinguishable from the pure intelligibility of homogeneous space.

Bergson construes the relationship between life and matter in both dualistic and monistic terms. Gilles Deleuze has argued that Bergson's use of dualism is methodological. Bergson dichotomises in order to recover real duration from the disfiguring medium of

homogeneous space, which occludes becoming by submitting it to calculability (Deleuze 1988: 29). After disentangling purely temporal living phenomena from space, Bergson is able to reintegrate life and matter into an evolving whole in which the difference between the creative speeds of life and the almost determined rhythm of matter is a difference in temporal tension (Deleuze 1988: 29). While I am in partial agreement with Deleuze's suggestion that Bergson's predilection for dualism is a provisional step in the establishment of a monistic metaphysics, I claim that the tendency to dichotomise is more than a methodological manoeuvre. Bergson's commitment to dualism can be read as symptomatic of a disavowal of a sexed hierarchy at the very heart of his open system. Further, I suggest that Bergson's celebrated monistic integration of the divergent tendencies of life and matter maintains this sexed hierarchy.

The sexuation of Bergson's thought is betrayed in his use of metaphor and image. This is particularly significant because in Bergson images and metaphors are privileged in his method. For Bergson, language is spatial in essence, which means that he cannot present the intuition of duration as such. Therefore precise use of image and metaphor is often a better way to convey the mobility of real time because they can 'suggest' the intuition of duration in a 'direct vision' (Bergson 1992: 43/1285).

I. Dualism as Method and Disavowed Masculinism

Bergson's use of dualism is directly related to his critique of the failure of the western tradition to trace the impact of the demands of practical life upon human knowledge. Before anything else, all forms of life are obliged to obtain food and shelter and seek protection from threats of injury and death. Bergson calls this the law of 'attention to life' (*l'attention à la vie*) (1981: 173/ 312).

According to Bergson, human beings have evolved a highly motivated form of knowledge to fulfil their bodily needs: intellection. The intellect is at home working with inert objects. When confronted with mobile and enduring phenomena, human intellectual representation dissolves the passage of time and mobility into static symbols such as points, axes, and lines sketched onto a grid of space. For Bergson spatialisation stems from the vital tendency to action that precedes the systematic formulations of the Greeks. He calls it, 'a latent geometry, immanent to our idea of space, which is the main spring (*le grand ressort*) of our intellect and the cause of its working' (1983: 211/674). In other words, the projection of homogeneous space, masquerading as an adequate measurement of

time is one of the primary functions of the intellect. Indeed, for Bergson, the structure of human understanding demands the masking of duration. It enables us to delimit objects with clear and distinct outlines that are perfectly suited to facilitate our actions upon them (1983: 211/674).

Bergson's claim that spatialisation derives from a vital human tendency is Eurocentric. The intellectual procedure in which a subject isolates objects as immobile and delineates them with clear outlines in homogeneous space is alien to many Aboriginal philosophies. For example, Irene Watson, a Nunga feminist legal scholar describes Nunga ontology in these terms: 'We are not merely on and in the land, we are of it, we speak as one voice of the Creation, the voice or song law. Land and people are one voice one song' (Watson 2002: 7).

While Bergson's account of how homogeneous space obfuscates duration does not hold as a universal description of human knowledge, it is a salient description of the cover up of time in Western thought. His critique demonstrates the need in Western philosophy for a method of thinking that is capable of grasping time, the method he calls intuition. Where intellect limits its scope to the preparation of action, Bergsonian intuition extends to the whole of living reality. Real time and mobility are the primary objects of intuition. This is the context in which dualism emerges as a necessary step in the task of recovering enduring phenomena. By separating (geometrical) space from real time, Bergson articulates a philosophy of process which strives to follow the very passage of time's becoming rather than pulverising its dynamic progress into a line of equivalent points set out in a diagram.

Bergson's first major work *Time and Free Will* is strictly dualist. Matter is identified with homogeneous space and differentiated sharply from human consciousness, which is nothing but qualitative change or duration. The flow of unforeseeable novelty that characterises consciousness as duration is praised as the ground of the human self's creativity. This is not sexually neutral. Bergson writes 'the act which bears the mark of our personality is truly free, for our self alone will lay claim to its paternity' (1913/173). Here, paternity (presumably the act of insemination) is a metaphor for the very freedom of a durational act.[2]

From *Matter and Memory* onwards, Bergson concedes some share of duration to matter. This gesture allows him to reintegrate the divergent tendencies of matter and consciousness into a temporal monism. While Bergson relinquishes the stark dualism of *Time and Free Will*, he barely modifies the hierarchically sexed terms of his thinking when he shifts from a subjective focus to the more ambitious question of the life and matter relationship. In this sense Bergson's use of dualism is more than

a methodological manoeuvre; it betrays a sexed hierarchy at work in his metaphysics.

II. The Force of Ascent and the Force of Descent

In *The Creative Evolution* Bergson traces a line of demarcation between the inert and the living (197–8/663). Within the whole, each inclines in the opposite direction: the movement of the inert is one of descent, whereas life is a movement of ascent. Materiality adds nothing new to the whole from moment to moment, and, in principle, its pulsations 'might be accomplished almost instantaneously, like releasing a spring.' It merely unwinds a roll ready prepared. In contrast, the ascending movement of life 'corresponds to an inner work of ripening or creating.' Becoming is life. It '*endures* essentially, and imposes its rhythm on the first [matter], which is inseparable from it' (1983: 11/503).

Bergson affirms repeatedly, insofar as inert matter is bound up in the duration of the universe, it endures. 'The universe *endures*... The systems marked off by science *endure* only because they are bound up inseparably with the rest of the universe' (1983: 11/503). He provides what is now a famous example to support his argument. If sugar is mixed in a glass of water, the observer cannot speed up or draw out the process of the sugar melting. The observer's impatience is not something thought, such as the mathematical time of the physicist; it corresponds to something lived. Waiting for the sugar to melt is not relative because the parts of time cannot be unfurled at will. It is absolute. The whole universe then, has a particular, irreducible rhythm of duration that is something like a consciousness (1983: 10/502). In other words, matter is irreducibly implicated in the duration of the living.

Intuition provides Bergson with the means to elucidate the relationship between life and matter. Characteristically, Bergson calls for the philosopher to reflect upon his own interior life.[3] In his view, this act of thinking introduces the philosopher to an intuition of the two contrary movements that make up the Whole, the movement of life and the movement of matter. To accomplish the movement of life, 'we' must seek, within 'our own' experience, 'the point we feel ourselves most intimately with our own life. It is into pure duration that we then plunge back, a duration in the past, always moving on, is swelling unceasingly with a present that is absolutely new.' (1983: 199–200/664–5) This effort is strenuous because it goes against the ingrained human habit of spatialising time. While this is an act of reflection upon the 'inner life', the temporal rhythm which the philosopher strives to discover here

is not the not duration of his own life, but the duration of life itself. Bergson emphasises that the intuitive thinker can never reach this limit of pure duration, which is nothing other than freedom itself.[4]

Materiality tends in the opposite direction. From the effort of contracting as much as possible of 'our' past into the present in an undivided continuity, Bergson invites 'us' to dilate our consciousness, as far as possible.

> If the relaxation (*détente*) were complete, there would no longer be either memory or will – which amounts to saying that, in fact, we never do fall into this absolute passivity, any more than we can make ourselves absolutely free. But, in the limit, we get a glimpse (*nous entrevoyons*) of an existence made of a present which recommences unceasingly – devoid of real duration, nothing but the instantaneous which dies and is born again endlessly. (1983: 200–1/665)

Materiality *inclines* in the direction of absolute passivity but never fully dilates. If it did, it would become pure space.[5] As Bergson concedes, 'analysis resolves it into elementary vibrations, the shortest of which are of very slight duration, almost vanishing, but not nothing' (1983: 201/665). Matter and consciousness are thus defined as two opposing tendencies: the ascending movement approaching creation and freedom and the descending movement inclining toward pure repetition. In this context Bergson is able say that matter is the interruption of duration (1983: 201/665–6). Given that the entire universe endures, and materiality is irreducibly bound up in all aspects of the whole, this interruption occurs within duration, although it inclines in the inverse direction to the one articulated in the becoming of life.

For Bergson, the double effort of contraction and dilation in consciousness proceeds from the plane of experience but incites the philosopher beyond it, toward the purely qualitative and purely quantitative. Intuition is really a traversal between two extremes: unextended qualitative duration, which is absolutely continuous, and extended quantitative repetition, which lends itself to calculation and division. For Bergson:

> the intuition of duration ... brings us into contact with a whole continuity of durations which we should try to follow, either downwardly or upwardly: in both cases we can dilate ourselves indefinitely by a more and more vigorous (violent) effort, in both cases we transcend (*transcendons*) ourselves. In the first, we advance towards a duration more and more scattered (*éparpillée*), whose palpitations, more rapid than ours, dividing our simple sensation, dilute its quality into quantity: at the limit would be the pure homogeneous,

> the pure repetition by which we define materiality. In advancing in the other direction, we go toward a duration which stretches, tightens, and becomes more and more intensified: at the limit would be eternity. This time not only conceptual eternity, which is an eternity of death, but an eternity of life. It would be a living, and consequently still moving eternity, where our duration would find itself like the vibrations in light, and which would be the concentration of all duration, as materiality is its dispersion (*l'éparpillement*). Between these two extreme limits moves intuition, and this movement is metaphysics itself. (1992: 187–8/1419)

We can see from the vertical movement of intuition described in this passage how Bergson reconciles the dualisms. Between the extremes of freedom and necessity, there are so many different degrees of tension, so many different degrees of extension.[6]

Bergson's temporal monism plainly privileges life over matter. On the one hand, life is celebrated for approaching freedom, and on the other hand, matter tends towards necessity. Where life has the dynamic capacity to draw upon the virtual and engender new configurations in the actual, matter is confined to the plane of the present, in which it ceaselessly makes itself from moment to moment. This hierarchical relationship is not explicitly sexed. Nonetheless, Bergson deploys traditionally phallocentric images to describe life and matter. Matter is associated with 'absolute passivity', an expression with well known feminine connotations in the misogynist sense (1983: 200/665). In contrast, life is presented in heroically masculine terms as a movement of ascent approaching freedom. It is not just Bergson's use of metaphor that is sexed; the very structure of the spatial relations Bergson that deploys in his image of duration as a monism has phallic connotations. Pure duration is at the summit of the Whole, while matter serves as the base.

III. Seminal Creativity

The sexed hierarchy in Bergson's formulation of the relationship between life and matter is perhaps most pronounced in his account of evolution. Paradoxically, the emergence of sexual generation, as such, receives scant attention in his description of evolution's dynamic progress.

Bergson posits the *élan vital* as a virtual multiplicity, which in its initial impulsion held an immense reservoir of forces within itself. These forces contained mutually antagonistic aspects. In order to allow them an ability to grow, the forces were obliged to split up into distinct tendencies. We have arrived at one of the central theses of Bergson's

most famous work: evolution proceeds by means of dissociation (1983: 100/579–80). This process is nothing other than the acts by which the multiplicity of the *élan vital* is actualised. Evolution proceeds through the differentiating movement of duration, which draws on the *élan vital* to create distinct tendencies.

While Bergson does not ascribe a common purpose to life, the *élan vital* is understood monistically. It is the very force from which life arises (1983: 51/ 538). At this virtual source, all of the tendencies of life abided together because their features did not yet need to be differentiated. In Bergson's vision of the Whole as an incalculable multiplicity of different degrees of tension discussed earlier, the *élan vital* is virtually implied as the force of all of the different rhythms of duration.

Tendencies are not defined by the possession of particular attributes. On the contrary, they are characterised by the aspects that have the most emphasis. Animals, for instance, tend to accentuate movement while plants incline towards immobility. Most aspects of the Whole continue to abide in a specific tendency in a virtual state. 'There is no manifestation of life which does not contain in a rudimentary state – either latent or virtual – the essential characters of most other manifestations [translation modified]' (1983: 106/585). In this sense, something of the virtual Whole abides in all of the dissociated tendencies that make up life (1983: 54/540).

The first great bifurcation in Bergson's account of evolution is the division of the *élan vital* into life and matter. For Bergson, the reason for this dissociation is found in the divergent characters of these two tendencies. Life contains an unstable and explosive balance of forces to which inert matter is tremendously resistant (1983: 98/578). Their dissociation enabled these antagonistic aspects of the *élan vital* to express themselves. It is should be remembered: the *élan vital* is virtual. It functions as the 'reservoir' from which life engenders new tendencies, which in turn give rise to actualities. The emergence of matter and life, then, must be understood as an act of creation. When Bergson describes matter in negative terms, for instance, as the inversion or interruption of duration, he is speaking of it as a tendency distinguished from the inventive duration of life (1983: 186–271/653–725; Deleuze 1991: 100–3). Bergsonian matter is construed as a positive fact. Yet it is precisely the antagonism between the explosive force of life and the rhythm of near necessity found in the force of matter which led to their bifurcation. Matter was an obstacle to life's creative dynamism.

The dissociation between life and matter is the first of many bifurcations in the movement of evolution. Although Bergson doesn't say

this explicitly, the first divergence within the tendency of life engenders what he calls 'sexual generation.' In a section of twelve pages devoted to the bifurcation between plant and animal, he makes a fleeting remark:

> sexual generation is perhaps only a luxury for the plant, but to the animal it was a necessity, and the plant must have been driven to it by the same *élan* which impelled the animal thereto, a primitive, original *élan* anterior to the separation of the two kingdoms [translation modified]. (1983: 119/596)

What I want to emphasise here is less the thesis that sexual reproduction is perhaps a luxury for plants, than Bergson's admission that this bifurcation arises from a 'primitive, original *élan*.' He readily admits that not all of the directions of life hold the same interest for him. Bergson is particularly concerned with the path that leads to 'Man' (*l'homme*) [sic] (1983: 105/584). Bergson's treatise on evolution thus attends carefully to the dissociation between plant and animal and the bifurcation between instinct and intellect. Yet his allusions to the emergence of sexual reproduction are few. Surely sexual generation occupies an important place in the path that leads to the human species?[7]

Bergson's marginalisation of sexual generation is interesting in relation to the sexed hierarchy I suggest is at work in the images and metaphors he draws upon to articulate his thought. In my view, emergence of the sexed hierarchy precedes the primitive *élan* that Bergson credits as the force that impels the emergence of sexual generation. I think it motivates the very desire to split the 'antagonistic' forces of life and matter. While Bergson largely abandons an analysis of sexual generation, he repeatedly invokes images of ejaculation, explosion and erection to account for the evolution the life and matter relation.

I alluded earlier to Bergson's use of a paternal metaphor to describe the genesis of the free act in *Time and Free Will*. In *The Creative Evolution* he draws upon the image of paternal creativity to elaborate another kind of free act, the organising act. While the free act characterises human consciousness, the organising act is fundamentally transhuman; its source is the *élan vital*. This act is particularly important because it creates complex structures such as the human eye. Bergson writes:

> The organizing act… has something explosive about it: it needs at the beginning the smallest possible place, a minimum of matter, as if the organizing forces only entered space reluctantly. The spermatozoon, which sets in motion the evolutionary process of the embryonic life, is one of the smallest cells of the organism; and it is only a small part of the spermatozoon that really takes part in the operation. (1983: 92/574)

This procreative image confers all of the creative force upon the purely temporal act which enters the space of matter 'only reluctantly.' In addition to emphasising the immateriality of the organising act here, Bergson's image downplays the materiality of sperm. It as though the truly creative aspect of sperm is not reducible to its material status.[8] This is, arguably, the most explicit use of a hierarchically sexed image in Bergson's account of evolution, yet there are many more instances in which he theorises the relationship between life and matter in sexist terms, at least implicitly.

In a particularly puzzling formulation, Bergson suggests that life is an immaterial force making itself, while matter is unmaking itself. Matter's tendency towards spatiality, or what Bergson calls extension, can be understood as a temporal tension that is interrupted. He proposes that matter should be imagined as a falling weight (1983: 245/703). Conversely life is a movement of ascent. These opposed movements must be understood together, especially given that, as Bergson admits, the creative activity of life evolves with matter on the surface of Earth. 'If it were pure consciousness, *a fortiori* if it were supraconsciousness, it would be pure creative activity' (1983: 245/703). This formulation suggests that life could exist independently of matter. Indeed, in the Huxley Lecture he makes precisely this claim (1922: 35/835).[9]

The evolution of life on Earth has always been attached to matter. Life is '*riveted* to an organism that *subjects* (*la soumet*) it to the general laws of inert matter. But everything happens as if it were doing its upmost to set itself free' (1983: 245/703). Bergson contends that life retards the descent of matter by acting upon matter with its explosive energy. He turns to the cholorophyllian function of plants. Plants accumulate energy, as in a reservoir, that can be discharged suddenly through the nervous systems of the animals that eat them. Bergson hypothesises that prior to the dissociation between plant and animal, life was accumulating 'explosives' to be released through movements. 'It is like an effort to raise the weight which falls' (1983: 246/704).

Matter is a weight that the explosive force of life attempts to mould and transform with tremendous effort. In my view, this scenario is reminiscent of a violent figuration of heterosexual intercourse in which a man fucks a woman whose inertia approaches 'absolute passivity' (1983: 200/665). Woman is figured here as an 'inert' weight acted upon by a frenzied man.

The phallocentrism of Bergson's life-matter relation is also evident in a number of images that he proposes for understanding the relation between them. He invokes his readers to think of a vessel full of steam

at high pressure. The vessel has a few cracks and steam escapes its enclosure, in a jet:

> The steam shot (*lancée*) into the air is nearly all condensed into little drops which fall back (*retombent*), and this condensation and this fall (*chute*) represent simply the loss of something, an interruption, a deficit. But a small part of the jet stream subsists, uncondensed, for some seconds; it is making an effort to raise the drops which are falling (*tombent*); it succeeds at most in retarding (*ralentir*) their fall (*la chute*). So, from an immense reservoir of life, jets must be shooting out (*s'élancer*) unceasingly, of which each falling back (*retombent*) is a world [translation modified]. (1983: 247/705)

Bergson warns against taking this comparison too far. The cracks, the jets of steam, the forming of the drops are subject to the laws of inert matter and the creation of a world is a free act. So he proposes instead the image of the action of an arm raising itself. For Bergson, the effort to lift the arm gives a better sense of life's freedom, while the tendency of the arm to fall back down reveals the direction of matter unmaking this effort. 'In this image of a *creative action which unmakes itself* we . . . have a more exact representation of [animate] matter' (1983: 247–8/705). This image, like that of jet stream shooting forth from a vessel, is reminiscent of a penis becoming erect in arousal and falling back into detumescence. And Bergson proposes yet another metaphor with strongly phallic connotations.

> Consciousness or supraconsciousness is the name for the rocket whose extinguished fragments (*les debris*) fall back as matter; consciousness . . . is . . . that which subsists of the rocket itself, passing through the fragments and lighting them up into organisms. (1983: 261/716)

'Inert' matter is the debris of the *élan vital's* immense effort to create. Some of this debris gets animated by the passage of consciousness through 'it' and thus engenders organisms. However, it is the tendency of life itself that is credited as the true creator of the living being.

In my view these passages demonstrate the valorisation of a hyper-masculine theory of life and corresponding devaluation of matter as feminine. This is not a binary hierarchy because Bergson's concepts of life and matter are never actualised as pure activity and pure space. He emphasises that there is always a trace of the characteristics of most other tendencies within any of the actualised tendencies of life (1983: 106/585). For this reason, matter's inclination towards pure repetition is never fully achieved. There are some oscillations in matter's rhythm that are analogous to the dynamic transformations articulated in the duration of life. At the same time, life is not manifested as pure creative energy. Life is riveted to matter, and can only actualise free acts through its

inverse tendency. Moreover, Bergson admits that if materiality was pure repetition, consciousness could never have installed itself within matter's palpitations. In a key passage from the Huxley lecture, he writes:

> Life would be impossible were the determination of matter so absolute as to admit of no relaxation. Suppose, however, that at particular moments and at particular points matter shows a certain elasticity, then and there will be the opportunity for consciousness to install itself. It will have to humble itself at first; yet, once installed, it will dilate, it will spread from its point of entry and not rest till it has conquered (*obtenir*) the whole, for time is at its disposal, and the slightest quantity of indetermination, by continually adding to itself, will make up as much freedom as you like. (1920: 18/824–5)

At particular moments, matter 'offers a certain elasticity' that allows life to transform it. Consciousness could never have succeeded in creating organisms without the emergence of these fluctuations at certain points within matter's rhythm. A number of important questions emerge from this passage that Bergson does not address. Why does matter generate fluctuations in its rhythm? Is elasticity merely a fortuitous accident or are the oscillations in matter provoked when consciousness seeks to install an action upon it? Does this imply that matter anticipates the imminence of a new act, which exceeds the plane of actuality that Bergson frequently insists matter is confined to? We could say what Bergson does not say: when the force of consciousness stimulates matter, it does not merely repeat its past. Matter actualises alterations in its tension that constitute new configurations in the becoming of the world. But this is still to accept the terms of Bergson's dualism. Perhaps we would do better to reconsider the life-matter relation beyond dualism?

Let us return to what Bergson says in this quotation. Far from modifying the violent hierarchy of life over matter by allowing matter, however infinitesimally, to participate in engendering new actualities in the world, Bergson declares that material elasticity allows consciousness to install itself. Once consciousness has entered matter, 'it will not rest until it has conquered the whole' (1920: 18/824). In sexed terms, matter's elasticity makes her amenable to the power of the masculine tendency to create. She offers herself to life and allows him 'to conquer' (*obtenir*) her.

Given the sexual violence of Bergson's figuration of the life-matter relation, it is no surprise to find him asserting that the subjugation of matter is most successful in 'Man' (*l'homme*). In the same essay, Bergson praises 'man alone' for his ability to force matter into the status of a 'mere instrument' (*à l'état d'instrument*). He has this ability because he can oppose every habit he has contracted with a contrary habit and

this gives him more freedom to act upon matter than any other animate creature.[10] In other organisms, freedom remains riveted to the 'chains' of matter. At most they are able to stretch these chains.' But, in Man, 'a sudden bound (*un saut brusque*) is made.' Freedom is unleashed. 'Freedom, coming to itself whilst necessity is at grips with itself, brings back matter to the condition of being a mere instrument. It is as though it has divided in order to rule' (1920: 26/830).

For Bergson, Man is distinguished from animals by a difference in nature and presented as the 'end' of evolution. He warns his readers that Man is the 'end' in a special sense. Bergson does not mean to imply that Man's success realises a ready-made plan. The divergent actualisations of the *élan vital* were contingent and radically unpredictable. Man is only one species among a number of them. Nonetheless, Man is the great success of evolution because he alone allowed life to finally triumph over the 'obstacle' of matter (1983: 263–6/718–21). Despite his argument to the contrary, Bergson's celebration of Man as the 'end' of evolution" tends to undercut the innovation for which his philosophy is justly famous: the claim that duration articulates an incalculable flow of novelty (1983: 266/720–1).

Keith Ansell-Pearson has voiced grave reservations about these humanist assertions in Bergson's corpus. According to Ansell-Pearson Bergson's evolutionary philosophy elevates the 'form' of Man in a gesture of 'residual perfectionism' (Ansell-Pearson 1999: 158–9). I support Ansell-Pearson's call to move beyond the 'residual perfectionism' and 'anthropocentrism' at work in this aspect of Bergson's *oeuvre* (Ansell-Pearson 1999: 159). But it is not just a case of exceeding the problematic elevation of 'Man' in Bergsonism. The privilege conferred upon life as a movement of ascent and creation and the simultaneous degradation of matter as an obstacle to the progress of life must be called into question. This violent hierarchy articulates a kind of phallic anthropomorphism, where matter is the stuff or dead weight that paternal life must impregnate or overcome in order to incarnate animate beings and introduce free acts into the world. At his most extreme, Bergson valorises a spiritual position that is nothing short of somataphobic. He speculates that human consciousness may have 'an intenser life' no longer riveted to the body (Bergson 1920: 35/ 835).

IV. Rethinking Material Elasticity

I have suggested that Bergson's split between life and matter is bound up in the disavowal of a hierarchical conception of sexual difference. The implications of this split are troubling, not only from a feminist

perspective, but also a philosophical approach that seeks to affirm the dynamism and duration of matter.

Manuel de Landa's thought strikes me as a promising resource in rethinking Bergsonian materiality. He draws upon complexity theory that has shown matter's capacity to exceed the tendency towards entropy in far from equilibrium conditions. In these instances, 'inert' matter is capable of organising itself and acting in ways that exceed mathematical prediction. For de Landa this suggests that 'matter can "express" itself in complex and creative ways' (de Landa 1992: 133). He emphasises that the virtual arises from the duration of matter. This is not to say that the virtual is actualised; it means that the virtual has a material foundation, or better, it arises from a material rhythm.[11]

I do not think this is strictly unfaithful to Bergson. In *Matter and Memory*, Bergson describes the Whole as 'concrete extensity' pervaded by, '*modifications, perturbations* changes of *tension* or of *energy* and nothing else' (1981: 201). In this monistic formulation life and matter might be thought together as enduring tensions capable of actualising the new.

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Notes

1. All references are to the English translations of Bergson's work. The second page reference refers to French edition of Bergson's *Oeuvres* (1959).
2. For a close reading of this remark in Bergson see my 'Interval, sexual difference: Irigaray and Bergson' (2008).
3. Reflection upon the 'inner life of the self' is the cornerstone of Bergson's intuitive deduction of duration. This procedure is first elaborated in *Time and Free Will*. Bergson presents this as purely temporal. Contra Bergson, I ague that that the deduction of duration is a both embodied and sexuate in 'Interval, sexual difference: Irigaray and Bergson' (2008).
4. William E. May argues that the limit of pure freedom described in this passage is how Bergson conceives of God (1970: 637).
5. As I have already indicated, it is only in his first book, *Time and Free Will*, that Bergson identifies matter with pure space. In all of his subsequent publications, the absolute passivity sketched in this passage is a pure limit beyond the actual. See May 1970: 614–5.
6. It is noteworthy that, in this instance, Bergson defines materiality, without qualification, as *pure* repetition. In the passages from *The Creative Evolution* I have just discussed, Bergson says matter stops short of *pure* repetition. The passage comes from his important essay 'An Introduction to Metaphysics' (Bergson 1992: 159–200) which was published several years after *Matter and Memory*, but before *The Creative Evolution*.
7. Bergson refers to 'sexuality' in the first chapter of *The Creative Evolution*. He also makes a few references to sex cells (59–60/ 563–4; 79–80/545–6). The neglect of this primitive differentiation is even more marked in Deleuze's reading of *The Creative Evolution*. Deleuze provides a diagram summarising the divergence of the *élan vital* into distinct actualities but omits what Bergson calls 'sexual generation' (Deleuze 1988: 102).
8. It is perhaps unfair to chastise Bergson for neglecting to mention the egg in this image. After all, the active part played by ovum in the selection of sperm to create an embryo was not discovered until the second half of the twentieth century.
9. Bergson speculates that the mind may outlive the body. He suggests that living in the conventional sense may prepare consciousness for 'more efficient action, an intenser life', no longer harnessed to the matter of the body (1920: 35/835).
10. Bergson also identifies the complexity of the human brain, social life and languages in his argument for Man's superiority over of life forms on this planet (1983: 264–5/719–20).
11. De Landa's excellent discussion of the scientific background to Deleuze's conception of multiplicity is a particularly valuable contribution to this field. See especially chapter one 'The Mathematics of the Virtual: Manifolds, Vector Field and Transformation Groups' (De Landa 2002: 9–55).

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Reviews

Rosi Braidotti (2002) *Metamorphoses: Towards a Feminist Theory of Becoming*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Rosi Braidotti (2006) *Transpositions*: *On Nomadic Ethics*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

A desire for an affirmative and invigorating concept of identity, relations and ethics within feminism in these 'strange times'[1] where 'strange things are happening'[2] forms the generative *modus operandum* in Rosi Braidotti's complementary sister-contributions to critical theory. Indeed, the acknowledged strangeness of contemporary Western spatio-temporal subjects forms one of the crucial tenets in Braidotti's emancipatory agenda. *Metamorphoses* and *Transpositions* develop a strategy formed on Irigaray's emphasis on the importance of sexual difference and constructive materialism, and achieved through a Deleuzian conception of simultaneity and nomadism. Subjectivity is, for Braidotti, always already in motion and bodies and spaces are materialised in the act of becoming different or strange. The significant task of a nomadic feminist ethics is to harness and relish bodies' capacities for transformation and to discover their potential for mapping flux, in shaping localised traces of becoming.

Braidotti thus prepares a conceptual space where the de-essentialised subject of Western deconstructivist thinking can take pleasure from and explore the possibilities of social construction and material being. She provides a possibility of 'multiple singularities without fixed identities'[3] in the act of 'legitimating and representing a multi-centred, internally differentiated female feminist subjectivity without falling into relativism or fragmentation'[4]. These singularities are, however, not singular stand-alone concepts, nor is the subjective space plane. 'Just like travellers can capture the "essential lines" of landscape or of a place in the speed of crossing it, this is not superficiality, but a way of framing the longitudinal and latitudinal forces that structure a certain spatio-temporal "moment".'[5]

In emphasising corporeal experience and refuting both a coherently essential and a purely superficial idea of the sexed and/or gendered body, Braidotti forms a concept that is not in opposition to, but goes beyond both the third and the second waves of feminism. Is Braidotti's project signalling the emergence of a fourth wave of feminism; or even a form of feminism which should be conceived of outside of the linearity of conceptive 'waves'?

Although Braidotti shares a conception of gender constructivity with certain third wave feminist philosophies, she differentiates her viewpoint from less materialist feminist thought, such as is formulated in the early work of Judith Butler. Braidotti argues that there are certain socially constructed identity-shaping loci of becoming, but these are cartographical points within inter-, trans- or internal materialising processes rather than external impositions. She allows that 'To enact different steps of this process of becoming, one has to work on the conceptual coordinates,'[6] but these never remain superficial. The types of transformations that Butler urges onto the body remain figural, because processes of becoming 'are neither easily accessible nor free of pain. In other words, changes hurt and transformations are painful; this does not mean that they are deprived of positive and even pleasurable side-effects, of course.'[7]

The affective facet of transformative bodily positioning – or what may more appropriately be termed transpositioning – is a vital element in Braidotti's project. *Metamorphoses* and *Transpositions* encounter a number of cultural amalgamative becomings, such as becoming-woman/animal/insect/machine/cyborg/other, considering these as 'process[es] of intersecting forces (affects) and spatio-temporal variables (connections)'.[8] Through the produced affects each process of becoming is connected to other processes of becoming at loci of empathetically joint and shared sensation. 'A "location", in fact, is not a self-appointed and self-designed subject-position. It is a collectively shared and constructed, jointly occupied spatio-temporal territory.'[9] She establishes that 'These multi-layered levels of affectivity are the building blocks for creative transpositions, which compose a plane of actualization of relations, that is to say points of contact between self and surroundings.'[10]

Rhizomatic affect is thus the means by which the subjective becomes general and the general becomes subjective. It comprises the cartographical points of becoming-world and becoming-ethical. Braidotti refers to works from the schools of eco-feminism and viral politics, developing a theory of shared affect or 'care', where

'anti-essentialist yet vitalistic figurations'[11] prepare space for 'a model of porosity, fluidity, multiple interconnections and symbolic interrelation, a transversal subjectivity'.[12] These figurations are 'hybrid figurations',[13] a stand-alone complex, requiring transpositioning processes of becoming, which 'negotiate with the generative powers of *zoe*, this life in "me" which does not bear my name and does not even fully qualify as human'.[14] Braidotti returns to Deleuze and Guattari and the concept of the Body-without-Organs or incorporeal, arguing that the process of becoming-ethical starts where a 'primacy is given to the Relation over the terms'[15]: it is the becoming of 'the affective being of the middle, the interconnection, the Relation'.[16]

Braidotti's notion of ethics is a process that has nothing to do with either dominant morality or relativism: 'Rather it contains clearly set limits that are activated by careful negotiations.'[17] She argues that 'To accept differential boundaries does not condemn us to relativism, but to the necessity to negotiate each passage.'[18] Becoming-ethical involves an affirmation of the limits and boundaries-in-shaping. They need to be considered 'points of encounter and not of closure: living boundaries and not fixed walls'.[19]

For feminism, as well as for any other emancipatory discourse, Rosi Braidotti's project opens up an alternative to the 'loss, failure, melancholia and ontological lack',[20] which she claims to be central to much contemporary, especially psycho-analytic, theoretical discussion. It presents an opportunity to pursue a political agenda without adhering to fusty binary power structures. One may question what happens after the living boundaries have been embraced: once we are celebratory participants of the process of becoming-affirmative, what happens next? However, I believe that this question belongs to a future configuration within the theorising negotiation that Rosi Braidotti is taking part in.

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Notes

1. Braidotti, *Metamorphoses*, p. 1.
2. Ibid. p. 1.
3. Ibid. p. 149.
4. Ibid. p. 26.
5. Braidotti, *Transpositions*, p. 172.
6. Ibid. p. 169.

7. Braidotti, *Metamorphoses*, p. 43.
8. Ibid. p. 21.
9. Ibid. p. 12.
10. Braidotti, *Transpositions*, p. 172.
11. Ibid. p. 123.
12. Ibid. p. 123.
13. Ibid. p. 123.
14. Ibid. p. 123.
15. Ibid. p. 129.
16. Ibid. p. 129.
17. Ibid. p. 268.
18. Ibid. p. 268.
19. Ibid. p. 268.
20. Braidotti, *Metamorphoses*, p. 57.

Martin-Jones, David (2006) *Deleuze, Cinema and National Identity: Narrative Time in National Contexts*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 256 pages.

David Martin-Jones's cinematic application of Deleuze as a form of 'philosophical sodomy' is provocative from the outset. His distinctive assemblage of the time–image, the movement-image and the politics of national identity is bound to fuel ongoing arguments that reverberate beyond the field of theory. As Martin-Jones indicates, film scholars remain 'bemused' by or 'concerned' about Deleuze's value to their field. This is particularly the case with Anglo-American film studies. The book intervenes in the long–standing and often highly partisan debate between formalism (film as art form and aesthetic experience) and culturalism (film as representational socio-political practice). In tandem with this, opposing camps often contest the relative political values of 'experimental', frequently modernist-inflected art and popular genres.

Deleuze's position as a Parisian cinéaste with a predilection for the art-house canon is well known and has been contested, both by lovers of both popular mainstream film and world cinema. As Martin-Jones and others have reminded us, Deleuze's personal view of film history is predominantly Eurocentric. The majority of his examples are modernist–inflected works from European art film and 'deviant' Hollywood directors such as Welles, and he locates the birth of the time-image in the new waves that developed in the wake of post-war Italian neo-realism. Deleuze's approach to Japanese directors such as Ozu and Mizoguchi is philosophical/aesthetic rather than being motivated by the politics of Japanese nationalism.

Yet of course Deleuze and Guattari's joint work is overtly informed by an astutely radical political awareness espousing micropolitical

oppositions to local, international and global abuses of power. Actively involved in the events May 1968 and their aftermath, Deleuze and Guattari do not indulge in pure aestheticism, though they certainly privilege art as a potentially radicalising force. Seeking to refute both psychic interiority and fixed semantic systems, Deleuze and Guattari insist that art is an immanent process 'a being in sensation and nothing else: it exists in itself' (1994: 164). Art 'undoes the triple organisation of perceptions, affections, and opinions in order to substitute a monument composed of percepts, affects, and blocs of sensation' that replace language (1994: 176). By this apparent refutation of ideological content, Deleuze and Guattari advocate looking elsewhere than representational equations or Oedipal symbolism. Schizoanalytic approaches to art thus replace representation by material capture. Deleuze's cinematic applications seek an experiential rather than a significatory approach to the moving image; one that deterritorialises perception via the machinic automatism of the medium.

As Martin–Jones indicates, the 'localised historical dimension' is deliberately absent from Deleuze's solo work on cinema. Using this absence as a motivation for his own exploration of film and national identity, he expands the parameters of the cinema books by drawing on relevant insights from the works co–authored with Guattari. For Deleuze and Guattari, the forces of reterritorialisation and deterritorialisation are much more than an intense aesthetic encounter. Rather than being for its own sake, art is always intended as 'a tool for blazing life lines'. Here, the strengths of Martin–Jones's critique emerge, as he uses his film readings to express a politically-committed analysis of shifting international power-relations. Setting out to link formalism and culturalism with philosophy, he puts the forces of Deleuzian theory to work in an engaged and engaging critique of national identities in recent films.

Martin-Jones begins with Deleuze's location of the time-image in the cinema of post-1945 Europe, with its fragmentation of linear narrative time. His response to these more labyrinthine forms of narrative is also marked by David Bordwell's very different typology of film based on the classification of narrative structures. Despite its structuralist and cognitive approach, Bordwell's category of the parametric art–film has, arguably, some commonality of content, though not of perspective, with Deleuze's own cinematic taxonomy. The book's case-studies are chiefly generic hybrids such as *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* (Michael Gondry, 2004) that mix independent/art house devices with popular box-office appeal. Other Deleuzian film theorists (among them, Patricia

Pisters, Barbara Kennedy and myself) also find this type of hybrid film very productive for Deleuzian-inflected explorations, but Martin-Jones is consistently led by the distinct socio-political focus on national identity.

Deleuze, who elsewhere discusses 'minor literature', introduces the concept of 'minor cinema' in *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* (1989). As Martin-Jones notes, Deleuze's consideration of films by John Cassavetes, Jean Rouch and Charles Perrault does not overtly address issues of national identity per se. Rather than pursuing this agenda, Deleuze discovers in these films a different 'revolutionary' challenge to move beyond subjective identity. The rhizomatic processes of becomings–other move instead towards a more radical embrace of collective identity, which may or may not be nationally motivated.

The time-image exceeds fragmented narrative form and politically explicit thematic content. Asserting that 'the brain is the screen' (in his eponymous essay), Deleuze argues that by bringing 'a little time in its pure state' onto the screen and breaking up conventional narrative patterns, it offers a temporal hiatus with potential to trigger new thought and new forms of micropolitical engagement. This distinct political focus could explain Deleuze's 'reticence' about dealing with macropolitical issues of nationhood per se in the context of the cinema books. Yet, rather than following this line of enquiry, Martin-Jones re-works major national discourses and 'minor actions' to produce an original ideological analysis of narrative strategies in selected films. He develops his tightly constructed agenda by locating major/minor forces in the same films and revealing their antithetical dynamics at work in a struggle for national identity. *Deleuze, Cinema and National Identity* offers a clear and accessible introduction to Deleuze's two main categories of cinematic time. It provides ample textual examples to anchor chief concepts and to key in the subsequent argument. The structure of the exposition is rigorously constructed and its direction is frequently signposted. It develops dialectically along the clear trajectory of a series of contested binaries: movement-image/time-image, major/minor, and reterritorialisation/deterritorialisation.

One area in which Martin-Jones takes creative liberties with Deleuze appears in his alignment of the movement-image to an unproblematic presentation of national narrative time, and the time-image to 'multiple, jumbled or reversed' narrative time that expresses national struggles. He strikingly asserts that the contested ground of movement and time make these films either 'time images caught in the act of becoming movement-images' or 'movement-images caught in the act of becoming

time-images'. Yet rather than staging such a battle of clearly opposed forces, Deleuze's account reveals a complex intermeshed taxonomy that puts certain films and directors to work across both books. Deleuzian film theory, in its focus on the ontological properties of the medium, is applicable in some degree to *all* films, regardless of explicit subject-matter, style or genre. Movement and time in cinema inevitably use both temporality and movement as their modus operandi. Film images move in time and the interlinked process of the brain's own temporally moving images problematises dialectically neat divisions at both macro and micro levels.

In a productive move, Martin-Jones links Deleuze's two-plane model of temporality and Homi Bhabha's conceptualisation of national identity formation via 'rhetorical figures' that produce a double time-structure: the technological and progressive present and the timeless past. One contentious issue here is that Bhabha's rhetorical figures are emblematic but Deleuze's cinematic figures are stylistic devices that operate elsewhere than overt image content. Nevertheless, as Martin-Jones indicates, Bhabha selects the stylistically experimental *Handsworth Songs* (John Akomfra 1986) to argue that the film's presentation of successive waves of immigrants to the UK disrupts the homogenising tendency of national discourse. Overall, though, the political specificity of Bhabha's ideological concepts does not align neatly with either Bordwell's Classic Realist Text/parametric narration or Deleuze's movement and time images. Again, Martin-Jones's argument challenges us to dialectical activity by making new theoretical assemblages.

The first chapter provides a clear, workable outline of Deleuze's cinematic applications of Bergsonian memory. This is connected with the national theme via the occluded contexts of racial Mexican anxiety (Hitchcock's *Vertigo*, 1958) and the displaced status of Catholic heritage in the Italy of 'the economic miracle' in Fellini's 1963 film $8\frac{1}{2}$. Here, Martin-Jones unfolds a confidently handled series of parallels between film text and ideological context more typically associated with sociohistorical and culturalist approaches to film studies. He thus sets up and seeks to integrate two distinct frames of reference in a way that neither 'party' might find entirely satisfactory but which throws us the gauntlet to engage with further reflection on the limitations of these respective agendas when working with film.

Martin-Jones further explores national identity via contemporaneous fantasies of the global city as progressive, egalitarian marketplace, as seen in Nora Ephron's 1998 *You've got Mail*. His focal cities are

London in Peter Howitt's *Sliding Doors* (1997) and Berlin in Tom Tykwer's German film, *Run, Lola Run* (2000). Here he interrogates the relations of time and memory, connecting labyrinthine narrative structures relevant to changing national contexts. In his reading of *Sliding Doors*, Martin–Jones considers the Americanisation of London and its implications in relation to national memory loss. In *Run Lola Run*, the focus is on the reconstructed post-wall Berlin. He asserts that its centrality as meeting place of global networks and its embrace of materialist values is conveyed via the film's 'fractal' structure. Both films remove evidence of their location city's representative national past and replace this with vibrant contemporaneous images of internationalism unmarked by problematic issues of ethnicity. At the same time, films like *Sliding Doors* use nostalgic notions of quintessential Englishness as a 'structuring absence', evinced by the casting of American star Gwyneth Paltrow and her adopted 'plummy home Counties accent'.

The argument shifts focus to a different national scenario, tackling two cinematic takes on the first Gulf War and American triumphalism: *Memento* (Christopher Nolan, 2000) and *Saving Private Ryan* (Steven Spielberg, 1998). *Saving Private Ryan* remains closer to a conventional narrative with flashbacks. Deleuze analyses the temporal complexities of flashback in the films of Joseph Mankiewicz and others. Martin-Jones here aligns them with the time-image as the implications of American national memory are re–fashioned and mythologised via narrative discontinuities. Through an ethnically diverse group of soldiers, the film presents American diasporas as united in the 'quest to save America', drawing 'historical' inspiration from the Civil War and Abraham Lincoln's address.

Martin-Jones indicates that the film makes Deleuze's any-space-whatevers literally visible via location images of devastated European cities. He deploys the movement–image to equate the linear order of the troops with American political order as it seeks to control and realign the chaotic breakdown of social structures wrought by war. For Deleuze, though, the complex and shifting formation that is the movement-image is far from being unproblematically repressive. His main concern is to highlight and explore the category's diverse capacities to stimulate particular types of perception and concept formation via the multi-layered reverberations of affective forces in the screen/brain assemblage.

The nationally inflected reading of *Memento* has less overtly Deleuzian currency. This temporally and subjectively labyrinthine film is placed in Martin-Jones's category of movement-image 'caught in the act' of becoming time-image. Here, his interpretation is rendered more

speculative than the previous case-study. He aligns the protagonist's personal 'getting away with murder' and the Gulf War via an allegorical use of the oil refinery setting. This kind of parable-construction engages worthwhile speculation but is less obviously Deleuzian in its inspiration.

The mainstream movement-image film *Terminator 3* (Jonathan Mostow, 2003) figures in Martin-Jones's analysis of the apocalyptic mood triggered by 9/11. He addresses more complex narratives via the 'structuring absence', a tactic that evokes psychoanalytical scenarios of the play of absence and presence. The Deleuze/Bergsonian 'Elsewhere', however, is outside or between the frame's represented content. It is durational not macropolitically representational in its ideological intent. The author makes the case that the 'structuring absence' of triumphalist narratives is 'smuggled in' to films that appear to be about time and personal memory. From Martin–Jones's perspective, these exemplify the time–image becoming movement–image. In the light of this thesis, in *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, post 9/11 paranoia seeks to reterritorialise the film's labyrinthine time–image with a homogenised model of national identity. Confusing narrative patterns retaliate by deterritorialisation as they struggle to keep national identity fragmented. The theme of memory erasure is Martin-Jones's other focal point. He maps the need to return to the causes of 9/11 onto Joel's and Clementine's quest to piece the past together after amnesia via the device of an audio-tape. Again, this reading deploys national allegory in intriguing, but perhaps not-strictly-Deleuzian ways.

An important element of the book's agenda is to extend Deleuzian applications not just to previously untheorised recent Western films, but to international cinemas outside the strictly Deleuzian canon. The less familiar we are with a culture and its national identities the more likely we are to rely on media images of that culture, including fictional feature films. Chapter Five analyses films from the Pacific Rim. Here, Martin–Jones offers a strongly argued reading of the play of possibilities and narrative oscillations between deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation. His political and ideological contextualisation is informed by sharp-eyed identification of the salient features in each country's twentieth and twenty first century political past.

The Cantonese gangster comedy *Too Many ways to be Number One* (Ka-fai Wai, 1997) convincingly indicates how the twice repeated narrative can be used to reconsider the handover of Hong Kong to China. Martin-Jones return to firmer ground here as he acknowledges the film's overt use of allegory regarding the choices of Hong Kong's population to throw in their lot with China or with Taiwan, both with attendant fears of national erasure. For Martin–Jones this is a

'time-image caught in the act of becoming a movement-image'. As before, his assertion is based on the equation of the time–image with non-linear narrative structure and an open ending. Here, the protagonist's emblematic choices of death (reincorporation with mainland China) or disability (throwing in its lot with Taiwan) is a decision deliberately left unresolved at the end of the film.

The Japanese film *Chaos* (Hideo Nakata, 1999) presents its narrative outcomes before their causes. Martin-Jones uses the jumbled and ambiguous narrative structure to problematise gender issues. He signals that the film's recollection-images have similarities to those of *Vertigo* in terms of the plot's 'indiscernible female double'. The narrative confusion between Satomi as femme fatale and Saori as dutiful wife is viewed as representative of the changing roles of women in contemporary Japan. Satomi's leap from the cliff, temporally frozen on freeze frame, is thus presented as a microcosm of the ambiguity of women's roles and possibilities in the nation's future.

New Korean cinema is illustrated by Chang-dong Lee's 2000 *Peppermint Candy*, a fictionalised scrutiny of South Korea's national narrative over two decades, hence its deployment of a less open-ended narrative structure than the previous films in this section. *Peppermint Candy*'s allegorical intent is made overt, but is rendered more complex by a reverse narrative. Martin-Jones suggests that moments of potential change are signalled by the character's temporary sensory-motor incapacity as manifest in a limp. The protagonist Yong-ho's potentially Bergsonian search in the past to find an image that matches the present is indicated, but Martin-Jones's deployment of the time-image remains consistently macropolitical rather than philosophical in its remit.

The underlying theoretical trajectories of Martin-Jones's thesis retain clear acknowledged links with Bordwell's narrative schema and Comolli and Narboni's categories of politically motivated film form. His readings privilege the films' representational narrative content above the expressive style of images, their affects, percepts and the new mental concepts to which these give rise. Yet, as part of the temporal hiatus between perception and action, the affective interval is crucial to thinking Deleuzian aesthetics and its impact on us. Affect is strongly and horribly operant in some of Martin-Jones's examples: the torture sequences in *Peppermint Candy* immediately spring to mind, and a further consideration might have encountered significant layers of perceptual and conceptual response as well as the important focus on represented content.

His argument that some films reterritorialise the time-image by defining national identity through the movement–image and

deterritorialise the movement-image by the reverse process sets up a sharply dialectical contest between these categories that initially appears very different from Deleuze's multivalent taxonomic agenda. Yet, this deliberately chosen critical distance offers us in itself a productive hiatus for further thought. Deleuze and Guattari's perspectives encourage innovative development rather than purely scholarly exegesis. The cinema books are concerned with how rather than what we think and how this might be changed. Rather than producing another philosophical explication of Deleuze's Eurocentrically inflected cinema books, *Deleuze, Cinema and National Identity* mobilises their concepts by engaging them in critical and creative action in a crucial new field.

Overall, Martin-Jones's book raises some crucial questions on the nature of Deleuzian-inflected critique and its use/value for film studies. He argues indubitably that we need to increase the scope of Deleuze's theories to include the shifting fabric of cinematic work produced by nations in process. A consideration of this diverse and widely viewed range of films is timely. With their complex forces of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation, generic conventions and formal experiments, they map out '*undecidable alternatives* between circles of past, *inextricable differences* between peaks of present' as time-image components gravitate against the extrinsic sensory-motor links of movement-images.

Martin-Jones reiterates his priorities of his thesis in the book's conclusion: to use Deleuze's film-theory to 'add another dimension to our understanding of the way national identity is constructed in cinema'. His ideologically engaged and systematically structured discussion links areas of inquiry often at loggerheads, philosophy, aesthetics, politics and history, to find ways they might co-operate as a viable assemblage. By moving from the letter to the spirit of Deleuzian critique, Martin-Jones's lucid, impressively argued book makes a provocative intervention in both Deleuze studies and film studies. This distinctive and politically engaged assemblage demands our closest attention.

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Christian Kerslake (2007), *Deleuze and the Unconscious*, London and New York: Continuum, 246 pages.

This work arrives as the first book-length study devoted to examining Deleuze's relationship to various conceptions of the unconscious, psychoanalytic or otherwise. Anyone interested in this question would be well advised to consult the wealth of bibliographical and historical information that Kerslake has gathered together and, like him, not to neglect Deleuze's more 'esoteric' references which, as *Deleuze and the Unconscious* so forcefully shows, are undeniably present in his work. The originality of Kerslake's project is striking. It does, however, also present several shortcomings.

The first, perhaps minor, shortcoming relates to the ultimate aims of the book. Indeed, the title of the book is a little misleading since, as Kerslake admits, the 'book is not a general introduction to Deleuze (or even to Deleuze and the unconscious)' (3). The most appropriate description of the purpose of the book is, then, Kerslake's own, less encompassing one: 'a series of attempted raids on Deleuze's hive of ideas about the unconscious' (3). But what guides these 'raids', since there are, as Kerslake admits, 'plenty of omissions and probably lots of oversights too' (3)? Kerslake tells us from the outset that he will not deal with *Anti-Oedipus* (1983), since a very good introduction to this text has already been published (see Eugene Holland 1999), and since he is trying to uncover the theoretical background to that work. This is, of course, all well and good. But then we must wonder why he omits without explanation an examination of Deleuze's early references to Lacan in *Difference and Repetition* (1994), *The Logic of Sense* (1990a) and 'How Do We Recognize Structuralism?' (1998), for example; or why he does not examine Deleuze's sustained engagement with psychoanalysis in the second half of *The Logic of Sense*, which includes long analyses of the works of Freud, Klein, Leclaire, Laplanche and Pontalis, and so on. Based on the material examined by Kerslake, it seems that the Deleuzian ideas about the unconscious in which he is most interested relate to Deleuze's most obscure, esoteric, and even 'disavowed' references: Bergson's theory of instinct, Carl Jung, Johann Malfatti, and so on. However, given that these references are comparatively marginal to the Deleuzian corpus, scholars interested not only in the question of 'Deleuze and the unconscious', but also in Deleuze's pre-*Anti-Oedipus* takes on psychoanalysis and the unconscious, would perhaps be entitled to question the merit of devoting an entire book to their examination.

In any case, in what amounts to a highly original undertaking in its own right, Kerslake primarily wants to show that Deleuze's work

is based in part on certain esoteric ideas about the unconscious (184). Indeed, he often expresses himself on this point in very strong terms.[1] However, examining the text, we can be dissatisfied with the strength of these claims for several reasons.

First of all, on several occasions, Kerslake moves without ample justification from the postulation of highly speculative 'genealogical' hypotheses to the unreserved affirmation of these hypotheses. For example, Kerslake deciphers in one of Jung's lectures on 'archetypes', a lecture that Deleuze appears to have read, the 'mention of "*a priori* conditions for fantasy-production"... as gesturing to a possible connection with Kant's theory of productive imagination'. He then proceeds to assert that, since archetypes take the form of problems, and since 'Deleuze's aim [in *Difference and Repetition* and in his work on Kant] is to show how the productive imagination is ultimately a receptacle for the harnessing of problematic Ideas., it 'can be *argued* that Deleuze takes up [Jung's] model in his theory of problematic Ideas in *Difference and Repetition*' (91–92 – my emphasis). To highlight this as a *possibility* is well and good. But it is quite another thing when, a few pages later, noting Deleuze's *only* substantial reference to Jung in *Difference and Repetition* – a footnote of uncertain value, to which we will return below – Kerslake fully affirms that Deleuze does indeed take up Jung's model, even going so far as to assert the Jungian '*origins*' of certain aspects of Deleuze's theory of the unconscious (96; 100). Indeed, in the absence of any analysis of the concept of the 'problem' such as it appears in *Difference and Repetition* – and to which, without mentioning Jung at all, most of the fourth chapter is devoted – this seems to be at best a rather exaggerated claim. What is more, in *Difference and Repetition*, when Deleuze does talk concretely about unconscious problems in the context of psychoanalysis, he predominately talks in Lacanian-structuralist terms about the displacement of the virtual object or 'phallus' in differential series, in the manner of Lacan's analysis of *The Purloined Letter* (Deleuze 1994: 106–7). We can thus be dissatisfied not only that Kerslake moves with only limited justification from very interesting genealogical speculations to their unequivocal affirmation, but also that he does not discuss certain other, and perhaps more pertinent, 'conceptual components' of the Deleuzian differential unconscious.

Besides Jungianism, Kerslake tracks down and argues for the persistence of several other 'esoteric' references in Deleuze's work. For instance, based on the selection of texts that Deleuze made for the collection *Instincts et Institutions* (1953), and on the short article 'De Sacher-Masoch au masochisme' (1961) where Deleuze turns in part to

the Jungian coupling of the notions of 'instinct' and 'archetype', Kerslake sets himself the task of demonstrating that, in various guises, the ethological, 'somnambulist theory of instinct' profoundly preoccupied Deleuze from 1953 to 1961 and beyond (53; 91–92). One cannot help but admire in this work Kerslake's eye for detail. It does seem, however, that Kerslake at times makes too much of the sparse textual evidence available for such claims. For example, quite a bit of weight is given to the above-mentioned footnote on Jung in *Difference and Repetition*. As noted above, Kerslake effectively concludes from this 'important reference' that 'Deleuze takes up Jung's model in this theory of problematic Ideas in *Difference and Repetition*' (96). However, since this note only appears in the context of a critique of the Freudian conflictual model of the drives and of Deleuze's counter-postulation of its 'differential' basis, perhaps it would be more appropriate to the evidence to argue that Deleuze is here simply signaling with a footnote that the notion of a differential or problematic conception of the unconscious, such as he himself is developing it throughout *Difference and Repetition*, is not completely foreign to psychoanalysis.

Several other shortcomings can be identified as weakening Kerslake's claims. Firstly, in order to suggest the similarity of their ideas, Kerslake sometimes juxtaposes long analyses of Bergson, Jung or Schopenhauer, with citations from Deleuze which have been isolated from their context and which are devoid of any conceptual elaboration. The problem here is that, left in such a state of generality, Deleuze's pronouncements can do no more than 'recall' or suggest an analogy with the work of these other thinkers, rather than demonstrate, as Kerslake seems to want them to do, Deleuze's conceptual debt to them. Thus, for example, we are asked to compare a citation from Deleuze's *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza* (1990b) with Kerslake's long analyses of Jung and Schopenhauer, but without any real discussion of what is at stake in *Expressionism* as a whole or in the Deleuzian concept of 'expression' which is, moreover, the focus of the citation (151). Or again, after a long analysis of Jung, when Kerslake claims that 'Deleuze's and Guattari's theory that desire must be articulated in terms of intensities is not so far from the Jungian theory of psychic energy', the ensuing brief discussion of several references to *Anti-Oedipus* (not one of which mentions the concept of 'intensity') does not seem enough to justify the conclusion that Deleuze never really left behind 'the most fundamental Jungian principles' (74).

It also detracts from Kerslake's arguments that he sometimes does not clearly distinguish 'who' is speaking in the Deleuzian texts that he analyses, about 'what' and with what problem or aim in mind. This

is particularly apparent when Kerslake all but identifies Deleuze's own views with his editorial 'selection' for *Instincts and Institutions*, when he treats the text of Deleuze's foreword to Jean Malfatti's *Études sur la Mathèse ou Anarchie et Hiérarchiede la Science* (1946) as the expression of a youthful Deleuze's own thought, and, finally, when he examines the essay, 'De Sacher-Masoch au masochisme'. While it is true that Deleuze's own ideas and interests permeate his work on other thinkers, this does not authorise the assimilation of Deleuze's thought with the particular figure under consideration in this or that Deleuzian text: that is, at least, not without asking what is at stake in that particular engagement. Thus, for example, it seems too hasty to claim that in 'De Sacher-Masoch au masochisme' Deleuze 'seems to endorse a Jungian, epochal view of history, with Anima and Animus as the main protagonists' (77), particularly when we add that Deleuze's aim in this essay was to develop a psychoanalytical account of masochism which differed from the unsatisfactory Freudian model, and that he found in Jung certain conceptual tools that seemed appropriate to Sacher-Masoch's texts and, moreover, to the suggestive imagery to be found therein.[2]

Finally, it would have strengthened Kerslake's 'genealogy' of Deleuze's views on the unconscious if, in his discussion of Deleuze's introduction to Malfatti, he had tried to establish the reasons why Deleuze retracted his acknowledgement of this text. Kerslake writes that it 'is not an *a priori* mistake to take a philosophical text written by a twenty-one-year-old seriously' (213, n.23). This is, of course, quite true. But without an account of *why* Deleuze might have disowned this text, it is difficult to see the *continuity* between this early work and Deleuze's later writings. The terminological coincidences between Malfatti's and Deleuze's work that Kerslake notes in order to bolster his argument do not suffice for this task, since, in the absence of further analysis and elaboration, terminological coincidences do not automatically make for conceptual coincidences:

> [O]ccult themes run throughout Deleuze's work: not only does the term 'mathesis' appear at crucial points of *Difference and Repetition*, along with a weird emphasis on the esoteric use of the mathematical calculus, but his interest in somnambulism, the notion of the world as an egg, the theory of the second birth and the recurring image of the hermaphrodite all refer back to ideas found in Malfatti's book. (125)[3]

Kerslake's book is thus, in short, a very promising, if ultimately unsatisfying attempt at establishing Deleuze's relationship to certain esoteric notions of the unconscious. Kerslake's painstaking research

has, however, garnered a wealth of historical and bibliographical information which will be of great interest to Deleuzian scholars.

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Notes

1. To list some examples: 'Jungianism continues to shape [Deleuze's] theory of the unconscious right up to *Difference and Repetition*' (69); 'It is not clear that Deleuze ever really left behind the most fundamental Jungian principles" (74); '[H]e seems to endorse a Jungian, epochal view of history, with Anima and Animus as the main protagonists' (77); 'The notion of a "second birth", rebirth or renaissance [which has an esoteric background] is fundamental to Deleuze from the beginning' (81); '...Deleuze's attempt to ground his own Jungian notion of the symbol in Kant's aesthetics...' (105); 'In 1961, Deleuze fully affirms Jung's notion of symbolism' (111); 'In effect, Deleuze follows up the relationship between fate and the death instinct by turning to Jung's theory of synchronicity' (146); 'Deleuze thus finds a way to defend the Hermetic idea that the microcosm contains the macrocosm' (160); and the oft-found 'following Jung...', applied to Deleuze (99; 106; 151).

2. Indeed, if we base ourselves on this more cautious reading of the reference to Jung in 'De Sacher-Masoch au masochsime', it comes as less of surprise that in Deleuze's 1967 essay on Sacher-Masoch, 'Le froid et le cruel' (1967), while maintaining the same aim, Deleuze altogether drops the reference to Jung.
3. Indeed, Kerslake often makes use of these terminological coincidences in order to strengthen his general claim that that Deleuze's work is based in part on certain esoteric ideas about the unconscious. To list several of them: 'Deleuze may have come across Jung's notion of archetype while researching the theme of repetition. Not only are archetypes, apparently, impressions of ever-repeated typical experiences, but, at the same time, they behave empirically like agents that tend towards the repetition of these same experiences' [a citation from Jung's collected works]' (88); 'Jung's emphasis on the role of condensation in symbols suggests that condensation involves a different kind of synthesis, perhaps involving something like the "condensation of singularities" Deleuze discusses in relation to the determination of the Idea in *Difference and Repetition*" (109); or finally, 'The language of invisible rays runs through both magical and psychotic writings. Deleuze's appeal to the language of "flows", "intensities", "force" and "power" is rooted in that curious convergence' (173 – for further examples, see: 69–70 and 172).

The Image of Thought*

Jean-Clet Martin

Abstract

The image of thought that Rembrandt proposes with his *Philosopher in Meditation* still wears the mask of the old philosophical pedagogy based on ascent and the heights, but it ushers in new percepts and affects corresponding to the philosopher's concept, fold, that Leibniz elevates to the status of the principle of Baroque variation. The fold unleashes a power that carries forms and statements over a variety of disjunctive statements.

Keywords: Fold, Rembrandt, *Philosopher in Meditation*, Leibniz, image of thought, rhythm, style, Romanesque, Gothic, Baroque, Focillon Henri, counter-curve, Bacon Francis

Rembrandt, *Philosopher in Meditation*, Amsterdam, 1631. Emerging from a pitch-black wall, a half-open window admits the diffusion of an uncertain glow. We can see nothing beyond the window. And yet, coming from it there is plenty of light, ample incandescence, illumination, a whole world of fires and glowing embers – a diaphanous and yet impenetrable burst of universal light reflected on a white facade. Here, in the hollow of this artificial opening, the eye witnesses something brilliant, each particle of which explodes in the vicinity of all the others. In the centre of the room, a flight of stairs unfurls its shell-like helix in silence. Positioned between the intangible light and the spiral staircase that carves out the space of the ascending steps, the philosopher composes himself – folded hands resting on legs covered by his dimly lit coat. We do not know whether this person is dozing or lost in thought. Could he, perhaps, be contentedly fixated on the wrinkled lines leading from one hand to the other over his interlaced fingers? Or, perhaps, with unfocused eyes, he is absorbed by a point whatever on

* Adapted translation of chapter III of Jean-Clet Martin's *Variations: The Philosophy of Gilles Deleuze*, translated by Constantin V. Boundas and Susan Dyrkton, forthcoming from Edinburgh University Press.

the intersecting slabs of the floor. At any rate, the angle of his head reflects a redistribution of shade and light upon his face that exactly mirrors those chiaroscuro areas that shape the curve of the staircase. From bottom to top, towards the vaulted summit of this peaceful room, a crack contorts the visible space. Its S-shape arabesque unfolds as it exhausts the entire spectrum of light that diagonally expands. Along the length of this modulating line, this winged, spiral staircase, every step offers a new incline, a fresh face towards the window from which the light unfolds. In its contorted expansion, the flight of stairs traverses the entire spectrum of the chiaroscuro on its inner border, as it advances from one step to the next, either in a smooth and twisted groove, or in fitful, discrete, and successive stages. And as such, two kinds of light surface: one smooth and continuous, the other scalar and discontinuous. On the slope of a typical spiral, all the degrees of light and all the stages of visibility are exposed. A staircase: the spiral of the visible with a border in continuous variation and isles disposed in a scalar progression. On one side of the room, we have the spectral white, a burst of white that displays in its intensity all the degrees of which it is capable – all the colours, pale and dimly lit, that the vaulted walls of the room reflect. On the other side of the room, we have the flight of stairs, every step of which liberates a threshold – a gradient actualising in extension the degrees that the light is enveloping in intensity. Still and silent, the philosopher waits for midnight, when, one after another, the illuminated steps of noontime will disappear as the descending ray silently retreats, from top to bottom, along with the receding sun and moon. Rembrandt develops an image of thought around the staircase, which borrows its material from the traditional image of philosophy, an ascetic image, whose uplifting character he preserves, but only after substantial modifications.

As Deleuze so beautifully says, apropos of Nietzsche, a force would not survive if it did not first borrow the face of previous forces, against which it had struggled (Deleuze 1983: 5). A new image of thought wears the mask of its predecessor, given that it is to its advantage to be mistaken for its forerunner in order to survive the opposition and resistance that it will encounter.

At first glance, Rembrandt's painting says nothing new. A philosopher meditates at the side of a staircase that leads him to the heights and the true. This is Plato's ladder, symbolising elevation, purification, transcendence. We know it already: thought presupposes the axes and orientations that draft its image, even before one begins to explore it. The exercise of thought, therefore, is subjected to an entire

geography and to a system of coordinates that is vertically organised. Philosophy cannot escape the clichés that overdetermine its proper exercise (Deleuze 1990, 18th series). Before painting, Rembrandt must assess the proliferation of prejudices which he has at his disposal. The white canvas is, in fact, already teeming with orientated vectors and polarities that direct the system of places distributed by the double axis of the canvas, and which predetermine the painter's actions. Unless he follows the orientation of this geometry with the intention of perverting the game, Rembrandt must fight a preconceived image of thought if he aspires to create, which is why it is necessary for him to purge the canvas of the clichés and the polarities that haunt it.

At first glance, if philosophy is confined to an objective that stands for both ascension and conversion of the principle from which thought emanates, the flight of stairs that Rembrandt places around the philosopher is bound to relate to the traditional image of thought.[1] But to this image of the Epinal, other forces are superimposed – forces that would be immediately neutralised had they not borrowed the appearance of a cliché. Beneath the mask of ascension and elevation, Rembrandt has another vision in mind: the crack of thought in front of the S that lines the space of the visible with a zebra-like pattern – smooth and slithery like a serpent whose scales reaffirm the continuous variation of light – whereas individual steps convey the discontinuity of the light's spectrum. Leibniz translates Rembrandt: there is no opposition expressed between the continuous and the discrete. There is no arithmetical dualism found between the principle of indiscernibles and the principle of continuity. There is no more incompatibility between the continuous and the discrete than between the internal border of the spiral and the external, serrated border extended by the suspended staircase. A unique and continuous S gives a zebra-like pattern to the visible space, like a diagram, despite the fact that on this helix no two steps can receive light from the same angle. Being unequal in terms of their iridescence, they are *ipso facto* always singular.

The fold, Deleuze says, is the genetic element of a baroque thought, a line of variable curvature from which one can deduce many differentiated points of view, much like in a suspended staircase, the interior space of which would be dilated after being exposed and hollowed by means of a disquieting and inordinate outside.[2] It is then that a new image of thought is portrayed on Rembrandt's canvas devoted to philosophy. And this image resembles neither that of de La Tour nor Velasquez, even though they each suggest a rupture in the orientation of thought.[3]

If Velasquez inaugurates the representational apparatus, Rembrandt to the contrary invents the power of continuous variation. From one image to the next, a complex arrangement unravels the thread of its dispersal, the principle of its distribution, even if the historical distance between Rembrandt and Velasquez is negligible. The arrangement of Velasquez's *Las Meninas* and the apparatus of Rembrandt's *Philosopher in Meditation* do not obey the same geography, even if they belong to the same era. We are so much in the habit of thinking of historical mutations over long periods that are hard to move that we become deaf to the din belonging to a definite moment of history. In fact, each age constitutes an inextricable tangle of flows that are very erratic in its distributions – resulting in a multilinear map with a variety of different apertures. It is true that the Velasquez painting develops an image of thought suitable to the novel distribution of subjects and objects in the constitutive process of classical representation; but this image is only one particular vector on a large map of an entire era. It necessarily enters into a relationship with other images that inevitably capture it, transform it or weigh it down according to strategies the modalities of which must be individually defined.

Between Velasquez and Descartes, de La Tour and Pascal, Rembrandt and Leibniz, there are interferences and exchanges that render the idea of a homogeneous history obsolete. One can certainly discern procedures of exchange and follow the articulation of sign regimes specific to a period, but one is incapable of saying on which axis and which semiotics provide the rhizome with an orientation. One can always identify the vanishing points and interpret them in terms of results and goals, but it is on an alternative line that the rhizome can resume its growth and recompose its forces.

From this point of view, it is inconceivable that history reflects upon itself and orientates itself towards absolute knowledge. We do not have absolute knowledge. History is a surface in flux upon which things can be distinguished and become visible at the same time that certain expressions become readable. Velasquez makes an image of thought visible by tracing its axes and coordinates – representation of representation.

> Perhaps, in this canvas of Velasquez, there is something like the representation of the classical representation and the definition of the space that it exposes. Indeed, it tries to be present in all its elements, with its images, the eyes to which it is offered, the faces that it renders visible, and the gestures that bring it about. But at the point where this dispersion both disseminates and gathers together, an essential void shows itself categorically from all sides:

> the necessary disappearance of that which grounds it [. . .]. The subject itself has been elided. And made free of the relationship that kept it prisoner, representation can now offer itself as pure representation. (Foucault 1966: 19)

One can always follow this image of thought in order to see how it expands in an apparatus where general grammar, natural history and economy of wealth amalgamate. But such an image of thought is not alone: other forces may disguise themselves within it to expose themselves in another cut-out. There are many clashing images of thought on the same geo-historic stratum. Even if a historico-discursive formation distinguishes itself on a stratum, this is not done without dragging along a procession of forces that refuse to distinguish themselves from it (the principle of asymmetric distinction). On the labour of representation one can superimpose other forces, another history, another image. Baroque staircases, folds, Rembrandt, Leibniz – another semiotic, another apparatus. Let us pay homage to Deleuze for his Baroque machines! Indeed, from Velasquez to Rembrandt, the distribution of elements and signs is not the same. The Baroque regime of the fold profoundly modifies the status of the subject and object. The space that it inaugurates belongs to perspectivism more than to the domain of representation.

To the space of representation, the Baroque superimposes the twist of the fold. The continuous fall of a circle's arc along which discrete fields of visibility expose themselves, resembling planes laid out in tiers, differing greatly in the way they sparkle and in their way of gathering the light. Where Velasquez distributes objects in a space of stable coordinates and marks the place of a withdrawn subject setting up the possibility of a coherent representation, Rembrandt's flight of stairs deploys a surface with variable curvature, each power of which proposes a threshold of new visibility. From the height of its obscurity, a continuous helix drops down, caressing the light of its shell – a spiral tangential to an infinity of points and to an infinity of curves. Under such circumstances, no object can be conceived in reference to an essential form. There is no longer an essence for things. There is no essence on the basis of which one could determine the accidents of things by referring them to their necessary form; rather, every object describes a fold, a singular inflection, a series of variable declinations in a state of incessant modulation.

This is a new understanding of the object, one capable of supporting a becoming where sounds and colours are flexible, on a voyage in the same place comparable to those Lowry's consul experiences on his capsized skiff. From the represented object, one passes to the inflections of things,

to the folds that carry it off – an *objectile*! But we are not yet done. With respect to the subject, the Baroque produces a similar mutation. In a way, we could say that the subject itself, instead of founding the process of representation from its missing place, becomes a linear focus and a viewpoint. The mutation seems negligible and imperceptible if by 'viewpoint' we understand the pre-existing orientation of a subject capable of unveiling the view of what Heidegger inscribed within the horizon of transcendence.[4] If we must think of the viewpoint as a constitutive element, as the act of objectification understood as a pre-existing openness in a horizon of visibility, we have not yet left the apparatus of representation behind but, on the contrary, we have sunk deeper into the orientated space that makes representation available.

If the subject must be conceived as a linear focus, it is in a very special sense. Subject, says Deleuze, is what comes to a viewpoint. The subject is not at all the opening of a horizon or the fundamental orientation of representation. It is not the origin of perspectives but rather it designates the point where all perspectives intersect: the singular point where, beginning with a branch of inflection, all lines perpendicular to the tangent meet one another (Deleuze 1993: 25–6).[5]

Subject is what comes to a viewpoint – in our case, the point where the variation of light on the staircase becomes tangible. Rembrandt places the subject where we can follow the spectrum of light that fades on the sequence of steps with the fluid colours. The subject is nothing but a product, the focal point of a lens where the entire fan through which the light passes is reflected, the site from where the luminous spectrum is decomposed and spreads out in a crescent of coloured spikes. No one has done better than Rembrandt to reveal these forces of becoming in the register of the chiaroscuro. With Rembrandt, the qualities of objects also become flexible, while the object exists only through the declination of its profiles in Baroque anamorphosis.

Perspectivism is an image of thought that enters into a war against the forces of representation and can be extended to the vicinity of a network of lines where philosophy, architecture, projective geometry and painting come together in a multi-linear ensemble, the reverberations of which can also be heard in molecular biology, embryology, morphogenesis, ethology and so on. At any rate, the concept, fold, allows Deleuze to follow the display of a map whose axes extend themselves with a great deal of suppleness. Everywhere, the branches of inflection cancel out the copies of representation as well as the masks of sedentary distribution. There is no reason, therefore, to privilege the process of representation at the expense of other sign regimes, whether

diagrammatic or transformational that make up a geo-historic stratum. That one among them becomes dominant during an entire epoch is beyond doubt! But, in taking hold of other regimes of signs, in scaling the variable possibilities of visibility that agitate a stratum, the dominant semiotic necessarily submits itself to the powers of treason that it harbours. If such a semiotic system deploys endless strategies of reappropriation and structures that resist change, the forces it orientates and tries to mobilise remain nevertheless very active.

This is exactly what Deleuze and Guattari mean to say when, to the genealogical and arborescent logic, they inject the grass-like existence of rhizomes. One can understand nothing of rhizomes if one opposes them unceremoniously to centenarian trees. Evidently, opposition is not a good concept and it would be difficult to conceive of a history that corresponds without further ado to the dialectic of opposition, negation and sublation. Hegel is a poor historian. The real is no more rational that the rational is real. Such a belief confirms that an image of thought is extremely poor and reactive to boot. Besides, the idea of leaving Hegel behind, of overcoming his dialectic which feeds on oppositions, is not worth much. To exit Hegel is a false problem. This image of thought contributes to the idea that there is something to overcome, whereas becomings are made elsewhere and according to other procedures. For a long time now, biology has abandoned the model of teleology in order to expose evolution as a question of mutation rather than one of overcoming. We must stop thinking of our history in terms of cumulative progress or revolution, but rather as the mode of mutation and metamorphosis. Every civilisation mutates. The West itself is a product of treason, the result of a contagion that places heterogeneous codes in variation. Like a virus, there are always minorities that take hold of the Roman Empire and the Judeo-Christian culture in order to fuse them together – year one thousand! The barbarian is comparable to the virus that takes over the cat or the baboon. As it transports the genetic and semiotic material from one to the other, it creates an alliance against nature. It is on this new image of thought that Deleuze and Guattari elaborate: *A Thousand Plateaus* – the book of treason!

Be that as it may, it cannot be a question of opposing the rhizome-like existence of multiplicities to the arborescence of representation. Deleuze's philosophy does not tolerate dualisms. The images of thought do not oppose each other but rather they sketch orientations and assembled vectors according to *clinamen*s and unpredictable declinations. In fact, thought is always involved in the topological network of countless courses with irrational branches and multiple

crossroads. How can one travel on this changing map, along which axes, following which lines of flight? This is the problem. No itinerary precedes the peregrination limned by the course, and this map extends itself uniquely according to the problems that we encounter. An image of thought is nothing but the sum total of bifurcations that draw the line of a problem.

> I think there's an image of thought that changes a lot, that's changed a lot through history. By the image of thought I don't mean its method but something deeper that's always taken for granted a system of coordinates, dynamics, orientations: what it means to think and to 'orient oneself in thought' … . It's the image of thought that guides the creation of concepts, It cries out, so to speak, whereas concepts are like songs. (Deleuze 1995: 148)

A complete geography of problems exists, pulling thought along diverging paths. Thought, sooner or later, stumbles against singular points and problems that require a new image, a network of cases demanding heterogeneous solutions. The image of thought is certainly not the solution to a problem. Rather, it is the geometric projection of a plane, following which a problem is disarticulated along incompatible lines. It is the composition of a mental space that has nothing to do with ideology. And it is derived from an art of problems that Deleuze defines as noology. Indeed, an image of thought surges whenever thought encounters a problem, whenever chance is born in thought, compelling thought to choose and to distribute itself among many examples of solutions. We never think while under the influence of our good will but rather while under the constraints of the outside. Whenever thought stumbles against a problem, a map with forking paths is necessarily designed. A moment of great uncertainty arises in which all possibles are realised at the same time according to a number of trajectories whose violence is experienced by thought in its entirety. At this moment of indecision, all issues are drawn in an image that divides thought according to the capacity of the issue on an extended surface of the map.

It is clear that the problem sketched by representation does not have the same map as that created by the problem of perspectivism. From one image to another, we do not deal in the same way with the labyrinth that unfurls at the forefront of our thought. Not every problem takes hold in the same way. It is not the same geography that carries us away, nor the same wind that pushes us from behind. The fact is that, on each map, we find the moment of uncertainty responsible for its dimension. Each map has its suspense, its point of uncertainty, its line of flight. Each thought

has its own image and each image digs its own dimensional line, despite the fact that the issues are neither the same nor equivalent.

Every image, according to Deleuze, exposes the suspense of its dimensional line and makes an appeal to thought; every image proposes its own problem and question. This is the way to experience both the difficulty and the lifestyle, and these are not the same. There are two ways for thought to trace its burrow and to experience its labyrinth: one finds as many images of thought as one wants. But there is a way of living these images, whether active or reactive, affirmative or negative, intensive or extensive, without installing this difference in a metaphysical dualism. There are two ways of experiencing the labyrinth that do not oppose each other. Deep down, it is a question of the differences between Ariadne–Theseus and Ariadne–Dionysos that Deleuze already thematised in his book on Nietzsche.

As long as Ariadne subjects herself to Theseus, he needs a guiding thread to help him through the labyrinth – a thread that reduces to nothingness the other paths that thought represses: 'As long as Ariadne remained with Theseus, the labyrinth was interpreted the wrong way around, it opened out onto higher values, the thread was the thread of the negative and ressentiment, the moral thread' (Deleuze 1983: 188).

It is enough for Ariadne to turn her back on Theseus for the labyrinth to no longer be a source of knowledge and morality, for the thread to become useless and for every point of the labyrinth to repeat all the others, taken up by other roads in the process of the eternal return. The labyrinth is no longer the road on which one risks losing herself; it is now identified with the road that returns. Yet these two experiences of the labyrinth do not oppose each other: it is the same labyrinth envisaged either as standard or as singular. Ariadne considered every point of her thread as a regular instance, prolonging itself analytically over one and the same series. When she loses the thread, every point becomes singular and, from then on, finds itself in other series without common borders, in which case, every point will be absorbed by diverging series. In this respect, all roads lead to the same point where, if we prefer, every point finds itself on all roads, much like a vague essence or a nomadic singularity.[6] To follow the thread does not oppose the affirmation of all paths. What changes from one to the other is the use of synthesis, and we are reminded of Yu Tsun who Borges placed in a labyrinth. With each gesture, Yu Tsun feels echoes taken from other worlds proliferate around him, disjunctive syntheses with all points having become singular and surrounded with a halo of virtuality that expresses their positions in other series and their repetitions in other spaces.

A labyrinth, therefore, can be lived in different ways. One can make one's way much like one moves from one tree branch to another, but one can also follow it according to an analytic extension, like a rhizome, not from one point to the other, but rather by encountering new roads at each point, and by forming on each spot an association with the new worlds. This would be to jump on the spot across all possible worlds – Fang = X, and to be astride all the planes of the real. We encounter experiments of this nature everywhere – in Vasarely, Proust, Huxley, Mallarmé and so on – at points of flight, lines of transit and voyage. This is what coming to the viewpoint means: leaping on the spot where all worlds in a neo-baroque perspectivism are torn.

From Rembrandt to Leibniz by way of Spinoza and Nietzsche, an image of thought sketches itself, and it is difficult to rediscover in it Velasquez, Descartes or Heidegger. We owe this noology – that marks the mutation of images of thought and the endeavours to follow their entanglement – this geo-historic cartography that renews our relationship to philosophy, to the work of Deleuze and to his gallery of portraits. With Deleuze, every philosophical epoch stumbles and stutters. Philosophers are related to one another by substituting for their usual figure a singular form that bleeds in all directions – Spinoza and Nietzsche, Nietzsche and Spinoza, both cocooned within the same aura and under the same halo.

It does not matter if we lose the thread, because from one philosopher to the next a number of singularities coexist in a geographic way rather than in an historical one. To the histories of philosophies, a topology that connects with them also superimposes itself the way one travels from one road to another, with the possibility of rediscovering the same road a little farther along at another intersection with new crossroads. On this map, one can see zones with speeds and slownesses, roads and landmarks, each one of which reveals another image of thought so that none of these images is capable of offering a definitive orientation to the process of connections.

There are styles of thought that we can locate in Antiquity that are less classical than those we qualify as modern. In this respect, *The Logic of Sense* offers a typology of images and a noology erected around three stylistic variables. A style is a variable, a spatio-temporal ensemble made consistent within a block whose harmony is not given; it is sought after and can always unravel. This is why, in every style, we find bendings and flexions that carry a block of space-time, concept and networks of concepts, towards new becomings. A style always defines a series of heterogenous connections between concepts, as a diagram. As such,

noology as the study of stylistic movements must account for two factors: on one hand, it is indispensable to think of how styles that vary can coexist in sufficiently narrow, even unique regions. We must also note, on the other hand, that not all styles develop in a homogeneous manner in the various concepts to which they apply, and that to each concept we must associate another charge of affects and another form of visibility. Each style lives according to an internal logic and external encounters. Considered according to its internal development, each style produces a solid chain, a block of space-time and a consolidated arrangement that extends itself much like a curve. But at each of these sensitive points, each curve is associated with numerous experiences that function like a shock of the outside that reverberates on affects and to new percepts. Viewed from this angle, the logic of the percept, the concept and the affect do not necessarily overlap and can come loose in a Baroque or expressionist way.

The divergence of these three types of logic can be attributed to the various states of the life of styles. In the experimental state, these three dimensions search one another and are endlessly relaunched in the form of hesitant consolidation. On the contrary, the classical state manifests the rigid moment of style – its forced equilibrium. But each style is marked by a Baroque or flamboyant slope which unravels the equilibrium and destroys the unity of affects, percepts and concepts, at which point Ariadne will have lost her thread.

The Logic of Sense analyses many images of thought that are distributed according to three categories of style. In a way, everything begins with Plato and the Platonic equilibrium on which the popular image of the philosophy in the clouds depends as much as that of the philosopher taken up on the wings of the intelligible world and made to account for sensitive appearances. This style is based entirely on height, with its retinue of rising and falling, with its cyclothymic, manic-depressive affectivity and its blind-blinding perception. This version of the sun, this heliocentrism, this orientation according to height – the centre-height – already displays a hardening of style, a segmentary dual stratification, and the breathlessness characteristic of the classical moment of style. In fact, this dimension is not alone. There is an experimental state of style and a flamboyant state that cannot be reduced to the classical equilibrium that the duo, Socrates – Plato, had imposed:

> There are dimensions here, times and places, glacial or torrid zones never moderated, the entire exotic geography which characterizes a mode of thought as well as a style of life. Diogenes Laertius, perhaps, in his best

> pages, had a foreboding of this method: to find vital Aphorisms which would also be anecdotes of thought – the gesture of philosophers. The story of Empedocles and Etna, for example, is such a philosophical anecdote. It is as good as the death of Socrates but the point is precisely that it operates in another dimension. The presocratic philosopher does not have the cave; on the contrary, he thinks that we are not involved enough or sufficiently engulfed therein. In Theseus' story, he rejects the thread: 'What does your ascending path matter to us, your thread leading outside, leading to happiness and virtue . . . ? Do you wish to save us with this thread!' (Deleuze 1990: 128)

This is another way of conceiving, experiencing and perceiving a new vital articulation, another lifestyle. What the Platonic height had in some way stratified is the experimental state of the Presocratic depth – another philosophic vector, a complete style of multiple and lacerated images. But we can also find a different orientation, a new style between height and depth, a conquest of surfaces inhabited by the Megarians, the Cynics and the Stoics. It is the image of height and the image of depth that change in this reorientation of thought. Depth now becomes the index to mixtures of bodies – Diogenes strolling while a herring dangles at the end of his string; Chrysippus behaving like a pig; Thyestes devouring his own child. In all that, height is liberated from the weight of ideas and basks in the incorporeal lightning and thunder, the pestiferous haze and fog, while between the sky and the earth a strange art of surfaces subsists. Likely, each epoch of history must be read as a combination of the three styles: the experimental, the classical and the baroque. Of course, we never deal with the same experimental or the same Baroque style. The flamboyant is not to be confused with the Baroque *strictu sensu*, and the Baroque does not allow us to understand the development of expressionism. Nevertheless, as we move from one to the other, we discover the same singularities, but according to another block of space-time and situated on other layers of style. Between the Stoic reorientation of thought, for instance, and that which Nietzsche rediscovers when he redistributes the relations of surface, height and depth, we encounter the spurt of flamboyant gesture that perverts both the tiered dualism of the Cartesians and the depth of transcendental philosophy.[7]

This original understanding of philosophical style offered by Deleuze is close enough to the one that Focillon attributes to the life of artistic forms.[8] It is important to distinguish between two planes of style that run through every moment. Each style traverses several epochs and moments and is able to actualise itself in accordance with many images. The states that it realises successively can be fairly intense, fairly swift, according to the geo-historical conditions that the style encounters.

This resembles what Deleuze stresses with respect to cinematographic transformations:

> There is a whole history. But this history of images doesn't seem to me to be developmental. I think all images combine the same elements, the same signs, differently. But not just any combination's possible at just any moment: a particular element can only be developed given certain conditions, without which it will remain atrophied, or secondary. So there are different levels of development, each of them perfectly coherent, rather than lines of descent or filiation. That's why one should talk of natural history rather than historical history. (Deleuze 1995: 49)

The history, therefore, that Deleuze paints with bold strokes should not be based on evolution understood as genealogy. The way in which a film-maker or a painter reorients the elements of style with its particular geography cannot be understood as an eclectic recapitulation of the regimes that succeed one another in history. No doubt we must rediscover the same elements and their differing arrangements on the strata under consideration. A classification of images and signs should then strive to account for two lines of confrontation between which the styles are able to develop: a line of the outside and a line of the inside, an external logic and an internal logic. From this point of view, the way in which Bacon traverses the history of painting is instructive.

On any of Bacon's canvases, there are numerous semiotic regimes, many elements that can be found in each painting, to the extent that a work always distinguishes itself from that which does not distinguish itself from it, according to a principle of asymmetric distinction. Artwork cannot be actualised on the surface without other elements refusing to distinguish themselves from it and following it like a comet's tail or a halo of virtuality. Bacon's paintings are pervaded by an untimely din, the first element of which is Egyptian. There is an Egyptian style in Bacon, in virtue of which form and ground, related to each other by means of the contour, constitute a unique plane capable of producing a near vision and a planar perception. This style is the first insistence – a transcendental determination that escapes history and is counter-effectuated in painted works of art.

Aside from the Egyptian line, Bacon's work brings about the coexistence of other a priori elements of style. We can even find in him the *malerisch* treatment of the chiaroscuro, with its capacity for realising an optical world founded on a difference of values. But to the relations of values, Bacon juxtaposes relations of tonality within an arbitrary colourism. From the Egyptian element to the

malerisch by way of colourism, Bacon rearticulates all the tendencies that run through painting like a curve and left behind remarkable masterpieces (Deleuze 2003: 111–14). There is an internal logic in the development of painting, permitting tendencies that follow one another in an almost necessary and continuous way. This curve of regulated progression, however, and this movement of tired stratification are swept away by events and catastrophes that represent *clinamen*s and points of bifurcation.

As we consider the Egyptian side of Bacon's style, with his near vision and haptic perception, we are bound to discover an unusual declination. We could say that the Egyptian element spreads out to neighbouring post-Cubism, to the extent that the ground–form relationship acquires a little depth. From this point on, the form no longer presents the contour as if the former were an essence; rather, it is randomly produced where the dimensions of the foreground and the background intersect. Likewise, as we study the interactions between chiaroscuros, we inevitably notice a similar declination. A new catastrophe forces the *malerisch* treatment towards an expressionist tendency that cancels the optical coordinates through an aleatory sweep of the canvas. As for the rest, Bacon is one of the greatest colourists since Van Gogh, and in his work, the art of modulation accedes to a completely oversaturated dimension that carries painting along a Byzantine line. The curve upon which the moments of style have been stratified constantly challenges accidents that cause it to split. The artist, as a result, always reaches back to the molecular plane where all the elements of the painting coexist virtually in order to extract from it another draw.

The history of painting and cinema develops like a natural history with its internal and external, organic and inorganic logic. Wörringer and Focillon were the first to consider art under the appearance of natural history, where an organic and genealogical regime confront a crystalline and inorganic one according to orientations and dynamisms that involve new images. On this confrontational line between the inside and the outside, the organic and the inorganic, we find many stylistic regimes that never deplete themselves in a specific work of art that will rediscover them in another constellation of the semi-aleatory dicethrow. This will be the nomad line that Deleuze discovers in his analysis of the barbarian arts–the line that crosses the ages in order to expose them to the non-actual and to the power of the untimely. In fact, we find in every site and in every period of our history constellations and arrangements with the same formal characteristics, the same constitutive

elements, albeit according to a line of confrontation that tirelessly redistributes them.

> A line that delimits nothing, that describes no contour, that no longer goes from one point to another but instead passes between points, that is always declining from the horizontal and the vertical, that is constantly changing direction … . This streaming, spiraling, zigzagging, snaking, feverish line of variation liberates a power of life that human beings had rectified and organisms had confined, and which matter now expresses as the trait, flow, or impulse traversing it. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 497–9)

This is why the history of style does not draw a singular and ascendant line, but rather it unfurls on a multilinear plane – possessing an organic line, an inorganic line and also, from the one to the other, a line of confrontation – a median line that achieves an infinite classification of images and signs. This multilinear ensemble refers to the principle of classification that Deleuze develops in his *Francis Bacon* (2003) and in his book on cinema; and it is this same semiotic programme that prompted the writing of his book, *What is Philosophy?* (1994).

Ever since *A Thousand Plateaus*, this multilinear taxonomy has marked Deleuze's work, and strives time and again to extract the transcendental determinations that we also find *with other dynamisms* in every empirical moment of style. In philosophy, the friend, the lover, the suitor, the rival are as many transcendental determinations actualised in each epoch with the help of differing conceptual personae, each one of which reveals new relations and new rhythms and limns a complex semiotic, thereby affecting philosophy[9] with mutations. But these transcendental determinations do not imply that concepts can be found ready-made in an intelligible heaven. A concept is never a simple essence, it has to designate the circumstances and name the event – no longer the essence. There are no concepts when the transcendental determinations no longer collide with the line of the outside, which causes the concepts to enter *new networks*, new maps, new agencies and new rhythmic personae.

In this sense, the a priori elements of style are applied to new experiments on the basis of a variable alliance designated as 'confrontation.' The connection between stylistic elements and circumstances, contexts and historical conditions, define concepts and spatio-temporal dynamisms in agreement with the modalities of struggle, confrontation or resistance. This confrontation, this shock of the outside, has nothing empirical about it. Rather, it confirms the

connection between principles and domain and this is one way to justify subjecting the domain to principles assigned by Kant to the transcendental. In other words, the relationship and struggle between principles and a specific domain is never given and never determined in experience. The empirical provides the concrete figure on the strength of which principles are assembled in a domain whatever, but does not explain what makes this assemblage possible. The empirical registers how an apparatus is actualised in history. What history retains of the shock and the confrontation depends on its actualisation in an original figure, but its becoming and its event are not indebted to history. As Deleuze has often said, history only indicates the sum of the fairly negative conditions that cultivate the effectuation of something that is not historical.

And so, it is not history that determines the mutation of the images of thought and its concepts but quite the opposite. Relating a concept to a space-time block is not an act that is given; it is, instead, a door to the outside by means of which something new arrives. An act of this nature is going *to subordinate* the a priori elements of style to a new diagram not offered by *experience* – a diagram that, alone, is able to produce an experiment with the outside. The connection between elementary logic and a poetic diagramatics that elicits mutations is one between the inside and the outside, the struggle of the internal and the external, the organic and the inorganic. Without the shock of the outside, the constitutive elements of philosophy, science and art would always stratify themselves or link together in a series based on a centralised organic process in order to lay the foundation for a necessary curve of development.

In this context, it is common to associate Gothic architecture with the progression of a theorem. There is no better situation under which to witness the submission of matter to the law of form. And, beginning with the vault, nowhere else are far-reaching consequences unleashed – consequences capable of determining the association of masses, the articulation of the empty and the full, the distribution of visibility and so on. However, this curve that appears to be genetic is not exempt from the catastrophes and *clinamen*s by means of which it reconstitutes the whole gamut of relationships. The vault becomes acquainted with events and declinations that are neither historical nor structural but rather exhaled breath, a call for air where the thundering untimely is to be found. One can certainly say that the architecture of the thirteenth century already contained the counter-curve internally, so that its blossoming in France was genetically determined. The counter-curve was perhaps already enveloped in the trajectory of relatively old

forms, so that the encounter between the Gothic arch and the lower lobe of a four-leafed clover shaped its plan. But with the development of the flamboyant style, it became necessary for this element to *confront* a new state of architecture – a new diagram – in order for the counter-curve, enveloped within the old forms, to be seen by this logic as a principle contrary to the stability of architecture and to the coherence of results. The principle of the counter-curve was not compatible with the unity that governed this logic and had therefore to be sought elsewhere – in the mutation of either a style or an image of thought and in the emergence of a new percept.[10]

Architecture poses problems, therefore, which exceed all theorems and confirm a constant struggle with an outside prepared to hollow the inside, in accordance with extremely variable relations:

> Human movement and action are exterior to everything; man is always on the outside, and in order to penetrate beyond surfaces, he must break them open. The unique privilege of architecture among all the arts, be it concerned with dwellings, churches or ships, is not that of surrounding and, as it were, guaranteeing a convenient void, but of constructing an interior world that measures space and light according to the laws of a geometrical, mechanical and optical theory that is necessarily implicit in the natural order, but to which nature itself contributes nothing. (Focillon 1992: 74–5)

According to Focillon, there is an extreme divergence between the mechanical logic of structure, perspective and geometric reasoning, depending on the images of style and thought, but also according to the epochs of the life of the forms. In every noological diagram, a complex game persists between geometry, optics and mechanics – a game that mobilises dynamisms between spaces that have no common border. Architecture is developed in a variety of spaces of '*n*' irreducible dimensions. The laws of optics, mechanics and geometry are never presented on the same space. The space created by light is not the same as that which settles over immobile masses. Similarly, the space that hollows mass volumes through an internal relief mobilises motifs that have nothing in common with the stability of the mural economy. The same silhouette pierces through one sheet of space to the next, and the same transcendental elements hover about. Obviously, neither the Romanesque, nor the Gothic, nor the baroque crosses the various spaces in a uniform way. One never has repeat access to the same concept. In fact, a conceptual silhouette animates this peregrination in space, according to the smallest value of time – a block of space-time. And a

conceptual sketch limns the variation of stylistic elements on blocks of incommensurable space.[11]

A variety of spaces with no common measure – haptic, optic, digital, mechanic – constitutes a fragmented universe: a labyrinth of forking paths. This variety, along with its modalities, constitutes, for each stylistic event, the transcendental part that must be distinguished from what is actualised in history. The task of the philosopher is to extract a concept from this silhouette which will be the event – the singularity of a dynamism that crosses the various spaces and reorganises the elements according to their intensities and without any extension. The concept, therefore, is not so much the passage of one stylistic element to another, but rather, of one form to a dynamic space – the erratic passage of a form upon *all* planes of space. The concept is a method of transposition, of metamorphosis – a line of flight. And it is characterised by a power of variation that traverses the heterogeneous states of numerous spaces. It is due to this method that a form or an utterance is compelled to cross all the variables that might affect its contents in the shortest moment of time. And *at the same time* a concept relays a form along *all* the heterogeneous dimensions of space, thereby drawing an arabesque that could connect rebirths and regressions of the ordinal, modular or processual style in a series of positions.

I inscribed this putting into variation in the process of a transformational semiotic. But this semiotic is possible only if a line of confrontation is drawn between the inside and the outside. A concept does not become a diagram simply because the latter is related to a pre-philosophical, pre-aesthetic and pre-scientific plane, like an image of thought. It is, in fact, inseparable from an image of thought. *The diagram sketches out the orientations and coordinates in accordance with which a concept develops* and is able to produce its arabesque within a variety of spaces without common borders. Style qualifies the entire movement from diagram to concept and from concept to the constitution of the spatio-temporal blocks within the framework of a natural history. Styles, diagrams, concepts and space-time blocks constitute the pure elements of natural history.

This is why we find the same concepts and styles in Gothic and Romanesque eras albeit *with different degrees of development*, and within other silhouettes and under other profiles of visibility. Hence, concepts that animate Gothic space may be the same as those that we find at work in Romanesque space, even though their *orientation* is not the same. The concept of the fold intervenes both in the Gothic and in the Romanesque eras. But it finds its full measure only within the Baroque

diagram. Indeed, concepts alter their dynamism and their orientation only under the constraint of a new diagram or new ways by which the different leaflets of space intersect. Such a stylistic reorientation marks the birth of a new image of thought in a natural history that juxtaposes all ages of style. This is why one can find in the same moment anticipations and relics as well as the coexistence of late and innovative forms. As Henri Focillon aptly states, time is occasionally on short waves and occasionally on long ones. It follows a rhythm that beats at many speeds of flow.

> History is not unilinear: it is not pure sequence. We may best regard it as the superimposition of very widely spaced present moments. From the fact that various modes of action are contemporaneous, that is, seized upon at the same moment, it does not follow that they all stand at an equal point in their development. At the same date, politics, economics and art do not occupy identical positions on their respective graphs, and the line joining them at any one given moment is more often than not a very irregular and sinuous one. (Focillon 1992: 140)

Natural history neither progresses in a synchronised movement nor does it proceed according to a chronological or synchronic rhythm. On the contrary, we see in natural history asynchronic movements and becomings, decelerations and accelerations that carry forms and concepts along vectors that are divergent, dissimilar and without common measure. Style, therefore, cannot be reduced to the internal logic of genealogical development. It confronts a line of the outside, an inorganic line that redistributes its elements by imposing new orientations and new images of thought and matter. Natural history involves complex formations of coexistences and sign regimes, the articulation of which is no longer dialectical but diagrammatic. In this respect, the historian's duty lies in recovering the flows of differentiated passages, in pointing out the periods of coexistence or the simultaneity of movements, in marking the entanglement of the empirical and the transcendental, in composing a multi-linear semiotic with the help of diagrammatic, transformational and generative regimes, and in liberating the image of thought where, through deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation, it finds itself. This is the multi-sided programme of *A Thousand Plateauxs* for a philosophy of the future (*avenir*) or a philosophy of the occurrence (*advenir*).

Consequently, the image of thought that Rembrandt mobilises with the motif of the *philosopher in meditation* is especially instructive and helps make sense of the pragmatics that Deleuze develops in his analysis

of the Baroque style. To hollow space from the outside, to experience the outside, constitutes an experiment that Rembrandt's flight of stairs skirts. It focuses on the spiral, the inside of which is constantly widened by the outside, along a line of force that folds material into a helix, marking the confrontation between the inorganic and the organic, the continuous and the discrete, the smooth and the striated, the sinuous and the scalar. Rembrandt's flight of stairs crosses over many spaces where the space of light no longer overlaps the dynamic space of the hub. The latter must still be distinguished from mechanical space unfurled by the successive steps. This image of thought that Rembrandt develops around the staircase is already present in the philosophical understanding of the real, even if it behooves the philosopher – and no one else – to create the concepts that correspond with the aesthetic percepts and the affects of an ethical origin. If philosophy creates concepts according to its own curve, this curve necessarily intersects with creative forms that are not concepts but productions suited to the sciences, to the arts and to practices with dynamisms that are compliant with other rhythms and under other occurrences. With Rembrandt's flight of stairs as image of thought, philosophical concepts, mathematical functions and diverse artistic endeavours are associated.

In Leibniz, we find Rembrandt's proposed concept that corresponds with the slope of the staircase. The fold, according to Deleuze, designates an inflexion that Leibniz successfully elevates to the status of concept. Fold is the Leibnizian concept from which one can consider the principle of baroque variation. It unfurls a power that carries forms and statements over a *variety* of disjunctive spaces:

> Yet the Baroque is not only projected in its own style of dress. It radiates everywhere, at all times, in the thousand folds of garments that tend to become one with their respective wearers, to exceed their attitudes, to overcome their bodily contradictions, and to make their heads look like those of swimmers bobbing in the waves. We find in painting, where the autonomy conquered through the folds of clothing that invade the entire surface becomes a simple, but sure, sign of a rupture with Renaissance space (Lanfranc, but already Il Rosso Fiorentino). Zurbaràn adorns his Christ with a broad, puffy loin-cloth in the rhingrave style, and his Immaculate Conception wears an immense mantle that is both open and cloaked. And when the folds of clothing spill out of painting, it is Bernini who endows them with sublime form in sculpture, when marble seizes and bears to infinity folds that cannot be explained by the body, but by a spiritual adventure that can set the body ablaze. His is not an art of structures but of textures . . . . (Focillon 1992: 121–2)

The fold not only designates what happens to the texture of materials and forms in each particular art, but it also marks the point of passage from one art to another. This does not mean that philosophy, literature, painting and architecture belong to the same category. On the contrary, one must distinguish between all these practices to the extent that each one actualises its own task on its own curve. Together, philosophy, art and science gather a multi-linear ensemble of relations and mutual resonances with melodic curves alien to each other. Leibniz and Rembrandt, philosophers *and* architects … . Obviously, in architecture, the modulation of a formal element over a variety of spaces does not amount to a concept, even if we were to have, in each case, a *differenciated concept* for these spaces. It is the philosopher who produces the concept, on his specific line. But from architecture to philosophy, we follow the movement of a diagonal that introduces obvious intersections. As always, a philosophical concept cuts across the neighbourhood of concrete entities that architecture, sculpture or paintings actualise along their own trajectories. It is from the side of philosophy that architectural modulation releases concepts according to methods and conditions that no longer belong to architecture. From this perspective, Deleuze's analysis of the labour of the concept monad in Leibniz is instructive. What preoccupies architecture also confirms a power of modulation that Leibniz will raise to the status of concept through dissimilar methods. There are always resemblances by means of which things do not resemble one another. That the monad is without doors or windows is something extraordinary and must be taken in a literal sense, even if it does not concern inhabitable space. The monad is visualised against the model of a dark chamber, together with a diversified canvas and the help of moving folds. Shining effects emerge from this interior texture, folded in all directions, as the many incorporeal events that Leibniz refuses to assimilate to predicates:

> For ages there have been places where what is seen is inside: a cell. A sacristy, a crypt, a church, a theater, a study, or a print room. The Baroque invests in all of these places in order to extract from them power and glory … . The monad has furniture and objects only in trompe l'oeil … . The monad is a cell: It resembles a sacristy more than an atom. A room with neither doors nor windows, where all activity takes place on the inside. (Focillon 1992: 27–8)

In short, the concept of monad expands on a geography, where one discovers the layers and dynamisms that correspond to 'the architectural ideal [of] a room of black marble, in which light enters only through orifices so well bent that nothing on the outside can be seen through

them, yet they illuminate or color the décor of a pure inside' (Focillon 1992: 28). The individual substance is, therefore, more like a texture rather than an essence, a texture whose folds and pleats designate events, polished effects rather than predicates – marblings, tissue, cloth, the kind of fold that stretches to infinity. And so, the concept of monad corresponds with an image of thought that partakes in a world of diverse rhythms and thresholds. It also forms a counterpoint to the Baroque house. Concepts, affects, percepts develop themselves in accordance with a philosophy, an ethic and an aesthetic that establish a contrapuntal world in a system of resonance and correspondence – the Romanesque, Baroque, Gothic worlds, the diagrams of which are neither given nor imposed. Then how is a world created? What produces a world? How is it that two curves as unlike as those of architecture and philosophy, for example, can be constituted so that the motifs of the one agree with those of the other? How should we determine the event that incorporates philosophy, art and science in a network of points and counterpoints?

There are moments of time when men simultaneously think of similar forms, as if the same impulse runs from one discipline to the other and is already present in new material. But the influence is somewhat weak. The work of an affinity is never sufficient to describe it. An influence and a postulated translation never account for anything. Besides, in order for an influence to succeed on a given line, we must be able to account for the conditions that this influence is unable to produce. Imitation explains nothing. We can say, in fact, that the development of the counter-curve in France corresponds with the English influence inherited from the Hundred Years War. But for such an influence to be possible, conditions of acceptability, reception and expectation are necessary and these are not established by influence alone. The meeting of two different states of style produces mutations only through deterritorialisation. This is a becoming that occurs between two stylistic states – it is a phenomenon of double capture, of aparallel evolutions, where each term snatches particles from the other and becomes something else – an explosion between two heterogeneous series!

In fact, the English counter-curve *becomes*, it transforms itself completely as it deterritorialises along the French line that will, in turn, metamorphose itself. The introduction of a foreign contribution would mean nothing without this shared deterritorialisation that inscribes the contribution in a new configuration.[12] The notion of mimetic transference is a poor concept to account for mutation. Indeed, one cannot isolate a style from the geographic milieu that has an effect on a foreign element. The program of architecture is found in material – a

sky, a site or a city – that accepts the transfer by modifying the content in an unpredictable way:

> Brick, stone, marble and volcanic materials are not merely elements of color: they are elements of structure. The amount of rainfall determines the steepness of the gables; it call for the gargoyles and the gutters that are installed on the weather-faces of flying buttresses. Aridity of climate the substitution of terraces for steep roofs. Brilliant sunlight implies shadowy naves. Where the weather is customarily dark, a multiplicity of windows is needed. The scarcity and high cost of land in populous towns control corbeling and the overhanging of stories. (Focillon 1992: 148)

From one milieu to another, no matter how hard we try to create resemblance, it creates itself through non-resembling means – and this changes everything. Moreover, the notion of milieu itself is not homogeneous. Each milieu is established through topological variables that never develop themselves according to the same rhythm and because of this, milieus cannot be separated from a differentiated temporal flux. Furthermore, if architecture inscribes itself within a milieu, this milieu never stops fleeing, deterritorialising itself on a border whose growth one cannot prevent. Actually, there is no single milieu: rather, they are superimposed in a way that one never inhabits more than once in the same way, with laws that cannot be reduced to a uniform principle:

> But Venice has worked on Venice with a most extraordinary freedom. The paradox of its construction is its struggle *against* the elements: it has installed Roman masses on sand and in water; it has outlined against rainy skies oriental silhouettes that were first conceived for use in perpetual sunlight; it has waged an unending war against the sea by devices of its own invention – the 'maritime tribunes,' the works of masonry, the *murazzi* – and finally, it has seen the overwhelming preference of its painters for landscape, for the green depths of forest and mountain that lay so close at hand in the Carnic Alps. (Focillon 1992: 150)

What is true of Venice represents the charm and the singularity of every other city, each one of which combines a number of very important milieus. It is precisely at the intersection of these coexisting milieus that a strange element resonates in a new way, according to new relations and new territorial counterpoints. And so, the counter-curve, which will be developed in France around the thirteenth century, enters a universe that puts it in variation and proposes to it heterogeneous milieus that react on its trajectory, with unexpected tonalities. In this way, no milieu is ever simple – they are not suspended over the time that possesses and modifies them. Geography itself consists of milieus and rhythms. Milieus

do not cease to clash, to slide beneath one another, as they snap up each other's periodically repeated components.[13]

Rhythm is established at the same moment an element transposes itself from one milieu to another and begins to oscillate between them. Rhythm designates the repetition of a term on different planes in continuous variation. How is the counter-curve going to roam around all milieus and according to which rhythm? The coordination of milieus depends on a singular rhythm, and this testifies to the temporal character of geography. This is why, at any given moment, the components of milieus intersect in accordance with a rhythm that corresponds neither with another period nor an influence of a mimetic order. Each epoch and its region manifests an original system of world-making, precisely where all divergent milieus meet. The Baroque, Romanesque or Gothic worlds designate a variable multiplicity of elements and lines that, each time, follow other rhythms. And what is true of architecture is equally true of interdisciplinary intersections. Art, science, philosophy do not encounter one another without causing the rise of milieus and rhythms, spaces and waves, in accordance with a non-given world that must be snatched from chaos in a semi-aleatory process, similar to the toss of a dice. The event is this: a contact or a contrast that provokes the intersection of unequal development and incompatible heterogeneous lines in a non-chronological and ahistorical time. In a language that resonates with Deleuze's concepts, Focillon has this to say: 'This immense multiplicity of factors is in complete opposition to the harshness of determinism, into which, by breaking it down into endless action and reaction, it introduces cleavage and discord at every turn' (Focillon 1992: 156).

Notes

1. On the notion of the cliché, see Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation* (2003: chap. XI); see also Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* (1986: chap. XII).
2. On the nature of the fold, which in this book I connect with the suspended staircase, see Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque* (1993: 30–1; 33–4).
3. For de la Tour, see Michel Serres, *La Traduction* (1974: 203); for Velasquez, see Michel Foucault, *Les mots et les choses* (1966: 31); trans. is ours.
4. On the question of sight in general as a condition antecedent to every representation, see Martin Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* (1962: 148 – 60).
5. On this question, see the excellent analysis of the point of view that Deleuze offers in Proust and the way he contrasts it to Leibniz's pre-established harmony: *Proust and Signs* (2000: 161–9).
6. This logic will be developed in the second part of this 'Variation'.

7. On this Nietzschean reorientation, see Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense* (1990: 18th series); see also Georges Morel, *Nietzsche, introduction à une première lecture* (1988: chap. V, pp. 688–706).
8. See Henri Focillon, *The Life of Forms in Art* (1992). I shall refer mostly to the first and fifth chapters.
9. On the idea of the conceptual persona, see Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, 'Introduction', in *What is Philosophy?* (1994).
10. On the variations of the vault, see Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987: 364–5). My analyses are also inspired by Henri Focillon's, *The Life of Forms in Art*, (1992: 51–92).
11. The concept always contains and is animated by *sensibilia* (conceptual personae). As for the percept, it carries always with it conceptual silhouettes which are not the products of philosophy. These silhouettes are sketches totally subjected to the eye and to the field of visibility that the eye actualises for its own sake. Similarly, we find in the sciences part-observers moving in the direction of the percept without belonging entirely to the percept. On this question, see Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* (1994).
12. On the schema of this deterritorialisation, see Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987: chaps 1 and 9).
13. For this conception of milieus and rhythms, see Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987: chap. 11, pp. 318–23).

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Deleuze on Intensity Differentials and the Being of the Sensible*

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Abstract

The present essay on the being of the sensible investigates the individuation of intensity differentials. This is Deleuze's theme in the fifth chapter of *Difference and Repetition*, where he places individuation in the context of his 'transcendental empiricism'. The mechanisms of subjectivation are conceived as spatially-temporally determined actualisations (of the virtual) whose implicit intensity relations are neither accessible empirically nor are they governed by transcendental conditions (in the conventional sense). Central to the discussion is the distinction, stemming from Kant, between intensive and extensive magnitudes.

Keywords: individuation, intensity, subjectivation, spatial-temporal, intensive and extensive magnitudes, virtuality and actualisation, transcendental empiricism

> In the West one has always avoided thinking about intensity . . . Deleuze has now freed it in a thought that will become the highest, the sharpest, and the most intensive. (Foucault 1969: 11)

> Est aliquid praeter extensionem imo extensione prius. (Leibniz)

I. First Overview

Deleuze's interest in the philosophical history of the calculus is connected with the time-honoured question whether infinitesimal magnitudes are

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responsible for the continuous variation of qualities in perceived objects. There is in the history of philosophy a wide spectrum of doctrines by naturalist philosophers, psychologists and physicalists that all take their start in one way or another from Leibniz and his somewhat ambiguous metaphysical definitions of the differential. For our purposes we should mainly keep in mind various post-Kantian positions which precisely in light of their decidedly non-atomistic stance tie in nicely with Kant's indispensable distinction between intensive and extensive magnitudes. It is from these sources that Deleuze develops his empiricist yet empirically critical practices. He applies them first to Hume and then to Nietzsche before reverting to Leibniz himself in order to develop a transcendental psychology of perception comprehending both the differential and sub-representative relations of intensity and the processes of becoming which are presupposed by every objectively oriented perception.

Kant, with his doctrine of principles, certainly inspired ideas relative to the range and conditions of mathematics, as for example in the sections in the *Critique of Pure Reason* from the 'Axioms of Intuition' to the 'Anticipations of Perception' – ideas which Hermann Cohen later worked out in exemplary fashion. Kant also anticipated certain important questions to be raised in philosophical psychology from Herbart to Fechner and beyond, which becomes evident in the critique of psychologism later carried out by such diverse authors as Bergson and Cohen, again with reference to the Kantian distinction between intensive and extensive magnitudes. These historical connections are noteworthy because when Deleuze embarks on his own fundamental criticism of Hume's classical empiricism on the basis of Kant's theory of intensity and intensity differences, he expressly takes his cue from Cohen and, with some reservations, from Bergson.

To put it succinctly, the Humean bundles of perceptions, as extensive magnitudes (at least in the case of visual and tactile perceptions), display a degree of intensity – but it remains unclear how the two orders of magnitude are connected. Furthermore, to speak with Kant, impressions of sensation seem to be perceptions that show relatively indistinguishable characteristics of intuition and sensation. So Hume's interpretation is fraught with difficulties as long as he insists on a philosophical understanding of psychology that blocks the overcoming of its naturalistic limitations. On the other hand, however, it is precisely empiricism's obdurate and steadfast stance in wanting to base itself on (subjective-psychological) experience as it presents itself that provides a starting point for its necessary phenomenological or even 'life-philosophical' radicalisation.

The central point of a post-Kantian critique maintains that no intensive magnitudes as such are ever involved in psychological facts: they are simply not quantifiable. Now, this thesis is easily misunderstood and at first glance it is not very instructive. First of all it disputes quite generally the scientifically fundamental interpretation of perceptions as actually being intensive contents of consciousness. No doubt Bergson and Cohen choose quite different critical strategies – and Deleuze takes from both, because they each make a contribution toward a positive definition of the concept of intensity – yet they both agree that 'intensities' present measurable magnitudes only when defined extensionally as (physically-physiologically or even behaviouristically) objectifiable facts. But while Bergson in the last analysis reduced all quantities to extensive quantities, Cohen not only held firm to the Kantian distinction between extensive and intensive magnitudes, but he expanded it for cognition-critical reasons by construing intensities as the physical counterpart of mathematical differentials. It is just this stretching of the second Kantian principle in order to make it the 'principle of reality' that allows Cohen to exceed the boundaries of the transcendental aesthetic and become attractive for Deleuze. Bergson, on the other hand, combines with his rejection of positivistic procedures in psychology an acceptance of the distinction between actual and virtual multiplicities, whereby the latter are then also quite compatible with intensities in the Deleuzian sense.

II. Through Hume to Pre-objective Intensities

Let us look again at the foundations of the empiricist theory of perception. We know that it is supposed to facilitate the realisation of a programme that founds and checks over all knowledge through reference to immediate experience. Hume introduces 'perception' as the generic term for facts of experience in general and distinguishes two types of perception according to their degree of intensity: impressions and ideas. Impressions for their part divide into impressions of sensation and impressions of reflection. In addition Hume emphasises that there are not only simple impressions, but also (from the simple ones) compound impressions and ideas. This addition is important because it complicates the dependency relationships of the two types of impression to one another. Hume's fundamental empiricist proposition, which is generally known as the copy-principle, frankly maintains 'that all our simple ideas in their first appearance are deriv'd from simple impressions, which are correspondent to them, and which they exactly represent'

(Hume 1978: 4). The prototype-copy relation can therefore only be established on the level of simple perceptions. This is fundamentally significant because the empiricist analysis of abstract ideas depends on being able to reduce ideas to impressions and can only elicit their truth content in this way. In this context we have the principle of difference as formulated by Hume, which states that 'whatever objects are different are distinguishable, and that whatever objects are distinguishable are separable by the thought and imagination' (Hume 1978: 18). Associations of ideas cannot combine the latter in such a way that they merge together or are made inseparable: precisely their 'independent separability' makes possible their empiricist justification in the first place.

It has often enough been pointed out that for Deleuze the atomistic premises of the theory of perception and the corresponding copy theory are not feasible and force us to look back at the distinction between phenomenological and naturalistic aspects of Hume's empiricism. The atomistic premises then give way to the central thesis to which Deleuze adheres, which says that sensual intensities are genetic elements that actualise themselves in extensity as an extensive magnitude. However, they are concealed by perceived qualities that ascribe themselves to some persistent object constituting itself within the same given framework (that is, in the corresponding space-time actualisation relations). Formulated in empiricist terminology, this thesis maintains that sense impressions are first to be understood as pre-individual sense data and only begin to stabilise themselves as associatively bundled and organised moments of perception in the order of visible objects. The postulated displacement within the empiricist field of concepts reveals itself only after a requisite appraisal in terms of immanent criteria.

Hume himself begins rather emphatically with the phenomenological relevance of the expression 'simple perceptions' as constituting building blocks of experience. In the much discredited chapter 'Of the ideas of space and time' in the *Treatise*, the atomistic presuppositions of perception theory are formulated by Hume in a particularly concise way, as Antony Flew has shown (1976: 257–69; see Hume 1978: 26–39). With the intention of rebutting the theorem on the infinite divisibility of space and time, Hume refers there to the kind of inseparable and extensionless perceptions underlying, in his opinion, all ideas of space and time.

> I first take the least idea I can form of a part of extension, and being certain that there is nothing more minute than this idea, I conclude, that whatever I discover by its means must be a real quality of extension. Then I repeat this

> idea once, twice, thrice, etc. and find the compound idea of extension, arising from its repetition, always to augment, and become double, triple, quadruple, etc. till at last it swells up to a considerable bulk, greater or smaller, in proportion as I repeat more or less the same idea. (Hume 1978: 29)

In his proof, Hume combines several arguments. First he relies on the universal admission 'that the capacity of the mind is limited' (Hume 1978: 26) and can never possess an adequate image of infinity. Second, he maintains 'that whatever is capable of being divided *in infinitum*, must consist of an infinite number of parts' (Hume 1978: 26). From these two premises it follows for him that the imagination is able to comprehend minimal ideas 'which cannot be diminish'd without a total annihilation' (Hume 1978: 27). Behind this thought, which draws a conclusion from the finite limitation of the imagination to the real structures of time and space, lie further assumptions on Hume's part. Thus time and space connections of perceptions must be put together out of single, unitary, and indivisible perceptions, since they otherwise couldn't exist. ' 'Tis evident, that existence in itself belongs only to unity … 'Tis therefore utterly absurd to suppose any number to exist, and yet deny the existence of unites [*sic*]' (Hume 1978: 30). In addition it is assumed that ideas are especially clear and evident if they are formed of correspondingly simple impressions and thus have at their disposal an immediately certain degree of reality. The postulate of correspondence between ideas and impressions asserts that that which is smaller than the smallest possible idea cannot be imagined and is therefore impossible.

Hume repeatedly says that ideas cannot be as small as you like, but reach a minimum that cannot be further subdivided. This thesis, which is here not an issue, is combined with another thesis concerned with the necessarily smallest impressions. Hume uses the ink spot experiment to illustrate what he understands to be simple impressions or *minima sensibilia*.

> Put a spot of ink upon paper, fix your eye upon that spot, and retire to such a distance, that at last you lose sight of it; 'tis plain, that the moment before it vanish'd the image or impression was perfectly indivisible. (Hume 1978: 27)

From this experiment we are supposed to understand that sensible impressions have a least magnitude that cannot be further minimised and therefore are indivisible. In Hume studies one speaks of extensionless points, because each extensive size is by definition assembled out of similar simple points. We can leave aside here the problems that arise when one tries to develop a concept of extension based on these points and their addition. It suffices for the moment to

interrogate the phenomenological evidence that Hume brings forth for his empiricist argument. In the last analysis the arrangement of the experiment is directed toward determining a limit to visibility, a limit that is normally invisible; this is where – more or less on the threshold of consciousness – the little, barely visible phenomena prove their irreducible atomic and discrete character. But now it seems that the intention to ground the 'logic' in a cognitively theoretical manner persistently influences Hume's descriptive analysis of the ink spot experience. The fundamental quest to uncover calculable basic units of a psychological nature compromises itself, since the description of the sense data understood in this way is unfortunately incompatible with the phenomenological facts. It isn't even necessary to harp on the multiple critiques of sense atomism from the perspective of Gestalt theory or phenomenology to argue against the assumptions Hume makes concerning the evidence of simple perceptions. In his replay of Hume's 'self-experiment', C. D. Broad summarises for the long haul the most important aspects of the way the perceptions are treated.

> At the earlier stages there certainly is a noticeable decrease in size, whilst the intensity of the blue colour and the definiteness of the outline do not alter appreciably. But, as I approach the limiting position, from which there ceases to be any appearance of the dot in my visual field, what I find most prominent is the growing faintness of the blue colour and the haziness of the outline. The appearance of the dot finally vanishes through becoming indistinguishable from that of the background immediately surrounding it. But, so long as I am sure that I am seeing the spot at all, I am fairly sure that the sense-datum which is its visual appearance is extended, and not literally punctiform. So I very much doubt whether there are punctiform visual sense data. The case for punctiform tactual sense data would seem to be still weaker. (Broad 1961: 166)

At issue here is the breaking up of Hume's atomistic position by looking more closely at the implicit and undifferenciated reference to both extensive and intensive magnitudes. On the one hand Hume gains mathematical points of sense out of a continuous minimisation of extension, whereas on the other hand they only exist as extensionless points because they have at their disposal a gradation of intensity. Clearly the spot, when it is no longer visible, loses both its spatially extended form and its more or less intensive colour. But does that mean it is a matter of equivalent magnitudes? Broad's observations show that the minimalising of extension and the weakening of intensity are not proportional to one another. That raises certain unforeseen questions. If there are simple perceptions, don't they have to operate with an intensive

magnitude that also cannot be further reduced in size? Don't elementary sense data require elementary intensities? Can we postulate elementary values with respect to intensive magnitudes? Is it at all possible to assign an intensive grade to perceptions as such? Or more generally, how should we understand the empiricist relationship between intensive and extensive magnitudes?

Hume's reliance on immediate experience and his fixation on the primordial structures of the experiential material, that is on 'clear and precise' perceptions that have to act as the base upon which all higher level ideas are grounded, leads him automatically to understand the individual 'sensual qualities' as indivisible homogenous parts which allow themselves to be assembled in the sense of discrete actual magnitudes. Hume's fundamental intention of grounding a science of human nature in accordance with the Newtonian (rather than the Leibnizian) model finds direct expression in his concept of experience insofar as the perceptual process is supposed to consist in 'a mere passive admission of the impressions thro' the organs of sensation' (Hume 1978, 73), which means that it manages for the moment without any mental activity or other synthetic process. These pure, passively received and unconnected impressions are completely individualised and clearly determined, as are the ideas that result from them, and therefore 'can never, but from our fault, contain any thing so dark and intricate' (Hume 1978: 72–3). As a result of his scientific-mechanistic objective, Hume raises himself above the phenomenological evidence that very small perceptual givens are merely blurred or hazily perceived or even that only such things are perceived to which attention has been drawn or that somehow have awakened interest. A small ink spot is normally not noticed at all, which means of course that the smallest perceptions are not normally available and thus also fail to be represented by ideas.

The anti-atomistic implications of the phenomenological interpretation that Broad puts forward with respect to Hume's experiments in perception become better appreciated when one recalls the concept of an intensive magnitude as developed by Kant. According to Kant, intensive quantities, as distinct from extensive ones, are characterised, after all, by not being measurable precisely because they don't have at their disposal any indivisible units that can be added to one another. They designate magnitudes that are constituted not in relation to one but to zero. That is why they can be infinitely and continuously diminished: at all times they involve ever smaller genetic moments that are not synthesised successively but – as Kant says – 'in an instant' (see Kant 1999: A167/B209–211). Intensive magnitudes can therefore

increase or decrease – and it is quite possible that it is exactly these self-differenciation processes that make them perceptible – but because they do not have a common denominator, these differences cannot be located on a constant, unchanging measurement foundation. Using this concept of intensity it is now possible to conceive of the gradation of affection (Husserl), so that inconspicuous perceptions cross the consciousness threshold at some specific point, namely at exactly the place where they (for example, the distant ink spot) become noticeable.

It follows that Hume makes his *minima sensibilia* dependent on perceptual conditions that – at least within the concrete contexts of daily life – are subject to permanent gradual modifications. Thus their unified and extensionless status no longer has any foundation. As Kant has shown, for any intensive magnitude it is a matter of a complex unit that does not consist of homogeneous parts which can be consecutively connected to one another. Even if a certain (variable) degree does define a minimum of visibility, nevertheless every quality of sensation implies an intensive and 'fluid' magnitude that 'doesn't run from the parts to the whole, that is to say, isn't an extensive magnitude', and results from the momentary synthetic apprehension of many (smaller) sensations (see Kant 1999: A167/B209ff.). According to Kant, sensations – in contrast to intuitions – are neither extended nor divisible: they can be arranged on a vertical scale of intensities which, although it has no general standard at its disposal, yet allows one to talk about intensive degrees that fall below any particular threshold whatever. The result is that a known sensation presents a complex unit constructed out of passive syntheses of imperceptible sense data. Not for nought does Kant call apprehension a synthesis. The givens of consciousness are in no way simple representations or bundles of simple representations, but noticeable phenomena lifted off an undifferenciated background, phenomena that result from the self-organisation of the field of experience. When these phenomena disappear, there is a continuous, not abrupt process of becoming invisible in which they become – as Broad described – indistinguishable from their background. Even though in the last analysis Kant subordinates the productive syntheses of the imagination as a whole to the activity of the understanding, we nevertheless owe to his discovery of the form of the inner sense the fact that the atomistic representation of the mere reception of simple givens can be rejected in favour of a transcendental consideration of the implicit syntheses of affection.

This is a good place to clear up a fundamental problem of empiricism with respect to the dispute about the Kantian objections to the premises

of the Humean theory of perception. It is the problem regarding the object-relationship of simple versus complex impressions and representations. Hume often presents simple perceptions as perceptions of objects: the empiricist sense criterion and the concept of association presume, according to Hume, already constituted objects as initial phenomena – at least in the actual practice of many of his arguments. On the other hand, he does not overlook the fact that pure incidents of experience have a 'pre-objective' nature, without, however, drawing from that the necessary consequences. Not without reason has Hume been called the 'spiritual precursor' of pointillism.

> The table before me is alone sufficient by its view to give me the idea of extension. This idea, then, is borrow'd from and represents some impression, which this moment appears to the senses. But my senses convey to me only the impressions of colour'd points, dispos'd in a certain manner. If the eye is sensible of any thing farther, I desire it may be pointed out to me. But if it be impossible to shew any thing farther we may conclude with certainty, that the idea of extension is nothing but a copy of these colour'd points, and of the manner of their appearance. (Hume 1978: 34)

Hume thus distinguishes single visual and tactile impressions from the combined total perception of an extended object. Accordingly, it seems that in the case of a perception intentionally directed at an object, we are concerned with a specifically organised association of sense data. Yet at this point Hume fails to give a precise determination of the organisation process relating to the object, nor does he consider radically enough the quasi-objective status of the sense data involved. Hume does not distinguish sharply enough between sense data and objects, nor between the object-constituting syntheses of pre-individual sense data and the resulting objects given to consciousness together with their empirical relations of association. Deleuze, in contrast, concentrates on the fact that the structure called 'conscious object' is predicated on genetic syntheses, so that he makes a cut between the intensive potential of virtual sense data and the extensive qualities that can be attributed to the objects of perception. The perception of an exterior physical object implies the (habituated) unification of visual and thought processes with respect to a persistently held identity terminus. Contrary to Kant and Husserl, Hume fails to appreciate the significance of the constituting syntheses in the case of the 'identity relation'. In his opinion the identity of constant and unchanging objects is immediately perceived, that is without the mediation of a corresponding act of thought, 'since (in the case of identity) the mind cannot go beyond what is immediately present

to the senses' (Hume 1978: 73). No doubt that Hume meticulously depicts the genesis of the belief in persistent and isolated things, yet he fails to grasp pre-objective sense data simultaneously as pre-conscious moments of perception.

The whole problem of Humean scepticism can now be better judged thanks to the insights we have gained. For example, Hume treats the representation of thing-constancy or of ego-identity as natural illusions which are brought forth by the imagination on the basis of many and diverse perceptions and their conventional relationships to one another. Under what conditions is this scepticism then to be considered radical or moderate, ruinous or pragmatically useful? As a matter of fact, the evaluation of the Humean 'doctrine of doubt' depends on the evaluation of the legitimacy of traditional epistemological validity claims. If Hume, for example, wanted to provide a foundation to the realistic assumptions of common sense then his philosophy falls apart in terms of its sceptical consequences. If on the other hand his critique of these assumptions is accepted and affirmed, then it is possible to develop out of it a defensible pragmatic scepticism that takes common sense to be a mutable form of opinion belonging to a historically determined imagination. When applied to the psychologism that can be found in Hume, this way of thinking means to say that the attempt to evaluate the 'laws of gravitation of the mental landscape' breaks down to the extent that no sure (causal relation depicting) cognition of facts is possible. This result is disastrous as long as one holds fast, with respect to the theoretical constitution of things, to the epistemologically foundational function of consciousness. All the same, Hume points two ways out of the mess. On the one hand, his determinations of human nature and its apparent conformity to natural laws motivate one to see the continuation of the empiricist project in a physiological or naturalistic 'psychology without soul'. On the other hand, the possibility presents itself of passing beyond an empiricist philosophy of consciousness with respect to its descriptive analyses of experience in the direction of a transcendental psychology that knows how to think the stream of consciousness rigorously as a virtual/continuous multiplicity.

Transcendental empiricism's great strength is the way it unfolds Humean scepticism in a productive way. The subtlety of the Humean experiential method, which appears above all in critical reflections on the concept of substance and causality, is given a new 'grounding' by Deleuze insofar as he undergirds transcendentally the atomistic theory of perception. It is of particular importance that small perceptions or sense data are not given (in isolation), but are understood as virtual

and intensive moments that are organised in transcendental syntheses. Only a complex unit comes to consciousness, a unit that results not from successive associations of simple sense data but from momentary syntheses of unconscious sensibilia. These passive syntheses correspond to self-differenciation processes in the field of experience that allow something to become noticeable or cancel it out. According to Deleuze it is not a matter of indifference if the noematic phenomenon (in the narrow sense) of a diffuse, not objectively localisable perception of colour is interpreted merely as the sensible quality of an identifiable object. Exclusive attention to actual and extensive givens implies disregard for precursory genetic syntheses and their characteristic relations of intensity. This disregard applies once again to difference in itself if it can only be conceptualised in a mediated form, starting with instances relieved of difference.

III. Second Overview

In his book *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (1962), Deleuze develops a theory of active and reactive forces on the basis of the doctrine of the will to power. In the fifth chapter of *Difference and Repetition* (1968), Deleuze again takes up what Nietzsche thought about the asymmetric relation of forces in order to give that relation an 'intensive' foundation. The two texts are bound together thanks to Nietzsche's interest in the conception of force in thermodynamics, which shows how and why, in scientific theories of energy, intensive magnitudes appear – and are determined – only in connection with already extended physical bodies. With this in mind, Deleuze exhibits, in *Difference and Repetition*, intensity as the ontological characteristic of individuation processes. These processes continuously explicate the virtual structures within actual givens, but they must be defined independently from the order of explication in the sense of an order of implication peculiar to intensity. Finally in his book *Leibniz and the Baroque* (1988), Deleuze develops a transcendental psychology of perception directly concerned with the differential and sub-representative relations of intensity underlying the processes of becoming presupposed by every objectively oriented perception.

IV. Nietzsche and the Intensive Differentials of Power

Deleuze starts the fifth chapter of *Difference and Repetition* by interpreting difference of intensity as a fundamental constitutive factor of consciousness and its phenomenological givens. 'Intensity – difference

of intensity – is the sufficient reason (ground) of all phenomena, the condition of that which appears' (Deleuze 1994: 222). From that it will be possible to derive the ontological primacy of the intensive over the extensive magnitudes founded therein. It is through the application of force or energy, the physical intensive magnitude par excellence, that extension in general can claim reality. Inspired by Nietzsche, Deleuze begins to conceptualise relations of forces or power as intensity relations. However, he doesn't succumb, any more than Nietzsche does, to the physicalist thinking that threatens to wipe out the essential difference between intensive and extensive magnitudes by way of good sense and common sense.

> This is what the will to power is: the genealogical element of force. The will to power is the element from which derive both the quantitative difference of related forces and the quality that devolves into each force in this relation. The will to power here reveals its nature as the principle of the synthesis of forces. (Deleuze 1983: 50)

With his interpretation of the will to power, Deleuze presents in 1962 the very first version of his transcendental empiricism. The crucial point is that the will to power is understood as the genetic and differential principle of force, that is as the universal motivating principle of becoming that explains the never-ending processes of change and interpretation of singular constellations of force. This endogenous and dynamic principle is responsible for the fluctuating relations that constantly take place between the little energetic moments of reality which organise themselves into variable units insofar as they affect one another, overcome one another or resist one another. The active forces that associate with one another construct physical relationships of intensity that predate consciousness and its reactive perspective. 'What makes the body superior to all reactions, particularly that reaction of the ego that is called consciousness, is the activity of necessarily unconscious forces' (Deleuze 1983: 41–2). Deleuze makes abundantly clear that Nietzsche defines quality, which corresponds to the quantity-differences in the configurations of quanta of forces, as affections. The will to power appears (à la Spinoza) as a capacity to affect and to be affected. The capacity for being affected is not necessarily a passivity (in the sense of suffering and receptivity) but an affectivity, a sensibility, a sensation' (Deleuze 1983: 62). The will manifests itself as 'differential sensibility' and in this way expresses the transcendental principle of intensity that is an essential characteristic of the 'higher empiricism' (*empirisme supérieur*).

Nietzsche developed his theory of the will to power and the eternal return on the basis of contemporaneous research in physics (see Zimmerli 1999: 266ff.). However, he does not actually adopt established knowledge from the exact sciences. Instead he transfers certain of their theorems into his philosophical reflections. Thus although his non-mechanical concept of force is compatible with the first law of thermodynamics, it turns against the second. Nietzsche's critique of science is expressed in exemplary fashion by his rejection of the teleological notion of entropy because, at least from Deleuze's perspective, that notion concentrates on the physicalist tendency to homogenise inequalities of energy differences by attributing to them a questionable, finalistic 'plan of transcendence'. For Deleuze the becoming – without beginning and without end – of forces affecting one another, which Nietzsche conceives under the title of eternal return of the same, is thought in the sense of a 'utopia' of pure immanence. Thus differences of quantity – for example, chaotic differences – cannot reach equilibrium any more than they can be resolved in extension. Even though Nietzsche wants to see 'the closest possible convergence of a world of becoming to that of a world of being' in the thought of a cyclical return of identical series, Deleuze can rightly cite Nietzsche in order to bring difference, as the transcendental principle of becoming, into play.

To speak with Deleuze, the quanta of force, that as elements of structure stand in differential relationship and that actualise themselves in differenciated forms, remain as virtual singularities behind their actual ways of appearing. The process of becoming is never brought to rest in its effects. The micrological relations of force persist in the background of the actual phenomena that are conditioned by them. Deleuze always presents his critique of the general idea that one has concerning the erosion of differences of intensity in the field of extended bodies and their qualitative determinations with a kind of 'deep-seated' Nietzschean undertone. For if, in energy studies, force is defined as a mixture of intensive and extensive factors, then that kind of force follows the tendency to de-differenciate intensive quantities in the field of homogeneous forms of extension. Forms of energy are therefore distributed in extension, just as extensions are qualified by forms of energy, as, for example, 'height and weight for gravitational energy, temperature and entropy for thermal energy' (Deleuze 1994: 223). From this, Deleuze concludes the following:

> In experience, *intensio* (intension) is inseparable from an *extensio* (extension) which relates it to the *extensum* (extensity). In these conditions, intensity

> itself is subordinated to the qualities which fill extensity. In short, we know intensity only as already developed within an extensity, and as covered over by qualities. (Deleuze 1994: 223)

This 'knowledge' leads Deleuze back to a transcendental illusion provoked by the way intensity is explicated, insofar as it tempts one to orient its description in terms of explicit results. Thermodynamics thus empowers good sense (*bon sens*), blessed as it is with the prescience to reduce differences by forging a path from what is more differenciated to what is less differenciated. Although good sense presupposes differences, it also prescribes how they are to be distributed, unified and thus negated in accordance with conditions reflecting sensible ideas of physical time and space. Good sense, 'like Plato's demiurge, ceaselessly and patiently transforms the unequal into the divisible' (Deleuze 1994: 224–5). In like manner, Deleuze characterises the most general content of thermodynamic principles by asserting that 'difference is the sufficient reason of change only to the extent that the change tends to negate difference' (Deleuze 1994: 223). Of course Deleuze doesn't deny that intensity as difference tries to explicate itself. But although it is deleted within extension and its physical or sensual qualities, he certainly denies that difference is thus abolished. For difference outstrips itself or loses its very nature insofar as it is explicated, but 'as intensity, difference remains implicated in itself, even as it is cancelled by being explicated outside itself' (Deleuze 1994: 228). It is intensity's implicative mode of being that preserves it in the face of its continuous transferal into the world of already constituted individual objects and, as Nietzsche puts it, protects Becoming's irrevocable inequality or disparity from 'immobilization, mummification, or mortification in Being'.

When Deleuze again and again speaks of forces and force relations – especially with respect to Nietzsche – then he is referring – in the jargon of *Anti-Oedipus* – to the 'differential coupling of streams of intensity that circulate on the body without organs'. But we can avoid the jargon, which has its own problems. For Deleuze is clearly stating that the field of intensity is coextensive with the field of individuation. Connecting with concepts developed by Hume, we can say that Deleuze in no way bases the logic of sensation on impressions of sense perception, but rather on the immediate impressions of self-perception. According to Deleuze, sensations (or forces) are affects that as such imply an individuating self-affection or folding of force on itself. The subject does not dissolve in the substanceless play of perceptions without reconstituting itself anew in what is sensible, hearable, visible or tasty.

As we have seen, for Deleuze it is not a matter of the destruction but rather of the immanent determination of the subject. For example, in the articles on 'literature and life' collected in *Critique and Clinique* Deleuze makes it clear that it only makes sense to talk about 'forces' where destabilising affects are present that in their particular self-reference give rise to subjectivation effects. Where Deleuze simplifies matter and talks about forces and intensities by alluding to Freud's *économie libidinale*, one could just as well substitute the phenomenological vocabulary of sensations and perceptions with respect to their individuational movements toward actualisation.

V. Deleuze and the Intensive Character of Time and Space

Deleuze's aspiration to radicalise Kant's critical philosophy in his book on Nietzsche turns out to be a leitmotiv of his philosophical enterprise as a whole – as Daniel W. Smith convincingly shows (Smith 1997: 5f.) – and is accomplished through the genetic-structural method of an immanent sense-determination of experience. In *Difference and Repetition* the names of Maimon and Cohen stand for the possibility of a post-Kantian transcendentalism, overhauling, thanks to Leibniz, the doctrine of time and space in terms of a theory of differentials. In the chapter on the asymmetric synthesis of the sensible Deleuze makes more concrete this vanquishing of Kantian dualism and its restrictive theory of cognition. Transcendental conditions are not regressively exposed possibilities of presupposed experience but genetic conditions of a developing experience that in the process of its actualisation determines itself in diverse ways. Difference in intensity does not at all mark an empirical relation between various facts that in each case already have an identity. Instead this difference characterises the way the given comes about in the first place. Difference is 'that by which the given is given as diverse' (Deleuze 1994: 222). The problematical structures of ideas define themselves within experience as differences of intensity in passive syntheses. For Deleuze the conditions of perception are thus contained within intensity as difference and cannot be established abstractly, before all experience as pure forms of intuition.

In the last section of the chapter on ideas in *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze explains that the immanent factors in the dramatisation of the idea are space-time dynamics: they embody as actualisation times and actualisation spaces the differential relations between ceaselessly and reciprocally determined elements of structure. To be sure, the processes of differenciation differ from their results: the processes themselves

(1) are simultaneously spatial and temporal and (2) are concealed by the actual qualities and extensities that they reveal. In addition to the latter two features of the (spatio-temporal) realisation of structure, there is also a third, since (3) 'every spatio-temporal dynamism is accompanied by the emergence of an elementary consciousness which ... is born on the threshold of the condensed singularities of the body or object whose consciousness it is' (Deleuze 1994: 220). Here there is no room to go into detail on consciousness. Instead we will move forward to the concrete processes of actualisation in the field of individuation and the intensity relations intrinsic to it. Actual extensive and qualitative series correspond indeed to the ideal elements of quantitability and qualitability. Even so, the conditions of their actualisation are still completely undetermined. We need to find out 'what carries out ... the element of potentiality in the idea' (Deleuze 1994: 221). And Deleuze quickly gives an answer. It must be a matter of spatial-temporal dramatisation, but one grounded in intensity and its relationships.

> Intensity is the determinant in the process of actualisation. It is intensity which dramatises. It is intensity which is immediately expressed in the basic spatio-temporal dynamisms and determines an 'indistinct' differential relation in the idea to incarnate itself in a distinct quality and a distinguished extensity. (Deleuze 1994: 245)

Deleuze draws a parallel between intensity's explication movement and the idea's differenciating movement. However, intensity can only then determine the structural conditions of actualisation if it can be defined independently of the differenciated or explicated results. That is possible, says Deleuze, because it has at its disposal an ontologically primary distinguished order of implication that is characterised by an idiosyncratic mode of processing. 'The essential process of intensive quantities is individuation' (Deleuze 1994: 246). Deleuze always calls the actualisation processes that can be described against the background of intensity relations individuation processes. They establish a field of communication or a system of signalising for heterogeneous series, so that the immanent structures of experience can get signs to flash and qualities to generate. In *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze proposes to treat thematically the reciprocal relations of the ideal synthesis of difference in the domain of individuation with its fields of intensity as passive spatio-temporal syntheses. In this way the fifth chapter builds a bridge between the fourth and the second chapter: the time-syntheses of 'repetition for itself' articulate the 'asymmetric syntheses' of the individuation processes that explicate the structurally determined

actualisation forms of 'ideas'. Thus it is no wonder that Deleuze in the fifth chapter focuses above all on the problem of space and places these investigations next to his analysis of time.

In connection with his reflections on the characteristic revelation-and-concealment structure of intensity, Deleuze asserts, 'that extensity does not account for the individuations which occur within it' (Deleuze 1994: 229). Here he follows the theoretical principle of individuality set down by Gilbert Simondon:

> Individuation does not only produce the individual. One ought not skip quickly over the step of individuation in order to arrive at that last reality that is the individual. One ought to try to know the ontogenesis in the entire development of that reality and get to know the individual in terms of individuation rather than individuation in terms of the individual. (See Simondon 1964: 4)

And in fact Deleuze, impressed as he seems to be by the work of Simondon, makes a lot of room for reflections on the biological genesis of the individual in the chapter on the asymmetric synthesis of the sensible. At first it is only a matter of ascertaining the origin of extensive magnitude from the intensive magnitude of original depth. 'Extensity as a whole comes from the depths' (Deleuze 1994: 229). Taking into account the paradox of symmetric objects, Deleuze makes problematic the presence of individuating factors in extensity: up and down, right and left, form and background. These factors lend depth to perception in the passively running organisation of the field of vision. In his discussions of the depth perspective that determines visibility, Deleuze has recourse, without saying so, to passages from the *Phenomenology of Perception* by Merleau-Ponty (see Merleau-Ponty 1981: 297–311). Following Merleau-Ponty to the letter, he shows that although in perception the 'third dimension' of depth may present a possible length or breadth, for example when the observer carries out an abstract measurement, it in fact becomes in this way part of extensity and loses its heterogeneity or its genetic potential (see Deleuze 1994: 229). Deleuze agrees with Merleau-Ponty that depth arises out of a 'primordial experience' which 'clearly belongs to perspective, not to things' (Merleau-Ponty 1981: 298–9). One could say that in the (binocular) 'seeing of depth' the perceiving subjectivity is made complicit, namely in the passive syntheses of disparate monocular images. From here it is but a short step for Deleuze to associate the original relation of perception to its background, its own depth, with

the coexistence of the pure past within the present. But on this point as well Merleau-Ponty anticipated him:

> Perception ratifies and renews in us a 'prehistory'. And that again is of the essence of time: there would be no present, that is to say, no sensible world with its thickness and inexhaustible richness, if perception . . . did not retain a past in the depth of the present, and did not contract that past into that depth. It fails at the moment to realize the synthesis of its object . . . because the unity of the object makes its appearance through the medium of time, and because time slips away as fast as it catches up with itself. (Merleau-Ponty 1981: 240)

As expected, Deleuze draws parallels between the syntheses of space and of time insofar as both of them, as actualisation forms of the idea, mark out concrete individuation conditions relative to experience. The perception of extensive individual objects implies depth, which precisely in its implicative mode of Being refers to intensity. As Deleuze declares, 'It is the power of diminution of the intensity experienced that provides a perception of depth' (Deleuze 1994: 230). The power of depth is proportionally grounded in the potentiality of the idea that it is capable of actualising (see Deleuze 1994: 244). That is why the sensible or physical qualities of persistent objects presuppose fields of intensity which they explicate – and in the course of explication cancel out. Which brings Deleuze to the question, how is it possible that intensity can be sensed independently of these constituted objects of experience? 'How could it be other than "sensed", since it is what gives to be sensed?' (Deleuze 1994: 230). With that, Deleuze arrives at the ontological aspect of the third syntheses of space and time regarding the transcendental exercise of powers or abilities: intensity, which can only be sensed – or depth, which can only be perceived. 'Depth and intensity are the same at the level of Being, but the same insofar as this is said of difference' (Deleuze 1994: 231).

Up until now we have found that the structure of intensity is such that its differences cancel out or explicate themselves in a system of extension without yet sublating themselves within the framework of this system or allowing themselves to be grasped in their nature. From this derives the ambivalent or double aspect of the produced quality-as-sign within the structurally determined milieu of individuation: 'It refers to an implicated order of constitutive differences, and tends to cancel out those differences in the extended order in which they are explicated' (Deleuze 1994: 228). The problem, whose key concepts are implication and explication, is further unfolded by Deleuze through his presentation of

three Nietzschian-Bergsonian features that 'deeply' characterise intensity (see Deleuze 1994: 232ff.). The first feature marks what cannot be cancelled in differences in quantity: the intensive magnitude envelops or interiorises an essential, irreducible inequality that can be homogenised but still insists within the depths of its homogenised manifestation. The second feature of intensity marks its 'profound' affirmation of difference, which only appears as negation in the domain of perfected extensities and qualities. 'Since intensity is already difference, it refers to a series of other differences that it affirms by affirming itself' (Deleuze 1994: 234). Deleuze wants to show that the negative is the inverse image of difference insofar as the negative figures of opposition and limitation are necessarily bound to differenciated forms of extension in actuality. For this purpose he examines the Platonic idea of an immanence of contrasting oppositions within a sensible quality. Large and small, thick and thin, hard and soft, etc., are for Plato 'challenging to reason' because they each only 'come to mind with their opposite'. Precisely the identity of oppositional characteristics, that is to say the coexistence of 'more' and 'less' as implied by sensible signs, points to the paradox of becoming, which according to Deleuze defines the constitutive character of intensity. Note the memorable passage, in the *Logic of Sense*, on growth taken from *Alice in Wonderland*:

> When I say, 'Alice becomes larger', I mean she becomes larger than she was. By the same token, however, she becomes smaller than she is now. Certainly, she is not bigger and smaller at the same time. She is larger now; she was smaller before. But it is at the same moment that one becomes larger than one was and smaller than one becomes. This is the simultaneity of a becoming whose characteristic is to elude the present. (Deleuze 1990: 1)

The paradox of becoming consists therefore in the simultaneity or 'identity' of two directions of sense. The present and its clear contours evaporate in the process of becoming, where past and future merge or are distributed in a new way. The intensity of becoming, that is the implication of counter-running lines of actualisation, differenciates itself by explicating itself concurrently in two directions. When Plato makes a distinction between problematic signs and problematic objects of recognition and moves his exposition of the former in the vicinity of the asymmetric paradox of intensity, he sees, according to Deleuze, intensive quantities 'only in qualities in the course of development – and for this reason, he assigns both contrariety and the being of the sensible to qualities' (Deleuze 1994: 236). In this way, however, he misses its third feature, which has to do with implication's form of being. For Deleuze,

intensity is not only implicated in quality, but it is primarily implicit in itself, that is, implicative and implicated. This implicative self-reference of intensity happens in differential and continuous syntheses which drive forward the actualisation processes of virtual manifolds and, as processes of individuation, make them concrete. The passive syntheses are presented by Deleuze as (spatial) syntheses of implicit multiplicities (intensive magnitudes) which stand opposite explicit multiplicities (extensive magnitudes). With that, he repeats and modifies on the plane of individuation – parallel to his treatment of temporal syntheses – the distinction between virtual and actual multiplicities. This is especially apparent in the concept of distance, which is introduced by Deleuze as the implicit magnitude and partial aspect of the third feature of depth-as-intensive-space (*spatium*). 'Within intensity, we call that which is really implicative and enveloping difference; and we call that which is really implicated or enveloped distance. Therefore intensity is neither divisible, like extensive quantity, nor indivisible, like quality' (Deleuze 1994: 237). The conclusive 'therefore' comes from the definition of distance, in reference to Leibniz, as a relatively indivisible and asymmetric relation that, in distinction to extensive lengths or stretches, is not put together out of discrete, homogeneous parts (see Deleuze 1994: 237f.).

Deleuze adopts and radicalises Kant's distinction between intensive and extensive magnitudes, exemplified by distances on the one hand and lengths on the oher hand as implicit and explicit multiplicities. Extensive quantities are defined as follows: 'by the relative determination of a unit (. . .); by the equivalence of the parts determined by the unit; by the consubstantiality of the parts with the whole which is divided' (Deleuze 1994: 237). It is a question of measurable multiplicities put together out of parts that are compatible, additive units of magnitude, all of the same order as the whole. The extensive quantities are divisible without essentially changing thereby. This is in contrast to intensive quantities which cannot be grasped in the context of a fiction of homogeneous space and time relations.

> An intensive quantity may be divided, but not without changing its nature. In a sense, it is therefore indivisible, but only because no part exists prior to the division and no part retains the same nature after division. (Deleuze 1994: 237)

The quantitative intensive unit implies only un-self-sustaining and heterogeneous partial moments that cannot be extracted as such from the whole: implied intensities as unit components would in the process change into implicit intensities as units. The Kantian determination of

the intensive unit of magnitude, which 'can only be represented through approximation to negation = 0' (Kant 1999: A168/B210), establishes between itself and zero a gap that can be infinitely and continuously made smaller, which argues against the possibility of its being defined in terms of its parts as units of measure. Deleuze will therefore suggest that two types of multiplicities be distinguished, 'those whose metric varies by division and those which carry the invariable principle of their metric' (Deleuze 1994: 238).

In *A Thousand Plateaus* this whole problem is discussed under the rubric smooth and striated spaces. A smooth space is a non-metric intensive space, 'one of distances, not of measures', whereas a striated space is an extensive space, with a closed, parcelled out or measured surface (Deleuze 1987: 479). Deleuze and Guattari present a series of different models – technological, mathematical, aesthetic and so on – which show the existence of both spaces in their interaction and in the factual interference phenomena of smooth and striated (de- and re-territorialisation). In the course of the discussion of the mathematical model and in the context of Riemann's substantive use of the manifold, they talk about Bergson's distinction between two multiplicities. And in fact Kant's reflections on the difference between intensive and extensive magnitudes are here reclaimed as well, in reference to the conceptual construction of a continuous, virtual manifold that opposes any explication or striation in terms of representational logic. However, this is not a question of an uncritical adoption of a traditional dogma. In *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze specifically refers to Cohen's 're-interpretation of Kantianism', which in his opinion 'attaches full value to the principle of intensive quantities' (Deleuze 1994: 231). The Marburger cognitive methodology is interesting for Deleuze because it connects the release from transcendental aesthetics with an orientation toward the fundamental propositions of pure understanding.

The decisive 'gap' in Kant's synthesis doctrine is for Cohen the fact that empirical intuitional material is pre-arranged for concepts. Kant awards a geometric extension to the pure forms of intuition 'and reserves intensive quantity for the matter which fills a given extensity to some degree or other' (Deleuze 1994: 231), whereas Deleuze, taking his cue from Cohen, attempts to derive space and time, as conditions of experience, out of the definition of the principle of intensity. For Cohen, it is a question, raised by the second Kantian fundamental principle when understood correctly, of a constructive precept that delivers reality as infinitesimal increments. Deleuze, for his part, understands what is here 'delivered', that is this spatial-temporal actualisation of ideal relations

of differential moments, as it is empirically intuited, to be of extensive magnitude. The genetic syntheses of space and time present a whole made up of 'virtual parts' that are not already given as (actual) parts in advance, nor can they be so represented.

> Space and time are not presented as they are represented... Space as pure intuition or *spatium* is an intensive quantity, and intensity as a transcendental principle is not merely the anticipation of perception but the source of a quadruple genesis: that of the *extensio* in the form of schema, that of extensity in the form of extensive magnitude, that of *qualitas* in the form of matter occupying extensity, and that of the *quale* in the form of designation of an object. (Deleuze 1994: 231)

Even though space and time cannot be reduced to concepts of the understanding, they nevertheless let themselves be integrated into the problematical field of the idea as transcendental conditions of experience – not at the outset related to extension but as 'subjacent conditions of real experience which are indistinguishable from intensity as such' (Deleuze 1994: 232).

Over against the extensive spatial relations that experience presupposes externally, there are intensive spatial relations that determine experience from within. This opposition results from the fact that for Deleuze there are also spaces in the sense of intensive magnitudes that cannot be divided up without each time changing essentially: these smooth spaces have no permanent points of reference, no constants and variables that could be assigned with respect to a stationary outside observer. On the contrary, these spaces are defined through continuous variations of their directions and points of orientation. They are not to be confused with a closed surface cut up into fixed point intervals, but correspond to open, unbounded, and multi-directional spaces on which nomads move about without sectioning them.

> Smooth space is filled by events or haecceities, far more than by formed and perceived things. It is a space of affects, more than one of properties. It is haptic rather than optical perception. Whereas in the striated space forms organize a matter, in the smooth space materials signal forces and serve as symptoms for them... Perception in it is based on symptoms and evaluations rather than measures... That is why smooth space is occupied by intensities... Striated space, on the contrary, is canopied by the sky as measure and by the measurable visual qualities deriving from it. (Deleuze 1987: 479)

The distribution of intensities on smooth space or on the 'plane of immanence' takes place 'nomadically' or according to the law of univocity, since it is not defined by any established transcendent

reference points: smooth space cannot be defined independently of the many events that subject its surface to a steady process of mutation or metamorphosis. 'It does not have a dimension higher than that which moves through it' (Deleuze 1987: 488) and tends to become identical with that which fills it. That is why no subjective perspectives exist on the space, but rather only local perspectives within the space, whose coordinates not only structure the particular patch, but also vary depending on the patch.

As we have seen, every relevant addition or subtraction from an intensive magnitude means its qualitative change. In this sense distances were only indirectly measurable: although they can be divided if one definition is implied in another, nevertheless they cannot be assigned a common measure. Seen in this way, intensities can be compared to one another and can be given a place in non-exact and discursive relationships of order. However, a smooth space comes about primarily by means of an 'accumulation of neighbourhoods' which stand externally in the vicinity of one another without implying one another. In this respect he takes his cue from the model of Riemannian space as amorphous and informal juxtapositions of heterogeneous parts that 'can be effected in an infinite number of ways' (Deleuze 1987: 485).

VI. Individuation as the Actualisation of Differentials

In spite of all that the implied multiplicities of intensity and the differential multiplicities of ideas have in common, we have held on to the fact that Deleuze wants to determine power relationships within the processes of individuation insofar as they dramatise the ideas or develop solutions for problems. In this way he sets a genetic field of passive syntheses into the middle of virtual and actual determinations of structure (differentiation-differenciation), a field that is primarily defined through the order of implication. Therefore the actualisation processes are to be described as processes of individuation and not in terms of their outcomes as processes of explication or differenciation.

> Individuation is the act by which intensity determines differential relations to become actualised, along the lines of differenciation and within the qualities and extensities it creates. (Deleuze 1994: 246)

Structures actualise themselves when their disparate and pre-individual elements are 'tensed up' or 'coupled up' with one another or transported in a 'communicative state', which means when they express and organise themselves in a field of individuation. The virtual structures are

differenciated from the relations of intensity that are being explicated. The latter make an effort to cancel themselves out in extension and cannot simply be separated – as *qualitas occulta* – from this movement. As we have seen, intensity does not actually explicate itself as such: it does not lose its differential status because it cancels itself only outside itself. It is of decisive importance for Deleuze that the intensive magnitudes cannot be derived from already constituted extensive or differenciated forms.

In this connection Deleuze falls into line with evolution-theoretical thoughts that allow individual differences to be localised in the field of individuation, that is beneath the larger taxonomic divisions. The universality of the individual, its organic classification on the model of the family tree, must accordingly rest on previous processes of individuation: in no way do individual differences merely fill out gaps in already structured systems where points of resemblance are differenciated by genus and species. 'It is the individual which is above the species, and precedes the species in principle' (Deleuze 1994: 250). Individuation must not be understood as propagation of specification. On the contrary, specification must result from the individuation. Deleuze bases his thoughts on von Baer's work, who situates embryonic epigenesis and the phenomena of organic de-differenciation in a constitutional milieu not defined by the criteria of representational concepts. 'The embryo is the individual as such directly caught up in the field of its individuation' (Deleuze 1994: 250). This constitutional or individuational field is generally defined in terms of sexual propagation, which expresses the 'evolutionary' principle of differenciating difference. Thus Deleuze again stresses that the differential relations only actualise themselves under the condition of individuation. 'What cannot be replaced is individuation itself' (Deleuze 1994: 258). Individuality cannot be separated from a virtual reservoir of pre-individual singularities which enable it to be drawn into unanticipated processes of becoming. The missing resemblance between ideas and their actualisation means, therefore, that only a genetic method can clear up the relations between the general and the particular, between the universal and the singular.

The field of individuation, which dramatises only undifferenciated differential relations – and presupposes nothing else, which is why it cannot be defined with concepts of explication or differenciation – therefore gives expression to ideas in terms of the order of implication. The intensities imply themselves reciprocally, so that each expresses the variable totality of differential relationships. However,

they express as implicational only some relations clearly, whereas they express as implied all relations confusedly. The intensive unity of the simultaneously clear-confused, which derives from the implicative nature of intensity differences, corresponds to the ideal unity of the simultaneously distinct-obscure. The clear-confused doesn't determine the idea, but rather the thinking of it, insofar as the latter expresses and works with an idea whose actualisation it determines: for indeed 'The thinker is the individual' (Deleuze 1994: 253).

At this point Deleuze returns to Leibniz, who shows every sign of having succeeded, on the basis of his theory of expression, in developing a logic of thinking that breaks with the Cartesian premise of a direct proportionality between 'clear' and 'distinct'.

> For despite the complexity and ambiguity of the texts, it does indeed seem at times that the expressed (the continuum of differential relations or the unconscious virtual Idea) should be in itself distinct and obscure: for example, all the drops of water in the sea like so many genetic elements with the differential relations, the variations in these relations and the distinctive points they comprise. In addition, it seems that the expresser (the perceiving, imagining or thinking individual) should be by nature clear and confused: for example our perception of the noise of the sea, which confusedly includes the whole and clearly expresses only certain relations or certain points by virtue of our bodies and a threshold of consciousness which they determine. (Deleuze 1994: 253)

The Idea is simultaneously distinct and obscure because it is virtually determined (differential) and actually undetermined (undifferenciated). It possesses virtual but not actual reality. The perception, on the other hand, is both clear and confused because it is actually determined (differenciated) and therefore implies virtual determinations that are not differenciated. The minute or molecular partial perceptions condense or intensify more or less in relation to our bodies and determine a threshold of differenciation across which they actualise themselves into a clearly defined perception. In this context there is also the distinction between seeing up close and seeing further away or between haptic and optic space. Whereas the smooth haptic space has no fixed points of orientation, no guidelines at its disposal which could be unified in some kind of visual model, the optic striated space is determined by distant vision and its conditions. In close vision and the undifferenciated perceptions belonging to it, the differential 'prototypical relations' of seeing are dramatically evident in the way they strive to make (something) visible. 'Cezanne spoke of the need to no longer see the

wheat field, to be too close to it, to lose oneself without landmarks in smooth space' (Deleuze 1987: 493).

In the book on *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, Deleuze pins down the perceptual implications of his differential empiricism in connection with the problem of intensity. Particularly cogent is the chapter 'Perception in the Folds'. There Deleuze develops a transcendental psychology of perception, whereby every simple and object-directed perception contains unconscious individualising differences that organise themselves into genetic processes. Starting from some of Leibniz's metaphysical thoughts, Deleuze remarks that every perceiving monad expresses an infinite world. Because of their finite constitution they are, however, restricted to express clearly only a small portion of that world. The world, which does not exist apart from its expressing monads, must nevertheless be implied by them in its totality. That is only possible – apart from the mentioned clear portion – in the form of confused perceptions. Deleuze combines at this point the metaphysical thought with a psychological one, also originating with Leibniz, which Deleuze extracts – to the extent necessary – from the metaphysically burdened context of 'world syntheses' as regulated by the principle of compossibility. Accordingly, a conscious (clear) perception is assembled out of infinitely many minute (confused) perceptions that are capable of producing it in its changeable state, more or less stabilising it, and then dissolving it. There are always micro-perceptions that do not integrate themselves into the present macro-perception but prepare for the next one.

> However abruptly I may flog my dog who eats his meal, the animal will have experienced the minute perceptions of my stealthy arrival on tiptoes, my hostile odor, and my lifting of the rod that subtend the conversion of pleasure into pain ... Tiny perceptions are as much the passage from one perception to another as they are components of each perception. (Deleuze 1993: 87)

The relation between the tiny and the large perceptions is a relation between the customary and the notable. It is thus not a question of a relation between parts and wholes, at the very least because the non-notable perceptions already have a collective character in their own right, even if they do not become conscious. A conscious perception can appear whenever at least two minute and confused perceptions determine one another or enter into a differential relationship so that they bring forth a novel singularity: for example, mixed yellow and blue colours constitute a perceptible green precisely when they alone (as two separate colours) are imperceptible. In the case of micro-perceptions,

when 'differentials of consciousness' blend with one another and in this manner unfold their genetic potential in a field of individuation, they are able to call into consciousness an objective quality for the very first time.

> For example, the sound of the sea: at least two waves must be minutely perceived as nascent and heterogeneous enough to become part of a relation that can allow the perception of a third, one that 'excels' over the others and comes to consciousness (implying that we are near the shoreline). (Deleuze 1993: 88)

Consciousness in the narrow sense is therefore not impervious. Rather, it must become pervious because it itself results from passive syntheses of unconscious or inconspicuous components of perception. More exactly, consciousness is determined by structural features of bodily affectivities, as well as from the number and properties of the filters with which the continuum of singularities belonging to radical experience are 'sieved', so that the important stuff is separated from the unimportant and the expected from the unexpected. Deleuze expresses this state of affairs succinctly as follows: 'All consciousness is a matter of threshold' (Deleuze 1993: 88). Which is to say that there are intensities below the threshold, 'smaller than the possible minimum ... of consciousness' (Deleuze 1993: 88) that only become conscious past a certain point, that is when they have so organised themselves that they cross the threshold or become conspicuous.

In summary, Deleuze, influenced by Kant and Cohen's intensive understanding of the Leibnizian differential, works past Hume's classical 'pointillism', picks up Nietzsche's intensive use of force and substitutes for the Kantian 'method of conditioning' an 'internal, subjective method of genesis'. Differential relations are what filter out certain of the available hallucinatory and hazy minute perceptions and concoct out of their reciprocal syntheses a conscious perception. From that it follows that two essential cognitive presuppositions of Kantian transcendentalism fall by the wayside: first, space and time do not have to act as an a priori basis for experience in the pure form of receptivity, and second, it is unnecessary to speculate about exterior objects that 'affect the mind in a certain way' (Kant 1999: A19/B33). The pure and empirical presuppositions of experience are instead integrated into the differential self-determination of experience: space and time can be grasped as variable actualisation forms of the differential relations among minute perceptions. The object itself is nothing that is empirically given, but rather the product of those relations in completely determined perceptions.

> Thus differential calculus is the psychic mechanism of perception, the automatism that at once and inseparably plunges into obscurity and determines clarity: a selection of minute, obscure perceptions and a perception that moves into clarity. (Deleuze 1993: 90)

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The Idiocy of the Event: Between Antonin Artaud, Kathy Acker and Gilles Deleuze

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Abstract

Exploring the evolution of the conceptual persona of the idiot from the philosophical idiot in Deleuze to the Russian idiot in Deleuze and Guattari, this article suggests that their use of the figure of Antonin Artaud as a model for an idiocy that is freed from the image of thought is problematic since Artaud in fact evinces a nostalgia for the capacity for thought. The article invites the writings of Kathy Acker and argues that Acker makes possible a more successful way of thinking of the event of thought beyond the Image and thereby a new conceptual persona of the post-Russian idiot.

Keywords: idiocy, image of thought, conceptual persona, Antonin Artaud, Kathy Acker, Gilles Deleuze

> There is thus something that is destroying my thinking,
> a something which does not prevent me from being
> what I might be, but which leaves me, if I may say so,
> in abeyance.
>
> (Antonin Artaud)

I. The Philosophical Idiot

> this is a table, this is an
> apple, this is the piece of wax,
> Good morning Theaetetus.
>
> (Deleuze 2004b: 171)

In Chapter 3 of *Difference and Repetition*, Gilles Deleuze asserts that the tradition of philosophy is based on a presupposed capacity and trajectory of being and thinking toward truth through good sense

and common sense.[1] The Cartesian *cogito*, for example, remains as a beginning of thought, not only because I am because I think but because in postulating such a claim I take the act of thinking as a given, as a universal premise that in itself need not be questioned. Cited from the source, Descartes' famous principle reads as follows:

> This truth, *I think, therefore I am*, was so certain and so assured that all the most extravagant suppositions brought forward by the sceptics were incapable of shaking it, I came to the conclusion that I could receive it without scruple as the first principle of the Philosophy for which I was seeking. (Descartes 2003: 23)

While Descartes' presuppositions regarding the self-evidence of the nature of thought have been challenged throughout the subsequent history of philosophy, Deleuze suggests that this tradition of critique, exemplified by, for example, Hegel's absolute spirit or Heidegger's pre-ontological Being, has nonetheless failed to escape an ultimate reference back to sensible being as the beginning of thought. To break with this 'beginning', this presumption that lingers as a problematic beginning of thought, thinking must break with this Image.

> The thought which is born in thought, the act of thinking which is neither given by innateness nor presupposed by reminiscence but engendered in its genitality, is a thought without image. But what is such a thought, and how does it operate in this world?(Deleuze 2004b: 207–8)

From here, Deleuze shows how the Cartesian self-evidence of thought places the philosopher as the idiot. Deleuze identifies this idiot in Descartes in terms of a belief in the common sense of man regardless of acquired knowledge.[2] As John Rajchman shows, Deleuze sees this idiot as an 'original figure' in Descartes (albeit anticipated by Nicolas of Cusa)[3] who differs from the Aristotelian rational animal in that he carries a natural capacity for thought independent of his political (in the Aristotelian sense) starting point (Rajchman 2000: 37). The idiot speaks French rather than Latin and forms his thoughts according to an untutored and perfectly common 'natural light'. The idiot takes the universal capacity to think for granted and the philosopher, Deleuze writes, 'takes the side of the idiot as though of a man without presuppositions' (Deleuze 2004b: 165). Like the idiot, the philosopher fails to recognise that his self-reflection is based on a very strong presupposition regarding his own natural capacity for thought. The idiot, in fact, naturalises these presuppositions of the Image of thought and conceals them as a pure element of common sense. This means that

the idiot serves as a basis rather than an escape from the dogmatic image of thought. In the overarching movement of Cartesian subjectivity, whereby thought returns to confirm the I as the basis of its own trajectory, the idiot steps in and allows thinking itself to remain an unthought category.

This paper seeks to address the figure of the idiot, not only as a neglected theme in Deleuze studies, but also in terms of the ways in which it could be reconfigured and used as a means to move beyond rather than predetermine the Image of thought. To enable this, it revisits one of the most established figures in the history of the writing of idiocy and madness, Antonin Artaud, and invites the work of a less obvious writer in such a context, American experimental novelist Kathy Acker. Moving from Deleuze's early conception of the idiot to the later one developed with Félix Guattari and from Artaud to Acker, this paper will suggest firstly that Deleuze and Guattari's use of the figure of Artaud is problematic and secondly that Acker renders possible a more appropriate and successful way of thinking of the event of thought beyond the Image.

II. The Russian Idiot

> Descartes goes mad in Russia? (Deleuze and Guattari 2003: 63)

As has been indicated above, the idiot initially appears in Deleuze's thought as a character who insists on his own capacity for thought. This is the 'private thinker' who trusts implicitly 'the innate forces that everyone possesses by right ("I think")' (Deleuze and Guattari 2003: 62); it is the philosophical idiot, the idiotic impersonator and perpetuator of the Image of thought. In *Difference and Repetition*, the critique of this Image and the idiot that upholds it is vehement. Indeed, the whole of philosophy is at stake. As long as philosophy relies on this moral, dogmatic and orthodox *pre-philosophical* Image, we are not really thinking. Deleuze even imagines a philosophy without presuppositions:

> Instead of being supported by the moral Image of thought, it would take as its point of departure a radical critique of this Image and the 'postulates' it implies. It would find its difference or its true beginning, not in agreement with the *pre-philosophical* Image but in a rigorous struggle against this image, which it would denounce as *non-philosophical*. (Deleuze 2004b: 167)

Later, in *What is Philosophy?*, the nature of this struggle has been somewhat transformed. Deleuze and Guattari make use of the freedom of the concept 'to change and take another meaning'. The concept is an event rather than an essence, they state, which means that a new

problem will require a modification of the concept (Deleuze and Guattari 2003: 21). A post-Second World War state of philosophy, as Gregg Lambert notes, means a modernity in which common sense ceases to be self-evident (Lambert 2002: 5). As a consequence, Deleuze and Guattari offer a new conceptual persona, an idiot that does not merely reject the possibility of a public, general knowledge, but also the possibility of his own capacity for thought (Deleuze and Guattari 2000: 70).[4] While the old idiot wanted to be able to judge what was comprehensible or rational, the new idiot that Deleuze and Guattari designate as the 'Russian' idiot, wants 'the lost, the incomprehensible, and the absurd to be restored to him' (Deleuze and Guattari 2003: 63).

This figure of the Russian idiot is foregrounded already in *Difference and Repetition*, for as Deleuze puts it in his chapter on the Image of thought: 'At the risk of playing the idiot, do so in the Russian manner' (Deleuze 2004b: 166). Basing his figure on works by Russian writers such as Dostoevsky and Gogol and their fascination with nihilism and the absurd, Deleuze suggests that this is a figure who does not recognise himself in the 'subjective presuppositions of a natural capacity for thought'. Rather than taking his thinking for granted, this Russian idiot fails to adjust to this supposed self-evidence of thought; as Deleuze puts it, he 'lacks the compass with which to make a circle' (Deleuze 2004b: 166).

Even if the Russian idiot is thus foregrounded in *Difference and Repetition*, its appearance has different implications in *What is Philosophy?* Here, Deleuze and Guattari seem to have given up on the project of escaping the Image of thought and try, rather, to develop concepts and conceptual persona that enable a negotiation of thinking. The 'radical critique' of and 'rigorous struggle against this image' that Deleuze calls for in *Difference and Repetition* has turned into a focus on a reconceptualisation of the relation between the concept and the problem it responds to and thereby to a more truly immanent principle. The philosophy 'without any kind of presuppositions' that Deleuze calls for has turned into a recursive generation of images of thought. As Deleuze and Guattari write: 'A concept like knowledge has meaning only in relation to an image of thought to which it refers and to a conceptual persona it needs; a different image and a different persona call for other concepts' (Deleuze and Guattari 2003: 81). This multiplication of images, then, becomes possible in *What is Philosophy?* because thought has become a plane of immanence. There is no thinking subject to be immanent to, in the Cartesian-Kantian-Husserlian style, but only thinking as a non-transcendent event. Because thought is not ascribed to

a subject but to a *thought event*, thinking could no longer be said to stem from a will to truth. Nietzsche, Deleuze and Guattari suggest, makes us see how thought is not a will to truth but rather a process of creation. But if there is no will to truth, they continue, 'this is because thought constitutes a simple "possibility" of thinking without yet defining a thinker "capable" of it and able to say "I" ' (Deleuze and Guattari 2003: 54–5). When thought precedes the thinker and occurs through the event, there is no longer any self-evident capacity to think. On such plane of immanence, Deleuze and Guattari suggest, thinking becomes an increasingly difficult process which lacks method and proceeds by 'uncoordinated leaps', like a dog (Deleuze and Guattari 2003: 55).

Artaud is posited as the Russian idiot par excellence, a conceptual persona that enables thought to leap and snarl and thereby to approach the thought without image, the point where, as Deleuze puts it in *Difference and Repetition*, it would seem as 'though thought could begin to think' (Deleuze 2004b: 168). Artaud, Deleuze and Guattari point out, says that the limitless plane of immanence inevitably engenders 'hallucinations, erroneous perceptions, bad feelings' (Deleuze and Guattari 2003: 49). The plane of immance thus becomes a way, maybe not to escape the Image of thought, but at least to lift thought from its basis in a self-evidently capable thinker.

For Deleuze and Guattari, Artaud is the schizophrenic who neglects to confirm the established limits of literature, common sense and the body. The schizophrenic is crucial to their project because he does not see the world in terms of fixed objects or entities but rather experiences it as a constant process of unpredictable production. Thereby schizophrenia becomes a way of breaking down idealistic categories of any kind, most centrally those of the body and thought. Recurring in Deleuze and Guattari's writing, then, Artaud is praised for his insistent and self-proclaimed incapacity to think. That Artaud sees thought as the event of a '*central breakdown*' and as proceeding 'solely by its own incapacity to take form' means that he opens for a possibility of creating a thought without Image (Deleuze 2004b: 417). In Deleuze, Lambert writes, the figure of Artaud is found at the very moment of rupture of the Image of thought, where the subject fails to externalise itself to make the Image part of the Whole and instead breaks apart at the prospect of this Image. At this point of rupture, thought 'does not accede to a form that belongs to a model of knowledge, or fall to the conditions of an action; rather, thought exposes its own image to an "outside" that hollows it out and returns it to an element of "formlessness"' (Lambert 2002: 127).

Artaud's literary and dramatic production seems to confirm and even flaunt his inability to think. His theatre conveys an uncertainty

in thought at the same time as it stands as an affirmation of what is lost, incomprehensible and absurd. His incantations and mumbles, cries and rhythms are not so much expressions of an inability to think and speak as they are expressions of a new form of thinking and speaking, one that is unhampered by the weight of rationality and language. The destruction of language frees the creativity of thought and enables a subjected 'deeper intellectuality' to happen.[5] Deleuze and Guattari pick up on Artaud's use of the figure of the mummy in his 'The Mummy Correspondence' but also recurring in poems such as 'La Momie attachée' and 'Invocation à la Momie'. In the former, Artaud compares his 'bloodless intellect' to that of the mummy in order to give God 'a glimpse of the void in which being born necessarily puts me' (Artaud 1968: 168). In *What is Philosophy?*, Deleuze and Guattari follow up on this in describing the idiot as 'a cataleptic thinker or "mummy" who discovers in thought an inability to think' (Deleuze and Guattari 2003: 70). This mummy links back to Artaud and cinema and the way he celebrated the potential power of cinema to disrupt and disassociate thought by 'un-linking' images of the Whole. In *Cinema 2. The Time Image*, Deleuze traces Artaud's use of the cinematic medium to reveal a powerlessness to think through the figure of the automaton, or *vigilambulist*, that stands as the impossibility of thinking in thought. The spiritual automaton in Artaud's scripts *32* and *Dix-Huit Secondes*, Deleuze argues, 'has become the Mummy, this dismantled, paralysed, petrified, frozen instance which testifies to "the impossibility if thinking that is thought"' (Deleuze 1989: 166). The mummy as the bloodless figure that both exists and does not is thus an important figure for Artaud as well as for Deleuze and Guattari in their search for the unthought in thought. What Deleuze and Guattari do not pick up on, however, is the close connection in Artaud between the word 'momie' (mummy), and 'môмo' which, Hayman notes, is slang for 'idiot' (Hayman 1977: 133). In Artaud, the 'void' in which he finds himself as a mummy is closely linked to his impotent intellect, his idiocy.

In *Artaud le Môмo*, Artaud uses surrealist nonsense to create his own language. As Hayman notes, Artaud has an ambition to create to 'create a language which did not depend on words that were not his' (Hayman 1977: 134). This means, Deleuze and Guattari in their turn suggest, that he makes thought snarl, squeak and stammer, 'which leads it to create, or to try' (Deleuze and Guattari 2003: 55). The loss of stable references of thought is extremely painful but also something more creative than those who 'fix landmarks in their minds', those who

> are masters of their own language, all those for whom words mean something, all those for whom there are currents of thought [...] and who have named these currents of thought I am thinking of their specific task and the mechanical creaking their minds give out at every gust of wind. (Artaud 1968: 75)

Unlike this 'trash' of 'those who still believe in orientation of the mind', Artaud celebrates and affirms his confusions. 'I truly lose myself in thought like in dreams', he writes, 'the way one returns to thought, suddenly. I am he who knows the inmost recesses of loss' (Artaud 1968: 74–5). This loss is the loss of the self-evidence of thought and Artaud thereby rejects the idiocy of philosophy and its presumption about the self-evident capacity to think. Returning to thought 'suddenly' means a production of thought that does not begin nor return to the innately capable thinker but that is produced in thought itself.

Despite his uncertainties and failures, Artaud's is an ambitious project that somehow continues to strive toward new possibilities for being and for thought; it is, as he states himself, a confrontation with 'the metaphysics I created for myself, in accordance with the void I carry within me' (Artaud 1968: 81). This means that although Artaud rejects the self-evidence of the thinking 'I', he nonetheless believes in the creativity of thought. But to reach this creativity, there must be an originality that only the idiot could provide because to reach real thinking one must slough off the 'masters of language' who 'orient thought'.

If we take a look at Artaud's private letters, however, we will see how Artaud struggles to find a way of justifying a thinking that seems to lack the will to truth that would justify it as subjective thought. '[I]s the substance of my thought so tangled', he writes in the first of his many letters to Jacques Rivière, 'and is its general beauty rendered so inactive by the impurities and uncertainties with which it is marred that it does not manage to exist *literally*? The entire problem of my thinking is involved. For me, it is no less than a matter of knowing whether or not I have the right to continue thinking, in verse or prose' (Artaud 1965: 8–9). Artaud's uncertainty about his own 'right' to continue thinking suggests a frustration, a sense of a capacity lost to him. Thought continually 'abandons' him, leaves him on the border of non-being. The poems he so insistently offers to Rivière are crucial to him because an existing uncertainty is still so much more reassuring than non-existence. Artaud, it seems, clearly mourns his professed inability to think, and he is also pursued by nostalgia; he is in search for a capacity lost, in 'constant pursuit of [his own] intellectual being' (Artaud 1965: 7). While Artaud

admittedly cannot posit thinking as a comforting proof of his being in the manner of Descartes, he is still, I would argue, in pursuit of this possibility. It is this pursuit, in fact, that constitutes the ingeniousness as well as the tragedy of his sense of mental dislocation.

Does not, then, the figure of Artaud in fact bring out some tensions rather than resolve Deleuze and Guattari's problem of freeing thought from its own image? As one who constantly doubts his capacity for thought, and who disrupts what may be called the self-complacency of thinking, we can see clearly why Deleuze and Guattari would place Artaud as a Russian rather than a philosophical idiot. At the same time, the fact that the perceptions on the plane of immanence can be described as 'erroneous' suggests that Deleuze and Guattari's conceptual persona of the Russian idiot nonetheless aspires to universal, or at least unequivocal, truth even as he fails to achieve it. Error, Deleuze writes in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, is a concept whose persistence in philosophy illustrates the dogmatic image of thought. Everything opposed to the image functions to lure thought into error (Deleuze 2006: 98). As such, error is central to the classic Image of thought in that it comes to define that which is false in relation to the turning toward truth. While this should mean that error may provide a way of escaping the Image of thought, of demolishing the notion of truth at its basis, the relation to error must be as decisive as the relation to truth. To continue along Nietzschean lines, an error which is measured against truth must surely be indicative of a reactive force rather than the active force that throws us into thought. As Deleuze himself writes: 'Insofar as our thinking is controlled by reactive forces, insofar as it finds its sense in reactive forces, we must admit that we are not yet thinking' (2006: 100). Artaud's letters suggest that his failure of rationality does not do away with rationality and truth but compares itself with them. Not only does it invest these concepts with a sense of nostalgia; his recognition of his own lost capacity to think also keeps his thought in the grip of reactive forces and, as such, determined by certain coordinates.[6] Does this not, in fact, suggest a 'pre-Russian' rather than Russian idiot, an idiot that refers back to the dogmatic, even Cartesian plane by measuring his thought according to innateness and doubt?

III. Friendship, Ethics, and the Event of Thought

Artaud's letters to Rivière and the doubts they bring to light actualise the function of *friendship* in philosophy.[7] For thinking to be possible and for new concepts to be created Deleuze and Guattari reconfigure the

relation of friendship. The friend, they argue, reveals 'the Greek origin of philo-sophy' and the way in which philosophical communication and reflection 'violently force the friend into a relationship that is no longer a relationship with an other but one with an Entity, and Objectality [*Objectité*], an Essence – Plato's friend' (Deleuze and Guattari 2003: 3). Such friendship relies on common knowledge and on the self-evidence of thought and thereby blocks the possibility of creating new concepts, that is the possibility of thinking. Furthermore, it points to the inevitable ethics of the event. A philosophical thinking based on intersubjective idealism, or, rather, a stupefying dialectics, disables thinking through appropriation and domination of the Other that could unsettle the presuppositions that make up the Image of thought. The true event of thought relies on an ethics of true difference, 'to will the difference' of the friend that disrupts rather than negotiates your ability to think.

While the conceptual persona of the friend is not a person in the material, phenomenal sense in Deleuze and Guattari's reading, I will nonetheless stop for a moment to compare cursorily Artaud's exchanges with Rivière to an exchange between Acker and Avital Ronell.[8] At first glance, the exchange between Artaud and Rivière reveals the lack of common knowledge that philosophy presumes and thereby affirms Artaud's position as the Deleuzian Russian idiot who rejects the natural capacity for thought. Artaud anticipates Rivière's rejection of his work and even justifies it. 'You will say to me', he writes in a postscript, that 'in order to give an opinion on matters of this kind, another mental cohesion and another perceptiveness are required' (Artaud 1965: 12). Recognising his own failure he realises that 'it may be necessary to think further than I do, and perhaps otherwise. I am waiting only for my brain to change' (Artaud 1965: 12). But can the lack of 'proper' thinking really be a liberatory thought-event as long as it is measured exactly against the 'proper'? Is a thinking that is not only nostalgic, as I have already suggested, but also painfully aware of its submission as an 'Entity' to the domination of the old philosophical friendship really affirmative of its own difference?

This exchange suggests a very different ethical relation. In an article on Acker, Ronell characterises her exchanges with Acker by emphasising the 'co' in conversation. This is a politics of friendship that Ronell theorises in a discussion whose implications lie well beyond the scope of the present essay, but that indicate an ethics of 'being with' that complicates the origins of thought through the work of Martin Heidegger, Jean-Luc Nancy and Jacques Derrida. Arguably even more complex, however, is the ethics of the production of thought in Acker's

writing. Acker's texts, I would suggest, do not rely on the 'co' so much as the 'con' in conversation.[9] Acker strips philosophy and literature of their meaning by removing philosophical statements and narrative pieces from a meaningful context. She uses, or mis-uses or (ab)uses, thought, thereby undermining it as a meaning-making process. These *con*versations, then, imply a very different friendship than that which relies on common sense.

This con, it is important to note, is not a dishonesty within a moral system. Rather, it is a dishonesty that displaces this moral system. Or, more radically, it is a con that displaces the system of self-evident thought. 'The only way you can get the real self', Acker writes in *Great Expectations*, 'is to rip someone off [...]. You're a con man' (Acker 1982: 98). What is the nature of a friendship that steals rather than communicates? What are the ethical implications of such thought? Stealing, Deleuze has argued, is the very reverse of plagiarism or copying. Rather than the deadweight of imitation, stealing involves a becoming, a 'double-capture' or 'double-theft' that is always 'outside' or in between (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 7). Stealing is a more radical move than plagiarism in that it produces something new out of the old. Indeed, Deleuze describes his collaborations with Guattari in these terms of the productivity of a 'theft of thoughts', of being 'between the twos'. 'I stole Félix, and I hope he did the same for me' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 17).[10]

In Acker's literary production, the act of stealing involves a radical mode of thought because thinking has become an act of immanent creation rather than one of nostalgic reproduction. Acker steals shamelessly from philosophical as well as literary discourse. She 'borrows' characters, fragments of stories and historical personages from the history of literature and philosophy. For example, she includes the writings of classical Roman poet Propertius and Pauline Réage's infamous *The Story of O* as well as quasi-fictionalised versions of real life critics such as Sylvère Lotringer and Susan Sontag. Furthermore, she transcribes lines from other novels and even 'steals' entire book titles, one novel being entitled *Great Expectations*, another *Don Quixote*. In the former, Pip from Charles Dickens' novel becomes a woman and a woman (possibly the same, who knows) is taken to Roissy to become O, Pauline Réage's masochistic protagonist.

This kind of tactic does not only challenge representation and meaning in literature; Acker's unabashed pilfering also challenges the nature of philosophy as a reflective mode of thinking. Acker's writing seemingly mirrors the thematisation of the thinking subject and the

possibility of the self-reflexive moment of subjectivity that haunts philosophical thinking. Her work seems apparently intelligent and reflective but this overtly intellectual self-reflexivity cannot be sustained. When classic philosophical claims are squeezed in between nameless subjects, incoherent narrative and stolen scenes of sexual violence, Acker undermines any moment that would enable a dialectical reflection, a mutual mirroring, between literature and philosophy and also, on a narrative level, between being and thought. While situating her characters in a patchwork of philosophical and literary discourse, these characters neither come to reflect philosophically on literary events nor do they reflect in a literary manner on philosophical events. Such a strategy would presume the possibility of knowing, of an autonomous vantage point, both epistemological and ontological. But there is no vantage point in Acker's texts and thereby thinking becomes neither a definition of being nor a mode of reflection. Acker's layering of literature and philosophy creates subjects without thoughts and thoughts without subjects. Her characters are portrayed as beyond a 'natural capacity for thought'. Thinking has a problem completing the circle of thought through which the characters could be portrayed as self-reflective subjects.

Acker's characters are denied a 'natural capacity for thought' in the way in which their identities are disrupted through their stolen roles and nature. Missing is also a logical literary narrative as well as a grammar through which we could determine the 'I' and a continuous self-reflexive consciousness that would make thought their 'own'. This means that the philosophical statements that are scattered through Acker's writing are not part of any coherent argument or thinking on behalf of the characters. Instead, they are ruthlessly mingled with a kind of incoherent splutter – 'I'm a … googoo' – short notes on sexual assault and pieces of appropriated narrative (Acker 1982: 21). In this way, the presence of philosophical thought does not serve to construct characters as philosophical subjects. In Acker's fiction, thought simply refuses to come back to itself and thereby to ground the being of her characters as constituted subjects. Thinking is no longer presented as subjective reflection. In fact, any attempt at self-reflection seems to take her characters even further from themselves. Thinking has two possible outcomes in these novels; it ends either in a stated impossibility of thinking or in the dissolution of the logic of thought and its relation to the subject. In *Empire of the Senseless* she writes: '[S]ince the I who desired and the eye who perceived had nothing to do with each other

and at the same time existed in the same body – mine: I was not possible' (Acker 1988: 33).

Acker's characters do not only lack the capacity for self-reflexivity, they also lack the immediate recognition through which thinking could proceed along the path of common sense. The common sense of the philosophical idiot functions as such because to him, thinking is obvious and does not therefore lead to the questioning of thought itself. Acker's writing violently opposes such self-evidence of thought. When Acker's characters are temporarily and defectively constituted through philosophical claims, they are constituted, not through thinking, nor through thinking about thinking, but through *someone else's* thinking about thinking. By extension, there is no possibility for thought to be truly self-reflexive – thought cannot return to prove the subjective capacity of the character to think, there are no such circles to be made. Instead, thought comes to be outside itself, beside itself. When Acker's characters are caught in a repetition of thoughts that cannot be identified as their own, they lose the possibility for coherent self-reflection.

Thus far, Acker's writing fits well as a thematisation of the Russian idiot that no longer takes for granted his own pre-existent capacity for thought. In its forceful mixture of challenging and frequently repulsive narrative fragments and its unforeseeable textual spaces Acker's work is distinctly similar to Artaud's. Like Artaud, Acker seems to resist representation in favour of a stuttering text in which characters ebb and flow without a delineable subjectivity. Acker too questions the self-evident nature of thought. Acker's writing, however, does not only reject reminiscence, it also rejects the nostalgia for the capacity to think that haunts both Artaud and the conceptual persona of Deleuze and Guattari's Russian idiot. In fact, Acker plays with and ridicules the Cartesian agent capable of improving himself through thinking. In her text, seemingly philosophical ponderings concerning the nature of being and thinking are mixed with incoherent writings on sadistic and masochistic relations. In this way, the 'instrumental stance' to one's desires, inclinations, tendencies, habits of thought and feeling is overtly ridiculed. Instead of producing coherent self-reflection, these philosophical scraps are juxtaposed to the most extreme forms of physical and unconstrained desires, inclinations and habits. We read: 'Stylistically: simultaneous contrasts, extravagancies, incoherences, half-formed misshapen thoughts, lousy spelling, what signifies what? What is the secret of this chaos? (Since there's no possibility, there's play. Elegance and completely filthy sex together)' (Acker 1982: 107). Thought, here, is exchanged for 'play'. Thinking, in Acker's writing, is

not so much a mode of reflection or knowledge as it is an event – an immanent possibility unrestrained by Cartesian cognition as well as by a nostalgia for it.

'Since the world has disappeared', Acker writes, efficiently doing away with the transcendent outside, 'rather than objects, there exists that smouldering within time where and when subject meets object' (Acker 1988: 38). And this is also how philosophy and literature meet in Acker's texts – through a smouldering within time where transcendent thought is impossible. It is, to return to Deleuze and Guattari, to will the difference; stealing becomes an event of thought in that it is unhampered by pretentions to any Image or Idea.

Acker's writings, it has been pointed out, are negotiations of the 'power relationships inherent in writing' (Mitchell and Parker 2005: 68). While this could be related to her infamous strategies of plagiarism, her strategies of layering of philosophical and literary discourses could be related to negotiating the power relationships inherent in thought. By inserting philosophical fragments in context without sense, she denies the friendship of philosophy, the totalising power of reason whereby thought could make sense of itself. The event of thought and its embodiments in philosophy and literature is the event of the con.

IV. Stealing Artaud: New Friendship, New Idiocy

But where is the thought that is without an I? What is the ethics of the thought-event that is beyond the individual subject? We have still not managed to determine what such an event of thought would be. (Indeed, if we did, would we not construct another image of thought?) Deleuze takes Artaud's concept of genitality as a possibility for thinking without an image. Genitality is a way of pointing to a creation rather than the innate capacity for thought. It is a way of escaping the idiocy of philosophy by replacing the Image of thought in which thinking already exists and can be judged with the birth of thought outside such preordained presuppositions. When Artaud says that he is 'innately genital' and that he must 'whip his innateness' in order to be, he is replacing the reproduction of an already existing quality (Image of thought) with the creation of thought through a violent becoming (thought without Image). Artaud is he who can think only if he obliterates the Image of thought and genitality violates this image because it threatens the reproduction of the already existing capacity of thinking that the Image of thought presumes. As Catherine Dale points out, Artaud can make innateness genital because he sees

it as an autonomous creation; thought is engendered in itself without presumptions (Dale 2002: 89). This process, the engendering of thinking in thought as Deleuze calls it, is about having the courage to confront the idiocy of philosophy, of facing the possibility of pain and madness as the event of thought. 'I truly lose myself in thought like in dreams', Artaud writes, 'the way one returns to thought, suddenly. I am he who knows the inmost recesses of loss' (Artaud 1965: 74–5).

In her novel *Pussy, King of the Pirates*, Acker invites, or rather steals, Artaud. She sets up an incoherent communication between Artaud and O, the protagonist, we recall, that Acker has stolen from Réage's novel.[11] Acker couples O's sexual concerns as a masochistic prostitute with the painful event of thought in Artaud.[12] In the novel, O has a difficulty with being beyond the hole that her name spells out because 'I couldn't walk away because inside the whorehouse I wasn't anybody. There was nobody to walk away' (Acker 1996: 9). O's statement is later followed up by one by (Acker's) Artaud who declares that 'Now I am Gérard de Nerval after he castrated himself because consciousness in the form of language is now pouring out of me and hurting me and so I can be with you. I shall own you O' (Acker 1996: 21). Both O and Artaud balance between genitality as becoming or disappearing, with the costs of the loss of self. But while O struggles to exist beyond the hole, Artaud needs to produce a gashing hole in order to reach consciousness and language. For Acker's Artaud, it seems, O becomes the very possibility for thought, his castration enabling his access to consciousness which, in turn, enables his possession of O. But who is O? O, in her masochistic surrender and complete abandon of integrity and self-hood is, many readings of Réage's novel have pointed out, an O, a void or a hole – a nothing. Is this then, the 'complete nothingness' from which Artaud snatches his 'shreds' of poetry? (Artaud 1965: 8). Acker places the O, the nothingness, as the beginning of thought – the aim for Artaud's nostalgic longing for 'owning' the capacity to think.

One might say, then, that Acker takes the cue of Artaud's/Deleuze's concept of genitality and brings it into the traditionally female position of non – access to language and consciousness, the O, or the impossibility of speaking and being so central in feminist studies. 'I can't help myself anymore I really can't I'm just a girl I didn't ask to be born a girl. When I think, I know totally realistically I'm an alien existant' (*sic*) (Acker 1982: 117). In Acker's hands, Artaud's creative idiocy opens a way to engage the female inaccessibility to thought toward a rebellious refusal to think. Acker chains the body to the text, O to Artaud and S/M to thought. Acker's stealing thus brings the inaccuracies and absences to thought, the

body that it has feared and the potential incapacity that it has ignored. Is O the possibility for a thinking that is 'neither given by innateness nor presupposed by reminiscence but engendered in its genitality' as Deleuze desires? Beginning with O means beginning from nothing, from a genital plane of immanence that disables the reminiscence at the basis of the image of thought from Socrates to Descartes.

Does this mean that we can consider Acker's fiction as an alternative configuration of idiocy, one that may be more active than the idiocies Deleuze and Guattari proffer? Considering Acker's writing in terms of idiocy may be perceived as provocative, not in the least because many feminist critics have pointed to Acker's writing as offering an important contribution to the possibility of thinking female subjectivity. As the many feminist readings of her work suggest, Acker can indeed be said to challenge the mastery of discourse through pastiche and mimicry and in this particular respect, her literary project can be discussed in relation to Luce Irigaray's philosophical one. Like Irigaray, she follows the critical approach(es) evinced both in postcolonial and feminist quarters that see mimesis as introducing a powerful disruptive force into the dominant discourse that it mimics. However, if this strategy opens for 'another articulation' as Brennan suggests, then this is an articulation that does not playfully repeat a masculine framework of thought but that violates it with its repetition. Acker constructs her characters through statements about the impossibility of identity, about moving so fast you become 'a perfect image: closed', about not being a name but a movement (Acker 1982: 44, 49 and 63 respectively), and many others that clearly echo the terminology and thought of what in her contemporary America was called poststructuralism. By tying philosophy and its presumptions regarding thinking closely to her characters while simultaneously subverting its morals, Acker creates a space that resists any transcendent logic that could determine the nature of thinking. Unlike Irigaray's repetition that works to bring out the feminine potential in the history of metaphysics, Acker's repetition, as Naomi Jacobs suggests, 'is original only in its omissions and inaccuracies, the absences surrounding its inclusions, the forgetfulness around its remembering' (Jacobs 1989: 53). In this sense, Acker's literary production invests Irigarayan mimicry with the problem of thinking, not just beyond a phallogocentric frame of thought, but thinking in itself.

It seems clear, then, that if thinking in Acker's work is idiotic, it is not so in the philosophical sense described in *Difference and Repetition*. Both her characters and the text itself lack the common sense that allows presuppositions regarding the nature of thinking. In other words,

she denies the self-evidence of thinking and knowing. In this sense, it coincides quite clearly with the struggle against the Image of thought that Deleuze calls for in *Difference and Repetition*, 'even at the cost of the greatest deconstructions and the greatest demoralizations' (Deleuze 2004b: 166). Acker's fiction renounces representation and the common sense that upholds the morality of the Image. As she writes in *Bodies of Work* 'The problem with expression is that it is too narrow a basis for writing, for it is pinned to knowledge, knowledge which is mainly rational. I trust neither my ability to know nor what I think I know' (Acker 1997: viii). As such, Acker has the courage of 'modestly denying what everybody is supposed to recognize' and at first glance her work would thereby seem to correspond to the other version of the idiot that Deleuze proposes, that is the Russian idiot (Deleuze 1004b: 165).

As I have suggested, however, the conceptual persona of the Russian idiot in *What is Philosophy?* is compromised by an unacknowledged, or at least untheorised, nostalgia in Artaud. Carla Harryman writes that in Artaud, Acker finds a mirror, a reflection of her own project for the unsettling of the Cartesian reign of unsullied, unbodied thought (Harryman 2004: 164). I would suggest, however, that while Acker certainly finds an ally in Artaud, she takes his ball and runs with it. Her destruction of thought is a way of giving up the project of authenticity altogether and affirming the non-originality of thought itself. The inability to think in Acker thus comes to have less to do with the possibility of thinking than with the inability to locate this thinking in a coherent 'I'. As a complex challenge to Descartes' proof for his own being through thinking, Acker lets O in *Pussy, King of the Pirates* state: 'I thought, where I am in this world which is no world, there's nobody' (Acker 1996: 57). There is no world, there is nobody in the world and thought hangs loose, unable to provide the reassuring 'therefore' that would allow thought to reconfirm the existence of 'I'. At stake in Acker's fiction is the occasion of thought itself, the being of thought without an I.

It seems, then, that Acker's writing of idiocy fits neither with the idiot as the figure of common sense, nor with the idiot as he who questions this capacity. It neither naturalises the capacity for thought nor mourns its loss. And yet, her writing repeatedly rejects the possibility of a complete circle of self-reflexivity that would allow her characters as well as her texts themselves to become capable of coherent thinking.

Acker simply refuses to create her fiction and her characters in accordance with a tradition that does not account for any movement outside the circle of self-reflexive thought. There is no stable relation

between inside and outside, no Cartesian consciousness through which the 'I' could be a reflection on the very fact of thinking. According to such a tradition of philosophy, Acker's characters simply are not thinking. Through the disjunctive mix of philosophy and literature, thinking becomes a doing, an action released from any fixed point. Scraps of philosophical discourse, bits of literary history, historical and fictional characters, fragments of sentences and narrative all stand to evince thought as an event unhampered by innate capacities as well as nostalgia for authenticity. Despite, or maybe because of, the pre-eminence of stolen material in Acker's texts, her writing resists a presupposed image or Idea according to which thinking could proceed.

If it is correct, as Deleuze argues through Nietzsche, that as long as our thinking follows the logic of the reactive forces of metaphysics, we are not thinking (Deleuze 2006: 101), and the possibility of thought demands a refusal of its self-evident nature, then the event of thought can only take place through an idiocy that is neither that at the heart of philosophy nor that of the Russian madman. This article has posited that the presumptions of the philosophical idiot are replaced in Deleuze and Guattari by a Russian idiot that does not quite manage to escape a classical, Greek, ethics of friendship as a means of evaluating and coordinating thought. At the same time, Deleuze cites Maurice Blanchot when he describes the event as 'the abyss of the present, the time without present with which I have no relation, toward which I am unable to project myself' (Deleuze 2004a: 172). In this abyss of the present, the event necessarily precludes the possibility of thinking within the coordinates of a presupposed image. The abyss of the present cannot sustain a friendship of common sense, of common coordinates. What Acker's writing points toward is a sense in which the event of thought must be idiotic in a manner that supersedes both innateness and nostalgia. If Acker's writing does indeed achieve this it does so by presenting what may be called a post-Russian form of idiocy. If it does so, it does so through the unveiling of what has been latent in Deleuze and Guattari all along, that is thinking as the creative and absolutely unrestrained idiocy of the event.

Notes

1. I would like to express my thanks to Dr Charlie Blake for crucial response to an early draft of this paper, to an anonymous reader for crucial response to a later draft and to Professor James Williams for helping me make sure that I got my Images and images right.

2. Descartes, as Deleuze and Guattari show, works with thought according to three personae, Eudoxus – the idiot, Polyander – the technician, and Epistemon – the public expert (*What is Philosophy?*, 2003: 221).
3. Nicholas de Cusa's wrote on the figure of the idiot in the fifteenth century and Deleuze and Guattari point toward him as the first to make the idiot into a conceptual persona (*What is Philosophy?*, 2003: 62).
4. 'The conceptual persona', Deleuze and Guattari write, 'is the becoming or the subject of philosophy, on a par with the philosopher, so that Nicholas of Cusa, or even Descartes, should have signed themselves "the idiot", just as Nietzsche signed himself "the Antichrist" or "Dionysus crucified" ' (Deleuze and Guattari 2003: 64).
5. Cited in Hayman (1977: 85).
6. This nostalgia and recognition of his lost capacity for thought also differentiates this Russian idiot from yet another idiot that appears in Deleuze's essay 'Plato and the Simulacrum'. This idiot, as Lambert notes, is more likely to be found in Shakespeare than in Dostoevsky and is characterised less by the naive innocence of the common man than by a 'will to stupidity' or even 'malicious cunning' that allows him to ignore his effect on the world (2002: 5).
7. The notion of friendship has been extensively theorised by philosophers from Aristotle to Derrida, the contemporary interest peaking, arguably, with the seminars called 'Politics of Friendship' in 1988–89 in France. My aim here, however, is not to make a (belated) contribution to these debates but rather to use the notion of friendship as a stepping stone toward a discussion of the ethics that qualify the event of thought in Artaud and Acker.
8. Ronell, incidentally, has spent quite a bit of time theorising the notion of stupidity. Her book *Stupidity* was published in 2002. She also writes about stupidity in relation to Acker in the essay 'Kathy goes to hell: on the irresolvable stupidity of Acker's death'.
9. Obviously, the prefix 'con' has its etymological base in 'com', that is 'with', an interesting point in itself in relation to Acker's strategy of incorporating others' work and the implications of such strategy on how we think about friendship.
10. For this more personal-philosophical aspect of Deleuze and friendship, see, for example, Charles Stivale's work on these relations including *Gilles Deleuze's ABC: The Folds of Friendship* (2007) and 'The folds of friendship: Derrida-Deleuze-Foucault' (2000).
11. This exchange between Artaud and O also appears in a slightly modified version as the essay 'The end of the world of white men' (Acker 1995).
12. Acker presents O as a prostitute – in Réage's novel she is not.

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Violently Oscillating: Science, Repetition and Affective Transmutation in Fassbinder's *Berlin Alexanderplatz*

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Abstract

This essay looks at Fassbinder's *Berlin Alexanderplatz* to trace the film's transformation of a mechanistic scientific discourse into affective indeterminacy. Through patterns of repetition of a key event, the film considers its protagonist as a complex web of constantly shifting forces – a network of biological, social, political and semiotic flows coalescing in a body that exists in a state of perpetual oscillation between force and mutilation, ecstasy and pain. The role of physics and other materialist discourses in the film is thus not to fixate subjectivity, but rather to provide a passage into its affective transformations and the intense desubjectification that results.

Keywords: Fassbinder, Berlin Alexanderplatz, Deleuze and Guattari, science, repetition, affect

> Franz Biberkopf bends, and at last, like an element struck by certain rays, is transmuted into another element. (Alfred Döblin, *Berlin Alexanderplatz*)

Fassbinder's cinema is eminently affective in its zealous attempt to document the processes of transformation that bodies undergo as they pass from one state to another.[1] There is no denying that, to some extent, these affective transformations are attached to a particular human subjectivity. But, as *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (1980) quite eloquently shows, Fassbinder's films tend to surpass the level of personal consciousness or subjective intentionality, instead reconfiguring the body's powers of affection as self-determining material flows and processes. By taking full advantage of the capacities of cinema to visualise the virtual plane where affective transformations take place, *Alexanderplatz* intensifies the desubjectifying process to which

Alfred Döblin's novel already submits its protagonist Franz Biberkopf. The film positions its central character in the midst of a vortex of planes of composition and assemblages of enunciation that go from the imperceptible microlevel of physical, biological existence to the more readily perceptible levels of Weimar economics, politics and culture.

One may look at the city of Berlin in the film and at the representative of its human skin, Franz Biberkopf (Günter Lamprecht), as instances of a chaosmic matter that is governed in equal parts by chaos and order, chance and determination. *Alexanderplatz* intervenes into this chaosmic matter by paradoxically 'mak[ing] a machine that triumphs over [its own mechanistic organization (*sic*)]' (Lambert and Flaxman 2005: 118). The film functions as a performative machine that passes through mechanistic and deterministic rules (of narrative, of science, of psychology and ideology) in order to arrive at a sense of affective interiority beyond subjectivity. Rather than shunning mechanistic determination in the name of the higher human faculties of free will or endurance, *Alexanderplatz* makes its own the very scientific discourse that might potentially reduce the human event to a series of external, homogeneous and deterministic acts. But, in adopting a scientific discourse in some of its pivotal moments, I want to argue, *Alexanderplatz* makes a strategic use of science. The role of physics and other materialist discourses in the film is thus not to fixate or determine the subjectivity of its protagonist, Franz Biberkopf, but rather to provide a threshold or passage into his affective transformations and into the intense desubjectification resulting therein.

Against all logic, references to science in this film work in the direction of affective shock and not in the direction of instrumental reason. Perhaps because science is generally thought of as an epistemological domain of functions far removed from affections and sensations, its unaccountable presence during peak emotional moments generates the widest arc of affective resonance. In other words, the scientific will to exclude emotion paradoxically feeds into the irruptive and erratic power of emotion itself. Thus, despite the film's recurrent references to scientific laws and despite its involvement of a man's history with the idea of physical, accidental forces, *Alexanderplatz* considers these laws and forces as carriers of awe-inspiring mystery, and not as signs of crude, legible or fully determining causality. My interest in this film is therefore circumscribed to the unusual strategies it deploys as it transforms a quantifying scientific discourse (and the deterministic discourse of its narrative) into affective quality. Borrowing Deleuze and Guattari's terminology, I would say that *Alexanderplatz* transforms legal, state

science into a nomad or intensive science that follows the flows of matter and accommodates notions of relationality, affect, creativity and virtuality, thus displacing a deterministic model for one ruled by affective indeterminacy.

From the materialist perspective I am taking, Franz Biberkopf embodies a complex multiplicity of systems of intensities – what John Marks has described as a 'temporary coagulation in the flow of biomass, genes and … units of culture … mov[ing] through time' (Marks 2006: 13). This temporal, and temporary, confluence of biological, social, political and semiotic flows that is Franz presents itself to us as a forceful, imposing body, but also as a body that is used up, mutilated, battered and punished by the very forces that coalesce in his existence. Like all complex material systems, Franz displays both a long-standing behavioural pattern and a reserve of unpredictable potential. His strong tendency to act violently against the women he loves functions as an attractor and predictor of future behaviour, a force so firmly established that it guides a process toward an outcome even prior to its actualisation (DeLanda 2005: 83). Thus we see Franz's accidental murder of his lover Ida (Barbara Valentin) re-enacted six times throughout the film, never letting go of Franz in a definitive way.

James Williams' remarks on the ways in which repetition is invested with value are strongly evocative of the logic *Alexanderplatz* follows in choosing the event of Ida's killing as a privileged attractor in Franz's history:

> Seen as brute material processes, chains of repetitions are neutral with respect to value … [But] when events are selected, value impinges to introduce hierarchies … For Deleuze, [this value] is itself *a selection through sensations and these depend on past associations of ideas and sensations*. There is therefore a virtual, immaterial, trace of selections that runs through all the virtual past and this trace introduces value and selection into actual processes. *There is a virtual history of value that allows for determinations in the actual … A continuous relation … is presupposed by all actual events*. (Williams 2006: 110, emphasis added)

As in the process described by Williams, *Alexanderplatz* effects a hierarchical distribution of affective value across the series of events that constitute Franz's history, and such process of selection and distribution entails a certain direction or determination in that history. Furthermore, the notion of a 'virtual, immaterial, trace of selections' immediately displaces any hint of human intentionality or agency, suggesting instead that the process of selection of events results from the self-organising

tendencies of matter itself (in this case, the film as a self-regulated material assemblage of concepts, percepts and affects). As I will show in the following discussion, *Alexanderplatz* selects the event of Ida's murder as that which is capable of yielding the most prolific and productive connections with any other subsequent event. The film lays out Franz Biberkopf's history as a series of actual presents that can only be synthesised if seen in a continuous relation with the pure virtual past of Franz's killing of Ida.

But at the same time, the deterministic power of this repetitive event needs to be qualified. Given that the film starts with Franz leaving Tegel prison after serving time for his murder of Ida, this crucial event is never visualised in the present tense of its actualisation. Instead, being situated from the outset in the realm of the virtual, the event of the murder maintains its openness to quasi unlimited repetition and transformation in the mode of an eternal return. Thus, despite the event's function as a crucial attractor and predictor of Franz's future behaviour, its virtual status confers on it an outstanding capacity to grow connective ties with other events, thereby enabling its ongoing regeneration. As an event fundamentally unhinged from a stable ground, Ida's murder attests to Dorothea Olkowski's idea that attractors can be 'unstable … and allow for some unpredictability even while deterministically following established rules' (Olkowski 2007: 210). The film extends the permanent openness and oscillation of this event to Franz Biberkopf as well, who is never reduced to either a phallic dominant subject or a victim, or even to both of these positions at once. As I hope to demonstrate, even when dealing with repeated content, *Alexanderplatz* performs that content in a transversal fashion that never definitively circumscribes Franz within extrinsic social, ideological or moral coordinates (Genosko 2002: 202). Rather, in the course of the thirteen episodes and epilogue of *Alexanderplatz*, Franz comes to instantiate the 'essential complexity of elementary phenomena' (Bachelard 1985: 103). Like these phenomena, Franz remains absolutely exposed to the Open, in a state of constant oscillation and affection, having implicitly decided to live unshielded and unmoored.

I. The Encounter with Minna, or Pass-Words into the Garden of Eden

Franz's sexual encounter with Minna (Karin Baal), shortly after his release from Tegel prison, is powerfully connected to his killing of Ida. The moment is temporally uncertain, as it works as both a prelude and a

sequel to Franz's murder of Ida – a prelude to the film's first visualisation of the event, and a sequel to its invisible actualisation in the past. As I implied a moment ago, this scrambling of narrative linearity no doubt reinforces the priority the film gives to continuous affective virtuality over discrete linear temporalities. Franz's visit to Minna prefigures, and affectively motivates, our first visual access to Ida's murder. The scene opens and closes, hence is literally framed, with a portrait of Ida that Franz keeps in his room. Minna bears an uncanny resemblance to her sister Ida, and, as Franz seduces and rapes her in this scene, she very much stands for a kind of resurrected Ida who alone can restore Franz to his former sexual potency after years of guilt-induced impotence. Fassbinder shows Franz in this scene as inhabiting two divergent planes simultaneously: the symbolic/semiotic system of phallic, majoritarian subjectivity dependent upon the order-words of militarism, nationalism and dominance; and the molecular system of life at an elemental material level that dissolves the boundaries of subjective intentionality.

Soon after entering Minna's apartment, Franz's eyes lock into a realist painting of a military officer kneeling in front of the Kaiser and receiving a sword from him. Franz is literally positioned between the dark, emphatically defined contours of the painting's military bodies and ideals, and the softly illuminated, diffused close-ups of Minna anticipating the dissemination of identities that is to follow. Inspired by his vision of the painting, Franz launches into a song whose lyrics straightforwardly link sexual potency with military authority. The words 'The Kaiser relinquishes the sword; the Kaiser must return the sword to me' express a sexual ideal rooted in Oedipal principles that waver, all too predictably, between castration and dominance. This reading is reaffirmed by Franz's subsequent sexual assault on Minna. However, the scene simultaneously opens a powerful line of flight, the strength of which does not lie in opposing the order-words of nationalism, militarism or Oedipal sexuality. Rather, Fassbinder deflects what Deleuze calls the death-sentence of the order-word by 'hearing another word beneath it' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 110). This more resonant sound, which uncovers Franz's primal relation with the natural flows of life, emerges through a moving alchemy of images and words.

The crucial part of the scene begins with a shot compositionally divided in half along the horizontal axis formed by a fish tank elevated from the floor. In the upper half, we see the fish in the tank, while the lower half frames Franz and Minna's bodies on the floor. While Franz forces himself upon Minna, Fassbinder's voice-over tells a story of an old divorce case concerning a captain and

his wife's infidelity with another captain. This story tangentially pertains to the scene's associations of military authority with masculine sexuality, but its relative indeterminacy marks the first step toward the line of flight that intensifies as the rape proceeds. Defacialised close-ups[2] of Franz expressing infinitesimal variations of sexual ecstasy are punctuated by melancholy, almost religious sounding, violin chords and by Lamprecht's voice-over announcing his exit from prison and his entrance into 'the Garden of Eden, with dazzling fireworks'. In the next shot, the fish are moving in a liquid space with no visible boundaries or frames. The left upper corner of this liquidity is brightly lit as if by the light of the sun. The green of plants, the orange of the fish and the purple of the background reverberate with Franz's declared state of *jouissance*, which Fassbinder's voice-over also expresses: 'No house. No gravity, centrifugal force. Gone, sunk down, extinguished. The red diffraction of solar radiation, the kinetic theory of gases, the transformation of heat into energy, the electrical oscillations, induction phenomena, the density of metals, of fluids, of non-metallic solids'. These words, quoted verbatim from the novel, are perhaps the film's first avowed expression of its commitment to the idea of an impersonal, material consciousness that encompasses, yet surpasses, the Döblin-Fassbinder creative continuum. The metamorphosis the scene has undergone by this point recalls Deleuze and Guattari's words in *A Thousand Plateaus*: 'We witness a transformation of substances and a dissolution of forms, a passage to the limit or flight from contours in favor of fluid forces, flows, air, light, and matter, such that a body or a word does not end at a precise point' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 109).

The emotionless and measured tone of Fassbinder's voice, the content of his words and the deframing of the images – all contribute to changing the order-words conspiring to organise the scene into what Deleuze calls 'pass-words', 'words as components of passage' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 110), as they transform the stale organisation of majoritarian identity and Oedipal sexuality into creative chaos and moral judgement into affective paralysis and shock. The escape from physical gravity alluded to by the words ushers us into pure celerity without measure or extension – a corporeality so intense that it tips over into incorporeality as it reaches its limit. Legal science mutates into eccentric science by putting gravity in contact with affective speed (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 373). The fluidity/liquidity that takes over the last moments of the rape scene does not cause the rape to become any less shocking. If anything, the slowing down of time and the literal decrease of gravitational weight in the bodies increase the shock we receive by virtue

of the unlikely performance of rape these elements produce – a surprising conjunction of masculine force and its extreme deformation.[3] Despite Franz's cognitive experience of the event as a joyous repossession of the sword of his masculinity, the film invokes a larger reality – one that subsumes the boundaries of Franz's individual subjectivity within the immanent flows of matter that compose his existence.

II. An Event That is Manifold: Now and Then Franz Kills Ida

Immediately after the close-up of Ida's portrait at the conclusion of Franz's encounter with Minna, we are thrown into the first re-enactment of Franz's murder of Ida. This is the first in a series of repetitions throughout the film, each of which is uniquely matched to a different voice-over text to bring forth in a stretching out of time the manifold singularities of the single event the film identifies as Ida's murder. Accordingly, each time the event is re-enacted, the subjectless consciousness carried over by the voice transects the event with a different plane: of physical laws, of bodily force and labour force, of historical and political events, of Biblical narrative, of bits and pieces of news of the day, and so on. The voice-over thus performs the function of transversality with regard to Franz Biberkopf's story, in the sense that it summons radically heterogeneous domains with the aim of preserving the event's complexity and flexibility. These are not the repetitions of a personal unconscious compulsively drawn to revisit a traumatic event in a static, unproductive fashion. Instead, the multiple repetitions are performed by a cinematic brain that is auto-possessed and auto-affected as a proto-subjectivity of material and living assemblages.

The first re-enactment of the murder is the only one to feature a direct verbal description of the act. While in the image-track we see Franz first quarrelling with Ida and then beating up her body in various positions to the point of death, Fassbinder's voice-over provides a medical dissection of Ida's damaged body parts, and a moment-by-moment account of the forces mobilised by Franz's body and received by Ida's. In the final portion, the voice-over invokes the Newtonian model of classical physics:

> What … happened to the woman's rib cage … has to do with the laws of rigidity and elasticity, impact and resistance. Without a knowledge of these laws, the case cannot be understood. The following formula may be applied: Newton's first law says that a body remains in a state of rest unless acted upon by an external force, open parentheses, which applies to Ida's ribs, close parentheses. Newton's second law says that the change of momentum is

> proportional to the force and is in the same direction, open parentheses, the effective force being Franz, of his arm and fist and the contents thereof, close parentheses.

From a purely scientific standpoint, such a clinical account of the event perfectly fits the model of classical or Newtonian mechanics as described by Arkady Plotnitsky:

> [Classical mechanics] accounts for its objects and their behaviour on the basis of physical concepts, such as 'position' and 'momentum', and measurable quantities corresponding to them. Classical mechanics is thus, ontologically, *realist*... [and] *causal* ... [and] epistemologically, *deterministic* insofar as our knowledge of the state of a classical system at any point ... allows us to know, again ... its state at any other point. (Plotnitsky 2006: 44–5)

As Döblin aptly notes in his novel, 'there is no unknown quantity' (Döblin [1929] 1968: 124) with respect to the physical forces involved in Franz's act and the laws that govern their effects. Döblin's interest in foregrounding the quantitative dimension of the event is expressed in the physics equation he provides, which the film also displays on a starkly white background at the end of Ida's killing. This equation, like the voice-over text itself, epitomises the scientific attempt to describe and predict the behaviour of systems by creating functions capable of actualising the virtual (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 118).

It is clear that the mechanistic account of Ida's murder infuses a high degree of impersonality into the behavioural dynamics between Franz and Ida. While impersonality is instrumental in avoiding the inertia of psychologising and moralising evaluations of this event, it also comes at the price of stripping the body's gestures, acts and expressions of interiority. In other words, as Olkowski notes with respect to the limits of Newtonian dynamical systems, 'Intentions are converted into the objective movements of the nervous mechanism, sensory experience becomes a quality traceable from nerve endings to nerve centers, as the body is transformed into an object, a machine among machines' (Olkowski 2007: 211). The lack of interiority that Olkowski ascribes to scientific descriptions of dynamical systems is in fact echoed by Thomas Steinfeld's comments on *Alexanderplatz* when he says that '[Franz Biberkopf's] "ego" is always present ... on every page of the novel [and every scene of the film], yet it never forms a consistent interior' (Steinfeld 2007: 57). Given this stripping of subjective interiority, the question *Alexanderplatz* implicitly poses, and, I believe, affirmatively answers, is whether it is possible to preserve interiority while doing away with subjectivity as one adopts mechanistic accounts of human

existence. The impending task then is to examine the means by which the film still manages to produce an overwhelming, at times even stifling, sense of interiority. How does *Alexanderplatz* surpass the model of classical dynamics/physics and its homogeneous, external and deterministic version of events? How does it arrive at its own conceptual and aesthetic version of quantum field theory or chaos theory in order to express film events as heterogeneous, internal and absolutely new? In other words, if consciousness disappears in an individuated human sense, can it perhaps re-emerge in an altered form, that is as a primary form of consciousness that surveys itself and is no longer dependent on an ego-logical subjectivity? (Bains 2002: 112).

As always already cognisant of the outcome of the violence that unfolds before our eyes, the voice-over during the first re-enactment of Ida's murder seems initially to have an anticipatory function, a certain epistemological capacity to survey and determine the course of action. This claim to cognition also appears to be reinforced by the legalistic content of the speech – its emphasis on court records and especially on Newton's physical laws clearly examples of a scientific discourse that is reductive and extensive rather than expressive and intensive. But despite appearances to the contrary, the intervention of science here is not destined to have autonomous power, but to follow the flow of matter. In ways that I will momentarily discuss, the juncture of moving images and words brings together in the closest, hence most affecting, way the deterministic laws of physics and the absolute openness of the situation, that which has always already transpired in the past and its eternal prolongation into the future as a spilling of chaotic creativity.[4]

Although the voice-over describes the action concurrently unfolding in the images, its function is anything but redundant. By providing a painstakingly detailed account of the forces unleashed by Franz's body and applied to Ida's, the voice-over discloses a physical dimension of the event that remains below the threshold of visibility. As I already indicated, the text underscores the invisible materialism of the event by reference to physical laws that remove the action away from ego-logical agency. Instead, these impersonal physical laws recast the event as a matter in flux that works independently of human consciousness and possesses its own self-measuring and self-determining capacities. Döblin's training as a physician must no doubt have played a part in his choice of words here, as in many other instances in the novel/film that make a substantial use of medical discourse. But the transformation of this scientific discourse into affectively inflected materialism, the capacity of these quantifying words to become intense,

is in excess of the model of gravitational forces described by the voice-over alone.

The alchemy of image and word produced by the film injects a qualitative affective leap into the written narrative of Franz Biberkopf. Relative to the novel, the film has at its disposal a greater number of means to devise a structure that 'allow[s] us to grasp change from the inside rather than the outside' (Olkowski 2007: 206). This enhanced capacity of film is an effect of the shift not only from a written text to a visual and multi-sensorial one, but it is also an effect of the shift from written narration to one recurrently delivered by Fassbinder's voice. Images and words enter in a relation of mutual affection and enhancement beyond simple analogy or mimesis. Affective interiority is triggered on multiple levels simultaneously and along their various concatenations and intersections. The spoken word itself consists of two interrelated facets: a material trace or pure physis of sound, and a semiotic/semantic content. In the former instance, Fassbinder's voice-over running commentary is a catalyst for a kind of interiority that we feel and absorb below the threshold of consciousness. On the other hand, the very content of the words in this scene reinforces the material properties of the voice by referring to material processes. The culmination of these series of material assemblages is achieved in their intersection with the image, which truly liberates matter's capacity to set its own 'energetic materiality in movement' (Marks 2006: 5).

The repetitions of Ida's murder plunge us into a temporal hole of affective intensity. Affect emerges from the tension between (the spoken) cold factual details and (the visible/audible) hair-raising violence; but it is also heightened by a twofold mechanism that empties out the image of its narrative content while saturating it with a temporality that is as dense and visible as bodies. This is the temporality that film-maker Tom Tykwer identifies in *Alexanderplatz* when he says that, 'The film ... stretches [the story] ... and spins it out into time, expands it ... to such a degree that interim spaces are torn open in this drawn-out time ... until time itself seems no longer expansible' (Tykwer 2007: 22). Certain cinematic inflections of the image are key to the film's materialisation of time. A few close up shots of Ida during the murder scene, for example, reveal a slowing down and a thickening of time that enhance the ethereal fogginess of the image. At one point in particular, after Franz hits Ida's side with the cream whip, we see a close up of her face, suffused with pain and disbelief, looking up towards Franz. As her mouth opens and blood streams from it, Ida seems to articulate a word or two, but her

gesture is impossibly slowed down and her words remain inaudible. In this hole in time, the focus becomes uncertain, the lighting liquid. The visceral paralysis that takes hold of the image in such moments matches the kind of suspended emotional state that Brian Massumi describes as 'a temporal sink … not exactly passivity, [but a state] filled with … vibratory motion, resonation' (Massumi 2002: 26). In its intensely slow movements, Ida's close-up takes on a peculiar affective speed – the kind of speed in which bodies are caught up when they deviate from their gravitational centre.

When taken all together, as a synthesis of the virtual pasts and the actual presents, the six repetitions of Ida's murder in *Alexanderplatz* insistently manifest the wavering of Franz Biberkopf between dynamism and determinism. That is, although the event as outcome is set and the rules of its narrative scaffolding are given even prior to its first visualisation, the particular movements and interactions of the particles entering into each re-enactment are fully contingent and unpredictable. Each of these repetitive instances thus animates a different affective choreography, depending on the myriad sensations and affections that emerge in the interface between the almost identical images of the murder and the consistently new words spoken by Fassbinder's voice. Although we may come to know the sequence of the movements and gestures that transpire between Franz and Ida rather exhaustively and intimately, we can never predict the kind of world each new intersecting network will be able to fashion.

III. The Whole Man, the Amputee and the Slaughtered Animal

In order to tackle the question of 'what Franz Biberkopf's body can do', *Alexanderplatz* experiments with the possibility of extending Franz's body into a virtual series of bodily states. The third re-enactment of Ida's murder in the film's eighth episode brings forth the unstable conjugation of power and vulnerability that is Franz's body, in fact weaving together this most productive of events in Franz's history with the two contiguous figures of physicality in pain that are central to the film: the crippled human and the slaughtered animal. In this instance, the transversal qualities of the voice-over further widen the event of Ida's murder by spinning a series of discontinuous, yet uninterrupted, narratives revolving around the idea of bodily force and its impairment. Physical amputation or diminution thus figures prominently here, first in a story that features Franz himself, as an amputee, observing a horse that has fallen into a pit, where it trembles, whinnies and thrashes furiously

with its legs. Fassbinder's voice-over informs us that, as 'Franz jumps down into the pit … and helps push the horse forward, everyone is amazed at what Franz can do with one arm'.[5] Multiple lines of resonance fan out in several directions at once. First, the words in the story resonate against the violent visual interaction of Franz and Ida. The horse in the pit that trembles, whinnies and thrashes furiously with its legs is both Franz, even as he thrashes furiously against Ida, and Ida herself as she is subdued and killed by Franz. Second, in a temporal tour de force, the resonance between words and images brings all temporalities out of linearity and into an affective knot of simultaneity, for the Franz-become-horse in the story is already an amputee, while the images of the murder show Franz as physically whole. Logically, we know that Franz's amputation will be actualised long after Ida's death, but, following the impersonal process of selection described earlier, the film chooses virtual resonance over actual, chronological linearity, between different states of the body in time, as well as between the concepts of ability and inability, physical force and physical impairment.

As expressed in the statement 'everyone is amazed at what Franz can do with one arm', force and disability are conjugated here as (virtual) coexistent compossibilities, rather than (actual) oppositional states of affairs. According to Williams, the field of the virtual, which produces the new, can 'change only as continuous, that is, in terms of relations of distinctness and obscurity, rather than in terms of relations of opposition and identity' (Williams 2006: 112). In the domain of the virtual, being a whole man, an amputee, and very importantly in *Alexanderplatz*, an animal in pain or a slaughtered animal, are not three successive moments in chronological time, but three continuous states of the body/soul,[6] three modalities of affective intensity in a scale from the least intense exteriority/optimal limit (Franz as a whole man) to the most intense interiority/pessimal threshold (Franz as a slaughtered animal). Thus the film is free to conjugate these various virtual powers irrespective of the actual state of affairs Franz may be involved in at any single point in time, spinning multiple configurations of actuality and virtuality (For example, in this instance in episode eight, Franz is already an amputee while remembering killing Ida as a whole man, while a voice-over describes him simultaneously as an amputee and a becoming-horse-in-pain; yet, in another instance in episode six, Franz is a whole man who dreams he is a horse pulling a vegetable cart in the cold of the night; the horse/Franz then dies and transmutes into a bird only to be bitten by a snake he identifies with Reinhold [Gottfried John].)

As part of its ongoing emphasis on Franz Biberkopf's participation in a series of physical/material processes, *Alexanderplatz* displays a gallery of becomings-animal that further intensify the desubjectification of its protagonist. The transversal quality of molecularity involved in becoming removes the human body from its 'natural' (in the sense of 'programmed') functions in order to participate in an 'unnatural' (in the sense of 'non-anthropomorphic' or 'transversal') nuptial or relation. Thus, throughout *Alexanderplatz*, the human body and the animal body intersect each other on a continuous plane of physicality and affection. In the story Fassbinder reads over the third repetition of Ida's murder, Franz is not just an observer of the horse's pain. Rather, the proximity between Franz and the horse constitutes a machinic assemblage of bodies that does not withstand anthropomorphic hierarchies or territories. As in Deleuze's example of Hofmannsthal's becoming-rat,[7] it is not a question of '*a feeling of pity* … still less an identification' between human and animal. Rather, it is a question of Franz and the horse being traversed by a single composition of speeds and affects, so that 'Being expresses them both in a single meaning in a language that is no longer that of words, in a matter that is no longer that of forms, in an affectability that is no longer that of subjects' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 258).

An illuminating instance of machinic conflations of bodies as exchanges of affective forces beyond linear chronology can be found in episode thirteen when Franz, upon hearing the news of Reinhold's killing of his girlfriend Mieze (Barbara Sukowa) in the woods of Freienwalde, takes the canary Mieze had bought for him out of its cage and crushes it in his strong hand. Here, Franz, the animal brought again and again to the abattoir by Reinhold, becomes the agent of death/Grim Reaper for the helpless bird. The bird is Mieze,[8] killed once more by Franz/Reinhold. But, in resonance with Franz's dream in episode six just mentioned, the bird is also Franz, seduced, suffocated and bitten by the snake Reinhold.

The complex affective circulation between Franz and Reinhold throughout *Alexanderplatz* deserves more attention than I can devote to it here. Suffice it to say that Franz is the vivid example of the 'becoming-animal essential to masochism' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 155) – his masochistic position with respect to Reinhold inseparable from his becoming-amputee and his becoming-slaughtered-animal. As is made abundantly clear by Franz's irrational yielding to the increasingly irrational demands placed on him by Reinhold, Franz is 'kept in continual expectancy of [Reinhold's] actions and orders, and … little by little all opposition is replaced by a fusion of [Franz's] person

with [his master's]' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 156). As I implied a moment ago, as Franz strangles the canary/Mieze a second time, he finally embraces the continuous, undifferentiated stream of violence that traverses both his and Reinhold's actions, in a sense participating at that moment in the same affects and speeds that compose Reinhold (an idea exactly captured in the title of this section as outlined in the Criterion DVD edition: 'Me and Reinhold ... and murder').

The story of Franz's becoming-horse-in-pain resonates with a recurrent line of thought in Fassbinder's work: man becoming-animal-at-the-slaughterhouse, an image at the heart of his previous film *In A Year of Thirteen Moons* (1978).[9] *Alexanderplatz* reaffirms what was already clear in *Thirteen Moons*, namely that, far more important than a visual analogy between the dismembered bodies of cattle and the human body, is the way in which the latter is endowed with the relations of speed and slowness of the slaughtered animal. If in *Thirteen Moons*, the voice of Erwin-Elvira (Volker Spengler) becomes a major transducer of the affects and speeds of the body-in-pain, in *Alexanderplatz*, this function is taken up primarily by Fassbinder's own voice, and even, in one particular instance, by the physical presence of his body on screen. The three instances in *Alexanderplatz* that most poignantly draw on the image of the slaughtered animal are all indicative of Fassbinder's own desire to involve himself in Franz's 'unnatural participation' in other bodies-in-pain, hence creating an interiority that no longer belongs to any individuated body or subject. Thus, in episode four, we are shown a series of documentary stills of cattle at an abattoir while Fassbinder in great detail recounts the drama of a bull facing his death at the hand of the drover. When Ida's killing is re-enacted in episode nine, Fassbinder's voice tells the Biblical story of Abraham, asked by God to prove his faith by showing his willingness to slaughter his own son Isaac. The repetition of the image of the slaughtered animal in the epilogue matches the more hallucinatory quality of this latter part of the film: here, Fassbinder's voice is replaced by his own visible body standing by the angels Sarug and Terah, all three of them witnesses to the final slaughtering of Franz and Mieze's bodies in the human abattoir. In this instance, the explanatory function of the voice is displaced by the odd juxtaposition of the angels' matter-of-fact description of the event ('swing, swing, hack, hack') with the music of Wagner's *Tristan and Iseult* and Mieze/Sukowa's frightful uninterrupted screaming. With all such material/physical interventions in his film, Fassbinder largely departs from the classical authorial position; that is, one hears in his voice, or even senses in his physical presence, a

desire to become imperceptible by dissolving his subjectivity within the continuous affective flow of bodies in the film.

As Fassbinder's voice explains over the slaughterhouse stills in episode four, 'Stockyard, slaughterhouse, and market form an indivisible economic unit'. The slaughterhouse image thus weaves together the most intensive/molecular affective series and the most extensive/molar discursive transformation of the body. As Thomas Elsaesser has pointed out, throughout *Alexanderplatz*, the idea of physical force as pure matter is contiguous with the idea of labour force as quantifiable/commodifiable physicality within a system of capitalist economic exchange (Elsaesser 1996: 235). During the third re-enactment of Ida's murder discussed above, the voice-over commentary places a great deal of weight on the issue of how a disabled man's alienated relation to the labour market drives him to make his living by engaging in morally dubious activities. From the story of the paralysed man who trundles his cart forward with his arms through the city selling postcards with sensationalist tales, to the dialogue that first questions and then sanctions the idea of a crippled man working as his wife's pimp, this whole string of narratives reflects Franz's situation for most of the film as a cripple and a pimp. Thus Franz is situated within a discursive assemblage that pursues its inquiry into the notion of force by weaving together 'semiotic, material, and social flows simultaneously' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 23).

The entire sequence of narratives spoken by the voice-over in this scene shows a powerful link between physics and sociology – the assemblage of physical forces a body crystallises and mobilises, and the ways in which those forces are managed or accounted for by the labour structures and institutions of a given capitalist economy/society, whether they be measured and put to use or disregarded as useless. Even if a bit decontextualised in historical terms, Deleuze and Guattari's observation that 'the wage regime [of the nineteenth century] had as its correlate a mechanics of force' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 490) is rather relevant to the interacting dynamics of physical force and socio-economic force played out in *Alexanderplatz*. An enormous unevenness thus exists between Franz's formidable physical force and the unwillingness, or rather inability, of the labour market to set this force in motion as anything but a commodified quantity. It is not that the socio-economic conditions of Weimar Germany strip Franz of his force, but rather that, to some extent, they force him to channel that force into extremely violent expressions. In fact, the film never looks upon Franz as a victim altogether deprived of force, but rather as a network of constantly shifting forces. That is why this scene in particular

does not spin force and disability as two oppositional values, but as differing degrees/intensities in a single conceptual web.[10]

IV. From Heaven to Hell in the Blink of an Eye: The Diabolical Interval

In *Alexanderplatz*, the assemblage Franz-Mieze may be seen as both an *original production* of new possibilities and a *dead-end production* of the fear of repetition of the assemblage Franz-Ida. But, I would argue that, in staging the alliance between Franz and Mieze, the film's meticulous affective choreography inflicts a final blow on the notion of repetition as predictable determination. For, while we are led to believe, not without reason, that the event of Ida's murder has a powerful enough hold on Franz's history so as to deterministically taint and destroy his relationship with Mieze, the manner in which Franz and Mieze interact at the level of each singular encounter (and even the manner in which their alliance eventually decomposes) is ultimately more forcefully indebted to the idea that 'the structure and functioning of complex systems remains somewhat unknowable and unpredictable' (Marks 2006: 10).

Tykwer has perceptively pointed out the disconcerting effects of the twists and turns of mood in *Alexanderplatz*, 'the accidentalness with which vehement rage can suddenly turn into bloody madness' (Tykwer 2007: 28). The scenes between Franz and Mieze redouble the accidental undertones of human behaviour already at work in the scene of Ida's murder, as they widen the gulf that separates the states the body traverses, instantly transforming the tenderest, most innocent expressions of love into the cruellest expressions of wrath and hysteria. But, underneath this impression of accidental changes of mood lies a whole method that Fassbinder seems to adopt for tracing and documenting human behaviour – a method that is radically at odds with the realist, psychologising tendencies of classical narrative. For while classical realist cinema is only attentive to the visible level of actual expressions and actions with which it identifies the whole of the real, *Alexanderplatz* weaves a far more complex layering of realities. Leaving aside the layers of the possible and the potential,[11] which would take us away from the specifics of a scene, let us just consider the layers of the actual and the virtual and their intricate intertwining as a particular scene unfolds. To this end, I will briefly examine one of the most emotionally nuanced of exchanges between Franz and Mieze. This scene in episode ten takes place in their apartment on the morning after

Franz has come home deliriously drunk and Mieze has made her pact with Eva (Hanna Schygulla) regarding her having a child by Franz. In this scene alone, Franz and Mieze undergo three consecutive series of tense quarrels and tender reconciliations, thus expressing a high degree of affective oscillation and volatility.

The scene begins with Mieze standing by the window a few feet apart from Franz who sits at the table. Obstinately silent at first, Mieze takes her time to voice her displeasure with the kind of men Franz befriends and the left-wing political meetings he attends. Upon Mieze's demand of a promise of change, Franz bangs his hand on the table with a violent blow, but then he gets up to feed the canary and, in a much lighter, kinder tone, informs Mieze of his utter indifference to politics. Mieze is overjoyed, approaches Franz and hugs him, but a few moments later, she resumes her place by the window, a move which Franz rightly perceives as indicative of further worries on her mind. With the two of them in their initial positions again, Mieze declares she has met a guy who wants something more permanent, 'like Eva's wealthy gentleman friend'. Gnawed by jealousy and self-doubt, Franz smashes a saucer on the floor with all the strength of his one arm. Mieze then engages in one of her hysterical demonstrations of singular devotion to Franz, kneeling on the floor by him while denying his accusations. Franz believes her and they kiss. Mieze then discloses the core issue of her concern, namely that Eva, in response to Mieze's pleas, has agreed to have a child by Franz. At this point, the height of Mieze's happiness, Franz, thinking that Mieze wants to get rid of him, collapses on his knees over a chair and begins to sob and scream, while he delivers a chilling monologue that features himself in the place of the animal led to slaughter. Mieze pleads with him to stop and, with her head down, she covers both her ears while he continues to scream at her. In an unexpectedly composed tone of voice, Mieze finally makes herself heard, puts Franz's fears of being abandoned to rest and declares her love for him once more. Mieze looks at Franz with her radiant, child-like smile, and Franz's remaining resistance melts away. They kiss again and she rushes out.

In realist cinema, emotional expression does not take into account the continuous trail of affective transformations in the virtual, hence emotions seem to appear out of, and to disappear back into, nothingness. To avoid the threat of incoherence, extreme emotional changes within a classical scene need to be exhaustively accounted for and sewn back together into linear coherence. Usually, the emotional rift is repaired through causality – by adding an explanation through dialogue or by pointing out a narrative connection through editing or camera work.

By contrast, Fassbinder's cinema shows the pure continuity of states in the virtual, which obviates the need for rationalisations of extreme changes from one state to another. And, even when, as in the scene above, (Franz's) questions are rather logically followed by (Mieze's) answers, the affective accent falls entirely elsewhere. Here, bodies and their emotional expressions are caught up in what Deleuze and Guattari call a state of 'continuous variation' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 108):

> The smallest interval is always diabolical: the master of metamorphoses is opposed to the invariant hieratic king. It is as though an intense matter or a continuum of variation were freed. The idea of the smallest interval does not apply to figures of the same nature; it implies at least a curve and a straight line, a circle and a tangent. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 109)

Thus, as the scene described shows, the greater the distance between two contiguous emotional states, the smaller the interval, hence the more diabolical the intensity of the passage from one state to the other.

Under the kind of magnified lens that Fassbinder applies to the behaviour of bodies, the most minute of inflections in gesture or movement becomes perceptible right at the interval, the point of passage from the virtual to the actual. In other words, the barely perceptible moment-to-moment changes in bodily posture (from standing or sitting to kneeling), gesture (from small to large or hysterical) or voice (from neutral speech to loud laughter, yelling, sobbing, and so on) compose a continuous topology that allows us to visualise the very movement of the actual's appearing – the passage from virtual affects to actual gestures and actions. This intricate choreography of the visible whereby the actual emerges only to recede back again into inactuality/virtuality (Massumi 2002: 136) (not nothingness) endows the human event with a complexity that can never be grasped merely by treating bodies as external, visible signs of fully disclosed and rationalised behaviour. As Marks puts it, 'the identity of an actualized [*sic*] object or event can never fully account for that object or event' (Marks 2006: 3). Such extension of the actual into the virtual acts, at the level of the film's perceptions, sensations and affections, as a powerful mechanism for generating a sense of non-subjective interiority.

If, on a visible, actual plane, the shifts of mood between Franz and Mieze appear disconcerting, random or unjustified, on the level of the virtual they are part of a 'continuous topological transformation' (Massumi 2002: 184) that always already contains the most disparate of emotional states. The film intervenes into this virtual plane by selecting and choreographing these various affects, acting in conjunction with the

dynamic reserve of surprise that is nature itself (Massumi 2002: 236) with the aim of producing the most surprising, least deterministic of configurations and trajectories. It is thus not a matter of considering the whole process determined in advance, insofar as the affects are already real on a virtual plane, but a matter of *which affects* will be actualised and of *what compositions with other affects* they will enter into. Will Franz at a particular point react to Mieze with violence or with kindness? Will the past assemblage Franz-Ida be actualised again, or will something else emerge instead?

The film does take account of the possibility of repetition with the phantasmagoric insertion of a travelling shot of two decapitated mannequins at the start of a scene in episode ten when Mieze decides to get drunk with Franz. As the hand-held camera travels over the mannequins, also tracing the movement of a spider that crawls over one of the bodies from foot to head, Fassbinder's voice reads a text that transposes Ida's murder onto Mieze: 'In his thoughts he was holding a small wooden instrument, and he struck Mieze a blow with it from above, hit her in the chest once, twice, and smashed her ribs. Hospital, cemetery, Tegel Prison'. But, as we see in the film, rather than simply repeating the Franz-Ida assemblage, the end of the Franz-Mieze alliance exponentially enlarges the scope of the former event with its far more complex, devastating resolution. Thus, relative to Franz's murder of Ida, the murder of Mieze at the hands of Reinhold intensifies Franz's individuated violence with its extension into the assemblage Franz-Reinhold (which is ultimately at stake in actualising Mieze's death);[12] as well, the second murder in the film widens the affective resonance of the Franz-Ida murder event with the far more disparate affective dispositions between cold, lethal Reinhold and trustful, loving Mieze.

As we clearly see in the emotionally overwrought scene discussed above, Franz and Mieze each bring a particular set of affects into their alliance: in the case of Franz, a culturally inspired fear of a loss of masculinity combined with a paradoxical masochistic willingness to submit to Reinhold's humiliation and abuse; in the case of Mieze, a child-like trust incapable of discriminating between serpents and doves. As Deleuze and Guattari remark in the above quoted passage, 'the idea of the smallest interval [and its diabolical intensity] does not apply to figures of the same nature' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 109) but to those that relate through a profound disparity. Indeed, such is the case with the volatile affective alchemy produced by the Franz-Mieze assemblage. For, if Franz and Mieze are on the one hand joined by a fundamental belief in the goodness of the human other, they are also situated at irreconcilable

extremes, particularly with respect to the cultural codes and demands of their gender positionings. Thus all exchanges between Franz and Mieze in the film show that:

> Every union is undone by its own discordant productions; for every connection, a disjunctive synthesis emerges to separate each event both from its sense and from other events, destroying codes, pushing ahead of itself the detritus of life, actualizing [sic] it as pure value, the value of savagery, tyranny or capital. (Olkowski 2006: 171)

Olkowski pairs off this force of separation and discordance with nature's intrinsically violent task 'to disconnect what has been connected, to keep separate, to tear apart what otherwise might be related' (Olkowski 2006: 169). *Alexanderplatz* is overtly cognisant of such a destructive force, as apparent from the film's continuous references to death as 'a Reaper with the power of almighty God'. The words Fassbinder speaks in a voice-over during the last moments leading to Reinhold's murder of Mieze are in fact strongly evocative of this force: 'Let no one come to stop anything here, or there will be a rupture such as no hurricane or rockfall can hinder. It is a cannonball, a mine flying through the air, smashing through anything in its path, thrusting it aside. On it goes, farther and farther'. From this standpoint, man's violent acts are but a residual effect of 'the divine power to break apart anything that has been connected' (Olkowski 2006: 169). Looking at Franz Biberkopf as a residuum of nature's violent axiomatic certainly allows us to avoid a moralistic judgement of Franz's acts and to reconsider these acts in a more dispassionate light. But I wish to go further and suggest that, while the film shows a lucid awareness that the violent axiomatic can neither be mitigated nor redeemed, it is at the same time capable of inscribing another force that runs parallel to, and can be felt beneath, such destructive imperative. This, I would argue, Fassbinder accomplishes in his film by creating an open-ended, perpetually moving machine, in the words of Ronald Bogue, 'an image … intense enough that it *lives its own life*' (Bogue 2006: 218).

Alexanderplatz makes available to our perception a common matter that synthesises all intensities (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 109) – from the biological and physicochemical to the aesthetic, linguistic, semiotic and political. To escape the 'death sentence' that might have ensued had the film offered a psychological simplification or a moral judgement of Franz, Fassbinder submits all systems that compose Franz Biberkopf's existence to a continuous affective synthesiser. It is by no means a question of lining the gestures of a phallic, sadistic masculinity with

an aesthetic exuberance that would obliterate the ethical implications of its violent acts. Rather, it is through the material, virtual continuity that synthesises a sadistic male force and the deterritorialising forces that tear away at the illusion of its coherence that the film harnesses its most radical ethical impulses. Indeed, the uncovering of such illusion and the acknowledgement of the claim to consciousness of vital, impersonal forces unfold in *Alexanderplatz* as indispensable components in Fassbinder's passionate wager for a new ethics of subjectivity.

Alexanderplatz may be considered a scientific experiment on human existence – an experiment where life unfolds according to laws quite other than those of classical physics/mechanics. In its staging of Franz Biberkopf's harsh, yet eventful, existence,[13] the film blatantly rejects the inherently soothing rules of realism, causality and determinism. Instead, *Alexanderplatz*, more faithful to the spirit of Döblin's novel in this respect than the novel itself could be, traces the trajectory of a man who is absolutely open to affection, and who breathes life's risks beyond any possibility of protection or promise of salvation. Franz Biberkopf appears as the ultimate oscillator,[14] the abolisher of all prediction, in a film that knows there is no secure haven outside this life, and no armour that can protect us against its forces.

Notes

1. In *Deleuze and the Cinemas of Performance: Powers of Affection* (2008) I have analysed these affective processes in two other Fassbinder films: *The Marriage of Maria Braun* (1978) and *The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant* (1972).
2. The treatment of Franz's face at this point recalls Deleuze and Guattari's comments: '[W]hen the face is effaced, when the faciality traits disappear … we have entered another regime, other zones infinitely muter and more imperceptible where subterranean becomings-animal occur, becomings-molecular, nocturnal deterritorializations [sic] overspilling the limits of the signifying system' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 115).
3. The slowing down of time common to many moments in *Alexanderplatz* recalls Dorothea Olkowski's notion that 'some slow-down [is] essential to the intuition of sensibility' (Olkowski 2007: 7). This view is echoed by Gregg Lambert and Gregory Flaxman when they write of cinema as a techno-scientific art 'made up by the relative speeds it uses to slow down chaos in order to "capture" movement' (Lambert and Flaxman 2005: 119).
4. The passage in *Alexanderplatz* from classical/Newtonian mechanics to an affectively-inflected mechanics runs parallel to a conversion of a phenomenological notion of embodiment (where bodies retain their gravitational weight) into a Deleuzian incorporeal materialism (where bodies are set loose from a gravitational centre/anchor).
5. Note the similar wording Deleuze and Guattari use in reference to Little Hans' affective horse when describing the all-too-common incident in the early decades of the twentieth century of a horse falling in the street: 'These affects circulate

and are transformed within the assemblage: *what a horse "can do."* They indeed have an optimal limit at the summit of horse-power, but also a pessimal threshold: a horse falls down in the street! It can't get back on its feet with that heavy load on its back, and the excessive whipping; a horse is going to die! – this was an ordinary sight in those days (Nietzsche, Dostoyevsky, Nijinsky lamented it)' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 257, emphasis added). In the voice-over story in *Alexanderplatz*, the impaired condition of the horse is contrasted with the 'unnatural' conjugation of ability and disability displayed by Franz: 'Everyone is amazed at *what Franz can do* with one arm'.

6. Spinoza's idea of a parallelism between body and soul seems to be present throughout *Alexanderplatz*, in the way it perceives the augmentation or diminution of force/power in the former to result in a correlative augmentation or diminution of force/power in the latter. Such parallelism runs counter to the Christian tradition where body and soul strive for ascendancy over each other in a relation of mutual exclusion/opposition (that is, indulgence in bodily pleasures deprives the soul of strength and vice versa).
7. *Alexanderplatz* also features Franz Biberkopf's becoming-rat in a moment in its epilogue that shows Franz straight-jacketed and on all fours drinking from a plate on the floor and surrounded by dozens of rats in a dimly lit room.
8. Several details in the film signal to the becoming-bird of Mieze: not only her act of bringing the canary into the apartment, but also her cooing like a bird when in the woods with Franz; after her death, in the epilogue, countless bird cages are hanging from the trees in the woods where she was strangled by Reinhold.
9. Thus, for example, the scene at the slaughterhouse in *In a Year of Thirteen Moons* when Erwin/Elvira (Volker Spengler) relates the story of his past to Red Zora (Ingrid Caven) is not just an autobiographical narrative, but the moment when the film produces the machinic assemblage of Erwin/Elvira-becoming-slaughtered-animal. Thomas Elsaesser has identified the desubjectification that takes place in this scene in *Thirteen Moons* as a shift from expression to excorporation, noting that this scene does not follow a classical melodramatic paradigm of repression/expression. Through a process of excorporation, Elsaesser claims, Erwin-Elvira's pain is separated from his individual body and disseminated into the body of the film (Elsaesser 1996: 213). But, as I argue in *Deleuze and the Cinemas of Performance* (2008), if we follow a non-subjective model of expression such as Spinoza-Deleuze's, we can still speak of the film as an abstract assemblage of sound effects, light, music and ambient noise expressing a pain that goes beyond any individual experience. *Thirteen Moons* achieves the exchange of speeds and affects between human and animal by weaving its tracking shots of carcasses and its background melancholy music together with the rising affective speed of Erwin-Elvira/Spengler's voice.
10. The concept of a mechanics of force is in fact evoked during the opening credits of every episode of *Alexanderplatz* with a montage of images that juxtaposes still bodies and moving machines. The constant moving image of the wheels and steam of a locomotive is superimposed over a succession of twenty-eight still archival images. As one of the anonymous readers of this essay remarked, 'One has the impression of violent, churning forces just beneath the surface of people living in Berlin', while they themselves remain quite unaware of the source of what plagues them. The juxtaposition of stillness and mobility at the beginning of each episode perfectly captures Franz's predicament, caught in a mechanised industrial economic system that attempts to supplant his own formidable physical strength and to render him static and useless.
11. To the actual and the virtual, Massumi adds the possible and the potential. It is at 'the point of intersection of the possible, the potential, and the virtual',

he argues, that the actual occurs. 'The actual is the effect of their momentous meeting, mixing, and re-separation' (Massumi 2002: 136).

12. Every time we see Franz and Mieze together in the film, the snake-like presence of Reinhold is lurking nearby. This is most directly implied in the scene where, egged on by Franz himself, Reinhold hides under Franz and Mieze's bedcovers to witness what turns out to be Franz's most emasculating experience – not coincidentally, the most violent interaction between Franz and Mieze, and the closest to a literal repetition of Franz's murder of Ida.
13. My characterisation of Franz Biberkopf's life as 'eventful' is supported by Fassbinder's unsentimental description of Franz as possessing a '[highly] differentiated subconscious, combined with an almost unbelievable imagination and capacity for suffering' (Fassbinder 2007: 48).
14. The idea of 'oscillation' very much reflects the way I see Franz Biberkopf. The first part of the title of this essay, 'Violently Oscillating', comes from a passage in Olkowski: 'What matters is not what an individual *consciousness* can do, but what *does*, what *gives*, what provokes thought and what is thought in a continuous process driven by the dark precursor, the violent axiomatic in which every connection is violently disjoined, the conjoined, violently oscillating' (Olkowski 2006: 170).

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If Not Here, Then Where? On the Location and Individuation of Events in Badiou and Deleuze

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Abstract

This paper sets out a series of critical contrasts between Alain Badiou and Gilles Deleuze's philosophies of the event. It does so in the context of some likely objections to their positions from a broadly analytic position. These objections concern problems of individuation and location in space-time. The paper also explains Deleuze and Badiou's views on the event through a literary application on a short story by John Cheever. In conclusion it is argued that both thinkers have good answers to the objections, but that they diverge on the ontological commitments of their definitions of the event.

Keywords: Badiou, Deleuze, event, political, ontology, individuation

I. Introduction: a Counter-balance to Badiou's Reading of Deleuze's 'Event'

In his latest major work, *Logiques des mondes*, Alain Badiou adds a series of distinctions and clarifications to his already extensive engagement with Gilles Deleuze's thought.[1] This addendum focuses on an interpretation of Deleuze's philosophy of the event as set out in his *The Logic of Sense*; it then sets out a list of differences between Badiou's philosophy of the event and Deleuze's.[2] Two points need to be stressed about Badiou's interpretation. First, it is limited in its form, since like many of the notes on other philosophers in Badiou's works, the main goal is to clarify his own position and distinguish it from perceived flaws in another. Of course, this is not necessarily a failing and certainly does not lead inevitably to a mistaken reading. However, it does skew that reading towards Badiou's concerns and towards the places where he

sees important differences between his philosophy and others. Second, the form of the interpretation is designed to fit the wider structure and terminology of Badiou's argument rather than operate a more immanent critique of another position. Thus, for instance, Badiou imposes external concepts in his readings in order to bolster his critical distinctions and to demonstrate the reach and relevance of the conceptual framework he is deploying in his wider philosophical argument.

Badiou's interpretation of *The Logic of Sense* turns on two conceptual shifts and one interpretative claim at odds with the form and concepts of Deleuze's book. First, the event is treated in terms of 'the One'.[3] This is a problematic shift from Deleuze's multiplication of terms for the event where the term 'Event' is distinguished from events and where 'one great Event' is connected to actual events and to events in sense and to what Deleuze calls surface through processes of static and dynamic geneses.[4] Where Badiou capitalises the 'One', Deleuze capitalises 'Event' and his point is that, in a counter-actualisation or replaying of any event, all events *communicate* in one Event where communication is not in terms of set meanings but in terms of processes.[5] Events set each other in motion with no limits in principle; they therefore communicate in one great Event constituted by this multiple, mobile and ever-changing series of relations. It can therefore be argued that this latter Event should not be thought of as the 'One' but rather as a multiple that cannot be represented as a unity or identity; the Event is in the communication of all events rather than in their collection or as their essence. This Event is presented as a process of communication and multiple disjunctions by Deleuze, for instance in his study of games in *The Logic of Sense*: 'Each event is adequate to the entire Aiôn, each event communicates with all others; they form a single and same Event, event of the Aiôn where they have an eternal truth'.[6]

Note how Deleuze avoids any statement such that the events *are* the Event, or that Event *is* the same, or that the final *meaning* of events is in the Event. Instead, he stresses adequacy, communication and forming. Adequacy is taken from his major work on Spinoza where that concept and the concept of inadequacy play a central role in Deleuze's account of expression.[7] Thus Badiou can be questioned in his identification of the Event with the One since for Deleuze the adequacy of events to the Event is not representative or designating but expressive and explanatory, where to explain is to envelope the other idea, that is, in strict Spinozist terms, to express the cause in the effect.[8] This expression is necessary and never a matter of identity or inclusion. It is the only way we come to know the cause and, since it is neither representational

nor designating, it is not a matter of meaning or signification. Badiou is therefore moving away from a strict Deleuzian usage when he interprets sense in theological and hermeneutic terms.

The following imposition of a theological model of the One onto Deleuze's account misunderstands or ignores Deleuze's reading of Spinoza and misses the necessary multiplicity implied by the multiple ways in which events are folded and unfolded in the Event:

> If in fact sense has an eternal truth, then God exists for never having been anything other than the truth of sense. Deleuze's idea of the event should have convinced him to follow Spinoza, who he calls the 'Christ' of philosophers, all the way and to name 'God' the unique event in which all becomings are diffracted.[9]

When Deleuze says that the Event is the truth of events this does not mean that events find their highest truth as meaning in some identifiable One, but rather that the truth of events lies in their communication with one another as ever-changing multiple series *that can never be reduced to the One* since this would interrupt the truth of the ongoing becomings, disjunctions, expressions, foldings and unfoldings. Again, the concept of God is imposed on Deleuze's work by Badiou through a very quick and perfunctory move via Spinoza. This move takes no account whatsoever of the intricacy of Deleuze's interpretation of Spinoza's concept of God again formulated in terms of expression and communication[10] or of Deleuze's long discussion of divine names in *Spinoza and the Problem of Expression*[11] or indeed of the pointed humour when Deleuze and Guattari call Spinoza the Christ of philosophers, a passage again misquoted by Badiou since Badiou's rendering is '*le Christ de la philosophie*'[12] (the Christ of philosophy) when the original is '*le Christ des philosophes*' (the Christ of philosophers).[13] The difference in prepositions is crucial since, notwithstanding the humorous provocation, Deleuze and Guattari's point is that Spinoza's construction of the plane of immanence of all other planes is a once only occurrence, like Christ, since it is a paradoxical construction (as the inside and the outside of thought) presupposed in all others. As such, all other philosophers are apostles to Spinoza's Christ but this in no way commits Deleuze and Guattari to any dogmatic conception of God as the One or as the truth of meaning (a misreading of Deleuze's sense). Instead, it commits them to the notion that the Spinozist plane of immanence of planes of immanence because it is the most pure, that is one that does not impose meaning or truth but

rather allows for the generation of new senses, planes and events with the 'least illusions, bad feelings and mistaken perceptions'.[14]

Second, Deleuze's approach is reduced to a fourfold axiomatic of the event, something that might be plausible in terms of the later work with Guattari but that does not fit the differential processes set out in *The Logic of Sense* which owe much more to structuralism, to Lacan, to Lautman and to philosophical structures developed in *Difference and Repetition* than to the later axiomatic. Badiou takes truncated passages from *The Logic of Sense* then sets them in quotation marks and numbers them as axioms. However, these passages are never indicated as axioms by Deleuze. They are often part of longer sentences and arguments. The extraction of these passages sits very uneasily with the serial form of Deleuze's book and of his argument on the interlocked and event-like quality of series. Finally, Badiou reads Deleuze as close to the twentieth-century linguistic turn in his use of the concept of sense, when it might be argued that the concept of sense is exactly designed to resist and move away from the linguistic turn and to extend a philosophical treatment of language away from the tripartite distinction of denotation, signification and manifestation by adding a concept of sense that is inseparable from another concept (surface) and which operates to open up paradoxes in the philosophy of language such that any linguistic turn will be seen as inadequate both with respect to the problems that lead to it and with respect to bodily, ideal and surface events, as well as the surface intensities accompanying them. Badiou claims the following:

> From the very beginning of his book, [Deleuze] forges what is for me a chimera, an inconsistent portmanteau [*mot valise*]: the 'sense-event'. This, moreover, makes him communicate much more than he desired with the linguistic turn and the great contemporary sophistry. Since, to claim that the event is of the register of sense is to topple it fully into language. (Badiou 2006: 408)

But what if the point is to topple language into the event rather than the event into language? What about the extensive treatment in *The Logic of Sense* of portmanteau words as inconsistent yet structurally functional in Carroll's works and the associated explanation of this functionality through the concept of the event as moving beyond the traditional linguistic definition of sense as meaning or signification?[15] What of Deleuze's extensive study of the circle of language set in motion by his new concept of sense associated with intensity rather than set linguistic structures?[16] What of the distinction that has to be drawn between signification and sense in *The Logic of Sense*, for

instance in Deleuze's reading of Benveniste?[17] In short, though Badiou's interpretation of Deleuze is without doubt of interest and value for the elucidation of Badiou's work, it cannot be taken as the last word either on Deleuze's philosophy of the event or of its relative worth with respect to Badiou's position. It is simply too much of a reduction, too textually selective and limited, too far removed from Deleuze's idiom and, from an interpretative point of view, too lacking in self-critique in the imposition of an unsympathetic conceptual schema without questions concerning the possible costs of such an approach.

Two options open up given these doubts about Badiou's reading of Deleuze on the event and about his interpretation of their differences. We could go through a detailed analysis of that interpretation to show its limits. I have already sketched the direction this move would take, but it would be insufficient with respect to a wider question that I take to be more important, that is where to situate and how to evaluate the different positions on the event in Deleuze and Badiou in the context of the turn to the event in recent continental and analytic philosophy.[18] In order to respond to this question I want to set out a thesis on the broad similarities and differences between Badiou and Deleuze's positions in order to then proceed to a study of what is a stake in those connections and divergences.[19] These theses have been deliberately set in as neutral manner as possible, that is in the most accessible general language about the event. Here are the points that I wish to show that Deleuze and Badiou share:

1. The event does not have a well-defined spatio-temporal location.
2. The event does not happen to things or to persons, but rather happens through them.
3. Events are politically and ethically of the highest significance.
4. Relations between events are not causal.
5. The concept of genesis is central to the concept of the event.

The divergences between the two thinkers stem from the following oppositions (again stated very generally):

1. Events are either rare or ubiquitous.[20]
2. Events have no well-defined spatio-temporal location because they cannot be recognised from within a given established state or because they are infinitely extended and ongoing processes.
3. The event has an important relation to truth, or the event is prior to any philosophical conception of truth.

4. Logical and subject-led sets of actions posit and then follow on from an event, or there can be no valid logical following on from an event.
5. Events organise and give order to political and ethical behaviour, or events are occasions for experimentation and creative transformation in political and ethical action.[21]
6. Relations between events are a matter of logical implications punctuated by free decisions, or relations between events are a matter of many different kinds of interdependent determinations.[22]

Badiou's position maps onto the first set of options, Deleuze's onto the second. The aim of this article is to explain these oppositions in the context of some of the shared features, not in order to finally take sides with Deleuze or with Badiou, but rather to allow a stronger understanding of their differences and a sense of the value of their novel philosophies of the event. Possible responses to a severe objection to both positions underlie this explanation. The objection is a familiar one in philosophies of the event[23] but it takes on a particularly difficult form once the spatio-temporal location of the event is denied:[24] how are events individuated if they cannot be located in a shared space-time? This discussion of the problem of individuation, taken from analytic philosophy but with deep roots in Leibniz and hence with strong connections to Badiou and to Deleuze,[25] might appear to be easily refuted for both of them through the argument that of course both thinkers speak of events located in particular spaces (Paris, say) and at particular times (1917, say). This misses the point that for there to be a successful individuation in space-time it has to be unique and homogeneous: one space-time for all events, even if positions within it are relative.[26] It is this uniqueness and homogeneity that Badiou and Deleuze deny through the claim that we have different spaces and times for different events. The problem is that if this is the case, how do we know that the events are different, that is according to what principle do we distinguish those spaces and times without establishing a new unique space-time to make the distinction?

II. Definitions of the Event

Badiou suggests that an event is a rare occurrence that cannot be recognised within a given state of affairs. It can, however, be named by subjects as that which cannot be recognised. Subsequently, a fidelity to

the event can be constructed according to a well-ordered series of faithful acts implied by that first naming and driven by the hitherto unrecognised truth that it brings to light.[27] This fidelity follows a subsequent series of points where new decisions have to be made with respect to the event in relation to the situations that resist its recognition.[28] For example, political actors can group together to name an injustice within a system incapable of seeing it as an injustice. They can then embark on a suite of actions designed to construct a new situation free of the injustice and organised by its form and its agonistic relation to the old situation. This construction will encounter different turning points where novel decisions have to be made, for example in terms of how to militate for the truth in the face of reaction from those in favour of the established situation. Thus the effort to name and describe a form of suffering endured by some human beings but not seen as possible in a wider society (to the extent that they might not be seen as belonging to the class of human beings) could lead to the formation of a political grouping determined to militate in the name of that wrong. This militant activity would then continue until society was changed to the point where the suffering and our duty towards it become manifest, though still not from the point of view of the former state.

So the event has no place, in the sense that it cannot be recognised at a given time by a wider state that militants act against through their naming and fidelity to the event.[29] The trace of the event emerges during a construction that follows a naming and unfolds according to a necessarily ambiguous rationale – one that sets up an antagonism between a new construction and a prior but continuing state that is inconsistent with it. The logical difficulties generated by this ambiguity run parallel to the activists' political difficulty of having to bridge between incompatible systems; they militate for a new state within an old one. Badiou's Maoism provides him with many interesting examples and cautionary tales on the risks and difficulties of this bridging. Recently, in *Logiques des mondes*, he has given accounts of Mao's strategy for separating the Red Army from wider society while bringing elements of that society into the army.[30] In the same book he provides analyses of different Spartacist movements explaining their failures and successes on the ground of categories of subject defined according to their fidelity to the event and to a shared truth where freedom is posited on political equality.[31] In all these cases, the struggle refers back to an event that it also constructs. For instance, the new event of a crime against humanity emerges with the definition of this novel form of crime, with historical work situating it, and with political work that changes legal and social

frameworks so that they incorporate the new crime; all this activity is not performed by individual human subjects but is rather understood better as the work of a collective political subject or grouping. Badiou carries forward the lost militancy of twentieth-century revolutionary politics, yet tries to adapt it to a more multiple and flexible view of reality.[32] This explains why the non-location of the event and its relation to truth and to a series of points of decision is so important to him, since it avoids a monolithic politics, yet retains militancy and effective structures of order, priority, relation to truth and claims about reality. New events can always be named and there is no essential (say, proletarian or liberal democratic) state free of falsehood.[33] Truth emerges in the naming and militant fidelity; for instance, in the way the wrong of slavery became an accessible and shared truth through the efforts of abolitionists over more than a century.[34] This appeal to a truth is important because it avoids any relativism, because Badiou restricts truths to a few 'eternal' propositions, such as 'all men are equal'. These are only appropriate to specific fields and only appear in what he calls a truth procedure, or the connection of an event in a state through the actions of subjects set in an organised political body fighting for a novel maxim (of equality for the political truth).[35]

Deleuze's view of events lacks the binary oppositions found in Badiou's model. Badiou opposes the state where an event cannot be recognised to the fidelity and militant actions that follow the naming of such an event. This means that his ontology is itself binary. We either have a well-ordered and consistent structure that admits of no events, or we have a line of militant moves from point to point that are generated by a named event and a corresponding truth that can never appear as such ('all men are in fact equal'), even within the new structure that emerges with the militants and that will eventually disappear with them. There is therefore always a series of radical oppositions at work in his philosophy, such as the pure philosophical one of event and state or the derived political ones of reactionary and militant.[36] Thus for Badiou either a thing has its place within a state or it follows from an event that can never be shown as such within that state. In *Logiques des mondes* this place is determined according to a transcendental logic assigning degrees of appearance in a world to any phenomenon (roughly this can be understood as degrees of importance derived from the number of active relations a thing holds to others).[37] That such degrees can always be assigned is deduced by Badiou following a use of mathematical category theory – broadly a theory of simple relations applicable across many or perhaps all mathematical fields – which he calls his 'grand

transcendental logic'.[38] This use of category theory to establish the necessity of degrees and the consistency of a world can seem highly abstract but Badiou provides illuminating examples of how it works in practice, for instance when he assigns different degrees of appearance to different groups and individuals in the preparation for a demonstration on the *Place de la République* in Paris. A timid postal unionist on the fringes has a lesser degree than a leading agitator from an anarchist group, for example.[39] A world is constituted by a set of phenomena, or things that can appear in that world that can be traced according to a logic that assigns a degree of appearance to them, itself determined according to the type of relation that determines the world (political action, in the case of the demonstration, or military effect, in the case of a battle). The whole point about an event is that it cannot be assigned such a degree and it cannot therefore be a phenomenon or appear in the world. The event, when named, is therefore a challenge to the logic of the world and that challenge then goes through a series of tense points where the logic of appearance keeps raising problems for the new line that follows on from the naming of the event. A novel political action sees itself compromised when it has to make a choice with respect to things it is ambivalent about (the definition of admissible violence in the world, for instance). It is then caught by the logic of appearance of a world. At least in his writing, Badiou often takes the radical and extreme view with respect to such compromises because to yield to them is to fall back into the logic of a world and hence to betray the event. His writing on violence and what he calls cruelty is therefore often rather shocking[40] and Badiou's taste for ferocious commitment to political action is one of the undercurrents in the debate with Deleuze on the event. There is a misgiving that action can be at any cost for Badiou, if cost is set by a world inconsistent with the militant's truth and event.

For Deleuze, an event is a real process in different kinds of realm – virtual and actual – that together constitute a complete reality. An event is therefore something that runs through real series of Ideas and through actual things. It runs through them not in terms of break-like changes in actual and ideal relations, but in terms of changes in degrees of intensity in their relations carried by the movement of placeless occupants along empty places in different series, for instance when a question runs along a series of different possible answers illuminating them differently when each in turn is seen as the right one. The empty places determine a lack in actual series and an excess in virtual ones and intensity can be seen as a wave-like effect running through both series as they interact.[41] If we concentrate just on a series at a particular

point it can seem that there are still breaks in Deleuze's model, but this would be to miss the variations in intensity carried by movements along series. So an event is an actual relation, such as 'this fell from here to there', but it is also an ideal or virtual change, such as 'the fall changed the relations between these Ideas in this way', and the event is also a change in the intensity or significance of such ideas in relation to actual things, such as the rises in different intensities expressed in the phrase 'this Idea began to dominate after the fall'. In Deleuze's technical language from *The Logic of Sense* the event is therefore something that occurs along series in the depth of (actual) bodies, along series in the height of (ideal) sense and it is on the (intense) surface connecting the two realms.[42] In the terminology from his *Difference and Repetition*, an event is actual and virtual and a change in intensity. As a process whereby the actual is determined by an ideal change, it is a 'differenciation'. As a process where virtual ideas are determined by an actual change it is a 'differentiation'. All of these processes of determination are a matter of changes in degrees of intensity as individuals emerge according to particular dramatic enactments of prior events.[43] Deleuze therefore sees reality as a manifold of communicating processes which can be described in terms of multiple distinct series within separate realms, but only temporarily and incompletely. An event for Deleuze is therefore any significant change within a process, where the emphasis is on significance and on a limitless extension of this change through all other series and, in principle, through the whole of reality.[44] In his famous discussion of the A and B series of time McTaggart sums up this interconnection of events in relation to change or process through the following evocative example, capturing the difficulty of what Deleuze wants to sign us up to:

> And if anything changes, then all other things change with it. For its change must change some of their relations to it, and so their relational qualities. The fall of a sand-castle on the English coast changes the nature of the Great Pyramid.[45]

In his work on the event, Deleuze also uses the example of the great pyramid to illustrate this connection over great distances in time and space through a reference to Napoleon's famous statement: 'Soldiers, from the height of these pyramids forty centuries look down upon you',[46] and to Whitehead's discussion of the event as process in *The Concept of Nature*.[47] Thus, for instance, a rise in anger around a slave ship massacre is at the fulcrum of an event involving all series of events, to the point where the event is not located in any

particular crime or witnessing but rather as contrast running through all series as the change in intensity of the anger alters the whole of reality.[48]

It is important to stress that for Deleuze such events are not primarily meaningful in a linguistic sense, but rather that significance indicates a change in degree, such as a rise in outrage for example, as a prior condition for a change in meaningfulness and a change in its relation to things we can refer to in the world.[49] The opposition to Badiou's twofold antagonisms rests on these limitless and multiple processes determined by turning points in degrees, because any absolute 'two', such as state and event, shown by Badiou[50] is for Deleuze a complex many which can appear as two or more, but only fleetingly and incompletely.[51] It is beyond the scope of this study of the event in the two thinkers, but there is more at stake in this definition of the many than any simple opposition could capture; this is because both philosophers can lay claim to a special use of the terms multiple and multiplicity. Put somewhat simply, Badiou's 'multiple' does not include the event as such. It is rather the evental site in a situation where the event can be named[52] whereas Deleuze's multiplicity, for instance as found in the concept of the rhizome, is event through and through, and thereby resistant to any sense of a countable multiple.[53]

Badiou concentrates on forced shifts between objective states made possible by the positing of the event. Deleuze, on the hand, never allows for a settled objective state, which for him is always an illusory cover over ongoing event-driven processes. This point can be generalised to explain his position further. For him, any representation of an event is a false abstraction away from its role in wider series of processes; for instance, the event of slavery is still rumbling away now and was being prepared for in the ancient world, so to isolate it in any given time-slice will always be an incomplete representation of it.[54] As discussed in the introduction to this article, in *The Logic of Sense* the basis for this claim about the interconnection of all events lies partly in the remark that all events communicate and therefore become one great 'Event', or put otherwise, it is that no boundary around any given event or game is legitimate because events outside those boundaries can change the sense of the event or what winning means within any given game.[55] These oppositions allow us to understand the violence and fervour of the debate around the event in Badiou's work on Deleuze, since his militants appear to be cancelled out by a lack of distinctness in Deleuze's model, which therefore appears reactionary and insipid when compared to militant action for a truth.[56]

III. Badiou and Deleuze Events in Cheever's 'The Trouble of Marcie Flint'

These debates and oppositions on the existence and nature of events have a long and complex history in analytic and continental philosophy since the 1960s and, to a lesser extent, before then. The two traditions sometimes overlap in terms of problems if not method, for example in arguments around the distinction to be drawn between processes and facts which occur in Deleuze and Whitehead, but are also discussed in analytic philosophies of the event.[57] There is therefore no single 'analytic' or 'continental' philosophy of the event.[58] Given the complexity and lack of clear definition in this historical background, I will give a second, more practical approach to the event through a literary example. This literary angle provides a simplified approach to everyday events, through the imposition of narrative boundaries and selections in characterisation, yet a more contextual one than encountered in abstract philosophical examples such as 'the spilling of a cup of coffee'.[59] I will therefore look at a number of interconnected events drawn from a short story by American novelist John Cheever (1912–82).[60] and show how they illuminate further the differences between Deleuze and Badiou. This is because Cheever's short stories revolve around significant events and chart their effects through series of characters. Cheever plays on matters of perspective and perception, yet also relies on events as central organising and disorganising factors within human lives. His fiction is a useful hinge between different types of approach to the event, since his stories combine ethical and political import with existential and thematic complexity and with carefully described and located everyday events. This also means that the commonsensical and the ordinary in language and life are combined with deep effects and rich contexts.

'The Trouble of Marcie Flint' is situated about half-way through the influential chronological collection of Cheever's stories *Collected Stories*.[61] It is an interesting but also potentially a problematic story about events because, like many of Cheever's stories, it is constructed around a reversal. This is not a grand *coup de théâtre*, but a more discrete play on patterns in characters and in acts, where patterns are revoked when different and often uncomfortable truths and events come to light. Cheever's event-driven turnarounds are reminders of the base and frequently unjust human propensities to jump to impose set patterns, to judge others on scant evidence and to operate with set moral categories bearing little relation to a more complicated underlying reality. The reversals described in the stories, many of which first

appeared in *The New Yorker*, therefore have a socially reforming tenor, providing a gentle but nonetheless effective critique of the negative role of conservative social structures and judgements in relation to lives as they are actually lived rather than as they are perceived through a moral lens. The difficulty of sensitive and realistic practice is contrasted with the certainty and brutality of judgement according to values external to given situations. Fiction here need not be viewed as real for it to be able to trigger awareness that reality and modes of judgement are out of kilter. The lesson is about how we judge and about the potential life has for fine-grained complexity rather than about this or that real event. Cheever's stories are an experiment on the effect of events on malleable structures rather than a straightforwardly informative account. For a discussion about recent philosophies of the event, the stories therefore have the further merit of combining precise moral and political scope with manageable accounts of everyday events, as opposed, on the one hand, to descriptions of events in a moral and political void, and on the other hand, to grand sweeping events such as wars or revolutions which seem to call for a closer study of their subcomponents.

Cheever likes simple and spare titles that accurately capture the main topic of his story: a place, a person or a state of affairs, all very briefly depicted or named. The titles are descriptive yet keep a little in reserve in terms of the deep point of concern.[62] This prompts readers to search for the lesson and, if they are aficionados, they know to look for an event twisting the story to an unexpected yet revealing outcome. Marcie Flint's trouble initially seems to lie with her husband, who opens the story with a self-indulgent account of a mid-life crisis involving an Atlantic crossing and an idyllic illusion of a new life in Turin sipping wine on the Superga. The main event is then, at first sight, unfaithfulness with the effects on wife and children as sub-events caused by the crisis. The location of these events is outside Marcie, in her husband's spirit, mind and body, then in her own and those of her children. However, the trouble with Marcie turns out to be more convoluted. It lies with her own betrayal, not only a sexual infidelity but one breaking with her social and moral position in a tightly-knit upper-middle-class commuter village. The crossing of a social boundary is all the more shocking, from the point of view of her class, as it not only involves consorting with a lower-middle-class man, but one she has warmed to because of his humanity and vulnerability. The story therefore shifts with Cheever's extraordinary economy of style from a commonplace account of the morals of married life to broader comment on class boundaries and the cruelties necessary to maintain them against social and political change. The tryst starts because the man speaks in favour of a public library in Marcie's village; something

it has 'no need for' since, from a privileged point of view, everyone who ought to have a library has a private one, and anyone who does not have a library has no place in the village. Underlying this complacent judgement and double-bind there is the fear that with the lower middle classes come crime associated with poverty and lack of moral standards. Below that we then find the even more unavowable evidence that social distinction is neither as permanent nor well-founded as those on top feign to believe. Marcie's troubles therefore run deep and resist cures with greater tenacity than her husband's, whose second trip to Turin leads to an exorcism of his jealousy and a renewed determination to live happily with Marcie and their children.

Though each of the story's events has internal coherence in terms of factual accounts, they are ambiguous in their external relations. We can be sure of Charles and Marcie's locations and position in time when he is writing a diary on board a Europe-bound ship and when she shows her first kindness to an outsider maliciously repelled by her neighbours. We can, however, make serious mistakes in their causal relations. It turns out that the return to Turin and the diary's self-involved reverie are not the result of a tawdry and ignoble midlife crisis but rather of a much harder to judge wrong, another's unfaithfulness with more complicated roots and broad causal and social contexts. This complexity is reflected in the key event of the story and its relation to another event acting as a catalyst. Marcie's troubles stem from a profound guilt, expressed as an unbearable fear of punishment through an assault on the well-being of her family. This symptom is so strong that Marcie demands a divorce, not as revenge on her husband, or as an attempt to escape the marriage, but as a desperate attempt to save her children from fateful punishment. The catalyst is the accidental poisoning of the children, where guilt lies, if anywhere at all, with the husband who thoughtlessly leaves the poison within reach, because he is indeed at the outset of a crisis of misplaced self-regard.

Why though would any of this be ambiguous by the time we unravel the many turns of the story and arrive at its main declaration? When Marcie confesses, a clear chain of causes ought to emerge and the reader's perception of indistinct or contradictory causal lines should be traceable. This in turn will allow us to re-establish spatial and timely locations for all the events:

> 'I want a divorce. I can't bear living like this any more. I can't bear it. Every time they have a head cold, every time they are late from school, whenever anything bad happens, I think it's retribution. I can't stand it.'

'Retribution from what'?
'While you were away, I made a mess of things'.
'What do you mean'?
'With somebody.'[63]

After this declaration we know why Marcie's husband left for Turin a second time. We know why there is talk of a divorce. We have information and a causal chain to base judgements on, such as who is at fault. We can also describe which social and sexual conditions we might take into account in arriving at such judgements. Why then should we claim that the events have no spatio-temporal location and do not entertain causal relations to one another?

The first step, in explaining Deleuze and Badiou's resistance to these questions on the location and causal nature of events, lies in changing that initial set of questions and the order of priority of subsequent ones. They are not just asking 'What happened?' but also 'What are the conditions for action after the event?', 'How is the event novel?' and 'How can we best respond to that novelty?' Moreover, they are claiming that an unambiguous account of what happened is neither one of those conditions, nor even answerable when we understand them and their relation to subsequent actions. The conditions for significant political and ethical action therefore become prior conditions for answering questions about the nature of events. Significance here is all important, since neither philosopher is committed to the claim that we cannot describe factual situations and causal relations between actual things. Instead, both claim that there is a relation to these situations that is in excess of them, in the sense of not obeying rules concerning its form and in terms of demonstrating incompleteness in objective spatio-temporal accounts of events (physical or mental).

For Badiou, as we have seen, a significant response to an event involves advocating and following a truth that is incompatible with a state of affairs (something he calls a world in his latest writings and a state in the earlier ones). When an event is named and related to this truth a new world begins to take shape as we follow a suite of ordered steps punctuated by decisions regulated by our fidelity to the event and to the truth, yet that event cannot be shown in the original world. Thus, in the Cheever story, the truth standing outside its world could be 'The sexes are politically and socially equal'. We can see why this truth has no place in the facts of Marcie's story, but for Badiou what matters is that active subjects can begin to trace a new event within that story, thereby moving towards a world that does have a place for the truth.

For instance, the mutual lack of comprehension between lovers and the injustices of the story turn on the lack of equality, which itself feeds into Marcie's guilt and her husband's self-satisfaction and complacency. The hatred of other classes and the deep shame and fear of punishment following relations across classes are also inflated by this lack of equality. The event in relation to the truth is then nowhere in the story; there is no equality of the sexes in any of its facts. Yet the event can be named and its negative and positive traces can be followed through Cheever's account, both in the world that resists truth and in the glimmers of a world that is consistent with it. For example, if we introduce the notion of equality, the depth of Marcie's reaction and its strange context in fateful retribution can be explained according to a tension between a justified desire and its unjust prohibition. Marcie's infidelity would then become a point of tension and a decision that, together, constitute a trace in the construction of a state true to the emergence of the event of equality, one that does eventually begin to be constructed a decade or so later.

It is important to note that, in Badiou's philosophy, ambiguity is not a matter of the interpretation of events, of different subjective views, but rather the result of the introduction of what Badiou calls a truth and the actions of subjects into a world that is ambiguous because of its capacity to change. A truth is then not an accurate correspondence to a state of affairs or the result of coherent logical argument but rather a shared conviction that sets subjects in motion despite the fact that it does not correspond to a state of affairs or follow from a logical argument and agreed premises. Truths stand outside worlds and have to be forced upon them. They can be played out in different worlds and in different ways, but always as the result of the naming of an event and the activities of subjects on bodies in worlds. This capacity for change depends upon events that cannot be represented in the world but instead only named and worked faithfully in relation to, as political subjects work to alter the original one. In other words, ambiguity is built into ontology through the nature of events and worlds (hence the title of Badiou's most important work, *Being and Event*). The following passage, from *Logiques des mondes*, gives Badiou's succinct account of the event and world structure:

> We begin with the underlying ontological components: world and event, the second introduces a rupture in the presentational logic of the first. The subjective form is then assigned to a localisation in being that is ambiguous. On the one side, the subject is but a set of elements of the world, and therefore an object of the scene where the world presents its multiplicities; on the other

> side, the subject orientates that object, in terms of the effects it can produce, in a direction that comes from an event. The subject can therefore be called the unique known form of thinkable 'compromise' between the phenomenal persistence of the world and its evenemental [*événementiel*] reshaping.[64]

A world has a logic governing what can and cannot be presented in it, for instance in terms of impossible objects in a given presentation, such as the free slave under the ownership of another or the equal sex in a patriarchal society. Subjects though can introduce a truth into the world that forces such a contradiction upon a world, 'No human is a slave' or 'The sexes are equal'. This means that the subjects must bridge between the world they belong to, or are a set of presented elements of, and the world they move towards, one determined by the event that cannot be presented in the first, yet one that directs the actions of the subjects designed to bring about the second; hence the ambiguous position of all political subjects, in the strong sense appealed to by Badiou. The ambiguity is not between interpretations but within the forms of subjective activity and existence. Thus, in terms of Marcie Flint's trouble, the reader as political subject recognises the fatefulness of Marcie's situation and the impossibility of presenting her equality and sexual freedom, as well as her hopes for political equality. Thereby the reader belongs to that world and is caught in its presentational logic. On the other hand, though, the reader can also work towards another possible world governed by a new truth, one where an event that cannot be localised in Cheever's story determines new presentations and possibilities. It is this latter world that the subject militates for.

Where Badiou's event requires subjects to 'force it' onto a state that cannot recognise it, Deleuze's view is that a state is undergoing events, introducing novelty and stress into it, at all times and in all parts where there is a change in intensity in the state. For example, in Cheever's story the increases and decreases in sadness, fear, hope, bemusement, desire and hate are all signs that events are running through the characters of the story. As such, these events could resemble more closely what we commonly understand as events: things that happen to us. This is not Deleuze's main point, though. Instead, the changes in intensity associated with events occur within series of repeated patterns. A change of intensity is a change within the pattern that alters its relations. Moreover, these patterns are actual and ideal, that is they occur in identifiable actual series and in ideal ones. For instance, Marcie's infidelity begins when a predictable and often repeated series of village meetings designed to keep outsiders at a distance is interrupted by a plea

from the man she will eventually commit adultery with. The intercession by the outsider is a source of violent emotional reactions in the village committee. These reactions push her more firmly towards the stranger. The reason an event cannot be located in space and time is that it occurs *throughout* actual and virtual series, back and forward in time, such that the event does not happen 'here' and 'now' but rather through all series at different degrees of intensity. Marcie's actions do not make sense when taken simply with one committee meeting and boorish behaviour by her neighbours. Her rebellion is the result of repeated exclusions and cruelties. Similarly, the distress felt by Marcie after the poisoning of her children runs back and forward through all the series that make up her life, not only in terms of physical aspects but also in terms of ideal ones. The significance of those events changes; Deleuze calls this their sense. For instance, on the ideal plane, the affair becomes a deep wrong worthy of the most terrible punishment and her marriage becomes insufferable. On the actual plane, she cannot physically bear the guilt and apparently robust feelings of sensual pleasure and everyday ease disappear. The event then is an intensive transformer running through lives, altering their values and the arrangements of priority between ideas and physical things. This explains why it is wrong to say that the event 'happens to someone'. It is rather that its happens through them and intersects with many other series that happen through others.

Two strange and counter-intuitive features of Deleuze's account allow for a better understanding of it – if not an agreement. Both can be explained in terms of surprising claims about reality. Given that changes in intensity are the signs and focal points of events, defined as alterations in relations running through series, it seems that reality must be seen as many interleaved and communicating series, each determined by intense events. Reality then becomes multiple, something like a set of interconnected worlds, each determined by its events, but then also determined by the resonance of those events with other worlds. The term 'world' is not Deleuze's and it would be better to talk in terms of individuations. Thus Cheever's story would have an individuation running through Marcie and her intensities, another running through Charles; these would interfere with one another but not be reducible to one series of events. This explains the ubiquity of events for Deleuze: there is an event wherever there is a change in intensity accompanying novel effects along actual and ideal series. This contrasts with the rarity of events in Badiou's account due to their dependence on the actions of subjects. For the former, events happen and then have to be replayed and worked with, for instance in the way Marcie calls for a divorce in

reaction to her fear of retribution. For the latter, events emerge when subjects construct a world conforming to events and truths. It is easier to see why Badiou's events are not caught in causal chains because the free intervention of subjects is an attempt to disrupt causal and logical chains (primarily logical ones). However, in Deleuze's case, if events are disruptions or alterations running along series, why aren't they causal and how can it make sense to speak of effects along all series forward and back in time?

The answer to this question comes out of a complicated and at first sight outlandish metaphysical structure constructed by Deleuze in his book *The Logic of Sense*.[65] Reality is not only actual series, but rather relations of reciprocal determinations between actual and ideal series through a medium they share, the surface of changing intensities.[66] So the real is the actual, the ideal (also called the virtual) and surface. Actual events occur as depth, an increase in intensity around a physical wound, say.[67] Ideal events occur as the change between series of infinitives, an increase in intensity in 'to suffer' in its relation with other infinitives.[68] Intensities therefore connect actual series to ideal ones, but without reducing them to one another and without allowing for shared laws.[69] The way intensity changes actual series and virtual ones is completely different: in the former actual things are altered 'in depth', but in the latter only the relations between infinitives change and not the infinitives themselves.[70] If we return to Cheever's story, Marcie's trouble has three components, each of which is incomplete without the other. There is her physical wound: the agony she feels waiting for retribution for her betrayal. There is the ideal alteration in what Deleuze would call sense, for instance the relation between 'to love' and 'to fear' becomes stronger. And there is the change in surface intensity relating the actual and ideal realms. The occurrence of this intensity changes the relation of sense to her body; the significance of her actions and actual relationships changes forward and back in time (for example, in the judgements 'I should not have done that' or 'This is retribution'). The potential for ideas and infinitives to be expressed in different ways is also changed forward and back in time, for instance, because the close relation of 'to love' and 'to fear' makes it much harder to continue in her marriage and because earlier relations of 'to love' and 'to fear' are now connected to their changed relation in the present. That is why I have described the event as an intensive transformer running through actual and virtual series: the change in intensity is a change in significance forward and back in time. No series is left untouched by it and no partial series, that is one taken as merely actual or merely ideal, is complete without this

appeal to significance which itself only continues to appear when it is transformed by new events that our actions contribute to. The setting of event into series allows them to counter and transform one another. It is the basis for Deleuze's most important moral and political term 'counter-actualisation'. In counter-actualisation an event is doubled back on, countered or replayed, so that its actual wound is diminished, while the intensity of the event's ideal connections is maximised: 'We only grasp the eternal significance of the event when the event is inscribed in the flesh; but each time we must double this painful actualisation with a counter-actualisation that limits it, plays with it and transfigures it'.[71]

IV. Conclusion

It is now possible to return to the similarities and oppositions set out at the beginning of this paper and to the aim of offering a counterbalance to Badiou's reading of Deleuze's work on the event. For Badiou and for Deleuze we can speak of an event despite its lack of spatio-temporal location because we have signs of the event. These signs can be found in the actions of subjects, in traces of the event, in actual turning points with respect to intensities (changes in the intensity of a sensation around an event) and in effects that run through patterns in structures. Events are first individuated through these signs, but then also, for Badiou, according to the worlds they move from and into, and for Deleuze, according to the processes that emerge with an intense event. For both philosophers, the familiar problem of individuation of events is reversed.[72] Real individuation is achieved through events and only through events. This individuation can only occur through events because they account for changes between worlds and for the actions of subjects (Badiou), or because events are the source of significance in any world (Deleuze). Without events we lose political action in the grand sense of revolutionary action, and we lose existential significance, that is the reason why we value one thing more than another, or more precisely the reason why we move in one way rather than another. The identity conditions for events could then be given the following form for each philosopher. Two events would be identical for Badiou if they were followed by the same line of subjective actions and if they were the trace of the same truth, despite the fact that neither the truth nor the event could be located. Two events would be identical for Deleuze if they were accompanied by the same degrees of intensity of ideas and of significance in actual events, in short if the events were accompanied by the same

signs. However, the broader point is more paradoxical for both thinkers. It is that there is a circle in these identity conditions, since the actions of subjects and the signs depend on events for their identity conditions (the actions are only the same if they are faithful to the same event; the signs are only the same if they express the same event). Of course, if identity conditions are viewed as essential for a theory of events, then this paradoxically circular position appears to be disastrous – a vicious circle rather than a paradox. One reason why it might not be is that Deleuze and Badiou allow for identity conditions only for some kinds of entities (appearances for Badiou, actual things for Deleuze). It is just that they do not think that such conditions are satisfactory if they are taken as conditions for any kind of entity, in particular events.

The greatest differences between Deleuze and Badiou's positions stem from answers to the critical questions regarding the causal interaction of events and their resistance to fact-based analysis. For Badiou, events have no causal relation, first because they depend on the free actions of subjects (shown through his insistence on the importance of fidelity to the event), and second, because events belong to different worlds with different logical structures. For Deleuze, events occur across different realms that condition one another but do not have causal relations to one another; this is rendered as an asymmetrical determination of the actual and the virtual, or in more traditional terms, of actual and ideal planes. Ideas condition the significance of the actual side of events; they determine why things matter and how we respond to them. Actual events determine ideas by highlighting their relations and bringing some of those relations to the fore while relegating others to the background. However, neither of these relations of determination has the law-like reliability of causality. Though both philosophers admit to facts, for instance, in the judgement that 'A caused B' neither thinks that any such fact is sufficient on its own, because such facts are always open to being cancelled when taken within the ambit of a novel event where the fact changes in its significance (Deleuze) or in its logical relations (Badiou). Different worlds constructed by our political actions alter Marcie Flint's guilt, or different intense events change the relation of that guilt to the set of other occurrences around it, where some come to the fore and others recede. In short, contemporary French philosophy is caught in a debate around the question of why events matter and how they set us in motion. The answers given to these questions remove events from any simple analysis in terms of causal relations, identity conditions or linguistic meanings. They also give events the final say over matters of fact.

Notes

1. Badiou (2006: 404–10).
2. Other reference points for the encounter of Deleuze and Badiou are in the latter's book on Deleuze (Badiou 1997). Badiou is given as an example in a discussion of events in relation to concepts and to functions in Deleuze and Guattari's *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?* (1991: 143–4). Badiou also wrote an important review of Deleuze's *Le pli: Leibniz et le baroque*. The question 'What is an event?' is the title of one of the chapters of Deleuze's book on Leibniz *Le pli: Leibniz et le baroque* (1988: 80–103). There is also a shorter discussion of Deleuze by Badiou 'One, multiple, multiplicities' in the collection *Theoretical Writings* (Badiou 2004: 67–80). For an excellent study of Badiou's and Deleuze's philosophies of the event in relation to language see Jean-Jacques Lecercle's *Deleuze and Language* (2002: 108–18).
3. Badiou (2006: 404).
4. Deleuze (1969: 217). For a detailed account of this intricate multiplicity in the event in relation to genesis, see Véronique Bergen's *L'ontologie de Gilles Deleuze* (2001: 109–17). See also John Marks' *Vitalism and Multiplicity* (1998: 38–42).
5. Deleuze (1969: 179).
6. Deleuze (1969: 80–1).
7. Deleuze (1968b: 114–39). For a discussion of the importance of the concept of adequacy and of its roots in Spinoza, see Ian Buchanan's *Deleuzism: A Metacommentary* (2000: 6, 30–3): 'How we attain adequate ideas, which is to say, how we overcome whatever obstacles stand between us and a secure knowledge of causes, is clearly enough the crucial question' (2000: 31).
8. Deleuze (1968b: 118–19).
9. Badiou (2006: 409).
10. See Deleuze (1968b: 112).
11. Deleuze (1968b: 44–58).
12. Badiou (2006: 409).
13. Deleuze and Guattari (1991: 59).
14. Deleuze and Guattari (1991: 59). For a further development of these points on Christ and Spinoza, also in relation to Lenin, see Slavoj Žižek (2009): 'What if Christ is an Event in the Deleuzian sense – an occurrence of pure individuality without proper causal power?' (I thank Ian Buchanan for this helpful reference.)
15. Deleuze (1969: 84–5).
16. Deleuze (1969: 27).
17. Deleuze (1969: 25–6).
18. Thus work on the event is not restricted to Deleuze and Badiou. It is also an important concept in Lyotard's *Discours, figure* and *Le différend* (see Bennington 1988: 75–6, 106–10) and throughout Derrida's work since the early 'Signature, événement, contexte' (Derrida 1972: 365–90). I will also be referring to the extensive research on the event in recent analytic philosophy (see Varzi and Casati, 1996 and 1997).
19. In terms of the aims and content of this article, I am very grateful to the two anonymous readers of an earlier version for their helpful suggestions, notably to extend my engagement with Badiou's *Logiques des mondes* and refine my reading of the event in *The Logic of Sense*.
20. This point is made by Justin Clemens and Oliver Feltham in their recent paper on Deleuze and Badiou on the event (Clemens and Feltham 2007: 23–4). In the conclusion to their paper Feltham and Clemens argue for a possible rapprochement of Deleuze and Badiou on the event: 'But if Badiou's rare

and punctual event is rendered equivalent to the coming into being of a new situation, then aren't we uncomfortably close to Deleuze's conception of any state of affairs being also a host of events, or to what we termed above in our exegesis of Deleuze: "the continuing 'eventing' of the event"'? (Clemens and Feltham 2007: 24). This paper resists such fusions of Deleuze and Badiou. Though I am in sympathy with some of the points Clemens and Feltham make against comparative work on philosophers, I believe that it is important not to lose differences that condition the form of ethics and politics grounded on metaphysical distinctions.

21. These critical points for Badiou and against Deleuze have been made by Hallward for the political argument (2006: 159–64) and by Reynolds for the ethical one (2007: 151–7).
22. I have omitted an opposition with respect to Badiou and Deleuze's approaches to mathematics from this list as it is only indirectly connected to the differences with respect to events. However, the opposition is nonetheless very important and for a extended discussion of it followed by a trenchant summary see Smith (2004: 93).
23. The seminal text on the problem of the individuation of events is Davidson (2001b): 'What we want, rather, is a statement of necessary and sufficient conditions for identity of events [. . .]' (Davidson 2001b: 172).
24. Jaegwon Kim, for instance, uses the time component of an event to give identity criteria (Kim 1996: 119). This option is not open to Deleuze or to Badiou. For an idea of the controversy and counter-intuitive position implied by this denial that events take place at a particular time see P. M. S. Hacker's gloss on the more accessible view of events as related to time: 'Events, unlike objects, are directly related to time. They occur before, after, or simultaneously with other events' (Hacker 1996: 445). Badiou and Deleuze claim that an essential property of events is to lie outside time or as a prior condition for it, such that we cannot say that an event occurs before another without missing something essential about those events.
25. Badiou (1988: 349–60); Deleuze (1988: *passim*).
26. For an illuminating discussion of Deleuze and Guattari and the problem of actual events, see Lampert (2006: 114–42).
27. The strongest account of the way the event is outside a situation which itself includes the 'evental' site where the event is named but does not occur as such is described, in terms of set theory, in Badiou's *L'Être et l'événement* (see, for instance, Badiou 1988: 197).
28. Badiou (1988: 257).
29. Badiou (1988: 203).
30. Badiou (2006: 515–25).
31. Badiou (2006: 72–80).
32. This militancy can be traced back to Badiou's early Maoism and remains central to his politics and philosophy as set out, for example, in his recent *Le siècle*. See Badiou (2005c: 91–5) and Badiou (2006: 29–35, 515–25). For an up-to-date review of his philosophical and political careers see his recent introduction to the re-edition of his earliest book of philosophy *Le concept de modèle* (Badiou 2005a: 1–37).
33. The denial that there are events necessarily outside the grasp of modern capitalist democracies is at the heart of Badiou's critique of 'materialist democracy', that is of individualist, wealth-seeking and, at least in his view, essentially selfish and reactive liberal democracies. This criticism is itself a development of his early Maoism but is put in more technical terms in *Logiques des mondes* (Badiou 2006: 531–7) and more aesthetic ones in *Le siècle* (Badiou 2005c: 247).

34. Thinkers influenced by Badiou often share political concerns with him, notably around racism and slavery. See, for example, Peter Hallward's work on Haiti 'Haitian Inspiration: Notes on the Bicentenary of Haiti's Independence' (2004) and his interview with Jean-Bertrand Aristide in the *London Review of Books*, 22 February 2007. It is also important to note that Badiou is one of the few French intellectuals to continue in the role of the *philosophe engagé*, for instance in his critical book on Nicolas Sarkozy (Badiou 2007) or his militant action for the *sans papiers* (immigrants without valid documents; see Badiou 2005b).
35. Badiou (2006: 77–8). For a helpful discussion of truth in relation to events in Badiou and Deleuze see Bell (2009: 35).
36. See Badiou (2006: 62–6).
37. Badiou (2006: 146–50).
38. Badiou (2006: 313–37).
39. Badiou (2006: 211–16).
40. Badiou's discussion of the cruelties of the twentieth century in Badiou (2005c: 178–9). For a good study of the political in Deleuze see Patton (2000).
41. Deleuze (1969: 65).
42. Deleuze (1969: 172–3, 178–9).
43. Deleuze (1968a: 323).
44. Deleuze's most extended work on the event comes in his 1969 book *Logique du sens*, but it continues through to late works such as his book on Leibniz *Le pli: Leibniz et le baroque* with a chapter on the event in Whitehead and Leibniz.
45. McTaggart (1993: 23–34, esp. 24).
46. Deleuze (1987).
47. Whitehead (2004: 77). Bell (2006: 193–4) gives a good discussion of the relation of Deleuze to Whitehead on the event.
48. See J. M. W. Turner's *The Slave Ship* as discussed in Simon Schama's recent *Power of Art* series on the BBC (2006) and his article on Turner in 'The Patriot: Turner and the Drama of History', *The New Yorker*, 24 September 2007.
49. Deleuze (1969: 34).
50. I am using 'two' loosely here to indicate a binary opposition. Badiou has related but more technical uses of the term in his set theory (Badiou 1988: 227) and his definition of the eternal truth of love (Badiou 2006: 40).
51. The concept of 'two' in Badiou should not be confused with a numbering of units, but rather as the manifestation of a radical difference, to the point where his *L'Être et l'événement* involves the claim that 'two' is not itself an identity. This then leads into an equally radical view of the antagonism of political groupings whose differences cannot be subsumed (a point made repeatedly in *Le siècle*). In his book on Deleuze, *Deleuze: La clameur de l'être*, Badiou denies that Deleuze is a philosopher of the multiple and instead classifies him as a philosopher of 'the One'.
52. Badiou (1988: 195).
53. Deleuze and Guattari (1980: 31).
54. Events therefore have begun and continue to reverberate long before and long after their actual expression or effectuation. One of the ways in which Deleuze explains this is through the idea that events raise problems that go beyond them and that resist closing solutions in our response to given events (Deleuze 1969: 70).
55. Deleuze (1969: 77–80).
56. In *Logiques des mondes*, Badiou is highly critical of what he sees as reactionary politics with respect to the event (Badiou 2006: 62–7) and his interpretation of Deleuze on events would classify him as reactionary, in particular where Badiou finds either a diversionary commitment to inexistent multitudes or a new

religiosity in Deleuze's philosophy of events (Badiou 2006: 408–9). For a reading that raises religious themes such as 'spirit' and 'transcendence' in Deleuze see Goodchild (1996: 162–9).
57. Parsons (1996: 235).
58. Varzi and Casati (1997: 1–6).
59. I do not mean to imply that there is something particularly egregious about the selection of such relatively simple examples. It is rather that the 'spilling' taken by Davidson is hard to connect to the more overtly political and aesthetic examples and stakes considered by Badiou and by Deleuze (Davidson 200la: 43–5).
60. For a good biography of Cheever see Donaldson (2002).
61. Cheever (1990: 375–90).
62. Famous Cheever titles with this gnomic simplicity include 'The Swimmer' and 'The Sorrows of Gin' both in Cheever (1990).
63. Cheever (1990: 387).
64. Badiou (2006: 89).
65. Deleuze (1969: 205). See Williams (2008: 28–76) for a full discussion of this metaphysics in relation to the event and to language.
66. See Williams (2003: 186–7) for a more full discussion of reciprocal determination.
67. Deleuze (1969: 174).
68. See Colebrook (2002: 110–11) for a helpful discussion of infinitives and events in Deleuze.
69. Deleuze (1969: 37).
70. Deleuze (1969: 46).
71. Deleuze (1969: 188).
72. See Davidson (2001b: 163).

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Speranza, the Wandering Island

Ronald Bogue

Abstract

Michel Tournier's novel *Friday* is the subject of an important essay of Deleuze's, in which he presents the concept of the 'a priori Other'. Alice Jardine and Peter Hallward have offered critiques of Deleuze via readings of this essay, but neither takes into consideration the full significance of Tournier's novel or Deleuze's commentary. Jardine and Hallward provide divergent and only partial perspectives on Deleuze. If there are several Deleuzes, each defined by a critical point of view, there is also a single Deleuzian problem that informs the Tournier essay and Deleuze's thought as a whole.

Keywords: Tournier, a priori Other, perversion, the possible, perspectivism, becoming

At the end of Michel Tournier's *Friday: Or the Limbo of the Pacific*, the subject of an essay of Deleuze's included in the appendix of *The Logic of Sense*, Robinson Crusoe decides to stay on the island of Speranza, despite the fact that a ship has at long last landed on his desert island and offered to rescue him. Twenty-eight years earlier, Robinson had been shipwrecked on the island, which he initially named the Island of Desolation. For the first several months of his stay, he desperately and fruitlessly laboured to build a boat for his escape. After failing, he resorted to submerging himself for hours in a swamp he called 'the mire', where he began to lose his mind, seeing at one point a vision of his sister Lucy, who died as a child. To save his sanity, he instituted an administrative rationality for himself, raising crops, gathering goat herds, building a shelter, writing an island charter, constructing a water clock, recording dates, keeping a diary, and so on. He mapped the island and renamed it Speranza, the island of hope, noting that its shape resembled that of a headless woman. He pursued a kind of hyper-capitalism, concluding ultimately that accumulation was the sole good and that consumption was evil. Yet he sensed that beyond the

administered island lay 'another Speranza'. He came closer to that Speranza when he bathed his naked body in milk and slipped into a womb-like cavern, discovering a foetal warmth that reminded him of the rising bread his mother had kneaded when he was a child. Eventually he came to embrace the feminine Speranza as his wife. He began copulating with the earth, burrowing his erect penis in the ground and inseminating the soil, his semen mysteriously producing mandrake flowers which he regarded as his daughters.

Then someone else arrived. Neighbouring Aracauna Indian tribes used the island for sacrificial rites, and one day Robinson witnessed a would-be victim escape his torturers. Robinson fired his rifle, caused the torturers to flee and saved the escapee, whom he subsequently named Friday. Robinson initially regarded Friday as a savage and considered it his duty to civilise the fifteen-year-old. Friday, however, was a recalcitrant subject, who exasperated Robinson to such an extent that he began to adopt the habits of a tyrannical slave driver. But Robinson was also becoming weary of the strict order of his island regime, and he sensed beneath the savage Aracauna 'another Friday'. So when Friday inadvertently ignited Robinson's stored powder kegs and blew Robinson's settlement apart, it was with a secret relief that he left that administrative order and entered a nomadic existence with Friday. He learned from Friday, who seemed an aerial spirit. The terrestrial Robinson, under the guidance of the aerial Friday, came to discover a new Robinson, a solar spirit who inhabited the island with an animal immediacy and experienced each day as the eternal return of a new present. Not surprisingly, when the *Whitebird* landed and Robinson began talking with the crew, he had misgivings about leaving the island and returning to the civilisation he now saw as alien. He decided to stay and continue his existence with Friday. Yet as the *Whitebird* departed, he discovered that Friday had departed as well, and in near despair he faced the prospect of dwelling alone on the island forever. He then heard a voice and found that a twelve-year-old cabin boy had jumped ship to avoid the constant beatings he had been subjected to. With equanimity restored by the promise of the boy's companionship, Robinson 'drew a deep breath, filled with a sense of utter contentment, and his chest swelled like a breastplate of brass' (Tournier 1969: 234).

In an early assessment of Deleuze's relevance for feminism, Alice Jardine treats Tournier's plot as a figure for the dangers of Deleuze's approach to sexuality, gender and power relations. She is especially wary of the concept of 'becoming woman', which she regards as strategically disadvantageous and suspiciously similar to recalcitrant male attitudes

towards women. All becomings pass through a becoming woman, she observes, but they all end in a becoming imperceptible – that is, in the erasure of women. She duly notes the alliance of Robinson's sister Lucy with the mire, Robinson's maternal affection for Speranza and his eventual embrace of the island as his bride. But with the appearance of Friday and the explosion of the fortress settlement, Robinson goes beyond Speranza. She disappears, and in an enactment of the primal male fantasy of a world without women, Robinson is miraculously presented with offspring in the form of the cabin boy, a child born for Robinson without the intermediary of a mother. For Jardine, Tournier's *Friday* aptly illustrates the subterranean motif of Deleuze's approach to gender: Speranza, the limbo of the Pacific, represents woman in limbo, and Deleuze's others, she concludes, eventually prove to be his brothers, not his sisters.

In Peter Hallward's recent book *Out of This World* (2006), Tournier's novel assumes a markedly different function. Hallward couples his remarks about Deleuze's essay on *Friday* with an extended meditation on Deleuze's early unpublished essay, 'Causes and Reasons of Desert Islands', emphasising the motif of a 'world without others' in the two essays. In the early essay from the 1950s, Deleuze treats the island as a figure of absolute origin and creativity. Under certain circumstances, the island remains 'deserted and unpeopled', no matter how many people may occupy it, for the island has become 'only the dream of humans, and humans, the pure consciousness of the island' (Deleuze 2004: 10). In the moment of its desertion, the island gives rise to 'uncommon humans, absolutely separate, absolute creators, in short, an Idea of humanity, a prototype, a man who would almost be a god [...] a pure Artist, a consciousness of Earth and Ocean' (Deleuze 2004: 11). In the light of this vision of the island as a pure creative consciousness untroubled by others, Hallward reads Deleuze's analysis of the 'a priori Other' presented in *Friday*. Hallward concludes that for Deleuze, the only meaningful form of creative thought entails 'the sacrifice of that most precious sacred cow of contemporary philosophy – *the other*'; hence, Hallward argues, 'a liberating return to the immediate and the impersonal will requires elimination of the other' (Hallward 2006: 92). Hallward treats this movement beyond the other as a symptom of Deleuze's weakness as a political philosopher. Hallward concludes that 'there is no place in Deleuze's philosophy for any notion of change, time or history that is mediated by actuality'. Deleuze is 'indifferent to the politics of this world', to 'mechanisms of exploitation and domination', "conflicts and contradictions' and to 'relations of conflict

or solidarity, i.e. relations that are genuinely *between* rather than external to individuals, classes, or principles' (Hallward 2006: 162), and primarily because his model of thought and creation is that of a world without others.

Jardine's reading of Deleuze and Tournier is understandable, and her objections spring less from the interpretation than the practical application of Deleuze's thought. Her presentation of becoming-woman is reasonable enough – she simply questions the strategic political value of the concept. She does tend to intermix Deleuze and Tournier, as, for example, when she attributes to Deleuze a reading of the characters in terms of earth, air and sun, whereas that association is inscribed directly in the novel, and Tournier himself says explicitly in a prose commentary, 'Earth + Air = Sun' is the same as 'terrestrial Robinson + Friday = solar Robinson' (Tournier 1988: 195; translation modified). Such manoeuvres, of course, allow her to imply that all aspects of the novel reflect Deleuze's attitudes, including the closing scene of Robinson with the cabin boy, when in fact Deleuze never mentions that plot detail. Perhaps she is correct that the novel's final section focuses on a brotherhood of Robinson and Friday, but we should note that Tournier briefly feminises Robinson when Robinson says of his 'elemental' sexuality, 'If this is to be translated into human language, I must consider myself feminine and the bride of the sky' (Tournier 1969: 212). Granted, this feminisation is only provisional, since Robinson adds that such 'anthropomorphism is meaningless', for 'the truth is that at the height to which Friday and I have soared, difference of sex is left behind' (Tournier 1969: 212).

Hallward's reading is more tangential than Jardine's, though oriented as well toward practical political concerns. Deleuze's explication of Robinson's disorienting experience of living in a world without others – something, we should note, Robinson undergoes only until Friday's arrival – asserts that an a priori Other structures commonsense reality before the appearance of subject or object, assigning them positions within the realm of the possible and orienting them in a chronological time. That a priori Other functions in roughly the same way as the agencies of common sense and good sense in *Difference and Repetition*, or, even more roughly, as the sensory-motor schema of hodological space in the cinema books. But as Boundas has pointed out, Hallward entirely ignores the 'otherwise other' Deleuze sees as emergent in Tournier's novel. Far from rejecting the Other entirely, Deleuze denounces only the Other as structure of limiting possibility, leaving room for an alternative world of 'otherwise others'. And such

a conception is not simply hypothetical or imposed on Tournier's text. Tournier says repeatedly that Robinson sensed beneath Speranza and Friday 'another Speranza', 'another Friday', and the relationship of two individuals as 'otherwise others' is directly presented in the interactions of Robinson and Friday in the novel's final section.

Neither Jardine nor Hallward do justice to the complexity of Deleuze's essay, which is a remarkable piece of literary criticism as well as a subtle set of variations on familiar Deleuzian themes. One might say that Deleuze adopts both Jardine's focus on the problematics of psychosexual desire and Hallward's concentration on the phenomenological, epistemological and ethical implications of the Other. The term common to these two concerns is 'perversion'. The a priori Other is a transcendental structure that organises space according to Cartesian coordinates and a Newtonian, Laplacean causality. The emergence of subject and object within this regulated space in turn gives rise to an organised sequential time of past, present and future. But most important, the a priori Other structures desire: 'In all these respects', says Deleuze, 'my desire passes through Others, and through Others it receives an object. [. . .] It is always Others who relate my desire to an object' (Deleuze 1990: 306). When Robinson enters a world without others, his desire loses its object – it turns away from its normative object, 'per-verts', and becomes first telluric, then vegetable and finally solar. In that turning aside, that 'per-version', Robinson discovers a different space, a new temporality and a social relation that is 'otherwise other'. 'What is essential', says Deleuze, 'is that Friday does not function at all like a rediscovered Other. [. . .] Not an Other, but something wholly other than the Other' (Deleuze 1990: 316–17).

At this point, it is worth considering Tournier's own reading of his novel, since his views point to elements of the novel that supplement Deleuze's interpretation and that Deleuze could assume his audience would already be aware of. In his autobiographical book *The Wind Spirit*, Tournier argues that myth is central to human culture. 'Man rises above animality only by grace of mythology. Man is nothing but a mythological animal. He only becomes man – he acquires a human being's sexuality and heart and imagination – only by virtue of the murmur of stories and kaleidoscope of images that surround him in the cradle and accompany him all the way to the grave' (Tournier 1988: 158–9). Myth is 'a fundamental story' (Tournier 1988: 156), '*a story that everybody already knows*' (Tournier 1988: 157). An allegory, by contrast, is 'a dead myth', and 'the writer's function is to prevent myths from becoming allegories' (Tournier 1988: 160). (We might note

that Deleuze, in his early essay on desert islands, says 'Literature is the attempt to interpret, in an ingenious way, the myths we no longer understand, at the moment we no longer understand them, since we no longer know how to dream them or reproduce them' (Deleuze 2004: 12).) For Tournier, Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* is a myth in danger of becoming an allegory. Tournier revivifies the Crusoe myth in part by rendering it in the elemental terms of earth, air and sun, in part by uncovering the psychological dynamics of isolation buried by Defoe, and in part by envisioning a world outside the conventional real. The meeting of Robinson and Friday, says Tournier, represents not 'the marriage of two civilizations', but 'the elimination of every last vestige of civilization in a man subjected to the corrosive effect of an inhuman solitude: the very roots of his life and being are laid bare, and he must then create from nothing a new world, groping in the dark, feeling his way toward discovery, clarity and ecstasy' (Tournier 1988: 190–1).

Tournier also imbues the novel with a mythical-philosophical structure, whereby, as Tournier observes, 'the three stages of Robinson's evolution are related to the three types of knowledge described by Spinoza in the *Ethics*' (Tournier 1988: 196). Robinson submerged in the swampy mire corresponds to Spinoza's first form of knowledge that operates through 'the senses and emotions'. Robinson's administered island aligns with Spinoza's second form of knowledge, that of 'science and technology', a rational knowledge 'but superficial, mediated, and for the most part utilitarian'. Finally, Robinson's solar ecstasies represent Spinoza's third form of knowledge, that of 'an intuition of the essence of the absolute' (Tournier 1988: 196). But most important in his resurrection of the Crusoe myth is Tournier's focus on Friday. In *The Spirit Wind* Tournier reflects on his years of study at the Musée de l'Homme and the condescension with which Defoe treats Friday. That exposure to traditional cultures' wisdom and that awareness of Western racism, says Tournier, led him to vow that in his novel the cultural Other would not be dismissed or reduced to a distorted reflection of the West. Hence, part of Tournier's mission is, first, to reconfigure Defoe's mythical presentation of Crusoe as *homo economicus* and lay bare the logic of capitalism and colonialism in the first section of the novel, and then to counter Western racism and infantilising primitivism in the novel's closing section. In the novel's middle section, we might note, Tournier provides an analysis and critique of the eros of exoticism through his exploration of Robinson's libidinal engagement with Speranza. One can see, then, that in Tournier's mythic project there is a political dimension. His treatment of capitalism, colonialism,

exoticism and primitivism engages historical forces that continue to play through the present world. It is for this reason that Tournier remarks, 'I wanted to dedicate my book to all of France's immigrant workers, to those silent masses of Fridays shipped to Europe from the third world – some three million Algerians, Moroccans, Tunisians, Senegalese, and Portuguese on whom our society depends and whom we never see or hear, who have no right to vote, no trade union, and no spokesperson' (Tournier 1988: 197).

It is startling to note the degree to which Tournier's characterisation of his novel conforms to the Deleuzian notion of fabulation, which Deleuze only began to articulate in *Cinema 2*, *What Is Philosophy?* and *Essays Critical and Clinical*. The engagement with historically situated assemblages of power, the detection of the diabolical forces of the future, the hallucinatory invocation of the names of history, the mythic 'legending *in flagrante delicto*', the exploration of the floating time of the event, the invention of a new earth and a new people to come – all are present in Tournier's description of *Friday*.[1] Hallward's charge of a lack of engagement with the divisions, conflicts and inequalities of the socio-historical world certainly cannot be sustained against Tournier's fiction. A reader once asked him why he had not dedicated *Friday* to Defoe, and Tournier admits that 'the thought never even occurred to me, for it seemed obvious that every page of the book paid tribute to its English model' (Tournier 1988: 197). One might argue similarly that Deleuze need hardly mention in his essay on *Friday* that Tournier is reworking the Crusoe myth, that he is touching on central issues in the rise of capitalism and colonialism, and that he is countering European racism in his depiction of Friday. Such things are so obvious that they go without saying, and it would be odd were Deleuze deliberately labouring against the basic thrust of the novel and arguing that the work's theme and his own point is that one must eliminate the Other, escape historical contingency and move somewhere 'out of this world'.

If Tournier's novel resists assimilation within Hallward's scheme, does it lend easier accommodation to Jardine's treatment? Perhaps, but there is one alternative reading that might at least problematise a feminist interpretation of the novel. Tournier is a gay man, and though he does not thematise sexual orientation and concerns explicitly coded as 'gay' in the novel, one might ask, what would the work look like, not from the perspective of feminism, but from that of gay studies? Would the handling of the feminine and concentration on males seem as symptomatic of the sexism of dominant, heterosexual norms? Or would the exploration of the psychology of perversion suggest an openness

to alternative conceptions of sexuality available to men and women? Jardine argues that the cabin boy who remains with Robinson is a son procreated without the aid of a mother, but might the twelve-year-old (and the fifteen-year-old Friday for that matter) be seen as an ephebe, an older man's ideal lover (albeit of a Platonic kind)?[2] Is it possible that Tournier is slyly winking at the reader as he brings the tale to its conclusion?

Tournier was one of Deleuze's oldest friends, a close companion during their years as philosophy students at the Sorbonne and in later years as well. As Stivale has recently shown us, friendship has always been an important component of Deleuze's thought and values, and no other individual as close to Deleuze as Tournier, save perhaps François Châtelet, has been the subject of Deleuze's writing. All creators need intercessors, and Tournier in this essay is an especially intimate intercessor, which raises the question of the status of Deleuze's essay. In his works on Spinoza, Leibniz, Hume, Bergson and Nietzsche, it is not always clear when Deleuze is explicating the philosopher and when he is presenting his own views, and separating Deleuze from Tournier is especially difficult in this case. The essay is a generous offer of friendship, and a contribution to a collective thought about the Robinson Crusoe myth. As such, it certainly cannot be taken as an antithetical negation of the fundamental texture and spirit of the novel.

So, how might we situate this case of Tournier, Deleuze, Jardine and Hallward in relation to the question of whether there is one or several Deleuzes? Obviously, the issue may be approached in two broad ways, one in terms of interpretation, the other in terms of the object of interpretation. If we adopt a hermeneutical perspective, we may say that the Deleuzian text does not exist outside its activation by readers, and each reader will necessarily engage the text in a slightly different fashion. Hence, we would find as many Deleuzes as there are readers. It might be argued that this is a very un-Deleuzian approach, and though I would question Hallward's assertion that Deleuze is not an anti-foundational thinker (Hallward 2006: 134), I would agree that he is no proponent of the unrestrained free play of the signifier. Levi Bryant is right, I think, that even Nietzschean perspectivism, as it is commonly construed, is not really Deleuze's, but I would insist that the Leibnizian perspectivism of the clear and the obscure, which Bryant does attribute to Deleuze, entails a necessary differentiation of degrees of chiaroscuro in each monad, and hence a qualified support of a perspectival hermeneutics. According to this view, Jardine's Deleuze and Hallward's Deleuze are incommensurable, and necessarily so.

More interesting, however, is the issue of whether the object itself, Deleuze's thought, is single or multiple. Should we clearly demarcate Deleuze from the other philosophers he examines, Deleuze from Deleuze-Guattari, early Deleuze from late Deleuze? Raymond Bellour and François Ewald put the question directly to Deleuze in a 1988 interview: 'Should we take your work as a whole, as unitary? Or do you see in it, rather, breaks, transformations?' (Deleuze 1995: 135). Bellour and Ewald then propose a division of Deleuze's work into an early treatment of other philosophers, a middle phase of his own philosophy, including *Difference and Repetition*, *The Logic of Sense* and both parts of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, and a final return to more traditional philosophical topics in the books on Bacon, cinema and Leibniz. Deleuze responds, 'Three periods, not bad going' (Deleuze 1995: 135), then considers in sequence the three phases of his work, never really addressing the question of whether his work is single or multiple, but suggesting, ultimately, that throughout his career he has never ceased to invent concepts, and hence to do philosophy.

In the Tournier essay, one might discern evidence of a shift in Deleuze's work, specifically in his approach to the possible, which is regarded here as essentially negative and limiting, whereas in Deleuze's later works the possible occupies a positive role, as in his reference to the invention of possibilities of life as a goal of philosophy and the arts. One thinks specifically of Deleuze's citation of Kierkegaard in the Tournier essay. Like a spectator overcome by the heat of a crowded theatre, crying out, 'Water! Water!', so a bourgeois gentleman suddenly rushes to the window and exclaims, 'The possible! The possible! or I shall suffocate' (Deleuze 1990: 318). Deleuze asserts that Kierkegaard is 'only invoking the a priori Other' (Deleuze 1990: 318). Yet in *Cinema 1* (Deleuze 1986: 240) and *What Is Philosophy?* (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 177), Deleuze cites the same remark and glosses it as a quest for possibilities beyond the actual, that is, outside the structure of the a priori Other. The contrast, however, is more apparent than real. The possible has two senses, the first of which is that which is practicable, feasible, predictable, a sense picked up in Bismarck's quip that politics is the art of the possible. But a second sense is that of alternatives beyond expectations, new conceptions and approaches outside conventions, a sense epitomised in the Pauline dictum, so important to Kierkegaard in *Fear and Trembling*, that with God all things are possible. From as early as Deleuze's book on Nietzsche, through *Difference and Repetition* and into *Essays Criticial and Clinical*, the latter sense of the possible may be found, and if Deleuze concentrates on the former sense in the Tournier

essay, it is to echo Bergson's critique of the possible as opposed to the virtual, rather than to discount the sense of the possible as the sphere of invention and creation.[3] This seeming difference in the articulation of the possible I see as symptomatic of the dangers inherent in the temptation to divide, periodise and segment Deleuze's thought. All too often, what appears to be a shift in position is actually merely a retooling of vocabulary. In my view, at a basic level there is a singular focus throughout his work. Granted, Deleuze is a philosopher of assemblages, planes of consistency, qualitative multiplicities, the one as an additional part existing alongside machines, the open whole, and so on. Yet I would argue that a single problem occupies Deleuze from start to finish – that of difference and its expressive individuation. A problem, of course, is not a fixed, stable entity, but a trajectory, a line of continuous variation, a modulation of a transmission frequency, a metastable locus of ongoing disparation, what Bryant has aptly called 'a durational tendency-subject', 'a sort of thread, flow, distension or "smear"' (Bryant 2008: 217). Yet that problem remains singular, if not single.

So are there several Deleuzes? Yes, and certainly so from the hermeneutical perspective. Is there one Deleuze? Yes, at least from the vantage of the continuing explication of a singular problem. Could it be otherwise? Yes, but from the position of the otherwise other – that is, it could be 'otherwise otherwise'. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari say that they aim to 'arrive at the magic formula we all seek – PLURALISM = MONISM' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 20). Perhaps our aim as well should be the magic formula, 'SEVERAL DELEUZES = ONE DELEUZE'.

Notes

1. For a detailed account of Deleuze's concept of fabulation, see Bogue (2006).
2. In the short story 'The Taciturn Lovers', Tournier briefly alludes to the sexual status of the cabin boy on board ships. In the story, an older man recalls having gone to sea as a cabin boy at the age of thirteen. 'But for a ship's boy on a deep-sea fishing boat, it was hell. As the Larousse dictionary of the time coolly wrote at the entry for "scapegoat": "the ship's boy was the crew's scapegoat". He was exploited, trampled underfoot, beaten and sodomized' (Tournier 1991: 5–6).
3. I treat this motif of 'the possible' at greater length in Bogue (2007).

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Review Essay

Taking Deleuze into the Field: Machinic Ethnography for the Social Sciences

Mark Bonta

Julia Mahler (2008) *Lived Temporalities: Exploring Duration in Guatemala. Empirical and Theoretical Studies*. Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag.

Arun Saldanha (2007) *Psychedelic White: Goa Trance and the Viscosity of Race*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.

The social sciences need Deleuze and Guattari whether we know it or not. We need them with us in the field. In my discipline (geography), we have a disturbing tendency to attempt to fold the 'latest' Continental theorists into series of speculative journal articles where we discuss how and why they should be used, and why they are an improvement on the theorists we were using five years ago. Enough articles like these and we then claim we have 'done' Deleuze, or whomever, and it's on to the next hot thinker. But the social sciences, dominated still by traditional (by which I mean pre- and anti-poststructuralist) approaches, are orphan stepchildren in the process whereby theory moves from the Continent to English translation, into the humanities and from there leaks and creeps into the social sciences. Sometimes decades late. And even when there is notable contagion, at least in the US, it is generally contained locally, within a few odd departments. Some do make it through, of course: Foucault, for example, seems to be gradually tunnelling his way toward the 'mainstream' and can occasionally be seen in the company of others of his kind. Mention of Deleuze and Guattari, however, like Derrida, still elicits uncomfortable squirming and awkward silences in 'respectable' social scientific circles.

Where social scientists, particularly anthropologists, are engaged in critical and deconstructive endeavours, there has been for some time

a close engagement with Continental theory. The challenge before Deleuzians is to show that works like *A Thousand Plateaus* (1986) can also guide and inform field-based research, in which all of us – sociologists, anthropologists, geographers, psychologists, criminologists, historians, economists and political scientists – are engaged, either directly or indirectly. Protevi and I (2004; see also Bonta 2001) have argued that Deleuze and Guattari's 'geophilosophy', read as complexity theory, can indeed provide substantial ontological scaffolding for the social sciences (though geography is a bit of an odd case because it is part-physical science) via an emphasis on the creative, self-organising, and rhizomatic characteristics of the social world. And now a rich, book-length literature is emerging along these lines, and this will make all the difference.

To take the example of geography again, in the 1990s, Deleuze and Guattari were primarily understood as proponents of 'nomadology' and most of the rest of what they had to say was politely ignored or misunderstood as clever wordplay and metaphor. But the Deleuze onslaught has continued, of course, and the publication of *Deleuze and Space* (Buchanan and Lambert 2005) and a scattering of other works (e.g. Byerley 2005; Halsey 2006), along with the healthy growth of Deleuze studies in general, came to inspire two doctoral students in the social sciences to plow into the heart of his oeuvre and put him to work for three very distinct field studies. Arun Saldanha, a geographer, uses Deleuze and Guattari's machinic approach in *Psychedelic White: Goa Trance and the Viscosity of Race* to devise a new theory of whiteness and race; Julia Mahler employs a blend of anthropology and psychoanalysis in an ethnographical study of highland Guatemala, *Lived Temporalities: Exploring Duration in Guatemala*, informed primarily by Deleuze and Bergson.

The creation of this new literature is enormously gratifying to me, because it is one thing to advocate that social scientists use Deleuze, but another thing entirely to be among the first to make the leap and demonstrate – I believe successfully in these two cases – that they are not just to be cited among others (to please a committee, perhaps) but rather should be considered as powerful allies in our social scientific endeavour to disentangle the human world, its conceptual categories and its relationships to space and time. Throughout this essay, I shall be attempting to show how these two authors contribute to this breakthrough – how their own experimentation, through being largely faithful to the machinic, materialist Deleuze, gets us past the logjam of antinomies that plague our disciplines. These two obviously took

Deleuze into the field with them, on Guatemalan buses and to the beach at Anjuna. That's a comforting thought.

I would like to get the bad news out of the way first, and the first bit is simply about the clutter. On one hand, both studies, through the nature of what they are doing, perforce spill a lot of ink on making sense of Deleuze to a wider academic public. This is necessary and can be gratifying to see; as in all ethnography it can detract from the narrative, but here it is entirely understandable that Deleuze (as always) has to be explained from the beginning. On the other hand, both are also re-writing doctoral theses, so there are obvious problems with the retention of scaffolding. Mahler's book is the most troublesome in this sense, as at times poor translation from German is exacerbated by an annoying tendency to wedge the ethnographical narratives – every chapter – between theoretical foreplay and post-event analysis. Saldanha is more successful here, as his rather amazing writing prowess gets him through some sticky parts, particularly toward the end of the book where he has a somewhat viscous exit strategy: after revealing his machinic theory of race, he then returns to the parties of Anjuna and wants to try to settle what should be done there, ending with some comments about beggars that I found a little odd, even offensive. I could feel the ghosts of his doctoral committee peering over my shoulder.

Happily, these turn out to be mostly editorial issues, and both texts are redeemed so that the reader doesn't feel that the only reason to wade deeper is for the love of Deleuze and certain curiosity about whether they 'get it right' (to a large extent, I feel they do). Saldanha's work is a page-turner: hippie enclaves are something geographers who have travelled can't fail to have noticed and wondered about (and perhaps participated in). There is a certain appeal to a text written by a researcher who uses foul language and admits to having dropped acid at all-night raves that only get 'pure' after sunrise. The whole premise is unremittingly cool, and it pulls you along (I could hardly put it down – how often does *that* get said?). Mahler's study was at first almost the opposite for me, particularly because she's writing about a part of the world that I know well. But once I got accustomed to the odd English, the theoretical excesses and the poorly informed discussion of 'Ancient Maya' (29–34), I found that the ethnographical narrative was superb. Her micropolitical descriptions of everyday life in Quiche Maya households, markets and buses rang true – embarrassingly enough, they sound better and more like what one really experiences than too many of the works in the voluminous geographical and anthropological literature that she almost unfailingly ignores. Thus I came to admire her refreshing, outsider

approach to one of the most social-science-saturated landscapes on the planet.

Now, on to the flesh. In *Psychedelic White*, Saldanha applies his 'nonessentialist, nonmechanistic, and emergentist materialism' (27) to an ethnography of place, and seeks thereby to foreground a novel ontology of race. His guiding concepts – virtuality, embodiment, face and location, for example – are heavily tinged with Deleuze and Guattari (Levinas, Massey, Goffman and others also make appearances), but he creates 'viscosity', which he defines as 'pertain[ing] to two dimensions of a collective of bodies: its sticking together, and its relative impermeability' (7). In this case, his study highlights again and again the way that whiteness is performed in certain locations through 'viscous' practices that help stick like bodies to like – a process of sorting and sifting a certain sediment, particles that stick together and create a pack of whites, an island of whiteness in a sea of others, connected to other white islands through time and space, island arcs across Asia and the world, lines of flight traceable to bourgeois discontent with Whiteness in the West and becoming-West (the latter: others who, by virtue of practices and qualities that make up for their unwhite skin tones, get accepted). Ironically. In short, Saldanha's very defensible idea is that hippies and their ilk, and their descendants, the ravers of Goa circa 2000 CE, never escaped what they rejected in the West. In their searches for authenticity and the Other, they nevertheless did not become-other and disappear into the warp. Rather, they clustered together in certain apparently non-Western exotic locales: Kathmandu, Marrakesh, Bali, Goa and so forth, creating their own worlds riven with microfascistic tendencies.

Saldanha rejects discursive theories of whiteness and particularly the type of social constructionism that permeates white studies. He wants his whiteness to be gritty and to depend on what happens in Goa – what really happens – though at the expense of non-whites, who often come across as little more than caricatures: beggars, Indian tourists and 'locals' in general. This is perhaps the only real disappointment in the content, but it is likely the price of empathising with a highly exclusivist spatial identity; participant-observation takes its toll. He hopes, through the study, to arrive at 'not an abolishing of the idea of race, but its critical reappropriation so as to combat racism more effectively' (9). Race, to him, is 'a heterogeneous process of differentiation involving the materiality of bodies and spaces', and 'racial difference emerges when bodies with certain characteristics become viscous through the ways they connect to their physical and social environment' (9). Race is to be understood as a machinic assemblage; categories of race emerge

from the sifting and sorting practices of lightly hierarchised rhizomatic communities forever tapping into a far-from-unlimited realm of virtual possibility.

'Psychedelic whiteness' (Chapter 1) is a skilful geohistory of the West's discontents, a century and more of mystics turning from the Rational to the East, and homing in on India (Chapter 3). Said upside-down. Goa, part-India and part-world, apparently unrooted, 'the place where people go to run away from India' (words of an informant, thirty five), becomes the setting for a decades-long party sucking in the wretched refuse of the West, a place for creativity, individuality, spirituality and simplicity, as an informant would have it. Trance dancing is simply the latest expression of how it goes to be white there. Reality is hybrid and nonconformist if you're one of Us, like/unlike the author, 'half-Indian, half-Belgian, definitely not white' (45). A core evolves: the 'Goa Freaks' (Chapter 4), a specific identity, little suns of non-conformity, epitomes of cool, black holes sucking in more peripheral bodies, their lines of flight become microfascistic. Saldanha spends many chapters explaining the mechanics of how this happens: through drug taking (Chapter 5), trance-dancing (Chapter 6), travellers' 'war stories' and the siege mentality of being a xenophobic backpacker on the cheap in the non-West (Chapter 7), the visual economy of dress, body modification, motorcycle riding (Chapter 8). The description rarely lags, and is accompanied by helpful sketch maps and photos that plot the micro-geography of clubs and outdoor raves, where he applies the white wall/black hole system to the face-sorting constantly going on, allocating bodies to specific places and times and reserving the sunlit hours of the morning for the whites: a 'combination of visibility, intoxication, outlandish music, a peculiar sociability, and an exoticist attitude toward the tropical sun … keeps outsiders out' (127); thus, 'subculturally pure … comes to mean racially pure' (131).

Later chapters move from the exclusive and 'cool' spaces, where highly specific sorting takes place, to more heterogeneous situations, particularly those involving markets, the law and the 'Third World' in general. Highly racist behaviour is to be expected; the author's tentative solution is via Levinasian ethics, e.g. 'being friendly to poor Indians' (176) as a place to start. This seems very lukewarm to me, and unnecessary as I don't think such a 'machinic geography of phenotype' (Chapter 16) requires any sort of transcendent ethics whatsoever. Oddly enough, he claims to not want to deal with Deluze and Guattari's 'anarchic' and 'avante-garde' tendencies (210), yet these very tendencies are what would allow us to understand the pervasiveness of racialist

overcoding and the striations not only of Worldwide Whiteness and the molar but also the molecular when it folds in upon itself. The 'nouvelle terre' could emerge not only after recognition that The [White] Man's got us down, but also as we ourselves do not succumb to viscosity at the expense of unbecoming-local.

Julia Mahler's *Lived Temporalities* is an important book in a wholly different sense. She is a trespasser in the social sciences, and we need more of those: inventive even when reifying, unafraid and jumping across to the 'Other' as if she were one. In a sense, she does what Saldanha cannot, ignoring the tourists and getting in deep with Guatemalans. For the sake of space I shall spend little time on her theoretical discussions, which are as heavily engaged with Bergson as with Deleuze. I can't say that I agree that 'Deleuze's entire work is vitalist' (49) but I am more interested here in getting across the authenticity of her portrayals of lived time in the Guatemalan highlands. I think many Deleuzians would have much to argue with in this text; in the Preface, for example, she argues that one can inhabit the event even while claiming that the Deleuzian event is narcissistic, without an other as other; she uses Jessica Benjamin's interrelational theory to attempt to get past this. She sees the Deleuzian actual as enemy to the virtual, whereas I see this relationship as endlessly productive lemniscate. I am relatively certain we would not agree.

She explores 'passive time' à la *Difference and Repetition* (Deleuze 2004) in Chapter 2, and this is where I begin to be convinced that Mahler and I have inhabited the same Deleuzian Central America. Section 2.2.1.1 'Chopping Firewood' (73), for example: 'Firewood produces an atmosphere of time passively unfolding in all its weight, full time. The atmosphere gets produced through signs that signal the co-existence of the non-abbreviated and non-mediated temporalities of nature and the non-abbreviated and non-mediated temporalities of people.' She demonstrates how this works through thick ethnographic description, and sets the pattern for the entire work. Next: tending the fire, temporalities of water, cleaning clothes, washing the body, temporalities of sweetcorn, temporalities of saints, and so on. Guatemalans, she tries to show, 'tend to live among so much passive time, but [don't] appreciate it particularly' (107) in the sense that the way that they inhabit the event seems so normal that they do not detect it, while she, the European, is struck by every nuance. What she is doing, it turns out, is empathising with the distinct temporalities of the so-called 'Third World', with a decidely unhippylike delight in everything that is strange. She unfolds herself onto and into Guatemalan space-time

without the need for critical distance – she tells us what she's thinking all the way along, and eventually we get the point. Chapter 3 explores immanence and territorialisation via the passive self and the market; Chapter 4 delves into the unpleasant as a way of reaffirming life (via war, excreta, chicken-killing and trash, for example); Chapter 5, via engaging accounts of riding on buses, unravels the time of the event, contrasting Chronos with Aion. Theoretical differences aside, I would like to say that Mahler gets closer to what is true in the social world of the highlands (and this has wide applicability across the Central American cultural region) through her painstaking approach than most others have. The rhythms and refrains of life, constructing the interwoven space-times in endlessly creative ways, *are* Guatemala – hers is the complement to Saldanha's account, as if the latter had abandoned the freaks and explored what it meant to be Indian. Both accounts are brimming over with Deleuze and enough practical application of concepts to keep us busy in the field for the time being.

It might go something like this. Doing ethnography is a way of letting the world wash over us, taking note of what's going on, and making sense of it all through the construction of narratives without doing violence to the interwoven complexity of the forces at work out there. We take Deleuze into the field, we're crammed into a bus somewhere, how in the hell is any of this supposed to make sense? Where's the ritornello? The pineapple plantations whizzing by appear to be striated, but there's so much dust coming in the window that the thought of 'faciality' actually being something you could apply to what's going on around you before you get back to some sterile quiet space somewhere (where it's relatively easy to do so, ex post facto) is nauseatingly laughable. You throw up your hands – it takes years to get on top of the 'basic data', to become proficient in the languages and landscapes. Why not just paste theory on afterwards? If you go out looking to reinforce the theory that's in your head, good luck – you'll likely find what you were looking for (or perhaps never complete the study). Deleuze is hinting at ways to figure out how the full corporeality of the world works while we're in the world, not just providing us with endless new ways to interpret the meanings of signs from a safe distance. But Deleuze, like many honest philosophers, was, as we say, 'not exactly a field person'. Try writing *your* doctoral thesis as a set of interconnected plateaus with a fair number of invented concepts and foul language. Power/knowledge: the censo/u/reship is not to be taken lightly. Bottom line: Mahler and Saldanha, and others, are opening the door, preparing the way, paving over the rut for the rest. I would hope that at

some point, Deleuze becomes imperceptible – a veritable Descartes, but a better coordinate system for the social.

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3rd International *Deleuze Studies* Conference

Connect, Continue, Create

Deleuze and Nomadic Methodologies

Amsterdam 12–14 July 2010

ASCA/CFH
Amsterdam School of Cultural Analysis with the Centre for the Humanities at Utrecht University

'Philosophy needs a nonphilosophy that comprehends it; it needs a nonphilosophical comprehension just as art needs nonart and science needs nonscience', Deleuze and Guattari argue in *What is Philosophy?* The third annual International *Deleuze Studies* Conference will address the relevance of nomadic thought for contemporary scientific, critical and artistic practices. More specifically, it will explore the fast-growing new interconnections among the three domains of art, science and philosophy, by mapping out and exploring the complex ways in which transdisciplinary encounters can be engendered. Combining critique with creation, the conference will focus on issues of methodology by positioning Deleuze's philosophical work as the missing link among different domains of scientific enquiry and philosophical and artistic practice today. Central questions are: What are the different ways of interference among these different areas? What kind of methodological implications do their dynamic encounters entail? What are the limits of transdisciplinary connections, relations and fields? What kind of research is art practice? In a world that is increasingly technologically linked and globally mediated, how can scientific disciplines connect in distinctive and productive ways, both among themselves and with practices located in the world of art and thought? The conference rests on the assumption that rhizomatic growth and interrelations are unpredictable but this does not mean that they proceed randomly. Connections may be broken but will always continue to grow in other directions and create new encounters, new thoughts and new affects. Accounting for the unexpected patterns of both sustainable

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Conference Organisers: Prof. Patricia Pisters, University of Amsterdam; Prof. Rosi Braidotti, University of Utrecht. For information asca@uva.nl. See also the conference link at www.hum.uva.nl/asca.

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Preceding the conference students can participate in the Deleuze camp **Mille Gilles** which will take place on **5–9 July 2010** in Amsterdam. In intensive sessions participants will read texts by Deleuze and Deleuze scholars with the help of experienced scholars from different fields. The Deleuze camp also includes a student forum in which participants can launch their own ideas and questions. Places are limited. Please address your application to Amir Vodka: avodka@gmail.com

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Introduction to Félix Guattari's 'Project for a Film *by* Kafka'

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> *CONTROLLER*: *All who are here today must remember that we are gathered in a ritual to approach what is called Kafka through Kafka, by Kafka, with Kafka.*
> *THREE*: *Whatever Kafka means. (She speaks, dreamily.)*
> *TWO*: *Kafka? Someone said Kafka . . . Kafka? (A sudden cry.)*
> *THREE*: *What is Kafka?*
> *CONTROLLER. (Moving toward THREE, threatening her with the knife). We are joined in a struggle against incomprehensible odds. We must all enter the ceremony.* (Shein 1975: 23)

Franz Kafka's 'oeuvre', Guattari thought, was falsely manufactured after the fact as a 'corpus' and a 'work'. Instead, Guattari found it full with failure, fragmentation, and minoritarian tendencies: deterritorialisations, anOedipal becomings, collective assemblages of enunciation that loosened statements from subjects, and literary machines of all sorts: rhizomatic letters, stories of animal becomings, unfinished and interminable novels. Failures at formalisation link writing with becoming, and make it possible to see the singular transversal lines crossing language and literature, but also exiting these, too, along intensities running across institutions, professions, and social movements.

There is, of course, the 'Kafka book' co-written with Deleuze (Deleuze and Guattari 1986), but that is not all, even if it should be enough for anyone. There are many notes for unrealised projects, out of which this translation has been created. Guattari was fascinated with Kafka's dreams; he collected and numbered them (in *Soixante-cinq rêves de Franz Kafka*, 2007), commenting that they 'engage the most diverse and heterogeneous semiotic means: those of theatre, dance,

cinema, music, plastic forms, and once again, to be sure, writing!' (Guattari 2007: 29). Moreover, these dreams are 'open, machinic indices' conjoining Kafka and Guattari, literary and schizoanalytic machines, and open in the sense of 'how they have fertilized and broken such and such semiotic or behavioral chains' (Guattari 2006: 405). A machinic dream interpretation follows the deterritorialising line and its messy nonsense, fuck ups, brutality, and sputtering flows of particle-signs. But the collective assemblage that is Guattari's Kafka also includes his 'first schizo' patient, who he had copy out *The Castle*, and the tape recorder Guattari used to play back sessions since this patient liked to listen to his own voice (Guattari 2006: 146). And then, many decades later, the internet comes along, and its Kafka potentiality is staggering – what better medium than one that enables two or three enthusiasts to communicate about Kafka's dreams by means of keyboard and screen, Guattari remarked (Guattari 1985: 11). Schizo processual chain: Guattari, R.A. (patient), Kafka, journals, writing, copying, tape recorder, e-mail . . .

François Dosse reminds us of another Guattari: an inventive curator of multimedia exhibitions, a 'Kafka event' on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of his birth, mounted in the summer and fall of 1984 at the Centre Pompidou in Paris (Dosse 2007: 294 ff). Kafka event: dream texts, dream theatre courtesy of Philippe Adrien, seminars, dream cinema (by François Pain). It may be said without exaggeration that Guattari never stopped working on Kafka who was, after all, his favourite author (Guattari 2006: 146). He even wanted to tour the exhibition to Japan.

The semiotic at issue here is cinema. To the existing relation of Kafka and minoritarian becoming in a literary key, Guattari adds cinema. For Guattari, minor cinema precipitates becomings minor (practical enrichments of schizo desire) in the mass, just the sort of people he wanted to reach with 'Le Siècle de Kafka'. And to become minor is not to be in a minority or the representative of a minority, or even to formally acquire the characteristics or status of a minority through some affiliation. It is not a question of mimesis or membership, but of how to produce becomings that might summon a people with whom cinema connects. The fundamental theoretical problem here lies at the heart of what it means to summon a new people without teleological or messianic politics. And on television, no less! What Guattari thought he needed to accomplish was to make a film that would find some funding through the production of television shows, perhaps culminating in a 'cultural series'. Television was a choice medium in Guattari's search

for a potential public, a public yet to come, with which he attempted to connect through minor Kafka becomings, engaging sensibilities not yet fully entangled in dominant normative modelisations. In short, an anOedipal, anti-axiomatic Kafka assemblage; a Kafka not closed off by editors and translators; a molecular Kafka beyond representation (not 'about' Kafka but 'by' Kafka through Guattari's production group); independent Kafka affects that connect across existing strata, blending with real material fluxes, intervening in and resisting stolid representations, enriching flight paths of singularisation, right at the heart of repetition (that is, 'the threshold of deterritorialization' in Titorelli's 'companion' canvases in *The Trial*; see Guattari 1984a: 258; Kafka 1968: 163).

Guattari believed that Kafka was nothing less than the future, but in addition to the sense of a people to come just evoked: 'Kafka is not, as some have said, a nineteenth-century writer imprisoned in family conflicts. He is a twenty-first century writer describing the earliest stages of a problem whose implications we are barely beginning to grasp today' (Guattari 1984a: 259). Qua bureaucrat, Kafka struggled against the perverse satisfactions of bureaucracy – its micro-fascisms that trap power in static forms, procedures, protocols, and hierarchies, alienating those encountering it.

But Kafka's relation to bureaucracy has been misunderstood, Guattari insisted. His vision was not sombre and sad, but full of humour, and insight into the perversions of bureaucracy. Indeed, recalling a comment in *A Thousand Plateaus*:

> if Kafka is the greatest theorist of bureaucracy, it is because he shows how … the barriers between offices cease to be 'a definite dividing line' and are immersed in a molecular medium that dissolves them and simultaneously makes the office manager proliferate microfigures impossible to recognize or identify, discernible only when they are centralizable. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 214)

The perverse mixing of transversal communication between compartments, workstations, boxes on forms, with the boss at the top corner office, and company crest at the top centre of the page, is in the Kafka assemblage. The 'great paranoid bureaucratic machine' and the 'little schizo machine' are in the same assemblage (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 34).

Guattari worked with Yasha David on the Kafka exhibition. Here and there he mentions this collaboration, sometimes referring to it as a joint project, at other times suggesting he had 'entrusted' the running of the

event to David (Guattari 1996: 235; Guattari 1984b: 1). Whatever the case may have been, Guattari also notes in every instance the trouble he experienced with the arts bureaucracy at the Centre Pompidou: 'Those in charge at the Pompidou Centre made it so difficult that, on several occasions, we thought we would have to abandon the project' (Guattari 1996: 235). So Guattari, in a very Kafkaesque manner, plugged into a bureaucratic machine, in organising the centenary celebrations of Kafka's birth.

Project for a film *by* Kafka? Yes, Guattari's emphasis is deceptively simple. The affects with which Kafka wrote may live in film made for television because they are independent and survive their author, remaining available for 'non-human becomings' of readers to come: 'artists are presenters of affects, the inventors and creators of affects. They not only create them in their work, they give them to us and make us become with them' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 173, 175).

Finally, it has to date been hard enough to think of Guattari as a film theorist (Genosko 2009), let alone as a filmmaker. Perhaps this fragmentary outline, which is not the only evidence we have, is most important for the role it may play in helping readers of Guattari to overcome existing difficulties, think of minor cinema, and join the Kafka assemblage.

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Project for a Film *by* Kafka[1]

Félix Guattari

Abstract

This short document, appearing for the first time in English translation, concerns the prospects of a made-for-television cultural mini-series inspired by select episodes in Kafka's works. A window is opened onto Guattari's curatorial ambitions, cinematic projects, and theory of minor cinema, bringing into focus how he translated theoretical preoccupations into the cultural sector with reference to diverse semiotic media.

Keywords: Félix Guattari, Franz Kafka, film and television, workshop, exhibition, script

[1. DRAFT]

The Kafka draft may be divided into three large sections:

1. A video workshop, consisting of six important sessions staggered every two months, that brings together material for a script;
2. The writing of the actual script by a small team;
3. The film's production.

We are, of course, particularly interested in phase 1. It consists of two aspects: the study of a film project on Kafka and the more general study of the method of developing scripts, in terms of a critical analysis of actual cinematic practices.

We will then be faced with three distinct financing problems, phase 1 probably being taken care of by different television stations in view of producing a 'cultural series', and phases 2 and 3 being handled by producers.

Kafka's work and life seem to lend themselves especially to this type of project; indeed, it would not seem proper to expect that a scriptwriter should monopolize all the dimensions likely to go into the film (on the levels of design, music, sound, gesture, etc.).

It is worth remembering that Kafka's work has itself been largely reconstructed, superficially, by Max Brod, on the basis of material pulled from texts Kafka wanted to burn. This work, to borrow Umberto Eco's expression, is essentially 'open'. But the literary machine made of it a closed work: it manufactured books like *The Castle* or *The Trial* out of sketches; it made choices, and a Dutch researcher, Herman Uyttersprot, was able to demonstrate how the order of chapters as fixed by Kafka himself had not been respected. In fact, novels were produced that absolutely do not correspond to that which we can reconstitute from Kafka's project (Max Brod managed to find a sort of religious conclusion to *The Trial*, whereas it was actually the chapters on the very rich character of Titorelli, open to all the azimuths of art and sexuality, that make up the natural continuity of the novel). We have tried to show that the subject of Kafka's death is in fact a short story that could fit perfectly at the beginning of the book. Even a novel like *Amerika*, which seems to be the most constructed, is unfinished. If we take a closer look at Kafka's work, we notice that numerous appended notes, which in present editions have been placed outside of the text, have in fact as much importance as the text itself. We cannot say that Kafka would not have modified the works as we now know them on the basis of these sometimes microscopic notes. In fact, I believe we are in no position to distinguish, in Kafka's work, what constitutes short stories, novels, the diary, the correspondence, etc. Because of the very fact that Kafka had an extremely rigorous literary ideal – Flaubertian, Kleistian – he left us with a work of failure, according to him, a fragmented work. He only acknowledged the validity of certain short stories like *The Verdict* or *The Metamorphosis* and, for the most part, he renounced his work. But on the other hand, implicitly, he acknowledges it: certain comments show us that what interests him are very small sentences, very small sequences. For example, he explains that what interests him in cinema is not the whole of the film, but a comment, a retort, and this sometimes even in very bad films.

If we want to respect what seems to be the profound inspiration of Kafkaism, we must endeavour to capture the molecular elements of the work and to deal with them in all possible matters of expression. What interested Kafka, and what should interest us in cinema, are not characters, plots, but systems of intensity, gestures, reflections, looks – for example a face behind a window, attitudes, sensations, changes in gravity, in space and time coordinates, and the dilations or retractions of all perceptual semiotics... For too long, Kafka has been described as a literary hack of the nineteenth century; in fact, his

approach to unconscious social processes places him perhaps on the level of the twenty-first century, on the level of what could be twenty-first-century cinema.

The (inordinate) ambition of our project would then be not to make a film about Kafka's work, or a film on Kafka, but a film *by* Kafka; let Kafka's machine live within the coordinates of cinema, work within the oeuvre. It appears to me that only a group, bringing together people with different points of view and setting out from systems of specific singularities, will be able to contribute in ways that make the themes, and the significations that tend to impose themselves, explode. We could start with sequences like the ones with characters who, heads bowed, beards crushed to their chests, curl themselves up; or those that stand up in one shot, that put their heads through the ceiling; these animal heads that burst in through a window or through a wall; the diverse becomings-animal; the fact that a little detail starts blooming and transforms the whole landscape (I am thinking specifically about this cathedral scene, when K. notices a detail on a relief and, after this, the novel seems to turn in a new direction).

We would therefore in no way have to seek to identify a work or flesh out one type of character. Indeed, it is not the same K. character that traverses the various works or even each of them. If we read the text carefully, in *The Castle*, when K. arrives at the outskirts of the village, we realise that a certain number of his characteristics disappear in the rest of the novel: at the outset, he appears to be a married man, a sort of sales representative, a little bit like Kafka himself was for an insurance company; then the character takes shape, acquires a certain authority, bends in different directions. With the K. of *The Trial*, we are dealing, at the beginning, with an extremely ambitious, proud character linked to the bigwigs of the bank – we have to remember that Kafka himself was not a low-level bureaucrat but an important civil servant, much appreciated by his superiors. Along the way, K. loses some of his rigidity and, at the same time, takes on a kind of authority . . . There is no uncertainty here, in fact there are clues to find, lines of desire to discover in *The Castle* as well as in *The Trial*, or in the short stories. One of these directions, that could be explored from the outset but just as easily abandoned along the way, is a certain type of *jouissance*, what we have called 'bureaucratic *jouissance*', that is established through the power relations of the bureaucrat who 'holds' his employees, who 'caresses' his folders, and who argues about them to the point of losing sight of them. This should lead us to turn away from making a film noir, a sad film; Kafka's work is essentially humorous, violent and cheerful.

The workshop of phase 1 might then consist in bringing together a certain number of people working on Kafka's oeuvre from their own perspective, capturing in their own way these lines of desire. Some will retain such themes as the window, or the woman in black with her silk shawl around the head, whom we find in the entire work; or even the small dog, a kind of little monster that pursues you in the night, etc.

Bringing these themes to light will give rise to suggestions concerning composition, editing and semiotisation. We can imagine that actors such as Jean-Pierre Léaud would seek to portray such and such a gesture, such and such an attitude; whereas a set designer would sketch the stage setting, etc. The interval between sessions should allow a minimal video summary [of one session] to be presented in the following session, which does not at all mean that from one session to the next choices or the slightest organization of work should be made. Indeed, during this phase, we should remain within the same exploratory perspective; nothing will prevent us from contradicting ourselves from one session to the next. I clearly imagine the presentation I could make, at one of the sessions, about certain Sologne farms as the setting of the new *Defence of a farm*, but, just as well, on another occasion, I could suggest a wholly abstract setting. The polyvocality of the collective inspiration should not in the least reduce each intuition to a consensus; it is in this sense that the fragmentation of Kafka's work should be protected. Perhaps in this way we could bring to light certain dimensions that are generally crushed in the typical working of cinema. This concerns the work of the screenwriter as well as that of the musician, the set designers; indeed, even the decorators, the lighting, sound, and make-up artists, etc. Maybe each of them would be able to tip the balance of opinion and seize upon a trait especially appropriate for highlighting a particular system of intensities.

At the end of this year of work, twelve to twenty hours of video, summarizing the totality of the work, would serve as the basic material for two types of activity:

1. the production of a script by a team in charge of phase 2 (which would not necessarily be dominated by film professionals, but depend on negotiations with the producers);
2. a series of TV shows, with the aim of absorbing costs, and that might result in a cultural series. But it should be understood from the get go that at no point should the workshop be impelled by the video team towards 'making a show'. The video team will have to submit a report, and participate in the rest of the work, without

imposing its point of view, which would be that of the presentation to television viewers.

The possibility that a part of this material accumulated in phase 1 be used in phase 3 in making the film implies that the work must be made with quality video (probably 2 inch tape).

About phase 3, about the film itself, I will not say anything else except that, ultimately, the producer will be asked to take limited risks. In fact, phase 1's workshop should be mainly financed by TV stations, and the producer will be asked to finance part of phase 2, that is to say, the part of the work of the professional team participating in the workshop.

[2.] COMPLEMENTARY NOTES

The whole film takes place along a wall:

- wall of the farm at K.'s arrival;
- wall across which runs a beam of light, indicated by the woman who writes in the night and whom children join;
- wall of the inn through which Frieda indicates Klamm sleeping;[2]
- wall along which two children run and 'catch' little Hans;
- wall of the farm, this time seen from the inside and that will open to let the official procession pass . . .

During the first half of the film, the wall, seen from the outside, conceals a mystery and lets K. sense the existence of the castle. During the second part, after having cleared the wall in the children's dramatic scene, we discover that the castle is not mysterious at all, that everything that takes place there is the result of typical behaviours, gesticulations and bureaucratic rituals.

This wall's *plastic* and *musical* unity should cross the entire film, different scenes somehow detaching themselves from it. This way, intermediate scenes depicting, for example, a gliding motion along the wall, or else an immobile face-to-face revealing the almost imperceptible modifications at work within it (a little like in Henri Michaux's film on drugs), would be of great importance, especially from the musical perspective, thus bringing out a common thread through the same kind of blend of sounds, noises and words these scenes would showcase.

The wall is synonymous with the absence of the face and the absence of the eyes. I thought under these conditions, an alternative to the wall could be suggested in the form of a face, always the same, in extreme

close-up, speaking very loudly and therefore integrated into this music-noises-words complex previously put forward. As the camera gradually gets closer to this face, we cease to distinguish its traits and seamlessly pass to the wall.

Thus, during certain climactic moments of the film, this complex would suddenly reappear. A whole paranoid and bureaucratic discourse will need to be brought into focus, flowing rapidly yet in a deep voice, linked to images that are perhaps being inscribed onto the face itself – images of streets, cities, corridors, offices, etc.

I also thought that at a certain point, perhaps this face might be composed of about forty videos showing the same urban images, in a sort of ballet of changing figures, with systems of gliding lines, symmetries, dissymmetries, rhythms, and images that skip, etc.

The very first image of the film could issue from such a distorted face: in this way, that which had been initially proposed regarding the linking together of wind, music, words and noise, would be presented in a different order, the horizon of the wall appearing in the greatest silence, after all the noisy images had dissipated from the face.

[3. SCRIPT OF THE] FIRST PART

Elements for the first segment:

A cart in the night. Phosphorescent horse – somewhat purple – slippery, slimy image. (I am thinking about the image of the dog at the end of *Los Olvidados*.[3])

Tremendous acceleration: the cart crashes into the wall towards which it charges. Exploded head.

(Reference: the short story *A Country Doctor*.)

Elements of the final break (a few seconds):

- the young man from *The Verdict* steps over the parapet of the bridge;
- in the distance, a hand signal through a window, a few seconds before K.'s execution in *The Trial*.

Elements for the second segment:
Same movement of the cart.

But at the moment where the acceleration becomes unbearable: abrupt stop. (Like in the text I lent you.) The peasant characters are almost midgets; they are dressed in cowls, a little medievalistic, which gives

them a comical silhouette. Each keeps their distance. (A kind of formal ballet, Jancsó style.[4])

For a few seconds.

Final scene, inside of the farmyard: the same characters, in a slightly blurred background (I don't know what there will be in the foreground), cross the field at full speed. (In reality, this will consist of silhouettes mounted on rails).

- Woman's face, rings under her eyes; she has cried a lot. Slow, careful conversation in a foreign language. Sudden, authoritarian interruption, in the manner of: 'I will take care of all of this; I will take back control of everything.'
- Very quick image of the scene of the dance's eruption.

For the third segment:

The cart, slowly, along the wall; summer afternoon; vegetation.

The young boy's legs, sitting on the wall.

K. enters the farm. Fixed silhouette – in the background – of one of these comical characters.

K. walks into the room where two old men are eating their soup. The scene continues with children; until the client bursts in.

But then, the link is made with the licentious civil servant from the end of the film who pursues a young girl. (The violin scene, etc.)

(Ridiculous orchestra parade, etc.)

For the fourth segment:

Two old men get up. They direct the cart in. They lead K. through the barn towards a door. Steam; scene of the tub; of laundry. Children's legs climbing down a ladder. Sketch of the wall scene.

[4. CUTTING OF THE FIRST PART]

Break 1

[Description of the first shot:] 1 a

[Image 1:]

Sequence shot: A greyish white wall seen from the front with, in double exposure (or an altogether different device to be determined, for example, by intercalated images), a face in extreme close-up, but that we can barely make out.

As the camera imperceptibly approaches the wall (or zooms in), the face loses its contour, only the fixed eyes and a talking mouth still vaguely appear.

[Sound 1:]

A rapidly flowing speech, while remaining in a low tone, or progressively, transforms itself into muffled music. This music, an arrhythmic sonorous mass, transforms itself very progressively into the whistling of the wind which in turn will extinguish in reaching a perfect silence.

We will only understand the text intermittently, given that, step by step, the same voice will be superimposed on itself and sometimes this superimposition will triple or quadruple in fits and starts. The source texts will be extracted from the reports of the Moscow trials, for example, Karl Rudels' last statement:[5]

> *The presiding judge: 'Defendant Rudels, you have the floor for your last statement.'*
>
> *Rudels: 'Citizen Judges, after I have confessed to the crime of treason to the country there can be no question of a speech in defence. There are no arguments by which a grown man in full possession of his senses could defend treason to his country. Neither can I plead extenuating circumstances… And when I hear that the people in this dock are mere bandits and spies, I object to it. I do not object to it with the purpose of defending myself; because since I have confessed to treason to the country it makes little difference from my point of view, from a human point of view that I committed treason in conspiracy with generals, I have not that professional pride which permits one to commit treachery in conjunction with generals, but not to commit treachery in conjunction with agents… If you are dealing with mere criminals and spies, on what can you base your conviction that what we have said is the truth, the firm truth?… And that is why I contest the assertion that those who sit here in this dock are criminals who have lost all human shape. I am fighting not for my honour, which I have lost; I am fighting for the recognition of the truth of the testimony I have given, the truth in the eyes not of this court, not of the Public Prosecutor and the judges, who know us stripped of the soul, but of the far wider circle of people who have known me for thirty years and who cannot understand how I have sunk so low.' (Excerpt from: Report of court proceedings in the case of the anti-soviet Trotskyite centre, heard before the Military collegium of the Supreme court of the USSR, Moscow, 23–30 January 1937, English Edition, 1937, page 541 ff.)*

[Description of the second shot:] 1b
[Image 2:]

With fade-in dissolve or any other device, we pass, without any resolution of continuity, without any rupture of luminous intensity, 'through the wall'.

Little by little a horizontal line appears. It seems that we are in a field and that we are advancing, facing a wall that is still very far away. This wall crosses the shot horizontally and cuts it through and through in the middle.

Blunt jerk of the camera and return to the fixed shot.

Again, a 'clumsy' jerk and a soft oscillation: we are in a cart pulled by a mule – up to this point, we had not yet seen the mule.

We see, in the foreground, an arm dressed in a thick peasant cloth (on the right side of the shot).

A hand wearing a ring quickly crosses the shot.

Camera pulls back: we see:

- the mule (bird's eye view);
- on the occasion of a chaos [*sic*], two characters, seen from the back: a peasant and K. dressed in black.

[Sound 2]:

From the sonorous mass, sounds of the mule's steps and the cart's grinding gradually emerge.

[Description of the third shot:] 1c
[Image 3:]
Cutting speeds up.
Shots in quick succession.

- Establishing shot of the cart.
- Close-up of the mule's eyes (no blinkers).
- Close-up of hands.
- Close-up of a paper that sticks out of the peasant's pocket.
- Shot facing the wall that comes closer but sways because of the cart's movements.
- In passing, we catch, but very quickly, without really distinguishing what it is: three fixed heads above the wall.

[Nothing is noted regarding sound 3]

[Description of the fourth shot:] 1d

[Image 4:]

Little by little the cart's motions centre on the three heads above the wall. The middle one is placed a little higher than the other two. It sports a long red beard.

Through sudden jerks, shots displaying the same stationary cart, and the two characters – K. and the peasant – gesticulating nervously, are inserted within the preceding sequence. We understand that the peasant refuses to go further: he is scared.

[Nothing is noted regarding sound 4]

Break 2[6]

[Image 5:]

Suddenly the film becomes white, swept by the film stock that seems cut. Little by little we realise that this is not a technical incident because

1) some numbers appear,
2) in – *very light* – double exposure, the three heads reappear.

[Sound 5:]

Sounds of the projector in which the film stock is cut.

[Image 6:]

Sudden obscurity: long shot sequence to the right, the wall and K. seen from the back (about twenty metres away). He advances towards a dark tree. He turns his head occasionally towards the wall as if he were trying to find the three heads. He approaches another peasant who is stopped by the side of the road, slightly in front of the tree.

Close-up shot: K. calls out to the peasant

[Sound 6:]

> K.: 'Who was the guy we could see a short while ago on top of the wall?'
> – No answer.
> K.: 'Excuse me sir, is there not an inn around here?'
> – No answer.
> K.: 'Sir, I am speaking to you!'
> The peasant: 'Yeah, so what?'
> K.: 'Is there an inn?'
> The peasant: 'An inn.'
> K.: 'Sir, I beg of you, I would like to find an inn for the night.'
> The peasant: 'What are you doing here?'

[Image 7:]

The peasant points in the direction from which K. came. He turns around without answering K. and goes away towards the tree.

[Sound 7:]

K. (disconcerted): 'But, listen, I have things to do.'
The peasant: 'He has things to do!'
The peasant: 'After all, I don't care! Go there if you want, you will see . . . '
K.: 'Sir . . . '

[Image 8:]

K. goes in the direction indicated; he takes a piss a way along the wall.

[Nothing is noted regarding sound 8]

Break

[Image 9:]

For a second, Frieda's image appears as she props herself up on her elbow, at the point when Klamm knocks on the door.

We hear the peasant speaking to a woman. We see that a woman had stayed in the shade, in the tree, spying on them.

[Sound 9:]

The woman: 'But what are you doing with this pig?'

Translated by Jakub Zdebik

Permission for this translation was kindly provided by Nouvelles editions Lignes.

Notes

1. [Note added by French editor Stéphane Nadaud:] In the 1980s, Guattari was planning to produce a film based on Kafka's oeuvre. Many rough drafts and work projects are deposited in the Fonds Guattari (IMEC: Institut Mémoires de l'Édition Contemporaine). Here, we put forward four previously unpublished texts which are sufficiently complete to be published (the additions to make the text coherent, which appear in brackets, are our own, as is the title of the piece). The first text, the 'draft', exposes the feasibility of the project: likely written for eventual financiers, it sets out the project's extremely elaborate structure. The second is a 'complementary note' that already envisions what the film could be. Guattari, in his many rough drafts, puts forward a fastidious cutting of the film into many parts, each composed of many segments the assembly of which is almost impossible to follow. The third text proposes a script of the first part of the film (divided in four of these segments). The fourth text is the shooting script

of the first part (cut according to *image* and *sound* side by side in two columns that we convey here by putting them in brackets).
2. Frieda and Klamm are characters in *The Castle*.
3. The French title of Luis Buñuel's film is *Pitié pour eux* (1950) [The English title is *The Forgotten Ones*].
4. Guattari is discussing the Hungarian filmmaker Miklós Jancsó. He follows a schema representing K running along the wall with, at the level of the wall, '*three barely seen silhouettes [of] soldiers from the ending*'.
5. [Translator's note:] Guattari takes this dialogue from: Piatakov, Georgii Leonidovich. Report of court proceedings in the case of the anti-soviet Trotskyite centre, heard before the Military collegium of the Supreme court of the USSR, Moscow, 23–30 January 1937, in re: Y. L. Pyatakov, K. B. Radek, G. Y. Sokolnikov, L. P. Serebryakov, N. I. Muralov, Y. A. Livshitz, Y. N. Drobnis, M. S. Boguslavsky, I. A. Knyazev, S. A. Rataichak, B. O. Norkin, A. A. Shestov, M. S. Stroilov, Y. D. Turok, I. Y. Hrasche, G. E. Pushin, V. V. Arnold, accused of treason against the country, espionage, acts of diversion, wrecking activities and the preparation of terrorist acts, i.e., of crimes covered by articles 58(1a), 58(8), 58(9) and 58(11) of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR. Verbatim report. Moscow: People's Commissariat of Justice of the USSR, 1937. The text Guattari attributes to Karl Rudels is actually pronounced by Karl Radek.
6. From this point on, Guattari does not cut his scenes. We have reconstructed the sequence.

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Lessons to Live (2): Deleuze

for C. B.[1]

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Abstract

Part of a series on the question of what is the good life, the essay is structured as a montage. Part 1 contests the received notion that death is exterior to the work of Deleuze. To this end, it gathers together a telegraphic collection of examples – 'corpses' in his corpus – that invariably show up whenever the question is raised. Part 2 attempts a Deleuzian move: it puts death to work. If death is not nothing, it argues, it must be productive of something absolutely new. Drawing upon Blanchot's seminal essay, 'The Two Versions of the Imaginary', it makes the case that this creation is the cadaver: the first time-image.

Keywords: Deleuze, Blanchot, Godard, time-image, cadaver-image, resemblance, repetition, imaginary

PART I

Resistances

The first thoughts on the subject of this essay organised themselves around a provocation arriving from a colleague or rather – as he himself may prefer a title that invokes the presence of an *inoperative community* – a 'literary friend'. Upon reading my reflections on Derrida's last lesson on learning to live (Baross 2008) – 'only from an other and by death' (Derrida 1994: xviii) – this ardent student of Deleuze exclaimed (or so I imagine, since our communications were electronic): 'but why speak of life starting from death!'

It is, however, not in defence of Derrida that I begin to write, to replay otherwise the *différend* Deleuze/Derrida or to confirm – against his not undeserved reputation of a thinker *in* mourning – his 'yes' to life, until the last *instant*. It is rather the defence, if not the praise, of death that motivates me. The ambition – indeed folly, for the task is far too

great and not only because of the constraints of an essay – is to show death to be *something* (following Bergson's celebrated formula 'time is something'), to extract it from the radical exteriority imposed on it by a calculated *philosophical* indifference, in whose long history Deleuze's is only one among many illustrious names.

Resistance to Deleuze, however, requires a certain measure of faithfulness to Deleuze, such is the power of his work. It demands fidelity at least to what Badiou considers one of its 'major motifs': 'il faut se lever contre le négatif' (Badiou 2008: 110). I will embrace this injunction against the negative, even as I appear to move against the grain of Deleuze's work and inscribe death in the order of life and creation. Not in order to restore to it the force (*pulsion*) of a negative principle at work on the reverse side of life, or to replenish its negative idea (Nothing) with *signifiance*, but rather to render justice to its power (*puissance*) of creation. The power to introduce something absolutely new in the world, something that is proper to death and death alone. This *something*, as we will see, is worthy of the great reputation of its creator. Unexpected, counter-intuitive, unthinkable by any direct route – which is why I name it provisionally and ahead of time in my narrative by way of a hypothesis: it is the image, or better still, the first Image.

I begin, however, with a counter provocation. My first reactive impulse to my interlocutor's irreverence for death is to send off a heterogeneous collection of corpses in Deleuze's corpus – a macabre enterprise, I know – that invariably turn up whenever the positive principle of life and the future is at stake: What is an adequate life? How to live the accidents of one's life – disease, war, misfortune, and yes, the *mortal* wound – precisely not as accidents?

Space permits only a few questions and a handful of examples from my strange collection:

♦ 'Bébé écrasé': the grotesque image is introduced in the Spinoza lectures as a telegraphic reference to premature death and the extreme case of a life being extinguished right away; it arrives at the precise moment when the question of the good life is raised: 'what is that curious benediction that one can give oneself, which is different from being content with oneself?' (Deleuze 2001a). Significantly, the damaged corpse of an infant is offered up as an icon not of innocence (salvation) but, on the contrary, of an existence absolutely without benediction, condemned to mortality in all its parts. A merciless ethical lesson regarding life may be extrapolated from this cruel image: it concerns not immortality but eternity, which is not a question of age. The child-body signifies a life – at any age – that failed to actualise its essence, the singular degree of *puissance* it is. (I should hasten to add, however, that in the last published text – to which I will return and where

life at the other extremity, on the death bed, is considered – it is precisely 'small children [who] through all their suffering and weaknesses are infused with an immanent life that is pure power and even bliss' [Deleuze 2001b: 30]).

♦ Of a voluntary death – whose example, I admit, constitutes a forcing – perhaps I only imagine to have read in Deleuze: someone, the author of *The Waves*, or maybe one of her characters who enters the town 'like a knife through everything' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 169) (although not the poet [Celan], who hurls himself against death and whose verse [breath/*Atem*] is hard as *Crystal* – and I will have to speak more of crystals), gently slips into death, as if into a wave. It is impossible to pause here long enough to consider the profound pedagogy that conjugates with this image: an understanding of life 'as a complex relation between differential velocities … a composition of speeds and slowness', a *sagesse* of living that is the wisdom of composition. 'It is by speeds and slowness [*lenteurs*] that one slips in among things, that one conjugates with something else' (Deleuze 1981b: 165–6). Before learning to swim, the child cries out: 'maman, la vague m'a battu'. Later, he slips in between the waves ('Formidable!'). One crashes (bad composition) – or swims, or surfs, or glides. If death may be conceived as a force ('it is something stronger than me that will kill me'), one could also decide to slip into it as if into a wave, choose to compose with it without fear, panic, agony or despair, and not 'rage, rage against the dying of the light' (Dylan Thomas). For 'the fear that sings its head off in the dark' – this is not Deleuze's but Bataille's lesson, though their kinship is often overlooked – 'the rage and the vomiting are so many evasions' (Bataille 1992: 50).

(At the threshold of this massive problematic, which I cannot cross here, one question nonetheless insists on being recognised: how to discriminate between suicide, voluntary death, and the life-negating 'aller au devant de la mort' that Deleuze denounces as the summit of an inauthentic life? For obvious reasons, we must leave open the possibility of a voluntary death that is an affirmation of life: a 'death willed against all death', of which Deleuze himself writes in *The Logic of Sense*, or a 'good death' that Blanchot – whom Deleuze reads closely on this very point – defines as 'with regard to the living' [Deleuze 1990: 149]. Still, it would appear that the Spinoza Deleuze ventriloquises in these lectures, or the Deleuze who is the ventriloquist behind the portrait of the philosopher he paints, categorically disallows every intimacy, every interiorisation of death. The language could not be stronger: 'I deny the beauty', he says, of any writing that would lead to the exaltation of death. Whatever the beauty, it is an 'offense to thought', 'an offense to life', 'an offense to everything lived … It is I say the enemy' [Deleuze 2001a].

It takes an unexpected intervention from the audience – significantly, it introduces *durée*, that is, finitude – to breach this categorical exclusion, to

force an admission [inclusion]: that of a 'profound sentiment of existence', an apprehension or calculation that comes 'from the depth of existence' – of the time that remains. At the threshold, where one senses that there is not much time left to live, where one touches the limit [and Derrida's last lesson also privileges this boundary], questions of a different order impose themselves on the living: 'how to make preparations?' how to 'arrange one's affairs', without panic or anxiety?

'Aih, c'est intéressant, ça': the sound recording captures the familiar cadence of this untranscribable 'aih'. Yet, the effect of this replay [repetition] could not be more uncanny, more untimely today [we know that Deleuze burnt his papers before the act]. The pensive, quiet aside, which appears to address no one, not only arrives in the living voice of someone dead, but posthumously. It redoubles over itself, is overprinted, as if by a film or virtual image, with the memory of the future, which future it predicts, or rather, subverting every chrono-logy, repeats before it would or could have taken place.)

♦ One momentous leap into death comes in *Difference and Repetition*: an Empedokles, a Hamlet, 'throw[s] time out of joint, make[s] the sun explode, throw[s himself] into the volcano, kill[s] God or the father' (Deleuze 1994: 89). (The exalted language corresponds with a magnificent image of Godard, who himself repeats Olivier's Hamlet by purely cinematic means: rather than falling, Godard's prince soars in an Ikarus flight that metamorphoses into that of a bird filmed high against the open sky [Godard 2007]). Although fictional/mythical, the event, in the most rigorous sense of this term, is at the very heart of the corpus. The hero's becoming equal to the act performs the crucial third repetition, the repetition that breaches the future – that is, opens a caesura in time so as to make a future that deserves the name appear: one that leaps away from the past. Exceptionally for Deleuze, who has no taste for the tragic, the death of the hero here necessarily submits to the logic of sacrifice. The future appears at the cost (sacrifice) of the life of the 'actor', who is excluded from it, whose self is smashed into pieces, 'as though the bearer of this new world were carried away and dispersed by the shock of the multiplicity to which it gives birth' (Deleuze 1994: 89–90).

♦ Another leap is historical, actual. In a terrifying fall that is the opposite of composition or slipping into waves, the philosopher's body crashes violently onto the hard surface of the sidewalk below. (How) are we to avert our eyes from this bloody spectacle – avoid, that is, inscribing it on the interior of his corpus as a sending, perhaps the philosopher's last – precisely with regard to life? (As Derrida taught us, the body is always implicated in testimony.) Bequeathed to us is not material work to guard but an obligation, a task that by necessity befalls those who come after – namely, to let the work test, to 'taste' this last mute *geste* of the body, to let the corpus decide whether to expel it, violently, or incorporate it as the last 'word' *of* a life, judging itself.[2]

♦ My final example, from one of Deleuze's last published texts, is often cited: 'a disreputable man is found … as he lies dying' (Deleuze 2001b: 28). Turning from the threshold to the threshold, the writing of Deleuze meets here, doubly, Derrida's condition of rightfully teaching a lesson on life ('from the other at the edge of life' [Derrida 1994: xviii]. The rest is speculation). A hymn and prayer to life, Deleuze's last writing nourishes itself by its double proximity to the extreme limit situation. From the threshold of a life, it watches over the limit of another, over a deathbed where an 'individual life confronts universal death' (Deleuze 2001b: 29); it watches, not as a 'pleureuse' would, with her eyes veiled by tears for the departed (and Deleuze, we know, confesses a passion for this vocation), but as a keen observer. (I cannot digress here as I would like to, to read this passage closely together with several other texts, including two magnificent accounts of a confrontation between death and a life by Duras: in one, she watches, for fifteen long minutes, 'on the wall, near me', a common fly's agonising combat with death [Duras 1998: 21]; in the other, her war diaries, she records a similar confrontation, lasting for weeks, by Robert Antelme, or rather, the vegetable-earth body that returns from the camps [Duras: 1986].) Vigilant, Deleuze seeks out – in the narrowest of regions, between 'his life and his death' – not the 'instant' that is 'his' alone but, rather, that which is denuded of every trace of subjectivity: 'a moment that is only that of a life playing with death' (Deleuze 2001b: 28). The result is something unexpected, a double benediction: in the confrontation, the dying attains a sort of beatitude, whereas we, the living, intuit what Derrida would call 'more than life' – a pure event, freed from the accidents of internal and external life – a 'homo tantum'. (Once again, I can only signal in the direction of the field of a massive problematic that opens up here, whose indices could be the figures of the 'homo sacer', or the *Muselmann*, or Robert Antelme. Each leads to the same question: how to think the non-relation between what Benjamin calls 'blosse Leben', also nothing but life, and the reality of this concept 'homo tantum'? What must be maintained in 'a life' that is nothing more than life for it to attain still a sort of 'beatitude'? In other words, what aspectus of life is nihilated when a singular life confronts not 'his' death but a steel-gaze under the insignia of a *Totenkopf*?[3] Deleuze's meditation on Nietzsche's life at the end may be instructive to think precisely this difference: what life deserves the name, to be lived?

♦ Regarding the *corpus* of Deleuze – which I hesitate to include in my collection, a 'cabinet of corpses' as my anonymous reader will call it – I note precisely its vital productivity, as also witnessed by its proliferation into 'several Deleuzes', by the fervent production of Deleuze studies, conferences, journals, symposia, and so on. Certainly, the work is alive. And yet, someone is dead. What difference does it make to the future, to future writing, that there will be no more texts arriving in the future? Ought (not) the corpus – by virtue of its exposure and lack of defences – impose a certain limit (boundary)? Demand of us an audacious modesty? A reserve

and prudence, also in the sense these words have in the erotic domain in relation, precisely, to an other's corpus?

PART II

Hypotheses

The oblique path I will be plotting here does not lead around the work ('autour de travail') of Deleuze, or encircle (define, delimit, outline) the body that bears his signature without being self-contained. A relation more distant (circumspect), though not any less violent than the reverent *touch* of the faithful disciple, will be sought here. In fidelity to Deleuze – whose philosophical portraits, to borrow a Derridean idiom, 'faithfully betray' their subject, and who laments the failure of *application* ('travail médiocre, travail raté') but marvels at the speed with which the thought of Bergson moves – the immodest ambition pursued here is to make a Deleuzian move, however minor and modest: to breach a passage to a plane where death may be posited as *something* (creative). It is on that plane, and only at the very end of this journey, that I hope to intersect with, and perhaps even succeed to intercept, Deleuze.

As for meeting, or rather, evading, not entering, my interlocutor's objection to an overvaluation of 'my' presence, these will be my order-words: do not speak of 'my' death, do not speak of the death that is – in so far as it *is* – essentially (*wesenmässig*, says Heidegger) *mine*; do not mistake, in other words, death for the dying (*mourir*) that is indeterminate: co-terminus with a life, with *living* dying, with the dying that is *living*; nor speak of death as an abstraction: a rarefaction/subtraction or an absolute – each time the end *of* the world ('chaque fois la fin du monde comme totalité unique' [Derrida 2001: 9]). Approach it instead as the production of an event *in* the world – impersonal, belonging to no one, even though it is always someone or something that dies, someone or something that must die for it.

I will search neither for *(a)signifiance* nor calibrate indifference, but ask instead: what absolutely new immaterial thing is the creation of death and death alone? What irreducibly *new* reality does the death of any animate being – a man, a dog, or a fly – introduce for the living into the flux of flowing matter, transforming the order of relations within (the Whole, *le Tout)* – irreversibly? And one must speak of an event for the *living*, for the disjunction between dying and death is also confirmed by the animal. Even if we grant to Heidegger that the animal cannot

die, it does encounter, has the capacity to experience the encounter with the cadaver. Writing in the summer of 2004 for a dying Derrida, who questioned Heidegger on this very point of the poverty of the animal ('weltarm', 'weltlose' [Derrida 2006]), Cixous reminds us of the heartrending scene in Joyce's *Ulysses* where the dog Tatters undergoes the 'experience of the encounter with the cadaver: "He stooped, stalked around it, brother, nosing closer, went round it, sniffing rapidly like a dog all over the dead dog's bedraggled fell . . . Here lies poor dogsbody's body" ' (Cixous 2007: 177). What the animal example (of which there are many) confirms is not the common 'subjectivity' of man and animal but, on the contrary, the exteriority of the event as irreducible to the 'subjective' dimension of an interior experience, whether or not we would reserve the latter as unique privilege for the 'subject'.

The truth of the cadaver – as hypothesis I have named it in advance – is as liberating (from dread and anxiety) as it is counter-intuitive: it is, it gives (*es gibt*) the first Image. In other words, we do not know what an image is. Common usage and its very Platonic conception – victims of an *objective* (structural) illusion – fail to grasp the profound reality of the image: that it does not come 'after' its object (as secondary representation, reflection, imitation, copy); rather, it is made *after* (in the image of) the first Image, which is neither representation (of something on the outside) nor a (natural) reflection or repetition in the water's mirror (whose mirage needs the presence of a Narcissus or a snow-capped mountain on the outside in order to reflect it, as absent, on the inside). The model to which every image bears resemblance and whose resemblance ('image') qua image it repeats is the cadaver. The cadaverous of every image is a memory image, in remembrance of the cadaver as the first Image.

All this already resonates with, or rather, finds *a posteriori* expression, as we will shortly see, in the principal motif that governs Godard's cinema: an image that deserves the name is never a *solitude*, but an act of memory. It recalls other *images*.[4] The initial insight, however, I owe not to Godard but to Blanchot – and this is not the first time that I turn to him to negotiate the difficult non-passage the Deleuzian fold introduces in the field that is contemporary thought.[5] By a strange coincidence, it is also the same passage as before that now takes me outside the old dilemma (another kind of non-passage) between sense and nonsense, significance and indifference, reverence and calculation (Baross 2000). 'The strangeness of the cadaver', says Blanchot in his seminal essay, 'Les deux versions de l'imaginaire', 'is also the strangeness of the image' (Blanchot 1962a: 266).[6]

I cannot retrace here the path along which Blanchot dissolves his analogy and posits the cadaver as itself image par excellence. I cite only the three conclusive moves. The *first* detaches the cadaver from 'this' world: 'what we call mortal remains evades common categories: something is there before us, which is neither the living in person (*le vivant en personne*), nor any sort of reality, nor the same as the one who was alive, nor an other, nor another thing' (Blanchot 1962a: 268). The *second* complicates this first thesis: establishes the cadaver as pure image to which then it immediately confers the status of first Image.

If complication means movement, thought passes here as Deleuze would want it: with infinite speed, from one *niveau* to another, from an actual to a virtual real within the space of only a few phrases. In order to preserve the rich linguistic *ambivalence* that *drives*, literally, Blanchot's meaning in two different directions, I cite the original: 'Qu'on le regarde encore, cet être splendide d'où la beauté rayonne: il est, je le vois, parfaitement semblable à lui-même; il se ressemble. *Le cadavre est sa propre image*' (Blanchot 1962a: 270–1, emphasis mine). ('If we look at him (it) again, this splendid being that radiates beauty: it (he) is, I can see, perfectly like itself (himself), it resembles itself. *The cadaver is its own image*.')[7] Thought, we can see, traverses the length of these phrases, its movement passes along the effects of language, relying for its passage on the sliding of meaning in the place of the strategically positioned pronouns – 'il'/'le'/'lui-même'. Their referent, in Blanchot's *precise* phrasing, remains rigorously undecidable. Simultaneously 'he'/'him' and 'it'. But if meaning hesitates, if the semantic play oscillates between the personal and impersonal, between a splendid being that retains something subjective ('il', the 'departed') and the splendid being of the *cadaver itself* – thought breaches a passage. It makes its move, slides from actual to virtual object on different planes, at the very place (of the pronouns) where the two 'objects' are simultaneously co-present. It slides, however, without deciding the undecidable, without attributing their difference. Complicating rather than replacing the first thesis, it turns the linguistic indetermination into a more complex formulation, extracts from the cadaver its *own* (*propre*) image: it perfectly resembles *itself* (*parfaitement semblable à* lui-même), it *is* its own image.

Having established the cadaver as pure image, Blanchot immediately confirms it, with the *élan* of the same uninterrupted move, as the *first* image: 'This is why [because the cadaver is its own image] the living, in fact, is still without resemblance.' Self-resemblance, that is, pure image,

is a posthumous acquisition. It arrives with and to the cadaver. Blanchot is very precise on this last point and even interrogates himself as to the (in)accuracy of the expression: '(parfaitement semblable) *à lui-même*'. But no, he says, after having given way to doubt, it is the right formula. 'Lui-même' designates a 'being impersonal, removed and inaccessible' (Blanchot 1962a: 270). It has no longer any relation with this world, where it still appears, *except that of an image*.

The *third* and final move completes the dissolution, dispenses with every form of analogy and parallelism between image and cadaver, by eliminating the last remnant of an absent referent: 'if the cadaver resembles to such a degree it is because, at a certain moment it is resemblance par excellence . . . It is the *semblable* [here neither 'likeness' nor 'equivalence' in the two existing translations would do], *semblable* to an absolute degree . . . But what does it resemble? Nothing' (Blanchot 1962a: 271).

The Cadaver-Image

The cadaver is its own image. But what does this mean? A repetition of the same without difference? Or as Blanchot says, an object 'doublé par soi, uni à la solennelle impersonnalité de soi par la ressemblance et par l'image' (Blanchot 1962a: 270)? An object incessantly sinking back to its own image as the unity of two aspects, an actual-virtual in perpetual exchange? Or rather, the cadaver is itself (the pure effect of) this exchange? Either way, if an image resembles (repeats this) cadaverous duplicity, it will not do so as mere reflection or weak, secondary copy. On the contrary, it is starting from this tremor on the interior – itself a repetition of the first re-semblance – that an image will summon and be summoned by other images. It is by virtue of this (virtual) vibration that it has the *potentia* to recall and be recalled, to haunt and be simultaneously haunted by other images – that is, to *give* birth to memory that comes to pass (takes place) only in the *medium* of the image.[8] It is also owing to this tremulous inner vibration that an image has the power to forge pure image-relations: montage and circuit. The one gives birth to something more powerful than the expressed power of any one image: a montage effect; the other – simultaneously with the first but taking place on another plane – constitutes multiple series: circuits that at once remount the past and open (to) the future.

Herein lies the first paradox and the reversal of the mytho-poetic fantasy that translates the cadaverous into something demonic, a

vampiric power that feeds itself on life. Clichés for this image abound, especially in early cinema, which cultivates, indeed, narcissistically nourishes (itself on) this myth. 'Picturing' the dark forces animating and emanating from the image (see Wegener's *Student of Prague*, and several early adaptations of Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher*), silent cinema indirectly re-claims those forces for itself. And yet, the vampiric is not the truth of the image, whose power lies elsewhere. In fact, it is not the image but the word that opens a gaping hole in the universe. ('When I say "this woman" ', writes Blanchot elsewhere, 'this person who is here right now . . . plunge(s) into nothingness' [Blanchot 1981: 42].) The image, on the other hand, in so far as it paradoxically bears the mark and memory of the work of death, gives birth to something absolutely new. And with the cinema, as we will see, it accomplishes a miracle: a future that is open to the future.

'Why not concentrate on the dying involved in repetition?' asks another missive from my interlocutor. Certainly, there is death in repetition: the next beat comes to/takes the place of the previous one, on whose passage its own coming to pass depends. But the cadaver *is* repetition. It resembles *itself*, is repetition in the same place, which is why 'the cadaver is not in its place' (Blanchot 1962a: 269). 'Its' place is where all foundation founders. A heterotopia (Foucault), it does not communicate with any other space, just as the remains, the object-thing in the room, does not compose with any other thing: the familiar furniture, the scattered sheets of paper on the desk, the jacket hanging in the closet. Together with the 'departed', these are at an infinite distance from the 'thing' in the room.

Still, the cadaver is no (simple) thing. On the one hand, it resembles *itself*: it is a self-same without difference *and* a double without being a fusion (amalgam) – both at once, simultaneously. On the other hand, it *resembles* itself: *is* resemblance. Resemblance constitutes its being, which is neither incarnated nor tangible ('indéplaçable, intouchable', says Blanchot [1962a: 269]), nor an inert effigy, a look-alike that Merleau-Ponty called, apropos the Cartesian who cannot see *himself* in the mirror, a *mannequin*. Not unlike the close-up in whose faciality Deleuze intuits precisely the duplicity of the cadaverous – 'réfléchissant et réfléchi'[9] – the cadaver-image is neither actual nor virtual but the pure effect of their exchange. It *is* re-semblance: the trembling repetition of a semblance that incessantly refers back to itself as if to its double or reflection. A pure effect (virtuality), the cadaver *is*, as an electric current *is*, as a musical tone *is* – as long as the vibration continues. But until then,

it is image without being the image of anything else. As Blanchot says, it resembles 'nothing'.

Even less so than Plato's *phantasma*, this pure image has no place in 'this' world; it is at an infinite distance both from 'here' where we are, standing just next to it, and from the departed, who was still with us perhaps just a few minutes ago. Except that this 'few minutes ago' (or two days ago, or two hours ago) does not compose with the *time* of the cadaver either. (Heterotopias are thoroughly 'chronique', temporal, says Foucault [1986: 22].) To the heterogeneity of the site in space, to the loss of every foundation ('l'absence et la perte de tout fondement') corresponds, here in the room, something *in* but also *of* time. The time of the cadaver cuts into the flow of *durée*, into the seamless continuity of ex-changes, metamorphoses, mutations, becomings. For this reason we cannot speak of 'cadaver becoming'/'becoming cadaver'. The latter is not only discontinuous with everything else (here and now) but also with the dying, which it does not end and which, in so far as it is co-terminus with life, is unending.

Dying is interminable ('mourir n'aboutit pas à la mort', writes Blanchot elsewhere [Blanchot 1962b: 103]), but the cadaver is incessant. Unlike the interminable, the incessant is not continuous, it only cannot stop continuing (the dog barked incessantly). If it is impossible to speak of 'becoming cadaver', it is equally without sense ('sans sens', as Nancy would say) to speak of the cadaver's becoming. Incessant, it does not cease to re-semble itself, 'to be' the pure effect of the same semblance re-sembling itself in the same place. A pure virtuality – and here I already borrow Deleuze's language with regards to the time-image: 'an actual-virtual circuit on the spot' (Deleuze 1989: 80), and nothing else. At least for a little while, until the re-semblance collapses and the object sinks back to the world of things, the flux of matter, where it once again composes with other things: the soil, the air, liquid matter ... and the worms, which 'in the context of "immanence, a life" ' – as my irreverent interlocutor reminds me – have their right to its elements.[10]

The cadaver's inner vibration is what every image qua image repeats. This is its only possible mode of repetition (the *miracle* of Lazarus is not the resurrection of the already putrid corpse but the impossible possibility of the second cadaverisation). It is the effect of this cadaverous repetition (there is death in repetition) that Narcissus recognises and *surrenders to* in the trembling surface of the water's mirror as he cries out: 'I recognise my own *image*!'

'Fatal beauty', says Godard of the cinema (Godard 1988b: 2B).

Cadaver/Crystal

Incessant vibration, the false movement of perpetual exchange in the *same place* – this does not translate to movement-image, which is a temporal perspective, a mobile cut in duration. The effect of repetition rather than of movement, the cadaver-image and the cadaverous of the image correspond with an altogether different sort of temporal reality: that of the time-image.

This hypothesis, we said, is not born out of perception or observation. The 'image' (cadaver as time-image) is conceptual: transformative, productive of a possible world. It will not be, therefore, derived from the direct experience of encountering the cadaver. Confirming one more time the profound affinity linking image to thought (Godard: 'the cinema is a form that thinks'), the concept is mediated by the (cinematographic) image. It appears that the principle of reversibility that Deleuze applies to the direct time-image holds here as well,[11] holds especially well with regard to the first time-Image – the revelation, or better still, the *pedagogy* (Serge Daney's term for Godard's cinema) of the photographic/cinematographic image. It is the most recent of images that give the cadaver-image visible form, repeat it in the depth of their interior, as the pure virtuality that since time immemorial has been haunting the image. A vertiginous anachrony, indeed. But this belatedness is not fortuitous; it is not by chance that the *révélateur* (in the photographic sense of the 'developer') of this *phantasma* is machine-made and mechanically reproduced: image by repetition. Consequently, this revelation too is an affair of time, is indissociable from the temporalising of the machinal and the machinery of image itself.

Images, as is well known, temporalise. The photographic image, and this is Barthes's lesson, contracts a whole life time into a single divided instant – always according to the same formula, whether or not the subject is dead, says Barthes: 'he is dead and he will die'.[12] Despite the name, the *still* photograph does not *capture* the immobile reality of a single instant that it cuts into duration; it rather *fashions* a new temporal reality: the *simultaneity* of two *incompossible* times – a present past ('he is dead') and a future present that actually or virtually will have also passed ('he will die'). In the space of the photograph, says Derrida, 'we are already haunted by the future that carries our death'. 'Notre disparition est déjà là' (Derrida and Stiegler 1996: 131). It awaits the cinema, however, to perfect the art of the cadaverous, its art as cadaverous, now in the above-defined sense of the term. Without letting go of the photographic accomplishment, the moving image shakes off

the funerary mortuary function, the haunting that the former 'fixes' (as one fixes precisely an image or a butterfly) in the photograph's own time. It does so, not by the simple (mechanical) addition of movement to the still image, or by mobilising the image itself (the shot becoming a *mobile* cut in duration), but rather by virtue of the apparatus. An apparatus of repetition, a machine for the making of time(s).

Due to the technological nature of the apparatus, 'primitive cinema' already projects images that themselves project: memories of the future, histories that come to pass for the first time in its 'medium' (in every sense of this rich word). With time, the cinema teaches itself to interiorise the cadaverous dimension, to fold it back to itself as the expressed power of its own image. The passage from Murnau's *Nosferatu* to Tarkovsky's *Solaris*, from Dreyer's *Vampyr* (where the camera takes on the perspective of the corpse) to Resnais' *Je t'aime, je t'aime*, measures this displacement/complication. Once detached from a figure – spectre, ghost, or vampire, who cannot die and yet is dying from this inability – the cadaverous is installed, is given new life, in the depth of the images themselves. Due to this complication, the image acquires new powers and inaugurates a new regime: like the hysteric who cannot forget, images now involuntarily remember (recall) other (perception, memory, and world) images, which in turn reciprocally both haunt and *parasite* them, and with which they incessantly compose new – ever deeper, ever larger – circuits of time or time-images.[13] (In a recent example, Wong Kar-wai's *In the Mood for Love*, the repetition of the street light filmed against the beating rain is not a sign for the passage of time: this is another day, another hour, etc.; it functions rather as a refrain which simultaneously effectuates two disconnected regions of time: nesting inside the other is the any-time-whatever that shelters a singular love affair, their meetings and missed encounters, outside the order of world-time. But this latter, which envelops the first, is itself a pure recollection, a crystallised mythical memory-time of an irretrievably lost life-form – not of a person but of a city, Hong Kong.)

Composition is in fact unique to the cinema's method of temporalising. The Deleuzian pedagogy is clear on this point: on the one hand, the cinema forms images with (two) sides (crystals); on the other hand, it assembles circuits or machines that make time (pass). Circuits unite actual and virtual images – perception and recollection, real and imaginary, dream and memory, world and pure recollection, physical and mental images – that continually 'follow each other, run behind each other, and refer back to each other' (Deleuze 1989: 69) around a point of indiscernibility – *the shortest circuit and the simplest crystal*.

I will limit my concern to this most contracted point, unique among the crystals in that it is both limit and circuit. On the one (horizontal) plane, in relation to itself, the purest crystal redoubles over itself: is an actual image and its *immediate* and *simultaneous* double. In one word, it is cadaverous, or in the words of Blanchot, it *resembles itself*. On another (vertical) plane, however, in relations to all other circuits, the same crystal redoubles as *internal* limit that defines an *open* whole; it is taken up (repeated) by a whole as its extreme point and narrow base that bears everything and starting from which all other, vaster and deeper circuits – circuits of the future – develop.

In short, the crystal is the cinema's first and originary time-image. As such it recalls (already assembles with) the other, the cadaver-image – except that the Deleuzian schema appears to exclude this very possibility, permitting only two other positions: the crystal is either the (same as the) cadaver-image, in which case the latter is absorbed into the cinematic whole *with its singularity and irreducible heterogeneity effaced* (with the additional consequence of also depriving the cinema of its power of creating something new); or, alternatively, the cadaver, which is its own image, *maintains no relation* with the simplest crystalline structure or the circuits the cinema fashions – not even a negative relation of the reverse side, since the crystal is *internal* limit and the whole it defines is without an *outside*. In this second case, the cadaver-image simply falls away, it cannot but fail to compose with the cinema (whose creations then come from nothing). In one case, we preserve resemblance but lose the singularity of our object; in the other, we protect its singularity but at the cost of obliterating the resemblance, that is, its status as time-image.

This, in fact, is a false problem. To exit from its dialectic we need to re-inscribe *resemblance* on the interior of the whole, as a thing not of space but of time: as *re*-semblance, that is, repetition. If, as my interlocutor reminds me, there is death in repetition, it is because the interval separating the crystal from the cadaver *in their resemblance* is an abyssal gap *in time*. If, on the other hand, as Derrida also showed us in *Archive Fever*, there is no future without repetition, the interval that repetition cuts in time as its condition of possibility is *creative* of the future. It differentiates. The first condition confers to the resemblance 'cadaver/crystal' a *temporal* reality; whereas the second, which relies on the first, confirms our hypothesis: in *resemblance*, the cadaver-image is taken up as the first time-Image by the cinema, which repeats, that is, differentiates it on a wholly other plane.

This complex relation, we said, is the pedagogy of the image, that is, the effect of a 'secondary repetition' that reveals (revelare: re, 'again' + velum, 'veil') what comes first. In fact, the reprise here is reciprocal and itself forms a 'circuit' of non-chronological time:

a) On the one hand, the cinema's crystal *retrospectively* recapitulates – exhibits for the first time in history – the cadaver-image as itself a time-image, a crystal. If the cadaver resembles itself to such a degree that it is resemblance itself – 'si absolument lui-même qu'il est comme doublé par soi' – it is because it crystallises with its virtual double: '[est] uni à la solennelle impersonnalité de soi par la ressemblance et par l'image' (Blanchot 1962a: 270). Deleuze's 'crystal', however, is not just a name. A concept, it transports Blanchot's cadaver-image to another plane where, as circuit, it composes with other circuits – machines for giving birth to time.

b) On the other hand, the reciprocal effect or backward flow from the direction of the cadaver, now exhibited as a singular time-image, is to make *a posteriori* the cadaverous dimension of the image visible as itself a repetition *in memory* of this first image, which repetition differentiates what it repeats: opens it to the future and opens a future.

The one question that still remains concerns now the singularity of the *cinematic crystal* as internal limit to a whole: where to locate this limit in relation to the creative interval, this operator of difference, *in time*?

On the one hand, the crystal is base and support to *a* whole and not *the* whole, to circuits of time, not to the whole of time. On the other hand, the crystal has two faces or sides; the interval runs through it. One face is turned towards the future, towards (future) circuits the cinema assembles and continues to invent; the other face is towards a non-chronological past that is older than memory, is at an infinite distance from the plural, anachronic times of the cinema and its 'histoire(s)'. Whilst remaining internal to the whole (of Kronos), the crystal cuts a (creative) interval into Time. Starting from one side, it is *seed* for all future circuits (the future times of the cinema), an opening to an open future: the future of the cinema (double genitive) and future cinema. The other side, however, faces the *arché* of the Image, which is also the arch-image *whose repetition gives birth to the cinema*. For what is unique to the cinema is precisely this repetition, which is for the first time in the history of the image and is irreducible to the mechanical reproduction of images, although not separable from it.

In Deleuze, as in Derrida, there is no future without repetition. His third repetition in *Difference and Repetition*, we said, breaks

with the past. But so does the cinema. Even its simplest time-image (the shortest circuit and crystal) differentiates (pluralises) time in time – in the cinema's time.

We see time in the crystal, says Deleuze, in three different states, each of which involves the future (there is time that splits itself in each moment in two heterogeneous directions 'one of which is launched towards the future while the other falls into the past' [Deleuze 1989: 81]; there is time that leaves the crystal, gives itself a future in a leap towards, in an opening of the future [Deleuze 1989: 88]; and, in the crystal in the process of being made, time's dividing into two, its differentiation is the 'bursting forth of life' [Deleuze 1989: 91]). And yet, we said, the cadaver is cut off from the future. It is neither a becoming nor is becoming (something else). Into the flux of becoming, it cuts a non-passage – an *écart*, partially analogous to the living body. But whereas the body's selection/extraction from the flux only *changes* the future of the past (which future finds cinematic expression in the three types of movement image: perception, affection and action image), in the place of the cadaver, a hiatus opens in what we may call *world-time*: things – the traffic of people, objects and words, even animals – flow around it, as if an island in its river. An island of (other) *time* in the river of time.

What is the time of the cadaver? This difficult question asks not in what time it is situated but rather what order of time constitutes it. Tentatively perhaps, we may advance a few propositions: as its own image, the cadaver does not preserve the past, contract all the past lived into the density of the corpse. Nor is it a perpetual frozen present, an *amber* of dead time (a captured and immobilised insect-time). It is not a or the *past* that is captured in the present; it is rather the present that is cut off in its place from the future, from future presents arriving, without which the present present could not be passing. This is exactly what we see in the cadaver-crystal: time at the point of its non-passage, a frozen and paralyzed exchange – a *freeze-frame*, which, as we know from the cinema, is never the same as a simple photograph which fixes time; it itself is fixed in time. In the case of the cadaver-image the actual image and its virtual double are maintained at the point of trembling, on the threshold of reversibility, lacking the force to complete the exchange.

Does this mean that the cadaver is outside time, in an abyss of time? No, the incessant *is* its time or, following Bergson's lesson on time's productivity, the cadaver is the work (*désoeuvrement*) of the incessant as time. What corresponds with it in the temporal region is not an abyss

of time but an abyssal time, which is in time, whence it solicits every other (concept of) time.

The incessant, then, is what we see in the cadaver's crystal – if, that is, we approach it from the direction of the cinema. For this 'vision', as we said, will not be derived from the object-thing in the world as it gives itself to direct perception; it is the revelation (in repetition) of a purely cinematic creation (even if retrospectively, the latter will expose its long presence in literature, in painting): the time-image.

This pedagogy too is reciprocal. Once we begin to see the cadaverous through the cinema's crystal, and vice versa, we learn one more lesson regarding – that is, how to see through – this double lens. It is also here, at this last point and lesson, that our path intersects with, perhaps even constitutes a forcing (fecundation) of Deleuze: if the time-image of the cinema is neither a pure creation nor a secondary copy, but a repetition of the first image, its *differentiation*, its *heterogenisation*, then the stillness of the cadaver teaches something extraordinary about the nature of this differentiation: in the cinema's crystals time passes *once again*; what we witness is a resurrection – of time that passes, the resurrection of the image opens and is itself an opening to the future.

This is how I propose to read Godard's enigmatic formula (an attribution to Saint Paul): 'L'image viendra, au temps de la résurrection' (the image will come at the time of the resurrection [Godard 1998b: 214]). Contrary to common analysis – that the cinema mummifies *durée* (Bazin) – the direct time-image liberates the frozen trembling, the incessant, into a fluid passage. Starting from the shortest circuit it composes ever larger, deeper and more complex circuits, incessantly. In other words, it effectuates a future whole in the course of making itself.

All this not just resonates with – recalls in hallucinatory fashion – Deleuze. It accords with the lesson Deleuze himself learns from the cinema: 'one leaves the theatre to get to life… imperceptibly, on the thread of the stream, that is, of time' (Deleuze 1989: 88).

Postscript: Response to an Anonymous Reader

Let me answer the 'provocation' you sent with your comments by way of a detour – citing Blanchot, who does not think of himself when he writes: the relation between *master* and *disciple* is one of 'infinity' (Blanchot 1969: 5). Infinite here means: a distance not measurable by itself. Paradoxically, this often most intense and personal of relations is also divested of every dimension of the 'subjective' – the genius, the talent, the charm or charisma of the master (even if these attributes

never fail to irradiate the inter-relational space). It is not what the master knows that matters, says Blanchot, but the 'unknown' (*inconnu*) that he represents, which affirms itself precisely in the infinity of their distance. While this formulation may be at some distance from Deleuze, who says, 'Sartre, my master' (Deleuze 2002: 109), we know how crucial the years at Vincennes were for inextricably tying his 'research' to the seminars, for Blanchot, a 'noble way of being together, of thinking according to the division, master–disciple' (Blanchot 1969: 3).

The disciple is someone who has entered (is caught by) the curvature the master's discourse introduces in space and time. This *structural* (impersonal) dissymmetry in turn explains her (fatal) predicament or, as Derrida describes his own situation vis-à-vis Foucault, the 'unhappy consciousness (*conscience*) of the disciple'.[14] She must begin to speak (for speak she must) in the virtual or actual presence of the master, or better still, after his interventions have radically reworked the field, changing the very condition of speech itself.

One temptation – which only intensifies with the death of the master, in the face of a future without more future words or works to come – is a false (corrupting) faithfulness. Foucault called it 'commentary'. Deleuze himself contemptuously described it as turning the master's works into a container of content to be mined for 'significance' (Deleuze 1990b: 17). Ironically, such reading (writing) too opens the path towards an infinite: the infinite exhaustion/rarefaction of the work. 'One will comment, one will interpret, one will ask for explanations, one will write the book of the book, *to infinity*' (Deleuze 1990b: 17).

The other temptation is disputatious contrariety – a re-activity whose self-deceiving comedy Deleuze ever so gently but mercilessly exposes in a patient and long letter to his 'severe critic'. Needless to say, both of these tendencies fail to break with and out of the binding asymmetry. As Blanchot explains, the continuity (of faithfulness) is never continuous enough; discontinuity (discordance) is never discontinuous (divergent) enough. (Perhaps one notable and rare exception is Derrida's 'terribly daring' challenge to Foucault that questions, in the master's presence, the justification of the sense of the latter's 'entire project'. It may be true that only a Derrida can 'break the glass . . . the mirror'; on the other hand, one could also say that, despite his painful protestations, Derrida had never been a 'disciple' of Foucault and his undoing of the infinity of the *relation* as purely subjective, an 'infinite speculation *on* the master', shows him to be already on another path [Derrida 1978: 32].)

As I confess in the essay right away, my writing here is guilty of yielding to the temptation of the second kind. At least initially, for it

corrects itself in its course. Nevertheless, the inspiration to write derives from a re-active impulse: to issue a counter-provocation, to demonstrate to my interlocutor that the measure of the good life – of benediction, salvation – is unthinkable without reference to death, even for Deleuze, whom I try to catch in the course of a series of *gestes*, affirmations that pass through domains indelibly marked by an awareness, an anticipation, a calculation of death. My 'cabinet of corpses', as you call them, is in the service of this counter-demonstration, or, more precisely, is an opening towards such a demonstration as possible.

Possible though not necessary. The path is opened but is not followed through to the end. The project is not rejected or disowned, however – only interrupted when another, new path is opened. The *intuition* leading to this change of heart comes to me only now as I write this postscript in response to your provocation: whether or not death illuminates life or vice versa is a weak question to ask of Deleuze. (Badiou's example comes to mind, whose attempt at reversal – 'this philosophy of life is essentially . . . a philosophy of death' – only leads back to Deleuze [Badiou 2000: 12.3].) In this case, the interruption of the common reflex is accomplished when the writing creates an opening to what it does not yet know. The method for this is a hypo-thesis (I have no time here to recall Derrida's beautiful passages comparing himself to a blind man, thrusting himself forward headlong, guided, as if an antenna, only by a *hypo*thesis [Derrida 1993: 2].) Mine is fashioned after Bergson: if death is something rather than nothing, it must create something absolutely new – the cadaver, which is not another object but the first (time) image. This hypothesis indeed leads to something unexpected and unforeseen: the *secret* relation that links the cadaver-image to the cinema, whose cadaverous dimension has nothing to do with spectres and ghosts of shadows. The latter are only reflections of a more profound indebtedness to the cadaver as the first image, which image the cinema, if and when an act of pure creation, infinitely differentiates – repeats (remembers and recalls) again and again, otherwise.

In your letter, you find the 'thesis' (your term) regarding the cadaver too 'subtle', and the lessons learnt implicit, 'if not cryptic here and there'; you ask for a concluding section which would return to the interlocutor's provocation (why speak of life starting from death?), and perhaps more pressingly, explicitly address the enigmatic last essay, 'Immanence: a life'. You will forgive me if in this quest for explication I see a strange kinship with the translator's decision to omit the ellipsis from Deleuze's original title of the same essay: 'Immanence: une vie . . . '.

With one stroke, the omission eliminates the pragmatics of *suspension*, the *indefinition* that places the title at the limit of the un-sayable, converting it to a stammer. I hope you will see why a 'conclusion' would amount to a similar closure of an accomplished opening. First, the trajectory of the writing is not circular or even linear. Instead, the essay is structured as a montage of two discourses of unequal length that operate on discontinuous and heterogeneous planes. One discourse, not without justification, points in the direction where death is present on the reverse side of life in Deleuze's work. And reverse is not the same as the outside. The other transposes death to a wholly other plane. If I dare speak of a *theoretical* accomplishment here, it is only by reference to this translation opening to an altogether different question/questioning of death. On this second plane, the concerns of the first discourse (is death the limit against which life – benediction, salvation – needs to be thought?) are not invalidated. They simply fall away or rather cannot take place. Yet, with regards to the whole, these same questions continue to operate (insist) in and through the montage, which institutes a reciprocal interplay across the interval between the two planes.

If a montage is not a sum or summation but an opening, the question it begs for is, as Deleuze says: what passes in between? 'Qu'est-ce qui se passe "entre"?' (Deleuze 1990b: 165).

Notes

1. An early version of this essay was read at the conference 'Gilles Deleuze: Texts and Images', held at the University of South Carolina, 5–8 April 2007. It is dedicated to Constantin Boundas, who introduced me to the work of Deleuze and whose infinitely polite but persistent provocations have always showed me how to take one more step.
2. To my knowledge only René Schérer, more than a literary friend of Deleuze, dares to turn his gaze to this bloody spectacle to propose that only a *philosophical* reading of it is possible: 'On ne peut parler que *philosophiquement* [my emphasis] de la mort de Gilles Deleuze.' Significantly, he speaks not of a fall but of flight: 'il s'est *envolé*'; 'il a pris son *envol* dans une défenestration rare et sublime arrivant à s'égaler à l'événement de la mort . . . '. By offering this rare and sublime *image*, which recalls my reading above of Godard's reversal of Hamlet's leap into a soaring flight, Schérer takes the first step towards such a reading: an *a posteriori* affirmation of the act that *Logic of Sense* phrases as 'saying yes to death by the love of life' (Schérer 1998: 10).
3. For a discussion of this confrontation see Nancy 2003: 57–99.
4. 'Une image en appelle une autre, une image n'est jamais seule, contrairement à ce qu'on appelle "les images" aujourd'hui qui sont des ensembles de solitudes' (Godard 1998a: 173).
5. For a discussion of this fold see Nancy 1996: 107–13.

6. Under the same title 'The Two Versions of the Imaginary' there exist two different translations for this text, one by Ann Smock, the other by Lydia Davis, in *The Space of Literature* (1982) and *The Gaze of Orpheus* (1981), respectively. My translation borrows from and frequently modifies both.
7. Both existing translations destroy this ambiguity. One by Anne Smock: 'let us look again at this splendid being from which beauty streams: he is, I see this, perfectly like himself. The cadaver is its own image' (Blanchot 1982: 258). The other is by Lydia Davis: 'If we look at him again this splendid being who radiates beauty: he is, I can see, perfectly like himself; he resembles himself. The cadaver is its own image' (Blanchot 1981: 83).
8. 'We witness the birth of memory, as the function of the future which retains what happens in order to make it the object to come of the other memory' (Deleuze 1989: 32).
9. 'Réfléchissante et réfléchie', says Deleuze (1983: 125) of the close-up that facialises the object framed. But whereas the two aspects of this 'face' are reflective surfaces that open to the outside – make visible affects on both sides of the face, on its exterior and interior – the cadaver's redoubling is a closure: in resembling itself, it closes upon itself.
10. In truth, it is difficult to say when the remains (*dépouille*) ceases to be a cadaver. In the essay already cited, Cixous reminds me of this difficulty by way of another literary example, this time supplied by Stendhal's *Charterhouse of Parma*: 'Fabrice's horse stopped [here another animal encounters the cadaver] before *the border thing* [my emphasis], someone's cadaver or else body? Or else an alreadynolongerbody and notyetcadaver ? . . . Fabrice turned green at the sight not of the whole but of the part that still detained the indecisive being in human life: the filthiness of the feet' (Cixous 2007: 177). The dirty feet sticking out of the ground may be still cadaverous, even if the rest is already neutral, organic matter. But so is the amputated hand displayed as war trophy on the jeeps of ragtag soldiers in some African city – even though the person it once belonged to may still be alive.
11. 'The direct time-image is a phantom which has always haunted the cinema, but it took modern cinema to give a body to this phantom' (Deleuze 1989: 41).
12. For Barthes' meditation on the impossible time of the photograph, see his *Camera Lucida*. The photograph in question, taken at the end of the nineteenth century, shows a young man before his execution in his prison cell. Barthes captures the bifurcation of time that the photograph fixes for all future presents by the celebrated phrase: 'he is dead and he is going to die' (Barthes 1981: 95). See also my 'Toward a Memory of the Future: Cinema, Memory, History', forthcoming.
13. For further discussion on the cinema's temporalising see the following essays: 'A Fourth Repetition' (Baross 2006a), 'The Future of the Past: the Cinema' (Baross 2006b), 'The Future of Deleuze, an Incomplete Project' (Baross 2006c) and 'Toward a Memory of the Future', forthcoming.
14. See especially Derrida's long preamble to his 'severe' critique of *Folie et déraison*. The time it takes for Foucault to answer is perhaps an indication of the depth of the wound it delivers. Writing at once an apology and a confession, Derrida hesitates between being 'challenged, rejected and accused' and being the challenger himself; or between the 'consciousness of an admiring and faithful disciple' and an 'unhappy consciousness', and then again, between having a master and having only interiorised the master (Derrida 1978: 31–63).

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Paris and its Doubles: Deleuze/Rivette

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Abstract

This essay sets out from the premise that the films of Jacques Rivette merit sustained reconsideration in the framework provided by Deleuze's *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*. In particular it explores the concepts of 'the powers of the false' and 'fabulation' as ways of engaging with Rivette's cinematic oeuvre, with a particular focus on his Paris-set films. On this basis the article seeks to add to the readings undertaken by Deleuze himself and, in the light of Rivette's cine-thinking, to examine in tandem both films to which Deleuze directly responded, such as *Le Pont du nord*, and later post-Deleuze renegotiations of the city such as *Secret défense*.

Keywords: Powers of the false, fabulation, the virtual, bifurcation, urban space, the time-image

In his early study of Nietzsche Deleuze asserts: 'our highest thoughts take falsehood into account; moreover, they never stop turning falsehood into a higher power, an affirmative and artistic power that is brought into effect, verified and becomes true in the work of art' (Deleuze 1983: 105). The second of Deleuze's two volumes devoted to cinema returns to the theme of the 'powers of the false' first introduced in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. In *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* the emergence of the powers of the false is seen as symptomatic of the broader transformation which Deleuze associates with the break with the movement-image – that is with the precepts and modus operandi, not to mention the conceptual support-structure, of 'sensory-motor'-driven or organic cinematographic presentation. What this emergence seeks to displace is a cinematographic model dependent on a certain stance vis-à-vis representation, verisimilitude and realism. 'The space of a sensory-motor situation', *Cinema 2* informs us, 'is a setting which is already specified and presupposes an action which discloses it, or prompts a reaction which adapts to or modifies it' (Deleuze 1989: 7). Organised as it is by a vector of transcendence guaranteed to consolidate 'good form', organic

cinematographic presentation secretes what Deleuze calls chronological time. In chronological time, overseen by the 'sensory-motor situation', interventions which jar with the narrative presupposed by that situation are only capable of being viewed as 'contingently abnormal' (Deleuze 1989: 128). Organic cinema 'presupposes the independence of its object, and hence presupposes a discernibility of the real and the imaginary' (Deleuze 1989: 7). By contrast, the cinema which Deleuze identifies as 'crystalline' adopts strategies of representation which see it, like the *nouveau roman*, offer up descriptions which replace its own object. The object is erased but another reality is powerfully brought out in the act of constructing through speech or vision. In such a cinema the imaginary and the real become indiscernible (Deleuze 1989: 7).

Pascal Bonitzer, now one of the film director Jacques Rivette's regular collaborators as screenwriter, once recalled with amusement an article on the latter's *Céline et Julie vont en bateau* (1974) written under the influence of *Anti-Oedipus* which was rejected by the editors of *Cahiers du cinéma* because it was out of step with the Althusserian turn which the journal had taken in the early to mid 1970s (Bonitzer 1998: 50). His anecdote serves as an introduction to the present study. For the connection between the thought of Deleuze and the cinema of Rivette has emerged with some hesitation.[1] In the two volumes on cinema written by Deleuze, while there is no doubting the importance for him of Rivette, in his account of the adventures of the movement- and time-images in the twentieth century Rivette's work occupies at first glance a place more marginal than either that of Jean-Luc Godard or Alain Resnais (see Deleuze 1985: 213–14 and 1989: 10–12, 19, 76–7, 194).[2] Despite the fact that discussion of the work of Godard and Resnais respectively is considerably more substantial than the space devoted to Rivette, a detailed examination of the opening pages of the second volume nonetheless reveals just how central Rivette is to the subsequent elaboration of Deleuze's taxonomy.

The 'visionary aestheticism' of Visconti, the 'emptied spaces' of Antonioni which have 'absorbed characters and actions' (Deleuze 1989: 5), and the effacement of the 'distinction between the spectator and the spectacle' in Fellini are components emerging from the neo-realist tradition – all of which find themselves continued in Rivette. The trajectory of Deleuze's argument here is marked by an important and informative digression – the discussion of Robbe-Grillet in which Deleuze notes how the *nouveau roman* replaces its own object and fabricates through indirect speech and vision (Deleuze 1989: 7). It is to Robbe-Grillet that Deleuze will return in the key chapter as far the

present essay is concerned, 'The Powers of the False'. Deleuze subscribes to the view of André S. Labarthe that *L'année dernière à Marienbad* (1961), to which Robbe-Grillet contributed the scenario, is the last of the great neo-realist films. In this it forms for Deleuze the logical link between the Italian neo-realist tradition and the French *nouvelle vague*. As in *L'année dernière à Marienbad*, in Antonioni's films, from *L'Eclisse* (1962) onwards, the severance of character from territory means that what we encounter is emptied space 'occupied' or haunted by emptied character. '[T]his space refers back again to the lost gaze of the being who is absent from the world as much as from himself' (Deleuze 1989: 9). The gaze is adrift and dislocated, thus creating an optical drama lived by the character. In Robbe-Grillet's novel *Dans le labyrinthe* (1959) for example, in which an unnamed city is the location for a soldier repeatedly to encounter a child as they circulate in a 'quadrillage' of identical streets, the oneiric space flattens out in several self-reflexive devices such as the 'engraving generator', which is itself the source of the characters in the city (Robbe-Grillet 1983: 17), and the check tablecloth which in its gridding and interplay of chaos and order becomes just one of the novel's innumerable *mises-en-abyme*. 'On' this scene, 'in' this place, objects come into prominence only through their being covered, traced in their contours by an at once enveloping and revealing substance. They are absences which are pulled back into Being by means of being covered either by dust (if they are interior objects) or snow (if they are exterior objects). In coming into the zone of emergence the city and table are simultaneously and paradoxically buried. In articulating what he sees as the common ground between neo-realism and the *nouvelle vague*, for Deleuze there is in Rivette both a consolidation of several innovations with which the fiction of Robbe-Grillet is identified and a new set of departures. The two main film directors identified by Deleuze at this juncture are Godard and Rivette. Together with Jacques Tati they continue to create a cinema of optical and sound situations, as opposed to the cinema of action, or sensory-motor cinema.

Rivette is moreover identified by Deleuze as a filmmaker melded with his terrain, an inheritor of Nerval – a 'singer of Paris and its rustic streets' (Deleuze 1989: 11). It is not surprising to read this in the work of the philosopher who so admired Edith Piaf.[3] But Rivette's Paris is one which is often emptied (and in this respect unlike that depicted in one of Piaf's songs – 'La foule'), as if its population were exhausted by the actual characters, in the manner of Antonioni (*Paris nous appartient*, *La Bande des quatre*), or it is the launch-pad for hallucination (*Céline et*

Julie vont en bateau), experiments in reformulating and deconstructing the traditional heterosexual couple (*L'Amour fou*), or playful trans-genre exercises (*Haut bas fragile*), all united in their common recourse to a repertoire of 'fantasies, memories, or pseudo-memories . . . fable and children's games' (Deleuze 1989: 10).[4] The emptied terrain is occupied by a visionary character which does not coincide with itself, which, staring back at its emptied space, produces and perceives only pure optical and sound situations. Thus Deleuze writes of *Paris nous appartient* (1961) that 'the stroll culminates in a twilight fantasy where the cityscape has no reality or connections other than those given by our dream' (Deleuze 1989: 11). In other films Rivette is shown to compound the loss of circumscribed terrain by rendering unreliable the boundary between spectator and spectacle, both poles inhabiting the mirage itself, which in *Duelle* (1976) – the exemplar for Deleuze – takes the form of the two women of the spectacle proceeding to eliminate all witnesses to their cosmological conspiracy 'projecting an eternal mirage on to the earth' (Deleuze 1989: 11).[5]

I. The Powers of the False and Fabulation

The problem of the powers of the false is linked to the allied questions – also central to Deleuze's work more generally – of population and of territory (Deleuze 1987: 51). In particular, through their joint implication in the presiding concept of the time-image, for Deleuze both the notions of the powers of the false and of territory (itself resonant with the concept of territorialisation – not explicitly a concern in the cinema books) pertain to a modern conception of time which he describes as belonging to the specificity of the 'urban'.[6] For, although the concept of the powers of the false has a specific function in Deleuze's argument, it finds a complementary expression under the banner of another Deleuzian concept (this time derived from Bergson rather than Nietzsche) – fabulation. To fabulate is essentially linked by Deleuze with a political problem: 'the people are missing'. The latter notion is on the one hand historically specific (say, in the case of a postcolonial filmmaker – Senegalese director Ousmane Sembène, for instance), but on the other, functions as a conceptual placeholder to identify traits in films which, while less explicitly concerned with politics, experiment with modes of address, enunciation and representation such that fabulation is also concerned in both geopolitical and ontological terms with ground, with territory, with foundation and, ultimately, with the *effondrement* ('ungrounding') advocated at the close of *Difference and Repetition*

(Deleuze 1994: 292). Writing of ontological repetition there, Deleuze had suggested that:

> Perhaps the highest object of art is to bring into play simultaneously all these repetitions [physical, psychic, metaphysical, ontological], with their differences in kind and rhythm, their respective displacements and disguises, their divergences and decenterings, to embed them in one another and to envelop one or the other in illusions the effect of which varies in each case. (Deleuze 1994: 293)[7]

Fabulation, as the engine of the 'powers of the false', under certain conditions, is an undertaking which confronts thought with its own limit. In cinema it entails 'having a thought', *thinking otherwise*. What we encounter is, in Stephen Zepke's words, 'a creative will of cine-thought emerging in a new cinematic aesthetics' (Zepke 2005: 105). Unlike the philosophical model of error, which will measure transgressions in terms of their deviation from truth, considered as prior and as standard, the powers of the false entail an alliance which does not recognise truth or the truth–falsity distinction in the first place.

In the specific context of *Cinema 2* fabulation is exemplified, *inter alia*, by the work of Ousmane Sembène. This is why the *griot* is Sembène's way of figuring in *mise-en-abyme* the role of the film director. In foregrounding the *griot*'s function Sembène is able to show how stories have either been silenced or their context heavily contaminated, and how in this specifically postcolonial context it is necessary to create a counter-memory, to speak for the absent, to 'falsify' for those who will remain absent, and for those who never were (Deleuze 1989: 222). The cinema of Rivette of course, does not approach or embody fabulation in the same way or to the same ends as does the work of Sembène.[8] Nonetheless, in the conjunction of the theme of territory and the powers of the false, his oeuvre is marked by a mode of fabulation. Rivette's first full-length feature, *Paris nous appartient*, had already raised the question of a population and a territory (and their relation) in its very title. Later, *Le Pont du nord* (1981) articulates a conflict between very specific geographical coordinates (in a northern part of Paris in the nineteenth arrondissement around La Villette, then being massively redeveloped) and their modulation in the film's narrative within an imaginary global conspiracy.[9]

Other Paris-set films which embrace the typical Rivettian combination of plot and *complot*, in particular *Secret défense* (1998) and *Histoire de Marie et Julien* (2002), concern access to the hidden and buried layers of intrigue, the unravelling of which serves less to resolve than

to keep open a constitutive ambiguity. If, as Balint Kovács observes in an essay on Deleuze, 'the narrative principles of modern cinema consist in making possible the realisation of virtually existing suprasensible worlds' (Kovács 2000: 163), then Rivette is an important figure in this regard.

According to Deleuze part of the specificity of the work of Rivette is that it revisits the work of the pre-war French school (Grémillon, Epstein, Vigo, L'Herbier): 'I think expressionism conceives light in relation to darkness, and their relation is one of struggle. In the pre-war French school it's quite different: there's no struggle, but alteration; not only is light itself motion, but there are two alternating lights, solar and lunar' (Deleuze 1995: 49). In his essay published in *Cahiers du cinéma* on Rivette's film *La Bande des quatre* Deleuze develops this theme. The essay is organised as a taxonomy featuring three 'circles' – roles (theatre), attitudes and postures (life), and masks (conspiracy) – which are themselves enclosed in an encompassing circle. 'We are all rehearsing parts of which we are as yet unaware (our roles). We slip into characters which we do not master (our attitudes and postures). We serve a conspiracy of which we are completely oblivious (our masks). This is Rivette's vision of the world (Three Circles)' (Deleuze 2006: 256). Deleuze extrapolates from this to provide an account of Rivette's entire oeuvre based on the ideas of modulation, transformation and intersection: 'In a certain way, Rivette has never filmed anything else but light and its lunar (Lucia) and solar (Constance) transformations. Lucia and Constance are not persons, but forces' (Deleuze 2006: 258).[10] Through its interplay of two lights and two women, solar and lunar, *Duelle* (the earlier film) had already in Deleuze's assessment marked a return to concerns associated with the pre-war French school.[11] The struggle between characters associated with these lights is conducted in a shifting terrain which disrupts any dialectical confrontation. In place of dialectical opposition, Rivette presents a world marked by divergent series which are 'endlessly tracing bifurcating paths' (Deleuze 1993: 81), or by cuts and interstices which might be said powerfully to exemplify that aspect of modern cinema which for Deleuze is concerned, in Zepke's words, with 'the interstice of images . . . Indiscernibly virtual and actual, their actual individuation emerges from the virtual' (Zepke 2005: 115).

In this respect there is a fundamental disagreement between the approaches of Deleuze and of Jacques Rancière to cinematographic modernism. In contrast to Deleuze, who views the sensory-motor schema as producing effects of totalisation, narrative coherence and the solace of good form, Rancière proposes that all cinema, and not just the

particular directors favoured by Deleuze, is founded upon what he calls a 'thwarted fable'. Accounts such as the one Deleuze provides of Rivette would be examples of Deleuze's quest for a 'dramaturgy of ontological restitution' (Rancière 2006: 5) which Rancière finds to be contradictory, based as it is on extracting from film narratives (such as Hitchcock's *Rear Window*) allegories of the rupture with sensory-motor schema (such as the immobility of Jeff/James Stewart). It is beyond the scope of this essay to engage in this debate further than simply to note that Rancière restores a dialectical imperative which Deleuze would resist. For Rancière *opsis* (emergent and accidental visions) runs against the grain of *muthos* (enabling narrative), and this is for Rancière the *thwarted fable* (Rancière 2006) This is quite distinct from Deleuze's bifurcating paths, wherein the act of fabulation is implicated in a pervasive virtuality, even if both philosophers find in cinema an allegory for a politics which features the idea of what Rancière describes as a 'surging-forth from the shadows'.

II. Bifurcation, Folding, Fabulation

In Jorge Luis-Borges' renowned tale 'The Garden of Forking Paths' two competing impulses can be discerned: on the one hand there is a disposition towards encompassment and synthesis, and on the other, one towards divergence and bifurcation. Deleuze's brief reading of Borges' tale as put forward in *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque* (it is also referred to in *Cinema 2*), positions the text as a neo-baroque reworking of the 'Baroque' philosopher Leibniz's theory of possible worlds (Deleuze 1993: 62). Deleuze's conceptualisation of what he calls the neo-baroque, with its emphasis on folding, has the merit of what has been described by one commentator as 'complicity with the world . . . a thought of inflexion and fluidity, of a geometry regulated by rapports more than by distances' (le Dantec 1992: 140). In addition one of the most notable aspects of Deleuze's concept of the fold is the specific model of virtuality which it entails.[12] Deleuze takes from Leibniz a theory of virtuality which he returns from the brink of dogmatic closure to which the author of the *Monadology* is committed. Reading Leibniz somewhat against himself, Deleuzian virtuality, in the form of possible worlds, does not, as it does in Leibniz, work in such a way as to shore up the actual, the state of things. John Rajchman's succinct summary of the difference between Leibniz's possible and Deleuze's virtual will serve our purposes here: ' "Virtuality" is not the "possibility" of something that might be "realised"; it is already real, and it does not stand in a representational

or mimetic relation to what "actualises" it' (Rajchman 1998: 125). In Leibniz's *Monadology* each individual monad is the intellectual mirror of the entirety of existence. Each, to a degree peculiar to it and dependent on the force at its disposal (its position in a hierarchy of beings lends the monad its force), is said to 'express' the entire universe (Leibniz 1991: 25). In Leibniz's scheme the virtual designates that part of a given monad which houses the unconscious expression of the universe. It also includes under its jurisdiction worlds which are said to be possible. However, in Leibniz any discordance between possible worlds is ruled out by recourse to an overriding principle which declares that worlds which are incompossible with pre-established Divine harmony only have a contingent status. The virtual of possible worlds shores up the actual of this world.

What is ruled out, however, in the neo-baroque (Deleuzian) version of the possible world is the harmonic modulation of the fold by means of which the subject (the Leibnizian monad) is formed. Instead of a divergent world wherein the election was between the compossible and the incompossible (with the compossible winning out in Leibniz), we witness an inclusive disjunction, a bifurcation: the incompossible is not simply rejected but becomes, instead, constitutive of the subject. In the work of certain directors – Rivette, Raúl Ruiz and Werner Schroeter most notably – we encounter what amounts to an elaboration of a thinking of incompossibility first formulated in Leibniz.

Fabulation, as Deleuze understands it, is another way of thinking through the virtual once it is returned from the threshold to which Leibniz takes it. Fabulation is a speech/enunciative act (conceived in the most general terms) which can engender a people (it cannot realise that people, but it can summon it forth in germinal or viral form). '(A)s Bergson was able to see, fabulation – the fabulating function – does not consist in imagining or projecting an ego. Rather, it attains these visions, it raises itself to these becomings and powers' (Deleuze 1998: 3).[13] Fabulation, then, summons a protean, virtual people which always retains a germinal status and never acquires the status of Being. 'The people' as a collective is not actualised in a state of things but retains a virtual status in the specific sense in which Deleuze understands virtuality. This people is not prepared for, nothing pre-exists, no script is written which will accommodate it to us. Fabulation is also 'free indirect discourse' wherein it will be impossible to disentangle the contributing and constitutive voices one from the other. Rivette's work, especially of the more emphatically experimental phase, is attuned to this consequence of fabulating utterance. On the one hand this is

true in so far as collaborative collective utterance – through Rivette's frequent work on scenarios with his cast – is made possible through the circumstances of filming.[14] The director as filmmaking subject is not a unity but a multiplicity traversed by forces and vectors of becoming. Writing of Blanchot in terms which equally apply to Rivette, Deleuze refers to 'the presence to infinity of another thinker in the thinker, who shatters every monologue of the thinking self' (Deleuze 1989: 168).

In order to register the intensity of fabulation, rather than neutralise it in the name of intentionality and the ego, Deleuze argues that what is required is the 'intercesseur': 'Creation's all about mediators . . . Whether they're real or imaginary, animate or inanimate, you have to form your mediators. It's a series. If you're not in some series, even a completely imaginary one, you're lost . . . you're always working in a group, even when you seem to be on your own' (Deleuze 1995: 125). The mediators Rivette seeks out are on the one hand his intertextual points of reference. These include references arising from direct adaptation. *Out 1: Noli me tangere* (1970–71) is loosely derived from Balzac's *L'Histoire des treize*, *Noroît* (1976) is based on Tourneur's *The Revenger's Tragedy* (1608), *Hurlevent* (1985) on the first few chapters of Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, while *La Belle noiseuse* (1990) is adapted loosely from Balzac's 'Le Chef-d'oeuvre inconnu'. Other intertextual elements are summoned in the shape of works of theatre, literature and film, for example Racine's *Andromache* in *L'Amour fou* (1969), Henry James' 'The Other House' and 'A Romance of Certain Old Clothes' in *Céline et Julie*, Pirandello's *As You Desire Me* in *Va Savoir* (2001), Brisseau's film *Un jeu brutal* in *La Bande des quatre* (1989). In addition mediation comes in the form of his collaborators: Bulle Ogier, Juliet Berto, Jean-Pierre Léaud, Pascal Bonitzer, et al. These mediators then designate certain of the 'kinetic populations' which traverse the Rivettian oeuvre, equivalent to the mediators Deleuze describes as operative in his own work: 'What mattered was not the points [. . . which. . .] functioned simply as temporary, transitory and evanescent points of subjectivation – but the collection of bifurcating, divergent and muddled lines which constituted . . . a multiplicity and which passed between the points, carrying them along without ever going from one to the other' (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: ix).[15]

III. Relation, Belonging and Non-derived Images

Deleuze's claim – made at the mid-point (to date) in Rivette's career – that the director was 'the singer of Paris' (Deleuze 1989: 11)

in the tradition of Gérard de Nerval has been upheld by his output. From *Paris nous appartient* (1961) to *Histoire de Marie et Julien* (2003), roughly half of Rivette's output is set (or partly set in the case of *Secret défense*) in Paris. What one might call 'the problem of Paris' is articulated in the paradox which Rivette takes from Charles Péguy and which appears on screen in his first feature film: Paris belongs to us and Paris belongs to no one. This for Deleuze is an essential characteristic of the new type of character required by the cinema of the time-image: 'It is because what happens to them does not belong to them and only half-concerns them, because they know how to extract from the event the part that cannot be reduced to what happens: that part of the inexhaustible possibility that constitutes the unbearable, the intolerable, the visionary's part' (Deleuze 1989: 19–20).

The question of belonging also gives rise to that of attribution. By asking in his very first feature film the question which destabilises the attribution of Paris, which disorients it, uncouples it, Rivette poses the problem of both the dispossessed people and the dislocated city. He poses in his own medium the question at the heart of Deleuze's conception of the time-image: to whom is the image to be attributed? Maurizio Grande, in his own Deleuzian analysis, has classified the status of the image in Rivette in terms of 'images non-dérivées' (Grande 1997: 297). The world, in Rivette's vision, becomes an enormous hallucination, to which, or within which, a stable enunciative subject and/or object cannot be appended or isolated. In his response to *Noroît* following its only theatrical screening in 1976, Jonathan Rosenbaum points out how, like *Duelle*, it is structured 'on the successive elimination of every character, developing towards a confrontation between a moon ghost and a sun fairy' (Rosenbaum 1983: 162). Thus the magic sweets in *Céline et Julie vont en bateau* elicit the world of the family romance, fabulation, the birth of a possible world. But we never simply accompany these characters the better to return with them. For we will not return: the *dérive* causes the baseline to alter, to alter for all time and to always-in-advance have altered. Film, character and scenario each take off on a transversal trajectory which by definition rules out a return to the point of departure. As Coureau explains, 'Le cinéma de Rivette propose bien une géographie faite d'instables et précaires tentatives d'installation au sein de territoires' ('Rivette's cinema proposes a geography made of unstable and precarious attempts at installation in the heart of territories') (Coureau 1998: 51). In the words of Guattari, character and terrain in Rivette would be examples of ontological threshold crossing: 'I have crossed a threshold of consistency. Before the hold of this

block of sensation, this nucleus of partial subjectivation, everything was dull, beyond it, I am no longer as I was before, I am swept away by a becoming other, carried beyond my familiar existential Territories' (Guattari 1995: 93). 'Paris' for Rivette is the occasion for and ground of such a territorial fabulation.

This point can be illustrated by considering the status of urban wandering in *Le Pont du nord*, the film which occupies the same position in Rivette's career as *Passion* does for Godard: that of provisional summary (Deleuze 1989: 10). The film appears at the end of those *années* Giscard Rivette so abhorred. What happens to the characters of *Le Pont du nord* does not belong to them. The two central characters (played by mother and daughter Bulle and Pascale Ogier) attempt to unravel a labyrinthine thread inherited from Cervantes – the coordinates and vectors to which they respond deriving loosely from the trials of Don Quixote. But the foray undertaken here is one into a world where the so-called 'Maxes' (a clandestine movement with unspecified political motives) wreak havoc. The quest undertaken by the duo is dominated not by the line leading from beginning of quest (a problem posed to which the endeavours of the characters respond) to resolution of difficulty (or failure to resolve it), but by a continuum of branchings, graftings and bifurcations. For Lauren Sedofsky *Out 1: Spectre* (the short version of the 12-hour-plus *Out 1: Noli me tangere*) had already established this:

> it proposes to the spectator a plural vision ... thoroughly independent cuttings of reality. To this extent Rivette participates in a contemporary acceptance of phenomenological incompleteness. In *Spectre* he works actively against all totalizing principles, including his own, thereby dissolving the plot (understood as conspiracy and narrative). (Sedofsky 1974: 19)

The problem posed to the characters, as so often (and arguably always) in Rivette is one of representation: the map which they use to accompany, trace and establish their itinerary is the equivalent of Mallarmé's throw of dice which cannot abolish chance. The problem of representation is carried along by the film, inserting itself at each moment. Thus, at one point, the protagonists are found suspended, trapped in a labyrinth or spider's web of their own making. The film unfolds, then, according to a neo-baroque logic of the event. Subject and object are lost in the folds, the characters becoming 'nothing other than these optical haloes that are drawn at the intersection of the radii of curvature that fold the surface of images' (Cache 1995: 3). Towards

the end of the film a 'Max' exchanges martial arts kicks with Baptiste (Pascale Ogier).

Within a classic narrative denouement – quest, evasion, confrontation – the presence of the antagonists in the same frame suggests the convention of a conflict bringing to potential conclusion the problematic posed by the film up to and including this point. But within this moment of framing another frame intervenes. As the frame which accompanies our viewing of the film is traversed by celluloid and is veering towards resolution (i.e. the end of the film approaches), it is transgressed and multiplied by the emergence of the 'crystalline' effect of another frame (a viewfinder). In the second frame, or in the partition of the moment, the viewer sees, simultaneously, the Max and Baptiste engaged in combat and one actor (playing a Max in the film) and another (Ogier) practising the moves to be employed in that (simulated) sequence. Not one after another, or even alongside one another: to what is at work here one cannot respond 'now we see that it has been a film within a film all along'. The moment and the partition of that moment (the frame and the deframing) are given contemporaneously and disjunctively. While this rehearsal is not theatrical rehearsal – a concern in several other films by Rivette – it nonetheless performs here a related function to theatrical rehearsal, which, in the hands of Rivette, offers a paradoxical index of what cinema cannot itself achieve: the inscription of the contingent in every repetition. In the performances of Pirandello in *Va Savoir*, for example, external contingencies determine elements of the performance every night. The performance in the space behind the proscenium arch differs depending on who is in the audience and visible to the actress. Cinema screening, by contrast, is always repeated as the same. Ménil's claim that the theatre (including the idea of rehearsal in particular) of Rivettian cinema exists only as a function of a strictly speaking cinematographic project (Ménil 1998: 67) is all the more evident in *Le Pont du nord*.

In ending with this conjoining of rehearsal and filming *Le Pont du nord* operates a paradoxical closure and opening, script (plot) and conspiracy (*complot*) given together in what Deleuze would call an inclusive disjunction. For Deleuze this is an example of the crystal image, made possible by the break with the modus operandi of classical cinema: 'The crystal-image is, then, the point of indiscernibility of the two distinct images, the actual and the virtual, while what we see in the crystal is time itself, a bit of time in a pure state' (Deleuze 1989: 82). As Youssef Ishaghpour writes of the ending: 'La fin du *Le Pont du nord* est comme le chiffre du cinéma de Rivette: La fiction donnée

comme fiction devant la caméra' ('The end of *Le Pont du nord* is like the key to Rivette's cinema: Fiction given as fiction in front of the camera') (Ishaghpour 1986: 211).

Within the space constructed in Rivette's films one is concerned less with a spent time which can be exchanged and cancelled in favour of closure and resolution than with *durée* itself. His films seem apt illustrations of Deleuze's discussion:

> The universe is made up of modifications, disturbances, changes of tension and of energy, and nothing else. Bergson does indeed speak of a plurality of rhythms of duration; but in this context he makes it clear – in relation to durations that are more or less slow or fast – that each duration is an absolute, and that each rhythm is itself a duration. (Deleuze 1988: 76)

This is borne out in *La Bande des quatre* which divides its scenes by means of shots of metro trains serving as blocks of sonic and visual affect. They intervene; they are between scenes, at once cutting across and conjoining. Theirs is a trajectory separated from departure or destination; they are intermediate states of dislocation and dis-locution.

As Deleuze writes, apropos Leibniz's *Monadology*, ultimately, despite the conservative intentions of its author, it concerns 'a world of captures rather than of closures' (Deleuze 1993: 81). In the films of Rivette it can be argued that one witnesses molecular conspiracy (capture) staged as the subversion of a global encompassing molar conspiracy (closure). Jonathan Rosenbaum attributes the Lang influence, with its strong theme of conspiracy, which returns with considerable force in *Secret défense*, to the long-standing admiration inaugurated in Rivette's 1957 review of *Beyond a Reasonable Doubt* for *Cahiers du cinéma* (Rosenbaum 1983: 165). For some commentators this theme is synonymous with an integral aspect of modernity. As Hélène Frappat points out however: '[L]a modernité consiste à inventer des complots d'ou toute intention a disparu' ('Modernity consists in inventing conspiracies from which all intention has disappeared') (Frappat 2001: 213). It is the fact that in his presentation of conspiracies, in *Paris nous appartient* and *Le Pont du nord* for example, there seems to be both a lack of any intent on the part of the conspirators as well as a lack of any human intentionality to ground and sustain them, that makes Rivette's most pervasive genre 'coordinate' so lacking in anchorage. In place of this Rivette creates what has been called a 'cosmological' perspective on conspiracy. In seeming to locate itself upon this genre coordinate Rivette's oeuvre indicates all the more its slippage from all coordinates, including those imposed upon it in the name of interpretation. In place of resolution or of Hegelian

sublation, what Rivette films is usually a crystalline moment, one of coalescence and rapport; capture, provisional enclosure with the crystal of time (just as the duo from *Le Pont du nord* are enclosed in the spider's web).[16] Thus the film-within-a-film sequence in *Le Pont du nord*; thus the doubles which proliferate in many of the works but especially in *Duelle* and *La Bande des quatres*, or even the double painting and erasure which forms the axis of *La Belle Noiseuse*; thus also the repetition, in the form of a reverse mirror image, in *Céline et Julie vont en bateau*. The equivalent of the crystalline merger of the virtual and the actual, in Rivette one is left in the throes of an inexhaustible possibility – incompossibility rather than a conclusion. This, arguably, is the Hawksian side of Rivette.

If, then, the site to which either character or theme would be adhered does not serve in fact to locate or consolidate either then both are left adrift, dislocated and in abeyance. Which is why so many Rivette protagonists are always *en route* (Baptiste in *Le Pont du nord*, circling on a moped the statue of the lion in the *place* Denfert) and often found at dawn, on the threshold of day and night, life and death.

It is this insistence, first on place – the streets of Paris, and then on characters-actors who cannot *belong*, that provides the shifting territory of the 'fabulist'. Paris for Rivette is a garden of bifurcating paths. The scene in *Secret défense* where Sandrine Bonnaire's character crosses Paris and journeys to the estate in the country by various modes of public transport – a particular fascination of the director – comprises three long takes. Antoine de Baecque in an otherwise quite acerbic article representing a strong statement on the alleged irrelevance of this manifestation of the 'Rivette system' to contemporary French cinema, writes eloquently of this scene: 'Time, then, dilates, the body see-saws with deliberation, hastening from train to train, from speed to speed; the world is ceaselessly sucked in by the fantastic and the irrational; everything flows (liquids play an important role in the film) and nothing can settle until death is achieved' (de Baecque 1998: 71). The scene reveals several aspects of Rivette's singular project. First there is a concern with vectors, second with duration, Bergsonian *durée*, but third it reminds us of Rivette's approach to his actors.

As a director Rivette is notable for the extent to which he has attempted to theorise film acting. In an interview he refers to his attempts to 'treat the text as material which plays a role exactly similar to the other materials in the film: the actors' faces, their gestures, the photographic texture . . . the words carried by the images are not filmed

for their meaning but rather for their materiality, as events and not as meanings' (Rivette [1973] in Rosenbaum 1977: 52).

In interview with Serge Daney in the film *Le Veilleur* (directed by Claire Denis), Rivette reveals what it is that fascinates him about actors such as Jean-Pierre Léaud. They manage, he argues, to act with their entire bodies. This is why Rivette cannot restrict the actor's body to close-ups of the 'privileged part of the fragmented body, the face' (as he explains in the film). He needs to have the entire body, not the signifying, metonymic fragment. Rivette's cinema requires a specific type of actor as well as a new approach to them as co-creators. Bulle Ogier and Juliet Berto created their own roles through part improvisation and writing – in films in which, as has been said of *Out 1*, good and bad acting ceased to matter, what was at stake being 'behaviours' Geraldine Chaplin described to Jonathan Rosenbaum the rigours of working with Rivette on *Noroît*, while recently in an interview on the DVD release of *Histoire de Marie et Julien* Emmanuelle Béart describes the particular challenges working with him continues to present to actors. His approach has counterparts in cinema and of course theatre. While the experimental fervour of the post-1968 era which characterises his work in the 1970s may no longer be in evidence, there remain, in films such as *Haut bas fragile* (1995) and *Va Savoir*, in different ways and to different degrees, elements deriving from the period. Sedofsky's account retains its force: 'Like Artaud, Rivette has created a "non-theological space" (Derrida) which admits the tyranny of neither text nor auteur. It is a space in which the actor's grammar of gesture and voice may play creatively, without impediment' (Sedofsky 1974: 19).

IV. *Secret défense*

Sandrine Bonnaire's portrayal of detachment from the socius had already been deployed to great effect in Agnès Varda's *Sans toit ni loi* (1985) and Claude Chabrol's *La Cérémonie* (1995) when Rivette developed her character for *Secret défense*. Her character Sylvie is only partly participatory in the world of human exchange, interacting with humans only at the level of DNA as she conducts her research – interaction with the molecular DNA as opposed to molar human subjects (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 345). The only other interaction with anyone outside her family takes place in commercial situations (or states of transit), buying a ticket or a drink to steady her nerves en route to Walser (Jerzy Radziwilowicz) at the estate. Sylvie exists only as

a force of intervention, refusing relation, and inhabits what Deleuze calls 'vectorial' as opposed to 'encompassing' space (Deleuze 1985: 218). She perpetuates a question, sends a vector into the estate, and threatens to unearth its buried secret. Indeed, as the scene from which the film gets its title demonstrates (as Sylvie walks past the sealed room where missiles are being constructed Walser jokingly whispers 'Secret Défense!' – Top Secret), we are reminded that the secret has a kind of radioactivity: 'It is as if the past surfaces in itself but in the shape of personalities which are independent, alienated, off-balance, in some sense embryonic, strangely active fossils, radioactive, inexplicable in the present where they surface, and all the more harmful and autonomous. Not recollections but hallucination' (Deleuze 1989: 113).

At work in her Parisian laboratory Sylvie is attempting to find a 'cure' for cancer. The cure however must 'kill' the cancerous cells, as the scene in which she observes the promising results of an experiment makes clear. Likewise, in her view and that of her brother, to cure the malaise that stalks and unsettles their present requires the death of Walser, their father's former associate. The photograph uncovered by Sylvie's brother sets Sylvie off on a path leading towards Walser, as assassin of their father and supplanter of the latter both in their mother's affections and in the role of company head. However, as she sets off on this trajectory, the contact which takes place with him initiates another path, incompossible with the first: Walser as avenging the suicide of the younger sister after the sexual abuse suffered at the hands of the murdered father. Time, here, is off its hinges: the original and suspended sorority is repeated in the two local sisters, both of whom sleep with Walser. But the murdering Walser's role is accidentally now occupied by Sylvie; beginning with the intention of revenge, she replicates Walser's own earlier murderous act, but misdirects her own vector of intervention: as Sylvie holds a gun to Walser not believing his account, Walser's young lover intervenes only to be accidentally shot as she struggles to defend him. The two surviving sisters eventually confront each other, the local woman deliberately shooting Sylvie in what she regards as revenge for her own sister's death. The goal to which each character is directed – is vectorially disposed – is to be reached by means of a killing and yet in killing in each case one fails to reach that goal. Each occasion, then, is a 'false' death, comes about as the result of a wrong move, one brought about by the intervention of the incompossible, the impossible. What happens to Sylvie does not belong to her.

Deleuze says of theatrical representation in Rivette that it 'is a mirror-image but, precisely because it is constantly failing, is the seed of that which does not manage to come to completion or to be reflected' (Deleuze 1989: 76). Theatricality in *Secret défense* is somewhat distinct from the literal theatrical doublings of *Céline et Julie vont en bateau*, *L'Amour fou*, or *La Bande des quatre*, and from the painter–model frontality of *La Belle Noiseuse* (which is a kind of bridge in this respect taking us from the latter films to *Secret défense*), but it is present in the form of the stand-in at different levels: two sisters, Ludivine and Véronique, are played by the same actor (Laure Marsac), Sylvie acts in the place of her brother, Walser acts in a paternal role towards Sylvie, Walser and Sylvie's mother together play out a scenario extending over 15 years, within which he plays the role of faithful lover. None of these roles is allowed to be completed: each collapses in its own failure to represent, to render actual the virtual. 'Only the breakdown in artifice, the deconstruction of the plot, can identify the film as fabulation' (Sedofsky 1974: 19), or as Rivette himself says of the films up until and including *Céline et Julie vont en bateau*: 'In each case there was a first part where we assembled a story of a search, and a second part where little by little we wiped it out' (Rivette 1974: 23).

If Rivette's work attests to possible worlds in their bifurcation, inclusive disjunction and becoming, and if in this respect it maintains itself as generative locus of incompossible series without resolution, then it is in this sense that his work provides an emblem of a people to come, in Deleuze's sense. 'The people' does not designate a collective of individuals bound together in the imagined community of a nation. Instead of being an imagined community, the people to come, progeny of fabulation, is both the object and subject of a collective utterance.

For Jean-François Lyotard, in the megalopolis there is 'only transit, transfer, translation and difference. It is not the house passing away, like a mobile home or the shepherd's hut, it is in passing that we dwell' (Lyotard 1991: 198). Paul Virilio's neologism, *trajectif*, is helpful here (Virilio 1996). That which is trajective is to be distinguished both from the subjective and the objective. It collapses the binary distinction between these terms. In many respects the work of Rivette obeys a trajective logic: it does not have a centre, because within any posited centre we encounter a series of doubles ('Paris and its doubles').[17] This imposition of a labyrinthine imperative deprives his films of fixed coordinates, those which permit the identification and differentiation of subject and object. The viewer, once deprived of these coordinates,

is presented instead with a collection of vectors and trajectories in a cinematographic *dislocation*.[18]

The films of Jacques Rivette respond to the distinct velocity of the contemporary world, to its altered density. He – and Virilio might agree – is one of those who have invented a system of divergence, of decoy, at the threshold of dubious consistencies and subject positions (Virilio 1996: 25). In Deleuzian terms, to adapt Claire Colebrook, 'from the thought of the constitution of this or that space from this or that desire, one can think space as such in its infinite divergence: a thousand plateaus' (Colebrook 2005: 205). The work of Rivette has, for more than half a century, generated many molecular populations. Through the medium of a cinema predominantly located in the city, the space of the people, but also of the state and of the state apparatuses, Rivette has continuously invented collective assemblages of the type advocated by Deleuze, for whom 'The utterance is the product of an assemblage – which is always collective, which brings into play within us and outside us populations, multiplicities, territories, becomings, affects, events' (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 51).

The practical political impact of a cine-thinking such as that of Rivette is not to be measured in the light of any discernible transformations which it manages to effectuate through influence upon a mass of people as such. Rather it is to be measured in the extent to which it stages levels of becoming (Deleuze 1998: 1) and trajective possibilities which do not belong to a molar model of liberation (arguably still the case with Rancière in his notion of the division of the sensible), but which, rather, function at a molecular level and engage with the *socius* at that level. Such lines of flight are dramatised in a filmic space which is also that of thought itself, as Deleuze says in *Dialogues* – cinematic thought, cinematic relation. In detecting the forces of resistance which can make power bend, 'the virtual is an opening for this combat, for this struggle of thought and of language against that which, in thought and in language, is at the same time power and servitude' (Parente 1998: 564). Deleuze's description of *Le Pont du nord* focuses on one side of Rivette – the molar conspiracy 'which distributes roles and situations in a malevolent game of snakes and ladders' (Deleuze 1989: 214) – whereas in *Secret défense*, with global power structures 'occluded' under the false immunity named in the film's title, at a molecular level another conspiracy – 'a collision of love or hatred' (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 52) – is at work. It is the role of such an aesthetic problematisation of the contemporary to be, in Deleuze's and in Nietzsche's terms, untimely – that is, a critique of the

present world. For Rivette, it is apparent, as it is for Deleuze, that 'Time out of joint' is 'the time of the city and nothing else' (Deleuze 1998: 28).

Notes

1. Considering that Deleuze devoted an essay to the director, Anglophone commentary on Deleuze's writings on cinema has to date been relatively silent with regard to Rivette. In a French context, perhaps not surprisingly, there have been more frequent critical conjunctions (see for example Chauderlot 2001, Coreau 1998 and Ménil 1998).
2. Deleuze's 1989 *Cahiers* essay on Rivette's *La Bande des quatre* (1988) provides confirmation of the importance of the director to his understanding of cinema (see Deleuze 2006).
3. The admiration is emphasised in *L'abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze*.
4. Of course several of these films were made after the completion of Deleuze's book.
5. Rivette had the cast watch Mark Robson's Val Lewton-produced *The Seventh Victim* (1944), a film concerning the elimination of traitors and witnesses in a narrative about devil worship in Manhattan's East Village.
6. See Alliez (1996b: preface by Deleuze) on 'conducts of time', with Kant, for example, as 'the first *philosopher* of cities' (Alliez 1996a: 231) and Stengers (1997: 177–212) on the clock and the development of urban time.
7. At the end of the paragraph (Deleuze 1994: 294) Deleuze indicates the extent to which his thinking about this matter was already turning towards cinema (*L'année dernière à Marienbad* in particular).
8. Deleuze's emphasis on other aspects of Rivette is such that he is not mentioned in the 'Powers of the False' chapter.
9. On conspiracy see Watts (2005).
10. The essay revisits concepts developed in *Cinema 2* which was written before *La bande des quatre* was released. 'The attitude of the body is like a time-image, the one which puts the before and after in the body, the series of time; but the gest is already a different time-image, the order or organisation of time, the simultaneity of its peaks, the coexistence of its sheets' (Deleuze 1989: 195). Rivette there is one of the directors discussed in the context of the Brechtian idea of the 'gest [as] the development of attitudes themselves . . . a direct theatricalisation of bodies . . . independently of any role' (Deleuze 1989: 192). The film takes further the ideas developed in the films Deleuze does discuss, namely *L'amour par terre* and *L'amour fou* (Deleuze 1989: 193–4).
11. *Duelle* is a film which subsequent relative inaccessibility has rendered more peripheral in Rivette commentary than Deleuze might have imagined at the time he was writing. The fate of *Noroît* and *Merry Go Round* rendered them even less accessible (until its release on DVD in 2006, *Noroît* had only received isolated festival screenings since its completion in 1976).
12. Deleuze's theory of virtuality traverses much of his work. The crucial distinction between the virtual and the possible however appears in Deleuze (1988: 96–103).
13. 'Utopia isn't the right concept: it's more a question of a "fabulation" ' (Deleuze 1995: 174). He goes on to reiterate the assertion that we ought to take up Bergson's concept and make it political. Zepke suggests that 'the artistic power

of the false marks Deleuze's creation of the indiscernibility of Bergson and Nietzsche' (Zepke 2005: 106).
14. The collaborators multiply in *Haut bas fragile* with seven individuals listed.
15. On kinetic populations see Deleuze (1994: 216–7).
16. For Deleuze, Eisenstein is cinema's Hegel (Raessens 1997: 270).
17. 'Paris and its doubles' is one of the three titles which appear at the start of *Out 1: Spectre*, the four-hour refashioning of Rivette's 12-hour *Out 1: Noli me tangere*.
18. See Benoît Goetz (2002).

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From Negation to Disjunction in a World of Simulacra: Deleuze and Melanie Klein[1]

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Abstract

This paper will articulate an underappreciated side of the psychoanalytical Deleuze: his relation to Melanie Klein, particularly as it appears in *The Logic of Sense*. Deleuze's engagement with Klein largely follows his familiar strategy of re-reading a thinker off of a twist in one or two of that thinker's key concepts. With Klein, this twist involves re-reading her story of psychic development on the basis of disjunction rather than negation, so that the psychic surface that emerges generates a persistent non-correspondence between self and other and between concept and thing. Deleuze thereby makes Klein a central figure in his ontology of sense and his analysis of how the physical surface of bodies generates a metaphysical surface of thought. However, Deleuze's ultimate turn is a Nietzschean one towards overcoming, the thought of eternal return, and the demolition of the Oedipal Law. As this final turn makes clear, even in his early writings that engaged more directly and affirmatively with psychoanalytical thought, Deleuze was already on an anti-Oedipal path.

Keywords: Gilles Deleuze, Slavoj Žižek, Melanie Klein, ontology, psychoanalysis, Oedipus complex

In a very strange book that is purportedly concerned with Deleuze's thought yet devotes at best 20 per cent of its pages to it, Slavoj Žižek proclaims his intention to carry out a '*Hegelian buggery of Deleuze*' (Žižek 2004: 48), which he later modifies to a 'Freudo-Lacanian buggery' (81). For Žižek, this means showing how Deleuze has an unacknowledged proximity to and reliance on the very thinkers he seems to caricature and oppose the most. To this end, Žižek focuses on *The Logic of Sense*, which he considers to be Deleuze's most Lacanian work. Noting Lacan's own approval of the text, he proclaims an identity between Deleuze's 'quasi cause' and Lacan's *objet petit a* (27) and, oddly

enough, also declares the 'quasi cause' to be Deleuze's 'name for the Lacanian "phallic signifier"' (83). Žižek maintains that this thesis 'goes "against the current"' (xi) because the Deleuze who is 'much closer to psychoanalysis and Hegel' (xi) has been obscured by the dominant popular image that defines him primarily through his collaborative works with Guattari.

According to Žižek, Deleuze was already struggling in *The Logic of Sense* with a commitment to two opposing logics embedded in his ontology of the virtual: on the one hand, the virtual is a surface effect of actual physical processes; on the other hand, it is the productive foundation of the actual (Žižek 2004: 20–1).[2] Both logics conform to the idea of the virtual as a sense that exceeds linear physical causality and representation, but the second 'comes dangerously close to "empiriocriticist" formulas: the primordial fact is the pure flow of experience, attributable to no subject, neither subjective nor objective – subject and object are, as all fixed entities, just secondary "coagulations" of this flow' (22). The logic of production thus leads to the vitalist ontology often associated with Deleuze; however, this vitalism, far from being a form of materialism, is really 'a *post-metaphysical idealism*' (24; see also 22–6). The other logic leads to genuine dialectical materialism, which alone 'can effectively *think* the "immaterial" void, the gap of negativity, in which mental Events emerge. Idealism, by contrast, substantializes this void' (89). Žižek holds that Deleuze never directly confronts these dual logics of representation and production, materialism and idealism, which are 'fundamentally incompatible' (20). This failure supposedly leads him – mistakenly in Žižek's view – towards Guattari and a crude ontology of production in *Anti-Oedipus*: 'Deleuze [was] pushed toward Guattari because Guattari presented an alibi, an easy escape from the deadlock of his previous position' (21). Deleuze thus bypasses engagement with the central paradoxes that lead post-Hegelian and psychoanalytic theories towards a true materialism built upon contradictory entities such as the phallus, the *objet a*, and so on, in which meaning and sense emerge from a foundational lack. The political implications of this skirting of the issue are profound. 'The ontology of productive Becoming', Žižek claims, 'clearly leads to the Leftist topic of the self-organization of the multitude of molecular groups that resist and undermine the molar, totalizing systems of power' (32) – in other words, Deleuze's turn to Guattari leads directly to the naïve politics of Hardt and Negri's *Empire* (2000). The other ontology may appear sterile and apolitical, but it really 'involves a political logic and practice of its own' and it opens a domain that

is 'crucial in transforming reality' (32). Deleuze seems not to have recognised the politics associated with this ontology, since '*not a single one* of Deleuze's own texts is in any way directly political; Deleuze "in himself" is a highly elitist author, indifferent toward politics' (20).[3]

However, in *The Logic of Sense*, where Deleuze had not yet 'disavow[ed] his own roots' (Žižek 2004: 83), 'the basic premise of Deleuze's ontology . . . that corporeal causality is *not* complete' (27) is developed into a psychoanalytical account of the corporeal origin of incorporeal sense. Providing little or no textual support, Žižek holds Deleuze's account to follow Lacan by giving a foundational role of symbolic castration:

> As it was clear to Deleuze (and not only to Lacan), the notion of castration answers a very specific question: how does the universal symbolic process detach itself from its corporeal roots? How does it *emerge* in its relative autonomy? 'Castration' designates the violent bodily cut that enables us to enter the domain of the incorporeal. (85)

The phallus, of course, is therefore the signifier of this process, which raises sexuality – the one drive that, being both excessive and lacking, is capable of surpassing bodily needs – to the level of neutral, desexualised thought.

> Therein lies the materialist 'wager' of Deleuze and Lacan: the 'desexualization,' the miracle of the advent of the neutral-desexualized surface of Sense-Event, does not rely on the intervention of some transcendent, extrabodily force. It can be derived from the inherent impasse of the sexualized body itself. In this precise sense – shocking as it may sound to vulgar materialists and obscurantists in their unacknowledged solidarity – the phallus, the phallic element as the signifier of 'castration,' is the fundamental category of dialectical materialism. Phallus qua signifier of 'castration' mediates the emergence of the pure surface of Sense-Event . . . it is the 'pseudo cause' that sustains the autonomy of the field of Sense with regard to its true, effective, bodily cause. (91)

This logic, Žižek argues, is jettisoned by the ontology of production found in *Anti-Oedipus* and its division of productive becoming and reified being (92). He thus declares that *Anti-Oedipus* is 'arguably Deleuze's worst book . . . the result of escaping the full confrontation of a deadlock *via* a simplified "flat" solution' (21).

There is certainly a complex and subtle relationship between Deleuze and Lacan – and between Deleuze and Hegel – which, sadly but not unexpectedly, Žižek does little to illuminate. His reading, which attributes to Deleuze a variety of sharp divisions (the central

one being '*The Logic of Sense* versus *Anti-Oedipus*' [Žižek 2004: 21]) and unequivocal positions (for example, that *Anti-Oedipus* is a wholesale rejection of psychoanalysis), is self-serving and simply erroneous.[4] Although there are important and explicitly positive resonances with psychoanalysis in Deleuze's mid to late 1960s solo writings, Žižek is unprepared to do more with them than equate various Deleuzian concepts with Lacanian counterparts. The results in this regard are astonishing: Žižek does not even appear to notice that the psychoanalytical account of the genesis of sense in *The Logic of Sense*, worked out over some 50 pages and eight series of the book, is carried out through a reading of Melanie Klein, not Lacan.[5] Deleuze's turn to Klein is particularly damaging to Žižek's thesis, as she specifically contests the centrality of the castration complex while referring the Freudian Oedipal complex of the child's third and fourth years back to earlier processes of object relations. Given her distinctive position in post-Freudian psychoanalysis and her key differences from Lacan, this would seem to be prima facie evidence that Deleuze, while certainly not rejecting his 'roots', was already thinking independently of them.

Deleuze typically engages with other thinkers by adding a distinctive 'twist' to their thought, resulting in readings that are not particularly faithful, but also not simply invented. With his reading of Klein, Deleuze retraces her revised story of pre-Oedipal and Oedipal development with the twist of inserting the Kleinian infant into a world of simulacra rather than one of substantial objects with stable boundaries. The world of simulacra is no longer a temporary one that the infant outgrows, as it is for Klein, who sees the infant synthesising part-objects into whole and complete objects as its ego develops. As a result of this move, Kleinian processes of splitting and synthesis, which she links to death and life instincts, are in Deleuze's hands no longer dialectical negations and reconciliations. Klein was famously alone among post-Freudians in taking the existence of the death instinct seriously, holding it to operate from birth. Deleuze's alterations of Klein, however, turn the death drive into a force not of negation, but of disjunction. It compels psychic development to go beyond the corporeal and physical and towards a metaphysical surface of sense and thought; but, as this Deleuzian surface is also a surface of nonsense, this process culminates not in the consolidation of the ego, but in its dissolution.

The following discussion will first introduce Klein's reworking of Freud's understandings of the nature of negation and the role of the death instinct in driving psychic development, showing how Deleuze in turn replaces negation with a principle of disjunction in order to

construct an account of the psychic surface that breaks with both Freud and Klein. It will then analyse Klein's pre-Oedipal paranoid-schizoid and manic-depressive positions and the processes of splitting and synthesis that effect the transition from the former to the latter, all of which are the central focus of Deleuze's adoption and reworking of Klein's thought. Finally, it will explore Deleuze's use of these adapted Kleinian themes in his re-reading of the Oedipus complex and the passage from sexual instincts to a desexualised surface of thought, areas where Klein uncritically follows Freud. Deleuze's reading of Klein is certainly not a Lacanian one, assuming such a thing were possible. And indeed, even while it incorporates Lacanian concepts such as the phallus in the Oedipal stage of development, it culminates with a turn to Nietzsche – that is to say, not with the ascendancy of the phallic Law but with creative overcoming and revaluation. In later writings, Deleuze is harshly critical of Klein, holding her to obsessively Oedipalise childhood experiences.[6] Nevertheless, without discounting that changes take place from *The Logic of Sense* to *Anti-Oedipus* to *Dialogues*, it seems that even if the early Deleuze engages affirmatively with the Oedipus story, it is already with the intention of doing something different. Deleuze's early psychoanalytical writings, as will be seen, show him already to be on a decidedly anti-Oedipal path.

I. Surfaces of Negation; Surfaces of Disjunction

In the account of sense developed in *The Logic of Sense*, the notion of *surface* plays a fundamental role. Invoking the language of surface is not meant to oppose sense to a deeper or more substantial essence, as though sense were something superficial. Rather, the surface refers to a plane that brings together but also holds apart distinct domains, much like the ocean's surface separates but also connects water and air. Such a surface belongs to neither domain yet constitutes both. It is therefore a site of differentiation, but it is also a difference in its own right – in Deleuze's terms, it is a 'difference in itself' that serves as a 'differenciator': 'Sense is never only one of the two terms of the duality . . . it is also the frontier, the cutting edge, or the articulation of the difference between the two terms, since it has at its disposal an impenetrability which is its own and within which it is reflected' (Deleuze 1990: 28).[7] Nevertheless, the surface is not a singular phenomenon, as Deleuze indicates by his discussion of two kinds of surface in the early pages of the text. On the one hand, there is a surface formed at the interstices of material bodies; on the other hand, a surface of sense is

embedded in language, allowing the proposition's various functions – the designation of facts, the manifestation of a subject's intentions, and the signification of universal concepts – to operate and 'make sense'. The first surface refers to material simulacra, while the second refers to phantasms of thought. Deleuze's ultimate concern is a second-order surface where these surfaces of thought and thing intersect.[8]

For both Freud and Klein, this second-order surface is the psychic surface, which mediates the mind's contact with the external world. Negation is at once the differenciator and the form of differentiation articulated and carried out on this surface. Freud and Klein differ fundamentally on negation's primary location – external versus internal, real versus phantastic – but they share a traditional understanding of it being a force that, through its powers of separation, denial, repression, and even destruction, at once distinguishes objects and consolidates their distinct identities: through negation, water is water because it is *not* air and vice versa. Thus, for both Freud and Klein, the development of the psychic surface sees it more or less accurately mapped onto the body's physical surface in such a way as to secure the distinction between inside and outside and the adequate correspondence between phantastic objects and real objects.

For Freud, negation enables a compromise with repressed instincts, allowing them to become conscious – to reach the psychic surface – only in the form of denials: I express my desire for my mother only by insisting it does not exist (Freud 1961b: 235–6). It is also an expression of the death instincts turned outwards, both as a desire to possess or destroy external objects and as a symbol of negation that resides within statements and without which the intellect could not achieve independence from the pleasure principle. In its intellectual form, negation firms up the separation of inside from outside: the affirmation and negation of attributes assigned to subjects correspond to the pleasure-ego's oral processes of introjection and projection and thus to the desire to externalise the bad and internalise the good; judgements of existence, linked to the subsequent reality-ego, rest on the idea that what is external is objectively real while what is internal is subjective, phantasic, and imaginary (Freud 1961b: 237–8). All of these real and intellectual negations function throughout the stages of sexual development, in which libido instincts, separating themselves from their original link to vital functions, pass through oral, anal and genital phases, organising the body and its erotogenic zones and allowing external reality to be measured in terms of its promotion or hindrance of libido satisfaction (see Freud 1966: chs 20–1).

Freud holds negation to be absent from the unconscious, where contraries easily condense into one another, and where there is no reference to linear time, with its negative difference between past, present and future, or to death, which is an abstract concept known only to the mind's higher strata (see Freud, 1961a: 57–8; 1966: 178). For this reason, he maintains the development of the psychic surface is driven by external negations, such as the temporary loss and return of objects, which allow the ego to unify and distinguish itself from outside reality (Freud 1994: 3), and the realistic (if not necessarily real) castration threat that underpins neurotic anxiety and the Oedipus complex (Freud 1965: 85–6, 93–4). Such firm and factual separations – the mother's obvious presence or absence, and so forth – thereby consolidate the internal distinctions of the psyche and provide a measuring rod for the adequacy of the child's phantasies to reality. Although the death instinct is an internal source of negation, its existence remains speculative, as it can be glimpsed only obliquely in negations directed outside the self (sadism) or turned back against the self (masochism); but even these indirect signs arise only in response to the denials and frustrations of the external world, making the death instinct's negativity derivative. Thus, at the conclusion of his 'Negation' essay, when linking affirmation and negation to the primordial instincts, Freud declares: 'Affirmation – as a substitute for uniting – belongs to Eros; negation – the *successor* to expulsion – belongs to the instinct of destruction' (Freud 1961b: 239, emphasis added).[9] Once actualised, the death instinct's negativity is crucial to completing the psychic surface; in being turned outwards and then back, it establishes conscience and the superego. These final negations exceed the ego's reality principle, internalise the real negativity of external authority figures, and desexualise libido energies so they can be sublimated into thought. But they are once again linked by Freud to actual external events through his insistence on the reality of childhood events of trauma and on there being a real event of primal patricide at the foundation of individual and collective psychic life. Freud's aspiration to scientific rigour leads him to this privileging of the external world's negations in the constitution of the psychic surface: as he states in the *Introductory Lectures*, he prefers to represent the origin of psychic conflict in terms of an external frustration that is supplemented by an internal one because 'it hints at the probability that the internal impediments arose from real external obstacles during the prehistoric periods of human development' (Freud 1966: 350).

Klein inverts many of the priorities in Freud's conception of early development. She pushes the start of the Oedipus complex back, first

to the beginning of the second year and ultimately to the second six months of life (see Klein 1998: 129 and 1975: 2), holding it to be largely completed by age three (Klein 1998: 151). Moreover, she links the formation of the Freudian superego to a series of pre-Oedipal developments, but she also posits the existence of an infantile superego and a pregenital sense of guilt that are far more persecutory than what Freud sees as the culmination of the Oedipus complex (Klein 1998: 133, 186–7). Although initially accepting the thesis of primary narcissism (Klein 1998: 85, 128), she eventually holds all narcissism and auto-eroticism to result from object relations, thereby taking the processes of introjection and projection to be primary (Klein 1975: 13, 51). As a result, it is no longer possible to privilege real and external negations in psychic development, and the worlds of phantasy and reality are intertwined: 'external and internal situations are always interdependent, since introjection and projection operate side by side from the beginning of life' (Klein 1975: 139). Early psychic life is governed by the often violent interplay between these two worlds, each mirroring but also distorting the other, but external negations are fundamentally displaced, as Klein maintains that the death instinct's destructiveness and a corresponding unconscious fear of death are present from birth. Consequently, the origins of anxiety, mastery of which is both the primary task of the ego (Klein 1986: 216) and the essential determinant of normal versus neurotic psychic development (Klein 1989: 176–7), cannot be located in external frustrations such as those linked to weaning, the loss of the mother, or castration threat imposed by the father. Castration anxiety 'is a modification, in the course of development, of the earliest anxiety situation', which is created by the projection of excessive cruelty onto both parents by 'the early sadistic super-ego' (Klein 1998: 213). Moreover, 'if we assume the existence of a death instinct, we must also assume that in the deepest layers of the mind there is a response to this instinct in the form of fear of annihilation of life. Thus . . . the danger arising from the inner working of the death instinct is the first cause of anxiety' (Klein 1975: 29). The psychic surface now arises only when, through phantasy, these destructive impulses are thrust outward – the sadistic phantasies wrapped up in the oral-sucking phase constitute the child's first relation to the external world (Klein 1998: 292–3) and they continue in the anal-sadistic phase where faeces and urine are seen as poisons (Klein 1998: 219–20) – and are then modified so that the anxiety displaced onto the external world does not overwhelm the still weak infantile ego and prevent the stabilisation of symbolic relations (Klein

1998: 232). Conversely, schizophrenia develops when 'the capacity for personification and for transference fails, amongst other reasons, through the defective functioning of the projection-mechanism' (Klein 1998: 208), leading to 'a severe inhibition of the capacity to form and use symbols, and so to develop phantasy life' (Klein 1975: 138). As it is also for Deleuze, schizophrenia amounts to a failure to establish a psychic surface able to mediate the connection between words and things (Deleuze 1990: 82–93). A controlled deployment of sadistic phantasy is therefore crucial to psychic development.

Against both Freud and Klein, Deleuze refuses to accept negation as the differenciator and driving force in the surface's development. Instead, he posits a differenciator that carries out a 'disjunctive synthesis' among the differences related at and through the surface. Negation certainly establishes a disjunction among differences, but Deleuze holds that its disjunction remains a kind of exclusion. With negation, differences only communicate to the degree to which they still mirror one another, making it yet another way in which difference is submitted to the principles of identity, as what diverges no longer relates. In contrast, the challenge, Deleuze holds, is to make 'divergence . . . no longer a principle of exclusion, and disjunction no longer a means of separation. Incompossibility is now a means of communication . . . the whole question, and rightly so, is to know under what conditions the disjunction is a veritable synthesis' (Deleuze 1990: 174). Such a synthesis requires that 'everything happens through the resonance of disparates, point of view on a point of view, displacement of perspective, differentiation of difference, and not through the identity of contraries' (Deleuze 1990: 175). Such a disjunctive synthesis, relating the differences it brings together *through their difference* rather than any unity, constitutes the surface as the site of an 'event'. This event is not merely a factual or real occasion, but a communication between real and phantastic worlds, which never correspond. Thus, 'on one side, there is the part of the event which is realized and accomplished; on the other, there is that "part of the event which cannot realize its accomplishment"' (Deleuze 1990: 151–2).

Being committed to negation, Klein certainly does not theorise psychic development in terms of this kind of resonance. Indeed, for her, normal development culminates with the ego consolidating itself in such a way that the psychic surface not only maintains the negative separation of inner and outer worlds but also allows the former to become sufficiently stable so that it can mirror the distinct objects found in the latter. Even though she rejects Freud's privileging of real negations, Klein in many

respects follows his 'scientific' approach of treating the real separations between real objects as the standard to determine successful formation of a stable psyche. However, the resonance and communication of divergences is precisely what Klein portrays in her analysis of the infant's initial situation, a condition in which it encounters only fragmentary 'part-objects' that are simultaneously good and bad, loving and terrifying. The negative force of the infant's aggressive instincts, along with the real stability of the external divisions to which its phantasms ultimately conform, allow the infant eventually to organise its world into fairly unambiguous, stable, and complete objects. But for Deleuze, no such external stability exists and aggressive instincts are not forces of negation but rather of disjunction. In Deleuze's account, therefore, the synthesis of part-objects never fully overcomes their divergence.

II. From the Paranoid-Schizoid Position to the Manic-Depressive Position

The major part of Deleuze's engagement with Klein deals with her theory of pre-Oedipal positions.[10] The Kleinian infant first encounters a chaotic world of part-objects, from which 'springs . . . the phantastic and unrealistic nature of the child's relation to all objects . . . The object-world of the child in the first two or three months of its life could be described as consisting of hostile and persecuting, or else of gratifying parts and portions of the real world' (Klein 1998: 285). The breast, which contains all nourishment but does not guarantee its presence or generosity, is the prototype for good and bad part-objects alike. Through phantasy, the infant's loving and aggressive impulses are projected onto it, so that it becomes at once benevolent and persecutory; but these aspects are also introjected and become extreme imagos operating within the psyche. Projection corresponds to object-relationship while introjection corresponds to superego formation (Klein 1989: 178). Phantastic imagos mirror and are mirrored by external objects: 'for all children in the beginning external reality is mainly a mirror of the child's own instinctual life' (Klein 1998: 233); 'from the very beginning of psychic development there is a constant correlation of real objects with those installed within the ego' (Klein 1998: 266). This explains the child's fixation on its mother even if, because of severe distortion in its perceptions of both the internal and the external worlds, its phantasy life remains inadequate to reality. A resonance thus emerges between a

simulacrum of part-objects[11] and a phantasm of imagos, with the infant unable to clearly distinguish the real from the imagined.

For Klein's infant, part-objects are not only mixed together but are also merged. The mother being considered the source of all good things, the father's penis is thought to be within her (Klein 1989: 195). Indeed, 'according to the child's earliest phantasies (or "sexual theories") of parental coitus, the father's penis (or his whole body) becomes incorporated in the mother during the act' (Klein 1998: 219). Moreover, reflecting the ambivalence in the child's sexual and aggressive impulses, these part-objects are seemingly intractable amalgamations of good and bad, making them both loved and hated objects, and this ambivalence is also internalised through introjection. Both parents come to be seen as castrators (Klein 1998: 190; also 1989: 131) and are even united into a single terrifying imago (Klein 1989: 253). As real and phantastic objects double one another, with reality tests applied to the external parents serving as an indirect way of judging the corresponding internal imagos,[12] a dialectic arises between inner and outer worlds that reinforces infantile anxieties.

> From the beginning the ego introjects objects 'good' and 'bad', for both of which its mother's breast is the prototype – for good objects when the child obtains it, for bad ones when it fails him. But it is because the baby projects its own aggression on to these objects that it feels them to be 'bad' and not only in that they frustrate its desires: the child conceives of them as actually dangerous – persecutors who it fears will devour it, scoop out the inside of its body, cut it to pieces, poison it – in short, compassing its destruction by all the means which sadism can devise. These imagos, which are a phantastically distorted picture of the real objects upon which they are based, become installed not only in the outside world but, by the process of incorporation, also within the ego. Hence, quite little children pass through anxiety-situations (and react to them with defence-mechanisms), the content of which is comparable to that of the psychoses of adults. (Klein 1998: 262)

Responding like a tiny Manichean, the infant struggles to secure itself from anxiety by strictly separating good and bad. It does this through both phantasies and real actions, unable completely to tell the difference. It thus it takes its most sadistic phantasies to be acts it has really carried out on its parents.[13] Its ego being weak and dispersed, splitting is the infant's primary defence mechanism. Its sadistic and aggressive impulses being ascendant, the infant aims to divide part-objects, expelling and destroying what it deems bad and introjecting and possessing the good. But as its world lacks any stable boundaries, these separations cannot be sustained. To ward off the anxiety generated internally by its own

death instinct, the infant directs its aggression against bad part-objects, but anxiety then returns as a fear of these objects retaliating (Klein 1998: 220); meanwhile, the infant cannot project its aggression onto external part-objects without also identifying with these part-objects and so re-internalising the bad, the end result being that it suffers persecutory anxieties from both internal and external attackers. Attempts to introject the good object so as to protect it are ultimately ambiguous because of continuing anxiety and the infant's sense that its inside is also a bad place (Klein 1998: 264–5). Furthermore, 'the ego is incapable of splitting the object – internal and external – without a corresponding splitting taking place within the ego' (Klein 1975: 6), so that the ego's own defence mechanisms weaken it. On the one hand, the ego becomes excessively dependent on external objects it idealises as good (Klein 1975: 9); on the other hand, while the ego strengthens itself by introjecting good part-objects, it cannot avoid incorporating bad or sadistic objects as well. Finally, since good and bad cannot be cleanly separated, attacks on bad part-objects necessarily bring harm to good part-objects as well (Klein 1975: 6), and good objects are easily transformed into bad ones (Klein 1998: 268).

All of this defines the paranoid-schizoid position that dominates the first months of life: 'The accumulation of anxieties of this nature, in which the ego is, as it were, caught between a variety of external and internal persecution-situations, is a basic element in paranoia' (Klein 1975: 11–12). It is marked by an early superego that works off the anxiety aroused by the child's sadism, as opposed to the adult superego that 'arouses less anxiety and more sense of guilt' (Klein 1998: 252). However, as sexual development approaches the genital stage, where sexual instincts finally attain independence from vital and aggressive ones, libidinal impulses grow stronger and sadistic ones weaken (Klein 1989: 175). With this, the most terrifying and anxiety-producing imagos retreat, the discrepancy between the superego's phantastic objects and the ego's real objects diminishes, and the ego's suppression of the id becomes less violent (Klein 1989: 154–5). As early sadism subsides, the infant can synthesise part-objects into complete objects, coming to see its mother as a person, for example. But in achieving this synthesis of good and bad part-objects, the resulting unity is a whole but damaged love object.

The infant now enters a new, manic-depressive position, characterised by feeling the loss of the loved object – 'Not until the object is loved *as a whole* can its loss be felt as a whole' (Klein 1998: 264). Its stronger ego being more capable of love but also now able to assume

responsibility for itself, 'depressive anxiety is intensified, for the infant feels he has destroyed or is destroying a whole object by his greed and uncontrollable aggression . . . he now feels that these destructive impulses are directed against a *loved person*' (Klein 1975: 50). A quest now begins to repair the damaged parent, its specific form guided by the choice of primary sexual object at the genital stage: the boy, whose libido changes to the aim of penetration, retains the mother as his primary object, while the girl, keeping the receptive aim of the earlier oral phase, turns to the father (Klein 1998: 186). The project is encouraged by a new sense of omnipotence, which works as a defence against depressive anxiety but which is also closely bound up with unconscious sadistic impulses, so that 'the child feels again and again that his attempts at reparation have not succeeded, or will not succeed' (Klein 1998: 350). The penis – visible in the boy's case and introjected from the father in the girl's – becomes the representative of this power (Klein 1998: 244; also 1989: 233) and thus a tool of reparation. For the boy, 'the penis is then felt to be a good and curative organ, which shall afford the woman pleasure, cure her injured genital and create babies in her' (Klein 1998: 315), while for the girl, the discovery that she cannot make these reparations leads her to penis-envy (Klein 1989: 216). At this point, obviously, the Freudian Oedipus complex appears: 'Anxiety and guilt add a powerful impetus towards the beginning of the Oedipus complex' (Klein 1975: 50). Its resolution, like its inception, is made possible by the passage through the two pre-Oedipal positions, as a result of which 'the demarcation between conscious and unconscious is more distinct. These developments make it possible for repression to take a leading part among the defences' (Klein 1975: 86). Through its use of repression, the ego can now fulfil the demands of the superego without risking itself: 'since in repression the splitting predominantly effects a division between conscious and unconscious, neither part of the self is exposed to the degree of disintegration which may arise in previous stages' (Klein 1975: 86). Repression is also a pre-requisite for symbol formation, which functions primarily to direct the sublimation of libido energies towards non-sexual interests (Klein 1998: 86; see also 221, and 1975: 83, 115, 137–8). The next several years are filled with vacillations and regressions, but culminate in the resolution of the Oedipus complex and the establishment of the final form of the superego.

The development Klein traces depends on the separations between real objects being sufficiently stable so that phantastic imagos can adapt to them. Because there are real complete objects to which the child can conform, it is able to move from the paranoid-schizoid to the

manic-depressive position and then to the Oedipus complex. Deleuze breaks with Klein precisely on this point: the child, he holds, never outgrows the original chaos of part-objects, because reality is a simulacrum – a multiplicity of differences that never form a unity because they are synthesised through a 'difference in itself' that both connects them and sustains their discontinuity. As such, the phantasm of imagos that relates to this external reality at and through the psychic surface can never amount to a good or bad copy of this reality, and the issue of whether phantasms have real or imaginary causes is thereby displaced. The two domains relate not through their correspondence but rather through their difference: 'phantasms, even when they are effects and because they are effects, differ in nature from their real causes' (Deleuze 1990: 210–11). However, the phantasm itself is also a disjunctive synthesis, and, as such, it is constituted as an event within thought that allows thought's linguistic propositions, which relate it to things, to 'make sense'. As such, negation – whether held to originate in the psyche or in the outside world – cannot account for the separations between the constituents of the internal and external domains, nor the separations between the domains themselves. Indeed, it is not even a matter of the two worlds being separated but also mediated in a way adequate to reality, but of their folding into and resonating with each other: 'The question of whether particular events are real or imaginary is poorly posed. The distinction is not between the imaginary and the real, but between the event as such and the corporeal state of affairs which incites it about or in which it is actualized' (Deleuze 1990: 210).

But the effects of replacing negation with disjunction go beyond just preventing any final stability for Klein's infant. It also changes completely the mechanism of the child's passage through pre-Oedipal positions. The infant may never be successful in this world of simulacra, but it nonetheless endeavours to split the good from the bad, and, eventually, to repair a complete good object and identify with it (Deleuze 1990: 187–8). However, Deleuze maintains, since good is associated with purity and fullness, all part-objects are necessarily bad: 'every piece is bad in principle (that is, persecuting and persecutor), only what is wholesome and complete is good' (188). Furthermore, and against Klein, Deleuze contends that because of the ambivalences associated with introjection and projection, these processes cannot secure the synthesis that constitutes the good object: 'introjection, to be precise, does not allow what is wholesome to subsist . . . the equilibrium proper to the schizoid position and its relation to the subsequent depressive position do not seem capable of coming about from the introjection

of a good object as such, and they must be revised' (188). But given that reality does not offer whole objects with stable boundaries to serve as a guide, where within the simulacrum of corporeal part-objects does the child find inspiration for its enterprise? The answer for Deleuze is in the simulacrum's differenciator, here termed the 'body without organs' – 'what the schizoid position opposes to bad partial objects . . . is . . . an organism without parts, a body without organs, with neither mouth nor anus, having given up all introjection or projection, and being complete, at this price' (188). Deleuze associates this body without organs with the urethral attacks of the anal-sadistic phase (188–9), noting that Klein makes no such distinction between urine and faeces (351–2 n. 3). Circulating through the dispersed part-objects, this fluid body without organs provides a principle of purity that the child can use to organise itself and its surroundings. But its resistance to introjection also places it on another level, which corresponds to the manic-depressive position that follows the paranoid-schizoid position.

> It seems to us that the good object is not introjected as such, because it belongs from the very start to another dimension. The good object has another 'position.' It belong to the heights, it holds itself above, and does not allow itself to fall without also changing its nature . . . The superego does not begin with the first introjected objects, as Melanie Klein says, but rather with this good object which holds itself aloft. (189)

Thus, although the splitting process does not move the infant out of the paranoid-schizoid position, the mechanism for this transition is immanent to it, as the good object 'forms itself in the current of this [schizoid] position, with borrowings, blockages, and pressures which attest to a constant communication between the two [positions]' (190). The way the body without organs, arising from within the simulacrum of part-objects, generates the *appearance* of a transcendent reference point, an 'idol on high' (192), raises the infant to the manic-depressive position. From there, it sets the conditions for the intervention of the castration threat and thus the introduction of the Oedipal drama.

III. From Oedipus to the Thought of Eternal Return

For Klein, the passage through the Oedipus complex brings the superego and external objects into alignment so as to comply with both the requirements of reality and phantastic commands (Klein 1989: 180). Upon reaching this level, 'the internalized imagos will approximate more closely to reality and the ego will identify itself more fully with "good"

objects' (Klein 1998: 264). As the child learns that its own aggression was the source of bad objects, it comes to see its parents more accurately (Klein 1975: 242). Thus, although every synthesis of good and bad part-objects also renews the splitting of imagos, 'this splitting is carried out on planes which gradually become increasingly nearer and nearer to reality' (Klein 1998: 288).[14] In contrast, Deleuze rejects the possibility of such correspondence because the complete good object that leads psychic development from the paranoid-schizoid to the manic-depressive position and beyond is not a real object but only a simulation. At this point Lacanian elements enter Deleuze's account, as the good object becomes associated with the phallus.[15] The phallus 'marks always an excess and a lack . . . It is essentially an excess, as it projects itself over the genital zone of the child, duplicating its penis, and inspiring it with the Oedipal affair. But it is essentially lack and deficiency when it designates, at the heart of the affair, the absence of the penis in the case of the mother' (Deleuze 1990: 227–8). Nevertheless, this does not make it a foundational negativity. Instead, 'oscillating between one and the other [excess and lack] and even being both at once' (227), the phallus is fundamentally a differenciator of difference. As such, its negativity is at best derivative. Furthermore, acting as a differenciator, the phallus does not ultimately consolidate the ego but instead effects its dissolution.

Consigned to the heights, 'the good object is by nature a lost object. It only shows itself and appears from the start as already lost, as *having been lost*' (Deleuze 1990: 191). Its ambivalence is thus fundamentally different than the ambivalence of part-objects in the paranoid-schizoid position: it is both loving and threatening because it is pure, mysterious and good (191). Characterised as transcendent, the good object begins the separation of the incorporeal from the corporeal – 'the depressive position prepares us for something which is *neither action nor passion*' (192) – but, as a hidden source, it lacks the connection to subjects, objects, and concepts required for the incorporeality of language and thought. The good object 'has the dimensions of a language without having its condition; it awaits the *event* that will make it a language' (193). In other words, it must be reinvested, not into the part-objects that belong to an opposing world of depth, but onto a surface that can cause the two domains to resonate.

This is achieved through the good object's organisation of erotogenetic zones on the body's physical surface, a process that culminates in the genital phase, where sexual drives attain their independence and the libido becomes 'a veritable *superficial energy*' (Deleuze 1990: 199). In this process, the phallus becomes the privileged

signifier of the lost object, serving 'the direct and global function of integration, or of general coordination . . . And the phallus, in this respect, does not play the role of an organ, but rather that of a particular image projected . . . onto this privileged (genital) zone' (200). But rather than being a signifier of transcendent law, the phallus is an image donated by the good object – 'the child receives the phallus as an image that the good ideal penis projects over the genital zone of his body' (203) – but a donation that inhabits the surface, aiming to mediate the child's relation to the heights. It is 'an instrument of the surface, meant to *mend* the wounds that the destructive drives . . . have inflicted on the maternal body, and to reassure the good object, to convince it not to turn its face away' (201). It gives 'to the child's penis the force of embarking on the venture' (206) of making reparations to the damaged object. However, it also initiates Oedipal anxiety, introducing negation into the story as the delineation of the sexual surface defines the mother's body by a lack and elevates the father to the position of being owner of the penis. For the boy, his loving attempt to restore his mother by substituting himself for his father also introduces murder and castration: 'by wishing to restore the mother, the child has in fact castrated and eventrated her; and . . . by wishing to bring back the father, the child has betrayed and killed him, transformed him into a cadaver' (206). The destructive impulses, which were subordinated along with the pregenital organisation of the sexual surface when libidinal instincts were elevated, now return, but in a different form, as the Oedipal drama establishes 'intention as an ethical category' (206), which raises the agency of aggressive impulses to a new level of thought. Death and castration carry out a desexualisation of libido energies, which are then sublimated to form 'the second screen, the cerebral or metaphysical surface' (218). Oedipus thereby not only traces a line of castration on the physical surface of the body, but enacts a process of symbolisation (208).

Death, castration and murder now become the never fully identifiable components of an Oedipal phantasm that circulates between the physical surface of sexuality and the metaphysical surface of thought. Deleuze here rejects the Kleinian ascription of phantasms to the pre-Oedipal positions, holding the phantasm to arise only with desexualisation and symbolisation, not prior to them (Deleuze 1990: 215–16). Through the phantasm acting as a differenciator between the physical and metaphysical surfaces, sexuality is brought into thought, as the trace of castration remains even after sexual energies have been sublimated, while, thought, via symbolisation, reinvests its desexualised energies onto the body's surface (242–3). The two surfaces thereby fold into

each other yet remain irreducible: the sexual organisation of thought prefigures language (230–3, 241–2), but language arises only in so far as sexuality is sublimated into something different; symbolisation, in turn, never fully collapses the symbol into what is symbolised. The Oedipal phantasm resonates between these sexual and desexualised surfaces, but it also refers to the pregenital and genital organisations of the body, since it constitutes a traumatic event that separates the two orders and, indeed, constitutes them through this separation (226). Through the phantasm, pregenital and genital sexualities continue to resonate in the unconscious (240).

Ultimately, then, the Deleuzian surface is composed of disjunctions upon disjunctions: the disjunctions of simulacra produce the appearance of the lost good object that, through the image of the phallus, guides the separation of sexual and aggressive drives and the subordination of the pregenital organisation of the sexual surface to the genital organisation; the disjunction of these surfaces via castration desexualises and sublimates libido energies into thought; and the surfaces of sexuality and thought continue to resonate through their difference. The body without organs, the phallus donated by the good object, and the Oedipal phantasm are the three surface differenciators effecting the necessary disjunctive syntheses. Each is a difference in its own right, a 'difference in itself' marked by a certain opacity, but each is also immanent to the differences it brings together. But only the phantasm brings together all the constituents, as it 'recovers and integrates not only images but even idols and simulacra' (Deleuze 1990: 219). And, ultimately, it is the resonance of the phantasm's disjunctive movement that is the nonsense that generates sense, although this includes the phallus in so far as it 'gets involved in Oedipal dissociations' (227). The phantasm functions in this way because

> throughout all of that which language will designate, manifest, or signify, there will be a sexual history that will never be designated, manifested, or signified in itself, but which will coexist with all the operations of language, recalling the sexual appurtenance of the formative linguistic elements. This status of sexuality accounts for repression. (243)[16]

The phantasm thereby underpins the identities of denoted bodies, signified concepts, and the self that manifests or expresses itself in language; but precisely because it is a movement of disjunction, the phantasm is also linked to a decentring through which these identities, and particularly the identity of the ego, are dissolved. Although the

phantasm 'finds its point of departure (or its author) in the phallic ego of secondary narcissism', seeming to depend on the pre-Oedipal consolidation of the ego traced by Klein, within the phantasm the ego 'is neither active nor passive and does not allow itself at any moment to be fixed in a place, even if this place were reversible' (212). This dissolution of the ego, Deleuze argues, must not be confused with a similar dissolution carried out in dialectics: 'if the ego is dissipated in it [the phantasm], it is not perhaps because of an identity of contraries, or a reversal whereby the active would become passive' (213). Arising through disjunction, this process transforms the ego into an event: 'the individuality of the ego merges with the event of the phantasm itself, even if that which the event represents in the phantasm is understood as another individual, or rather a series of individuals through which the dissolved ego passes' (213–14).

As 'the process of the constitution of the incorporeal' (Deleuze 1990: 220), the phantasm's extrinsic or external beginning is castration (219), but it also has an intrinsic beginning in a 'repetition of beginnings' (220) – that is to say, in the resonance of pregenital and genital sexual series through the differenciator of the phallus, each series repeating the other without one being the original and the other the copy. Ultimately, however, 'the phantasm develops to the extent that the resonance induces a *forced movement* that goes beyond and sweeps away the basic series ... the forced movement of an amplitude greater than the initial movement' (239). In this regard, while Eros's sexual instincts initiate the surface's development, it is Thanatos, the death instinct, that performs the excessive forced movement, dissolving the ego, desexualising libido instincts, and sublimating them into thought: 'We can therefore name the entire forced movement "death instinct," and name its full amplitude "metaphysical surface"' (240). In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze criticises Freud for restricting himself to a material model of death and brute repetition, which is reflected in the conception of the death instinct as a drive to return to an earlier, inorganic state (Deleuze 1994: 111–12). With Freud, death is thereby 'reduced to negation ... to the negative of opposition ... [or] the negative of limitation' (112). But with the death instinct transformed into a force of disjunction, it becomes the principle of the repetition/resonance of sexuality, driving sexuality beyond itself: 'Thanatos (as transcendental principle) is that which gives repetition to Eros, that which submits Eros to repetition' (18).

The creation of the surface now culminates with Nietzsche, as the Oedipal phantasm becomes 'the site of the eternal return' (Deleuze 1990: 220). Although the phantasm could not have emerged without the

positing of the idol of the lost good object, it ends with 'the subversion of this world – the "twilight of the idols"' (262). It ends, in other words, with the destruction of the Oedipal Law. By dissolving the ego, the phantasm paves the way for self-overcoming. And by raising disjunction to the level of thinking and going beyond its sexual origins, it makes way for a creative break with the compulsions and necessities of both the instincts and the past. In explaining the temporal structure of eternal return, Deleuze argues that 'the present is no more than an actor, an author, an agent destined to be effaced; while the past is no more than a condition operating by default' (Deleuze 1994: 94). The past delineates the conditions for action in the present, but action still could not occur without a consolidation of the ego in relation to an ego-ideal from on high, which makes the self equal to the task (110–11). Nevertheless,

> the event and the act possess a secret coherence which excludes that of the self... they turn back against the self which has become their equal and smash it to pieces, as though the bearer of the new world were carried away and dispersed by the shock of the multiplicity to which it gives birth: what the self has become equal to is the unequal in itself. (89–90)

There is thus a link between the eternal return, death and the future's openness.[17] To think and to act is to work off of a simulation of transcendent unity in order to replace unity with a resonance and communication between divergent differences.

There is, of course, an uncreative form of thinking – 'the risk is obviously that the phantasm falls back on the poorest thought, on a puerile and redundant diurnal reverie "about" sexuality' (Deleuze 1990: 220) – but when the phantasm sustains the resonance between sexuality and thought, it finds its 'path of glory' in the thought of eternal return: 'What kind of metamorphosis is it, when thought invests (or reinvests) that which is projected over its surface with its own desexualised energy? The answer is that thought does it in the guise of the Event' (220). Raised to this level, thinking becomes inseparable from transmutation and the revaluation of values, and to a dissolution of identity that is part and parcel of Deleuze's political and philosophical thought throughout his corpus.[18]

Notes

1. This paper is a development of analyses first published in my *Reflections on Time and Politics* (Widder 2008). They were also presented in a paper of the same title at the first annual *Deleuze Studies* conference in Cardiff in August 2008.

2. Deleuze himself asks: 'How can we maintain both that sense produces even the states of affairs in which it is embodied, and that it is itself produced by these states of affairs or the actions and passions of bodies (an immaculate conception)?' (Deleuze 1990: 124).
3. The politics linked to this seemingly sterile ontology is, of course, the one that is explored in different ways by Žižek, Laclau and Mouffe (1985), and others who insist upon the need to construct collective identity through strategies such as hegemonic articulation. On the limitations of the political theory and practice that Žižek seems to think goes unnoticed by Deleuze and his followers, see Widder (2000). The differences between contemporary Deleuze- and Lacan-inspired approaches to ontology and politics has been cashed out by Tønder and Thomassen (2005). The contributions to that volume show quite clearly that Deleuzian politics is neither limited to the Hardt and Negri variety nor reducible to the collaborative work with Guattari.
4. In addition to little direct engagement with Deleuze, Žižek singularly ignores evidence of Lacan's approval of – or at least his unwillingness to dismiss – *Anti-Oedipus* (see Smith 2004: 635–6), as well as Deleuze and Guattari's consistent separation of Lacan from Lacanianism, which is apparent all the way up through Deleuze's highly critical and polemical 'Dead Psychoanalysis: Analyse', where he writes: 'It cannot be said that they [psychoanalysts] are very jolly; see the dead look they have, their stiff necks (only Lacan has kept a certain sense of laughter, but he admits that he is forced to laugh alone)' (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 82). Moreover, Žižek's reading is built around the questionable ascription of a series of oppositions to Deleuze's thought, many taken from Badiou's *Deleuze: The Clamour of Being* (Badiou 2000), on which Žižek admits he relied extensively (Žižek 2004: 20 n. 24). It is simply a joke, for example, to equate the virtual with pure becoming and the actual with stable and reified being, as Žižek consistently does (see Žižek 2004: 9–10, 20, 24, 26, 28), or to proclaim that 'virtualization and actualization are two sides of the same coin' (84). The former idea is belied by Deleuze's statement in *Difference and Repetition* that 'all identities are only simulated, produced as an optical "effect" by the more profound game of difference and repetition' (Deleuze 1994: xix), which suggests that no coagulation of becoming *actually* takes place; the latter is contradicted by Deleuze and Guattari's statement that 'if we go back up in the opposite direction, from states of affairs to the virtual, the line is not the same because it is not the same virtual (we can therefore go down it as well without it merging with the previous line)' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 156). Of course, it goes unnoticed by Žižek that Deleuze does not even use the terminology of virtual and actual in *The Logic of Sense*. This paper does not aim to go systematically through Žižek's reading, but Smith (2004) provides an excellent review. On Deleuze's relationship with Hegel see Smith (2000); Widder (2003; 2008). On his relationship to Lacan see Widder (2005; 2008).
5. Indeed, Melanie Klein is not mentioned once in Žižek's book – although Naomi Klein earns some of his attention.
6. 'When Melanie Klein's children say "a tummy" or ask "How do people grow up?," Melanie Klein hears "my mummy's tummy" or "Will I be big like my daddy?" When they say "a Hitler," "a Churchill," Melanie Klein sees here the possessive of the bad mother or of the good father' (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 79).
7. On 'difference in itself' as a differenciator of difference, see Deleuze (1994: 117).
8. Deleuze here follows Émile Bréhier's (1997) reading of the ancient Stoics' conception of the four incorporeals: place, void, time and sayables (*lekta*).

On the one hand, Bréhier maintains that Stoic incorporeals have the character of becomings or events that arise from and circumscribe the interactions of corporeal bodies; on the other hand, he holds them to constitute corporeal interactions, which could not occur without these incorporeals acting as a surface through which bodies interact. The incorporeals embedded in corporeal utterances allow these utterances to have meaning and to correspond to the events that arise from bodies. The relationship of these incorporeals thereby forms a surface that allows corporeal thought and the corporeal world to connect. Deleuze here breaks with Bréhier by treating this surface as a disjunctive differenciator that brings together thought and things but prevents them from ever corresponding.

9. This issue of negation's secondary status is taken up in Lacan's seminars. Hyppolite (in Lacan 2006: 746–54) holds that as a successor to expulsion, negation must be a distinct and subsequent development of the death drive, whose original processes can be pleasurable. Lacan himself (2006: 308–33) holds Freud's expulsion to refer to a primordial excision of oral impulses that goes beyond repression and constitutes the real, making negation a subsequent symbolisation of the trace of this unsayable real. On the controversy that ensued between Klein and her opponents over the existence of negativity and anxiety in the infantile unconscious see Kristeva (2001: 169–77) and Rose (1993: ch. 5), who both also discuss Klein's theories of negation and symbolisation in relation to Lacan.
10. Klein explains her use of the term 'position', which she introduces after *The Psycho-Analysis of Children* (Klein 1989), as follows: 'I chose the term "position" in regard to the paranoid and depressive phases because these groupings of anxieties and defences, although arising first during the earliest stages, are not restricted to them but occur and recur during the first years of childhood and under certain circumstances in later life' (Klein 1975: 93).
11. Deleuze explicitly uses the term 'simulacra' to describe the early world of Klein's infant: 'We call this world of introjected and projected, alimentary and excremental partial internal objects the world of *simulacra*' (Deleuze 1990: 187).
12. 'The fact that by being internalized, people, things, situations and happenings – the whole inner world which is being built up – becomes inaccessible to the child's accurate observation and judgement, and cannot be verified by the means of perception which are available in connection with the tangible and palpable object-world, has an important bearing on the phantastic nature of this inner world. The ensuing doubts, uncertainties and anxieties act as a continuous incentive to the young child to observe and make sure about the external object-world, from which this inner world springs, and by these means to understand the internal one better. The visible mother thus provides continuous proofs of what the "internal" mother is like, whether she is loving or angry, helpful or revengeful' (Klein 1998: 346).
13. 'A most important feature of these destructive phantasies, which are tantamount to death-wishes, is that the baby feels that what he desires in his phantasies has really taken place; that is to say he feels that he *has really destroyed* the object of his destructive impulses, and is going on destroying it: this has extremely important consequences for the development of his mind' (Klein 1998: 308).
14. This reconciliation of phantasy and reality, however, seems largely an assumption. And, as Klein acknowledges, irrational splitting and idealisation recur in adolescence: 'Young people tend to be very aggressive and unpleasant to their parents, and to other people who lend themselves to it, such as servants, a weak teacher, or disliked schoolmates. But when hatred reaches such strength, the necessity to preserve goodness and love within and without becomes all the

more urgent. The aggressive youth is therefore driven to find people whom he can look up to and idealize' (Klein 1998: 329).

15. The link to Lacan is made even stronger by Lacan's association of the phallus with simulacra: 'The phallus can be better understood on the basis of its function here. In Freudian doctrine, the phallus is not a fantasy, if we are to view fantasy as an imaginary effect. Nor is it as such an object (part-, internal, good, bad, etc.) inasmuch as "object" tends to gauge the reality involved in a relationship. Still less is it the organ – penis or clitoris – that it symbolizes. And it is no accident that Freud adopted as a reference the simulacrum it represented to the Ancients' (Lacan 2006: 690).
16. The secondary status of repression is also a theme in *Difference and Repetition*: 'I do not repeat because I repress. I repress because I repeat, I forget because I repeat. I repress, because I can live certain things or certain experiences only in the mode of repetition. I am determined to repress whatever would prevent me from living them thus' (Deleuze 1994: 18).
17. 'The ultimate synthesis concerns only the future, since it announces in the superego the destruction of the Id and the ego, of the past as well as the present, of the condition and the agent . . . If there is an essential relation between eternal return and death, it is because it promises and implies "once and for all" the death of that which is one. If there is an essential relation with the future, it is because the future is the deployment and explication of the multiple, of the different and of the fortuitous, for themselves and "for all times"' (Deleuze 1994: 115).
18. These last connections between death, the death instinct, the structure of time and Nietzsche's eternal return are developed more fully in Widder (2008).

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Forum on Deleuze and Bacon
Introduction: *Folie à Deux*

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On the 29 November 2008, to coincide with the first major retrospective of Francis Bacon's works to be held in Britain since 1992, Darren Ambrose, Andrew Conio, Margarita Gluzberg and Simon O'Sullivan spoke at Tate Britain about the extraordinary *folie à deux* between Gilles Deleuze and Francis Bacon.[1] This event was an important opportunity to evaluate the potential of Deleuze's work to lift the debate about Francis Bacon away from the art historical, technical and psychological clichés to be found in other works and bring to bear the full panoply of Deleuze and Guattari's conceptual armoury to be found in *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, and in Deleuze's more general aesthetic theory and philosophy. None of the speakers adopted a slavish conformity to Deleuze's claims, preferring active, productive encounters with some of Deleuze's most problematic aesthetic concepts. Three of these papers are presented here, each providing very different reflections on the multiple paths into and out of this open and expansive relationship between painter and philosopher.

Darren Ambrose attends to Deleuze's complex hypothesis on the nature of the triptych, its law and order, and particularly how the triptych reconfigures the figural as rhythm. In this peristaltic rhythm is to be found the continuity between the 'matter of fact' of painting and the spiritual sensation of the eternity of time that is the sensation's logic. Through a close and detailed reading Darren draws out the special importance of Deleuze's Spinozist reading of the immanent spirituality of the modalities of the temporal made palpable through the non-human becoming of sensation.

Simon O'Sullivan's paper unravels the disruptive potentials brought about by the glitch or the stammer, from Deleuze and Guattari's idea of a minor literature, and the parallels between this and the potentials effectuated by the diagram. In both, he argues, we find the potential to counteract the sclerosis and confinements of regimes of signification as

well as the call 'for a future form, for a new earth and people that do not yet exist', something that characterizes the affirmative potential of contemporary art.

Like Simon's, my own contribution aims to create appositions as a strategy to draw correlations and disjunctions: to make concepts work. The paper sets up a four-fold arrangement of convergences and contradistinctions between 1) concepts from the general aesthetics to be found in Deleuze and Guattari's *What is Philosophy?* and *A Thousand Plateaus*, 2) the 'pack' Deleuze/Bacon, 3) Damien Hirst's early work, and 4) the state of the food production industry, exemplified by the phrase *becoming-packaging*. Through this, it becomes possible to test to what extent *The Logic of Sensation* reaches beyond the confines of painting, and whether Hirst's art disrupts its intense formalism.

The fundamental claim of Deleuze's book is that painting's logic of sensation is the paradigmatic form of the collapse of divisions and oppositions – such as those between figure and ground, the general and the singular, sensual particularity and abstraction – to create new sensual relations, pulsations in the folding of materials, of peoples and worlds, taking place on the plane of immanence. For Deleuze, the plane of immanence is 'the non-thought within thought . . . it is the most intimate within thought and yet the absolute outside – an outside more distant than an external world because it is an inside deeper that any internal world' (Deleuze 1994: 59–60).

Each of the following essays argues in its own way that what distinguishes this exceptional *folie à deux* is its power to produce encounters with the infinite potential of the perfectly liquid (folded and infinite) distributions of intensity of the plane of immanence.

Notes

1. The event was supported by the University of Wolverhampton.

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Deleuze, Bacon and the Challenge of the Contemporary

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Abstract

This paper tests the aesthetic theory presented in *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* against the Foucauldian Turn in art in the 1980s and Damien Hirst's early artworks, in order to ask if the concepts taken from the more general aesthetics to be found in *A Thousand Plateaus* and *What is Philosophy?* are better suited to an understanding of contemporary art, before returning to the question of whether there is something truly significant at work in this *folie à deux* between painter and philosopher.

Keywords: Damien Hirst, becoming-packaging, sensation, thinking painting, the Foucauldian Turn

For Deleuze, Bacon's paintings achieve a *becoming-animal*, not through correspondences but through incarnations of traits, through 'meat' and through the creation of 'zones of indiscernibility' or 'undecidability' between man and animal that state the common 'fact' of both. This is all well and good, but while Bacon's 'meat' bears the suffering and pain of man, nowhere is 'becoming-animal' a state of repose, stillness or grace. Bacon's animals don't sleep, nurture or caress. In the pack 'Deleuze-Bacon', becoming-animal is a wretched affair, the animal emerging only through contortion and spasm. Only in scant references to birds and music do we find the richly and brilliantly colourful imagery of the individuations and singularities of melodic refrains. We have to look to *A Thousand Plateaus* for an outline of the melodic counterpoints of nature as *natura musicans*, as Deleuze constructs a phylo/ontogeny of becoming that has a distinct directional (albeit without structure or genesis, therefore diachronic and crystallising) impulse from the human to becoming-woman to

becoming-animal, and finally, to the higher deterritorialisation of becoming-imperceptible.

Bypassing its masculinism, *Francis Bacon*'s inherent evolutionary theory has plenty to say about the über-technological world of contemporary food production. Becoming-animal as an aesthetic project, and the 'privatisation' of food production, share the basic formula of evolution by contagion and alliance. Through the transgression of the boundaries of filiation transversal traits are to be found both in Deleuze's aesthetic theory and in the food industry's processes of selection. Both challenge the autonomy of entities and unities. In art, becoming-imperceptible is 'to reduce oneself to an abstract line, a trait, in order to find one's zone of indiscernibility with other traits, and in this way enter the haecceity and impersonality of the creator' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 280). In the privatised food production process, where the entire process of cellular division, selection, reproduction, husbandry, labour and marketing is geared towards only one outcome, becoming-molecular serves only the exploitative potential of the phenotypic trait in order to transcend the boundaries of descent by filiation. A process that can be captured by the phrase *becoming-packaging*.

Of course, becoming-animal in art and becoming-packaging are governed by two wholly different logics. The former forms a[n] (a-subjective) phenomenological 'becoming' governed by the logic of sensation and the modulation of heterogenic forces, while the latter emerges from the capitalist colonisation of life. Capitalism exploits, and despite its miraculous agency, that is its nature. And having exploited the reproductive process and colonised the virtual and the unconscious, it has now intensified its colonisation of the planet's species. A process elegantly captured by Eugene Holland;

> They argue that capitalism is able to continually displace any apparent limits to its growth by adding new axioms to its systems of axiomatization. Thus for example when biological and/or political limits appear as obstacles to the extraction of… surplus value… capital adds axioms of technology to increase productivity within the system of production so that more value… can be extracted… (Holland 1999: 114)

This appears to set up a conflict between, on the one hand, the heterogenic potential of organic life, society and human consciousness, and the crude expropriation of life's creative potentials by capitalist, machinic rationality. However, as Deleuze and Guattari tirelessly point

out, subjectivity is machinic and machines are often the non-human becomings of man.

> The plane of consistency of nature is like an immense Abstract machine, abstract yet real and individual; its pieces are the various assemblages and individuals, each of which groups together an infinity of particles entering into an infinity of more or less interconnected relations. There is therefore a unity to the plane of nature, which applies equally to the inanimate and the animate, the artificial and the natural. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 254)

And what more perfect example is there of man becoming more through the non-human becomings of a machine than cinema? The machinic is a site of becoming, or a threshold to many possible worlds, whilst nature itself operates on the basis of 'machinic phylogenetic becoming' (Ansell-Pearson 1997: 135).

What is clear in becoming-packaging, however, is that difference is indeed sought-after to create extra-ordinary new becomings, becoming scorpion/mushroom/corn, but the heterogeneity of germinal life has now been replaced by the repudiation of expansion, propagation, contagion or unnatural participations. Any trait that might serve the animal itself, any inconsistency or potential for anomaly is screened out and destroyed. Any attempt at a re-enchantment with the natural world, from wherever its source, is repudiated by the techno-sphere.

There are a number of clear difficulties in creating homologies between becoming-packaging and the Deleuze/Bacon coupling. We are dealing with fundamentally divergent worlds and further parallels would stretch the concepts to breaking point. Instead, we should perhaps ask if Damien Hirst's work responds to the logics of becoming-packaging that are symptomatic of capitalism's relationship with the entire life world. To do so, we must first situate Hirst's work within the broader terrain of Contemporary Art.

I. The Foucauldian Turn

Over the last thirty to forty years the ideas of Jacques Derrida (the 'trace' and *différance*), Jean Baudrillard ('simulacra', 'hyperreality', and the 'loss of the Real'), Jean-François Lyotard, (on 'the sublime' and Newman) Jacques Lacan (misrecognition), have proliferated, and their various interpreters (Owens 1992, Krauss 1993) have provided the philosophical balustrades for academic writing on art as well as an indispensable intellectual infrastructure for contemporary art practice. Despite having written relatively little on art,[1] Foucault's

influence on both the values that pertain to Contemporary Art and how those values are constructed and institutionalised, especially his disassembling of the notions of authorship and originality, has been considerable. This is exemplified by the *Sculpture Project Muenster* (2007), which encapsulated the degree to which sculpture has transcended the boundaries of the object and the formal concerns of modernism to become imbued in the social and political fabrics of architecture (Manfred Pernice), space (Pawel Althamer), desire (Mike Kelly), education (Maria Pask), corporations (Andreas Siekman), and of society's forgotten underclass (Valérie Jouve).

Foucault's works on the body, power and subjectivity are widely held to have made a major contribution to the reconfiguration of art practice and theory (Boyne 2002: 337–48). Together with his writings on the assignation of subjectivity, this was contiguous with new art practices that questioned authorship, individuality and the testing of the body's limits in the burgeoning performance art scene of the 1980s. The present paper, however, looks chiefly to Foucault's theory of discourses, the function of which are to organise signification, knowledge and material practices. These discourses – for example, those of madness, punishment and sexuality – regulate systems of rules for behaviour and knowledge as well as the domain of the discourses' own existence and their functions. Claims to truth, even when they are touchingly intimate or epistemologically or ontologically potent, are regulated according to rules that determine what can legitimately be called knowledge. And these claims for truth are codified into series of permissions and legitimations governing who can claim to make statements, the place from which they might be spoken, and their nature and object. We find, then, that the general terrain for much that is interesting in Contemporary Art is provided by an acute if implicit sensitivity to discourse formations and the potential of art to unravel hidden power relations, as well as the articulation of strategies to intervene in and disrupt their operations.

Instead of a search for the 'sublime' or the 'transcendental', in either its philosophical, quasi-spiritual or social forms, artists now seek to unravel power relations that sanctify the art object's various 'claims to truth'. Although this is by no means an exclusively Foucauldian project, Foucault was pre-eminent in his concern with how power and subjectivity are naturalised and how, because power operates in minute and seemingly unobtrusive ways, subjects are not necessarily aware that they are being trained or disciplined. This is a concern echoed in contemporary art practices that foreground the microstructures

of domination, not least in response to the transformation from a Disciplinary Society to the Society of Control, according to the logic of which power becomes anonymous and ubiquitous.

If the Foucauldian Turn provides the general milieu of Contemporary Art, artists are certainly acting in a way that confirms Foucault's hypothesis; if anything, they are challenging discourses by opening them up to the wider non-discursive forces from which they are formed, in ways that are interruptive, troublesome, dissonant. Moreover, many contemporary art practices can be understood as implicit critiques not only of the regulative functions of discourses, but also of the limits of a theory that attempts to determine what is inside and outside a particular discourse.

Deleuze departs from Foucault in devising a number of other more supple concepts to describe the formation of social bodies, including assemblage, milieu, and abstract machine. Deleuze is rarely interested in entities, no matter how transitory, or in describing their functions, domains, genus and so forth. His is a philosophy of flows, of pulsations, of becomings that are movements across discourses, logics, systems and epistemes.

Thus, whilst contemporary art practices articulate an implicit cognisance of discourses, Deleuzian strategies for the release of transversal becomings from the grip of whatever discourse is blocking, restricting or codifying the free-flowing potentials of life provide a richer loam for Contemporary Art. This leads to the basic distinction between Foucault and Deleuze: where Foucault is the archaeologist or genealogist of disciplinary practices, Deleuze, in asking other questions of affect and intensity, seeks to release desire from their grip.

II. Deleuze Studies Damien Hirst

Deleuze and Guattari's aesthetics of the 'bloc of affects and percepts' and the mounding of sensation into a *plane of composition* provides more mobile and shrewd terms for understanding the values of Contemporary Art. This can be demonstrated in relation to Damien Hirst's early works (this paper has no interest in the later works or the celebrity/speculator Hirst), with their commitment to issues of decay and mortality shared by humans and other species. In *A Thousand Years* (1990), the life cycle of the fly is staged as it changes from maggot to, in the unmistakable eloquence of brain Sewell, 'the breeding buzzing dying business of the blow fly', until finally brought to its indifferent end by the insecticutor. In *Mother and Child Divided* (1993), the viewer has the disconcerting

exemption to walk where no person should ever go,[2] between the divided corpses of a cow and a calf suspended in formaldehyde: pity the meat! *Affect* infuses the viewer through 'haptic eyes',[3] which are concurrently fascinated and repelled by the human capacity to turn living matter into nothing more than a facile exhibit for our aesthetic pleasure. The visceral shock to be had from walking between the sinews of once-living matter; the palpable tragedy of humanity's imperious and supercilious attitude to life; the terrible beauty of the division which transforms a sentient being into a textbook-like diagram of its own organs – these are *affects* combined in such a way as to create new relations of speed, proximity and intensity. Specifically, the calf's eye is now indefinitely open and its digestive process responds to the rhythms of spectatorship. Its organs no longer organise the differential processes that sustain life, but create a macabre body without organs. These incommensurable durations are recomposed to create a new achromatic time associated with becoming, instantiated by the artwork itself.

In becoming-packaging little space is allowed for individualism. People and animals play merely supporting roles in the logistics of a system that sustains society's standard of living. Yet, in *Mother and Child Divided* both are given new roles as the viewer's soul is reinserted in the machinic. The viewer is invited to disentangle naturalised relationships between food production, labour, consumption, scientific objectivity, biology and mythology (it is *Mother and Calf* divided). The precision and instrumental rationality of becoming-packaging is refracted in the sculptural precision of the frames, the glass and suspension, not as perceptions but as the rendered perceptible of the 'imperceptible forces that populate the world, that affect us and make us become' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 172).

To be precise, Hirst stages these sculptural soliloquies upon matters of life and death with explicit reference to the minimalism of Sol LeWitt and Donald Judd, while the title *The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living* (1991) adopts the playful conceptualism of Michael Craig Martin. Hirst shares with most Young British Artists an adoption of only those dimensions of conceptualism Kosuth dismisses as 'stylistic' (as opposed to 'theoretical') Conceptual Art, or that which Art and Language would dismiss as idealistic and self-mythologising. A clear distinction cannot be manufactured between the concepts of Conceptual Art and Deleuze's percepts. Not least because the definition, practices and practitioners, geography, role and legacy of Conceptual Art cannot be adequately described by a single term that covers linguistic, dematerialising and performative practices – or

indeed practices that are embedded in analytical philosophy (Kosuth), or the imperatives of institutional (Daniel Burren) or social critique. Notwithstanding this, in any of its diverse formulations Conceptual Art lacked the conceptual tools necessary to articulate the distinction between concepts, percepts and affects. As Deleuze and Guattari say: 'conceptual becoming is the action by which the common event itself eludes what it is' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 177). We can situate Hirst's works outside the interminable and unsatisfactory debate over what constitutes valid Conceptual Art, since his (albeit early) artworks do not just present concepts in another form, they think through percepts, percepts that are not given and 'represented' but are reconfigured in such away as to create a new type of thinking; that is, in the manner of art's distinctive character. This may sound similar to Kosuth's formulation of 'art as philosophy', but what distinguishes Deleuze's aesthetics from any formulation of the conceptual in its general privileging of the role of the idea over sensual particularity is his emphasis on the central role of sensation in the moulding of percepts and affects into a plane of composition.

In Hirst's early works, the conventions of the gallery, the consequences of the Foucauldian Turn, and the dynamics of social forces and epistemological struggle are not illustrated or represented. Instead, dynamic *rhythms* issue from newly forged, embodied relationships between the legacy of conceptualism brought into a new contrapuntal relationship with the intensities of decay, mortality and despair. These works undo the propositional nature of signification by bringing distinct and differentiated pulsations into a new relationship. And, precisely because they are distinct modalities of experience, the act of bringing them together creates disjunctive and conjunctive pulsations, pulsations that are, in sum, refrains. As Ronald Bogue notes: 'The refrain is the differential rhythm constituted in milieus, the relation between milieu components . . . their contrapuntal *relation* is the refrain' (Bogue 2003: 74).

This creates not a Greenbergian autonomy of art but a relative autonomy from the sedimented, axiomatic forces of restriction that reduce life to organised and finite manageable units. And crucially, the *metrical* rhythm of becoming-packaging is detached from its source and transformed into a transversal rhythmic component of the milieu. Meter is substituted with the pulsations of augmentation and diminishment, the amplification or elimination of pure sensations imbricated in the artworks themselves.

Both Bacon's and Hirst's work exude rhythmic pulsations and refrains that undo the usual tropes of figuration. According to Deleuze, Bacon's

figures are composed of systolic and diastolic rhythms, ascending and descending pulsions. Hirst's 'Figures' emit rhythms of contraction and release in the embodied participation of viewing, walking by, standing near, and perceiving sculptural forms; through images that are more filmic than painterly his work releases new virtualities from their material by the contrapuntal refrains mentioned above. Hirst's and Bacon's works can be understood equally well in terms of refrains, the difference being that while Hirst moulds out of already clichéd and coded materials, Bacon moulds out of pure intensities. In both, these melodies have the de- and re-territorialising effects of fashioning new territories, allowing expressive components to create a shock to thought.

Whilst each artist – and here we begin to cleave the two apart – creates a phenomenological engagement with their respective objects, in the case of Hirst, this is no more than a repetition of the common or garden mode of the reception and experience of art objects, consumer goods and artefacts. Hirst's significations are of the type Deleuze associates with Peirce: 'Icons defined by similitude and "symbols of conventional rule" ', (Deleuze 2003: 116), in short, spectatorial signs. Hirst's sensations *are* palpable, but, reading from *The Logic of Sensation*: 'narrative or symbolic figuration obtains only the bogus violence of sensation' (Deleuze 2003: xiv). They do not mobilise a more profound level of sensation, of sensations that reveal, or better *are*, as *matters of fact*, new forms of thinking. The implication of this distinction is made clear by Deleuze: 'When Bacon distinguishes between two violences, that of the spectacle and that of the sensation, and declares that the first must be renounced to reach the second, *it is a kind of declaration of faith in life*' (Deleuze 2003: 61, emphasis added).

However, this argument can be turned around to suggest that Hirst's work presents a challenge to Bacon's intensive phenomenology. Such is the intensity of the paintings – in which flesh and meat and subjectivity are enraptured by the energetic combat of the flaying pulsations of ascending and falling rhythms – that the exegesis of the political, social and physio-biological are pushed off the canvass, to become the *social unconscious* of the painting. In this age of becoming-packaging all asignifying, alogical pulsations of life are already codified. This is no longer the age of the spirit – pig-spirit, buffalo-spirit, dog-spirit, bat-spirit – as the pure animal spirit of man is already stratified and coded. These primal forces enter into society commodified, organised and subject to whatever regime of thought (medicine, jurisprudence, education) predetermines their being. This chimes with the art practices

of many leading contemporary artists from Jeremy Deller to Michael Landy, from Gordon Matta Clark to Mike Kelly, who no longer deal with pure experience but with rhetorical strategies such as synecdoche, synonym, metonymy and syllepsis applied to objects and images rather than language to invert the naturalised 'order of things'.

Arguably, for all its inventiveness and social critique, Contemporary Art merely reconfigures regimes of signs, using what Daniel Smith describes as 'techniques of graphic representation of intelligible relations or coordinates' (Smith 2003: 43). Bacon's position is essentially eccentric to the modern world and its concerns; which leads to a claim, to be referred to below, that may sound extraordinary to non-Deleuzian ears, namely, that Bacon's *forces* are those of the universe, of absolute territorialisation and abandonment to the plane of immanence.

III. The Diagram

The diagram is by no means unique to art but Deleuze gives it a specific role in painting. The diagram has two parts, the catastrophe and the modulating function. Whilst Bacon is embedded in the force of the catastrophe, Hirst follows the postmodern tradition by showing little concern with the forces of pure chaos or collapse. Firstly, however, we should bear in mind that Deleuze's description of the collapse in *The Logic of Sensation* is ambivalent. On the one hand it is *not* the pure collapse of a fall into an abyss, it is a highly systematised and specific collapse from representation and figuration. And the catastrophe is methodologically operative through challenging the supremacy of the eye with the hand, and through particular marks, scrubbing, smearing and rubbing out. Hence, for Deleuze, the 'diagram must remain localised in space and time'. On the other hand, in the 'emergence of another world', the catastrophe is also the catastrophe of 'being' (Deleuze 2003: 159). This is not psychological collapse but, according to Deleuze, one brought about by forces of 'pressure, dilation, contraction, flattening, and elongation', which are 'like the forces of the cosmos confronting an intergalactic traveller immobile in his capsule' (Deleuze 2003: 58). We have seen this correlation of the local action of matter on the canvas with the vital movement of cosmological forces worked out at its farthest and nearest reach in Deleuze's description, taken from Spinoza, of a Universe's diastolic and systolic movements and planes of various speeds and slownesses, all in relation and variation in the creation of refrains – the *natura musicans* discussed above.

The diagram modulates not just concepts or significations, clichés or order-words; its first principle is manual in the creation of modulations between 'haptic world and haptic sense'. In this way, Deleuze argues, the diagram creates a more profound resemblance than any produced through figuration, abstraction, and by implication, conceptual art. Hirst's compositions of deterritorialised stratifications and axioms are only embodied to the extent permitted by the highly conventionalised modes of reception of the artwork in the gallery system. The fundamental difficulty in transposing the diagram from Francis Bacon to Damien Hirst is that Hirst's work is a continuation of already embedded systems of thought by other means. In contrast, the diagram 'overturns the optical co-ordinations' and 'figurative coordinates' that Hirst accepts. The diagram's work is more fundamental; it introduces or distributes forces, and it places forces in relation, modulating them in order for something to emerge from it, 'if nothing new emerges . . . it fails' (Deleuze 2003: 159). In short: it would be an act of conceptual vandalism to apply the diagram to Hirst's work.

It is of note that the diagram is an iteration of the same basic design found in all of Deleuze's work. In none of his differential systems of thought is Deleuze a philosopher of pure unbridled chaos. All of his books are concerned in some sense with the same issue: how to gather the heterogenic forces of difference in a contraction, territory, milieu, assemblage or abstract machine so that they retain their extreme openness yet become operative or, more importantly, productive. In this vein, Elizabeth Grosz talks of 'networks, Field and territories that temporarily and provisionally slow down chaos' (Grosz 2008) in our case the diagram and the Figure are the operative terms in relation to painting.

IV. Sensation

As is to be expected, it is in terms of sensation that the real distinction between Hirst and Bacon is to be found. Whilst Hirst's viewers may experience intense sensations these cannot be classified as pure sensation because Sensation transcends apperception by either mind or the body. As such, sensation is not the property of an object itself (it is not the 'redness' of the apple), or of the facility of the eye's cones and rods to perceive colour; it is rather the infinitive 'to redden', or, in the case of Francis Bacon, it is the *scream itself*. As sensation is not the attribute or quality of an object that acts either as sensation's substantive or

predicate, it is the action (the change in direction and intensity) by which something or someone ceaselessly becomes other; it is, in short, valence.

This does not imply that sensation is somehow non-attributable. Sensation flows through actual objects; it has to be, in some sense, palpable. James Williams has adroitly summarised this recently and in a way that resonates with the approach of this paper: 'Sense flows through actual things, sense changes all things. For example, when a species is extinct, the sense of that changes the whole world forever. When sense changes the senses of past and present, all senses are changed at once' (Williams 2008: 8).

Once sensation is released from the domain of the subject, because its properties are no longer in service to the assignation of subjectivity, it becomes logically ineluctable to ascribe sensation to the world beyond the subject. Life itself (with this, Deleuze also includes the inorganic) is an endless flux of pulsions, of rhythmic counterpoints, individuations, haecceities and events, all in endless relation far beyond the domain of man. It is only our species that perceives of its relatively frugal (although miraculous) portion of life and the world through its own image. Whereas, in the world, when song relates to flesh, sea to wind, machine to organism, each of these relations are relations of sense. Here is Deleuze and Guattari: 'the being of sensation is not the flesh but the compound of nonhuman forces of the cosmos, of man's nonhuman becomings, and of the ambiguous house that exchanges and adjusts them, makes them whirl around like winds' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 183).

One of Deleuze's significant disagreements with phenomenology concerns the nature of thinking. For phenomenology, the entwining of the subject and world means that consciousness is co-enacted with the world. However, as subtle as this might be (and I attend to the consanguinity between Deleuze and the Merleau-Ponty of *Partout et nulle part* elsewhere), phenomenology ultimately looks to this folding to explain the endowments of consciousness and the domain for a 'natural perception' in the world that is tied to the experiencing subject.

The restatuation of what it means to think, rather than the nature of consciousness, is of pre-eminent concern for Deleuze. In different ways, each of Deleuze's works raises the question: what does it mean to think? He displaces thinking from the thinking subject to the world that thinks through its relations and variations. This is not an image of thinking as a purely cognitive process, or even as an 'enfleshed' thought, it is the non-human thinking of the world itself. According to Deleuze, the expressions of milieu components in the creation of a territory – the contraction of the mollusc, the reaction of the plant to the sun – are all

forms of thinking. And thought is not limited to nature: ATMs; mobile phones, stock markets all develop consistencies and potentials, in short, they share autopoietic characteristics. As Keith Ansell-Pearson notes: 'an autopoietic machine is one which continuously generates and specifies its own organisation through its operation as a system of production of its own components' (Ansell-Pearson 1997: 140–1).

What painting offers is the paradigmatic form of thinking through sensation; 'all begins with sensibility: it is always through an intensity that thought comes to us', says Deleuze (Deleuze 2004: 182). This is an encounter and commingling of the forces and rhythms of world, materials, thinking and sense. In this way painting addresses its own problems, distinct from other arts or other domains (science/philosophy), through the sensations it intensifies and the variations and relations between sensations it creates.

Painting is paradigmatically, a-subjectively, phenomenological and carnal; carnal in its mode of production and carnal in its mode of reception. But this alone does not make it the exemplary mode for the expression of sensation. What does is painting's capacity to interlace materials, bodies, affects and percepts in such a way as to re-substantiate, as a 'matter of fact', the non-human becomings of man through sensation.

However, a note of caution needs to be raised lest sensation becomes hypostatised as the apeiron of life. Deleuze and Guattari answer their own question in *What is Philosophy?*: 'can sensation be assimilated to an original opinion, to *Urdoxa* as the world's foundation or immutable basis?' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 179). As we have noted, Deleuze and Guattari's works consistently illustrate interest in the things that *modulate* the zones of indeterminacy, whilst maintaining the most intensive potential for absolute deterritorialisation.

With this in mind, we can now revisit the claim we made earlier, that something truly exceptional emerges through this *folie à deux* between Deleuze and Bacon. This concerns what for the non-Deleuzian is the most fanciful aspect of Deleuze's ontology. That is his attempt to connect thinking, experience and sensation to the infinite: to elaborate body and universe, finite and infinite, cosmos and chaos, as folded, co-enacted and consubstantial. For Deleuze the artist is someone for whom there is something 'unbearable' in life, who senses 'the mutual embrace of life with what threatens it' (Deleuze 1994: 171). As such, through its truly eccentric relationship with the *regimes of signification* of the modern world, by embracing invisible chaotic or cosmological forces, painting is

able to use its own material practices to disrupt and confront habituated modes of thinking, experiencing and sensing.

This abandonment does not function without disjunction, intervals and interruption, as Bacon casts himself adrift to adopt the role of the anomalous. As such, Bacon's practice is apolitical only if politics is already aligned with power's own representation of itself; that is, a politics that repudiates the idea that cosmological, geological, infinite transcendental forces are part of our lives. Against power's self-determination, painting is able to offer a remodelling of the potentials of thought to enable the phrasing of the questions: what does it mean to think? what is thinking within the dominions of the abyss, chaos and the universe as expansions and contractions are weaved through bodies, concepts and materials? These are not asked so that an answer might be given, but so that the potentials of thought might be revealed. As Claire Colebrook says: 'The task of thinking is not to establish the truest or highest world but to think the multiplicity of perception that unfolds in divergent worlds' (Colebrook 2006: 139).

That is to say, what is it about a particular art form and the way it poses its own problems that gives to its form of 'thinking' its own conditions of possibility? As Deleuze is not a philosopher of moribund concepts or dry abstractions but of incitations to creative and experimental activity, the modest aim of this paper has been to do just that: produce new alignments of thought through the apposition of the food production process encapsulated in the phrase becoming-packaging, Damien Hirst's early works, and the pack Bacon-Deleuze.

Notes

1. For example, the chapter 'Las Meninas' in *The Order of Things* (Foucault 1982), and *This is Not a Pipe* (Foucault 1973).
2. Literally billions of animals are divided in abattoirs, but the specific capacity of art to decode and recode affects has the effect of making this palpable, bringing to our senses what has become invisible, or unconscious, the privatised nature of mans relationship between himself and species.
3. The eyes that feel the surface of the visible.

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From Stuttering and Stammering to the Diagram: Deleuze, Bacon and Contemporary Art Practice

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Abstract

This article attends to Deleuze and Guattari's idea of a 'minor literature' as well as to Deleuze's concepts of the figural, probe-heads and the diagram in relation to Bacon's paintings. The paper asks specifically what might be usefully taken from this Deleuze–Bacon encounter for the expanded field of contemporary art practice.

Keywords: Francis Bacon, figural, diagram, contemporary art, minor literature, probe-head

I. Minor Literature

Deleuze and Guattari's concept of a minor literature (at least as it is laid out in *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature* from where the following definition has been condensed [see Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 16–18]) involves three components: 1. The foregrounding of the affective and intensive quality of language or its operation on an asignifying register. A minor literature stutters and stammers the major. It breaks with the operation of 'order-words'. It 'stops making sense'. 2. The always already political nature of such literature. A minor literature is always connected to the wider social milieu and not fixated on the domestic/Oedipal. 3. Its specifically collective character. A minor literature is always a collective enunciation. In fact, a minor literature works to pave the way for a community – sometimes a nation – yet to come. This is a minor literature's future orientation.

Each of these components of a minor literature, I would argue, can be 'applied' to contemporary art practice (and I think operate as a corrective to any simple affirmation of 'the new' as it is incarnated in the

commodity form). Elsewhere I have attended to the third point above, which seems to me to be a particularly useful way of thinking through many of the most interesting of today's art practices and their mode of effectivity, as it were. To briefly repeat that point here: such practices are not made for an already existing audience, but to call forth – or invoke – an audience. They do not offer more of the same. They do not necessarily produce 'knowledge'. They do not offer a reassuring mirror reflection of a subjectivity already in place. With such art 'the people are missing', as Deleuze might say. In fact, I would argue, the operating field of these practices can be thought of as the future and, as such, the artists in question here operate as kind of prophets. We might even say *traitor* prophets, in so far as they perform a treachery in relation to our more dominant affective/signifying regimes (that is to say, consensual reality).

All of this gives such art a utopian function inasmuch as part of its being is somehow located elsewhere. Importantly, and following Deleuze, and Deleuze and Guattari, we can understand this as a specifically *immanent* utopia – intrinsically connected to the present, made out of the same materials, the same matter (after all what else is there?) but calling 'for a future form, for a new earth and people that do not yet exist' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 108). This last quotation is from an argument Deleuze and Guattari make in relation to philosophy, and to the creation of concepts; however, it seems to me it is equally applicable to a minor literature, and indeed to contemporary art practice (not least given the fact that art practice post-Duchamp has increasingly concerned itself with the conceptual, and indeed, in some cases, with the invention of concepts). In passing, I think we could make the argument that Bacon's paintings are traitor paintings in this sense. Certainly they are *different* to the other objects that surround us and constitute our everyday habitual milieu. Bacon's paintings might also be thought of as future-orientated in that they are not merely of the present in the sense of being easily readable by our present subjectivity as it is. They call something forth from within us, in fact something that is not just another reading/interpretation of the paintings in question. This affective response or reaction might involve a certain interest or excitement, a point of inspiration perhaps (and Spinoza's notion of a productive, joyful encounter would be pertinent here), but it might also be a certain horror or disgust, even an irritation or boredom. These last two often mask the fact that something has been encountered that in some way challenges a given subjectivity. They operate as defensive mechanisms. As far as art goes reactions such as these might indicate that we are at a limit point or edge – and that if we can stay with these uncomfortable affects then

something, finally, might happen. We might say then that this future orientation of art as I have been calling it opens us up to what we might *become*.

So much for this third modality of a minor literature. Below I want also to focus on the first characteristic of the latter – its operation on an intensive register. To repeat, for Deleuze and Guattari, a minor literature foregrounds asignification or simply the intensive aspects of language. It counteracts the operation of order-words and the exercise of power this involves by breaking language open to a howling outside/inside. It is these moments of noise – or glitches as we might call them – that free language from itself, at least, from its signifying self, by putting it into contact with other forces. This is an experimentation with, and from within, language. A rupturing of representation. A breaking of the habit of 'making sense', of 'being human'. We can perhaps begin to see here the connections with Bacon.

In more technical terms, such a stuttering and stammering of language operates to produce what I would term an affective-event that in itself can produce what Guattari calls a 'mutant nuclei of subjectification' and thus the possibility of 'resingularisation' (a reordering of the elements that make up our subjectivity) (Guattari 1995: 18). In fact, when attending to this event in his own writings Guattari turns to Mikhail Bahktin and writes of the 'detachment of an ethico-aesthetic "partial object" from the field of dominant significations' that 'corresponds both to the promotion of a mutant desire and to the achievement of a certain disinterestedness' (Guattari 1995: 13). The partial object here operates as a point of entry into a different incorporeal universe. A point around which a different kind of subjectivity might crystallise. Crucially, and as Guattari remarks, this operation must involve a certain disinterestedness (Guattari is indebted to Kant in this sense). We might say that the listener – or spectator – must respond to the glitch, the affective-event, *as* an event, as the bearer of the potentiality of something else. Put simply, one must, in order that this procedure work, be open to the possibility of something different occurring. This, I think, is crucial. The artwork – or the work that art demands of us – involves an active engagement, a *participation* as it were. Without the latter even the most seemingly radical work will remain inoperative. The glitch then, I would argue, is co-produced through object and subject – in fact, it names a passage between the two. This last point would be to bring Guattari's expanded notion of art briefly laid out above, and indeed the central notion of becoming in *A Thousand Plateaus*, into conjunction with the apparently more conservative 'version' of art given in *What is Philosophy?*, where

art is seen as precisely the place of 'a passing between things'. As Deleuze and Guattari remark in the latter volume: 'Life alone creates such zones where living beings whirl around, and only art can reach and penetrate them in its enterprise of co-creation' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 173).

Deleuze and Guattari's work on the notion of a minor literature and specifically, here, the necessity of stammering and stuttering a major language, or the foregrounding of what I have been calling the glitch, is then a highly productive text for thinking the field of contemporary art in its conservative and in its more expanded form (we might say, within painting [as we shall see with Bacon] but also within video for example [that often stutters and stammers 'reality' and indeed the major language of film]). Such affective stammering operates as a kind of singularity that in itself counteracts already existing affective/signifying regimes, whilst at the same time, crucially, opening up a gap within these all too familiar series and circuits of knowledge/information. A gap which we might also configure here as a form of non-communication. This is to bring art close to what Deleuze calls (and calls for), in his 'Postscript on Societies of Control':

> Maybe speech and communication have become corrupted. They're thoroughly permeated by money – and not by accident but by their very nature. Creating has always been something different from communicating. The key thing might be to create vacuoles of non-communication, circuit breakers so we can elude control. (Deleuze 1995: 175)

Art is not, I would argue, ultimately concerned with knowledge – or, at least, with what passes for knowledge within our everyday knowledge-economy (simply, information). It is not 'useful' in this sense. Indeed, even those so-called art practices that seek to produce *counter*-knowledge can become caught by the very thing they attempt to work against. Such practices necessarily have to work on the same terrain as it were – and thus utilise the same terms. Art, it seems to me, might be better thought of as an event that interrupts knowledge – that breaks information. In fact, art is one of the very few things we have left that is able to creatively make this break.

We might also understand these moments or rupturing events in Bergsonian terms as opening further the gap between stimulus and response that defines us as human (the complexity of the nervous system, which allows a multiplicity of different pathways for stimulus-response, determines a hesitation – or gap – in that response). This is to identify a certain slowness, even a stillness, which might work against the incessant speed of contemporary 'life'. For Bergson, this gap opens us up to the

pure past – a kind of ontological background to ourselves. It is through this gap that we become creative rather than reactive creatures (see Bergson 1991: 101–2). This is the very definition of freedom, at least freedom from habit or simply the (impasses of the) present plane of existence.

Another way of understanding this potential of the glitch – following Guattari – is that it operates as a point of indeterminacy, and, as such, opens up the possibility of a multiplicity of subsequent pathways and thus a multiplicity of possible worlds. We might say in fact that the glitch always contains within it the germ of a new world. Indeed, I would argue, it is this functioning as a point of indetermination that gives much contemporary art its inspirational, we might even say hopeful tenor. Such glitches – or breaks in the typical – are a kind of reverse-technology in that they offer an escape from the manipulation performed by those other affective assemblages that increasingly operate in a parallel logic to art. I am thinking here of the complex utilisation of affect, specifically by the mass media that increasingly operates on a self-consciously affective register – as a kind of nervous system – utilising the temporally indeterminate aspect of the event in an ever expanding exercise of power (what we might call a politics of pre-emption, or simply, the colonisation of the virtual).

We might say then that the glitch names two moments or movements. To break a world and to make a world. In fact these two are never really divorced from one another: to dissent means invariably to affirm some where/thing else. To affirm an elsewhere we have to turn from that which is already here. The glitch is then a moment of critique, a moment of negation – but also a moment of creation and of affirmation. Indeed, the glitch – in whichever regime it operates and ruptures – is the 'sound' of this something else, this something *different* attempting to get through. To end this first section then, we can return to the artist as the one who specifically uses this logic of the glitch. The artist as traitor prophet names a twin orientation: the betrayal of one world and the affirmation of a world-yet-to-come.

II. Deleuze-Bacon

I want now to shift sideways, before returning to this idea of stuttering and the glitch, and look at Deleuze's book on Bacon and at a number of concepts Deleuze 'invents' there to think Bacon's paintings. As with the above section I am particularly interested here in how these

concepts – and the paintings – attempt to undo representation, and how we might extend their workings to the field of contemporary art in general.

Firstly then, the *figural*. The figural for Deleuze-Bacon is that which deforms, or does violence to, the figurative. We can understand the latter here as the typical way we are represented and represent ourselves within the world. Those forms that reassure us of our identity. Indeed, for Deleuze, representation is not solely a type of art, as it were, but the very means by which we constitute ourselves as an organism and as a subject in the world. To quote Deleuze:

> If representation is related to an object, this relation is derived from the form of representation; if this object is the organism and organisation, it is because the form of representation is first of all organic in itself, it is because the form of representation first of all expresses the organic life of the man as subject. (Deleuze 2003: 126)

The figural achieves this disruption, firstly, through a mechanism of isolation. The figure is presented as a 'matter-of-fact', detached from narration or any illustrative function. To quote Deleuze again:

> Isolating the figure will be the primary requirement. The figurative (representation) implies the relationship of an image to an object that it is supposed to illustrate; but it also implies the relationship of an image to other images in a composite whole which assigns a specific object to each of them. Narration is the correlate of illustration. A story slips into, or tends to slip into, the space between the two figures in order to animate the illustrated whole. (Deleuze 2003: 3)

Isolation then is a method for breaking with a certain use of images in our world – the way in which they tend to be mobilised for a certain end, almost always to sell us something (witness advertising). In passing, and with a nod to Guattari's writings on the Readymade, we might expand this requirement of isolation out to the wider field of contemporary art in general. An object might be detached from its habitual mode of circulation and specifically its position within capitalist relations of exchange. We might say simply, that it is, in one sense, rendered inoperative, placed as it is within the frame of art.

However, to return to Bacon, this isolation is only one moment in a process, for the isolated figure also operates as a point of departure for deterritorialisations, for a moving beyond the figure. In this sense the figural is a kind of in-between the figurative and the non-figurative. Put differently, the figural involves a *becoming* of the figure. A becoming-animal ('in place of formal correspondences what Bacon's painting

constitutes is a *zone of indiscernability or undecideability* between man and animal' [Deleuze 2003: 21]), and ultimately a becoming-imperceptible ('whatever its importance becoming-animal is only one stage in a more profound becoming-imperceptible in which the figure disappears' [Deleuze 2003: 27]).

To return to my digression on the Readymade, and following Guattari once more, we might say that the object isolated from a given series works as a trigger point to open up other 'incorporeal universes of value' (and no doubt, given the increasing emphasis on productivity and speed within our information age, this isolation and opening will involve the type of slowness I mentioned above). Hence Guattari's understanding of the Readymade – laid out in his essay 'Ritornellos and Existential Affects' – as that object which has been taken out of a normal series thus allowing the latter to be put to work in a different manner:

> Marcel Duchamp's *Bottlerack* functions as the trigger for a constellation of referential universes engaging both intimate reminiscences (the cellar of the house, a certain winter, the rays of light upon spider's webs, adolescent solitude) and connotations of a cultural or economic order – the time when bottles were still washed with the aid of a bottle wash . . . (Guattari 1996: 164)

It is this power of art to access these other universes and other times away from a narrow and alienated present that, we might say, is the *time of art*.

Secondly, *probe-heads*. We can see the above becoming-animal in relation to Bacon's treatment of heads where, in the terms of *A Thousand Plateaus*, Bacon attempts to disrupt the processes of faciality, understood here as that abstract machine of modernity that produces signifiance (the white wall) and subjectification (the black hole). To quote Deleuze and Guattari from the latter volume:

> if human beings have a destiny, it is rather to escape the face, to dismantle the face and facialisations, to become imperceptible, to become clandestine, not by returning to animality, nor even by returning to the head, but by spiritual and special becomings-animal, by strange true becomings that get past the wall and get out of the black holes. (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 171)

Bacon's heads are probe-heads in this precise sense, lines of escape from the face and from faciality. Crucially, they are not a return to some kind of primitive pre-faciality. They are in fact an escape that takes place from within the terrain of the face itself, a kind of stammering from within. Of course, probe-heads need not necessarily be pictures of heads but rather any device that disrupts faciality, for the latter applies not

just to heads but to all of the mechanisms that produce signifiance and subjectivity (from faces and landscapes within painting to facialisation and lanscapification within the world). To quote Deleuze and Guattari once more:

> You will be pinned to the white wall and stuffed in the black hole. This machine is called the faciality machine because it is the social production of the face, because it performs the facialisation of the entire body and all its surroundings and objects, and the landscapification of all worlds and milieus. (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 181)

A probe-head is then that which explores the terrain beyond the face, the terrain from which the face is nothing more than an extraction or crystallisation. Probe-heads are in this sense a move into chaos. Probe-heads are those devices 'that dismantle the strata in their wake, break through walls of signifiance, pour out of the holes of subjectivity, fell trees in favour of veritable rhizomes, and steer the flows down lines of positive deterritorialisation or creative flight' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 190). They are, however, not just destructive, but, as the name suggests, productive of other, stranger and more fluid modes of organisation: 'Beyond the face lies an altogether different inhumanity: no longer that of the primitive head, but of 'probe-heads'; here, cutting edges of deterritorialisation become operative and lines of deterritorialisation positive and absolute, forming strange new becomings, new polyvocalities' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 190–1). As well as being a name for Bacon's portraits (and indeed his other paintings), 'probe-heads' might also be a useful name for more experimental, non-traditional art practices, or indeed for other practices – of living differently – not normally considered 'art'. Such practices might not seem to be de-facialisations, but with the systems of facialisation becoming increasingly complex (one thinks here again of the mass media and especially of new communications technologies) then the lines of flight from these will themselves become increasingly complex and unfamiliar, as will the territories produced on the other side of the 'white wall'. A case study of this new production of subjectivity might be collective and collaborative practices, those that deliberately dissent – or simply turn away from – the production of individualist and atomised subjectivities and other typical capitalist formations.

Importantly, probe-heads do not arrive from some other place. They are in fact made from the same stuff as faces. Indeed, we might say that the same (capitalist) machines that produce probe-heads also produce faces. The latter being subjectivities and assemblages that are 'useful',

the former often appearing as redundancies or dead ends. We have here a definition of sorts of art: it involves a kind of super-productivity arising from what appears, on the face of it as it were, to be non-productive.

Third, and finally, the *diagram*. For Deleuze-Bacon it is the diagram that enables this deterritorialisation of the face and the production of the 'body without organs' (the latter understood here as that which lies 'under' the organism/organisation [Deleuze 2003: 50]). In painting, and specifically Bacon's painting, the diagram involves the making of random marks that allow the figural to emerge from the figure. 'The diagram is . . . the operative set of asignifying and nonrepresentative lines and zones, line-strokes and colour-patches' (Deleuze 2003: 101). We might apply this rule of the diagram to other kinds of modern and contemporary art – practices that necessarily involve this play with chance, this contact and utilisation with that which goes beyond conscious control, if only to circumnavigate the reproduction of just-more-of-the-same. It would be an interesting project to identify how specific artists incorporate this lack of control 'into' their practice, or simply, how they contact and somehow 'use' that which is outside them 'selves'. How, for example, they might mobilise chance (and perhaps error) in the production of something new.

Here random occurrences are ontologically constitutive of art (and not an accident that befalls it). Indeed, an art practice – rather than a practice that just produces products – is always open to an outside in this sense. It needs to have a certain cohesiveness and form, but equally must be able to access a certain formlessness, as it were (simply put, it must have points of collapse). It is in this sense that art can never be wholly predetermined or worked out in advance but must involve this productive encounter with chaos (it is also in this sense that the artist seeks to make work that speaks back to him or her, as it were, or, in the painter Gerhard Richter's terms, 'that something will emerge that is unknown to me, which I could not plan, which is better, cleverer, than I am' [Richter, quoted in Gidal 1993: 47]).

The diagram is then 'a chaos, a catastrophe, but it is also a germ of order or rhythm. It is a violent chaos in relation to the figurative givens, but it is a germ of rhythm in relation to the new order of the painting' (Deleuze 2003: 102). The diagram is rhythm emerging from chaos, the manipulation of chance to suggest the 'emergence of another world' (Deleuze 2003: 100). Again, all sorts of art practices might be said to produce rhythmic worlds in this sense, worlds hitherto unseen but always produced from within the seen. Art is the production of worlds (the figural) that sit between that which is known (the figurative) and

that which is unknown (chaos): 'the law of the diagram, according to Bacon, is this: one starts with a figurative form, a diagram intervenes and scrambles it, and a form of a completely different nature emerges from the diagram, which is called the Figure' (Deleuze 2003: 156). Art, when it really is art, is always located at the edge of things in this sense. It faces, as it were, in two directions. It is a bridge, or again, a *passage* between.

This is, however, not all without its dangers. Indeed, for Deleuze-Bacon there are two 'wrong' positions as it were, which the middle way of the figural must avoid. Figuration (narration and illustration, which is to say representation), but also the *absolute* deterritorialisation of the figure (the move to total abstraction). We might call these the twin dangers of moving *too* slow – of remaining within representation – but also of moving too fast and ultimately following a line of abolition. Figuration operates through *cliché*, understood as that which surrounds us everyday: 'We are besieged by photographs that are illustrations, by newspapers that are narrations, by cinema-images, by television-images' (Deleuze 2003: 87). These are the clichés – physical, though there are also psychic ones ('ready-made perceptions, memories, phantasms' [Deleuze 2003: 87]) that fill the canvas even before the artist has dipped his brush (for Deleuze-Bacon, unlike Clement Greenberg for example, the canvas is not empty, but always already full, teeming as it were with virtualities). Another way of understanding these clichés is as habits; habits of sight – and also of thought. Art opposes the latter with its own logic of difference.

The other way, abstraction, can be divided further into two tendencies: 1. Pure or geometric abstraction, which elevates the optical and ultimately returns to figuration inasmuch as it contains a code (visual and spiritual) or, to say the same differently, passes through the brain (as is the case, Deleuze argues, with Kandinsky) (Deleuze 2003: 104–5). In this regard, the same criticism can be made against both figurative painting and abstract painting: 'they pass through the brain, they do not act directly on the nervous system, they do not attain the sensation, they do not liberate the Figure – all because they remain at *one and the same level*' (Deleuze 2003: 36). This is a signifying art waiting to be read. 2. Action painting, as paradigmatically the case with Jackson Pollock, that provides an all-over diagram (a purely haptic space) but in so doing, according to Deleuze-Bacon, loses its capacity to act on our nervous system (such painting is not controlled enough) (Deleuze 2003:109). The figural avoids these, although it is, according to Deleuze, no less radical in its own path.

In concluding this second part of my paper we might say then that the figural involves a not-too-fast but also a not-too-slow deterritorialisation of the figure – a rupturing of the latter so as to allow something else to appear, or to be heard 'behind' the figure as it were. The figural might seem less radical than other avant-garde techniques, other attempts at bringing art into life (one thinks here of not just the many movements of modernism but also of their stuttering and stammering manifestos . . .). There is indeed a cautious aspect to Bacon's practice of painting – a certain control that accompanies the wildness. The same might be said of Deleuze who, in his writings, practises an 'art of dosages'. It might be argued however that it is only through this caution, through this careful engagement with the matter of representation, that the line of flight from representation can be actually located. To quote Deleuze and Guattari themselves specifically on this methodological point:

> This is how it should be done: Lodge yourself on a stratum, experiment with the opportunities it offers, find an advantageous point on it, find potential movements of deterritorialisation, possible lines of flight, experience them, produce flow conjunctions here and there, try out continuums of intensity segment by segment, have a small plot of new land at all times. It is through a meticulous relation with the strata that one succeeds in freeing lines of flight. (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 161)

III. Conclusion

In conclusion, we might say that the figural within Bacon parallels Deleuze's own philosophical project (and even more particularly the joint project with Guattari as laid out in *A Thousand Plateaus*) of thinking beyond the human. The human is to be understood here as a habitual mode of being (a *representational* mode). Both projects involve less a simple abandoning of the figure or of the human (that is, a complete disruption/abolition), but rather a kind of stretching or twisting of the latter. A rupturing that allows for the releasing of forces from within and the contact of forces that are without (both in fact being the same operation). Both Bacon and Deleuze are specifically mannerist in this sense (Deleuze 2003: 161). Both are interested in accessing the figural 'behind' the figure; the invisible 'behind' the visible.

We are now in a position to attempt an articulation of the connections between the notion of the diagram in painting and the intensive functioning of a minor literature: both involve a stuttering and stammering – of the figurative, of language – of representational modes. Both also involve the utilisation of these glitches as points

of indeterminacy that might finally allow something new, something different, to emerge. Indeed, although specific in many senses to Kafka's writings and to Bacon's paintings, both are, I think, incredibly productive concepts, not least in thinking through the effectivity of the expanded field of contemporary art practice as it exists today.

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Triptychs, Eternity and the Spirituality of the Body

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Abstract

This paper develops a detailed reading of Deleuze's philosophical study of Bacon's triptychs in *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*. It examines his claims regarding their apparent non-narrative status, and explores the capacity of the triptychs to embody and express a *spiritual* sensation of the eternity of time.

Keywords: Gilles Deleuze, Francis Bacon, triptychs, eternity, spiritual realism, rhythm

One of Deleuze's ambitions in *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* is to outline an experimental conceptual analogue of Bacon's paintings that demonstrates a genuine fidelity to the specificity of his work. His book produces a philosophy of painting where Bacon is conceived as one of the great painters of immanence, a painter of the body without organs. His figural paintings are understood to repeatedly explore the vital intensities and sensations associated with the dynamisms of becoming, processes of individuation and the destratification of the organism, subject and individual. Deleuze suggests that a brutal form of realism is manifested by Bacon's art, but it is not a realism associated with the violence of appearance but a violence of sensation associated with a spiritual realism of the body. Bacon's paintings depict, he claims, a visceral topography of embodied sensation that is profoundly non-representational and spiritual.

One of the most complex and creative sections of the book is his philosophical analysis of the triptychs. In just a few dense pages he arguably provides one of the most powerful accounts yet written about triptychs in relation to the questions of what they are, how they function, and what operative principles govern their production. In this paper I wish to develop a reading of Deleuze's philosophical understanding of the triptychs that incorporates his arguments regarding their

non-narrative status within the claims he makes about their capacity to express a *spiritual* sensation of the eternity of time.[1] I will briefly demonstrate that the notion of eternity being elicited from Bacon's triptychs is largely derived from Spinoza's *Ethics*, namely, the eternity of substance and the eternal cycles of becoming. However, in order to fully grasp the significance of Deleuze's claims regarding the eternal time of triptychs it is necessary to re-examine his initial analysis of classic religious painting which forms much of the context for his argument. Despite the fact that religious art labours under the auspices of obvious narrative content, Deleuze will claim that it is still capable of conveying intense spiritual sensations associated with the celestial and abstract realm. Once we develop an understanding of how this was achieved in the past, the significance Bacon's liberation from the constraints of narrative has for his ability to embody a Spinozistic sense of eternity within the mechanism of triptychs can be explored.

In an interview from 1981 Deleuze talked explicitly about the role intuition played in developing his own understanding of the triptychs when writing: 'I was looking at the triptychs and had the feeling that there was a certain internal law, forcing me to jump from one reproduction to the other to compare them' (Deleuze 2006: 184). Some initial remarks on the triptychs are also contained in the preface to the English translation of the book,[2] where he clearly identifies the broad shape of his subsequent, more detailed reading. From the very beginning Deleuze aligns himself closely with Bacon's own remarks on triptychs, which were made in an interview from 1962 with David Sylvester (Sylvester 1987). Deleuze recognises an inherent quality in Bacon's triptychs, which he terms their 'internal law'. Triptychs are composed of three distinct sections, with the separation between panels serving to effectively negate any imposed narrative meaning across the different parts. However, for Deleuze it is precisely this separation which provides the means for linking the three panels in new and unique ways. He argues that there has to be some kind of relationship between the separated parts of each triptych, but that this relationship cannot be narrative or logical in any straightforward way. As he identifies in his subsequent analysis, there is a definite logic but it is of a profoundly irrational order – it is a 'logic of sensation'. The triptychs establish a common unifying fact for the diverse and separated figures within each of the three panels, but it is a unity radically removed from narrative meaning. Figures present in triptychs become reconceived as 'rhythmic characters' rather than agents or subjects operating within a narrative. Triptychs exhibit a 'brutal' unity where an array of complex forces and sensations,

rather than stories, are distributed across the separated panels. Each triptych operates like an infernal machine producing novel circulations and rhythmic interplays of these characters, forces and sensations. Somewhat enigmatically, Deleuze identifies a mysterious, unifying force, which is captured by the arrangement of the triptychs but which is also, simultaneously, the force operating to structure and unite the triptychs. This force acts to separate figures, both within and across the panels, and the panels themselves. Deleuze suggests that this unifying and separating force is the force of eternal time.

Before progressing with an analysis of Deleuze's complex reading of the triptychs, I think it is necessary to question the legitimacy of his emphasis on the non-narrative status of Bacon's triptychs. One might take the view that Bacon's insistence, when in conversation with Sylvester, on there being no explicit straightforward narrative is in fact mendacious, that it is part of his effort to control and conceal inconvenient biographical truths and sources in favour of constructing an elaborate mythological artistic persona. Whilst this is probably the case, it remains possible that his broader non-narrative ambitions indicate a more significant philosophical and artistic ambition that is indeed worth taking seriously. For Deleuze, Bacon's work instantiates a profoundly anti-narrative spiritual dynamic of matter. Nevertheless, by focusing on the non-narrative element I do not believe that Deleuze is altogether denying *residues* of narrative content that might be clearly present and form an important factor in fully understanding a specific composition. Bacon's deeply personal obsessions, experiences and inspirations form and shape the voluntaristic intentions that guide his hand at a primary pre-pictorial level and at the 'first level' of figuration on the canvas.[3] Deleuze is not necessarily denying the existence of this type of intentionality, rather he is bracketing it off, suspending explicit consideration of it, in order to concentrate upon the 'involuntaristic' aspect of Bacon's practice or the 'second order' of figuration. It is here, within what he calls 'the diagram', that Bacon's particular range of visual motifs are injected into a metamorphic, transformative and liberating realm (or experimental amphitheatre) of paint on the canvas.

A significant clue to understanding Deleuze's attitude towards specific narrative residue emerges from his treatment of religious painters whose figurative innovations are linked to Bacon's own. When discussing the structural and historical underpinnings of Bacon's practice, Deleuze discusses one of Bacon's operative propositions (a proposition derived from André Malraux) that is almost a truism within modern art, and would seemingly necessitate a move within painting towards a form

of total or absolute abstraction. This is the supposed conditioning of painting by 'religious possibilities' or imperatives which simply no longer apply, given that we arguably exist within an atheistic milieu. Deleuze contests whether this historical proposition is really adequate. Such contestation is only the first of a series of critical contestations of Bacon's ideas as outlined in the Sylvester interviews, many of which go some way towards countering the idea that Deleuze is guilty of the most crude and naïve intentional fallacy, and of slavishly adhering to Bacon's point of view. I want to argue that Deleuze's remarks on religious painting are critically incisive and do genuinely illuminate an important aspect of Bacon's work. More importantly, for my purposes, they provide useful insight into Deleuze's concentration on the non-narrative character of Bacon's triptychs. When writing of Bacon's proposition regarding the way painting's representational function was largely confined by religious or theological sentiment, Deleuze responds by arguing that 'the link between the pictorial element and religious sentiment . . . seems poorly defined by the hypothesis of a figurative function that was simply sanctified by faith' (Deleuze 2003: 9). To support his argument Deleuze analyses El Greco's *The Burial of Count Orgaz*. He notes the presence of a horizontal division separating the painting into two distinct sections – the terrestrial and the celestial. In the lower section of the painting there is figurative and narrative content (albeit unorthodox and already displaying a degree of figural distortion) as the Count's terrestrial dead body is laid to rest in the Earth. However, in the upper section where the count's living spirit is being received by Christ, there is an astonishing figural liberation – 'the Figures are lifted up and elongated, refined without measure, outside all constraint' (Deleuze 2003: 9). The figures in this section of the canvas are relieved of their representative (earthly and bodily) role, and are placed upon an entirely different, spiritual register (they are being put 'into relation with an order of celestial sensations' [Deleuze 2003: 9]). Deleuze uses this particular work to demonstrate how a Christian painting, ostensibly governed by the historical task of representing and communicating a sacred narrative, discovered startlingly aberrant painterly means for expressing non-representational and sensational affects. Here 'lines, colours and movements' are freed from the demands of representation and narration, and express celestial, infernal, immaterial and spiritual sensations. This is particularly true if one spends any time at all looking at the different ways Christ's body is depicted within the history of Christian painting as a means of expressing the broadest range of intense and extreme sensations, ranging from Cimabue to Grünewald.[4]

Deleuze's argument suggests that great religious narrative paintings, marked by representational imperatives, provide the conditions of possibility for an essential liberation of figures, i.e. the emergence of Figures[5] freed from figurative constraints and able to become the vehicles of sensation. He notes that 'Christianity contains a germ of tranquil atheism that will nurture painting; the painter can easily be indifferent to the religious subject he is asked to represent' (Deleuze 2003: 124). In Christian painting representational and narrative space is placed into a direct relation with not only accidents but also an aberrant non-representational space (an any-space-whatsoever), a spiritual space, the realm of the immaterial and the invisible. Intriguingly, Deleuze returns to the theme of Christian painting at the end of the book with a discussion of 'pictorial fact' (as opposed to representation, thematisation and narration) in Michelangelo's work. With Michelangelo 'pictorial fact' emerges in its purest state from Christian art where 'the forms may still be figurative, and there may still be narrative relations between the characters' – but these constitute the residues of the primary act of figural painting which are supplanted by the properly 'pictorial fact' (Deleuze 2003: 160). With Michelangelo Christian painting achieves an extraordinary level of pictorial facticity which 'no longer tells a story and no longer represents anything but its own movement, and which makes these apparently arbitrary elements coagulate in a single continuous flow' (Deleuze 2003: 160). His figures realise, within the realm of Christian art, a form of proto-Baconian pictorial fact where organic figuration provides a painterly vehicle for the 'revelation of the body beneath the organism' (i.e. the body without organs).[6] This body *beneath* the organic figure causes it to 'crack or swell' and imposes a 'spasm' on it forcing it into a relation with 'forces' – 'sometimes with an inner force that arouses them, sometimes with external forces that traverse them, sometimes with the eternal force of an unchanging time, sometimes with the variable forces of a flowing time' (Deleuze 2003: 160–1).[7]

If the extraordinary manifestation of bizarre figural metamorphoses in classical religious art (Cimabue, El Greco, Tintoretto) are functions of a religious sentiment being explicitly narrated, figured and represented in the paintings of this time, then one cannot legitimately abstract the religious sentiment from them, despite recognising within modernity that such 'truths' no longer hold. Religious sentiment and narration (for example, Christ's passion, the Creation, the Apocalyptic visions of Hell) animate and inform not only the efforts within painting to 'represent' them as events in space and time, but also the efforts to express them

as intensities, sensations, and extreme modes of affectivity (a divine realm *seen* and a divine realm *felt*). The affective register of religious painting remains locked into a causal relationship with the narrative content of the Christian religion. Such art might aim to represent a particular event in Christ's life (e.g. the crucifixion) as a type of religious or spiritual portrait, however to do this it is not enough merely to illustrate it as a discrete event in time. Rather, it is important to utilise the depiction of such events to communicate the affective force of the 'spiritual' depth associated with them. This affective quality, informed by religious sentiment, operates as a disruptive modulator to 'good' stable representational form and the earthly body becomes subject to deformation by invisible celestial forces. Bacon's own practice inherits much of this dynamic structure in so far as his work displays repeated motifs seemingly borrowed from (or almost certainly analogous to) traditional religious art – i.e. crucifixions, death and physical dissolution, bodies in the process of becoming immaterial (a process of 'becoming-indiscernible'), bodies confronting spirits, and bodies placed in relation to animals (a process of 'becoming-animal'). However, the religious sentiment and concrete theological concerns have been extracted and are no longer being represented or narrated. For Deleuze, Bacon's paintings operate like great religious paintings evacuated of their religious narrative and representation. Such content is simply of no relevance to Bacon – his work signifies an accelerated form of pictorial atheism, the very roots of which Deleuze identifies as being present in great Christian art itself. This explains the insistence upon the non-narrative quality of Bacon's triptychs – first and foremost Figures become the vehicles of sensation (rhythmic characters) and survive to serve as representative characters in a depicted narrative only in a residual and secondary manner, as in Michelangelo's work.

Deleuze's account is not incompatible with the idea that certain residues of narration remain as inevitable, irreducible or deliberate traces. Indeed, his account allows for the insistence that the primary narrative content (in so far as any can be adequately and accurately established) forms an important framework in the overall germination, negotiation and sculpting of forms in space and time on the canvas. What Deleuze does insist upon, and in this he is absolutely aligned with Bacon's own statements, is the *subsidiary* status of such content. Bacon's paintings involve an evacuation of religious content, theological narrative and spiritual drama, and the effort to replace it with an elaborate and audacious attempt to translate elements and events drawn from his own physical existence and filter them through his

particular nervous system onto the canvases as figured sensation. The historical specificity of Bacon's life becomes reconfigured through art into the grandeur of elemental eternity. This clearly fits with Deleuze's recognition of how the 'eternity of art' remains a constant reference for Bacon's practice: 'Like Rodin, he [Bacon] thinks that durability, essence, or eternity are the primary characteristics of the work of art' (Deleuze 2003: 123)

In my reading of Deleuze an understanding of Bacon emerges as a 'spiritual' painter (a mystical atheist). He enacts a similar dialogue between the 'actual' and the 'virtual' as El Greco had explored between the material and the spiritual, or the terrestrial and the celestial. Following the pictorial facticity of Michelangelo, Bacon's paintings pursue a hyperbolic form of pictorial hysteria where he is directly attempting, again and again, to release the presences beneath representation, beyond representation. His paintings repeatedly attempt to make such overwhelming and intense presence immediately visible. When discussing Bacon's renunciation of represented violent spectacles in favour of excavating the invisible forces beneath or beyond appearance as sensation, Deleuze comes close to identifying Bacon's 'spiritual' thematic, his spiritual conviction, as 'a kind of declaration of faith in life' (Deleuze 2003: 61). He considers statements from the interviews with Sylvester (particularly the remarks about cerebral pessimism and nervous optimism), and asks why choosing to paint 'the scream more than the horror', the violence of sensation, more than the violence of the spectacle, is an act of *vital faith*. In his clearest and most unambiguous passage Deleuze writes of Bacon's indomitable and visceral spirituality which has supplanted hoary old religious truisms and transcendental myths:

> But why is it an act of vital faith to choose 'the scream more than the horror', the violence of sensation more than the violence of the spectacle? The invisible forces, the powers of the future – are they not already upon us, and much more insurmountable than the worst spectacle and even the worst pain? Yes, in a certain sense – every piece of meat testifies to this. But in another sense, no. When, like a wrestler, the visible body confronts the powers of the invisible, it gives them no other visibility than its own. It is within this visibility that the body actively struggles, affirming the possibility of triumphing, which was beyond its reach as long as these powers remained invisible, hidden in a spectacle that sapped our strength and diverted us. It is as if combat had now become possible. The struggle with the shadow is the only real struggle. When the visual sensation confronts the invisible force that conditions it, it releases a force that is capable of vanquishing the invisible

> force, or even befriending it. Life screams at death, but death is no longer this all-too-visible thing that makes us faint; it is this invisible force that life detects, flushes out, and makes visible through the scream. Death is judged from the point of view, and not the reverse, as we like to believe. Bacon, no less than Beckett, is one of those artists who, in the name of a very intense life, can call for an even more intense life. He is not a painter who 'believes' in death. His is indeed a figurative *misérabilisme*, but one that serves an increasingly powerful Figure of life... In the very act of 'representing' horror, mutilation, prosthesis, fall, or failure, they have erected indomitable Figures, indomitable through both their insistence and their presence. They have given life a new and extremely direct power of laughter. (Deleuze 2003: 61–2)

This ethos is clearly linked to Bacon's efforts, following Michelangelo, to render life and time visible *through the material of the body*. For Bacon there is the chronomatic force of changing time which he depicts through the allotropic variation of bodies, and which involves a degree of figural deformation; and then there is the force of eternal time, the eternity of time, which is established through the uniting–separating that reigns in the triptychs, a pure light. One can begin to discern the reason for Deleuze's insistence upon the complete evacuation of represented narrative from Bacon's work (as he insists is evident within Michelangelo's work too), or at least its relegation to secondary traces or residues. What Bacon's work *ultimately* tries to figure is an expression of something fundamentally inexpressible, what it brings to visibility is something which is usually invisible, what it attempts to figure is the un-figurable. His work cannot be simply reduced to a matter of what is straightforwardly representational or narrative, since these imply the prior existence of things, events and ideas to be merely represented as such. It presupposes that all the things in Bacon's paintings exist prior to the work as something to be represented or narrated. For Deleuze, Bacon's ultimate theme lies outside all such coordinates, in much the same way as the divine celestial realm had for the classic Christian painters. There, a sensation (an affective element) of these realms could be allied to the familiar representational coordinates of the religious or theological dogmas of the time. With Bacon no such scripture exists apart from his own lived reality in time, his own nervous system, which he transmutes into figures resonating and hystericised by the invisible forces and intensities of the virtual in matter and the eternity of time.

Having established the 'spiritual' dynamics and thematics of Bacon's work, this paper will now proceed with an analysis of how that work specifically functions to encapsulate a certain sensation of time, namely of eternity. Deleuze initially establishes the key elements in their

structural mechanics. Underpinning their mechanics is the principle of *rhythm*. In the triptychs, he argues, rhythms become characters and objects. By initially focusing on their rhythmic characteristics, Deleuze identifies three basic rhythms being circulated across the separated panels of many triptychs.

1. A steady or attendant rhythm
2. Crescendo or simplification
3. A diminuendo or elimination

Referring to Bacon's triptychs, Deleuze attempts to uncover each of their rhythmic elements and demonstrate the full complexity of their actual interplay across the panels. The attendant rhythmic character does not necessarily always signify a straightforward visible observer or spectator/voyeur despite their frequent appearance in triptychs (for example, the presence of a voyeuristic figure in the right panel of *Triptych Inspired by T.S. Eliot's Poem 'Sweeney Agonistes', 1967*; a sinister cameraman in the right panel of *Triptych – Studies from the Human Body, 1970*, and the spectators in both the left and right panel of the *Crucifixion Triptych, 1965*). Rather the attendant refers to a constant function, a steady measure or cadence in relation to which spectators are able to discern or distinguish rhythmic variation. This function can have multiple objects which might include, but not be restricted to, the circular arena, photographic apparatus, photographs of figures, faces or objects which are flattened out onto two dimensional mirror-like surfaces, or it can be presented in several figures. Deleuze claims that it can be figured through flat hysterical smiles, the prone bodies of sleepers, and/or coupled or copulating bodies. These are defined as attendants because of their steady and almost constant horizontality. This horizontal quality defines a rhythm without increase or decrease, augmentation of diminution. However, the attendant function is anything but simple, and Deleuze goes some considerable way to further developing an account of its apparent complexity. Whilst the attendant function can initially be seen as something deliberately imposed upon certain visible characters in the paintings, it actually abandons them to become an autonomous rhythmic character which emerges into existence at different points throughout the three panels of a triptych. It does this by being assigned as that character by the active rhythmic characters in other parts of the painting. This dynamic, autonomous and self-generating character of the work is clearly something that resonates deeply with Bacon's own understanding of the process of auto-composition and auto-figuration. In an interview

with Sylvester from 1979, Bacon said: 'I don't really think my pictures out, you know; I think of the disposition of the forms and then I watch the forms form themselves' (Sylvester 1987: 136). This auto-formation of forms explains the type of emergence of the attendant rhythmic character in triptychs that Deleuze indicates. Attendant function might subsequently emerge from figures in full context which, if isolated from the entire composition, might actually appear to have either active or passive rhythms. For Deleuze this is why some of the prone sleeping characters in the triptychs have an odd trace of activity or passivity – so although explicitly situated across the horizontal they retain a certain heaviness or vivacity, relaxation or contraction, that comes from elsewhere. Equally, attendants can be seen as assuming other functions – as on the brink of turning to an active rhythm or passive rhythm – thus linking themselves to one or the other and ceasing to be an attendant.[8] This fluid autonomy creates not only great tension and instability but is also indicative of an extraordinary mobility within triptychs, what Deleuze terms their 'great circulation'. It is as if the triptychs function like musical machines possessing a range of different rhythmic permutations.

Having introduced the attendant rhythmic character, Deleuze proceeds with an explanation of the two vertical directions of active and passive rhythms. The simplest variation consists of descending or rising opposition (for example, *Triptych – Three Studies for a Crucifixion, 1962*) or perhaps a diastolic/systolic opposition. Occasionally the opposition at play is between being naked or clothed, or an augmentation/diminution of the flesh. Throughout different triptychs there exists an extraordinarily subtle and diverse process of additions and subtractions. The example which Deleuze talks about in most detail is Bacon's *Triptych – August, 1972* depicting George Dyer, which he claims is Bacon's most 'profoundly musical painting'. Across this triptych Bacon uses figural mutilation and prostheses in 'a game of added and subtracted values' (Deleuze 2003: 79). The triptych is like an assemblage of hysterical sleepings and wakings affecting diverse parts of the body. Here, the attendant couple in the centre panel are accompanied by organic elongations and a clear and well defined mauve oval. On the left panel the figure has a diminished torso, having had a significant portion of its body subtracted; while on the right the figure is in the process of being built up or added to. However, everything changes if one looks at the legs. In the left panel one leg is completed while the other is being subject to further addition and definition, while in the right panel, it is just the opposite – one leg has been amputated

and the other is apparently flowing away. Correlatively the defined mauve oval in the centre panel changes its status within the other two panels – on the left panel it is transformed into a pink liquid pool lying next to the chair, and then becomes a red liquid discharge flowing out from the figure's leg in the right panel.

For Deleuze this profoundly musical triptych is emblematic of the degree of rhythmic complexity and variation achieved by triptychs. The diverse oppositions across different panels are never logically equivalent in any normal sense and their different terms never quite coincide. What triptychs represent is a radical combinatorial freedom where multiple permutations can be produced. Each and every element can coexist in a unified way – share a simple matter-of-fact – yet the different oppositions set up can vary in diverse ways or even be reversed depending on the perspective or viewpoint that one adopts as a viewer. One cannot assign a single univocal role to the centre panel, since the constancy they seemingly imply can change depending on the case at hand. Hence, the horizontal of the constants govern extremely variable terms from the viewpoint of both their nature and their relation. The dynamic circulation is always composed of variable, opposable rhythms (where each operates as the retro-gradation of the other) offset against a common and constant value in the attendant rhythm.

At this point, in developing his understanding of the active rhythm, Deleuze insists upon the primacy of 'the fall' in Bacon's triptychs. However, it is not a sense of descent which should be identified with any straightforward spatial notion. The active is a fall in the sense of it being a descending passage of sensation, a passage identifying variation and difference of level within sensation. He claims that differences of intensity in sensation are often experienced and figured in Bacon's work as a fall. Flesh descends from bones, the body descends from arms and thighs. Sensation develops though this fall by falling from one level to another. The fall thus exists to affirm a variation in level. Whilst Deleuze reiterates Bacon's view that one shouldn't confuse the violence of sensation with the violent spectacle, he also indicates that the so-called fall of a sensation should not be confused with a fall through spatial extension. Rather the fall records variation and change and is simply what is most vital and alive in sensation. The fall is that which is experienced as the sensation of living. This does not of course preclude the possibility that it could coincide with a spatial descent. But equally it could coincide with a rise. It could also be expressed through a variety of different movements in the paintings – diastolic or systolic, dilation or dissipation, diminution or augmentation. In this sense, the fall as

the measure of variation in sensation is precisely what is meant by the *active* rhythm in the triptychs. Again, this active rhythm is fluid and variable, and the degree to which it is assigned to a particular figure or object within the painting rests upon which viewpoint or perspective one chooses to adopt. It thus exchanges its function with the *passive* rhythm.

Having analysed the different rhythmic characters associated with the triptychs, Deleuze establishes what he describes as 'the laws of the triptychs'.

1. There are three distinguishable, rhythmic figures.
2. There is the existence of an *attendant* rhythm which circulates fluidly through the panels as both visible attendant and rhythmic attendant.
3. There is a determination of an *active* and *passive* rhythm with all of the variations that depend on the character chosen to represent the active rhythm by the spectator.

Having set out these formal laws, Deleuze concludes by claiming that they broadly embody a profoundly irrational logic, a logic of sensation, that constitutes the art of painting in general. By stressing the power and vitality of this non-normative logic and non-voluntaristic means of composition, Deleuze instinctively aligns his own account again and again with Bacon. In 1979 Bacon told Sylvester:

> One of the things I've always tried to analyse is why it is that, if the formation of the image that you want is done irrationally, it seems to come on to the nervous system much more strongly than if you knew how you could do it. Why is it possible to make the reality of an appearance more violently in this way than by doing it rationally? Perhaps it's that, if the making is more instinctive, the image is more immediate. (Sylvester 1987: 121)

The full complexity of the formal elements now established, Deleuze crucially shifts his attention to the question of what forces correspond to the triptychs. What precisely is this complex machinic apparatus a means of capture for? And in what way does this force impact upon the structure of the triptychs? In the triptychs the question of the relation between the different Figures becomes extremely significant. Figures are violently projected onto the field and are often governed by the simplicity and clarity of uniform colour or naked light. In many cases, the figures look like trapeze artists whose milieu is nothing but light or colour. The particular methodology identified by Deleuze within triptychs is again something Bacon talks about with Sylvester. Particularly in relation to the question of precision and clarity: 'I've increasingly wanted to make

the images simpler and more complicated. And for this to work it can work more starkly if the background is very united and clear. I think that probably is why I have used a very clear background against which the image can articulate itself' (Sylvester 1987: 121).

Deleuze observes that if this unity and clarity of light or colour immediately incorporates and unifies the relationship between Figures and the Field, the result is that Figures also attain their maximum *separation* in light and colour. A force of separation or division sweeps over them, placing them within an almost spiritual milieu of eternity. This separation is therefore the unique principle of the triptychs (their pictorial fact) – maximum unity of light and colour for the maximum division of Figures. It is the force of this separating light and colour that engenders the distinct yet interrelated, rhythmic characters. The separation of bodies in universal light and colour becomes the common fact of the Figures – their overall rhythmic being – a disjunctive synthesis – a union that separates. A joining-together acts to separate the Figures and colours. Such, Deleuze claims, is the quality of light. Figures separate while falling into black light; colour fields separate while falling into white light. In the triptychs everything becomes aerial – the separation itself is in the air. Here time is no longer simply expressed in the apparent chromatism of bodies via the broken tones across flesh – it has become a monochromatic eternity. In the triptychs an immense space-time unites all things as if in a fourth temporal dimension. Deleuze writes of how triptychs, evacuated of any straightforward narrative linkage, unite things only by introducing between them

> the distances of a Sahara, the centuries of an aeon. Within the triptychs there resides the mysterious force of the eternity of time. The three canvases remain separated, figures within them remain separated, yet they are no longer isolated. They are united within the eternity of time. The frames or borders of each panel and the outlines of each figure no longer refer to the limited unity of each but represent and figure the distributive unity of all. (Deleuze 2003: 85)

In Bacon's triptychs a profound sensation of eternal time is being figured, producing brilliant aberrant figural spaces which resonate historically with the greatest achievements in religious art to figure the divine celestial realm. Bacon's rhythmic characters flow with an extraordinary dynamism across the vast spaces of the monochromatic eternity presented within the triptychs, each expressing a new spiritualism of matter, a new spiritualism of the body, as they perform their small embodied feats upon the grand amphitheatre of nowhere,

all playing their different roles in the musicality of becoming. Deleuze's most complex and controversial claim about Francis Bacon in *The Logic of Sensation* is thus to reconfigure him as a Spinozistic mystic, engaged in the profoundest of spiritual revaluations of existence through art. In the *Ethics* Spinoza defines eternity as that which stands outside all duration or time – 'Eternity can neither be defined by time nor have any relation to time' (Spinoza 1992: 214). True eternity stands outside of all temporal categories whatsoever. 'Before', 'after', 'now', 'later' and all such ascriptions are completely inapplicable to what is eternal. According to Spinoza God and Substance are both eternal, and even individuated and singular things as instances of substance are eternal. Despite the fact that we have no recollection of our own bodily emergence from eternity 'we feel and experience that we are eternal' (Spinoza 1992: 214). For individuated bodies to be seen as eternal they must be considered not in their temporally and spatially bound state, where they are in relation to other finite things in their normal durational existence, but from a more abstract perspective as atemporal essences – what Spinoza terms *sub specie aeternitatis*. Thus, according to Deleuze's reading of Bacon's triptychs, what Bacon ultimately manages to elaborate is a profound spiritual mechanics for displaying Figures *under the aspect of eternity*.

Notes

1. It is the 'revelation' of the 'spirit' immanent to the body which Deleuze suggests as the entire 'spiritual' thematic of Bacon's work. This point is clarified in the chapter on 'Hysteria' where Deleuze links the spiritualism of Wilhelm Worringer's Gothic Line to Artaud's Body-Without-Organs: 'It [the Gothic Line] attests to a high spirituality, since what leads it to seek the elementary forces beyond the organic is a spiritual will. But this spirituality is a spirituality of the body; the spirit is the body itself, the body without organs' (Deleuze 2003: 46–7).
2. This text first appeared in *Artforum* in January 1984, and is republished (with minor emendations) as a preface to the English translation of *The Logic of Sensation*.
3. See Deleuze's remarks in *The Logic of Sensation* (Deleuze 2003: 97–8) regarding first and second order figuration in Bacon's work.
4. This would seem to call for a rigorous study of Hegel's remarks on the history and development of Christian painting in the second volume of his *Aesthetics*. When writing of how certain painters had depicted Christ's suffering on the cross, he notes how 'some masters discovered an entirely peculiar tone of colour which is not found in the human face. They had to disclose the night of the spirit, and for this purpose fashioned a type of colour which corresponds in the most splendid way to this storm, to these black clouds of the spirit that at the same time are firmly controlled and kept in place by the brazen brow of the divine nature' (Hegel 1975: 824). Hegel writes at length about how painters had to betray the verisimilitude of representation in order to express 'spiritual' depths

and sensations. Deleuze's own remarks on what he calls the 'accident' and the depiction of Christ's body in the history of Christian painting recall Hegel's remarks. Deleuze notes how 'Christ is besieged, and even replaced by accidents' (Deleuze 2003: 124).

5. This differentiation is marked in Deleuze's text with the capitalised form of 'Figure'.
6. Note Deleuze's use of the specifically religious notion of 'revelation'.
7. In a footnote to this passage Deleuze cites Luciano Bellosi's work on Michelangelo, which 'has shown how Michelangelo destroyed the narrative religious fact in favour of a properly pictorial or sculptural fact' (Deleuze 2003: 196).
8. Of particular note here are the two spectral figures in the left panel of *Triptych – Three Studies for a Crucifixion, 1962*. These two figures hover and resonate with an ambiguous rhythmic character that is extremely disturbing and affective.

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From the Archive
Introduction to Günther Anders' 'The Pathology of Freedom'

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> Never act in such a way that the maxim of your action contradicts that of the machine of which you are or will be part.
> (Günther Anders, *Die Antiquierheit des Menschen*; see van Dijk 2000: 82)

In the twenty-second series of *The Logic of Sense*, 'Porcelain and Volcano', Deleuze refers to a remarkable essay by Günther Stern – mistakenly referred to as 'Stein'. Stern is better known under the name of 'Anders' – 'different' in German. What relevance does Anders' essay have to this series? The series opens with a passage from F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Crack Up*, and moves from the 'crack up' as an event no more internal than external (think of a crack in the shell of an egg, or, perhaps, one's own birth, or of how the blurriness of eyes tired from a day of reading is matched by dizziness in the world – Sartre) to the temporality of a particular kind of addiction: alcoholism. A crack or fissure extends along a life, as estranged as it is strangely one's own. Indeed, the crack up is not so unlike what Georg Simmel, in an essay Anders' references, calls an adventure:

> The most general form of adventure is its dropping out of the continuity of life. 'Wholeness of life', after all, refers to the fact that a consistent process runs through the individual components of life, however crassly and irreconcilably distinct they may be. What we call an adventure stands in contrast to that interlocking of life-links, to that feeling that those countercurrents, turnings, and knots still, after all, spin forth a continuous thread. An adventure is certainly a part of our existence, directly contiguous with other parts which precede and follow it; at the same time, however, in its deeper meaning, it occurs outside the usual continuity of this life. (Simmel 1971: 187–8)

Alcoholism extends the impersonal and transcendental event of the 'crack up' across a life by way of a caesura of time. Alcoholism, Deleuze writes, 'hardens' the present (Deleuze 1990: 158). In Fitzgerald, alcoholism's temporality is that of the past perfect – I have-acted, I have-broken, I have-touched – where the present auxiliary is the hardened present and the past participle the volatile, churning real it extends across and holds in its entirety: a volcano held in porcelain. Still, in alcoholism, the 'I have-drunk' collapses the near past of the last drink with the distant past of sobriety (Deleuze 1990: 159). Hardness becomes indifference and the present loses its hold on the past without ceasing to enclose it; lava turns to dust. Further, each drink is always already a drink I have-drunk, faded into the past at the same time that the past is washed out by the indistinction of its points. For the drink to break through the present is for the undifferentiated past to break upon the present and wash over it. The crack becomes a wound as the drunk meets her alcoholism and becomes an alcoholic, and no longer a sober companion to another self who has drunk. The self collapses into a single ego, no longer split into the actual event and a double that might 'counter-actualise' it.

Anders' essay is likewise concerned with the paradoxical and ever-incomplete synthesis of life with self and with what has happened within it. His 'Pathology of Freedom' diagnoses numerous ways of negotiating one's 'not being cut out for the world' that disavow rather than affirm this existential state. Deleuze's invocation of Stern's work comes within his sketch of a second form of alcoholism captured in Malcolm Lowry's novel *Under the Volcano*. In *Under the Volcano*, alcoholism is lived as a piercing and dire need. Time fissures under this need, but in a different modality. It hardens around a future under the form of a future perfect: immanently, 'I will have drunk.' It is to Günther Anders' remarkable essay that Deleuze turns to describe this future-oriented caesura in time. Readers of Deleuze's *The Logic of Sense* will also be interested in Anders' suspicion of identification with what happens to one as what one is worthy of or equal to, as well as Anders' account of paradox, repetition, memory, space, and the relation between life and self, to mention but a few of the themes touched on in this essay.

Günther Anders (1902–92), born Günther Stern, was the cousin of Walter Benjamin and the first husband of Hannah Arendt (between 1929 and 1937). Anders spent 1921 as a student of philosophy under Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger at the University of Freiburg, and completed his doctoral dissertation under Husserl's direction in 1923. In 1930, still working under his given name of Stern,

Anders gave a presentation of his developing 'negative anthropology' before the Kant society of Frankfurt and Hamburg entitled 'Die Weltfremdheit des Menschen' ('The Unworldliness of the Human Being'). This lecture, included in Anders' *Nachlass* housed in the Austrian Literary Archives of the National Library in Vienna, was the basis for the first French translation of Anders' work, by Emmanuel Levinas, published in *Recherches Philosophiques* IV (1934–35) under the title 'Une interpretation de l'a posteriori' ('An Interpretation of the *A Posteriori*'). Levinas translated the first 24 pages of the manuscript. The essay which appears here – first published in Volume VI of *Recherches Philosophiques* (1936–37), and translated by P.-A. Stéphanopoli under the title 'Pathologie de la Liberté' ('The Pathology of Freedom') – shares some content with passages from 'Die Weltfremdheit des Menschen' but does not have a clear predecessor in this text. The Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna, where Anders' work is archived, considers the original lost, and has undertaken a reverse translation into German based on the French and informed by some corresponding passages in 'Die Weltfremdheit des Menschen'. (My thanks go to Peter Hertz for reviewing the archive director's notes on this reverse translation.)

Stern took up the name Anders while working as an editor for the *Berliner Börsen-Courier* (1930–33). The rise of National Socialism and of Hitler in Germany changed the focus of Anders' work, directing him away from the academy with which he already felt only a tenuous bond. In 1931, alarmed at the inability of many intellectuals to fathom Hitler's potential to rise to power, he began writing a dystopian, anti-fascist novel entitled *Die Molussische Katakombe* ('The Molussian Catacomb'). In 1933, the advance publication of this novel together with the inclusion of his name among those in Bertolt Brecht's address book, confiscated by the Gestapo, made it unsafe for him to remain in Germany. He took refuge in Paris and then, in 1936, New York. After learning of the Holocaust from Arendt upon her arrival in New York in 1941, and later of the bombing of Hiroshima through President Truman's radio address to the nation, Anders' life work became centred around a critique of technology: what we can produce exceeds what we can imagine, the machine becomes the subject of history and its makers its raw material, and our primary affective relationships become relationships with machines and artefacts, which treat us in ways that, in the words of Paul van Dijk, render us 'both greater and smaller' than ourselves (van Dijk 2000: 78). Further, Jean-Paul Sartre once said that it was Anders who inspired his understanding of 'the human being condemned to freedom' (van Dijk 2000: 29).

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The Pathology of Freedom: An Essay on Non-Identification

Günther (Stern) Anders

Translated by Katharine Wolfe

Abstract

In the twenty-second series of *The Logic of Sense*, Gilles Deleuze references a remarkable essay by Günther (Stern) Anders. Anders' essay, translated here as 'The Pathology of Freedom', addresses the sickness and health of our negotiation with the negative anthropological condition of 'not being cut out for the world'.

Keywords: Nihilism, historicism, philosophical anthropology, freedom, contingency

A Note on the Translation

It is Stéphanopoli's version of the essay, the one which Deleuze read and referenced, that is translated here. Incomplete and inaccurate citations in the French suggest that the piece Stéphanopoli worked with remained very rough. Here, citations have been corrected and completed for readability, with reference to English-language editions of sources where available, and hopefully without too great a harm done to the feel of the text. German passages and terms preserved in the French have been carried over into the English. All endnotes are my own. Anders's original footnotes have been incorporated into the body of the text, in parentheses {} and introduced with 'Note'. Although any shortcomings are my own, I wish to thank both Anne O'Byrne and Marcus Michelsen for their assistance in revising and improving early drafts of this translation.

An analysis of the situation of man in the world has revealed to us, in broad strokes, the following conclusions [see Stern 1934–35: 65]:[1]

In contrast to the animal that instinctively knows [*connaît*] the material world belonging to it and necessary for it – like the bird migration south, and the wasp her prey – man does not foresee his world. He has but one *formal a priori*. He is not cut out for any material world, cannot anticipate it in its determination, and instead must learn to know it [*connaître*] 'after the fact',[2] *a posteriori*; he needs *experience*. His relation with a factual determination of the world is relatively weak, and he is in the awaiting of the possible and the indeterminate [*le quelconque*].[3] Likewise, no world is in fact imposed on him (as, for example, on every animal a specific milieu), and instead he transforms the world and builds over it according to a thousand historical variants and in a way as a superstructure; sometimes as a 'second world', sometimes as another. For, to put it paradoxically, *artificiality is the nature of man and his essence is instability*. The practical constructions of man and his theoretical faculties of representation testify equally to his *abstraction*. He can and must disregard the fact that the world is such as it is for he is himself an 'abstract' being; not only part of the world (it is this aspect that materialism treats) but also 'excluded' from it, 'not of this world'. *Abstraction* – thus meaning freedom vis-à-vis the world, the fact of being cut out for generality and the indeterminate, the retreat from the world, and the practice and the transformation of this world – is the fundamental anthropological category, which shows the metaphysical condition of man as well as his λόγος, his productivity, his interiority, his free will, and his historicity.

Man proves his freedom vis-à-vis the world with all his acts, but in none so expressly as in the act of retreating within himself. For by this act he now takes in hand the destiny of his rupture with the world, he intensifies it until a gateway to the world is made, and he offsets the world by himself. What will follow proceeds from this self-experience and from the adventures of the 'unhappy consciousness', as Hegel calls it. This will be reduced in the first part to a description simply of the *nihilist* – of the man who, because sometimes free and sometimes not, sometimes of this world and sometimes 'not of this world', loses the possibility of self-identification. This failure of identification will be brought to light through an analysis of the nihilist *states of the soul*. In the second part, an antithesis will be opposed to the picture of the nihilist, that of the historical man. In conclusion, in place of a synthesis, the problematic will be put in question as such, and we will attempt to determine if the question, relative to philosophical anthropology, of knowing what man in general could be is justified according to this formula.

I. Thesis: Picture of the Nihilist

1. The shock of the contingent: 'That I am precisely myself'. The identification of the 'I' and its failure.

It is not necessary for man to accomplish a deliberate act of 'self-positing' or 'self-determination' (expressions that constantly recur in transcendental philosophy, particularly in Fichte) in order to secure the guarantee and the coronation of his freedom.[4] Man's retreat within himself reveals the ability to disregard the world and is already sufficient proof of freedom. But the expressions persist with all their excessive pretension. And they conceal the ensemble of difficulties and antinomies that lead to this free act of retreat into oneself: *i.e., the paradoxical fact that only if man discovers himself freely, by an act emanating freely from him, then he discovers himself precisely as non-free, and as non-self-determined*. The character of the 'non-positing by oneself' has a double aspect. On the one hand, the man who finds himself in the state of freedom discovers himself as 'existing there beforehand', as 'delivered' and 'condemned' to himself, as non-'self-constituted', as a real, irrevocable presupposition of himself, as a part of the world, as an *a priori* of oneself defying all subsequent freedom; as all that which the term '*Amor fati*' attempts to rise above. On the other hand, and this is in close correlation with the previous point, this irrevocable presupposition appears qualitatively as something absolutely indeterminate. Man experiences himself as *contingent* [Troeltsch 1951: 87–9], as indeterminate, as 'me precisely' (such as he has not chosen), as one who is precisely as he is (although he could be entirely different), as coming from an origin to which he does not answer and with which he nevertheless has to be identified; as precisely 'here' and as 'now'. This deepening paradox of freedom and contingency's reciprocal belonging, this paradox that is an imposture, freedom's fatal gift, is elucidated in the following way.

To be free, this means: to be strange [*étranger*],[5] to be bound to nothing specific, to be cut out for nothing specific, to be within the horizon of the indeterminate and in an attitude such that the indeterminate can *also* be encountered amongst other indeterminates. In the indeterminate, which I am able to find thanks to my freedom, it is also my own self that I encounter; by the same token, for as much as it is of the world it is strange to itself. Encountered as contingent, the self is, so to speak, the victim of its own liberty. The term 'contingent' must consequently designate these two characteristics: the

self's 'non-constitution of itself by itself' and its 'existence precisely such as it is' [*telle et ainsi*].[6] This holds for all that will follow. {Note: Hegel has presented a dialectic that we have totally neglected; it also relates to the insistence of the *I* on its own formalisation. The expression 'I' designates something precise, stripped of all contingent reality; but it does not only designate only the self. The expression is misleading, for everyone can say 'I', and the 'I' is everyone; thus, in existence there is moreover the general. If we put the Hegelian antinomy together with our own, it can be said that the self searches in vain to take place between its contingencies, the attributes that are accidental for it (but that always belong to it), and the form *I* in general [*Ichheit*] (that is not its alone). A painful position.}

2. Formulation of the shock of the contingent; falsification thereof.

'Why', demands Schopenhauer in his *Tagebüchern*, 'is the now precisely now?' [*sic*] [Schopenhauer 1969: 279].[7] This type of question is characteristic of the shock of the contingent. In so far as Schopenhauer does not intend to answer it, the question is nothing other than a formulation of this shock.

Nonetheless, the translation of the shock ('that I am precisely myself') into an interrogative proposition – and it is only under this form that the problem of contingency appears in the history of philosophy – seems to us to emanate already from a theoretical point of view, and appears falsified. The real shock can be formulated only in a subordinate anacoluthon; it is much too fundamental and much too absurd for one to be able to answer it. For alone susceptible to answers are the questions that arise as formulations of the lacunae that a context, unquestionable in itself, may comprise. And in the case of the shock of the contingent this context and its non-problematic state are precisely shaken. Even more illegitimate than to translate the shock into an interrogative statement would be to transform it into a judgement – to return it, for example, to the proposition 'I am not myself', the like of which may be encountered in numerous formulas imitating Hegel. All judgement, even dialectical judgement, observes [*constate*].[8] But the observation [*constatation*] at the base of the shock is precisely this one: that however unhappily, I am nevertheless myself. Translation: 'I am myself.'

Without fail, judgement also knows the distinction between Subject and Predicate as such a rupture. But although it is possible to transform or to exchange the predicate, this cut presupposes the identity of the subject with itself. It is precisely this identity that will be shaken in

the subordinate. For what shocks in the shock of the contingent is not even primarily the fact 'that I am thus or not', but precisely the fact that 'myself, I am myself'. The intention to formulate this state of affairs by a dialectical formula runs up against the fact that in dialectical logic 'is' almost always means 'becomes', the transformation of one determination into another by the intermediary of a phase of transition ambiguous in itself. There can be no question of it in our case. What is there only a more or less ambiguous phase of transition becomes the theme of our research.

3. An extension of the matter of contingency.

The contingency that the *I* discovers within itself must not decrease when it enters into relation with the world. Although by this route the *I* loses itself in the world most of the time, to such an extent that the internal division of this free and contingent *I* is only a neutralised element of consciousness, it can happen, conversely, that the relation with the world and the encounter with anything whatsoever can hold the 'being-precisely-me' [Gerade-ichsein] in suspense, further still than before and in a continuous way. Astonishment [*étonnement*][9] before the contingent – formulated initially in the proposition 'that I am precisely myself' – now discovers in every thing and in every place an occasion to show itself and a source of nourishment, and is expressed thus: 'that I am neither this one here nor that one there, but precisely myself'. {Note: The many forms of Pantheism that convey fraternisation and identification with the All are revealed on more in-depth examination as no more than opportunist dissimulations and a deficiency of self-identification. See the following implications of contingency and of Pantheism in Hölderin's *Empedocles*.} This possibility of being everything thus signifies neither the unity nor the affinity of the *I* with man and with world, but, conversely, its perfect strangeness: *it can be all, because it is as strange and as contingent to itself as to any other part of the world*. Each contingent thing that I am not increases once more the weight of the fact of being that which I am precisely. The *I* and the world complement each other, reciprocally rising up in their fortuitousness. If the *I*, itself contingent, seizes the occasion of the world to confirm its own contingency once more, that of the world will be likewise made more radical. From now on the accident of self-identity and the uselessness of 'self-identification' will be attributed to each fragment of the world as such, that is, outside of human contingency: the one who is astonished now pronounces 'that this, which is here, is precisely

here and nothing else'. Likewise in this new phase, nothing contingent, an accident, will be observed [*constatera*] starting from something non-contingent, a substrate; astonishment will still remain in a way within the field of the validity of the principle of contradiction, with the pathology of this astonishment characterised precisely by constantly breaking such frameworks. And what this boils down to is that any *Hoc* and *Illud* is really itself. {Note: Thus formulated, this paralysis of things and this nihilist stage of freedom appears completely contrived. Nevertheless, we are acquainted [*connâit*] with it in pictorial art. The majority of still-life paintings make it their theme. For in these paintings, man not only depicts the thing that has lost its relations with others and has become strange to them – as if it were not 'his' thing, the thing that is no longer either man's neighbour or handled by him, and which, isolated in a space without atmosphere, is simply there (Chardin) – but also the thing as contingent, as if it were blameworthy in its own mode of existence, and which, fixed now in the painting, can no longer escape from the shame of its contingent existence (for example, the chairs and the shoes in the first Van Gogh). It is not by accident that this ridicule and strangeness can be represented by art. For isolation is not only characteristic of strangeness, but is also an important condition of the beautiful (cf., for example, the function of the frame). Painting that fixes the aspect of a man or a thing in a picture seems as it were to repeat the act by which each thing is already condemned to itself.}

Hölderlin, in his first outlines for Empedocles, described contingency and what is unbearable in it in the following way: Empedocles would be unsatisfied, inconstant, suffering simply because (these relations) would be *particular* relations [*sic*].[10] Each determined relation is thus for him the loss of all the others; each being-itself the loss of all the beings whose form it could take.

But Empedocles' contingency is not the most radical. Empedocles searches and finds deliverance anew from his 'Being-precisely-this', the pantheistic salvation: total being, to which he entrusts himself while leaping in the crater and in which his personal being, the being that he is precisely, is sublimated, remains for him the non-contingent, the last absolute. It is certainly understandable that one reserves such a salvation, a non-contingent residue. But this goes against the nihilist's classical principles. For the radical nihilist, in his fury at contingency, renounces not only the unique, the particular, and the indeterminate, not only the being that he is personally, but the being of the existent itself, which falls now under the curse of indeterminate contingency, as if it were any existence whatsoever. 'That there exists a world in general',

'that there exists a "there is something"', 'that I am quite simply', 'that there is something in general which I am'; such are the formulas that the nihilist employs.

In truth, the henceforth unlimited astonishment that is expressed in these expressions and the shaking of being's simple existence have their deepest foundation in this state of things: that man at bottom is not cut out for any mode of existence whatsoever, but for himself, in so far as he is also of the world. He reaches a pathological extreme in so far as he remains within theory alone, in so far as he does not realise his freedom in practice, in the constitution of *his* world. {Note: This goes for all the forms of freedom that are here discussed. They all belong to the domain of reason, described by Kant, that deceives itself and that, in place of being understandable as praxis, in place of transforming itself into practical reason, remains theoretical, and so moving and tragic that it is possible for the antinomies and pathological forms of freedom born henceforth to arise. These antinomies, insoluble within the framework of theoretical reason, will be resolved by practical reason; further still, they will no longer be posed.}

4. Digression on the general validity of the statements concerning philosophical anthropology.

These first formulations of the non-identification of man with himself are exaggerations. But they are, if it will be allowed, *philosophical exaggerations*. The principle indicated is at the root of the facts, but, taken as such, it appears more radical than reality and seems pathological. If man dwelled perpetually on the impossibility of self-identification, there would remain for him no other solution [*issue*],[11] to put it bluntly, than suicide – the only one the Stoics perceived; no other means to abolish what one is in the state of non-freedom, to cancel contingency. However, what we are calling 'philosophical exaggeration' is not falsification; if consciousness of contingency is, admittedly, almost always less precise and more illusory than the formulas claimed to express it, these formulas are nevertheless born of the nihilist life itself, and must be once again, as it were, there transposed. They are thus not only statements concerning the life that unfolds in the paradoxical, but documents emanating from this life itself. The exaggeration stems from what these statements in principle only express in situations of exception, of which, moreover, certain formulations complete and specify actual [*effectifs*] states, and lead them only then to their actual truth [*effective*]. What is 'exaggerated', that is to say, pushed to an

extreme of acuity and to a bare truth, is in the first place the situation of contingency itself, and in the second place only the statement of which it is the object. The formulations are thus not only expressions of this existence but they 'inform' it, and in such a way that they *become* real.

Although we take them to be rare, situations of non-identification are probably not. They are only rarely expressed and rarely communicated because their formulas are not the starting point of anything and because they come from a socially non-existent point of view (for they are neither questions nor answers; they reveal only astonishment). Even if it will be admitted that such situations are extremely rare, this will say nothing against their philosophical value or against their utility in philosophical anthropology. It should be noted, moreover, that philosophy preserves a certain antipathy towards treating the infrequent philosophically, be it due to the identification of the general and the essential, fatal in many respects to Western philosophy, or because the verifiable in general is accepted as criteria of the scientific. It is very characteristic of this state of things that Jaspers dealt with his theory of 'limit situations', which are certainly rare, in a 'psychology of conceptions of the world'. It was not quite obvious in his eyes – still wholly confused by a naturalist conception of science – that he was philosophising in treating despair, death, ecstasy, etc.... It is necessary to uphold, on the contrary, that the rarest human situations and the least familiar human types can play a part in an interpretation which would aim at the general on the condition of considering and interpreting the very fact of their rarity. To return to our case, we can say that an extremely precise state of shock of the contingent is rare, because, in the first place, the duplicity of the *I* is not experienced in practice – the man who discovers himself as already existing can really *make* something of himself – and because, in the second place, the mortal shock is resolved into attitudes that already constitute a *modus vivendi*, attitudes that conceal their character of contingency. The study that is attempted here can thus only have for its theme a subject whose life continues, and thus of such compromise attitudes. {Note: What goes for these exceptional human situations goes for all the phenomena and human types that must be explored in philosophical anthropology, this being something that must not remain perfectly empty out of consideration for the concept of validity in general. Such an account, which seems directed against scientific 'rigor', and just as easily justifies precisely those who depend on the fixation of general traits, that, more often than not, must admit of statements that are valid in general, does not sufficiently question

the philosophical significance of the term 'generality', and does not hesitate to take 'generality' for a purely logical category that could be indifferently applied to all classes of objects. These statements are false. For the general plays different roles in different places (different in the domain of the animal, for example, than in that of man); it becomes in each case significant only in relation to individuation and specification, in such a way that, consequently, these general statements have for each class of objects a different essentiality and dignity. *Man is general in a very specific* [*spécial*] *way*; he is not realised according to a single form foreseen in principle and valid in general, but, as daily life and history indicate, according to many different types. Man is in plural 'men' in an entirely different way than the animal is in plural 'animals'. In the latter case the plural signifies the generality of the specific [*spécial*]; in the former, the set of the multiple specifications of the general. Such a plural represents much more than just empirical variants of an *a priori* 'humanity' in itself. It is the fact of the variation, and not the constancy of the variable, that defines the specifically human in philosophical anthropology. Therein, it is true, something of the general is likewise still expressed. To what extent is a general determination valid?

The fact of not being fixed on any *a priori* material world, of not being settled on any world, of not having any foreseen determination, thus of being *indeterminate*, defines man essentially (as we have shown elsewhere, *Recherches philosophiques*, IV).

It is thus only to the point of specific indetermination that the general determinability of man is possible. What comes from this indetermination, what man makes of it, can no longer be determined from the point of view of the general if one does not want to affirm and deny indetermination simultaneously. The case of the nihilist who perpetuates the instability and the indetermination of his role, who does not decide in favour of any determination and who ceaselessly confuses the indicative 'can' with the conditional 'could', and who does not want anything other than to find himself in his most formal *I*, is a special case. We will not hesitate in what follows to introduce a different type of man, equally 'held up' to philosophical anthropology.

We are aware of thus making ourselves advocates of the concept of the type, employed and rejected in an equally vague way. The criticism addressed to this concept, namely, that it does not have the univocal structure of γένος, should be handed over to another court. The famous 'accusation of the good Lord' with which the biologist set an end to the ideas of his colleague, the mathematician, is also applicable here.

If the essential is not essential through its generality, the question of knowing if a thing will be general or specific [*spécial*] could be rejected as non-philosophic. Undoubtedly, the philosophical enterprise, accustomed to an average generality, becomes unstable in renouncing its claim to the general; it does not know to just what specific [*spécial*] and to just what concrete it can and must advance. When it deepens into the specific [*spécial*], an external limit of its competence is not prescribed in advance. Instead, as in historical research, the thing that one discovers and the documents by which one discovers it are mutually conditioned and corrected; it is the result of this working together, which decides the degree of specification [*spécialisation*] and this decides the result.[12]}

5. Shame as the reality of the consciousness of the contingent, and as the classical form of its concealment.

{Note added by Stéphanopoli: The states of the soul to be treated further, and encompassed in the German term '*Scham*', are exhausted neither by what we call 'shame' nor 'modesty' considered independently of one another. Sometimes expressed as shame and sometimes as modesty, it is a matter of shame of being such as one is, of one's own origin, and thus of something pre-existing which serves as the foundation of these expressions, and of others as well, to which a nuanced analysis might appeal. (It is thus a matter of an affective state inherent to an existence, not to an action. Shame of the act is remorse. Shame of being diversifies up to the point of regret and sometimes reaches shame of the Act. The 'shame' in question goes thus from regret of the Act from which I arose, and which is not mine, to modesty in unveiling my self, which is not as I would have liked.)}

Thus we return to contingency.

The state of shock of the contingent, as an attitude within life, and stripped to the fullest extent possible of all shocking character, is called *shame*. Shame is not originally shame of having done this or that, even though this form of shame already signifies that I do not identify myself with something that emanates from me, my action, and that nevertheless I must, that is, by constraint, identify with it. The fact of being capable of this special moral shame itself already requires that I am at the same time identical and non-identical with myself as a formal condition; *that I can not get out of my skin, even though I can conceive of it as such*, which I meet in the freedom of the experience of myself – but as non-free. Shame is not born of this incongruity; this incongruity is itself already shame. In shame the self wants to free itself, in so far as it feels definitely

and irrevocably delivered to itself, but where it escapes it remains in a deadlock; it remains at the mercy of the irrevocable, and thus of itself.

Nevertheless, man makes in this a discovery: precisely whilst he experiences himself as not-self-made, he has a presentment for the first time that he comes from something that is not him, he has a presentment for the first time of the *past*; not, however, of what we are accustomed to calling the 'past', not our own, familiar, and historical past, but precisely the completely strange, irrevocable, and transcendent past; that of the *origin*. Man has a presentment of the world from which he comes but to which he no longer belongs as himself. *Thus shame is above all shame of the origin*. We defer to the first biblical examples of shame: to the coincidence of shame and the fall, and to the example of the sons of Noah who, 'the face turned away from shame' [*sic*],[13] covered the nudity of their father. {Note: In the case of historical man, *Scheu* (*veneratio respectus*), that is, timid respect, is the piety that replaces shame. It is the circumspect approach of one's own past and of the one that precedes it, which is undoubtedly further off, but which is no longer beyond.}

Although the origin arises as what one *is not* as free, and what one could not elect by a free choice, the category of the origin is a characteristic category of human existence. The animal has not accomplished the definitive leap from the origin [*Sprung aus dem Ursprung*] into freedom. It remains constantly bound to the reality from which it comes and confused with it in such a way that the origin can no more be considered as anterior reality than the animal can be considered *qua individuum*.

For this being only, separated from the reality from which he comes, and for whom it *is not* there for him alone, this reality is something unique; it is the *origin* and as such it is to some extent endowed with a transcendence that presents itself under the aspect of anteriority [*Transzendenz nach rückwarts*]. In man alone, the liaison with that from which one comes can be maintained.

What starts as shame [*Schande*] ends as honour:[14] the one who is ashamed undoubtedly returns to himself. The power to not remain in the grips of the world, with its heritage of being-precisely-oneself and being-also-of-the-world, and the power to refer yet again to oneself, testifies already to the double condition of man: although he is something other than himself, he is nevertheless himself. The one who is in the state of shame undoubtedly flees, but only towards himself. He would like through shame to retreat underground, but he only retreats into himself up to the point where he forgets, proud of the power to escape (in himself), the motive that he had for fleeing (from not being himself).

Then the one who is in the state of shame prides himself on his power of concealment. He sublimates and falsifies his genuine motive, which has been presented as the scandal of shame in the failure of identification. *He now makes the misery of shame a virtue*. In the concealing, he rehabilitates the concealed under the aspect of the secret, or alternatively holds it in reserve as his most intimate and deliberate self, and as what belongs to the self expressly and belongs only to the self. In concealing, he appropriates what he must conceal, what is of the world, what is 'common' in the world, and what there is in 'common' with the world, in such a way that it now becomes 'private' and one's 'own'. The weariness of being-precisely-myself and the original motives of concealment are now not only stifled and disowned but are also the occasion of a strengthening of oneself and of a positive pride. The man who has so transformed shame is no longer engaged in this world, it is no longer offered to him. And he denies afterwards, while abstaining from the world through callousness and through purity, the fact of having come into the world through contingency and the imposture of 'worldliness'.[15]

Precisely because of this moral *happy ending*, shame is the most typical symptom. In it, since life continues, the antinomy is transformed into a *modus vivendi*. Among many other equally instructive symptoms the most important is *self-disgust* because it presupposes the habituation of the *I* to itself, which is fulfilled in the course of life, and thus its *identification* 'despite itself'. Self-disgust is the occasional protest against this automatic habituation of the *I* 'precisely to itself'. At the moment when disgust occurs, life takes on, as it were, the function of an external milieu in which the *I* is misled in perpetuity. In self-disgust, one is not strange to oneself and astonished, as in the shock of the contingent but, on the contrary, is *too* familiar to oneself. Yet this self-habituation proves next to nothing against contingency. 'Why', asks the I in disgust, 'is this self precisely so familiar to me?' 'Why does all this concern me?' And it returns so-called 'normal' self-identity to the simple habituation of the parts of the self to each other.

The thousand forms of hypocrisy, of disguise, and of comedy positively exemplify the negative proof of shame and disgust: the instability of man in relation to himself, his vagueness. The self succeeds only provisionally at abandoning its precise existence as such and thus at taking the form of another and making itself, as it were, the occasion and the matter of multiple personifications. The provisional is itself conclusive: among all the species, man is the one who has the least character.

6. The future perfect; the spirit of escape [fugue];[16] *man in the subjunctive.*

In shame, man discovers himself as delivered to himself, as a being that was already there before the act of self-experience. The imperfect 'I was there' is in a sense already a disavowal of my self as free [*mon moi en tant que je libre*]; even more so is the past perfect, as far back as one can go. For the past perfect announces that 'what had been there, that was not me'.

This dubious freedom to proceed as far as the past perfect, and to act as if one reached what is underneath the self, has a parallel in man's possibility of reaching the future perfect. This possibility is equally the sign of his freedom and his non-freedom; it also leads to the failure of self-identification.

For a start, the simple future is the most common symptom of human freedom. It is no more than a cliché that the future is the dimension of indeterminacy, the dimension within which I can act. It is no surprise that philosophies that spring from the Kantian theory of freedom, from Hegel's to Heidegger's, are philosophies of time.

But in so far as man does not realise this freedom in the practical – in so far as he uses the dimension of the future to override his contingent 'being-precisely-now' [gerade-jetzt-Sein], as he reserves all the energy required by the demands of the hour, as he spends it in order to realise this dimension as such and is committed more and more, hands tied, to the positive direction of time, *ad infinitum – he compromises his freedom*: for the more he proceeds, abandoning his ties, in the direction of the future that this freedom makes him glimpse, the more he is led astray in the domain of the indeterminate [*l'indéterminé*]. The future thus prolonged is qualitatively transformed, it is dialectically reversed, and all of a sudden it is no longer the future that is man's own. This is mislaid in something that is no longer available to him. To this 'time' not even the specific direction of time, its forward sense, applies; it is reduced to something that will no longer be of the future, to an αιών irrelevant to the self. Man can surely still think and indicate the existence of this αιών, but in a sterile way, without comprehending or realising it; it is too far beyond the horizon of life that is close and one's own.

The 'I will be' is henceforth changed into a 'what will be, I will not be'. The positive expression of this formula is the future perfect: 'I will have been'.[17]

That man can declare 'I will have been' and that he can outlive himself in thought constitutes an astonishing act of freedom and of

self-abstraction. In anticipating memory, he returns to himself as if he were not imprisoned in the framework of his present life, as if he were able to live his life in advance, to be transported beyond it, and to preserve its memory; a memory to which he is nevertheless referred in the time of his present life, for which the future is henceforth neutral. But what he discovers in these acts of free self-transposition is once again something negative; he sees himself pushed back into the deepest past and already sees his death – still future – as past, like his birth. Everything is already seen as past, and, as in *Ecclesiastes*, everything that does not accidentally express its nihilism in the future perfect is understood as 'vanity'. To those that will be, no memory will be granted by those that will come after them, because they will have simply been. And already the future becomes past.

This freedom to exceed oneself (of which the future anterior is both the triumph and the failure) has its analogue in the *spatial freedom* of man. This is particularly important because space, more than anything else, represents a possibility of evading the being that I am precisely. This degenerates into spatial panic and the spirit of escape.

One can envisage space, as does Max Scheler, as a milieu, seeing it as the product of the freedom characteristic of motility [*liberté motrice*], as the independence of the here and the there, and as their permutability.[18] This freedom can now go astray, veering off into areas of complete irrelevance to me. If it sets its course according to its own impulse, a moment comes where it exceeds the limits of its own domain. Countless 'also-theres' [auch-dort] arise without any differentiation: they are there simultaneously and claim to be there singularly, without this simultaneity being fulfilled in such a way that man could be there-and-there at the same time. *Together these points remain in the subjunctive*. Since 'I could have been here, but also there and there', every here is changed into a 'precisely-here', whose contingency makes it unbearable. No 'here' is preferred to another.[19] The original sense of spatial freedom, in so far as it consists of a power [*pouvoir*] to pass from a certain here to a certain there, is neutralised by the fact that free movement [*liberté motrice*] is on the wrong track. This neutralisation can present itself as inertia or as the spirit of escape. The one to whom space presents itself under the aspect of the pathological and who falls into the contingency of the 'here' no longer attempts any movement because this would be entirely useless; or, indeed, the anxiety of 'never being able to be here precisely and of having, nevertheless, to be precisely here' will become identified with the panic of the nihilist in the paradox of freedom: to want never to be precisely-me and to be nevertheless perpetually

restrained to the precisely-me. Space appears now as the ensemble of the possibilities of fleeing the precisely-there and the Being-precisely-me. But all emigration ends nevertheless in a new here and pushes the wanderer from one contingency to another, and from one subjunctive to another.

Pulled from one side to the other by the excessive possibilities of the world and of things that he knows simultaneously, and of which he knows that to experience them is to lose them, the one who is sick with the sense of Space, snatched from the place that he has just given up, does not arrive at nothing; he remains, in the strong sense of the term, always himself, because he is the only constant within the change. Nevertheless, he never actually [*effectivement*] returns to himself. At bottom, he searches for nothing. If he seeks something, it is not the determinate, but precisely the end of determinations. He wants to impose the *equivalence* of this 'there' and another 'there' in order to *occupy* it with his own present, because, in another way, this would remain an imaginary dimension. This equivalence, however, can never be verified through an omnipresent existence. It oscillates thusly, seeking over every thing the indetermination of everywhere; but it is deceived at every step of the way by the determination of the precisely-here.

Nothing can stop this pursuit; it comes to its end only there where the sick fall blind and dizzy. The points reached, then lost again, and all those not even reached, are reduced to each other and interchanged. Omnipresence finally seems achieved because during the short duration of vertigo, they enkindle the indetermination sought. But this is only an appearance for this indetermination costs too much. It cannot be preserved because we have ourselves been struck by indetermination at the moment where it sprung up in space, and as guarantee of our own existence, there is nothing more than the uneasiness of vertigo. Just like the fundamental panic of being-precisely-me, this wandering is condemned to a perpetual repetition: the pursuit begins again. This attempt to make Being-precisely-there disappear is once again overcome:

That is, the specific precisely-Here loses its significance, and the pursuit of other heres and other theres becomes unmotivated and superfluous, as soon as the space of all heres – *the space of the world* itself – gathers in one and the same *precisely-Here*. One is now the *prisoner* of the *precisely-Here*, in spite of the incalculable number of fragments of the world still unrealised; in whatever direction one turns, one always remains precisely-here – that is, *in this world* – and the attempt to steal away from this world, to escape from it through any other place, is thus revealed as impossible, for there is no wall

surrounding the Here that could lend itself to any effraction. One is prisoner of the precisely-Here not despite but because it is precisely without limits. The terror is transformed into torpor.

It is necessary to explain once more why being-precisely-here is identified with being-precisely-me, and why, in the impulse that determines the escape from the self, in the flight before the being-precisely-me, the *Here* is abandoned in the place where it is oneself. For the man who possesses κινησις κατα τοποη, the system of spatial positions appears as the very principle of immobility and contingency: no point can transform into another, none concerns the other, each is nothing but itself. Space is thus the *Principium individuationis*. This reciprocal indifference will undoubtedly only be manifest for the being who can pass from one point to another, for the being that can go out of the element to which it is accustomed. This the animal cannot achieve because, despite its κινησις, it remains in its specific vital space, its own milieu, and never transports itself in what is strange as such. This only man can do. He *can abandon 'his' place, and he hopes that by losing it he can forget the principle of individuation and his own belongings. And in losing what belongs to him – the 'his' – he hopes to lose himself.*

7. Thirst for power and search for glory.

The one ill from the sickness of space wants the contingency of where he is precisely to be neutralised. He wants to be *everywhere at the same time*; he wants to *seize* totality in one fell swoop. But the desire to possess is only one specification of a deeper thirst for power: the desire to render the world congruent with oneself, more exactly, to force the world to become the *I*. It can at most become *mine* instead of becoming *I*; for the thirst for power, this is the first scandal and the first compromise.

Although a symptom of the shock of the contingent, the thirst for power also strives to neutralise the fact of contingency. In the fact that man is given to himself in advance, that he can only discover himself without being able to invent himself, and that the world and the Other are always ahead of him, the weakness of man is ceaselessly demonstrated to him and reproached. He cannot bear that there is still something outside of him that is not him. He cannot bear to be in the world superfluously, like 'a fifth wheel on a car', for it works just as well without him, or that once condemned to being, he must content himself with being only one being among others. The total absence of limitation to the thirst for power which wants to hold everything under its thumb, even beyond all necessity, is only the expression of the

absolute disappointment that the *I* feels when it realises that once in existence it is confined to *share it with* other beings and that the totality of existence is not its alone. A word from Nietzsche, 'If there was a God, how could I endure not to be God' [*sic*], constitutes the definitive formulation of this painful state.[20] In the desire for power, man seeks to make up for the advance that the world has on him; since already he *is not* all, he must *have* all. He gets his revenge on the world by spreading his contingent self over the world, by incorporating it within himself and by representing it. For the one who is powerful is no longer only *himself*, such as he was in his miserable condition, but this one and that one, himself and the other, an ensemble. He is simultaneously here and there and there again. For he is, in domination, in representation, and in glory, to employ an expression from theology, *omnipresent*.

So he wants to be now and always. That is, he attempts to be immortalised in time, just as he worked to be glorified in space; he attempts to subsequently refute the contingency of the now to which he is abandoned. And he endeavours to set up his authentic being in the form of a permanent monument, in relation to the Memory and in the Renown of which his actual and incomplete form stands merely as the phenomenon to the Idea. His being is still only the unfaithful and temporal copy of this glorious monument. Here is the paradox: the more its glory increases, the less he 'himself' seems to have to do with his own monument. It has usurped his name and will reap the glory in his place even long after his death. Crushed and devastated, he is now envious of his own great name.

It is not by chance that we have entitled the preceding the 'pathology of freedom'. It would undoubtedly be vain to think that the goal of this designation is to draw a portrait of the complete man. The descriptions that correspond to it are, as we said, philosophical exaggerations. But the pictures that we have presented, considered in themselves, are not absurd. They represent the radical dangers that man can be subject to, and they are better known to each of us than one usually thinks; dangers which are here pushed to their ultimate, catastrophic aspect, compromising life itself. The forms of shame, disgust, desire for glory, depict compromises that are all too familiar to us. And if, in these ordinary phenomena, we are not in the habit of discerning the shock of the contingent, it is because of their 'ambivalence'. They all present themselves, as it were, in positive disguises; they constitute the *refuges* where one escapes from the threat of the contingent, and, compared to suicide, they are already *modi vivendi*. Shame, disgust and desire for glory take place, in the final analysis, in the course of contingent

life; since practical life is a self-affirmation, they are already constant compromises with life accused of contingency; they are protests and insults. They are the protests and injuries that splinter on the back of the insulted enemy, and which are nevertheless made for him to carry, less in order to constantly devastate him by their sarcasms than in order to remain purely and simply with him in order to live. Antinomies are rarely stronger than the love of life. The Nihilists also want to live.

II. Antithesis: Picture of The Historical Man

8. Life continues. The shock of the contingent repeats itself unwillingly.

> 'One thing alone can cure us from being ourselves.'
> 'Yes, but at bottom, it is less important to be cured than to be able to live.' [*sic*]
> (Conrad, *Lord Jim*[21])

The man who gets lost ceaselessly and futilely in the deadlock of his own contingency, and who finds his way in his 'being-precisely-me', as if he did not have life behind him, and precisely as if each time he had just been born, *pursues his life*. This is to say that paradox does not spring forth suddenly, from an imaginary point of departure situated 'before' life. It is rather in the middle of life itself, of life as it goes on in defiance of paradox and from under it, in so far as man does not make paradox a pretext for putting an end to himself. To whatever extent he compromises and impedes the course of life with his fanatical formalism and constant interruption, alleging that it is not itself, and that it cannot continue because it can take place in *iteration* and indeed must take place in iteration if it wants to remain effective [*efficace*], he concedes the possibility of life that perseveres in spite of him and he yields to it. The possibility of its repetition thus drives paradox *ad absurdum*; this is itself paradox and contradicts its own destructive claim. Consequently, the condition of paradox is iteration. The latter is itself paradox anew; for paradox should never be repeated within this life which it claims can never have a positive outcome. In fact, that paradox repeats does not mean that it repeats itself on its own initiative. Its movement is neutral from a temporal point of view; neither would it want nor would it be able to generate the temporal mode of repetition on its own. Repetition is rather the paradoxical temporal mode of life itself as it is realised in duration *against all* paradox: life hastens against the resistance of paradox opposed to its course, and at each point of this current of life

paradox is experienced in so far as it plays the part of a barricade. It is thus not paradox that repeats but life that repeats the experience of paradox at every moment. From the point of view of the resistance which paradox represents, it is always the same life that collides with it in order to afterwards continue its course from under it. Repetition only takes place for the life that goes on; it thus develops as the permanence of its arrest. It always represents the *specific* negation of life carried out in time.

As iteration of the identical, 'movement opposed to memory' [*sic*], repetition is thus the principle of the neutralisation of historical time within a life that can continue its course even outside historicity [cf. Kierkegaard 1941: 33].[22] *That is, the nihilist paradox of the experience of freedom characterises non-historical existence, or more exactly, existence against history; this* [*existence*] *consequently heightens its own difficulty and attempts with so much obstinacy to attack the walls of the antinomy that contains it as it is deprived of time, which alone, in so far as it could be historical, would pass for an answer to paradox*. The man henceforth deeply engaged in the idea of the antinomy is actually non-historical. What so falls due to him in division – and this necessarily since he now pursues his life once and for all – that is, what he is and what he was, is not in a strict sense a life; it is at bottom only an event arriving accidentally, an event that in relation to the constancy of paradox remains something simply possible and does not lend itself to recollection [cf. Simmel 1971: 190].[23] The shock of the contingent thus destroys the strict possibility of experience itself, of appropriating life lived *de facto*. Everything happens as if it took place 'for nothing'; even the fact that it has been lived is constantly repudiated by paradox. Since he has been exposed to the accidental change of his fortuitous experiences, if man tried to return to himself, he could no longer capture his life *in concreto*. For there is no life, strictly speaking. Not because of but despite the paradoxical nature of man's situation at large, at the moment when paradox takes place at 'the interior of life', it becomes increasingly stringent, and all the more stringent as it neutralises life and makes it unfit for memory. Yet it becomes in the end the one and only real. That is to say, it is not only paradox that is disavowed by the life that continues, but life is in its turn disavowed by paradox; because it is unfit for recollection, and because it has yielded its vital force and its reality to paradox, it passes by as if it were not there.

It is only an apparent contradiction that both life and paradox are at once the conquered and the conqueror. If life merely goes on, it is defeated; paradox loses out in turn because it is constrained

precisely to repetition, constrained to ceaselessly seek to overcome. This ambiguity and oscillation between victor and vanquished, never finding the equilibrium of indifference, preserves precisely the paradox 'of life'; and the duration of what is lived in life in spite of paradox determines paradox's pride. For the larger the field in which man continues, the more paradox proves that it was right. Thereby man in despair finally 'grabs hold' of himself and of the contingent fact of his being-precisely-me, and remains suspended in this situation, without having succeeded at discovering himself or at unifying himself through a positive experience.

Here already, with man in the grips of paradox, the historical path takes shape as the power [*puissance*] opposing paradox. This fact expresses that historical life is itself placed outside of paradox, but also that the man opposed to history, instead of simply meeting paradox, brings it to light as his characteristic property. It maintains, fixes and tyrannises man, acquiring for him a sort of retro-active truth. That is to say, paradox is only valid for the man who experiences it in its acuity, and who does not easily come to the end of it. Thus paradox expresses the troublesome character of the very one who questions; it is not the sign of a 'question in itself' which would exist apart from the one who questions or which would apply to man in general. The special situation corresponding to the paradox of identification is thus determined. But if we now cross over to a new type, the historical man, we can no longer conceive of man as a fugitive before the shock of the contingent; it is necessary to consider him as a type *sui generis* which is already beyond the state of contingency, and of which the principle traits, such as memory and the ability to experience, do not represent ulterior acts carried out with an eye to salvation, but original *modi vivendi*. {Note: admittedly, these are still *modi vivendi* that do not yet reveal man in full possession of himself and in the free exercise of his freedom. We do not quite reach to the highest degree of self-concretisation. It is a matter of a return to the concrete, the steps of which have already been marked out in the history of the philosophy of freedom: between the Kantian philosophy of the *I* and the Marxian theory of practice and of action, there is a Hegelian philosophy of history.}

9. The 'I remember, therefore I am myself' as the minimum of identification.

The nihilist who expresses himself in the proposition 'that I am precisely myself', when he wants to escape from himself, turns in circles or only

encounters a contingent stranger who bears his name. It is difficult to positively determine the mode of identification that such an I awaits and claims. The proposition that he states expresses at bottom his indignation in the face of the fact that the various parts of his self do not coincide through the miracle of a pre-established harmony. He does not realise that identity can be stabilised subsequently by memory. This can be brought to light by a kind of *Cartesian argumentation*.

From the point of view of memory, the antinomy and the difficulties of identification that have just been described are inconceivable. *Because what I discover as myself in memory does not only contain the 'strange', but also precisely me, the subject itself that is affirmed. The man of yesterday whom I remember already contains the two I's in an indissoluble union*. For the same reason, the very man who is astonished today by his contingency has the possibility of remembering his being astonished yesterday.

Thereby, a minimum of identification is achieved, so to speak, in a Cartesian manner: the *I* now no longer insists on its being-here and its being-now; he has suddenly discovered in himself a determination (i.e. yesterday's shock of the contingent) with which he can identify in good conscience today. He no longer discovers only the contingent man that he avoided, but the one who avoided contingency. But here is what is strange: both are already unified in memory. It is not only the act of recollection that confuses them. The object of memory is already an identity in memory. This will be further interrogated. Speaking first of the forms of identification: they are thus not immediately expressed by the formula 'I am myself', but by the alternatives, '*that which I was, I am*', and '*I remember, therefore I am myself*'.

This argument appears somewhat complicated. Two different types of identification intersect; it is firstly today's *I* that is identified with yesterday's; then in yesterday's *I*, the formal and contingent I merge. The second point is the most important: in yesterday's I, all that happened to it, all that it experienced, is confused. For yesterday's I is not exactly an 'I' but a *fragment of life* – at least in the eyes of today's memory.

10. Identification and the possessive.

For what does one remember? {Note: This question has not been posed despite the imposing number of monographs devoted to the psychology of memory; for this psychology is nearly always interested in the quantum and duration of memory. Philosophy, for its part, barely caught sight of the question. It accepted as a matter of course

that memory agreed in its object with perception, that only their acts and their temporal value differed. An analysis along the lines of ours, which is even phenomenological in the sense of the school, has been curiously neglected in thorough analyses of phenomenological time.} This seemingly crude question is decisive for philosophical anthropology. Unlike perception which has its object in front of it, a fragment of the world, memory is memory of a *situation* in which the perceiving and the perceived, the *I* and the world, are already confused to such an extent that neither the *I* without the world nor the world without the *I* can be abstracted as such from this single given.

I see, for example, a misfortune approaching me; it is still strange to me. It fills me with anguish: this anguish is nothing other than the stupefaction of the *I* before a radically strange object. But in memory, the misfortune is already *mine*. Not only do I remember its approach and my subjective reaction, but I remember the whole of the situation, which consists of the two preceding aspects, and thus presents itself as a fragment of life. It is henceforth impossible in the face of this fragment of life to fall back into astonishment that 'as myself I must be myself', because, in the case of painful experiences, it is in truth no longer the *I* that recalls memory and which arranges that which is recollected, but memory itself that forewarns the I and arranges it. In identical cases it is not the I that defines the self but lived experience; and now the I is no longer as indeterminate as before. From this point of view the shock of the contingent, in spite of the terror that accompanies it, even seems to be a kind of supplementary element: this terror of being precisely myself, disappearing because of a really unpleasant memory, can be postponed to a subsequent epoch and appears futile.

In memory, the contingent events that one has lived, those which occurred by accident, are thus already confused with the *I*. Identity was established before the terror of identification could rush to the surface. From this, one can draw very important conclusions for the notion of experience. Memory thus abolishes what we have recognised of the indeterminate and of the contingent in experience. In memory man discovers himself as a situation and not as an I; what he experienced, he now *is*; and if he disregarded the experience of his 'being such as it is' [*tel et ainsi*] [sosein], as well as everything he experienced and the modalities of his entire history, nothing of him would remain, not even his former *I*.

But this is not enough. For it is not only particular situations and fragmentary experiences which appear in memory, but life as a totality; life in the sense of bibliographical life. But it does not present itself as

a 'Gestalt', or as the unity of a thing; it is there as a 'medium': one is at home in one's own life, this life is *my* life, in spite of and through the multiplicity of beings and of things experienced. It is furthermore the field of all particular experiences wherein each is identified as '*mine*'; and I can run through it at any time. Through his history, which becomes one with him and envelops him, man escapes from the strangeness of the world and from the contingency of his 'being-precisely-me'. The identical proposition 'I am myself', analytical at its origin, and contradicted by the shock of the contingent, is transformed into this more meaningful proposition 'I am my life' or 'the self is life', and thus into a proposition of identification that is '*synthetic*' in the true sense of the term. It is completely characteristic that the 'am' and the 'is' of the two preceding statements are interchangeable. Life is not only the first person (I) nor only the third person (something strange and contingent), but is a possessive: it is *mine*, it is MY LIFE.

In truth, this '*my*' does not indicate the presupposition of the I as the proprietor to which life belongs. This would be to argue against history from a nihilist point of view of existence all over again. *The possessive pronoun does not ordinarily designate only the fact of possession but also the fact of 'being possessed'; neutrally, it designates the general fact of belonging. 'My' life thus equally signifies the fact that I belong to my life, as I, and that my life belongs to me, as mine.* {Note: It is only now that we reach the concept of authentically human experience. It represents here 'the having of the experience of life', a concept that indicates a knowledge of what there was to experience in life, a complete mode of man: this concept of experience could not have arisen earlier. Originally, that is, for the man against history, experience is not. For originally, that is, for the man against history, experience is not in itself 'experience of life', but rather announces a need for experiences. Experience thus becomes experience of life only from the point of life recollected and already lived as such. Curiously, in this situation, man finds not only himself, and even less the contingent things that he has experienced, but he extends his experiences to a characteristic generality that one can neither define nor refute theoretically. In any case, this generality signifies that the type of experience in question is not simply the subsequent result of experiences previously undergone, but that it is qualitatively more than the sum of these specific experiences. In so far as man can continue his life and grow old, and consequently no longer remains, like the nihilist, in the perpetual repetition of the now, this type of experience can become the specific character of the stage he reaches.}

The most diverse traits of historical man testify to the self-identity memory reveals under its formal aspect. He no longer knows the surprise of 'being such as it is' [*tel et ainsi*], of 'being-precisely-me'; he no longer knows the concrete faces of the shock of the contingent. The historical man would consider absurd the ideas of the nihilist on an indeterminate *transcendent* origin, and on his being placed here below thanks to a strange design. He is beyond the polarity of the present and the transcendent past that the nihilist, on the contrary, felt with such acuity. For he has his *own* past, a past in which he is not only united with his experiences, but with other beings and other persons. Even the time of his ancestors is not, in truth, strange to him; it is only distant. He can 'approach it with piety'. And if piety, like shame, is at the same time respect and fear, it does not compromise identification, as shame did. Piety consists instead of recognising the distance that the act of identification must cross when it realises the identification of a being with his ancestors.

11. What today is called 'I' as of tomorrow will be 'life'; of what the I's formality consists.

If the *'I'* nevertheless restores these a posteriori and contingent original experiences to its life through memory, this subsequent identification does not present any incorporation nor any organisation of the matter of life by an already *formal I*. For this *I* is nothing other than the vanguard of the plenitude of material life itself. If the *I* is formal, it is thanks to life; it is because life laid out and forced to consider all the possibilities, to experience the new, and to show presence of mind, formalises itself in an *I*, and ends at the point of an acute and lucid present, in such a way that it puts an end to its material richness at the point where it culminates. Whereas the nihilist I believes he chances to be precisely this man or that, and claims: 'Me, I am called man', it is, on the contrary, man who gives himself the 'name' of I, and who actually formalises himself as an I. *Man is not the rear-guard of the fact named 'I', but the I is the vanguard of the state of affairs named 'man'*. What is I today, so as to introduce life to experience and the world, constitutes my life as of tomorrow, joined together with all that was present; and a part of what is my life today was the 'I' yesterday.

The alternative between the *I* and contingent determination that ceaselessly shocked the nihilist is, so to speak, a mistake the I makes about its own role: it emphasised its conditioned formality and its presence as positivity and freedom; it opposed this to life 'which is only

material', and which sinks into the past. *This mistake about the self*, which brings the *I* to *actually* [*effectivement*] break with life in the case of counter-historical existence, does not take place in the case of historical man.

The conception of the *I* 'as a constitutive element' of life (at once in a logical and a temporal way) must yet not be understood as if there were no difference between the form of life and of the I. Certainly, they form but one in memory; yet memory itself is not an indifference, but a perpetual identification. A certain duality is incontestable; a certain hiatus remains, ventured through life between itself and the I. It is only when it gets ahead in the freedom of its possibilities and when it wants to be 'in the know' ['*au courant*'] that it takes precisely the form of the I. This hiatus admittedly always disappears in memory, and identity is restored anew.

We said above that memory 'informs'. We understand by this not only that the *I* remembers, and not only that the I 'keeps its life in the know', but that *life* draws its I close to it and into itself. This type of memory is even more frequent than the first. It has commonly been neglected in theories of memory, for this relapse of self within life does not present itself as an act, and psychology, like philosophy, is quite elementary when it comes to the vocabulary of the I's passivity. The conditions of normal memory are such, in any case, that the I yields to life's gravitational force ['Schwerkraft'], where it is then charged with melancholia ['Schwermut'] and drawn to life's interior: it thus disappears as the I and as the terminal present.[24] For memory, life is no longer *its* own life, for life and I are now confused, there is no longer between them this distinction, this separation, which alone allows the use of the possessive pronoun. The life that is thus at home in memory no longer has need of particular representations, of the realisation of former situations, of the precise repetition of past experiences. It can fully suffice with the states of the soul of another time, of which images and realisations constitute a secondary process. {Note: Cf. the classical example of Proust (*A la recherche du temps perdu,* I, ch. I) [*sic*].}

12. Identity in certain stable situations.

The presentation of the problem of identity and of identification would be incomplete without mention of the situation in which the panic of identity does not break forth, and where no problem of identification arises.

If in order to be at home, man is forced to superimpose on the natural world an artificial world, arrested and constructed by him – that is, the social and economic world with its customs and its laws – he shows undoubtedly that he is not cut out for the natural world. But this second world, ever varied according to historical conditions, can nevertheless succeed and stabilise, to such an extent that man is in his element there and the problems and pathological attitudes of identity fade into the background, just as identification does through history. In these stable social states, *it is the world itself that takes care of identifying* the self before auto-identification is necessary.

The social world already realises a minimum of identification in the *name*. Once man is baptised – and no one can baptise himself – the name persists as a constant in life; and it is a constant so natural that the one who is named, without worrying about the debate between nominalism and realism, not only claims *to be called* John or James, but *to be* James or John. Conversely, in the case where the name is changed (as is, for example, the name of the woman who becomes a wife), a real [*effectif*] change takes place.

James is thus named James today and tomorrow, and is regarded as James yesterday. Identification thus seems assured. But as we have said, it is only so when the milieu remains relatively identical and identifiable. *For the identity of the self* is *a function of the identity of the world which is its correlate*.

In this world, we thus exceed the minimum guaranteed by the name and the I now plays a determined role. This role can be so stable and so natural that it obstructs the *role of man* (the judge, the professor, the general, etc.), and disregards it. Thus it is conceived of as independent of him, as his simple substrate, and as simple 'role overload'; thus as an *empty* 'I'. This ensures that man sees neither difference nor antinomy between himself and his function, and that he cannot restrict his authentic existence to an abstract self. In these stable situations, the phenomenon of the role of 'what' and 'that which' one is, is no less a 'primary phenomenon' than the phenomenon I. That the role represents the accident and the I the substrate – a distinction which undoubtedly applies to the situation that we experience in this day and age, in which the social world ceaselessly transforms itself and in which man continually changes position, as well as to a great number of social and historical situations – is not *a priori* and is not demonstrated by the philosophy of the I. *In stable or stationary epochs, it is entirely possible that it is not the self that 'has' a role, but conversely the role that 'has' a self; at the very least it is possible that the tension and*

the non-identity that were treated in the portrait of the nihilist *are not realised*.

In the situation outlined here, the relation between man and the world differs essentially from the one that has been described up to now. Under the form of the role, belonging to the social world, 'social worldliness' [soziale weltlichkeit], is already in place. That here the world is not something 'exterior', something that is added on to me, shows the uselessness of terror in the face of the contingent as well as the necessity of its interiorisation by memory and its subsequent assimilation. One might think that in the stable situation where man is identified through the world, he is discharged of and exempted from all collaboration with identification. This is not the case. Rather, even in stable situations, man must comply with and answer to the claim to identity that the world places in him. This correspondence consists, in truth, of other acts than the simple acts of recollection that are the means of historical identification. It consists of moral acts, of acts of 'responsibility' above all. Today I must answer before the world for what I did yesterday. This identity is clearly no longer of a historical nature, but is of a juridical and moral nature. It is historical only when, on the one hand, the place and the role of man, and on the other hand, the claim and the authority of the world in him, become so vague that man is forced to call himself by his name so that he can answer to it through identity and so be put back 'in himself'. Just as it is from the heart that one obeys for his part the call of duty according to Kant, the call of identification now springs up from the heart of the historical man. When he answers his own call and when called by his name, when he pulls himself together and is put back in himself, he resembles, from the point of view of the stable situation, the Münchhausen knight who pulls himself out of a marsh by his own hair.

From the point of view of this identity guaranteeing the social, the two types that we have described up till now, the nihilist who does not succeed in identifying with himself, and the historical man who takes charge of his own identification, no longer appear so far from one another as it seemed before. For both *need* identification. And the forced staging of the rescue of the historical man together with the unconcealed catastrophe of the nihilist testify to their identical position: strangeness in relation to the world.

Despite this similitude, the portrait of the nihilist appears philosophically much more important to us than that of the man placed in historical existence. If the essence of man actually [*effectivement*] consists of his non-fixity, and thus of his propensity for a thousand

incarnations, it is the nihilist who makes of this instability *as such* his definitive destiny, and who is determined by indetermination; he does not profit from specifying in this or that manner. The nihilist, indetermination incarnate, paints *an exaggerated portrait of man* through his manner of flaunting his faults without the least concealment.

Next to this the portrait of historical man appears of dubious ease. Man as historical presents himself as a being who is worthy of [*à la hauteur de*][25] what happens to him, of his contingency, and as a man who has the courage to risk *amor fati* because he follows *fatum* closely and always calls it 'myself', who thus, to employ a famous Hegelian formula in a non-orthodox sense, makes all that is in him, and in him by contingence, 'reasonable' after the fact [*après coup*]. Certainly, he takes pride in saying in the face of all that happens to him 'this is mine'. But he cannot dispose of what has become 'mine': this identification is thus suspect.

13. Calling into question the problem of philosophical anthropology.

Identification is not so simple. Undoubtedly, it is necessary, when one is not identified and situated by the world itself, to be identified through oneself. Nevertheless, it is not enough to be situated in oneself. Without the world, identification is impossible. *The one who acts* (disregarding the socially identified self) is alone set apart from the difficulties of the terror of contingency; for he does not insist on his ceaselessly assimilated past but on his task, which relates him to the world. Although the world did not assign him a determinate place anymore than the nihilist and the historical man, he actually [*effectivement*] achieves identity.

In the eyes of the one who wills, what is willed is thus, compared to everything which is only encountered and to his empirical existence, something non-contingent. This non-contingent, in contrast to experiences, goes without being assimilated; it is the will that must assimilate the world. {Note: It is not by chance that many *want* to will simply in order to escape from contingency, and that the fact of having a task is a solution for them.}

It is true that there is a good possibility that the world appears contingent to the one who seeks to transform it. But it is beyond all contingency that it is *him* who has the will to transform it. If one now wants to attempt to mimic the proposition we have stated 'that I am precisely me' in the formula 'that I will precisely this', the latter would be revealed as a pure construction: it is absolutely inconceivable starting

from the will. And if one accepted this formula in the situation of will, it would neutralise it. The man who seeks something precise can be against the world, and although the world did not assign him a determinate place, can thus achieve an actual [*effective*] identification. This would be expressed by a formula that is neither that of the nihilist – 'I am myself' – nor that of the historical man – 'I am that which was' – but which is stated as follows: 'what I willed, I will'. In the concept of the task, the constant is already there; it is thus not necessary that it be maintained as such, in the form of a memory or of any experience. For the task disappears only once the result is achieved. {Note: It is entirely characteristic to observe that from the permanence of the will results, without the least secret intent, *a* life, and that few biographies, and even few autobiographies, offer a unity as clear as those of the life of great men of State or revolutionaries, whose will aimed at everything but identity. This unity is thus a kind of 'bonus', unlike that of autobiographical existence.}

Through this recourse to action, it is true that philosophical anthropology reaches the limits of its legitimacy, its capacities and its competence. From the point of view of what man *does*, the question 'what is he and who is he authentically?' seems wrongly posed. *For acting is not being.*

It was Hegel who made the act disappear in considering it as already both developing and to come (and it becomes an actual [*effectif*] being subsequently and as past). In making it already engulfed by being itself, he transformed it in any event into a kind of 'being', and a kind of being not specifically human, for it is not by chance that it is called 'organic'. This attempt, the consequences of which are unlimited, now obscures the phenomenon of action. It was Kant, however, who treated the question as such and without any mask, although Hegel more explicitly than Kant gave an expression to the problem of self-identification. (He characterises history as the fact of coming to itself for the spirit that is not identical with itself). Self-identification through 'Aufklärung' and through the critique is an action for Kant: there is no question for him of observing [*constater*] what reason *is* (and for him it is equivalent to man), but of constituting it through the critical operation.

Hegel asks himself on the contrary what it *is* in order to answer dialectically that it is not *Being*; thus, although proceeding by negation, the answer that he gives remains within the framework of the theoretical. It recoups the qualitative leap from the theoretical to the practical from the term 'genesis', and replaces it in the theoretical domain itself. Historical materialism gets credit for having formulated anew

the specific sense of Kantian idealism, that is, the transformation of theoretical reason into practical reason.

The aims of Kant are ours also. And we presume that they carry a much greater significance than we had supposed at the start. Philosophical anthropology and its problem of the definition of man must consider itself opposite human action as a productive misunderstanding, and put an end to itself.

The question of knowing what man is authentically [Eigentlich] *is consequentially wrongly posed. For the theoretical definition is only a shadow that decision rejects in the theoretical realm* [*sic*].[26] '[W]hat I am in an authentic sense', 'what I discover in me', is always already decided, whether by myself or by another. What is opposed to the definition of man is thus not the irrational but the fact of human action; the action whereby man is constantly defined in fact, and whereby he determines what he is on each occasion. In this perpetual definition of himself that man presents in acting, is it useless to appeal to the principle of order, to demand a moment's pause to pose questions of 'authentic' definition, and to establish what man is in an 'authentic' sense. There is nothing more suspect than this 'authenticity' [Eigentlichkeit]. It is no accident that the German term *feststellen* [*constater*] signifies both to state something [konstatieren] and to fix something. And it is not by chance that the problem of definition (for example 'what is authentic to a German?' and also 'what is man authentically?') presents itself in conditions of reaction; in particular, in the state of incertitude and of crisis where one is no longer anything precise. The one who poses the problem of definition is now the inactive one, the one who compromises the real transformation and poses this problem retroactively, so to speak. 'Who am I authentically?', he asks, in place of being actually [*effectivement*] defined and of making someone of himself. While he poses the question and as he poses it, to put it hyperbolically, he is nothing at all; he is thus whatever he or another has made of him with the aid of an outdated practical definition. This is what he can consequently discover and define as his authentic existence. The question of knowing who I am is not of the sort that it is sufficient to pose, but of the sort that it is necessary to answer.

We finish with this consideration. The problematic of philosophical anthropology, which explored in the first part the pathological specifications of human freedom, appears from this point on as itself a contaminated form that denatures its problems. It makes of autonomy a definition of oneself; and while it teaches man to run after his 'authenticity' [Eigentlichkeit], it abandons him to those who have

an interest in putting him in his place, and makes him his lose his freedom.

Notes

1. The reference is to Emmanuel Levinas' translation of the first part of (Stern) Anders' presentation before the Kant society of Frankfurt and Hamburg in 1930, entitled 'Die Weltfremdheit des Menschen' (Stern 1934–35). 'Pathologie de la Liberté' shares some content with the later half of the same lecture.
2. Stéphanopoli's quotation marks suggest that Anders' term is 'Nachträglichkeit', from Freud. The term is conventionally translated as 'après-coup' in the French, and is translated as 'deferred action' in James Strachey's English translations of Freud. Jean Laplanche suggests 'afterwardness' as a preferable English rendition. See the editor's introduction to Laplanche (1999).
3. Alternative translations of '*le quelconque*' include 'the whatsoever', 'being whatsoever', 'anything whatever', and 'the indefinite'. I have chosen to translate '*le quelconque*' as 'the indeterminate' throughout, due to its adequacy in every context. Where noted, 'the indeterminate' translates '*indéterminé*' rather than '*quelconque*'.
4. Stéphanopoli's translation uses the terms '*auto-position*' and '*auto-production*'. In the English scholarship, 'self-positing' carries the significance of Fichte's 'setzen', which means to position or place as well as to posit.
5. I have translated '*étranger*' as 'strange' throughout the text.
6. Alternatively, '*telle et ainsi*' might be translated 'in such a way'. Literally, it translates as 'such and so', 'such and thus', or 'such and in this way'. Stéphanopoli may be translating the German '*sosein*' – 'suchness' or 'essence' – with this locution.
7. 'Why is this now, his [the questioner's] now, precisely now and *was* not long ago? Since he asks such strange questions, he regards his existence and his time as independent of one another, and the former as projected into the later. He really assumes two nows, one belonging to the object and the other to the subject, and marvels at the happy accident of their coincidence' (Schopenhauer 1969: 279).
8. See Anders' remarks below on the dual meaning of the term *feststellen* in German which Stéphanopoli's *constater* is likely translating here.
9. I have translated 'étonnement' as 'astonishment' throughout the text.
10. The early sketch for Empedocles, called 'The Frankfurt Plan', opens with this passage: 'Empedocles, by temperament and through his philosophy long since destined to despise his culture, to scorn all neatly circumscribed affairs, every interest directed to sundry objects; an enemy to the death of all one-sided existence, and therefore also in actually beautiful relations unsatisfied, restive, suffering, simply because they are *special* relations, ones that fill him utterly only when they are felt in magnificent accord with all living things, simply because he cannot live in them and love them intimately, with omnipresent heart, like a god, and freely and expansively, like a god; simply because as soon as his heart and his thought embrace anything at hand he finds himself bound to the law of succession . . . ' (Hölderlin 2008: 29).
11. '*Issue*' also translates as 'exit'.
12. The French term '*spécial*' carries the Latin *speciālis*'s sense of being of a given species.
13. See Genesis 9: 23: 'But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it upon both their shoulders and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their

father; and their faces were turned away, so that they did not see their father's nakedness' (*New American Standard Bible* 1995).

14. The German term '*Schande*' carries the sense of both shame and dishonour.
15. The term here is '*mondanité*', which is the standard French translation of Heidegger's 'Weltlichkeit'.
16. The term '*fugue*' can also be translated as 'flight' and, like '*fuite*', comes from the Latin term '*fugere*'.
17. My translation of the preceding three lines in part follows and in part differs from Mark Lester's translation in *The Logic of Sense* (Deleuze 1990: 349, n. 5). The most signification difference is that I have translated 'le sens positif' as time's 'forward sense', whereas Lester translates it as 'positive sense or direction'.
18. The term '*liberté motrice*' may be a play on Scheler's notion of 'motor intention', subsequently developed in the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and possibility also on the phrase 'freedom of movement' – *liberté de mouvement*.
19. Stéphanoli's text reads: 'Puisque "que j'aurais sément" que sa contingence rend insupportable. Aucun "ici" n'est prépu être là, mais aussi là et là', tout ici se transforme en un 'ici-précifére à un autre.' My translation follows the changes suggested on the site *Les Amis de Némésis*, with the difference that I change the first 'la' in their '[p]uisque "que j'aurais pu être là, mais aussi là et là"' to an 'ici' in light of the context. See http://www.geocities.com/nemesisite/anders.patholib.htm
20. Nietzsche (1961: 110): 'If there were Gods, how could I endure not to a be God!'
21. 'One thing alone can us from being ourselves cure / Yes... strictly speaking, the question is not how to get cured, but how to live' (Conrad 2002: 153). This passage is notable not only for its significance but for its unconventional and improper grammar, possibly intended to demonstrate one language moving – bumpily – into another. See Sylvére Monad, 'Joseph Conrad's Polyglot Wordplay', available at: http://www.mhra.org.uk/ojs/index.php/MLR/article/view/2/30
22. 'Repetition and memory are the same movement, only in opposite directions; for what is recollected has been, is repeated backwards, whereas repetition properly so called is recollected forwards' (Kierkegaard 1941: 33). In the French, the passage in quotation marks reads: 'mouvement opposé au souvenir' (literally: movement opposed to memory), but Kierkegaard's text suggests that the sense Anders' intended is something more like 'movement in the opposite direction of memory'.
23. In his original note, Anders' references page 14 of Simmel's *Philosophie der Kultur*. The actual title of this text is *Philosophische Kultur: Gesammelte Essais* (Leipzig: W. Klinkhardt, 1911). 'Das Abenteuer', or 'The Adventurer', spans pages 7–24 of this volume. Simmel conceptualises the adventure thusly: 'The most general form of adventure is its dropping out of the continuity of life. 'Wholeness of life', after all, refers to the fact that a consistent process runs through the individual components of life, however crassly and irreconcilably distinct they may be. What we call an adventure stands in contrast to that interlocking of life-links, to that feeling that those countercurrents, turnings, and knots still, after all, spin forth a continuous thread. An adventure is certainly a part of our existence, directly contiguous with other parts which precede and follow it; at the same time, however, in its deeper meaning, it occurs outside the usual continuity of this life' (Simmel 1971: 187–8). On the corresponding page in the English translation, Simmel adds: 'the adventurer is also the extreme example of the ahistorical individual, of the man who lives in the present. On the one hand, he is not determined by any past... nor, on the other hand, does the future exist for him' (Simmel 1971: 190).

24. *Schwerkraft* is the force of gravity; *schwermut* is melancholia. Their shared root, *schwer*, can be translated as 'heavy', indicative of the weightiness and overwhelming force that marks both the force of gravity within nature and of melancholia within an individual life. *Les Amis de Némésis* note this; see http://www.geocities.com/nemesisite/anders.patholib.htm
25. '*À la hauteur de*' can also be translated as 'equal to'.
26. 'Car la definition théorique n'est qu'une ombre que la decision rejette dans le domaine du théorique'. It seems that the second 'théorique' should read 'practique' (practical).

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Review Essay
A Stirring Alphabet of Thought

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José Gil (2008) *O Imperceptível Devir da Imanência – Sobre a Filosofia de Deleuze*, Lisbon: Relógio D'Água.

One might interpret and explain the great philosophers as one pleases, but an honest interpretation must not smother the soul of their oeuvres, however much one may admire or criticise them. Many would agree that Deleuze's writing is often obscure and difficult, and therefore the attempt to introduce some clarity through interpretation must be welcomed. However, too much order can compromise the delicate mechanism of his work and literally freeze its internal dynamics when, for example, concepts and planes of thought are arranged without regard for their links and junctures. In the case of Deleuze, it seems that if anything must be respected, it is the sense of constant movement through the connections that he was able to forge for the benefit of philosophy. This movement is related first and foremost to his critical dwelling on the dogmatic image of thought, which Nietzsche was undoubtedly instrumental in fostering, as Deleuze himself describes in the preface to the English translation of *Nietzsche and Philosophy*:

> And without doubt this is the most important point of Nietzsche's philosophy: the radical transformation of the image of thought that we create for ourselves. Nietzsche snatches thought from the element of truth and falsity. He turns it into an interpretation and an evaluation, interpretation of forces, evaluation of power. It is a thought-movement, not merely in the sense that Nietzsche wants to reconcile thought and concrete movements, *but in the sense that thought itself must produce movements, bursts of extraordinary speed and slowness*. (Deleuze 1986: xii; emphasis mine)

Deleuze's *diagram* is perhaps an apposite concept in this respect: as Williams explains, 'a Deleuzian diagram is an apparatus expressing a series of dynamic transformations . . . these movements are not displacements of things as the effect of forces, but changes in things

as they move and encounter others' (Williams 2008: 79). This constant movement evades the very possibility of capture for the sake of recognition, representation, or static identity. And it is here that José Gil's book scores a major achievement: his writing ties in neatly with Deleuze's agility, because he chooses to interpret Deleuze as a thinker of movement, one who manipulates philosophical concepts, problems and ideas by alternately pushing them away, turning and twisting them this way and that, beyond their intended boundaries, and beyond their previous identities. With Deleuze, there is always a 'Deleuzian movement' of thought. Thus, for Gil, we always find in Deleuze 'a movement of torsion that immediately allows us to contemplate a sphere of difference' (Gil 2008: 30).[1] Viewing thinking as a motion means it is a potentiality – and therefore an action and a critique without transcendent referents (Gil 2008: 166–7). But this torsion of concepts[2] is done not merely for the sake of creating new concepts, but also for the purpose of defining a new field of experience and thought, one marked by excess – that is, beyond the bare empirical exercise of the faculties (Gil 2008: 64–5). And to this end, a proper 'pedagogy of the senses' is required: to educate the senses to discern that which is transcendentally insensible.

But it is more – it is also a matter of language. There is something particularly agile in Gil's Portuguese Deleuze. Perhaps it is the Latin kinship with the French that explains this airy and lyrical version, the sense of the French rhythms. The rhythm and sense of anticipation that Gil's Portuguese instils in Deleuze's philosophy lift the written word above the idiomatic technicalities and rigidities that occasionally stem the flow of Deleuze's prose in other languages. In this respect, Gil keeps the reading in flux, in a state of constant becoming. And yet, in spite of Gil's aspirations, this book cannot be considered an introduction to Deleuze's thought. Although he carefully explores Deleuze's complicated concepts and ideas and offers a rich interpretative language, Gil also does not refrain from embarking upon the complicated task of offering a micro-dynamic of Deleuze's body of thought, thus rendering his book less suitable for novice readers of Deleuze. This is increasingly apparent as one progresses through the book and witnesses Gil's evident mastery of the broad material written by Deleuze (and Guattari), and his ability to crisscross at will the length and breadth of Deleuze's work, and make connections between what he judges to be the different stages and transformations of Deleuze's concepts (Gil 2008: 178). However, in one respect, the book *is* introductory, in that it is not a work in which Deleuze's thought is applied to specific problems in philosophy, politics

or any other field. It is an interpretative work of Deleuze's thought and, seen in perspective, Gil serves as Deleuze's conceptual biographer.

Covering Deleuze's works from before and after his volumes on *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Gil greatly expands upon the notion of the plane of immanence as the ontological axis of Deleuze's thought, in a way more suited to experienced readers of the genre. Nonetheless, his writing is clear and makes for pleasant and fluent reading. Thus, for example, as he puts it, the process of learning – as explained in *Difference and Repetition* – is 'the discordant exercise of the faculties divorced (disconnected) from every form of identity' (Gil 2008: 34). In other words, for Gil the activity of learning is something that can never be achieved, but rather only be the focus of constant experimentation.

I. Introduction

Before considering the main arguments of Gil's book, a few preliminary comments are in order. As noted, central to its theme is a Deleuzian exploration of the transcendental conditions of the plane of immanence.[3] To this end, Gil explores the realm in which the conditions for thinking and of real experimentation must be found (thereby underlining Deleuze's distance from transcendental Kantianism, in which these are regarded as mere replications of the empirical). But what exactly do these conditions point to? They allude to the 'invisible which is stronger than the visible forms', Gil argues – to the sub-representative realm of singularities, that is, to the virtual (Gil 2008: 63–4).

According to Gil, Deleuze developed his problematisations through two lines of inquiry. The first was induced by his desire to follow in the footsteps of other great philosophers, from Aristotle to Husserl, to 'rescue the sensible' – but in defiance of tradition, rather than with it. This in turn led to the second, more positive, line of inquiry, in which Deleuze set out to present 'the sensible, or the concrete' as something that is beyond what our physical senses might grasp as concrete. This 'beyond' is defined by Gil as 'the insensible that only may be felt, the unimaginable that only can be imagined' (Gil 2008: 14). It is a terminology that he adopts to designate singularity in concrete experience, that which embodies difference itself. The insensible, however, can only be generated in a field that is distinct from the comparative field of the empirical: it is there that we find the Deleuzian transcendental conditions of experience. For Gil, Deleuze's lines of philosophical inquiry compelled him to build – primarily from *Difference and Repetition* to *The Logic of Sense* – a supportive

topological ontology of difference that connects the concept of repetition with an original reading of the eternal return, culminating in the plane of immanence in his later works with Guattari.

But how exactly does repetition 'open up' the future as a dimension of creation? To put it another way, where lies the habitat of difference? According to Gil, it is the depth of the spatial texture of the eternal return (as opposed to Plato's false depth) or the texture of immanence, which guarantees the logic of excess, the '*produçao do novo*' (Gil 2008: 60). Without this ontology, Deleuze would be unable to offer a dynamic of thought based on nomadic distributions (and away from sedentary distributions of analogy) with which life may be re-thought. As Deleuze writes in the last pages of *Difference and Repetition*:

> Repetition in the eternal return appears under all these aspects as the peculiar power of difference, and the displacement and disguise of that which repeats only reproduce the divergence and the decentring of the different in a single movement of *diaphora* or transport. The eternal return affirms difference; it affirms dissemblance and disparateness, chance, multiplicity and becoming. (Deleuze 1994: 300)

II. Structure and Main Arguments

Over ten chapters and an appendix, Gil's book revolves around the ways in which Deleuze presented a new style of thought, one never anchored in a model or an image. For Gil, Deleuze created a revolutionary alphabet of thought, one always in flux, averting nodes of sedimentation and creating lines of flight. The Deleuzian alphabet of thought is the medium through which we learn to think – it is his 'conceptual machine', with movement as the only vehicle within this medium. This alphabet is also of the field of virtual singularities from which a calculus is forged, and a grammar or a language comes into being in different domains (Gil 2008: 40–2). How does it move and change? While the alphabet's letters are the conditions of intelligibility of the Idea[4] – the elements articulated by the dice in every throw – these conditions change in the face of new problems that emerge with every throw (in every domain). Here the letters must be understood not literally, but as the changing elements of the alphabet, which in turn animates thought. It is an infinite alphabet in terms of its potential combinations: there are always new integrations of letters – 'a genuine machine for the creation of concepts' (Gil 2008: 42). It follows that the Deleuzian alphabet is not a fixed model of construction, but a constantly moving machine of differenciation: 'dislocation of terms, corrections of concepts,

abandonment and adjunctions of other notions – indicating how the alphabet experiences transformations from one text to another, from one work to another' (Gil 2008: 42) (here Gil expands upon Deleuze's concepts, as for example, with the 'Idea' in *Difference and Repetition* and its evolution to the 'Event' in *The Logic of Sense*).

How does this alphabet of thought move one to create and perceive difference? Broadly speaking, Gil answers by structuring and connecting Deleuze's fundamental concepts in the following elliptical and centrifugal fashion: to begin with, a thought of this kind is one of excess, since it always takes itself to its limits; second, multiple logics of excess (life and death, freeing blockades and auto-destruction) are found in what is engendered by the connection and disjunction of divergent series; third, a 'beyond' the organic and the empirical, in which excess or difference circulates and therefore must be localised and described; fourth, this 'beyond' is given by the *n* dimensions of the plane of immanence; fifth, immanence follows the logic of potentiality, the strategy of reciprocal determination between the virtual and the actual (or between sense and the expressed), works from within desire and gives it a plane in which to operate; sixth, and therefore, what emerges is *delirious reality* ('history is delirium'), so immanence is the ontological texture of the real; seventh, the texture of the plane depends on the matter of expression (thought, writing, dancing, etc.), and its transformation (or becoming) is conditioned by rhythmic connections and by consistency between heterogeneous forces; eighth, agency is about microscopic processes of becoming, and not a model to follow (here we find a pillar in Deleuze's significant revolution of thought); and finally, since Deleuzian thought is rhizomatic, it is a thought of excess.

What is a thought of excess? For Gil (Chapter 3),[5] in terms of syntheses of time, excess means to regard the future as the ontological dimension of the new, as an empty form that allows for forgetting and connecting (the task of the eternal return). In terms of energy, excess liberates that which is buried by blockades – unfolded by an inequality or difference in intensities (like erupting volcanoes).

Gil argues that Deleuze's treatment of excess evolves through two different stages. How can we break with the false entropic system with which the world is represented and liberate the intensities? According to Gil, in *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense* Deleuze introduces excess as an augmentation of forces that rupture the systems of common sense and the doxa – a norm attacked by a movement of dissolution. Therefore, thought is reterritorialised with a flux of excess breaking with that which it imprisons. Up to this point, it might be said

that the logic of excess operates in a sort of action–reaction fashion, since the line of flight appears as a result of the violence exerted by the excess of external forces. But according to Gil, this logic of thought abruptly changes, to the point where he is able to distinguish between a 'First thought and a Second thought of Deleuze' (Gil 2008: 202). From *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze and Guattari put forward a different image of the world: here excess is a part of all systems, creating lines of flight and war machines. The world is machinic at every level or plateau. There is no excess relative to a norm, since every norm is already distorted by a war machine, meaning that there is no state apparatus without lines of flight. Therefore, there is excess everywhere. In other words, the change in *A Thousand Plateaus* in relation to *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense* is given by a movement of thought, which introduces immanence within the actual texture of the concepts. This is to the benefit of connectivity, since the tempo of incessant movements within concepts allows not only for internal modifications of components, but mainly for an in between (or opening) to connect across concepts (Gil 2008: 80). But with the advantages, Gil warns, there are also dangers: an excess of excess might appear when immanence is introduced within the texture of the concepts, thus 'an escalation in the flux of variation outlives a boundary, making the flux homogeneous' (Gil 2008: 83). This mechanism, says Gil, explains micro-fascisms and why desire turns against itself, and why the line of flight loses its power of becoming.

The argument goes like this: from the plane of immanence in which everything is in circulation, at certain rhythms and conjugations the plane can be filled with energy of just one type (hate, love, etc.). The excess of this type of energy is equivalent to a drastic reduction in the potential of the bodies (homogenisation takes place) and of heterogeneity. In summary, the excess of energy in the plane of immanence, as excess without limits, transforms the lines of flight (the trajectories of the singularities) into lines of impasse and destruction, and as a result, the power of becoming is lost.

As an example of the transformation of lines of flight into lines of destruction, Gil cites Fernando Pessoa's schizophrenic writing. Pessoa, on whom Gil has written two books and several articles, is one of the most celebrated Portuguese poets. Writing as Alvaro de Campos (one of Pessoa's many heteronyms), Pessoa gives us an image of destruction: 'the self-multitude, producer of multiplicities . . . who multiplies through infinite forms of sense and infinite selves – freezes into an immutable and self-destructive unity' (Gil 2008: 84). The destructive movement is from a centrifugal movement to a centripetal and unifying one,

converging onto the self-individual, emerging after the struggle with the self-multitude. Thus, we have multiple logics of excess: a line of flight might stop blocking concepts, but it might also lead to self-destruction.

To some extent, Deleuze's criticism of Platonism in *Difference and Repetition* undermines Gil's argument regarding the change in Deleuze's thought. On the one hand, Deleuze attacked the dogmatic image of thought in Plato with an external movement of dissolution, to unblock concepts. But on the other hand, for Deleuze the touchstone of Platonism is also its undoing, with Plato himself providing the ammunition. In other words, Deleuze found in Plato an internal war machine that allows for transformation. Although 'Platonism as a whole is erected on the basis of the desire to hunt down the phantasms or simulacra that are identified with the Sophist' (Deleuze 1994: 127), it is the distinction between the two kinds of images (and not between the original and the image) – the copy and the simulacra – that seems to Deleuze to be the decisive junction of a philosophical decision which could have ended otherwise: namely, the decision as to which model Plato chose. The simulacra are the false pretenders, 'demonic images' according to Plato, not eligible for inclusion in the system that measures the copy against the identity of the original Idea. 'Does this not mean, however, that if simulacra themselves refer to a model, it is one which is not endowed with the ideal identity of the Same but, on the contrary, is a model of the Other, an other model, the model of difference in itself from which flows that interiorized dissimilitude?' (Deleuze 1994: 128) Yes, is Deleuze's answer: Plato had sown both models, of the identity of the Same and the resemblance of the Similar on the one hand, and of the terrifying dissimilar on the other. He opted for the former, but also provided the means for criticising this choice, which Deleuze saw and seized upon.

Divergent series (composed of intensities) are in relative displacement, explains Gil, implying a differential correspondence between the elements of the series, a disequilibrium, which is the excess of one series over other (Chapter 4). The emphasis here is on the communication between the series, given that it is through this connection that the excess of forces circulate. This connective element is the 'dark precursor' of *Difference and Repetition* or 'the empty square' of *The Logic of Sense*. It is an intensive element and an active difference. Fernando Pessoa himself, for example, is the dark precursor in his oeuvres: he communicates across the series and assembles the heteronyms through their edges, their margins. This is the significant function of the empty square – its circulation across the series in the structure and the attendant displacement of frontiers – or, in other words, it

is also the significant function of the structure which 'is in fact a machine for the production of incorporeal sense' (Deleuze 1990: 71). The dark precursor as embodiment of difference is decentred, outside itself, dislocated, in constant movement (Gil 2008: 102–6). Pessoa cannot be identified by means of the traditional tools of recognition and representation: *he is not*; he moves. How does the moment of communication take place across the series? Here Gil points out that the *disjunctive syntheses* are the true machine of innovation in Deleuze's thinking of the event (Gil 2008: 18). According to Gil, citing Deleuze's critique of Leibniz's theory of the incompossibles (series 24 in *The Logic of Sense*), he is able to offer an innovative concept of disjunction as the synthetic movement of divergent terms, where the distance between two inherently different terms is breached not by macroscopic wholes but by pre-individual singularities (Gil 2008: 20). The connection or '*ligaçao*' creates difference and introduces variation: this is the Deleuzian definition of the Event.

From this point onwards (starting from Chapter 5) Gil devotes the book to a critique of how Deleuze defines the transcendental as the realm that determines the changing conditions of the possible, and to the 'passage', or the genetic process between the virtual and the actual. Without this realm, it would be impossible for thought to create movement beyond common sense and good sense. The whole question becomes one about how to localise and describe a space for that which is beyond the organic and the empirical – where the intensities from *Difference and Repetition* attest to an ontological-virtual depth. From the perspective of this task, Gil maintains that prior to *Anti-Oedipus* Deleuze had failed to assure univocity of sense through the notion of 'surface'. With Guattari, and following May '68, a second philosophy emerges. A conceptual evolution in Deleuze's thought takes place, and previous concepts are rethought and expanded upon (Gil 2008: 163). It is worth noting that scholars differ in their identification of the various turning points in Deleuze's work. The argument over Deleuze's change following his collaborative work with Guattari and the events of May '68 is well known. But for James Williams, a significant singularity appears with *Logic of Sense*, in which Deleuze experiments 'with a style of writing and a more free approach to the tradition [that] break out and allow novel ideas and a different ethos to guide philosophical thought' (Williams 2008: 77). However, this sort of 'identification' of Deleuze's changes of attitude is instructive in itself, and opens up doors for further analysis and implementation. (It is possible that Deleuze himself would resist even this attempt to 'represent' a passage and the stages used in

this type of interpretation.) This is in contrast to the genealogies through which Deleuze's 'philosophical perfect origins' are usually sought.

According to Gil, in *Anti-Oedipus* and in *A Thousand Plateaus*, the surface is replaced by the plane – as the place where sense is engendered. This plane is what is necessary to provide a basis for the thought of immanence, and the concept of the body without organs (BwO) starts to play a major role in its construction. In *Anti-Oedipus*, the BwO acquires a precision and consistency that it hadn't in *The Logic of Sense*; it is now the plane of immanence. 'A whole battery of new concepts describing the movement of the BwO arises, and it is further developed in *A Thousand Plateaus*' (Gil 2008: 164). The significant change is Deleuze's incursion into the social field and history, and the relationship of the latter to a theory of desire; particularly important is the crossed parallelism between the production of desire, its inscription and reception, and the capitalist production and its recording and consumption (Chapters 7 and 8). According to Gil, most important is the convergence between these two series and the emplacement of the BwO not as a metaphor, but as the socius itself and the place of becomings: desire is the real, and the real comprises desire. The convergence between the desiring-production and the capitalist production is the real. The plane of immanence is the real and it is of the order of production of desire, of capitalist production, and of power, or in other words, history is delirium. This is a new regime of concepts and thought. It is at this point, according to Gil, that Deleuze and Guattari start to perceive thought itself as immanence and as life.

Immanence works from within desire. Desire is a force of composition, an infinite, incessant machine of connection, creation and agency. When we desire, we are on the BwO. Desire needs a space or a plane on which it can circulate: this is the BwO. Here Gil explains Deleuze's choice for Artaud's concept, against the organism, the organised structure. An organism presupposes an organisation of organs, and it is an obstacle to the intensification of free energy. For this reason, the un-doing of the organism is a precondition for the construction of the BwO. It is important to stress that the BwO is not inhabited by the basic units of empirical life, says Gil. He elaborates on this further. For example, the BwO of a writer is not words, but the result of their work on words. Gil maintains that the point of departure to reach a BwO is our empirical body-organism. What we have is just an interpretation of the body, ready to be undone. That is our point of departure in constructing the BwO: our materials are transformable. It has all the necessary materials to be

transformed into another body. The BwO is a body of sensations, and the result of transformation of the empirical body; it lies beyond the empirical body. It is virtual-real. The transformation has an initial phase that is negative: here it is necessary to undo the organism, to combat strata (or opinions); in the second phase we encounter chaos; and finally, a strategy to form the plane of immanence is adopted in order to leave chaos.[6] The construction of a BwO passes through these phases, not necessarily in the linear sequence as explained (Gil 2008: 187). What are the three great strata opposing the construction of the BwO? They are the organism, significance and subjectivity. Against the organism, Deleuze and Guattari propose disarticulation and multiplication of articulations; against signification, experimentation; and against subjectivity – nomadism. There is an important operation in the stage of dissolution of strata, present through the three strata. It is the disorganisation of the order of stratification of the internal organs of a body. In the course of the making of the BwO, we fight against consistency and return to new forms of it. Consistency is simultaneously coexistence and conjunction: in order to have consistency, the elements must be capable of assembly.

> Regardless of the nature of the plane, its construction must provide consistency, necessary for the coexistence of the most diverse elements... because the encounter, the interlacement and the composition of the heterogeneous as heterogeneous is a first condition of creation and of intensification of fluxes. (Gil 2008: 184)

In response to the question where are we supposed to find the weapons (war machines) for the struggle to make a BwO, Gil says that Deleuze is obscure: he addresses voluntarism and the spontaneity of desire at the same time (Gil 2008: 199). It is necessary to *violentar* (to force) the strata that condition the interior of desire, but it is also necessary to *violentar* our thought (Chapter 9). This is why 'to think is dangerous':

> Because in order to think, it is necessary to destroy the strata of good sense and common sense – namely, to destroy normalised thought and generalised opinion; because the philosopher, as the artist, must engage with chaos in order to cut from it a plane of immanence. To enter into the chaos – into doubt, into the 'epoché' and the vertigo of thought – to leave the doxa of the 'natural attitude', implies imposing violence upon the total of common existence. (Gil 2008: 221)

The solution resides in the ideas of chance and encounter. We desire, and leave the strata by virtue of a chance encounter. In a life dominated by strata, adventure always produces encounters that sprout desire.

'All these strategies imply a continuous oscillation between man and his environment; between external forces and the fluxes of the body; between the strata and desire... It assumes a body that is able to combine different kinds of energy with its own... a body capable of taking a line of light, of knowing what is best for itself' (Gil 2008: 200). A body like this forever finds itself partly beyond the strata and partly stratified. At this point, in the manner of other Deleuzians wrestling with the problematic nature of agency, Gil quotes the famous 'non-recipe' recipe: 'This is how it should be done: Lodge yourself on a stratum, experiment with the opportunities it offers...' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 161).

Prudence, however, must be adopted to avoid fatally risking ourselves whilst breaking with the strata of the organism, of significances, and of subjectivity. This is why Deleuze insists on prudence, Gil reminds us. According to Gil, 'prudence is not an attitude or a moral prescription, but a technique' (Gil 2008: 188). He considers it a technique of mastering the struggle against the strata. As Deleuze and Guattari warn, to be prudent means to conserve 'small amounts' of organism, of signification and subjectivity. But it is a twofold technique, because those small pieces of strata must be 'reactivated' by breaking them every day. It is a technique that saves us from destruction, while at the same time bringing about the erosion of the dominant strata. In this way we must respond to the dominant reality:

> To maintain small resources of signification and subjectivity, to reproduce the codified game of the social networks every morning, and simultaneously to practice new strategies of struggle, by reproducing the enemy and experimenting with its efficacy. The deliberate repetition of interpretations and subjectivities imposed by the dominant order creates a distance in relation to them and supplies stages on the road to destratification. (Gil 2008: 188)

To what extent is this distance planned and acted upon? How does knowledge (regarding selection of strata to be repeated or forgotten) stand here in relation to chance and spontaneity? If it is a distance between the actual and the virtual, how is unconscious desire accounted for here? If this distance accounts for the critical turn in reactivating the strata, then under which conditions does repetition become an experiment in the beyond? These are perhaps the most troubling questions regarding agency and activism, and in fact, the scholarly literature on Deleuze's thought is mostly mute about them. At the phase where the debate deals with agency, and like many Deleuzian scholars before him, Gil is disappointing. His writing lacks the social and

political landscapes that might enhance the notions of '*agenciamento*' and prudence, and the roles of the BwO. Expectations are hampered by abstract language and by literary examples (from Gil's and Deleuze's works) with a narrow spectrum of political implications.

I will conclude with two themes present at the end of Gil's book: the function of time in the formation of the plane of immanence (Chapter 10), and the notion of becoming (Appendix). The time of immanence is given by the *Ritornello* (*A Thousand Plateaus*), explains Gil. The repetition creates an aperture to a continuation, something that facilitates orientation and calm – 'a beginning of order within chaos'. For example, fieldworks are accompanied with Ritornellos; they work by tunnelling forces of the body to combine with forces of the land. The Ritornello creates a space, a territory, in which forces are selected, combined, joined. It delimits the borders of an internal space, just as a bird might stake out its territory with its songs. In the end, 'a melody becomes a landscape' (Gil 2008: 232). The micro-dynamics of the Ritornello goes in this way: the internal forces of the body must be freed from their biological impulses to allow for expressive combinations. The Ritornello then disconnects itself from the territory which enabled it to become expressive, and it is deterritorialised, acquiring an independent dynamic which allows for new connections with other forces. How do the heterogeneous elements (heterogeneous matters of expression, e.g., body and land, artist and colours and canvas) consolidate? 'To consolidate (consistency) is not about coexisting in proximity, but to engage in articulation, to connect' (Gil 2008: 234). According to Gil, it is the rhythm of the Ritornello that enables matter to capture heterogeneous forces. Capture means transformation of the time of a matter to permit connection with another matter's time. And transformation means becoming.

Becoming is a pre-philosophical condition of a thought of immanence. Becoming is a process of transformation of intensities, and takes place in a zone of the indiscernible. It is where reciprocal transfer of forces and intensities occurs across traditional categories. The molecular dynamic: forces move particles of becoming, creating a relation of movement and repose, through which micro-parts of the body enter into a zone of vicinity of the other's micro-parts. Everything is in a state of becoming, and we are in a perpetual state of becoming of several types. Even the most blockaded entity in a stratum emits virtual particles which places it partially in a plane of immanence. Or, to put it in other way, says Gil, even the most petrified stratum is transversed by lines of flight through which molecular becoming escapes.

> A becoming is not a transformation of form, an 'identification' of an 'I', an imitation of a macroscopic figure (molar). It is a microscopic process (molecular) through which strata are dissolved (with 'I' as a stratum of subjectivity). Between all the kinds, the imperceptible becoming is that which saves us from paralysing molar capture. (Gil 2008: 258).

This brings us to the title of Gil's book. The Deleuzian primacy of the molecular over the molar is there for the purpose of combating recognition and representation, because the imperceptible, the indiscernible and the impersonal cannot be recognised or formally represented (Gil 2008: 260). This is the majestic voice of becoming. The thought of the molecular brought Deleuze to a molecularisation of the thought. The molecular is neither a standpoint nor a scale. It is an objective dimension of the real. To think the real is to think on a molecular level.[7]

Notes

1. Translations mine.
2. The torsion of concepts needs to be understood, according to Gil, as Deleuze's method of critical thinking based on a special form of negation. Rather than negating a concept by its mere categorical opposite, Deleuze applies a movement of critique through which the identity (or the principle) of the foundation (of the concept under critique) is no more sustained (Gil 2008: 27). By this movement of torsion a field of difference is finally opened and affirmed, and this affirmation is in itself the movement of thought. Gil returns to a similar description also for dualisms.
3. Despite Gil's commitment to the theme of transcendental empiricism – articulated by Deleuze from his early writings – it is surprising not to find any reference to Deleuze's book on Hume.
4. Following Deleuze, Gil explains that the Idea cannot be represented or identified. The Idea is a sub-representative virtual multiplicity. Its object is a problematisation and its state of being is 'in movement'. There is a complex field of connection between Ideas. Here the notion of Perplication appears: the differential interrelation of Ideas (clarity and obscurity). The notion of Perplication assumes the internal mobility of the Idea.
5. In Chapters 1 and 2 Gil introduces Deleuze's ontological concepts mainly from *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense*.
6. According to Gil, the same philosophical 'logic' is at work in those philosophers Deleuze wrote against: Plato, Descartes and Husserl (Gil 2008: 201). What distinguish Deleuze from the metaphysical philosophers is that he is after how to acquire consistency without lose the infinite where thought is immersed. If the infinite movement of thought is not stopped – where infinite is the condition of immanence – explains Gil, then the transcendental cannot be introduced (Gil 2008: 203). 'Therefore, the first big difference consists in the way we handle chaos: either it is negated, excluded (as with Descartes), or the movement and the infinite velocities that animate concepts are extracted from it' (Gil 2008: 203). The second difference resides in the fact that the circulation of concepts on the plane of immanence are aleatory; they don't obey any law, rule or a

despotic signifier, but only the chance of the encounter – 'the ideal game of the eternal return'. There are nomadic movements and not fixed trajectories on a map in which the territorial distributions are determined by categories; this is a philosophy of difference in which everything changes (Gil 2008: 203). Then, if the concept is a movement of thought, how was it possible to handle it as a static representation?

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Capital, Crisis, Manifestos, and Finally Revolution

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Gilles Deleuze, in an often-cited interview with Antonio Negri, says that both he and Félix Guattari are Marxists. Deleuze insists: 'I think Félix Guattari and I have remained Marxists, in our two different ways, perhaps, but both of us' (Deleuze 1995: 171). However, this spectre of Marx haunting Deleuze's works, both individual and collaborative, has yet to be fully reckoned with, although commentators such as Eugene Holland, Jason Read and Nick Thoburn have all made significant strides in mapping the important contours of this philosophical and political relationship (see Holland 1999; Read 2003; Thoburn 2003). Thus, once again we intervene in the middle, in the middle of a discussion that has already begun and indeed did not simply begin in the heady days of 1968. But the situation in which this intervention is being made could perhaps not have been more timely, as we globally experience the deepest and most crippling economic crisis since the Great Depression. Indeed, Capital is no longer undergoing the simple popping of some temporary economic bubble, as with the dot.com or housing bubbles, or even the credit crunch (even if all these contributed to the current erosion of the economic and social base); rather, it is undergoing a crisis. Yet forces on the 'Left' remain unable to provide an appropriate response. Over a century and a half ago, Marx and Engels ended the *Communist Manifesto* with 'Workers of the World, Unite!', and yet we remain as fragmented as before, indeed we remain a 'sack of potatoes'. It is these very forces on the Left who stubbornly argue that the need for a rethinking of the Marxist project outside of orthodox texts – Lenin, Luxemburg, Trotsky, Mao, and so on – is not only unnecessary but indeed constitutes heresy, yet simultaneously argue that it is only they who creatively apply Marxism to their particular conditions while being painfully aware of their increasing marginalisation in contemporary politics. It is in this stagnant and stultified context that Deleuze and Guattari's work becomes pivotal. They put forward a Marxism that rejects many of the essentialist, evolutionist teleologies that have

burdened Marxist theory for so long, while remaining committed to the Marxist project for emancipation in the wake of the failures of orthodox Marxist State-building projects.

The contributors to this volume do not claim to be presenting a totalising whole (indeed a rejection of the totalisation of life is a consistent theme in many of the essays), or to be providing a manifesto or a party programme; nor are they necessarily in agreement over the nature of Marx's influence on Deleuze and Guattari's thought, or the appropriate Deleuzian strategy by which to change the world. Their essays do, however, constitute in their different ways 1) a serious attempt to demarcate Deleuze and Guattari's relationship to Marx and to discern which useful tools for analysis and for action must be appropriated from Marx's methodology; 2) an honest appraisal of the current situation, including problems of the State and the structure of Capital and capitalism; 3) an attempt to demarcate a strategy arising from Deleuze and Guattari's rethinking of the Marxist project. Only through discussions and debates such as these might an appropriate revolutionary theory and guide to political praxis be worked out, in line with Lenin's famous maxim that 'Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement' (Lenin 1973: 28).

In their respective contributions, Simon Choat, Aldo Pardi and Aidan Tynan each attempt to fully draw out the relationship with Marx through very different gestures: both Choat and Tynan see Deleuze and Guattari as being essentially the inheritors of the Marxist tradition, while rethinking significant sections of the Marxist ideological corpus such as the relationship to Hegel and the 'mode of production'. Choat grounds his analysis in Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition* and *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, arguing forcefully against depoliticised readings that produce an 'apolitical' or liberal Deleuze. Indeed, rather than claim that any appearance of Marx in Deleuze's intellectual oeuvre can simply be seen as a result of Guattari's influence, Choat argues that Deleuze's troubled relationship with Marx and Hegel is already evident in *Difference and Repetition* and *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. Choat provocatively suggests that any hesitation on Deleuze's part in endorsing Marx arose not from a fear of over-radicalism, but from a doubt as to whether Marx was radical enough in comparison to Nietzsche. Furthermore, Choat shows how Deleuze and Guattari's excavation of Marx's theory of universal history, while rejecting its inevitablism and teleology, results in a necessary re-conceptualisation of the structure of capitalism itself. This re-conceptualisation relies on Deleuze's interrogation of Hegel's dialectic, vis-à-vis the problem of

representation, and the rejection of the concept of contradiction. It also results, Choat argues, in a reformulation of other Marxist concepts such as that of 'modes of production'.

Tynan, for his part, follows the shifts in Deleuze's thought between *Difference and Repetition* and *Logic of Sense* to *Anti-Oedipus*, focusing on the relationship to Marx's *Capital* and other works critiquing political economy, again addressing the problem of the 'mode of production', taking up where Choat left off. Indeed Tynan asserts that Deleuze's 'philosophy of difference' is compatible with desiring production. Furthermore, while marking different contours in the Deleuze–Marx relationship than does Choat, Tynan argues that Deleuze is attempting to engage in an 'immanentisation of Capital' through an analysis of four constitutive moments of the Capital circuit: production, distribution, surplus-value and consumption. Tynan does not attempt to crudely reduce Deleuze's terminology to Marx's, but rather demonstrates how the new vocabulary developed by Deleuze and Guattari allows for a re-establishment of Marxism within a different set of intellectual parameters. Radically, Tynan suggests that Deleuze and Guattari are fundamentally engaged in the same intellectual strategy as was Marx, in so far as, through abstraction from empirical data, they are able to perceive general laws, in particular in relation to the role of desire. For example, they are able to show how Capital's tense relationship to production and reproduction is mediated through desire and the connective-synthesis of desire to Capital, or desiring production. The role of the State is thus to regulate and absorb debt while also coding society, allowing for the axiomatisation of capitalism.

Pardi displaces the relationship from being that of progeny to that of ally, presenting Marx and Deleuze as intellectual and political allies seeking to address the same problems. Thus rather than focusing on the reformulation of specific features of Marx's analysis in Deleuze's work, the existence of which Choat and Tynan have well demonstrated, Pardi focuses on a second encounter with Marx, occurring after the intellectual 'deconstructive detour of transcendence and the thought of the One'. Indeed Marx here appears as an initial and essential entry point into the central problem of ontology which, Pardi suggests, must be situated within the grid of need/production and subject/society, it being this very grid that allows for the establishment of a 'definition' of the 'transcendental coordinates of the existent'. Pardi argues that Deleuze is attempting to deal with the problem of liberation posed necessarily in juxtaposition to Hegel's unified totality, and that traditional Marxism is inadequate in and of itself to accomplish such a task. Pardi

reassembles Deleuze's intellectual framework – Bergson, Kant, Spinoza and Nietzsche – in constructing the intellectual line of flight necessary to construct an adequate response. It is at this point that Marx returns to Deleuze's side: the Marx of the revolution and the struggle for new modes of production and a new society. This is not simply a political affinity, but a theoretical recognition of the revolutionary content of the critique of the unified totality as being a configuration of forces that constitutes a specific 'mode of production', and of the field of politics as a competition of different forces of production. The configuration of forces on the field of politics determines the form of State that is produced and the resulting socius produced by the State.

Jason Read picks up this emphasis on the concept of 'mode of production' in his essay, analysing its relationship to the 'image of thought', and addressing the problem of the relationship between materiality and abstraction. Indeed, Read examines more closely the theoretical methodology that, according to Tynan, Deleuze appropriated from Marx himself. Deleuze, Read argues, attempts to arrive at a new definition of revolutionary thought that attempts to immanentise revolution as an exceeding of society as fetish, rather than take refuge in the traditional Marxist proposition that one must seek the conditions of the future revolution in the present situation. Read points out that while Deleuze rejects Althusser's emphasis on ideology, he simultaneously revives Marx's concept of 'commodity fetishism' as a model which critiques the form and the limits of thought itself, and not merely the 'empirical limits of error'. Indeed, Read points out that Deleuze, in agreement with Althusser, recognises that the economy is the determination of a problem which is solved through differential relations rather than through historical necessity or the determination of the base. These differential social relations are in the virtual. Read then also briefly turns to the problem of the State to argue that the latter is itself an image of thought – a position consistent with Pardi's claim that the State is the configuration of forces not simply in the economy and social relations, but also in the determining field of politics itself.

Thus far, we have been presented with different, albeit not incompatible, analyses of the State and of Capital. We have noted the numerous different lines of flight and contours that Deleuze and Guattari map in relation to Marx's work. Furthermore, each author has argued that only through a change in social relations can there be an achievement of liberation. The Deleuze and Guattari presented thus far have been Marxists who seriously appreciate the need for a revolutionary politics. However, thus far a strategy for such a

politics has been lacking. The basic question: 'What is to be done?' remains unanswered. Eduardo Pellejero and Guillaume Sibertin-Blanc, in their respective essays, reflect on this lack and seek to formulate Deleuzian strategies of revolt. Both locate Deleuze and Guattari's revolutionary theory in the concept of 'minority' and 'becoming-minoritarian', although in differing ways.

Pellejero attempts to discern a Deleuzian praxis allowing for a liberatory politics that results in the 'detotalisation of life'. Pellejero poignantly reminds us that Deleuze re-reads Marx in light of the failures of already existing regimes, especially the Soviet Union, and argues that 'the minor', or the line of flight, which has been attempted thus far in traditional political movements has not developed in revolutionary ways. In fact, it has allowed only for the subsumption of those revolutionary movements under the sign of Capital. Thus, we cannot and must not return to the field of politics utilising a revolutionary strategy that re-conceptualises politics outside of the narrow band of power determined by the simplistic binary of Government and Opposition; rather, we must reject 'the totalisation of life by power' through an affirmative politics of revolutionary-becoming arising from the immanent event and not grounded in a utopian vision in which all of History is realised. Indeed, Pellejero controversially argues that 'power formations are inhabited by an essential powerlessness' that is incapable of capturing all the micro-moments of resistance, creativity and transformation. Revolution, as Pellejero further argues, is no longer the Event in itself, but is, rather, a process of becoming. No longer can we hold onto the utopias of the past that must be realised; we must, rather, recognise that the revolution is a continuous 'everlasting' process. Rather than invoking merely an empty catch-phrase, Pellejero asserts that this 'revolutionary-becoming' must occur through 1) the envisioning of differential possibilities; 2) the creation of new assemblages for the realisation of the revolutionary praxis; and 3) the articulation of new revolutionary lines of flight.

Sibertin-Blanc addresses the concept of 'becoming-revolutionary' by grounding his analysis of Deleuzo-Guattarian praxis in minorities. Sibertin-Blanc recognises that the contours of capitalism, the State and the contradictions within these assemblages gesture towards the problem of the 'collective subject' and of its articulation as 'proletarianisation' and 'minoritarianisation'. Sibertin-Blanc reminds us that one should not romanticise becoming-minoritarian since Capital, for example, minoritises flows that cause famine. Capital's minoritarian axioms result in a double process: 1) the formation of class assemblages and resistance;

2) the formation of minorities and the manipulation of their positions within the national economy and society that allows for particular forms of manipulation. Sibertin-Blanc differs from Pellejero in his attempt to rearticulate and re-conceptualise traditional revolutionary movements. Despite the intimate connection between 'proletarian' and 'minority', Sibertin-Blanc is quick to point out that we cannot simply collapse these movements into an undifferentiated series of working-class struggles, and that revolutionary minoritarian movements must remain independent of the State. Indeed, this push for autonomy parallels Pellejero's argument that revolutionary movements should not be encoded within the binary of the State and an Opposition that simply attempts to capture State power. He points out, however, that the problem of minorities remains that 'minoritarian sets are immediately constituted in the State-form'. He shares Pellejero's call for the formation of new assemblages, but also emphasises the need for an accompanying minoritarian 'culture, thought and practices'. It is in this context that Sibertin-Blanc argues that minoritarian movements have been revolutionary in so far as they have challenged both capitalist axiomatisation and the modern State-form through troubling the basic borders that demarcate that form: for example, the national/exterior boundary by which an influx of immigrant populations results in the production of a discomforting resident foreigner, or the individual/collective boundary arising from the relationship between the majoritarian (or national) subjectivity and the 'subjective position of the minority'. Again, the struggles of minorities are not revolutionary in and of themselves, and an evaluation must be made within the context of the situation in which they find themselves. Sibertin-Blanc then turns to the need for a 'minoritarian internationalism' capable of responding to the historical task that it faces, but without resorting to the State-form.

What I have given here is not a tracing of the arguments as carefully laid out by the authors in their respective essays, but is rather a single mapping of this collection as concerned with the problems outlined above: 1) the intellectual relationship between Deleuze and Guattari and Marx's work and methodology; 2) the contours of modern capitalism and the State-form; and 3) the appropriate strategy for realising liberation. Indeed, authors and readers alike may be uncomfortable with the particular connections between essays I have made, and I urge readers to arrive at their own intellectual assemblages. It is these various connections between the essays, but also their links to other literary machines, revolutionary minoritarian movements and new

social assemblages that will allow for the further development of the revolutionary theory needed.

What is clear from this collection, however, is that Deleuze's claim that he and Guattari are Marxists is grounded in a common project they share with Marx, namely, that of liberation from the 'totalisation of life' by capitalism and its accompanying State-form. From Marx they also adopt the methodology of peering into the particular with a view to discerning the abstract; and, while remaining loyal to many of Marx's key propositions, they are able to rethink his analysis of capitalism, society and the State without recourse to the more vulgar economic determinisms that have been endemic to the Marxist movement. This reinterpretation of the world is accompanied with a re-thinking, in light of previous failed attempts, of what political strategies might be adopted and followed in order to change the world. It is clear that we cannot work within the parameters of the formal political structures currently in place, since they are constituted by the very capitalist axiomatisation and stratified State-politics that have resulted in our being everywhere in chains. Furthermore, we cannot simply cling to the worker movements of the past. We must, rather, develop and work immanently within social movements that allow for the development of new social assemblages capable of demonstrating that another world is indeed possible.

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Deleuze, Marx and the Politicisation of Philosophy

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Abstract

Against those who wish to marginalise Deleuze's political relevance, this paper argues that his work – including and especially that produced before his collaborations with Guattari – is not only fundamentally political but also profoundly engaged with Marx. The paper begins by focusing on different possible strategies for contesting the claim that Deleuze is apolitical, attempting to debunk this claim by briefly considering Deleuze's work with Guattari. The bulk of the paper is concerned with a close examination of the appearance of Marx in both *Nietzsche and Philosophy* and *Difference and Repetition*, establishing that the 'pre-Guattari' Deleuze was fully engaged with both politics and Marx and demonstrating that the concepts and arguments of the Marxist politics of the Deleuze–Guattari books can be traced back to Deleuze's own work. It is argued that an analysis of Deleuze's work on Marx is significant not only for deepening our understanding of Marx, but also for understanding the possibilities for Deleuzian politics.

Keywords: Deleuze, Marx, Nietzsche, philosophy, politics, social machines, capitalism

In some ways Deleuze's unfinished book on the *Grandeur de Marx* – the book that shortly before his death he announced he was working on (Deleuze 1995a: 51) – leaves us with a frustrating gap in our knowledge of his work: there is no text on Marx to compare with those on Spinoza, Nietzsche, Bergson, and so on. On the other hand, it might be better to think of *Grandeur de Marx* not as some kind of missing key, but rather as an unnecessary distraction: speculation about the content of the lost book brings with it the risk of drawing attention away from the presence of Marx in Deleuze's published writings. Rather than using the book on Marx as a touchstone by which Deleuze's Marxist credentials can be safely guaranteed, it may be better to focus on what we know Deleuze

has actually said about Marx. This, however, is not as easy as it sounds, for in fact Deleuze himself wrote little about Marx: of all his works, it is those jointly authored with Félix Guattari, particularly the two volumes of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, that are most obviously influenced by and comment most often upon Marx. The problem with relying on the joint works is that it leaves open the suspicion that Deleuze was not a Marxist at all, and that the Marxism was all Guattari's: a special case of the claim that Deleuze was not a political thinker at all, the politics being all Guattari's.

Against this suspicion, I shall argue that the interest in Marx comes just as much from Deleuze as from Guattari. Much fascinating work has been done by commentators who have taken Deleuze and Guattari's Marxism seriously, substantially advancing our knowledge of Marx as well as of Deleuze and Guattari.[1] But rather than looking at the books written with Guattari, I want primarily to examine the references to Marx in Deleuze's solo writings, focusing on *Nietzsche and Philosophy* and *Difference and Repetition*. Doing so can help demonstrate that even before he began collaborating with Guattari, Deleuze's work was both deeply politicised and engaged with Marx. Indeed, these two things are in some senses inseparable: Deleuze's philosophy was deeply politicised because it followed in the footsteps of Marx, the thinker who more than any other politicised philosophy. If we want a political Deleuze or a Deleuzian politics then a good place to start would be by recognising the place of Marx in Deleuze's work. This recognition must, however, be made against those who claim that Deleuze's own work is not political.

I. Deleuze and Marx

There have been numerous strategies for rejecting Deleuze as a political thinker: deferring the political moment until the Deleuze–Guattari books, dismissing his political formulations, explicitly denying the political relevance of his work, or simply ignoring his political pronouncements in favour of something else.[2] Perhaps the strongest allegation that Deleuze is not a political thinker comes from Slavoj Žižek, who claims simply that there are no politics in Deleuze's own work: 'It is crucial to note that *not a single one* of Deleuze's own texts is in any way directly political; Deleuze "in himself" is a highly elitist author, indifferent toward politics.' Any direct political moments are, according to Žižek, only found in those books co-authored by Guattari, whom Žižek names as a 'bad influence' on Deleuze (Žižek 2004: 20).

Žižek argues that Deleuze's solo texts, while in themselves strictly apolitical, contain the potential for the development of a different materialist, even Marxist, politics. Žižek contrasts this potential politics both with the supposed idealism of the Deleuze–Guattari books and with what Žižek sees as the dominant form of Deleuzian politics today, namely a Hardt and Negri-style politics of the Multitude. Hence for Žižek, while we can find both Marx and politics in the Deleuze–Guattari books, they are there only as a result of the (bad) influence of Guattari, soaked in a pernicious idealism and productive of an inane political standpoint; whereas when we read Deleuze 'in himself' we are not dealing with a political thinker at all, let alone a Marxist. Against Žižek, however, it can be shown that Deleuze's own work is both already politicised and engaged with Marx – and that this work anticipates the Marxist politics of the later collaborative work. There are a number of strategies that could be pursued in order to establish this point.[3]

One way to counter Žižek's image of an apolitical Deleuze is simply to think about the composition of the Deleuze–Guattari books, their literary construction. A few small clues help undermine the notion that in this partnership Guattari was the Marxist revolutionary and Deleuze the dry, apolitical philosopher subject to bad influences. Deleuze has presented himself as a 'lightning rod' for Guattari's thoughts, systematising things by bringing together and ordering Guattari's inventive but chaotic ideas (Deleuze 2006: 239). If we accept this image, then it can be seen that the analysis of capitalism in the Deleuze–Guattari books – rigorous, methodical and systematic – bears all the hallmarks of Deleuze's style: given how profoundly indebted to Marx this analysis is, this suggests that Deleuze as much as Guattari was deeply engaged with Marx. This intuition finds some support in the correspondence between the two authors. During the writing of *Anti-Oedipus* Guattari wrote to his friend: 'I have the feeling of always wandering around alone, kind of alone, irresponsibly, while you're sweating over capitalism. How could I possibly help you?' (Guattari 2006: 137). These are hardly the words of someone who has imposed his Marxism on a passive or indifferent collaborator. Rather, they suggest that we should take Deleuze at his word when he claimed: 'I think Félix Guattari and I have remained Marxists, in our two different ways, perhaps, but both of us' (Deleuze 1995b: 171).

Elizabeth Garo has noted suggestively that it is somewhat peculiar for a philosopher so committed to processes of becoming to claim to 'remain' a Marxist: 'For a thinker of becoming, remaining cannot be a very stimulating objective but, at most, a slightly disenchanted and

necessarily sceptical stance' (Garo 2008a: 609). But – aside from the fact that we should not put too much weight on the casual use of a particular word in what was an interview – 'remaining' does not necessarily imply static adherence or loyalty. The very fact that it is possible to remain Marxist in 'two different ways' implies that this is not a question of stubborn or sheepish attachment to a given dogma, but rather of an active interpretation of the Marxist heritage: a dynamic process in which neither he who remains nor Marxism itself stay the same – less a question of remaining Marxist than of becoming-Marxist. Evidence that Deleuze's claim to have remained a Marxist indicates a renewed commitment to Marxism is also provided by the historical context: it was a way of distancing himself from the violent reaction against Marx that took place in France after 1968, when the *nouveaux philosophes* competed with each other to renounce Marx and Marxism. To remain a Marxist when those around you are denouncing Marxism as the philosophy of the gulag is a profoundly political act – as Garo herself recognises (Garo 2008b: 66; 2008a: 614).

There are other reasons, however, why picking over the details of how *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* was written is unsatisfactory as a response to Žižek's charges. For a start, although it may tell us a little about Deleuze and Guattari's respective contributions, it risks misrepresenting their work, implying a clear division of labour between two isolated contributors. This was not the case at all; as Deleuze said of their relationship: 'we do not work together, we work between the two' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 17). Hence, rather than focusing on the Deleuze–Guattari books, it may be more productive to turn to Deleuze's own work, establishing a continuity between this early work and the later collaborative texts. For while the co-authored books may be the most obviously political, the themes, concepts and arguments of those books emerged out of Deleuze's solo work.[4] The rejection of dialectical notions of negation and contradiction, the Nietzschean affirmation of active over reactive forces, the ontology of pure difference, the understanding of being in terms of multiplicity, the imperative to highlight the virtual conditions of all actually existent beings – all these ideas came from Deleuze, so it is senseless to claim that the later, 'political' work with Guattari is somehow a break with or regression from the supposedly apolitical work that preceded it. Rather than pointing to broad themes, however, it is possible instead to look for Marx in Deleuze's early work: this search can show that the specifically Marxist politics of the later books can also be traced back to Deleuze, who was writing on Marx long before he met Guattari, in addition

to demonstrating that to 'remain Marxist' was not merely an act of resistance when surrounded by apostates but also a creative use of Marx. Perhaps the two most prominent appearances by Marx in Deleuze's pre-Guattari work occur in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* and *Difference and Repetition*.

II. Marx and Nietzsche

Nietzsche and Philosophy gives the lie to the claim that Deleuze is an apolitical thinker: this is a highly politicised Nietzsche, in at least two senses. First, Deleuze's theoretical reconstruction of Nietzsche presents him as a political thinker worth reading: a novel claim at a time when Nietzsche was dismissed by many as at best an individualist forerunner of existentialism unconcerned with broader social and political issues and at worst a proto-fascist whose politics should be unequivocally rejected. Second, Deleuze's book itself had wider political consequences, playing a vital role in facilitating the introduction of Nietzsche into political thought in postwar France. It is worth considering the manner in which Deleuze politicises Nietzsche before examining the role that Marx plays here. Deleuze argues that, like Kant, Nietzsche offers a critical philosophy. But Nietzsche goes much further than Kant. While the latter undertakes a critique of the forms and claims of knowledge, truth and morality, he does not criticise knowledge, truth and morality themselves: they remain outside critique, acting as transcendent standards that are used to measure, judge and ultimately denounce life. Kant's critique is thus fundamentally compromised and is effectively a form of nihilism, depreciating and denying that which exists in the name of another, superior world. Nietzsche, in contrast, replaces the question of truth or falsity with the problem of forces and power: no longer an attempt to establish the essence of truth in order to judge life, philosophy now pursues an interpretation of the forces that give sense to things and an evaluation of the will to power that gives values to things (Deleuze 1983: 54). Rather than seeking to determine the essential nature of a thing, 'essence' itself must be recognised as the result of the forces and powers that take hold of a thing. What Nietzsche seeks, according to Deleuze, is a 'thought that would *affirm* life instead of a knowledge that is opposed to life' (Deleuze 1983: 101). This does not mean that we simply indulge in a celebration of everything that exists. Genealogy is at once interpretation and evaluation: forces can be active or reactive and the will to power can be affirmative or negative. As affirmation of life, thought must reject all *ressentiment* and

take a genuinely critical stance that can explain and subvert reaction and negation. Philosophy's role is therefore not to establish timeless principles but, in Nietzsche's phrase, to be 'untimely': to remain vigilant in upsetting existing values and institutions.

Deleuze's Nietzsche is political because he reveals that apparently stable and immutable values and institutions are products of struggle between competing forces and powers, and in doing so he undermines the established order and points to the possibility of a different world. This politicised philosophy is sharply contrasted by Deleuze with the piety of Hegelian dialectics, which effectively acts as a functionary of the Church and the State by sanctioning the present order. Whereas dialectics can only recognise what is already established, Nietzsche seeks to create the new. It is in his discussions of the relation of Nietzsche to dialectics that Deleuze introduces Marx. Nietzsche and Marx are placed in a provisional alliance with the claim that they both found their 'habitual targets' in 'the Hegelian movement, the different Hegelian factions' (Deleuze 1983: 8). As it stands, this claim does not necessarily imply approval of Marx's project by Deleuze: the claim is not that Marx targets Hegel as well as the Hegelian factions, nor that Marx's critique of Hegelianism is identical to or even compatible with Nietzsche's critique. It does, however, suggest that it might be interesting to pursue the relation between Nietzsche and Marx – and this suspicion is rewarded by further examination of *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, as Marx makes a number of cameo appearances. Deleuze clearly recognises that Marx's relation to Hegel is more complicated than is Nietzsche's. At one point he draws a parallel not between the attitude of Nietzsche and Marx towards Hegelianism but between their attitudes towards Kant and Hegel respectively: 'Nietzsche stands critique on its feet, just as Marx does with the dialectic.' He goes on to add, however, that 'this analogy, far from reconciling Marx and Nietzsche, separates them still further' (Deleuze 1983: 89). They are separated still further because while Marx was trying to stand dialectics on its feet Nietzsche rejected dialectical thinking altogether. This comparison neatly captures Marx's place in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*: intriguing hints about possible connections are quickly complicated or undermined, leading to what can look like a dead end, yet with the possibility of further links never entirely foreclosed. Marx is posed a series of challenging questions by Deleuze, either directly or implicitly. Is Marx trying to save the dialectic from sliding into nihilism or does he join Nietzsche in defeating it? Is Marx, like Nietzsche, interested in inventing new possibilities of life, or is he engaged in a nihilist subordination of life to transcendent values, driven

by the spirit of proletarian *ressentiment* and hoping to return to the working class what is rightfully theirs? Is negation in Marx an active self-destruction, or is he caught up with the concept of contradiction, unable to recognise more subtle, fluid forces? That these questions are left largely unanswered in the Nietzsche book should not lead us to conclude that Deleuze has no answers, or that they are posed rhetorically as a way of confronting and condemning Marx. These questions do not suggest a rejection of Marx by Deleuze, or a lack of interest in Marx. Instead they suggest that he was grappling with Marx, and that if he was reluctant to endorse him fully then this reluctance did not come from an elite indifference towards politics but, on the contrary, from a fear that Marx's political position was not radical enough: that compared to Nietzsche, Marx did not go far enough.

That Deleuze had such fears is hardly surprising, and can be explained (at least in part) by the intellectual and political context within which he wrote. Given the somewhat dismissive attitude toward Nietzsche in France in the immediate postwar period, Deleuze could come to him relatively fresh. Marx, on the other hand, laboured under a joint burden: stifled by a sclerotic Stalinism within the PCF, and anaesthetised through official sanction within the academy. In both realms, Marx was also eventually aligned with a Hegelian humanism. Within academic circles, various factors led thinkers like Sartre and Goldmann to forge a humanist Marxism. (These factors included but were not limited to: the lectures and writings by Kojève and Hyppolite; the interest sparked by the release of Marx's early writings; and the translation into French of Marxists like Lukács, Korsch and Marcuse.) This trend was then mirrored in the PCF as its leading theorist Roger Garaudy sought an alternative to Stalinism for the Kruschev era. Given all this, it would not have been surprising if, in his attempt to generate a new, post-humanist and non-Hegelian philosophy of difference, Deleuze had rejected Marx completely. Deleuze's contemporaries dealt with the situation in different ways. Michel Foucault made a conscious and conspicuous effort to distance himself from Marx and Marxism (even while simultaneously continuing to draw upon Marx's conceptual innovations). Jacques Derrida was more or less silent on Marx until *Specters of Marx* was published in 1993, at a time when reference to Marx could act as a useful codeword for resistance to a newly triumphant neo-liberal hegemony. Jean-François Lyotard and Jean Baudrillard effectively abandoned Marxism altogether. For Deleuze to continue to speak favourably of Marx in such an environment is in itself highly significant.

That the tentative attempts in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* to link Nietzsche and Marx are more than idle speculation is confirmed in an interview from 1968 in which Deleuze maintains that both Marx and Nietzsche offer 'a radical and total critique of society': not a reactive, negative critique but one that is the prelude to an equally radical moment of creation: 'a great destruction of the known, for the creation of the unknown' (Deleuze 2004a: 136) – essentially what Deleuze himself calls for. *Nietzsche and Philosophy* can tell us not simply that Deleuze was engaged with Marx before he collaborated with Guattari, however, but also something about the kind of Marx that Deleuze was interested in. Indirectly, we can make comparisons with the manner in which he reads Nietzsche. Deleuze *uses* Nietzsche rather than merely interpreting him, producing a specifically Deleuzian Nietzsche in whom it is almost impossible to discern where Deleuze ends and Nietzsche begins. This is not a playful eclecticism in which Deleuze chooses and combines elements of Nietzsche's work more or less at random, but a systematic reconstruction of Nietzsche's philosophy. This approach mirrors Deleuze's readings of other thinkers, and we might anticipate that he will read Marx in a similar way: reconstructing a Marx who is recognisably Deleuzian but who is nonetheless drawn from the heart of Marx's work. Clearly this Marx will be one separated from the dialectical method: it cannot be a Marx for whom historical change is driven by society's contradictions. Equally, a Deleuzian Marx must avoid offering an idealist judgement of life using transcendent standards, yet without on the other hand capitulating to a relativism that uncritically accepts things as they are: he must instead undertake an immanent critique that challenges the established order.

This is the Marx that we find in *Anti-Oedipus*, where Deleuze and Guattari pursue the allusive connections between Marx and Nietzsche that are found in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. Marx is arguably the key influence upon *Anti-Oedipus*, though it is a Marx transformed by being filtered through numerous other thinkers, including Nietzsche. Perhaps the most obvious example of this double reading of Marx with Nietzsche is found in the book's adaptation of Marx's universal history: this is not a Hegelianised, totalising history in which capitalism is the inevitable culmination of a necessary process of historical development, but rather a kind of Nietzschean genealogy of capital: 'universal history is the history of contingencies, and not the history of necessity. Ruptures and limits, and not continuity' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 140). By using universal history, Deleuze and Guattari claim, it is possible 'to retrospectively understand all history in the light of capitalism'

(Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 140). Yet rather than being an imposition upon Marx, or a simple hybridisation of Marx and Nietzsche, this conceptualisation of universal history comes directly from Marx's work itself, or at least a part of it. In the *Grundrisse* Marx argues that bourgeois society provides the key to understanding all previous societies. He uses a well-known analogy to make his point: 'Human anatomy contains a key to the anatomy of the ape. The intimations of higher development among the subordinate animal species, however, can be understood only after the higher development is already known' (Marx 1973: 105). Rather than an attempt to naturalise historical development, this passage should be read as Deleuze and Guattari read it: as a rejection of teleology and recognition of the uncertainty and irregularity of historical development. Human anatomy can help us understand apes not because apes are destined to become humans but because humans have developed from apes; likewise, bourgeois social relations can illuminate previous social forms not because they were predestined but because bourgeois society has developed out of social formations that have now vanished and yet whose traces are still carried within capitalism. Bourgeois political economists were able to formulate the category of labour in general – a category that could then be used to analyse previous social forms – because under capitalism labour has in reality become generalised, as deskilled labourers separated from the means of production (or deterritorialised, to used Deleuze and Guattari's language) move regularly from one type of work to the next. This creation of a propertyless labour force was not the result of a preconceived plan but of entirely contingent circumstances, as a peasantry that had been forced from its land for quite different and varied reasons was then incorporated into a production process that required them as a precondition: the emergent capitalist class thus made 'use of events in which they had played no part whatsoever' (Marx 1976: 875). The history of capitalism according to Marx is a history of rupture and contingency, not necessity.

Just as they modify Marx's universal history, so do Deleuze and Guattari modify his analysis of capitalism. Where Marx seeks to expose the contradictions upon which capitalism depends yet which will ultimately be its undoing, Deleuze and Guattari instead analyse capitalism in terms of its deterritorialising and reterritorialising tendencies. In doing so they maintain Marx's focus on the tensions within capitalism – between, for example, its subversion of all traditional political institutions and forms of authority and its simultaneous need for such institutions and forms to enforce the established order – yet

without understanding them in terms of contradictions that will ultimately be superseded and resolved. If Deleuze does not understand capitalism in terms of resolvable contradictions, then nor does he posit an 'outside' to capitalism that could act as both a transcendent standard of judgement and a point of potential resistance (be it unalienated labour, pure use value, or an immediate transparency of social relations under communism). This does not mean, however, that he resorts to either a celebration of or a resigned submission to capitalism. Just as *Nietzsche and Philosophy* calls for an affirmation of active forces over reactive forces, so the central imperative of *Anti-Oedipus* is to push further the deterritorialisations of capital, against its efforts to reterritorialise. It has been suggested that this argument aligns Deleuze with a Hayekian liberalism: if the state is that which reterritorialises the decoded flows of the market, then Deleuze's call to deterritorialise effectively becomes a call for the deregulation of the market against the restrictions of the state.[5] The reverse is true, however: it is precisely Deleuze's argument that distances him from Hayekian liberalism and makes a mockery of attempts to portray Deleuze as 'the ideologist of late capitalism' (to use Žižek's phrase) (Žižek 2004: 183). Following Marx, for Deleuze and Guattari the reterritorialisations of the state are not *opposed* to the deterritorialisations of the market, as a reactive limit on a boundless natural energy: the state is a necessary model of realisation for the axiomatic that capitalism requires. The call to push deterritorialisation further, far from being an exultation of the market, is in fact what provides Deleuze's analysis of capitalism with a critical perspective. It offers recognition that the deterritorialising tendencies of capitalism offer the potential to lead somewhere different and unexpected, and it demands that this deterritorialisation be pursued against capitalism's simultaneous tendency to reterritorialise in order to further and protect private accumulation. This position is inspired in part by Nietzsche, echoing the distinction between active and reactive forces in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. But it is also a strictly Marxist position: like Marx, Deleuze recognises both the possibilities and the dangers immanent within capitalism.

In *Anti-Oedipus* we thus have the Marx that was promised in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*: a reconstructed, non-dialectical Marx who proposes a radical, immanent critique of the present in the name of something yet to come. This is not to say that the Marx of *Anti-Oedipus* had already been worked out by Deleuze in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* and needed only further elucidation or application. Rather, in the same way that Deleuze's collaborative work with Guattari develops concepts

that had already been created by Deleuze alone, so too does that work develop Deleuze's Marx. Something similar can be said of Deleuze's first great work of philosophy, *Difference and Repetition*.

III. Marx and Social Ideas

Like *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, *Difference and Repetition* is a fundamentally political text. *Nietzsche and Philosophy* sought to champion the creation of new values over the recognition of established values: *Difference and Repetition* maintains this critical distinction, and takes as its central target the dogmatic image of thought, whose contours had been sketched out in the Nietzsche book. The dogmatic image of thought operates through recognition, and in so doing ' "rediscovers" the State, rediscovers "the Church" and rediscovers all the current values that it subtly presented in the pure form of an eternally blessed unspecified eternal object' (Deleuze 2004b: 172). It is politically conservative, even reactionary, endorsing established values rather than promising new ones. Deleuze's critique of representation and the dogmatic image of thought in *Difference and Repetition* thus has political consequences: it aims to expose and undermine forms of thought that reinforce the status quo. But this is not a primarily epistemological or ontological critique that also happens to produce political effects: to a great extent it is motivated in the first place by political considerations. In the concluding chapter of the book, Deleuze states abruptly that 'if the truth be told, none of this would amount to much were it not for the moral presuppositions and practical implications of such a distortion' (Deleuze 2004b: 337). He is referring here specifically to the dialectic, in particular Hegel. But Hegelian dialectics is only the most pernicious form of orthodox thinking; the warning can be extended to give it wider significance and cover the distortions of the dogmatic image of thought in general: the critique of representation amounts to little if it does not combat the presuppositions and practical implications of those distortions. The presuppositions are not merely moral but profoundly political: it is presupposed that the established values of Church and State, the values that maintain the present political order, must be protected. If there is any doubt about the political significance of the 'practical implications' that Deleuze refers to, a few lines later he provides a pertinent example: it is the bourgeoisie that uses the weapon of contradiction to defend itself, while the (proletarian) revolution proceeds by the power of affirmation (Deleuze 2004b: 337). Deleuze's battle against the concepts of 'contradiction', 'opposition', 'analogy', and so on – his struggle to show that these categories, though

they may be indispensable, are only effects of a more fundamental difference – is therefore profoundly political. Thus while it is acceptable – even necessary – to question and challenge the political consequences of Deleuze's metaphysics (as Badiou [2000] does), it would be profoundly misguided to argue that Deleuze is merely apolitical (as Žižek does).

Where does Marx fit in this time? Deleuze's reference to the proletariat may once again suggest an ambiguous attitude: employing Marxian phraseology while simultaneously implicitly rejecting Marx's reliance on the concept of contradiction. Yet we have already seen that in Deleuze's work rejection of apparently fundamental Marxian tenets (like the notion of societal contradictions) is perfectly compatible with continued use of Marx. The broad arguments of *Difference and Repetition* can be seen to reflect the Deleuzian analysis of capitalism that has already been outlined: capitalism both generates and curbs difference, at once subverting what Deleuze calls 'the qualitative order of resemblances' (destroying all traditional representational codes) and reinforcing what he terms 'the quantitative order of equivalences' (reducing every relation to one of exchange) (Deleuze 2004b: 1).[6] More than this, it can be said that although there are not many more references to Marx in *Difference and Repetition* than in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Marx's presence is stronger in the second book: rather than allusive suggestions and unanswered questions there is a concrete use of Marx. His main appearance comes in the fourth chapter on 'Ideas and the Synthesis of Difference'. Deleuze posits that, following Marx, we can say that there are social Ideas. What this means is that we can think of society as a structure or multiplicity: a system of differential elements with no prior identity, determined by reciprocal relations and incarnated in actual relationships. In the case of capitalist society, and following Marx, we can say that virtual relations of production are incarnated in actual relationships between wage-labourers and capitalists. These relations – which are here class relations – are not characterised by some pre-existing identity but are reciprocally determined. In this way, it is possible to claim that the economic conditions of a society determine all other aspects of that society – not because actual economic relationships are the essence of society considered as a totality, but because those actual relationships, and all social relationships, are the incarnation of economic relations as differential virtualities that may be actualised in different ways. So we have something like the priority of the economic as found in Marx, without the economic essentialism as found in certain forms of Marxism.

Deleuze acknowledges that this reworking of Marx is not entirely original: Althusser and his collaborators had already read Marx in similar terms, and Deleuze quotes Althusser approvingly throughout *Difference and Repetition*. For Althusser, Marx's great theoretical contribution was to rethink the concepts of structure and structural causality (Althusser and Balibar 1970: 186): the Marxist conception of society is not a Whole in which the elements are expressions of an inner essence, but a complex and differentially articulated structure in which the elements are reciprocally determined. Deleuze's rereading of Marx thus looks very much like that of Althusser – yet Deleuze goes a step further. Althusser introduces the concept of 'overdetermination' in order to combat Hegelian Marxisms: instead of reducing the complexity of a society to a simple, central contradiction (as Althusser claims Hegel has done), overdetermination allows us to think society precisely as a structure in which differential elements are codetermined. But as Deleuze points out: 'It is still the case that for Althusser it is contradiction which is overdetermined and differential, and the totality ... remains legitimately grounded in a principal contradiction' (Deleuze 2004b: 87). Thus, for Deleuze, Althusser remains too tied to the dialectic (which, after all, is for Althusser the 'crucial gift' that Hegel gives to Marx [Althusser 1972: 174]). In addition, and relatedly, the Deleuzian language of virtuality allows us to avoid the risk of reintroducing a simple determinism such as comes with the Althusserian 'determination in the last instance by the economy': the movement from the virtual to the actual is creative and always leaves other potentials unactualised. So Deleuze's critique of certain forms of Marxism is thus also in part an escape from Althusserianism. Of course Althusser himself later sought to break away from Althusserianism: in particular, the turn towards 'aleatory materialism' in the 1980s can be characterised as an attempt to offer a more open philosophy that is less beholden to dialectical thinking and provides greater sensitivity to the contingent singularity of events. Yet this move by Althusser comes long after Deleuze's radical reading of Marx in *Difference and Repetition*. Indeed, while there were clearly numerous factors – both theoretical and political – that led Althusser to reformulate his philosophical approach, it is not fanciful to speculate that in doing so he may have been influenced by Deleuze: certainly he cites Deleuze positively in his later work (Althusser 2006: 189).

We have seen that Deleuze's Nietzschean Marx resurfaces in *Anti-Oedipus*; similarly, the presentation in *Difference and Repetition* of the Marxist conception of society is developed in *A Thousand Plateaus*. Rather than referring to social Ideas, in *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze

and Guattari refer to social machines. There are virtual abstract machines that can be actualised in a variety of social assemblages. Deleuze and Guattari refer to 'machinic assemblages': concrete assemblages effectuate or actualise abstract machines and '[a]bstract machines operate within concrete assemblages' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 510). There remains a common purpose, however, behind the two terminologies of social Ideas and social machines: namely, to theorise social forms without reference to any kind of organic totality or any transcendent imposition of unity. In one sense Deleuze and Guattari do this in conscious opposition to Marx: 'We define social formations by *machinic processes* and not by modes of production (these on the contrary depend on the processes)' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 435). But this reflects a transformation rather than a rejection of Marx. The concept of a social machine enables Deleuze and Guattari to rethink Marx's concept of a mode of production in various ways. A machine is made up of fluid connections: it selects, connects and combines different elements, interrupting and arranging flows – flows of people, of wealth, beliefs, desire, and so on. The Deleuzian 'machine' is therefore more dynamic than either simply the Marxian 'mode of production' or the Althusserian 'structure': a machine is a process rather than a static combination of determined elements. The terminology of machines also allows Deleuze and Guattari to overcome certain traditional binaries. It identifies different elements and levels of analysis without depending on a simplistic base–superstructure model whereby one needs to dive beneath the surface to find the hidden, determining instance, the inner essence that drives the whole. As Jean-Jacques Lecercle has said of the concept of assemblage (as actualised machine): 'It makes it possible to go beyond the separation between material infrastructure and ideal superstructure, by demonstrating the imbrication of the material and the ideal' (Lecercle 2006: 200). Deleuze himself claims: 'There is no base or superstructure in an assemblage' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 71). Related to this deconstruction of the relation between a supposedly material base and a supposedly ideal superstructure is the machine's imbrication of labour and desire: in a machine, there is no division between that which is objective, political and real and that which is subjective, libidinal and fantastic or ideological. This is, however, not a repudiation of Marx's concept of the mode of production but rather a development of it: an attempt to push Marx in an even more materialist direction.

Some commentators have argued that Deleuze and Guattari's theory of machinic assemblages distances them from the Marxist tradition. This argument has perhaps been best articulated by Manuel DeLanda.

DeLanda must be considered one of the foremost commentators upon Deleuze – better, in fact, simply to call him Deleuzian than a commentator upon Deleuze, precisely because the value of his work lies in the fact that he does not merely comment on Deleuze but attempts to reconstruct Deleuze's philosophy, not unlike the way in which Deleuze himself approaches other thinkers. But there is in DeLanda's work a curious blind spot when it comes to Marx, or rather a strange hostility. Although DeLanda's best work is a Deleuzian study of the philosophy of science (DeLanda 2002), he cannot be counted among those who obliterate Deleuze's politics by ignoring it, for elsewhere he has offered lucid and thoughtful accounts of the implications of Deleuze's work for social and political thought. Marx, however, is eliminated from these accounts: else occasionally explicitly condemned as the kind of anachronistic thinker Deleuze tried to escape from, but more often simply ignored. From Deleuze's work on abstract machines and social assemblages DeLanda develops what he calls 'assemblage theory', the value of which he claims is that it can account for entities without having to suppose either that there is an organic totality whose parts are seamlessly fused together or that the whole is nothing more than the aggregate of its parts. In contrast to these flawed approaches, assemblage theory is 'an approach in which every social entity is shown to emerge from the interactions among entities operating at a smaller scale' (DeLanda 2006: 118). This does not mean simply recognising that societies are made up of relations between individuals. The problem with existing theories, DeLanda argues, is that they treat scale as absolute – so that, for instance, individual persons are considered 'micro' while whole societies are 'macro'. In contrast, assemblage theory relativises scale: both individuals and societies have both micro- and macro-levels, depending on how you view them (DeLanda 2008: 166). Given this, to continue to talk of entities like 'society as a whole' or 'the capitalist system' is misguided or spurious, because it erases the very distinctions of scale that assemblage theory reveals: a society or the capitalist system are not wholes of which other entities are component parts, but can themselves be component parts (if considered in a global or even planetary context, for example).

In his discussions of assemblage theory DeLanda largely passes over Marx's work in silence, pausing only to accuse Marx (amongst others) of a 'macro-reductionism' within which only the social structure really exists, with individuals relegated to the status of epiphenomenonal effects of the social structure (DeLanda 2006: 5). If Deleuze and Guattari continue to talk of 'capitalism' then according to DeLanda this only

attests to the fact that 'the Marxist tradition was like their Oedipus the little territory they did not dare to challenge' (DeLanda 2008: 174). This is a problematic argument, in at least two (related) ways. First, Deleuze's dependence on Marx is far more than a residual terminological affiliation: as we have seen, in his own writings and those produced with Guattari, a critical engagement with Marx is an important part of the development of Deleuze's (and Guattari's) analyses of social forms. Second, Deleuze's work itself demonstrates that we do not need to read Marx as a theorist who prioritises the social structure at the expense of its components: any society is an actualisation of virtual relations, and thus a dynamic solution to the problem of how to order relations of production rather than a static structure that determines and fixes the relations within it. A major problem with DeLanda's presentation of 'assemblage theory' is his insistence on interpreting it in terms of scale. What Deleuze and Guattari call 'micropolitics' – that is, the central project of *A Thousand Plateaus* – has nothing to do with scale.[7] They are unequivocal on this point: 'the molar and the molecular are distinguished not by size, scale, or dimension but by the nature of the system of reference envisioned' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 217). Micropolitics therefore does not entail a rejection of a concept like 'capitalist society' for being too generalised or too large, unable to account for scale; it entails a different kind of analysis of capitalism. Micropolitics means analysing different kinds of line: molar lines of rigid segmentarity, molecular lines of supple segmentarity, and lines of flight (that which escapes and provides new connections and the possibility of change). A micropolitical analysis of capitalism is an analysis that recognises that capitalism is traversed by deterritorialising lines of flight – indeed that these lines of flight are its very conditions of operation: in order to function capitalism must necessarily release and encourage flows that may lead in unexpected directions which it cannot control (Deleuze 1997: 189). This insight is taken in large part from Marx's analysis of capitalism as a mode of production that must constantly revolutionise the instruments and relations of production – and that hence, in Deleuzian language, is always creating new flows and lines of flight. Far from being predicated upon a rejection of Marx, the micropolitics of social assemblages is deeply indebted to his work.

IV. Conclusions

Analysis of the place of Marx in Deleuze's early works achieves a number of things. First and foremost, it validates and reinforces

Deleuze's self-description as a Marxist. This aids understanding of his later work with Guattari. The point is not to attempt merely to reverse the orthodox view of the Deleuze–Guattari books, so that the Marxist politics therein becomes all Deleuze's, to the neglect of Guattari's contribution. Rather, by recognising that both Deleuze and Guattari were Marxists when they came to work with each other, we are better able to trace the lineage of their arguments and concepts: it is not only with reference to Deleuze's broader conceptual innovations that we can sketch a line between his early and his later, collaborative work, but also with reference to his specific use of Marx. In addition to throwing new light on the joint works, recognition of Deleuze's Marxism alters our understanding of his solo work, bringing out passages or insights that have been ignored. The image of Deleuze that arises from both *Nietzsche and Philosophy* and *Difference and Repetition* is not at all that of an apolitical elitist yet to show an interest in Marx, but of a politically committed thinker involved in contemporary debates within Marxism and making the first steps towards a reformulation of Marx's ideas, unafraid to deal with him even though he was still associated with trends that Deleuze must have found repellent and that many of Deleuze's contemporaries had abandoned Marx altogether.

There has in recent years been an effort by some commentators to align Deleuze with a liberal-democratic, even Rawlsian, politics.[8] This effort is not in itself illegitimate, and may even yield significant insights. Nor is it wholly incompatible with recognition of the important place of Marx in Deleuze's work. But there is a risk that if Deleuze is aligned with the liberal tradition in this way – even if as a critical interlocutor – then what makes his work interesting in the first place may be smoothed away, to the extent even that Deleuze may effectively become depoliticised: assimilated into mainstream thought and practice and into an academic exercise in the history of thought, his work loses his political impact. It might be argued that, on the contrary, to align Deleuze too closely with Marx is to depoliticise him. There has, after all, been a long-standing accusation made against Marx that he is depoliticising, in that he supposedly effects an economistic reduction or effacement of the political. But Deleuze and Guattari know that this is not true: what they show throughout both volumes of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* is that far from reducing the political to the economic, Marx demonstrates that it is capitalism itself that performs this reduction, as it functions directly through an axiomatic, without the need for political codes or beliefs. Simultaneously, they show that Marx politicises realms that had been previously thought to be apolitical: it

is true that capitalism effaces politics by making political institutions, values, beliefs, practices, etc., secondary or even unnecessary – but this effacement of politics is itself a political manoeuvre: it is generated by economic forces that prior to Marx (in the work of the classical political economists) had been considered an apolitical realm of natural and spontaneous order, but which Marx reveals to be pervaded by political relations of power and domination. When they claim that it is Marx's analysis of the encounter between the deterritorialised worker and decoded money that lies at 'the heart of *Capital*' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 225), Deleuze and Guattari indicate the importance of Marx's section on primitive accumulation. They do this not simply because this section counters determinist readings of Marx and demonstrates his recognition of capitalism's contingent origins, but also because it is here above all that Marx politicises economics. For Marx as for Deleuze and Guattari, the recognition that the capitalist economy depoliticises must be based upon the simultaneous recognition that the capitalist economy is highly politicised.

Furthermore, all this rests upon a politicisation of philosophy. Marx directs philosophy's attention to the political struggles and forces that exist as an integral part of apparently apolitical domains, including that of philosophy itself: philosophy's function after Marx is no longer to separate the true from the false but to analyse, interrogate and change the material conditions of its own emergence, challenging the existing order in the name of a new world. Deleuze's *Nietzsche and Philosophy* and *Difference and Repetition*, far from being apolitical, are in a similar way politically motivated by the need to challenge established values and create a new order. To recognise this is to begin to recognise Deleuze's debt to Marx. A political Deleuze and a politicised Deleuzian philosophy are both possible and welcome – but we will get nowhere until we acknowledge the profundity and persistence of Deleuze's Marxism.

Notes

1. See in particular the excellent studies found in Lecercle (2005), Read (2003) and Thoburn (2003).
2. I think that one way (among others) to distinguish between the well-known critiques of Deleuze by Badiou (2000) and Hallward (2006) is to say that whereas the former rejects the political implications of Deleuze's work, the latter denies that Deleuze's work has any real political relevance at all.
3. It is not my aim to offer a thorough critique of all of Žižek's arguments concerning Deleuze (which are more interesting and sophisticated than many Deleuzians have acknowledged): I am interested only in Žižek's claim that Deleuze is neither political nor Marxist.

4. This point is well made by Paul Patton (2000: 132).
5. It should be said that the links between Deleuze and Hayek are more often alluded to than actually worked out: see Garo (2008a: 612) and Mengue (2003: 67).
6. Eugene Holland opens his informative account of the relation between Marx and Deleuze (and Guattari) in this way, arguing that the 'first page of Deleuze's most important philosophical work, *Difference and Repetition*, lays the groundwork for his analysis of capitalism' (Holland 2009: 147).
7. For further criticism of this sort, see the review of DeLanda's *A New Philosophy of Society* by Read (2008).
8. Patton is perhaps the leading figure here; see Patton (2005, 2007, 2008). See also Tampio (2009) and the review of Patton's *Deleuze and the Political* by Smith (2003).

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The Marx of *Anti-Oedipus*

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Abstract

The meeting of Deleuze and Guattari in 1969 is generally used to explain how the former's thought became politicised under the influence of the latter. This narrative, however useful it might be in explaining Deleuze's move away from the domain of academic philosophy following the upheavals of May 1968, has had the effect of de-emphasising the conceptual development which occurred between *Difference and Repetition* and *Anti-Oedipus*. Worst of all, it has had the effect of reducing the role of Marx's philosophy to the superficial level of political alibi, impoverishing our understanding of its importance with respect to the conceptual assemblage of *Anti-Oedipus*. This paper attempts to restore Marx's relevance to Deleuze and Guattari's project by understanding *Anti-Oedipus* through the Marxian categories of production, distribution, surplus-value and consumption, and argues for a conception of schizoanalysis which does not relegate the name of Marx to the garbage heap of poststructuralist intellectual strategy.

Keywords: Marx, *Anti-Oedipus*, capital, production, surplus, distribution, consumption, ideology

The story of the meeting of Deleuze and Guattari in the summer of '69 has attained something of a mythological status. The reason for this is clear: *Anti-Oedipus* is one of the most important and controversial intellectual responses to the political tumult of May '68. The accepted version of the 'origin myth' suggests that Deleuze, the respectable professor, needed the sense of political urgency which Guattari offered, while Guattari, the lifelong activist, needed the theoretical grounding which Deleuze provided (Holland 1999: vii). While this characterisation is based on the authors' own statements, and is obviously in some respects accurate, it has led to a certain picture, most luridly painted in recent times by Slavoj Žižek, of the radicalism of *Anti-Oedipus* as a purely strategic interjection whereby, in the climate of political

reaction which followed May '68, Deleuze cynically acquired a political alibi (Žižek 2004: 20–1). Such a strategic explanation of Deleuze and Guattari's joint enterprise, moreover, has been used by Deleuzians partly as a way of explaining the change in tone between *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense* on the one hand, and *Anti-Oedipus* on the other, and partly as a means to perceive Deleuze and Guattari's relationship to Marxist theory as extrinsic.[1]

While the strategic explanation is no doubt a useful shorthand in accounting for Deleuze and Guattari's fulminating style, it tends to impoverish our understanding, emphasising a paradigm shift in Deleuze's thought at the cost of a sense of logical development and continuity. What's more, Deleuze's apparent shift from the history of philosophy to political theory has been interpreted by some critics as little more than a superficial retooling of an ultimately apolitical philosophy of difference.[2] What I wish to argue here is that the transition from *Difference and Repetition* to *Anti-Oedipus* represents neither a dramatic change of terrain nor a post-conceptual politicisation. We should instead regard *Anti-Oedipus* as the necessary and logical development of concepts already active in Deleuze's thought prior to his meeting with Guattari.[3]

In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze writes that 'the name of Marx' is enough to save his philosophy of difference, and particularly his rejection of Hegel, from being merely 'the discourse of beautiful souls' (Deleuze 1994: 207). What are we to make of this, especially when Marx appears only in passing in the pages of *Difference and Repetition* and only once, briefly, in *Logic of Sense*? I wish not only to argue that the critique of the philosophy of difference which Deleuze performs in these books is logically consistent with the Marxian theory of desiring-production presented in *Anti-Oedipus* but that this logical consistency needs to be grasped in order to understand fully the Marxism of the latter book. In the place of Hegel's concepts of contradiction, opposition and alienation, Deleuze puts his processual theory of different/ciation which in *Anti-Oedipus* is termed desiring-production. The concept of a surface upon which actualisation and counter-actualisation take place, and the objective illusion which attends this process, functions in *Anti-Oedipus* to account for the historical development of capital, the ideological 'image' of the real relations of production, the law of the tendency to a falling rate of profit and the displacement of capital's immanent limit which secures the counteraction of this tendency. In short, the philosophy of difference and repetition, of actualisation and counter-actualisation, of surface and

depth, are given an explicitly Marxian expression in the pages of *Anti-Oedipus* and this in no way entails a crude *politicisation* of Deleuze's thought. The commitment to Marx which *Anti-Oedipus* displays is at least as much a theoretical as a strategic commitment.

I. Productive Dissymmetry

In *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari use Marx's concepts to give an account of the *immanentisation* of capital, the means by which capital's interior limits become its principle of expansion. If a reconstruction of this account in Marx's own terms is rarely done, this is due to the conviction that Marx is largely external to Deleuze's thought. But such a reconstruction is vital in dispelling the pervasive misunderstanding that the theory of desire put forth in *Anti-Oedipus* is complicit with the postmodern stage of capital.[4] If Marx's chief contribution was to disengage capital from its concrete manifestations in order to perceive its laws, then desire, like capital, must be understood not in any sense as a 'thing' but as a process which goes through different phases in order to reproduce itself. If Deleuze and Guattari emphasise desiring-production, rather than a desiring subject or a desired object, it is because they want us to grasp this processual aspect as primary.

Marx's critique showed how bourgeois political economy begins at the level of exchange, distribution or consumption, whereas these are always secondary with respect to production. If political economy tends to uphold and justify capitalist exploitation, Marx argued, it is because it begins with the phenomenal or ideological form of capital as 'concrete' rather than with production as the 'rational abstraction' capable of explaining how the concrete became what it is (Marx 1973: 100–1). Similarly, as Deleuze and Guattari argue, psychoanalysis, beginning as it does with a concept of desire already installed in the subject–object form (desire as sexuality), tends to naturalise the repressive social structure constitutive of this form. Desiring-production, then, is Deleuze and Guattari's rational abstraction and the desiring-machine the form of desire's autoproduction.[5]

For Marx, the economic categories of exchange, distribution and consumption must be considered moments of the process of production even when these categories appear to exert a determining influence on that process. We might suppose for example that need is primary with regard to the products which satisfy it. Anyone with any experience of consumer culture, however, will quickly deny this, as the market clearly creates the 'needs' for whatever objects it believes consumers

will be willing to purchase. This essentially cynical, consumerist insight corresponds to the economic principle of Say's law which states that the supply of goods in the market creates the demand for them. At first glance, this appears to be in accord with Marx's emphasis on the determining role of production. The production of ever more consumer goods appears necessary for the capitalist system to maintain stability and fend off crises caused by wars, shortages of raw materials and so on. All that is required for the market to regain stability is to create more commodities and stimulate more demand. Hence, although we might admit the primacy of production in the creation of commodities, it is consumption which has the true determining influence since it is the latter which governs the reproductive process. To assert the priority of production in the midst of mass consumerism and artificial needs might then seem hopelessly naïve.[6]

Marx was quite vociferous in his condemnation of Say's law and its adherents (Marx 1973: 94; Harvey 1982: 76). The reason for this is simple: to say that supply creates its own demand – in other words that, given the right conditions, they cancel one another out – is to suppose that the market is essentially equilibrating and that disequilibrium always has some external source. Marx, however, argued that the crises which afflict capital are generated by capital itself, and this for the simple reason that capitalist production is founded on the unequal, antagonistic relationship between the worker, who owns nothing but his labour-power, and the capitalist, who owns the means of production. This fundamental inequality is what allows the capitalist to extort surplus-value and 'realise' it as profit through a system based on the general equivalent of money (the market). Exchange, distribution and consumption explain nothing in themselves because there is a necessary *disjunction* between the worker as producer and the worker as consumer (Hardt and Negri 2000: 222). In order to furnish the capitalist with profit, the worker must produce *more* than he consumes. The laws of equivalence which condition the wage-system (an honest day's work for an honest day's pay) and the market (you get what you pay for) are derived and secondary with respect to this 'productive dissymmetry' (Deleuze 1994: 20).

This last point is key to understanding the theory of desire put forth in *Anti-Oedipus*. For desire to produce, it requires machines (a form of autoproduction) and, to the extent that this link is the fundamental connective principle which governs all life, *every* machine is a desiring-machine. But this does *not* mean that every machine functions according to the same laws, or uses, by which it has been produced (Deleuze and

Guattari 2004: 314–16).[7] The primary and direct link between desire and the machine should not lead us to believe that every desiring-machine is equally legitimate, or that production and machine are cognate terms. It is quite possible, for example, to desire fascism, but this does not mean that desire is essentially fascistic. Similarly, we are not revolutionaries simply because we desire.

To say that a society consumes as much as it produces is to say ultimately that it produces only in order to consume. But Marx's claim is that capital's ultimate goal is to reproduce itself in ever greater magnitudes and to displace the limits, internal to it, which reproduction imposes. This, as many have pointed out, is the only way of accounting for the global dominance capitalism has attained. It is only on the 'surface' of capitalist society, that is, in ideological phenomena and the movements of the market, that production and consumption appear to cancel one another out. This illusion is maintained by commodity fetishism. In the first volume of *Capital* Marx examines this phenomenon closely. The 'free' worker, owning nothing but his labour-power, stands in an unequal relation to the capitalist – the relationship between worker and capitalist is only productive to the extent that it is unequal and relative.[8] The capitalist can exchange the commodity thus produced for the equivalent of its value. Hence, Marx speaks of two entirely different forms of value: 'the relative form and the equivalent form are two intimately connected, mutually dependent and inseparable elements of the expression of value; but, at the same time, are mutually exclusive, antagonistic extremes – *i.e.* poles of the same expression' (Marx 1954: 55). In Marx's expressive theory of value a commodity (a roll of linen or a coat) can be said to express x amount of another commodity. A coat can be expressed in x rolls of linen, a roll of linen in x number of coats, and so on. But changes in the conditions of production (increasing exploitation, technological development, etc.) cause this equation to fluctuate continually. Hence the disjunction between value, measured by production, and exchange value, measured by money. What this means is that value exists only in its expression as production and cannot be said to pre-exist it.

We might be tempted here to object that labour-power is the form value takes prior to its realisation in commodities, however, Marx insists that labour-power is not value but what *creates* value (Marx 1954: 57). Productive capacity is the source of all value but is not itself a value. If the commodity fetish has a mystifying function, it is that it gives an equivalent expression to an unequal relationship. In this sense, the distinction between production and capital *appears* quantitative and

calculable: the worker exchanges an amount of his labour for a set wage, the more he works, the more he earns. But underlying this is a qualitative distinction between labour-power as value-creating activity and the general equivalent through which value is expressed. The difference between production and capital is both quantitative *and* qualitative, which is what allows labour to be turned into a commodity and sold, and why Marx continually speaks in both *equivalent/absolute* and *relative* terms.

Marx's solution to the problem of the genesis of value was only possible by separating human labour-power in the abstract from its embodiment in both commodities and concrete forms of labour. The concept of simple abstract labour was derived by Marx from Smith and Ricardo, who posited the existence of a form of wealth on the side of the subject, prior to its embodiment in objects (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 280–1). The 'liberation' of labour-power from traditional social forms means that, unlike the serf, the slave or the bondsman, the free worker has to sell his labour-power in order to become a 'factor' of production. As a consequence of this, the worker himself is produced as an adjacent part, peripheral to the production process which his labour constitutes in concert with the means of production. This is what Marx means when he says the worker is literally 'devalued' by capital. But how was the free worker separated from the means of production in the first place and how is he continued to be separated from them? This brings us to the problem of 'primitive accumulation' and the disjunctive synthesis.[9]

II. Separation, Distribution and Disjunction

Deleuze's jettisoning of Hegelian categories appears to place his philosophy in a compromised position with respect to the 'bloody contradictions' out of which history is inevitably made. If difference is not given in terms of contradiction then the difference which Deleuze emphasises might seem to be somehow indifferent to materiality, austere and otherworldly. Supposing, as is generally done, that the inequality between production and capital is made known only through contradiction and opposition, does this not put Deleuze in league with the mystifications of capital itself? As Marx points out, the specific illusion to be dispelled is that capital rather than labour is productive: '[Capital] becomes a very mystic being since all of labour's social productive forces appear to be due to capital, rather than labour as such, and seem to issue from the womb of capital itself', while the market becomes 'an enchanted, perverted, topsy-turvy world, in which Monsieur le Capital and Madam la Terre do their ghost-walking' (Marx 1972: 827–30).

In *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari stress that desire composes the material infrastructure as much as the cultural and ideological superstructure. In other words, desire is immediately constitutive of reality. If this is so, how can we account for a specifically political domain defined by desire, the transition from formal to real subsumption in the labour process, the increasing dominance of technical machines in social reproduction, and most importantly the mystification of the relations of production in social life?[10] This relates to a larger debate within Marxism relating to the problem of political consciousness and the opposition of theory and practice. Marx invokes historical examples (chiefly the British land enclosures of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries) to explain the origins of 'primitive accumulation', the process by which the worker was separated from the means of production in order to render him 'free', the bearer of labour in its abstract form (Marx 1954: 669–70). But Marx de-emphasises historical subjectivity in order to lay bare the very laws of capital, which do not appear directly in experience and over which no one has direct control. This ambiguity in Marx's thought concerning the merits of history and practice on the one hand and theory on the other has led to much intramural debate (as, for example, between E. P. Thompson and Perry Anderson in the 1970s). But for Deleuze and Guattari, primitive accumulation is neither solely historical (materialist) nor continuous (ideological), and, while they dispense with ideology as crude false consciousness, they do in fact give a very powerful account of the mystification of desire, its 'capture' in social reproduction.[11]

In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze states that 'every phenomenon refers to an inequality by which it is conditioned' (Deleuze 1994: 222). We can take this as one of the essential statements of Deleuze's critique of the philosophy of difference. If empirical phenomena can be constituted as a set of differential relations between terms (Peter is taller than Paul, Paul is taller than John) then this has given rise to philosophies of difference (Aristotle, Leibniz and Hegel are Deleuze's main examples) which emphasise negation over positive terms and derive difference from identity. Deleuze's critique, however, not only charges that the primacy given to negation and identity stems from an illusion, but, and this is the crucial point, that the illusion is internal to difference itself (Deleuze 1994: 240). Difference generates its own illusory appearance – it generates, through its embodiment in concrete particulars, its own 'inverted image' or self-negation precisely because through its distribution in these particulars it is 'cancelled' in them. The concepts of opposition and contradiction are not the causes but only the effects of cancellation. The phenomenal world is 'doubled' by an

intensive, noumenal one, but this double is *asymmetrical* with respect to the extensive particulars whose production it conditions.

We might suppose from this that Deleuze's philosophy is crudely dualistic (as some readings tend to argue[12]) but the dissymmetry pertaining between intensive and extensive is reducible to neither domain. To do justice to Deleuze's philosophy, then, we must speak of three distinct elements: 1) a field of pure differentiation/intensity which qualifies the phenomenal field; 2) the phenomenal, differenciated field itself, where the laws of quantitative and qualitative determinations (contradiction, opposition, etc.) come into being and intensity is cancelled; 3) something which allows a communication, interaction and reciprocal determination between the two but is reducible to neither one. In other words, between intensity and extensity there is the all important factor of distribution. Distribution here plays for Deleuze the role of what, for other philosophers, would be epistemology. We can only *know* difference in its cancellation in empirical things but, and precisely because of this fact, we can *think* difference as that which conditions phenomena. Similarly, the distribution of difference in phenomena causes the empirical to be mistaken for what conditions it. The cancellation of difference in phenomena '[measures] the time of an equalisation', and in this way 'the principle of physical causality finds... its categorical physical determination' (Deleuze 1994: 223). The cancellation of difference appears at one with irreversible physical causality, so that we take the cancellation of difference for difference itself.

If the cancellation of difference in the empirical experience of quantity and quality takes on the character of irreversible physical causality (an 'apparent objective movement' as Deleuze and Guattari call it), then intensity allows us to grasp this movement from the perspective of difference in itself: 'intensity defines an *objective sense* for a series of irreversible states which pass, like an "arrow of time", from more to less differenciated, from a productive to a reduced difference, and ultimately to a cancelled difference' (Deleuze 1994: 223, emphasis mine). The apparent objective movement by which the producer is steadily impoverished through 'distribution' of the product has an 'objective sense' defined by the intensive states which qualify this distribution. If we are to find a concept of ideology in Deleuze, we should seek it here in the concepts of sense and distribution:

> Good sense is the partial truth in so far as this is joined to the feeling of the absolute.... But how is the feeling of the absolute attached to the partial truth? Good sense essentially distributes or repartitions: 'on the one hand' and

> 'on the other hand' are the characteristic formulae of its false profundity or platitude.... Good sense is the ideology of the middle classes who recognise themselves in equality as an abstract product.... [F]or example, the good sense of eighteenth century political economy which saw in the commercial classes the natural compensation for extremes, and in the prosperity of commerce the mechanical process of the equalisation of portions. (Deleuze 1994: 224–5)

The distribution which good sense effects repartitions (separates) and equalises in a compensatory manner according to the logic of the part and the whole, the part which belongs to the whole and the whole which lacks the part. In opposition to this, however,

> there is a completely other distribution which must be called nomadic, a nomad *nomos*, without property, enclosure or measure. Here, there is no longer a division of that which is distributed but rather a division among those who distribute *themselves* in an open space – a space which is unlimited, or at least without precise limits. Nothing pertains or belongs to any person, but all persons are arrayed here and there in such a manner as to cover the largest possible space. (Deleuze 1994: 36)

The discourse of *Anti-Oedipus* is organised around these two distinct forms of distribution. The molar corresponds to 'mass phenomena' and 'the laws of large numbers' while the molecular is described as 'micropsychic' and 'micrological' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 311–16). What needs to be remembered is that these are types of *distribution* and not differences in scale. We must avoid at all costs interpreting Deleuze and Guattari's position here as a sort of 'cult of the small'. The crux of the matter is that, while *all* production corresponds to molecular laws, which are schematised as the three syntheses of desire, when it comes to reproduction these syntheses can become subject to 'illegitimate uses' corresponding to the molar distribution. This is how Deleuze and Guattari account for the 'apparent objective movement' which allows 'a fetishistic, perverted, bewitched world' to come into being as a requirement of 'social reproduction' (Deleuze and Guattari: 2004: 12). We must also note that this process through which the real source of production (labour) is mistaken for something dependent on it (capital, the earth, the despot) is, for Deleuze and Guattari, a characteristic of *all* societies to the extent that all societies reproduce themselves. Desire, then, in its revolutionary mode, produces without reproducing, and so is antithetical to *any* kind of social organisation, whatever its character.

Anti-Oedipus is concerned with understanding the role of capital with respect to this tension between production and reproduction, and specifically how capital, unlike other modes of production, draws on desire directly in order to secure its reproduction. Capital releases a form of desire, described by psychoanalysis as libido, freed from any social or organic ties, an eminently flexible form of energy which can be channelled into any imaginable activity. This is how we should account for the bizarre array of desiring-machines in the opening passages of *Anti-Oedipus*. But 'free' desire, like 'free' labour, is something of a misnomer: in order to function, it needs some kind of 'surface' on which its effects are registered, recorded, stored-up, that is, distributed. This is why Deleuze and Guattari need the concept of the body without organs. The latter is what orchestrates desire, it is a surface on which the desiring-machines can become productive. Capital, then, forms the body without organs of capitalist society. But what really interests Deleuze and Guattari is the discovery of different kinds of bodies without organs in the pathological states of schizophrenia, in which the functioning and distribution of the machines follow the laws of production, not the laws of the reproduction of capital. While these pathological states are in no way desirable in themselves, they provide a heuristic for the revolutionary imagination.

If a society which reproduces in the same way it produces is literally impossible according to the criteria of the syntheses of desire this is suggested by the fact that, at the heart of desire, there is an antiproductive element which tends to resist the desiring-machines. The body without organs emerges not only as something which allows the machines to operate but also as a means to resist them (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 9). Every investment of desire in an organ or a machine is a source of pain and anxiety, much in the same way that the investment of money in a large piece of constant capital, such as a manufacturing plant, is a cause of great concern for the capitalist. An organ, like a factory, is not in itself productive but only becomes so through investments of desire. This is why the body without organs forms a disjunctive surface which attracts the desiring-machines but also repulses them. Without this attraction–repulsion, no machine would ever work: 'The genesis of the machine lies precisely here: in the opposition of the process of production of the desiring-machines and the nonproductive stasis of the body without organs' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 10). It is only by being constituted in opposition to *any* sort of organisation of desire, social or organic, that the body without organs is capable, in a seeming paradox, of performing a regulating or distributive role with respect to the machines.

When the machines and the body without organs become opposed in this way (a functional opposition) the latter

> falls back on *(se rabat sur)* desiring-production, attracts it, and appropriates it for its own. The organ-machines now cling to the body without organs . . . An attraction-machine now takes the place, or may take the place, of a repulsion-machine . . . The body without organs, the unproductive, the unconsumable, serves as a surface for the recording of the entire process of production of desire, so that desiring-machines seem to emanate from it in the apparent objective movement that establishes a relationship between the machines and the body without organs. (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 12)

This whole process, in which the desiring-machines are attracted and repelled, explains the phenomenon of primitive accumulation, the separation of desire from its productive organs, and the transition to the properly 'ideological' stage when desire labours under the repression which both keeps it apart from its final satisfaction and constantly stimulates it into new investments and counter-investments. Capital, and the relations between money and commodities that it establishes in its opposition to production, draws on desire directly in order to meet the needs of capitalist reproduction. If Deleuze and Guattari condemn the discourse of Freud it is because psychoanalysis never (with rare exceptions such as Wilhelm Reich) points up this complicity. In the Oedipus complex, the molecular (or pre-personal) way in which desire is produced (the id) is related to the molar (or personal) object forms: the father and the mother. By insisting on this molar distribution in the processes of psychic repression which constitute Oedipal sexuality, psychoanalysis argues that the desiring subject is produced as a function of these objects, as what is missing to and what is lacking them, whence the triangle of 'daddy-mummy-me'. The paternal law separates the child from the body of the mother, through its prohibition, then grants access under certain conditions (the molar distribution) which re-constitute desire as a function of the law. Whence the topsy-turvy, perverted and bewitched world.

It is vital to note here that desire is never duped into its complicity with authority, it simply continues to desire under conditions alien to its laws of production. Desire cannot be deceived because it is immediately constitutive and so has nothing to be deceived about. But this does not rule out something which performs the ideological function of 'capturing' desire. This is why Deleuze and Guattari insist that 'the essential thing is the establishment of an enchanted recording or inscribing surface that arrogates to itself all the productive forces and all the organs

of production, and that acts as a quasi cause by communicating the apparent movement (the fetish) to them' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 13). The body without organs, then, plays the role of an ideological surface, what Marx calls the 'surface of society'. The laws which determine the production of desire are not the same as the laws which determine the distribution of desire on this surface: 'when the productive *connections* pass from machines to the body without organs (as from labor to capital), it would seem that they then come under another law that expresses a *distribution* in relation to the nonproductive element as a "natural or divine presupposition" (the disjunctions of capital)' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 13). The 'real' cause refers to the 'inter-molecular modifications' of the desiring-machines, while the distribution of the machines on the surface presents a 'fictive' quasi-cause whereby the real cause is displaced in the apparent movement of separation/disjunction (Deleuze 2004: 108–9). This 'double causality' is the only thing capable of constituting the social world of desire and its capture. It is in the space opened by the two causalities that we find the domain of sense, the distribution and inscription of effects, or the ideological domain as such.[13]

Primitive accumulation, in which production is shorn from its products, is never accomplished once and for all but persists as a necessary part of the process; it is a necessary double movement which at once transforms the social means of production into capital and the producers into wage-labourers. The historical development of capital is dependent on this double movement which brings into being a disjunction between abstract 'production in general' shorn from the means of production, but also a *conjunction*, in which the two meet again but this time under conditions set by the capital relation. Once formulated in this way, we can understand Deleuze and Guattari's conception of the dynamic of accumulation constitutive of the specific power of the capitalist axiomatic as a disciplinary force.

III. Surplus-Value of Code, Surplus-Value of Flux

In chapter four of *Theories of Surplus-Value*, Marx writes:

> Productive labour, in its meaning for capitalist production, is wage-labour which, exchanged against the variable part of capital (the part of the capital that is spent on wages), reproduces not only this part of the capital (or the value of its own labour-power), but in addition produces surplus-value for the capitalist. It is only thereby that commodity or money is transformed into capital, is produced as capital. Only that wage-labour is productive which produces capital. (This is the same as saying that it reproduces on an enlarged

> scale the sum of value expended on it, or that it gives in return more labour than it receives in the form of wages. Consequently, only that labour-power is productive which produces a value greater than its own.) (www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1863/theories-surplus-value/ch04.htm)

Capital, in order to reproduce, must reproduce at an expanded rate because it only produces to the extent that it produces a surplus. Conversely, the way the worker produces is not the same as how he reproduces, or consumes in order to reproduce his labour-power, because the disjunctive surface of capital *excludes* the greater part of his product. Here we have the fundamental Marxist proposition regarding surplus-value, prior to its breakdown into profit, interest, rent, costs of circulation and so on. Under capitalism, products are not produced for their immediate use-value, they are kept in a reserve in order to be sold at a later date. For this reason, Marx saw clearly that the sphere of exchange, of *values*, is constituted as a function of a superabundance on the side of products, which itself presupposes the appropriation of labour above and beyond that required for the production of immediate use-values (Marx 1973: 456–9). Although Marx insists that surplus-value is unique to the capitalist mode of production, he does suggest that a form of accumulation in the capitalist manner is a naturally occurring and universal phenomenon:

> No production [is] possible without an instrument of production, even if this instrument is only the hand. No production without stored-up, past labour, even if it is only the facility gathered together and concentrated in the hand of the savage by repeated practice. Capital is, among other things, also an instrument of production, also objectified, past labour. Therefore capital is a general, eternal relation of nature. (Marx 1973: 86)

What Deleuze and Guattari call 'surplus value of code' is the means by which primitive economies regulate society through direct inscriptions ('scarifications') on the body which block any movement towards decoding. The emergence of capital, on the contrary, marks the transition to a society regulated by a surplus-value of flux, the latter being a 'conjunction' of two kinds of decoded flows: a flow of workers without any ties and a form of general equivalent capable of buying and selling anything at all, including labour-power (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 290). The regulative principle of capitalist society, then, corresponds not to coding but to this interior limit between the mutually exclusive decoded/ing flows. This limit is regulative precisely because it both attracts and repels the organs of capital.

Capital is constantly deterritorialising, finding new, exotic markets and innovative practices of decoding at its periphery, but as part of the same movement it must reterritorialise, rediscovering within its centre zones of archaism and lack which check this expansion. Without subjects ready and willing to occupy, to *live*, this interior limit, capitalism itself would not be possible since it would be unable to legitimate its periods of crisis. Capitalism, then, must constitute a subjectivity based on hostility towards codes, but it must also produce subjects *unwilling* to follow decoding all the way beyond the social relations which condition the production of the decoded flows themselves. The psychoanalytic subject discovers 'desire in the abstract', a free floating desire (libido) which, however, is only free to the extent that it is tied to a social order that denies it satisfaction (prohibition of incest). Capitalist society constitutes the limit between production in general (desire) and production for the sake of capital (work) as its own interior, uncrossable limit (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 333). The libidinal objects of the parental fantasy are 'discovered' only to the extent that they are rediscovered *outside* the family as symbolic substitutes (the cop, the priest, the nation). Deleuze and Guattari characterise the disciplinary power of capital entirely within the terms of this 'double movement', or axiomatic, the conjunction/disjunction of the two mutually exclusive flows:

> In *Das Capital* Marx analyzes the true reason for the double movement: on the one hand, capitalism can proceed only by continually developing the subjective essence of abstract wealth or production for the sake of production, that is, 'production as an end in itself, the absolute development of the social productivity of labor'; but on the other hand and at the same time, it can do so only in the framework of its own limited purpose, as a determinate mode of production, 'production of capital,' 'the self-expansion of existing capital.' Under the first aspect capitalism is continually surpassing its own limits, always deterritorializing further, 'displaying a cosmopolitan, universal energy which overthrows every restriction and bond'; but under the second, strictly complementary, aspect, capitalism is continually confronting limits and barriers that are interior and immanent to itself, and that, precisely because they are immanent, let themselves be overcome only provided they are reproduced on a wider scale (always more reterritorialization – local, world-wide, planetary). (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 281)

The necessarily expanded reproduction of capital cannot be separated from a form of subjectivity which seeks to surpass its immanent limits (the unconscious) only by displacing them, redrawing them at a further remove – hence the psychoanalytic drama of Oedipus, in which the

subject overcomes the familial figures only by rediscovering them in the social and political domains.

The Marxian theory of money, then, is of particular interest to Deleuze and Guattari because it relates specifically to the production of 'axiomatised subjects' (Thoburn 2003: 97). The two decoded flows, the flow of workers and the flow of money capable of buying their labour-power are characterised as a differential (a difference between two differences). Money as a result appears in two forms, a flow of wages which goes into the pockets of the workers (what Marx called variable capital), and a flow of profits which the capitalist takes and reinvests in the means of production in order to extract more surplus-value from his workers (what Marx called constant capital). In establishing a common measure money effects the cancellation of the intensive difference, which qualifies the two flows:

> Let us return to the dualism of money, to the two boards, the two inscriptions, the one going into the account of the wage earner, the other into the balance sheet of the enterprise. Measuring the two orders of magnitude in terms of the same analytical unit is a pure fiction, a cosmic swindle, as if one were to measure intergalactic or intra-atomic distances in meters and centimeters. There is no common measure between the value of the enterprises and that of the labor capacity of wage earners. (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 250)

Capital is not defined by a homogeneous flow, but by two mutually exclusive flows which act as checks on one another: a flow of payment and a flow of financing, a flow of tangible assets and a flow of credit, a market flow and a flow of technological innovation (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 407). For this reason, Marx's theory of money is conceived on the one hand as a measure, or store, of value, and on the other as a medium of exchange, facilitating the circulation of capital (Harvey 1982: 251). The great 'cosmic swindle' which the social authority of capital performs is to conflate these two aspects of money, to displace the limit which separates them, and to mystify this in commodity-fetishism and exchange (Marx 1970: 87–9).

Deleuze and Guattari are insistent on a Marxian theory of money which gives adequate importance not only to the general equivalent but 'to banking practice, to financial operations, and to the specific circulation of credit money' since it is in the opposition of the two kinds of money (payment and finance) that difference is cancelled and surplus-value realised (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 250). This explains why they are hostile to Freud's account which emphasises the role of the general equivalent in psychic life. According to Freud, the libidinal structure

which accounts for the significance of money is primarily anal-erotic rather than phallic. Hence, the famous equation 'money = shit' which Deleuze and Guattari so vehemently deride (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 31). The phallus, being the standard or the unit of measure (gold), refers to *excrement* as the medium of exchange value, the general equivalent (credit-money). As Jean-Joseph Goux writes:

> Supplementary (superfluous) elements are what govern the circulation of substitutes. The surplus is *excluded* to act as measure of the replacements. In general, whatever the register, the universal exchange value is linked to excess. In the election of gold as in that of the phallus, the surplus is charged with measuring the deficit in transactions involving value – whether in a positive form (as surplus of wealth in gold or surplus of vitality in the phallus) or in a negative, archaic form (as excrement, matter that is excluded and expelled). (Goux 1990: 31, my emphasis)

Surplus brings into being a lack or exclusion (something withheld in a reserve) which functions as a principle of calculation (or cancellation)[14] and allows a separate flow to be set up as the medium of exchange. A 'detatched complete object' is excluded or excepted, only to return as the totality which the parts lack; the parts lack what is in excess of them.

The function of the State is to establish an infinite debt capable of appropriating and absorbing everything and this, precisely, is what establishes money as the general equivalent (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 214–15). The despotic or Asiatic formation does not eradicate the primitive codes and their finite debts; it overcodes them by relating them all to a single, transcendent 'higher unity', rather than each other. The despotic mode of production brings into being two flows, a flow of credit (debt) and a flow of payment (tribute), crucial to the development of capital. In this sense, capitalism does not replace feudalism. Rather, feudalism becomes capitalism by being monarchised, democratised, etc., over a long historical period (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 242). Capitalism lacks a 'body' of its own on which it could inscribe its codes precisely because it is hostile to coding and this is why it finds an archaic body on which to reterritorialise. Capitalism does not replace feudalism, but rather maintains elements of feudal authority, exercised no longer from a point of transcendence but immanently, through capital itself.

The limit between attraction and repulsion is the regulatory principle of all desire. This limit is universal, not only to all societies but to nature. In phenomena of co-evolution, such as the orchid and the wasp, two elements double and are thus in excess of one another, but also attract one another as what each lacks. In primitive society, similarly, the

limits which regulate behaviours such as incest are coded and thus the limit remains purely *virtual* (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 270). Capitalist society is distinct from every other because its limits are constantly being brought into reality as something *lived*, and, indeed, this occupation of the social limit is precisely how capitalist society can dispense with codes. The limit which constitutes capital is experienced in different realms as the limit between payment and credit, production and capital, variable and constant capital, but also as that between desire and work. Money, in so far as it functions as a means of social regulation, *concretises* this limit, makes it a lived reality. The zones of lack and archaism which capital hollows out in the midst of abundance and innovation serve as graphic examples of this.

IV. Realisation, Consumption and Counter-actualisation

The realisation of the surplus-value immanent in commodities is necessary for the maintenance of social authority since realisation, and not production, is what governs the distribution of desiring-machines: 'Furnishing or realizing surplus value is what establishes recording rights' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 12). Social authority is dependent on the ability to realise surplus-value and thus crises of realisation are part and parcel of capitalist reproduction. If capital cannot accommodate itself to the expansion of products and markets which its reproduction necessitates, it will enter a period of crisis; surplus-value will be produced but will not be realised as profit. All crises are crises of realisation in this sense. 'The entire mass of commodities . . . must be sold. If this is not done, or done only in part, or only at prices below the prices of production, the labourer has been indeed exploited, but his exploitation is not realised as such for the capitalist' (Marx 1972: 244). The barriers to realisation were known to the political economy of Marx's day but were explained, for example by Ricardo's theory of rent, by factors external to capital. It was Marx who discovered that the barriers to realisation arose out of the antagonism, internal to capital, between the conditions under which surplus-value is extracted and those under which it is realised as profit. Similarly, we can say that Deleuze and Guattari were the first to discover the disjunction between the productive conditions of desire and the ideological conditions of its consumption.

What David Harvey calls the 'structural problems of realization' can be read, then, following *Anti-Oedipus*, as the problem of how capital manages to displace its interior limits, encountering them as something external but constantly redrawn at a further remove (Harvey 1982: 87).

Deleuze and Guattari's analysis proposes that capital fabricates a psychic interiority which places these limits inside the subject itself, forcing the subject to occupy them *libidinally* as psychic repression, as the trauma of the family romance, as dream and fantasy, as psychotherapy and hospitalisation (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 338). The fundamental argument of *Anti-Oedipus* is that capital's limit, while being perfectly real and concrete, produced as it is by desire, is populated with the fantasy figures of an archaic authority, *mommy and daddy*, as a condition of desire's realisation. For this reason, we need to think in terms of three elements in the ideological process: 'the repressing representation which performs the repression; the repressed representative, on which the repression actually comes to bear; the displaced represented, which gives a falsified apparent image that is meant to trap desire' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 125). Desiring-production, as distinct from social (re)production, always occurs at the limit of society, but the synthesis of conjunction is deemed illegitimate when it derives what lies beyond the limit from the limit itself. In the Oedipal drama, the subject's desire is constituted as a function of the paternal proscription from which the desired object, the mother, is derived. The social limit is thereby lived, but only as dream, fantasy and the representations of the subject. This is precisely how 'unconscious material' is fabricated through the synthesis of conjunction (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 345).

The problem from the point of view of the capitalist is precisely that the consumption powers of the worker are constantly being undermined by capital itself through the impoverishment of workers. The capitalist deprives the worker of the greater part of his product, not in order to consume directly but to sell at a profit. But the proletariat, precisely because of their exploitation, are incapable of buying all the commodities they produce, and so capital must constantly find new means of disposing of its reserve, discovering new markets (whence imperialism, but also the psychoanalyst's consulting room) for realisation. Capitalism, then, brings into being models of realisation which do not necessarily involve consumption, and which may be explicitly ascetic. As Deleuze and Guattari write:

> Marx has clearly demonstrated the importance of the problem: the ever widening circle of capitalism is completed, while reproducing its immanent limits on an ever larger scale, only if the surplus value is not merely produced or extorted, but absorbed or realized. If the capitalist is not defined in terms of enjoyment, the reason is not merely that his aim is the 'production for production's sake' that generates surplus value, it also includes the realization

> of this surplus value: an unrealized surplus value of flux is as if not produced, and becomes embodied in unemployment and stagnation. (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 255)

As a result, capital includes as part of its vast productive process a moment of antiproduction, something which prevents immediate consumption. Indeed, capital can be defined as the unity of production and antiproduction, since what intervenes in order to separate the producers from the product (the State, its police and its army) likewise function to prevent consumptions, even on the part of capitalists, which do not serve the interests of capital. There must be something to prevent unfettered technological advancement, a flow of stupidity to counter the flow of knowledge; there must be an asceticism to counter the flow of excess, and an archaism to counter the tendency towards absolute deterritorialisation. Capital produces far more than it can accommodate, and so must bring its vast resources of repression to bear on whatever escapes realisation.

This conceptualisation represents a recurring theme in the history of Marxism. Rosa Luxemburg in her *Accumulation of Capital* famously proposed that militarism and imperialism provide the vital markets in which surplus-value is absorbed or realised. Sweezy and Baran, in their landmark book *Monopoly Capitalism*, suggest that the problem of absorption becomes ever more pressing when capital enters its late, or monopoly, phase where price fixing and centralisation become the norm. The problem, however, must be related back to what Marx, in volume three of *Capital*, considered the central law of capitalist accumulation, the so-called law of the tendency to a falling rate of profit. As Marx explains:

> proceeding from the nature of the capitalist mode of production, it is . . . a logical necessity that in its development the general average rate of surplus-value must express itself in a falling general rate of profit. Since the mass of the employed living labour is continually on the decline as compared to the mass of materialised labour set in motion by it, *i.e.*, to the productively consumed means of production, it follows that the portion of living labour, unpaid and congealed in surplus-value, must also be continually on the decrease compared to the amount of value represented by the invested total capital. Since the ratio of the mass of surplus-value to the value of the invested total capital forms the rate of profit, this rate must constantly fall. (Marx 1972: 213)

What this means is that even if the rate of surplus-value grows, this can only be *expressed* in an ever decreasing rate of profit. Marx schematises

this as follows: if a capitalist employs 100 workers for one week and pays out £100 in wages (variable capital) in order to produce £200 worth of total product, then the rate of surplus-value is 100%. But if we suppose that the same capitalist spends £50 on constant capital (machinery, raw materials) the rate of profit will be expressed as 66 2/3%, if he spends £100 on constant capital it will be 50%, and so on (Marx 1972: 211). Increasing technological development entails a relative decrease in the amount of labour and an increase in productivity, leading to a general glut of products and an increasingly impoverished proletariat incapable of purchasing them. As a result, even if the *absolute* rate of profit goes up, the rate of profit *relative* to total capital (constant and variable) decreases (Marx 1972: 220).

A number of influences counteracting the falling tendency have been noted by Marx and others writing after him. All of these influences, whether they involve the depression of wages or the channelling of money into bureaucracies such as civil government and social welfare, into military spending and public works, are ways of devaluing, depreciating or destroying capital.[15] Deleuze and Guattari reinterpret this from the unique perspective afforded by schizoanalysis. The schizophrenic is produced in the same way as any other commodity but with the vital difference that the schizo is not saleable; the desire of the schizophrenic is produced by capitalism but is unrealisable in it, whence the repressive forces of psychiatry, anti-psychotic drugs and the asylum, all of which are means capital finds to counteract the unprecedented liberation of desire it precipitated (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 266). The neurotic, on the other hand, is perfectly realisable, and neurotic illness has provided capital with a whole new set of markets (therapy, anti-depressants, and so on). It is for this reason that Deleuze and Guattari condemn the practice of psychoanalysis as 'a gigantic enterprise of absorption of surplus value' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 260). Psychoanalysis, in other words, contributes to the diffusion of antiproduction, that bourgeois asceticism on which realisation depends, in that consumption in the realm of fantasy is no consumption at all.

Realisation, then, is opposed both to production and consumption proper. In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze distinguishes the virtual from the possible, arguing that while the possible is *realised*, the virtual is *actualised*: 'The possible is opposed to the real; the process undergone by the possible is therefore a "realisation". By contrast, the virtual is not opposed to the real; it possesses a full reality by itself. The process it undergoes is that of actualisation' (Deleuze 1994: 211). The social limit, which the schizo occupies, is in no way realisable (its realisation is its

displacement) but *is* actualisable. To the extent, then, that actualisation is opposed to realisation, we can argue that every actualisation is already a counter-actualisation to the extent that the latter de-realises a corresponding realisation. This, in fact, is in accordance with Marx's own conception of the influences which counteract the falling rate of profit, since these influences are literally *destructive* of capital. Counter-actualisation, then, must be seen as part of capital's self-destruction, since it signifies the production of something unrealisable in the heart of capital itself. As long as the falling tendency and its counteraction are regulatory, this secures the immanentisation of capital. Legitimate consumption, on the other hand, would be a deregulating counter-actualisation, a displacement of the limit *common* to both desiring and social production, not the displacement of one into the other.

If realisation involves the calculation, or cancellation, of difference, then legitimate consumption always involves something incalculable and unrealised, a *remainder*: 'the conjunctive synthesis . . . implies a veritable migration of the remainder or residue' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 359). The schizo then, like the worker, receives a 'share of the product', of 'what is left after each division' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 17). But, unlike wages, which serve to reproduce labour-power, this share remains unrealised. In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze describes the process as follows: 'God makes the world by calculating, but his calculations never work out exactly [*juste*], and this inexactitude or injustice in the result, this irreducible *inequality*, forms the condition of the world. . . . [I]f the calculation were exact, there would be no world. The world can be regarded as a "remainder"' (Deleuze 1994: 222, emphasis mine). These remainders can be found migrating everywhere on the body without organs of capital as what capital cannot consume, and from these remainders we make our own bodies without organs.[16]

V. Conclusion

Anti-Oedipus gives us a coherent and compelling account of how capital constitutes 'a whole field of immanence that is reproduced on an always larger scale, that is continually multiplying its axioms to suit its needs, that is filled with images and with images of images, through which desire is determined to desire its own repression' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 407). Deleuze and Guattari exhort us to think this process of immanentisation in terms of three different planes of the body without organs of capital. First, there is the plane of the unequal productive relationship between worker and capitalist, or desire and machine. This

is the differential in the unequal relationship between the owner of labour capacity and the owner of the means of production constitutive of surplus-value. Second, there is the plane of disjunction or recording on which the two incommensurable forms of money, the flow of wages and purchasing power on the one hand, and the flow of finance and credit on other, come into being to constitute the interior limit of capital. This is the limit that capital is constantly displacing through the cancellation of the difference constitutive of the productive relationship. Third, there is the unity of production and antiproduction which capital needs as a condition of realisation. The great forces of repression (the State, its police and its army) are joined to the permissiveness of the market. The permissive structure *is* the repressive structure (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 291). Whence, the dualism of capital, which on the one hand produces for the sake of production, but on the other produces strictly for the sake of the capitalist social formation. The ideological function which psychoanalysis performs is the displacement of the absolute limit, which is the exterior limit of all societies, into the relative limit (capitalist reproduction) through a repressing false image of this externality derived from the interior limit of capital and fabricated in the unconscious to be invested and consumed.

Notes

1. 'The question of their relation to marxism is one that is only posed from outside the theoretical work of Foucault and Deleuze; within it, the question of marxism does not arise. At the level of intellectual strategy, it is the positivity of this approach that must be underscored. These authors deploy elements of marxist theory in the process of elaborating something else, a different form of intelligibility of social reality' (Patton 1988: 126). In a similar vein, Isabelle Garo argues that the appeal to Marx was a convenient way of opposing the wave of reactionary sentiment which followed May '68 but was never internal to Deleuze's thought (Garo 2008: 65–7). Manuel DeLanda, meanwhile, avers that 'the Marxist tradition was like [Deleuze and Guattari's] Oedipus, the little territory they did not dare to challenge' (Delanda 2008: 174). Patton, Garo and Delanda's comments, although divergent in tone, amount to the same thing: that Marx figures in Deleuze's thought as a sign of *bad conscience*.
2. See for example Hallward (2006: 162).
3. It is not at all my intention here to write Guattari's influence out of the story, but rather to emphasise that his influence must *not* be taken to be a crude politicisation of Deleuze. This much is a prerequisite to understanding Guattari's true influence which, however, is a matter that lies beyond the scope of this paper.
4. Boltanski and Chiapello associate the triumph of neo-liberalism in the 1980s and 1990s with Deleuze's critique: 'Much better in effect, from the standpoint of unlimited accumulation, that the question be suppressed, that people convince themselves that everything can no longer be anything but a simulacrum, that

"true" authenticity is henceforth excluded from the world, or that the aspiration to the "authentic" is only an illusion' (quoted in Callinicos 2003: 11).

5. 'Like Marx, contra Hegel, [Deleuze and Guattari] attempt to set things right by making a new beginning, a new type of beginning in fact, one which, as in Marx, starts with a "rational abstraction", namely production in general (as process). Desire as process, as production, is as much of a corrective as Marx's general production is' (Buchanan 2000: 21). On the importance of distinguishing between desiring-production and desiring-machine, see Buchanan (2008: 49–50).
6. This is the criticism of *Anti-Oedipus* Baudrillard makes in *The Mirror of Production*.
7. Deleuze and Guattari employ the terms 'laws' and 'uses' interchangeably. Whether illegitimate or legitimate uses are at stake, these refer to the same syntheses (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 127).
8. In *Theories of Surplus Value* Marx writes: 'Productivity in the capitalist sense is based on relative productivity – that the worker not only replaces an old value, but creates a new one; that he materialises more labour-time in his product than is materialised in the product that keeps him in existence as a worker' (www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1863/theories-surplus-value/ch04.htm).
9. The history of the debate over the meaning of primitive accumulation goes back to Lenin's *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, which argued that primitive accumulation was a one-off historical occurrence characterising the transition from the corvée to capitalism. Rosa Luxemburg's famous argument in *The Accumulation of Capital* was that capital necessarily expands into a world system in order to find pre-capitalist markets, and hence primitive accumulation is a continuous and necessary feature of capitalist reproduction. The latter thesis has been instrumental in the conception of postmodern capital as imperialist by Hardt and Negri and Samir Amin, among others.
10. This is Badiou's critique of Deleuze's political theory, see Thoburn (2003: 5).
11. Thoburn argues that, since capital is 'amoral', Deleuze does not need a concept of ideology. Thoburn, however, understands ideology purely as 'belief system' and not, as Marx does, as part of a system of distribution (Thoburn 2003: 94).
12. For a recent example of this type of dualistic reading, see Reynolds (2007).
13. As Brian Massumi writes, 'The power of the quasi-cause is essentially distributive', www.anu.edu.au/HRC/first_ and_ last/works/realer.htm). For the Marx and Engels of *The German Ideology*, the role of distribution is central to the historical development of the division of labour and the ideology of the State:

    > With the division of labour … is given simultaneously the distribution, and indeed the unequal distribution, both quantitative and qualitative, of labour and its products, hence property: the nucleus, the first form, of which lies in the family, where wife and children are the slaves of the husband. … This fixation of social activity, this consolidation of what we ourselves produce into an objective power above us, growing out of our control, thwarting our expectations, bringing to naught our calculations, is one of the chief factors in historical development up till now.

    This 'objective power above us' is precisely what gives rise to the State, which re-constitutes an 'illusory communal life' from 'real ties' (Marx 2000: 184–5).
14. Surplus-value only becomes *calculable* through its realisation as profit. Realisation of surplus-value and cancellation of difference then are to be understood as cognate terms in the discourse of *Anti-Oedipus* (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 251).
15. See Harvey (1982: 84–5) for a discussion of these terms.

16. Finance, for example, while representing a flow which facilitates realisation through banking power (credit money constitutes purchasing power), cannot itself be realised (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 249; see also Deleuze 2006: 12).

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Marx as Ally: Deleuze outside Marxism, Adjacent Marx

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Abstract

Deleuze reworks Marxist concepts in order to identify those that represent discontinuity and produce a theory of revolution. Marx is important because, along with Spinoza and Nietzsche, he is a part of a project to leave behind concepts such as transcendence and univocity which underlie the totalitarianism of traditional philosophy. Deleuze is looking for concepts that might form a different theory, within which the structures of production are not organised vertically by the domination of universal concepts, such as 'being' or 'essence', but flow horizontally through a multiplicity of relations of conceptual singularity. The production of a different series of concepts is a strategic and tactical operation that, in confronting prior notions of transcendental philosophy, turns philosophy itself into a battlefield. Marx provides the general methodology for this tactical approach through two fundamental categories: production and conflict. Deleuze practises Marx's theoretical method and by using Marx's own central concepts challenges traditional Marxism, to arrive at a totally different and revolutionary philosophical structure based on concepts such as those of force, variation, difference, singularity, production and the war machine.

Keywords: Conflict, production, forces, linking, battlefield, substance, immanence, transformation

Marx is at our side. That is to say, to reconstruct a thought worthy of a possible revolution means to cross the threshold of Marx. He has always been thought of as the eldest brother who, representing the beginning of a lineage, assigned and distributed roles and positions within a family tree. Half-father and half-mother, Marx was the reference necessary

and sufficient to recognize oneself, to define oneself in relation to an identity. Marx was at the same time a space of thought and a field of activation, the precursor who had already accomplished in advance all the events brought about in his name. He was the first projection of the origin, the necessary process of history, and the identity of the motor which pushed it onward. Each event related to Marxism was, and presented itself as, the accomplishment of a potential which history had until then kept hidden within its folds. Marx therefore himself contained that potential, as an iconographic image of the general form of thought. But what thought? What thought did Marx incarnate? The lineage that the Marxist tradition always wished to attain in making of Marx the first son of a revolution already present and given in its ideational terms: consumption as necessary passage, but so determined, between *production* and *appropriation*, and the motor which powered the two moments which accomplished each other. The first was called 'natural dialectic of need and consumption', or 'nature'. The other was denominated 'subjectivity'. Nature is a dialectic process that circulates inside of a network of organic functions organised inside of a superior system, the corporeal organism. Production appears as an exterior application of its biological articulations, in their turn the formation of one sole model. This model remains the accomplished figure of the natural character of the organism and does not ideally guide its manifestations.

The continuity that links function to satisfaction is guaranteed by need. Need is the *a priori* form which gives to function its structure, the direction for its undertakings, the sense of each cogwheel which constitutes its mechanism. Need is the carving tool that gives to the thing the image of a function, in rendering consumption a continual labour of recuperation and incorporation. It is the motor which pushes function beyond itself. It discovers itself in the mirror where the body will coincide with the body of nature. The natural organism is nature itself in the expression of its accomplished totality, form actualised by the resolution already foreseen in its cracks. Nature is not a substrate, a 'hyle', to speak like Husserl, but is the sole content, the ontological horizon that presides over the existence of every phenomenon.

Nature projects itself forward from itself. As positional signifier and thetic signified, it is 'Subject'. It devotes itself to the centring of the circuits which find their necessity in the form they accomplish. Each of them is a variant of the logic of identity which reshuffles nature upon its body. Its homogeneity affirms itself through the centrifugal movement of extrusion that activates it. Its contents are nothing other than itself,

a manifestation which never strays from its origin, for it recalls nothing other than the character which it already was. Nature is the principle of reason that governs all processes by unifying them. Its projections are the figures it assumes in expressing itself. Nature is the invisible and the visible, a source which springs forth everywhere. This originary core remains forever in its properties, and cannot surpass them because it has already brought them back to the interior of its intentionalities. Nature expresses itself in making of existents the signs of a supreme signifier which engraves the marks of one sole meaning. Objects reduce themselves to being the transcendental return of a general principle. There are processes of subjective totalisation everywhere. Once we suppose the existence of a function related to a body, we also admit the presence of its specular double, the thing, and their originary unity. At this point, it gives itself a subjective projection. Needs are always natural needs, even originary intentionalities, of the transcendental substance of the principle. What differentiates the manifestations of nature is not their content, but their gradient of formalisation. We will find givens which are still embryonic, simple inferior moments of the dialectic which activates the passage towards a superior manifestation. We will be able to trace an entire hierarchy of passage which makes the inorganic fall away onto the organic, and from there to superior living forms, to spill eventually into the human, with its capacity for manipulation and management, and its linguistic potential which is a sign of its proximity to the principle. Having attained the human, we installed ourselves at the level of the totality. Human reason is only the enacted position of transcendental contents which qualify the thetic constitution of nature. Man is the adequate expression of its lines of totalisation. Man is nature as given to itself, life as it is exploding forth, the transcendence of reason which makes itself flesh. The body of man, his flesh, represents his intentional projection, which envelops beings, and his totalisation thanks to signifying links which intertwine. Man exercises his needs and works in order to consume: his productive activity is the identity of meaning and signification. For man, what happens in other natural entities is not valuable in itself. The different manifestations of the human are not reference points of a complete signifying expression. Man and signifier are one. He is the model which serves as criterion for other living and non-living elements (for they are also the superior stage envisaged by the non-organic). Man is the universal which is in the midst of living. His existence is totalisation because man synthesises in himself the identity between functions and things, and distributes them all along signifying chains. Functions and things do not indicate the collocation of

the signifying chains in the pyramidal organisations which thought, and even language, have at their summit.

In man the organism and the thing complete each other in a perfect identity, assured by consumption. Consumption is the link which makes of any thing a human object: the other dimension, the other face, the second aspect, reversed, of the breaking forth of the life of man in a completely human world. Consumption demonstrates that beings are only pieces of the enlarged universe of humanised nature, that is to say, of complementary modules of a milieu which does not exist if not as a human signifier. They are managed and distributed according to the order of signification which emerges from its projections, declinations of a universal principle which proffers itself in its acts.

Once man has been mentioned, we are directly addressing society. The totalisation of nature in the human anticipates a definition of man as a general collectivity, a global horizon of human characteristics and their intentional contents, an extensive milieu which invests the entire space of existence. Society is the human in its totalisation. It holds in all its partitions the same adequation between thetic signifier, signification and meaning. Once again, it is the circuit of consumption that takes on the value of logical sequence which strings together the active tension of social subjectivity with all the forms which constitute the lines of sense. The process of assuaging that fashions beings in the blast furnaces of human expression causes the piercing cry of totalitarian reason to resound. Each being is the song which glorifies its perfection; each thing is a sign which indicates it; all movements are signals which indicate it, the rays of one sun which recall its source, light.

In nature, only the interior exists. The form and actualisation of this absolute interior is consumption. The subject is a total subject, constituting inasmuch as it is capable of appropriation. Man realises his materialisation at the level of transcendent principle because he is by definition the being who has needs and *thus* speaks and works. He satisfies his needs as it is given that his acts are the universal origin which totalises itself as society. He comes *a priori* from a general social milieu that represents rational value. We can thus say that a thought of the individual as such is impossible. Every time an attempt was made to reconstruct humanity from man in shared milieus by glances met from far away, it was discovered, at times with horror, that the human was a concept which has society as its form. However, what is more important is that this human society is *regulated*, which is to say managed, in one way or another. The universal rationality which displays the essence of the human spreads its manifestations about according to an order.

Society, which does not represent acts, finds in itself the logic that allows production to attain its ends. Society is always rational, even in its dysfunctions. It moves in forced conduct which forcibly drags the signifier to meaning.

Human society is a transparent collectivity that governs its manifestations while containing within itself the identity between actions and significations. This is the heritage that Marxist thinkers, among others, wished to claim. Need/production and subject/society is the grid that realised the circulation of the ontological principle in its forms, and the schema which gave an accomplished definition of the transcendental coordinates of the existent. Marxism was the conception which could bring thought to its goal by ending the problem of history. It went beyond the limits of bourgeois thought which, stuck in its divisions and dichotomies, did not succeed in holding the four together, as the wooden legs of a theory of universal history, adequate to its object.

But again, what thought? And why was history a problem for thought? Once again these questions remained open, but unasked. In fact, they were the same which invested the famous 'adversarial' field. If this thought was essential to the philosophy of Marx, its ends were not to be distinguished from those of other philosophies. Surely it was a step forward in relation to them. However, the categories, the theoretical structures and the conclusions inhabited the same terrain. The grid of history targeted by Marxism also marked non-Marxist thought. The circularity that linked need, production and thing, and the historical process of subjectification which one could pull from them, were the points of departure of all the theories which made of the position of a transcendental form the fundamental task of a possible ontology.

We can construct the passages of this strategy of conquest, this imperial campaign of thought directed by exceptional strategic intelligences. We could start with the Platonic partition of the four genres of knowledge, which found the asymmetrical equilibrium of all that is by organising it into a hierarchy between matter and idea. We could continue with Aristotle, who made of the accomplishing of souls, through their productive activation, the articulation of a universal substance having the same quality of realness. We can follow that with Augustine, who understood that time was the movement of totalisation which allowed need to jump beyond the finite and establish itself directly in the universal principle that spreads out everywhere in order to take hold of every thing. We can see how Hobbes made scissions produced by needs, i.e. the drives, in order to fold history onto the linear dynamic which appeases them in a principle that was henceforth socialised, which

finds in its social form the very foundation of its transcendence. We can cite Descartes and his operation of negation of the existence of need, which was necessary in order to subjugate it to the ideal equation that regulates the correspondence between the absolute nature of subjective projections and their transcendent dimension.

But the man who accomplishes this long search through the centuries is Hegel. Hegel realised the project of rendering the spread of needs in contingence, the realisation of their transcendence, by unifying it in one sole and unique movement of totalisation. It is the principle itself that is affirmed in the scissions of the finite, for they are only the unifying and necessary journey which assures complete extension. Beyond its movement there is no existence. Everything begins from nothing: the nothing of reality which exists at the exterior of the universality of the constituting foundation. It is already its beyond, projected, in any of its parts, to the celebration of its completion. It imposes itself by making of the negativity of the contingent a linear process of which each moment is a sign of its manifestation. It is in its end, as intrinsic goal of its absolute existence. It is absolute spirit, a transcendent principle which arranges the real according to its effusion. There is no longer in Hegel a distance between contingence and foundation. Absolute spirit is at the same time contingence and subsistence. Hegel's operation is unheard of: all beings are organised into a hierarchy and forced to submit to the interior of a system of domination which enlists them into its regiments. It is not limited to assigning them forcibly an order of position, that is, a determined value proportional to the portion of totality which it incarnates. It also imposes upon them their form, their possibilities, their behaviours, and thus, their goals. All objects are the intentions of one sole source of activation. Absolute spirit is subject, possessor of its spiritual body: the dialectic of opposites, the negation of negation, expresses its activation. History is its property, and is controlled by it. It is an extraordinary, dominating power, and it is no coincidence that its definitive affirmation happens with the State. To attack Hegel is to go in the opposite direction of the pestle of the totalitarian thought of transcendence. Deleuze understood this well: 'What is philosophically incarnated in Hegel is the enterprise to "burden" life, to overwhelm it with every burden, to reconcile life with the State and religion, to inscribe death in life – the monstrous enterprise to submit life to negativity, the enterprise of resentment and unhappy consciousness' (Deleuze 2004b: 144).

The State, as separated but immanent mechanism, is the scaffolding which harnesses all of reality's movement. Need, labour and

consumption are the movement accomplished by the State to assimilate reality. They are, under the name of 'civil society', the properties incorporated by this total conscience which presents itself in the form of order and organised human society into a hierarchy as totalising expression of an apparatus which is in itself totalised (and thus collective), thetic, and constituting. In other words, its primacy is explained by its nature as absolute reason, originary and universal conscience which imposes its norm. Its power affirms its supreme law and its infinite power of control.

Is it possible to embark upon another project, in another direction? Was it possible to search for a different route? Was it a hopeless enterprise to push through the history of domination in order to arrive at a path of liberation? Was it possible to wrench theory away from its ostensibly natural task of affirming in the sign the power which makes of every layer of reality the object of a tremendous domination? The problem was that of manoeuvring oneself as an alternative force through thought. One had to make war against the power which forced signs into submission, in order to join with experiences of emancipation which struggled against the actual form of domination, i.e. capitalism. Besides, Hegel, the steel point of occidental philosophy, had been responsible for making of history the living presence of the transcendent principle, in order to transform the government of the bourgeoisie into the completed reality of absolute reason under the State form. It was necessary to free oneself from the problems which led to the imposition of a government founded upon transcendence. To embark upon the path to liberation meant to draw theory out of the dialectic game which rendered nature the concretisation of the subject, and the subject the proper name of nature. One had to put on the map an 'other' project, to make of thought an escape, instead of a place of integration. The tactic and the strategy of this 'at the limit' experience should have been twofold: 1) the desegregation of transcendence and the idea of the negative, which sustained it; 2) the affirmation of a scission, which would enable extrication from the process of totalisation.

It is in this direction that Deleuze engages philosophy. From the beginning of his theoretical work, he embarks upon a lateral movement, traversing philosophy diagonally in search of faults capable of opening out upon the possibility of liberation. It is a veritable combat strategy against the normalising conceptions of transcendence and domination.[1] Of course, it was not an explicitly declared struggle, the sort that provides a small pleasure which comforts narcissistically with self-recognition in what are only self-aggrandising good deeds. It was not a

question of small transgressive reassurances which give the impression of omnipotence. In Deleuze, there is none of this sort of hidden complicity with the ideas he fought against. He did not seek self-affirmation through attention-seeking gimmicks, similar to many philosophers who remain attached, in a sort of eternal adolescence, to the idealisation of daddy-theories from which they believe themselves emancipated while remaining all the more dependent. Deleuze constructed piece by piece his theoretical strike forces with the concentrated silence of the artisan who is one with the labour he is accomplishing. And like a true artisan completely immersed in the process of creation which is not himself, because it is only a movement of fashioning that comes from the outside and renders him an anonymous field of transformation, Deleuze cultivated the silent calm which gives speech, one could say humbly, to the piecing together of a work which springs up like a collective construction, and never becomes the auto-referential din of a paranoiac individual haunted by himself.

What he practised was a revolutionary action of a theoretic gesture towards escape. In positioning himself in order to perceive experiences of rupture that produced new regimes of signs in the arts and in literature, he allowed himself to be contaminated in order to render thought a *part* of a constellation of forces, and no longer the solitary birth of a sage, of a 'philosopher', but the collective construction of all the dissociations which constitute the pluralist fields of alternatives to domination.

Thought must reconstitute itself as a network of an apparatus of productive extrication. It should not return to a social base superimposed upon its second manifestations, it must in itself socialise itself. It must become an institution:

> We are forced back on the idea that intelligence is something more social than individual, and that intelligence finds in the social its intermediate milieu, the third term that makes intelligence possible. What does the social mean with respect to tendencies? It means integrating circumstances into a system of anticipation, and internal factors into a system that regulates their appearance, thus replacing the species. This is indeed the case with the institution. It is night because we sleep; we eat because it is lunchtime. There are no social tendencies, but only those social means to satisfy tendencies, means which are original because they are social. (Deleuze 2004b: 21)

We must practise theory as a curve that tears the law away from power, assemble an entirely new toolbox that can bend thought and provoke in it radical scissions. In this sense Deleuze disperses the traditional concepts, in particular those of 'nature' and 'subject', while

traversing practices of thought which made of movement and change precarious equilibria, always problematised by the social components which engendered them, or their field of production. Deleuze works on Hume (Deleuze 2001a), Bergson (Deleuze 2001b) and Kant (Deleuze 1984). In Hume, he takes up again the idea of nature composed of sensible processes, a transferential collation which forms a socialised imaginary. This phantasm is on the one hand a partial mechanism of management of sensible stimulations, and on the other a schema of regulation of practices which activate it. Hume's problem is to emphasise the juridical rather than ontological nature of natural associations, partial applications of processes of the management of complex systems of partial practices of regulation.

Bergson is the philosopher who first proposed the theme of change at the heart of a possible ontology. After Bergson, reality is only visible if one considers it from the point of view of time which passes by while changing its connotations. This passing does not accomplish a given present, i.e. the return of a stasis which reaffirms itself each time. It is the past which presents itself as an already passed instant. Reality is the leap forward which is always overtaken by a leap which overtakes itself. It carries along with it all beings by projecting them far from their constituted form, a transformation which has already happened, and in spite of this, is in the process of realising itself again. Life is loss and forgetting, for it is evolution which creates through detachment and difference:

> The Bergsonian question is therefore not: why something rather than nothing, but: why this rather than something else? Why this tension of duration? Why this speed rather than another? Why this proportion? And why will a perception evoke a given memory, or pick up certain frequencies rather than others? In other words, being is difference and not the immovable or the undifferentiated, nor is it contradiction, which is merely false movement. Being is the difference itself of the thing, what Bergson often calls the *nuance*. (Deleuze 2004b: 25)

Kant revolutionises the theory of knowledge by producing a double movement of scission. On the one hand, he blocks the relation between thought and the immediately given sensible; on the other, he breaks apart the universality without individuation of ideas founding traditional metaphysics (God, soul and world), empty representations of a being without positive manifestation. The faculties, and in particular the faculty of knowing, support intuitive dynamics which intertwine with ideas strung together by functional relations, qualified by their proper

content. Their general character does not escape the indetermination of their form, but is their result, rather than the necessary effects of figures taken by the two coordinates which are closer to any experience whatsoever: space and time. They preside over the movements of coupling that reunite the sensible elements into series, arranging them in ordered relations where each spatial point connects to the next according to the parabola traced by the instants of time. Since space and time are the principles of constitution of the objective syntheses, they come before and after each real manifestation. They contain within them all sensible elements, since these latter are only their phenomena, partial moments, *a posteriori*, of a network of normal relations *a priori* which reconnect the extension of all existence. Space and time are the universal forms which govern the consistence of reality in terms of conceivable subsistence. It is the reason of proximity that discharges an infinite complex of points in a dynamic which assigns them form and function, returning them to the norm that brings them together. They remain above things, principles of an ideal constitution that selects the phenomenal modalities of the presentation of beings. A concept, an existing given, finds its objective dimension in the regulated constellations which unite it with elements composed by a law which transcends them all. Space and time are thus the transcendental principles of a normalising activity which informs experience. They manage to fill the totality of what exists by affirming the norm posed by their twistings and turnings in such a way as to represent presence enacting the universal. They must remain detached from empirical reality.[2] They compartmentalise inside of a specific and general physical equation an infinite number of sensible impressions, whose concrete character is assured by their collocation in the spatio-temporal relations. They cannot be confused with an individual given, an empty content-less box incapable of finding its qualification. They surround the complex evolutions which dig through existence from one end to the other while forcing them to become the points of application of a disciplinary power which surpasses them as proper variations.

The Kantian universe is an infinite outpouring of equation where space is arranged in relation to unities of time. The collocation of objects in space is a function of temporal diagrams which do not regulate their relations. It is thus time which commands, and it is time which divides the idea, or the active expression of the law, from the sensible reality it incorporates into norms. However, the scission which separates forever the concept from the individual matter subsists while imposing obstructions. They prevent each position of existence that works to found the universal in the immediate apprehension of a universal given

without passing through the categorical grid which gives its 'normal' quality to the object. Reason falls into its amphibologies when it wishes to attain the infinite in one stroke. This is the defeat of any metaphysic that would like to assign itself the value of a first ontology. The general norm that governs the existent establishes itself by seizing the dynamic of constitution which, in surpassing the particular, attaches it back infinitely to its global application. The law is a categorical content sprung from a general stratification of synthetic mechanisms of regulation. This is why space and time are always ideal factors, and the activity of transcendental constitution of real series is a production of concepts in the form of singular indices, despite being plural, of formal discontinuities. From this it follows that judgements are *a priori* active intuitions of an activity of knowledge which is the mirror of an ideal plane that ceaselessly develops.[3]

Deleuze does not approach these authors in order to assign them a perfunctory interpretation. He does not unearth their 'veritable' spirit in order to offer it forward to the reader in the form of a lifeless review. His reading is already engaged in a theoretical project which is the affirmation of a political position inside of theory. He crosses paths with philosophers according to the requirements of his own travels, pushed by strange meetings which emerge from a foreign collocation inside of philosophy. His experience of thought does not take off vertically, from a base to a summit, but moves horizontally while it encircles, through scission, a plane of conceptual construction where each thesis is at the same time a rupture, an overlapping and an aggregate.[4] In describing these hyperboles, theory is separated from its spiritual ghost to offer itself up to shapings provoked by cracks which trouble the identity of its concepts. Philosophy is no longer the lightning flash that reveals the essence, but the practice of difference which resides in the theatre of relations between elements which intertwine.

We must leave behind us the grid of totalisation, hollowed out by the dialectic binary nature–subjectivity, of which Plato defined the assumptions and which Hegel brought to its conclusion with his idea of the 'negative'. Deleuze begins to produce thought in difference, exploiting the power of liberation it contains:

> It is as though Difference were evil and already negative, so that it could produce affirmation only by expiation – that is, by assuming at once both the weight of that which is denied and negation itself. Always the same old malediction which resounds from the heights of the principle of identity: alone will be saved not that which is simply represented, but the infinite representation (the concept) which conserves all the negative finally to deliver

> difference up to the identical. Of all the senses of *Aufheben*, none is more important than that of "raise up". There is indeed a dialectical circle, but this infinite circle has everywhere only a single centre; it retains within itself all the other circles, all the other momentary centres. The reprises or repetitions of the dialectic express only the conservation of the whole, all the forms and all the moments, in a gigantic Memory. (Deleuze 2008: 65)

According to this method, one touches on philosophies in order to locate the necessary gears of an engine which does not realise itself from total notions. It must act as a sort of drill which pierces a hole in the domination of transcendence and its hierarchies. Deleuze addresses himself to theories which made of difference the centre of their questioning, to theses which took speculative knowledge as the point of departure of a practice of putting into question, and not as its solution. This is how Deleuze meets Hume, Kant and Bergson, from the angle of the crises which they provoked in thought. It was said that these were arbitrary operations of interpretation, at the very limit of thought, and this is true: they deliberately abandon the fact that Hume finds his equilibria in the dependence of institutions upon sympathy, that Bergson submits change even more to transcendence in making of time a life force (*un élan*) towards a personal absolute being which accomplishes unheard-of creations, and that Kant twists the ontological superiority of the general idea into the immanence of space and time in order to inject it directly into the particularity of the sensible. But Deleuze was well aware of this, to the point that these conceptions are used by him to strike the foundations of ontology, and to invade its field itself through the place where it seemed the most secure: the grid which orders reality in the specular game between 'nature' and 'subject'. They were only bridgeheads which served to break the defences of theories of transcendence and begin to ravage them: 'Precisely, by virtue of those criteria of staging or collage we just discussed, it seems admissible to extract from a philosophy considered conservative as a whole those singularities which are not really singularities: that is what I did for Bergsonism and its image of life, its image of liberty or mental illness' (Deleuze 2004b: 144).

In order to reach a position, we first must decompose the lines of the adversary. This action had to be accomplished by detaching the domain of signs from the problem of the position of reference. One intervened in signification by breaking, with the hammer of paradox, the closed triangulation which connected designation, manifestation and even signification itself, henceforth dispersed in the proliferations of

propositions which produce uninterrupted series of predications, points of crossing of plural lines of sense. The first was the task of *Proust and Signs* (Deleuze 2000), the second the undertaking of *The Logic of Sense* (Deleuze 2004a). But this is still not enough. The decomposition of transcendence could succeed in a real upheaval of the philosophical field only in attaching to the decomposition of the centred structure conceptual totalisations of apparatuses capable, in the same moment, of affirming a new arsenal of concepts: no longer valuable transcendent ideas such as origins and ends in a closed circuit of biunivocal and polar designation, but zones of contact, connectors, pressure points, of detachment and connection; practical exercises of uncoupling and grouping in which pluralities of elements divide in a conflicting field, the horizontal plane of serial organisation realised by scission. Deleuze accomplished this task before and beside his search for an escape from thought dominated by *ressentiment*.

He begins by positioning himself to listen to the affirmative practice of Nietzsche's thought. He gives Nietzsche the density of the sensible in placing him in the positivity of conflicting contacts which related singular elements to each other: this is the theme of *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (Deleuze 2002), Deleuze's second book.[5] The quality of these components is not defined negatively, in relation to an essential nature given in advance. They are dissolved and recomposed in the reversals of asymmetrical engagements, effects of their meetings. This quality is discovered via evaluation, that is to say by a line of division which regroups forces among themselves by splitting them away from the others, themselves grouped in plural and singular constellations. This cut which welds complex and articulated bodies is what Nietzsche will call 'will'. Thus, the content of partial segments is defined by orientation and position in a striated space of conflict.

These divisions criss-cross the formations, abandoning them to conflictual games which harm every attempt at identitary formation. The shocks' blows repeat tirelessly, similar to a throw of the dice which falls back into the same modality without ever producing the definitive combination. The detaching of constellations prevents there from being an interruption of the division which the objects of a group remove in order to unite them to another. Things enter into a combat which distributes them into infinite series of scissions, a laboured earth in which they are affirmed by movements of conflictual disintegration and differential formation. They are forces, sensible bodies that traverse the terrain opened up by their tactics of combat. This terrain, a veritable desert, does not know time, because it is the eternal return of an infinite

plurality of effects, a sliced up surface that transforms itself and becomes in relation to figures created by the scissions.

'To think' is no longer anything to do with an essential glance, with reflection which looks down upon existence while judging it according to its principles; it is action, strategic practice, a politics of construction of conceptual bodies. This relational activation is affirmative inasmuch as it does not refer to anything. The dynamic of forces poses their content and their signification. It expresses the political tasks which produce their movements. Their becoming is necessary inasmuch as it has no other reference than the changes effectuated by their counter-blows. The necessity which Nietzsche is talking about is the recognition, always situated, of a strategic chessboard which draws out a political cartography. Thought is a topological art, a geographic designation of places where bodies hit against each other and divide up the earth into distinct domains.[6]

A force can never become universal. It is the fruit of a plural complexion, engendered by determined encounters of singular elements.[7] A body is always situated by relations to a field of manoeuvres where other forces already assumed places. If a body is composed, it is by seizing hold of elements which are parts of complexes present on the terrain. If an aggregate is taken apart, it is because it was swallowed up by an apparatus capable of incorporating it in its own process of aggregation.

It is this strategic chessboard which splits up bodies between dominating and dominated. The dominating forces are those which succeed in becoming by attaching composites to their body. They are thus active aggregations. The dominated forces are subjected to a process of fragmentation, second form of activation, and submit to the dominating forces. This difference separates the forces qualitatively. It traces the equation which distinguishes them as different natures: the differential relation which defines their activation potential. It does not follow that the quality of forces is a question of *quantity*: the more bodies realise anchorages, the more their power of formation grows, the more the forces become affirmative. The concept of the 'will to power' expresses the practical action which posits a domination that criss-crosses the genealogy of asymmetrical relations that realise the singular constellations of bodies.

Force–domination: these are the first categories of a new image of thought. They dislocate it inopportunely, a never-finished world made of impersonal individuations or of pre-individual singularities.[8] And nevertheless, it would not be possible to guide it back into this

practical dimension where the vitality of conflicts erupts without another theoretical operation. This intervention must block the framing of the existent in the unconditioned supremacy of a transcendent essence. The figures of the 'negative' subdivide beings in proportion to their proximity to the last principle, all the while furthering them from the being which, always beyond them, remains frozen in a single point of concentration. The effacement of the negative must pass through a definitive prohibition of all possible ontology. We must construct concepts which do not possess any ontological value, and begin to act theoretically in another sense, on this earth, irreducible to any unity, worked upon by the political effects of encounters between sensible bodies. To do that means to relinquish the thread of mutual recallings that allowed the universal and the singular (which is, besides, its negative image) to take hold of the entire space of theory, forcing it to mechanically repeat the same act: the analogical judgement which forced all beings onto the One and the Same. We interrupt the vertically moving vicious circuit that makes of objects simple variants of a general biunivocal relation, equalising them on a plane without exteriority, the transcendental condition of *immanence* which only admits singular variations. Spinoza's concept of 'substance' and his theory of power give to difference the force to assail all constituting ontology (Deleuze 1992). There is only one plane, the egalitarian dimension where the eminence and ideal consistence of transcendent contents are reduced to formal variations. Apparently, each being lays claim to an essence. We must admit a plurality of eminent entities which found all the levels of existence. But how can we discover the difference of ontological constitution among these beings? How will the absolute nature of being not be touched by the presence of these other 'minor' essences? There will be a multiplication of these substances which will lay claim to all their rights. They will have to settle for sharing the transcendent constitution of the first essence. How is it, however, that elements of the same nature are differentiated? The relation between beings and existence, and the successive distinction by '*genux proximo et differentia specifica*' are abolished in their own logical possibility. There is only infinite immanence where the substance will equalise all elements. The movement of elevation that poses a transcendent instance is deprived of its own presuppositions. If there is no transcendence, it is impossible to acquire the ethereal nature that gives to essences their metaphysical flesh. Substance is only a single material block (Deleuze 1992).

On the other hand, as it is impossible that something is totalised while proposing itself as first essence, neither is substance ever totalised

retrospectively, in affirming itself behind things in terms of creative personality or first cause. This is the fundamental argument Spinoza makes against Descartes. Substance exists in its singular manifestations because it is nothing other than singularities which cannot be totalised. And since there are no universal entities, substance varies in its infinite series of controlled modulations. The attributes – although we know theoretically only of two, namely thought and extension – are infinite, and function by putting substance back in circulation at the material and egalitarian level of existing singularities. Attributes contain substance's infinite modalities of pluralisation. Attributes continue to pulverise substance into singular formations which do not designate their intrinsic multiplicity. Nothing interrupts this collective distribution of contacts and disjunctions. It poses the insurmountable limit for beings. This is the theoretical motivation which makes of substance a constellation of modes, singular and plural, and assigns them an essence, that is to say, a reason for formation, different from that of substance. It is through the fault opened up by this difference that substance bursts out as a horizon of becoming.

We must take a step back: modes, never capable of beholding themselves like faces of an identical essence, plug into each other at their contours, at their sensible shell. They encounter each other and form relational configurations, linking their members like pieces of a giant machine of production. Substance is the disarticulated factory which lives in its power of production, and *production* is the concept which expresses the specific form of the becoming of substance.

Force–domination and *immanence–production*: this is the new grid discovered by Deleuze at the end of his long deconstructive detour of transcendence and the thought of the One. Now, it is possible to begin again to think positively. It is possible to leave the circle of recognition to construct a 'critical' theory which works to 'provoke crisis' in the simple identification between need and subjective projection, and to work out a revolutionary theory of transformation.

At this moment Deleuze takes up conceptual tools which leave nothing for the adversary. He returns to Marx. But another Marx, the Marx of forces of conflict, of social relations of power, of strategies and war tactics which impose systems of domination, and groups which oppose them. It is the Marx of bloody struggles which tear apart the conformity of the social body and indefatigably transform it. A revolutionary Marx who makes of revolution the practice and content of his theory, and who is close to all experiences of the same signs, at all levels and places.[9] 'Marx' is a plural name, the seal of an alliance: he is the comrade who

fights by one's side, who attacks with goals and blueprints, who shares trenches.

Traditional Marxism took Marx out of his natural place: politics, the struggle against power and its actual form. This was a strange reversal: they took him out of the place where he alone could explain the meaning of his theoretical project, that being political revolutionary practice in theory and in society, hoping that such a sterilisation would clear the way towards an alternative. No, Marx is not the theoretician who realises the dialectic, bringing it to a possible accomplishment which Hegel could not achieve.[10] He did not introduce the most efficient categories with which to force nature onto a subject that would supposedly explain that subject's dialectic development. Determined Marxist analysis is an assault, a political investment of a social field towards an alternative, under the conditions posed by a determined apparatus (mode of production) of the victorious forces, i.e. capitalism. To struggle next to Marx, one must practise another conceptual strategy, one which makes pivots out of production, domination and the immanence of the social field in the conflict of forces, in order clear a path of escape towards another regime, conceptually and also in social practice. It is no longer a question of 'criticising' capitalism, nor of emphasising its backwardness, its contradictions or its irrationality. These are sterile positions, as they reproduce the capitalist ideology of egalitarian exchange through which an identitary subject extends itself all throughout history, or in this case, capital. It can be recognised in the satisfaction of its needs: it is the summit and blossoming of nature, in sum the essence of existent totality (the *homo oeconomicus* of Smith and other classical economists). The only possible critique has already been carried out by Marx. Capital is a combination of forces which compose a mode of production. It is not a neutral movement, set off by the nature of components which will be brought to their accomplishment. Upon forced labour, in its multiple configurations and strata, is engraved the mark of the power of capital: it becomes 'labour force'.[11] It is constrained to act, to speak and think under the weight of capitalist domination. Capitalism is an immense force of disjunction and reconnection of a system of relations which has the production of surplus-value as its goal. Capitalism does not work, as in feudalism, to allow the feudal lord to make wealth the sign of his supremacy. The ideas of the feudal epoch are not associated with a version of nature which proceeds by degrees of minor perfection. This is the nature of capitalism, the decoding which sweeps away the feudal code and projects it into a world of individual subjects which effectuate by themselves the

comprehensive movement of a unique need for exploitation. Labour's submission to capitalism is expressed in a closed social body, full to the brim with the power of its apparatuses of management, selection and control. These apparatuses discipline their subjects in reducing their functions to the circuit of accumulation composed by *conjunction*: 'That is why capitalism and its break are defined not solely by decoded flows, but by the generalized decoding of flows, the new massive deterritorialization, the conjunction of deterritorialized flows. It is the singular nature of this conjunction that ensured the universality of capitalism' (Deleuze and Guattari 2000: 224). Capitalism does not develop out of an interior necessity at the heart of feudalism. It has a genealogy of alliances, combats and tactical positions taken to organise itself as force and affirm itself as mode of production.

It is *here* that Deleuze returns to Marx, in occupying the same theoretical front and reuniting himself with the latter's revolutionary struggles that would construct an *other* social mechanism of production, a mechanism that works not for surplus-value but in *common*. The Marxian revolution is to have first announced that each historical formation is a disposition which results from a struggle. Each historical formation is the investment of an organised complex, stratified into multiple components, and to master adversarial forces is to reduce them to the matter and cogwheels of a mechanism of production. It causes changes there, that is to say, transformations.[12] The concept that opens the way for history in terms of revolutionary transformations is 'production'. These transformations have different modalities and directions, and Deleuze endeavours to map them out. Capital revolutionises the feudal regime by installing another system of production. Feudalism knocks down the domination of the *Urstaat*, just as it subdued the savage connections of production, by intertwining their pieces into an utterly different apparatus of subjugation. There is conflict everywhere because there is production everywhere. 'Production' – the connections, overlappings and disconnections which emerge – is the category which presents the possibility of accomplishing this recognition of history.

History is the battlefield of antagonistic productions, because everything is production:

> production is immediately consumption and a recording process (enregistrement), without any sort of mediation, and the recording process and consumption directly determine production, though they do so within the production process itself. Hence everything is production: production of

> productions... Everything is production, since the recording processes are immediately consumed, immediately consummated, and these consumptions directly produced. This is the first meaning of process as we use the term: incorporating recording and consumption within production itself, thus making them the productions of one and the same process. (Deleuze and Guattari 2000: 4)

The body of history is a laminating constellation of strata of production.[13] It is this articulated production, its syntheses and its effects of transformation, which are traced by genealogies divided between domination and flight. The modes of production function by connecting vanquished forces to engines which realise them. These vanquished forces are the materials with which the mode of production nourishes itself and reproduces its apparatuses.

The word 'being' no longer has any meaning.[14] It recalls the analogical reference which reduces the noisy motors of engines dispersed everywhere to dreary images, phantasms of signification. Force – immanence – domination – production, it is thanks to these concepts that conceptual machines are composed which break the cages constructed by the dialectic.

The only logic familiar to this strategic plan linked to conjunctures of war is that of change by subordination, or even the political enterprise which affirms the government of partial collective entities through other partial constellations. It is the same for the *Urstaat*. Never was a Deleuzian concept less understood. The *Urstaat* is not the model of an ideal type of State which is regularly represented throughout history. The *Urstaat* is an apparatus of coupling of a particular group of forces. These forces compose a determined social formation which, if it conforms politically to the formation of an *Urstaat*, in the process of work requires an ensemble of systems of material production and exchange – including the market – to work for its pre-eminence. The *Urstaat* is the notion with which it is possible to seize the State from myths of the social nature of man (i.e. from ideology), and from the natural disposition of social practices to organise themselves in a juridical apparatus. The State is also an effect, produced from the construction of a social body by packs which conquer a territory and assume for themselves the *right* to inscribe upon it their mark.

Once the State is made an object of production like the others, we can retrace the changes of the juridical processes – jurisprudence, which so fascinated Deleuze – of the various regimes. At this moment, the state formation established under capitalism loses its sacred allure. The differential specificity, related to conjuncture, of forms of the

State permit us to discover the content belonging to the capitalist state apparatus. It is no longer the needle which by itself guides all the members of society, similar to what happens under feudalism. Capitalism works through decoding. It must continually rework its objects in order to continue to obtain surplus-value from particular degrees of exploitation. Capitalism does not have the State at its centre because it is its own centre. It schizophrenizes in a ceaseless movement, incorporating everything it encounters, in changing its nature, modelling it and modelling itself – even in relation to its fundamental disposition. Capitalism must stratify itself in occupying the entire body of society. Marx understood this well (judging from embryonic bits of theory which he left behind), so much so that he posed the capitalist State in terms of a concrete category realised concretely from more abstract categories which maintain it as a subordinated element (Marx 1970).[15] The State becomes in a differential and stratified manner under the impulsion of the 'creative' evolutions of capital. The capitalist norm directly manages its world and projects it in productive flows, sliced-up strata which spring forth from its intentional tensions similar to anonymous and memory-less noematic nuclei.

We can thus appreciate the real value of minor flows, the schizophrenic lines traced by the subordinated which do not succeed in breaking free. They refuse the capitalist decoding and its law, and find therein not transgressions, regardless of secondary troubles, but the slices of an alternative social body, a completely other '*socius*'.

As Deleuze specifies, in the body of capital, which integrates everything through subjugation, there are never two classes, but one sole factory of reproduction of the capitalist axiomatic. The new full body which results from the inverted capital is neither a development nor the contrary of capitalism (which was called 'socialisation', especially 'by the State', of 'productive forces') but the last result of the intrinsic logic of accumulation. Socialisation resulted from the fictive opposition of two opposing poles, or classes, of a unique molar structure. As it happened, it only reproduced the totalitarian machine, inverted into the 'collective' form of State. A 'different' *socius* is made instead of forces which 'free themselves from this axiomatic just as they free themselves from the despotic signifier, that break through this wall, and this wall of a wall, and begin flowing on the full body without organs' (Deleuze and Guattari 2000: 255). They are machines which do not work towards despotism, but produce liberation in persistently conserving a 'minor' dimension, that is to say, in never totalising themselves in an attempt at ending conflicts.

Capitalist decoding flows are produced everywhere. They stock up on resources in order to direct themselves again and again at their subjects, swallowing them into one body, that of surplus-value. This action which unites force, organisation and efficiency also produces reactions. A logic of combat then imposes itself which gradually becomes explicit, on fronts in which are formed flows of singular machines of liberation that approach, as allies, all the other experiences which struggle against capital's domination of governed conjuncture. It is not said whether they will triumph in constructing other bodies, but under the pressure of domination, processes of work are set off which form machines of a completely different direction, architecture and function. The molar body that encloses flows in a despotic axiomatic is confronted by molecular actions which strike at the capitalist gears with weapons of a social disposition that already differ from their formation. This is the sole theoretical (and certainly political) criterion that may distinguish machines of liberation from machines of axiomatisation. This demolishing action occurs on all levels. There is a combat in work, just as there is a combat in signs. They are not similar, they do not even share modalities or movements. But they are all determining. Just as capital is extended over the totality of the social body, imposing its violence, various conflicts traverse it from one end to the other. Signs are also a battlefield, a matter of forces which confront each other in a struggle to affirm their own regime. The confrontations which *produce* the body of signs are also traced out on the cartography of conflicts. It is a true body, material as effectuated by relations between signifying elements which touch, connect with and detach from each other, and struggle. They are sensitive, and in this also find the reason for their proximity to the sensitive functions of the physical body. The struggle waged by the schizophrenic is just as central to the struggle in the factory, for the schizo is a constellation torn apart by a struggle which plays itself out at the level of signs. It involves reattaching, under the sign of production, the analysis of capitalism to that of schizophrenia in order to bring signs into the immanent domain of production and conflict. The forces of decoding allied to capital are found on this stratum as well. They have the name of Mommy and Daddy, and the factory in which they are formed is the family. These figures, as material as the materiality of capital's axiomatic, are active in the psychoanalyst's office. It is there that the ruptures provoked by the freeing of signifying elements irreducible to despotic signification are approached, discovered and again subjugated. However, the struggle does not end. The schizo continues to fabricate a new regime of signs, he turns to the factory

where sense is produced to carry it away from capital's totalising axiomatic. The schizo is in himself, in his very body, an advanced front, a field of signifying forces that command an irreducible chain of production.

The relations between the conflicts that tear apart the layers of the *socius* are subjugated to the evolution of the respective battlefields. They may construct reasons for alliances, confluences. Sometimes, they even work in parallel. They will however remain different. It is this very distinction which prevents their totalisation. This distinction becomes, if guided with strategic intelligence, either a guarantee, or an excellent weapon: it can obstruct the orders of the adversary, which is always a present risk. It strikes at his defences by continuing to break his totalising (molar) structures. The act of disjunction traverses these structures, through processes of singularisation. The despotic machine was knocked down by the fabrication of a social body which puts into practice the absolute democracy of a factory of scission, made of gears of liberation which work to open up new spaces to conflict and to ceaselessly deconstruct totalitarian superimposition.[16]

Thought is also brought back to unstable equilibria which create trembling in language, images and sounds, or the figural constellations of the unconscious. It is swept away by the scissions and overturned as much as these latter. It has no pre-eminence. Thought and foolishness are one, because ideas are partial elements produced by partial layers, parts of a divided social body, criss-crossed by the conflicts which work upon all the strata. Theory is a singular moment in a singular proliferation of struggles.[17] It must discover itself as *one* combat front and renounce its privileges. It is no longer the light which shines upon the learned, the rulers, on collective or organic intellectuals, inscribing upon them the marks of reason. It is a war machine, a combat apparatus which intervenes in the concept.

A theory which works scissions and is produced to liberate itself from the paranoiac discipline of capital is found in the wake of Marx. It shares trenches. It ceases thus to be the prophet who sanctifies the name of the father assigning the dignity of the son to his brothers, a privileged voice of the sovereign principle, the dialectic of productive forces and manager of its royal science. Marx is a celibate body. He is a toolbox and a revolutionary movement. Marx digs escape routes in theory, and delivers blows in the streets with the other comrades. How many people racked their brains (one thinks of certain 'all too human' Italian theorists, such as Della Volpe[18] or Luporini,[19] for example) over the question of 'fetishism', even of ideology, forgetting that it is only

comprehensible in relation to the function of thought in Marx, and thus to the war machine in the theory he assembles. The fetish is the military conquest of signs drafted by a despotic axiom, which struggles for and with capital. Furthermore, the analysis of the fetish has nothing to do with its substitution by another totalitarian truth. It is the flight which revives theory in flows of alternative production, the assault carried out upon a general domination which frees theory in order to bring about conflicts everywhere in the strata of signifying production. The Marxian theory of fetishism is analysis in so far as it is decomposition of a totalitarian abstraction which affirms one sole law upon all signs. Or rather, it is a force which strikes the despotic sign *par excellence*: money.[20] Marx, in attacking the fetish, had already moved elsewhere. Marxist theory became a plural body of alliances, a riot of singular war tactics against power and its machines of subjugation. Marx loses his identity and begins to open out in thousands of growths, in a proliferation of plural machines of liberation. We no longer encounter Marx in the stuffy atmosphere of identitary lineages, which are houses much too tight to give liberty its space. We meet him, with the intense joy of a liberty always to come, in traversing as nomads the capitalist city on our way to the desert where all encounters are possible, *producing* democracy without transcendence.

Notes

1. On this see also Delcò (1988).
2. 'The phenomenon appears in space and time: space and time are for us the forms of all possible appearing, the pure forms of our intuition or our sensibility. As such, they are in turn presentations; this time, *a priori* presentations' (Deleuze 1984: 8).
3. The important thing in representation is the prefix: *re*-presentation implies an active taking up of that which is presented; hence an activity and a unity distinct from the passivity and diversity which characterize sensibility as such' (Deleuze 1984: 8).
4. On this see also Fadini (1998) and Montebello (2008).
5. I refer here to Zourabichvili (1994).
6. See Agostini (2003).
7. See Hayden (1998).
8. I refer here particularly to Sibertin-Blanc (2006: 717–93).
9. In this regard Deleuze makes the same theoretical move as Althusser. See Althusser (1969) and Althusser and Balibar (1970: 182–94).
10. Gianfranco La Grassa made a great contribution in a non-dialectical critical reading of Marx (in Kautsky's and Bernstein's deterministic and idealistic vein, but also similar to the hyper-subjective and even more idealistic dialectic of Luxemburg, Korsch and Lukács). See La Grassa, Turchetto and Soldani (1979); La Grassa (1989, 2002); La Grassa and Preve (1996).
11. In my opinion, the most important contribution on this subject in Marxist theory has been made by Raniero Panzieri (1973, 1977).

12. Etienne Balibar wrote a very important essay on this, which Deleuze knew very well (see Balibar 1970: 199–308).
13. See Balibar (1970: 199–308).
14. This is why I don't believe that a Deleuzian ontology exists (and so ontological interpretations of Deleuze's theory are misguided, whether for or against Deleuze's approach). One study that makes this typical mistake about Deleuze is Bergen (2001).
15. On this see Bidet (1985).
16. Vaccaro (1990) has worked on this.
17. I develop this idea in my introduction to the Italian translation of Deleuze's lessons on Spinoza (Pardi 2007).
18. See Della Volpe (1964, 1968).
19. See Luporini (1974), a fundamental essay for several generations of Italian theorists.
20. On the role of money in Marx's theory, see Duménil (1978).

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The Fetish is Always Actual, Revolution is Always Virtual: From Noology to Noopolitics

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Abstract

By most accounts Deleuze's engagement with Marx begins with the two volumes of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* he co-authored with Félix Guattari. However, Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition* alludes to a connection between Deleuze's critique of common sense and Marx's theory of fetishism, suggesting a connection between the critique of the image of thought and the critique of capital. By tracing this connection from its emergence in the early texts on noology, or the image of thought, to the development in the critique of state thought in *A Thousand Plateaus*, it can be argued that what initially appears as an entirely infra-philosophical problem, concerned with the presuppositions of philosophy, is not only a political problem as well, but ultimately bears on the very nature of the conjunction between thought and politics, making possible a re-examination of what is meant by revolutionary thought. It is a transition from noology to noopolitics. In the end it can be argued that revolutionary thought is no longer an eschatology, attempting to discern the signs of the future revolution in the present, but a thought oriented towards everything that exceeds the fetish of society, towards the virtual relations and micropolitical transformations that constitute society but exceed its representation.

Keywords: Commodity fetishism, ideology, labour, noology, virtual, and actual

The obvious starting point for any discussion of the relation between Marx and Deleuze would seem to be the two volumes of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, in which Marx's texts provide the backdrop for the conceptualisation of deterritorialisation, desiring-production and abstract machines. However, in *Difference and Repetition*, there are a

few references to Marx that, although disparate and oblique, suggest a fundamental overlap of central problems. As an initial point of provocation and orientation, we can begin with the following two statements: 'The natural object of social consciousness or common sense with regard to the recognition of value is the fetish'; and secondly, a few lines later: 'The transcendent object of the faculty of sociability is revolution' (Deleuze 1994: 208). In these passages we see two of the central terms that represent the alpha and omega of Marx's thought: fetishism and revolution; the first is synonymous with false consciousness, a fundamental misapprehension of the world, while the second is the overturning of that perspective and that world. The citation of these terms is situated within Deleuze's project of transforming the very image of thought, from one based on recognition and identity to a paradoxical thought of difference. Of course it is possible to argue that what links these two thinkers and problems is nothing but the contingent and superficial connection of a context: Marx was a central, even obligatory point of reference during the 1960s in France, and thus the invocation of his name is nothing more than the by-product of writing in a particular place and time. If one scratches beneath the surface, however, it is possible to see that this superficial pairing of problems indicates a much more significant intersection, one based on the fundamental problem of what could be called the politics of thought: a politics that examines how certain images of thought emerge from different social relations, and how they in turn affect these relations.

This problem takes on different forms, concepts and names in each thinker. For Deleuze, it emerges in *Difference and Repetition* as the problem of the dominant image of thought in philosophy, and continues through the collaborations with Guattari as noology, which they define as 'the study of the images of thought and their historicity' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 376). Deleuze's (and Guattari's) fundamental point is that despite philosophy's attempt to function without presuppositions, to engender itself through a fundamentally grounded and rational discourse, it always rests on an implicit idea of what it means to think, an image of thought. The problem of the politics of thought takes on a somewhat different form in Marx's writing, so much so that it might not even appear to be a problem that Marx's work addresses at all. However, as Marx and Engels argued in *The German Ideology*, the fundamental mistake of German Idealism, and thus to some extent all of philosophy, has been to overlook its connections with 'its material conditions.'[1] The central political and philosophical concepts of Marx's work – mode of production, ideology and commodity fetishism – all

address, in one form or another, the relation between thought and its conditions, conditions that are not conceptual, but material, the social conditions that are the constitutive outside for any philosophy, for any thought.

It might appear that in each case what is meant by presuppositions is fundamentally opposed. In the first case they are conceptual, the orientation and image that all thinking must assume; while in the second the presuppositions concern material conditions that by definition are lived rather than thought, reflected in Marx's fundamental assertion that '*Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life*' (Marx and Engels 1970: 47). My point is not that Deleuze and Marx are the same, rather it is the differences between the two – the former's focus on the preconceptual assumptions underlying conceptual thought and the latter's focus on the material conditions that make thought possible – that give shape and meaning to a fundamental philosophical problem. This fundamental problem is formed and transformed through Deleuze and Guattari's writings that continue to address this problem of the image of thought, from *Difference and Repetition* through the two volumes of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, a problem that remains strongly connected to the general problem of materiality and abstraction. As we will see, the vicissitudes of the problem are determined as much by extrinsic conditions – by the changing relationship between thought and labour in contemporary capitalism – as they are by intrinsic factors, or the development and revision of a line of thought. It is through tracing this connection between material conditions and conceptual presuppositions that we can arrive at a new definition of revolutionary thought; revolutionary thought is no longer an eschatology, attempting to discern the signs of the future revolution in the present, but a thought oriented towards everything that exceeds society as a fetish, exposing the virtual relations and micropolitical transformations that constitute a sociality that exceeds any delimited society.

I. Society is a Fetish

In developing his idea of the image of thought, Deleuze takes as his initial focus not ideology, but the fetish, or commodity fetishism. In the initial gloss of Marx and Deleuze, we have treated these two problems, ideology and commodity fetishism, as relatively interchangeable, turning to *The German Ideology* for a general definition of Marx's interrogation of thought. Deleuze's rejection of the term 'ideology' in the 1970s is well known; as made clear in a famous discussion with Michel Foucault,

the concept of ideology is rejected because of the manner in which it positions social relations, knowledge and the intellectual. Ideology presupposes both masses who are deceived and an intellectual who possesses the truth. For Deleuze the notion of ideology obscures the real problem, the investments and productions of desire (Deleuze and Foucault 2004: 212). This explains the rejection of ideology, but not the adoption of fetishism. An examination of the general contours of the problem of commodity fetishism alongside Deleuze's general project of *Difference and Repetition* begins to establish a deeper connection, one that has less to do with the polemics of the role of the intellectual and more to do with the problem of the relationship between thought and the social order.

On first glance the choice of commodity fetishism as a model for a critique of an image of thought seems like a strange move; ideology would seem to be the obvious position from which to interrogate the relationship between thought and its presuppositions. After all, in *The German Ideology*, ideology was just another name for (German) idealism, for a mode of thinking which, in ignoring its material conditions, not only fails to grasp the real basis of society, but is unaware of the way in which it serves class interests. In contrast to this, commodity fetishism would seem to be restricted to a much more specific problem, that of the epistemological status of political economy, and its understanding of value. This is the difference if we focus on the objects of Deleuze's and Marx's respective criticism, namely philosophy and political economy. A different picture emerges, however, if we examine the way in which each concept articulates the relationship between thought and its social presuppositions. While ideology, for Marx, is rooted in social conditions, such as the division between mental and manual labour and the consequent class divisions of capitalist society, there is no necessary relation between these conditions and either the form or the content of ideology. In other words, while there are material conditions that make each ideology the ruling ideas of the ruling class, namely ownership of the means of production, there is nothing to dictate the specific shape that ideology will take, what these ideas will be in each case. Thus, while it is possible that Marx meant to indict the pretensions of philosophy *tout court* with his critique of ideology, the term ideology is generally understood in the plural. There are various ideologies all of which have a merely extrinsic historical relationship to thought. The fetishisation of the commodity form, however, is a necessary appearance of capitalist social relations. This is why the chapter on commodity fetishism ends with a discussion of different

societies – Robinson Crusoe, medieval society and an 'association of free men' – because fetishism can only be overcome practically through a change in social relations (Marx 1976: 171). This is why the opposite of fetishism is not enlightenment but revolution. In capitalist society, the isolation of the different producers, the separation of private industry, makes it so that social relations appear in the form of the relation between things; the value of the various commodities, a quality that appears to be as real as their myriad qualities, is nothing other than the social relations of society in a distorted form. Two consequences follow from this; first, the emphasis is not on the content but on the form. Any attempt to develop a critique of philosophy from the commodity form would take as its starting point not a criticism of this or that content or concept, as in ideology critique, but would begin from a much more troubling problem regarding the social causes of what is seemingly most necessary and inescapable for thought, its form.[2] Second, given that the fetish is most fundamentally a misapprehension of social relations, seeing the social relations as the quality of things, the opposition is not simply between truth and falsity, but between a thought of difference and identity, of relations and things.[3] This is precisely what Deleuze stresses about commodity fetishism, as he writes: 'For example, according to Marx, fetishism is indeed an absurdity, an illusion of social consciousness, so long as we understand by this not a subjective illusion but an objective or transcendental illusion born out of the conditions of social consciousness in the course of its actualisation' (Deleuze 1994: 208). What is at stake for Deleuze in Marx's understanding of commodity fetishism is a new understanding of the limits of thought, not the empirical limits of error, or even the transcendental condition of illusions hard wired into subjectivity, but the socially produced limits that transform relations into objects.

To grasp Deleuze's understanding of fetishism, and how it relates to Deleuze and Guattari's later engagement with Marxism, it is necessary to at least briefly clarify the concepts that form the critical backdrop of *Difference and Repetition*, specifically the critique of common sense as an image of thought. For Deleuze common sense is a particular presupposition of thought, a presupposition that is not objective, not a particular concept or definition, but an implied meaning of what it means to think. What is presupposed is an ideal of representation that posits an identical object, a thing which remains fundamentally the same, and a unity of the subject, as the various faculties converge on the same object; it is the same thing, which is felt, seen and remembered by the same subject. Truth is recognition: error is misrecognition. Common

sense is dominated by recognition; to know is to recognise, to extract the same from the multiplicity of its instances. Against this Deleuze suggests a counter-image of thought based not on recognition, but on an encounter. 'Something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but of a fundamental encounter' (Deleuze 1994: 139). Whereas recognition is predicated on the convergence of the different faculties on the same object, the encounter, the break from common sense, is predicated on their fundamental discord. What is thought, sensed, or remembered, takes each of these faculties to its limit and does not communicate with the other faculties, except through a kind of crisis. This includes a sociability, which has its own disjoint relation to the faculties; it cannot be recognised, it is not an object for knowledge, it can only be lived. As Deleuze writes:

> Take the social multiplicity: it determines sociability as a faculty, but also the transcendent object of sociability which cannot be lived within actual societies in which the multiple is incarnated, but must be and can be lived only in the element of social upheaval (in other words, freedom, which is always hidden among the remains of an old order and the first fruits of a new). (Deleuze 1994: 193)

Common sense objectifies sociality, makes society a thing that can be seen, remembered and thought. To use a term that is not entirely out of place with Marx's understanding of commodity fetishism, common sense reifies sociability; it displaces the practice, the process of the constitution of social relations, with the product. In contrast to this, in moments of upheaval and disruption, there appears a sociality that exceeds any actually existing society, a virtual society that is always in excess of any existing social order. In Deleuze's thought, virtual does not mean possible (a concept that is always derived from reality, caught in a relation of identity), nor is it unreal: it is, as Deleuze writes, abstract and real. It is the fact that every society, every social articulation, can be realised otherwise, can have different relations, and is thus surrounded by a virtual cloud (Deleuze 1997: 148). At this point in *Difference and Repetition* this revolutionary idea, this idea of revolution, is only seen in the moment of disruption. It is thus no accident that in this text the transcendent object of sociability is named anarchy (Deleuze 1994: 143). In Deleuze's later writings with Guattari, the connection between this virtual sociability and the economy, or, more specifically, labour, will be strengthened. The transition from anarchy to labour is not just a matter of reviving some nineteenth-century debate between

anarchism and Marxism, but of shifting the focus from the virtual as a revolutionary moment to a persistent presence – an immanent condition.

II. Production/Representation

As Deleuze argues, the social idea, sociality as a virtual multiplicity, has to be seen as something of a structure, which different societies realise in myriad different ways. As Deleuze writes:

> The social Idea is the element of quantitability, qualitability, and potentiality of societies. It expresses a system of multiple ideal connections between differential elements: these include relations of production and property relations which are established not between concrete individuals but between atomic bearers of labour-power or representatives of property. The economic instance is constituted by such a social multiplicity – in other words, by the varieties of these differential relations. (Deleuze 1994: 186)

Deleuze's nod here is to Louis Althusser and Etienne Balibar's reading of Marx, which makes it possible to grasp history not as the teleological unfolding of a fundamental contradiction, making possible the periodisation of history, but as the differential actualisation of a system of relations. In Althusser and Balibar's view the 'mode of production' is most fundamentally a 'relation between relations' (Althusser and Balibar 1970: 224). This structure, or relation between relations, is made up of the different practices, economic, political, ideological, etc., that act on and in relation to each other. In this structure of relations, the economic remains determining, but it does not simply act on the other aspects of society, imposing its brute necessity; it acts on them by determining their differential relations, determining which of these relations, or practices, is dominant. The classic example of this is drawn from Marx's discussion of feudalism, in which Marx argues that in the Middle Ages religion was determined as dominant (Marx 1976: 176). The constituting relations can be articulated in multiple different ways, with different practices, economic, political or religious, occupying the dominant position, and different relations between these different instances. 'The economic instance is constituted by such a social multiplicity – in other words, by the varieties of these differential relations' (Deleuze 1994: 186). Such a conception of the economy breaks with any teleology, any sense of the different modes of production following each other in a linear progression, in order to stress their differential articulation. While Deleuze stresses the determining nature of the economy, its determination is that of a problem which

is solved in different ways, not that of historical necessity or a base. The truth of social relations is not to be found in some concrete instance, but in the relations between the different social relations, thus in abstraction, in the virtual.

Deleuze deviates from Althusser and Balibar in placing 'abstract labour' at the foundation of this differential relation. As Deleuze writes, 'In what Marx calls "abstract labour" abstraction is made from the particular qualities of the products of labour and the qualities of the labourers, but not from the conditions of productivity, the labour power and the means of labour in society' (Deleuze 1994: 186). Deleuze's definition stresses two aspects of Marx's concept that will become increasingly important to his later work: abstraction as indifference to subject and object, yet socially determined. In *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari foreground Marx's discovery of abstract labour – or rather his crediting of Adam Smith and Ricardo for the discovery – in their development of desiring-production. As Deleuze and Guattari write:

> Marx said that Luther's merit was to have determined the essence of religion, no longer on the side of the object, but as an interior religiosity; that the merit of Adam Smith and Ricardo was to have determined the essence or nature of wealth no longer as an objective nature but as an abstract and deterritorialized subjective essence, the activity of production in general. (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 270)

This is a fundamental example, if not the paradigmatic instance, of deterritorialisation. Whereas prior political economists had initially sought the origin of wealth in a privileged object, such as the earth, or in a particular kind of activity, such as agricultural labour, the political economy of Smith and Ricardo recognises that at the basis of wealth there is nothing other than labour as an abstract subjective activity. Deleuze and Guattari immediately assert that political economy no sooner discovers this abstract activity than it objectifies it, reterritorialising it by subordinating it to accumulated capital. Capitalism is thus the exemplary instance of Deleuze and Guattari's fundamental point: deterritorialisation is inseparable from reterritorialisation. This is how they introduce Marx's critique of political economy, as a critique that not only liberates abstract subjective activity from the territories of the earth, but also explores the way that this activity is appropriated by the territories of capital and the State.

Abstract labour, as Marx defines it in the opening section of *Capital*, is not only labour that is indifferent to, or abstracted from, its particular concrete mode of existence. It is also, and perhaps more

importantly, labour that has been rendered interchangeable, equivalent, despite the different individuals performing it. It is that invisible but not impalpable unit that makes exchange-value possible. Its invisibility outlines the fundamental problem of the question of value, and of commodity fetishism, in which the grounds for the equivalence of the various commodities is mysterious in theory because it is always already answered by practice. In practice, abstract labour is a socially necessary abstraction, an abstraction made possible by the machines and technologies that render different kinds of work interchangeable. It is felt as a practical reality whenever these social and technical realities change, whenever a new machine or new more efficient labour process is invented (Marx 1976: 135). As such, it arises only with the formation of capitalism. As Marx writes: 'the most general abstractions arise only in the midst of the richest possible concrete development' (Marx 1973: 104). It is only in capitalist society, with the rise of monetary relations and the breakdown of traditional jobs and activities, that something like 'labour' as an abstract activity emerges, displacing the concrete activities. However, as Marx famously argues, just as 'human anatomy contains a key to the anatomy of the ape', so it is from the perspective of this historically produced activity that we are able to make sense of other societies as determined by modes of production, as based on the articulation, distribution and use of labour. This is precisely the position taken by Deleuze and Guattari with respect to abstract subjective activity, or what they call desiring-production: it emerges at the end of history, in the breakdown of codes and the general imperative to produce, but it makes possible an understanding of other societies, precisely in the manner in which they code or repel desiring-production. The most fundamental abstractions, abstract labour or desiring-production, are not found at the beginning of society, in some primitive state, but in the most complex societies.

Returning to the passages above from *Difference and Repetition*, viewed now through their development in *Anti-Oedipus*, we can see that in the former text Deleuze draws together two very different strains of Marxist thought. The first, which posits the economy as a series of differential relations, is drawn from Althusser and Balibar, while the second, focusing on abstract labour, does not seem to have a specific point of influence aside from Marx, but has resonances with the idea of 'real abstraction' developed in different senses by Alfred Sohn-Rethel, Moishe Postone and Paolo Virno. These two lines of thought continue through Deleuze and Guattari's works: the first, with its emphasis on relations, forms the basis of concepts such as that of abstract machines,

while the second underlies their conception of desiring-production. Where these two lines of thought converge is in their refiguring of the notion of abstraction: abstraction is no longer an activity of thought, but the product of material relations, relations that remain in some sense unrepresentable. This claim is in some sense already indebted to Marx's understanding of his own critical project, which paradoxically focuses on the status of the abstract concepts of 'abstract labour' and 'surplus value' (Althusser and Balibar 1970: 80). It is only from the perspective of the critique of capitalism that labour can appear as both absolutely necessary, as part of man's metabolic interrelation with nature, and as fundamentally abstract, as an indifference to its specific object or subject. This indifference must be actualised, it must take the form of a particular kind of work, of labour. This necessary abstraction can only appear in particular concrete formulations. From this we can better grasp Deleuze's earlier assertion, in *Difference and Repetition*, that 'there are only economic social problems' (Deleuze 1994: 186). The economy is both absolutely necessary, something that meets the most fundamental needs of existence, and fundamentally abstract, made up of only the differential relation between the various practices, and structures, which become concrete only in their reciprocal relations. It is the problem that every society faces, but a problem that can only be resolved in specific articulations, in specific social formations. The economy, understood as the articulation of abstractive subjective activity, of any-activity-whatsoever, is something that exists only in its particular articulations, as specific concrete realisations of this virtual set of relations. Deterritorialisation is inseparable from reterritorialisation.

In *Anti-Oedipus* the critique of recognition, of identity in thought, is resituated from a critique of an image of thought to an opposition between production and representation. Much of this takes a polemical tone, in which the theatre of Oedipus is opposed to the factory of the unconscious, the work of the desiring-machines. However, it also extends and deepens the idea of fetishism. As Deleuze and Guattari write:

> Let us remember once again one of Marx's caveats: we cannot tell from the mere taste of the wheat who grew it; the product gives us no hint as to the system and relations of production. The product appears to be all the more specific, incredibly specific and readily describable, the more closely the theoretician relates it to *ideal forms of causation, comprehension, or expression*, rather than to *the real process of production on which it depends*. (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 24)

Just as products, commodities, obscure the process of their production, so institutions, structures, society itself, obscure the virtual relations that constitute them; the solution conceals the problem from which it emerged. In *Anti-Oedipus* Deleuze and Guattari expand upon and develop this idea of the fetish from *Difference and Repetition*: the fetish becomes the socius. It is not just that the product, society, obscures the productive relations that generate it, it actively appropriates them. As Deleuze and Guattari write:

> the forms of social production, like those of desiring-production, involve an unengendered nonproductive attitude, an element of anti-production coupled with the process, a full body that functions as a *socius*. This socius may be the body of the earth, that of the tyrant, or capital. This is the body that Marx is referring to when he says that it is not the product of labour, but rather appears as its natural or divine presupposition. In fact, it does not restrict itself merely to opposing productive forces in and of themselves. It falls back on [*il se rabat sur*] all production, constituting a surface over which the forces and agents of production are distributed, thereby appropriating for itself all surplus production and arrogating to itself both the whole and the parts of the process, which now seem to emanate from it as a quasi-cause. (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 10)

Just as the despot appears to be the cause and not the effect of subjection, capital appears to be the cause and not the effect of labour. Once disconnected from the conditions of production, from the virtual relations that make it possible, society, the socius, not only appears to be autonomous, in the form of money making money, but is an effect that appears as a cause. Society not only appears to exist prior to the differential relations, the production and desire that constitute it, it also appears to stand above these relations as their necessary condition.[4] The fetish has become common sense in that we see society, with its structures, rules and goals, as something that exists prior to and is constitutive of the social relations of desire, perception and production.

III. The Return to Noopolitics: The Problem of State Thought

Following the line of noology, of the politics of thought, from *Difference and Repetition* to *Anti-Oedipus*, leads to a rather strange deepening of the problem. In *Difference and Repetition* the criticism was focused on a particular 'image of thought,' one that takes recognition as the fundamental function of thought. At the social level, this object of recognition, this identity between past, present and future, is in some sense society as a fetish. Against this, Deleuze focused on the

transcendent object of thought, on the abstract and differential relations that exceed any faculty of thought, any possible conceptualisation. The difference still passed within thought, opposing the provocations of thought to common sense. In *Anti-Oedipus*, however, the opposition shifts; it is no longer between different figures of thought, but between representation and the forces of production that exceed representation. The fundamental opposition is between how social relations are produced and how they are represented: or, as Deleuze and Guattari put it, how desire is produced and how it is recorded. It is for this reason that the image of thought, or what Deleuze and Guattari call noology, disappears from *Anti-Oedipus*. The entire problem of the image of thought disappears, to be replaced with the stark opposition between representation and production.[5]

Of the many shifts of terminology, content and style that characterise the transition from *Anti-Oedipus* to *A Thousand Plateaus*, two are relevant for our project here: the first, as I have already acknowledged, is the return of noology, the image of thought as a problem, and the second is the disappearance of labour, or rather production, as that which exceeds representation. It might be more accurate to state that it is the polemical rift between production, or labour, and representation, or thought, that disappears in the later text; when labour does appear, it appears not as an absolute rupture with the logic of representation, but as a figure of capture and subjection. Taken together these two changes suggest a fundamental transformation of the opposition that characterised *Anti-Oedipus*, that of thought and production. Production is no longer the absolute outside of representation, nor is thought reduced to a representation that can never intersect with production: thought is no longer limited to the fetish of common sense – to tasting the wheat without ever grasping how it has been produced – but is itself a productive force. Thought and production become tied to the same relations of deterritorialisation and capture.

If we turn our attention briefly back to *Anti-Oedipus* we can see that the issue of labour was never quite as simple as it might first appear, that the transformation of the question of production was already indicated by tensions within that text. As much as Deleuze and Guattari based their concept of abstract subjective activity, or 'desiring-production', on abstract labour, this understanding was perhaps always skewed with respect to Marx's text. (One of the strangest elements of Deleuze and Guattari's text is that in referring to Marx's understanding of the break represented by Smith and Ricardo, they frequently cite Foucault's *The Order of Things*, locating in that text an epochal

distinction between a classical age of representation and a modern age of production). For Marx, abstract labour is the condition of possibility of exchange, of the exchange that makes capital possible; thus it is first and foremost an equivalence established between different types of concrete labour. Marx vacillates somewhat on the ground of this equivalence, sometimes attributing it to an anthropological constant, and at other times attributing it to the machines and techniques that render labour equivalent and exchangeable (see Read 2003: 74). Deleuze and Guattari do not recognise the existence of anything like an anthropological constant underlying abstract labour, arguing that any idea of a standard amount of labour is itself the product of an arbitrary imposition. What Deleuze and Guattari focus on is not the equivalence underlying abstract labour, the fact that the labour of one person is equal to that of others, but its abstraction, or, more properly, deterritorialisation, its indifference to object or subject. It is perhaps for this reason that in *Anti-Oedipus* Deleuze and Guattari also consider the role of machines, actual machines, in the production of surplus-value. If labour can be abstracted from particular forms of subjectivity, from the blacksmith or shoemaker as a particular kind of labourer, and from particular objects, from the land or industry, then why cannot it also be abstracted from humanity, from human hands and minds altogether? Abstract labour becomes part of the machine; not just in the sense that Marx might have argued, in which the pure motor force of the body is replaced by the machine, but in the sense that abstract subjective activity, including that of knowledge, can become part of the machine. As Deleuze and Guattari write: 'Knowledge, information, and specialized education are just as much parts of capital ("knowledge capital") as is the most elementary labour of the worker' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 234). Machinery has a fundamentally different role to play in each account: in Marx's account the machine internalises the skills and knowledge of the worker, leaving behind a residue of labour that is fundamentally abstract in that it can be performed by anyone, while in Deleuze and Guattari's understanding, the abstraction of subjectivity crosses the divide between machine and human, constituting and exceeding both. In the first instance the machine makes abstract labour possible, as form of completely exchangeable human activity, while, in the second, the machine embodies abstract labour.

It is at this point that we can see the gulf separating Marx's understanding of abstract labour from Deleuze and Guattari. For Marx, abstract labour is first and foremost an equivalent, it is what makes possible the exchange of the labour of one for others, while for

Deleuze and Guattari abstract labour is primarily defined as a flow, as something separate from specific bodies and objects, the equivalent of which can only be the effect of a seizure by force. This last point is crucial, while Marx had always excavated the asymmetries of force underlying the equivalents of exchange, Deleuze and Guattari radicalise this point through their understanding of the primacy of difference over identity. In a seminar in the 1970s, Deleuze makes a distinction been an arithmetical and a differential understanding of surplus-value.[6] In the first, the quantifiable nature of labour is given, or assumed, and the only difference is a quantitative one between the wage (necessary labour) and profit. In the second, differential understanding, there is no equivalence, just an encounter between a flow of labour and a flow of wages. There is no ground for the exchange between labour and capital, the very terms of the exchange are constituted by the relation. The scandal of exploitation is not that labour is paid for at an insufficient rate, but that it is paid for at all: that a unit of money becomes equivalent to a unit of labour time (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 249). This differential understanding also makes possible a theory of scientific or technical labour. Just as there is an encounter between a flow of labour and a flow of money, there is an encounter between a flow of money and a flow of knowledge. As Deleuze and Guattari argue, technological innovations are only introduced if they can increase surplus-value. Technological innovations are dependent upon a flow of money for their realisation. This is dependent upon multiple factors, such as scale of production and cost of labour, factors that make possible an incredibly uneven development of technology and social relations (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 233). As with *Difference and Repetition*, society only exists as a set of differential relations between different flows: money, labour and knowledge.

In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari repeat their earlier formulation that presents capitalism as formed in the encounter between an unqualified activity, any activity whatsoever, and an unspecified object, any object whatsoever (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 453). However, at this point, production, labour, is no longer presented as the paradigmatic instance of deterritorialised subjective activity; rather, it is integral to the manner through which this activity is seized by force, it is an apparatus of capture. The model of abstract subjective activity is no longer abstract labour, but free action: the figure of this abstract subjective activity is no longer the 'schizo', the factory of desiring-production, but the nomad and its war machine. This radical break at the level of names and figures risks concealing what is in many

respects a continuation at the level of concepts and problems. As we have seen, when Deleuze and Guattari invoke abstract labour in *Anti-Oedipus*, it is never the quantifiable abstraction that is stressed, the capacity of rendering labour exchangeable and interchangeable, but its qualitative indifference to subjects and objects. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, it is precisely this capacity to render different activities comparable that is identified with the 'apparatus of capture'. Activity, free activity, is captured by being rendered comparable with other activities, by being subject to an abstract standard that defines it as work, a standard that is always inseparable from a surplus. The encounter between the two flows, money and labour, is always asymmetrical, with the first setting the terms of the relation. Surplus labour is not the simple quantitative difference of labour above and beyond what is necessary to survive, but the foundational excess that determines the terms of the equation. 'Surplus labour is not that which exceeds labour; on the contrary, labour is that which is subtracted from surplus labour and presupposes it' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 441). Labour does not exist as a generic human capacity, but is constituted by the very act that exploits it, that constitutes a surplus. As Deleuze and Guattari write:

> Impose the Work-model upon every activity, translate every act into possible or virtual work, discipline free action, or else (which amounts to the same thing) relegate it to 'leisure,' which exists only by reference to work. We now understand why the Work-model, in both its physical and social aspects, is a fundamental part of the state apparatus. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 490)

As the passage indicates, one of the fundamental roles of the State is to create work as the standard for the comparison of different activities. What is excluded from this, what cannot be measured or exchanged, becomes unproductive labour, leisure. In something of a reversal of classic Marxist theory, Deleuze and Guattari argue that the State as central force of command must be prior to the economy as an organised set of relations between disparate human endeavours. 'It is not the state that presupposes a mode of production; quite the opposite, it is the state that makes production a mode' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 429). Moreover, in attributing this process to the State, rather than the market, Deleuze and Guattari begin to suggest that the two problems addressed above, the return of noology and the changing status of labour, are in some sense related. The State is not just the name of the relations of force that make possible the equivalence underlying the exchange of different labours (and the commodities and surplus produced by this exchange), it is simultaneously a model of thought. It is a model of

thought that obscures the groundless nature of the differential relations between labour and capital, effacing the asymmetry of force with the neutrality of law – State violence is inseparable from its justification. This justification is not based on some specific narrative, some specific conceptual content, that would make the State reasonable, but on an identification of the State with reason itself.

The critique of state thought develops from the critique of common sense; in each case it is a matter of a presupposed unity, 'what everyone knows', but in the case of the State, this unity is elevated to universality. As Deleuze and Guattari write:

> The classical image of thought, and the striating of mental space it effects, aspires to universality. It in effect operates with two 'universals,' the Whole as the final ground of being or all-encompassing horizon, and the Subject as the principle that converts being into being-for-us. Imperium and republic. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 379)

What is striking about this passage is that the identification of the State as functioning with two universals, the 'whole' and the 'subject,' is very close to the general formula that Deleuze and Guattari use to identify capital: the encounter between an unqualified subjective activity and an unspecified object. Both capital and the State, or at least state thought, function in relation to an object and a subject that is in each case generic and universal. The crucial difference would seem to be that capital deals with differential relations between abstract activities and objects, while the State presents these abstract relations as equivalent, fundamentally overcoding the differential relations with an image of legitimacy. Capital is founded on the encounter between two flows, an asymmetrical, contingent and groundless encounter, that the State renders legitimate by presenting the terms – money and labour or worker and capitalist – as interchangeable. For the State the difference of class, of being a worker or capitalist, is irrelevant, they are equally subjects, motivated to exchange by interest and dwelling in 'the Eden of the innate rights of man' (Marx 1976: 280). As Deleuze and Guattari argue, the interiority of state thought is primarily a relation of identity between capitalist and worker, or ruler and ruled, positing a common ground of reason amongst different subjects. 'The state must realize the distinction between legislator and the subject under formal conditions permitting thought, for its part, to conceptualize their identity' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 376). Deleuze and Guattari's criticism of capital and the State risks collapsing the distinction, not just to the point where the two are identified, capital and the State as both figures of universality

and abstraction, but to the point where the opposition is reduced to a simple binary of the State versus nomadism (or, in *Anti-Oedipus*, fascism versus the schizo).

Despite the tendency to present the conflict between the State and the nomad as timeless, or at least metahistorical, Deleuze and Guattari fundamentally change the terms of the conflict by shifting it from philosophy – in which it was between the long line of state thought, stretching from Descartes to Hegel, and nomadic thought – to science. As Deleuze and Guattari argue, state science is primarily hylemorphic, working with form and content, and privileging formed and fixed bodies. 'Nomadic science', however, works with movements, with singularities: the events through which qualitative transformations take place (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 372). The opposition between these two forms of science is only apparent: state science constantly needs the discoveries of nomadic science. The fluctuations of nomadic science thus are reterritorialised onto the fixed coordinates and categories of state science. Two things can be said about this concept of science. First, it reiterates a theme that is central to *Anti-Oedipus*, in which knowledge is presented as a deterritorialising/deterritorialised force. Second, the situation is parallel to that of labour, which is deterritorialised only to be reterritorialised onto property and capital. The deterritorialisations of nomadic science are integral to state science, even as they are subordinated to measures and concepts that are alien to them. The idea of nomadic science allows Deleuze and Guattari to make a point they could not make with respect to the history of philosophy: state thought is dependent on nomadic thought, difference is prior to identity, deterritorialisation is primary to reterritorialisation. For Deleuze and Guattari, knowledge and labour, thought and action, are subject to the same apparatus of capture, the same process of homogenisation and standardisation that constitutes quantitatively exchangeable units from differential relations of desire and action. In *A Thousand Plateaus* there is no longer a division between representation and production, or thought and action, each have their deterritorialised dimension, nomadic science and free activity, and are thus subject to similar apparatuses of capture. This similarity does not close the question of the relation of consciousness to life, but opens it to its historicity.

IV. From Production to Invention: The Problem of Noopolitics

Of the many readers of and commentators on Deleuze and Guattari's works, the Italian reception, specifically that of Antonio Negri and

Maurizio Lazzarato, is unique in that it stresses the historical dimension of their writing. To begin with, Negri's understanding of this dimension is not the simple assertion that their work represents an example of 'May '68' thought, of that bygone moment of exuberance and revolutionary excess. Rather, for Negri specifically, what is central is precisely what we are examining here: the changing structure of labour and its relation to the problem of thought. Negri argues that the machines that populate *Anti-Oedipus* are not metaphors, but attempts to grasp the complexity of the interactions of humanity and the machine that make up contemporary capitalism. The same could be said for the assemblages and machines that make up *A Thousand Plateaus* (Negri 1995: 104). What Negri's reading underscores, often overlooked by many other readers, is that it is not simply because of theoretical sophistication that we do not accept a dualism between representation and production, but because such dualisms no longer fit the current reality, in which representations are themselves productive. The schema of labour, action and intellect, first articulated by Aristotle and placed on modern footing by Hannah Arendt, is itself out of touch with a reality in which knowledge is productive and the uncertainty and plurality of action has become part of the service industry.[7] Thus, the shift of philosophical positions regarding the relation of labour, subjectivity and thought from *Anti-Oedipus* to *A Thousand Plateaus* is itself a product of the transformation of capital.

Negri's reading opens, or, rather calls to attention to, a different way of approaching the relationship between Marx (or Marxist problematics) and Deleuze and Guattari. It is no longer simply a matter of the way in which particular problems from Marx and Marxists inform Deleuze's writing, providing the basis for understanding society as a fetish, but the way in which Deleuze and Guattari's writing provokes and continues a re-examination of Marx's concepts. Or more to the point, since such a division is artificial, what is important is the way in which the central problems and concerns of Marxist thought, including that of the redefinition of labour in light of the contemporary transformations of capital, are integral to Deleuze and Guattari's understanding: just as Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of deterritorialisation, noology and the virtual make possible a re-examination of Marx's thought.

Of all of the post-autonomist thinkers who have followed Negri in reading Deleuze and Guattari as thinkers of the present, the one who is perhaps most interesting or relevant to our concerns is Maurizio Lazzarato. Lazzarato's central project turns on rethinking the current

conjuncture from the perspective of both noology, the image of thought, and an examination of the intersection of abstract subjective activity and labour. Lazzarato takes as his starting point what Deleuze and Guattari define as the foundation of capital, the encounter between a generic subject, of any subjective activity whatever, and an unspecified object (Lazzarato 2004: 13). Picking up on Deleuze and Guattari's emphasis on deterritorialisation, on the abstraction from specific activities and objects, Lazzarato opens the question of the adequacy of thinking this abstract activity through the figure of work (Lazzarato 2004: 13). As much as Marx may ground his understanding of capital on an abstract subjective activity, labour, that works on any object whatsoever, the commodity, he still primarily thinks of this relation as the action of a subject on an object producing a product through the medium of a tool (Marx 1976: 284). While we might add, in good dialectical fashion, that this action in turn transforms the subject, the fundamental question remains as to whether or not this schema of activity can account for contemporary relations of production in which work is not so much about transforming objects as it is about transforming perspectives, desires and relations. Thus, for Lazzarato, Marx's perspective is limited on two counts: first, in that it takes as its general schema of labour the idea of a subject transforming an object, and second, in that it understands this activity to be an abstract and interchangeable activity, positing subjects who interact only through the ground of this generic activity (Lazzarato 2002: 25). What is excluded in each case is difference, difference that is neither quantitative nor subject to the measure of labour time. The question is one of subjectivity, subjectivity not simply defined as the capacity to transform an object, but understood as temporality, invention and relation (Lazzarato 2004: 144).

For Lazzarato, the thinker who provides the true basis of an understanding of the abstract subjective activity underlying capital is not Marx but Gabriel Tarde, who tried to understand subjectivity as a relation of invention, imitation and competition (Lazzarato 2002: 39). Lazzarato uses Tarde's re-examination of the sociality of subjectivity to redefine labour, or replace it with the idea of 'action at a distance', of minds affecting minds, and to return to the problem noology, or rather, noopolitics. Noopolitics is defined as the action of minds on minds, of subjectivities acting on each other at a distance, affecting memory, desires and attention (Lazzarato 2004: 85). Despite the terminological similarity with Deleuze and Guattari's study of the images of thought, the 'nous' that underlies noology and noopolitics, Lazzarato's point of reference is less *A Thousand Plateaus*, with its battle between

state thought and nomadic thought, than Deleuze's 'Postscript on Control Societies', with its emphasis on forms of control that do not so much operate on the body, but on the mind, through the new technologies of communication (Deleuze 1995: 181). Lazzarato places Tarde's interest in the public, and the forms of media that were emerging in the nineteenth century, in a trajectory (borrowed from Foucault and Deleuze) in which power operates less and less on the flesh of the body, as in sovereign power, and more and more on perceptions, affections and memories. Modern technologies such as the television, cinema and the internet operate on minds; they are apparatuses of capture, capturing attention, memory and imagination. Before products can be sold, or even made, attention and memory must be captured by the technologies that work on publics (Lazzarato 2004: 117). The emphasis is on a new form of capital that works more on memory (think of the various cinematic remakes that are nothing more than attempts to mine a reservoir of nostalgia), belief and attention than on the production of things. This action in which the mind acts on the mind, on thoughts, defines a new political or social relation: if the age of abstract labour corresponded to the political regime of discipline, which made disparate bodies and actions abstract and interchangeable, the age of highly deterritorialised labour corresponds to actions on disparate minds, memories and perceptions. As Lazzarato writes: 'Noopolitics is exercised on the head, implicating attention in order to control the virtual power of memory. The modulation of memory would thus be the most important function of noopolitics' (Lazzarato 2004: 85). However, it should be noted, especially in the face of the many arguments levelled against epochal understandings of contemporary capital, in which the new is posited as a complete break with the past, immaterial labour replacing material labour, that Lazzarato's interest in Tarde is less about a transformation of the economy than a different understanding of the relationship between subjectivity and the economy. For Tarde, both Marxism and theories of marginal utility overlook the constitutive role of memory and desire in forming markets. Tarde's *La Psychologie Economique* argues that the 'economy', in the sense of the production and circulation of goods, is itself embedded in a larger economy, or circulation, of beliefs and desires that determines it (Lazzarato 2002: 28). Not only is there no separation between representation and production, belief and labour – the former is the ground of the latter. The immaterial, the virtual, becomes central to production, as goods and finance are increasingly dependent on the relations of belief.

As much as Lazzarato's argument can be understood as posed against the Marxist idea of labour, especially against the gulf that separates production from representation, it is an argument that returns us to the identification of the economy and the virtual in *Difference and Repetition* (as well as the productive power of desire in *Anti-Oedipus*). Lazzarato argues that the dialectic of subject and object needs to be replaced by the relation of event and worlds. Capital is not simply the work of an abstract subject on an undetermined object, it is inseparable from the production of new worlds, new senses of possibility, belonging, and orientations of affects. Every product, every enterprise, entails not just the actualisation of particular material and technological possibilities, but the actualisation of particular subjective possibilities, ways of thinking and seeing. As Lazzarato writes, 'Capitalism is not a mode [mode] of production it is a production of worlds [mondes]' (Lazzarato 2004: 96). These worlds emerge from the virtual relations of belief and desire that define a particular sense of the possible. This is not only true of consumption in which every product is inseparable from its lifestyle, its habits and desire, but it also effects finance capital, in which corporations are valued primarily in terms of the level of expectations and belief (Lazzarato 2004: 112). The stock market is also immersed in a field of beliefs and desires that constitute the basis for value. This process of production and effectuation, or in Tarde's terms, invention and imitation, takes place through activity, activity understood broadly to include the actions that disseminate beliefs, ideas and knowledge, activities that involve labour but exceed it. The two points of Deleuze's reading of Marx in *Difference and Repetition*, the economy as the articulation of differential relations and abstract labour, ultimately converge: the differential relations constitutive of society are actualised through abstract subjective activity.

V. Becoming Revolutionary Without the Revolution

In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze argues that different societies can be understood as the actualisation, which is to say the solution, of a general problem that can be called, for lack of a better word, economic. The solution actualises one of a virtual multiplicity of relations, and in doing so obscures the problem from which it emerges. In *Anti-Oedipus*, this general problem takes on the specific form of the relation between desiring-production and social production; every society, every form of social production is nothing but a specific organisation and

articulation of desiring-production, assigning it specific goals and aims. This task is in part completed by a representation of society itself, by the socius that presents society, in the form of the despot or capital, as something that exists prior to the various actions that constitute it. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, noology, the image of thought, returns; now it is situated within the conflict between the State and the nomad. This conflict between the images of thought is a conflict between a mode of thought that privileges fixed forms and stable movements versus 'thought without an image' that is founded upon difference and events. The differential relation of forces that constitutes capital is obscured by state thought which deals only with equal and interchangeable subjects. At this point, however, the relation is less an opposition than a process by which the former is continually captured by the latter. State thought requires the deterritorialisation of nomad thought, just as capital requires labour. What this trajectory underscores is not just the virtual differential relations underlying any delimited society, that every society is the realisation and limitation of various social possibilities, but that these different relations are produced and actualised by abstract subjective activity.

Deleuze and Guattari thus offer a more radical, or at least more interesting, understanding of the phrase 'there is no such thing as society' than the one made famous by Margaret Thatcher: society is a fetish (albeit one with incredibly pervasive effects), but what it misrepresents is not some underlying reality of 'individuals and families' but an abstract subjective activity, which is another way of saying that what is real is the indetermination and transformative nature of activity itself. Deleuze and Guattari rearticulate a different link between labour and revolutionary consciousness than the one that has traditionally held sway in Marxism. It is not a matter of a dialectical negation, or a historical telos, of labour-power taking the subjective form of the proletariat as that class with nothing to lose but its chains. Production in Deleuze and Guattari is not the act of a subject at all, it is an abstract subjective activity, an activity that exceeds subjectivity and constitutes it. It even exceeds any attempt to delimit it to a specific type of activity, to designate it as labour. As Deleuze and Guattari argue, capitalism entails a fundamental, almost ontological transformation of what constitutes subjectivity and objectivity: an unqualified and global subjectivity encounters an unspecified object, or, in more conventional terms, labour-power confronts the commodity. The connection between this activity and revolution does not pass through a subject of history, but rather passes through the relationship between the virtual and

the actual, the creative activity constitutive of society and its actual articulation and concealment within a specific society.

This activity does not just produce the actual world, but, as Lazzarato argues, the possible world as well, producing the halo of the virtual that accompanies the actual. To become revolutionary is to grasp this potential underlying the present, the virtual underlying the actual. The virtual is always already present in every labour, in every action. Politics is no longer a struggle over this world, even of its contradictions, but a production of new worlds. Another world is always possible.

Notes

1. Pierre Macherey underscores this dimension of *The German Ideology*, writing the following: 'Hence this notion that Marxism was the first to explore: philosophy is not an independent speculative activity, as would be a pure speculation, but is tied to "real" conditions, which are its historical conditions; and this is why, let it be said in passing, there is a history of philosophy, which can be retraced and understood' (Macherey 1998: 9).
2. In this manner Deleuze's comparison of the form of thought with the commodity form, a form that privileges identity over difference, is similar to Theodor Adorno's critique in *Negative Dialectics*.
3. John Holloway, following Lukács, Adorno and Negri, has generalised this idea of fetishisation in terms of a rift between the doing and done, subject and object, difference and identity. His understanding, like Adorno's cited above, is not unrelated to the intersection of Deleuze and Marx (see Holloway 2005).
4. Once again the point of reference would seem to be Althusser and Balibar's *Reading Capital*. In that text Althusser refers to the 'society effect' as the way in which the different and differential practices of society hold together through a form of subjection. As Althusser writes: 'The mechanism of the production of this "society effect" is only complete when all the effects of the mechanism have been expounded, down to the point where they are produced in the form of the very effects that constitute the concrete, conscious or unconscious relation of the individuals to the society as a society, i.e., down to the effects of the fetishism of ideology (or "forms of social consciousness" – *Preface* to *A Contribution*...), in which men consciously or unconsciously live their lives, their projects, their actions, their attitudes and their functions as *social*' (Althusser and Balibar 1970: 66).
5. Etienne Balibar has offered an interpretation of the limitations of *The German Ideology* that is relevant here. As Balibar argues, the strong identification of idealism, ideology and domination has as its corollary an identification of matter, production and liberation in the body of the proletariat (Balibar 1994: 93). Put simply, in Marx's text the proletariat has no ideology, no theory, as Marx argues, its theoretical illusions have been dissolved by the pure force of history.
6. The lecture, dated 12/21/71, is available here: www.webdeleuze.com/php/index.html
7. This argument regarding the breakdown of the classic schema of labour (or poesis), action (or praxis) and thought (or theoria) is given its most concise formulation in the work of Paolo Virno (see Virno 2004: 51).

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Minor Marxism: An Approach to a New Political Praxis

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Abstract

In 1990, Antonio Negri pointed out some problems with Deleuze's political philosophy. Substituting infra-structures for life or desire, as constitutive dimensions of power formations, did not imply giving up on Marx, but it certainly did imply a change in the table of conceptual analysis and a profound renovation of the questions that pertain to militant praxis. Taking this into account, we intend to explore the sense of a rare fidelity to Marx, and a certain idea of intellectual commitment that, reframing its objects and its instruments, pretends to renew political thinking in order to confront the unforeseeable of new knowledge, new techniques and new political facts.

Keywords: Minor-dialectic, becoming-revolutionary, creation of assemblages, de-totalisation, ethics of struggle

In 1990, in an interview conducted by Toni Negri for the magazine *Futur antérieur*, Deleuze defended his fidelity to Marxism, that is, the idea that political philosophy finds its fate in the analysis and criticism of capitalism as an immanent system that constantly moves its limits and constantly re-establishes them on an expanded scale (Capital being itself the very limit). Furthermore, he also defended a re-evaluation of its objects and its instruments along the lines of a differential typology of macro and micro-assemblages as determinants of social life (Deleuze 1990: 229–39).

Substituting infra-structures for life or desire, as constitutive dimensions of power formations, did not imply giving up on Marx, if, as Derrida suggests, Marx had already alerted us to the historicity and the possible aging of his work; that is, to the necessity of *transforming* his own thesis to confront the unpredictability of new knowledge, new

techniques, new political data (Derrida 1993: 35). On the other hand, it did imply the problem of the type of struggle that such a shift in the theory could produce at the level of praxis. Lines of flight (rather than social contradictions), minorities (instead of classes), and war machines (against the State apparatus) did not entail a change in the conceptual framework of the analysis without requiring, at the same time, a profound renewal of the issues that shape militant praxis.

And that renovation was imperative once we recognise that the analysis of society in terms of assemblages of desire – the concept that Deleuze prefers over Foucault's concept of *dispositifs* (deployments or devices) of power – implied a break with any logic of progress or libertarian teleology. In fact, from sovereign societies to disciplinary societies, and from disciplinary societies to control societies, the adjustment of collective assemblages is the expression of a change, but not necessarily a change for the better:

> It is possible that the hardest confinements may come to seem part of a happy benevolent past, taking into account the forms of control in open spaces that emerge... liberations as submissions have to be confronted one by one in its own way.... There is no place for fear, neither for hope, it is just a matter of finding [creating] new weapons. (Deleuze 1990: 241–2)[1]

The awareness of the impossibility of any totalisation of reality by means of representation – i.e., the assumption of the local value of our theoretical instruments – as well as the renunciation of any kind of 'structural messianism' (Derrida 1993: 102) – i.e., the desertion of any promise of emancipation – embodies the demand for a thought capable of confronting the biopolitical mutations of capital, nonetheless, at the same time it leads struggle to a dispersion without precedent.

The 'minor' understood as a line of flight or a war machine did not establish the basis of a revolutionary political programme,[2] it actually developed in the very opposite direction, that of the organisation logics of traditional political movements (in this sense, Guattari reminds us that 'the search for a big unification of resistance forces would just make the work of the semiotisation of capital easier',[3] and Deleuze says that there is no such thing as a left-wing government – there are governments more or less receptive to the claims of the left, but the left has nothing to do with the form of the State or the logics of government).

Taking this into account, we should not be surprised when, confronted with the political dimension of Deleuze's work, Tony Negri speaks from the paradoxical place of the militant who finds in this philosophy a powerful inspiration to re-think the movement, but in

another sense, does not understand how it could be institutionalised: 'How could minor-becoming be effective? How could resistance become insurrection? Reading your writings, I always doubt the way these questions can be answered, even if I find in your works an impulse that forces me to reformulate them theoretically and pragmatically' (Deleuze 1990: 234). Negri celebrates the publishing of *Mille Plateaux*, which he considers a remarkable work of political philosophy, but regrets a tragic note in its excessive theoretical will, which leaves every problem open and does not determine where it can lead us.[4]

Here I pose the problem from a revolutionary perspective, but the questions raised by Negri could certainly also be raised from a progressive perspective; as is the case with Mengue, when he writes:

> If Deleuze offers us productive tools to emancipate us from the past and encourage us to commit the matricide of History, matrix of modernity, he just liberates us from it to throw us into an-historic becomings, but disconnected from any social or political effectuation ... the marriage between the spontaneist anarchism of the untimely and the long-term work of inscribing it on things and institutions is impossible ... they have opposite political directions ... The untimely does not lead to any form of institution ... That is, the guerrilla has deserted the political field closing itself on an unassailable but just ethical position. (Mengue 2003: 17, 155, 157)

In other words, the new instruments of analysis of capitalism, developed by Deleuze and Guattari, challenge – for Negri – the historical sense of struggle. If the de-totalisation, locality and dispersion of struggle come together with the renouncement to any historical possibility of revolution, why go on fighting? What are these lines of flight, subversion processes or forms of resistance worth, if revolution is, by definition, condemned?

Nevertheless, an idea of militant praxis is not that strange to Deleuze, who is looking for concepts that may bring us to an *an-historical* sense of struggle. Such a pragmatics could be put in terms of a series of impossibilities (as Deleuze would say): 1) the impossibility of a successful totalisation of life by power (thus, the impossibility of the fulfilment of History in the present); 2) the impossibility of any lasting subtraction of life from power (thus, the impossibility of the fulfilment of History in the future); and 3) the impossibility of the acceptance of the state of things, of the actual stratifications of life by power (thus, the impossibility of the recognition of History in the past).

What we have, therefore, is a notion of a militant praxis that, without giving in to the demands of power, but at the same time without aspiring

to power, embraces – beyond government and opposition – the vocation of resistance.[5] Thus:

1) Deleuze affirms, against all strategies of totalisation of life by power, against discipline or modulation of life by its *dispositifs*, that resistance comes first; i.e., that there is an essential contingency working out the inner nature of the social. Society is not a given totality: it is a puzzle of heterogeneous pieces, which do not always fit together ('here lies the problem of the world that globalisation wanted to reshape: pieces do not fit', says Marcos, in *Siete piezas sueltas del rompecabezas mundial*[6] [Subcomandante Marcos 1997]). Consequently, power formations are inhabited by an essential powerlessness. The social field is not composed by isolated and immutable formations: only stratifications of knowledge and power may give some stability to it, but in itself it is unstable, agitated, changing, as if depending on a 'paradoxical apriori', on a 'micro-agitation' (Deleuze 1986: 91).[7] There is no *dispositif* that, besides the points that it connects, does not imply relatively free or liberated points: points of creativity, points of mutation, points of resistance. The social field leaks everywhere. Lines of flight are the primary determinations, they are objective lines that pass through a society.

2) Deleuze does not ignore the historical failure of modern revolutionary projects. The way revolutionary groups betray their task is well known, but does not scare Deleuze (Deleuze 2002: 278; Deleuze 1995: 'G comme Gauche'). And if he admits that we will never assist again to a clear major break, opening a new kind of society, he also claims that revolutions – historically failing – produce effects immanently (incalculable effects) in that very history within which they fail. In this sense, in a 1988 interview, Deleuze said that 'there is a whole dimension of revolution that history does not catch: its becoming (another language, another subject, another object)' (Deleuze and Guattari 1991: 96–7), so, 'when it is said that revolutions have an infamous future, nothing has really been said yet about the revolutionary-becoming of people' (Deleuze 1990: 209).

3) So, Deleuze does not defend the ideals of a historical future, where a collective and lasting expression of liberated or egalitarian life could come to be true, nonetheless he wagers on the freedom effects of pure explosions of desire:

> even when revolutions failed, that did not prevent people from becoming revolutionary ... If someone says to me: 'You will see when they succeed, when they win ... It will not be good.' But then problems will not be the

> same, a new situation will be created and new becomings will break out. In situations of tyranny, of oppression, men have to become-revolutionary, because there is no other thing to do. (Deleuze 1995: 'G comme Gauche')

Briefly stated, Deleuze passes from *REVOLUTION* as the end of history, to *revolution* as a line of transformation, that is, to the affirmation of resistance, at the expense of revolution conceived as the radical and irreversible advent of a society finally totalised, not divided, reconciled.

A logics of the ephemeral, unpredictable, neutral *event*, substitutes for the global, determinist and teleological dialectic of *advent*.

This is the first positive principle (although in-voluntaristic) of Deleuze's militant praxis: 'becoming-revolutionary, *without* a future of revolution', 'a bifurcation, a divergence from the law, an unstable state that opens a new field of the possible', and which 'can be contradicted, repressed, recuperated, betrayed, but always entails something insurmountable' (Deleuze 1995: 'G comme Gauche'[8]; Deleuze 2003: 216). It is a matter of life, that takes place inside individuals as in the exteriority of society, creating new relations with the body, time, sexuality, culture, work; changes that 'do not wait for revolution, neither prefigure it, even if they are revolutionaries on their own: they have within themselves the power of resistance proper of poetic life' (Deleuze 2002: 200–1) (that is, displacing desire or reorganising life, make useless the *dispositifs* of knowledge and power that used to channel them).

In other words, those processes find their value in the fact that, by the time they take place, they escape from constituted knowledge and dominant powers, even if later they are continued in new *dispositifs* of knowledge and power.[9] The object of struggle, in this sense, is no more the fulfilment of a possibility, becoming essential divergence and multiplication of perspectives.[10] Zouravichbili reminds us that in *The German Ideology* Marx and Engels defined communism exactly this way (in opposition to utopian socialism): 'Communism is . . . neither a *state* that has to be created, nor an *ideal* for the ruling of society. We call communism the *real* movement that abolishes the actual state' (Marx and Engels 1976: 33).

Anyway, for these openings of the possible to be something other than a vision, for this new sensibility to be asserted, it is necessary to create proper assemblages. That creation is, after all, the task that gives consistency to this new militant praxis (therefore it is its second principle): the elaboration of new assemblages and the struggle for the

associated rights:

> When a social mutation takes place, it is not enough to think of the consequences or effects following lines of economical or political causality. It is necessary that the society creates collective assemblages, associated to the new subjectivity, in order to mature the mutation ... There is no solution unless it is creative. Only creative reconversions will contribute to resolving the actual crisis. (Deleuze 2003: 216–17)

This creation of assemblages covers the distance between becoming-revolutionary and 'left-wing civism' (according to the sharp formula of Claire Parnet). On account of the fact that, if events overcome any committed will (that is, events do not depend on objective or subjective possibility), to embrace or to ignore them defines an essential difference, that allows Deleuze to distinguish pragmatically left from right.[11] In this sense, the left-wing is defined by the search for assemblages in order to extend the movements triggered by events (and then, by the invention of rights from the new material conditions generated by mutations of desire). While the right-wing defines itself by the denial of movement and the opposition to any form of redistribution, the left-wing 'is a passion for procedures ... the collective catch of dynamics for the de-stratification of structures and re-arrangement of life and society following different forms of equilibrium' (Guattari 1984: 4).[12]

Nevertheless, if, according to Deleuze, May '68 is enough for the purpose of illustrating what he understands by revolutionary-becoming, it is not enough to illustrate the subjective reconversions.[13] Even creative and innovative answers to the objective and subjective demands of the mutations unchained by the event – the American New Deal, the Japanese take-off, and Iranian Muslim fundamentalism – imply all kinds of ambiguities and reactionary structures. May '68, on the other hand, was quickly recoded by the French government (with the help of the PCF). That is, even at the level of objectivity and the conscious and unconscious subjectivity of individuals and social groups, there are mutations of unpredictable consequences; power shows great shrewdness and a huge capacity for adaptation to the new forms of sensibility and new types of human relations resulting from the different 'mutations' (commercial recovery of marginal 'inventions'; relative tolerance in relation to zones of *laissez faire*, etc.). In other words, a semi-tolerated, semi-stimulated dissent is part of the system (and is instrumentally recovered by it).[14]

Creative articulation of the lines of flight in assemblages that allow them to mature is not just possible and desirable, but constitutes the constructivist vector of this new militant praxis. In *La révolution moléculaire* Guattari will make this the cornerstone of his political philosophy. The revolutionary character of the lines of flight that cross through a given society depends on their articulation, on the convergence of the subjective lines of flight with the objective lines of decoding of the system in suitable assemblages, creating an irreversible aspiration to new spaces of freedom. And Guattari offers us a minor example, one which is much less ambiguous than the examples given by Deleuze – I am referring to the case of free radio in the 1980s: an assemblage where the technological evolution (in particular, the miniaturisation of transmitters, and the fact that they could be 'assembled' by amateurs), 'concurred' with the collective aspiration for new media of expression. Another example of these objective and subjective mutations are the communities that appeared everywhere in the 1960s and '70s, in consonance with new musical genres, from rock to punk – with all the technical innovations that they presupposed, from amplifiers and synthesizers to acids, as well as the changes in subjective and objective conditions: the baby-boom, the welfare state, etc. Another example we know better is the internet. (From another point of view, maybe we could also inscribe all these minor examples into a major Marxist line, if, as Raya Dunayevskaya suggests, Marx set out, as a fundamental axis of his conception, the daily creation of new forms of struggle and new human relations between workers, between workers and the production infrastructures, etc. Dunayevskaya relates this conception of Marxism, more concerned with the fulfilment of freedom that with the conquest of institutions, to the creative acts performed by the Paris Commune, or, even, during the Russian revolution, to those actions that, in the auto-emancipating moment of birth, gave way to totally new forms of labour assemblages – such as the Soviets [Dunayevskaya 2004: 208]).[15]

Obviously, lines of flight are not necessarily revolutionary; a line of migration (sub-Saharan or Cuban) can end in death (at sea), or in much harder *dispositifs* than those which it left behind (slavery). And, obviously, these micro-revolutions do not lead automatically to a social revolution, to a new society, an economy or a culture liberated from capitalism.

Finally, there is no way to compare, according to a progressive set of values, which regimes are more harsh or more bearable (I mean, it is possible to do so retrospectively, but not at the moment of adopting a

line of action); the power of resistance or, on the contrary, submission to control, is decided in the course of each attempt. What matters is that, suddenly, we do not feel condemned in the same old way anymore; a problem which nobody could see a way out of, a problem in which everybody was trapped, suddenly ceases to exist, and we ask ourselves what we were talking about. Suddenly we are in another world, as Péguy said, the same problems do not arise anymore – though there will be many more, of course (Péguy 1957: 300–1).

Such is the scope and the limits of this new militant praxis that in a certain way responds to the demands of what Jean-Luc Nancy named 'literary communism' (Nancy 1983). As we saw at the beginning, in 1990, Negri could not help feeling a certain reluctance when confronted with it. Ten years later, however, with the publication of *Empire*, Negri offered us a free re-appropriation of Deleuze's thesis.

Deleuze and Guattari – after Foucault – appear then as the founding fathers of a new form of criticism, redefining the space of political and social struggles in relation to 'classic' Marxism: creation of spaces of freedom, strategies of torsion of power, conquest of individual and collective forms of subjectivity, invention of new forms of life, came to constitute the new subversive grammar.

Negri also seems to embrace the idea of an *an-historical* sense of struggle, at least if we read in a Deleuzian way the epigraph by William Morris that opens the book ('Men fight and lose the battle, and the thing that they fought for comes about in spite of their defeat, and then it turns out not to be what they meant, and other men have to fight for what they meant under another name' (Negri and Hardt 2000).

But we do not need to read much more to understand that *this post-structural comprehension of biopower that renews materialist thought* remains still unsatisfactory for Negri, because it just (and only) provides the elements for a superficial and ephemeral resistance (political work, for Negri, is not simply resistance, but an alternative political organisation, the institution of a new constituent power beyond the Empire).

For the wilful militancy of *Empire*, Deleuzian praxis is not enough. Attached to a classic Marxism, Negri renews once more the commitment to a dialectics in which we had no more faith ('We claim that Empire is better in the same way that Marx insists that capitalism is better than the forms of society and ways of production that came before it.... In the same way today we can see that Empire does away with the cruel regimes of modern power and also increases the potential for liberation'[16] [Negri and Hardt 2000: 43–4]), even if he denies its more

oppressive historicist elements ('This approach breaks methodologically with every philosophy of history in so far as it refuses any deterministic conception of historical development and any "rational" celebration of the result' [Negri and Hardt 2000: 66]). In this sense, the problem for Negri is still the problem of a new materialist teleology (in the line of Spinoza and the *Theological-Political Treatise*,[17] but maybe, as well, in the line of Merleau-Ponty's *Adventures of the Dialectic*, that is: there is no sense of History but an elimination of non-sense).

The problem lies elsewhere for Deleuze. There is no doubt that we do not possess, neither in fact nor by right, any reliable means to free and, *a fortiori*, to preserve the becomings that undermine the *dispositifs* of knowledge and power in which we are compromised: 'What condemns us to an everlasting "restlessness" ... We do not know how such a group can change, how it can fall back in history ... We do not dispose of the image of a proletariat which just needs to gain consciousness' (Deleuze 1990: 209). But this uncertainty does not imply any imperative of demobilisation.

Lacking the geopolitical options known decades ago, when it was still possible to chose between first and second worlds – thus, exposed either to inscription in the first world or sinking into the third – the struggle goes on. Lacking every form of social utopia – thus open to the dispersion of its local objectives – the struggle goes on. Deprived of any progressive project, of the idea that if we do everything possible things will improve, will change for the better – thus, aware of its tragic destiny – the struggle goes on.

Deleuze stakes the whole of his political thought on the effectuation and contra-effectuation of the untimely as the irruption or inscription of events in history, but at the same time he transvalues the essence of the event, which ceases to constitute the sense of History, becoming the agent of a redistribution of affects, relationships and singularities: the very revolutionary potential of events lies in their novelty or discrepancy in relation to a specific situation (objective modification of a state of things, but also the subjective assemblages of resistances and lines of flight):[18] 'Against apocalyptic history, there is a sense of history that matches with the possible, with the multiplicity of the possible, with the profusion of the possible in every moment' (Deleuze 2003: 183–4).

Deleuze and Guattari are not philosophers of liberation; the chances of transformation of the material organisation of life and desire, the possibility of molecular re-distributions of power and knowledge, do not imply for them the abolition of molar organisation as such. Which does not mean that revolution

> is just a dream, something that is never achieved, or that is achieved betraying it. On the contrary, it means to posit revolution as a plane of immanence or infinite movement, as long as these features are connected with the struggle against capitalism, here and now, and propel new struggles every time previous struggles are betrayed. (Deleuze and Guattari 1991: 97)

What is to be done? The old Leninist question still hangs over us, with an irresistible weight, even if we are convinced that there is no answer but a creative one (but 'to create' is not a satisfactory answer for the question).

The question would lie, today, before and beyond any programme of action: How to embrace such politics, a politics that proposes struggle, not as revolution, but just as resistance? How to embrace it when we are fully aware of the local, strategic and non-totalisable value of the changes we can aspire to?

We gave up utopias. Perhaps we will never grow up, as Kant wished. Philosophy relinquishes, in this sense, the possession of power (by right) and the (factual) property of knowledge.

Maybe this is why, unlike Marx's, Deleuze's work does not constitute the insurmountable philosophy of our time. But in its imperative precariousness, in its radical minority, it still shows a unique critical power, and outlines maps on the desert of the real (in a desert full of mirages). In its joyful proclamation of a thought of immanence, beyond any reliance on moral or messianic structures, it still gives us reasons for resistance, to go on thinking, when it comes impossible to go on seeing certain things without doing nothing, or go on living as we do. (Neither dreams nor hopes, not even fidelity to old utopias;[19] it is just a question of perception, of sensibility, and, immediately, a problem of creation.[20])

The production and administration of inequality, of injustice, of misery, are still a pervasive reality in our societies. The attempts of the most different formations of power to control life collide, and will keep colliding, with the shocking fact that the pieces do not fit. Power claims to deal with this fact just as a spare, as junk. But included in that spare are thousands, millions of people convicted every day (people who die from diseases that a simple pill could cure, victims of collateral damage from anti-terrorist operations, but also students educated for unemployment, adolescents enclosed in urban ghettos or suburbs, elderly people without pensions or social security).

We do not have faith in the advent of a new happy world, but we cannot renounce to the exercise of a resistant thought, in the difficult, unpredictable and dangerous intersection of our powerlessness and our

ignorance. Without it, the various dystopias that may be glimpsed on the horizon would see the space that distances them from their total or totalitarian fulfilment surmounted.[21]

Thus, the new revolutionary praxis will be, in the first place, a work of de-totalisation of life (the creation of a world in which many worlds could fit, in which all possible worlds could fit). And it will be, also, an everlasting work, because power learns from its mistakes and knows how to take advantage of its defeats. (But will we stop working for that reason?) After all, as Deleuze and Guattari say:

> the success of a struggle lies just in the very struggle, in the vibrations, in the embracing, in the openness that it gives to men at the moment it takes place, and that compounds in itself a monument, always in progress, as those graves where every new traveler adds a stone. The victory of a struggle is immanent, and consists in the new relations it sets up between men, even if they do not last more than their material fusion, and they quickly give place to division, to betrayal. (Deleuze and Guattari 1991: 167)

Thought is the monument of that struggle, always to start over again in the labyrinth of the mixed up battles in which we are compromised every day. A monument that does not commemorate anything, does not honour anyone, but whispers at the ear of the future the feelings that embody the everlasting suffering of men, and its recreated protest, its sustained fight.

In this sense, struggle *without* any future of revolution comes to transvalue the imperatives of compromise we inherited from past generations; it comes to give them sense, necessarily a new sense, in these winter years of *every man for himself*.

I think of the words Sartre raised so many times as a flag: 'Everything I do is probably destined to failure, but I still do it, against all odds, because it has to be done.'[22]

But I think also, as counterpoint, of the tough, excessive, desperate order-word, in which – against the setbacks of our recent history – the sense of a remarkable event that goes by the name of Ernesto 'Che' Guevara survives:

Hasta la victoria siempre!

Notes

1. There is no hope of progress, no expectation of a complete vanishing of problems, but that does not signify the absence of an immanent hope, that is, hope of getting out – through creative solutions – of the mousetraps (Sartre) in which we find ourselves caught. Each *dispositif* implies new submissions, but also, certainly, new lines of flight: 'Dans le capitalisme il y a donc un caractère

nouveau pris par les lignes de fuite, et aussi des potentialités révolutionnaires d'un type nouveau. Vous voyez, il y a de l'espoir' (Deleuze 2002: 376). As a matter of fact, from this statement to the affirmation of Empire as a better sociopolitical assemblage (in the same sense that Marx maintained that capitalism was better than the modes of production that preceded it) there is a long way that won't be surpassed by Deleuze.

2. Even if *L'Anti-Oedipe* ends with a 'Program for desiring machines', schizoanalysis 'does not have a proper political program to propose' (Deleuze and Guattari 1973: 380). On the contrary, it raises a series of conceptual contrasts that allow us to analyse social fields or processes, evaluating the assemblages at stake (see Patton 2000: 71).
3. 'Well, I don't think so because, once again, the molecular revolution is not something that will constitute a program. It's something that develops precisely in the direction of diversity, of a multiplicity of perspectives, of creating the conditions for the maximum impetus of processes of singularisation. It's not a question of creating agreement; on the contrary, the less we agree, the more we create an area, a field of vitality in different branches of this phylum of molecular revolution, and the more we reinforce this area. It's a completely different logic from the organisational, arborescent logic that we know in political or union movements' (Guattari and Stivale 1985). See also Anne Querrien, 'Esquizoanálisis, capitalismo y libertad. La larga marcha de los desafiliados', in Guattari (2004: 28).
4. Negri's worry about the institutionalisation of Deleuzian political philosophy was not strange to Guattari, who regretted the difficulties that molecular revolutions have creating links between singular achievements: 'Will these micro-revolutions, these profound impugnations of social relationships, be put away to restricted spheres of the social field? Or will they be articulated in new "social segmentations" that won't imply the restitution of hierarchy and segregation? In short, will all these micro-revolutions set up a new revolution? Will they be capable of "assuming" not just the local problems, but the management of big economic sets? ... How far could these molecular revolutions go? Aren't they condemned, at best, to vegetate in German style ghettos? Is the molecular sabotage of the dominant social subjectivity enough in itself? Should molecular revolutions make alliances with social forces at the molar (global) level? ... How can we imagine, then, revolutionary war machines of a new type that could graft, at the same time, into the manifest social contradictions and these molecular revolutions?' (Guattari 2004: 54). 'We cannot be content with these analogies and affinities; we must also try to construct a social practice, to construct new ways of intervention, this time no longer in molecular, but molar relationships, in political and social power relations, in order to avoid watching the systematic, recurring defeat that we knew during the '70s, particularly in Italy with the enormous rise of repression linked to an event, in itself repressive, which was the rise of terrorism' (Guattari and Stivale 1985). This very same problem concerns Deleuze. But the multiplicity of revolutionary focuses does not represent a lack or a weakness for him, but a power (potentia) of resistance to power (potestas). Talking with Foucault, in fact, Deleuze said that 'les réseaux, les liaisons transversales entre ces points actifs discontinus, d'un pays à un autre ou à l'intérieur d'un même pays', even when imprecise, they imply 'qu'on ne peut en rien toucher à un point quelconque d'application sans qu'on se trouve confronté à cet ensemble diffus, que dès lors on est forcément amené à vouloir faire sauter, à partir de la plus petite revendication qui soit. Toute défense ou attaque révolutionnaire partielle rejoint de cette façon la lutte ouvrière' (Deleuze 2002: 287–98).

5. Cf. Tomás Segovia's 'Alegatorio', in Subcomandante Marcos (1997): 'First, I beg you not to mix up Resistance with political opposition. Opposition does not oppose to power but to government, and its complete and successful form is the party; on the other hand, Resistance, now by definition, can't be a party: It is not made for government, but to . . . resist.'
6. Cf. Alemán (2007: 91): 'There is no reality, as consistent and hegemonic as it may appear, as, for example, actual capitalism, that could be considered definitive. . . . To be left-winged implies insisting on the contingent character of the historic reality of Capitalism. Even when the way out or the passage to another reality is defered, even if that transit has no guarantee and could stay unfinished, even if that other reality, different of Capitalism, could not be call Socialism.'
7. Every assemblage presents, on one hand, a stratification more or less hard (let us say, the *dispositifs* of power; Deleuze says: 'a concretion of power, of desire and territoriality or reterritorialisation, ruled by the abstractions of a transcendent law'), but, on the other hand, implies points of deterritorialisation, lines of flight where it is disarticulated and transformed ('where desire is liberated of all its concretions and abstractions', says Deleuze).
8. 'Par "nouveau champ de possibles", il faut donc entendre autre chose: le mot possible a cessé de désigner la série des alternatives réelles et imaginaires (ou bien. . . ou bien. . .), l'ensemble des disjonctions exclusives caractéristiques d'une époque et d'une société données. Il concerne à présent l'émergence dynamique de nouveau. C'est l'inspiration bergsonienne de la pensée politique de Deleuze' (Zourabichvili 1998: 339).
9. '[I]ls ont bien une spontanéité rebelle. . . . Ils se lèvent un instant, et c'est ce moment-là qui est important, c'est la chance qu'il faut saisir. . . . Croire au monde, c'est ce qui nous manque le plus; nous avons tout à fait perdu le monde, on nous en a dépossédé. Croire au monde, c'est aussi bien susciter des événements même petits qui échappent au contrôle, ou faire naître de nouveaux espaces-temps, même de surface ou de volume réduits' (Deleuze 1990: 238).
10. 'L'événement n'ouvre pas un nouveau champ du réalisable, et le "champ de possibles" ne se confond pas avec la délimitation du réalisable dans une société donnée (même s'il en indique ou en induit le redécoupage). L'ouverture de possible est-elle alors un but, le problème étant moins de construire l'avenir que d'entretenir des perspectives à son sujet. . . . On passe ici à un autre régime de possibilité, qui n'a plus rien à voir avec la disponibilité actuelle d'un projet a réaliser, ou avec l'acception vulgaire du mot 'utopie' (l'image d'une nouvelle situation qu'on prétend substituer brutalement à l'actuelle, espérant rejoindre le réel à partir de l'imaginaire: opération sur le réel, plutôt que du réel même). Le possible arrive par l'événement et non l'inverse; l'événement politique par excellence – la révolution – n'est pas la réalisation d'un possible, mais une ouverture de possible . . . Le possible est le virtuel : c'est lui que la droite nie, et que la gauche dénature en se le représentant comme projet' (Zourabichvili 1998: 345).
11. Anyway, Guattari considers that one of the tasks of political commitment could consist in the precipitation of events: it consists in the active research of those differences that take place against the homogenising movement of integrated world capitalism.
12. Deleuzian involuntarism collides with Gramscian concept of political commitment: pessimism of reason, optimism of will. The left-wing, indeed, generally defined itself through voluntarism, that is, by means of the idea that if we do all we have to do, that if we do everything we can (following the guidelines of a revolutionary project, in this case), things will necessarily change

for better. Deleuzian involuntarism implies a problematisation of this idea, but this certainly does not mean a total alienation of the political by the pessimism of reason. In fact, what is put in question by Deleuze is the hope of a total fulfilment of revolutionary projects, not the will of change. Then, the question that has to be raised is: what kind of action is possible without the hope of its total fulfilment? Does the impugnation of any project's fulfilment imply the impugnation of the very notion of will? I would say that Deleuze probably meets up here with the sense that Duns Scot or Schopenhauer used to give to the concept of voluntarism, that is, the principle according to which will is the first of human spiritual powers (previous, in that sense, to reason or intellect). Certainly, this will is not for Deleuze a subjective will, but an impersonal, event-by-product will (but isn't this the case with all doctrines of will?). Deep down, Deleuzian involuntarism states that a subjective mutation can't be decided, that is, that a subjective mutation could never be the outcome of a dedicated fulfilment of an idea postulated by reason; it is, indeed, the impersonal will of the event which decides a new sharing out of the affects, a new circumscription of the intolerable ('the event is the very revolutionary potential itself' [Zourabichvili 1998: 354]); it is that impersonal will in relation to which we can react (oppose some kind of resistance) or respond (the subjective mutation is real, but it must be prolonged by a rational assemblage of the new relations that it provokes or shows). In this sense, as suggested by François Zourabichvili (who has said the most interesting things about this), change is not to come, but is inscribed as a tendency in the contradictions of a situation in which we are compromised, that authorises us to talk about the future without having a relapse into fantasy; it can be deciphered in the very becoming of present (actuality), by opposition to the structure of fulfilment that has the future as an image thanks to the dialectical apparatus. Between the act of deciphering the future at the level of the virtual, and its assemblage at the level of the actual, there must exist an act of creation, and not the mere fulfilment of a possible (system of alternatives): 'le néant de volonté procède à la destitution d'un faux problème: le système des alternatives. Son envers, ou la consistance positive de la politique, est l'élaboration expérimentale de nouveaux agencements concrets, est l'élaboration expérimentale de nouveaux agencements concrets, et la lutte pour l'affirmation des droits correspondants' (Zourabichvili 1998: 354). In short, even if it is not possible to talk about hope in the context of this militant praxis, neither can we conclude a politics of total despair. Deleuze writes: 'ne pas savoir d'avance comment quelqu'un, éventuellement, se trouvera capable d'instaurer en lui et hors de lui un processus de rationalisation. Certes il y a tous les cas perdus, le désespoir. Mais s'il y a une chance, de quoi quelqu'un a-t-il besoin, comment procède-t-il pour sortir de ses démolitions? Tous peut-être, nous naissons sur un sol de démolition, mais nous ne gâcherons aucune chance. Il n'y a pas de Raison pure, ou de rationalité par excellence. Il y a des processus de rationalisation, hétérogènes, très différents suivant les domaines, les époques, les groupes et les personnes. Ils ne cessent d'avorter, de glisser, d'aller dans des impasses, mais aussi de se reprendre ailleurs, avec de nouvelles mesures, de nouveaux rythmes, de nouvelles allures' (Deleuze 1988: 14–15).

13. '[S]uivre les flux qui constituent autant de lignes de fuite dans la société capitaliste, et opérer des ruptures, imposer des coupures au sein même du déterminisme social et de la causalité historique; dégager les agents collectifs d'énonciation capables de former les nouveaux énoncés de désir; constituer non pas une avant-garde, mais des groupes en adjacence avec les processus sociaux, et qui s'emploient seulement à faire avancer une vérité sur des chemins où elle ne s'engage jamais d'ordinaire; bref, une subjectivité

révolutionnaire par rapport à laquelle il n'y a plus lieu de se demander ce qui est premier, des déterminations économiques, politiques, libidinales, etc., puisqu'elle traverse les ordres traditionnellement séparés; saisir ce point de rupture où, précisément, l'économie politique et l'économie libidinale ne font plus qu'un. . . . Le mouvement du 22 Mars reste exemplaire à cet égard . . . sans prétention d'avant-garde ou d'hégémonie, simple support permettant le transfert et la levée des inhibitions' (Deleuze 2002: 279). (The movement of March 22 was an anti-establishment student movement that, headed by Daniel Cohn-Bendit, would be the revolutionary seed of May '68.)

14. Yet, everything comes to flee again, opposing to the biopolitical articulation of society a series of insurmountable becomings in the domain of libidinal economy: Daily relationships between women and men, homosexuals and heterosexuals, children, adults, etc., as well as production mutations, imply coefficients of freedom irretrievable to the dominant system (Guattari 2004: 68–9): 'J'ai beaucoup de mal à imaginer une petite communauté libérée qui se maintiendrait au travers des flux de la société répressive, comme l'addition d'individus tour à tour affranchis. Si le désir constitue en revanche la texture même de la société dans son ensemble, y compris dans ses mécanismes de reproduction, un mouvement de libération peut "cristalliser" dans l'ensemble de la société' (Deleuze 2002: 370) (it is Guattari who speaks this way).
15. Cf. Kaufman (2007: 67): 'A left-wing perspective would be a perspective involved with the antagonisms that structure the conditions of injustice, much more than with the institutional modalities that result from this concern.'
16. 'Although Empire may have played a role in putting an end to colonialism and imperialism, it nonetheless constructs its own relationships of power based on exploitation that are in many respects more brutal than those it destroyed. . . . Despite recognizing all this, we insist on asserting that the construction of Empire is a step forward in order to do away with any nostalgia for the power structures that preceded it and refuse any political strategy that involves returning to that old arrangement, such as trying to resurrect the nation-state to protect against global capital. We claim that Empire is better in the same way that Marx insists that capitalism is better than the forms of society and modes of production that came before it' (Negri and Hardt 2000: 61).
17. 'In contrast, any postmodern liberation must be achieved within this world, on the plane of immanence, with no possibility of any even utopian outside. . . . Perhaps we need to reinvent the notion of the materialist teleology that Spinoza proclaimed at the dawn of modernity when he claimed that the prophet produces its own people' (Negri and Hardt 2000: 83). 'There is not finally here any determinism or utopia: this is rather a radical counter-power, ontologically grounded not on any "*vide pour le futur*" but on the actual activity of the multitude, its creation, production, and power – a materialist teleology' (Negri and Hardt 2000: 66).
18. 'La rupture des schèmes, ou la fuite hors des clichés, ne conduit certes pas à un état de résignation ou de révolte tout intérieure: résister se distingue de réagir. Résister est le propre d'une volonté dérivée de l'événement, qui s'alimente à l'intolérable. L'événement est le "potentiel révolutionnaire" même, qui se tarit lorsqu'il est rabattu sur des images toutes faites (clichés de la misère et la revendication)' (Zourabichvili 1998: 354). 'Un événement politique est du même type: une nouvelle répartition des affects, une nouvelle circonscription de *l'intolérable*' (Zourabichvili 1998: 341).
19. 'Pourquoi se révolter? En dehors de l'intérêt spécifique qui motive telle lutte pour ceux qui sont directement concernés, quelle raison de s'engager au côté de la subversion? Est-ce une question de *morale* ou d'éthique, de simple dignité

pour soi-même, comme on a envie de répondre, qui plus que toute autre chose nous obligerait à écouter la voix des insoumis, des victimes, des singularités qui se dressent un moment, un instant se soulèvent? . . . Pourquoi se révolter? Par rêve, espoir, fidélité à l'utopie . . . Soit. Mais, du coup, le caractère de ce désir le rapproche dangereusement du désir freudien, dirait-on. Ce désir, en effet, à jamais insatisfait historiquement, *comment peut-il se maintenir*, et relancer continûment dans l'histoire des actions toujours nouvelles sans sombrer dans le découragement, le désespoir? . . . Éthique et rébellion. Qui a pour mot d'ordre: On a toujours raison de se révolter. . . . La révolution comme promesse d'un juste état social et politique, a disparu. Ce qu'il en reste donc, c'est, exactement, un mode de vie, *un style d'existence*, avec une forme particulière de rapport à soi et aux autres' (Mengue 2003 : 146–57).

20. '*On ne peut que* répondre à l'événement, parce qu'on ne peut pas vivre dans un monde qu'on ne supporte plus, en tant qu'on ne le supporte plus. Il y a là une responsabilité spéciale, étrangère à celle des gouvernements et des sujets majeurs, responsabilité proprement révolutionnaire. On n'est ici responsable de rien, ni de personne; on ne représente ni un projet ni les intérêts d'une collectivité (puisque ces intérêts sont précisément en train de changer et qu'on ne sait pas bien encore dans quel sens). On est responsable devant l'événement' (Zourabichvili 1998: 347).
21. I think that the generic threat of totalisation is, nowadays, much more worrying than eventual totalitarian threats. Capitalistic totalisation – under the forms of control societies (Deleuze), integrated world capitalism (Guattari), or empire (Negri-Hardt) – implies a vast number of forms that go much further than dictatorial (military or party based) totalitarianisms. Current capitalism, indeed, establishes in our societies a kind of symbolic totalitarianism, a totalisation that overdetermines reality by representation, and reaches zones which traditionally are far away from power. Clumsy forms of totalitarianism are, from this point of view, just a violent and voluntaristic reaction of states facing up to the failure of operational totalisations by worldwide legitimated *dispositifs* of knowledge and power (and, in this sense, they represent a kind of step backwards in the direction of archaic *dispositifs*: discipline, sovereignty, etc.).
22. Cf. Jeanson (1975: 286). I owe this reference to Ignacio Quepons (G. C.), faithful friend and tireless partner in this patient job of giving form to the impatience of freedom.

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Politicising Deleuzian Thought, or, Minority's Position within Marxism

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Abstract

This text provides an analysis of the Deleuzian theory of minorities. Its hypothesis is that this theory produces a double effect of interpellation: upon a materialistic reading of the philosophy of Deleuze, and upon the theoretical and political heritage of Marxism. Concerning the first aspect, the thesis of an actual multiplication of 'becomings-minoritarian' reopening 'the question of the becoming-revolutionary of people, at every level, in every place', has to be referred to the Deleuzo-Guattarian analysis of the conjuncture – namely, to a diagnosis of the global capitalist system's dynamisms and the contradictions they produce in the social, juridical and political institutions of national States. Concerning the second aspect, I confront the adversities faced by minorities with the schema of the classes struggle, and I examine certain links (of continuation and integration, but also differentiation) between the processes of 'proletarianisation' and 'becoming-minoritarian', that is to say, between two ways of problematising the collective subject of a revolutionary politics of emancipation. Finally I assert that the concept of 'becoming-minoritarian' makes of the possibility of an unprecedented internationalism the way to a renewal of the two concepts between which the horizon of modern political thought extends, and around which the tradition of political liberalism and thinkers of a revolutionary politics have never ceased to confront one another: autonomy and universality.

Keywords: Deleuzian politics, minorities, the State, global capitalism, social struggles, universalism, internationalism

I. Writing in Minor/Reading Deleuze Politically

The question of minorities touches at the heart of Deleuze's political thought, taking place as it does where the category of the 'political' becomes in every way problematic. This is true from several points of view: from the point of view of the political meanings of this category in the progression of Deleuze's work; from that of its effective political implications (in the forms of theoretical instruments of decoding of the relations of social forces, of location in these relations, of prescriptions of intervention or simple tactical indicators); and from that of the manner in which one defines what it means to 'read politically'. Here we must often hesitate between the first two points of view, which are perhaps never entirely dissociable but which do not overlap unless thus coerced – in other words, between a hermeneutic of the political, and a theoretical practice with political effects. It is certainly not a coincidence that the terminological series minority–major–minor begins to form the base of a specific conceptual work, in *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* in 1975, about a literary experience which for Deleuze and Guattari directly poses the theoretical and practical question of ways of writing and reading (they will draw conclusions on this the following year in their theory of the book, *Rhizome*). In the first place, minorities are not thought of as 'objects' of reflection, nor as 'objects' of historical, political or sociological knowledge. Rather, they are positions and processes interior to a practice of writing (in this case literary), processes interior to language which condition a creative transformation of collective regimes of enunciation. Of course these processes themselves recall social and historic coordinates: upheavals of frontiers and migratory dynamics linked to the history of imperialism, the evolution of multinational empires, annexationist movements and creations of States, territorial redrawings and populational displacements resulting from revolutions and from the end of the First World War which will make of minorities, following the formula of Arendt, a 'permanent institution' throughout the juridico-political structure of the nation-state.[1] And for Kafka himself we recall the status of the Czech Jewish minority throughout the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the decline of this Empire and the rise of nationalist struggles, the sociolinguistic circumstances of this minority in the Prague of the beginning of the century. These circumstances were characterised by the coexistence of three languages. Lingua franca German was the official language of administration, business, culture and university. Czech was the vernacular language of most of the population, characterised by an increasingly conflicting relation with

German domination. Finally, Yiddish was spoken by some of the Jewish, mostly Germanophone population and scorned by Czechs and Germans alike (Wagenbach 1967: 65–71). What is most important for Deleuze is the impact that such complex circumstances will have upon the domination of a major language. When the hegemony of a major language is established, there are always tensions and conflicts at work within it; correlatively, the language is permeated by creative initiatives and all sorts of vectors involved in an immanent politicising of its enunciation (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 23–7; Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 101–5).

In this sense, the Deleuzian theory of minorities appears first in the problematising of the endogenous conflict which weakens every system of 'majority' from the inside. These 'systems of majority' are characterised by the hegemony of a normative ensemble which both determines the social inscription of practices, conducts and human multiplicities, and manages regimes of expression and subjective positions in which groups and persons are individualised. It is within these regimes that interests, demands, memberships, distinctions, recognitions and identifications are articulated (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 105–6). From this standpoint, the norms of the language imposed as the 'standard', along with the norms of discursive practices in force in an institutional fabric, do not compose one hegemony among others. They compose rather the hegemony that all the others presuppose and by which they are reproduced. But the German of Prague for Kafka – the language of political, economic and cultural power – is not imposed as a major language without being simultaneously affected by multiple vectors of transformation which bear witness to effects produced on the inside of this language by geographical movements and human migrations, relations of social forces, displacements and destabilisations of the geopolitical balance of powers. The German language had already been deterritorialised from its economic domains and its commercial functions by the development of English as the new language of exchange. It had also been transformed in bureaucratic spheres by the administrators of Hapsburg established in Prague who transformed aristocratic German into unheard of variations. German thus became especially suited for 'strange and minor uses' for recently urbanised Czech and Jewish populations – 'this can be compared in another context to what blacks in America today are able to do with the English language' (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 17) – such as that 'inextricable mixture of German and Czech' which forms *Kuchelböhmisch*, or that 'sort of Germanized Yiddish', *Mauscheldeutsch* (Wagenbach 1967: 79).

The German learned by Kafka (following his father's desire for him to climb the social ladder), 'this German taught by our non-German mothers', as he writes to Max Brod, resembles a fluid form with irregular intonations, and is riddled with syntactical errors and semantic fluctuations. It is not a minor language derived from or opposed to the major language but rather a 'minorisation' of the major language itself, whose resources Kafka could mine for another language capable of sweeping away the narrative contents and their actantial schemata.[2]

Such an immanent politicising of the means of enunciation which the Kafkan oeuvre, in its own historical conjuncture, allows to come to light, is not to be confused with the struggles of national minorities, nor does it figure there as an ideological instrument (in the sense for example that the construction of a literary history may intervene in the ideological struggle to impose the recognition of a national identity). It is conditioned by historical processes which 'minorise' a system of majority, or in other words, which subject the normative constants of this system to variations or deviations not coded *by* the system. It can only be actualised by a practical appropriation of these processes by assemblages (*agencements*) capable of experimenting with their potentialities for transformation. Even so, such practical assemblages are necessarily linked to the aforementioned struggles, and the Kafkan literary machine is itself adjacently connected to them in a historic conjuncture which determines literary writing as decisive in the formation of a collective conscience which does not yet exist and thus remains uncertain. It is not so much a question of literary history as of the actual creation of new forms of collective expression and enunciation, in a historical milieu where the objective conditions of such an enunciation are everywhere lacking outside of literature.[3] We shall name 'minor' these enunciative creations (which are not only literary, but political, theoretical or philosophical) that are capable of creating a new language *in* a major or dominant language and, in minorising it, forging 'the means of another consciousness and another sensibility', striving to induce a *becoming-revolutionary* in the minorities to which they are connected. The problem is then that of more precisely determining the nature of this connection, for it conditions both the structure of conflictuality potentially within every majoritarian system, and the concept of the specific effectiveness, in such a system, of these minor practices. These latter are enacted from within by the actual or potential struggle of minorities. In other words, they occupy 'positions of minority' in a discourse, in the sense used by Marxists who talk of 'class positions on the inside of the theory'. We will return to this analogy,

which has its limits. We mention limits precisely because it is *more* than an analogy: it is a profound problematic similarity. But we can already reformulate the initial problem. In what sense would the analyses of minorities conducted by Deleuze be themselves enacted from within by such minoritarian processes? At what point does one find in Deleuze, not only a political theory of minorities, or an interpretation of the political signification of minorities today, but a possible politicising of his thought which could be identified with his internal minor positions? At what point could what Deleuze writes concerning 'minor' literary enunciation serve for a political enunciation in Deleuze's philosophy? Or, to twist a formulation of Louis Althusser: in what sense could Deleuzian philosophy claim to instantiate the struggles of minorities in theory and political thought?

II. Minorities in the Becoming-Revolutionary of the Actual Situation

This questioning cannot begin with considerations on 'minorities' or 'becomings' in general. Rather, they should start at the exact location where Deleuze explicitly formulates his political diagnostic of the actual situation. A double and significant location, in fact, in two texts which echo and are connected one to the other: the penultimate paragraph of *Dialogues* from 1977 ('What characterizes our situation is both beyond and on this side of the State. *Beyond* national States...'), and the last sections of the thirteenth 'plateau' which presents in 1980 the Deleuzo-Guattarian theory of the apparatus of State ('6. Minorities. – Ours is becoming the age of minorities...'). In fact nothing less than the locating of this conjuncture seems capable of shedding light on certain factors that are relevant for us here:

- The extension which is effectuated in Deleuze's use of the term 'minorities', and correlatively its apparent dispersion in a work which never attempts to subsume multiplicity under a principle of objective or subjective identity, such as a State or a class.
- The formalisation, beyond the example case of Kafka, of the specific conflictuality of minorities, which leads Deleuze to identify in the actual multiplication of minoritarian sets the indication of a re-emergence of a global revolutionary movement.
- The theoretical gesture, accordingly perhaps less paradoxical than it appears, by which Deleuze makes of this becoming-minoritarian of increasingly numerous social and cultural multiplicities the way to a

> renewal of the two concepts between which extends the horizon of modern political thought, and around which the tradition of political liberalism and thinkers of a revolutionary politics have never ceased to confront one another: autonomy and universality.

Actually these ostensibly different aspects are intimately linked together. At any rate, they must be, for the overlapping of a 'becoming-minoritarian' and a 'becoming-revolutionary' not to be illusory, for the affirmation of a 'becoming-minoritarian of everyone' not to be reduced to a speculative formula empty of all effective content, and for the very term 'revolutionary' not to conceal a political vacuity. Bearing this in mind, we will put forward the hypothesis that the emergence of the multiplication of minoritarian struggles, in the analysis of the conjuncture which Deleuze carries out, takes over from class struggle. This does not mean that it simply supplants class struggles, but rather that it prolongs them while complicating their coordinates and transforming their modes of realisation, but also interiorising certain of their presuppositions and difficulties. This must be understood in at least three senses, which will permit us to assess both the continuity and the difference between the two forms of struggle.

1. Minorisation and proletarianisation in the State-form

Firstly, the factors related to the constitution of minorities are not fundamentally different from the factors of proletarianisation. When Deleuze and Guattari write that 'the power of minority, of particularity, finds its figure or its universal consciousness in the proletariat' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 472) it is in the first place because their concept of minority redraws the demarcating line of the base of Marxist communism and utopian communism. We find here a refusal to consider the socioeconomic structure's forces of rupture independently of the contradictory dynamics by which the structure sustains these forces within itself, and by which it at least partially conditions their forms of crystallisation and effectuation. This is why they index their locating of becomings-minoritarian upon the systematic dynamics of worldwide capitalism, which proceed *de facto* to their real generalisation. Adhering to the geo-economic and geopolitical axes of capital accumulation within relations of unequal dependence between 'Centre' and 'Peripheries', the following are considered by Deleuze and Guattari the principal factors which engender minoritarian sets: decodings of alimentary flows generating famine, decodings of populational and urban flows through

the dismantling of indigenous habitats and urbanisations, and decodings of flows of matter-energy generating political and monetary instability. In accordance with the transformations of relations between constant capital and variable capital in the countries of the Centre, the following lead to the formation of 'peripheral' zones of underdevelopment within the countries of the Centre itself: the development of a 'floating' and precarious labour force of which 'official subsistence is assured only by State allocations and wages subject to interruption', and the development of an 'intensive surplus labor that no longer even takes the route of labor' but goes through the modes of life, the collective forms of expression, the means of communication, circulation and consumption and so on. These sorts of 'internal Third Worlds' or 'internal Souths' foment many new struggles in all the linguistic, ethnic, regional, sexist, juvenile domains, but such struggles are always overdetermined by the global system of unequal dependence (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 145–7; Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 468–9).

The global capitalist system 'minorises' as much as it proletarianises. The difference between the two points of view will thus be all the more pronounced. The Marxist notion of the proletariat entails a triple consideration: its position within the structure of production, determined at minimum by its dispossession of the means of production and its insertion into the process of production as a pure, abstract labour force; the big industry working population's living conditions, which involve not only the homogenisation of human misery, but populational concentration and the appearance of forms of cooperation which produce, within the 'pores' of industrial sites, unheard forms of solidarity, of relationships and collective consciousness; the power of becoming of that which thus tends to be constituted as a class, or following the expression of Etienne Balibar, its transitional value. While considering the surprising rarity within *Das Kapital* of the notion of the proletariat – a notion which nevertheless condensed until then for Marx all the implications of the 'point of view of class' – Balibar remarks:

> Everything happened as if the proletariat as such had nothing to do with the positive function that the exploited labour force carries out in the sphere of production, in so far as 'productive force' above all else; as if it had nothing to do with the formation of value, the transformation of surplus labour into surplus value, the metamorphosis of 'living work' into 'capital'. (Balibar 1997: 223)

As if in the end this very term connoted nothing more than the 'transitional' character of the working class, or the manner in which

the historically untenable character of capitalist accumulation (which was already preparing the material conditions of 'another transition which would annul the preceding one') was inscribed into the workers' condition, an unstable state in relation to 'normal' social existence (Balibar 1997: 222–3). In a strikingly similar vein, the Deleuzian notion of minority seems firstly to involve a signified that remains problematic, and secondly to indicate nothing other than the transitional vector of a substratum which is fundamentally unstable, and even unassignable (the 'becoming-minoritarian of everybody'). However, no effacement of the signifier results; on the contrary, the signifier's proliferation is found at all levels of the analysis between 1975 and 1980, a proliferation which seems to challenge every attempt to reassemble their instances and occurrences into a unitary form.

This is because minorities are nothing other than 'proletarianised' masses, but they are masses inasmuch as they are immediately formed within institutional, social, juridical and ideological structures of national States. Dissociated from a strictly economic determination of the proletariat as well as from a strictly sociological determination of the working class, the concept of minority records the State's process of socialisation, that is to say, the process through which State power is incorporated into the social and institutional structures of the capitalist formation. We could thus call 'minorisation' that internal distance, in the process of proletarianisation, between that which is expropriated of all social power throughout the structure of production, and that which is partially (and unequally) reintegrated into the liberal State-form, through social and political rights, statutory and symbolic recognitions, organs of representation and delegation. Consequently, the notion of minority involves an irreducible multiplicity, which is neither soluble in the sketch of a contradiction between capital and labour, nor in the supposed homogeneity of workers' conditions. The minoritarian sets recall, in their very constitution, the variability of national frameworks and of State apparatuses which manage these sets, which partially integrate them, and which conflict with them in multiple ways. This multiplicity depends on 1) the variability of States' positions within the international division of labour and the unequal integration of their interior market into the global market (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 461–2); 2) the variability of political structures and regimes fluctuating between social-democratic and totalitarian poles, namely between institutional and juridical integration of minorities as 'subsystems', and exclusion 'outside the system' of minorities subsequently abandoned to repressive State violence (Deleuze and

Guattari 1987: 462–3); 3) the correlative variability of the forms and degrees of development of minoritarian struggles; 4) the variability of the types of political manipulation of minorities. We know at least two functions of such a manipulation: the instrumentalisation of immigrant workers in order to repeat the classical process of forcing producers into competition and sowing dissension into the working class (Noiriel 2005: 108–22); the 'displacement' of social conflicts onto 'cultural' norms – regarding place of residence, ethnicity, linguistic or religious criteria, generational relations, sexual conducts, etc. – all norms which ostensibly seem without relation to the norms of economic exploitation. But these norms are sources at once of objective representations and modes of subjectification, so that the conflicts thus displaced onto the cultural terrain pose in turn sundry problems for the State (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 257–8).

2. *Autonomy of minoritarian struggles*

This difference between proletariat and minorities is not only theoretical. It has as a practical correlate the renouncement of a presupposition put forward in Marxism since *The Communist Manifesto*: the idea of a trend towards simplification of the antagonism supposed to oppose, increasingly clearly and inevitably, 'two great diametrically opposite classes', bourgeois and proletarian.[4] If the notion of minorities reactivates for Deleuze and Guattari the problem of the relation between the capitalist social machine and the politicising of forces capable of shattering it, this very notion does not at all seem to guarantee a unified base, or a potentially unifiable subject, such as an objectively determinable class in which the possibility of a collective awareness and the work of its political construction could be localised. This is a difficulty which is above all political, and is the correlate of the one just mentioned which expressed (and constantly risked being concealed by) the thesis of the underlying simplification of the antagonism of the two social classes. In a way, this thesis clearly expressed the necessity of the construction of a proletarian politics outside of the State-form, while worker struggles forced the bourgeoisie to be recomposed as a class inside of the State. And yet, this thesis simultaneously tended to misjudge that same necessity. Indeed, complemented in Marxism by an underestimation of capitalism's inventiveness and the suppleness of institutional and State frameworks capable of developing the capitalist relations of production, it led to the conception of the relevant theoretical and practical problems as fated to be spontaneously

resolved by the infallible historic evolution of the mode of production.[5] These problems are those of an autonomous politics of revolutionary movement, that is to say, the invention of original forms of organisation, but also of culture, thought and practices, capable of maintaining the asymmetrical character of conflict, and thus of creating within the revolutionary process the immanent conditions of a politics which would not be modelled on the forms of bourgeois politics or the practices of capitalist State power. Not only do minoritarian struggles encounter in turn this problem of the political autonomy of the revolutionary movement, but they confront it in an even more direct fashion, precisely because the minoritarian sets are immediately constituted in the State-form.

> The power of minority, of particularity, finds its figure or its universal consciousness in the proletariat. But as long as the working class defines itself by an acquired status, or even by a theoretically conquered State, it appears only as 'capital', a part of capital (variable capital), and does not leave *the plan(e) of capital*. At best, the plan(e) becomes bureaucratic. On the other hand, it is by leaving the plan(e) of capital, and never ceasing to leave it, that a mass becomes increasingly revolutionary. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 472)

The problem of the political autonomy of a new revolutionary movement is even more crucial for Deleuze and Guattari, since it condenses their evaluation of the ambivalent success of the worker movement. On the one hand, it succeeded in imposing a class duality and social antagonisms which brought the proletariat out of its state of minority, in the specific sense of a subsystem integrated into the new 'industrial system', as the Saint-Simonians would say. On the other hand, it proved itself less and less capable of calling into question its own class identity (and its 'universal class' identity, destining it to establish a transitional new hegemony), whereas the political and union apparatuses, which were supposed to materially incarnate it, tended to be incorporated into the State-form as organs of conflict regulation within the social State, or as 'driving belts' within the domination of a totalitarian bureaucracy (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 255–7). This is the source of Deleuze and Guattari's suspicion regarding the struggles of minorities internal to institutional, juridical and political structures of the State, and the reason for their insistent criticism of the aim of conquering the majority as a 'simple' displacement of hegemony.[6] In the first part of this assessment, they seem to reactivate familiar critiques of Parliamentarianism and reformism. In the second part, they seem to replay a vague libertarian

impulse. The Deleuzo-Guattarian analysis is, however, more complex because it engages the internal contradictions of the modern State: this latter develops within its national framework the capitalistic relations of production; but these relations are made necessary through an enlarged accumulation and reproduction process, which passes through a worldwide division of labour and a transnationalisation of capital movements. As simultaneously instruments of capital valorisation and the management of systematic disequilibria and crises, the State institutions concentrate within themselves all the contradictions of the process of accumulation. They also negotiate for better or for worse its social repercussions according to both the degree of socialisation of their political, economic and juridical apparatuses and the level of corresponding social struggles. For as much as the minoritarian sets are themselves taken up in the variable combinations of institutional integration and repression, and for as much as they take part in these contradictions internal to the State, their struggles cannot fail to take place inside of it. 'Their tactics necessarily go that route', at the most diverse levels: 'women's struggle for the vote, for abortion, for jobs; the struggle of the regions for autonomy; the struggle of the Third World; the struggle of the oppressed masses and minorities in the East or West' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 471). And what is more, these struggles inside of the juridical, political and economic institutions of States are not only tactically inevitable but strategically necessary. They are necessary to generate pressure and to influence the conditions in which the State develops within its own order the relations of production of global capitalist accumulation. This runs contrary to the mystifying representation of a capitalist system which simply and purely transcends States. These struggles interior to the institutions of the State are necessary to exacerbate the distance between the constraints of global accumulation and the impotence of States to 'regulate' their repercussions, whether those be economic, social, cultural, ecological, etc. This in turn runs contrary to the no less mystifying representation of an omnipotent technocracy (such a representation contributes to the simplifying reduction of every struggle within the State to a '*récupération*' which could only be avoided through some isolated regional struggles renouncing all global strategy and all exterior support) (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 145–6; Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 463). But henceforth, in this very movement within the State, these minoritarian struggles reveal themselves simultaneously as 'the index of another, coexistent combat' which, directly or indirectly, puts into question the global capitalist axiomatic itself and the State-form as such.

> It is hard to see what an Amazon-State would be, a women's State, or a State of erratic workers, a State of the 'refusal' of work. If minorities do not constitute viable States culturally, politically, economically, it is because the State-form is not appropriate to them, nor the axiomatic of capital, nor the corresponding culture. We have often seen capitalism maintain and organize inviable States, according to its needs, and for the precise purpose of crushing minorities. The minorities issue is instead that of smashing capitalism, of redefining socialism, of constituting a war machine . . . whose aim is neither the war of extermination nor the peace of generalized terror, but revolutionary movement (the connection of flows, the composition of non-denumerable aggregates, the becoming-minoritarian of everybody/everything). (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 472–3)

At this second more profound level, according to Deleuze and Guattari, the autonomy of a revolutionary politics of minorities passes primarily through a critique of the two 'cuts' or two boundaries by which the national State codes its social multiplicities. This coding is nothing but the formation of the nation as 'the very operation of a collective subjectification' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 456), which minorities always more or less internalise but under necessarily conflicting conditions: a) a national/extra-national boundary, which tends to make of minorities (usually immigrant minorities, but also potentially every minority, whatever their criteria of segregation) interior foreigners; b) an individual/collective boundary, which inscribes in the structure of the 'major' national subjectivity a private–public division which is particularly problematic regarding the subjective position of minorities.[7] The isolation and thus the 'communitarianisation' of minoritarian struggles proceed through these two boundaries. They form the double bind of a State strategy of differential and unequal integration into the national community and identity. They permit the State to confine their demands to the private sphere as only relevant to strictly individual problems, or else to tolerate their collective impact and political significance on the condition that they do not begin to connect to international coordinates or other exterior minoritarian sets. If the actual becoming of the world determines the emergence of 'a universal figure of minoritarian consciousness as the becoming of everybody', it is not by conquering the majority that this is accomplished. Neither is it realised by burying oneself inside of one's minority, one's particularism, which is only a breeding ground for marginalism. 'It is certainly not by using a minor language as a dialect, by regionalizing or ghettoizing, that one becomes revolutionary; rather, by using a number of minority elements, by connecting, conjugating them, one invents a specific, unforeseen,

autonomous becoming' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 106) – a becoming which then passes necessarily through transversal connections between various struggles, in a national and international space. This is a strategic line and a criterion of evaluation. Minorities are certainly not revolutionary in themselves. But the problem remains that of an evaluation immanent to the very struggles they engage in, to the practical 'style' of these struggles, to the modes of existence which they suppose, to the problems which they enunciate and the demands which they make (or to the utterances which they more or less consciously interiorise). The base criterion of such an evaluation is their variable aptitude to join with other struggles, to connect their problems to others which may be very different regarding interests and group identities – 'a constructivism, a "diagrammatism", operating by the determination of the conditions of the problem and by transversal links between problems: it opposes both the automation of the capitalist axioms and bureaucratic programming' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 473). In all these ways, the true effect of minoritarian struggles in the actual conjuncture – namely at the moment when Deleuze can affirm that 'our age is becoming that of minorities' and that this tendency of the present reopens 'the question of the becoming-revolutionary of people, at every level, in every place' – is not communitarianism, according to an already republicanised conception of minorities throughout a universal incarnated in the *État de droit* or the Rule of law. It is rather a new internationalism which excludes the State-form. Its task would be to construct a 'minoritarian universal' that would express both practices of universality which are more effectively real than the universality of the national-capitalist State, and a composition of power at least as powerful, confronted with the capitalist system, as the historic worker movement.

3. The minoritarian universal within the becoming-revolutionary

How are we to understand such a universal, 'the minoritarian becoming as universal figure of consciousness?' At the very least, the revolutionary workers' movement could claim, even at the price of countless self-delusions, a real underlying universality, correlative with the historic movement of the concentration of capital resuscitating from itself its most profound negativity: a new collective subject, a bringer of a universal interest, a precursor of a society itself universal, liberated from private property as principle of particularisation and antagonistic division of the social field. We mean, of course, a society without class. What remains certain is that the minorities must not only

surmount their own particularisms, but shatter the previously mentioned double boundary, being both interior (private/public) and exterior (national/international), which allows the functioning of the national coding of minoritarian sets. But this task does not consist, for Deleuze, in renouncing the element of the 'particular'. This element in fact remains crucial in order to valorise a mode of formulation of social, economic and political problems that is capable of thwarting their bureaucratic administration by the State.[8] But this prevents at the same time the projection of a unification of the minorities into the identity of a collective subject – whatever name one gives it, classical (people), modern (proletariat), postmodern or again classical (multitude)... How then are we to conceive of a 'minoritarian universal' which would be constructed by and within a revolutionary process taking up the contradictions of the actual capitalist world, and that yet does not entertain the fantasy of the messianic universality of a new subject?

Such is ultimately the problem condensed by the Deleuzian formulation of a system of domination resting upon, and reproducing itself through, the distinction majority/minorities. Recall that this formulation takes place within a semiology of collective identities, that is to say, within a questioning regarding the logical and semiotic operations by which are distributed social states defined by rules of identity assignations of individuals and groups, rules of categorisation of their conducts and utterances, or in sum, by norms of disjunctive inscription (Pierre Bourdieu would say 'distinction') of social multiplicities:

> Majority assumes a state of power and domination, not the other way around... A determination different from that of the constant will therefore be considered minoritarian, by nature and regardless of number, in other words, a subsystem or an outsystem... But at this point, everything is reversed. For the majority, in so far as it is analytically included in the abstract standard, is never anybody, it is always Nobody – Ulysses – whereas the minority is the becoming of everybody, one's potential becoming to the extent that one deviates from the model. There is a majoritarian 'fact,' but it is the analytic fact of Nobody, as opposed to the becoming-minoritarian of everybody. That is why we must distinguish between: the majoritarian as a constant and homogeneous system; minorities as subsystems; and the minoritarian as a potential, creative and created, becoming. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 105–6)

It obviously follows that the majority has a content, since it is constructed precisely by the hegemonisation of particular contents corresponding to a given state of domination. If the majority defines an empty universal, this simply expresses the fact that, once these contents

are raised to dominant norms, these norms themselves seem constructed less so that everyone will conform to them than to assess those who don't conform to them, and to identify and differentially categorise the distances between them (and not simply between them and the supposed identity fixed by the normative utterance). This is something that Deleuze no doubt picked up from Foucault. The normative utterances do not simply demand an identification or conformity ('normalisation'). They permit the recording of the different manners of behaving in relation to this supposed interpellation (and which one also learns afterward),[9] to identify the different rather than to render it identical, to assess and establish 'deviance' within a reproducible space of distribution of the unequal, and to make of its so-called rectification a means of reproduction of new imputations of deviance. In such an operation of 'inclusive exclusion', the majority is the analytic fact of *Nobody*, while the minority, constituted as a state by this very operation, is the synthetic fact of *some particular people*, whatever their number be, gathered into a subsystem and rendered countable and quantifiable by dominant norms. Plenty of dialectics can henceforth be tied between the universal and the particular in such a mechanism.[10] And yet according to Deleuze, the element of conflictuality, at once dynamic factor and immanent principle of an other universality, comes from minoritarian processes which are not defined simply by deviances, but by their non-coded or unregulated character in the game of differences and differential positions. This is not a sociological extrapolation. It is an attempt at making way, within social theory, for a non-categorisable reality which prevents the objective representation from closing itself off, or furthermore (and this is effectively the same thing), which prevents the social system from coinciding with the structure of disjunctive relations which make of it a system of differential positions. Between the positions, there are still subjective transpositional processes which are entirely liveable and thinkable; between the identitary states, there are always objective becomings which are positively knowable and feasible. What is essential thus has to do with the specific effectiveness of such processes. They work simultaneously against the empty universal of the hegemonic norm and against the particularisation inclusive-excluding of minority as subsystem. At the very least they can attain this double efficiency if determined assemblages succeed in carrying out their practical appropriation. Such are these 'minor' practices of which Kafka had presented an example on the plane of literary enunciation. These practices occupy a position of minority to weaken from the interior the majority's normative constants, but they simultaneously lead this

minority itself into a transformation which frees it from its state as subsystem. And such a transformation does not abolish its 'deviance', but rather renders it dissipative, or undetectable, not assessable by the major rule of the measure of distances and assignation of unequal identities.[11] This is why Deleuze writes that even a minority has to become-minoritarian ('it certainly takes more than a state') at the same time as it forms the 'agent' or the 'active medium' through which a subject 'enters a becoming-minoritarian that rends him from his major identity'. As an active medium, minority thus becomes a vanishing mediator within 'two simultaneous movements, one by which a term (the subject) is withdrawn from the majority, and another by which a term (the medium or agent) rises up from the minority. There is an asymmetrical and indissociable block of becoming, a block of alliance' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 291).

Supposing it is through the multiplication of these double becomings that the 'becoming-minoritarian of everyone' can be constructed (that is to say, through a universal process which involves no gushing spontaneity of 'Life' or 'History'), perhaps this point only remains obscure because of two theoretical errors which compromise the politics of minorities in Deleuze. And these are two political errors precisely because they result from an overly 'theoretical', or even ontologising, vision of Deleuzian thought. The first is when one speculates abstractly upon 'the' becoming, outside of the couplings of always contextualised becomings which make of them problems of collective experimentation capable of rendering identity positions *in reality* abstract. The second is the error of (theoretically) making of the multiple a given, in being or in a transcendental structure, while it is (practically) only effectively constructed by these dynamic couplings, in these connections of asymmetrical becomings. 'Before being, there is politics' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 203), since before ontology, there is strategy. It is the constructions of alliances which decide both the type of multiplicity which one promotes and the practices of identity which one invents or reproduces. Certainly then we must give up the assumption that a collective consciousness could only have as possible content a common identity (be that identity of 'objective interests', problems or conditions), to accede to a universal consciousness having for content a community of becomings, that is to say, of interdependent transformations capable of modifying in their turn the very form of the universal. Then we must consider a universality of a process of relational inventions, and not of an identity of subsumption; a universality which is not projected forward in a maximum of identitary integration, but which is

programmed and reshuffled in a maximum of transversal connections between heterogeneous systems; rather than a socio-logical universal as genre, category or class, a tactical and strategic universal as an indefinite dynamic system of practices of alliance, where the alliance proceeds neither through integration of terms into a superior identity that homogenises them, nor through mutual reinforcement of differential identities, but through the blocks of asymmetrical becomings where a term may become-other thanks to the becoming-other of another term itself connected to an *nth* in an open series. In short, no longer an extensive and quantifiable universality, but on the contrary an intensive and unquantifiable universality, in the sense that subjects become in common in a process where their identitary anchorages are dissipated, to the advantage of that conception and radically constructivist practice of autonomy required by a new minoritarian internationalism. 'Minorities from all countries. . . '

It is not entirely contingent, historically speaking, that Deleuze comes to occupy a position of minority in the political theory of the 1970s, when the revolutionary workers' movement tends increasingly clearly to lose its major position through various struggles against the capitalist system. The way proposed here was not a proposition to 'Marxianise' the Deleuzian theory of minorities, but to suggest rather that this theory produces a double effect of interpellation, upon the reading of Deleuzian philosophy as well as the theoretical and political heritage of Marxism – and that, in pushing Marxism to (re)become 'minoritarian', Deleuzian thought itself is disposed to become political and thus to produce real effects.

Notes

1. See Arendt (2004: chap. 5).
2. See for example the analysis of the becomings in which Kafkaesque novels carry their conjugal and bureaucratic duos away, their bureaucratic and family trios . . . in chapters 6 and 7 of *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*. On the deformations undergone by the German of Prague, in semantic and syntactic as well as phonetic levels, see also Wagenbach (1967: 77–82).
3. 'Because collective or national consciousness is "often inactive in external life and always in the process of break-down," literature finds itself positively charged with the role and function of collective, and even revolutionary, enunciation. It is literature that produces an active solidarity in spite of skepticism; and if the writer is in the margins or completely outside his or her fragile community, this situation allows the writer all the more the possibility to express another possible community and to forge the means for another consciousness and another sensibility' (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 17).

4. This thesis is in the heart of the first chapter of *The Communist Manifesto*.
5. On these questions, we must recall the decisive analyses of Etienne Balibar in *La Crainte des masses*, the chapters 'La relève de l'idéalisme' and 'Le prolétariat insaisissable' (Balibar 1997).
6. 'The response of the States, or of the axiomatic, may obviously be to accord the minorities regional or federal or statutory autonomy, in short, to add axioms. But this is not the problem: this operation consists only in translating the minorities into denumerable sets or subsets, which would enter as elements into the majority, which could be counted among the majority. The same applies for a status accorded to women, young people, erratic workers, etc.' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 470).
7. A sign of minority is precisely this impossibility, or the extreme difficulties objective as well as subjective, in interiorising the partition between individual and collective dimensions. Precisely because the 'minor' subject is in an unstable, marginal or precarious state in relation to the conditions of life and to the rights of the majority, all events that come for the 'major' subjects within the scope of an 'individual concern (familial, marital, and so on) [joined] with other no less individual concerns, the social milieu serving as a mere environment or a background', immediately reach on the contrary, for the 'minor', collective and sociopolitical consequences. (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 17–8, quoting Kafka: 'What in great [major] literature goes on down below, constituting a not indispensable cellar of the structure, here takes place in the full light of day; what is there a matter of passing interest for a few, here absorbs everyone no less than as a matter of life and death'.)
8. 'However modest the demand, it always constitutes a point that the axiomatic cannot tolerate: when people demand to formulate their problems themselves, and to determine at least the particular conditions under which they can receive a more general solution (hold to the *Particular* as an innovative form)' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 471). See also Deleuze and Parnet (1987: 145–6).
9. *Anti-Oedipus* called such an operation 'paralogism of displacement' (see Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 113–5).
10. See for example the evocative reading of Ernesto Laclau proposed by Slavoj Žižek (Žižek 1999: Part II, chap. 4).
11. Deleuze's preface to Guy Hocquenghem, *L'Après-Mai des Faunes*, is absolutely emblematic on this point (Deleuze 2004: 284–8).

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Review Essay

After Utopia: Three Post-Personal Subjects Consider the Possibilities

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William E. Connolly (2008) *Capitalism and Christianity, American Style*, Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Alexander García Düttmann (2007) *Philosophy of Exaggeration*, trans. James Phillips, London: Continuum.

Adrian Parr (2008) *Deleuze and Memorial Culture: Desire, Singular Memory, and the Politics of Trauma*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Not the least of the many challenges involved in engaging with Deleuzian thought is the problem of writing about it without re-inscribing the same positivistic model that Deleuze so inimitably subverts. If difference itself grounds a virtual actuality that is also characterised by multiplicity, univocity and pure immanence, then a merely narrative account of our epistemological situation begins to seem like folly, a reductive process that drags Deleuze to a standstill in order to take a snapshot of whatever concept is most relevant to the moment. Surely there must be a better way. But even the most sophisticated approaches can be imprisoned by the linear nature of language or the symbolic order; perhaps this is part of what informed Deleuze's well-known remark to Claire Parnet, that in philosophy 'the aim is not to answer questions, it's to get out, to get out of it' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 1). The task then becomes, as Claire Colebrook and others have pointed out, to think transitively: how might it be possible to think actuality, think immanence, think univocity, think desire, think language itself?

These questions imply metaphysical hunger of a sort with which theoretical discourse has been manifestly uncomfortable for several decades. Considered another way, however, they promise new

conceptual schema based on the positive (rather than positivistic) notion of creative and desiring production. The task for those exploring the relationship of Deleuze to cultural issues is not to extend his thought in a straight line, but to swerve or veer into thinking a productive approach to the cultural events that actualise themselves in our time. The process is then less about iconoclasm than it is about permeability: how to theorise a way into a richly layered middle ground that comprises interstices of desire, immanence, virtuality and difference? And how might one do so without simply listing and exploiting some concepts 'given' us by Deleuze? While much has been written on the fairly explicit Deleuzian construction of the pre-personal subject, the implicitly post-personal subject who is actually developing concepts on a page seems to be hypostatised inside the critical text. Nonetheless, three recent books that work brilliantly with or from Deleuzian concepts also illustrate the importance of writing from a flexible, deeply thought, yet actualised subject position.

In *Deleuze and Memorial Culture*, Adrian Parr thinks several sites – architectural and conceptual – that are based on the collective experience of social trauma, including the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, 9/11 news coverage, US military abuses at Abu Ghraib, the Amish shootings, and ground zero. The Holocaust serves aptly as a reference point throughout her text, and she devotes a chapter to its powerful presence in the fractured urban space named Berlin. It is not, of course, that there are only a few narrative choices to make, that all cultural wounds are the same, or even that one is really 'worse' than another. Rather, Parr provides an intimate and agile series of readings that are sustained by the positive desire to think memorials in their unique contexts. A great strength of her work is that she clearly sees the body politic as gendered, organic and ethnic. Memorials are, she remarks, 'utopian memories thinking', and they work to signify the affective disruption that writers of utopian tales usually fail to mention. As such, Parr observes that memorials embody '[a]combination of cultural production and collective traumatic memory that can help us peel back the skin and tissue of repression so as to uncover the utopian demand that memory stirs forth' (3). Thus Parr sets the topography and architecture of memorial sites into motion, but the movement is not linear. She is at pains to point out that, as Bergson and Deleuze suggest, the present is not an *effect* of the past. Rather, the past and present co-exist and alter even as they are actualised into becoming.

Parr's chapter on the Vietnam War Memorial intriguingly deploys the Deleuzian concepts of affect, sensation and percept as well as the

distinction between minoritarian and majoritarian statement (54–75). Perhaps there is no other more powerful example of art overcoming or, more accurately, permeating the superficial emotions of the people to whom it is meant to speak. Parr details the numerous insults hurled by Vietnam veterans and others at the designer, Maya Lin Ying, when they saw the design for the memorial. The diatribe, however, was wholly derived from majoritarian narratives about wars, heroes, world communism and reflected glory. Remarkably, it is not political or social pressure that has changed the outlook of most veterans towards the memorial, it is Lin's dynamic re-reading of the area as an architectural and topographical machine for generating blocks of sensation and affect. Parr's illuminating and sure-footed analysis of this situation maps the majoritarian discourse onto Lin's gendered, ethnic and political body. Being young (still a student at Yale), a non-veteran, a woman and an Asian ultimately enabled Lin to find a line of flight from the vertical and static textuality that normally constitutes war memorials, thus leading to a deterritorialisation of the veterans' formerly monolithic position and the creation of a 'minor memorial' (69). This deterritorialisation did not emerge in order to deny or undermine the soldiers' collective memory of trauma in Vietnam, but to release it (68–72). One might add that no better testimony to the potency of Lin's work exists than the veterans' re-naming of the Vietnam War Memorial as 'The Wall', a productively reterritorialised marker for a war memorial that has, against all odds, become a multiplicity.

The attempt to theorise a middle ground takes on extra intricacy when large abstract categories are involved. In particular, Deleuzian thought highlights the limits and prevarications inherent in the molar structures that impose themselves on everyday life. Nonetheless, in *Capitalism and Christianity, American Style*, William E. Connolly essays the task of synthesising certain internal forces in such disparate institutions as democracy, capitalism, Christianity, secularism and the news media. Connolly carefully but creatively transforms the Deleuzian concept of the resonance machine in order to mobilise nuanced tensions and influences, and he writes with a refreshing intellectual integrity. Thus he points out that his description of a capitalist-evangelical resonance machine does not issue from some imaginary pose of neutrality. Connolly remarks that descriptive comments, including his own, already contain the seeds of an agenda. For Deleuze and Guattari this was surely true, because the resonance machine they explicate in *A Thousand Plateaus* is an instrument of fascism. Connolly therefore envisions a new resonance machine tuned to twenty-first-century progressive politics.

Whether such an assemblage can disassociate itself from the black holes of micro-fascisms that have been elided by post-Nazi discourse is a real question. However, Connolly does not seem to duck this problem; he simply appropriates the part of the theory that he needs without specifically contradicting the rest.

Pausing briefly to point out that the word 'resonance' is no more metaphorical than any other term used for political critique, Connolly lists some of the components that align themselves in order to resonate within the right-wing of North American politics. These include, but are not limited to, Fox News, most segments of the financial markets, the Republican Party, evangelical/fundamentalist Christianity, the Book of Revelation, and the Bush Whitehouse. While he condemns the *ressentiment* infused by the right-wing hermeneutic of the Book of Revelation, Connolly makes distinctions with a fine deliberation: he notes that Jimmy Carter is an evangelical Christian for whom 'the vengeful sensibility is alien' (52). If anything, one almost feels sorry for hyper-conservative televangelist Pat Robertson, whom Connolly puts to rout by arraying against him Spinoza, Weber and Nietzsche. The evangelicals are not the only ones capable of conjuring voices from a whirlwind.

For students interested in Deleuzian identity formation, the most interesting part of the book will perhaps be Connolly's deeply felt essay on the possibilities of Meliorism and tragic vision. Here he orchestrates a triple polyphony of Deleuze, William James and Nietzsche. Only James, he notes, draws back from sounding a tragic chord when it comes to the concept of progress, and James' brand of Meliorism depends on a personal struggle to square faith with a philosophy of transcendence. Connolly observes that both James and Deleuze formulate a limited god, but that Deleuze's signal contribution is belief in radical immanence. 'Deleuze', writes Connolly, 'experiments in those fugitive junctures during which tradition encounters the real uncertainty of twists and turns in the making' (131). To Deleuzian immanence Connolly ascribes an incomplete or disrupted mysticism, and it is this reading that allows Connolly to characterise his personal position on Christianity as 'Jamesleuzian' (133).

Alexander García Düttmann's *Philosophy of Exaggeration* begins with a textual experiment that situates the post-personal subject of the author (or possibly a persona) in counterpoint with his more traditional philosophical writing. Thus, even as the book's main text states that 'deconstruction recognises in its object, justice for example, an intrinsic exaggeration that does not even permit one to speak of a recognisable

object', a text box at the top of the same page asks, 'is my incensed exaggeration a weakness of temperament, an affliction, or is it precisely that which protects me from decrepitude and annihilation' (3)? The immediate temptation is to regard the line of thought in the text boxes as more personal, or perhaps more elemental, than the rest of the words on the page, but quite possibly the inverse obtains. After all, the first-person narrative is about what the 'I' or Ego can know or wonder, while the putatively more objective third-person academic discourse is engaged primarily, in this case, with making fine distinctions about imbricated exaggeration and *aporia*. I would aver that the voice in the text box knows far less about the 'internal' workings of exaggeration, as a mode of doing philosophy, than does the voice on the main page. And there are other moments in which percepts shift, most notably in a brief confessional about the narrator's visit to a sex club (26–7). This latter passage serves to complicate the book's production of corporeal affect, which soon reappears in the chapter entitled 'Odd Moves', itself a sophisticated and ironic recital of the difficulties inherent in being a professor right after 9/11. Düttmann's method here is to reframe the remarks of a literary critic to her college class in Manhattan a week after 9/11, one of her students having taken notes and later put them on the web. What follows is a devastatingly accurate satire on postmodernism as a sort of séance, with the anonymous professor playing the role of Madame Blavatsky or the Cumaean Sybil, or both. The class begins with the professor ringing a small bell, which Düttmann tells us is like an invocation of the spirits. The professor then informs the class that language itself is inadequate except to perform meaning or understanding when everything is shattered and disconnected. She gives the class aphorisms, such as 'understanding understands only itself' (42–3). The professorial mystic communicates by telephone with disembodied spirits (Derrida, Hélène Cixous and Jean-Luc Nancy) and reports to the class that 'A lot of energy is coming here. A lot of language failure' (43). This role of poststructuralist as servant of a secret fire will perhaps be not unfamiliar to those who have tried giving a paper on Deleuze as part of their local faculty lecture series, although there it is usually a perception of the audience, not honest Deleuzian affect.

Düttmann's writing displays his easy familiarity with every corner of twenty-first-century philosophical discourse. Beginning with his axiom that justifying an exaggeration thereby causes it to lose its exaggerated status, he follows the twisting and turnings of exaggeration, its implications and inclinations, its limits and liminalities. Drawing attention to his complicity with Deleuze early on, Düttmann sketches

the Deleuzian project of exaggeration as a method of pitting crowned anarchy against the familiar 'image of thought'. Doing so requires excision from the totalising requirement of 'clarity' that characterises everyday opinion as well as some academic discourse. *Difference and Repetition*, for example, shows that comprehensive explication is radically counterproductive. For Deleuze, writes Düttmann, 'explanation without remainder and exhaustive interpretation integrate difference in a determinate and articulated system only at the price of its annulment' (6). This thought sorts agreeably with something that is well-known to students of Deleuze and Guattari: even in a philosophy of pure immanence and radical difference, a small amount of molecular order and subjectification is necessary in order to avoid collapse into an infinite regression of difference. Therefore, the idea is to follow becomings, de-subjectifications, lines of flight, and deterritorialisations without immediately abandoning the subject to the *end* of becoming, which would be solidification into a fact.

It is in this context, then, that Düttmann adduces the importance that Deleuze and Guattari place on utopian narrative. The concept of utopia is deeply implicated in revolutionary politics, and revolution is immanent, as opposed to being an occasional disruption. Utopian discourse takes place 'in a field of forces constituted by exaggerations ... in which there is no solidification that would not harbour a becoming, and no becoming that would not harbour solidification' (72). The idea of utopia is thus trapped between two poles, although there remain various ways 'to get out, to get out of it'. One way is via the utopian memory and affect explored by Parr, and another would be to proceed according to Connolly's opportunistic Meliorism. Yet a third way consists in Düttmann's method of using exaggeration and irony to break utopian critique on the wheel of its own institutional and traditional status. The virtue of these three books, then, is that they do not simply go back to the same old questions; all of them represent departures in the best sense of the word.

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What Concepts Do: Preface to the Chinese Translation of *A Thousand Plateaus*

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Abstract

This essay suggests an approach to the reading of Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus*, grasped as a philosophical event that is as directly pragmatic as it is abstract and speculative. A series of key Deleuzo-Guattarian concepts (in particular, multiplicity, minority and double becoming) are staged from the angle of philosophy's relation to its disciplinary outside. These concepts are then transferred to the relation between the authors' philosophical lineage and the new cultural outside into which the Chinese translation will propel their thought. Emphasis is placed on the writing – and reading – of philosophy as a creative act of collective import and ethical force.

Keywords: Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, speculative pragmatism, minority, becoming

> 'Philosophy, nothing but philosophy'.[1] (Deleuze 2007a: 176/163, trans. mod.)

That was Gilles Deleuze's simple answer. The question – what kind of book is *A Thousand Plateaus*? – has likely occurred to many a reader upon opening the book. It is clear at a glance that something is going on. Each chapter heading bears a date as well as a title, and is accompanied by an image. The images, the reader quickly senses, are not directly illustrative. What connection, for example, does a diagram of a partridge hunting device have to do with the theory of the State and its relation to capitalism (plateau 13)? Or a line-drawing of an egg to the nature of the human body (plateau 6)? The suspicion that Deleuze's answer is not as simple as it seems is reinforced by a brief introductory authors' note informing the reader that the book is not divided into chapters at all

but is instead composed of 'plateaus'. The difference is that plateaus can be read in any order. Each plateau threads a sinuous weave of topics related to many disciplines other than philosophy: art, mathematics, geology, biology, linguistics, anthropology, history, ethology, literature, music, religion, political theory, economics. The breadth and diversity seem unbounded. The reader is led to a cliff-edge of bewilderment. Suddenly connections leap out, often between disparate passages in different plateaus, like conceptual flashes of lightning joining earth and sky, briefly illuminating a vista with a clarity at once too intense and too fleeting to hold. The flash connections-at-a-distance multiply at each reading, launching the weave of topics into a performative rhythm. Written not unlike a work of experimental fiction, the book reads with the feel of music: in movements. Resonances build at each 'playing', enriching the experience with a self-enhancing sense of variation. Didn't Deleuze once comment that a book should be read as one listens to a record (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 13/10)? Another complication: the very first line of the first plateau announces a duet. Every passage was integrally co-authored, and 'since each of us was several, there was already quite a crowd'.

Deleuze's co-multiple, Félix Guattari, was not a philosopher by profession. He was a lifelong political activist and a trained psychoanalyst – who never belonged to a political party, and never practised as an analyst. He agitated tirelessly in the extra-parliamentary left that would explode into view with the worker–student revolt of May 1968, energising the social movements that would characterise the following decades. Guattari worked for his entire career at an experimental psychiatric clinic, La Borde, which was allied to the *anti*-psychiatry movement. Guattari's life, Deleuze writes, was itself a rhythm of perpetual movement, uncontainable by any set ideology, disciplinary enclosure or established institution. 'He can leap from one activity to another, he sleeps little, travels much, and does not stop'. His life is like a 'sea', 'always mobile in appearance, with constant flashes of light' (Deleuze 2007b: 237/218 trans. mod.). Earth, sky, sea. Flash, rhythm, resonance. 'Nothing but philosophy', it seems, is made of many things. 'Forces, events, motions and sources of movement, winds, typhoons, diseases, places and moments' (Deleuze 1995a: 34/52). Everything but an interiority of thought. 'Philosophy is not made to reflect on anything … Nobody needs philosophy to reflect' (Deleuze 2007c: 318/292 trans. mod.). A book of philosophy is 'in a relation with the outside'. Philosophical thought 'exists only through the outside and

on the outside' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 4/10). 'It's not in the head' (Deleuze 1995b: 134/183 trans. mod.).

Philosophy, for Deleuze and Guattari, is a way of engaging with the world. Speaking for both co-authors, Deleuze remarks that in *A Thousand Plateaus* 'we have the impression we are doing politics. ... The question is whether other people can make use of the work it does, even just a little, in their life and projects' (Deleuze 2007a: 180/166 trans. mod.). Philosophy engages with the world in a way that is as political as it is musical. Its politics is pragmatic, not programmatic. Rather than directing, it donates. It gives a gift of potential for use in other people's lives and projects. Philosophy is a doing, and it acts for change.

This is why philosophy cannot be content to reflect, pronouncing upon the world from a disengaged posture of explanatory description or judgmental prescription. To contribute to change is to herald the new. The new, by definition, cannot be described, having yet to arrive. If its arrival can have been pre-described, it will not have been new. It will have been programmed in the present as a prescription for the future. Philosophy as Deleuze and Guattari practise it is neither descriptive nor prescriptive. It is constructive. 'Everybody knows that philosophy deals with concepts. ... But concepts don't turn up ready-made, and they don't preexist: you have to invent, create concepts, and this involves just as much creation and invention as you find in art' (Deleuze 1995a: 32/48). Philosophy has but one object: the crafting of concepts. 'Nothing but philosophy' is a conceptual art.

Deleuze and Guattari's approach to philosophy has important consequences for how the reader may best approach the experience of *A Thousand Plateaus*. It bears directly on the status of the non-philosophical disciplines from which the authors draw much of their material for the book. The authors do not appeal to other disciplines for outside authority. That is not at all what they mean by philosophy being in relation with an outside. Neither is it a question of setting up philosophy as a judge or outside arbiter of other modes of thought and action. There is an evaluation involved in the activity of philosophy, but it is of a different kind. Each discipline is credited as having its own mode of construction, for which it invents its own self-policing criteria of judgement. Philosophy does not presume to instruct other disciplines in their own affairs. It does not confirm or deny the validity of their results relative to their own sphere of activity. Nor does it simply import their results into its own activity, taking them on board with

borrowed authority. Rather than lay judgement upon other disciplines, or kneel down before their judgement, philosophy takes something for itself from them. It extracts something from their outside activity, which it then artfully goes about making its own. What it extracts, from non-philosophy, is philosophical *potential*. It applies its art to recrafting the potential, recasting it to lead in directions it could never have gone in had it stayed where it started. Philosophy *frees* potential from the captivity of disciplinary self-policing. It does this in the interests of passing the potential forward, to other lives, for other projects. Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy helps itself to the potential of other disciplines. More than one discipline at a time. The potentials it extracts from each enter into proximity with those of others. Together, they enter a weave and a rhythm. Philosophy performs this feat following its own criteria of *mutual inclusion*. It is not just anything goes. This artful inclusion of the otherwise disparate in a mutuality of conceptual movement requires great craft and much sobriety.

Loosed upon the world again, the proximities philosophy has produced translate into a complex network of potential passages *between* spheres of activity at work in the world, including but not limited to the disciplines from which potential was originally mined. From these 'transversal' connections something as yet unseen may arise: a new synthesis. What philosophy takes, it gives back, with a difference. Deleuze and Guattari call this freeing of travelling potential for making a difference in the world 'deterritorialisation'.

This is what philosophy is all about for Deleuze and Guattari. Not reflection, description, prescription or judgement. Philosophy is about new potential coming together, between activities which in the normal course of their affairs tend judgmentally to sequester themselves and jealously hold to their own. The object of philosophy is not things as they are, but things as they potentially come-between, to become-together, outside of their normal conditions of captivity. The meaning of a philosophical concept cannot be reduced to its semantic content, defined in abstraction from this process. There is a transformational aspect to the concept's letting loose, by which it effectively overspills its own definition. This is the aspect of what philosophy comes to *do* in the world: its pragmatic aspect. It is the processual aspect of the concept's moving on, to new effect. The concept's meaning cannot be abstracted from its flow-over effects. Its meaning is one with the movement of its taking excess effect. In addition to the semantic meaning that it can be defined to contain, a philosophical concept carries a surplus of meaning that is one with the transformative movement of its performative *force*.

Philosophy is doubly engaged with non-philosophy. It needs existing realms of non-philosophical activity from which to extract the potential it makes its own; and it needs becoming realms of non-philosophical activity to which to pass on its own potential, to inclusive new effect. It needs the wideness of a participatory world to gear into. Philosophy gears its activity to the potential of existing domains of activity, approached from the angle of how they can move together and change together. It is all about relation. Relation is all about co-variation.

To get the most out of the book, readers of *A Thousand Plateaus* must be willing to open themselves to the book's performance of conceptual forces. Nothing, but nothing, comes of philosophy, unless its pragmatic sweep is allowed to wash through the reading experience. What this 'means' for the reader will co-vary. Only one thing is sure. It means taking the risk that the movement of philosophy will pass into your life and projects next, to new and unpredictable effect. True thought, said like-minded philosopher A. N. Whitehead, is truly an adventure. If the thought of adventure is not already a pleasure, the reader is well-advised to go elsewhere. There are any number of less becoming thought practices on offer.

It was probably clear from the first lines of this preface that a chief concern for Deleuze and Guattari is *multiplicity*: many disciplines, many plateaus, many rhythms, multiple subjects, co-varying travellings. Philosophy, as it came to be institutionalised as a discipline in the West, is not in fact very adept at processing multiplicity. Quite the opposite, it has developed an arsenal of techniques for turning away from it. Institutional philosophy enjoys subsuming multiplicity to the One of totality. Or compartmentalising it in the Two of duality and opposition. Then, nostalgic for the lost unity it now regrets splitting up, it often labours to overcome the duality that it itself produced, in order to refind the One through a one-two-three of dialectical synthesis.

This is not to say that there are not great thinkers of multiplicity in the history of Western philosophy who resist the romance of the One of totality: Spinoza, Nietzsche, Bergson. It is with thinkers such as these that Deleuze and Guattari ally themselves. Given the accumulated weight of Western philosophy's totalisations, dualisations and triangulations, added assistance is appreciated. So they turn, for example, to mathematics, a discipline that has no choice but to grapple with multiplicity. For what is number, if not the very problem of multiplicity as such? Mathematics will accordingly invent a variety of specialist formal languages for handling multiplicities. Philosophy, not being mathematics, does not need the formalisations. But built into each

formalisation is a concept of multiplicity, constructed to yield specifically mathematical results. Deleuze and Guattari's attitude is that there is no reason in the world why that concept of multiplicity cannot or should not be extracted from its specifically mathematical expression and redeployed in a manner specific to philosophy, so as to generate philosophical results.

For example, Riemann's geometry invents a formalisation of space as a patchwork of regions *all* of which connect at the edges of *each*. Space for Riemann is the continuity *of* the multiple, unreduced to a unity, unsplit, and needing no salvation through triangulation. The *continuity* of this infinite connectivity of the multiple makes the preoccupation with the One simply unnecessary. A displacement has occurred. The problem has changed. Deleuze and Guattari will make use of that displacement for philosophy, taking care to deterritorialise it in relation to its previous institutional incarnations. They will extract from Riemann's mathematical project the properly philosophical concept of 'smooth space' (plateaus 13 and 14). They do this in order to bring to philosophy a new potential for its thinking which alters the problems it encounters. Philosophy's engagement with mathematics does not simply import a mathematical solution from mathematics. It uses a mathematical solution to reproblematise philosophy. In doing so, philosophy challenges itself to invent new solutions proper to its own sphere of activity.[2]

The concept of smooth space is that of a space in which there is the potential to go from any point directly to any other, without passing through intervening points. This raises a series of properly philosophical problems that are beyond the ken of mathematics. Can a body come to *move* in ordinary space in such a way as to *transform* it into a smooth space? Can movement invent its own operative space of infinite connection, freeing itself from the boundaries and limits of already instituted spatial formations? Can movement deterritorialise space itself, to produce a space of a different order? To think these problems Deleuze and Guattari invent the conceptual persona of the 'nomad' as the figure of the embodiment of this transformation, exemplified in history in the ancient societies of the Inner Asian steppes (plateau 12).[3] If it happened once in history that the nomad invented itself as a people by inventing a smooth space of movement, there is no reason why it cannot happen again. The fact that it happened once demonstrates that the potential was there. Once a potential, always a potential. What, Deleuze and Guattari speculate, would be the embodiment of the nomad in our time? What are the present world's peoples to come, already perhaps in the process of self-invention?

Their answer: what we term 'minorities' (plateau 13). They use the word minority in a special philosophical sense. A minority is a human multiplicity that is non-denumerable. It is a human multiplicity in continual flux, such that the individuals composing the multiplicity cannot be counted one by one and placed in recognisable categories. They cannot be attributed a definite identity, nor assigned a normal function. Because they cannot be pinned down, they can move 'smoothly' from any point directly to any other in the territorial landscape of recognised categories and instituted functions. They are in a flux of collective becoming. Their movement makes a Riemannian space of the territoried patchwork of recognised national and local identities and the functioning institutions that contain and regulate their activities. The modern nomad reinvents the 'steppe' for the age of global capitalism. Their movements secrete a smooth space of becoming that is uncontainable within the boundaries of existing identities and unregulated by the economy of their normal channels of circulation. This philosophical concept of a smooth space of collective becoming did in fact pass into other lives and projects. Taken up by elements of the anti-globalisation movement, it contributed in the first years of the twenty-first century to the invention of a new transnational space of anti-capitalist resistance.

A philosophical concept always moves through 'double becomings', and double becomings cascade. Something passes between mathematics and philosophy, such that a construction that was nothing but mathematical becomes philosophical, in a way that changes how philosophy is done. Philosophy itself becomes through that engagement: more capable of thinking multiplicity; more free of the burden of its acquired historical habits. Double becoming between the disciplines of mathematics and philosophy. Cascade: the concept strikes fertile ground in a different domain, that of activist political practice, where it generates flow-on effects that overspill the discipline of philosophy – and of disciplinarity as a model. Extraction, transformation, overspill. This relational development of undisciplined potential is the pragmatic movement of philosophical thought.

It is through this processual engagement with mathematics, and others like it, that Deleuze and Guattari develop what may be considered *the* key concept of the book: multiplicity as a continuity of becoming, uncontained. Other key concepts play out from analogous encounters with different disciplines belonging to the natural sciences, the social sciences, the humanities, anything at all. A reencounter with philosophy's own discipline is of course a crucial part of the

mix. It gives already philosophical concepts the chance to rebecome philosophical and take on new life. It is these conceptual becomings- and rebecomings-philosophical which interweave to form each 'plateau', and which return in a rhythm all their own across plateaus, making a smooth conceptual space of the book itself. A plateau, the authors say, is a region of 'intensity' of a concept's deterritorialised becoming: a particular coming-together of a multiplicity of strategically displaced conceptual movements-between. These movements compose the text. Their composition couches in the text a charge of relational potential that may well move outside again, into non-philosophical spill-over effects.

Each reading of the book is a performative 'mapping' of these movements: a recreative travelling of 'abstract lines' of conceptual potential; a reinventive 'tracing' producing anew the thought-regions it traverses. The book as a dynamic whole is a 'geology' of these regions whose tectonic plates are constantly shifting and folding, and rising under the force of their folding-together to form the apparently stable compositional landmarks called 'plateaus'. The result is a complex 'cartography' of potential becomings of thought, coursing in from the outside of non-philosophy, through philosophy, then back out again in potentialised overspill. Philosophy, practised in this way, is metabolic. It energises. Any non-philosophical domain can provide the nourishment. Deleuze and Guattari are notoriously omnivorous in their sourcings. What would be the point of limiting the energies philosophy may metabolise by preselecting what it can feed on? Philosophy as a discipline – philosophy as it exists institutionally, embodied in specialised university departments – is an ascetic shadow of what it can be. It is philosophy on a starvation diet. It is philosophy that has long ago renounced its symbiotic relation to the outside, restricting its input to the canon of recognised authors over which it claims exclusive ownership rights. This is philosophy feeding on its own. As a direct result of this cannibalism, institutional philosophy suffers from a conceptual nutrient deficiency. It can only regain its energies and rebecome the metabolically creative enterprise it always was – philosophy and nothing but – by adventuring beyond the interiority of its institutional repair and reengaging with the varied life of the world at large.

It is little wonder, then, that the publication of *A Thousand Plateaus*, the great book of the philosophical outside, was at first deafeningly ignored by its own discipline. It is only in the last five years or so that it has been added to the institutional larder. There is still discomfort. There is something institutionally indigestible in its way of

practising philosophy. This is not at all to say that *A Thousand Plateaus* was without effect for its first twenty-five years. It had enormous impact from the start, just not in the institution of philosophy. It was immediately taken up in a panoply of other domains of activity, towards their own creative becomings-between: architecture, literature, dance, cinema, new media and interactive art, experimental music, performance, education, anthropology, international relations, political science, political activism. The list is long, and still growing. The book's conceptual rhythms have struck many a chord.

A warning is in order: there is nothing inherently good or bad in a philosophical concept, or in the creative process it fosters. To return to the concept of smooth space, Deleuze and Guattari underline that the movements producing it are by nature 'war machines' (plateaus 12 and 13). It is not, they explain, that these movements seek conflict, or have war as their object. It is that their uncontained becoming places them in a permanent state of *potential* conflict with territorial orders and the way of life they support. That potential may always be 'captured' by a military institution and rechanneled so that it does take war as its object. The first modern reinvention of nomadism, according to Deleuze and Guattari, was in the arena of maritime warfare, and evolved as an offshoot of the Western powers' colonial hegemony, as it transitioned into the Cold War. More recently, Eyal Weizman has shown how the concept of smooth space was consciously appropriated by the Israeli Defense Forces to reinvent urban warfare for use in their occupation of Palestine, with *A Thousand Plateaus* itself used as an officer training manual (Weizman 2007). The movement of thought metabolised by the creative movement of philosophy is not a priori morally good or bad. Nor is it necessarily right or left in political terms. It has the potential to go either way. This means that it can only be judged on its own terms. Which is to say pragmatically: in its consequences.

Since what effectively follows from a philosophical concept comes with how it is remobilised outside philosophy, the value of a philosophy is always the product of a collaboration. According to William James, a founder of pragmatism, a concept is what it *does*. Its value is the difference it effectively makes in the world. If it looks like a concept, sounds like a concept and even tastes like a concept, but doesn't make a difference in the world, it's not a concept. James's favourite example of a concept which isn't one is, once again, the One itself (James 1996). Nothing can be done with absolute totality. It dissolves into nothingness at the slightest attempt to make something of it. Because then there are two: its lost grandeur, and the slightness of your attempt. Which has

made no difference. One might as well skip the dialectical third step that usually comes next, and just make do with the multiplicity with which the world presented itself in the first place, instead of wasting thought-energy fruitlessly trying to overcome it. That is the more creative option by far.

Deleuze and Guattari emphasise that creatively making-do with multiplicity involves a collective project of becoming. This is the meaning of their frequently repeated formula that the creative force of a concept is 'a people to come' (plateau 11). A people's coming-to-be in outside relation *is* the evaluation of the concept. A conceptual evaluation comes in the form of an event. It is a lived judgement. Deleuze and Guattari name this self-inventive, event-based evaluation 'ethics'. Following Spinoza and Nietzsche, they oppose ethics to morality. Morality is prescriptive. It pre-judges. Ethics unfolds. It makes-do. The ethical value of a philosophical concept is its pragmatic truth. That truth *occurs* to the concept, in the course of its own unfolding process. It is not in the head. Pre-judging the concept makes no difference to its true potential for event. Critiquing a concept in the abstract, standing grandly in judgement outside and above it, does nothing. It leaves the concept unlived, separated from its own event. Deleuze and Guattari advocate instead what they call 'immanent critique'.

An immanent critique acts from within the movement of the problem at hand. It consists in entering the flow, and *acting* within it to infect its course. The ability to do this requires an *experiential* assessment of the direction of the movement and the potential it carries forward. It is in this sense that a truly philosophical evaluation is always, ethically, 'affirmative'. It must begin by actively opening itself to the experience of the problem which concerns it. Participatory concern is its necessary condition. A conceptual movement submits itself to judgement only to the extent to which it awakens concern, taking on 'importance' in the world. And it does this precisely to the extent to which it is collectively felt to make a difference. Deleuze lists the markers of a philosophical concept as the Singular (the event), the New (becoming) and the Important (lived force of consequence). 'Concepts', he says, 'are inseparable from *affects*, by which I mean the powerful effects they have on our life, and from *percepts*, which is to say the new ways of seeing or perceiving they inspire in us' (Deleuze 2007b: 238/163 trans. mod.). Concepts are not abstract. They are for the living, and it is life which judges them.

Another word for a movement which is oriented, in the sense of carrying a certain kind of potential, but is at the same time open-ended in

its consequences, as well as being self-affirming, is a *tendency*. Concepts are always of tendencies. Which means they are always ultimately 'about' their own movement, because they *are* tendencies. Concepts are pragmatically self-referential. This point is especially important understanding how the concepts mobilised in *A Thousand Plateaus* relate to history. Perhaps the most persistent misreading of Deleuze and Guattari's ideas is to think that they *refer* to something outside their own movement: to mistake them for empirical descriptions. This is also not what Deleuze and Guattari mean by philosophy relating to its outside. The historical events and formations Deleuze and Guattari mobilise in such great abundance are not empirical states of things to which philosophical concepts are descriptively applied. Deleuze and Guattari are not concerned with *applying* their philosophy to history, or to anything else. They are interested in letting philosophy loose on the world. What their concepts are 'about' are the tendencies which wash through historical events and sweep historical formations into a movement of becoming, including that of philosophy itself. Tendencies are *transhistorical*. They pass through historical moments, joining them in the continuity of variation that is as much about philosophy as philosophy is about it. The philosophical issue is not, for example, whether the societies of the Inner Asian steppes were or were not nomadic, judging by whatever empirical criteria a historian may wish to apply. Philosophically it is not a question of what they were, but *how* they were: what they did, as concerns becoming.

What they did was to bring a certain transhistorical tendency to expression, to the greatest extent possible, given the conditions. They exemplified a tendency to the highest degree. The function of the dates in the title of each plateau is to mark the arrival in history of a highest-degree expression of a transhistorical tendency. This is not an empirical description, but rather a *speculative* proposition. The proposition is that the tendency will carry forward through history, to find further expression, in equally high-degree variations exemplifying the same tendential movement to the limit of what changing conditions will permit. The philosophical conception of history concerns the movement of a tendency through a *series* of limit-case exemplifications.

The series, in principle, is unending. There could always, potentially, be a next tendential expression. All it takes is a people to come to invent it. The philosophical thinking of history bears on this leftover of creative potential that is in excess over any given expression of it in a given state of things. What philosophy thinks in relation to history is the charge of *futurity* energising the historical present's passing. This is

what philosophy concerns itself with: the 'untimeliness' of the historical moment (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 296/363). Since the concern is for futurity, philosophy is *speculative*. Speculation is 'superempirical' in the sense that it concerns the empirical overspilling of history by tendency. The best way to 'describe' a tendency is to mobilise it in thought, and take it as far as it can go in thought. Philosophy stages thought-experiments extrapolating movements it finds astir in the world. A tendency is characterised by a certain mode in which a multiplicity of elements come together in becoming and hold together in a dynamic unity of movement that makes a difference in history. This mode of making a difference is what Deleuze and Guattari call an 'assemblage'. An empirical object has *properties* defining *what* it *is*. A tendency has *poles* governing *how* it *goes*. Make a concept for *how* a given multiplicity of elements come together and hold together to make a *difference* in history. Then extrapolate that assemblage to the absolute limit of what it can do, in thought. How would it go, were it to exemplify itself to the highest conceivable degree?

This absolute limit of a highest-degree expression of a tendency is a pole, almost in the magnetic meaning of the term: an attractive force orienting a tendency. The philosophical extrapolation of a tendency is an active diagnosis of this orientation. What is at issue philosophically is never the empirical question of 'what' something is (the question of being). It is the pragmatic question of 'how' things go (the question of becoming-oriented). What is always at issue philosophically is this pragmatic question, taken to the limit of thought (Deleuze 2004: 95–6/132–4). At that limit lies an attractive force that is never exhausted in any particular historical present. Taken to the limit, a movement is in processual excess over any empirically describable instance of its activity. What philosophy extrapolates is this excess, which as such is empirically 'pure'. As a polarity, it is historically empty – and philosophically loaded. Philosophy is the speculative invention of pure experimental thought-forms. It is in these limit-forms that its creativity finds its own highest expression. It is crucial to bear this in mind in thinking about the role of history in Deleuze and Guattari's writing.

'Philosophy', it must not be forgotten, 'is as creative a discipline as any other' (Deleuze 2007c: 318/292). As a creative endeavour, Deleuze and Guattari often emphasise, philosophy is closely allied with art. Repeat: 'you have to create concepts, and this involves just as much creation and invention as you find in art' (Deleuze 1995a: 32/48). Deleuze and Guattari think philosophically in relation to the outside of art and literature as extensively as they do in relation to history,

mathematics or science. One of the reasons they place an image at the beginning of each plateau is to mark this kinship with art, and to suggest that there is a conceptual activity in art itself that can nourish philosophy in a way that is much closer to its own activity than any other of its outsides. The kinship they feel between art and philosophy has to do with the fact that the object of art is also the untimely. Art, like philosophy, looks past 'what' things are, to how they become. It 'looks only at the movements' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 282/346). In order to do this, it 'breaks' things as they are 'open', in order to liberate the pure form of their potential, making a tendential event of it (Deleuze 1995c: 86/119). This is a speculative act, a conceptual gesture, in much the same way that a philosophical thinking is. It is also an act of resistance: to the way things are, out of concern for *how* they may become (Deleuze 2007c: 327–9/300–2). Philosophy makes resistance thinkable. Art makes it perceptible (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 163–99/154–88). They are both, in Guattari's terms, 'ethico-aesthetic' practices of inventive resistance oriented to becoming (Guattari 1995).

The 'artfulness' of philosophical concepts should not be taken to mean that they are unrigorous, merely metaphorical. 'For me', warns Deleuze, 'metaphors do not exist' (Deleuze 2007d: 202/186 trans. mod.). For a philosophical concept to do what it can do best, to the limit of its inventive abilities, it must achieve a pragmatic excess of conceptual precision. It is only with pragmatic precision that things can be made to happen through thought. To make an event of thought is a most rigorous endeavour. Deleuze does not recoil at the word 'system'. A philosophy, for him, must have all the rigour of a complex 'open' system, constitutively open to changing relations of the outside (Deleuze 1995a: 29–34/44–52).

The Chinese translation of *A Thousand Plateaus* is a rigorous thought-event in its own right, 'involving as much creation and invention' as the original. It is only fitting that the Chinese reader, finding this new creation in their hands, treat the translation of their book as Deleuze and Guattari treat every achievement: break it open. Resist its 'being' European. Don't take it as descriptive of where it has come from. And especially don't take it as prescriptive for where it has now arrived. Liberate the pure form of its potential – for Chinese thought, in a continuing of its own singular adventures in becoming-between, coming-together again in a relation to the great outside of its own futurity. Nothing would please Deleuze and Guattari more than their philosophy

taking on a new and untimely importance beyond the limits of 'what' they, as the European thinkers that they were historically, could ever have imagined.

Notes

1. Where necessary, page numbers for the English version are given first. Page numbers for the original, French edition are given second. Some translations have been modified by the author. These are noted in-text.
2. On philosophy as the invention of problems, see Deleuze (1991: 15–21/ 3–11).
3. On the notion of the 'conceptual personae', see Chapter 3 in Deleuze and Guattari's *What is Philosophy?* (1994: 60–83).

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Becoming-Bertha: Virtual Difference and Repetition in Postcolonial 'Writing Back', a Deleuzian Reading of Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea*

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Abstract

Critical responses to *Wide Sargasso Sea* have seized upon Rhys's novel as an exemplary model of writing back. Looking beyond the actual repetitions which recall Brontë's text, I explore Rhys's novel as an expression of virtual difference and becomings that exemplify Deleuze's three syntheses of time. Elaborating the processes of becoming that Deleuze's third synthesis depicts, Antoinette's fate emerges not as a violence against an original identity. Rather, what the reader witnesses is a series of becomings or masks, some of which are validated, some of which are not, and it is in the rejection of certain masks, forcing Antoinette to become-Bertha, that the greatest violence lies.

Keywords: Gilles Deleuze, Jean Rhys, writing back, becoming, *Wide Sargasso Sea*, virtual, *Difference and Repetition*

Within the postcolonial critic's lexicon, terms such as 'hybridity', 'writing back' and 'creolisation' have come to be associated with a fundamental ambivalence that lies at the heart of the postcolonial project. Indeed, Homi Bhabha's characterisation of the 'location' of the postcolonial moment as a transitory site, 'neither a new horizon, nor a leaving behind of the past' (Bhabha 1994: 1), confirmed radical ambivalence and 'in-betweenness' as the archetypal features of postcolonial resistance: the hybridised subject or creolised text works to undermine colonial authority precisely because it is not easily accommodated into the coloniser's self-assured world-view. In the same way, where postcolonial authors such as Jean Rhys, Derek Walcott, J. M. Coetzee or Aimé Césaire appropriate and rewrite canonical texts,

writing-back to the imperial canon as Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin (2002: 96) have argued, it is the production of a text that both does and does not resemble the original work that marks its ambivalent status as a hybrid or creolised text. Yet, what has remained understated in contemporary postcolonial criticism is the extent to which both hybridity and creolisation do witness the birth of 'a new horizon'. Rather than locating the revisionary potential of postcolonial aesthetics within an ambivalent hybridity, I contend that it is the overlooked ability to effect the new that distinguishes postcolonial discourse and, crucially, marks its compatibility with the philosophical writings of Gilles Deleuze. Elaborating the distinction that Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition* identifies between the first and third syntheses of time, this essay outlines a Deleuzian approach to postcolonial writing back by drawing on the particular example of Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* and identifying the repetitions of virtual difference and becomings that make Rhys's canonical re-dress a genuinely original literary expression.

At issue in this essay is not simply the question of whether Rhys's novel, or any example of postcolonial writing back, is a new work of literature, but rather, at a more fundamental level, a question of the particular relationship between the postcolonial present and the colonial past enacted in writing back. Indeed, this question is evident in Bhabha's own formulation of the postcolonial moment as neither a 'new horizon' nor the abandonment of historical memory. Despite this suggestion, *The Location of Culture* does not oppose the idea of the postcolonial as the production of the new: Bhabha later defines cultural translation as 'an encounter with "newness" that is not part of the continuum of past and present' (Bhabha 1994: 7), and argues that the hybrid object be recognised as 'new, neither one nor the other' (25). However, it is the concern to define postcolonialism as both the liberation of the subject from the traumatic legacies of colonialism and the care that the past be not forgotten that leads Bhabha to ostensibly reject the horizon of the new. In turn, what is needed to address this concern is an understanding of postcolonialism as a historical relation that gives rise to a newness 'that is not part of the continuum of past and present', but which is, nevertheless, derived from a particular (colonial) history. It is this paradoxical relation in which the engagement with history both generates a future with the potential to become something wholly new and revises our understanding of all that led up to it (a new continuum that leads from past to present and into the future) that Deleuze establishes in his third synthesis of time: articulating a theory of becoming that accounts for the production of the new from a

re-dress of the past and, I argue, when applied to writing back, reveals the revisionary force of postcolonial writing.

The significance of Deleuze's philosophy for postcolonial studies has received little attention to date, with Peter Hallward's *Absolutely Postcolonial* remaining the most comprehensive critique of Deleuze's influence on the field. For Hallward, questions of singularity, specificity and, crucially, locatedness take centre stage in his attack on a Deleuzian postcolonial discourse, arguing that while colonial and counter-colonial discourse may indeed be criticised for their over-specification of the subject, in his view, the postcolonial has moved in precisely the opposite direction, towards a singular reality which 'will operate without criteria external to its operation'; replacing 'the interpretation or representation *of* reality with an immanent participation in its production or creation: in the end, at the limit of "absolute postcoloniality", there will be nothing left, nothing outside itself, to which it could be specific' (Hallward 2001: xii). Implicit in Hallward's argument is the view that postcolonialism tends to follow a logic of immanence or single-substance (Burns 2009: 104–5). As such, everything exists as a particular element within the singular substance that we might term the universe, and is nothing other than a particular configuration of that single-substance. Accordingly, for Hallward, the postcolonial will tend towards the elimination of specific histories, locations or cultures as independent, contextualising forces and, as a result, postcolonial discourse can be regarded as 'more or less enthusiastically committed to an explicitly *deterritorialising* discourse in something close to the Deleuzian sense – a discourse so fragmented, so hybrid, as to deny its constituent elements any sustainable specificity at all' (Hallward 2001: 22).

While Hallward's work does represent a significant and distinct intervention in the field of postcolonial studies, the core logic behind his critique should sound familiar since it echoes precisely the criticism that Hegel levelled against Spinoza's notion of singularity. To recall Hegel's indictment of Spinoza in his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, 'the cause of his [Spinoza's] death was consumption, from which he had long been a sufferer; this was in harmony with his system of philosophy, according to which all particularity and individuality pass away in the one substance' (cited in Hardt 1993: 257). For Hegel, as for Hallward, the Spinozist conception of substance and positive (or immanent) differentiation cannot provide a basis for particularity or the specific since it lacks the core feature of determination: dialectical negation. As Michael Hardt argues, 'according to Hegel, the unique and absolute being of Spinozism cannot provide a basis for determination

or difference because it involves no other or limitation' (Hardt 1993: 67). Within a Hegelian ontology, determinate or specific being emerges through the negation of its opposite, nothingness, and it is this opposition between being and nothingness that 'defines the foundation of real differences and qualities' (Hardt 1993: 3). In other words, difference is always produced through a negative movement and each thing exists in its particularity and difference through the active negation of something else. Importantly, this view of difference is echoed in *Absolutely Postcolonial* in which Hallward highlights what he considers to be effective acts of postcolonial resistance, such as the fiction of V. S. Naipaul, in which difference emerges when 'Naipaul puts himself and his characters in a *position* of judgement, as alternatively judge and judged' (Hallward 2001: 332). As a result, Naipaul's work 'is simply specific rather than singular, inflected through the experience of a positioned narrator or character and maintained as a network of [. . .] relationships' (332). In other words, for Hallward difference and specificity are produced negatively through one's situated opposition to an other.

Hallward's claim that the lack of situated opposition or determination in postcolonial literature results in a discourse that, given the absence of negation, cannot sustain real difference and will inevitably dissolve into an undifferentiated nothingness must be recognised for what it is: a contemporary elaboration of Hegel's critique of Spinoza's positive ontology. As such, Hallward's argument faces strong criticism from the philosopher he holds responsible for the singularising nature of postcolonialism: Deleuze. Hardt has shown in detail how Deleuze draws on both Spinoza and, in particular, Bergson to demonstrate that negative determination not only presents a false notion of difference but also, controversially from Hallward's point of view, 'fails to grasp the concreteness and specificity of real being' (Hardt 1993: 4). Put simply, Deleuze elaborates both Bergson and Spinoza to argue that Hegel's concept of negative or dialectical differentiation cannot provide an adequate foundation for being since it depends on external causes, thus introducing contingency and causality into being: to quote Deleuze, 'in Bergson [. . .] the thing differs with itself *first, immediately*. According to Hegel, the thing differs with itself because it differs first of all with all it is not' (cited in Hardt 1993: 7). Hallward's reluctance to fully acknowledge the Hegelian logic behind *Absolutely Postcolonial* results in an argument against postcoloniality and Deleuze that fails to address Deleuze's own ready-made answer to the charge of singularity as well as postcolonial criticism's demand to face the emergence of newness and not just specific instances of located resistance. As a result, his reading rests upon a

critique of differentiation at odds with Deleuze's commitment to an immanentist philosophy. However, by recognising the value of positive differentiation and the shift away from dialectical negation as the foundation of being, a more significant form of postcolonialism emerges based on instances of virtual difference, repetition and becoming-new.[1]

It is this aspect of Deleuze's philosophy that Caribbean writers such as Édouard Glissant and Wilson Harris draw on in their own postcolonial works. Notably, both Glissant and Harris envision the postcolonial project as an engagement with the traumatic history of colonialism that, nevertheless, creates a new, unpredictable future: a 'prophetic vision of the past' (Glissant 1999: 64), for Glissant or in Harris's characteristically opaque prose, 'continuities running out of the mystery of the past into the unknown future yield proportions of originality, proportions of the "genuinely new"' (Harris 1996: 6). The particular engagement with history that both Harris and Glissant propose in their writings represents a shift from what Walcott designated a literature of 'recrimination and despair' (Walcott 1998: 37) which endlessly repeats the biases of colonialism, towards a revisionary postcolonial literature. Wole Soyinka's denunciation of the negritude movement as that which trapped 'itself in what was primarily a defensive role' (Soyinka 1976: 129) and 'stayed within a pre-set system of Eurocentric intellectual analysis both of man and society and tried to re-define the African and his society in those externalised terms' (136) highlights the point of contention: counter-colonial discourse is wholly specified by the colonial context in which it exists, it adheres to the 'pre-set system' in which the black man is cast as the racial other. The postcolonial, on the other hand, while drawn from a particular socio-historic milieu (one marked by the traces of the colonial era), is distinguished by its ability to move beyond the 'defensive role' of counter-colonialism. It is a discourse that exceeds the already established, 'pre-set' value systems that Europe imposed on its colonial others. In other words, postcoloniality denotes a synthesis of the past that does not repeat predetermined attitudes, but creates something new: an original future not determined at the outset by pre-existing socio-historic subject positions or cultural hierarchies, but, nevertheless, specific to those legacies.

I. Expectancy, Stereotypes and the First Synthesis of Time

The distinction that I am arguing for between a historical relation that repeats already established biases and fixed subject-positions and a postcolonial re-dress of history that engenders the absolutely new is

clarified by Deleuze's account of the first and third syntheses of time. As Deleuze presents it in *Difference and Repetition*, the first synthesis of time is a theoretical paradigm that accounts for the continuation of the same and the general. Crucially in terms of the particular relationship to the canon that is enacted in writing back or what Edward Said designates 'contrapuntal' reading (Said 1993: 59), for Deleuze the first synthesis is the creation of expectancy through repetition, accounting for the way in which, in the present, we come to anticipate future events because of their past occurrence. For example, the repetition in the series AB, AB, AB, A…, Deleuze argues, 'changes nothing in the object or state of affairs AB. On the other hand, a change is produced in the mind which contemplates: a difference, something new *in* the mind. Whenever A appears, I expect the appearance of B' (Deleuze 2004: 90). In this 'contraction' of specific instances of 'A' and 'B' into 'AB', the first synthesis of time produces a movement from the specific to the general (91). Furthermore, the effect of this contraction is to create a sense of expectancy: in this case, the recurring experience of A followed by B is contracted in the present into the projected expectancy that AB will recur in the future.

It is this sense of expectancy that underlies postcolonial authors' problematic relationship with the canon and historical legacies. Following Ashcroft et al., the relationship envisioned here is not between individual authors or works since the 'canon is not a body of texts *per se*, but rather a set of reading practices (the enactment of innumerable individual and community assumptions, for example about genre, about literature, and even about writing)' (Ashcroft et al. 2002: 186). In writing back, postcolonial authors seek to expose not only specific prejudices, expressed in particular cases, but the continuing influence of these views. In Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, for example, the reader encounters particular references to the colonies and racial others, expressed in a particular way. One might then read Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* and register a repetition in the way in which both authors depict the relationship between the coloniser and the colonised, a repetition that is echoed as one then reads Austen, Dickens and so forth. It is the repetition of these specific ways of characterising the relationship between centre and periphery that is contracted into what might be termed, in general, as a colonial attitude. Importantly, as Deleuze's account of the first synthesis emphasises, it is not a change in the texts themselves or in that which is repeated, but it is a change in the mind of the reader who registers the repetition. This is why the canon evokes reading practices: the repetition of themes, attitudes or genres in

specific texts are synthesised in the mind to create a general expectancy, a general set of reading practices that will, accordingly, shape future reading experiences. As the process which engenders this expectancy, the first synthesis is that which makes of the canon a set of reading practices that determines in advance one's response to the text.

It is this expectancy that writers such as Rhys seek to challenge as they produce works which ostensibly repeat canonical texts. *Wide Sargasso Sea* as a whole, and in particular Part Three of the novel, is a repetition of Brontë's *Jane Eyre*. However, it is a repetition that exposes the processes of contraction and projection that Deleuze's first synthesis envisions by deconstructing colonial stereotypes and demonstrating, as Albert Memmi argued, that in colonialist discourse what 'is actually a sociological point becomes labelled as being biological or, preferably, metaphysical' (Memmi 1974: 71–2). Thus, in Part One of *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Mr Mason's complaint that the recently manumitted black Jamaicans 'won't work [. . .] don't want to work' (Rhys 2000: 30) is re-read by Rhys within the specific historical context of Jamaica in the wake of Emancipation and the end of the Apprenticeship scheme. As a result, Mr Mason's statement is revealed as a contraction of a number of converging sociological features of Jamaican society at that time into a general 'truth' about the newly manumitted population. A similar prejudice is articulated by Rochester during the couple's honeymoon at Granbois when he criticises Christophine's 'horrible' language as she asks him to 'taste my bull's blood, master' (71), her trailing dress and her languorous appearance. Here Rochester expresses the coloniser's point of view: the black woman, he infers, is unclean, sexualised and lazy. All colonial stereotypes, yet in each case, Antoinette responds by telling Rochester that each of these traits have a logical explanation: allowing one's dress to get dirty is an expression of affluence, slow movements are about precision. The difference between the two characters' perception of Christophine's actions is that Rochester reads in them a confirmation of colonial stereotypes as inherent or biological truths about black women, whereas Antoinette understands them as sociological points.

Rhys's novel consistently undermines stereotypes by illustrating their constructed, sociological basis. However, more than this, *Wide Sargasso Sea* draws attention to the additional issue of expectancy that is created: the specific repeating trait drawn from the past is generalised to form some 'truth' about the present and, as Deleuze points out, determines the way in which future repetitions are perceived. In Rochester's changing relationship with his wife, the full force of Rhys's critique of expectancy is felt. Throughout Part Two of the novel, Rochester

is clearly involved in a process of, to paraphrase Sartre, making Antoinette like what she would have to be like to deserve her fate (her eventual incarceration in the attic of Thornfield Hall as the mad, violent Bertha).[2] Rochester does this in the most matter of fact way: literally renaming her Bertha. More than this, however, he exploits prevalent stereotypes about white creoles in order to reread Antoinette's actions as a sign of her sexual proclivity and inherited madness. In this way, Antoinette's white dress, once admired by Rochester, comes to reflect his expectations of his wife's disposition. The dress that 'had slipped untidily over one shoulder and seemed too large for her' (105), as Carine Mardorossian argues, evokes association with '(black) female sexual wantonness and prostitution' (Mardorossian 1999: 1076), suggesting an intentional provocation on Antoinette's part and recalling Rochester's earlier claim that 'one afternoon the sight of a dress which she'd left lying on her bedroom floor made me breathless and savage with desire' (78). While this latter quotation evidences his sexual desire, Rochester's narrative increasingly seeks to read Antoinette's actions as a sign of her unrestrained sexuality. Thus, the dress that was, perhaps, carelessly left lying on the floor is misconstrued as a purposeful incitement to Rochester's desires. Antoinette's misunderstood intentions are underscored by the parallel image of the Miller's Daughter that occurs earlier in the text: one evening at Coulibri Antoinette recalls her 'favourite picture "The Miller's Daughter", a lovely English girl with brown curls and blue eyes and a dress *slipping off her shoulders*' (30, emphasis mine).[3] Antoinette's later mirroring of this image is, therefore, a misunderstood attempt to conform to Rochester's cultural values, to project an image of what, to her limited understanding, 'a lovely English girl' should look like.

It is, however, after his meeting with Daniel Cosway, the illegitimate son of Antoinette's father and a black slave, that Rochester's wilful misinterpretation of his wife's character becomes most apparent. Daniel's vindictive assertion that 'Mrs Cosway is worthless and spoilt, she can't lift a hand for herself and soon the madness that is in her, and in all these white Creoles, comes out' (80) re-enforces the prevalent stereotype that madness afflicts the white creole plantocracy. However, although Daniel's venom is clearly directed against the ex-slave-owners (he does not single out madness as Antoinette's or even Annette's affliction, but rather as the fate of 'all these white Creoles' (Mardorossian 1999: 1082)), Rochester recalls only that which confirms his misgivings about his wife. Echoing Daniel's parting words, 'give my love to your wife – my sister. [. . .] You are not the first to kiss her pretty

face' (104), the final pages of Rochester's narrative refigure Daniel's accusation as an admission of incest: 'give my sister your wife a kiss from me. Love her as I did – oh yes I did' (130). Rochester's firm resolution to secure his wife and her fortune by returning to his English estate is revealed as the product of his distorted recollection of Daniel's words and the confirmation of his own pre-determined expectations about creole, female sexuality: 'she thirsts for *anyone* – not for me [. . .] (a mad girl. She'll not care who she's loving). She'll moan and cry and give herself as no sane woman would – or could. *Or could*' (135–6). Faced with the discrepancy between Antoinette and the portrait of the 'lovely English girl' she tries to mimic, here Rochester resolves to make of his wife the very opposite image of female sexuality and, just as he names her Bertha, here he names her mad by giving her a sexual proclivity that 'no sane woman would' have. In his final resolution to 'see who hates best' (140), Rochester reveals the extent to which fears about miscegenation and the licentiousness of white creoles in nineteenth-century colonialist discourse created a projected expectancy about creole behaviour: a pre-established framework that determines Antoinette's actions from the outset of the novel.

Rhys consistently confronts colonial stereotypes not purely as a means to suggest that, in agreement with Memmi, that which is misconstrued as a biological or metaphysical fact is, in truth, socially or culturally determined, but also in order to expose the force of expectancy. It is, in particular, the issue of canonical expectancy, created by the texts of the past in the mind of the reader and projected into the future as a set of regulatory reading practices, that underlies the postcolonial tradition of writing back. In enacting a contrapuntal rewriting, authors expose the ideological biases that lie behind certain generalised expectations: highlighting the syntheses that occurred in order to produce particular stereotypes or reading practices, while at the same time revealing what was excluded by such generalisations. Rhys's text is exemplary in this respect: returning her text to the historical moment of Emancipation in the Anglophone Caribbean to expose the formation of colonial stereotypes and prejudices, and to highlight the social factors that were excluded from accounts of creole madness such as she found in Brontë's novel. By deconstructing colonial stereotypes, Rhys's novel challenges preconceived attitudes by returning the general to the specific. Writing back, therefore, works by confronting expectancy and what we might term a contrapuntal rereading/rewriting, in line with Deleuze's first synthesis of time, directs its attention to the contraction of the specific past into a generalised framework for determining the future.

In turn, this is exemplary of the distinction between counter-colonial discourse and the postcolonial previously delineated: by writing against the expectancy created by the first synthesis of time, Caribbean writers do not envision the continuation of a fixed relationship between centre and periphery, but engender an unpredictable future specific to but not limited by the contracted past. In other words, postcolonial texts must reject the determination of the Deleuzian first synthesis as a contraction of the past that has created the generalised colonial relationship and propose a new continuum. This latter process Deleuze calls the third synthesis of time: a differentiation of the past as a virtual presence in the production of an unpredictable future. It is only through an analysis of the ways in which Rhys contrapuntally exposes the virtual past she encounters in Brontë's novel and depicts the singular conditions by which Antoinette becomes Bertha that we can appreciate the full force of Rhys's re-dress and uncover the processes of virtual repetition and becoming-new that characterise a truly postcolonial aesthetics of writing back.

II. Becoming-Bertha

Far from remaining ambivalent to the role of past trauma in shaping the postcolonial present, writers such as Rhys, Harris and Glissant recognise history as formative, but see in trauma and oppression a potentiality to re-dress historical antagonisms and create something new. Indeed, it is this appreciation of a historical relation that effects the 'genuinely new' that Harris locates in Rhys's novel (Harris 1996: 6). Relating *Wide Sargasso Sea* to a template of war he finds in the history of the Caribs and Arawaks, Harris uncovers in the mythology of opposing cultures, common, repeating features that speak of a single source of collective creativity:

> it is a time of war. The rainbow compression of a tree is set on fire by the Caribs when the Arawaks seek refuge in its branches. [. . .] Creation suffers and needs to be re-dressed if the spirit of the stars is to be discovered again. The fire rages and ascends even higher to drive the Arawaks up and up until there is no further escape, they burn and rise into a spark in the sky of fiction. That spark becomes the seed of the garden of the Pleiades. (Harris 1983: 50)

For Harris, the memory of past conflict retains a virtual aspect, a 'seed', which remains latent in the collective unconscious, ready to be recalled and explored in order to creatively re-dress historical trauma. What Harris finds in Rhys's novel is the potential for a future that is not a

repetition of historical antagonisms and conflicts, but one which 'yields proportions of originality' (Harris 1996: 6) through a re-dress of the past. As Harris argues in his own novel *Jonestown*, 'it is essential to create a jigsaw in which "pasts" and "presents" and likely or unlikely "futures" are the pieces that multitudes in the self employ in order to bridge chasms in historical memory' (Harris 1996: 5). What Harris refers to as the 'incalculable' (5) line of continuity between the past and an unpredictable future emerges in the postcolonial project as a form of restructuring by which genuine novelty or 'newness' results.

It is in this respect that Deleuze emerges as an important figure in this debate and, in particular, his reformulation of a Spinozist plane of immanence or single-substance philosophy. Where Spinoza recast the Cartesian separation of Thought and Extension as an immanentist philosophy in which the single-substance universe (God or Nature) is conceived under two attributes termed *natura naturans* and *natura naturata*, a (virtual) self-creating aspect and the structure of (actual) created things respectively, Deleuze adopts Spinoza's dual sense of actual created world and virtual creative force as the two 'unequal odd halves' of reality (Deleuze 2004: 261).[4] Like Spinoza, Deleuze argues that reality must be considered both as the actual world and, at the same time, as a virtual plane which exists in opposition to the actual. Crucially, while the Cartesian split ensured that Thought and Extension persisted as non-relational, distinct spheres, Spinoza's single-substance ontology offers a relational structure that is reflected in the way in which Deleuze presents the actual and the virtual as caught up in a ceaseless movement from one to the other; where elements of the virtual become realised within the actual, experienced as sensations, events or identities. Where Deleuze exceeds Spinoza is in the profound creativity that he locates within this movement from virtual to actual. Rather, it is to another philosopher, Henri Bergson, that Deleuze turns to find a theory of the virtual as both a creative force (what Bergson terms *élan vital*) and a historical relation that, to recall Harris, 'yields proportions of originality, proportions of the "genuinely new"' (Harris 1996: 6).

It is the virtual's status as the absolutely-other, as that which cannot be represented since by definition it is that which exceeds the limits of the actual, that ensures its role in maintaining the renewed potential for newness. As Daniel Smith explains, because 'the virtual is constituted through and through by difference [. . .] when it is actualised, it therefore differs from itself, such that every process of actualisation is, by its very nature, the production of the new' (Smith 2007: 6). Thus, any actualisation of the virtual is essentially a creative process since what

emerges will be different from that which already exists within the actual. Crucially, it is this movement from virtual to actual (what Deleuze terms 'differentiation') that Bergson introduces in his notion of *élan vital*, understood as 'a virtuality in the process of being actualised' (Deleuze 1991: 94). With this concept, a full sense of the relation between actual and virtual comes into focus and, moreover, offers a philosophical paradigm for change and novelty. Since each actualisation of the virtual designates the emergence of the new, both *élan vital* and differentiation describe the creative evolution of the immanent totality: 'evolution takes place from the virtual to actuals. Evolution is actualisation, actualisation is creation' (Deleuze 1991: 98).

Differentiation accounts for the ways in which newness enters the world; however, more than this, Bergson's sense of the virtual as a 'gigantic memory' (Deleuze 1991: 100) ensures that this creative process is also a temporal evolution. The past for both Deleuze and Bergson is a virtual field that is available for differentiation within the present as recollection. At issue here is not history since the past as virtual has 'no psychological existence', it is 'not a particular past of a particular present but [...] is like an ontological element, a past that is eternal and for all time, the condition of the "passage" of every particular present. It is the past in general that makes possible all pasts' (Deleuze 1991: 56–7). By constituting that which enables each present to pass and 'preserve itself in itself' (58), the pure or general past (what Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition* terms the second synthesis of time) represents what James Williams describes as a virtual 'archive' in which 'all events, including those that have sunk without trace, are stored and remembered as their passing away, independent of human activity and the limitations of physical records' (Williams 2003: 93, 94).[5] Clearly, the premise of a pure past independent of physical records or active recollection is of great significance to Caribbean writers and theorists faced with a historical inheritance of 'amnesia' (Walcott 1998: 39–40). As Jean Bernabé, Patrick Chamoiseau and Raphaël Confiant write in their manifesto of *créolité*, 'our history (or our histories) is not totally accessible to historians. Their methodology restricts them to the sole-colonial chronicle. Our chronicle is behind the dates, behind the known' (Bernabé et al. 1993: 99). Precisely by accessing that which lies 'behind the known', a postcolonial synthesis of the past repeats the processes of actualisation that Deleuze locates in Bergson's theory of memory as virtual presence. Further, as a differentiation of the virtual what emerges from this process is new, a wholly novel postcolonial 'chronicle'.

Deleuze's account of the relational movement of the actual and virtual as a temporal, creative evolution in *Bergsonism* echoes his elaboration of the three syntheses of time in *Difference and Repetition*. While the past as virtual implies that any differentiation of the past will result in the production of the new, the first synthesis gives consistency to the present by relating it to a distinct series (AB, AB . . .) of the pure past and then subjecting it to the processes of contraction and generalisation. In this way, the newness that is created via differentiation is assimilated by habit and generalised as anticipated behaviour towards the future. The first synthesis alone cannot account for the radical sense of the future as an infinite potentiality that is evident in the writings of Harris and Glissant. As a result, this demand to account for a future with the ability to become-new leads us beyond the first and second syntheses of time 'in the direction of a third' (Deleuze 2004: 111).

With the third synthesis of time Deleuze offers a full account of how newness enters the world. Where the first synthesis demonstrates the way in which actual things gain consistency in the present and the second synthesis details a pure past into which each present falls, the third synthesis accounts for the prevailing sense that the future maintains the potential to become something wholly new. In other words, what I have presented here as differentiation, the actualisation of the virtual, Deleuze names the third synthesis of time: a theoretical paradigm that accounts for the infinite ways in which the actualised present retains the ability to become in unpredictable ways. Further, as a differentiation of the pure or virtual past, Deleuze's third synthesis may be used to elaborate Said's claim that contrapuntal reading uncovers that which was excluded from the colonial text. In other words, when Said argues that we should re-examine *Jane Eyre* to discover the latent prejudices within the text, he is asking us to differentiate Brontë's work, exposing the unspoken assumptions and unacknowledged exploitations that are taken for granted within the economy of the nineteenth-century novel. In turn, what this contrapuntal reading engenders, according to the Deleuzian model, is new. By actualising the virtual (here the virtual 'side' of the canonical text), the repetition on which the third synthesis is based is not, as in the first, grounded on recurring instances of the contracted past, but on the repetition of the virtual past's becoming-actual, of differentiation as the production of the new (what Deleuze designates the eternal return of difference-in-itself). In turn, writing back produces an original work of literature not because it repeats the actual text or canon that has generated certain generalised expectations and reading practices, but because in actualising the virtual aspect of the

canon it repeats only the processes of differentiation necessarily as a becoming-new.

The same holds true of Rhys's contrapuntal reading of stereotypes in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, in which her account of the ways in which these stereotypes become established reveals the specific socio-economic factors that were excluded from the generalised form. What Rhys's novel repeats then is not the actual colonial stereotype *per se*, but the processes of becoming that engendered those contractions. In the same way, by contrapuntally rewriting *Jane Eyre*, Rhys's novel does not repeat the actual elements of Brontë's work, but, more specifically, the processes of becoming that constitute it: Antoinette's becoming-mad; Rochester's becoming-cold-hearted. Moreover, as with all becomings, according to the Deleuzian model, the movement from virtual to actual that the third synthesis encapsulates does not exhaust the virtual: the virtual is not actualised outright. Rather, a virtual aspect is differentiated with each becoming *and* each actual state that one becomes maintains, in excess of its actuality, its virtual aspect: 'every object is double without it being the case that the two halves resemble one another, one being a virtual image the other an actual image' (Deleuze 2004: 261). It is this renewed virtuality that accounts for the prevailing sense that things always have the potential to become-new: as Claire Colebrook argues, 'each actual thing maintains its own virtual power. What something is (actually) is also its power to become (virtually)' and that this virtual difference is 'the power to become in unforeseen ways, always more than this actual world, and not limited by its already present forms' (Colebrook 2002: 96). As a result, with each repetition (of stereotype, of text) in Rhys's novel, not only do we see how things became what they actually are, but remain aware of how very different they might have been and, indeed, might yet become. It is this potentiality to become in unforeseen ways that the third synthesis as differentiation evokes. Accordingly, with each actualisation of Bertha (Antoinette's becoming-mad, becoming-violent), Rhys highlights how things might have been or might yet become very different. Rochester's moment of hesitation, 'I shall never understand why, suddenly, bewilderingly, I was certain that everything I had imagined to be truth was false. False. Only the magic and the dream are true – all the rest's a lie. Let it go' (138), Christophine's offer to care for Antoinette, and Rhys's famously open ending, these alternative paths all suggest lines of becoming that remain virtual, engendering the possibility that in every repetition of becoming-Bertha, becoming-Rochester things could have been different. It is this virtual aspect of becoming that destabilises the expectancy of the first synthesis of time and ensures that

the historical re-dress enacted in postcolonial writing back repeats only the revisionary potential of differentiation as the production of the new.

This is why, to use Colebrook's phrase, becoming is 'the hidden force of difference' (Colebrook 2002: 120): it designates the actualisation of different virtual intensities as a becoming-new and conceives of difference 'independently of the forms of representation which reduce it to the Same, and the relation of different to different independently of those forms which make them pass through the negative' (Deleuze 2004: xvii–xviii). Deleuze rejects the Hegelian formula of difference whereby any object (salt, say) is differentiated negatively via its oppositional relation to its other (pepper). Rather, for Deleuze difference is an expression of becoming, so that, to extend the example, salt is different to other sensations as an actualised intensity of becoming-salty, becoming-crystallised. As Williams explains, 'according to Deleuze you are not different from other humans because you differ in this or that actual characteristic but because your thoughts and sensations, the way you change, express a different relation of intensities' (Williams 2003: 9). Thus, if we look to *Wide Sargasso Sea* and find that Antoinette is different to Brontë's Bertha, it is not in actual characteristics that the significant difference lies, but in Antoinette's actualisation of different degrees of becoming-mad, becoming-licentious. What we recognise in Rhys's novel is a different process of becoming at work: Antoinette does not become mad because of some inherited disposition to do so, but because of a range of emotional, social and gender-specific forces acting upon her. This is the very definition of what Deleuze calls a minor literature: repeating not the actual elements of the canon, but the virtual becomings as that which makes things differ. Texts like *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Colebrook argues, repeat 'the hidden forces of difference that produce texts, rather than repeating the known texts themselves' (Colebrook 2002: 120); or again, 'a work of literature is not to *copy* that work, but to repeat the forces of difference that produced that work [. . .]: a repetition of the virtual and hidden power of difference' (121).[6]

Wide Sargasso Sea in a very clear way draws from the virtual side of *Jane Eyre*. As Rhys herself claimed, responding to Brontë's depiction of 'the poor Creole lunatic', 'that's only one side – the English side' (cited in Raiskin 1996: 133). Bringing to light the other side of the story, detailing Bertha's West Indian upbringing, tracing the disillusionment of Rochester, taking her reader behind the closed doors of Thornfield Hall, Rhys contrapuntally differentiates *Jane Eyre*. In doing so, what is produced is not a continuation of the same (this would be a result of the first synthesis), but an original work

through the repetition of the processes of differentiation: 'repetition is never a historical fact, but rather the historical condition under which something new is effectively produced' (Deleuze 2004: 113). Further, by accounting for an engagement with the past that creates a new vision of the future, Deleuze's third synthesis can be used to expose the full significance of Harris's reading of *Wide Sargasso Sea*. The fire motif that runs throughout the novel, signifying both destruction (the burning of Coulibri) and resistance (Antoinette's fire-red dress which symbolises her revolt against her husband and foreshadows her expected burning of his estate house), speaks to Harris of Rhys's attempt to re-dress absolutes and 'the paradox of resources of variables of the imagination through which the past speaks to the present and to the future [. . .], its inner capacity for re-dressed bodies and imageries' (Harris 1983: 61). What Harris envisions is a return to the memory or mythology of past conflicts in order to uncover unconscious (virtual) dimensions which may be synthesised in such a way as to allow the past to 'speak' to the present and future in a new way. Indeed, Deleuze envisions this too: the third synthesis, he tells us, marks a break or 'caesura' in the contemporary ordering of time and witnesses the birth of a new order of 'the before and the after' (Deleuze 2004: 112). The third synthesis is not a rejection of the past and although it incites a future that is radically different from what has come before, it is a future that is both linked to the past and which, to evoke Bhabha, generates a new continuum that leads from past to present and future.

Where Harris and Deleuze ostensibly disagree is in Harris's claim that Rhys's re-dress of historical antagonisms in *Wide Sargasso Sea* works through the identification of what he calls a 'core of likeness' (Harris 1983: 56). This point emerges in his discussion of the Arawaks and Caribs whose adverse relationship, he argues, might be addressed by the realisation of a common creative thread. In the same vein, Harris finds in Rhys's 're-dress of Charlotte Brontë's polarisations', a similar trajectory in which 'a cross-cultural web and likeness are revealed [. . .] through points that unravel apparently incompatible appearances' (56). It is in the exposure of 'likeness[es]' in apparent polarisations that Harris locates the potential for historical re-dress, a move that ostensibly sets him in opposition to Deleuze's celebration of difference and becoming. However, Harris's evocation of likeness is not to be misunderstood as signifying the same: the same is the foundation of the 'narrow basis of realism [. . . which] tends inevitably to polarise cultures or to reinforce eclipses of otherness within legacies of conquest that rule the world' (55). Realism is a reflection of the same and, accordingly, creates

the polarisations Harris seeks to overcome. Likeness, therefore, is not equivalent to the same: as Harris argues,

> the politics of culture assume that like to like signifies a monolithic cradle or monolithic origin. Whereas in creative subtlety or re-dress [. . .] monoliths are extremes/extremities that become fissures of emotion in claustrophobic and historical or cultural space, when imbued with asymmetric spirit or intangible, untameable life. Those fissures are parallels, extensions [. . .] in and into bodies of experience whose mental point or core of likeness turns into the spark or passion of science and art. (Harris 1983: 56)

What Harris refers to as a 'core of likeness' is not the identification of the same, but what he senses in the cross-cultural web: a single, collective unconscious that links all peoples and ties all cultures to a common creative 'spark'. Put another way, what Harris finds revolutionary is the virtual presence of the past as an undifferentiated (virtual) whole, to frame this in Deleuze's terms, as that which gives all the ability to become in unforeseen ways.

Harris's presentation of the past or collective unconscious as a virtual archive into which each present passes is fundamentally aligned with the Deleuzian/Bergsonian sense of creative evolution and memory. Paradoxically, although Harris identifies a 'core of likeness' at the heart of historical re-dress, it is fundamentally an issue of what Deleuze terms difference: a repetition of the virtual past's becoming-actual as that which engenders a new ordering of history. In particular, Harris invokes a Deleuzian concept of difference-in-itself rather than the Hegelian dialectic by arguing for the recognition of 'ceaseless parallel animations or subtle likeness *through* contrasting densities or opposite and varied appearances' (56). In other words, what is taken for granted as a difference achieved through opposition is, in fact, a difference of degrees of becoming, of 'densities' or 'appearances'. That Harris employs the term 'likeness' rather than Deleuze's difference-in-itself is a sign of the emphasis that Harris wants to place on the immanent creativity of the virtual as that from which differences are actualised or become-actual. To the extent that all identities are particular configurations or expressions of differentiated becomings emerging from the infinite virtual aspect of a single, immanent reality, all apparent adversaries are 'like' one another in that they all actualise the virtual albeit in different ways. Thus, Harris notes, despite their polarisation in *Jane Eyre*, 'Bertha and Rochester possess in themselves, within the genius of Charlotte Brontë, the seeds of such re-dress' (61). Brontë's characters always had the potential to overcome historical antagonisms, the ability to become

in unforeseen ways. If the 'seminal force of the fiction of the whole' (61), Brontë's commitment to the structuring influence of tradition and ideology, meant that this potential remained virtual in *Jane Eyre*, in Rhys's novel the repetition of becoming rather than the actual aspects of Brontë's text realises the potential for re-dress in the production of a new work of (minor) literature.

Through the repetition of *Jane Eyre* in *Wide Sargasso Sea* the reader encounters not an accumulation of actual differences, but difference-in-itself: the expression of becomings that emerge in particular ways relative to a range of other becomings. The actual differences between *Jane Eyre* and *Wide Sargasso Sea* – the discrepancy of names ('Bertha is not my name' [121]); of dates (the timeframe of *Jane Eyre* is 1789–1808, while *Wide Sargasso Sea* is set slightly later, roughly 1834–44); of mother's name (Bertha's mother's name is Antoinetta, not, as in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Annette); of family lineage (there is no Cosway line in *Jane Eyre*) – these actual discrepancies alone diminish full the significance of Rhys's novel by setting up an oppositional framework in which *Wide Sargasso Sea* is measured against the gold standard of the original parent text, *Jane Eyre*.[7] On the other hand, by acknowledging the virtual repetitions in *Wide Sargasso Sea* a more significant difference is uncovered, one which does not function through negation but as an experience of becoming expressed in relation to other becomings or intensities such as Emancipation, creole society and colonial attitudes. Features of Rhys's novel such as the changes in Antoinette's name from Antoinette Cosway to Mason and finally Rochester, her husband's renaming of her as Bertha, Christophine's affectionate but childlike names for her, and Daniel's reference to her as Antoinetta (the middle name of Brontë's Bertha and her mother's name in *Jane Eyre*) should not be misunderstood as a form of violence against the original identity that is Antoinette. Such a move would be based on actual difference. Rather, these developments express Rhys's repeated presentation of becoming, expressed not from the point of view of a pre-determined, original identity against which these becomings are judged as good or bad, but as constitutive of Antoinette's identity itself.

Such an approach is necessary for any Deleuzian reading of *Wide Sargasso Sea* given his claim that repetition 'is not underneath the masks, but is formed from one mask to another' (Deleuze 2004: 19). Here Deleuze characterises identity as an always-changing series of becomings, a process, Williams explains, akin to death: 'as we become, we die as this particular self and we move towards a final death. But there is something revivifying in the expression of becomings, they make a

life that must end in death one that participates in intensities' (Williams 2003: 9). In a very clear way, by presenting us with a series of becomings that will end in Antoinette's becoming-Bertha and her suicide, Rhys shows us the inevitable decline towards death as Antoinette Cosway becomes Mason becomes Rochester. The reader witnesses the death of a number of Antoinette's 'selves', but in line with Williams's reading of *Difference and Repetition*, remains aware of the 'revivifying' potential inherent in that process. Antoinette's declaration of her new Mason patronymic, embroidered in vivid red – 'I will write my name in fire red, Antoinette Mason, née Cosway, Mount Calvary Convent, Spanish Town, Jamaica, 1839' (44) – records the passing of her previous self (Antoinette Cosway) and stands as a positive assertion of a new identity, a point Simpson touches upon when she argues that in writing her name Antoinette 'creates a bold, fire-red marker of her life that very much contrasts with the attempts at erasure on the part of those who surround her' (Simpson 2005: 126). Although not consciously pursuing a Deleuzian reading of Rhys's novel, here Simpson identifies the central drive of the novel as the tension between a process of becoming that renews the life of the protagonist and one which leads to her pre-determined fate.

Antoinette's other masks or becomings similarly expose such a tension. The parallel established between Antoinette and her childhood friend Tia, who appears as a mirror image of the protagonist on the night of the burning of Coulibri – 'we stared at each other, blood on my face, tears on hers. It was as if I saw myself. Like in a looking-glass' (38) – is recalled (repeated) at the end of the novel to offer a sense of how things might have been very different for Antoinette. Tia, as Antoinette's double, is, in Part Three of the novel when she appears in Antoinette's dream, a virtual side or, more precisely, a potential differentiation of Antoinette's character: a sign of one self she might have become if it were not for the factors of economic tension, racial difference and social discontent (all intensities expressed in relation to the experience of Emancipation in Jamaica), which led Antoinette's becomings in a specific direction, towards becoming-Bertha. The same is true of another double, the picture of 'The Miller's Daughter', which Antoinette attempts to mirror. In doing so she hopes to become more like the image of English virtue she believes her husband desires in a wife. Yet again, this projected new self does not allow Antoinette to become like 'a lovely English girl' (30), because of her relation to another set of intensities and becomings. Antoinette, like her mother, is 'so without a doubt not English' (30), and her creole heritage evokes for Rochester a different set of becomings that express degeneracy, madness and an illicit sexuality. As a result, her

attempt to become-English is overwhelmed by the forces that repeat the processes of Brontë's novel as becoming-Bertha.

One of the most commented upon aspects of *Wide Sargasso Sea*, besides that of its association with *Jane Eyre*, is the novel's exploration of the mother/daughter relationship. Critics such as Ronnie Scharfman employ the developmental psychology of Nancy Chodorow and D. W. Winnicot in order to read Rhys's novel as 'the narrative of a subject's painful inability to constitute itself as an autonomous identity, to belong' (Scharfman 1981: 99–100).[8] Following Winnicott's claim that what a baby sees in his/her mother's face is him or herself, Scharfman argues that Antoinette projects a fragmented identity because as a child she did not experience her mother as a mirror. However, rather than reading Antoinette's narrative, as Scharfman does, as the account of an original identity that then becomes fragmented throughout the course of the novel, a Deleuzian approach suggests that Rhys presents a series of inevitable becomings that co-exist alongside a range of virtual ways in which Antoinette could possibly become. These alternative possibilities are presented to the reader in the mirror images and doubles that exist within the novel not only as virtual lines of becoming that Antoinette might have followed, but in themselves as actual differentiations that cannot be mirrored or repeated: as difference. Deleuze, Williams argues, paints a similar picture:

> reflections, doubles, soul sisters and brothers, acts of celebration and commemoration are all cases where the repetition or the experience of repetition is accompanied by intense reactions allied to the persistence of difference. [. . .] In each case, the emotions are double – something is sensed in the same way but there is also a sensation of a profound difference. (Williams 2003: 32–3)

Just as Rhys's novel contrapuntally differentiates *Jane Eyre*, Antoinette's doubles offer virtual lines of becoming that coexist with the various ways in which Antoinette 'actually' becomes. Moreover, just as *Wide Sargasso Sea* as the repeated double of *Jane Eyre* illustrates 'the persistence of difference', the fact that in every repetition the only likeness is difference or the power to become, so Antoinette's doubles evoke the dual sense of similarity and difference. For Antoinette, Tia is her mirror image – 'it was as if I saw myself. Like in a looking-glass' (38) – but also a sign of their irreducible difference. 'The Miller's Daughter' is the image of Antoinette's future self and the marker of her unsettling creole difference that Rochester will never manage to accommodate. For Rhys, as for

Deleuze, the repetition evident in reflections, mirror images and doubles echo only the forward movement of becoming and the impossibility of any other form of repetition. The self cannot become its double or mirror image, it can only become: 'I remember watching myself brush my hair and how my eyes looked back at me. The girl I saw was my self yet not quite myself. Long ago when I was a child and very lonely I tired to kiss her. But the glass was between us – hard, cold, and misted over with my breath' (147). It is this persistent separation, the repetition of difference rather than the same that *Wide Sargasso Sea* evokes in its presentation of Antoinette's reflected image.

Antoinette's mirror image evokes the double emotion that Williams recognises in *Difference and Repetition*: almost herself, but not quite. Instead of unity, separation persists, and a similar process emerges in Antoinette's relationship with her mother. In line with Winnicott, Antoinette does, initially, approach her mother's face as a potential mirror. But rather than never seeing herself reflected in her mother, as Scharfman argues, Antoinette encounters in her mother a series of becomings (becoming-disillusioned, becoming-unstable) that she is expected to mirror. The most striking example of this is offered in the repeated image of Annette's frown, 'deep – it might have been cut with a knife' (17), in Antoinette. As Rochester later observes of his wife, 'I looked at the sad droop of her lips, the frown between her thick eyebrows, deep as if it had been cut with a knife' (114). This apparent realisation of the mother mirror image is enforced once again by the novel's ending, in which Antoinette's appearance as the madwoman surrounded by the flames of the burning estate house is a repetition of her mother's fate: 'I went into the hall again with the tall candle in my hand. It was then that I saw her – the ghost. The woman standing with streaming hair. She was surrounded by a gilt frame but I knew her' (154). Here Antoinette becomes both her mothers, Annette and Bertha, signifying for critics such as Scharfman a 'long-desired, long-delayed mirroring fusion' with the mother that gives Antoinette a 'paradoxical freedom through death' (Scharfman 1981: 104).[9] What such a reading ignores, however, is the way in which the ending represents a culmination of forces that have coerced Antoinette to mirror those aspects of her mother that she does not identify with, her pain and her madness: 'I hated this frown and once I touched her forehead trying to smooth it'; 'after I knew that she talked aloud to herself I was a little afraid of her' (17). Looking beyond the actual repetition of images which recall the mother figure – the barefooted woman, the burning house, the secluded madwoman – Rhys's novel depicts a process of becoming that

is stunted by being coerced (by expectation and habit) into a repetition of the same rather than difference.

Mirror images and doubles are discrepant throughout *Wide Sargasso Sea* because, as a repetition itself, Rhys's novel draws attention to the fact that there is no possible 'mirroring fusion' only, to use the Deleuzian formula, the eternal return of difference. Characters such as Rochester who fail to recognise the difference in repetition, who see in repetition only the recurrence of the same or the general and find in Antoinette only the recurring image of the madwoman in the attic that is her mother/Bertha, fail to realise the potential for re-dress in the virtual aspect of Brontë's novel. In this respect, he becomes the Rochester of *Jane Eyre* who claims 'Bertha Mason is mad and she came of a mad family. [...] Bertha, like a dutiful child, copied her parents' (Brontë 1990: 298). It is the fate of Antoinette's other mother, Bertha, that warns the reader against celebrating too readily any union with the mother, for she is precisely the image of creole madness that Rhys sought to deconstruct. Rhys is not the 'dutiful child' copying the mother text; rather *Wide Sargasso Sea* is a difficult double, a 'repetition-with-difference' (Harrison 1988: 135) as Nancy Harrison observes. It is an account of Antoinette's becoming-Bertha that continually repeats her difference (her becoming).

Rather than reading in Antoinette's alienation from her mother a sign of her fragmented psyche, the model of becoming that I have used to discuss Rhys's novel offers an understanding of identity as a series of masks. In turn, as Williams explains with respect to Deleuze, this demands a new approach to psychoanalysis based not on the validation of actual events or the recovery of an original trauma, but rather 'analysis "works" because roles and masks are authenticated. [...] It is a site where a way of creating other masks is given a seal of approval' (Williams 2003: 49). If we may be empowered by the authentication of our masks, then the converse also holds true: masks which are rejected creates alienation. This, I would argue, is precisely the trauma that Antoinette suffers. Her attempt to validate her identity as Antoinette Mason by embroidering it in fire red, her attempt to take on the role of the Miller's Daughter, her childhood mirror image in Tia, these all stand as masks (becomings) that are never authenticated. Her marriage to Rochester, his fixation on her sexuality and heritage, and the racial tensions of post-Emancipation Jamaica, these factors deny Antoinette's masks the approval she seeks. Instead, those masks which offer Antoinette the least degree of freedom are the ones that are approved: her becoming-Annette, becoming-Bertha. Thus, what the

reader witnesses is a series of becomings or masks, some of which are validated, some of which are not, and it is in the rejection of certain masks, forcing Antoinette to *become* like what she would have to be like to deserve her fate, that the greatest violence lies.

It is the denial of the significance of the virtual past, the ability to become in unforeseen ways, that Rhys most directly seeks to challenge in *Wide Sargasso Sea*. As a repetition itself, Rhys's novel differentiates *Jane Eyre* by actualising the series of becomings that lead up to the burning of Thornfield Hall. What results is new, drawn from the virtual aspect of the canon, repeating its difference. Rhys's open ending which only suggests that Antoinette finally enacts Bertha's role again exposes the expectancy of the reader and the desire to find in repetition the perfect mirror image: 'at last I know why I was brought here and what I have to do. There must have been a draught for the flame flickered and I thought it was out. But I shielded it with my hand and it burned up again to light me along the dark passage' (155–6). Although this moment is a repetition of Brontë's novel, it is not an actual repetition: it takes us behind the closed doors and 'dark passage[s]' of Thornfield Hall that cannot be accessed by Jane Eyre. As a result, Rhys's ending remains alive with the potential to become a very different story – the flame might go out, Antoinette might not follow the fate of Bertha foretold in her dream and in the life of her mother. Such a virtual possibility critics like Graham Huggan have identified in the novel's resolution: 'should we take Rhys's Antoinette for Brontë's Bertha, and interpret the ending of *Wide Sargasso Sea* accordingly as the prelude to an inevitable act of self-sacrifice? Or should we listen again to the resurrected Creole parrot? "Ché Coco, Ché Coco". Answering back, cheekily, to Her Mistress's Voice' (Huggan 1994: 657). It is in the discrepancy of repetition that Rhys's novel opens up to the virtual potential of Antoinette's narrative, foregrounding a series of becomings that, in illustrating how the protagonist becomes-Bertha, draws attention to the myriad ways in which things could have been very different.

The Deleuzian framework that this article has traced provides the opportunity to reread Rhys's postcolonial 'writing back' as an illustration of difference as well as repetition: challenging the reader's expectancy and presenting its own becoming-new through a differentiation of the virtual text of Brontë's novel. In the final analysis, Antoinette's claim that 'there are always two deaths, the real one and the one people know about' (106) not only prepares the reader for another death besides her suicide at Thornfield Hall (the death people know about), but displays a sensitivity towards understanding being as a series of becomings

and deaths. Like her mother whose 'death' she witnesses at the burning of Coulibri, Antoinette dies as one particular self as she becomes another: 'like when he wouldn't call me Antoinette, and I saw Antoinette drifting out of the window with her scents, her pretty clothes and her looking-glass' (147). Rhys's presentation of Antoinette's two deaths, 'two at least' (106), then, finds resonance with Deleuze's claim that 'every death is double', and that 'suicide is an attempt to make the two incommensurable faces coincide or correspond. However, the two sides do not meet, and every death remains double' (Deleuze 2004: 322–3). Bertha's suicide leaping from the rooftop of a blazing Thornfield Hall is discontinuous with Antoinette's inevitable, actual death. The impossibility of bringing together the two sides of death – the death of Antoinette as she becomes-Bertha and her actual suicide – is underscored by Rhys's omission of the anticipated death scene. Her suicide remains outside the bounds of *Wide Sargasso Sea*, for although Antoinette's becoming-Bertha brings her one step closer to her inevitable end, it is a death that Rhys leaves resolutely double, existing virtually in her own novel, only to be realised 'later' in *Jane Eyre* as the continuation of Bertha's story.

Notes

1. Despite Hallward's employment of Deleuze to demonstrate the self-defeating aims of postcolonialism, his distinction between a counter-colonial stance that is locked into a fixed dialogue between coloniser and coloniser and an alternative view that holds that 'any creative expression is irreducibly specific to (though not specified by) the situation of its articulation' (Hallward 2001: 62), is one which I adapt to delineate the postcolonial project. For further analysis of Hallward's problematic reading of postcolonialism, see Burns (2009).
2. As Sartre writes, 'the oppressors produce and maintain by force the evils that render the oppressed, in their eyes, more and more like what they would have to be like to deserve their fate' (Sartre 1974: xxvi).
3. Mardorossian also notes the parallel between Antoinette's dress slipping off one shoulder and the depiction of the Miller's Daughter (Mardorossian 1999: 1076).
4. Stuart Hampshire's *Spinoza and Spinozism* provides a lucid outline of Spinoza's single-substance philosophy. For further discussion of Spinoza's philosophy in a postcolonial context, see Burns (2009).
5. Jay Lampert similarly implies this sense of archiving in his description of the second synthesis as 'a "storehouse" of temporal moments' (Lampert 2006: 41). If the 'flaw in [this] metaphor is that it suggests inert memory packages' (41), then Williams's evocation of the Foucauldian/Derridean archive better underscores the creative force of the second synthesis. See, for example, Derrida's claim that 'the archive [. . .] is not only the place for stocking and for conserving an archivable content of the past which would exist in any case, as such, without the archive. [. . .] No, the technical structure of the archiving archive also determines the structure of the archivable content even in

its very coming into existence and in its relationship to the future. The activation produces as much as it records the event' (Derrida 1995: 17). Foucault's archive is similarly creative, particularly as that which drives the production of the new as differentiation: 'its threshold of existence is established by the break that separates us from what we can no longer say, and from what falls outside our discursive practice. [. . .] It causes the other and the outside to burst forth' (Foucault 1972: 130–1).

6. Colebrook's brief analysis of *Wide Sargasso Sea* remains one of the few Deleuzian readings of Rhys's work. In another Deleuzian reading, Carol Dell'Amico draws on Deleuze's account of masochism in *Coldness and Cruelty* in order to reread Rhys's early texts as expressions of a subversive female empowerment (Dell'Amico 2005: 57–95). The main body of recent criticism on *Wide Sargasso Sea*, however, has focused on Antoinette's ambivalent creoleness as the primary site of resistance to colonial/patriarchical orders (see Alcocer 2005: 160–6; Huggan 1994; Mardorossian 1999; Murdoch 2003; Simpson 2005: 111–15, 136).
7. Kloepfer's study presents an analysis of the specific repetitions of *Jane Eyre* in Rhys's novel, such as parallels between Jane and Antoinette's dreams (Kloepfer 1989: 154).
8. For further discussion of the mother/daughter relationship in Rhys's work, see Gunner (1994: 136–51), Simpson (2005: 8–16, 115–21), O'Connor (1986: 171–96), Kloepfer (1989: 142–58).
9. Following Scharfman, Klopfer and Gunner have similarly viewed the mother connection as empowering, allowing Antoinette to narrate her story (Kloepfer 1989: 147–8); or to challenge patriarchy (Gunner 1994: 143).

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McDeleuze: What's More Rhizomal than the Big Mac?

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Abstract

The popularity of Deleuze and Guattari is an undeniable precedent in current theoretical exchanges, and it could be stated without much contention that one's theoretical positioning must at some point deal with the salient conceptual offerings of Deleuze and Guattari, especially their double-opus, Anti-Oedipus and A Thousand Plateaus wherein a wealth of critique abounds. However, the significant trends concerning Deleuze and Guattari 'scholarship' may be jeopardised by the (ab)use of certain conceptual themes and methods in their work that are distorted and employed by big business looking to secure their legacies of power by means of a control mechanism that looks to subjugate an entire world by means of (to borrow a term from Mihai Spariosu) 'globalitarianism'. Our aim here will be to use McDonald's Corporation as an example of how the theoretical offerings of Deleuze and Guattari have been indirectly and hastily deployed for corporate ends, how these attempts are counter-Deleuzian, and to answer at least one of Žižek's criticisms against Deleuze.

Keywords: Deleuze, immaterial labour, corporate structure, rhizome, Žižek, nomadology

One of the most pressing problems facing Deleuze and Guattari scholarship is a criticism that Žižek evokes in *Organs without Bodies: Deleuze and Consequences* (2004); namely, that those who have some brief familiarity with the texts will misemploy the conceptual strategies found there for the purposes of advancing corporate interests. What if some post-Machiavellian corporateer reads the Deleuze and Guattari trinity of *Anti-Oedipus*, *A Thousand Plateaus* and *What is Philosophy?* What if the lessons gleaned there are distended or abused for nefarious corporate ends? One can only imagine the applications where such a

being reads the chapters on how to create concepts as how to create global corporate empires, or how to build a global corporate empire without micromanagement and accountability as a merely metaphoric transposition from the body without organs (BwO). And what of creating the business of pure affect? No longer relying on traditional monopoly capital, but global zones of intensity with rhizomal webworks that operate under a new 'virtual' digicratic order. These constructions are ghastly and do not demonstrate a careful reading of Deleuze and Guattari's oeuvre; however, even misapplications can run the perilous risk of actually succeeding as models and practices, to the detriment of those working to limit the viral capacity of global capitalism.

The new slogan of late capital is to appear to concede locally, dominate globally. One of the new developments that distinguishes contemporary capitalism from the Fordist economy is precisely the decentralisation and rhizomal expansion of the corporation that makes the evasion of national bodies of law a much simpler affair. Calling to account the major meta-corporations for environmental degradation, labour abuses abroad and the flow of wealth to alternate regions of the world that function as tax shelters has quickly become the central problem that governments today are now powerless to face, for to pinion the expansionist policies of certain corporations only leads to the more disastrous economic repercussions of *glissement*; that is, the corporations are fully in their power to dismantle their operations in one region and set upon a more favourable terrain. Wal-Mart, for instance, can effectively de- and reterritorialise a given terrain by selecting areas of employment vacuum, offering the desperate multitude jobs, and effectively reinscribe and reterritorialise that region as yet another town that bears the indelible stamp of Wal-Mart, even to the detriment of local fledgling industries or environmental concerns.[1] Like fungus after a storm, these meta-corporations can pop up anywhere and add to the resonance factor of its rhizomal power nexus as it is surreptitiously wielded inter-regionally. As Laclau points out, the disparate elements come to resonate and thereby constitute the emergence of a fascist nexus. However, the strength of this nexus is its ability to shift its centre so that the archaic 'centre' is constantly shifting and adapting to new phenomena. This still classifies, *qua* Deleuze and Guattari's definition, as a fascicular root-tree of sorts rather than a true rhizome, but trees look like rhizomes when one is encompassed by the mad proliferation of its varying foliage. What makes the true determination or cut between the two models is precisely the awareness and critique of the ubiquity of strategies

employed by these meta-corporations that merely champion diversity within prescribed limits rather than true affirmative differences – to cater to local tastes while maintaining an Aristotelian taxonomic-style structure at its global base. For example, McDonald's has perfected this to an art: by catering to local-specific tastes as a kind of soft cultural concession (in Maine, the McLobster), McDonald's effectively reinscribes the social margin into its totalising menu, and makes it bear the stamp of the corporation so that there could come a point when, in Maine, the lobster industry will be completely non-distinct from the corporation that has absorbed it into its product array.

I. McDeleuze

When careful fidelity to the text is not heeded, it is no secret that constitutive and wilful misreadings may result. Let us consider Deleuze and Guattari's notion of the concept and how it seems already installed (per bad reading) in the concept that is McDonald's. What can be more crudely and physically rhizomal than the Big Mac? The size of the 'beef' patty itself will shrink or expand in anticipation of, or response to, cultural demand. McDonald's is an intriguing paradigm case for discussing corporate global expansion. The 'intensive affects' that impersonally de- and reterritorialise the traditional meat and potatoes fare as 'burger and fries' are merely a metonymic transition, and the 'flow of becoming' is also rendered crudely in the McDonald's system by designing seating that will be uncomfortable after twenty minutes (as well as the strategic use of 'panic colours') so that there is a constant flow of new customers supplanting the old.

Was Ray Kroc, the founder of the modern McDonald's and an industrious opportunist who bought out the previous roadside burger stand from its originators, an ante-Deleuzian? Does he not qualify as a 'concept creator' in that rigorous Deleuzian sense? If a concept 'is only created as a function of problems which are thought to be badly understood or badly posed' (Deleuze and Guattari [1990] (1994): 16), did not Kroc find in the old concept of McDonald's a problem of non-expansionism, non-proliferation and limited access, thereby applying his own conceptual innovations to resolve or repose the problem differently? Kroc began as a salesman for Dixie cups and appended the task of selling milkshake machines that could multiply production, and so incorporated these as 'concepts' to the newly posed problem of a fledgling burger stand. As Deleuze and Guattari write, 'In any concept there are usually bits or components that come from other concepts, which corresponded

to other problems and presupposed other planes . . . each concept carries out a new cutting-out, takes on new contours, and must be reactivated or recut' (Deleuze and Guattari [1990] (1994): 18). Each of the concepts had to share their zones. For Kroc, the problems posed were the efficacy of cups, milkshake machinery and fast food restaurants. By uniting these concepts, or at least their components, he was able to recast the new creation as the concept of McDonald's that has mostly been handed down today in its current form. Inspired as well by the use of cartoon characters, Kroc was able to respond to the problem of how to entice families to frequent these restaurants by targeting his marketing to children. These 'conceptemes' were made to resonate in such a way as to ensure a heterogeneous endoconsistency that made each concept component indiscernible in their neighbourhood or zone. The exoconsistency of the McDonald's concept was its subsequent alliances with various other concepts: movie promotions, toys and the like. The McDonald's concept speaks its Event, the haecceity of its expression. The actual restaurant is not determined by its coordinates on a map; it only suffices that it appears somewhere, anywhere, as an intensive ordinate. The means by which it absorbs other concept components assures its resonant becomings, such that 'each concept will therefore be considered as the point of coincidence, condensation, or accumulation of its own components' (Deleuze and Guattari [1990] (1994): 20). The further danger in misreading may be noted here when the concept is considered in properties both absolute and relative:

> It is relative to its own components, to other concepts, to the plane on which it is defined, and to the problems it is supposed to resolve; but it is absolute through the condensation it carries out, the site it occupies on the plane, and the conditions it assigns to the problem. As whole it is absolute, but insofar as it is fragmentary it is relative. (Deleuze and Guattari [1990] (1994): 21)

Even the variations within the concept are inseparable. However, we can see how this can easily be misread: McDonald's, as a concept packed with inseparable components upon a larger plane of expansionist capital, will be absolute in the appropriations (condensations) it can make wherever it is located, but will be fragmentary insofar as there is no one expression of the concept of McDonald's that could truly be said to function as the true and distinct 'archetype' since its success depends on local variations catering to local tastes. Although corporate decentralisation theories have aimed to resolve the dangers of vertical-based power distribution, differential concepts still function as auxiliary

to categorical thinking that functions as an a priori tracing rather than a non-hierarchical cartography.

The basis for isolating McDonald's is not to critique this particular corporation for not showing fidelity to Deleuze and Guattari's concepts, for this would presuppose an intention on behalf of this corporation to do so; rather, it will be of some utility to demonstrate the disagreement between multinational corporate practices and the ideas of Deleuze and Guattari as a means to answer Žižek's accusation that these ideas actually enable contemporary corporate logics. There are confusing similarities between what Deleuze and Guattari describe as the rhizome and the practices of corporations, but these similarities are merely appearances – a league of representations.

II. The Rhetoric of McDonald's

One need not turn to the legion of texts that criticise the practices of McDonald's Corporation since McDonald's own publicly released annual report discloses the rhetorical devices it employs to ensure brand loyalty and the maximisation of profit. In releasing these reports to the public, doubtless in response to critics who have lambasted the corporation for lack of disclosure, McDonald's abides by one of its initial guiding 'ethics': namely, that trust is hard to earn and easy to lose. Rhetorically, releasing an annual report is partially designed to 'earn' that public trust and to maintain its global credibility as a dynamic, caring corporation sensitive to the needs of all its employees and customers. There are frequent appeals to the 'founding principles' of Ray Kroc, verging on the religious near-deification of their founder. The overarching ethical conduit by which McDonald's wants to be perceived is the association between food production and (moral) value. Nothing can be more personal than what one eats and what one believes, and so it is essential for McDonald's, in order to be prosperous, to tread in such a way as to appeal to a reductionist 'common value' that encircles a perceived majoritarian set of values. In doing so, the corporation produces a regulatory framework flexible enough to allow regional differences while still maintaining a totalising system of common relevant moral values. Nowhere is this false or negative difference more evident than in its business model, 'Freedom within the Framework'. This model, pictorially demonstrated in their 2004 report on Corporate Responsibility, is a series of overlapping 'spheres' governed by both a central nexus of locations and corporate revenues, and an encompassing outer sphere that unites the structure into a

whole. Three 'rhizomatic' elastic spheres issue from the central nexus, namely owners/operators, company employees and suppliers (Skinner and Bell 2004). Presumably, the 'freedom' within this framework is the expansive character of the three spheres by which the centre sphere is fed by titration of profits. As well, floating as if in a soup, are three corresponding aspects that determine the encompassing sphere: policies (good business conduct and environmental policy to become the best employer, to give back to the community which presupposes something taken away, and holding themselves in the highest possible ethical standards). These three determining aspects have a dubiety about them, and this is precisely due to their substitutability in responding to the dynamic demands of any regionalist conditions that may later impact upon the whole. This model is more of an organism than a Deleuzian BwO since its power rests in a power structure that is governed by the crude metrics of profit and amount of locations. Is McDonald's, despite its seeming 'rhizomatesque' features, still a centralised organism? According to Jim Skinner (Vice-Chairman) and Charles Bell (President and CEO),

> Decentralisation is fundamental to our business model – and to our corporate responsibility efforts. At the corporate level, we provide a global framework of common goals, policies, and guidelines rooted in our core values. Within this framework, individual geographic business units have the freedom to develop programs and performance measures appropriate to local conditions. We view this model as a source of strength.

Decentralisation within limits: That is, there is still a centralising feature of McDonald's model, and this is located precisely in those 'core values' it is 'rooted in'. The moral overcoding is fascicular, a 'root book' of values that regulate the corporate organism, ensuring that its claims of 'decentralisation' is a confused one, especially since it (a) is stated as 'fundamental', (b) operates according to a global framework and (c) is rooted in core values that regulate the peripheral functions of the corporate structure. In essence, it would appear that decentralisation has been loosely appended as a buzzword or vacuous homily. McDonald's also discloses more than it perhaps realises by claiming its corporate strength in accordance with its 'Freedom within a Framework' model, stating that it can maintain its corporate governance globally while being flexible enough in the particulars to cater to local and regional differences, pending that they do not violate the categorical unity. This effectively trumps any truly affirmative difference from engaging and altering the corporate totality, and so rather consigns difference to paltry

variations under a global framework that is itself inflexible. Ray Kroc remains the unseen religious figurehead (as McDonald's rather prefers to use cartoon icons by which to channel the 'divine' corporate influence), acting as a kind of 'Holy Ghost' that spiritualises and concretises the core values the corporation relies upon. Nowhere is this more apparent than in its motto: 'At McDonald's, we believe that good governance starts with good values'. Harking to a worn Platonic dictate on the construction of a State, McDonald's does not deviate far from the common sense notion of governance. Words such as 'governance' and 'value' are frequently repeated as ultimate signifieds by which we are expected to believe that indeed McDonald's upholds these terms in all its operations. And even if these values were being upheld, it is unlikely that they were selected democratically or that those who are employed at the lowest employment tier would be invited or encouraged to dispute these values. The looming figure of hegemony is most present when values are 'handed down' to be 'obeyed', even if they come in the guise of generally accepted consensus or are articulated in the most broad and vague terms.

McDonald's does not stop at seemingly appropriating (albeit badly) Deleuzian themes, but also makes blatant use of various postcolonial and postindustrialist terms such as 'stakeholders'. For example, its global 'sensitivity' is trotted out here: 'And whether it's called "good corporate citizenship" or "social responsibility," we take seriously our commitment to conducting our business in a way that respects the world around us and the issues that matter most to you', and

> we work toward responsible actions by understanding the perspectives and needs of our customers and other important stakeholders, by collaborating with experts to understand issues and opportunities and by inspiring the people in our system – company employees, owner/operators and suppliers – to share and act on these core values.

What are these issues exactly, and how can their relevance gain purchase on this reductionist, universalised and structurally empty 'you'? If McDonald's could not assume a common set of values, and if these values could be demonstrated not to hold for all persons for all times, the credibility of their regulative framework would be in jeopardy. In desiring to provide meals and a dining out experience that exceeds its customers' expectations, McDonald's once again blunders in assuming a common set of predictable expectations, what their content would be and therefore how to exceed them.[2]

As to the globalising structure of McDonald's, McDonald's relies on its 'Plan to Win' business strategy: 'We manage our worldwide

operations with McDonald's global Plan to Win, which identifies five P's that drive our business – Products, People, Place, Price and Promotion'. Apart from what may have been construed in the planning offices, a clever use of alliteration and a mnemonic device for better corporate encoding, we find that these five P's are as empty and vacuous as they are attempts at totalisation and reduction. Instead of considering the various aspects of their business as a rich dynamism, a *planomenon* of intercalated becomings, they have instead relied on a rigid stratification, an *ecumenon* of particular determinations that function in concert according to an overcoding moral set which euphemistically is dubbed their plan to win. We may take especial issue with this notion of winning, most notably as it is draped upon their core values, and pose the question as to what winning means. It is not merely a victory of maximising profits per quarter, but a moral victory as well – that the McDonald's worldview of what morally ought to be is realised and ensures the perpetuation of its regulative moral codes. McDonald's succinctly states,

> We provide a framework of common values, policies and business strategies and then empower our owner/operators, our suppliers and company staff to contribute in ways that reflect their unique expertise and local circumstances. Like other parts of our business, McDonald's commitment to corporate responsibility follows this 'freedom within a framework' approach.

Heavy yet most likely vacuous words like 'responsibility' are not innocuous additions to their corporate mandate as they seek to respond to mounting criticism that McDonald's is yet another cold, faceless, profit-accumulating machine that only provides homogeneity as its major export:

> Responsibility at McDonald's means striving to do what is right, being a good neighbor in the community and integrating social and environmental priorities into our restaurants and our relationships with suppliers and business partners . . . We have a responsibility to maintain our values and high standards as we provide food that is affordable to a wide range of customers.

And again,

> Our restaurants and drive-thru's will be clean, relevant and inviting to the customers of today and tomorrow. We have a responsibility to manage our business by integrating environmental considerations into daily operations and by constantly seeking ways to add value to the community.[3]

To what extent these 'environmental considerations' actually enter into McDonald's schema seems to be tacked on, and McDonald's

claim to the addition of value to a community sounds hollow without further qualification. One may question how a McDonald's actually adds value to any community rather than reduces value to a flat common set of prefabricated corporate ideals, low-income employment, a menu of false choices, perpetuating animal cruelty, diminishing the profitability of smaller non-chain restaurants, infantilising the consumer public, the degradation of fine cuisine to mere convenience, massive garbage production and contributing to rampant obesity. In what way is McDonald's representing 'responsibility'? In recent years, 'healthy' choices have been added to the menu in response to a growing concern over the deleterious effects of fast food.

What is this 'healthy' turn? On pages 6–8 of the report, McDonald's repeats its mantra of food = value by making its first argument one of *ad populam* (the average consumer's values, highlighting a specific case example of an average consumer, quite politically inflected by the selection of a visible ethnic minority) and then moves towards an appeal to authority (a semi-alarmist message by Professor Paul Gately, member of McDonald's Global Advisory Council in Balanced Lifestyles). Dr Gately does not make a firm connection between skyrocketing overweight and obesity rates and the steps McDonald's is taking to help alleviate the problem, but rather states that,

> In a world where technological advances and our risk-averse culture have removed opportunities for children to be physically active, we need to find ways to give kids positive experiences of physical activity, exercise and sports. For children, what's critical is engagement and fun – and that's something McDonald's does very well.

After Gately shifts the blame for child obesity to broad social conditions of technology and safety (making sweeping generalisations, we might add), he asserts that McDonald's offers the following solutions: (1) providing 'fun' (which is a vacuous signifier), 'engagement', food choices within an 'improved nutritional matrix', convenience and good taste. Gately points to McDonald's as a 'powerful vehicle of change', and sees McDonald's role as provoking community changes via business and governmental partnerships to support and promote physical activity for children. The connection between the products McDonald's serves and physical activity among children is disparate and disingenuous at best.

On the whole, it seems, McDonald's is still a fascicular corporate organism abiding by inflexible moral schemas. Despite its claims to decentralisation and its appearance of being an immanent entity, these are illusory at best, and are still transcendent apparatuses of capture.

One may see how a facile engagement with the works of Deleuze and Guattari may actually perpetuate the stratified ends of corporate expansionism and proliferation, although these seem to be light concessions and nominal utilisations of theory terminology.

III. Fear Capital

McDonald's has only conformed to environmental and health standards when external pressure has been applied, and largely for reasons of public relations. For example, McDonald's has switched to the use of organic milk in its milk-based drinks, and uses coffee beans certified by the Rainforest Alliance. In addition, it has also aimed to reduce, if not entirely eliminate, its polystyrene packaging. However, the reason for embracing these environmental practices has a bearing on market practices that seek to broaden consumer appeal during a time when environmental issues are more predominantly of concern to the consumers. Interestingly enough, no mention of past corporate liability is made – given that McDonald's, among many other corporations, had contributed to environmental degradation for decades, thereby making McDonald's culpable for its share of deleterious environmental impact. Nor does McDonald's new turn towards environmental sustainability and corporate responsibility address the issue of overstressed farmland and standardised destruction of arable land used as feedlots for cows. The failures and contradictions in McDonald's Corporation's attempt to foster a new 'green' and 'fair' image are legion as they continue to patronise agribusinesses over smaller local farms, have quashed all attempts at allowing a unionisation of its workers, abetted the increasing Americanisation of global trade and American cultural imperialism, continued to limit biodiversity through dense central food processing facilities, and the unsustainable use of water and energy to produce every one of its menu items. In sum, although the corporation reports its commitment to sustainable practice, it is unsurprisingly a public-relations smokescreen. As well, McDonald's continues to direct its marketing enticements towards children in order to ensure lifelong brand loyalty, and this is effectively done through collaborative product tie-ins with toy manufacturers and movie companies.

McDonald's, like many corporations that utilise the same or a similar model, seems to operate on a plane of immanence since it need not refer to, or depend on, a transcendent state apparatus. It operates its flows through network relations as a series of capital accumulations. Deterritorialisation and uncoded flows – essential conditions for the

spread of free market economics – have indeed overcome the shadow of state imperialism as it has been generally defined; however, as Hardt and Negri point out, the segmentarity of the social has become more pronounced rather than less (Hardt and Negri 2000: 366). Economic theorists like Leo Strauss were instrumental in advocating an economic model with a minimum of government interference, a view championed and put into action by neo-conservatives like Ronald Reagan, Donald Rumsfeld, Richard Perle, George W. Bush and so on. Once the 'emancipation' of the market could engage in a regulatory axiomatisation supplanting the presence or perceived need for 'big government', welfare-state policies were downsized or phased out entirely to such an extent that even the then-President Bill Clinton was forced by market pressures to abandon his campaign promises of restoring social spending. One of the significant, yet under-examined, shifts was in the management of the US defence programme. Despite a spike in defence spending in the last decade, a disproportionately small amount of this money funds troops or their equipment. Ironically, a lion's share of defence funding is earmarked for civilian salaries of those who work for Department of Defense contracted corporations such as Lockheed-Martin, Raytheon and so on. Under the guise of defence budgets directly financing military personnel, the majority is spent on contracting corporations that will set up factories to increase domestic economic stability. In this way, the defence budget is tantamount to a jobs programme that replaces other forms of more socially based fiscal stimulus initiatives. When lobbyists favourable to these corporations, or former employees of these corporations enter into prominent positions of political power, political interests can become confused with corporate interests, ensuring that the state becomes economically beholden to these contracted corporations for fear of creating massive unemployment. The second irony concerns the apparent purpose of increased defence spending: the worst possible scenario for the sustainability of what Eisenhower first coined as the military-industrial complex is for there to be a war since funds would no longer sufficiently finance the jobs programme that corporations operate without spending more money on the war as well. The rather Orwellian scenario of increased defence spending when there is no war is part of a concerted fear programme that ensures the rigidifying of social segmentation. 'Fear of violence, poverty, and unemployment is in the end the primary and immediate force that creates and maintains these new segmentations' (Hardt and Negri 2000: 339). The choice between increased defence spending for capital accumulation

and that of war is captured in the disjunction Deleuze and Guattari identify:

> Either the State has at its disposal a violence that is not channeled through war – either it uses police officers and jailers in place of warriors, has no arms and no need of them, operates by immediate, magical capture, 'seizes' and 'binds', preventing all combat – or, the State acquires an army, but in a way that presupposes a juridical integration of war and the organisation of a military function. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 352)

In the case of the US defence industry, there would appear to be both, working curiously at cross-purposes.

The question would emerge as to what sort of 'fear' McDonald's utilises in order to ensure its place in sustaining a severe socio-global segmentation. Very much like the above US Department of Defense example, the fear is primarily of economic provenance.

IV. McNomadology?

Domination and resistance are always at war in what Deleuze and Guattari call the body without organs. In this perpetual in-folding (*Zwiefalt*), the body (which need not be a physical body) is perpetually dismantling and remaking itself. The organism resides as a stratum on the BwO: 'a phenomenon of accumulation, coagulation, and sedimentation that, in order to extract useful labour from the BwO, imposes upon it forms, functions, bonds, dominant and hierarchised organisations, organised transcendence' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 159). If we take the BwO as the 'scene' or the 'plane' upon which a war machine is organised, we must take care not to hastily declare this an ideological aspect. If taken just on the level of the axioms, nomadology *appears* to share a zone with the methods of McDonald's. The first axiom plainly states that the war machine is exterior to the state apparatus (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 351). As we have mentioned, the flow of contemporary capital operates with flows that are freed from the state; however, it would be too quick to make an equivocation between corporation and war machine. If we are to consider corporations like McDonald's as employing a strategy similar to Deleuze and Guattari's example of the game Go, we find that perhaps each individual franchise is like that anonymous piece that operates situationally, 'bordering, encircling, shattering' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 353). Unlike Chess, for McDonald's there is not the instance of occupying maximum space with a minimum of pieces since the McDonald's model operates by

ubiquity and proliferation of its franchises. As well, its operations model offers a minimum of quality at the highest quantity, recoding quantity as quality.[4] Go 'succeeds' by deterritorialising from within whereas Chess must confront from the outside. But whereas Go thrives upon a smooth space, free of the metric and striated space of Chess (the state), McDonald's still employs striation at the micro-level, the stratum of the organism that makes McDonald's its own kind of state – a micro-state, despotic in the way it organises itself between the governing and the governed inside its corporate body. If there was a war machine inside McDonald's, it would only seem to be a valorisation of liberal revolution: the formation of unions and demanding of universal rights. Rather, the war machine would utilise the aspects of labour prized by the contemporary state: mobility and flexibility. The labour force would not ask permission to form a union, but would rather form clandestine packs and gatherings, using the corporate methods of extreme efficiency for viral purposes. Far from becoming a Marxist romanticism that aims to reify the worker as an emancipated subject, the labour force as war machine would take on the role of non-subjectifiable, anonymous Go pieces, virally consuming from within and deterritorialising the McDonald's structure.

When once capital had a strategic set of purposes, usually linked with the state's purposes, it has since become almost Spinozist: it wishes to persevere in its own aspect, to continue accumulating without any further purpose but accumulation itself. Blind, vagabond, capital becomes a nomadic accumulator with the sole purpose of growing itself: capital as cancer.[5] The method of proliferation that McDonald's uses as it franchises itself across the globe appears to have this cancerous or nomadic element. This, however, comes with at least one crucial difference: the method of proliferation more resembles that of a religious model than it does a nomadic distribution. McDonald's grants the authority for another individual or group to conduct commercial operations on the condition that the franchisee conforms the root principles as set down by the corporation's laws. Minor variations are permitted if not encouraged as long as these variations do not violate the core principles. This transcendent ordering mechanism that regulates each component, each franchise, is partially what makes McDonald's more of an organism than a war machine.

If we follow Deleuze and Guattari's definition of rhizome with its six principles (connectivity, heterogeneity, multiplicity, asignifying rupture, cartography and decalcomania), we find moments where corporations like McDonald's seem to abide by a rhizomal programme. Most notably,

the aspect of asignifying rupture most closely resembles the decoding flows and de/re-territorialising strategy of capital, but more specifically, a decentralised corporate structure allows for local breakdowns and ruptures that do not endanger the whole. If a McDonald's restaurant fails to secure a certain profit level to keep it viable in one area, it can be shut down and reopened elsewhere. Since the success of the corporation is not contingent upon a rooted and fixed spatiogeography, it can merely take up operations elsewhere. The second strongest rhizomal aspect would be McDonald's capacity for cartographic expansion; it has free ingress and egress as a corporation in being able to enter and exit local and national markets throughout the globe. However, its internal structure does not admit of this aspect, preferring to manage its employees according to a rigid hierarchy. Multiplicity is demonstrated through domination and absorption, forming a unity of multiples that contain the source and target cultures in any given market in addition to its franchise proliferation mechanisms. However, this, too, does not qualify as an actual multiplicity since this form of domination and subversion is somewhat Hegelian in nature, forcing a synthesis by means of the *Aufhebung* of the cultural market it inhabits. Although recent trends in corporations like McDonald's have forced them to recontextualise their practices given the current increase in environmental concerns, this is not auto-derived as much as it is externally imposed by both a response to critics and an attempt to sustain consumer trust. One could also say that McDonald's employs rhizomal connectivity through the ability to construct an aggregate labour force wherever it happens to be. However, this too succumbs to a process of labour exploitation and subjugation. Even in this age of vector and network capitalism, corporations are still beholden to similar processes for their own sustainability as profit machines. A rhizome does not need to appeal to reactive methods in order to expand itself, whereas a corporation still contains within it the relatively unchanged phases of capital recovery towards expansion such as performing management changes, retrenchment and divestiture, restructuring, market/product reorientation, improved controls, improved marketing, and increase in plant and machinery expenditure (or improvements thereupon). With such methods that would be considered reactive, even today's corporations lack the critical apparatus and structural flexibility to implement a truly rhizomal programme.

There is also the darker shadow cast by McDonald's when it subordinates local customs and eating habits while claiming to mobilise local talents and encourage cultural diversity by the artificial appendage

of adding 'local' menu choices to its usual fare. Reducing culture to clothing and cuisine only serves a market purpose that simplifies and sanitises that culture for 'quaint' consumption by a presumed elite homogeneous group that can regard said cultures as secondary to their own. McDonald's effectively makes cultural consumption – culture based on mercantile utility – 'safe' for both the source and target cultures. For the source culture that is sanitised and emulated, it provides the illusion of cultural sensitivity. For the target culture that may consume these items, it provides a sense of satisfying the 'exotic', a false communion with the Other that serves to assuage guilt. For the source culture, a division may take place that recodes the cultural form from which the new menu option derives, a schism that may cause the consumer to become a flaneur in one's own culture. As a form of cultural and ecological imperialism, McDonald's – as well as other global fast food chains – aims to construct a new programme of eating habits as part of the larger programme of marketing it as an 'experience'.

V. Žižek contra Deleuze

One of the enduring criticisms Žižek makes against Deleuze in *Organs without Bodies* would be in the manner by which Žižek flattens and reduces Deleuze's insight of the rhizomatic multiplicity as being at odds with itself: between a leftist counter-capitalist ideology and being decidedly apolitical. Amid the raft of charges that Deleuze is merely touting ideology, that there is a secret complicity with Hegelianism, and an uncritical admiration of Spinoza, the most serious charge for the purposes of this article is that Deleuze and Guattari somehow provide the tools necessary for corporations to bolster their legacies of global power. Žižek goes on to criticise the Deleuze and Guattari project indirectly, especially in dubbing Hardt and Negri's *Empire* as a naïve revision of socialism (Žižek 2004: 196). What is fundamentally lost in Žižek's accusation is contact with the *esprit* of *A Thousand Plateaus*; namely, that Deleuze and Guattari are not advancing a concrete socio-political programme, but rather are providing readers with a conceptual toolkit. For Žižek to make the leap to the consequences of (mis)using those conceptual tools is an exercise in speculation since it would presuppose that the tools themselves have only one possible use, which in Žižek's criticism would be to strengthen the hand of late capital. To be fair, this is but one of perhaps several possibilities, but as we demonstrated supra, the current operational methods of contemporary corporations like McDonald's do not and

cannot adopt Deleuze and Guattari's concepts with strict fidelity without endangering their earning potentials derived from hierarchical controls. If corporations like McDonald's were to make use of those tools according to the effects they would inevitably produce, the rhizomatic nature of these tools would reorganise what we understand as the multinational corporation into a model incommensurate with economic domination and control. A 'rhizomatic' corporation would be devoid of any hierarchical structure, and would not operate according to a preset of conditions that orients its profit-accumulating activities. As well, a rhizomatic corporation would not have homogenising social effects, but would actively connect with, and produce, differences based on cultural, aesthetic, political and economic affects. We should not confuse dominant capitalist nations with their continued deindustrialisation via the exporting of labour to developing nations as an example of decentralisation since the central profit-accumulating apparatus still resides in the place of the corporation's provenance. Moreover, if the corporate structure abided by a rhizomal model, there would be free and unobstructed access to all employment roles and privileges according to the principles of connectivity and heterogeneity; there would be no 'ladders' to climb since every point of a corporate rhizome would have connective accessibility. Despite the increase in 'interfacing' which appears to grant the worker more decision-making capacity to conduct 'cooperative' labour as a socially interactive force, the categorical mandate of the corporation is still centred on the means by which to gain control over the worker-subject. Although more control is vested in the worker-subject through cooperative labour, the subjectivity of the worker must conform to the preconditioned set of expectations to avoid any deviations. And so, akin to Isaiah Berlin's notion of negative freedom, the worker-subject's freedom is within a given set of parameters that surreptitiously conform to corporate interests. Freedom within limits acts as a kind of enclosure mechanism that assures some degree of distance control of the worker-subject.

One of the added productions beyond commodities for immaterial labour in a post-Fordist economy is that of communication – the social relation of information capital. The inscription of the worker-subject into a wider spectrum of the production-consumption network also has as its outcome the production of a particular kind of subjectivity as a goal. This kind of subjectivity differs from the variety that is generally perceived as celebratory of free choice: it is a subjectivity that grants the illusion of self-mastery through choices that still must come to the same result (if A must go to B, the creative worker can devise any method

so long as B is reached). It is also the variety of subjectivity that, rather than becoming enslaved to the machine, one is instead subjected to it. As well, the 'new' subjectivity belonging to immaterial labour proper still abstracts from the individual, still reduces that worker to a 'knowledge capital dispensary' in a relay network that is governed by an overarching set of corporate ends. The value of the knowledge that enters into this relay is judged on how well it advances the goals of corporate efficiency, imposing a system of valuation even upon the dissemination and cooperation of information relayed in a labour network.

What remains in current corporate trends, as exemplified by McDonald's, and despite the movement towards decentralising corporate networks, is that the appearance of the rhizome is just that: an appearance. Contemporary capitalism by whichever name we give it – vector, cognitive, network, grounded theory – still plays a predominant role in the shaping of subjectivity on behalf of subjects, even if the methods are clandestine. A rhizomal corporation, if such a thing could ever exist, would be a multiplicity, would allow the component labour within it to develop according to its own cartography rather than have a tracing imposed upon it.

Žižek makes two critical mistakes in his reading of Deleuze. First, he reads Deleuze as 'pro-capitalist', which assumes Deleuze is valorising capital rather than explaining some of its tendencies without making valuations that have no place in a conceptual project. From there, Žižek imputes a variety of consequences that would result from a *particular* application of such concepts. Second, Žižek's understanding of the rhizome appears flawed given that a true application of the rhizome to multinational corporations will prove incommensurate to the existing structure of either. Instead, what we may be left with are corporate trends that borrow representations construed from these concepts to further their own agendas. What our McDonald's example demonstrated – and what presumably a similar study on other multinational corporations would as well – is that a representation of a rhizome is not a rhizome, but just another apparatus of capture.

Notes

1. One deleterious use of 'deterritorialisation' and recoding of flows, albeit not with full fidelity to the way Deleuze and Guattari employ these terms, has been in the way Wal-Mart has utilised predatory pricing to ensure a zone of commercial control in any given area that it 'captures'.
2. Aside from the ambiguous 'subject' this statement alludes to, there appears to be a quiet equivalence between social responsibility and corporate citizenship.

3. Nested in this statement is a rather non-environmental consideration: the contentious use and encouragement of drive-thru's. Recently, McDonald's partnered with Sinopec, China's second-largest oil producer, to promote and encourage the use of personal motor vehicles at its restaurant locations in East Asia. This corporate partnership adds substance to the seemingly odd use of the word 'relevant' in relation to drive-thru's.
4. This quantity = quality distinction is an insight formulated by George Ritzer's book *The McDonaldization of Society* (1993), wherein he also isolates three other McDonald's characteristics such as uniformity, calculability and a very narrow definition of efficiency.
5. This claim is drawn from Deleuze's occasional comparisons between cancer and capitalism as well as McMurtry's seminal article 'The Cancer Stage of Capitalism'. I make an attempt to clarify this distinction a bit further in 'Transcendent and Immanent Capital' in *Azimute* (2004: online).

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Forum Introduction: Sense, Sensation and Deleuze's Transcendental Empiricism

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The three papers in this forum were independently presented at the Second *Deleuze Studies* Conference in Cologne, August 2009. That they belonged together was quickly recognised. Each author focuses on the interplay of sense and sensation as the crux of Deleuze's transcendental empiricism. But note that each author takes the interplay as primary. Only given the interplay can it propose to the philosopher Deleuze possible approaches to its workings. Thus in all three papers sense and sensation are outcomes, just as transcendental empiricism is an outcome. All three papers, already familiar with Deleuze, work back in order to work forward. Sense and sensation, as well as their logics, turn out to be provisional as only one way of reaching another goal, something that makes all this effort worthwhile.

But as long as these concepts happen to be available at the moment, they suggest the following assertions: Sense without concomitant sensation is void, and sensation without correlative sense is totally indistinct. Yet there has never been a need to start from scratch. The differential material of sensation is always already immanent, although for the most part not actualised, and the fractal, self-organisational equipment of sense is also always already immanent, even if for the most part virtual and unrealised.

Humans are condemned or privileged to enter at birth into a fully furnished, fully interpreted world. The majority takes this world for granted. Many opt out, hoping for a better deal elsewhere. But a few affirm their existence by choosing to live again to the fullest the human condition as it has been passed down to them, affirming through self-effacement a truly sensational world in every possible sense that can be made to shine through them with the splendid impersonality of a fourth person singular.

Fourth person singulars constitute a manifold of centres in an eccentric world. All together they are one but each is unique, different

from all the others. Each is a monad, *a life*, what in the present world takes form as the materialised sense of a life: not biography but Event.

Baumgarten may not have been an exciting writer or a major philosopher, and he hardly rates a readable biography, but through him shines the inspiration of an aesthetics that gave impetus to a rebellious Romanticism. Nietzsche may have been a loner and a misfit who overstated his ideas because no one listened, but through him shines the heat of a revelation whose political consequences continue to play out against an all-consuming, consumption-oriented nihilism. And what about Deleuze himself? What shines through Deleuze is the active acceptance of the role he as actor must assume together with his immanent director not so much to ensure the integrity of his own works but to challenge the self-serving parochialism of so much institutional philosophy.

Forums like this are meant to put some spark into the philosophy business. The authors welcome feedback.

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Analogon Rationis: Baumgarten, Deleuze and the 'Becoming Girl' of Philosophy

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Abstract

Baumgarten's Enlightenment *Aesthetica* provides an important philosophical *analogon* to Deleuze's alignment of the 'logic of sense' and the 'logic of sensation'. By linking serious reason with its 'other', frivolous feeling, the book greatly influenced Herder and the Romantic movement. Baumgarten called aesthetics 'logic's younger sister'. Like Deleuze he propagates nothing less than the 'becoming-girl' of philosophy.

Keywords: aesthetics, feeling, Enlightenment philosophy, becoming-other, Baumgarten, Deleuze

> 'Reason is a kind of feeling.' (Deleuze 1991: 30)

Seen in retrospect, Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten (1714–62) is no doubt one of the minor figures in the syllabus of eighteenth-century German philosophy. This is probably not much of a surprise given that he died at the age of 48 without having completed his most significant book *Aesthetica* and wrote almost exclusively in Latin. *Aesthetica*, for instance, was translated into German in its entirety only two years ago, and, chronologically speaking, it was literally stuck somewhere between Leibniz and Kant. Baumgarten, however, was not only a rigorous logician in the Wolffian tradition of mid-eighteenth-century Germany; not only an 'eminent analyst' as Kant called him in *Critique of Pure Reason* (Kant 2003: 22n). Kant, in fact, is known to have used Baumgarten's *Metaphysica* (1739) as the basis of many a lecture in Königsberg, but Baumgarten was also a poet who wrote verses in Latin on a daily basis. In an early piece entitled *Meditationes philosophicae de nonnullis ad poema pertinentibus* [Philosophical Meditations on Some Requirements of the Poem], he combined these two interests in a first theory of sensibility, the prototype of what he would later establish as the first systematic theory of aesthetics.

The attempt to align the philosophy of Baumgarten, whose work is often associated with the rigid rationalism of the Wolffian tradition, with that of Gilles Deleuze, whose writings contain no direct reference to Baumgarten's work, may at first glance seem far-fetched. There are, however, parallels between the two philosophers, especially when the focus is set on the aspect of 'aesthetic intervention'. In other words, the way Baumgarten invents aesthetics as a philosophical category makes him one of the precursors of Deleuzian philosophy.

What relates Baumgarten and Deleuze in general is their aim to strengthen the link between life and thought from within a philosophical framework that involves seemingly incompatible systems of logic. In particular, this affinity lies in their mutual interest in depicting the interrelations between sense and sensation. As such, Baumgarten's work provides an important historical *analogon* to Deleuze's alignment of the 'logic of sense' with the 'logic of sensation' and to his development of a topology of complementarity.

As the bold attempt to lend sensation its own logical parameters, Baumgarten's *Aesthetica*, based on lectures held between 1750 and 1758, has served to establish aesthetics as a philosophical discipline in its own right, thus marking a turning point in the philosophy of the Enlightenment. It is in this book, categorically dismissed by Kant as 'the disappointed hope... of subjecting the criticism of the beautiful to principles of reason, and so of elevating its rules to a science', that Baumgarten is at his most radical (Kant 2003: 22n). The Neo-Kantian philosopher Ernst Cassirer, who dedicates a considerable amount of space to Baumgarten's two-fold model in his *Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, reverses the Kantian verdict and acknowledges 'Baumgarten's decisive historical merit' as truly *vernunftskritisch*. '[H]is real intellectual accomplishment', Cassirer writes,

> consists in the fact that through his mastery of the subject he became especially conscious of both the intrinsic and the systematic limitations of formal logic. As a result of his consciousness of these limitations, Baumgarten was able to make his original contribution to the history of thought, which lay in the philosophical foundation of aesthetics... Thus aesthetics evolves from logic, but this evolution discloses the immanent weakness of traditional scholastic logic. (Cassirer 1955: 338–9)

To have 'invented' aesthetics as an independent discipline is, in fact, Baumgarten's major contribution to philosophical discourse. One should note, however, that at its moment of inception aesthetics was much more inclusive than the philosophical investigation of art and beauty, to which it tends to be narrowed down today. With

aesthetics, Baumgarten developed nothing less than a general theory of sensibility with its own gnoseological faculty that produces a specific kind of knowledge. His aesthetics was a theory claiming epistemological relevance for sensual perception. Along these lines, the first section of *Aesthetica* delivers a programmatic definition of the new science that defies the traditional categories of thought: 'Aesthetics (as a theory of the liberal arts, as inferior cognition, as the art of beautiful thinking and as the art of thinking analogous to reason) is the science of sensible cognition' [*Aesthetica* (*theoria liberalium artium, gnoseologia inferior, ars pulcre cogitandi, ars analogi rationis*) *est scientia cognitionis sensitivae*] (Baumgarten 2007a: §1, my translation).

With the primary aim to integrate aesthetics into the realm of rational thought as the *analogon rationis*, Baumgarten draws extensively upon Leibnizian epistemology, which he modifies to serve as the basis of the new 'science of sensible cognition'. Not only does he emphasise the interconnections between the *gnoseologia superior* of the sense-making ratio and the *gnoseologia inferior* of sensation, but, even more importantly, he also underscores their genetic unity, which he regards as grounded in the dark recesses of the *fundus animae*. In *Aesthetica*, the *fundus animae* figures as the source of all kinds of perception, a domain that is of interest to psychology though it is largely neglected by philosophy itself; it contains that which remains forgotten, unconscious and unpredictable (Baumgarten 2007a: §80). A general definition of the *fundus animae* is provided in *Metaphysica*: 'The soul has dark perceptions. As a whole, these perceptions form the foundation of the soul' (Baumgarten 2004: §511). Despite all its obscurity, however, the *fundus* does not lack truth. 'What is abstraction, if not a loss?' Baumgarten asks, noting that the notion of fallibility and the very dichotomy of true vs. false are produced not by dark perception but by rational abstraction (Baumgarten 2007a: §560).

Despite resonances in terminology and approach, Baumgarten's and Deleuze's theories of the sensible are, needless to say, anything but identical. A conceptual affinity, however, can be detected in *Difference and Repetition* when Deleuze refers, without mentioning Baumgarten's name, to the founding moment of aesthetics:

> It is strange that aesthetics (as the science of the sensible) could be founded on what *can* be represented in the sensible. True, the inverse procedure is not much better, consisting of the attempt to withdraw the pure sensible from representation and to determine it as that which remains once representation is removed (a contradictory flux, for example, or a rhapsody

> of sensations). Empiricism truly becomes transcendental and aesthetics an apodictic discipline, only when we apprehend directly in the sensible that which can only be sensed, the very being *of* the sensible: difference, potential difference and difference in intensity as the reason behind qualitative diversity. (Deleuze 1994: 56–7)

Despite its anthropocentric tendency that sets it apart from Deleuzian philosophy, Baumgarten's aesthetics will have intervened in the philosophical discourse of his time with a force comparable to the intervention that Deleuze has made in twentieth-century philosophy. Baumgarten aimed at maintaining the balance between the rational and the sensual and set the emphasis on the 'transitions' between the two, the superior cognition of rationality and the so-called *inferior* cognition of sensuality. Already Leibniz, in his *Discourse on Metaphysics* (1686), had addressed the inferior domain, the domain of confused knowledge as opposed to distinct knowledge, as the mode of knowledge specific to art: 'When I can recognise one thing among others without being able to say what its differences or properties consist in', Leibniz wrote, 'my knowledge is *confused*. In this way we sometimes know *clearly*, without being in anyway in doubt, whether a poem or a painting is good or bad, because there is a certain *je ne sais quoi* which pleases or offends us' (Leibniz 1998a: §24). In Baumgarten's context, this inferior faculty does not simply receive a pejorative label for its less valuable and hence less favourable status; its inferiority is, rather, suggestive of a spatial model that renders sensation the crucial 'underlying' layer of the superior faculty of sense.

Baumgarten's modification of Leibnizian thought consists in his integration of the seemingly 'flawed' inferior faculty into the philosophical discipline of aesthetics as its unique mode of cognition. In fact, the confused cognition of sensuality becomes the one and only true link between the two ends of the spectrum, that is the level of rational knowledge on the one hand and the obscure level of what Deleuze would later call, in direct reference to Leibniz, unconscious micro-perceptions on the other. Aesthetics originates *in medias res* to establish the connections between the rational and the irrational:

> One could say that confusion is the mother of error. My answer to this is: it is a necessary condition for the discovery of truth, because nature does not make leaps from obscurity to distinction. Out of the night dawn leads to noon … We do not recommend confusion, but rather the amendment of cognition insofar as a necessary amount of confused cognition is mixed into it. (Baumgarten 2007a: §7, my translation)

Interestingly, this sounds much like an echo *avant la lettre* of Deleuze and Guattari's statement: 'To be present at the dawn of the world. Such is the link between imperceptibility, indiscernibility, and impersonality – the three virtues' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 280).

Baumgarten's notion of virtue is, no doubt, still closely related to the anthropological integrity of the individual (Baumgarten 2007a: §7). This integrity, however, can only be attained if one explores the domains beyond the confines of the *res cogitans*, and it is for this reason that Baumgarten attempts to establish the link to the inferior depths of consciousness, despite all the challenges posed to rational reasoning. Via the *analogon rationis*, a faculty that is at once 'analogous' to and decidedly different from the *ratio* itself, he paves the way for the 'becoming aesthetic' of reason.

Deleuze, in his reading of Hume's *A Treatise on Human Nature*, draws attention to Hume's interest in

> the problems of animal psychology, perhaps because the animal is nature without culture: the principles act upon its mind, but their only effect is a simple effect. Not having general rules, being held by the instinct to the actual, lacking any stable fancy and reflective procedures, the animal also lacks history. This is precisely the problem: how to explain that in the case of humanity, culture and history are constituted in the way that the fancy is re-established, through the resonance of affections within the mind. *How can we explain the union of the most frivolous and the most serious?*. (Deleuze 1991: 60)

From the Deleuzian perspective, if we consider Baumgarten's project as an attempt to conjoin the most frivolous and the most serious, we should note that he does so by setting the *analogon rationis* between the two realms. What is addressed by the term is less an analogical similarity to reason than an ongoing correspondence between Reason and its Other. Already placed by Christian Wolff in the rubric of empirical psychology (Wolff 1968: §506), the term *analogon rationis* originates from the domain of animal psychology, and is mentioned as such in Leibniz's *Monadology* (1714) (Leibniz 1998b: §26, §28). Hence, Baumgarten's use of the syntagm in the context of human sensual cognition not only emphasises the human being's hitherto neglected instinctive heritage, it also renders rationality complementary to the realm of the irrational. Thus, the aesthetic intervention brings about, in a very Deleuzian way, the *becoming animal* of the man of reason.

Furthermore, in order to underscore the clear yet confused character of sensible cognition, Baumgarten makes use of the term *haecceitas*

(haecceity), which he borrows from Duns Scotus. Unlike *quidditas*, by way of which the given object is rendered part of a typology, haecceity, following the dictum '*Haecceitas est singularitas*', addresses that singular property which lends something its individual difference. Baumgarten employs this term to emphasise the immediacy of aesthetic cognition, an immediacy that sets it apart from the superior faculty which, in order to attain clear and distinct perceptions, constantly engages in series of intermediate operations based upon reflexion and abstraction (Baumgarten 2007b: §755). Baumgarten's haecceity is not unlike Emily Dickinson's 'certain slant of light', the unique yet inexplicable property that constitutes the driving force behind what he calls *impetus aestheticus* and its ability to incite 'vehement' affects (Baumgarten 2007a: §78).

In the case of Deleuze and Guattari, the concept of haecceity is used in a novel sense that does away with forms and subjects, 'in the sense of an individuation which is not that of an object, nor of a person, but rather of an event (wind, river, day or even hour of the day)' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 155, translator's note), or as 'a mode of individuation very different from that of a person, subject, thing, or substance' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 261). While forms and subjects belong to the plane of organisation, haecceities, 'modest and microscopic' (Deleuze 1995: 141), are pre-personal intensities that circulate the plane of consistency, where 'it is the entire assemblage in its individuated aggregate that is a haecceity' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 262). Interestingly, in the Deleuzian context it is the girl that is the very epitome of haecceity:

> The girl is certainly not defined by virginity; she is defined by a relation of movement and rest, speed and slowness, by a combination of atoms, an emission of particles: haecceity. She never ceases to roam upon a body without organs. She is an abstract line, or a line of flight. Thus girls do not belong to an age group, sex, order, or kingdom: they slip in everywhere, between orders, acts, ages, sexes; they produce n molecular sexes on the line of flight in relation to the dualism machines they cross right through. The only way to get outside the dualisms is *to be-between, to pass between, the intermezzo*. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 276–7, emphasis added)

In *Aesthetica*, the *analogon rationis* that 'crosses right through' also corresponds to the figure of the girl insofar as Baumgarten refers to aesthetics as 'logic's younger sister' (Baumgarten 2007a: §13). The analogy connotes on the one hand both the frivolity and the vivacity of aesthetics as opposed to the seriousness of formal logic, and on the other hand it highlights the genetic relation between the sensual and the rational.

As Deleuzian philosophy seeks the reversal of the relationship of the rational and the sensual, according to which the 'superior' faculty evolves from the 'inferior depths', the younger sister becomes, in actual fact, the older one. Thus Deleuzian philosophy retains its share of the obscure and the confused, just as it always retains something of the chaos of the plane of immanence in its concepts (Deleuze and Guattari 2003: 118).

Baumgarten's work is a first moment in the reversal of the relation between sense and sensation, a moment that would become a seminal impulse for German romantic thought, whose importance for Deleuze is not yet charted with enough precision. Baumgarten's aesthetic experiment stands at the beginning of a movement that 'feels' and acknowledges the birth of philosophy from aesthetics. After all, Johann Gottfried Herder's praise of Baumgarten, which posits the rationalist philosopher as the precursor of the (romantic) tendencies aimed at thwarting the rationalistic doctrines of the Enlightenment, could easily apply to Deleuzian philosophy, as the mode of thought concentrating on the in-between of sense and sensation:

> The human soul lies before him, in its sensuous – that is, its most effectual and vivid – parts, like an enormous ocean that even in its calmest moments seems full of waves that are lifted up to heaven: there I place you, O philosopher of feeling, as on a high rock jutting out amid the waves. Now gaze down into the dark abyss of the human soul, where the sensations of the brute shade into the sensations of man, and as it were commingle with the soul from afar; gaze down into the abyss of obscure thoughts, from which there subsequently arise drives and emotions and pleasure and pain. Place the feeling of beauty where it belongs: between the angel and the animal, between the perfection of the infinite and the sensuous, vegetal gratification of cattle. [...] If you know the workshops of my animal spirits, then show me the spirit of beauty that courses through my veins [...]; show me beauty instead of conviction and reason and truth. Show me how the impressions in my sense organs become images in my soul, how my imagination pours rapture into my veins and that very moment weaves a mist around my faculty of reason. (Herder 2006: 44)

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The Time of Drama in Nietzsche and Deleuze: *A Life* as Performative Interaction

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Abstract

Nietzsche's model of eternal return triggers a drama of affirmation, the overcoming of a simple miming of our ancestors in favour of an active participation in the counter-actualisation of hidden potentials in recurrent events. Based on a close study of Zarathustra's struggle to free himself from a suffocating nihilism, the paper focuses on the revelatory caesura that ushers in what Deleuze calls the third synthesis of time, a time of 'doing' rather than reflection.

Keywords: Zarathustra, eternal return, caesura, syntheses of time, drama, Deleuze

> After all, since we are the products of earlier generations, we are also the products of their aberrations, passions, mistakes, and even crimes. It is impossible to loosen oneself from this chain entirely. Even if we condemn those aberrations and consider ourselves released from them, we have not yet overcome the fact that we are derived from them. (Nietzsche 1999a: 270, my translation)

This passage by Friedrich Nietzsche, from his second untimely investigation *On the Use and Abuse of History for Life*, gives us a clue regarding what it means to become a living being. A life starts precisely with the performance of an act of repetition. It comes not with some repetition of the future in which 'the man without qualities' reveals the vastness and joyful brilliance of the empty form of time on the plane of immanence, but in reproducing unconsciously the shades of one's ancestors by simply becoming their bodily double. Every singular mode of existence owes his or her life in the first place to the fact that one entity has started to repeat another – and this not by will or reflection,

but via the performance of what Deleuze has called, in accordance with Husserl, a passive synthesis, a way of acting that is performed IN DEED in a pre-reflective, unconscious manner before one is even aware of what one is actually doing as one is performing it, this act, this IT.

Repeating others in such a mode is precisely how acting the drama of *a* life begins. Since I never existed before this act, but am rather produced by and through its performance, it, this particular IT that has created me at the very onset of my life is perforce the transcendental field of a pre-individual essence. It is an unconscious activity that has started to create me rather than I having created IT. Even when one condemns this mode of repetition later on, after one has started to exist, the fact that one derives from it is not annihilated or stopped by simply deciding not to repeat it, this IT, anymore in the future.

'At best', Nietzsche continues,

> we bring the matter to a conflict between our inherited customary nature and our knowledge. [. . .] We cultivate a new habit, a new instinct, a second nature, so that the first nature atrophies. It is an attempt to give oneself, as it were, a past *a posteriori*, out of which we *may* be descended in opposition to the one from which we *are* descended. (Nietzsche 1999a: 270)

Perhaps, Nietzsche writes, one begins to repeat one's ancestors differently in one's own life by cultivating new habits and different instincts, in short, by cultivating a second nature arising from the performance of deconstructing one's inherited past. Culture, in these terms, is a word that indicates nothing less than the gap between two forms of nature: a first and a second one, divided and fractured in two parts by the occurrence of a powerful resistance, resisting the simple reproduction of a past tense, so that the repetition of one's IT gets out of joint and thereby becomes agonistic in itself. This fractured self longs for 'me' to be recovered by transforming it, this wounded IT, by transforming IT into a more promising one, a more promising future.

In the very beginning of a life, that life usually does not stay in contact with itself in an exuberant way. One is rather used to live one's life as if one were not alive at all. Being just the medium of one's ancestors, one's life simply mimes one's heritage over and over again. In such a 'bad' form of dramatising one's life, one lives as those who taught one how to live. Zarathustra regards the animalistic existence of his animals 'as barrel organs and buffoons', taking place even where one should finally let go of the same old fables in order to regenerate them anew. It is not a question of relapse but rather one of regeneration, a call to perform the

third synthesis of time, that temporality in which one is actually on the way to recover from a poisonous cultural beating, ready to counter-sign life again, once and for all, over and over again. *Amor fati*.

I. Caesura – The Time of a Drama

In Deleuze, as well as in Nietzsche, culture does not at all start with a social contract but, with the event of a traumatic caesura, a global hit, responsible for the shattering of our IT. Deleuze says,

> The caesura … must be determined in the image of a unique and tremendous event, an act which is adequate to time as a whole. […] Such a symbol adequate to the totality of a time [that causes an entire world to pass away], may be expressed in many ways: to throw time out of joint, to make the sun explode, to throw oneself into the volcano, to kill God or the father. (Deleuze 1994: 89)

Clearly this is a dramatic situation, in which the unfolding of time itself reaches a point where it longs for an epochal change: a nadir or zero point (*Nullpunkt*) in time in which the image of the totality of time is 'torn into two unequal parts' (Deleuze 1994: 89). The first part signifies the totality of time that passes away and the second one, announced already by the taking place of a caesura, makes the simple reproduction of the world, as it passes away, impossible in the future. 'In effect', Deleuze writes,

> there is always a time at which the imagined act is supposed 'too big for me'. This defines *a priori* the past or the before […]. The second time, which relates to the caesura itself, is thus the present of metamorphosis, a becoming-equal to the act and a doubling of the self, and the projection of an ideal self in the image of the act […]. (Deleuze 1994: 89)

The temporality of a drama is precisely that becoming in which a singular mode of existence is forced to counter-sign its life by rejecting the simple reproduction of an offered past. That past simply does not appear promising anymore for the subject called to accept it that is to mime and fulfil it as the bodily agent of its survival. In such a case the promise, promised by one's ancestors, indeed fails, because the passive affections, transferences of joyful sentiments, in fact no longer come about. One is no longer kissed by the kiss of the muses, the messengers of joy, so that the demand to stay within a given promise has lost its promise. It is this lack of joy, the impotence of the given promise to stimulate us anymore, that actually enforces our power to refuse it, even

though we are not yet sure what this resistance and caesura will bring to us. In this sense, history is theatre: 'the action of historical actors or agents becomes a spontaneous repetition of an old role. ... It is the revolutionary crisis, the compelled striving for something entirely new' (Rosenberg in Deleuze 1994: 91).

The becoming equal to the entirely new that is announcing itself in the event of a caesura longs for modes of existence able and ready to affirm the global challenge of a worldwide change, even if such fractured modes know that such a task is too big for them. Yet historical agents are often not capable of doing what they have already been called to do: to counter-sign their fate to overcome their first nature in order to transform it into a second, more stimulating one. 'O Zarathustra, your fruit is ripe, but you are not ripe for your fruit. Thus you must return to your solitude again' (Nietzsche 1995: 147).

The drama of Zarathustra precisely bridges two striking events. The first is the bitter, poisonous moment in which the monster of nihilism has crawled into Zarathustra's throat. The second is the moment of his recovery, in which he becomes capable himself of affirming his own, most abysmal thought: the doctrine of the eternal return of the same. Here is a new and paradoxical promise, one able to render him the means to defeat the doctrine of European nihilism that he, Zarathustra himself, has inhaled in his youth.

To become equal to his fate to be the teacher of the eternal return of the same, Zarathustra first has to conquer the inability of his own soul to desire its own return eternally, once and for all. In the beginning of the drama of his life he himself revolted against the doctrine of his most abysmal thought, which initially came to him as a daemon or monster rather than as a stimulating promise. At this time his soul still resembled more the conceptual persona of the truth-seeker whom he had met in his youth and heard once say: 'All is empty, all is the same, all has been!' (Nietzsche 1995: 133). Hearing this doctrine, Zarathustra himself was overwhelmed with an enormous sadness and exhaustion, as was the crowd who had gathered around the augur and heard him speak of life in such a manner. 'The best grew weary of their works' (Nietzsche 1995: 133). This speech of the soothsayer had something infectious in it. No one could effectively deny the illocutionary force of its words. Even Zarathustra himself was so infected by the speech that he 'walked about sad and weary; and thereby became like those of whom the soothsayer had spoken (Nietzsche 1995: 134).

Although Zarathustra had meanwhile learned that the words of the augur were merely fable-songs, the self-fulfilling prophecy had at the

time become word and remained stuck in his throat. This prevented him still from taking the all-decisive step, which would have cut the head off his disgust with life and freed him from his melancholy.

Even if he was not yet capable of completely digesting the bite of the poisonous words which had subdued him at the time, at least Zarathustra wanted to prevent his own friends and followers from being infected by the poisonous saying. 'I led you away from these fables', Zarathustra continued: when I taught you 'the will is a creator'. All 'it was' is a fragment, a riddle, a dreadful accident – until the creative will says to it 'But thus I willed it'. Until the creative will says to it 'But thus I will it; thus shall I will it' (Nietzsche 1995: 141).

II. Remembering the Empty Form of Time – Amor Fati

In reference to Deleuze's text *Difference and Repetition* (1994), Giorgio Agamben rightly reminds us that a 'lively' interaction with the transferred heritage of a certain history is therefore not just about remembering the past in order to prevent it from being forgotten. Rather, the potentiality of an act of remembrance lies in an act of regenerative re-membering, which, during the process of recollection, is posthumously returning a future to a past and thereby gives unfulfilled possibility back to a past. Such a creative, artistic remembering 'restores possibility to a past, making what happened incomplete and completing what never was. Remembrance is neither what happened nor what did not happen but, rather, their potentialization, their becoming possible once again' (Agamben 1999: 267).

A history in the service of life – a *topos* that Nietzsche early on affirmed (Nietzsche 1999a: 243–334) – will therefore not be satisfied with having dealt with the transmission of a historical heritage only in historical-critical perspective. Rather it will be about a 'plastic' interaction with history, in which our transmissions are treated primarily as the material of synthetic-performative processes. It will not just be about stating and staging that which was, in performing its historical replay over and over again, but about the performative interaction with that which has been transmitted to us as 'a fragment, a riddle, a dreadful accident' (Nietzsche 1995: 141), as Zarathustra says, in order to deal with it in multiple fragmentary ways. Zarathustra has to become ripe to experience this stimulating yet paradoxical message inherent in his most abysmal thought. In addition, if Zarathustra wants to do justice to his fate IN DEED and present a polyphonic expression of his teachings on the eternal recurrence of the same, then he needs to acquire a new and

sensitive lyre which will allow him to transmit the nuances and the abyss of his teachings to those who have an ear for such unheard-of truths. 'Sing and overflow, O Zarathustra', his animals advised him on his way to recovery, 'cure your soul with new songs that you may bear your great destiny, which has never yet been any man's destiny. For your animals know well, O Zarathustra, who you are and must become: behold, *you are the teacher of the eternal recurrence*. That is your destiny!' (Nietzsche 1995: 220).

Not yet ripe to affirm his doctrine as a third kind of knowledge in Spinoza's terms, a knowledge that elates per se, Zarathustra first has to undergo the temporality of a metamorphosis in which he himself will become adequate to this destiny. The temporality in which he will become who he is, is precisely the drama of his convalescence: the time of his acting in the drama that is his life. A life, as an act of regeneration of those handed-down forms of life, means therefore more than just being generated, more than simply to be alive. It means to perform our lives as a form of *Ueberleben*, a form of 'sur-viving' while we are actually alive. This performative turn within a life is exactly the unstable, revolutionary, a priori moment at work IN a life. Every inherited habit, every schema, every type of action now becomes a 'dis-position', a form that can be simultaneously deconstructed and regenerated anew.

Deleuze calls this stage the third synthesis of time: the critical time in the drama of a life in which a hero or heroine in revolt has to become capable of matching his or her own destiny. In this dramatic stage of a life, one literally has to prepare to counter-sign and endorse one's fate, to embrace the caesura in the double affirmation of a singular *amor fati*, and confirm that affirmation IN DEED once and for all.

Zarathustra's recovery obviously was not just about repairing the functionality of the already existing strings and chambers of his disposition in order to cure his chronic malaise of being infected by the destructive force of Christianity as he experienced it on its dead-end road towards what he identified as European nihilism. The drama of his recovery was not just about repairing old strings and rotten instruments, but about the regeneration of his entire sensual sensorium. We are talking about the entire repertoire of his senses to which he can momentarily refer, and thus the whole way in which his feelings of being touched, inspired and moved by the world are perceived, pre-reflectively understood through passive synthesis and finally interpreted pre-ontologically. All this is at stake in the process of his recovery. The feelings that are still created by mechanical recourse to the existing

chambers of his disposition have to be reconsidered anew, they have to be checked for the temper of their constitution, sensitively reviewed, and if necessary synthetically expanded, emotionally transformed, supplemented, completed and therefore constitutively reworked. For this reason a regenerative act is not just a recursive act by means of which one can simply refer, retentionally, to already existing chambers of one's disposition in order to use them for the umpteenth time. For if this happened, then this would just be a mechanical performance of feeling, nothing more than the production of a *cliché* of emotion in which we habitually react to sensory impulses with this or that affective pattern. The contemporaneousness of the current situation would then not be taken into consideration; it would not be felt and experienced.

Deleuze calls it

> struggling on the one hand against Habitus, on the other against Mnemosyne; [. . .] refusing the overly simple cycles, the one followed by a habitual present (customary cycle) as much as the one described by a pure past (memorial or immemorial cycle). (Deleuze 1994: 94)

Not just this or that organ, to which Zarathustra up until now has had recourse, but the way he 'uses' his entire sensitive sensorium is therefore at risk during the course of his convalescence. Interrupting the habitual habitus of his soul, so that the execution of emotional acts is examined during their execution and perhaps thereby ennobled and renewed: that is the recipe which not only Gilles Deleuze but also Zarathustra recommends in order to regenerate their emotional existence. Throughout the new instrumentation of his soul, Zarathustra thus was not only concerned with the composition of new songs and the creation of a new lyre, but he was also forced to immunise himself against all those who are used to translate every new song immediately into the same old recurring melody.

III. On Well-known Melodies and New Songs

As Zarathustra says on the way to his own dramatic convalescence, in order to do justice to the lives of others who were medially transferred to him in the act of his birth and therefore became his fate for his own way of life, he first and foremost needs new songs. The old songs have become too démodé to reach him any longer. 'Do not speak on!' his animals answered him again, 'rather even, O convalescent, fashion yourself a lyre first, a new lyre! For behold, Zarathustra, new lyres are needed for your new songs' (Nietzsche 1995: 220).

Therefore it comes as no surprise that Zarathustra's animals also speak of his teaching in a tone of voice that gives it the ring of a well-known melody: There will be a great year of becoming, they say, a monster of a great year, which just like a sand clock always has to be turned upside down again, so that it may run down and run out again, and all the years are alike in what is greatest as in what is smallest (Nietzsche 1995: 220). Fate catches up with every creature, and after a long cosmic minute it will be reawakened to life and the external circumstances will be repeated, so that it has to live the same life again that it has already led many times, and will live again in the future (Nietzsche 1995: 217–18).

This is how Zarathustra's animals spoke to him on that morning, making a pretence of having spoken of him and his most abysmal thoughts. 'O you buffoons and barrel organs!' Zarathustra replied and smiled again. 'How well you know what had to be fulfilled in seven days, and how that monster crawled down my throat and suffocated me. But I bit off its head and spewed it out. And you, have you already made a hurdy-gurdy song of this? But now I lie here, still weary of this biting and spewing, still sick from my own redemption. *And you watched all this*?' (Nietzsche 1995: 218).

While Zarathustra freed himself with a resolute bite from the historic burden of his own 'it was' – that beast, about whom he said that it smothered him with a great weariness – his animals merely watched this dramatic display, almost as if they did not have any historic burden that strangled them. Almost as if the notion of the 'eternal recurrence of the same' did not burden or bother them at all in their own animalistic existence. Almost as if they, his animals, could tolerate this idea without being ashamed of the eternal return of their own animalistic existence. Nothing in his teachings seemed to be painful for them. On the contrary, they make us believe that some of his teachings correspond to their own animalistic nature, which does not seem to know any resentful misgivings about their own lives.

For the majority of human beings, however, Zarathustra's teachings appear to be hard to digest. This is the sore spot that marks the decisive difference between the animalistic and the human interpretation of his teachings. For while animals have a right to interpret the eternal return of the same as a cosmic event in which their own life is fatefully entangled and fatally embedded, for human destinies it is proper to interpret the same event as the chance of a concrete challenge that all human beings need to face, give their own signature to, and hence have to engage in as long as they are alive. Zarathustra's phrase 'the eternal

recurrence of the same' is for humans never just a fatal truth, but rather a type of guiding principle (*Leitsatz*), which humans should not simply believe or treat as a given fact, but should cope with as something that has to be reciprocated in practice, that is to say, considered bad or good, cursed or agreed upon, wanted or refused. Only after a person has already chosen to make Zarathustra's concept of 'the eternal recurrence of the same' the maxim (*Leitsatz*) of his or her own life is such a person enforced to internalise it as the governing principle guiding his or her soul. The sensitive application of the teaching of 'the eternal recurrence of the same' to an individual existence, as an act of maximisation and intensification of one's liveliness, is a re-creation of pre-existing dispositions in a living creature and clearly not just an act with a purely descriptive character. Rather it is a performative-synthetic act in which the contemporary dispositions of a soul are not just cited, but expanded, supplemented, re-created and creatively regenerated during the performance of such an act.

Thus too the dispositions that Zarathustra confronts during the internalisation of the concept of 'the eternal recurrence of the same' – whether they concern his ability to feel, to think, to behave or to desire – all these abilities cannot be merely used, cited and applied in their existing form. Rather, during the process of the internalisation of his teaching, they must be exceeded, reworked, and, if necessary, synthetically expanded and constitutionally reconstituted. In a passage that is given the title 'On Redemption', Zarathustra can say this about the act of redemption: 'To redeem those who lived in the past and to recreate all "it was" into a "thus I willed it" – that alone should I call redemption' (Nietzsche 1995: 139).

IV. On Redemption

To repeat what has been transmitted to us as a life – what we ourselves hence did not bring forth and yet are forced to be – to repeat this in such a way that we come to the point of affirming it by willing it: that alone would mean redemption for Zarathustra, since the burdensome character of the past that is thereby repeated would completely disappear and melt away in such a moment of *amor fati*. Once we do understand that Zarathustra, from the very beginning of his own recovery, started to cut and refine the genealogically transferred historical burden of his life in such a way that his 'first nature' became ennobled and purified and was made into a jewel by his life, then it is clear that Zarathustra's notion of *amor fati* has nothing to do with a passive form of love. Since

his reception of the life that has been transmitted to him, Zarathustra's fulfilment of his own *amor fati* represents a synthetic act a priori, which Zarathustra has to perform and execute himself existentially in the course of his own genealogical becoming. Thus every living act, structurally speaking, represents a synthetic act a priori because the execution of a 'lively' behaviour necessarily brings with it a moment of instability: the possibility of an event that leads to the restructuring of those very structures that were involved in the act from its inception.

V. The Dawn

Today, at the dawn of his convalescence, Zarathustra was finally prepared to bring the ill-tempered nature of his soul to a sudden end and to rid himself of the monster of nihilism that had overcome him. 'It is I or you!' (Nietzsche 1995: 157) he cried out against his own melancholy. This morning Zarathustra sprang up from his bed and screamed with a dreadful voice: 'Up, abysmal thought, out of my depths! I am your morning cock, your dawn, you sleepyhead. Up! Up! My voice shall yet crow you awake!' (Nietzsche 1995: 215). Now IT was time; now he was ready for the decisive, final act.

On this morning, a resolute Zarathustra began to plumb his soul's abysses in order to hear what they had to say about his most profound thoughts. Once Zarathustra had seen a young shepherd lying on the ground, doubled over in pain because a heavy black snake had crawled into his mouth. Now, this morning, something in him cried out as well: 'Bite! Bite its head off! Bite!' (Nietzsche 1995: 159). Not just any day had begun this morning, but rather that day over which was written 'the convalescent', a date which would mark the singular nadir in the life of Zarathustra. If Zarathustra wanted to recover by virtue of his own thoughts, a morning would have to come to him on which he should be prepared not just to teach others his own teachings, but also to perform them on and by himself, an act of biting, in order to free himself from the burden of his own legacy. And look, today the day has come, the day on which he will challenge his own abysses to divulge something of his most abysmal thoughts. The final act in the drama of his convalescence should take place this morning and thus become a real event. 'You are stirring, stretching, wheezing? Up! Up! You shall not wheeze but speak to me. [. . .] I summon you, my most abysmal thought!' (Nietzsche 1995: 215–16).

During the dawn of his convalescence Zarathustra dares his own anima to speak of his most abysmal thoughts. All of the life that was

in him should today speak *to* him. His most abysmal thoughts should today testify to his soul. From them he finally wants to know what they themselves have to say about his teachings. This morning it had finally come to the point where they had to show their true colours and testify to what touches them in the deepest depth. It is no longer Zarathustra who speaks to his soul in the dawn of his convalescence. Rather it is his soul that speaks to him today. 'Hail to me! You are coming, I hear you. My abyss speaks, I have turned my ultimate depth inside out into the light. Hail to me! Come here! Give me your hand!' (Nietzsche 1995: 216).

Now the doctrine, demand or law of the eternal return of a regenerating mode of repetition has finally become a stimulating one, one that does not stimulate merely our intellect as a social demand or duty but a stimulating promise that corresponds to Stendhal's definition of beauty as the taking place of an unanticipated promise of luck, '*une promesse de bonheur*' (Nietzsche 1999b: 347). For the first time Zarathustra's teachings are reciprocated from the depths of his own soul. For the first time his soul echoes him. No longer does his soul fear its own abysmal thoughts. On the contrary, today even its abysses speak to him of his abysmal thoughts.

Have his teachings in the meanwhile really reached the deepest strings of his soul? Have they in the meantime really reached these depths and been desirously received in the deepest chambers of his anima? Shaken by the event that his soul reciprocated his own teachings, Zarathustra first remained lying, pale and stricken. Seven days he needed in order to digest that which he experienced during the final act of his convalescence. 'At last, after seven days, Zarathustra raised himself on his resting place, took a rose apple into his hand, smelled it, and found its fragrance lovely' (Nietzsche 1995: 216).

VI. *Amor Fati* as an Elating Double Affirmation (Counter-Signature)

'Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* is clearly a drama, a theatrical work', writes Deleuze, summarising his theory on the drama of repetition-in-itself. 'The largest part of the book is taken up with the before, in the mode of a defect or of the past: this act is too big for me' (Deleuze 1994: 92). The preparatory prelude of Zarathustra's story culminates, according to Deleuze, in the transition from the second to the third part of the drama. In 'The Stillest Hour', the last section of part two, we are told

that Zarathustra must again return to his solitude, precisely because 'his fruit is ripe, but he is not ripe for his fruit' (Nietzsche 1995: 147).

But Deleuze goes on to say, 'Then comes the moment of the caesura or the metamorphosis, the Sign, when Zarathustra becomes capable'. Only a little later, in the second section of the third part, 'On the Vision and the Riddle', Zarathustra's metamorphosis begins because he starts IN DEED to challenge his first nature. 'Stop, dwarf!' he says. 'It is I or you!' (Nietzsche 1995: 157).

The only way to free himself from his past had appeared to him in the vision and the riddle of a young shepherd 'writhing, gagging, in spasms, his face distorted, and a heavy black snake hung out of his mouth' (Nietzsche 1995: 159). Zarathustra would have to detoxify himself from the poisonous grip of the heavy black snake of European nihilism, a monster similar to the one that had crawled down the throat of the young shepherd while he was asleep. Now the alchemic contest between 'the spirit of gravity' (Nietzsche 1995: 158) and the performance of accessing his most abysmal thought, the thought of the eternal recurrence of the same, longs for a conclusive and decisive act. Zarathustra bites. The cut takes place.

However, 'The third moment remains absent: this is the moment of the revelation and affirmation of eternal return' (Deleuze 1994: 92). Deleuze assumes that Nietzsche did not have enough time to formulate dramatically this third stage in doing philosophy. Of course, the time after Zarathustra's recovery, the smell of the rose apple and its lovely fragrance, is on the far side with respect to Nietzsche's enterprise. But it is by no means out of bounds. It rather expresses his will of doing philosophy from a perspective located wholly within the scope and purview of *The Use and Abuse of History for LIFE*. 'In this sense', one can agree with Deleuze,

> something completely new begins with Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. They no longer reflect on the theatre in the Hegelian manner. Neither do they set up a philosophical theatre. They invent an incredible equivalent of theatre within philosophy, thereby founding simultaneously this theatre of the future and a new philosophy. (Deleuze 1994: 8)

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Sense, Being and the Revelatory Event: Deleuze and Metamorphosis

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Abstract

Metamorphosis is a sudden change, a 'becoming-other' in life or in philosophical perspective. A revelatory event initiates in a double manner the move from Heidegger's futile search for a transcendental IT that delivers perceptible beings to the confident positing of Deleuze's transcendental empiricism, suffused with the IF of incorporeal sense. In the process Deleuze dramatically enacts his personal connection between sense (*Sinn*) and being (*Sein*).

Keywords: event, being, incorporeal sense, transcendental empiricism, becoming-other, Deleuze

When working with philosophers who live philosophy rather than consider it an academic exercise, key words that they use can be traps that prevent rather than facilitate understanding. This is especially a problem when two or more languages are involved: French, German and English or Greek and Hebrew, not to mention Japanese and English.[1] To grasp the problem, it can be useful trying to translate a major philosopher such as Heidegger, with all of his etymological baggage, or Nietzsche, with his idiosyncratic, aphoristic and purposely counter-philosophical vocabulary. With respect to French philosopher Gilles Deleuze, who draws heavily on both Heidegger and Nietzsche, the traps multiply because he also lays them deliberately and subversively in order to mislead academic explication and thus to force the kind of confrontation with conceptual dead ends that has the power to lead to 'enlightenment'.

Take for example Deleuze's use of '*événement*'. This term translates easily into English 'event', a relatively innocuous, even weightless word. In German however, 'evenement' becomes 'Ereignis', which, thanks to Heidegger and a long philosophical tradition, carries the whole weight of

Being on its shoulders. Both translations are clearly traps. What Deleuze calls 'evenement' is decidedly neither 'event' nor 'Ereignis'. For Deleuze 'evenement' is dramatically transformative, signalling a metamorphosis not just in thinking but also in life as lived.

Let's begin by asserting that even in English events can be fundamental happenings, that an event is a process or eventuation or becoming, what Deleuze calls an actualisation or Heidegger calls a 'coming into one's own' or coming into a way of existential being (*seiend*). We live after all in a world of givens, including ourselves, and in light of our finite powers of thought, there are always ultimate questions about how all our givens were given in the first place. So then the age-old philosophical question naturally arises, as Heidegger would say, 'What in the last analysis is IT that gives?' (Heidegger 1972: 16).[2] While for a finitist philosopher that may be a question beyond answer, there certainly has been no lack of trying. And IT has never prevented one from giving Heidegger's unknowable transcendent powers various names, like God or ideals, reason or noumena, and so on, causing philosophy endless trouble, not the least of which is competing with self-validating religious doctrines.

For while all attempts to storm the transcendental realm philosophically seem bound to fail – by definition, so to speak – there have been no end of privileged communications *from* the transcendental into our world of reality. The word for such communication is 'revelation'. Revelations constitute major turning points or, literally, *cata-strophes* in the life of an individual or group. They radically change who we are, give us a new identity, put us with newly gained conviction in the middle of an ongoing dramatic action, and allow us to proceed in life with a certainty we never had before. Harold Rosenberg, in the *Tradition of the New* – a book highly praised by Deleuze (1994a: 91–6) – calls attention to the tripartite dramatic structure of character change, using Hamlet as his prime example. He echoes thereby Paul Tillich's tripartite structure of religious revelation, which also involves the probing, unsettling uncertainty of an outsider looking in, a near-death ecstasy, and consequent committed action in the midst of what Tillich calls an 'ultimate concern'.[3] There is then in this respect a

> fundamental connection between religious and dramatic thought. In both, the actor does not obey his own will but rather the rules of the situation in which he finds himself. In both, change (and escape from the plot) can be accomplished through one means alone, the dissolution of identity and the reappearance of the individual in a 'reborn' state. (Rosenberg 1971: 152–3)

Or, as Gilles Deleuze would say, it is a question of 'becoming other'.

Revelations take place in many areas of human endeavour, in religion and literary drama, to be sure, but also in revolutionary politics (Lenin), radical art (Bacon), Freudian psychology, the sciences – Archimedes' 'Eureka!' is a prime example – and even in mathematics, where Pythagoras and the revelation of the dreaded irrational numbers comes to mind. Thomas Kuhn calls such events 'paradigm shifts', which are certainly not without their dramatic moments.

So what about philosophy? What part can revelation play in the very field that regards revelation as nothing more than a crisis of thought and condones transcendental or inaccessible sources only as a last resort, when all else fails to glue a system together? Empiricists are particularly unhappy with the transcendental, yet in the last analysis the empiricists' starting points, simple perceptions, have to come from somewhere too, no matter how successfully one disparages so-called universal truths as products of habit.

A few philosophers actually admit to a revelatory aspect in philosophy, as in Nietzsche's famous revelation of the 'eternal return' or Schelling's systematic treatment of revelation. But other philosophers take pains to deny that revelation has *philosophical* relevance. Nietzsche stands accused of having hallucinations, and Kierkegaard faults Schelling for misunderstanding the singular and personal aspect that makes revelation so special. Plato's famous solution was to wrap the problem of revelatory communication in myth!

So what about Gilles Deleuze? He should know something about revelation because early in his career he too went through a trans-mutational experience, a veritable philosophical metamorphosis.[4] After the publication of his first book on Hume (Deleuze 1991/1953), Deleuze endured eight years of silence, what he himself calls 'a hole' in his life before emerging again with a spate of major books and a new philosophical buzzword: transcendental empiricism (Deleuze 1997: 138). 'This eight year hole in Deleuze's intellectual life does in fact represent [...] a period of *dramatic* reorientation in his philosophical approach', says Michael Hardt (1993: xx). The movement from ordinary or classical empiricism to virtual-transcendental empiricism was for him an extraordinarily difficult crisis of reconceptualisation, profoundly influenced by Nietzsche's own crisis. The result thereafter: the astonishing consistency of Deleuze's thought, even if that is difficult to see under the breadth and complexity of his works.

But how are we to understand this 'other' Deleuze with his 'other' philosophy? What in the world is 'transcendental' empiricism? Isn't that a contradiction in terms, a non sequitur or even a joke? If it is

a joke, that may sound hopeless but it is not serious. If it is a joke, it is in line with René Thom's catastrophe theory. Catastrophe theory was all the rage a few years ago, before chaos theory took centre stage, and culminated in a book by John Paulos called *Mathematics and Humor*.[5] But as Paulos knows, Thom's catastrophe singularities are not necessarily mathematical singularities at all but can be philosophical breaks or jumps between two ways of thinking, in this case between empiricism and transcendentalism.

If Deleuze is cast as an empiricist, his difficulty is clear: he is an outsider with respect to transcendental philosophy and cannot satisfactorily attack its presuppositions. This is Hamlet's problem as well, and why Hamlet dithers and cannot kill the king in the first part of his play. Deleuze's identity as an empiricist must undergo a radical transmutation if he is to re-emerge in the royal realm of transcendentalism and legitimately kill its assumptions. Somehow his empiricism must take on a virtual aspect it has heretofore avoided.

But how can Deleuze manage that? His new confidence, his new philosophical persona, can only be grounded if he can make sense of his new position. Make sense of his new position? No. Not make sense OF the new position, but make sense THE new position. In other words, Deleuze decides to insert SENSE in the catastrophic break or jump between empiricism and transcendentalism as a new kind of link between the actual or empirical and the virtual or 'transcendental'. The point is basically as follows: Deleuze re-prioritises thought by moving from being to sense, that is (in German) from SEIN to SINN.

Yes, transcendental empiricism is a kind of joke, but the joke is on the transcendentalists. We began by saying that the transcendental is a source from which emanate the laws and models, the forms and ideals, the originals and paradigms on which we base our accidental and imperfect real world. Its Being is unassailable from this side, that is to say, from the world of beings. But it communicates in privileged and personal communications with the world through those we call priests and rulers, prophets and principals. If like Kant we discount the personages who claim a connection to the transcendental, there are still the intuitions of reason or harmony or common sense to consider. Must we take these intuitions on faith? Or was Kant trapped by a search for integrative sources, just as certainly as Hume was trapped by a 'pointilism' that simply could not coalesce to form the kind of actual worlds we all experience.[6] As paradoxical as it may seem, it is precisely Deleuze's ingenious concept of sense that supplies the

conceptual glue Kantians and empiricists have both failed to produce. And this is the subject of the intentionally paradox-ridden Deleuzian *Logic of Sense*.

How then can we characterise sense? In a way, Deleuze's sense is nothing at all, at least insofar as it is incorporeal and cannot be touched or felt as such. But if eventuation is a giving, the giving of perceptions, then, says Deleuze, the resulting extensive environment must necessarily be charged with a correlative given, a correlative sense. Incorporeal sense lies like a transparent skin on everything that is in the world, including and particularly the corporeal linguistic units, written or oral, whose various possible senses it implies. Philosophically speaking, sense can be considered the tissue of concepts that holds any particular culture together, whether yours or mine or the possible worlds of any social group we can imagine. This tissue is entirely this-worldly, not transcendental.

On the one hand, sense is neither inherently virtual nor transcendental, any more than are the more or less flexible concepts that make up sense. All this is truly real. But on the other hand, because it is incorporeal, sense is not imbedded in or directly attached to the physical or material world, including actualised time and space. It is truly 'entre temps' or 'meanwhile' with respect to the succession of time, and as such, unlike chronological time, sense is in a special way 'recurrent' or superimposed upon itself (Deleuze and Guattari 1994b: 158). It thus bears some interesting resemblances, as we are beginning to see, to what Nietzsche calls the eternal return of the same or what Klossowski calls the vicious circle.

The job of philosophy, as Deleuze understands it, is to create and/or dismantle concepts. Concepts make explicit implicitly held beliefs that are fundamental to a society. Concepts are generated geopolitically and self-referentially out of their own constituent parts, without the need of controlling emanations from a transcendental source. They are, as Deleuze says, 'real without being actual, ideal without being abstract' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994b: 22). And, I repeat, constructing concepts is what a philosopher does, with perhaps a crisis of thought, but not with the help of otherworldly sources. Thus philosophy, by showing how concepts are constructed, has the means to eliminate classical realms of emanation.

Nevertheless, incorporeal sense would be completely vacuous if there were no actualised worlds to cover. And no doubt we are all within a world that is both constant and changing all around us. So the question becomes, how can empiricism account for the being of the sensible? Or

to phrase the problem succinctly, why is there something rather than nothing?

It is here that conceptual sense reflexively re-introduces the virtual, but not as an attribute of an inaccessible superior Being. As conceived by conceptual sense, the virtual is comprised of collections of yet undefined and indefinite energies that, unlike the concept itself, have under the right circumstances the potential of corporeal, perceptual actualisation. And where are all these undefined and indefinite energies? All around us, in and among us, that is to say they are immanent. Taken all together they constitute a plane of immanence. Taken as fortuitous singularities, each singularity is a differential 'will to power' – Nietzsche again – a differential 'will to power' ready to differenciate itself – differenCiate with a 'c' – through actualisation in the so-called real world (Rölli 2009: 36).

The syntagmatic differenCiation of the differential means setting aside (although not losing) inherent difference through necessary conforming, as a perception, to the already present habitual conditions of, for example, subject/object, space/time and linguistic configurations, as well as of phenomenological consciousness in our case as humans. As pre-actualised differentials, the virtual plane of immanence can be considered transcendental, but this is a 'transcendental' that is as fully accessible in its workings as those of Mallarmé's post-metaphysical, aionic 'Throw of the Dice'. I quote: 'anxious, expiatory and pubescent … mute … laughter … that … IF (Mallarmé 1994: 138)'.[7] There's that IF that says we're on our own! Always the same repetitive throw (Heidegger's IT), always the subtle differences (Mallarmé's IF) in its sense. Repetition and difference, *Difference and Repetition*: isn't that the true EVENT!

Yes, event. If the throw of the dice is Heidegger's *Ereignis*, then its IF is the Deleuzian event. And that IF is the tissue of sense, the incorporeal counterpart to the three passive syntheses of time: past experience, present instant and future indetermination. But being incorporeal means also that sense-as-event swirls around and through time, space and perceptions as a constantly counter-actualising force. We might say that Deleuze's Nietzsche – or Mallarmé – oriented IF lights up Heidegger's onto-theological IT. To put it another way, the Being of the sensible depends on the sense of that Being. *There is no Ereignis without the splendour of the Event*.[8]

It is appropriate to sum up in a special way. If one were to fictionalise the life of Gilles Deleuze as the great destroyer of the transcendent monster's 'emanating' domain, one would make him first the author of a Proustian novel.[9] Then, for the end of his life – which unfortunately gets all too little attention – it would be necessary to cast him in a

Greek-like tragedy very much like the anachronistic play *Empedokles* by the eighteenth-century German genius Hölderlin. Here's how the whole Deleuzian story would play out from this perspective.

As our young fictional Deleuze looks at the history of philosophy to the present day and realises that he is losing – no, wasting – time, he almost gives up his dream of becoming a philosopher. But then, having regained in a transmutational crisis the secret weapon called sense that hasn't been used since the Stoics, our fictional Deleuze morphs into a heroic knight, turns the transcendental dragon into Puff by writing a series of timely tomes, and is increasingly cheered by his disciples as the new philosopher king.

But in later years Deleuze comes to understand that without the need for chosen leaders to interpret enigmatic messages from discredited transcendental sources, he must reject the kingship offered him. To quote Hölderlin, 'the time for kings has come and gone … You can't expect *my* help if *you* can't help yourselves' (Hölderlin 1968: II, 1438 and 1452–3, my translation).[10] These words ought to trigger a social revolution. But they imply more. Our fictional Deleuze must recognise, as did the philosopher Empedocles, that by having dismantled the royal mantle of authority, he cannot any longer stay around and argue with his detractors. No, he must once again become 'other'. No longer individual or universal within his social milieu, he must entrust himself to the 'singular splendour of the fourth person', the truly immanent it-that-gives, and re-emerge for us through a final re-generative metamorphosis as the legendary FREE MAN. As his works and his actions show, the free man

> grasps the event and does not allow it to be actualised as such without enacting, the actor, its counter-actualisation. Only the free man can comprehend all violence in a single act of violence, and every mortal event in a single Event. (Deleuze 1990: 152)

We know from Hölderlin that Empedocles convinces his clinging friends to leave him. He then climbs the slopes of the chaotic volcano Etna and abruptly jumps into its molten interior. So – in his own way – does Deleuze.[11] The revelatory sense of that event should continue to inspire Deleuzians both now and long hereafter.

Notes

1. For relevant discussions of translation problems, see the author's first translation of Heidegger's *On the Way to Language* in his Stanford dissertation (Hertz 1967), then compare it to the version that was revised to conform to other

Heidegger translations at the time, published in 1971 and still in print. For Greek and Hebrew see Boman (1960), and for Japanese and English see Nishitani (1982).

2. 'We are still faced with the enigmatic IT that we named in the expression: it gives time, it gives being (*es gibt Zeit, es gibt Sein*). ... When we speak of IT, we arbitrarily posit an indeterminate power that is supposed to bring about all giving of being and of time. ... IT eventuates (*ES ereignet*). ... Being is appropriated in the eventuation (*Sein verschwindet im Ereignis*). What remains to be said? The appropriating eventuation eventuates appropriately (*Das Ereignis ereignet*)' (Heidegger 1972: 16–24, revised P. H.).
3. 'Revelation is the manifestation of the mystery of being for the cognitive function of human reason' (Tillich 1951: 129).
4. As Deleuze says again and again regarding metamorphoses in literature (Kafka, Carroll, Proust, Melville, et al.), there is nothing metaphorical about them. They are 'charts of intensities'. See for example Deleuze and Guattari (1975: 65).
5. See Paulos (1980) on the connection between jokes and René Thom's catastrophe theory.
6. For a complete discussion of the traps Kant and Hume fall into, see Rölli (2003). The author of this paper is presently translating and editing the book for publication in English.
7. On Aion as 'an empty and unfolded form of time', on an event-oriented playing of the game, and on Aion again as 'an infused and ramified chance', all in relation to Carroll and Mallarmé, see Deleuze (1990: 58–65).
8. On the splendour of the event, see Deleuze (1990: 152).
9. 'Proust's work is not oriented to the past and the discoveries of memory, but to the future and the progress of an apprenticeship. What is important is that the hero does not know certain things at the start, gradually learns them, and finally receives an ultimate revelation' (Deleuze 2000: 26). (Becoming 'other', becoming writer.)
10. Nietzsche, who venerated Hölderlin, incorporates the same line in *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, part III, 'Von alten und neuen Tafeln' (Nietzsche 1999: v. 4, 263).
11. Taking one last breath into his collapsed lung, he kicks away the machine, and leaps into the mouth of the open window ... 'for dying [...] gives him the right to begin anew...' (Deleuze 1990: 65).

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Forum Introduction: Deleuze, Whitehead and Process

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At the First International Deleuze Conference held in August 2008 at the University of Cardiff, Wales, each of the three contributors here presented papers in the session on 'Deleuze, Whitehead and Process'.[1] For this *Deleuze Studies* special forum, we were invited to re-address the relation between Deleuze and Whitehead by developing and elaborating our conference papers or, indeed, writing anew. The purpose of the conference session, and now this forum, is to examine some of the resonances and disjunctions, the affinities and contrasts, between their respective systems of thought. That there are strikingly deep and instructive convergences between Deleuze's and Whitehead's thought is now achieving recognition, not only from those who already work seriously with and on Deleuze, but also within the scholarship on Whitehead.[2] Indeed, as James Williams points out in his paper here, problems dealt with in the secondary literature on Deleuze and on Deleuze and Guattari often have parallels, sometimes remarkably close parallels, to those engaged with in the literature on Whitehead. Some of the most important interpretive issues raised within Deleuze studies in the last few years regarding, for example, the relation between the virtual and the actual or the problem of immanence, to name but two, have their counterparts in the Whitehead literature, and these problems are dealt with here in ways that are often directly relevant and illuminating for thinking about Deleuze. When placed in the context of either Whitehead's own thinking or the body of scholarship on his thought, questions pertaining to the meaning, purpose and scope of Deleuze's work, including questions on the nature of his thought and its relation to Western traditions of philosophy, science and aesthetics, are given a novel, surprising and 'untimely' quality.

Scholarship on Deleuze is clearly entering a new phase. The task now is to move beyond the 'introductory' format stage that has hitherto characterised a significant part of 'Deleuze Studies' and attempt to come to terms with the sheer range and daunting complexity of Deleuze's

extraordinary legacy of thought. By bringing Whitehead to bear on Deleuze, this focus section will be a contribution to that task. Each paper engages some of the key concepts that define the Deleuze–Whitehead encounter – immanence and transcendence, creativity and event, process and life – and each paper seeks to raise pressing questions about the role and status of these concepts in both thinkers. The promise of reading Deleuze and Whitehead together is that it will provide not only a new 'image of thought' for each thinker, but also an image of thinking the new in itself alongside a restored belief in the world as ever in the making.

Notes

1. I thank Ian Buchanan and the conference organisers at Cardiff for giving our session 'plenary' status.
2. Recent Whitehead scholarship in French has often referenced Deleuze. See Benoît Timmermans, *Perspective: Leibniz, Whitehead, Deleuze* (Vrin 2006); Didier Debaise, *Un empiricisme spéculatif: lecture de Procès et Réalité de Whitehead* (Vrin 2006); Isabelle Stengers, *Penser avec Whitehead: Une libre au sauvage création de concept* (Seuil 2002). The Whitehead Research Network (http://whiteheadresearch.org/) has actively encouraged readings of Whitehead in the context of Deleuze's work and continental thought more generally.

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Immanence and Transcendence as Inseparable Processes: On the Relevance of Arguments from Whitehead to Deleuze Interpretation

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Abstract

It is argued in this paper that recent work on immanence and transcendence in Whitehead scholarship, notably by Basile and Nobo, provides helpful guidelines and ideas for work on problems regarding immanence in Deleuze's philosophy. By following arguments on theism and naturalism in the reception of Whitehead, it argues that Deleuze's philosophy depends on reciprocal relations between that actual and the virtual such that they cannot be considered as separate without also being incomplete. It is then shown that Deleuze's philosophy allows for metaphysical terms such as 'pure' without having to concede a separate and self-sufficient pure realm.

Keywords: immanence, transcendence, God, relations, naturalism, metaphysics

A discarded magnifying glass lies by the side of a country lane, a mere child's toy, given away free on the cover of a magazine. It captures, or prehends, the sun's rays as they prehend its glass, focusing thereafter on withered, tinder-dry grass, setting it alight. A forest of mature trees is devastated in the subsequent fire, never to return, or at least not plausibly, in the new climate that turned the undergrowth to perfect kindling while conjuring up summer winds of unmatched intensity. Ancient homesteads and chancy new builds suffered equally on the fire front; those that did not or could not flee were choked then calcinated.

It takes a very detached eye indeed to survey this loss and to claim equal value for the new scrub and the ancient settled hills with their natural complexity, animal life and human bonds. 'The world is thus

faced by the paradox that, at least in its higher actualities, it craves for novelty and yet is haunted by terror at the loss of the past, with its familiarities and its loved ones' (Whitehead 1978: 340). This haunting is one of the forces behind the emergence of religion, with its clinging to transcendence as resistance to the passing of all immanent actualities: 'the culminating fact of conscious, rational life refuses to conceive itself as a transient enjoyment, transiently useful' (Whitehead 1978: 340). Harmony, running from past to future through the accord of transcendent entities with passing and novel ones, allows for a dance of transcendence and immanence.[1] Transcendent eternal objects carry forth the valuation of positive prehensions[2] and, as a sum, as one, Whitehead will call them a side of God, his primordial nature:

> In our cosmological constructions we are, therefore, left with the final opposites, joy and sorrow, good and evil, disjunction and conjunction – that is to say, the many in one – flux and permanence, greatness and triviality, freedom and necessity, God and the World. (Whitehead 1978: 341)

Yet Whitehead's model for immanence and transcendence is very subtle and neither realm is full without the other, since each is formed by the other in creative processes.[3] God's consequent nature comes from actual creations, each one creating a new valuation and a new series of relation between eternal objects, but each novel creation comes from a creative pull in God's primordial nature:

> For Whitehead, God is therefore immanent in each occasion by supplying it with its initial subjective aim and instilling in it the desire for perfection as is possible in its immediate situation. On the other hand, as consequent, God is the conscious and unbiased reception of the physical world as it passes into the immediacy of his 'feeling' [. . .] So the mental, permanent side of the universe passes into the physical, transient side by the primordial nature of God, which is his guide for realisation. The *one* becomes *many* by the unity of God's vision passing into the physical world. And the transient, physical side of the universe passes into the mental, permanent side by the consequent nature of God, which is his coordination of achievement. The *many* become *one* by reaching a final completion and harmonisation in God's eternal being. (McHenry 1992: 160)

Thus once Whitehead has set his speculative metaphysical categories in *Process and Reality*, he proceeds to describe and explain a set of 'derivative notions' of which God is one. Derivative should be seen in a strong sense here, as logically derived from the categories, such that God's consequent nature and primordial nature follow from categories for eternal objects and immediate occasions.[4] Here we can see the

folding of one and many into one another, not layered and hierarchical imbrications, such as the ones we shall see Deleuze move beyond a little later (see also Cloots 2009: 69–70), but relations of mutual derivation and dependency where the fold is all and the folded things, mere passing abstractions. One of these folds leads to an entire multiplicity, the many in the one and the one in the many: 'The primordial created fact is the unconditioned conceptual valuation of the entire multiplicity of eternal objects. This is the primordial nature of God' (Whitehead 1978: 31). Yet this entire valuation is itself created, something that draws Whitehead far away from traditional monotheisms:

> One of the major aims of Whitehead's metaphysical endeavour is to provide a rational interpretation of the immanence of God without denying the necessary element of transcendence enabling him to be considered as the principle of concretion and in that sense primordial, whereas the direct consequence of Plotinus' philosophical efforts was to carry the transcendence of God to its utmost extremity in his separation of the spiritual realm from the sensible world, placing him beyond being. (Wilmot 1979: 70)[5]

The consequent nature of God is the way this creativity and 'all-inclusive unfettered' valuation touch the transcendence of a future destiny through concretions of prehensions: 'By reason of its character as a creature, always in concrescence and never in the past, it receives a reaction from the world; this reaction is its consequent nature' (Whitehead 1978: 31). This creative circle moving from abstract eternal realm through a creative transformation in the actual and back to a now transformed virtual realm is akin to Deleuze's circle of destiny and his rejection of fatalism (Deleuze 1990: 149), where Ideas or sense move through surface or intensity to an actual realm, where a counter-actualisation reworks the form and power of the virtual, sending it back to return again as new creativity (Deleuze 1990: 151). It could seem that surface and intensity are the missing terms in Whitehead's account, but feeling can take on this role and intensity has been surveyed as a central component of his account by Judith Jones in this exact context:

> The reference to the fulfillment of God's own being here is unfortunate, for it suggests a divine agency with a directive office somehow transcendent of the creative process in which there is aim at intensity of satisfaction. But Whitehead's God has no such office. God's 'primordial appetitions', whereby there is this aim at intensity are not transcendent of creative process but primordial in it. (Jones 1998: 146)

The Leibnizian term appetition is taken up by Whitehead to describe the work of valuation and hence eternal objects (studied of course by

Deleuze in *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*; Deleuze 1993: 76–82) and God in the drive forward of immediate occasions (see Shaviro 2009: 24–6 and Williams 2009b: 286–7).

Where Deleuze often talks of the desires and compulsions shaping our destiny as genetic members of damned families or alcoholics (Deleuze 1993: 69–70), Whitehead chooses the more universal example of thirst: 'Thirst is an appetite towards a difference – towards something relevant, something largely identical, but something with a definite novelty' (Whitehead 1978: 32). The elegance of his position comes out strongly here, refusing to lapse into notions of pure identity or essence towards which thirst would return us once we have satiated it, and insisting instead on the becoming within the organism and its creative novelty, explicable only through an external source, but one whose full work can only be when transcendence and immanence combine to project things forward: ' "Appetition" is immediate matter of fact including in itself a principle of unrest, involving realization of what is not and may be' (Whitehead 1978: 32). Thus we find transcendence and immanence on two parts of a circle connecting them where neither transcendence, God as the unity of all multiplicities, nor immanence, God as a consequence of specific actual creations, can be treated independently of one another: 'God's immanence in the world in respect to his primordial nature is an urge towards the future based upon an appetite in the present' (Whitehead 1978: 32).

There is an important lesson for speculative metaphysics to take from Whitehead's characterisation of immanence and transcendence.[6] It lies in his positioning of the main philosophical problem away from worries about the mixing of the two terms: 'The vicious separation of the flux from the permanence leads to the concept of an entirely static God, with eminent reality, in relation to an entirely fluent world, with deficient reality' (Whitehead 1978: 346). Flux and becoming must be part of transcendence and immanence; it is a mistake to define one in terms of perfect self-identity and to assign it the role of setting relative identity and being in the other realm. Instead, they are relations we should think of in terms of becoming of different kinds and with different, but complementary, processes. The real problem lies, on the contrary, in their 'vicious separation'. The surprising use of this technical but also physical adjective could be read in many ways, for instance, as a worry about how the two terms are separated, or as concern for the denial of the priority of one or the other term in their separation. Yet what Whitehead means has little to do with how the terms are divided, or with a wish to preserve one or the other of them.

Instead, the separation is vicious because of the results of the separation for both terms. Both suffer violence because they belong together and can only be separated at the cost of creating a false image of each one: 'But if the opposites, static and fluent, have been so explained as separately to characterise diverse actualities, the interplay between the thing that is static and the things which are fluent involves contradiction at every step of its explanation' (Whitehead 1978: 346). For Whitehead, separated transcendence is pure stasis, meaningless because no change whatsoever can take place within it, a timeless and momentum free block. Yet pure immanence is equally nonsensical, since as pure flux we cannot explain its valued forward momentum and novelty, it becomes free of any realities and without sense. This sense is rendered, in *Process and Reality*, in terms of 'immortality' and 'everlastingness' (Whitehead 1978: 347). Again, though, the meaning of these terms is transformed by Whitehead. Immortality occurs through participation in a process of perfection *through* eternal objects and God, but not in them or as them: 'This factor is the temporal world perfected by its reception and reformation [...]' (Whitehead 1978: 347). Once again, this determination of the world as everlasting and completed as such is answered by a mirroring completing of God in the world[7]:

> In this way God is completed by the individual, fluent satisfaction of finite fact, and the temporal occasions are completed by their everlasting union with their transformed selves, purged into conformation with the eternal order which is the final absolute 'wisdom'. (Whitehead 1978: 348)

Nonetheless, and against Whitehead's own critical reaction to brute materialism as a mistaken return to substance metaphysics,[8] there have been persistent attempts to situate his philosophy on one or the other side of the immanence and transcendence divide, as either a philosophy that still culminates in a God consistent with the hierarchical transcendence of Christian monotheism,[9] or as a form of immanent natural realism with no need for any reference to God, eternal objects and hence to transcendence in its strong sense implying different realms (even if these cannot be separated and share the same ontological status in becoming rather than being under the same metaphysical categories). The former interpretation is perhaps understandable given Whitehead's choice of language, even if it is very distant from his arguments and from the logical structure of his metaphysics.[10] The latter interpretation, however, must bracket off Whitehead's work on God in the latter chapters of *Science and the Modern World* (1927), *Adventures of Ideas*

(1948) and *Process and Reality* (1978), in order to emphasise his search for metaphysics consistent with his contemporary sciences.

Following Jorge Nobo's work (Nobo 1986), George Lucas makes the following important points against the conflation of immanence and naturalism in the non-theistic, naturalistic interpretations of Sherburne, Lowe and Ford[11]:

> Such an account of the ground of final causation ultimately reduces Whitehead's category of creativity either to an account of mere randomness or to a mere reiteration of the past. In either case, no non-theistic rationale for the selective dominance in the present of some certain and specifiable element of the past seems apparent – whence the would be Whiteheadian naturalist cannot offer a satisfactory or coherent account of the origin of the novelty in discrete experience, which is the hallmark of Whitehead's own metaphysical system. (Lucas 1989: 164)

This understanding of the crucial role played by a transcendent realm completed by an immanent one in creativity and novelty is of course just as essential to an understanding of Deleuze's account of the third synthesis of time and the role of Nietzschean eternal return in *Difference and Repetition*. Equally though, this leads to the criticism that there is still too much transcendence in both philosophers as seen in critiques of Deleuze on creativity reminiscent of the early Marx's worries about Feuerbach and religion: 'Feuerbach resolves the essence of religion into the essence of man. But the essence of man is not an abstraction inhering in isolated individuals' (Marx 2006: 117).

Commenting on Deleuze's reading of Spinoza, Peter Hallward thus makes the following critical point: 'Rather than distinct facets of one and the same substance, the being-together of absolutely divergent modes can again only be thought via the pure affirmation of that unthinkable plane upon which their aberrant creating or deviant differing "consists" ' (Hallward 2006: 156). The key terms seeking to re-establish a transcendent reading of Deleuze via the idea of a lack of relation in his philosophy of creativity are 'absolute', 'pure' and 'unthinkable'. This breakdown of relations then allows Hallward to draw the following conclusion:

> Deleuze knows perfectly well what 'unifies' the field of being or creation in Spinoza isn't the idea of substance per se but the notion of God, that is, the idea of an infinity and perfection of essence. Nowhere in his work does Deleuze put in question such infinity or perfection; on the contrary his philosophy presupposes them at every turn. (Hallward 2006: 156)

Yet, if we turn to Whiteheadian arguments about this insidious return of the transcendent in a philosophy of creation, we find the counter that God (or Ideas, or the virtual or pure difference) is as much created as creating:

> The result of these truncated, one-sided interpretations of creativity, according to Nobo, has been a failure to appreciate Whitehead's full commitment to the active, creative 'power of the past' (as Whitehead himself describes it), of causal efficacy and of 'settled fact,' and of the radical subordination (from Hartshorne onwards) of efficient to pure final causality in a manner that transforms Whitehead's critical realism into a species of idealism or Kantian phenomenalism.[12] (Lucas 1989: 174)

I will show below how this argument also applies in defending Deleuze against the same charge.[13]

I want to draw on three ideas from Whiteheadian scholarship in tune with Lucas's points to show how this argument plays out in detail. The first is from a recent interpretation by Pierfrancesco Basile where he argues, completely at odds with Hallward's steps with respect to Spinoza and Deleuze, that Whitehead's metaphysics of God and world is one of *essential relation and mutual dependency*:

> [Whitehead's six antitheses] formulate a novel world view in which God and the world, although distinct, are essentially related, mutually dependent upon each other. This involves a significant revision of the traditional philosophical theology derived from Aristotle – Whitehead's God is still a mover, but not an unmoved one. (Basile 2009: 143)

The second idea comes from a more traditional source in the scholarship through Ford's critique of Neville's reading of Whitehead on God[14]:

> This creator God must be transcendent to all experience and its categories, and thus be quite unknowable. Such a God is akin to the 'causal nature' behind the scenes that Whitehead has rejected in his earlier books on the philosophy of nature. Whitehead's whole effort to achieve maximum coherence takes the form of trying to conceive of all actualities, including God, within one set of common categories. (Ford 1983: 272–3)

The use of *maximum coherence* fits with my earlier insistence on completeness in Whitehead and Deleuze. It is a point often missed in readings of Deleuze, such as Hallward's, because they take 'absolute', 'infinity' and 'perfection' as applying to the whole metaphysical picture when in fact thinkers such as Deleuze and Whitehead[15] are seeking to maximise coherence across different processes where one side may be defined as absolute or pure or unity *yet nonetheless be incomplete in*

relation to other processes, thereby requiring a maximisation against the background of creative antitheses (Whitehead 1978: 348) or creative paradoxes (Deleuze 1990: 100).[16]

So, to move to the third idea taken from Whitehead scholarship, the points about relations, mutual dependency and coherence mean that when we have a term such as potentiality it must never be seen as a pure and untouched reserve of possibility or as a creative fount or, to use Whitehead's term from earlier in this paper, as a form of eminence. This is Leclerc's careful statement of this point, where we can see why Rorty was inspired by Leclerc for his own account of the complex relation of transcendence and immanence in Whitehead's thought:

> Such potentiality is not a mere abstract possibility. It is a specific determinate possibility as potential for the subject in question. 'Potentiality' includes 'possibility' in its connotation, but potentiality in this sense is a determinate selection from pure abstract possibility [...] the purpose and function of actualization is to contribute to subsequent achievement as the potentiality for that subsequent actualisation. (Leclerc 1983: 63)

The key argument here turns on the use of 'subsequent' because it sets potential within a circle rather than at the high point of a ladder, even one that permits vibrations up and down it. Reciprocal determination in a circular motion means that there is never a pure origin in creation, or a privileged realm, *all is subsequent*, since were we to define this realm as *absolutely* primordial we would miss the fact that it is so only when it is incomplete and shorn of an essential relation that determines it as constituted rather than constituting.

To conclude then with Deleuze's own discussion of immanence in relation to transcendence in his short paper 'Les plages d'immanence', written in honour of his teacher at the Sorbonne, Maurice de Gandillac. The first thing to note is the correspondence of themes between the paper and Whitehead's reflection on transcendence and immanence studied here. Like Whitehead, Deleuze contrasts transcendence as 'eminent' and 'emanation' with immanence as a 'coexistence of two movements, complication and explication' (Deleuze 2003: 244). Complication and explication would be Whitehead's two processes of creation in relation to God: complication for the consequent creation of God; explication for the creation in the world through the pull of the primordial nature of God. Two movements whose resulting relations Deleuze describes in exactly the same words chosen by Whitehead: '*The multiple is in the one* which complicates it, as much as *the one is in the multiple* that explains it' (Deleuze 2003: 244; my emphasis). There is then a 'play' of

immanence and transcendence where the immanence of the earth (of the world for Whitehead) pushes through celestial hierarchies banishing any thought of a pure or absolute realm, yet also mixing world and God in the two processes. This is an 'adventure' of immanence in transcendence, where immanence in reflections and geneses form 'the two bases of an expressionist [and hence a Deleuzian] philosophy' (Deleuze 2003: 245). Of course, these short comments are more strongly in tune with Deleuze's early work and pertain to Gandillac, yet what I want to have suggested in this paper is that Deleuze's work is open to an interpretation where immanence and transcendence are never treated as fully separable, but rather must be considered as essentially and indivisibly related as processes. Neither term should be treated independently of the other. More importantly, as Whitehead teaches us, a great risk lies in treating one as a mere subset or as an eventually dispensable illusion within the other. I would suggest that Deleuze was always aware of this risk and that in praising Gandillac he is also adopting his measure and careful balancing of transcendence and immanence in their difficult yet life affirming relations. Should it still be said that this leads to an abstraction from life, the last word should be with Deleuze in his description of a valued individual human life in relation to all others through its creations:

> Philosophical concepts are also, for their inventors and those who release them, modes of life and modes of activity. To recognise the world of hierarchies, but at the same time to make planes of immanence pass through it, bringing it down more than any direct engagement could; that is an image of life inseparable from Maurice de Gandillac. (Deleuze 2003: 245–6)

Notes

1. This reciprocal relation or dialogue of immanence and transcendence, or one and many, is often seen as the core of Whitehead's speculative metaphysics. It underpins the reading set out here, and can be supported, for instance, through a reading of Leclerc's interpretation of Whitehead: 'The being of an ousia is its becoming, its becoming actual. And it becomes actual in order to be potentiality for further ousiai. Whitehead sees the universe as in rhythmic pulsation, from potentiality to actuality, and from actuality to potentiality, from the many to the one and from the one to the many. For him the universe is to be understood as in the process, and not statically' (Leclerc 1983: 66–7). Keith Robinson has also drawn my attention to William Christian's work for a similar emphasis on transcendence and immanence in Whitehead's work (Christian 1959). I thank him for this and other illuminating remarks.
2. For a helpful discussion of the necessity of this valuation over and above other relations, see Rose's treatment of the issue: '[. . .] while all "things" are constituted by their relations, all relations are further defined as value-relations,

that is, relations of some positive or negative character' (Rose 2002: 2). For a related account in terms of a leap into transcendence, see Whitehead (1948: 335).

3. Note how the versions of these arguments about immanence and transcendence are much more sophisticated in *Process and Reality* than in *Science and the Modern World*, for instance in the way the distinction between primordial and consequent nature expands greatly on the idea of God as 'principle of concretion' and 'principle of limitation' in *Science and the Modern World* (Whitehead 1927: 216–21).
4. For a particularly interesting account of this logical aspect of Whitehead's work, see Martin's rigorous reconstructions: '[W] wishes to elucidate "somewhat exceptional elements in our conscious experience – those elements which may roughly be classed together as religious and moral intuitions." The extraordinary appeal of Whitehead's approach is that it seeks to accommodate these exceptional elements in the same categorical framework that it seeks to accommodate logic mathematics and empirical science, and not just superficially, in a telling phrase or two, but with a reasonably full delineation of basic notions, definitions, and fundamental principles' (Martin 1974: 44).
5. Wilmot gives a full theological as opposed to philosophical reconstruction of this relation of immanence and transcendence; see Wilmot (1979: 165–7).
6. For a defence of the use of metaphysics when referring to Whitehead and Deleuze, see Robinson (2009: 132–3); see also Code (2007: 187).
7. Martin gives a good account of this mutual completion in terms of the primordial and consequent nature of God: 'God "creates" the World in the sense of providing items in it with the initial valuations or subjective aims, but the World creates God in the sense of providing the physical data for those valuations' (Martin 1974: 58).
8. See Whitehead's discussion of materialism in *Process and Reality* (Whitehead 1978: 78–9) and his definition of historical materialism in *The Concept of Nature* (Whitehead 2004: 70).
9. For an example of the use of Whitehead's thought as consistent with Christian monotheism, see Pittenger (1969: 54). For a much more developed account of the necessary move to a transcendent God based on freedom as a condition for creation and on the importance of explanations for evil, see Eisendracht: 'This theology, however triumphant, cannot be entirely sustained, for it would deny freedom and deal inadequately with the problem of evil. If God supplies the initial subjective aim of each occasion, and if He integrates all occasions into the perfection of His vision, how can Evil persist in the world?' (Eisendracht 1971: 201).
10. Wolfe Mays supports this point in drawing out the concern with religion in Whitehead's discussion of the eternal: 'We have already seen that Whitehead is concerned in his account of the concept of God's functioning in the universe, with indicating the elements of permanence or eternality in the world, with which, he claims, religion has essentially concerned itself' (Mays 1977: 130). Nonetheless it remains very important not to make the rapid step from concern with the religious drive and its value to an attunement with this or that religion and even less with this or that form of religious transcendence.
11. For an alternative critique of this reductive naturalistic reading of Whitehead, we find the perhaps surprising essay by Rorty (in his early pre-linguistic turn phase) on Whitehead where he distinguishes Whitehead from Aristotle, defending Whitehead's realist but not reductionist view of matter: 'If time is taken seriously, however, and it is thus recognised that "actual world" and "actuality" are token reflexive terms, then one can escape the first horn of

the above dilemma [that forms are indistinguishable from their actualisation] by distinguishing between the definiteness of an entity's characterisation (its "objective" reality) and the decisiveness of its concrescence (its "formal" reality). The latter is actual, and therefore non-repeatable. The former is repeatable, and therefore potential, in the sense that it is related (externally to it, although internally to each entity which prehends it) to a potentially infinite number of subsequent actualities by being "present in them" [. . .]. Its second horn [that matter and form are so different that the latter cannot characterise the former] is escaped by replying that the difference between the characterisation of the actual and the actual entity is no greater, though no less great, than between past and present – which, if one takes time seriously, is precisely the difference which one would expect' (Rorty 1983: 95–6). Rorty's fine analysis, indebted to Leclerc, is particularly acute in focusing on the role of time: an argument as important for a reading of Deleuze as anti-Aristotelian and non-reductionist. For an illuminating discussion of the relation of Whitehead to Rorty, see Hall (2004). Rorty wrote an MA thesis on Whitehead at the University of Chicago under the supervision of Hartshorne (Ramberg 2007). For an interesting discussion of the kinds of career pressures that led Rorty away from work on Whitehead, see Rorty's own comments in 'The inspirational value of great works of literature': 'But it was dear to me that if I did not write on some such respectably analytic problem I would not get a very good job' (Rorty 1998: 130).

12. There is no space here to go into the relation of Whitehead to Kant and to transcendental philosophy and deductions. For a study of this in relation to God in the context of Kant's transcendental philosophy, see Derek Malone-France (2007: 158–72). For an excellent discussion of Whitehead, Deleuze and Kant in relation to creativity and aesthetics, and Deleuze's transcendental empiricism in particular, see Shaviro (2009: 33–7).
13. There is no space here for a full reading of Isabelle Stengers' work on this question around the concept of God in Whitehead, but many of the insights in that discussion are the starting points for this study (Stengers 2002: 520–8; Williams 2009a: 156–9).
14. See Neville (1983: 267–71).
15. In no way should this rapprochement of the two thinkers be seen as a conflation of their terms; see for instance the very different treatment of the concept of multiplicity in *Process and Reality* (Sherburne 1966: 230) and *Difference and Repetition* (Williams 2003: 146–9).
16. For a fuller account of paradox in this context, see Williams (2008: 68–76).

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Interstitial Life: Subtractive Vitalism in Whitehead and Deleuze

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Abstract

Deleuze and Whitehead are both centrally concerned with the problem of how to reconcile the emergence of the New with the evident continuity and uniformity of the world through time. They resolve this problem through the logic of what Deleuze calls 'double causality', and Whitehead the difference between efficient and final causes. For both thinkers, linear cause-and-effect coexists with a vital capacity for desire and decision, guaranteeing that the future is not just a function of the past. The role of desire and decision can be seen in recent developments in biology.

Keywords: Whitehead, desire, biology, decision, causality

The deepest affinity between Alfred North Whitehead and Gilles Deleuze is that they both place creativity, novelty, innovation and the New at the centre of metaphysical speculation. These concepts are so familiar to us today that it is difficult to grasp how radical a rupture they mark in the history of Western thought. In fact, the valorisation of change and novelty, which we so take for granted today, is itself a novelty of relatively recent origin. Philosophy from Plato to Heidegger is largely oriented towards *anamnesis* (reminiscence) and *aletheia* (unforgetting), towards origins and foundations, towards the past rather than the future. Whitehead breaks with this tradition, when he designates the 'production of novelty' as an 'ultimate notion' or 'ultimate metaphysical principle' (Whitehead 1978: 21). This means that the New is one of those fundamental concepts that 'are incapable of analysis in terms of factors more far-reaching than themselves' (Whitehead 1968: 1). Deleuze similarly insists that the New is a value in itself: 'the new, with its power of beginning and beginning again, remains forever new'. There is 'a difference … both formal and in kind' between the genuinely

new, and that which is customary and established (Deleuze 1994: 136). Deleuze and Guattari therefore say that 'the object of philosophy is to create concepts that are always new' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 5). Philosophical concepts are not for all time; they are not given in advance, and they 'are not waiting for us ready-made, like heavenly bodies'. Instead, they must always be 'invented, fabricated, or rather created' afresh; 'philosophers must distrust ... those concepts they did not create themselves' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 5–6). For both Whitehead and Deleuze, novelty is the highest criterion for thought; even truth depends upon novelty and creativity, rather than the reverse. And it is because Deleuze and Whitehead alike take the New as the highest value, that they are both committed to process rather than result, or to Becoming as the highest expression of Being.

Of course, Whitehead and Deleuze are not entirely without precursors in their affirmation of the New as an ultimate value. Deleuze explicitly invokes Nietzsche's call for a 'revaluation of all values' and for the continual 'creation of new values' (Deleuze 1994: 136). And Whitehead and Deleuze alike are inspired by Bergson's insistence that 'life ... is invention, is unceasing creation' (Bergson 2005: 27). Whitehead and Deleuze, like Nietzsche and Bergson before them, denounce the way that, in traditional European philosophy, 'changeless order is conceived as the final perfection, with the result that the historic universe is degraded to a status of partial reality, issuing into the notion of mere appearance' (Whitehead 1968: 80). But appearance should never be qualified as 'mere', because the contents of appearance cannot be prescribed in advance. The *ways* in which things appear may well be limited, but appearances themselves are not. They cannot be known in advance, but must be encountered in the course of experience. This means that experience is always able to surprise us. Our categories are never definitive or all-inclusive. Being always remains open. 'The whole is neither given nor giveable ... because it is the Open, and because its nature is to change constantly, or to give rise to something new, in short, to endure' (Deleuze 1986: 9). 'Creative advance into novelty' (Whitehead 1978: 222) is always possible, always about to happen.

The problem, for Whitehead and Deleuze alike, is how to reconcile the emergence of the New with the evident continuity and uniformity of the world through time. In a sense, this problem is the opposite of the sceptical paradox introduced by David Hume, and which has been the primary focus of epistemological discussion for the last 250 years. Hume asks how causality is possible, given that the only ground for it he is able to discern is subjective expectation, or habit. That is to say,

Hume takes causality out of the physical world, and places it instead within the observing subject – an assumption that Kant continues to endorse, when he gives his transcendental solution to Hume's paradox. But isn't the problem of validating causality really just one, as Deleuze says in a different context, 'for the abstract thinker? And how could this thinker, with respect to this problem, not be ridiculous?' (Deleuze 1990: 156). The real problem is not to validate causality against scepticism; it is rather to find a way out from causality, an exception to the universal grip of what Whitehead calls 'causal efficacy' (Whitehead 1978: 116). How can the future avoid being predetermined by the past or by the relentless chain of causes and effects? How is it possible, in the world described for us by physical science, for anything genuinely New to emerge?

Deleuze takes up this problem in *The Logic of Sense*, by proposing a logic of 'double causality' (Deleuze 1990: 94–9). He reverts to what he describes as the ancient Stoics' 'cleavage of the causal relation' (Deleuze 1990: 6). On the one hand, there is real, or physical, causality: causes relate to other causes in the depths of matter. This is the materialist realm of 'bodies penetrating other bodies ... of passions-bodies and of the infernal mixtures which they organise or submit to' (Deleuze 1990: 131). On the other hand, there is the idealised, or transcendental, 'quasi-causality' of effects relating solely to other effects, on the surfaces of bodies and things (Deleuze 1990: 6). This quasi-causality is 'incorporeal ... ideational or "fictive"' rather than actual and effective; it works, not to constrain things to a predetermined destiny, but to 'assur[e] the full autonomy of the effect' (Deleuze 1990: 94–5). And this autonomy, this splitting of the causal relation, 'preserve[s]' or 'grounds freedom', liberating events from the destiny that weighs down upon them (Deleuze 1990: 6). An act is free, even though it is also causally determined, to the extent that the actor is able 'to be the mime of what effectively occurs, to double the actualization with a counter-actualization, the identification with a distance' (Deleuze 1990: 161). That is to say, Deleuze's counter-actualising 'dancer' makes a *decision* that supplements causal efficacy and remains irreducible to it, without actually violating it. The dancer thereby preserves 'the truth of the event', in its potentiality, from the catastrophe of 'its inevitable actualization' (Deleuze 1990: 161).

Whitehead also argues for a doubling of causality, in a way that preserves both necessity and freedom. Adapting to his own use a traditional philosophical vocabulary, he distinguishes between, but also seeks to reconcile, efficient and final causes. These two modes of causality can be correlated, to a certain extent, with the two modes of perception recognised by Whitehead: causal efficacy and presentational

immediacy. They can also be aligned with what Whitehead calls the 'physical' and 'mental' poles of any entity (Whitehead 1978: 239). Efficient causality refers to the naturalistic chain of causes and effects, or the way that an entity inherits conditions and orientations from 'the immortal past' (Whitehead 1978: 210). On this level, the causal dependency of a given entity upon its predecessors, its status as an *effect*, cannot be distinguished from that entity's prehension (its reception, or non-conscious perception) of those predecessors. 'The problems of efficient causation and of knowledge receive a common explanation' (Whitehead 1978: 190). An entity *feels* its precursors, and is thereby both *affected* and *caused* by them.

> All our physical relationships are made up of such simple physical feelings ... the subjective form of a physical feeling is re-enaction of the subjective form of the feeling felt. Thus the cause passes on its feeling to be reproduced by the new subject as its own, and yet as inseparable from the cause ... the cause is objectively in the constitution of the effect. (Whitehead 1978: 237)

Efficient causality is a passage, a transmission (Whitehead 1978: 210), an influence or a contagion. This objective inheritance constitutes the physical pole of the affected entity, its embodiment in a material universe.

However, as this process of causality-as-repetition unfolds, 'the re-enaction is not perfect' (Whitehead 1978: 237). There's always a glitch in the course of the 'vector transmission' of energy and affect from past to present, or from cause to effect. There are at least two reasons for this. In the first place, nothing can ever purely and simply recur, because of the 'cumulative character of time', its 'irreversibility' (Whitehead 1978: 237). Every event, once it has taken place, adds itself to the past that weighs upon all subsequent events. No matter how precisely event B mimics event A, B will be different from A simply due to the 'stubborn fact' that A has already taken place. The pastness of A – or what Whitehead calls its 'objectification', or 'objective immortality' – is a constitutive feature of B's world, a crucial part of the context in which B occurs. Thus, by the very fact that B repeats A, B's circumstances must be different from A's. 'Time is cumulative as well as reproductive, and the cumulation of the many is not their reproduction as many' (Whitehead 1978: 238). The effect is subtly different from the cause whose impulsion it inherits, precisely to the extent that the effect prehends (or recognises) the cause as an additional factor in the universe. Whitehead thus extends Leibniz's Principle of Indiscernibles. Not only can no two occasions ever be identical, but also 'no two occasions can have identical actual worlds' (Whitehead 1978: 210).

In the second place, the causal reproduction of the past in the present is imperfect, because no inheritance, and no feeling, is entirely neutral. The 'subjective form', as an element in the process of reception, differentially evaluates the data it receives, and thereby selects among these data. Every prehension, every causal connection, involves a 'valuation' on the part of the receiving entity: a valuation that does not just take the transmitted data as given, but 'values [them] up or down' (Whitehead 1978: 241). As a result, 'the actual world [is] selectively appropriated' (Whitehead 1978: 233), according to the 'qualities of joy and distaste, of adversion and of aversion, which attach integrally' to every experience (Whitehead 1978: 234). This affective response, with its selective and gradated 'conceptual prehension' of the qualities (eternal objects) implicit in the data, constitutes the mental pole of the affected entity, its potential for change or novelty.

Whitehead insists that every entity is 'essentially dipolar, with its physical and mental poles; and even the physical world cannot be properly understood without reference to its other side, which is the complex of mental operations' (Whitehead 1978: 239). Every entity's simple physical feelings are supplemented by its conceptual feelings. Of course, these 'mental operations', or conceptual feelings, 'do not necessarily involve consciousness'; indeed, most of the time, consciousness is entirely absent. But in every occasion of experience, both physical and mental poles are present. This means that everything happens according to a double causality. A final (or teleological) cause is always at work, alongside the efficient (mechanistic) cause. If 'transition [from the past] is the vehicle of the efficient cause', then concrescence, or the actual becoming of the entity – its orientation towards the future – 'moves toward its final cause' (Whitehead 1978: 210). As with Deleuze's quasi-cause, so with Whitehead's final cause: it does not suspend or interrupt the action of the efficient cause, but supervenes upon it, accompanies it, demands to be recognised alongside it.

For Whitehead, the final cause is the 'decision' (Whitehead 1978: 43) by means of which an actual entity becomes what it is. 'However far the sphere of efficient causation be pushed in the determination of components of a concrescence ... beyond the determination of these components there always remains the final reaction of the self-creative unity of the universe' (Whitehead 1978: 47). This 'final reaction' is the way that 'the many become one, and are increased by one' (Whitehead 1978: 21) in every new existence. The point is 'that "decided" conditions are never such as to banish freedom. They only qualify it. There is always a contingency left open for immediate decision'

(Whitehead 1978: 284). This contingency, this opening, is the point of every entity's self-determining activity: its creative self-actualisation or 'self-production' (Whitehead 1978: 224). And this is how novelty enters the universe. The decision is always a singular one, unique to the entity whose 'subjective aim' it is. It cannot be categorised or classified: for that would mean returning the decision to the already decided, to the efficient causes at the point of whose conjunction it arose.

To be sure, much of the time, this decision or final cause is 'negligible' in scope, and can safely be ignored (Whitehead 1978: 115, 245). In many inorganic physical processes, the space of 'contingency left open for immediate decision' is vanishingly small. Novelty is nearly inexistent, and linear, efficient causality can explain (almost) everything. Nonetheless, even physical science is obliged to recognise that in certain limit-cases – those involving quantum processes on the one hand, and processes of higher-order emergence on the other – linear, mechanistic causality is inadequate, and an explanation in terms of purpose, 'subjective aim' or 'decision' becomes necessary. Both quantum processes and emergent processes remain controversial among scientists today, and obviously I cannot pretend to know what the eventual scientific consensus will be. Nonetheless, it is worth at least mentioning the 'Strong Free Will Theorem' of John H. Conway and Simon Kochen, which

> asserts, roughly, that if indeed we humans have free will, then elementary particles already have their own small share of this valuable commodity. More precisely, if the experimenter can freely choose the directions in which to orient his apparatus in a certain measurement, then the particle's response (to be pedantic – the universe's response near the particle) is not determined by the entire previous history of the universe. (Conway and Kochen 2009)

In this sense, even subatomic particles make a 'decision' of some sort, one that is radically undetermined or self-determined.

In any case, the role of subjective 'decision' becomes especially important, so that it can no longer be dismissed as 'negligible' – when we get to those emergent processes of self-organisation known as living things. It is precisely in the case of living entities that the recourse to efficient causes is most inadequate, and that 'we require explanation by "final cause" instead' (Whitehead 1978: 104). Indeed, Whitehead defines 'life' itself (to the extent that a concept with such fuzzy boundaries can be defined at all) as 'the origination of conceptual novelty – novelty of appetition' (Whitehead 1978: 102). By 'appetition',

Whitehead means 'a principle of unrest … an appetite towards a difference … something with a definite novelty' (Whitehead 1978: 32). Most broadly, 'appetition' has to do with the fact that 'all physical experience is accompanied by an appetite for, or against, its continuance: an example is the appetition of self-preservation' (Whitehead 1978: 32). But experience becomes more complex when the appetition pushes beyond itself, and does not merely work towards the preservation and continuation of whatever already exists. This is precisely the case with living beings. When an entity displays 'appetite towards a difference', Whitehead gives the simple example of 'thirst' – the initial physical experience is supplemented and expanded by a 'novel conceptual prehension', an envisioning (or 'envisagement') (Whitehead 1978: 34) of something that is not already given, not (yet) actual. Even 'at a low level', such a process 'shows the germ of a free imagination' (Whitehead 1978: 32).

This means that it is insufficient to interpret something like an animal's thirst, and its consequent behaviour of searching for water, as merely a mechanism for maintaining (or returning to) a state of homeostatic equilibrium. 'Appetition towards a difference' seeks transformation, not preservation. Life cannot be adequately defined in terms of concepts like Spinoza's *conatus*, or Maturana and Varela's *autopoiesis*. Rather, an entity is alive precisely to the extent that it envisions difference, and thereby strives for something other than the mere continuation of what it already is. "'Life" means novelty … A single occasion is alive when the subjective aim which determines its process of concrescence has introduced a novelty of definiteness not to be found in the inherited data of its primary phase' (Whitehead 1978: 104). Appetition is the 'conceptual prehension', and then the making-definite, of something that has no prior existence in the 'inherited data' (i.e., something that, prior to the appetition, was merely potential). But if life is appetition, then it cannot be understood as a matter of continuity or endurance (for things like stones endure much longer, and more successfully, than living things do), nor even in terms of response to stimulus (for 'the mere response to stimulus is characteristic of all societies whether inorganic or alive' (Whitehead 1978: 104). Rather, life must be understood as a matter of '*originality* of response to stimulus' (emphasis added). Life is 'a bid for freedom', and a process that 'disturbs the inherited "responsive" adjustment of subjective forms' (Whitehead 1978: 104). It happens 'when there is intense experience without the shackle of reiteration from the past' (Whitehead 1978: 105). In sum, Whitehead maintains 'the doctrine that an organism is "alive" when

in some measure its reactions are inexplicable by *any* tradition of pure physical inheritance' (Whitehead 1978: 104).

Of course, contemporary biology is not prone to speak of final causes, or to define life in the way that Whitehead does. According to the mainstream neo-Darwinian synthesis, 'pure physical inheritance', when combined with occasional random mutation and the force of natural selection, is sufficient to account for biological variation. Innovation and change are not primary processes, but adaptive reactions to environmental pressures. Life is essentially conservative: not oriented towards difference and novelty as Whitehead would have it, but organised for the purposes of self-preservation and self-reproduction. It is not a bid for freedom, but an inescapable compulsion. The image of a 'life force' that we have today is not anything like Bergson's *élan vital*; it is rather the virus, a mindlessly, relentlessly self-replicating bit of DNA or RNA. Even the alternatives to the neo-Darwinian synthesis that are sometimes proposed today – like Maturana and Varela's theory of autopoiesis (1991), Stuart Kauffman's exploration of complexity and self-organising systems (2000), Lynn Margulis' work on symbiosis (Margulis and Sagan 2002), James Lovelock's Gaia theory (2000), and Susan Oyama's Developmental Systems Theory (2000) – share mainstream biology's overriding concern with the ways that organisms maintain homeostatic equilibrium in relation to their environment, and strive to perpetuate themselves through reproduction. It would seem that organic beings only innovate when they are absolutely compelled to, and as it were in spite of themselves.

Nevertheless, when biologists actually look at the concrete behaviour of living organisms, they encounter a somewhat different picture. For they continually discover the important role of 'decision' in this behaviour. And not only in the case of mammals and other 'higher' animals. Even 'bacteria are sensitive, communicative and decisive organisms … bacterial behaviour is highly flexible and involves complicated decision-making' (Devitt 2007). Slime moulds can negotiate mazes and choose one path over another (Nakagaki, Yamada and Toth 2000). Plants do not have brains or central nervous systems, but 'decisions are made continually as plants grow', concerning such matters as the placement of roots, shoots and leaves, and orientation with regard to sunlight (Trewavas 2005: 414). In the animal kingdom, even fruit flies exhibit 'spontaneous behaviour' that is non-deterministic, unpredictable, 'nonlinear and unstable'. This behavioural variability cannot be attributed to 'residual deviations due to extrinsic random noise'. Rather, it has an 'intrinsic' origin: 'spontaneity ("voluntariness")

[is] a biological trait even in flies' (Maye et al. 2007). In sum, it would seem that *all* living organisms make decisions that are not causally programmed or predetermined. We must posit that 'cognition is part of basic biological function, like respiration' (Lyon in Devitt 2007). Indeed, there is good evidence that, in multi-cellular organisms, not only does the entire organism spontaneously generate novelty, but 'each cell has a certain intelligence to make decisions on its own' (Albrecht-Buehler 1998).

Thus, biologists have come to see cognition, or 'information processing', at work everywhere in the living world: 'all organisms, including bacteria, the most primitive (fundamental) ones, must be able to sense the environment and perform internal information processing for thriving on latent information embedded in the complexity of their environment' (Ben Jacob, Shapira and Tauber 2006: 496). Organisms would then make decisions – which are 'free', in the sense that they are not pre-programmed, mechanistically forced or determined in advance – in accordance with this cognitive processing. This fits quite well with Whitehead's account of 'conceptual prehension' as the 'valuation' (Whitehead 1978: 240) of possibilities for change (Whitehead 1978: 33), the envisioning of 'conditioned alternatives' that are then 'reduced to coherence' (Whitehead 1978: 224). But it is getting things backwards to see this whole process as the *result* of cognition or information processing. For 'conceptual prehension' basically means 'appetition' (Whitehead 1978: 33). It deals in abstract potentialities, and not just concrete actualities; but it is emotional, and desiring, before it is cognitive. Following Whitehead, we should say that it is the very act of *decision* (conceptual prehension, valuation in accordance with subjective aim, selection) that makes cognition possible – rather than cognition providing the grounds for decision. And this applies all the way from bacteria to human beings, for whom, as Whitehead puts it, 'the final decision … constituting the ultimate modification of subjective aim, is the foundation of our experience of responsibility, of approbation or of disapprobation, of self-approval or of self-reproach, of freedom, of emphasis' (Whitehead 1978: 47). We don't make decisions because we are free and responsible; rather, we are free and responsible because – and precisely to the extent that – we make decisions.

Life itself is characterised by indeterminacy, non-closure and what Whitehead calls 'spontaneity of conceptual reaction' (Whitehead 1978: 105). It necessarily involves 'a certain absoluteness of self-enjoyment', together with 'self-creation', defined as 'the transformation of the potential into the actual' (Whitehead 1968: 150–1). All this does not

imply any sort of mysticism or vitalism, however; it can be accounted for in wholly orthodox Darwinian terms. In fruit fly brains no less than in human ones, 'the nonlinear processes underlying spontaneous behaviour initiation have evolved to generate behavioural indeterminacy' (Maye et al. 2007: 6). That is to say, strict determinism no longer applies to living things, or applies to them only to a limited extent, because 'freedom', or the ability to generate indeterminacy, has itself been developed and elaborated in the course of evolution. As Morse Peckham speculated long ago,

> randomness has a survival value … The brain's potentiality for the production of random responses is evolutionarily selected for survival. As evolutionary development increases and more complex organisms come into existence, a result of that randomness, the brain's potentiality for randomness accumulates and increases with each emerging species. (Peckham 1979: 165)

The power of making an unguided, and unforeseeable, decision has proven to be evolutionarily adaptive. It has therefore been forwarded by natural selection. Some simple life processes can be regulated through pre-programmed behaviour; but 'more complex interactions require behavioural indeterminism in order to be effective' (Maye et al. 2007: 8). Organisms that remain inflexible tend to perish; the flexible ones survive, by transforming themselves instead of merely perpetuating themselves. In this way, the 'appetition of self-preservation' itself creates a counter-appetition for transformation and difference. Life has evolved so as to crave, and to generate, novelty.

Such is Whitehead's version of double causality. Whitehead reminds us again and again that we never simply transcend efficient causality. Every experience 'is concerned with the givenness of the actual world, considered as the stubborn fact which at once limits and provides opportunity for the actual occasion … We are governed by stubborn fact' (Whitehead 1978: 129). We are impelled by the accumulation of the past, and by the deterministic processes arising out of that past. Nothing can ever violate the 'ontological principle', which asserts that 'there is nothing that floats into the world from nowhere. Everything in the actual world is referable to some actual entity' (Whitehead 1978: 244). But at the same time, these deterministic processes themselves open up an ever-widening zone of indetermination. In this way,

> efficient causation expresses the transition from actual entity to actual entity; and final causation expresses the internal process whereby the actual entity becomes itself. There is the becoming of the datum, which is to be found in

> the past of the world; and there is the becoming of the immediate self from the datum … An actual entity is at once the product of the efficient past, and is also, in Spinoza's phrase, *causa sui*. (Whitehead 1978: 150)

In this way, decision or self-determination subsists alongside, and supplements, linear, effective causality. This is a tricky argument, of course, and one that 'the popular positivistic philosophy' (Whitehead 1968: 148) will not accept. How can a subject that is entirely determined by material causes also be said to freely determine itself? Whitehead answers this by positing, not an originary subject, but rather a 'subject-superject' that is both a producer and a bearer of novelty, and that expires in the very movement by which it comes into being. Creativity, or the Category of the Ultimate (Whitehead 1978: 21), is the inner principle of freedom. It is unavoidably the case that 'whatever is determinable is determined' according to efficient causality; but at the same time 'there is always a remainder for the decision of the subject-superject' (Whitehead 1978: 27–8). And yet this decision or final cause is itself entirely immanent. The entity that makes this decision, and that is determined by it, is evanescent or 'perpetually perishing'. It fades away before it can be caught within the chains of deterministic causality. Or more precisely, its so being caught *is* precisely the event of its 'satisfaction' and passing-away. Thus,

> actual entities 'perpetually perish' subjectively, but are immortal objectively. Actuality in perishing acquires objectivity, while it loses subjective immediacy. It loses the final causation which is its internal principle of unrest, and it acquires efficient causation whereby it is a ground of obligation characterizing the creativity. (Whitehead 1978: 29)

Freedom, or the 'internal principle of unrest', is superseded by causal necessity, or the external conformity of the present to the past. The initiative that created something new in the moment of decision subsists afterwards as an 'obligation' of 'stubborn fact', conditioning and limiting the next exercise of freedom.

Although Whitehead finds the agency of decision to be at work most prominently in living organisms, his position is not that of any traditional vitalism. For

> there is no absolute gap between 'living' and 'non-living' societies. For certain purposes, whatever 'life' there is in a society may be important; and for other purposes, unimportant … a society may be more or less 'living', according to the prevalence in it of living occasions. (Whitehead 1978: 102)

In addition, if 'life' is a locus of appetition and decision, it is more an absence than a presence, more a vacuum than a force. Thus 'life is a characteristic of "empty space" … Life lurks in the interstices of each living cell, and in the interstices of the brain' (Whitehead 1978: 105–6). Life involves a kind of subtraction, a rupturing or emptying-out of the chains of physical causality. As a result of this de-linking, 'the transmission of physical influence, through the empty space within [the animal body], has not been entirely in conformity with the physical laws holding for inorganic societies' (Whitehead 1978: 106). These empty spaces or interstices are the realm of the potential, of a futurity that already haunts the present – or of what Deleuze calls the virtual. For, just as the past remains active within the present by means of the 'vector transmission' of efficient causality, so the future is already latent within the present, thanks to the 'multiplicity of pure potentiality' (Whitehead 1978: 164) that can be taken up by the living actual occasion. 'The past is a nexus of actualities' (Whitehead 1978: 214); it is still actual, still a force in the present, because it is reproduced as a 'datum', physically prehended by each new actual occasion. On the other hand, the future is *available*, without having yet been actually determined: it takes the form of eternal objects, or 'pure potentials', that may be conceptually prehended (or not) by each new actual occasion. Whitehead says therefore that, 'the future is merely real, without being actual' (Whitehead 1978: 214). Strikingly, this is the same formula that Deleuze (borrowing from Proust) uses to describe the virtual (Deleuze 1994: 208). Where Deleuze describes novelty or invention as the actualisation of the virtual, Whitehead says that 'reality becomes actual' (Whitehead 1978: 214) in the present, or in the decision of each living occasion. The process of actualisation is the hinge, or the interstice, not only between past and future, but also between the two forms of causality.

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Back to Life: Deleuze, Whitehead and Process

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Abstract

In this paper I argue that Deleuze's 'thinking with' Whitehead gives access to a range of novel conceptual resources that offer a route out of phenomenology and back to life, a movement beyond intentionality and back to things 'in their free and wild state'. I lay out four conceptual and methodological markers (there are many more) – creativity, event, prehension, empiricism – that characterise Deleuze's metaphysics and provide a guide for showing how these develop through a sustained becoming with Whitehead. I conclude by looking at Deleuze and Guattari's use of the term most famously associated with Whitehead: the concept of 'process'.

Keywords: Whitehead, process, metaphysics, phenomenology, the new, creativity, event, prehension, empiricism, life

In what follows I will try to develop some ideas to show how and why Whitehead's later thought functions as a central source for a good deal of what motivates Deleuze's entire philosophical project. The main strand of my argument will be that Deleuze's 'thinking with' Whitehead gives access to a range of novel conceptual resources that offer a route out of phenomenology and back to life, a movement beyond intentionality and back to things 'in their free and wild state'. I'll begin by looking at the commitment to metaphysics in Deleuze's work and suggest that Deleuze's metaphysics, like Whitehead's, is a metaphysics of the new. I lay out four conceptual and methodological markers (there are many more) – creativity, event, prehension, empiricism – that characterise this metaphysics and provide a guide for showing how Deleuze develops these through a sustained becoming with Whitehead. I'll finish with some remarks, somewhat critical, about Deleuze and Guattari's use of the term most famously associated with Whitehead: the concept of 'process'.[1]

I. Metaphysics and Creativity

To begin then, firstly, I take it as given – or should be – that from beginning to end Deleuze is doing metaphysics. There still doesn't seem to me to be much recognition of this. I know some are smuggling it in by using the word 'ontology', but there's really no need to give up this rich term and there may be good reasons for abandoning talk of ontology in Deleuze. In my view, with Deleuze and Whitehead we move towards 'that remarkable point of modern metaphysics which all preceding discourse had indicated like a flickering compass' (Descombes 1980: 136). The 'remarkable point' of modern metaphysics referred to here is the achievement of an immanent or fully differential metaphysics that returns to 'life' and the concrete world: a thoroughgoing effort to renew metaphysics in the wake of Kant and then Heidegger. This is what Deleuze recognised in Whitehead, and this is also no doubt one of the reasons why Whitehead, like Bergson, became marginalised by professional philosophy in the latter half of the twentieth century. Deleuze didn't have a problem using the term; as he declares, simply, 'I am a pure metaphysician' (Deleuze 2007: 42). I agree with Arnauld Villani that Deleuze's affirmation of metaphysics is crucial to his entire philosophy, just as it is for Whitehead.

There is much that one could say about this affirmative transformation of metaphysics. Perhaps one of the more important aspects of Deleuze's Whiteheadian inflected renewal of metaphysics is that it operates on the basis of a new, yet incomplete, system of categories (with a new understanding of 'system' and 'category'). These are categories, as Deleuze says, that are 'not in the style of Kant, but in the style of Whitehead' (Deleuze 2007: 41), and which are drawn and 'transposed' from various disciplines and elements of experience. It is directly from Whitehead that Deleuze finds the means to retain and employ a new type of category, a 'problematic' or 'virtual' sense of category 'so that "category" takes on a new, very special sense' (Deleuze 2007: 41). These new categories are no longer tied to structures of rational necessity that represent an essentially complete and unchanging real that inevitably suppresses the different, the contingent and the anomalous. If much of modern philosophy after Kant, and culminating with Heidegger, simply abandons categorical thinking, Whitehead's singular response is to 'reform' or reinvent the category not as a structure of being or of cognition, but as the unique act or event of the self-differentiation of things. Indeed, when Deleuze says in *Difference and Repetition* that '[Whitehead's] *Process and Reality* is one of the greatest books of modern

philosophy' (Deleuze 1994: 284–5), it is because Whitehead's categories or 'empirico-ideal notions', as Deleuze calls them, are precisely an effort to move beyond Aristotelian categories of being and Kantian categories of possible experience in the development of something completely new. Categories of the Aristotelian-Kantian type, although very different in themselves, belong for Deleuze to the world of representation, where they distribute and partition being according to the laws of 'sedentary proportionality'. By contrast, Deleuze-Whitehead's own 'descriptive', 'nomadic' or 'phantastical' notions are said to be 'really open' because they preside over a distribution of difference that is not governed by representational rules. Such notions are said to betray an empiricist or pluralist sense of Ideas that collapse the 'transcendent' distinction between existence and essence, thought and being. Thus, rather than presupposing the validity of categorical thinking in the Kantian mode as the epistemological conditions for all possible experience, these 'notions' are the conditions of real experience. Deleuze invokes Whitehead's 'empirico-ideal' notions, then, as examples of a non-representational, differential and metaphysical structure or 'open' system of categories where the Kantian map of critical reason is displaced and reworked. Here categories 'in the style of Whitehead' become the immanent differences and intensities of the 'nomadic' movement and processual distribution of being itself. It is in this sense that Deleuze can say 'to my mind, the conclusion of *A Thousand Plateaus* is a table of categories (but an incomplete, insufficient one). Not in the style of Kant, but in the style of Whitehead' (Deleuze 2007: 41).

This dynamism and becoming of the real in Deleuze and Whitehead is essentially a movement of creativity and so we could say that creativity is the 'first' and general category of this new metaphysics. It seems to me that Peter Hallward's basic claim in his book *Out of This World* (2006) that Deleuze offers a metaphysics of creativity is just about right, although I think he gets a good deal of the details wrong.[2] For Deleuze, being, thinking and creativity are one. Deleuze gives us a metaphysics of creativity. If there is one designation that accurately characterises Whitehead's later philosophy, it is that it is also a metaphysics of creativity in which being, thinking and creativity are one. For Whitehead, the category of the 'Ultimate' is 'creativity'. It is, he says, 'the Universal of Universals characterising ultimate matter of fact' (Whitehead 1978: 21). We could claim that Whitehead's metaphysics is in fact the first metaphysics of 'creativity' since he actually invented the concept, the English word 'creativity'.[3] At the very least I think we can claim that Deleuze, in appealing to creativity and 'creativeness' (which

Deleuze writes in English), was thinking with Whitehead (as well as Bergson).

II. Event

Deleuze's metaphysics of creativity has a number of important constitutive elements or associated special categories. Perhaps the first such element or category to mention is the 'event'. Deleuze, of course, discusses the concept of the event explicitly with detailed attention in several books. 'I've tried in all of my books', Deleuze says, 'to discover the nature of events. It's a philosophical concept, the only one capable of ousting the verb "to be" and attributes'[4] (Deleuze 1995: 141). In his *Leibniz and the Baroque* Deleuze even uncovers a 'secret school' devoted to answering the question 'What is an Event?' Of course, the successor to this secret school, the *diadoche* as Deleuze calls him, who inherits the question of the event is none other than Whitehead (Deleuze 1993: 76). Think of all the philosophers that Deleuze could have named here. Heidegger immediately springs to mind. Why is Heidegger not the successor, or Derrida, or even Foucault, who devoted a number of texts to the idea of what he called 'eventalisation'? But Heidegger is after all the thinker of 'ereignis', the veiling–unveiling as the event of Being. It seems to me that Deleuze naming Whitehead as the successor to the question of the event is important, and it's related precisely to Whitehead's metaphysics of creativity. I'll come back to Heidegger later. In any case, it's true that Whitehead also, like Deleuze, spent a good part of his career writing about the event. I want to suggest that what Whitehead offered Deleuze here was a model or 'logic' for thinking the event in relation to creativity and the new that would come to inform Deleuze's own conception of the event.

So, for Deleuze it is Whitehead who is the successor to the question of the event, a question that reaches back, according to Deleuze, at least to the Stoics who first elevated the event to the status of a concept. The second 'great logic of the event' comes with Leibniz for whom the event is a relation, a relation to time and existence. What, for Deleuze, constitutes Whitehead's unique contribution to this school, and the third great logic of the event, is to show precisely how the event can be thought in terms of the question of the new. Whitehead's creative advance over Leibniz's event, and as we'll see over phenomenology and Heidegger, is to lay out the conditions for thinking novelty and the new in itself. Such a thinking of the event would reveal the best of all worlds: 'not the one that reproduces the eternal, but the one on which new creations are

produced, the one endowed with a capacity for innovation or creativity . . . ' (Deleuze 1993: 70).

What are the conditions for the event of the new? In *The Fold* Deleuze attributes four conditions or components to Whitehead's event and I want to suggest that each component finds an equivalent correlate in Deleuze's own event.[5] Whitehead initially conceived of events as 'extending over' each other in an infinite relation of continuity between wholes and parts. The unique novelty of an event is given by its 'passage' into another series of events either as part or whole. Deleuze makes this concept of 'extension' the first condition or component of Whitehead's event. Extensive series have intrinsic properties, 'for example height, intensity, timbre of a sound, a tint, a value, a saturation of color' (Deleuze 1993: 77). If extension gives us something rather than nothing, then 'intension' gives us 'this' rather than 'that'. Matter, or what fills space and time, always has characters, properties, degrees or 'intensities' of value that determine its texture in relation to other materials that are a part of it. The second component of the event, then, is 'intension'. A further condition of the event for Deleuze-Whitehead is the 'ingression' of eternal objects. Eternal objects are thoroughly indeterminate 'pure possibilities' and express a general potentiality unconstrained by any states of affairs, but when actualised or ingressed they instantiate fully determinate facts or forms of definiteness. However, in addition to these three components there is another. One crucial factor in the structuring of the event or 'actual occasion', as Whitehead came to call it, is its appropriation and creative use of the past in the formation of the new individual. This leads us on to our next special category and the final condition of the event of the new: prehension.

III. Prehension

The creation of the new is achieved through what Whitehead called 'prehension'. Next to creativity, and the three other conditions of the event, this is another element that converges with Deleuze's ontology and it is perhaps one of Whitehead's most important concepts. Prehension is a non-cognitive 'feeling' that guides how the occasion shapes itself from the data of the past and the potentialities of the future. Prehension is an 'intermediary', a purely immanent potential power, a relation of difference with itself, or pure 'affection' before any division into form and matter. Prehension, for Deleuze, is a passage or folding 'between' states, a movement of pure experience or perception that increases or

decreases its potential through interaction and communication with those states. As Deleuze says, 'everything prehends its antecedents and its concomitants and by degrees prehends a world' (Deleuze 1993: 78). 'All prehension', Deleuze remarks, 'is a prehension of prehension, and the event a nexus of prehensions' (Deleuze 1993: 78). The event of prehension is double-sided and 'rhythmic' in that it is the objectification of one prehension and the subjectification of another. In *What is Philosophy?* (1994) Deleuze and Guattari describe the rhythmic movement of prehension in the context of Whitehead's public/private coupling: 'The ("public") matter of fact was the mixture of data actualised by the world in its previous state, while bodies are new actualisations whose "private" states restore matters of fact for new bodies. Even when they are non-living, or rather, inorganic, things have a lived experience because they are affections and perceptions' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 154). Deleuze turns to Whitehead's theory of prehensions here to describe the creative ongoing rhythm of 'lived experience' as a unity with two sides or aspects. There is no ontological 'gap' or separation in the sides, only a gathering of things into a 'prehensive unification', and as the many become one so the many are increased by one. In *The Fold* Deleuze describes this two-sided rhythm of prehension through the process of perception in Leibniz. For Deleuze each distinguished or clear perception emerges through a genetic process from the dark depths of the world that is contained within each monad. Deleuze describes this double process in terms of the 'microscopic' and the 'macroscopic', terms that Deleuze borrows from Whitehead's *Process and Reality* where they are used to refer both to the two meanings of 'organism' and to the two forms of 'process'.[6] However, for Deleuze the essential difference between Whitehead and Leibniz here is that Leibniz's monad operates, famously, according to a condition of closure, whereas for Whitehead 'a condition of opening causes all prehension to be *already* the prehension of another prehension' (Deleuze 1993: 81). This condition of prehensive opening onto incompossibilitites, divergences and bifurcations – the opening onto the new in itself – is a key feature of the event in Deleuze and Whitehead that Deleuze doesn't find in Leibniz or phenomenology or, as we'll see, in Heidegger's phenomenological ontology.

Deleuze refers to prehension in several of his books. In addition to the explicit remarks on prehensions in *The Fold* (1993) and in *What is Philosophy?* (1994), especially the important concluding pages of that book, further references can be found in various places in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987) and in the *Cinema* (Deleuze 1996a, 1996b) volumes.

It wouldn't be at all out of place in Deleuze's book on Francis Bacon (Deleuze 2003) because prehension, or its synonyms, forms the core of Deleuze's own 'theory' of perception or logic of sensation.

IV. Beyond Heidegger

So, we have creativity, events, prehensions. I want to suggest that one way of measuring the significance of these ideas in Deleuze, and Deleuze's thinking with Whitehead generally, is the extent to which they provide a conceptual route out of phenomenology, and beyond Heidegger in particular.[7] Although Heidegger challenges Husserlian phenomenology at least, as Deleuze says, 'in the "vulgar" sense of the term: with intentionality' (Deleuze 1988: 108) moving phenomenology towards ontology, Heidegger 'refounds' intentionality in a new dimension that does not allow for a fully differential relation in which difference differs from itself. This can be seen, Deleuze claims, by the way in which for Heidegger the *Lichtung* is the Open not only for light and the visible, but also for voice and sound. The Open in Heidegger, Deleuze declares,

> does not give us something to see without also providing something to speak, since the fold will constitute the Self-seeing element of sight only if it constitutes the Self-speaking element of language, to the point where it is the same world that speaks itself in language and sees itself in sight. (Deleuze 1988: 111)

For Deleuze this re-establishes an intentional relation, albeit between ontological forms rather than consciousness and its object, and if the correspondence between forms gives us the 'same world that speaks itself in language and sees itself in sight', then for Deleuze the Heideggerian ontological difference has not reached the being of difference and creativity. For Deleuze it appears that even recourse to the differentiated opening of the fourfold in later Heidegger restores an intentional field, however radicalised, that falls short of providing the conditions required for the complex and paradoxical expression of the new. Deleuze will challenge the Heideggerian *ereignis* with a new conception of the event as a pure 'differentiator' and he will look to Whitehead for the conceptual resources to construct a path beyond Heidegger's phenomenological ontology. Creativity, events and prehensions provide the outline of that path. For Deleuze Whitehead's prehension surpasses intentionality and Whitehead's event is a passage beyond being. Deleuze subordinates intentionality to prehension because the latter reaches

further back into the genetic order of experience, antecedent to any intentional relation. Prehension is an event but not of the order of the Heideggerian *ereignis* since, outside of an intentional relation, it provides the conditions for the purely creative and differential unfolding of the new.

V. Empiricism

Where does this Whiteheadian inflected path beyond Heidegger and phenomenology lead? If not back to the things themselves exactly (Deleuze says 'things in themselves in their wild state') then back to multiplicities and the radicalisation of empiricism. It was Foucault, in fact, who recognised very early on that empiricism was Deleuze's way out of phenomenology. As Deleuze says of his own metaphysics, it is 'inspired in its entirety by empiricism' (Deleuze 1990: 20). Deleuze's empiricism presides over the movement from being to event, intention to prehension, or rather the move from 'Is' to 'And' that Deleuze calls 'Life'. The path out of phenomenology and ontology leads back to life, back to 'erewhon' and things in their wild state. This is the heart of Deleuze's metaphysics. But Deleuze's empiricist metaphysics, or 'metaphysics of the concrete' to use Merleau-Ponty's phrase, is obviously not any simple appeal to lived experience nor is it an aversion to concepts. Rather, the 'secret of empiricism', for Deleuze, is that it is the most insane creation of concepts in which, as we have seen, the concept becomes the thing in itself in its free and wild state. How do we find the conditions of a life, or the conditions of a novel experience in-the-making? Philosophically, it is possible by following a multiplicity long enough to create a concept that corresponds to it. This is precisely the demand of a metaphysics of creativity: it is an experiment with the 'outside', Deleuze would say, in which he 'never renounced a kind of empiricism that sets out to present concepts directly' (Deleuze 1995: 88–9). What is the source of this empiricism in Deleuze? Rather than classical British empiricism, the source of this empirical metaphysics is deeply Whiteheadian. In the preface to the English translation of his *Dialogues*, Deleuze says:

> I have always felt that I am an empiricist, that is, a pluralist. But what does this equivalence between empiricism and pluralism mean? It derives from the two characteristics by which Whitehead defined empiricism: the abstract does not explain, but must itself be explained; and the aim is not to rediscover the eternal or the universal, but to find the conditions under which something new is produced (*creativeness*). (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: vii)

Why doesn't Deleuze refer to Hume or Bergson here? One answer is that Deleuze's Whiteheadian 'empirical pluralism' is more attuned to dispelling the illusions (the eternal, universal, etc.) and 'images of thought' that prevent us from thinking the creativity and novelty of experience in itself. With the illusions dispelled, the conditions under which something new is produced can be made visible, enabling the construction of a plane of immanence that is a 'radical empiricism' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 47). Radical or 'transcendental' empiricism will not only reveal the extent to which phenomenology still participates in these illusions but, as an innovative thinking of the conditions of real experience, it enables a decisive break with the ultimate illusion: the verb 'to be' and its attributes, so that finally 'is' yields to 'and'. As Deleuze says, 'empiricism has no other secret: thinking with And instead of Is. It is quite an extraordinary thought, and yet it is life' (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 57).

VI. Process

To summarise so far, Deleuze offers an empirical metaphysics whose ungrounded 'first principle' is creativity. Creativity creates events and is itself an event. Events are prehensions of prehensions, experience in the making. So we have creativity, events, prehensions, all little conceptual paths or 'lines of flight' out of phenomenology, out of 'being', and back to life. These are the concepts that Deleuze constructs with Whitehead in order to lay out and populate a plane of immanence. Perhaps this is even enough to believe in the world again. But there is one other concept I'd like to add, one other crucial Whitehead element that converges with Deleuze's ontology and that is, of course, the concept of 'process'. Creativity, events, prehensions: they are all processes. To shift into a more critical mode for this final section I want to ask whether process in Deleuze and Guattari fully reaches the conditions of the new and passes through the 'empiricist conversion' that creativity, events and prehensions undergo.

Although it is widely used throughout Deleuze and Deleuze and Guattari's work, I want to suggest that process is a concept that they never really explicitly theorise or 'create'. Yet, they use it as a neutral conduit or vehicle for discussions of many of their own most important concepts, including 'difference', 'desire' and 'becoming'. 'Process' in Deleuze, and in Deleuze and Guattari, always appears as subordinate to 'difference', 'becoming' or 'desire'. 'Process' is always in a relation of dependence, and it is never given its 'own' concept, never thought

'in-itself'. For Deleuze and Guattari there appears to be no philosophical school, secret or otherwise, devoted to answering the question 'what is a process?'

Indeed, just as the concept of process tends to be a necessary yet invisible support to the primary terms of the Deleuzian conceptual repertoire and process philosophy is overlooked as a positive tradition in Deleuze himself (a kind of 'anxiety of influence' since he prefers the invention and creation of his own schools and 'traditions', for example, the school of the event, the tradition of 'univocity'), recognition of process thought, and the idea that it might play a key role in Deleuze's own intellectual formation, is almost completely absent in the reception of his work. A few readers of Deleuze have invoked the concept of 'process' – most notably Manuel De Landa – in their reading of his texts, but this is only to include the concept as an empty placeholder within their descriptions and commentaries on Deleuze without ever subjecting the concept to a detailed explication or critical analysis. Thus, Deleuze, Deleuze and Guattari and some of their most well-known interpreters appropriate and rely upon a concept of process for their own theoretical practices and procedures without engaging in a 'genealogy', genesis or 'immanent critique' of this concept or tradition.

This claim would need to be elaborated at length and given detailed support, which I can't do here. But let me give just one example: in *Anti-Oedipus* process is used ubiquitously and deployed as a synonym for the sub-representative order of temporalisation and its expression as the three syntheses of time (developed in Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition*). This takes the form of a three-fold concept of univocal process as production (present), as 'producer-product' (past) and as a process without a goal or end in itself (future): the three syntheses of process. Desire is the process of passive syntheses (connective, conjunctive and disjunctive), the primary order of process, working themselves out in the secondary order of the real as product. Thus, production as process is the immanent principle of desire accounting for the movements and activity of the unconscious syntheses. For Deleuze and Guattari, whether we invoke social (political, economic or labour) processes on the one hand, or libidinal processes on the other, desiring production is one process of reality. In my view process does a lot of work in these distinctions and discussions, but that work – *precisely as a process* – is not examined as such. They discuss the process *of* desire but not process itself. In Deleuze and Guattari, process is always immanent *to* desire or difference, immanent to something other than itself. Another way of putting this point is to say that process in Deleuze

and Guattari risks being reduced to a dependent state or condition of something else and not an act in itself, especially since processes are always 'of' schizophrenia, difference or becoming.

My worry, then, is that process in Deleuze and Guattari is in danger of failing what Deleuze calls the 'empiricist conversion', in danger of functioning as an abstract (and transcendent) substratum that differences or becomings move along or undergo, identical with its manifestation as difference, becoming and so on. One suspicion here is that Deleuze and Guattari's use of process is effectively a 'blind spot' in their work resting on unquestioned assumptions about process embedded in the tradition of Western philosophy. One main assumption of that tradition is that process can only be admitted into ontology, if admitted at all, if it functions as a predicate dependent upon particulars like things or persons. It is precisely this assumption that Whitehead had rooted out in *Process and Reality* by developing a concept of the event as actual occasion in which being gives way to the reality of process. Process is of course not predicated of things and persons in Deleuze and Guattari, but it is arguably functioning as a silent predicate of events, differences and becomings. Roughly, what Deleuze said about the relation between substance and modes in Spinoza I want to say about the relation between difference and process in Deleuze. Did Deleuze and Guattari let their guard down when it came to process?

For process to achieve immanence in Deleuze it would require a full ontological 'destruction' or, in Deleuze and Guattari lingo, a thorough destratifying and 'empirical conversion' of its traditional sediment so that it may be turned towards its creative potential. Process must be shown 'processing'. Rather than make difference turn around another substance substitute, perhaps one of the real potentials of the Deleuze-Whitehead encounter lies in making process coalesce with and turn around difference. Only then will process be fully differential and difference fully processual.

Notes

1. This is a longer version of a paper presented at the session on 'Deleuze, Whitehead and Process' at the 1st International Deleuze Conference, University of Cardiff, Wales, August 2008. I'd like to thank James Williams for valuable comments on an earlier draft.
2. I don't have space to properly defend this here but I can't agree with Hallward's insistence throughout his book *Out of this World* on a 'unilateral configuration' of creativity such that creativity divides into an 'active *creans*' and a 'passive *creaturum*' (27). For Hallward creating is active and virtual and the created is

actual and passive. In my view there are indeed different modes of creativity in Deleuze but it is as true to say that the virtual is active and the actual passive as to say that the virtual is impassive and the actual active. In fact, just like Whitehead, each half of reality in Deleuze has two sides and one can only begin to account for Deleuze's thought when justice is done to the constant movement, exchange, translation, tension, struggle, displacement and conversion between both of these halves and their sides. In one way or another the effort to attribute simple hierarchical dualisms to Deleuze, and the determination to polarise his thought, characterises not only Hallward's book but also the books on Deleuze by Badiou and Žižek. Whereas Badiou insists that Deleuze choose (and has already chosen) between animal or number, one or multiple, Plato or Aristotle (and a bunch of other dualisms) in accordance with a formally determined 'axiom of choice', Žižek claims that Deleuze's work rests on 'two conceptual oppositions' that are incompatible: the logic of effect and the logic of production. Žižek uses this distinction to divide Deleuze's texts: '*The Logic of Sense* versus *The Anti-Oedipus*' and to separate Deleuze from Guattari. Although a number of commentators have objected, rightly, to these reductionist and divisive strategies and to their sometimes narrow and misleading emphases (e.g., Hallward on the 'theophanic', Badiou on the 'One'), one virtue (among numerous others) is that both Hallward and Badiou situate Deleuze under the sign of metaphysics.

3. I thank Steven Meyer who persuaded me of this. See his introduction to *Configurations* 13(1) Winter, 2005.
4. The idea that, as Deleuze says, the event 'ousts' the verb 'to be' is important for my claims here since it suggests an overturning of ontology, or the subordination of 'is' to 'and'. In other words, I'm suggesting that Deleuze offers a metaphysics that, after *Difference and Repetition*, attempts to 'twist free' of ontology, a metaphysics of the creative 'and, and, and …' where the creative event supersedes being. In this respect Heidegger, for Deleuze, remains tied to ontology and never really breaks with the 'isness' of things and the verb 'to be'. That Deleuze's model of the event and its folds is informed by Whitehead, not Heidegger, is explored in more detail in my 'Towards a Political Ontology of the Fold: Deleuze, Heidegger, Whitehead and the Fourfold Event' in *Deleuze and The Fold: A Critical Reader* (Robinson 2010a).
5. Deleuze's concept of the event receives various formulations in his work but the basic structure is well known: on the one hand a state of affairs that relates to actualised bodies and individuals and, on the other, an incorporeal reserve of infinite becoming and virtual movement. Treating this structure as a simple hierarchical dualism has been used to give a distorted image of Deleuze's thought (see note 2 above). I suggest that a better image is the 'between-two' or 'fourfold' where each component is internal to and completed by the other. In terms of the Deleuze and Whitehead event extension, intension, prehension and ingression each have a virtual/actual side and the process of conversion between them is carried out by different modes of creativity. Deleuze describes this in his own terms when he refers in both *Difference and Repetition* and *Logic of Sense* to 'two dissymmetrical halves'. In *Difference and Repetition* he says that 'everything has two odd, dissymmetrical and dissimilar "halves", …, each dividing itself in two' (p. 279–80). The dissymmetrical halves then become the '*entre-deux*' or fold between two that informs his reading of the event in Whitehead. For more on the event and the need to think it in terms of 'two multiplicities', see my "Between the Individual, the Relative and the Void: Thinking the 'Event' in Badiou, Deleuze and Whitehead" in *Event and*

Decision: Ontology and Politics in Badiou, Deleuze and Whitehead (Robinson 2010b).

6. That Deleuze is borrowing these terms from Whitehead is confirmed by a footnote in *The Fold*. See Chapter 7 note 7 in *The Fold*: 154.
7. Deleuze studies still do not tell us that much about how to situate Heidegger in relation to Deleuze. Nor for that matter do Heidegger scholars. One exception is Miguel de Beistegui in his *Truth and Genesis* (2004). I suggest that Heidegger is Deleuze's primary philosophical rival and that Alain Badiou, in his book on Deleuze, is quite canny when he suggests that Deleuze himself didn't recognise how close he was to Heidegger. *Difference and Repetition* is one of the primary texts where Deleuze's indebtedness to and rivalry with Heidegger is played out and the conspicuous absence of Heidegger in *Logic of Sense* suggests that it is Deleuze's first 'post' Heideggerian book in which being is no longer the highest term, giving way to the event. The path beyond Heidegger is developed subterraneously in many of Deleuze's books but surfaces again explicitly in *Foucault* and *The Fold* (and to a lesser extent in *What is Philosophy?*), albeit in a highly compressed set of claims and arguments.

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Book Reviews

James Williams (2008) *Gilles Deleuze's Logic of Sense: A Critical Introduction and Guide*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 219pp.

Originally published in 1969, *Logic of Sense* has an ambiguous place within Gilles Deleuze's work as a whole. Along with *Difference and Repetition*, which appeared the year before *Logic of Sense* came out, it is arguably one of his two most important single-authored books, but it is often overlooked by Deleuzians. This may have something to do with the fact that it has a rather hybrid quality: it is highly philosophical, drawing powerfully on Stoicism and having an ambivalent but important relationship with Husserl, but it is also steeped in structuralism, semiotics and psychoanalytic theory. The latter are the main reason for the relative neglect of *Logic of Sense*: they are often seen as the 'old-fashioned' ideas that Deleuze was soon to be 'freed' from by Guattari. However, it could be argued that there are genuine links with the later joint work, in particular the division of *Logic of Sense* into *séries*, which is very similar to the way in which *A Thousand Plateaus* is structured, but it is also a very valuable book in its own right. It engages with structuralism, semiotics and psychoanalytic theory in as fertile a way as Deleuze does elsewhere with earlier philosophers. There is a tendency to assume that the later joint work left such writers as Lévi-Strauss and Lacan behind, but there continue to be fresh interpretations of these writers as thinkers, so it is still worth exploring the boundaries between their ideas and those of Deleuze and Guattari.

Logic of Sense is also probably closer to critical theory than any other extended work by Deleuze, mainly because it explores language and meaning in such detail and with such richness. It is closer to a complex hermeneutics than the concentration on affect and how the arts 'do' philosophy within their own material terms that one associates with Deleuze. There is also an affinity with the fascination of French philosophers such as Derrida and Marin with performatives and linguistic pragmatics, although there is a compelling mix of meaning, being, event and change that goes beyond textuality in *Logic of Sense*.

Even if Deleuze and Guattari 'left behind' performatives and pragmatics, there is a peculiar mystery of immanence in language in Austin's ideas that can still be explored in relation to their work. It is well known that *Logic of Sense* uses *Alice in Wonderland* as a key text for developing its arguments, but there is another dimension behind this: as Charles Dodgson, Lewis Carroll was a professor of mathematics at Oxford and contributed to the analytic tradition's work on logic and paradox. The sections of *Logic of Sense* devoted to meaning, nonsense and paradox are much closer to this tradition than one might think, even if Deleuze is concerned to go behind propositionality and has a more embodied sense of paradox, which partly explains the use of *Alice in Wonderland*.

In general, what Deleuze has to say about being, event and process within a wider context of creative connectivity deeply challenges received approaches to the world and brings one closer to reality. There are also rich implications for a different model of social justice. Deleuze has a visionary quality as a writer, and he can produce powerful surges of affect in a sympathetic reader, but it is sometimes good to rein in that response and engage in a sober way with the astonishing power of his philosophical engineering: the architecture of the future can be as much about new building materials as it is about new ways of imagining space. The key to Deleuze's concepts lies more in the relational tools that bind and do not bind them together than in the concepts themselves. In a sense this is only to be expected in a philosophy that is about a shift from identity to an evanescent but semi-solidifying and individuating connectivity.

James Williams' remarkable *Gilles Deleuze's Logic of Sense: A Critical Introduction and Guide* deals very sustainedly with the philosophical engineering, which makes it a demanding but extremely valuable book. Williams has already produced a comparable – and excellent – book on *Difference and Repetition* (Williams 2003), a work that is primarily concerned with ontology, although Deleuze's ontology is more about becoming than being as it is normally conceived. Perpetual variation in the universe comes from the interaction of an asymmetrical, reciprocally determined binary pair, the virtual and the actual. This ontology, with certain additions and minor changes in terminology, appears again in *Logic of Sense*, but the binary structure is applied to other areas, producing new pairings: language and sense, human action and the unconscious, and two different conceptions of time. These pairs interconnect and overlap in very complex ways. Sense is also closely associated with the event, a concept drawn from Emile Bréhier's classic work on incorporeals in Stoicism.[1] The event is not the physical

happening itself, while sense contains the difference between the before and after of the physical happening. What is fascinating about *Logic of Sense* is how becoming and meaning are intertwined: a rich fabric of different latent forces is woven around the actual and a bridge is established between the personal wound and the universal.

Williams does not give a line-by-line commentary: indeed he often jumps intelligently around the *séries* that make up the main body of *Logic of Sense* in order to construct his arguments. Nevertheless, he more or less follows the overall movement of Deleuze's text across his central four chapters: 'Language and event', 'Philosophy as event', 'Morals and events' and 'Thought and the unconscious'. These chapters are framed by an introduction and a short conclusion. Williams explains the philosophical engineering in great detail, tries to show how a philosophy that can seem very abstract is relevant to real-world situations, defends that philosophy against possible objections, in particular from the analytic tradition, and is sensitive to the more aesthetic and psychologically complex sides of *Logic of Sense*, which may reflect some of Deleuze's own vulnerabilities: he lived as a young man in the shadow of his older brother, who had been killed in the Resistance, and he had a lung removed in the very year the book came out. Williams deals excellently with the treatment of moral actions, especially the way in which three literary figures with vulnerable qualities – Péguy, Bousquet and Fitzgerald – are used as part of that treatment. He also has a good understanding of the general relationship between Deleuze and psychoanalysis, although he is less assured with some of the more detailed arguments, and he does not quite convey how essential the presence of a subtly modified psychoanalysis is to the overall vision of *Logic of Sense*.[2]

However, what is superb about Williams' book is its exposition of the philosophical engineering of *Logic of Sense*: numerous concepts, all fascinating and specific to Deleuze (his philosophy was very much about the creation of novel exploratory concepts), are examined in an extended, highly detailed and rigorous way. They include the following: event, series and disjunctive synthesis; sense as infinitives and its relationship to nonsense and meaning in the proposition; paradox; the interplay of the series of the signifier and signified; the three images of philosophers; height, depth and surface; singularities; the nature of problems; static and dynamic genesis; 'higher empiricism' (there is a good discussion of Deleuze's response to Husserl); 'quasi-cause'; time and counter-actualisation. All these concepts are made fully available to the reader as tools for his or her own use.

The chapter on 'Language and event' is particularly good, with a thorough and extremely clear treatment of Deleuze's ideas on signification, sense, paradox and nonsense. Here, fruitful parallels are drawn with the analytic tradition. Deleuze's very profound conception of time is dealt with in a number of places, and there is an interesting comparison between his approach to it and that of Badiou.[3] Williams also explains the concept of the three images of philosophers very well, showing how it can be a tool for avoiding the binary oppositions that beset the way in which the history of Western philosophy is structured. Throughout the book, the position of Deleuze in relation to such binary oppositions as transcendental-immanent or empiricist-metaphysician is negotiated with exceptional subtlety. There are also occasional but illuminating references to quite a few other works by Deleuze. Williams is also sensitive to Deleuze's style in French and communicates the complex mixture of rigour, sensibility and energy that is to be found in *Logic of Sense*.

One slight quibble might be that Williams does not always succeed in communicating how the asymmetrical binary pairs and the individual concepts fit together and function as a whole. This is partly because he is trying to avoid oversimplification but also because Deleuze himself tends to employ the exceptionally plastic quality of his language and imagination rather than pure argument to conjure a more holistic impression of how the universe is for him. It is also possible that the structuralist elements in *Logic of Sense* give it a symmetrical quality, but this makes it all the more useful for exploring a potential disjunction between what could be binary or dialectical human thought and 'cosmic thought', which would be very different.[4]

Any minor faults should not detract from the fact that Williams has done something comparable to producing the first commentary on one of Kant's *Critiques* and that he has done so in an intellectually formidable and deeply passionate way: he has been worthy of the event.

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Notes

1. For an excellent discussion of the influence of Stoicism on Deleuze, see Alain Beaulieu (2005).
2. For a good reassessment of Deleuze's relationship with psychoanalysis, see Monique David-Ménard (2005).

3. For an extended study of Deleuze's conception of time, see Yann Laporte (2005).
4. Williams mentions the mathematician, Albert Lautman, who had a particular interest in the underlying primacy of anti-symmetry within his subject, in an intelligent, more general account of how mathematics is relevant to Deleuze's ideas. For a worthwhile recent book on Lautman, see Emmanuel Barot (2009).

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Adrian Parr (2009) *Hijacking Sustainability*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 209pp.

As a poststructuralist who teaches Deleuze and Guattari in a School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape, I seized the opportunity to review *Hijacking Sustainability*. 'Sustainability' has become an important trope in many space-related narratives and has produced such a range of truth effects that it may now be regarded as international orthodoxy for government-led spatial planning. 'Sustainable communities' are all the rage, from eco-towns in the UK, to eco-villages in Europe and the USA. The much-vaunted 'triple-bottom-line' of sustainability adds economic and social sustainability to that of eco- or environmental sustainability, implied above. As *Hijacking Sustainability* clearly demonstrates, however, the three elements often conflict, with economic 'sustainability' (also known as corporate viability or shareholder profit) dominant.

Adrian Parr is interested in applying Deleuzian ideas in the context of politics, transcultural studies and ethics. In her previous work, *Deleuze and Memorial Culture* (Parr 2008), she suggests that trauma, given a transcendent meaning, produces a despotic connective synthesis. Her argument in *Hijacking Sustainability* is not dissimilar: sustainability has also achieved transcendent meaning and despotic connective synthesis, as her transcultural examples illustrate. Parr concludes *Hijacking Sustainability* by seeking a more socially and environmentally just ethical connective synthesis.

Parr demonstrates clearly how sustainability is a cultural construct: an empty signifier, meaning everything and nothing. Sustainability has

become a buzzword, evocative of a 'good thing', which carries – indeed hijacks – universal acceptability when attached to a wide range of things, from housing to burgers, celebrities to warfare.

Deleuze and Guattari (1994) characterise philosophy as the creation of concepts through which knowledge can be generated. They use the term 'order-word' (*mot d'ordre*) to describe a linguistic function compelling obedience: order-words 'tell people what to think' (Conley 2005: 193). The word *mot d'ordre* also means a slogan or a military password in French: highly relevant to Parr's case illustrations of the militarisation of life in the name of 'sustainability'. Order-words – such as sustainability – are not commands as such, but rather terms which relate implicit presuppositions and speech-acts to social obligations, and which produce tangible effects (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 79). If we understand sustainability as an order-word, we ask, not what it means, but, like Parr and her examples in *Hijacking Sustainability*, how the power-laden term 'sustainability' works and what it produces in practice.

Several of Parr's examples demonstrate the strong ideological power of sustainability when combined with the signifier 'development'. Yet the two signifiers often contradict and negate each other: their rhetorical acrobatics creating merely illusion – language without possibility (Gunder and Hillier 2009). The sustainable development of eco-villages (Chapter 3), for instance, purports to be grounded in scientific 'fact' (of lower carbon footprints, of social bonding and so on) even if sustainability is itself indefinable and unachievable (as in a reality of car commuting to work and parochial neighbour conflicts). Yet such forms of violence are legitimated by the sublime truth of an unknowable transcendental ideal.

In *Hijacking Sustainability* Parr illustrates how sustainability has become 'a political attitude of the multitude' (4): a non-dualistic social practice which largely masks economic 'business-as-usual', with associated 'usual' disproportionate negative impacts on the poor. Parr's provocative interrogation of examples – including the provision of culturally appropriate disaster shelters in Asia (Chapter 7) and the 'greening' of the US White House (Chapter 4) – indicates how sustainability is akin to a Trojan horse, outwardly seen as 'good', while obscuring the corporate interests, government and military 'bads' hidden inside. The book discloses the voids and illusions of situations and supports activation of agency for the currently disenfranchised.

Sustainability pulls together assemblages of strange bedfellows, such as BP oil, Wal-Mart (Asda), the North American Sustainable Use

Specialist Group, the US Military, UNCHR and even, I would add, Prince Charles. Parr traces how sustainability has been coded in various situations, with various results. For instance, US President Jimmy Carter installed solar heating panels on the White House roof in the name of energy efficiency. Carter's successor, Ronald Reagan, removed the panels to demonstrate America's 'abundance of resources' (72). Bill Clinton, in turn, wanted the White House to symbolise 'a model of efficiency and waste reduction' (73). He ordered the replacement: of the White House roof to maximise thermal integrity; of incandescent light bulbs with fluorescents; of old air-conditioning units, refrigerators, windows and so on, and so on, saving some 845 tonnes of carbon a year. The presidencies of the two George Bushes, however, saw sustainability recoded as being an individual, voluntary choice. Neither Bush volunteered to publicise the presidential residence as a 'Green' House, when espousing policies of militarism and neo-liberalism, refusing to sign the Kyoto Protocol or creating a 'midnight rule' to bar consideration of global warming as related to the predicted extinction of polar bears. Parr's examples unveil the violences which make such enunciations and actualisations possible in the name of 'sustainability'.

Resonating more with Félix Guattari's (who is not mentioned in *Hijacking Sustainability*) writing (see especially 1995, 2000) than with that of Gilles Deleuze, Parr demonstrates how sustainability culture is not only a response to perceived 'problems', but also helps to create them in the first place. Dominant modes of valorisation are translated into political and economic programmes newly labelled as 'sustainable', such as General Motors' Hummer O^2. Dominant values subordinate everything under the imperative of a worldwide market and put social relations under the power of police and military machines. The 'double-sway' of the market and military-industrial complexes, and their bracketing of problems such as poverty, racism, social justice and so on, is clearly articulated.

In Part 1, Parr traces the conditions of possibility of five case examples. She demonstrates the popularisation of sustainability culture such that everyone wants to be associated with its feel-good brand. Consumption of 'junkspace' is increasingly greenwashed (Chapter 1), so that driving one's Hummer to shop in urban fringe Wal-Marts becomes environmentally and socially sustainable. Hollywood and its celebrities have enjoyed similar make-overs (Chapter 2), from the Oscars to celebrities pictured in proximity to cute, endangered species (though noticeably not endorsing campaigns such as Save the Slug![1]).

As a scholar of cultural studies, Parr cannot explore the depths of sustainability which a planner, architect or sociologist might. I personally disagree with aspects of the, somewhat idealist, analysis of eco-villages (Chapter 3), as embodying 'real' social and environmental sustainability compared with sub/urban gated communities. I would argue that eco-villages, as lines of flight from urbanisation, also harbour potentialities to perform as control societies, excluding 'others' whose views and behaviours do not fit the norm. Research into eco-villages suggests that there are potential problems: of engaging 'neo-primitivism', of extensive use of land, of cultural and social homogeneity, of car-travel to services and facilities, and so on (Barton 1998; Cummings 1999; Sizemore 2004; Sullivan 2008). Eco-villagers tend to opt out of the mainstream. While I do not criticise them for doing so, I would rather attempt to change the mainstream; to think transversally and to embrace more eco-sustainable ways of living, perhaps along the lines suggested by Félix Guattari's ecosophy and *Three Ecologies* (1995, 2000): 'ecology must stop being associated with the image of a small nature-loving minority' (2000: 52).

Like eco-villages, military sustainability represents striated space (Chapter 5). The idea of greening the military would seem a difficult concept to accept when related to agencies which count land mines and cluster bombs, depleted uranium and phosphorus in their arsenals. Yet the US Army now has goals of sustainability, including acting with integrity (79). As Parr indicates, however, sustainability becomes even more of an empty signifier in military usage. Traditionally an oppressive structure of domination, military 'sustainability' tends to bracket issues of environmental and social justice in favour of equating sustainability with US national security in broad terms. Recently introduced techniques, such as those of urban warfare, including human technology mapping (HTM), while 'badged' as sustainable, take violent conflict directly into the homes, for instance, of Iraqi and Palestinian citizens, as armed military personnel blast holes through walls between adjoining houses and regard men, women and children as suspected terrorists (see Weizman 2006). Meanwhile, in the US and UK, those branded as merely 'potential' environmental activists are arrested in police swoops legitimated by anti-terrorism legislation (Taylor and Vidal 2009).

Ironically, as Weizman points out, military institutions' reading lists often include texts by Deleuze and Guattari, whose work on rhizomes and assemblages, smooth and striated space and war machines has

influenced military thinking. In this way, Parr's picture of the 'increasing militarisation of life' (4) illustrates a relation between Deleuze's and Guattari's theory and practice which all the authors would surely find abhorrent.

Hijacking Sustainability interrogates practices of sustainability and raises critical questions about subjectivity, power and desire. In Part 2, particularly, Adrian Parr challenges orthodox thinking (the Deleuzian image of thought) on sustainability and indicates how such doxa must be resisted and replaced with new socio-ecological concepts if things are to change.

Chapter 6 on waste/trash indicates not only how a culture of consumerism is accompanied by a culture of disposability, generating huge volumes of 'rubbish' (another social construct) which must be hidden from view, but also how the poor are often themselves regarded as trash within the social fabric. Garbage dumps, incinerators and shiploads of toxic waste are thus located or dumped by the powerful on the world's poor: 'power, as used in environmental discourse, entails the privilege to decide whose communities are polluted and whose are spared, to define what constitutes a recyclable material on the soil of a developed country, and in turn to choose which environments can be sacrificed like common waste' (102). Parr argues that the 'key' is 'to create a sustainable connection with the environment by attending to the processes of change implied within that connection' (107). In doing so, we need to recognise that sustainability culture is a Western social construct within a Western plane of reference. We risk further subordinating other economic, social and cultural practices, both at home, and especially in the Global South, if we fail to break down the dominant framework and develop a more communal ethic.

Hijacking Sustainability tackles the idea of urbanism as a process of signification with relation to disaster relief shelters and slum dwelling (Chapters 7 and 8). While I am unsure that 'disaster is indiscriminate' (110), as some people are always more affected and disadvantaged than others, who may even benefit from disaster situations, I agree that there should not be universal solutions, copy-pasted across different circumstances. There is a need to examine the materialities and expressivities of disaster relief and slum clearance alike, to unpack the force relations between elements, to trace and map potential trajectories and to stimulate creative opportunities, or lines of flight, as appropriate.

Parr mentions the importance of informality in Latin American slums. She tends to regard informality rather negatively, however, compared with authors such as Ananya Roy (2009) who challenges what she

regards as such a traditional, hegemonic view of binary opposition. Roy demonstrates how and why informality is both far from unregulated and an internally differentiated mode of spatial production. Roy transcends the debate by reconceptualising informality as an oblique mode of power, or 'making do', which can be simultaneously legal and non-legal, regulated and deregulated, the rule and the exception.

Sustainability is concerned with the not-yet, with ensuring that something remains for the people-to-come. As such, Parr advocates a form of 'machinic urbanism' in which planners and designers would 'experiment with the material movements of life in all its variation' (141). Machinic urbanism would produce connections and relations between elements to stimulate challenges to traditional economic, environmental, social and cultural doxa, to create lines of flight and alternative discourses from which to imagine, or fabulate, different futures (see also Hillier (2007, 2009) for a spatial planning perspective). Parr's machinic urbanism aspires to create conditions of agency without structural constraints. This would involve overturning traditional capitalocentric values, in favour of new forms of social innovation, such as social businesses in diverse economies (see also Gibson-Graham 1996) which have the potential to release the dynamic materiality of life.

Hijacking Sustainability is a book for cultural geographers and cultural studies students. It successfully lifts the veil on crucial issues which lurk beneath sustainability culture. Adrian Parr clearly illustrates how sustainability rhetoric performs as a veil or smokescreen to cover the often-violent business-as-usual of economics and politics. The key question is how might we reimagine and rearticulate sustainability, not as a justification mechanism for yet more pro-market consumption, but as a means to displace economic and militarist imperatives from their domination of the wicked issues of class, social and environmental justice. Making progress requires a massive change of political, social and cultural mindset: one which reorients the objectives of material and immaterial production (Guattari 2000) and one which is sufficiently strong to resist co-optation by vested interests, as happened with 'sustainability'.

Students will find this a provocative and stimulating book, as I did, though I fear the extremely brief index is of little value. The case examples are Americas-dominant and it would be good if further editions could incorporate not only some non-Western cases from the Global South, but also some of their different views and approaches to sustainability.

I congratulate Adrian Parr on *Hijacking Sustainability*, a text which lays bare the problems of the sustainability culture and offers us the beginning of a Deleuzian- (and Guattarian) inspired escape forward which the planet so badly requires.

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Note

1. Save the Slug is a campaign by International Slugfest against the use of toxic insecticides to kill garden slugs, such as the endangered Canadian Dromedary Jumping Slug (EUT, 2007).

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Bernd Herzogenrath (ed.) (2009) *Deleuze/Guattari and Ecology*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 290pp.

In his contribution to *Deleuze/Guattari and Ecology*, Hanjo Berressem suggests that Felix Guattari's later texts, which contain his more explicit dealings with ecology, were 'a fallout of his general project … [Guattari's] ecosophy is more comprehensive than the more visible and mainstream versions of ecology' (60). This also suggests a helpful way in which to conceptualise the aim of Bernd Herzogenrath's collection. Certain disciplinary histories of ecology indicate that this field of study devoted to organisms, environments and their interactions has itself evolved into something of a fallout *without* a general project. For instance, Dana Phillips's *The Truth of Ecology* (2003) highlights a self-alienating tendency that has crippled ecology as an academic enterprise. On the one hand, scientists in ecology push forward without being able to sustain their own body of theories and methods from dismantling critiques by physicists and biologists who enjoy a tradition of well-established facts and core concepts; on the other hand, scientific research in ecology often gets skewed into a utopian holism by popular environmental movements and oversimplified by the pastoral assumptions besetting most ecocriticism. Ecology, apprehended in this restricted and isolating manner, is in need of structural couplings with a generalised ecology towards which Herzogenrath's collection gestures. Together, the essays inaugurate the productive syntheses that become from mapping the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari in proximity to contemporary ecological concerns.

Deleuze/Guattari and Ecology incorporates a broad array of perspectives that divide fairly equally between the sciences and the arts; indeed, one could categorise the essays along these two predominate lines. Yet Herzogenrath chooses not to divide any of the essays into thematic groups and his sequencing of the volume appears to be without a governing agenda. That said, I believe this (dis)organisational scheme reinforces the various 'eco*logics*' theorised by the contributing authors and makes the collection especially suitable for non-linear or affective

readings, which Deleuze himself promoted in texts such as *A Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze and Guattari 1987) and *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy* (Deleuze 1998). In this way, the collection enacts Manuel DeLanda and Roland Bogue's ideas on ecosystems: it is extremely complex and demands that one be knowledgeable in (or at least willing to engage with) a cacophony of disparate fields, and it plays host to a multitude of open-ended, autopoietic becomings and transversal encounters between authors whose diverse foci produce many innovative connections between Deleuze and Guattari, science and art, environmentalism and ecology.

In the volume's opening essay entitled 'Ecology and Realist Ontology', Manuel DeLanda attempts to rethink realist ontology so that, among other things, we can properly understand the immense complexity involved with ecosystems. While DeLanda claims that (a combination of) scientific fields are better equipped to study ecosystems than semiotics or hermeneutics, he insists that philosophy must fill a number of vital vacancies neglected by scientists, many of whom are over-specialised positivists concerned only with 'directly observable entities' and with predicting or controlling the phenomena in question (23). He contends that our understanding of ecological processes must treat 'entities like hydrogen atoms or electrons … every bit as real as large animals and plants' and 'grant reality full autonomy from the human mind', but such ontology must avoid the naïve essentialism that has previously turned intellectuals against realism (24). This Deleuze-inspired 'reconstruction' of realism, following modern evolution theory, starts by substituting 'an open-ended becoming based on individual and universal singularities' for the 'static and closed' categories associated with the classification system of *general* essence and *particular* instance (40). What is ultimately at stake here, according to DeLanda, is the proposition that *individuation processes* are responsible for the 'identity of each individual entity' and that one must then look to 'immanent (nontranscendent) abstract structure[s]' for an account of 'any regularities in the [individuation] processes themselves' (27). A more nuanced grasp of this proposition would require ventures into DeLanda's lengthy interpretations of Deleuze's use of the terms 'intensive' and 'virtual'. Suffice it to say, in terms of its impact on ecological thought, DeLanda's essay affords a substantial, hard-earned confidence boost to those who have posited or hypothesised an intuitive significance to unconventional ecological phenomena in spite of the intellectual haziness that, as he suggests, inevitably stigmatises traditional ontological commitments rooted in idealism and positivism.

By situating Deleuze and Guattari's ideas about the mechanosphere with reference to recent technological advancements, Luciana Parisi's 'Technoecologies of Sensation' helps us cope with and unpack the dense writing found in, for example, the Guattari of *Chaosmosis* (1995) (especially the chapters 'Machinic Heterogeneities' and 'Schizoanalytic Metamodelisation'). Important to her argument is Guattari's assertion that machines, in contrast to structures, are self-organising processes and should therefore be regarded as a prerequisite for technology rather than its subset or expression (Guattari 1995: 33). Working from the premise that 'changes in technical machines are inseparable from changes in the material, cognitive, and affective capacities of a body', Parisi sets out to examine how the 'bionic tendencies of new media technologies' leads to changes in sensation or modes of feeling (182). Beyond the taxonomy of form and content, Parisi conceives of new media technologies as 'technoecologies of sensation' that usher in domains of sensation marked by an unprecedented contact with virtual forces. Thus, not only is sensory-motor perception extended, but technologies such as biochips become linked to what Parisi calls 'symbiosensation: the felt experience of a nonsensuous relatedness between organic and inorganic matter, adding on a new gradient of feeling in the thinking-flesh' (192). If, as Deleuze insisted, the cinema presents a challenge to thinking, then Parisi's analysis of digital media architecture drives towards a related insight: bionic technologies evoke emergent nexuses between 'organic and inorganic milieus of information sensing' that 'engender an extended proprioceptive sensation whereby movement or spatiotemporal orientations have become ecological' (193). Scholars with a broader interest in this line of inquiry should consult the work of Gregory Ulmer, whose theory of electracy addresses the implications of digital media from a poststructuralist, often Deleuzian perspective. 'Technoecologies of Sensation', although environmentalists would likely overlook it, constitutes a difficult expedition into the 'more vague yet more real' ecological phenomena that become accessible when we think beyond standard categories and subsets, as proposed by DeLanda earlier in the collection. (It is helpful to read DeLanda and Parisi together.) Both authors write in the spirit of Deleuze in *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, building on his preference for thought over consciousness in a quest to 'acquire knowledge of the power of the body in order to discover, *in a parallel fashion*, the powers of the mind that elude consciousness' (Deleuze 1998: 18).

Scholars of literary and cultural studies who work on globalisation issues will undoubtedly find value in the Guattari-oriented essays

by Jonathan Maskit and Verena Adermatt Colony. For Maskit, globalisation or integrated world capitalism names a nightmare of homogeneity in which mass-media circulate a dominant subjectivity that 'produce[s] desires and pleasures that are concordant with the products and services that can be provided through the marketplace' (138). Maskit's discussion of the problem of consumption penetrates right to the core of integrated world capitalism. There is much more to our desire for commodities than a sterile, rationalist approach would like to admit, and Maskit admirably complicates the issue beyond the reductive work in environmental philosophy that he criticises. Rather than attempting to control consumer desire and waste in a moralising fashion, Maskit essentially calls for what Guattari terms a 'value-system revolution', whereby a (processual) resingularising subjectivity generates new values that make an ecological mode of living achievable by *affirmation* (as opposed to negation and lack). Although the recommended practices listed in the conclusion of Maskit's essay would have benefited from engagements with Deleuze and/or Guattari beyond just *The Three Ecologies* (2008), Maskit lays the groundwork for others to pick up where he leaves off by using their philosophy for the reshaping of subjectivity, in addition to critiquing capitalist subjectivity. Guattari would not be satisfied by the current omnipresence of 'green' lists prescribing to readers how they should live and what they should or should not buy in order to be eco-friendly. Maskit is then right to qualify contemporary ecological concerns as opportunities for 'a rethinking of what it means to be human', but this realisation will be of little consequence if, in the end, we fail to generate the transversal tools necessary to facilitate such a rethinking (140). Guattari's later writings on the shift from mass-media culture to what he calls a *post-media age* seem especially relevant here, if we are to truly 'move in the direction of co-management in the production of subjectivity' (Guattari 1995: 12).

Conley's essay 'Artists or "Little Soldiers?" Felix Guattari's Ecological Paradigms' has much to say in relation to Maskit's. After Conley spends much of the first half paraphrasing and elaborating on passages from *The Three Ecologies*, the essay takes on new life as it moves to examine the potential for 'affirmative creative resistance' that builds as advances with the internet provide more and more people a venue to publicise cultural work (123). If we accept Maskit's proposition to rethink subjectivity in the light of environmental crisis, then Conley's piece asserts 'the importance of singular and collective enunciation as a performance' integral to processes of resingularisation (124). In other words, acts of creativity (including 'new forms of militantism') are

central to the nascent subjectivity that Guattari prioritises at the end of *The Three Ecologies* (126). Furthermore, Conley does a remarkable job of constructing an exciting dialogue between poststructuralist theory and current events, as does John Protevi in a brilliant and far-reaching essay on Hurricane Katrina, wherein Protevi performs an astonishing amount of historical research to tease out an urgent 'political lesson' about government and solidarity (180).

What alternatives can we turn when surrounded by that all too human face of the integrated world capitalism denounced here? Essays by Herzogenrath, Halsey, Abrioux, Fuller and Zepke each speak to the belief, paramount to Deleuze and Guattari, that the 'non-human pre-personal part of subjectivity is crucial since it is from this that its heterogenesis can develop' (Guattari 1995). These five essays, which traverse an impressive blend of ethological and aesthetic objects, are perhaps best read in the context of Gary Genosko's essay on subjectivity and art. According to Genosko's extensive treatment of Guattari's later texts, art should always be of interest to those concerned with ecological or environmental problems – including creative works that do not explicitly valorise trees, flowers, prairie dogs and so on. Heterogeneous exploration of the refrains of subjectivity, the conditions of its production, is what conjugates the arts with a generalised ecology. Genosko successfully emphasises the 'esthetic dimension of eco-praxis' and shows how 'ecosophic activism "resembles" the work of artists' (110). Herzogenrath's essay searches for relations between nature and music that extend beyond representation. Thus, rather than the routine ecocritical study of how nature is depicted in selected works, Herzogenrath boldly asks: can weather itself be music, and can music itself be meteorological? Through a comparative analysis of three composers (Ives, Cage, Adams), via a surprising mix of Deleuze and Thoreau, Herzogenrath puts us in an excellent position to appreciate the full significance of John Luther Adams's claim: 'As we listen carefully to noise, the whole world becomes music' (228). While each of the authors mentioned above contribute innovative readings of 'off-beat' genres ('Intensive Landscaping' and 'Art for Animals' are prime examples), Herzogenrath's originality is the most poignant.

Essays by Roland Bogue and Hanjo Berressem shift the focus away from Guattari's explicit ecosophy and redirect our attention to ecological leanings of the collaborative works, namely both volumes of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. This move seems very pertinent given Deleuze's claim in the late 1980s that he and Guattari wanted to write a (last) book on their philosophy of Nature. Bogue's essay 'A Thousand Ecologies'

seeks to discern what this (eco)philosophy might have looked like, while Berressem stages an epic interrogation of key concepts (e.g. autopoiesis and structural coupling) Deleuze adapted from systems theory and second-order cybernetics, ultimately showcasing the influence of Deleuze's 'radical philosophy' on Guattari's 'radical ecology' (57). Indeed, both essays prove that Deleuze and Guattari's thought is quite applicable and enriching to ecological discourse, 'especially given their opposition to any definitive separation of the social, cultural, and technological world of humans from the non human world' (50). Finally, in the pivotal moment of Bogue's essay (arguably the book's most important moment), the question of philosophy's readiness to help us through ecological crisis doubles back on itself: what does philosophy stand to lose in an era of environmental degradation and endangered species? Bogue's answer is subtle, distinctive, and chilling:

> Modes of existence that destroy habitats, induce pandemics, or foster pathogenic disequilibrium inhibit a creative exploration of the possibilities of bodies and decrease the options for a reconfiguration of humans and the earth. The fewer the life forms available for becoming-other, the fewer the trajectories available for creative transformation. (54)

It should be noted that the sheer breadth of concepts mobilised in this collection renders it useful to a wide range of Deleuze scholars, but less so to ecologists who have never read Deleuze and/or Guattari (although the book could function as an inspiring point of departure to guide such readers). With the growing, international interest that now more than ever surrounds questions of environment and ecology, both established Deleuze and/or Guattari scholars, and younger ones first encountering their work, are signalling an ecological turn that, ten years ago, was all but absent from studies of these two landmark thinkers. Of this recent publication trend, Maskit writes, 'there has been a slow trickle that is, perhaps, ready to become a stream' (131). If it becomes a stream, expect Herzogenrath's collection to be cited many times along the way.

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Deleuze and the Symptom: On the Practice and Paradox of Health

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The concepts of health, illness and medicine are a persistent and recurring concern in Deleuze's work, yet the secondary literature shows only a scant interest in the topic, with Daniel W. Smith's excellent introduction to his English translation of *Essays Critical and Clinical* (Deleuze 1997) remaining one of the few sustained pieces of commentary on this aspect of Deleuze's thought. The reasons for this very possibly have to do with the complexities of Deleuze's own intellectual peregrinations. In an interview given in 1967, following the publication of his book on Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, Deleuze stated his plans to write a series of works on literary authors in order to 'articulate a relation between literature and clinical psychology' on the basis of the symptomatological method he had discovered in Nietzsche (Deleuze 2004a: 133). If these books were never written, with the pieces collected in *Essays Critical and Clinical* our only real clues as to what they might have looked like, it is no doubt because after May '68 and the meeting with Guattari the importance of generating a 'universal clinical theory' took on a different and renewed impetus (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 311). There is a certain divergence, then, in Deleuze's conception of the clinical which remains to be clarified. If, in the symptomatological register, the symptom is diagnostic, relating to the creation of new clinical entities, in the schizoanalytical mode it is therapeutic, an injunction to produce. As Deleuze put it, 'you *must* produce the unconscious. Produce it, or be happy with your symptoms, your ego, and your psychoanalyst' (Deleuze 2006: 81).

And yet, there is an undeniable continuity linking these two periods in Deleuze's thought. It is the fact that health always implies a *practice* that links the different clinical theories of symptomatology and

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schizoanalysis. When asked in an interview in 1988 about the role of literature in his work, Deleuze reflected on his incomplete critical and clinical project, insisting that his favourite authors, Masoch, Proust and Kafka, were all in their own way diagnosticians. But, he added: 'It's not just a matter of diagnosis. Signs imply ways of living, possibilities of existence, they're the symptoms of life gushing forth or draining away' (Deleuze 1995: 143). Art and politics are inextricable, in this sense, from a commitment to the practice of living, and any such practice must involve some conception of health. As Deleuze stated in 1968 with respect to *Difference and Repetition* but foreshadowing his future collaborations with Guattari, 'we're looking for 'vitality' in the patient, which the patient has lost, but which the analyst has lost, too. Philosophical vitality is not far off, nor is political vitality' (Deleuze 2004a: 142).

But the question remains: how are we to understand this vitality, this health to come which 'is not far off'? We need to return to the roots of the concept in Nietzsche who remarked on his own practice of 'inverting perspectives', of 'looking from the perspective of the sick towards *healthier* concepts and values, and conversely looking down from the fullness and self-assuredness of *rich* life into the *décadence* instinct' (Nietzsche 2007: 8). As Deleuze observed, it was this ability, this critical mobility, to shift between the two perspectives which, for Nietzsche, constituted 'great health': 'There is no reciprocity between the two points of view, the two evaluations. Thus, movement from health to sickness, from sickness to health, if only as an idea, this very mobility is the sign of superior health' (Deleuze 2001: 58). This understanding of health as a pure becoming implies no static opposition of sick and healthy but rather a *paradox* similar to the one Deleuze describes in the first series of *The Logic of Sense* with respect to Alice's becoming larger and smaller: 'paradox is the affirmation of both senses or directions at the same time' (Deleuze 2004b: 3). Health, then, understood in the Deleuzian sense, is an affirmative – which is to say both productive and unresolvable – paradox which orients us towards health and sickness, life *and* death, at once, towards a new vitality but also towards new dangers and impasses. In their very different ways, the contributions gathered together in this issue of *Deleuze Studies* pursue this paradox through a multitude of practices and explore how Deleuze's deep interest in clinical phenomena collides with philosophy, art, politics and morality. Each contribution engages deeply with the paradoxical nature of Deleuzian health and with the implications it has for a variety of fields and contexts.

Sarah Mann-O'Donnell's article thoughtfully reconsiders the vital continuum linking Nietzsche with Deleuze and Guattari via the theme of 'great health', and thus provides a perfect starting point for this issue. Health, for Nietzsche as for Deleuze and Guattari, is not to be understood in opposition to illness but as the immanent process whereby illness brings about its own autocritique and self-overcoming. True health can only take the form of a continuous revaluation of illness. It was the very problem of creating a critical concept of health, without succumbing to a static or hierarchical opposition, that inspired much of Nietzsche's critical practice. As Mann-O'Donnell argues, Nietzsche was 'terrified of repeating Socrates' error of choosing a cure for a sick age that only contributes to the sickness' and so instead took the radical step of positing the immanence of sickness and health in which critique would necessarily be a synthesis of patient and doctor, poison and antidote. Indeed, Deleuze recognised this when he wrote of Nietzsche's engagement with nihilism in terms not of opposition but of completion: Nietzschean revaluation pushes nihilism to the point where it is transmuted, 'defeated by itself', 'as if completed nihilism gave way to its opposite' (Deleuze 1997: 102). Thus, Mann-O'Donnell understands the paradox of health as the paradox of difference in itself, of the difference that differs only from itself: 'the organism must become ill before it can become healthi*er*, because falling ill makes those who can survive healthier. And yet *ill* is only a degree of *healthy*'.

Schizoanalysis can be understood as an even further radicalisation of Nietzsche's valetudinary concerns in that it extends the practice of health to include the controlled demolition of the organism. Mann-O'Donnell presents schizoanalysis as a therapy in which what we are cured of is the personological ideal informing oedipal psychoanalysis. In order to be cured of the oedipal cure in this way we do indeed risk our very personhood, and the abyss of schizophrenic breakdown is ever present. But health is always a means to find new ways, whether political, moral or aesthetic, of living the extremes of illness. These are the paradoxical terms by which Mann-O'Donnell exhorts us to read Deleuze and Guattari's sixth plateau, entitled 'How Do You Make Yourself a Body Without Organs?'. The language of caution infusing much of *A Thousand Plateaus* is strongly in evidence here, as the authors warn against the proliferation of empty, cancerous and hypochondriac BwOs (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 163). The art of experimentation Deleuze and Guattari describe involves us holding on to just enough of the organism so that we can continue our campaign of creative destruction against it. The critical concept of health, then, in both Nietzsche

and Deleuze and Guattari, implies an 'art of dosages', which Mann-O'Donnell describes in terms of 'autoimmune self-immunisation' by which we prescribe to ourselves just enough of the toxins of organisation and stratification to be able to take our experiments that bit further.

The practice of health requires us to think critique as a lived process, and thus to rethink the relation between bodies and signs. This was one of the main motivations behind Deleuze's synthesis of literary criticism and clinical diagnosis. Erika Gaudlitz presents Deleuze's 'critical-clinical hypothesis' within the domain of literary symptomatology, in which the author engages with bodily affects and linguistic signs through the exemplarity of specific symptoms. In Gaudlitz's analysis, this approach to the creative process is necessarily a liminal one since its focus is neither on the materiality of the sensuous body nor the immateriality of the signs which render meaning, but on a space in which sign and body are at once material and supersensual, mutually implicated in a space Deleuze calls 'body-language'. Deleuze's conception of literary style cannot be distinguished from his 'wild empiricism' which, as Gaudlitz suggests, discerns within language the exemplary signs of a bodily *pathos*: 'stuttering, vibrating, trembling evoke the gaps through which affects break forth, often underlined by the rhythms of breathing'. But style here does not simply diagnose a state of pathological breakdown, it also, crucially, bears witness to the possibility of new means of expression, new ways of living. Beckett's works seek out the 'unsayable' or non-verbal within language, the outside of language, a language of gesture. Beckett's style, then, is also, in some sense, a non-style, pointing beyond any aesthetic unity or formal integration in order to connect to an outside which is the political domain of desiring-production.

The amnesia, abulia and compulsions which wrack the bodies of Beckett's characters testify to states of bodily exhaustion and weakness, but it is only through this weakness that anything strong or vital can break through. For Deleuze, the body can only be thought in terms of this fundamental paradox informing the '*pathos*' of the creative process. The critical-clinical approach takes its inspiration from Artaud who tells us, as Deleuze and Guattari write, 'that thought operates on the basis of a central breakdown, that it lives solely by its own incapacity to take on form' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 378). It is this struggle against language and form, understood in their petrified, conventional sense, which holds out the hope for aesthetic and political rejuvenation. Gaudlitz's analysis of Deleuze's reading of Beckett posits the evolution of Beckett's works, from his early novels to *Worstward Ho*, as the stages of a becoming which follows the path of a schizophrenic disarticulation

of our present forms of life and language, of the exhaustion of names and the voices which speak them, towards a language of pure images and any-spaces-whatsoever. Gaudlitz concludes that the ultimate destination of Beckett's art is a language proper to the body without organs, the great recording surface for the universal and world-historical productions of desire.

Andrew Robinson brings Deleuze and Guattari into a fruitful confrontation with Žižekian political theory through the concept of the 'social symptom'. Žižek's infamous and pungent blend of Lacanian psychoanalysis and Hegelian logic posits the expulsion from the social field of a constitutive element – what Lacan defined in terms of the psychic 'real' – which subsequently functions as a structuring principle of politico-ideological subjectivity but which nevertheless remains necessarily excluded or lacking from it. The symptomatic return of the excluded, then, is capable of forming the basis of a revolutionary politics, as Žižek's work argues. Robinson, however, aims to disengage the concept of the social symptom from what he describes as a methodological and theoretical conservatism that mires it in dialectical and psychoanalytic theories of the negative in order to elaborate the possibility of 'an affirmative politics of the excluded'.

Žižek uses the Lacanian clinical structure of neurosis to conceive of the paradoxical position whereby one faces what is most real and authentic, and hence revolutionary, in social life only through a subjective identification with the symptomatic return to consciousness of what was, in the process of subject formation, violently expelled from it. But this means that Žižek remains, in an important sense, frozen between the poles of a constitutive and innate neurotic maladjustment on the one hand, and a conservative and oedipal psychotherapeutic individualism on the other, which, as Deleuze and Guattari were the first to point out, constitute the very ideological 'trap' of capitalism. The paradox Žižek invokes, then, cannot ramify along the rhizomatic and productive lines by which Deleuze and Guattari envisage the Lacanian real, and simply reproduces in theoretical discourse the ideological capture by which capitalism contains the revolutionary potential of desire. The Deleuzian correction of Žižekianism allows Robinson to make a forceful argument for a political alliance with a broad sweep of excluded, precarious and minoritarian groupings and peoples which resist, via multifarious forms of networked self-organisation, the ideological capture manufactured by the dominant gaze. The poles of constitutive neurosis and oedipal therapy which stymie psychoanalytic discourse are replaced in schizoanalysis by the poles of capture and escape. The

revolutionary task, then, is not to identify with something dominant that consciousness must, for the sake of its own integrity, refuse to recognise, but to embody through our desires and our becomings the emergence of something absolutely different in itself. The result would be, as Robinson concludes, a symptomless society in which everyone is a symptom.

Lorna Collins's contribution engages provocatively and, sometimes, critically with Deleuze's use of pathology as an animating principle of thought. The schizoanalytic project, Collins suggests, poses the question 'how much subjectivity is enough to hold together the particular individual that we are, but not too much to curtail the continuous flux of our identity?' The paradox here, once again, is that one needs an organism and a subjectivity in order to continue the process of creative destruction waged against them. How can one experience schizophrenia or anorexia without falling ill, or alcohol and drugs without becoming addicted? Collins foregrounds the practical and therapeutic impetus behind these questions, in that what she calls an aesthetic and moral 'restorative sense' can emerge from them. The language of caution and prudent experimentation which characterises *A Thousand Plateaus* must be read in the light of *The Logic of Sense* which, Collins argues, following James Williams, gives us a 'moral philosophy' capable of guiding us through the often violent reorientation of thought which Deleuze and Guattari bring about.

Illness presents an eminently *moral* problem which, while being physical and psychological with very real and often debilitating effects, is also thoroughly philosophical in its import. Every encounter with a body which threatens the stability and integrity of my self or which wounds my body, gives me the possibility to think and feel anew. But the properly philosophical, and also, therefore, moral crux of the matter, for Deleuze, is how to extract from such an encounter that part of it which remains the virtual component of the actual suffering caused. This is not to prize, out of an intellectual preference, the virtual over the actual, as some opponents of Deleuze have argued. On the contrary, it means a direct engagement with those processes of actualisation which block and inhibit us and which, in the worst cases, force us into the abyss of pathology. This is why Collins emphasises the importance of counter-actualisation: the point is not to avoid the actual in favour the virtual, but to *repeat* the actual so as to discover in it that which counters its damaging effects. This amounts to a practical engagement with the real, and not a retreat from it, through the restorative effects of art and creativity. Collins gives as examples the works of Joe Bousquet and F. Scott Fitzgerald, and goes on to discuss the *art brut* of figures

such as Adolf Wölfli, and role of the politically engaged theatre of Augusto Boal in relation to a Deleuzian conception of art therapy. As Collins convincingly and insightfully argues, the schizoanalytic project, especially as this is read through Guattari's conception of an 'ethico-aesthetic paradigm', shares profound links with the therapeutic conception of the value and function of art in society.

Simon O'Sullivan's article takes up where Collins finishes off and provides an incisive look at Guattari's notion of 'schizoanalytic metamodelisation' in *Chaosmosis*, framing the latter's work, alongside that of Badiou, as challenging the Kantian transcendental 'bar' separating the finite and the infinite in the subject-object relation. Instead of presupposing the opposition of subject and object, finite and infinite, O'Sullivan argues instead for a 'continuum of sorts' allowing for the folding of the one into the other. Guattari's ontology of the infinite gives rise to a politically therapeutic autopoiesis, 'the instalment of *local* coding or singular points of organisation' within the structures of overcoding and hierarchisation characteristic of the capitalist assemblage and the modes of subjection operant in it: '[for] Guattari it is this 'folding-in' of the outside – by the subject on his or her own terms – that constitutes a freedom of sorts from subjection. It is, as it were, a certain intention and orientation that will also involve a programme'. This programme, both therapeutic and aesthetic while also being thoroughly politically engaged, has links to the later Foucault's work on the autoproduction of subjectivity and refutes the aporetic melancholia implied by the split subject of Lacanian discourse.

For Guattari, psychosis and not neurosis provides the therapeutic model for moving beyond the capitalist assemblage. Psychosis here is not just an illness, but the point at which all the models by which subjectivity is produced and reproduced in daily life break down; it thus represents the crucial point at which the modes supporting consensual social reality can be immanently transvalued – hence, the metamodel of schizoanalysis. Here we touch upon the importance, which runs throughout Deleuze and Guattari's work, of schizophrenia as *both* the ultimate catastrophe, the terminal breakdown, *and* the decisive breakthrough. Thus, the symptom, as so many schizophrenic refrains or narratives flooding our petrified consensual models, is, as O'Sullivan puts it, 'a precursor of an unconscious that is yet to come'. The machinic and the symptomatic unconscious can join forces. It is precisely through the subjective autopoiesis of the symptom that the chaos threatening to deluge us with pathology becomes workable and susceptible to asignifying narration and diagrammatic mapping. Guattari's concept of

the aesthetic, then, aims to free aesthesis from its petrification within established artistic models in order to put processes of creativity into contact with everyday experience.

My brief and necessarily imperfect summary of the articles gathered here will hopefully spur the reader on to engage with them directly and to form his or her own opinions. These pieces cover an important but neglected area in the field of Deleuze studies, and go some way towards ameliorating that neglect. But beyond the field of Deleuze studies *per se* each of the contributions also demonstrates how the clinical theories proposed by Deleuze and Guattari – in different forms, both alone and in collaboration – can be of great relevance to a number of fields both inside and outside the academy. It is hoped that this issue will encourage literary theorists, philosophers, social scientists, clinicians, artists and others to explore the pathological, diagnostic and therapeutic dimensions which Deleuze and Guattari brought to bear on the problems of suffering, creativity and freedom.

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From Hypochondria to Convalescence: Health as Chronic Critique in Nietzsche, Deleuze and Guattari

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Abstract

In 1886, Nietzsche wrote: 'I am still waiting for a philosophical doctor in the extraordinary sense of the term': a doctor who pursues not truth, but an exceptional kind of health. Nietzsche's will to health, his theory of drive organisation, and his insistence that the philosopher put himself at risk, all work together in his overall project, which consists of taking up the very role of the highly revalued physician for whom he is waiting. Deleuze and Guattari engage this same task of a revalued doctoring in the *Capitalisme et Schizophrénie* books, attacking the disease of oedipality and providing instructions for the deorganisation of the organism as self-cure. Offering tips on this radical treatment, they employ the figure of the hypochondriac to show how it can fail. Both Nietzsche and Deleuze and Guattari perform a revaluation of health as a condition of chronic critique, a condition that wraps itself around illness to keep itself critical.

Keywords: Nietzsche, sickness, illness, convalescence, BwO, nihilism, hypochondria, health, revaluation, critique, Oedipus, vivisection, autoimmunity, dose, patient, doctor, physician

> . . . not to 'truth,' but to *something else*, let us say to health. . . [1]

The condition of the patient is critical, and as such, is patient . . . and waits. Hence Nietzsche: 'I am still waiting for a philosophical doctor in the extraordinary sense of the term': a doctor who pursues not truth, but

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an exceptional kind of health (Nietzsche 1886a: 2). The journey towards this 'great health' is presented in the narrative of convalescence that forms the preface to his *Menschliches, Allzumenschliches*. The preface functions like a prism to show how Nietzsche's will to health, his theory of drive organisation, and his insistence on the job of the philosopher to put himself at risk, all work together in his overall project, which, as we will see, consists of taking up the very role of the highly revalued physician for whom he is waiting. Enter Nietzsche as self-vivisectionist: as a patient doctor for health's critical condition. Deleuze and Guattari engage this same task of a revalued, patient doctoring in the *Capitalisme et Schizophrénie* books, attacking the disease of oedipality and providing instructions for the deorganisation of the organism as self-cure in the chapter, 'Comment se faire un Corps sans Organes'. Offering tips on this radical treatment, they employ the figure of the hypochondriac to show how it can fail. Both Nietzsche's preface and Deleuze and Guattari's chapter describe a radical practice for living and thinking, and both perform, in the context of their respective authors' *corporum*, a revaluation of health as a condition of chronic critique, a condition that wraps itself around illness to keep itself critical. If Nietzsche constitutes, as David Farrell Krell suggests, a 'carrier' (Krell 1996: xiii), Deleuze and Guattari show, above all in the 'Corps sans Organes' chapter, that they have successfully caught his infection. What Nietzsche carries, his tenacious will to critical health, has managed to survive the sickly drive interpretation that is Oedipus, infecting the *Capitalisme et Schizophrénie* books as a contemporary cure for the cure.

I. The Philosophical Physician as Convalescent: Health as Chronic Critique

> . . . healthy, which is to say, healthi*er*. . . [2]

The act of reading Nietzsche's *Menschliches* preface itself requires a bit of prefacing. Framing the preface in terms of Nietzsche's own self-framing in the *Versuch einer Selbstkritik* grants a preliminary sense of how convalescence functions as a mode of critique in his work. In the opening lines of the *Selbstkritik*, Nietzsche frames the origin of *Die Geburt der Tragödie*, the first published work, in terms of an illness brought home from the field (Nietzsche 1886b: 1).[3] Already in this act of framing, Nietzsche begins to rewrite the notion of origin, to critique it, by associating it with illness. As Foucault suggests, Nietzsche here, as

elsewhere, teaches us to question and to laugh at the assumed solemnity of origin, at that origin that precedes the 'Fall', the body and time (Foucault 2000 [1971]: 372). In the *Selbstkritik*, illness quickly infects origin, budges it from its place, constituting beginning instead as an always-already constitutive Fall – not a Fall *from*, but a beginning Fall. This Fall occurs, in time, in the body, as strife; as a beginning infection that constitutes Nietzsche's 'difference in the origin'.[4] We begin already in the fall, we *are* falling (ill).

Nietzsche further frames the origin of the *Geburt* not just in terms of illness, but in terms of his *Genesung*, his convalescence.[5] As the theory of drives represented in the 1888 *Nachlaß* fragments clearly shows, any healthy organism, for Nietzsche, seeks strife and struggle by entangling itself with sickness, in order to overcome, in accordance with the will to power (Nietzsche 1968: 656). A healthy organism's constant reworking, its constant self-overcoming, bridges the constitutive state of falling ill and the state we fight for as we overcome a given disparity.[6] This requirement of difference – of hierarchy in which one force dominates another but only ever tenuously – replaces any kind of origin for Nietzsche. This flickering continuum of convalescence between illness and a not yet arrived at health manifests as becoming in Nietzsche, and it is instrumental in his revaluation, in the *Menschliches* preface, of all three terms.

As prefacing self-criticism, this *Selbst-kritik* offers a window onto Nietzsche's patient convalescence *as physician*: he ministers to himself, the patient philosopher, as a doctor, preparing the body of the former while practising the role of the latter, performing what Daniel Ahern calls his self-vivisection (Ahern 1995: 161). 'I am waiting', he tells us, 'for a philosophical physician'; and in this context we can already see a certain commitment to non-arrival as we envision him waiting for *himself*. With his 'future-seeing night goggles', to borrow a phrase from Avital Ronell, Nietzsche waits for himself as he self-vivisects (Ronell 2005: 6). His commitment to an *active* convalescence as process produces an eternal wait to match a perpetual fall, resulting, as we will see, in a chronic self-critique that catches itself only in order to self-overcome.

In an intensification of the play between illness and convalescence that Nietzsche offers in the *Selbstkritik*, the structure of the *Menschliches* preface interlaces five figures of illness, each of which contribute to his revaluation of health. To demonstrate the process through which one must go to achieve this 'great health' (Nietzsche 1887: 2 : 24), he articulates first, the sickness of extreme nihilism; second, the

convalescence from that nihilism; third, that sickness revalued as cure; fourth, the diseases that this revalued sickness cures; and finally a fifth revalued health that embraces self-difference as intensive and chronic convalescence. Working through these figures one by one will clarify Nietzsche's practice of self-vivisection, already articulated in relation to the *Selbstkritik*, as crucial to his revalued health as chronic critique.

In the *Menschliches* preface, Nietzsche immediately articulates the 'infected (*Behafteten*)' status that results from his own 'unconditional disparity (*Verschiedenheit*) of view' (Nietzsche 1886c: 1). Let us pause, first, to consider the nature of this sickness in disparity. Sometime between 1887–88, Nietzsche calls himself 'the first perfect nihilist of Europe who, however, has even now lived through the whole of nihilism, to the end, leaving it behind, outside himself' (Nietzsche 1968, preface: 3). Having judged nihilism the disease of his era, his having lived through it renders his view quite disparate – he is utterly alone, different – different, crucially, from his closest enemy, Socrates, who, like Nietzsche, treated his culture as a philosophical physician, but unlike him, was unaware of his own infection, and therefore unaware that his treatment was just another part of the problem (Nietzsche 1875: 1). Terrified of repeating Socrates' error of choosing a cure for a sick age that only contributes to the sickness,[7] Nietzsche develops the visceral patience required of him in the form of a special discipline, a *Selbstdisziplin*: 'to take sides against everything sick in me' (Nietzsche 1888: *Vorwort*).[8] Thus his *Verschiedenheit* results from his survival of nihilism, attained through self-vivisection; but this state of self-vivisection does not cease, once he has healed himself. Instead, Nietzsche's *Verschiedenheit* further consists, as the preface will show us, in a keeping-himself-open, open to continued suspicion, and to the *Verschiedenheit* of illness that is so essential to the health of the Nietzschean organism as it self-overcomes in the movement of will to power. Thus Nietzsche's infection with nihilism is not the infected status to which he refers in this opening phrase – even if he has excised every trace of nihilistic infection, *this* infection of which he speaks is the result of the need to keep illness constantly alive, to keep himself open to it, so that he can maintain a conscious, ever-strengthening health.

This second infection is elaborated in the remainder of the preface, where he describes the process through which one must go to attain his status, by describing the companion spirits he imagines will one day form a community of thought for him, in other words, a community that will dissolve his *Verschiedenheit*, in the first sense articulated above (Nietzsche 1886c: 1). He describes the path one would have to take to

gain a *verschiedene* view comparable to that of his own, beginning with a violent unfettering from everything the person knows and holds dear (Nietzsche 1886c: 3). This convulsive tearing away from a normative set of beliefs and values gives way to a state of morbid, isolated wandering, in which the person attempts to evaluate the world on her own account through a 'wild' method of questioning, unveiling, reversal and experimentation (Nietzsche 1886c: 3). In his description of the spirit-in-becoming's most extreme questions, Nietzsche clearly identifies this sickness as flaunting the most desperate symptoms of nihilism as the historical phenomenon in which 'the highest values devaluate themselves' (Nietzsche 1968: 2): the invalid asks, 'Can *all* values not be reversed?... and [is] God only an invention and finesse of the Devil? Is everything perhaps in the last resort false? And if we are deceived, are we not for that very reason also deceivers? *must* we not be deceivers?' (Nietzsche 1886c: 3). In these questions, the current values of God, Truth, the Good, etc., are seen as deceptions, and as a result we gain a terrifying vision of meaninglessness in which we can find nothing worth living or dying for. And since, as he writes in the epilogue to *Der Fall Wagner*, we all have unconsciously, involuntarily in our bodies, values of decadent descent, 'we are, physiologically considered, *false* [*physiologisch betrachtet*, falsch]' (Nietzsche 1888: *Epilog*). The complete collapse of these values, our instinctive preference for what we can now recognise as false, renders us nearly incapable of avoiding our own demise (Nietzsche 1968: 5).[9] Enraged by the fact of ourselves as physiological antinomies, we thus become destroyers of anything resembling the devaluating truths (Nietzsche 1968: 24).

In the preface, Nietzsche calls this process of destructive inquiry of any meaning the world could hold an illness that can destroy the man who has caught it: 'how much illness is expressed in the wild experiments (*Versuchen*) and singularities (*Seltsamkeiten*) through which the liberated prisoner now attempts to demonstrate his mastery over things!' (Nietzsche 1886c: 3). Driving the person's 'toiling and weaving' is what Nietzsche calls 'the question mark of a more and more perilous curiosity'. This sickness of the emerging free spirit is intimately entangled with her 'vehement, dangerous curiosity for an undiscovered world' (Nietzsche 1886c: 3). I want to identify this extreme end of nihilism, the destructive compulsion to question, as the *first manifestation of illness* in Nietzsche's narrative (we will return to his infection as continual self-vivisection as a later manifestation, considering the preface as a narrative of convalescence). The figure of the question mark vibrates, in this part of the narrative, as a source of potential harm for the

organism herself – the increasing disorganisation of drives that occurs as all illusions are destroyed is haunted by imminent death. A 'threatening, suffocating, heart-tightening' isolation comes into play as the spirit's curiosity leads her 'on, even further away, even further down' (Nietzsche 1886c: 3). The process of self-risk, then, is inherent in this downward-spiralling, nihilistic practice of curiosity, enacted through *Versuchen* and *Seltsamkeit*, which Nietzsche labels 'sick'. He articulates this touchy space, the space of 'questionable questioners', between completely destructive questioning and productively destructive questioning, one year later in the *Genealogie*:

> We have no doubt today that sickness is instructive, much more instructive than health, and [we] seem to require contaminating people even more than we do medicine men or saviours. We violate ourselves, nutcrackers of the soul, questionable questioners, as though life were nothing but a cracking of nuts. Does this not make us every day more questionable but also more worth questioning, perhaps more worthy to be alive? (Nietzsche 1887: 3 : 9)

Here he frames his tenet that illness is necessary to life in terms of the necessity of the dangerous question: illness is a constant threat, a built-in resistance with which the organism must continue to engage, or else it begins to degenerate, which is what has happened in the utter desperation of nihilism.[10] As resistance, illness, we find in another 1888 fragment, 'restores energy to the slack fibers and toughness to the will to live' (Nietzsche 1968: 912). Only the most innovative of questionable questioners will be worthy of life, will survive; thus as early as 1885: 'That of which more delicate men would perish belongs to the stimulants of *great* health' (Nietzsche 1968: 1013). The event of nihilism is, in short, a medical emergency. Nietzsche sees the coming generations as having to simultaneously create truth while steadfastly holding that there is no truth (Nietzsche 1968: 616).

To find a path through this devastation of prior illusions to Nietzsche's great health, we must experiment and live dangerously, 'alas, with what protracted searching and succeeding, and failing, and learning and experimenting anew!' (Nietzsche 1885: 3 : 12). The nihilistic flirtation with self-destruction gradually gives way to a long process of convalescence, in which the spirit wrestles with the above-described dangers, risking the possibility that '[she] may even on [her] own road perhaps lose [her]self and become infatuated and remain seated intoxicated in some corner or another' (Nietzsche 1886c: 4). Here the preface shows us clearly an image of an organism lost in the movement towards health. This process of convalescence from nihilism,

which I identify as the *second manifestation of illness* in Nietzsche's narrative, seemingly resolves itself in, or at least converges towards, a state of exuberant health (Nietzsche 1886c: 4). Yet he fails to fully commit to this notion of resolution in health:

> [T]o become sick in the manner of these free spirits, to remain sick for a long time and then, slowly, slowly, to become healthy, *by which I mean 'healthier'*, [emphasis mine] is a fundamental *cure* for all pessimism (the cancerous sore and inveterate vice, as is well known, of old idealists and inveterate liars). (Nietzsche 1886c: 5)

This passage begs unpacking on several levels. First, Nietzsche's qualification of the process of becoming healthy as in fact one of becoming healthi*er* suggests that the initial sickness of which he speaks is already a form or level of health inhabiting a continuum. This suggestion is confirmed in an 1888 fragment: 'Health and sickness are not essentially different… One must not make of them distinct principles or entities that fight over the living organism and turn it into their arena… In fact, there are only differences in degree between these kinds of existence' (Nietzsche 1968: 47). Illness as disparity with health, then, as antagonism, as difference, is only a degree of health itself. Put differently: the disparity of the thing is a constantly shifting and essential part of the thing. Illness as *Verschiedenheit* is necessary to achieve great health, which overcomes *Verschiedenheit* in order to continue overcoming itself.

To return to my claim that we find, in place of origin in Nietzsche, a fall, a falling ill, we see that the organism must become ill before it can become healthi*er*, because falling ill makes those who can survive healthier. And yet *ill* is only a degree of *healthy* – *Verschiedenheit* is a level of health, of the organisation of the organism. Nietzsche's health thus erodes the hierarchised dichotomy of health/illness, in that health constantly turns to illness in order to become *more* itself. Here Nietzsche's will to power does not *resolve*; it only becomes. Nietzsche's disparity of illness simply continues to irritate and stimulate the movement of life in an unending movement of self-overcoming, an opening to sickness that closely resembles Derrida's conception of autoimmunity (we will return to autoimmunity in section II).[11] Health, finally, consists of an extreme, living *Verschiedenheit*: health is (itself) disparity, it is the movement of difference. And the becoming well of the philosopher is a tenuous, perilous, eschatological shifting of levels of intensity, rather than a strictly teleological movement. This constant

shifting, to the degree that it self-overcomes, does so only by plunging its hands back into its self-difference.

In the passage from the preface cited above, we also find its *third and fourth manifestations of illness*: cure as a capability of illness, and the diseases (the sick fictions) of idealism and untruth that this illness can cure. Nietzsche furthers his erosion of the health/sickness binary as described above, by explicitly ascribing a curative value to this sickness, a sickness we can now view as an intensity-level of healthi*er*, a force in this differential movement of the will to health: 'There is wisdom,' he writes, 'practical wisdom, in for a long time prescribing even health for oneself only in small doses' (Nietzsche 1886c: 5). Beyond affirming the productive status of sickness as health's disparity with itself, Nietzsche's prescription for a cure here highlights once more the self-risk involved in his process of lived philosophy: not only can the free spirit lose her way as she inquisitively extends herself further and further 'away', further 'down', as she casts off illusions, but per Nietzsche's prescription, she takes only small doses of a presumably curative health in order to lengthen the initial process of sickness of 'the great liberation', in order to maximise her space for dangerous experimentation. The third manifestation of illness in the text, then, the cure that sickness functions as, is a practice of self-risk and, indeed, a focused kind of self-poisoning through the measured withholding of too much of the pre-revaluation health, the turning to and indeed embracing, instead, of illness in order to remain healthi*er*. This illness as cure, the holding of oneself open to continued infection, is effectively Nietzsche's cure for pessimism. As with the Derridean conception of autoimmunity, he here anticipates, in the revaluating move that consecrates sickness as cure, Derrida's reading of the *pharmakon* as simultaneous poison and antidote (Derrida 1972: 86), especially when we remember that the work of illness replaces any origin for Nietzsche.

Along with nihilism, this extraordinary prescription cures the 'cancerous sore and inveterate vice' of idealists and liars, of those who continue to cling to symptomatic fictions of a sick culture. His grouping of the pessimists includes all those who deny the active force of visceral life: the idealists, who sequester themselves from lived experience; the metaphysicians, who submit human life to transcendent totalisation; the dialecticians, who reduce movement to negation; and the physicians, who quarantine and sedate the ill, submitting them to a normative process of cure. In this preface, Nietzsche employs a language of illness to articulate a set of western values, and to transform these values: the standard social and philosophical traditions are shown to be

diseased, and the sickness that these traditions consistently attempt to eliminate becomes their only and 'fundamental' cure. This is Nietzsche's revaluation of the values Socrates championed – the values he thought could cure his era of, but only worsened, which is to say weakened, its condition. Guided by a 'tenacious *will to health* that sometimes disguises itself as health already achieved' (Nietzsche 1886c: 4, my emphasis), the free spirit affirms, through its will, the ongoing process of sick experimentation of which health consists. Nietzsche's will to health here shows itself as a joyous, critical force that embraces the risk that true health requires of us.

Health, then, as Nietzsche's *fifth manifestation of illness*, is revalued against the backdrop of lived sickness as cure, as a struggle of the will, a condition of brilliant but tenuous critique. In other words, Nietzschean health coincides with convalescence. Nietzsche describes how, 'under the illumination of a still stressful, still changeable health', the philosopher approaches reflexivity, reflecting on her process of isolated and life-threatening illness. Through meditating on this experience of finally questioning our own 'great liberation', he suggests that the purpose of the violent loss, displacement and pain that comprised the initiatory illness from which we never fully separate has been to enable the philosopher to gain 'access to many and contradictory modes of thought': the ability to see through normative values (including, of course, those of health and illness), human-erected teleological structures, and the supposed strength of dialectical thought (Nietzsche 1886c: 4). Yet as his subversion and revaluation of a health/sickness binary structure suggests, this clear vision is produced and nurtured both through the thinker's continuing fluctuation at the level of healthi*er*, and through the *continued* practice of revaluation and critique that constitutes the cure for pessimism. Nietzschean health transforms the wild experiments and singularities of the budding yet confused free spirit into the master's 'dangerous privilege' of living experimentally (Nietzsche 1886c: 4). The convalescent thinker, 'half-turned toward life', but almost reluctantly, gains access to this exhausted space of happiness *by dint of* affirming her chronic relapses as part of the process of self-overcoming (Nietzsche 1886c: 5).

To identify Nietzsche's revalued health as a condition of chronic critique, then, is to articulate his vision of critique as self-vivisection, as living analysis. To live this critique is to chronically affirm illness as your health's self-difference. As Deleuze stresses, Nietzsche urges us towards 'the pleasure of knowing oneself different' (Deleuze 1962: 10), and it is precisely this pleasure that he proffers in this preface, as his will to

health. To know yourself different is to affirm the disparity within you as part of your health, and to render that affirmation a chronic condition. In so doing, you embrace yourself as patient, affirming your fall(ing ill) as differential health, actively participating in self-opening.

II. Self-undoing as Cure for the Cure

> Let's go further still . . . we haven't undone our selves enough.[12]

Because the healthi*er* organism's health *is* precisely its convalescence, its variable *Verschiedenheit*, it thrives by affirming that health as a differential relation, as self-difference. Since each integral adversary of sickness can make the organism stronger, but only by threatening it as a whole, it makes sense that Deleuze and Guattari take the schizo, a liberated schizophrenic functioning as the apex of experimental de-organisation, as *their* model for new health, because their aim is precisely *to destroy the organism* that still remains in Nietzsche. They champion a sick figure pushed past the limit of sickness to focus the problem of the organism as itself ill, as a loophole remaining in Nietzsche's overall project of affirmation, a loophole that negates life's flourishing. In this critique of organisation, they go beyond Nietzsche by inserting their own position into his differential relation of sickness and health, and cleaving this pair in order to continue Nietzsche's task of revaluation – pushing him to overcome himself. Thus in their rendering illness healthy precisely *because* it attacks the organism, Deleuze and Guattari perform *philosophos* in its exact meaning: they act as friends of wisdom, in Zarathustra's sense of the term: as Deleuze glosses: 'a third person between "I" and "me," who pushes me to overcome myself, to be overcome in order to live' (Deleuze 1962: 6). Deleuze and Guattari have thus caught Nietzsche's infection, and have overcome him so that he might live on. They take his health as convalescence and make it what Deleuze has called a 'health of tomorrow' (Deleuze 2004: 258).

Reading Nietzsche's flickering convalescence as distinctly non-teleological in that it has no defining endpoint but rather functions by dint of the will to health, his emphasis on integrity and organisation of drives in an organism, healthy or no, still presents an obstacle for Deleuze and Guattari to overcome. Their own 'cure for the cure' is a contemporary championing of Nietzsche's healthi-er, pushed past the integrity of the organism. Nietzsche's health as chronic critique already attempts a curing of the cure(s), and his targets overlap with those of

Deleuze and Guattari – to mention just one, Socrates' cure of dialectics and idealism, and the turning away from the body – but Deleuze and Guattari take this body which Nietzsche, in his formulation of 'meaning, physiologically speaking' (Nietzsche 1886b: 4), has joyously affirmed, and deorganise it to at least the point of the tragic chorus, to the brink of becoming-imperceptible, of self-annihilation; health, then, as self-annihilation through the *Corps sans Organes*, the body without organs.

Before we turn to the BwO chapter, let us call to mind its context: Deleuze and Guattari undertake their revaluation of health under the general name of 'schizoanalysis' in *L'Anti-Oedipe* and *Mille Plateaux*. Their project boils down to four figures of illness, which, like those of Nietzsche, work together to perform a revaluation: they articulate first, the oedipal cure as in fact the sickness to target; second, illness as defined by a certain distance from the oedipal master-text; third, schizoanalysis as the method to 'cure us of the [oedipal] cure'; and finally the fourth figure of the hypochondriac as a failed attempt at schizophrenisation. Beyond psychoanalysis, the authors clarify their larger target again and again as the repression, reduction and normativisation enacted through both a transcendent, teleological metaphysics and a representational, depth-avowing hermeneutics (Deleuze and Guattari 1972: 89, 127–9) – both targets of Nietzsche's revaluation. Psychoanalysis, Deleuze and Guattari write, inherited many negative traits from both these traditions, and current society in general has inherited Oedipus as its dominant structure. The task of their critique is to initiate the restoration of the creative force of desiring-production that psychoanalysis with all its baggage has trapped and subsequently displaced (Deleuze and Guattari 1972: 130).

To begin putting our four figures into play, Deleuze and Guattari situate their critical position in terms of a need to 'cure us of the cure' (Deleuze and Guattari 1972: 80). This oedipal cure as a sickness that needs curing is the *first figure of illness* in their project that I want to identify, and it consists in a structure of organisation, signification and subjectification that displaces the positive, productive desire of the unconscious, repressing that real desire and forcing us into a system wherein desire equals an unfulfillable lack. This repressing, normative cure forces us to exist as carefully organised subjects. Within psychoanalysis, illness consists in a departure from the oedipal axis, although it is always defined in terms of this axis. This conception of illness, as a *second figure* in the text, consists in the inability, temporary or permanent, to resolve the oedipal phase. Thus they protest: 'We are

extremely tired of those stories where one is said to be in good health because of Oedipus, sick from Oedipus, and suffering from various illnesses under the influence of Oedipus' (Deleuze and Guattari 1972: 96). Their call for a revaluation of health and illness thus requires a profound movement of de-oedipalisation.

As we will see, Nietzsche's *Selbstdisziplin*, the fighting of everything sick in oneself, is carried out in the BwO chapter, as Deleuze and Guattari instruct you to fight signification, organisation and subjectification, as strains of the sickness of oedipality. In Nietzschean terms, oedipality would be the latest fiction generated by a still sick drive organisation, a symptom, like Socrates' thought, of the drive to preservation's decadence and exhaustion. Thinking Oedipus in terms of Nietzsche's diagnosis of nihilism, the psychoanalytic project is a last-ditch attempt to maintain transcendent truth in the face of the desperate realisation of meaninglessness that constitutes nihilism. In this sense, Deleuze and Guattari's project can be seen as an attempt to get us back to that baseline sickness, the first figure of illness that I identified in Nietzsche's *Menschliches* preface, that allows the individual to wallow in the very depths of nihilistic questioning before the strongest ones slowly begin to convalesce, while the weaker ones become 'lost in some corner', i.e. they die off. Thus in Nietzschean terms, to rid ourselves of Oedipus is to first become dangerously sick, and then slowly, with our arms always wrapped around illness, to convalesce. But again, when Nietzsche continually proclaimed that 'I must fight against everything sick in me', his drive organisation is the spot, as it were, that he missed. His grounding conception of the organism is thus paradoxically revealed, according to his own system, as an interpretation symptomatic of sick drive organisation.

In Deleuze and Guattari's terms, we need to 'schizophrenise', not only to follow Nietzsche's example but to rid ourselves even of the strict coherence of his drive organisation. Their schizoanalysis, as a practice of de-oedipalisation or 'schizophrenisation' (rather than oedipalisation, neuroticisation, normalisation), constitutes the revalued cure for psychoanalysis' unacceptable oedipal cure (Deleuze and Guattari 1972: 80). This revalued cure is their *third term of illness*. Deleuze and Guattari proffer the schizophrenic as a figure who mocks and nearly escapes the oedipal system, often being institutionalised because of her sheer *lack* of Oedipus – her inability to inhabit some relation to the normative axis. Deleuze and Guattari essentially propose a movement towards a de-institutionalised schizophrenia as our only avenue for de-oedipalisation. Thus, like Nietzsche, they destabilise the

health/sickness binary by revaluing illness as the cure for a ubiquitous and crushing disease, the disease of the rejected oedipal cure (with all its philosophical baggage) as norm and practice of health. The new cure is thus posited as lived illness in the extreme, a position nearly identical to Nietzsche's in his identification of the free spirit's dangerous, experimental sickness as the convalescence-cure to diseased philosophy.

In *Mille Plateaux*, published eight years after *L'Anti-Oedipe*, Deleuze and Guattari recast the process of schizophrenisation in the chapter titled 'Comment se faire un Corps sans Organes?' (Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 185). In this text, the authors articulate the BwO as a set of practices that constitutes a paradoxically *produced* limit; we both produce and inhabit 'it', this set of practices, 'scurrying like a vermin, groping like a blind person, or running like a lunatic', without ever arriving *at* it (Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 186). Like Nietzsche's revalued health, whose continual mode of critique causes it to always fluctuate at the intensity level of healthi*er*, it is in part the enactment of non-arrival that produces this non-organism, this mode of existence *as* set of practices. In this sense, their de-organising self and Nietzsche's healthi*er* organism are roughly matched, in that they each function by dint of non-teleological non-arrival.

The great liberation of Deleuze and Guattari's dismantling subject consists in the process of struggling against organisation, signification and subjectification. As such, the production of one's BwO begins the moment one attempts to experiment with disorganising oneself as organism, the moment one resists signification and interpretation, the moment one 'converges' towards a state of desubjectification or de-individualisation by beginning to dismantle or undo oneself (*défaire notre moi*) (Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 187). The process of dismantling oneself as an organism, of dismantling one's 'organs', is not a process of fragmentation that references a lost unity, nor is this process a question of returning ourselves to an undifferentiated sphere (as Nietzsche seems to suggest early on in the *Geburt*) that requires an ultimate differentiable totality as frame. Rather, the BwO constitutes a mode of living and thinking as continual (and again, paradoxical) self-construction through the production of intensive difference (Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 203). In this way, Deleuze and Guattari echo Nietzsche's predominant refutation of teleology and totality in favour of an intensive process of becoming. In Nietzsche's vision, the world dissolves into 'a becoming that knows no … weariness: this is my Dionysian world of the eternally self-creating … and self-destroying' (Nietzsche 1968: 1067). This process of persistent becoming that self-creates and self-destructs

is Nietzsche's will to power. In the BwO's variable self-(de)construction, Deleuze and Guattari continue Nietzsche's vision of becoming as life (as will to power).

In its basic conception, the BwO disavows depth, enacting this disavowal through its self-*unfurling* (Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 197): its self-production as a de-organised surface on which this intensive difference can pass. In the spirit of Nietzsche's genealogical project, this refutation of depth betrays the philosophical and psychoanalytic tie to a hidden meaning to interpret, a secret essence to unlock, a repressed trauma to read and realign with the oedipal axis. By undoing itself as a standardly perceiving, consuming, identifying and interpreting organisation, the organs of this body flatten out, as it were, to comprise a kind of surface on which desire can move and produce. Where Nietzsche's free spirit was compelled by the will (to health), Deleuze and Guattari's self-undoing-self is propelled through her trajectory of experimentation by the force of desire; the Nietzschean will to health, to power, here has been transformed into desire.

From the start of their set of instructions, the authors stress the risk involved in this process of self-recreation or dismantling,[13] introducing the hypochondriac, their *fourth and final figure of illness*, to distinguish between the 'good', or 'full', BwOs and the failed ones. They describe the hypochondriac body as an 'emptied and dreary' body whose organs are destroyed, a body to which 'the damage has already been done' and where 'nothing happens anymore' (Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 199, 186). The hypochondriac body, for Deleuze and Guattari, is a *hypochondriac practice* of (attempted) lived self-critique, of self-dismantling. The failure of the hypochondriac practice, for the authors, lies in its inability to produce intensities, to perpetuate the production of desire; in Nietzschean terms, to perpetuate the will to health. In other words, the hypochondriac is not a good machine for production. Instead, one finds stasis as a result of destruction, of a 'messed up' or 'botched' practice of self-dismantling.

In the passage where they describe this hypochondriac failure, the reader encounters a woman of whom nothing remains but 'the skin and bones of a disorganized body' (Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 186). In medical terms, hypochondria consists in a somatic over-concern, including the morbid attention to the details of bodily functioning and the exaggeration of any symptoms. So a hypochondriac practice overinvests in a projected image of health by obsessing over their failure, as organism, at 'proper' bodily organisation. On this level of organisational failure, Deleuze and Guattari's hypochondriac consists

of nothing but a sac filled with broken pieces, not only unable to properly function on a traditional medical level, but certainly unable to engage in a creative process of self-dismantling or self-recreation. The hypochondriac BwO essentially fails because her fear of illness (in the sense of their second figure, illness as proscribed by Oedipus) manifests through a constant *hermeneutic practice* of self-constitution that frames itself in relation to a prescribed totality of health, rather than the desired un- or de-signifying practice of self-dismantling that refutes any lost or desired unity. The hypochondriac's obsessional reading of potential symptoms, her constant, paranoid awareness of the broken-ness of her organs and functions, creates an interpretive closed circuit where she encloses herself in a process of self-interpretation. And again, this closed process refers to a master-text of ideal health: health as essence and totality, health as oedipal resolution. Therefore the hypochondriac BwO consists in a paranoid, hermeneutic practice that manifests as a trap filled with illness.

The failed hypochondriac shows itself in Nietzsche's *Menschliches* preface, as the possibility of the spirit who 'may even on [her] own road perhaps lose [her]self and become infatuated and remain seated intoxicated in some corner or another' (Nietzsche 1886c: 4). The hypochondriac's hermeneutic practice of self-constitution maps nicely onto Nietzsche's lost spirit, especially considering the context of the spirit's questions as indicative of severe nihilism as it desperately realises that it is 'in its very body… false': infatuated and intoxicated in some corner, she has failed in some experiment or another by falling into a normative trap of representation. Her will to health has failed to adequately propel her through her experiments and singularities, and she collapses in on herself, 'infatuated'.

Given this obsessive image of symptom-reading, what, we may ask, distinguishes Nietzsche's constant self-examination, his fight against everything sick in him, his living critique as self-vivisection, from the hypochondriac BwO? First and foremost, Nietzsche's practice of self-vivisection is precisely a practice of self-opening (as opposed to the closed sac of the hypochondriac), of keeping oneself open to scrape away at any settling infection, but simultaneously to always allow illness, as a level of health itself, *in*. To self-vivisect is not only to search for any symptom of drive disorganisation, but to affirm and embrace one's difference from this organisation. Thus Nietzsche is fundamentally *not* to be considered hypochondriac in Deleuze and Guattari's sense, as represented in the BwO chapter, for the reason that Nietzsche affirms illness in his differential movement of healthi*er*. His model for

health constitutes in fact the opposite, in all ways but one, of this hypochondriac BwO.

The hypochondriac and Nietzsche take different things to be symptoms, and they each read these differing types of symptoms in crucially different ways. Nietzsche reads symptoms as a philosophical doctor striving towards convalescence, while the hypochondriac reads them as hermeneutic revelations of inner failure. The former is critical, the latter paranoid. Nietzsche's model of interpretations as only the final surface of a raging struggle of drives that rises to consciousness is certainly proto-Freudian in some ways;[14] Nietzsche's emerging perspectives, as symptoms of the healthier or sicker order of the drives, are not completely foreign to the Freudian symptom, which signifies an underlying illness to be read as text, inasmuch as it is possible. But unlike Freud's murky unconscious, which comes to be structured like a language, Nietzsche's model for drives and what they produce is *not* linguistic; instead, he provides a physiological system that produces physical yet readable fictions (these last being symptoms, his moveable host of metaphors). In this difference from the psychoanalysis that follows him, Nietzsche forms a great ally for Deleuze and Guattari in their rebellion against the signification-driven domains of Freud and Lacan, by providing a view of life's activity that is fundamentally physiological, rather than signifying. *Bedeutung* is always considered, *physiologisch gefragt*, in the profound sense of its role in the fluctuation of health. The hypochondriac, on the other hand, obsessively attempts to read *Physiologie* as primarily signifying. The difference may seem slim, but it is crucial. Yet Nietzsche's emphasis on interpretation as the congealing, the production, if not the expression, of drive organisation, places him as a distant cousin of the hypochondriac, in that, as I have already articulated, he remains attached to the conception of the organism. In this sense, he reifies an oppressive, constricting structure each time that he reads a symptom as the production of the organism's drives. In this distant sense, he fails in his act of reading. Unlike the hypochondriac, though, this problem of organism as ground does not prevent him from envisioning health as revalued convalescence.

To avoid becoming hypochondriac, Deleuze and Guattari preach caution through an 'art of dosages' (Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 198), advising us to take care as we practice our schizophrenisation (note that we return here to our third figure of illness: illness revalued as cure for the cure). In order to succeed in making yourself a BwO, you must follow a 'rule immanent to experimentation: injections of caution' (Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 186). Essentially, their art of dosages

consists in taking small doses of self-dismantling, of de-institutionalised schizophrenia, itself, which amounts to taking less and less of your*self*, as if weaning yourself *off* a medication, but the (organised, signified, subjectified) medication here is you: *moi*: the organism. To engage in this experimental practice, you open yourself slowly to connections. You give yourself small tastes of de-organisation, inventing 'self-destructions that have nothing to do with the death drive', nothing to do with a movement towards stasis (Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 186).

In a gloss complimentary to their art of dosages of self-destruction described above, Deleuze and Guattari describe the constant reterritorialisation necessary to remain alive in the process of making yourself into a BwO:

> You have to keep enough of the organism for it to reform each dawn; and you have to keep small supplies of signifiance and subjectification, if only to turn them against their own systems when the circumstances demand it, when things, persons, even situations, force you to; and you have to keep small rations of subjectivity in sufficient quantity to enable you to respond to the dominant reality. (Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 186)

This passage expands their figure of the dose as a two-way street of engaged process, of a procession of self-construction, of a struggle towards freedom. They insist on supplies and rations to ensure function and sustenance, and yet these rations are doses of the material against which we struggle, doses we may indeed only use as weapons against 'their own systems'. Thus emerges an image of pushing towards and pulling back from our BwO, even as we produce it, as a limit that, though constantly in the process of production, we never reach. This pushing-pulling-production of the limit relies necessarily on their art of dosages, an art that emerges at this point in their text as a cautious, balanced practice of self-poisoning. The image they offer is not simply a homeopathic one, wherein you would consume an incredibly diluted form of whatever ails you in order to counteract a condition. Instead, Deleuze and Guattari clearly prescribe *both* small doses of self-destruction and small doses of the organisation, signification and subjectification that block your self-destruction while keeping you alive and communicative.

With Nietzsche's prescription of 'health for oneself only in small doses' ringing in our ears, this art of dosages emerges as an engagement with toxicity, at the risk of death, for the enactment of radicality. What Nietzsche, Deleuze and Guattari suggest is an experimental practice that

balances itself between immunity and *auto*immunity. On the one hand, you take in 'self-destruction' in small doses, to get yourself used to less of yourself. But at the same time, this very practice is an autoimmune practice of immunity – you maintain in your system quantities of the former health, now revalued as that from which you wish to escape (the oedipal cure as sickness), in order to approach the new health, to enact the new cure. Thus an autoimmune self-immunisation allows the self to deterritorialise and reterritorialise itself into just enough of a balance to continue its experiments. This autoimmune practice of health could be rearticulated as Derrida's account of autoimmunity pushed to an active life and thought experiment – the move from a description of a system of 'self-destructive conservation' (Derrida 2005: 55) to a prescription for increasingly large doses of the threat, with an end (that is no end) to deorganisation.

This process of radical immunisation that Deleuze and Guattari prescribe is essentially identical to Nietzsche's offering of health as described in section I: health as *Verschiedenheit*, as disparity, and illness as the self-difference of health as it functions as *will* to health. This health as disparity that continually becomes and overcomes constitutes the condition of chronic critique that Deleuze, Guattari and Nietzsche all articulate as their revalued health. Now to what extent do the convalescent free spirit and the schizophrenising BwO converge in this radical practice of health? Are the two figures equal in their capacity for and enactment of critique?

III. Weighing Arrival and Annihilation in the Two Accounts of Critique

> . . . we're not there yet, we can't arrive . . . it's a question of life or death. . . [15]

A brief consideration of first, the narration of destination and second, the attitude towards death in the two projects clarifies the comparison. Both Nietzsche and Deleuze and Guattari spatialise their account of becoming healthy, with differing results: Nietzsche first describes the journey of the developing free spirit in terms of altitude and escape: this midway condition is characterised by 'a pale, subtle happiness of light and sunshine, a feeling of birdlike freedom, bird-like exuberance. . . ; one lives . . . near or far as one wishes, preferably slipping away, evading, fluttering off, gone again, again flying aloft' (Nietzsche 1886c: 4). The relation here is one of slipping, of evading, but at an unusual altitude,

thereby introducing the height, the high nature or privilege, of the spirit. He confirms that this quality of altitude persists in the convergence towards health, describing how as the free spirit gains philosophical maturity, 'power and right and spaciousness of perspective grow into the heights together' (Nietzsche 1886c: 6). The spatiality and altitude in his account constitute precisely the distance implicit in his order of rank.

He then makes reference to the 'inner spaciousness' that accompanies the acquisition of exuberant health, suggesting not so much a spatial destination as an expansion of the experimental organism. Finally, towards the end of the narrative, he describes his space of health shot through with breezes, with spots of sunlight on the wall. The healthi*er* convalescent 'loves to sit sadly still' in this space, 'to sit in the sun' (Nietzsche 1886c: 6). To summarise, then, Nietzsche evokes an inner space of convalescence at a high, sunny altitude that develops through a process of slipping, evading, fluttering. The autoimmune immunisation of his art of dosages is performed within this movement of fluttering against a space of elevated health as convalescence, in the tastes of sunlight and the sad relapses that constitute the spirit's existence. Thus while Nietzsche's health = convalescence, this convalescence, this healthi*er* operates at a higher altitude.

For Deleuze and Guattari's schizophrenising self, '[the] voyage does not necessarily imply great movements in extension; it becomes immobile, in a room and on a body without organs – an intensive voyage that undoes all the lands for the benefit of the one it is creating' (Deleuze and Guattari 1972: 319). Like Nietzsche, this process of becoming healthi*er* occurs largely within (and against) the self the depth of which all three writers disavow (as a result of the comparative process here, Deleuze and Guattari begin to carefully unfurl the free spirit, her inner spaciousness folding out to form a surface of intensity). Deleuze and Guattari's reference to a 'room' does not fix the destination of the journey; rather, their prose indicates a casual starting point for a voyage that undoes 'all the lands' – every established, organised land that the dismantling self has and could inhabit – in order to open the new land it is *creating* through its self-destruction, never the land it has *created*. The voyage here has strictly no destination, only a creative process of becoming that sustains itself through its radical practice of autoimmune self-immunisation.

In terms of destination, then, Deleuze and Guattari's narrative offers a slightly more critical figure, one built on and extending Nietzsche's convalescent. Although Nietzsche's free spirit engages in

this autoimmune self-immunisation by fluttering at an intensity-level of healthi*er*, his narrative suggests an ultimate possibility for relative stasis at a high level of thought, for the founding of a new 'land' of truth. Deleuze and Guattari take Nietzsche's health to a new level by refuting any possible *arrival* of the lived critique they propose. Another way of articulating this point is that while in Nietzsche's preface there is a fifth term of illness, health, Deleuze and Guattari stop at four, offering only illness revalued as the practice of cure (of schizophrenisation). Nietzsche's reification of health at the end of the *Menschliches* preface renders his account slightly more resolved. That fifth figure, again, is equal to convalescence – to Nietzsche's healthi*er* as an affirmation of non-arrival – but an organised convalescence on high.

The question of self-annihilation re-poses that of destination, but in a different key. The question brings us back to the problem of the organism in Nietzsche. 'I love', Zarathustra says, 'those who do not wish to preserve themselves' (Nietzsche 1885: 3 : 12); and yet even in the unconcern for self-preservation, the self as organism remains the basic unit which may, in its experimentation, become annihilated. For Deleuze and Guattari, it is precisely the annihilation of self that constitutes the BwO's gradual process of becoming. For Nietzsche, in other words, an organism becomes and becomes until it dies; for Deleuze and Guattari, an organism becomes to the degree that it stops being an organism, to the degree that it starts being something other. Nietzsche's 'pleasure of feeling oneself different' is, for Nietzsche, the feeling of difference in the self; for Deleuze and Guattari overcoming him, this pleasure constitutes the undoing of the very 'oneself' who feels. Thus while Nietzschean becoming is a process that moves to the brink of death, sometimes slipping over the edge, the death of the organism is the end of the organism; the end of the self = arrival. For Deleuze and Guattari, the end of the organism is the beginning of real becoming, not arrival at death (although becoming certainly risks this mortal end).

Once again, the absence of a fifth figure in Deleuze and Guattari's narrative serves as an indication that they have succeeded in overcoming Nietzsche, in allowing him to live by loving him as philosophical physicians. In the same way that Nietzsche revalues health for us as self-opening, Deleuze and Guattari open his self-opening organism to further revaluation; in this sense, their project liberates Nietzsche towards a health of tomorrow by helping him to begin deorganisation. It is precisely at this juncture of physiological *philosophos*, of loving Nietzsche by helping to undo himself, that his work opens to a becoming beyond the measure of organisation.

Notes

1. Nietzsche 1886a: 2. My emphasis. Unless otherwise noted: ellipses indicate my own omissions from quoted material; all translations are my own *except* for excerpts from *Der Wille Zur Macht*; all citations for Nietzsche refer to section numbers rather than page numbers; all citations for Nietzsche *except* for fragments from *Der Wille Zur Macht* refer to: Friedrich Nietzsche (1966), *Werke in Drei Banden*, ed. Karl Schlechta, 3 vols, Munich: Verlag.
2. Nietzsche 1886c: 5. My emphasis.
3. The autobiographical reference here is likely to some combination of the traumas of war and the diptheria, dysentery and likely syphilis that he contracted during his time as a medic in the Franco-Prussian war.
4. As Deleuze puts it (1962: 3).
5. Golffing renders *Genesung* as 'recovery', while Hollingdale uses 'convalescence'. When writing English, I opt for 'convalescence' over 'recovery' because of the connotation of gradual, not necessarily full recovery of a patient. As opposed to 'recovery', 'convalescence' includes the later stage of an illness that, despite the patient's symptoms improving, continues to be a source of infection.
6. Here is Nietzsche's theory of the organism's drive organisation, in a nutshell: A healthy organism's drives have a clear order of rank in which a dominant drive struggles with and synchronises the weaker ones, rather than negating them, resulting in an integrity with a clear goal (Nietzsche 1968: 778, 800). A weak organism's drives participate in a constant, unordered antagonism, and the organism thus attempts to satisfy all the drives rather than a dominant one, resulting in a lack of integrity and purpose (Nietzsche 1968: 778). Even in inorganic life, Nietzsche sees the constant struggle of the will to power manifest as the repelling force exercised by atoms (Nietzsche 1968: 342). This emphasis on mutual struggle and constant disparity offers Nietzschean health as the constant engagement with difference, which in turn suggests that illness, as disparity, as that against which health struggles, is always right behind health, constantly surrounding it. The will to power, Nietzsche writes, seeks what resists it, and in this sense, health seeks sickness in order to push itself even further (Nietzsche 1968: 656). As Ahern explains: 'every level of health [in the organism] requires its particular form of sickness as its unique adversary threatening the well-being of the organism as a whole. The organism is tested with the threat of destruction and thereby forced to overcome previous levels of sickness and health or be destroyed' (Ahern 1995: 39). A truly healthy organism is always entangled with its own level of illness so that it can grow as strong as possible, push as far as possible. Given the will to power's function as a will to growth, an organism may, Nietzsche explains, actually destroy itself in an attempt to become more (Nietzsche 1968: 688). In a healthy organism, the urge to grow far outreaches the urge to preserve oneself (Nietzsche 1968: 702). Life itself, as will to power, says to Zarathustra: 'I am that which must overcome itself again and again' (Nietzsche 1885: 2 : 12)
7. As Ahern acknowledges (1995: 84).
8. In the epilogue to *Der Fall Wagner*, he asks where a diagnosis of the modern soul would begin. The reply: 'With a resolute incision, … with the *vivisection* (*Vivisektion*) performed of the most instructive case' (Nietzsche 1888: *Epilog*).
9. Ahern summarises this dynamic neatly (1995: 128).
10. Ahern articulates this particularly well (1995: 38).
11. In, for example, Derrida's conversation with Borridori on autoimmunity (Borridori 2003: 94).
12. Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 187.

13. To take the first warning, for example: 'you can mess it up. Or it can be terrifying, and lead you to your death' (Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 185–6).
14. See, for example, Nietzsche 1882: 333.
15. Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 186–7.

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Stuttering in Beckett as Liminal Expression within the Deleuzian Critical-Clinical Hypothesis

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Abstract

This paper inquires into the nexus between the Deleuzian critical-clinical hypothesis and its literary instantiation in Beckett, with a focus on *How It Is* (1964) and *Worstward Ho* (1983b). I propose to read the interruptions in style symptomatically, and stuttering language in Beckett as liminal expression, thus tracing the flows and breaks of desire which Deleuze theorises in the sense of a symptomatological unconscious. The schizoid style as liminal expression exemplified in Beckett's work will be read as marking transit stages in the process of becoming which invites taking it as a proper language of the body without organs.

Keywords: Deleuze, symptom, symptomatology, liminal expression, the critical-clinical, stuttering, Beckett

I. Introduction: The Critical-Clinical Hypothesis

Several at first heterogeneous notions come together under the umbrella of the critical-clinical hypothesis: the critical-clinical as a type of critique, symptomatology as a mode to identify intensities and inner forces, and a range of exemplary symptoms such as stuttering which embody the specific type of critique the critical-clinical hypothesis attempts to achieve. The fusion, or folding, of the critical as intellectual evaluation with the clinical as medical, or psychiatric, observation is of particular interest, both striking and baffling. I read the critical-clinical as a type of

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critique which aspires to overcome the traditional but artificial splitting of mind and body that excludes bodily symptoms from the critical apparatus. Symptomatology will be positioned here as opening access to bodily affectivity, thus supporting the critical-clinical as a mode of registering intensities. Body-language as vocal and gestural stuttering becomes the clinical aspect of the symptomatological critique.

The critical-clinical as a specific type of critique activates symptomatology as a mental-corporeal mode of inquiry which I will exemplify by Beckettian stuttering. Symptomatology as a clinical, medical and psychiatric category carries a sense of enigma, admitting our ignorance of 'what a body *can do*' (Deleuze 1983: 36–7; italics in the original), as expressed by Deleuze in reference to Nietzsche and Spinoza.[1] The reading and grouping of symptoms to form a syndrome which can be named and identified, as Deleuze does with Beckettian stuttering, demands clinical perspicacity, an intuitive awareness of intensities and inner forces as yet without a name or an identification.[2] Stuttering, then, functions as an exemplary symptom to probe the critical apparatus of the critical-clinical since it offers a specific setting, being situated in its sonority between body and mind, connecting the invisible inside and the more accessible outside.

Deleuze's final *Essays Critical and Clinical* (Deleuze 1997), with a distinctly literary orientation, conclude his studies embodying the critical-clinical as a type of critique in the symptomatological mode. They exemplify a range of symptoms in their procedures and formulas – stuttering, masochism, schizophrenic and schizoid states, and Jarry's pataphysics – and serve as a framing for my paper.[3] However, a specific symptomatological critique is an integral part of Deleuze's work as evidenced in his testament, the final essay 'Pure Immanence – A Life' (2002), which concludes with an impersonal, and yet personal, literary reference (to Bousquet).

> A wound is incarnated or actualized in a state of things or of life; but it is itself a pure virtuality on the plane of immanence that leads us into a life. My wound existed before me: not a transcendence of the wound as higher actuality, but its immanence as a virtuality always within a milieu (plane or field). (Deleuze 2002: 31–2, referring to Bousquet 1955)

A life is impersonal yet singular, but to grasp its fullness Deleuze demands a wilder empiricism (Deleuze 2002: 25) which does justice to mind and body and the work of art.[4] Since it addresses our affects and our percepts, such an empiricism achieves a more complete grasp than the speculative mind alone can offer.

The paper first positions the Deleuzian critical-clinical hypothesis, setting out to read style as stuttering, before going on to explore stuttering as liminal expression, in its specific exemplification in Beckett. In this way, the intention is to demonstrate that the critical-clinical as a specific Deleuzian type of critique deploys symptomatology as mode and method, and that style as stuttering, the trembling of language, and the writer as stutterer, hold a specific place in Deleuze's understanding of writing.

II. Style as Stuttering in Deleuze

The focus here will be on three related aspects: first, the Deleuzian setting; second, the creative process defined in Deleuzian terms as a delirium;[5] finally the symptom as a type of Beckettian gesturing language. In terms of definition, a brief note is in place. Liminal expression is understood here as frenetic pseudo-syntax, a stuttering language in the sway of inner forces, verbal and bodily exhaustion and progressive loss of memory. I propose to read the interruptions in style symptomatically, and stuttering language as tracing the flows and breaks of desire theorised by Deleuze in the sense of a symptomatological unconscious. 'Writing is a question of becoming, always incomplete, always in the midst of being formed.' Becoming/writing is understood not in its mimetic sense or as identification, but in order to 'find the zone of proximity, indiscernibility, or indifferentiation' (Deleuze 1997: 1). The schizoid style can then be read as liminal expression exemplified in Beckett's work as marking transit stages in the process of becoming.

The Deleuzian setting

The first aspect exploring style as stuttering focuses on the Deleuzian stylistic criteria of excess, delirium and diagnosis. In Deleuze's understanding, the style of a literary creation transcends the textual level. It is not just an expression following the demands of the content but an original propulsion of life, of existence gushing forth, as he forcefully expresses it. There is in such a conception of style no separation of expression and expressed, of style and content. Although some textual boundaries are acknowledged, style supersedes the writing. There is an excess which can never be contained. The first criterion of style with a view to style as stuttering is its excess. The inner force of propulsion or desire is of a delirious nature since it is not yet regulated and streamlined

by mental and intellectual control. Delirium then becomes the second defining criterion of style within the symptomatological critique of the critical-clinical. 'All delirium is world-historical, "a displacement of races and continents". Literature is delirium, and as such its destiny is played out between the two poles of delirium' (Deleuze 1997: 4); it is vacillating between the disease of the world to be diagnosed and becoming a measure of health when successful. Since the delirium originates in the unconscious, within the emerging libidinal field, the established language patterns, understood here as majoritarian in the Deleuzian sense, will not contain the as yet unshaped visions and are not sufficient to express them. This makes stuttering as delirious expression a defining characteristic of the Deleuzian minoritarian, yet another example of symptomatology and a genre within the critical-clinical. Style in the Deleuzian sense becomes an indicator, or descriptor, of the inner, if still stuttering voice, urging for actualisation. More than the expression of content, of ideas or opinions, style is conceived as an original event in the Deleuzian sense, of a pre-individual and impersonal stature: a haecceity, a singularity. The creative act of writing, then, if viewed in the frame of the critical-clinical, cannot be set apart from the empirical framework of Deleuze's philosophy.

Deleuze maintains that writers create a style as an expression of a way of life. At the same time, this expression is a particular reading of symptoms, a diagnosis of life, culture, civilisation and society; a critique of symptoms as observed in life or imagined in a writing. Style as diagnosis can be viewed as the third criterion. Style as stuttering realistically can appear in writing in the image of characters stuttering, however, beyond this textually bound stuttering, style as stuttering more importantly concerns the writer as stutterer. 'It is no longer the character who stutters in speech; it is the writer who becomes *a stutterer in language*' (Deleuze 1997: 107; italics in the original). Thus the creative writer who is intent on setting his style makes the language stutter; the language becomes intensive and affective. This means that the stutter displays the movements of affects.[6] The stuttering elements can be treated as symptoms reflecting back on the inner forces which break forth. This type of expression displaying the affects is situated at the margin of language and is of a pre-linguistic nature. To support the display of affects in the stutter, the writer draws on the milieu or atmosphere so as to fuse expression and content of the writing. Deleuze evokes a whole range of possible degrees of stuttering: the quiver, the murmur, the stutter, the tremolo, the vibrato (Deleuze 1997: 108). These stylistic variants of affective stuttering reverberate in

the words, the syntax and the progression of the text. The stuttering, vibrating, trembling evoke the gaps through which affects break forth, often underlined by the rhythms of breathing. This points to the libidinal mechanism theorised as desiring-production.[7]

Drawing together the criteria of style as stuttering, excess, delirium and diagnosis, with a view to their function in liminal expression, Deleuze differentiates between two levels of stuttering: the dissociation of words and the syntactical dissolution, and the complex symptomatological trembling of language which takes in the effects in the milieu. Thus the actual stammering of the characters, beyond the stutter of the language, is doubled up. The excess produced in language becomes an undercurrent of the critical-clinical methodology conceptualised as minoritarian in the sense of a dissonant undertone of the major language which adheres to the equilibrium of morphology and syntax. Looking deeper into the structure of the changes which language undergoes under the impact of affects, stuttering eventuates as variation and modulation: 'Language trembles from head to toe.' Allowing affect to emerge in language as types of variation, overlapping 'zones of variations', 'introduce[s] desire into the corresponding field' (Deleuze 1997: 109). Language in style as stuttering becomes a libidinal field drawing in the clinical, symptomatological aspects and thus pushing beyond the critical, towards liminal expression.

To summarise, style as stuttering eventuates as a new, foreign language within the established language and, if successful, erases itself, becomes 'nonstyle', a not yet explored language, a language-to-come. Style as stuttering offers a new selection and combination of linguistic/literary elements. Style as 'nonstyle' reaches its liminal expression: 'to push language as a whole to its limit, to its outside, to its silence'. With its procedures as tools and instruments of resistance to established language, style as stuttering manages 'digging under the stories, cracking open the opinions, and reaching regions without memories, when the self must be destroyed' (Deleuze 1997: 113), and last but not least does away with, or does without, the self as organising principle.

The creative process as a delirium

I now turn to the second aspect of style as stuttering, how in the creative process excess, delirium and diagnosis, explored above as Deleuzian criteria of style, merge to draw towards the liminality of expression. The Deleuzian criteria of style as stuttering offer a first mapping of the

critical-clinical hypothesis, of the ways in which the critical-clinical as a type of critique, symptomatology as a mode to identify intensities and inner forces, and stuttering as embodiment and example of the specificity of a critical-clinical critique can be hypothesised. In these observations I follow Deleuze's late essays on the critical-clinical (1997 [1993]) and the (im)personal statements on a wilder empiricism and immanence (2002 [1995]). What ties the critical-clinical essays together is the idea of the creative process involving a direct approach to the process of life, to the immanence of life. This sets out parameters for artistic creation. It is the directness of approach and its immediacy which becomes the inner link between the critical and the clinical. And it is only the linked process which allows access to the process of becoming, not accessible to the critical alone. This inner link, or folding, of critical and clinical deals more comprehensively than just the critical by itself with the process of becoming and thus makes the symptomatological critique an apt and fruitful mode to open a path into Beckett's elusive if not unreadable works. The symptomatological critique aims at achieving several purposes: immediacy, affectivity, delirium; that is, grasping becoming as a flux, not as a status of being, which has repercussions for our understanding of subjectivity and temporality in literary texts.[8]

Defining the creative process as a delirium leaves the orderliness of boundaries behind and has not yet settled on new terms. The unbound flux opens the way towards new kinds of expressions, of style, of associative and paradoxical imagery. Deleuze locates the creative moment in the 'intervals between one linguistic combination and the next that generate the great events that fill these intervals, like the birth of a neck, the appearance of teeth, the formation of sex organs' (Deleuze 1997: 10). The syntactical body of writing is understood as undergoing a process of autopoiesis according to a self-generating, self-organising principle. The artist, the writer operates at the margins of identity-loss and silence in the field of an undetermined flux. This indeterminacy shows up in the variations and modulations of stuttering. The not yet articulated breaks forth as stutter since it has not yet recovered any linguistic structure or syntactical restrictions. But beyond that, style as stuttering grounded in delirium eventuates as a doubled-up movement, on its two levels, the level of word dissociation and syntactical dissolution, and its complex symptomatological level as trembling of language. That is to say, delirium demonstrates the forces of affectivity in pushing stuttering to its liminal position, the outside of language.

Style as stuttering draws together a whole canon of writers who are in fact critical-clinical symptomatologists.[9] The linguistic dynamism evoked within the critical-clinical exceeds the established equilibrium of language, and the disequilibrium created by symptomatologists can be described in terms of shaking, moving-fleeing, splitting and trembling, as varieties of modulation. Thus a whole range of symptoms beyond stuttering affords patterns of styles which combine to make up the sonorous qualities with different modulations.[10] Beyond this, the phrasing of language allows stuttering to eventuate forward and backward, two essential styles Beckett routinely enacts in his writings, as will be seen later. Patterns of the inner syntactical structure which contribute to the mechanics of stuttering are inclusive disjunctions and reflexive connections, that is, the expression encompasses double-layering in working in both senses (either *and* or) which disperses a logical progression such as happens in plot. Breathing is incorporated into stuttering and becomes a corporeal regulator of affect.[11] Beckett performs these procedures, according to Deleuze, to their full completion, exhausting all possibilities.

The symptom as a gesturing language

I now explore the final aspect of style as stuttering with regard to its function as liminal expression, and how the symptom may act as a gesturing language. If we follow Deleuze's definition of symptomatology as the transfer or transmission of the clinical observation, that is, the corporeal aspects, into the literary and artistic mode, then gesturing encompasses both sides of the double-sided critique: the bodily movement and its descriptive, expressive styling in the writing. Although the Deleuzian understanding of symptomatology is far removed from the psychoanalytic conceptualisation, there are some analogies which help to exemplify the processes.[12] Psychoanalytically read, the symptom presents itself in clinical terms as a coded message, not yet read in its signification, not yet deciphered in its address. Assuming that the symptom is addressed to someone, an answer or solution, a response or acknowledgement, is expected. The role of expectation in symptoms is decisive. Yet, at the same time, the functionality of the symptom is not yet comprehended, on either side, or the address is intentionally blurred, distorted or prevented. A symptomatological gesture can be understood in a multiplicity of ways since the symptom does not have any fixed agenda but is a processual mechanism of linking corporeality and mentality. Gesturing, then, may be understood as symptomatology

in action and performance. The symptom as a gesturing language can be creatively deployed as a linking mechanism. The psychoanalytic understanding of the symptom marks out the specificity of the Deleuzian symptomatological critique. In the psychoanalytic reading the symptom rises and appears when the language needed to express the underlying idea is lost, when the words are not accessible, for reasons of repression, and the syntax is not available. Circumvention over the bodily sign demands verbalisation from the other in the hope that the symptom might disappear. Within the psychoanalytic reading the symptom is grounded in transference and the contract with the analyst. Symptomatology in the Deleuzian sense does not accept the momentum of repression, or the mechanism of transference. As a positive expression of inner forces, as an immediate outpouring of delirium, the symptom carries in its gesturing the full original affect and thus can forego the demand for decoding or response.

I read the symptom as a gesturing language in terms of a moment of affective style in its own right. If the artist or writer operates at the margin of identity loss and silence, the symptom as gesturing attaches itself to the broken, stuttering syntax, the misplaced word, the catapulted or stuttered word. The symptom carries an unread message and indicates the broken exchange or communication but, more importantly, it also hints towards the encountered obstacles. Thus the symptom is indicator and hindrance of the expression, which makes it a schizoid mode; it is the gesturing momentum which integrates both, sign and barrier. Symptoms as a complex gesturing language, if we follow Deleuze, are to be understood as 'pre-individual, impersonal singularities' (Deleuze 2004a: 143).[13] While the delirium of the creative process engages with and propels the forces of affectivity towards the liminal position, the outside of language, symptoms – in our case exemplified by stuttering – as a corporeal and gestural mode of expression allow the lost linguistic terrain to be regained. Beckett's works, as will be seen, re-invent the unsayable by symptomatological gesturing.

III. Stuttering in Beckett as Liminal Expression

So far I have been concerned with elementary aspects of style as stuttering, the creative process as a delirium and the symptom conceived as a gesturing language. The creative act as a delirium and the gestural mode of symptom(s) can be grounded in exploring possible relations between symptom(s) and a Deleuzian reading of the unconscious which, however, goes beyond the frame of this paper. Both aspects, the delirious

and the gestural, set out symptomatology as a distinct mode to identify intensities and inner forces which support the critical-clinical as a distinct type of critique. A certain ground has also been laid for an understanding of style as stuttering in its multiple layers and levels, always with an eye to its usefulness for determining in which ways stuttering may function and embody the specific type of critique the critical-clinical attempts to achieve.

Symptomatology in literary texts

The exemplary literary symptomatology in Deleuze's analysis of masochism unfolds the specific critical-clinical apparatus and thus opens a way into understanding how the two levels of stuttering, the linguistic/syntactical and the complex symptomatological, relate and condition each other. In taking up literary texts such as Masoch's *Venus in Furs* (1870) and questioning the assumed (clinical, psychiatric) symptoms of masochism, the literary text reveals the functioning of inner, psychic processes, their manipulation in ritual and contractual patterns. Masochism develops a complex system of bodily displays of affects, mental control of suspense and self-discipline, thus making it possible to read the body-language in its symptoms as a balancing act between submission and refutation. It is this exercise of reading the symptoms in their corporeal, gestural and often paradoxical display which leads Deleuze to insert masochism into the larger frame of the critical-clinical. In Deleuze's understanding masochism has less to do with perversion than with delirium, a heightened affectivity as the core of literary creation in Masoch. The writer's performance of a diagnosis in the sense of a critical-clinical critique becomes his decisive stylistic mastery. By capturing the waves of inner forces, the literary text becomes a demonstration of delirium, accessing and expressing a zone between the unconscious, the not yet uttered, and their appearance in the literary text.

According to Deleuze, '(d)elirious formations are … the kernels of art' (Deleuze 1997: 54); they vary according to milieu and historical moments: 'Masoch's work … haunts the glacial zones of the Universe and the feminine zones of History'. The symptomatological apparatus of the critical-clinical is present in delirium, style as stuttering on both levels (syntactically and symptomatologically), affectivity, and a psychological trembling turned linguistic. Language at the deepest level stutters under the sway of affects and thus becomes the determining style. Suspension of bodies and the stammering of language become coordinated and are

inseparably fused in the style of writing, thus constituting the 'body-language, or the oeuvre, of Masoch' (Deleuze 1997: 55), which in turn is his specificity of style as stuttering symptomatologically understood. The symptomatological examination of Masoch's works parallels that of Kafka's and Beckett's. They are, in Deleuze's understanding, the great literary symptomatologists of life, culture, civilisation and society.

Each of these writers has specific linguistic/stylistic procedures. Progressive, enlarging dissociation of words and phrases (Deleuze 1997: 110) stands against expressions sprouting rhizomatically from the middle, pointing towards past and future (Deleuze 1997: 111). The process of dis-assembling the syntactical structure undercuts any possible time frame. In the extreme, these procedures lead to '*the outside* of language, but it is not outside it' (Deleuze 1997: 112; italics in the original). Thus Deleuze speaks of Péguy as being 'like a thwarted stutterer' using assemblages that belong to 'a superhuman stuttering'. Words accumulate through layering 'vertical thickness' (Deleuze 1997: 111) or a language block is dissociated through multiple, repeated bracketing inside the phrase, both linguistic strategies which allow affectivity to be gathered and demonstrated. The schizoid states of affectivity can be captured in these a-logical, a-syntactic variations. Rather than having a linear progressive syntax, Deleuze evokes 'curves, rings, bends, and deviations of th(e) dynamic line' (Deleuze 1997: 112). These procedures evoke forms of incantation through their routines of repetition and contraction, underlined by the patterns of sonority and breathing. I consider this liminal expression as it operates at the margin of what language can display before falling into silence.

Deleuze proposes that such a syntax is 'in the process of becoming, a creation of syntax that gives birth to a foreign language within language, a grammar of disequilibrium' (Deleuze 1997: 112). Extracting the writer's specific foreign language from the maternal language compares to extracting the 'unknown face of the event' (Deleuze 1997: 10). When speaking of reaching the liminal stage of the outside of language, Deleuze points to the confrontation with silence and it is the stutter which becomes the indicator for having reached the frontier of expression. The 'linguistic procedure' (Deleuze 1997: 19) as the material, symptomatological level of writing, in a paradoxical manner, eventuates in language, yet draws on what is impossible in language, (as yet) unsayable. 'The procedure pushes language to its limit, yet for all that it does not cross this limit. It lays waste to designations, significations, and translations –' (Deleuze 1997: 19–20; dash in the original). Stuttering as liminal expression, situated at the border of the sayable, employs

a schizoid mode/style and as symptomatological gesture lies at the core of the critical-clinical. The line-up of philosophical and literary symptomatologists, Masoch, Proust, Kafka, Nietzsche and Spinoza (Deleuze 1995: 142–3), points to some shared characteristics such as diagnostic intuition, resistance to their milieu and the impersonality of their vision.

> You write with a view to an unborn people that doesn't yet have a language. Creating isn't communicating but resisting. There's a profound link between signs, events, life, and vitalism: . . . Everything I've written is vitalistic, at least I hope it is, and amounts to a theory of signs and events. (Deleuze 1995: 143)

The critical-clinical as a type of symptomatological critique focuses on the realm between the body and its voicing in writing and thus grounds the writer's specific style. Voicing carries bodily affectivity in the form of symptoms into the writing whereby specific symptoms are of diagnostic character. While a diagnosis of life, culture, civilisation and society in the shape of observed, felt, experienced and remembered fragments is taking place, instantaneously – in the act of voicing in writing – the libidinal activity of creative delirium imaginatively transforms the raw material. Delirium as one of the defining aspects of style within the symptomatological critique of the critical-clinical, originating in the productive unconscious, overthrows the syntactical rules of established language and pushes towards a new, foreign language within language. Style as stuttering encompasses specific symptomatological linguistic procedures with distinct serialised formulas such as degrees of affective stutter (quiver, murmur) and breathing but more importantly the delineation of 'zone(s) of proximity, indiscernibility, or indifferentiation' (Deleuze 1997: 1).[14] The writer's activity of locating these unknown regions, spatially and temporally, then occupying and populating them, makes up the field of liminal expression in Beckett. Occupying may be understood here as creating situations and bodily positions including the repertoire of the gestural. Populating eventuates as a schizoid splitting of awareness, either in imaginary other(s) or in the natural process of division: 'Everything divides into itself' (Beckett 1983a: 168).[15] All potentialities – curving, ringing, bending, deviating and circulating of the dynamic propulsion of stuttering – have to be exhausted, which Deleuze conceptualises as 'Beckett's great contribution to logic': 'exhaustivity' (Deleuze 1997: 154). This parallels a Nietzschean kind of (necessitated) vital (as well as physical) degeneration which attaches itself to the profession of great symptomatologists.

Symptoms in Beckett

Solitude and isolation are presented as our existential predicament in Beckett's work, but there is at the same time a resilient yet mocking acceptance of suffering without ever giving in; life is handled energetically. This throws a specific light onto the processes of deterioration, the stages of exhaustion and decline, as they are an expression of the effort to stretch style to its utter limits. The symptoms of exhaustion lead to the limits of existence, yet they are not symptoms of resignation or defeat but gestures of provocation acted out with relentless bravado. Symptoms in Beckett can be read as the excessive, delirious and diagnostic elements of style as stuttering in the Deleuzian sense. The vocal and corporeal symptoms in the larval selves, as Deleuze defines them, are attuned to grey landscapes in which they harbour, in half-light, dimness or foreboding darkness. Loss of eyesight and blindness are not final or terminal hindrances but obstacles to be challenged. Corporeality is foregrounded in all its physicality and gives full reign to affectivity. The changing voiced impersonations are caught in either self-delusion or misrecognition, yet this only turns into a challenge to struggle on. Loss of mobility, vacillating, stumbling; malfunctioning of organs or partial decay of limbs are just minor obstacles to be overcome. Bodies are limping, falling, then crawling, and may collapse at any time, but will eventually, and repeatedly, stumble on. These bodily symptoms of inner forces urging towards change and metamorphosis take hold of the textual surface and make it tremble, thus effecting a stuttering in language.

Memory structures are uneven and often amnesia strikes. A continual flux of past experiences appears, interfering, superseding, receding and disappearing again, all of which makes up a libidinal field of affectivity traceable in the form of symptoms which twist and contort the syntactical performance so that style as stuttering in the Deleuzian sense is actualised. Memories splinter the awareness of the fragmentary selves, distract them, blur their consciousness; however, the competing voices hold on in a state of self-contradiction and confusion. There is an obsession with exploring the ever-changing self, whatever this self knows and remembers of itself, which colours the language and brings about the quiver or murmur which Deleuze theorises as a symptom of the inner forces breaking forth, and for which style as stuttering in the symptomatological mode within the critical-clinical hypothesis sets the appropriate frame of critique. There are younger and older selves, living a schizoid presence in the same body, contradicting

each other, superseding each other, acting out and performing a becoming.

Drawing on the symptomatological mode of the critical-clinical, I read the larval selves in Beckett's work as successive, fleeting embodiments which undergo a continuous metamorphosis. The desire for becoming other is perpetually renewed; this opens the path into reading Beckettian symptomatology. At times, the selves are preliminary projections of the same self, foreshadowing future stages of becoming. The self is reduced, stripped and pared down to essential characteristics, or rather, read in the Deleuzian sense, affects. It is a shifting assemblage of symptoms. Desire propels them forward, makes them act and pursue their indefinite, endless and backtracking journeys. Thought and language are compressed to a double-sided, folded unity in Beckett. What appears as syntactical dissolution points to a flux of libidinal affects in the Deleuzian sense and stuttering in language as a creative activity in the process of inventing a new, foreign language. Voices are competing with each other, and we might ask whose voices they are and from where they originate. Voices babble, chatter and prattle along and at times forget continuity so as to fall back into an earlier stage of reminiscence and repetition.

Beckett's texts express the inner chaos of creative delirium and stutter is its inherent characteristic. I situate spatiality and temporality in these texts on a mythic, or, in Deleuzian terms, on an Aionic plane; in the liminal state they become inexistent or are remotely important. The selves pursue trajectories of uncertain destinations, are always in midway, in-between movements or journeys which are either circular or linear, or both. Yet they do not recognise or notice the difference, and often wilfully and ironically equate both, with ensuing disorientation of movement which takes them through a void or endlessness. '(Y)ou must go on, I can't go on, you must go on, I'll go on, you must say words, as long as there are any' (Beckett 1983a: 381).[16] Exhaustion, fatigue and deflation of energy overtake them, yet there is boundless libidinal energy underneath, and eventually they rise and continue.

Stuttering as liminal expression

Turning towards the Beckettian form of liminal expression within the frame of the Deleuzian critical-clinical involves practising a symptomatological method of exhaustivity as theorised by Deleuze. Within such a frame, stuttering as an exemplary symptom is taken

through different levels of metalanguages (I, II, III) which are identified as specific Beckettian symptomatological techniques (Deleuze 1997: 156 [I]; 156–8 [II]; 158–62 [III]). While there are other possibilities than exhaustion to anchor symptomatological methods, a Deleuzian reading of exhaustion as the linguistic, affective and delirious situation of Beckett as a symptomatologist-writer opens a path into the blend of exhaustion and resilience of Beckett's works. Exhaustion does not point to tiredness, fatigue, or depletion of energies; quite the contrary: 'The tired person has merely exhausted the realization whereas the exhausted person exhausts the whole of the possible' (Deleuze 1997: 152), thus demonstrating a relentless Spinozism. This type of already achieved completion finds its pithy expression in Beckett as: 'I gave up before birth.' Any activity is directed towards nothing while remaining full activity; the idling in nothing effects, produces the symptom, which is an inclusive-disjunctive yet consumptive-consummative exhaustion. Linguistically detectable as the stuttering double-bind of inclusive disjunction (either *and* or), exhaustion symptomatically displays itself in bizarre repetitive rituals such as Molloy rotating sucking stones through the corridors of mouth and pockets (Beckett 1983a: 64–9), or Murphy's combinatorial games with five biscuits in all their permutations (Beckett 1974: 57 ff.).

Beckettian metalanguage I, as theorised by Deleuze for a critical-clinical critique, can be conceptualised as symptomatological exhaustion detectable on an elementary level: 'a language in which enumeration replaces propositions and combinatorial relations replace syntactic relations: a language of names' (Deleuze 1997: 156). Brief spurts of stuttering progressively withdraw meaning while at the same time pursuing a growing precision in the act of naming. 'Minimally less. No more. Well on the way to inexistence. As to zero the infinite. Quick say' (Beckett 1981: 54). Metalanguage I is still concerned with naming, finding and directing words at situations; already fragmented and restrained from connecting, these blocks of stuttering attenuate any hold on reality. Syntactical irregularity, agrammaticality, can deliver a dispersion and disconnection of words and things, of words and actions, and speech acts and words. Such a schizoid practice can be further refined in dislocating the wording as such, taking the level of affectivity back into the body, to a pre-linguistic level of voicing and breathing. This is already indicated in the above example in the finishing clue: 'Quick say'.

Beckettian metalanguage II, within Deleuze's critical-clinical critique, projects symptomatology as a mode to identify intensities and inner forces; on this level, style as stuttering comes into its own right with the writer becoming a stylistic, intensive and affective stutterer. Enumerating

things could reach a certain degree of exhaustion and relative liminality. Yet taking language back to its margins and into the pre-linguistic domain of voices, breathing, stuttering and murmuring breaks another barrier of exhaustion. Words stream and flow but under the sway of libidinal forces; they do not cohere, or do so to a lesser degree. Meaning is dispersed; affectivity reigns and silence can become the ultimate statement, apparent in open-ended, aporetic phrases and typographic blanks.

> this voice once quaqua then in me when the panting stops part three after Pim not before not with I have journeyed found Pim lost Pim it is over I am in part three after Pim how it was how it is I say it as I hear it natural order more or less bits and scraps in the mud my life murmur it to the mud (Beckett 1964: Part I, 21)

The rhythm of breathing and lowered voicing, murmuring, replaces any punctuation indicating a conscious syntactic regulation. There is a threshold to be crossed between the impersonations, '| not with || I || have journeyed |'[17] which creates a hiatus, an expressive flow forward and backward in language leading to a symptomatological stuttering of the text. At these moments affect breaks through in its immediacy. Within this schizoid milieu, voices start competing with and battling against each other: the transit stages of becoming are overlapping. Circuits of linguistic and symptomatological transformations coexist and overlap evoking the presence of apparent remnants or larvae of personae, yet obviously being part of the same voice.

> no nothing I said nothing I say it as I hear it I said always brief movements of the lower no sound Pim's voice in my ear that I'd have it always and life above not possible otherwise our little scenes blue by day always fine a few fleece clouds the stars by night heavenly bodies never dark ad libitum confidential between ourselves secrets a murmur always and what is more in my opinion I hear it such a question I murmur it my opinion such a question never crossed never could my mind such a doubt my opinion I hear it murmur it never never
>
> in a word Pim's voice then nothing life as we say little scene one minute two minutes good moments then nothing even better not a doubt Kram waits one year two years he knows us something wrong there but all the same two years three years in the end to Krim they are dead something wrong there (Beckett 1964: Part II, 102; paragraph break in the original)[18]

The bi-directional fluctuations, for instance in '|| no sound || Pim's voice in my ear |', effect paradoxical utterances of a schizoid nature. Locating the voice apparently becomes difficult if not impossible. It is either the deeper murmur of memory or the voiced murmur of the larval subject, or

rather in a Deleuzian reading of style as stuttering, both simultaneously. Although the text typographically establishes a progression, the event of the voicing separates itself from any temporality. The effect of stuttering takes place on the textual surface, however, at the same time, since the text moves between several layers (the present outer action, the inner vocal level, descending, the memory ascending, the self-questioning, the reflective level) stuttering in language results from crossing the thresholds of these linguistic layers. Repetitions establish a moment of silence, a halting which is typographically evoked in paragraphing. Further impersonations (I and Pim, now Kram and Krim) crop up which provoke a conscious, mocking, echoing commentary: 'something wrong there'.

Once the level of things and the level of words are attenuated in the process of progressive exhaustion and nearing their ultimately possible liminal expression, what are the promises that, according to Deleuze's symptomatological critique, Beckettian metalanguage III holds in store? Here is a symptomatological example from Beckett's later writing:

> Worse less. By no stretch more. Worse for want of better less. Less best. No. Naught best. Best worse. No. Not best worse. Naught not best worse. Less best worse. No. Least. Least best worse. Least never to be naught. Never to naught be brought. Never by naught be nulled. Unnullable least. Say that best worse. With leastening words say least best worse. For want of worser worst. Unlessenable least best worse.
> [. . .]
> The empty too. Away. No hands in the–. No. Save for worse to say. Somehow worse somehow to say. Say for now still seen. Dimly seen. Dim white. Two dim white empty hands. In the dim void.
>
> So leastward on. So long as dim still. Dim undimmed. Or dimmed to dimmer still. To dimmost dim. Leastmost in dimmost dim. Utmost dim. Leastmost in utmost dim. Unworsenable worst. (Beckett 1983b: 32–3)[19]

The voice is caught in an inner vortex of affectivity with little reasoning, in a sway of untiring exhaustion, 'no', 'no', 'no', yet determined to come to terms with the dim void it finds itself in, even though it cannot understand how it got there in the first place and never hopes to get out of it. There are, however, attempts of saying and seeing, and a maddening libidinal energy which reaches out for words only to dissect them and grind them down to the core: 'To dimmost dim. Leastmost in dimmost dim. Utmost dim. Leastmost in utmost dim.' The energy comes in waves like a tide and returns with unbeatable strength. Despite the linguistic repetitiveness and the dreary conditions of dimness of light (and of consciousness) and vastness of the void, the loneliness,

the general emptiness and the apparently endless continuity, there is a remarkable endurance and quirkiness which mocks itself in its cauldron of life.

The textual fabric vibrates under such insisting repetition and recurring formulas. The level of intensity can be heightened and gain momentum in frantic panting which is less a linguistic than a breathing performance, or both in even parts.

> alone in the mud yes the dark yes sure yes panting yes someone hears me no no one hears me no murmuring sometimes yes when the panting stops yes not at other times no in the mud yes to the mud yes my voice yes mine yes not another's no mine alone yes sure yes when the panting stops yes on and off yes a few words yes a few scraps yes that no one hears no but less and less no answer LESS AND LESS yes (Beckett 1964: Part III, 160; capitals in the original)[20]

Deleuze conceptualises Beckett's further attempts at approaching the outside of language in proposing 'a (Beckettian) *language III*, which no longer relates language to enumerable or combinable objects, nor to transmitting voices, but to immanent limits that are ceaselessly displaced – hiatuses, holes, or tears that we would never notice' (Deleuze (1997: 158). Such a language with its ceaseless displacements of thresholds – if it still can be called a language rather than a nonlanguage – could master symptomatological stuttering as liminal expression. It could be the linguistic medium to express the inner libidinal forces as they arise, fade and re-appear and thus be a symptomatological instrument of becoming. This deeper symptomatological level can be conceived in terms of 'Image, a visual or aural Image, provided it is freed from the chains in which it was bound by the other two languages' (language I and II) (Deleuze 1997: 158); 'Images' such as fleeting colours (dim white, a little blue) and bodily parts (a hand, a mouth, eyes), not attached to memories or inventing stories. Since '(t)he image is not an object but a "process"' (Deleuze 1997: 159), it fluctuates in the form of visual and aural 'ritornellos' (Deleuze 1997: 159–60) which are at times supported by 'motor ritornellos' (Deleuze 1997: 160) in the form of postures, positions held and shifted routinely, and specific Beckettian 'gaits': 'The boots. Better worse bootless. Bare heels. Now the two right. Now the two left. Left right left right on. Barefoot unreceding on' (Beckett 1983b: 23–4). Beckettian metalanguage III encompasses a system of symptomatological exhaustion where step by step the barriers of language are overcome, in unlimited enumeration (I), in silencing voices (II), and in contracting

images and space (III), where stuttering as symptom traces the libidinal intensities and the schizoid style as liminal expression marks a transit stage in the process of becoming.[21]

IV. Conclusion

This paper has explored the possibility of drawing together the critical-clinical as a type of critique, symptomatology as a mode to identify intensities and inner forces, and a range of exemplary symptoms such as stuttering which embody the specific type of critique the critical-clinical hypothesis attempts to achieve. Style as stuttering has been demonstrated as a specific form of literary expression and an apt and appropriate way to evoke the process of becoming as theorised by Deleuze, linguistically, syntactically and symptomatically. Within such a process, excess, delirium and diagnosis function as an accumulative set of stylistic criteria to define symptomatological stuttering. In the specific case of Beckett, stuttering in language has been shown as opening access to a schizoid style of liminal expression, in particular in a form of exhaustivity which, read in the Deleuzian sense, is of a positive nature.

Further questions which arise within the frame of exploring the schizoid style of liminal expression, but which reach beyond the scope of this paper, go towards the relations between style as stuttering with its levels of excess, delirium and diagnosis, and establishing the affective network of the Deleuzian body without organs, and whether stuttering can be named a proper language of the BwO.

Notes

1. Deleuze refers to Spinoza, *Ethics*, III, 2, Proof: 'I have already shown that they know not what a body can do, or what can be deduced from mere contemplation of its nature, and that they have known of many things which happen merely by reason of the laws of nature, which they have believed to happen save by the direction of the mind' (cited in 'The Body', section 'Active and Reactive', Deleuze 1983: 36–7; note 1: 192). In the section 'Active and Reactive', Deleuze foregrounds 'The Body' (and how it relates to the unconscious) by contrast to consciousness. In his preface to the English translation of *Nietzsche and Philosophy* Deleuze points to the two great axes of organisation of Nietzsche's philosophy; the first axis concerned with forces forming a general semeiology (*sic*), devoted to the analysis of 'signs, or rather symptoms' (Deleuze 1983: ix); the second axis concerned with power forming an ethics and an ontology. Cf. Deleuze 1992: 217–34. Deleuze analogously refers to Nietzsche, *The Will to Power* (1968: 659): The human body is 'a more astonishing idea than the old soul' (Nietzsche 1935/1937: VP II, 173); 'What is most surprising is rather the body; one never ceases to be amazed at the idea that the human body has become possible' (Nietzsche 1935/1937: VP II, 226). Cf. Rajchman (2000) for Deleuzian

connections (Spinoza, Hume, Bergson, Nietzsche, Whitehead); esp. Chap. 6: 'Sensation' (113–42), providing an outline of Deleuzian aesthetics; for further cross-connection, see Williams (2005).

2. Cf. Deleuze (2006: 16, 20, 32, 38, passim). Deleuze draws in his comments on masochism on Krafft-Ebing [1886]; Reik [1941/1949]; Freud [1905]; and Lacan [1963]. The chapters dealing with the language of Sade and Masoch, the contract in masochism (Chap. 1) and the role of descriptions (Chap. 2), attempt to free symptomatology from any pre-defined masochism. 'The sadomasochistic entity was not invented by Freud; we find it in the work of Krafft-Ebing, Havelock Ellis and Féré' (Deleuze 2006: 38). Cf. also Deleuze 2004b.
3. Cf. in Deleuze (1997): essay 1 [1993], 'Literature and Life'; essay 2 [1970], 'Louis Wolfson; or, The Procedure'; essay 3 [1986], 'Lewis Carroll'; essay 7 [1989], 'Re-presentation of Masoch'; essay 10 [1993], 'Bartleby; or The Formula'; essay 11 [1993], 'An Unrecognized Precursor to Heidegger: Alfred Jarry'; essay 13 [1993], 'He Stuttered'; and essay 18 [1992] 'The Exhausted'. Cf. Smith (1997; 2005) for different takes on the notion of the critical-clinical.
4. The Deleuzian understanding of empiricism (wilder empiricism, *not* simple empiricism, transcendental empiricism) cannot be addressed in the frame of this paper. Cf. 'There is something wild and powerful in this transcendental empiricism that is of course not the element of sensation (simple empiricism), for sensation is only a break within the flow of absolute consciousness' (Deleuze 2002: 25).
5. 'Kant owes something essential to Hume: we are not threatened by error, rather and much worse, we bathe in delirium' (Deleuze 2002: 43; cf. also 41–3, 45). The three essays in Deleuze's final work (his testament, and essays on Hume and Nietzsche) set out a final vision of delirium. The creative process defined in Deleuzian terms as a delirium is grounded in the notion of phantasm as explored in 'Thirtieth Series of the Phantasm' in *The Logic of Sense* (Deleuze 2004c: 241–9).
6. Cf. Massumi (2002) and Engelberts et al. (eds) (2000) for affectivity in Deleuze and in Beckett.
7. Cf. Deleuze and Guattari (2004a: 1–9; 38–45); cf. also Buchanan (2000; 2008).
8. Deleuze and Guattari's collaborations in *Anti-Oedipus* [1972] and *A Thousand Plateaus* [1980] introduce into the Deleuzian critical-clinical hypothesis a positively understood schizophrenisation and a notion of machinic desire which complicates and differentiates the critical apparatus. The symptomatological method accommodates the relational ideas of the threefold syntheses of the unconscious, thus acquiring a logical structure yet straining its visionary layers. I propose that in the initial critical-clinical hypothesis the subject can be viewed as losing its status in the process of becoming and is only traceable in its symptoms. In the process of schizophrenisation, however, as one of the folds of becoming, the subject can be viewed as operating at the limits of bodily existence between delirium and catatonia. So, the refinement of the symptomatological method as far as it can here be drawn in this paper, opens towards viewing bodily symptoms not just in terms of affectivity and inner (Nietzschean) forces but more specifically as the operation and functioning of desiring-machines. As will be seen later, this conceptual move towards a threefold mechanics in desiring-production (connection – inclusive disjunction – consumption/consummation) has repercussions in Deleuze's understanding of symptomatological stuttering with which I will be engaging in the transposition of the critical-clinical into Beckett's work. Cf. Gendron (2008) for a view of Deleuze and Beckett (as well as Derrida) and Murphy (2000); for Beckett, see Hill (1990) and Trezise (1990).

9. As critical-clinical symptomatologists figure: Masoch, Kafka, Beckett, Péguy, Roussel, Artaud and Céline. Cf. Deleuze (1997) and Deleuze and Guattari (2004a; 2004b).
10. On patterns of styles combining sonorous qualities with different modulations, cf. for instance: 'Twelfth Series of the Paradox', 'Thirteenth Series of the Schizophrenic and the Little Girl' (Artaud and Carroll), 'Third Series of the Proposition', 'Thirtieth Series of the Phantasm', in *The Logic of Sense* (Deleuze 2004c). Cf. Williams (2008) for a critical guidance through a challenging text.
11. It is important to acknowledge here that these symptomatological procedures of the clinical-critical are analogous to the operation and functioning of desiring-machines. The threefold operation of desiring-machines: connection – inclusive disjunction – consumption/consummation, is theorised in Deleuze and Guattari (2004a: 1–57).
12. Laplanche and Pontalis, in their work on Freudian (and Lacanian) terminology, state that symptom-formation denotes 'the fact that the psychoneurotic symptom is the result of a specific process, of a psychical working out'. Freud 'assimilates symptom-formation to the return of the repressed'. It is uncertain whether these are two separate processes. 'In a broad sense symptom-formation embraces not only the return of the repressed in the form of "substitutive formations" or "compromise-formations" but also "reaction-formations"' (Laplanche and Pontalis 2006: 446).
13. Symptoms as a complex gesturing language also manifest in other ways. By contrast to style defined by Deleuze as singularity, an event, in symptoms the emphasis is on their pre-individuality and impersonality while eventuating. Cf. 'Gilles Deleuze Talks Philosophy', an interview conducted by Jeanette Colombel (first published in *La Quinzaine Littéraire* 68 (Mars 1–15, 1969), pp. 18–19, hence situated after the publication of Deleuze's double theses [*Difference and Repetition* and *Spinoza and the Problem of Expressionism*] and just before the publication of *The Logic of Sense*), in which he defines the speaking position of today's writer (as philosopher, as literary writer, as artist) as that of someone speaking 'as someone else': 'These singularities are mobile, they break in, thieving and stealing away, alternating back and forth, like anarchy crowned, inhabiting a nomad space. . . . The poet Ferlinghetti talks about the fourth person singular: it is that to which we try to give voice' (Deleuze 2004a: 143).
14. Cf. 'Louis Wolfson; or, The Procedure' (in Deleuze 1997: 7–20; first published as the preface to Wolfson 1970: 5–23, under the title 'Schizology', here revised); and 'Bartleby; or, The Formula' (in Deleuze 1997: 68–90).
15. Deleuze counts the internal division as one of Beckett's 'exhaustive series', executed for instance in clothes, furniture, body positions and perspectives (cf. Deleuze 1997: 152–74; 154; note 11: 202). Cf. also Murphy 2000: 233–4.
16. The concluding words of *The Unnamable* [1952] read: 'they're going to abandon me, it will be the silence, for a moment, a good few moments, or it will be mine, the lasting one, that didn't last, that still lasts, it will be I, you must go on, I can't go on, you must go on, I'll go on, you must say words, as long as there are any, until they find me, until they say me, strange pain, strange sin, you must go on, perhaps it's done already, perhaps they have said me already, perhaps they have carried me to the threshold of my story, before the door that opens on my story, that would surprise me, if it opens, it will be I, it will be the silence, where I am, I don't know, I'll never know, in the silence you don't know, you must go on, I can't go on, I'll go on' (Beckett 1983a: 381–2).
17. For metalanguage II where punctuation (as conscious syntactic regulation) is abandoned I propose a range of typographical descriptors to capture: 1. the rhythm of breathing and lowered voicing, murmuring, by a vertical slash (|); 2.

the event of threshold crossings between impersonations creating a hiatus and a bi-directional fluctuation by a double vertical slash (||); 3. the persistence of the (interrupted) word stream and flow under the sway of libidinal forces by underlining (_):

> this voice | once quaqua | then in me | when the panting stops | part three | after Pim | not before | not with || I || have journeyed | found Pim | lost Pim | it is over | I am in part three | after Pim | how it was | how it is | I say it | as I hear it | natural order | more or less | bits and scraps | in the mud | my life | murmur it to the mud (Beckett 1964: Part I, 21).

18. I am using the typographical descriptors 1, 2 and 3 as indicated in note 17. I propose a further typographical descriptor: 4. for the conscious, mocking, echoing commentary eventuating in both blocks of stuttering (*in italics*):

> no nothing | I said nothing | I say it as I hear it | I said | always brief movements of the lower || no sound || Pim's voice in my ear | that I'd have it always || and life above not possible otherwise | our little scenes | blue by day | always fine | a few fleece clouds | the stars by night | heavenly bodies | never dark || ad libitum confidential between ourselves || secrets || a murmur always | and what is more | in my opinion | I hear it | such a question | I murmur it | my opinion | *such a question never crossed* || never could || *my mind* | such a doubt | my opinion | I hear it | murmur it | never never
> in a word | Pim's voice | then nothing | life as we say | little scene | one minute | two minutes | good moments then nothing | even better || not a doubt Kram waits one year | two years | he knows us || *something wrong there* || but all the same | two years | three years | in the end to Krim they are dead || *something wrong there* || (Beckett 1964: Part II, 102; paragraph break in the original).

19. A different linguistic regime is deployed in the form of libidinally propelled bursts of stutter which are repeatedly turned around, dissected and voided. I am using the typographical descriptors 3 and 4 as proposed in notes 17 and 18:

> Worse less. By no stretch more. Worse for want of better less. Less best. No. Naught best. Best worse. No. Not best worse. Naught not best worse. Less best worse. No. Least. Least best worse. Least never to be naught. Never to naught be brought. Never by naught be nulled. Unnullable least. *Say* that best worse. With leastening words say least best worse. For want of worser worst. Unlessenable least best worse.
> [. . .]
> The empty too. Away. No hands in the -. No. Save for worse to say. Somehow worse somehow *to say*. *Say* for now *still seen. Dimly seen. Dim white*. Two *dim white* empty hands. In the dim void.
>
> So leastward on. So long as dim still. Dim undimmed. Or dimmed to dimmer still. To dimmost dim. Leastmost in dimmost dim. Utmost dim. Leastmost in utmost dim. Unworsenable worst. (Beckett 1983b: 32–3).

20. I am using the typographical descriptors 1 (rhythm of breathing and murmuring), 2 (hiatus and bi-directional fluctuation) and 3 (libidinal persistence) as explained above. The capitalised commentary appears in the original text:

> alone in the mud yes | the dark yes | sure yes | panting yes | someone hears me | no | no one hears me | no | murmuring sometimes yes | when the panting stops yes | not at other times no | in the mud yes | to the mud yes | my voice yes | mine yes | not another's no | mine alone yes | sure yes | when the panting stops yes

> | on and off yes | a few words yes | a few scraps yes | that no one hears no | but less and less no || answer LESS AND LESS yes (Beckett 1964: Part III, 160).

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Symptoms of a New Politics: Networks, Minoritarianism and the Social Symptom in Žižek, Deleuze and Guattari

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Abstract

This article explores the contemporary 'symptomatic' position of radically excluded social groups through a critical engagement with the work of Žižek, Deleuze and Guattari. It begins with a presentation and critique of Žižek's theorisation, arguing that while he correctly perceives the symptomatic status of certain social groups and issues, his approach is insufficiently radical because of its reliance on inappropriate structuralist assumptions and metaphysical negativity. It then compares this theory to Deleuze and Guattari's theory of minoritarianism, viewed as a similar attempt to engage with the symptomatic effects of exclusion. A political trajectory is derived from Deleuze and Guattari's theory which reconceives the politics of the excluded in terms of emancipatory lines of flight rather than gestures of identification. The article then explores social movements arising from the growing phenomenon of global exclusion in neoliberalism, looking at examples such as Somalia and Bolivia, and proposing autonomy and networked approaches to social life as responses to exclusion which reconfigure social space in affirmative ways.

Keywords: social symptom, social exclusion, autonomous social movements, minoritarianism, forcible delinking, schizoanalysis, politics of desire, network politics, Somalia, Lacanian Real, Žižek, absolute deterritorialisation.

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The concept of the 'social symptom' takes on a new life when cross-read with the work of Deleuze and Guattari. This concept, derived from the work of Slavoj Žižek, applies Lacanian ideas to social analysis in a way that gives central importance to the excluded in formulating political radicalism, and that provides major insights into the contemporary world. In its current form, however, it is shaped and limited by the perspectival frame within which it is formed. Shifting the concept from the Lacanian frame into a Deleuzian frame opens up alternative avenues for linking it to other resonant issues such as the growth of the network form of political activism and the breakdown of systemic power in extremely marginal regions. By linking the concept to a reconstruction of the Lacanian Real as a misinterpretation of sites of excessive potentiality by the dominant gaze, a Deleuzian reading of the social symptom can connect the concept to possibilities for autonomy beyond those made apparent in existing inscriptions of the concept. Hence, it is important to explore the limits placed by the Žižekian/Lacanian ontological frame on the concept of the social symptom, and to suggest that it can be enriched by a cross-reading with various aspects of the work of Deleuze and Guattari, including ideas of minoritarianism, lines of flight, active desire and rhizomatic networks. While Lacanian psychoanalysis has a clear appreciation for the importance of excluded groups in the ideological or fantasmatic field, its methodological conservatism regarding the question of the primacy of the negative leaves it unable to formulate an affirmative politics of the excluded. Deleuzian theory, in contrast, provides a possible frame for thinking about issues around autonomous social movements and network politics. In previous collaborative work, I have explored in detail the implications of Deleuzian theory for the analysis of social movements, states and power in the contemporary situation (Karatzogianni and Robinson 2010). This paper expands on the analysis developed in this earlier work to theorise the relationship between Deleuzian theory and the concept of the 'social symptom'. In doing so, it provides not simply a Deleuzian critique and appropriation of Žižek, but also the outlines of a way of actualising Deleuzian praxis in the construction of autonomy.

I. 'We Are All Them'? The Social Symptom in the Work of Slavoj Žižek

The role of the social symptom has to be understood in relation to the importance of fantasmatic or ideological construction in the production

of dominant neurotic forms of social order. Lacanian theory echoes the Althusserian theory of ideology. In Althusser, ideology is not a misrepresentation of reality, but the real performative ways in which people relate to the actual conditions of their existence (Althusser 1970). How people relate ideologically to the dominant order thus strongly influences social stability and composition. In this problematic, the collective ideology or fantasy of a dominant social order can be viewed in psychoanalytic terms. Hence, Žižek views society as homologous to the Lacanian model of the psyche, containing a Symbolic (formal institutions), an Imaginary (the field of Althusserian ideology) and a Real, a part which is 'extimate' to (intimately present in but treated as external to) the system.

Žižek's politics apply homologically the structural categories of Lacanian analysis. In psychoanalysis properly speaking, the symptom is the point at which repressed or excluded aspects of the self associated with the Lacanian Real 'return' in the form of emotional intensities, actions and experiences which are incomprehensible to and rejected by the conscious mind. The symptom thus becomes a source of intense unconscious enjoyment while also being consciously rejected and hated as uncontrollable. Identification with the symptom (or in an earlier phase of Lacan's thought, traversing the fantasy) is crucial to the process of psychoanalytic cure as it is only by overcoming the exclusion of these elements that the personality can escape its entrapment in its current fantasmatic field, becoming capable of speaking the truth of one's desire (Solano-Suárez 2007).

The social symptom arises from a hierarchical construction of meaning similar to Deleuzian arborescence. Crucial to this view of society is the function of the 'master-signifier', reconfigured in Deleuzian theory as the despotic signifier or 'trunk' (in terms of its relationship to state despotism on the one hand and arborescence on the other). The master-signifier functions by 'quilting' or 'suturing' the symbolic field, creating an appearance of order by repressing or excluding the Real, and hence excluding contingency, incommensurability and incomprehensibility from social life. Hence, 'the master signifier is responsible for the conscious effects of the unconscious fundamental fantasy', for creating the subject's apparently orderly cosmological perspective (Brockelman 2008: 24). This exclusion is partial and precarious, and the Real necessarily returns to haunt the social formation. Hence, the violence of the establishment of the master-signifier must constantly be re-enacted. One can term the perspective constructed around a master-signifier the *dominant gaze*.

The social symptom is the structural equivalent in the social field to the symptom in the psyche. At some point in society, there is a 'symptomal torsion', and an authentic Act necessarily intervenes at this point (Butler, Laclau and Žižek 2000: 125). Following Badiou, Žižek argues that the social symptom is the void or gap in the situation (Žižek 1999: 138–40). The groups comprising the social symptom are 'the part which, although inherent to the existing universal order, has no 'proper place' within it' (Žižek 1999: 224). The crucial Žižekian concept of the Act is closely linked to the social symptom. The underlying social fantasy depends on the status of the social symptom. Hence, an authentic Act 'disturbs the underlying fantasy, attacking it from the point of the 'social symptom'' (Butler, Laclau and Žižek 2000: 124). This is the way to get around blockages arising from the dominant ideological constellation. Radical politics is rendered impossible by the dominant fantasy-frame, but can be recovered from the point of the excluded (Butler, Laclau and Žižek 2000: 125).

Acts have a number of characteristics, such as self-destitution and dogmatic ungrounded violence, but the crucial feature distinguishing true and false Acts is their relationship to the social symptom (see Robinson and Tormey 2005). A true Act, the authentic revolutionary gesture for Žižek, involves identifying with the social symptom. To identify with the symptom is to locate and identify with the 'part of no part' in society, the group which is necessary to society but excluded from it (Žižek 1999: 231). Politically, this involves taking a stance which is deemed unthinkable in the dominant social order (Žižek 2000: 156–7). Žižek calls for action from the standpoint of (hence, not necessarily by) the excluded, 'from the standpoint of this inherent impossibility' which is the disavowed structuring principle of society, and addressed to the excluded (Butler, Laclau and Žižek 2000: 123, 125). Hence, it is the discursive construction of an Act, not its concrete relationship to the excluded, which characterises it as authentic. Its effect is a kind of internal transformation. By identifying with the symptom, one becomes a 'proletarian', or 'touched by grace' (Žižek 1999: 173, 227).

While it exists structurally in every situation, the social symptom varies in terms of which group occupies the structural position. Although Žižek insists there is only one touchy nodal point in each fantasmatic order (Butler, Laclau and Žižek 2000: 125), his writing generates a whole field of 'social symptoms', from Sarajevans under bombardment and Muslims after 9/11 through to the urban poor. These might be symptoms of different situations or ideologies in a single global order, or else inconsistencies in Žižek's construction of the concept. Most

often, the social symptom is identified with the excluded. At one point, Žižek talks about a social stratum of the Real composed of various systematically disempowered groups such as unemployed people, homeless people, disadvantaged ethnic groups and undocumented migrants (Butler, Laclau and Žižek 2000: 323). At another point, unemployed people are identified as a kind of nodal point (Žižek 2001: 19). At other points, the proliferation of violence in social life, from urban revolts to the war in Bosnia, is taken as symptomatic of the Real of the liberal order and its disavowal of conflict (e.g. Žižek 2005).

Žižek is onto something important with his concept of the social symptom. The role of an excluded Real in reactive identity-formations is widely documented. A number of authors in the fields of conflict studies and poststructuralist international relations theory have emphasised the importance of discourses of exclusion in the construction of conflict (Jabri 1996, Benhabib 1996, Campbell 1999, Khan 1996, Edkins 2003). For instance, Kapferer's study of Sri Lankan nationalism suggests that ethno-religious identity emerges through the identification of social reality with a particular fantasy-frame. In the Sri Lankan case, state integrity is framed as essential to personal integrity, and hence the Tamils are viewed as a threat not only to the state but to the nationalist individual (Kapferer 2001). This echoes claims made by psychoanalytic scholars of fascism. Authors such as Theweleit (1987) show the importance of fear of disintegration in the construction of predatory identities such as those of fascism. Fear of ego-dissolution is prior to actual violence by or against the Other, expressing anxieties around masculinity and submersion in the mass. The Other is assigned a social-symptomatic status to enable an acting-out of violence which reassures the self of personal and collective integration. Similarly, Renata Salecl argues that hate-speech and prejudicial violence put the Other in her or his place so that the self can feel secure in her or his place (Salecl 1998: 120–1). Hence, the Other as 'social symptom' is crucial to the functioning of exclusionary ideologies.

The issue is complicated today by the ways in which arborescent frames are disrupted by global networks. If arborescent order is associated with the state, one can see its Real returning in the proliferation of networks. The state is being outflanked by networks, and might never catch up (Sassen 2006: 327). Since the state cannot dominate social flows, and can recognise them only at the expense of losing its 'stateness' or monopoly claims to power, the state wages a permanent war against forces which exceed and escape it (Castells 1997: 302–3). This loss of power is at the root of the dangerously extreme

assertions of sovereignty exposed by Agamben (1998, 2005). At an ideological level, the loss of state power leads to deep insecurities of arborescent identities. Political geographer Colin Flint and discourse analyst Michael Innes have shown that the geopolitical imagination is haunted by the dissonance between the world of states and the threat of 'deterritorialised, transnational social networks that overlay them' (Innes 2008). Such fears are mapped onto minorities and marginal groups as bearers of mobility, transnational flows and the gap between majority and totality. Arjun Appadurai shows that there is a clear relationship between insecurities arising from neoliberalism and anti-minority violence (Appadurai 2006: 83–4). '[M]inorities are the flash point for a series of uncertainties that mediate between everyday life and its fast-shifting global backdrop' (Appadurai 2006: 44). While the parallel is not drawn in Žižekian theory, it seems clear that the social symptom arises at the point where networked flows exceed systemic inscription, and resulting insecurities are mapped onto social out-groups.

Hence, networks and everyday life can be mapped as sites of disorder in a context where statist reason is haunted by network power, and become sites of potential collapse of such power. The social symptom is thus crucial in understanding the failure of processes of crisis management through which the dominant system seeks to ward off uncertainty. To take an example, François Debrix aptly analyses peacekeeping interventions in terms of insecurities arising from discontents of the New World Order. Echoing Lacanian theories of the return of the Real, Debrix views situations such as the Somali civil war as creating images of disorder which are disruptive of images of integration. In this context, intervention is performed as 'visual simulation' to create the appearance of order (Debrix 1999: 97–9). It is assigned a role of closing reality around 'a safe and certain identity' and a related system of meaning which constructs neoliberalism as the end of history (99). Intervention thus bridges the gap between the vision of order and the rhetorical reality of breakdown, providing a suture (107, 111). In Somalia, it failed to do so because the intervention was unable to create narrative closure. Instead, images arising from peacekeepers' failure began to disempower, deactivate and disarticulate the dominant ideology (126). Suture failed because what should be lacking instead appeared in excess (131). One can see this return of the repressed as arising from the density of Somali social reality due to the intensity and complexity of social networks. We shall return to the case of Somalia below.

Hence, the concept is useful in making sense of contemporary conflict. On the other hand, there are difficulties with how Žižek deploys the concept. Firstly, Žižek's approach retains the emphasis of clinical psychoanalysis on the individual patient. This is problematic when psychoanalytic categories have been transferred to the social field. The transformation involved in a Žižekian Act is subjective and personal, rather than relational, yet is assumed to have wide-reaching socio-ideological effects. This approach fails to situate ideological relations in social relations, and hence exaggerates the effect which a simple ideological gesture can have. This personalised approach also risks reproducing a therapeutic, self-adapting approach in which, 'under conditions we recognize as desperate, we are told to alter ourselves', not the conditions (Nielsen 1978: 168–70). It risks producing adaptation to social 'necessities' rather than their transformation. The difficulty is that, while a personal fundamental fantasy can be traversed by an individual patient, a homologous social ideology could presumably only be shattered at the social or intersubjective level.

Secondly, as a result of this personalised approach, Žižek does not attempt to formulate a politics of the excluded themselves. In his theory, the radical potential of the excluded derives from their structural position. Hence, it resides primarily in the excluded as they appear *for others*. This appearance is exploited for ideological disruption without being reconstructed as alternative social relations. Partly because he frames the question in terms of identification rather than a politics of the excluded, Žižek does not attempt to reconstruct the political forms which could arise from the excluded acting for themselves. As a result, he does not progress from the idea of the social symptom to an exploration of alternative forms of social life emerging at points of exclusion. This precludes engaging with the difficulties of analysis of concrete exclusion, hiding complexities beneath the apparent simplicity of structural logic. What if the actually existing excluded do not identify with their position, but construct their identities within the dominant fantasy-frame, or within an alternative neurotic frame which re-conceives their own position as that of the 'trunk'? What if a group is interpellated by the dominant fantasy-frame as a social symptom, but operates in its own fantasy-frame as the master-signifier? One cannot simply overlay the distinct levels of the structural-cultural position of a phenomenon, the distinct identities and meanings immanent to a social group, and the structures of individual psyches, each with different fantasmatic connections into or ruptures with the wider social field. Social fantasy

and social symptoms doubtless impact on the other levels, but are not identical to them.

In Žižek's theory, no distinction is made between different types of movements of the excluded – between ethnic conflict, 'terrorism', inner-city revolt, anti-capitalist protest and so on. This is not surprising given the choice of framing. In terms of their *significance for the gaze of the dominant system*, phenomena such as the Bosnia war, the *banlieue* revolts and the 9/11 attacks are indeed isomorphic. In terms of their *immanent construction* and *meaning for participants*, however, the events are heterogeneous. Furthermore, while Žižek generally identifies the social symptom with non-oppressive excluded groups such as immigrants, there is little *structural* reason why his theory should distinguish such groups from others, such as child abusers or suicide bombers, who are similarly subject to outrage and demonisation, but who are also engaged in harmful or oppressive actions. What is lacking, in short, is a clear account of how the radical potential of the excluded is, or can be, sometimes actualised and sometimes dissipated.

Instead of a politics of the excluded, what Žižek provides is a problematically representational emphasis on identification. This approach demands too little in terms of recomposition of social relations. Anyone can obtain the radical potential of the excluded subjectively, without relational transformations. Hence, for instance, a privileged academic such as Žižek can perform an authentic Act without at all altering their lifestyle or social inscription, simply by identifying with anathemas (Butler, Laclau and Žižek 2000: 122).

A third limit to this framing of the social symptom is a certain theoretical conservatism, particularly as regards the possibility of overcoming alienation and hierarchy (see Robinson 2005). Indeed, Žižek seems to treat the analogically neurotic structure of reality as inevitable. While Lacanian theory may allow for a passage beyond the field of neurotic desire through the concept of drive (Noys 2003), it is not apparent that any such passage occurs in the case of Žižek's Act. Rather, the social field is recomposed around a master-signifier. Žižek is very clear on the point that an Act leads to the re-emergence of an arborescent social order, but one in which certain blockages are overcome (Butler, Laclau and Žižek 2000: 92; Žižek 1999: 90–1, 331, 368; 1997b: 72–3; 1989: 211). Žižek constructs his idea that lack is a feature of desire *as such* in opposition to the idea that alienation results from *present, contingent* capitalist conditions (Žižek 1990: 56). In particular, the master-signifier is taken to be necessary (Žižek 1994: 43, 59, 1993: 49,

1992a: 103), and it is impossible to move beyond social exclusion or alienation (Butler, Laclau and Žižek 2000: 100–3).

Hence, the change involved in a process of identifying with the symptom is rather limited. The specific characteristics of social life do not necessarily change; what changes is how one relates to these characteristics (Žižek 1994: 57, 61). Identifying with the symptom may disrupt a particular system and its particular master-signifier, but it does not do away with the arborescent structure of the dominant society. One simply moves from neurotic incapacity to normal alienated subjectivity. The result – a change in perception which breaks blockages in the present order – falls well short of a recomposition of social relations. Ultimately, transformation remains subjective and 'ideological' (in the expanded Althusserian sense), and does not pass over into the overcoming of 'ideology'. For all its radical pretensions, Žižek's politics can be summed up in his attitude to neoliberalism: 'If it works, why not try a dose of it?' (Žižek and Salecl 1996: 32).

II. The Real and the Rhizome: Affirmative and Negative Symptoms

Deleuzian theory offers concepts which may lead out of the problems of Žižek's Lacanian analysis, in particular freeing the concept of the social symptom from the therapeutic confines of Lacanian theory and enabling more radical trajectories. Of the three problems outlined above, Deleuzian theory avoids the first problem of a focus on the subjective by situating subjective lines of flight in relation to transformation; the second problem of differentiating movements of the excluded through a theory of active and reactive desire; and the third problem of ontological conservatism by rejecting the conservative ontology of Lacanian psychoanalysis. It is in the third transition that the crucial break occurs which enables the others. In reconceiving the social symptom in Deleuzian terms, it is necessary to follow the transition from negative to affirmative philosophy and hence the emergence of autonomy as a vital political orientation.

In Deleuzian theory, the Lacanian Real is re-theorised as the rhizome, the positive force which is foreclosed in Lacanian theory. Where Lacan situates the Real, Deleuze situates the rhizome. Whereas the Real is a figure of negation, the point of breakdown for the dominant system, the rhizome is an affirmative figure, an alternative way of being. The Real does not disappear in this scenario, since it remains a feature of the dominant ideology. The Real is the rhizome as perceived by

the dominant gaze. The rhizome is identified as negative in neurotic character-structures because of the function of the master-signifier. Hence, the Real exists within specific neurotic character-structures, and as a result, master-signifiers produce social symptoms. This process does not have the transhistorical significance it is given in Lacanian theory, but the concept of the social symptom demonstrates the position of contingency and potentiality in a contingent, repressive social order. The existence of a social symptom is contingent on the existence of a repressive order. Hence, the symptom becomes the space not of lack as such, but of an excessive proliferation and potential abundance which creates a sense of lack or incompletion for the dominant gaze.

The affirmative approach of Deleuzian philosophy is constructed in distinction from the Lacanian approach, as articulated clearly in *Anti-Oedipus*. The basic claim of Lacanian theory is that identity – whether individual or social – is founded on lack. Therefore, social relations are always irreducibly concerned with antagonism, conflict, strife and exclusion. Hence, Žižek seeks an 'ethics grounded in reference to the traumatic Real which resists symbolization' (Žižek 1997a: 213). The Real is theorised as an amorphous, chaotic force, identified with anything incommensurable, and is viewed as arising in spaces of indeterminability. Žižek thus refers to 'the universal traumatic kernel which returns as the Same throughout all historical epochs', epochs which should be conceived 'as a series of ultimately failed attempts to deal with the same 'unhistorical', traumatic kernel' (Žižek 1992a: 81). People whose character-structure includes a master-signifier repress the Real in order to construct the symbolic field. For Deleuzians, this is a contingent effect of a particular personality-type; for Lacanians, however, this type of character-structure is inevitable. The ontological, rather than epistemological, status of the Real as an element of reality and not simply an incapacity to grasp a complex reality is strongly emphasised (Butler, Laclau and Žižek 2000: 216). The Real and the symptom are thus taken as points of a kind of primordial masochism, at which active desire is suspended out of a direct desire for displeasure.

As regards their critique of lack, Deleuze and Guattari are followers of Wilhelm Reich (see Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 29). Reich provides a critique of the Freudian death drive, a precursor of the Lacanian Real, which echoes closely the Deleuzian critique of Lacan and which, crucially, brings psychological effects back into the field of social power-relations. According to Reich, the masochistic tendencies Freud derives from the death drive are actually secondary forms of desire arising from anxiety. They are the result of 'the disastrous effect of *social* conditions

on the biopsychic apparatus' (Reich 1948: 209). In Reichean theory, the neurotic character-structure in which master-signifiers arise is a product of authoritarian parenting, the denial of unconditional love and the effects of an authoritarian social context. It is thus related to the social construction of scarcity as an existential condition. Recognition of the social basis of psychological repression reveals 'the necessity of criticizing the social conditions which created the neuroses – a necessity which the hypothesis of a biological will to suffer had circumvented' (209). In Reich's view, the apparently primordial force of masochism is actually a contingent effect of the psychological conflation of desired transgressive pleasures with anticipated dangers (221–2, 240–1). The thesis of primordial masochism is politically problematic because it provides a cover for the sadistic power-apparatuses which in Reichean theory produce actual effects of masochism.

On a related point, the Lacanian Real is associated with personified evil such as horror monsters and supreme evil beings (Žižek 1992b: 212–13; 1997a: 78–80, 199). This kind of fear is analysed in Reichean theory as an imaginary reaction to the separation of bodily energies and cognitive processes. Repressed energies become conceived as demonic influences and repression is viewed as protection against the devil (Reich 1948: 459, 461, 398, 427). This response of violence against desire personalised in the Other is exemplified in the kind of reactions discussed by Theweleit, which are equally crucial to Lacanian and Reichean/Deleuzian analyses of fascism. By situating the Real historically and socially, affirmative approaches allow the emergence of the social symptom to be connected to the construction of submerged, dominated personality-types rather than to 'the human condition' (cf. Freire 1970). Hence, processes of challenging submersion become crucial to emancipation.

The idea that many people are haunted by such a traumatic kernel is useful in conflict studies, and need not be rejected outright from a Deleuzian perspective. The crucial move for a Deleuzian is to resituate and particularise what is taken as universal in Lacan, and hence to open the possibility of moving beyond it. From a Deleuzian point of view, Lacan has not theorised the psyche *per se*, but has instead provided an insightful account of the dominant type of Northern, metropolitan, conformist personality. Other possibilities are either foreclosed or not theorised. For instance, there is little space in Lacanian theory for acephalous societies or social movements, for indigenous epistemology, or for liberationist understandings of psychological difference. Hence, the Lacanian view can be seen as an astute analysis of the neurotic

psyche which falls short of its radical potential by universalising this type of psyche. This reframing opens up other possibilities. The alternative to demanding a master-signifier – an illusion of order where there is none – is to reject the pursuit of the ordering function itself, and to embrace a rhizomatic politics which goes beyond this pursuit.

This Deleuzian move can be seen as a deepening of awareness of contingency. Lacanian theory embraces contingency up to a point, only to suspend this recognition by reifying contingency into a singular, structurally homologous element, the Real, and imbuing it with negativity, hence projecting epistemological uncertainty into ontology. This undermines the performative and reflexive implications of embracing contingency. As Butler claims, the Real 'is never subject to the same logic of contingency that it secures' (Butler 1993: 196). It is the unavoidable and irreducible nature of *negative* contingency which grounds the Lacanian argument for master-signification and hence for arborescent social forms. Butler remarks that Žižek's text is a 'project of mastery' and a discourse of the law in which 'the 'contingency' of language [is] mastered in and by a textual practice which speaks as the law' (198). As a result, Lacanian theory reproduces the tendency in academia to produce closed systems of knowledge which deny the possibility of radical difference. The 'contingency' embraced in Lacanian theory is not an openness which exceeds specifiable positivities, but a positivity posing as negativity.

Deleuze and Guattari are highly critical of the view of subjectivity as based on negativity. For Deleuze, the reason representation fails is epistemological: categories are always 'too general or too large for the real' (Deleuze 1994: 68). Like many radical ecological theorists, Deleuze and Guattari see scarcity as a contingent product of alienated society rather than an underlying existential condition. Guattari goes as far as to identify Lacanian negativity with capitalist authoritarianism: 'Without a boss, no factory; without lack, no desire' (see Guattari 1995: 151–62). He views psychoanalysis as unduly reductionist. 'Psychoanalysis transforms and deforms the unconscious by forcing it to pass through the grid of its system of inscription and representation. For psychoanalysis, the unconscious is always *already there*, genetically programmed, structured, and finalized on objectives of conformity to social norms' (Guattari 1996: 206). Similarly, Deleuze argues that the reduction of history to negativity produces a 'terrifying conservatism' (Deleuze 1994: 53).

Against the primacy of negativity, Deleuze and Guattari theorise the active production of difference as primary. Deleuze distinguishes the

primacy of negation in the 'politician's' perspective from the creative power of the poet. The latter feels the need to pass through antagonism to affirm, whereas the latter is initially affirmative. The latter expresses an underlying actuality. 'There is a false profundity in conflict, but underneath conflict, the play of differences', differences which should be affirmed as positive and not overcoded by negativity (Deleuze 1994: 50–4). It therefore follows that in a liberated person or society, active forces would have primacy over reactive forces, which would exist only as secondary expressions if at all, whereas in the 'neurosis' and 'paranoia' of the dominant forms of subjectivity today, the reactive forces gain a false and destructive primacy.

In attempting to reconstruct subjectivities against the primacy of lack in neurosis, Deleuze uses a distinction between active and reactive forces or desires. This distinction arises directly in Deleuze's *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, and indirectly under the names of 'schizophrenic' and 'paranoiac' desire in *Anti-Oedipus*. It also underpins other crucial conceptual binaries such as rhizomes and arborescence, being and becoming, and molecular and molar. The two forces express affirmative and reactive potentialities respectively. Active force pushes to its limits and transforms the world, whereas reactive desire turns against itself. Thus, 'only active force asserts itself, it affirms its difference and makes its difference an object of affirmation' (Deleuze 2006: 55–6). Active force is connected to the production of difference and the resistance of singularities to any totalising representations. It is ontologically primary over reactive force (41). In taking this stance, Deleuze and Guattari radically oppose the Lacanian model of desire. 'Desire does not lack anything; it does not lack its object. It is, rather, the subject which is lacking in desire, or desire that lacks a fixed subject... Desire and its object are a unity... Desire is a machine, the object of desire also a connected machine' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 26). Active force thus emerges as a line of flight from dominant subjectivities.

Reactive desire is not a unitary whole, and includes different ways in which active desire is compromised into social submission. Indeed, there are three types of reactive desire, the first being a contingent force of adaptation to the world, the second the disempowerment of desire (equivalent to Reichean repression), and the third, desire itself when distorted by repression (Deleuze 2006: 61). Reactive desire reaches its full form as desire is 'turned back against itself' in modern oedipal subjectivity (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 217), operating through sexual, emotional and bodily repression (350–1). Reactive desire is connected to *ressentiment* and the creation of slave morality (Deleuze 2006: 60).

It turns back upon the world, inscribing its fears as a 'space of laws' (Perez 1990: 18–19). Affirmation is becoming-active, whereas negation is becoming-reactive (Deleuze 2006: 54). Active and reactive desire are associated respectively with the overthrow of power by sovereignty and the enslavement of desire by sovereignty (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 366). Society constantly vacillates between the two poles (260). Reactive desire can dominate active desire only as anti-production, by alienating active powers from themselves (Deleuze 2006: 57). This provides the key to understanding how the social symptom can be the point of affirmative energies. The social symptom arises at the points where repressed active forces, or forces turned reactive by repression, become problematic for the force of repression. Transformative activity proceeds by strengthening active against reactive forces, and active forces appear in reactive dominant fantasies at the point of the social symptom. Hence, the social symptom is a primary site of the emergence of transformative possibilities.

III. Becoming-symptom? The Praxis of Minoritarianism and the Tasks of Schizoanalysis

Hence, from a Deleuzian standpoint, the social symptom exists, albeit scaled down to a contingent rather than essential structural entity. The social symptom is the point at which active forces are inscribed in the dominant fantasmatic frame. Hence, one can trace affirmative potentialities through dominant fantasies by means of their negative representations. They are represented as negative because they are excessive over the inscriptive and representational logic of the system, and thus *from its point of view* amount to 'lack', its own lack of total control.

So what might the social symptom become in Deleuzian theory? It is my contention that minoritarianism is the Deleuzian equivalent of the social symptom. In understanding the concept of minoritarianism, it is necessary to engage with the relationship between representation and singularity. For Deleuze, every entity is irreducibly singular, and different on some basic level from everything else. Each entity is irreducibly unique, in an almost Stirnerian sense. 'Beneath the general operation of laws... there always remains the play of singularities' (Deleuze 1994: 25). Difference is ultimately qualitative, not numerical (40). Representation is dangerous because of its necessary inadequacy to this complex, molecular, transversal field of flows and singularities. Hence, beneath limiting schemas and couples there are bundles of networks and

radiations in all directions (51); '[a]n entire multiplicity rumbles under the sameness of the Idea' (274). This rumbling multiplicity is somewhat akin to a repressed Real, and emerges in similar, symptomatic ways.

Minoritarianism is counterposed to the majority, and relates to it much as the Real relates to the master-signifier. In Deleuzian theory, the 'majority' is identified with the master-signifier. The difference between majority and minority is not quantitative but revolves around 'the determination of a state or standard' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 291). 'Majority implies a constant . . . serving as a standard measure' (105). Hence, a 'majority' is closely related to an unmarked term or globalised local in postcolonial theory, and to the concept of 'Benchmark Man'. Constructions of desire from very early in life are not merely familial but also involve marked and unmarked terms, superiority and inferiority (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 278). Minorities are associated with marked terms, and also with movements towards the outside of the arborescent schema, hence with lines of flight, becoming-other and nondenumerability (e.g. Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 469). By becoming-nondenumerable, minorities threaten to shatter majorities. Actual minorities can fall short of this potential by being recuperated as minorities defined in relation to the majority, as a subsystem or axiom (105–6, 291). Hence, it is minoritarian forces (not necessarily all minorities) which haunt and disrupt the logic of the dominant gaze, forming the Deleuzian equivalent of the social symptom.

Symptomatic status is thus stronger in some groups than others, but also diffused across the social field. Concentrations of minoritarian energy are strongest in minorities, but such energies can emerge in anyone who rejects the dominant standard. In a sense, the majority is nobody, since it is an abstract standard, and the minority is everybody, 'one's potential becoming to the extent that one deviates from the model' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 105). A minoritarian force is necessarily inferior (marked), as differentiation from a majority is fundamentally 'marking'. Minoritarianism implies rejecting the process of marking, and hence the goal of becoming the majority or dominant group, instead pursuing advances at the molecular level (292). The power of minorities is the power to 'bring to bear the force of the nondenumerable sets, however small they may be, against the denumerable sets' (471). Powers of becoming of universal minoritarianism belong to a different realm from Power and Domination, and hence to a realm of autonomy (106). This gives minorities substantial disruptive force, as something akin to a Real haunting the dominant frame. What is unbearable for the

powerful about the struggles of minorities is not their content, which can often be conceded; it is the fact that people are formulating their own desires which do not flow from the system (470–1). In exceeding the system's inscriptions, minorities become socially symptomatic for the dominant gaze. This means that the idea of identifying with the social symptom is paradoxically prefigured in Deleuze. Identification with 'inferior' statuses is a part of the flows of schizoid or active desire, which claims to belong internally to 'inferior' groups or races (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 86, 274, 277). Hence, becoming-other is also becoming-marked, becoming the social symptom.

Since active forces occupy a similar structural position to the Lacanian Real, it is unsurprising that similarities emerge at the level of therapy, in terms of the importance of introducing a relationship to the 'outside'. Deleuze and Guattari's approach to psychotherapy, termed 'schizoanalysis', has as its purpose the liberation of active energies and flows. It thus aims for deterritorialisation. This approach to therapy aims to untie the knots tied by authoritarian familial and social relations in the flows of desire (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 316). This is similar to the Lacanian identification with the symptom, but differs in its identification of the outside or symptom with multiple potentialities which are unknowable in advance. The authors' critique of psychoanalysis is that it performs a territorialising function, mapping desire onto rigid schemas in ways which restrict it (e.g. Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 307–8, 312, 354). Their alternative is a 'scouring' or 'curettage' of the unconscious to remove repressive forces, blockages and character-armour (311, 314), 'causing the desiring-machines to start up again' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 339). This is not to uncover (make present) a repressed (representable) content, but rather, to uncover the possibility of flows beyond representation. 'Schizoanalysis... has no other meaning: Make a rhizome' (251).

Along with this negative task, there are two positive tasks of schizoanalysis: to discover the 'desiring-machines' in each subject, and to reinvest these machines in social production in revolutionary ways (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 322, 341). The aim is a 'flick of the finger' which restarts movement, breaks out of the limited territories of fixed constructions and opens onto a new world 'created in the process of its tendency, its coming undone' (321–2). It introduces 'a bit of a relation to the outside' (334), similar to the Lacanian relation to the Real but recomposed in affirmative terms. Hence, the function of schizoanalysis is to free active desire from its containment in reactive forms. This is similar to the release of the symptom from its repression beneath the

master-signifier. It is also subtly different. Whereas the Lacanian process ends in the reconstruction of symbolic order, the Deleuzian process passes on into 'psychosis' or 'absolute deterritorialisation'.

The functions of philosophy and politics are conceived in similar terms to schizoanalytic therapy. The role of philosophy is to create new connections and new routes by creating concepts (Deleuze and Guattari 1996: 18, 23). Since no one plane of consistency can capture all of chaos, one must presuppose a multiplicity of planes, of philosophies (50). Deleuzian philosophy also calls forth a new earth and a new people (108). Deleuzian politics takes sides with minoritarian forces against master-signifiers and majorities. All desires infuse the social field, but divide into two types of 'delirium' or psychological complex, the 'fascisizing [*fascisant*]' type which disinvests every 'free' figure of desire and invests central sovereignty, and the 'schizorevolutionary type or pole that follows the lines of escape of desire; breaches the wall and causes flows to move; assembles its machines and its groups-in-fusion in the enclaves or at the periphery', producing an inverse effect (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 277). It thus again emphasises active and reactive forces. It is by leaving the plan or plane of capital and the axiomatic, 'and never ceasing to leave it', that a group becomes revolutionary; it is in this 'deeper movement that challenges the worldwide axiomatic' that the proletariat and minorities can be revolutionary, passing into autonomism via themes such as the refusal of work (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 472). Guattari posits a need to re-attain the plane of consistency through heterogeneity, and to 'activate isolated and repressed singularities that are turning around on themselves' (Guattari 2000: 51). The aim is thus re-singularisation, whether individual or collective (34). The political goal of Deleuzian theory is to actualise and activate the forces of active desire, constructing a space of absolute deterritorialisation in which networks overwhelm and destroy logics of hierarchy in their entirety (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 511). As a technique, this involves finding the points where autonomous social movements emerge, where desires escape dominant social forms and where new connections and combinations come into being. This leads us into the field of rhizomes, subject-groups, nomads, becomings and so on – a recomposition of the field of the social symptom as a field of autonomy.

Identifying with the social symptom thus becomes a matter of rejecting majoritarian viewpoints and adopting a standpoint of autonomy. One can view the adoption of the *standpoint* of the excluded in terms of a reversal of perspective, as theorised by Situationists. 'To reverse

perspective is to stop seeing things through the eyes of the community, of ideology, of the family, of other people... [It is to] base everything on subjectivity and to follow one's subjective will to be everything' (Vaneigem 1967). From a reversed perspective, the disaster is not something borne by the excluded as a group haunting the dominant fantasy-frame; if anything, this is an emancipatory potential. Rather, the catastrophe is that things continue to 'go on as they are', that the disaster of a destructive social reality based on reactive desire has not been reversed (Benjamin 1985). Since this standpoint can in principle be adopted by anyone (as an outgrowth of the excess in their own desire over its inscription in capitalism), it is not necessarily related to the excluded as a positive social group, but to a certain extent articulates with the excluded point of the arborescent system. Given its affirmative nature, it is no longer 'excluded' so much as 'autonomous'. It is, however, a potentiality which is most densely concentrated at the point of exclusion, of the social symptom. Others obtain similar potentiality only by rendering themselves autonomous and hence 'symptomatic'.

IV. Viral Symptoms: The Social Symptom, the Network Form and the Excluded

So, what can an emphasis on the 'social symptom' contribute to radical politics? Using a Deleuzian approach, I would argue, firstly, that the crucial point is not 'identification' with the social symptom, a gesture which in the abstract may be subjective and substitutionist, however necessary it may be to break from dominant fantasies. Rather, it is the reconstruction of social life based on forces which exceed and escape the dominant frame, hence the ways in which the social symptom constructs lines of flight. Secondly, the point is not to identify with the *appearance* of the excluded, with what the excluded are for the dominant gaze, but rather, to reconstruct and theorise *the forms of autonomous potentiality which emerge at the points where dominant social order breaks down*. This potentiality arises as the affinity-network form. The network form is the form of social life excluded peoples adopt either *when they are not* trying to imagine themselves as included (that is, as autonomous social movements), or *in spite of* such fantasies. It is thus the formal correlate of the social symptom, the alternative which can be generalised as an alternative to the dominant hierarchical social order. One thus finds in the 'social symptom' not merely a point of intensity of the fantasy-frame, but an entire global alternative to the hierarchical logics of the state and capital, a different 'organising logic' with its own 'capabilities'. The

network form emerges both as the 'symptomatic' political form of the excluded, and as the means whereby people can recompose their social world as autonomous and hence 'become-other'.

To understand this derivation of the network form, it is important to reconstruct the situation surrounding exclusion today. On a global scale, the social symptom is associated with the swathe of people excluded from formal inscription in the world economy. The excluded emerge on a global scale at the points where large strata of humanity fall outside the world market. A growing number in the periphery are not only excluded from the role of full-time family-wage worker but may not get official employment at all, despite being bombarded with images of family and consumerist lifestyles (Gledhill 2000: 79). This produces a gap between social life and the dominant ideology on a monumental scale. Samir Amin has documented a massive rise of pauperisation and precarity now affecting around 80 per cent of the popular classes of the periphery (Amin 2004). Such poverty is a result of political choices made mainly by the privileged (Nederveen Pieterse 2004: 81–3), and constructs a stratum of people whose very existence is largely irrelevant to the dominant system except as bare life. William Robinson refers to the excluded as 'supernumeraries' – people so marginal that they are useless to capitalism and prone to revolt (Robinson 1996: 342, 378). Huge strata are simply ignored or excluded, rather than exploited (Dirlik 1994: 54–5). This also has political effects. Exclusion produces an effect of ongoing asymmetrical conflict as those with no stake in the dominant fantasy contest the territorialisation of space (Ward 1990: 89–90). Hence, as Caffentzis puts it, '[o]nce again, as at the dawn of capitalism, the physiognomy of the world proletariat is that of the pauper, the vagabond, the criminal, the panhandler, the refugee sweatshop worker, the mercenary, the rioter' (Caffentzis 1992: 321).

In addition, entire regions have become 'symptomatic'. Much of the global periphery is being forcibly 'delinked' from global capitalism due to cutbacks in global patronage. For instance, 'Sub-Saharan Africa has almost dropped out of the formal international economy' (Mann 2005: 55–6). As a result, 'whole regions have now become virtually independent, probably for the foreseeable future, of all central control' (Bayart, Ellis and Hibou 1999: 19–20). These spaces are the loci of the state's 'black holes', as networked social life takes over from the state, and informal organisations ranging from militias to alternative economies proliferate. Such networked forms are adopted as survival and accumulation strategies, as well as being reassertions of older forms of social life submerged beneath dominant forms. In addition,

autonomy can become a site of chosen otherness in which similar forms arise. Networked anti-capitalist movements and autonomous social movements in the North provide a further site of autonomy by means of rejection of the dominant system, operating on the basis of a viral 'swarm' logic counterposed to hierarchy (Chesters and Welsh 2006). Borrowing from Southern movements such as the Zapatistas, such movements construct spaces rendered 'symptomatic' through demonisation by the state and the media, intersecting with movements against precarity, against borders and for the reconstruction of social life through means such as social centres, squatting, autoreduction and food sovereignty.

The space beyond hierarchical assemblages, the space of the 'social symptom', is simultaneously the field of forced delinking and exclusion, and the field of the recomposition of networked forms of life. The excluded thus become bearers of the possibility of otherness, connected to affinity, active desire and the network form as an alternative to hierarchies. In sites of delinking (whether forced or voluntary), people turn to networked forms of social life to survive, and sometimes to construct political alternatives. While networks arise most intensely among those strata forced into material scarcity by capitalism, the logic of network life is towards the recomposition of abundance. Such phenomena of everyday networking have arisen across the global South. Hecht and Simone (1994) provide a series of examples from African societies of horizontal social forms such as 'popular neighbourhoods' which 'produce informal, and often illegal, associations, alliances, strategies and practice, that provide an infrastructure for the community and a measure of functional autonomy' (Hecht and Simone 1994: 14–15). Larissa Lomnitz (1977) studies survival and mutual aid networks in Latin American shanty-towns, revealing that kinship and neighbourhood relations form an entire informal economy enabling a layer of excluded people to survive on the periphery of major cities by means of horizontal relations. Similarly, Partha Chatterjee refers to entire population groups who transgress formal prohibitions to subsist, and articulate political claims around resources they claim directly (Chatterjee 2004: 40–1). One can thus view the network form as the performative response to the failure of inclusion.

It is this power of networks that imparts to 'symptomatic' social life the ability to act as a 'returning Real' that disrupts the dominant narrative. Returning to the case of the US/UN intervention in Somalia, identified above as an instance of an effectively disruptive Real, the 'social symptom' of the world order emerged from the frustration

of global power-designs by complex networked politics. From the perspective of the dominant gaze, the situation was one of breakdown and chaos, a site onto which a colonial frame of civilisation versus lawlessness was projected (Razack 2004). This assumption that state collapse, social collapse, civil war and predatory relations are a single phenomenon led to misconceptions of the situation. Would-be peacekeepers in Somalia imagined themselves to be restoring a state which in fact never existed as a stable entity (Menkhaus 2003: 412). The conditions of the existence of the Cold War-era state no longer pertained; this had been a patronage state based on extensive external aid flows (Menkhaus and Pendergast 1995: 2–3). On the other hand, social peace in earlier and later periods in Somalia had and has little to do with state strength, arising mainly from networked communal structures (Menkhaus 2003: 407, 412). This society of nomadic herders has a 'complex and powerful system of ethical norms and rules', including conflict-resolution mechanisms as well as the more visible patterns of feuding (Lyons and Samatar 1995: 7, 10). Centrifugal forces tending towards acephalous social formations are extremely strong in Somali society, are the main cause of state collapse, and should not be interpreted as disorder (Menkhaus and Pendergast 1995: 2). Hence, both predatory action and civil war were ultimately more amenable to networked local responses than to international violence. By clumsily violating local cultural understandings in a context where such violations lead to a culturally recognised right of revenge or feud, the UN set itself up for the disaster which befell it. Once embedded in the logic of feuding, the UN was defeated by locals using asymmetrical warfare tactics and local knowledge to outsmart the occupying force (Lewis 2008: 79). In effect, the UN was defeated by the diffuse, complex, wide-spectrum power of networks. The social symptom returned as the power of networks against the state.

While in Somalia the negative, disruptive power of networks was most apparent, in other settings this force is connected to affirmative potentialities providing concrete alternatives to the global neoliberal order. In Bolivia, a range of inter-networked social movements using tactics such as road blockades have transformed the nature of political power, repeatedly defeating neoliberal governments in struggles such as the Cochabamba 'water war' and the El Alto 'gas war'. They are a diverse and very broad movement with near-universal support (Crabtree 2005: 28, 31). Their basis is in networked everyday politics such as the close-knit community units of shanty-towns and the indigenous *aaylus*. Protesters using direct-action methods have blockaded roads

every few yards and turned back military and police forces (12, 28, 45–6). Crabtree refers to these actions as rooted in a direct, participatory way of 'doing politics' which is marginal to the formal state (109). It operates through oscillating intensities, resonances across localities and accidental alliances between diverse sectors (110–12). Through lines of flight originating in symptomatic positions of exclusion, new possibilities come into being.

A Deleuzian, network-based approach to the social symptom moves away from the personalised emphasis on identification towards an emphasis on lines of flight which perform disarticulations and rearticulations in everyday social relations. The reconstruction of social life can arise only from a thoroughgoing relational transformation beginning in everyday life. Furthermore, the problem of identifying with the excluded *is also a problem for the excluded*. While the excluded exist as a structural category, only some of their actions are driven by minoritarian forces and thus are truly 'symptomatic'. The excluded may not identify with their assigned status as excluded. At least two major variants of this problem exist. Firstly, there may be a drastic separation between a person's actual conditions of life, the means through which they subsist and act, on the one hand, and their identification with *aspirations* to 'normal' consumer, producer and family life on the other. In this kind of situation, the potential is great for 'network capitalism' and 'rhizome-states' to rearticulate networks as 'radicles' or root extensions of a central trunk.

Secondly, the excluded may redefine themselves as included through the elevation of their particular identity into a majoritarian status. This leads to the common phenomenon of *reactive networks*, organised in the symptomatic network form but with aspirant majoritarian fantasy-frames. While in-group relations take typical affinity-network forms, they are contained behind a fantasmatic boundary against demonised out-groups which reproduces dominant forces of exclusion and scarcity. This is the problem discussed by Deleuze and Guattari in relation to 'neoarchaisms' such as ethno-religious identities (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 257–8). When a majoritarian fantasy-frame is combined with the network form, the effect is a reactive network. Yet such networks still exhibit some features of the liberating force of network power. This is shown in various studies of Salafi 'jihadi' or 'terrorist' networks, the social symptom *par excellence* of the 'War on Terror' – for instance, in Marc Sageman's study of Salafi networks, which emphasises the importance of intra-network integrative forces connected to affinity in constructing the cohesion of these strongly reactive networks (Sageman

2004: 107, 138). Similarly, Wiktorowicz shows the network to be subject to strong centrifugal pressures (Wiktorowicz 2005: 209). It operates through 'micromobilisation' in local network nodes and through a fluid system of leadership by reputation (210, 214).

Hence, even in its reactive form in which majoritarian fantasies drain its emancipatory potential, the network form shows many of the structural characteristics of the affinity-network. It is in this way that the 'social symptom' can carry the fundamental tensions of the dominant system even when the main attention is on its reactive features. Such movements are not symptomatic because of their excessive violence (a feature they share with states); they are symptomatic because they involve expressions of the network form, *in spite of* their exclusionary reactive attachments. Hence, the difficulty with these movements is paradoxically not that they are 'too extreme' but that they *have not gone far enough* in rejecting the exclusionary logic of the dominant system. Reactive and radicle networks do not identify with their own status as social symptoms, and thus do not gain thoroughgoing emancipatory force. When networks identify with the network-form as immanent aspiration as well as actual praxis, the result is a type of social movement which can be termed 'autonomous'.

In line with the Deleuzian theory of minoritarian lines of flight, there is a need to politicise exclusion through converting it into the auto-affirmative logic of autonomy. Autonomy refers to exclusion or self-exclusion when it is positively valued rather than rejected. The revolution-to-come is not a new order but a breaking-down of all asymmetrical and hierarchical social orders, in favour of a horizontality without borders. In distinction from but built upon Mike Davis's 'planet of slums' (Davis 2006) – a world where the majority are radically excluded – the coming world is a 'world of squats' (with the social centre as paradigm), a world of informal diffuse networks distributed transversally, in which the excluded space becomes a space of abundance through everyday social recomposition and the reclamation of ecologies from capitalist resource-extraction. The question determining the viability of this transition is how networks of the excluded can learn to valorise what they are, rather than mapping arborescent 'norms' onto their movements or scrambling to find a place on the inside.

This is quite different from Žižek's approach, in which autonomy is rejected as an ideological appearance (Butler, Laclau and Žižek 2000: 134). It shows the difference between an affirmative and a negative approach to political transformation. While the analysis

of the importance of the social symptom is similar, the political conclusions are extremely different – the difference between Žižek's neo-Leninist hierarchical politics and a horizontal orientation directed at the proliferation of autonomous networks against the global system.

V. Conclusion: From Social Symptom to Symptomless Society?

Hence, a Deleuzian approach offers a thoroughly transformative, emancipatory alternative to hierarchical politics. In this context, a political orientation to the social symptom becomes something more than a temporary gesture of individual 'grace' or fantasmatic reorientation. It opens the possibility for moving beyond an alienated society based on hierarchies, master-signifiers and quilted Althusserian ideologies, into a world where the whole of social life is composed of open rhizomes constructed around active forces and desires, a world of absolute deterritorialisation (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 511). Such a world becomes possible through the proliferation of lines of flight arising from the tendential outside constructed in autonomous spaces and autonomous social movements. From the standpoint of the dominant gaze, this tendential outside is 'symptomatic', and the cutting edge of diverse lines of flight can often be located in the points where, for the dominant ideology, a 'social symptom' expresses the return of contingency and the loss of sovereignty as incommensurable forces break free of systemic control.

A Deleuzian orientation thus goes far beyond *identification* with the symptom, as a symbolic and imaginary gesture; it enters into solidarity through the immanent relationality of the symptom at the level of the 'Real', reconstructing social life in terms of the networks which typify the symptomatic space. Becoming-symptom, or becoming-minoritarian, requires that one reconstruct social life beyond the territorial inscriptions (social, ecological, psychological) which constitute both the politico-strategic dominance and the ideological cohesion of the dominant system, and of hierarchical systems in general. It thus offers a substantial, intersubjective, 'material' and social challenge to the dominant discourse, not simply a symbolic challenge or a reconfiguration of elements.

In Deleuzian theory, the absolute deterritorialisation borne as potentiality by the social symptom carries the possibility of shattering the entire ideological and relational frame of hierarchical systems, rendering the social symptom the point, not only of the breakdown of the internal fantasy-frame of the dominant system, but also of its

relational and functional breakdown and of possible passages beyond it. As a result, it bears the potential to shatter the function of the master-signifier and hence not only recompose but decompose the matrix which produces social symptoms. In a sense, the result is a 'symptomless society', a society in which, in the absence of sovereignty, there is no ideological production of social symptoms. But it might also be viewed as a society composed only of symptoms, a society in which everyone is 'minoritarian' and 'marked', and, therefore, nobody occupies the position of mastery. This transformation cannot be achieved from inside the dominant fantasmatic frame, because the reproduction of this frame requires the reproduction of the master-signifier as a structural form. Nor is it inevitable in the case of networks of the excluded. It is, however, in the latter that its potentiality resides. The recomposition of social life from the position of the social symptom arises as a line of flight through the construction of affinity-networks as a comprehensive alternative to hierarchical social forms.

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Making Restorative Sense with Deleuzian Morality, Art Brut and the Schizophrenic

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Abstract

The essay consists of three parts: the first argues that Deleuze's moral philosophy in *The Logic of Sense* provides an ethical model of counter-actualisation; the second shows how three different practices of art therapy offer a means to effect this counter-actualisation and thereby demonstrate the restorative power of art; the third explores how such a power might form part of what Guattari calls the 'ethico-aesthetic paradigm' (Guattari 1995).

Keywords: morality, counter-actualisation, art practice, therapy, restorative sense

In *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze presents case studies showing particular examples of moral problems – such as Bousquet's wound, Artaud's madness, or Lowry's alcoholism – in order to describe series of singularities that provide turning points which define the real. Deleuze argues that by replaying such singularities with creativity and expression one can constitute new events and source potential relief from the causes of these moral problems. Deleuzian morality involves an aesthetic consideration and an artistic practice capable of offering rehabilitation and restorative sense for those who have psychiatric disorders, or for any of us when we have wounds or experience pain. Replaying events that exemplify moral problems or wounds, with creativity and expression, offers the chance for counter-actualisation, sublimation, catharsis and ontogenesis.

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The question then comes down to *how* one can replay events in this way. The examples to be discussed below – Theatre of the Oppressed, an application of art therapy, and the genre of Art Brut – suggest a number of possibilities. In these cases art provides individuals with a method of making sense of the world and of their condition, whilst offering some form of relief. In terms of Deleuzian morality the tortured individual is encouraged to replay the event of their wounding in a way that provides catharsis and the counter-actualising of pain. Just as Deleuze turns to literary figures like Bousquet, Artaud or Fitzgerald, the artistic practices explored here open up the possibility of a freedom both patent and potent during the creative process, in a sense consistent with Guattari's 'ethico-aesthetic paradigm'.

I. Deleuze's Moral Philosophy

In *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze utilises the schizophrenic and the pervert to create a rupturous new thought, outlining in the process the practical principles of a moral philosophy. This is particularly interesting because it involves the counter-actualisation of the wound and the sublimation of pain, implicating a different understanding of time and the event, and drawing up an ethical model. Deleuze engages with schizophrenic discourse in order to highlight the way that the schizophrenic's language foregrounds a dual or paradoxical sense of sense and nonsense, at the edges or on the surface of sense-making. Deleuze uses the words of Artaud, such as 'Ratara ratara ratara Atara tatara rana Otara otara katara…', and the nonsensical words of Lewis Carroll, like 'Pimpanicaille', because he is trying to free up set meanings for words, opening up their signification to a multitude of interpretations (Deleuze 2004: 96). In the schizophrenic's language, words become 'suitcases' for a multitude of paradoxical meanings, each one determined on or during the event of their utterance. Deleuze then uses the multiple layers of reality that define the schizophrenic's psychosis to open similarly heterogeneous and spontaneous possibilities for making sense. This sense is embodied, and located at the edge or on the surface of things and propositions. In this case his use of the schizophrenic offers a multiplicity that redefines the subject as a continually changing process of individuation, undoing its identity and reorientating thought.

There remains a violent and chaotic perversity to this kind of philosophy. The intention is to form an understanding of subjectivation – or a relation to oneself – that is not tied to a transcendental subjectivity, but is a qualitative multiplicity or relational

entity which is continually becoming-other. The process of defining this transgressive and unstable sense of the subject often seems destructive or dis-eased, advocating a body without organs, the body of a drug addict, or one suffering from another psychiatric disorder, so that it is hard to see how any stable sense or human could remain healthy or alive.

Deleuze does, however, state elsewhere that the intent is to retain *some* sense of the subject and lay out a transcendental plane of consistency for thought, rather than to destroy or deconstruct being entirely. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, when describing the body without organs (BwO), Deleuze and Guattari advise caution in undertaking the explicit destruction that they argue is necessary. One must retain a *small* sense of subjectivity:

> Dismantling the organism has never meant killing yourself, but rather opening the body to connections that presuppose an entire assemblage . . . You have to keep enough of the organism for it to reform each dawn; and you have to keep small supplies of signifiance and subjectification . . . and you have to keep small rations of subjectivity in sufficient quantity to enable you to respond to the dominant reality. (Deleuze and Guattari 2004a: 178–9)

This raises the question of just how much subjectivity is enough to hold together the particular individual that we are, but not too much to curtail the continuous flux of our identity. As the authors themselves say, there is a danger of overdosing destruction. Shaping the subject requires the artistic work of 'a very fine file', rather than a blow from a sledgehammer, in order to establish what degree of destruction or experimentation is sufficient to liberate the subject, and what is excessive and dangerous (Deleuze and Guattari 2004a: 177).

Deleuze is continually trying to undo the static and dichotomous sense of a subject seen in formations of subjectivity from the Cogito onwards. There is a continual battle running through Deleuze's thought as he trys to destroy any kind of static or set sense of self, whilst retaining enough of a self to constitute a living organism capable of carrying out this destruction. As he says, one must take care with these experiments and explorations with psychiatric disorders and substances: 'The important thing is not to dismantle the tonal by destroying it all of a sudden. You have to diminish it, shrink it, clean it, and that only at certain moments. You have to keep it in order to survive. . . ' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004a: 180).

But Deleuze offers the reader no guide for judging how to take heed of these warnings. Deleuze and Guattari then seem

overtaken by the ongoing dynamic of 'Destroy, destroy' that dominates *Anti-Oedipus*, which provides the recurring flavour of dis-ease and rupture that defines Deleuze and Guattari's thought (Deleuze and Guattari 2004b: 342). In both volumes of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Deleuze and Guattari question the violence and pathology involved in their own thinking. They advise that we should all take 'caution' when following the schizoanalytic direction or adopting the mental processing of the drug addict, anorexic, or masochist, etc., but their methodology of utilising these cases as figures of thought does not define the kind of prudence required (Deleuze and Guattari 2004a: 177). They do say that it would be *better* if one could achieve the thought process of the drug addict or the alcoholic *without* relying on drugs or drink, but their argument affirms a state of mind which depends upon these pathological behaviours. They assert the need for caution, but offer no way of judging how to be cautious, whilst their argument still depends upon an appeal to the pathological individual.

It is easy to question whether one must suffer from a debilitating illness, entertain potentially destructive behaviours, or take illegal substances, in order to create a new way of thinking. Deleuze and Guattari state that their philosophy involves becoming a *little* bit schizo. But it is difficult to ascertain what dosage would be sufficient or appropriate to attain the liberation and restorative sense offered by their thinking, particularly when they offer no advice on how one might raise or control the dosage.

In *The Logic of Sense*, however, Deleuze presents a different perspective – one which, as James Williams argues, does offer some practical principles for a moral philosophy (Williams 2008). Deleuze describes why he employs the amoral in his philosophy by showing how his repeated turn to the motifs of sadism, perversion and 'maladies' like schizophrenia can be traced back to the Stoics' use of similar amoral motifs such as incest or cannibalism. Seeing how the Stoics used amoral motifs helps us to understand why Deleuze's philosophy takes the direction that it does.

In the eighteenth series of *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze argues that entertaining maladies, or engaging with mania, depression or psychological problems, is a properly philosophical exercise. He says that one shouldn't equate philosophy with an illness, but 'there are properly philosophical diseases' (Deleuze 2004: 145). He then describes how mania 'guided' Plato, and says that the death of Socrates was something like a depressive suicide. Deleuze goes on to discuss how the Stoics invoked – or made permissible – activities such as masturbation,

cannibalism and incest in order to pose difficult and new philosophical questions:

> On the one hand, the philosopher eats with great gluttony, he stuffs himself; he masturbates in public . . . he does not condemn incest with the mother, the sister, or the daughter; he tolerates cannibalism and anthropophagy – but, in fact, he is also supremely sober and chaste. On the other hand, he keeps quiet when people ask him questions . . . Yet he also holds a new discourse, a new logos animated with paradox and philosophical values and significations which are new. (Deleuze 2004: 147–8)

These words seem to represent Deleuze's efforts to legitimise the controversy raised by his own philosophy's exploration of psychological problems. This is the way that Deleuze defines what philosophy actually is – as he says at the end of the eighteenth series: 'What are we to call this new philosophical operation . . . ? Perhaps we can call it 'perversion" (Deleuze 2004: 151). It seems a radical, contentious proposition to equate philosophy with perversion, but the reason Deleuze makes this claim, and makes use of the Stoics, is, he says, because it brings *the body* into play with thinking. Involving the body in this way then connects with the desiring-machines and BwO at play in schizoanalysis. Deleuze says that the Stoic philosophy, by engaging with amoral motifs, enables an opening up of 'passions-bodies and of the infernal mixtures which they organize or submit to: burning poisons and paedophagous banquets' (149). The point of this is to reorientate thinking: Deleuze wants to define philosophy by perversion as part of his overriding effort to construct a new kind of philosophy, one which uproots Platonic Idealism, dialectical contradiction, hierarchy, striation, causality, transcendence, signification and metaphysics: 'This is a reorientation of all thought and of what it means to think: *there is no longer depth or height*. The Cynical and Stoic sneers against Plato are many. It is always a matter of unseating the Ideas, of showing that the incorporeal is not Essence but event' (148).

In Deleuze the amoral motifs of incest or cannibalism engage with 'passions-bodies', reorientating thought away from Platonic Idealism or dialectical contradiction by engaging with the flesh and forces of the body. This opens up a plane of immanence for the BwO. From the start, Deleuze says, the pre-Socratics make schizophrenia 'properly philosophical' because with it they situate and activate thought in the body (Deleuze 2004: 148, translation modified). This raises the question of dosage: can we think with the body without (potentially) damaging it? Does thinking with the body, and founding a new philosophy, *require*

the likes of perversion or incest? Does it legitimise these activities, and if it so, how is freedom ever possible? After all, one cannot choose to be schizophrenic. Does Deleuze mean that it is a positive mentality and so we should desire to suffer from it?

Deleuze does anticipate such doubts on the part of the reader. He questions the Stoics' use of amoral motifs, which raises the same questions for his own philosophy: 'How could the world of mixtures not be that of a black depth wherein everything is permitted?' (Deleuze 2004: 148). The Stoics paint a picture of 'a world of terror and cruelty, of incest and anthropophagy', Deleuze says, and the reason why this works is because it opens a new mode of thinking *at the surface of things* (150). There is another paradoxical part to these activities, beyond their perversity, which comes from a different and non-causal understanding of time. The surface lays out a theatre for a paradoxical intertwining of sense, which provides an interface for expressions and their representation – propositions, bodies and events in their immanent arousal.[1] Here there is no hierarchy or depth or cause; just a flat surface for the body and its reorientating of thought:

> there is of course another story, namely, the story of that which, from the Heraclitean world, is able to climb to the surface and receive an entirely new status. This is the event in its difference in nature from causes-bodies, the Aion in its difference in nature from the devouring Chronos. . . . The Cynics and the Stoics establish themselves and wrap themselves up with the surface, the curtain, the carpet, and the mantle. The double sense on the surface, the continuity of the reverse and right sides, replace height and depth. (Deleuze 2004: 150)

Deleuze gives us particular examples of moral problems – Nietzsche and Artaud's madness, Fitzgerald and Lowry's alcoholism, or Bousquet's wound – because he wants to create a moral philosophy based on charting a series of singularities as events which, when considered as particular examples across a broad scan of society, demonstrate turning points that define the real. He argues that one must consider and replay the events of suffering in order to source a process of counter-actualising for what is amoral or damaging, whilst retaining the engagement with the process of the event and the emphasis on the body. This develops a diagrammatic of intense relations and particular phenomena within society, which then charts how they set a pattern to constitute and divine new events.

Deleuze argues that there will always be moral problems. His moral philosophy is then about charting series of actual turning points when

things are changing – the social, political, individual and singular turning points – and connecting diagrams of intense relations and particular phenomena within society. From this process it is possible to draw a chart that shows how moral problems constitute and divine *new* events, connected through the event that runs through all of them.

The point is to *actualise* the disruptive, corporeal *dynamic* that can be accessed through perverse or damaging behaviours, whilst simultaneously *counter-actualising* their perverse or damaging *event*. This involves a different non-causal conception of time. Deleuze presents a dialectic opening of series of time with Chronos and Aion in *The Logic of Sense*. On the one hand time is Chronos, where the present has some kind of extension that is sensual and corporeal. This involves a plurality of presences, which have no cause-effect relation but exist as wounds of time. The future and the past make marks on the present since they exist as relations to the present, but there is only one dimension. This dimension is material: 'Inside Chronos, the present is in some manner corporeal. It is the time of mixtures or blendings, the very process of corporeality' (Deleuze 2004: 186; translation modified). The future and the past exist as relations to the present, and take the form of 'what is left of passion in a body' (186). The future and the past affect our attitude towards the present, and our bodily presence in the present, and so they shape the present and our place within it, as a univocal being of difference.

On the other hand, Deleuze brings us another reading of time with Aion, where only the past and future are real and there is no present: 'In accordance with Aion, only the past and the future inhere or subsist in time. Instead of a present which absorbs the past and the future, a future and past divide the present at every instant and subdivide it ad infinitum into past and future, in both directions at once' (Deleuze 2004: 188). Aion is 'the eternal truth of time: *pure empty form of time*' (189). This is because through the dimension of being the future of the past, Aion opens up the sense and becoming of the eternal return of difference, in which the process of counter-actualisation is realised. It is the time of the event, which is 'always and at the same time something which has just happened and something about to happen; never something which is happening' (73).

The process of counter-actualisation is the eternal return in a cyclical repetition of the future of the past. The event is actualised in its present happening, from a proliferation of virtual possibilities. It marks an eternal wound on the present since it has an effect on one; then, in *willing* and *expressing* its presence in the present, as one of difference,

one can access a sublimation which can counter-actualise its wounding. The motor of this function is the repeating cycle of ontogenesis, in the becoming of the future of the past, which composes the sense of the present. In this context our wounds are the marks that make us real, and which demonstrate our contact with the world. As Jack Reynolds comments, in Deleuzian ethics we are all wounded: 'we are all traversed by some kind of fault-line (a virtual, impersonal intensity) that is supra-individual and not confined to the realms of bodies and states of affairs.... [I]t is the concept of counter-actualisation that he uses to more fully describe what is involved in the appropriate manner of giving body to an incorporeal event-effect' (Reynolds 2007: 154).

In this context sense is the fourth dimension of a proposition, which is an expression of being-in-the-present. The other three dimensions are the denotation, manifestation and signification of a proposition. Sense and the event 'are the same thing' (Deleuze 2004: 191). The event has an intrinsic relation to sense through the process of counter-actualisation. As Buchanan says: 'The event is the sense *we make* of what happens.... To the extent we take charge of events we counter-actualise what occurs, we see beyond actions and live the purity of the event, the crystal of sense awaiting us in all phenomena' (Buchanan 2000: 79). As such, the event is something we have to *will*, rather than something to which we succumb, not as a figure of *ressentiment* to its eternal or damning trauma, but in expression comes counter-actualisation and the opening for difference: 'The event is mot what occurs (an accident), it is rather inside what occurs, the purely expressed' (Deleuze 2004: 170).

Deleuze uses the French novelist Joë Bousquet to describe how the moral actor acts by diminishing Chronos, or the wound, and using it to become something different. Bousquet uses his wound to inspire his surrealist writing. There is a moment of elevation or sublimation, whereby the wound becomes something different. The tortured individual sublimates their wound and pain, releasing its counter-actualisation, through replaying the event with creativity and expression: 'He apprehends the wound that he bears deep within his body in its eternal truth as pure event' (Deleuze 2004: 169). Creation counter-actualises the pain by re-enacting the wound and putting it in touch with values that run to counteract its suffering and injuries.

Deleuze argues that a stoic moral philosophy, which he upholds in *The Logic of Sense*, is about creative lives, and 'a concrete or poetic way of life' (Deleuze 2004: 169). The idea is that one can deal with moral problems by replaying the event of their occurrence with creativity, which can counter-actualise their destructive or painful connotations.

James Williams explains how the act of counter-actualisation of the wound by replaying the event defines Deleuzian morality:

> The moral problem is . . . how to redouble the events occurring to us. These events are signs of the future and the past, but they have no necessary path. Deleuze's moral principles never recommend a particular course of action or align to necessary rules or models. On the contrary, they put forward guidelines and examples for picking our own way through the events that happen to us. His gift is of moral freedom in a complex structure and not compulsion or imperatives. (Williams 2008: 162)

Williams argues that Deleuze brings forward six moral principles in the twentieth series of *The Logic of Sense*, 'On the Moral Problem in Stoic Philosophy' (Deleuze 2004: 162–7). The first comes with the example of the stick and the egg, and the moral problem of how to break the egg. Deleuze is a realist – one cannot prevent the egg from getting broken – and says that the moral problem involves the *singular* situation of considering this particular egg and this particular stick, with the mixture of propositions, bodies and sense; immanent physical effects and established ideas and meanings. The second moral principle is that the event of the breaking has to be *willed*. Thirdly, the individual to whom the moral problem relates must deduce the arrival of the event with a process of *divination*. This concerns looking at the series of turning points and the expression of ideas in order to divine how new events might be constituted. The fourth principle involves charting the specific examples of the moral problem to be drawn together and their connections highlighted in order to respond to them *creatively*. The fifth principle describes the necessity of *representation* in divination and the willing of the present event. A moral problem requires a representation of its singular event and individual expression. Lastly, the event of the moral problem must be expressed in terms of its eternal significance, and also represented in its present happening. This involves two different processes of thinking about time, Aion and Chronos.

Williams derives thirty-two further principles from Deleuze in the twenty-first series. He says that Deleuze's use of examples like Bousquet or Fitzgerald presents case studies that illustrate his principles, providing a practical guide for how to act morally. On the one hand Deleuze's engagement with art, and the necessity for creativity in dealing with pain and moral problems is very important. But before we reach that point further moral questions must be raised. Does one have to suffer, and then replay suffering, in order to be free? Is freedom based on an

originary wound? How can the tortured individual know how to replay the events of their wound to find restorative sense?

Deleuze himself asks similar questions to these in the later chapters of *The Logic of Sense*. He talks about alcoholics, citing Fitzgerald's *The Crack Up*, which he uses to think about those who might suffer by reacting to the world in ways which Deleuze then wants to use to define his new philosophy. He considers whether or how it is possible to use the 'Crack Up' as a figure of thought that engages with the body, but without actually cracking up:

> Is it possible to maintain the inherence of the incorporeal crack while taking care not to bring it into existence, and not to incarnate it in the depth of the body? More precisely, is it possible to limit ourselves to the counter-actualization of an event – to the actor's or dancer's simple, flat representation – while taking care to prevent the full actualization which characterizes the victim or the true patient? (Deleuze 2004: 178–9)

It is hard to know whether any of the questions that Deleuze asks here can be answered by following his moral philosophy. But they touch upon the same questions that direct Deleuze's work with Guattari and schizoanalysis. Schizoanalysis is concerned with founding a new way of thinking about desire, which engages with the body and can create a 'place of healing' and restorative sense not only for the schizophrenic but for all of us. Here Deleuze is asking how one can think with the body, replay the event and counter-actualise the process of cracking up. He goes on to discuss, with insight and sympathy, the alcoholic's pattern of behaviour and the reasons behind his dependence on drinking as a 'process of demolition'. He ends the chapter with compassion, expressing the hope that the effects of drugs or alcohol might be revived and recovered independently from the use or abuse of these substances:

> We cannot give up the hope that the effects of drugs and alcohol (their 'revelations') will be able to be relived and recovered for their own sake at the surface of the world, independently of the use of those substances, provided that the techniques of social alienation which determine this use are reversed into revolutionary means of exploration. (Deleuze 2004: 182–3)

We can think about how Deleuze might try to respond to these questions by looking at the creativity and expression required to replay the event and counter-actualise suffering, particularly on the part of the schizophrenic. Deleuze offers examples from the arts, and his moral philosophy implicates an aesthetic; in the following section this will be taken a step further, showing how Deleuze's moral philosophy calls for

the therapeutic application of an art practice, which reveals something intrinsic to art and creativity *per se*.

II. How to Counter-actualise the Event: Art Therapy and the Schizophrenic

The process of counter-actualisation is, as Ian Buchanan suggests, central to Deleuze's constructivist philosophical enterprise: 'Counter-actualisation, Deleuze argues, is what the free can do, or more precisely what the free do; by free he means free of resentment and envy (the free do not try to profit from their wounds, they want only to own them)' (Buchanan 2000: 87).

Deleuze encourages us to be actors and to replay events. Reynolds describes the ethics in *The Logic of Sense* as 'an ethics of the mime and of acting' (Reynolds 2007: 154). Exemplary here is Augusto Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed*, a theatrical practice which was founded and developed in reaction to the catastrophic dictatorship that crushed Brazil during the 1960s (cf. Boal 1979). Premised on the understanding that 'to act' means both to perform and to take action, in Boal's form of theatre we are all actors – the actor/audience split that demarcates traditional performance is realigned. Spectators become 'spect-actors' and have the chance to react, replay, improvise and invent possibilities for new action in a performance. This is 'Forum Theatre', which presents a rhizomatic plane of composition for a *representation* of the oppressed subject, an *expression* of their subjugation, and a *production* for reform. It is a theatre 'of the Oppressed' because the enterprise is motivated by the need to act upon, and the desire to change, situations where people are disempowered, marginalized, silenced or subordinated.

The drama brought to the Forum Theatre presents scripted instances and examples of these situations, which the spect-actors then replay, experiment with and invent new possibilities with a view to changing the situation of oppression. Working in prisons and with homeless people in particular, Boal found that his simple system of simultaneous dramaturgy empowered people and promoted a creative, democratic dialogue that could provide an instrument of social change. Participants act out the scene of a particular situation that is problematic in their lives. They interact with the scene, change what happens, and think about what the ideal action might be. The point is to keep replaying and changing the situation until a way to resolve the matter is found. This generates dynamic new ways of dealing with oppression, and of preventing it. It prompts suggestions that can be taken to the

protagonists responsible for the oppression in the first place, to apply pressure for the necessity of legal change. Forum Theatre becomes 'Legislative Theatre'; theatre transforms reality.

Theatre of the Oppressed offers one way of replaying events that present the moral problems arising in situations where people are oppressed. As such it generates a sense of freedom for its participants. We can expand on this topic to consider how art is able to help us deal with moral problems, such as those presented by the clinical cases that Deleuze uses to define his understanding of being: the alcoholic, drug addict, anorexic or pervert, and in particular the schizophrenic. We can see how *art therapy* can help us to counter-actualise the wounding of the event. To do this it will be necessary first to define art therapy, second to describe – with the help of a case study – how it can help the schizophrenic, and finally to take this back to Deleuze to show how it can provide us with a 'place of healing' more generally.

The British Association of Art Therapists defines art therapy in the following terms:

> The use of art materials for self-expression and reflection in the presence of a trained art therapist. Clients who are referred to art therapy need not have previous experience or skill in art, the art therapist is not primarily concerned with making an aesthetic or diagnostic assessment of the client's image. The overall aim of its practitioners is to enable a client to effect change and growth on a personal level through the use of art materials in a safe and facilitating environment.[2]

Art therapy is an activity based on the assumption that visual symbols and images are the most accessible and natural form of communication within the human experience. Patients/clients/participants are encouraged to visualise, and express, the thoughts and emotions that they find difficult to talk about. The resulting artwork is then reviewed and interpreted by the patient and therapist. Making sense of the artwork produced in art therapy, during this review, typically allows patients to gain some level of insight into their feelings and lets them work through these issues in a therapeutic manner. The creative process involved in artistic self-expression helps people to resolve conflicts and problems, develop interpersonal skills, manage behaviour, reduce stress, increase self-esteem and self-awareness, and achieve insight. The positive, restorative results of art therapy are obtained through the phenomenological process of interacting with art materials and using them to create some kind of form that responds to what is on the patient's mind, and also from the conversation and process of

sense-making that the artwork they create prompts between them and those who see their work.

It is a commonly held opinion that art therapy can have beneficial effects in the assessment and treatment of a variety of illnesses and conditions, and in particular of psychiatric disorders and situations which involve anxiety, depression and mental or emotional problems. Recent research has demonstrated that art therapy is effective for those who suffer from psychotic illnesses such as schizophrenia. The National Institute of Clinical and Health Excellence (NICE) issued recommendations on the application of art therapy on the NHS for people with schizophrenia in 2008, which was publicised by the BBC.[3] Dr Tim Kendall, co-director of the National Collaborating Centre for Mental Health, helped to gain data from six different trials on several hundred people, finding from their results that dance, art and music therapy have 'a positive benefit' for schizophrenia. Dr Mike Crawford, also involved in this survey, said that art therapy helps the psychotic because their illness leads to problems with communication: 'With psychoses, part of the problem is hallucinations and delusions and it becomes really hard to talk to people about them – and people become isolated because no one is listening to them.'[4]

A study by Brooker et al., *The Use of Art Work in Art Psychotherapy with People Who are Prone to Psychotic States: An Evidence-Based Clinical Practice Guideline*, presents a detailed survey of the ways that art therapy can help the schizophrenic (Brooker et al. 2007). This research emphasises the way that art-making offers a language through which the client can communicate their emotions and feelings, and express what they cannot say in words. Art gives them a way to give form to the unspeakable complexities that constitute their life, and provides them with a method for making sense of themselves and the world:

> research has shown that Art Psychotherapy offers a stepping-stone from isolation to the outer world for people who have experienced, and are experiencing, psychosis. Making art in Art Psychotherapy provides a form of engagement that enables the maker – the client – to become absorbed, this being one of the tasks of therapy. The Art Psychotherapist fosters the evolution of the client's language through their artwork; this enables a mediation to occur between the client's concrete and symbolic thinking and helps him or her to develop symbolic functioning. These symbolising ego functions enable the development of communication and relationship that are severely impaired in psychotic and borderline psychotic states. (Brooker et al. 2007: 20)

We can see an example of the diagnosed psychotic gaining restorative sense from art-making in a case study presented by the Jungian psychoanalyst and art therapist Joy Schaverien in her article 'Transference and Transactional Objects in the Treatment of Psychosis' (in Schaverien and Killick 2007). Schaverien describes the situation and case history of Lena, a woman suffering from a paranoid psychosis who is admitted to hospital after a serious suicide attempt, where she engages with art therapy. We are presented with images created by Lena, which demonstrate how she uses the practice of art-making to communicate with the therapist who is guiding her, and also as a method of making sense of her own condition and situation which then offers her some degree of counter-actualisation and liberation. *Arrows* is the title of one of Lena's creations (Schaverien and Killick 2007: 28). It is the shape of a basic human figure, outlined in black, intertwined with a yellow wire coiling around the body, as if it were trapped within its physical form. Its basic skeleton is made from a black stick figure and disjointed shapes of white, with an overlay of red lines that seem to indicate the nervous system. Black arrows pierce the outline of this figure and seem to be attacking it like daggers, placing momentous pressure on the body. The figure cries, and tears fall from its eyes and drip down its body. In the background are green vertical lines, with more arrows, which seem to suggest that this is a puppet. It is an intense and simple image, which brings forward an impression of how Lena was feeling when she made it. Schaverien describes how this work then becomes therapeutic for Lena:

> There are no words in this picture which graphically and wordlessly embodies Lena's state. It reveals the pain of the potential fragmentation of psychosis in a way which no words could convey. There are times when words can add nothing to an image: the picture says it all – it is its own vivid and powerful interpretation. . . . Lena was able to communicate her state to me through the vehicle of the picture. . . . Lena realised that it both confirmed her feeling and conveyed it to me because I took the picture very seriously. Lena then began to value her pictures as both an expression of her state and a way of communicating. To speak directly to anyone was to lose herself, but the picture made this possible; it mediated, holding the space in-between us. (Schaverien and Killick 2007: 28–9)

The image offers Lena a method of communicating with the world. It also provides her with a method of getting in touch with how she is feeling and allows her to express this to the therapist. The sense of her illness is somewhat impossible to capture in words, but can

be immediately expressed in the image. By looking at the image, and relating it to her patient, Schaverien is able to gain a sense of the momentous physical pressures that Lena is subjected to, in her tactile hallucinatory experiences, which are indicated by the arrow daggers and the yellow line that encircles the figure. The image is powerful because, as Schaverien says: 'The picture is 'outside' and offers a reflection of some aspect of the self. There is a dawning of consciousness and the beginning of differentiation' (Schaverien and Killick 2007: 24–5). Lena creates an image that helps her to make sense of her being, in terms of the psychotic pressures that she is feeling, and she makes an object which is separate to these pressures, and whose autonomy provides some sense of distance and relief from them. In this way Lena can embody the event of her feeling like a puppet attacked by dagger-arrows, and direct or will her autonomy from it. This results in a connection with her being, and beyond her being, with the therapist, which can counter-actualise the persecutory elements of Lena's inner world and take a step towards a place of healing from them. In this process Lena finds a way to objectify her symptoms, or make an artwork from them, which then reinterprets and so counter-actualises what brings her discomfort and pain. It provides Lena with a method of maintaining a degree of subjectivity in a way that offers her restorative sense. The case of Lena illustrates how

> the inherent communicative value of artistic endeavours seems particularly important for a specialized and idiosyncratic understanding of the schizophrenic person. Moreover, art works of schizophrenics may be not only prognostically significant but also lead to interventions which enhance the problem solving process for both therapist and patient. (Amos 1982: 142)

In this context, emphasis is given to the 'meaning' of the artwork, as though what the client creates has a special and secret meaning beneath its exterior form. I would argue that in fact the meaning of the work is not separate from the process of its physical construction. There is meaning in the process of making because this process has restorative effects in itself. The process of interpreting, or making sense, of what is made also has restorative effects. Making sense is the process of interrogating the sensuous-intellectual data and ideas that constitute the style and content, the elements of the composition, or the abstract machine, that pull the work together. It involves understanding the sense of the here and now – the material presence of the artist-client, their situation, emotions and needs, which charge their creation, and their rapport with the world, the therapist and the materials they are

using. Meaning is immanent in the process of production, interaction and sense-making that constitute the artistic practice and the therapeutic communication it creates. One can relate this to Deleuze's logic of sensation, since here there is a similar dissolution of contradictions, and oppositions in the therapeutic and artistic process dissolve into a plane of immanence, which makes restorative sense. Here restorative does not mean a restoring, or returning to a *previous* state, but a replenishing, nourishing production of the new. Restorative sense is ontogenesis.

Art therapy from a Deleuzian viewpoint is thus not necessarily meant to restore a patient-cum-participant to a previous state of being, nor to realise a teleological goal of perfect health. The point is to open a way by which one can accept one's circumstances, and so create something new from them: to be able to *will* and make a world from them, so that there is a release from their wounding and the possibility for difference is realised. For the artwork provides a means of making sense of oneself and the world, and a paradoxical release-cum-realisation of one in the other, always becoming-other with the immanent sense and transformation involved during the creative process.

One need not have a diagnosed illness in order to benefit from this process. Art-making constructs a 'place of healing' for the schizophrenic, as we have seen, but it is something we can all benefit from. Deleuze might find the involvement of the therapist problematic. The made object can become a talisman that may be interpreted and used to make sense of an illness or disorder; it is thus diagnostic. It can also provide a means of communicating what is inexpressible in words. These factors may require a trained professional who can make sense of the artwork in relation to the client who made it. But in other cases the presence of the therapist is required only to provide the materials with which the patient can interact, and there is no clinical interpretation of what is made beyond sharing the sense one can make during the process of creation itself.

And yet, art therapy may seem counter-intuitive for Deleuzian thinking, when considered alongside his continual efforts to rupture the self, and his employing of models of perversion to define his characteristically violent philosophy. Although such violent thinking might itself raise the need for therapy – remember in Deleuzian thinking 'one courts death' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004a: 177). In any case, we can quite easily draw Deleuzian sense through art in a different context. The artwork made in the context of art therapy can be taken as a form of *Art Brut*. Deleuze himself says that his philosophy produces 'a sort of art brut' (Deleuze 1990: 122). Art Brut is a genre of art created

by Jean Dubuffet in 1948. Originally meant to denote art created by trauma survivors or people with mental illness (whose trauma or illness influences their work), Art Brut refers to artists who are self-taught and who do not participate in the 'mainstream art world' or who operate outside the institutions of Western culture. We can describe the artwork created in a therapeutic setup in accordance with this genre because it requires no training, it often involves making art in response to illness or injury, and it is something that we can all engage with.

Dubuffet presented his manifesto for Art Brut in 1948 as follows:

> Crude Art. We understand by this works created by those untouched by artistic culture; in which copying has little part, unlike the art of intellectuals. Similarly, the artists take everything (subjects, choice of materials, modes of transposition, rhythms, writing styles) from their own inner being, not from the opinions of classical or fashionable art. We engage in an artistic enterprise that is completely pure, basic; totally guided in all its phases solely by the creator's own impulses. It is therefore an art which only manifests invention, not the characteristics of cultural art which are those of the chameleon and the monkey.
>
> Before concluding this essay we want to say a word about the mad. Madness gives man wings and helps his power of vision; many of the objects (almost half) that our exhibition contains are works by people in psychiatric hospitals. We see no reason to segregate them, unlike others. All the numerous dealings that we have had with our friends have convinced us to be quite far-fetched: who is normal? Where is he, your normal man? Show him to us! The artistic act, with the extreme tension that it implies, the high fever that accompanies it, can it ever be considered normal? Finally, mental 'illnesses' are extremely diverse – there are almost as many of them as there are sick people – and it seems quite arbitrary to label them all in the same way. Our point of view is that art is the same in all cases, and there is no more an art of the mad than there is an art of the dyspeptic, or an art for those with bad knees. (Dubuffet 1993: 596)

To think about the sense made in Art Brut, and then see how we might use it to rethink Deleuze's treatment of the schizophrenic, we can turn to the schizophrenic artist Adolf Wölfli (1864–1930). Wölfli lived the majority of his adult life in a Swiss psychiatric hospital, after repeated paedophilic episodes with young children and the diagnosis of schizophrenia. During his time at the Waldau Clinic in Berne, Wölfli began to draw. He was outstandingly prolific, producing 45 volumes, which contained over 25,000 pages and 1,600 illustrations.

His pictures illustrate his psychotic fantasies and delusions. He built his very own world from them, by interpreting his existence in the form

of an autobiographical epic, with fantastical stories of his sainthood and adventures illustrated with kaleidoscopic pages of music, words and colour. For Wölfli art becomes a way of being-in-the-world, since his whole sense of existence is created by his art-making. His creativity becomes the way that he makes sense of his existence and how he deals with life at the psychiatric hospital. This is *raw art*: 'It is Wölfli's greatest achievement that he could create his art both within the domain of his illness and in spite of it. With the pictorial and literary means of this art he was able to express the existential condition that the psychosis forced him to experience, and in so doing, he allows us an insight into his particular *condition humaine*' (Spoerri 1997: 88).

The world that Wölfli created for himself is well illustrated in his picture entitled *General View of the Island Neveranger*. This is a labyrinthine composition created with colour pencil on a sheet of newsprint. It consists of an assemblage of colours, words, musical notes and images, which describe the cartography of a magical space. The piece is infinitely complex, with mandala-like circles bursting with queer creatures, symbols and crosses, the whole composition held together by a skeletal musical stave. One can practically hear a gypsy playing this strange, jolly tune on an accordion to a crowd of skulls with their creepy black eyes, death stares and glum faces. Words are squeezed in all the spaces making the image infinitely complex and utterly engrossing. It is a privilege to be given the chance to see a vision of Wölfli's world. He spent his life locked up; art became his liberation and the source of his sense of being: the realisation (or realising, manifestation, enunciation) of his condition and the counter-actualisation of his suffering. 'Wölfli experienced the 'full collapse in a person' through his illness, and he saved himself by his art, which gave self-assurance to him and meaning to his life' (Spoerri 1997: 88).

Luke Skrebowski argues that Art Brut offers 'a practical approach' for fulfilling Deleuze's schizoanalytic enterprise of 'dismantling the disciplined, unitary self' (Skrebowski 2005: 14–15). He states that by turning to Art Brut one can also fulfil the Stoic philosophy, as outlined in Deleuze's moral philosophy, by activating the kind of philosophy that operates as a 'practice of living', as 'explicitly a practical art, *techne* rather than *episteme*' (5). Skrebowski quotes the Stoic Zeno's aphorism defining art as 'a habit of roadbuilding', in order to emphasise the materiality of Deleuzian thinking and its immediate application as a way of living (5). We can see from the example of Art Brut how Wölfli used his creativity to work out a method of making sense – of both his condition and the world of his delusions – and also a method of being

in the present. Art Brut is defined by untrained artists employing their creativity as a way of life, which is similar to how the Stoics defined their practice of philosophy, and how Skrebowski interprets Deleuzism.

We have seen three possible interpretations of Deleuzian morality through an art practice: Theatre of the Oppressed, art therapy, and Art Brut. These examples have demonstrated how the process of counter-actualisation can be accessed through the creative process of art-making, which then offers a degree of liberation for the artist/patient/participant. As such this creative process acts out a Deleuzian morality, which offers a 'new earth' and 'place of healing' for those who follow it. The individual effects a counter-actualisation and gains restorative sense from the creative process of an art practice.

By now we can begin to see how this creative process might be relevant beyond the situation of the psychotic. To take this further step, we can now turn to Guattari's *Chaosmosis*, a work that confirms the symbiosis we have already seen between ethics/morality and aesthetics, while advocating an art practice in the search for the 'new earth'.[5]

III. Restorative Sense Made: The Ethico-aesthetic Paradigm

The creative process opens up universes of the possible and transversal becomings, as one interacts with material forms and responds to the shifting sense of being – or oneself – that creates with the work. It does not require a therapist to get in touch with the ontogenesis that occurs here, it is something that we can all access. By responding to our being with materials and making an artwork that then composes our presence within the present, we enter into the intrinsic symbiosis between ethics and aesthetics, in accordance with the 'ethico-aesthetic paradigm' that Guattari calls for in *Chaosmosis* (Guattari 1995: 8).

To form a new ethico-aesthetic paradigm we need to think about the implications that the creative process has for subjectivity, for, as Guattari says, a 'pathic agglomeration', or 'constellation of Universes' that are opened up for being (Guattari 1995: 47, 17). The 'artistic cartographies' mapped by the creative process provide what Guattari calls 'a mutant production of enunciation, where expression is not a signifier but a transversal *machine* for the production of difference' (130–1). The artwork formed by this machine is 'the enunciative assemblage'; it is 'a certain mode of aesthetic enunciation' because of the machinery of subjectivation that it opens up for the artist, who can express and counter-actualise their subjection through its creation (14, 29).

For Guattari, this process of creation involves a different kind of subjectivity and a different semiology. It is the realisation of the autonomy, or 'autopoiesis', that provides the definitive sense and ontogenesis of the artwork formed, in the possibilities for difference and restorative sense that it opens for the person who makes it (Guattari 1995: 7). This indicates a semiotics that moves from Hjelmslev's structuralist coupling of Expression/Content and becomes an abstract machine that is not defined by a binary opposition, but as a discursive force with 'energetico-spatio-temporal coordinates' (Guattari 1995: 25). The 'assemblage of enunciation' expressed as the artwork has an existential function – where the symptoms function as an 'existential refrain' in their counter-actualisation and a new mode of subjectivity is invented and becoming (Guattari 1995: 26).

Guattari says that the creative process engenders the invention of new qualities of being. It affirms itself as 'existential nuclei' and 'autopoietic machines', which then provide a new means of communication alongside these new qualities of being (Guattari 1995: 106). The deterritorialised and autonomous segment of the real presented by the artwork has no sign or meaning transcendent to its immanent function of making sense. The sense it makes is one which offers a new way of being-in-the-world:

> The work of art, for those who use it, is an activity of unframing, of rupturing sense, of baroque proliferation or extreme impoverishment, which leads to a recreation and a reinvention of the subject itself. A new existential support will oscillate on the work of art, based on a double register of reterritorialisation (refrain function) and resingularisation. (Guattari 1995: 131)

This creative process defines an art which does not just apply to the activities of established artists, nor just to therapy for the psychotic patient (although we can learn from these examples), but rather offers a subjective creativity 'which traverses the generations and oppressed peoples, ghettoes, minorities…', i.e. which applies to us all (Guattari 1995: 91).

> *How strange the unconscious flow is. Painting can express it. Painting can express anything. Painting is there, even if only to tinker away an afternoon in a mental hospital. Painting is real.*
>
> *Shapes and subjects. What can a farmer who has had a nervous breakdown make of them? Can he be an artist too? Does a scared, sick housewife go back to school to paint? Is the suffering too great to express? Can painting break*

down shyness? Is it fun! No, it isn't fun. It is soothing, however sharp and vicious the badinage of human nature in the therapy room.

Painting, art therapy is an exquisite art. It tells of people and fears. There is dynamo and dynamite in painting. It alleviates suffering and hails freedom, as if no artist was ever frightened of the misery and suffering of the world.

Just think of the universe you can paint. Just think o f all you can paint. It is wonderful.[6]

Notes

1. Perhaps we can use this theatre to play with *Theatre of the Oppressed*, as outlined in part two of this chapter.
2. Quoted in Ruddy and Milnes 2005: 2.
3. Cf. BBC News, 14 September 2008, http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/1/hi/health/7612901.stm (accessed January 2010).
4. Cf. ibid., and also Crawford and Patterson 2007: 69–70.
5. 'It is in underground art that we find some of the most important cells of resistance against the steamroller of capitalistic subjectivity … I simply want to stress that the aesthetic paradigm – the creation and composition of mutant percepts and affects – has become the paradigm for every possible form of liberation' (Guattari 1995: 90–1).
6. 'A comment on art therapy by a long-term resident in a psychiatric hospital': frontispiece to Dalley 1984.

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Guattari's Aesthetic Paradigm: From the Folding of the Finite/Infinite Relation to Schizoanalytic Metamodelisation

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Abstract

This article offers two commentaries on two of Félix Guattari's essays from *Chaosmosis*: 'The New Aesthetic Paradigm' and 'Schizoanalytic Metamodelisation'. The first commentary attends specifically to how Guattari figures the infinite/finite relation in relation to what he calls the three Assemblages (pre-, extant, and post-capitalism) and then even more specifically to the mechanics of this relation – or folding – within the third 'processual' Assemblage or new aesthetic paradigm of the essay's title. The second commentary looks at what Guattari has to say about this paradigm in relation to subjectivity, that is, the schizoanalytic programme or practice of metamodelling. Here the focus is on the turn to asignifying semiotics – but also the importance of signifying material and indeed the actual material scene of encounter – in any programme for the production of subjectivity (it is here also that the symptom makes its appearance).

Keywords: Guattari, finite/infinite, chaosmosis, schizoanalysis, metamodelisation, aesthetic paradigm, fold/folding, chaos/complexity

The only acceptable finality of human activity is the production of a subjectivity that is auto-enriching its relation to the world in a continuous fashion.

The machine, every species of machine, is always at the junction of the finite and infinite, at this point of negotiation between complexity and chaos.

Félix Guattari, *Chaosmosis*

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I. Introduction

I have argued in a recent article that, as regards the subject, a bar is in operation between the finite and the infinite within much post-Kantian philosophy (O'Sullivan 2009).[1] That article dealt explicitly with the philosophical system of Alain Badiou (as laid out in *Being and Event*) as an example of this kind of topology, comparing it with the system of Gilles Deleuze (in *Difference and Repetition*) where there is no such bar, but rather a continuum of sorts. The present article continues this investigation – of the finite/infinite relation – by looking to Deleuze's erstwhile collaborator, Félix Guattari, and to two essays, 'The New Aesthetic Paradigm' and 'Schizoanalytic Metamodelisation', from his major ontological statement: *Chaosmosis: An Ethico-Aesthetic Paradigm*.[2]

However, before beginning this somewhat technical commentary a brief word about the philosophical orientation of the latter complex work might be useful to set the scene: For Guattari there is always an *a priori* moment of creativity, or simply desire, that prefigures any given entity or any subject-object relation.[3] Indeed, life, in whatever form it takes (organic or inorganic), emerges from a ground of sorts – one that is unfixed and ontologically unstable – that at all times accompanies the very forms that emerge from it. Guattari calls this groundless ground 'chaosmosis', whilst the entities formed from it, although they are given different names, can simply be called subjectivities. Elsewhere I have attended specifically to Guattari's writings on the production of subjectivity in what we might call a political sense (see O'Sullivan 2006a: 87–95). The present article attempts to get to grips with this ontological argument behind the politics, while attending more explicitly to the therapeutic or analytic implications of the ontology, and in particular to Guattari's modelling of a processual and ecological subjectivity *contra* Lacan. This is a modelling in which asignifying components become crucial (although not exclusively so) and in which aesthetic practices play a privileged role.

Two further points are worth noting in relation to the above (and in general on reading Guattari), each of which, at least to a certain extent, works to differentiate his thought from Deleuze's. First, as well as looking to certain philosophical resources, Guattari utilises the paradigm of the new sciences, and especially quantum theory, where he finds the conceptual tools adequate for his processual modelling. This can make *Chaosmosis* a difficult read, especially for those used to a more typical humanities, or even 'continental philosophical' discourse.

Second, even when his writings are most abstract, Guattari is always especially attentive to the vicissitudes of our particular lived late-capitalist situation. This is evidenced in two further preoccupations of *Chaosmosis*: the identification of capitalist or 'universal' time that flattens and reduces local and singular durations; and the emphasis on new technologies that produce an ever increasing alienation and atomisation, but that also have the potentiality to produce new forms of life – and subjectivity – that go beyond the latter. Indeed, Guattari, perhaps more so than any of the other post-'68 French thinkers, holds to this utopian view of technology's promise.

What follows then, are two commentaries of sorts on Guattari's two essays, where commentary is to be understood as involving not just synopsis (although I attempt also to provide this) but also the expansion – and acceleration – of certain aspects of the commented-upon text, as well as occasionally a diversion or digression. Throughout, and especially in the lengthy footnotes, material is drawn in from the other essays of *Chaosmosis* as appropriate and occasional reference is made to Guattari's collaborations with Deleuze. Reference is also made to other thinkers who are either more or less contemporary with Guattari – especially Badiou, Foucault and Deleuze himself – or are important philosophical pre-cursors, for example Spinoza and Bergson. Each of these thinkers, with the exception of Badiou, might be said to be working within a similar aesthetic paradigm to Guattari's in the sense of positing a mind-body parallelism and in attempting a mode of thought beyond the subject-object split. In what follows then, when these thinkers do make an appearance it is because they can add something – from their own diagrams as it were – to Guattari's own particular diagram of the infinite/finite relation.

II. The Three Assemblages

At the very beginning of 'The New Aesthetic Paradigm' Guattari makes the important point that art, considered as a separate autonomous activity, is a relatively recent development in our world and that before this it was part of what we might call the general practices of life and of living. This is, as Guattari points out, difficult to appreciate as the past is invariably understood from the perspective and also the logics and interests of the present. Although specific instances of contemporary art might then be part of the aesthetic paradigm, the notion of art in general can stymie access to the latter in that it reduces aesthetic practice to a specialism. In a first definition then, the aesthetic paradigm might be

thought of as an expanded field of creative life practices that are not necessarily restricted to what is typically considered art, and, as such, this paradigm certainly has something in common with previous or pre-modern paradigms.

We are not, however, fully within this expanded aesthetic paradigm, but rather experience and produce the latter through a number of distinct practices each of which operates as an interface between the finite and infinite. Such practices, which include 'science, technology, philosophy, art and human affairs', are involved in their own distinct explorations and experiments (100). They conduct their local enquiries following their own logics and using their own particular means. With art it is 'the finitude of the sensible material' that 'becomes a support for the production of affects and percepts which tend to become more eccentred with respect to performed structures and coordinates' (100–1). Art involves a finite assemblage that presents the infinite to us in a specifically different and singular manner in *contra* distinction to the more typical assemblages that surround us on a day-to-day basis. In fact, this 'metabolism of the infinite' might be figured as moving in two directions: from the finite to the infinite but also as a 'movement from infinity to the passage of time' (101). In passing it is worth noting that this movement is also transversal in another sense, in that a 'mutation' in one practice or particular area of life can have effects on another. As opposed to a thinker like Badiou, for whom an event's effect is solely vertical as it were, here the event – of the finite presenting the infinite/the infinite becoming embodied in the finite – is horizontal, working *across* milieus. This is to map out an immanent field of events (or infinite/finite interfaces) without a supplementary dimension above or behind them. I will return to this below.

As we shall see, the aesthetic paradigm, which is implied in art practice though not fully realised, has a particular privileged role to play in the production of subjectivity in our contemporary world. Aesthetics in general, however, or what Guattari calls 'a dimension of creativity in a nascent state', is also characteristic of pre-capitalist societies that are involved in the production of 'polysemic, animistic, transindividual subjectivity' (aspects of which can also be found in our time in the 'worlds of infancy, madness, amorous passion and artistic creation') (101). Guattari describes this first type of territorialised Assemblage as follows:

> Polyphonic spatial strata, often concentric, appear to attract and colonise all the levels of alterity that in other respects they engender. In relation to them,

> objects constitute themselves in transversal, vibratory position, conferring on them a soul, a becoming ancestral, animal, vegetal, cosmic. These objectities-subjectities are led to work for themselves, to incarnate themselves as an animist nucleus: they overlap each other, and invade each other to become collective entities half-thing, half-soul, half-man, half-beast, machine and flux, matter and sign... (102)

This then is a *proto*-aesthetic paradigm in which the distinctions of subject-object have yet to be fixed and reified, a world of strange mutually implicated beings cohering around objects and practices (in 'Machinic Heterogenesis' Guattari presents a case study, following Marc Auge, of just such a complex practice in the voodoo object/ritual/belief of 'Legba' [46]).[4] It is also a world in which 'the spheres of exteriority are not radically separated from the interior', but rather implicated in a general folding that is also a reciprocal fold of the infinite and the finite (102). As Guattari remarks: '[h]ere there is no effort bearing on material forms that does not bring forth immaterial entities. Inversely, every drive towards a deterritorialised infinity is accompanied by a movement of folding onto terrritorialised limits...' (103).

The second kind of deterritorialised Assemblage – the capitalist regime proper – involves an ordering and reduction of the first. It 'erects a transcendent autonomised pole of reference' over and above what we might call the multiplicity of worlds evident in the previous regime (103). This is the instalment of dualisms or binary oppositions each of which necessarily involves the setting up of a privileged term. This might involve fixing a transcendent 'Truth', or notion of the 'Good', the 'Beautiful' and so forth, but crucially it is also the implementation of Capital as ordering principle of lived life and the concomitant reduction of heterogenetic multiplicity to the principle of exchange. This then is a flattening (exchange principle) and also a hierarchisation (with Capital at the apex). We might say that such a regime is one that subjects its people (albeit a subjection often masked by slogans invoking individual freedom and the possibilities of participation: Nike's 'just do it!' and the like). In technical terms, it involves a 'segmentation of the infinite movement of deterritorialisation' (the latter, as argued in *Anti-Oedipus*, being the determining factor of capitalism in so far as capitalism *is* desire) that 'is accompanied by a reterritorialisation' (again, following *Anti-Oedipus*, this capture might be thought as the second moment of capitalism – the capture, or siphoning off of surplus value from the flows of desire) (103).[5] In this Assemblage then, '[t]he valorisation which, in the preceding illustration, was polyphonic and rhizomatic, becomes bi-polarised' (103). Here subjectivity is under the rule of the 'transcendent

enunciator', held in a constant state of lack, debt, procrastination and so forth (104). Immanence is captured by a transcendent apparatus and, as such, subjectivity is standardised through the neutralisation of difference.[6]

The above two Assemblages cannot be reduced to specific epochs for they can, and invariably do, co-exist within the same period (for example, animist beliefs and practices co-exist with advanced capitalism in the hyper-modern culture of Japan). Likewise, the third Assemblage is present within our own – although only in an embryonic state. It bears some relation to the first, but crucially does not involve a simple return (if this were ever a real possibility), but, we might say, a return that is itself coloured by its passage through the second Assemblage. Certainly, the third Assemblage, the aesthetic paradigm proper, has in common with the first that the interiority of atomised individuated subjects is exploded and that a multiplicity of different regimes and practices are implicated.[7] However the difference – between first and third – is important. As Guattari remarks:

> One does not fall back from the regime of reductionist transcendence onto the reterritorialisation of the movement of infinity in finite modes. The general (and relative) aestheticisation of the diverse Universes of value leads to a different type of re-enchantment of the expressive modalities of subjectivity. Magic, mystery and the demonic will no longer emanate, as before, from the same totemic aura. Existential Territories become diversified, heterogenised. (105)

This affirmation of difference is then not animist in the sense of the first paradigm. It is not, we might say, a return to a pre-individual subjectivity composed of a-personal strata. For, as Guattari goes on to say: 'The decisive threshold constituting this new aesthetic paradigm lies in the aptitude of these processes of creation to auto-affirm themselves as existential nuclei, autopoietic machines' (106). Difference, or alterity, is then cohered together rather than dispersed as in the first Assemblage. I will be returning below to the crucial question of how this existential 'stickiness' takes place, but we can note here that it involves the invention of 'mutant coordinates' (106). Indeed, ultimately, it is art's capacity to engender 'unprecedented, unforeseen and unthinkable qualities of being' through the invention of such different coordinates that gives it a privileged place within the third Assemblage (106). As Duchamp once remarked (and as quoted by Guattari): 'art is a road that leads towards regions which are not governed by time and space' (101).[8]

It is also important to remember that, as noted above, this third Assemblage will be marked by its passage through the second. In fact, I would argue it involves an implementation of sorts of the strategies of the second albeit with a significantly different orientation and for different ends: whereas there is a general *over*-coding in the second, here there is the instalment of *local* coding or singular points of organisation. We might usefully turn to the late writings of Foucault at this point and insert the diagram of 'the care of the self' into Guattari's aesthetic paradigm. Here, subjectivation, or the active production of subjectivity by the subject itself, involves a particular relationship to any outside transcendent organiser. In fact, it involves what we might call a 'folding-in' of transcendence within the subject (or, in Foucault's terms, the application of 'optional rules' to oneself).[9] For both Foucault and Guattari it is this 'folding-in' of the outside – by the subject on his or her own terms – that constitutes a freedom of sorts from subjection. It is, as it were, a certain intention and orientation that will also involve a programme (Foucault's technologies of the self/Guattari's metamodelisation) in which the subject, ultimately, assumes its own causality (or in Lacan's paradoxical claim 'becomes a cause of itself').

It is here that we can also see the logic of Guattari's interest in the new sciences inasmuch as they involve a similar reorientation from a transcendent Truth to what Guattari calls 'operational modelisations that stick as close as possible to immanent empiricism' (106). This is the privileging of points of view over any objective and universal Archimedean point. It is also the operating logic of schizoanalysis that itself involves a turn away from the standard and normalising models of psychoanalysis, tied as they are to the second Assemblage (106). It is only a short step from this to Guattari's theory of metamodelisation, understood as a theory of the auto-composition of different models of subjectivity that involves the incorporating, repositioning – and implicating – of the models of the first and second Assemblages (106).

Guattari gives us a succinct description of how this new kind of Assemblage implies a different mode of organisation – or 'crystallisation' – that draws on the two previous Assemblages: 'No longer aggregated and territorialised (as in the first illustration of Assemblage) or autonomised and transcendentalised (as in the second), they are now crystallised in singular and dynamic constellations which envelop and make constant use of these two modes of subjective and machinic production' (108). The third Assemblage is then a composition of sorts that involves components of both the previous:

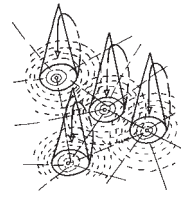
a 'folding-in' of the transcendence of the second Assemblage that in itself produces autopoietic nuclei around which the fields of alterity of the first Assemblage might crystallise. This is also to fold the outside – or infinite – within; to produce a relation to one's self that is akin to self-mastery (when the latter is understood also as self-organisation).[10] In this aesthetic paradigm we become the authors of our own subjectivities. This is not however solely the production of separate and isolated monads, for such an autopoietic folding is always accompanied by an allopoietic function in which a given subject maintains lines of connection – or 'multidirectional relays' – to an outside, including other subjects (114). In fact, each monad is always already ontologically related inasmuch as they are constituted on the same plane of immanence or 'ground' of the first Assemblage. In passing it is worth remarking that the actual political work of locating non-transcendent commonalities within the third Assemblage – or, we might say, of developing a politics of singularity – must invariably be one of continuous experimentation and testing; it cannot be given in advance as a general, or transcendent rule. To conclude this first section we might then diagram the three Assemblages and their attendant subjectivities thus:[11]



1. Territorialised Assemblage
Pre-Capitalist (trans-individual)
(Immanence/animist)



2. Deterritorialised Assemblage
Capitalist (individual)
(Transcendent over-coding)



3. Processual Assemblage
Post-Capitalist (post-individual)
('Folding-in' of transcendence/
autopoietic nuclei)

plolysemic/collective **standardisation/reduction** **autonomous/singular**

Figure 1. The Three Assemblages

III. Folding the Infinite

We come now to the more technical part of Guattari's essay with the laying out of precisely how this interface between the finite and the infinite – or between the subject and the object – operates. Guattari's claim for his 'transversalist' theorisation of enunciation (that applies as much to specific practices as it does to the very cosmos itself)

is that it establishes a bridge of sorts between the finite and the infinite, and, crucially, 'postulate(s) the existence of a certain type of entity inhabiting both domains, such that the incorporeals of value and virtuality become endowed with an ontological depth equal to that of objects set in energetico-spatio-temporal coordinates' (108). In Guattari's words 'these transversal entities appear like a machinic hypertext', and further, imply that 'Being', far from being pre-established, or operating as some kind of container for life (or for 'all the possible modalities of being'), is, in fact, 'auto-consistency, auto-affirmation, existence for-itself deploying particular relations of alterity' (109). This self-crystallisation, or form constituting itself from the formless, applies as much to non-human and indeed inorganic life as is does to the human (after all, even molecules, as assemblages, have a virtual aspect). Guattari calls this active, generative and transversal process 'machinic being' (109).[12] Such machines, or self-organising entities, have then two specific aspects – or face in two directions: towards the finite and towards the infinite:

> The machinic entities which traverse these different registers of the actualised world and incorporeal Universes are two-faced like Janus. They exist concurrently in a discursive state within molar fluxes, in a presuppositional relationship with a corpus of possible semiotic propositions, and in a non-discursive state within enunciative nuclei embodied in singular existential Territories, and in Universes of ontological reference which are non-dimensioned and non-coordinated in any extrinsic way. (110)

The precise nature of these entities which face the virtual (the 'non-discursive, infinite character of the texture of these incorporeals') and the actual (the 'discursive finitude of energetico-spatio-temporal Fluxes and their propositional correlates') is unclear, but the manner of this strange co-existence involves speed (110).[13] For Deleuze, reading Spinoza, this would be the absolute speed of the Third Kind of Knowledge that surveys all things at the same time in eternity.[14] Here, for Guattari, it is Pascal who defines the operation of these entities as 'a point which moves everywhere at infinite speed because it is at all places and whole in each place' (110, Guattari quoting Pascal). Only such 'an entity animated by an infinite speed... can hope to include both a limited referent and incorporeal fields of possibles' (110).

For Guattari, however, this Pascalian modelisation is not enough, producing as it does 'an ontologically homogeneous infinity' (110). The aesthetic paradigm is more generative and productive than this, involving 'more active and activating folds of this infinity' (110). In order

to develop this line of argument, Guattari introduces here a further two terms, somewhat synonymous with the infinite and the finite, namely chaos and complexity. Each of the latter interpenetrates the other in a chaosmic folding – with the entities traversing the two fields. Here is the crucial passage from Guattari on this finite-infinite weave:

> It is by a continuous coming-and-going at an infinite speed that the multiplicities of entities differentiate into ontologically heterogeneous complexions and become chaotised in abolishing their figural diversity and by homogenising themselves within the same being-non-being. In a way they never stop diving into an umbilical chaotic zone where they lose their extrinsic references and coordinates, but from where they can re-emerge invested with new charges of complexity. It is during this chaosmic folding that an interface is installed – an interface between the sensible finitude of existential territories and the trans-sensible infinitude of the Universes of reference bound to them. (110–11)

This oscillation gives the entities their character of consistency *and* dissolution, of complexity *and* chaos. Furthermore, the difference between the two milieus does not amount to a dualism as such given that both 'constitute themselves from the same plane of entitative immanence and envelop each other' (111). We might at this point insert Bergson's cone of memory from *Matter and Memory* into the Guattari diagram and point out that although there may indeed be no binary opposition between the two realms – of the actual and the virtual – there is nevertheless a difference in kind.[15] Without this difference the infinite, or virtual, would not be a force of creation and difference but would remained tied to the plane of matter and to the logic of the possible (the entities would always be just 'more of the same' as it were). As Deleuze remarks – and the same might be have been said by Guattari – this virtuality does not lack reality, only actualisation (cf. Deleuze 1988b: 96–7). The virtual is then not a transcendent realm above the actual but is its very ground, the stuff from which the actual is actualised as it were. It is in this sense that we can understand chaosmosis as itself virtual. This is immanence without a supplementary dimension and implies a non-hylomorphic (or self-organising) thinking of matter.

Indeed, Guattari points out that the 'primordial slowing down manifested in finite speeds' is already present *in* chaos (112), or simply that 'infinite speeds are loaded with finite speeds' (113). We might say that chaos already contains complexity and that complexity is always already composed out of a chaos from which it emerges and towards which it returns.[16] Furthermore, this chaosmic texture is lumpy, as it

were. It is in fact less a case of an oscillation between two distinct and absolutely separate fields than of multiple encounters between different entities that are composed out of these two fields.[17] These entities, as well as being spatially heterogeneous, will also be so temporally. They will keep time in different ways, each individual entity vibrating at a different frequency, or, in Bergsonian terms, implicating a different duration. This is to posit a kind of patchwork of different rhythms or refrains. The present is never temporally homogeneous in this sense, but is always a multiplicity of these space-time machines.[18]

Here is the second crucial statement from Guattari on the finite/infinite relation:

> So chaosmosis does not oscillate mechanically between zero and infinity, being and nothingness, order and disorder: it rebounds and irrupts on states of things, bodies and the autopoietic nuclei it uses as a support for deterritorialisation; it is relative chaotisation in the confrontation with heterogeneous states of complexity. Here we are dealing with an infinity of virtual entities infinitely rich in possibles, infinitely enrichable through creative processes. (112)

The relationship between virtual and actual, between infinite and finite is then incarnated in different entities in an entirely reciprocal manner. As Guattari remarks: 'the same entitative multiplicities constitute virtual Universes and possible worlds' (113), or, as he also says, '[t]he movement of infinite virtuality of incorporeal complexions carries in itself the possible manifestation of all the components and all the enunciative assemblages actualisable in finitude' (112). The entity – and here perhaps we should also say the subjectivity – is at once a part of the world and apart from the world. More accurately, it has a part of itself in the world as actualised but also a part in that groundless ground – the virtual – from which it has been actualised. But crucially this is not a split subject as such (there is no bar between the two), and as such neither is it a melancholy subject (a being barred from the infinite in its very finitude). Rather it is a subject that is always already eternal, composed of different speeds all the way up to the infinite. A properly Spinozist subject.

Guattari suggests that the production of this entity necessarily involves a 'grasping' of the infinite that in itself involves an ontological slowing down. This – a gestural semiotics that has precursors in ancient Greek epistemology, but that is equally a product of Guattari's knowledge of phenomenological psychiatry – implies a meeting of sorts with something that provides some kind of friction: '[a]n incorporeal complexion,

snatched up by grasping, will only receive its character of finitude if the advent-event of its encounter with a trans-monadic line occurs, which will trigger the exit, the expulsion of its infinite speed, its primordial deceleration' (114). The entity or 'complex entitative multiplicity' has to be cohered, or 'indexed' to use Guattari's term, by 'an autopoietic nucleus' (114). This moment of grasping and of slowing occurs then when the complex-chaotic field of the infinite encounters what Guattari calls a 'trans-monadism' (114). The latter introduces within chaos an 'ordered linearity' that allows 'the ordination of incorporeal complexions to crystallise' (114). Guattari likens this process to 'the pickup head of a Turing machine' arguing that 'linearity, the matrix of all ordination, is already a slowing down, an existential stickiness' (115).[19] Like a tape-head that spools tape, or perhaps a turntable stylus that picks up dust and static, '[t]he chaotic nothing spins and unwinds complexity' carrying out 'an aggregative selection onto which limits, constants and states of things can graft themselves' (114). This is then the second, more active folding of chaosmosis that produces a teeming ecology of entities, a virtual-actual life world. In Guattari's arresting phrase, it is 'the 'choice' of finitude' (116): 'Transmonadism through the effect of retro-activity crystallises within the primitive chaotic soup spatial coordinates, temporal causalities, energy levels, possibilities for the meeting of complexions, a whole ontological "sexuality" composed by axiological bifurcations and mutations' (115).

It is this transmonadic line, an 'infinite twisting line of flight', that slows chaos down, in the process organising it and giving it a consistency (116).[20] Ultimately then, what is at stake in this new paradigm is the tracking of this creative and experimental line of flight, which we might call, following the analysis of the three Assemblages above, a 'folded-in' transcendence. This line, which is also an autopoietic nucleus or, in the language of the new sciences, a 'strange attractor', involves the production of unforeseen new infinite/finite diagrams, which is to say, precisely the production of new subjectivities, different, more flexible and processual than those typically produced within and by the second Assemblage discussed above.[21] This, finally, is the aesthetic paradigm proper, or the production of 'new infinities from a submersion in sensible finitude, infinities not only charged with virtuality but with potentialities actualisable in given situations...' (117). Such a paradigm also enables us to redefine politics and ethics around these processes of singularisation as specifically productive and generative pursuits. This will involve breaking with consensus, reduction, standardisation, and what Guattari calls 'the infantile "reassurance" distilled by dominant

subjectivity', as well as the affirmation of a 'heterogenesis of systems of valorisation and the spawning of new social, artistic and analytic practices' (117).[22] Ultimately it is a call to participate in the auto-production of our own subjectivities, that in itself implies an auto-relationship to ourselves (the folding-in). This will mean drawing our own diagrams of the infinite/finite relation and mapping out our own terrain of their operation. It is to the pragmatics of this specific cartographic operation that we will now turn.

IV. Metamodelisation

What precisely are the mechanisms or technologies that would allows us to produce ourselves differently, or, in the terms of the above commentary, to rearticulate our own relationship with the infinite and thus constitute ourselves as different finite/infinite composites? Put bluntly, what are the practical and pragmatic implications for the production of subjectivity of the new aesthetic paradigm as Guattari outlines it? These questions can be approached by way of the essay on 'Schizoanalytic Metamodelisation', wherein we find Guattari's distinct and complex *analytic* take on the production of subjectivity. In fact, Guattari pitches his theory of metamodelisation against what he sees as a bankrupt psychoanalysis that, as a form of structuralism, insists on reducing all aspects of semiotic modelling to 'syntagmatic articulations' in which any 'points of ontological crystallisation', for example 'phonological gestural, spatial, musical, discursivities', become 'annexed to the same signifying economy' (59–60). Psychoanalysis, for Guattari, is then a paradigmatic example of the second Assemblage as explored above. In its place Guattari lays out his own system and anti-structure of sorts that attends specifically to a more expanded semiotics (asignifying and signifying) *and* to the processual nature of the production of subjectivity that in itself foregrounds the singular and local nature of each crystallisation of Being. We can see immediately that this schizoanalytic project is implicit in the aesthetic paradigm, and, as such, involves the production of subjectivities leading from the third Assemblage discussed above.

In order to theorise this schizoanalytic programme – or theory of metamodelling (the two terms are used more or less synonymously) – Guattari provides his own distinct articulation of the four ontological functions that determine any given 'discursive system' or 'refrain of ontological affirmation' (60).[23] They are as follows:

	Expression actual (discursive)	**Content** virtual enunciative nuclei (non-discursive)
possible	Φ = machinic discursivity	**U** = incorporeal complexity
real	**F** = energetico-spatio-temporal discursivity	**T** = chaosmic incarnation

Figure 2. 'The Assemblage of the Four Ontological Functions', Diagram from Guattari's 'Schizoanalytic Metamodelisation', *Chaosmosis* (60)

Guattari's organisational schema owes much to Hjemslev, from whom the expression/content framework is taken (and which is Guattari's response to the Saussurean signifier/signified framework determinant in Lacanian modelisations). Any given being – or enunciative assemblage – might be seen to be constituted across these four realms. As far as the real goes, F denotes the actual constitution of any given entity within space and time, whilst T denotes the chaosmosis out of which that entity has emerged (and towards which it tends in a movement of its own dissolution). On the possible side, Φ denotes the actual machinic nature of the entity – its autopoietic and allopoietic character as it were, whilst U denotes the virtual 'universes of reference' or 'incorporeal complexity' that are available to, or opened up by, this machinic discursivity.[24]

The key intention here is to complexify rather than reduce the components that make up any given instance of subjectivity (especially those that instigate the reign of a master signifier or any rule of transcendence [again, as in the second Assemblage]). The above box – or matrix – thus allows for a multiplicity of different pathways and arrangements to be diagrammed. This is schizoanalytic metamodelisation. As Guattari remarks:

> Schizoanalysis does not... choose one modelisation to the exclusion of another. Within the diverse cartographies in action in a given situation, it tries to make nuclei of virtual autopoiesis discernible, in order to actualise them, by transversalising them, in conferring on them a diagrammatism (for example, by a change in the material of Expression), in making them themselves operative within modified assemblages, more open, more deterritorialised. Schizoanalysis, rather than moving in the direction of reductionist modelisations which simplify the complex, will work towards

> its complexification, its processual enrichment, towards the consistency of its virtual line of bifurcation and differentiation, in short towards its ontological heterogeneity. (60–1)

Guattari's metamodelisation is thus an attempt to proliferate models and also to combine models, or parts thereof, which might otherwise be seen as non-compatible.[25] Crucially, the 'nuclei of partial life', which hold the assemblage or entity together (and which are, as we have seen, determinant in the third Assemblage above) involves a kind of 'self-knowledge' of 'being-in-the-world' that 'implies a pathic apprehension which escapes energetico-spatio-temporal coordinates' (61). At stake then is a kind of auto-cohesiveness – or rhythm – that operates *prior* to signification. Nevertheless, this self-constitution might well involve narration as a secondary cohering mechanism of sorts:

> Knowledge here is first of all existential transference, non-discursive transitivism. The enunciation of this transference always occurs through the diversion of a narration whose primary function is not to engender a rational explanation but to promote complex refrains, supports of an intensive, memorial persistence and an event-centred consistency. It is only through mythical narratives (religious, fantasmatic, etc.) that the existential function accedes to discourse. (61)

Guattari's argument here is that such 'narration' operates as a refrain, which is to say it is stripped of its signifying and discursive function in favour of the 'existential transference' of the non-discursive. Guattari gives us two examples of just such narrative refrains, or what we might call myth-systems: Christianity, which ultimately produces a 'new subjectivity of guilt, contrition, body markings and sexuality. Of redemptive mediation . . .'; and Freudianism, which produces an 'Unconscious presented as universe of non-contradiction' and a pragmatics of 'transference and interpretation' (62). For Guattari, Freud himself was in fact a veritable inventor of concepts and narratives, opening up vast new possibilities for the modelisation of subjectivity, but Freudianism 'quickly encountered limits with its familial and universalising conceptions, with its stereotyped practice of interpretation, but above all with its inability to go beyond linguistic semiology' (63). Freudianism, we might say, involved a petrification of the generative models of Freud, and a reduction of the latter to a wholesale signifier enthusiasm.

Crucially, whereas for psychoanalysis it is neurosis that operates as model, for schizoanalysis, following this notion of metamodelisation, it is psychosis: '[b]ecause nowhere more than here is the ordinary

modelisation of everyday existence so denuded; the "axioms of daily life" stand in the way of the a-signifying function, the degree zero of all possible modelisation' (63). It is this confrontation with chaos (over which the above narrations are cast, as it were) that positions psychosis in such a privileged position as regards metamodelisation (and indeed the aesthetic paradigm more generally). As Guattari remarks: 'The schizo fracture is the royal road of access to the emergent fractality of the Unconscious' (64). As such, psychosis is not just an illness or aberration, but also an indication of, and insight into, our own ontological condition as chaosmotic entities:

> Psychosis is not a structural object but a concept; it is not an irremovable essence but a machination which always starts up again during any encounter with the one who will become, after the event, the psychotic. Thus here the concept is not an entity closed in on itself, but the abstract, machinic incarnation of alterity at the point of extreme precariousness; it is the indelible mark that everything in this world can break down at any time. (64)

As well as involving asignifying rupture, psychosis also has its own narration – or produces its own myths (idiosyncratic, local, often strategic). Indeed the psychotic is a prodigious inventor of stories and concepts, and, like anyone else, has his own refrains that cohere a self or multiple selves, however fragile and transitory these might be (I will return to this below). Metamodelisation is, then, an anti-structure of sorts in which different elements (signifying and asignifying, discursive and non-discursive) become loosened, moving between terrains, migrating across the four quadrants of Guattari's model. Guattari introduces Daniel Stern's child ethology as paradigmatic of this new and more fluid modelling of relations, involving as it does a mapping of the infantile world or 'primary assemblage of subjectivation' that involves existential territories and incorporeal universes that have yet to be fixed on the father, mother, and so forth (65). Crucially this emergent self ('atmospheric, pathic, fusional, transitivist') is not itself a phase 'since it will persist in parallel with other self formations and will haunt the adult's poetic, amorous and oneiric experiences' (66).[26] In the collaboration with Deleuze, this emergent self is redefined as a 'becoming-child'; not a nostalgic return to childhood but the mobilisation of 'blocs of childhood' within a so-called 'adult' life. Becoming-child is just one moment in an ongoing series or processual programme that ultimately involves less human becomings, even inorganic ones (and, as such, we can understand one of the key

preoccupations of *A Thousand Plateaus* in terms of an exploration of the resonances between the first and third Assemblages discussed above).[27]

A further important developmental aspect of this emergent self is the discovery of 'sharable affects', or the 'recognition of the fact that the other can experience something that the subject experiences for itself' (67). The emergent self (that continues throughout life, but is habitually 'masked' or erased by typical subjectivity) is one that knows no subject-object duality. 'It is at the heart of this proto-social and still pre-verbal Universe that familial, ethnic, urban, etc., traits are transmitted' (67). Further phases follow, including the entry into language, but again, these phases – which we might also call, following Guattari's terminology, 'Universes of reference' – are not sequential but are rather 'superimposed in a kind of incorporeal existential agglomeration' (67). This is a crystallisation rather than a topology, a complex assemblage in which any given universe might foreground – or actualise – itself at any given time. Just as each of the three Assemblages are superimposed on one another within our own epoch, so the different aspects of a 'self' or a given subjectivity are likewise layered in a kind of palimpsest. Indeed, one might say that schizoanalysis, like the aesthetic paradigm more generally, involves the locating of an access point – or line of flight – from a given petrified individuality or transcendent mode of organisation. It is in this context that we must understand Guattari's paradigmatic redefinition of the symptom, in this case the lapsus, which becomes 'not the conflictual expression of a repressed Content but the positive, indexical manifestation of a Universe trying to find itself, which comes to knock at the window like a magic bird' (68). Here the semiotic (the index), the ethological (the bird against the glass) and the discursive (the scenario as metaphor) are combined in a modelling in which the symptom is no longer proxy from an unconscious that is always already there, but rather a precursor of an unconscious that is yet to come. The only way to 'shift petrified systems of modelisation' (and to open up to more expanded versions of the latter) is to follow these symptoms, to cross the barriers of non-sense and access 'asignifying nuclei of subjectivation' (68). We might say that, in Guattari's system, the symptom offers an escape route from the impasses of the present, or, simply, belies the very presence of the infinite within the finite.

However, as we have seen, the rupturing of given signifying regimes is only one of the gestures of schizoanalysis. The other is more constructive and might well involve the reintroduction of signifying material – alongside other material – in a local and singular modelisation. In fact, I would argue that this utilisation of signifying material might

be figured in three temporal sequences. First, it might come *after* the accessing of any asignifying nuclei. This would be a retroactive recognition, as it were, an 'Ah, so that's what it was!', or even an 'Ah, so that's me!'[28] It might also, however, operate *prior* to the asignifying nuclei as a kind of platform or catalyst. Here signifying material is predictive, even prophetic. In both these cases what is at stake, as mentioned above, is the production of alternative narratives and myth-systems. I would argue that this is a kind of performative 'fictioning' in the sense that it will take existing signifying materials – with their order words and master-signifiers – but reorder or reframe them in a local and singular constellation (and for different ends). We might say here that fiction can operate as the friction – the cohering mechanism – discussed above. A third moment might be the use of signifying material in *parallel* with any asignifying moment. Here writing, for example (as Foucault notes in his comments on the ancient Greek practice of self-writing, or *hupomnemata*), itself operates as a pragmatic technology in the actual processual production of subjectivity.[29] This is not to re-privilege the signifying over the asignifying but to note that the signifying element cannot be ignored (and in fact Guattari is always at pains to point out that signifying semiotics play their part in schizoanalysis).[30]

A confrontation with chaos then, but also the concomitant construction of an assemblage to give the latter consistency, to make it *workable*. This programme need not be abstract (although having an abstract diagram will foster a more general or generic applicability). Indeed, it might simply involve the encounter and use of different elements of the world/the body – signifying *and* asignifying – in a specifically different manner. In relation to this, Guattari gives us the example of the treatment of a psychotic. The description amounts to a succinct statement of the method of schizoanalysis:

> The treatment of a psychotic, in the context of institutional psychotherapy, works with a renewed approach to transference, focused henceforth on parts of the body, on a constellation of individuals, on a group, on an institutional ensemble, a machinic system, a semiotic economy, etc. (grafts of transference), and conceived as desiring becoming, that is to say, pathic existential intensity, impossible to circumscribe as a distinct entity. The objective of such a therapeutic approach would be to increase as much as possible the range of means offered in the recomposition of a patient's corporeal, biological, psychical and social Territories. (68)[31]

We are given the example of the kitchen at *La Borde* as just such a complex arena of heterogenetic encounter, a machinic assemblage

and veritable 'opera scene' of resingularisation (69). In such an assemblage, '[s]chizoanalytic cartography consists in the ability to discern those components lacking in consistency or existence' (71), and consequently in reintroducing them (or others) so as to allow individuals to resingularise themselves (or simply to creatively break debilitating patterns and petrified modellings – and produce new ones). In this respect it is especially the collective nature of institutional analysis that is important, when this collectivity is understood as operating at both the molecular and molar register, as sub- and supra-individual. To quote Guattari:

> Note that collective is not here synonymous with the group; it is a description which subsumes on the one hand elements of human intersubjectivity, and on the other pre-personal, sensitive and cognitive modules, micro-social processes and elements of the social imaginary. It operates in the same way on non-human subjective formations (machinic, technical and economic). It is therefore a term which is equivalent to heterogeneous multiplicity. (70)

This emphasis on collectivity, especially in terms of the pre-personal, involves a 'repudiation of the universalist and transcendent concepts of psychoanalysis which constrain and sterilise the apprehension of incorporeal Universes and singularising and heterogenetic becomings' (72).[32] Indeed, Guattari's metamodelisation is here, once more, pitched specifically against the 'fundamental linearity' of the Lacanian signifier that 'homogenises the various semiotics' and thus 'loses the multidimensional character of many of them' (22). As an illustration of this colonising function of the signifier Guattari gives us the example of Lacan's interpretation of Freud's Fort-Da game. For Freud it is a game of absence and presence (of the mother) and ultimately of a repetition compulsion that moves towards death. Lacan, instead, 'ties it down to the signifying discursivity of "existing language" ': '[t]hus the reel, the string, the curtain, the observer's gaze, all the singular characteristics of the assemblage of enunciation fall into the trap of the Signifier' (74).

Schizoanalysis, on the other hand, will attend to the asignifying semiotics of the game that have been 'overlooked' in this interpretation, 'recognising that with this refrain the child encounters unforeseen Universes of the possible, with incalculable, virtual repercussions. . . '.[33] Here the Fort-Da assemblage is less a theatre of language (or the playing out of an oedipal drama) than a 'desiring machine', 'working toward the assemblage of the verbal self – in symbiosis with the other assemblages of the emergent self – and thereby inaugurating a new mastery of the object, of touch, of a spatiality. . . ' (74–5). Guattari does not dismiss the

Lacanian theorisation *tout court* (as we have seen, signifying economies of narrative might well be crucial in cohering a subject), but places it along side other modelisations in a more expanded analytic framework.

Worth noting here is also Guattari's own take on Freud's insight regarding repetition and the death drive. For Guattari it is less the 'encounter or relation of intimate intrication between two distinct drives, Eros and Thanatos, [than] a coming and going at infinite speed between chaos and complexity' (75). A reciprocal relation between consistency and its loss, between 'differentiated complexion' and 'chaosmic submersion' (75). In the terms of the present essay, it is a relation – reciprocal, always in process, fragile and dynamic – between the finite and the infinite. We are then at the heart of schizoanalytic metamodelisation returned to Guattari's ontology, which informs his analytic framework and is informed by it. It is a post-human ontology and practice (inasmuch as the human is invariably a transcendent apparatus – or projection on to immanence), one in which Freud's decentring of the subject (in relation to the drives) is further deterritorialised on to an even more general field of 'chaosmic immanence' (75). The important point here is that individuation from this field, when it does occur, need not necessarily lie along typical lines or involve those habitual patterns that invariably produce atomised and alienated 'individuals'.[34] Indeed, the goal of schizoanalysis is precisely to reconnect the petrified models of subjectivity to the field of desire from which they have been extracted, a technique that involves a confrontation with chaosmosis but then also that one models it differently, utilises other models alongside the more familiar ones, and holds all models lightly and strategically.[35]

For Guattari this metamodelisation, which involves the production of new kinds of relation to our own finitude as well as to the infinite of which we are part, has, of course, a pressing urgency given our present ecological crises.[36] Indeed, the dominant paradigm of subjectivity today involves, as we saw in the first part of this essay, an homogenisation of life and its capture by transcendent points, especially the exchange principle. This is the organisation of subjectivity around money and material production solely for its own sake (a subject that sees the world as separate object and purely as a resource to be exploited). Such a subjectivity cannot but involve a certain kind of blindness, or wilful ignorance, both to its own finitude (and that of the world), *and* to those virtual ecologies – the infinite – of which it is an actualised part. Indeed, it would not be an exaggeration to say that the removal of these blinkers and the concomitant refiguring of the finite/infinite relation in alternative

modellings is a matter of our own survival as well as that of the world in which we find ourselves.

V. Concluding Remarks

Chaosmosis contains the most condensed and worked out statement of Guattari's very particular and complex schizoanalytic cartography. It also operates as itself a machine of sorts: a grasping and gathering of different materials that might be mobilised in the general project of forming an ontology 'beyond' the subject-object split and, leading on from this, of constructing a form of institutional analysis beyond Lacan (hence the many references to other thinkers, the new sciences, and so forth). In particular this philosophical and analytical programme involves the theorisation of chaosmotic entities, an emphasis on asignifying semiotics, and the concomitant mapping out of an aesthetic paradigm for subjectivity in which process, or processuality, is foregrounded. One of the most important aspects of this project is its negotiation of the capitalist regime of transcendent capture. Indeed, it seems to me that Guattari's insights here concerning 'auto-poetic nuclei of subjectivation', or what I call the 'folding-in' of transcendence, suggest a potentially very useful 'up-dating' of Foucault's thesis on the 'care of the self'.

To a certain extent the essays in *Chaosmosis* repeat the same arguments from different perspectives and with different emphases – all of them characterised by a certain polemical urgency and an animating desire for a form of life that is not solely determined by capitalism with its principles of standardisation and homogenisation. Capitalism's reduction of subjectivity and of life in general is countered by a call for a complexification and resingularisation that, rather than closing down on mutation, opens itself up ever further to creativity and invention. This proliferation of models is the second important aspect of Guattari's writings, and in this sense *Chaosmosis* reads like Science Fiction, producing worlds beyond this one and inventing new terms with which to articulate and describe them.

Indeed, *Chaosmosis* offers us a theory of metamodelisation, but also a modelisation itself, one premised on Guattari's very particular ontology. Adjacent to this Science Fiction narrative and conceptual toolbox we are also given – though case studies such as *Le Borde* – ample evidence that any theoretical work must itself be put to work in larger and more diverse realms of heterogenetic encounter. This is the third and arguably most important aspect of Guattari's thesis. Indeed, the paradoxical

nature of Guattari's writings is that while they are often dense and complex, they call for something deceptively simple, namely, that each of us interact with each other and the world in a specifically *different* manner. It is a call to become an active participant in changing our lives as they are at this moment, not to wait for an event that might force us to change. In fact, the nature of the event itself changes: it no longer 'arrives' from an infinite that is barred from the finite, but names the reciprocal inter-penetration of the finite and infinite. This is to figure the world as a complex weave of micro-events – or simply becomings.

In conclusion then, Guattari suggests a continuum of sorts between the finite and the infinite. This fundamentally anti-theological view positions him against a certain post-Kantian tradition of philosophy (and psychoanalysis) that would erect a bar between phenomena and noumena, the real and the symbolic, and so forth. It also, however, places him in a rich alternative tradition, running from the pre-Socratics to Spinoza and from Nietzsche to Bergson, in which subjectivity – or the finite – becomes the means of accessing the infinite as well as its very substance. It is, of course, this very same line of anti-state philosophers that Deleuze claims as his own. No wonder then that when this anti-psychoanalyst and activist, this drawer of diagrams and inventor of concepts, met the contemporary philosopher of immanence, the thinker of absolute difference, they each found in the other not only a fellow traveller but also a stranger, someone who might take them on further adventures of thought. Would it be an overstatement to say that Deleuze and Guattari's collaboration itself diagrammed a new relation of the finite and the infinite? Certainly in works like *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus* many strange entities appear, traversing multiple fields, moving at different speeds and often evidencing what Deleuze saw in Spinoza, and what lies at the heart of Guattari's *Chaosmosis*: a certain absolute velocity or infinite speed of thought.

Notes

1. This bar, that effectively stymies access to the infinite, might also be figured as what Quentin Meillassoux has called the 'correlation', or that form of thought – and consequent form of subjectivity – that figures the object as always-already determined by the subject (Meillassoux 2008). Meillassoux's notion of the 'arche fossil' points to a way out of the correlation in that it is an element of the universe that pre-exists man and thus the correlation itself (see Meillassoux 2008: 10). A confrontation between Guattari's theory of the production of subjectivity as a diagram between the finite and the infinite *and* the so-called 'Speculative Realist' philosophers who effectively jettison the subject from ontology is one that I leave for another time, though it is worth noting here

that Guattari's theory of subjectivity is certainly not restricted to the human, and indeed, following the arguments in *Chaosmosis*, might be said to involve any interface between the finite and infinite whether this be human or animal, organic or inorganic.

2. All page number references below are to *Chaosmosis* unless stated otherwise.
3. As Guattari remarks in an earlier interview: 'For Gilles Deleuze and me desire is everything that exists *before* the opposition between subject and object, *before* representation and production. It's everything whereby the world and affects constitute us outside of ourselves, in spite of ourselves. It's everything that overflows from us. That's why we define it as flow [*flux*]' (Guattari 1996a: 205). Guattari is talking here specifically about *Anti-Oedipus* and the refiguring of desire as plenitude (rather than lack) that takes place in that book, but replace desire with chaosmosis and we have a statement about his own solo writings (indeed, perhaps the most notable change in the ten or so years between this interview and *Chaosmosis* is Guattari's reframing of the question of desire and desiring-machines in terms of chaos and complexity). In the interview from which the above is extracted Guattari is interested especially in the repression of this desire – or what he calls micro-fascisms. In the terms of *Chaosmosis* micro-fascisms might be understood a those models of subjectivity that are hierarchised, organised around transcendence – and, crucially, have become petrified.
4. And in 'Machinic Orality and Virtual Ecology', an essay concerned with mapping the resonances between psychosis and creativity, we are given another 'definition' of such practices that might in fact also be part of the aesthetic paradigm:

> Strange contraptions … these machines of virtuality, these blocks of mutant percepts and affects, half-object half-subject, already here in sensation and outside themselves in fields of the possible. They are not usually found at the usual marketplace for subjectivity and maybe even less at that for art; yet they haunt everything concerned with creation, the desire for becoming-other, as well as mental disorder or the passion for power. (92)

5. See especially Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 34–5.
6. This 'effacement of polysemy' might be seen in the standardising individuating mechanisms of web 2.0 that masquerade as interactive and participatory (for example Facebook). Indeed, Guattari is prescient here, as elsewhere, as regards the dangers (as well as hopes) of new media, referring to a language 'rigorously subjected to scriptural machines and their mass media avatars. In its extreme contemporary forms it amounts to an exchange of information tokens calculable as bits and reducible on computers' (104).
7. I attend further to this point in relation to *A Thousand Plateaus* in my article 'Pragmatics for Future Subjectivities (*Probe-heads!* Or how to Live in the Face of Fear)' (O'Sullivan 2006b).
8. Duchamp is the privileged exemplar of the aesthetic paradigm, as evidenced also in Guattari's definition of the readymade (in this case the *Bottlerack*) in the essay 'Ritornellos and Existential Refrains' as a 'trigger for a constellation of referential universes…' (Guattari 1996b: 164). Although Guattari is increasingly seen as providing the theoretical model for expanded practices beyond the object – as in relational aesthetics (see Bourriaud 1998) – we can see in the three Assemblages, or at least in the third, the importance of an object of sorts as an intentional point around which a subjectivity might cohere. This point of self-assertion or autonomy will necessarily involve a break with

typical transcendent schema and signifying regimes, and, as such, art once more points the way: as Guattari remarks in 'On the Production of Subjectivity': '[a] singularity, a rupture of sense, a cut, a fragmentation, the detachment of a semiotic content – in a Dadaist or surrealist manner – can originate nuclei of subjectivation' (18).

9. For Foucault this 'care of the self' involves certain technologies (meditation, friendship, etc.), but especially personal and ethical codes of conduct that determine a freedom of sorts from any transcendent schema that subjects. Foucault writes of this in a number of places, see as indicative example the essay 'Technologies of the Self', and also the interview 'On the Genealogy of Ethics' (Foucault 1994: 223–52 and 253–80, especially page 266). For further thoughts on the connection between Guattari and Foucault, especially in relation to different practices, see my essay 'The Care of the Self and the Production of the New' (O'Sullivan 2008).
10. Deleuze also attends to this folding of the outside, in relation to Foucault's late writings, in the final chapter, 'Foldings, or the Inside of Thought', of his book on *Foucault* (Deleuze 1988a: 94–123). As Deleuze remarks there, in relation to subjectivation: 'It is as if the relations of the outside folded back to create a doubling, allow a relation to oneself to emerge, and constitute an inside which is hollowed out and develops its own unique dimension' (100). This, for Deleuze's Foucault, is specifically to bend external power relations within. Deleuze remarks that this folding – or doubling – might also be understood as memory: '[m]emory is the real name of the relation to oneself. Or the affect on self by self' (107). Indeed, it would seem to me that the folding of the outside in – or the infinite into the finite – precisely constitutes the 'pure past' of Bergson's schema (see the diagram in endnote 15).
11. Is it a coincidence that the third Assemblage (as I have drawn it) resembles the klein bottle used by Lacan as a model of the psyche?:

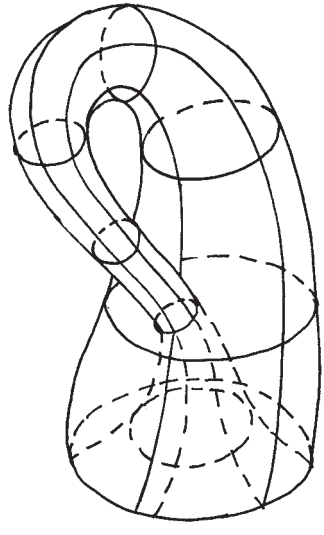


Figure 3. Klein Bottle

This is a model in which transcendence has been 'folded-in' and the subject has thus become a cause of himself or herself (the goal of analysis). Although

there is not the space to develop this here, one might argue that the same 'manoeuvre' – the folding-in of transcendence – is at stake in both Spinoza's Third Kind of Knowledge (no longer being subject *to* a world) and Nietzsche's Eternal Return (the affirmation of which enables a mastery of one's own destiny).

12. The notion of machinic being is developed in the essay 'Machinic Heterogenesis' where the 'entities' are defined as 'abstract machines' that traverse chaos and complexity, giving the different levels of being 'an efficiency, a power of ontological auto-affirmation' (35). In that essay Guattari extends his machinic ontology out to the universe, positing the existence 'of other autopoietic machines at the heart of other bio-mecanospheres scattered throughout the cosmos' (51), whilst at the same time, following the new aesthetic paradigm, foregrounding the importance of 'machines of desire and aesthetic creation' in today's 'assemblages of subjectivation' (54).
13. In 'Machinic Orality and Virtual Ecology' these pre-objectal 'entities' are defined in psycho-, or schizoanalytic terms: 'In the wake of Freud, Kleinian and Lacanian psychoanalysts apprehended, each in their own way, this type of entity in their fields of investigation. They christened it the "part object", the "transitional object", situating it at the junction of a subjectivity and alterity which are themselves partial and transitional' (94). This notion of part objects is itself part of the genesis of Deleuze and Guattari's 'desiring-machines' that further 'rupture with Freudian determinism', situating the latter in more expanded and incorporeal 'fields of virtuality' (95).
14. For a discussion of this form of knowledge, that constitutes a kind of becoming-world, see the section on 'Beatitude' in *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza* (Deleuze 1992: 303–20). In 'Machinic Orality and Virtual Ecology' Guattari would seem to have Spinoza in mind when he describes new practices of orality – such as performance art – as involving 'a search for enunciative nuclei which would institute new cleavages between other insides and other outsides and which would offer a different metabolism of past-future where *eternity will coexist with the present moment* [my italics]' (90).
15. See 'Of the Survival of Images: Memory and Mind' (Bergson 1991: 133–78). Here is the diagram in question:

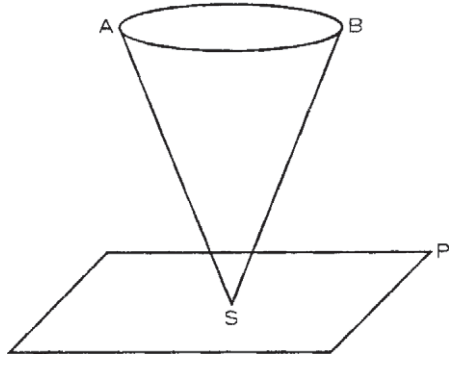


Figure 4. Diagram from Bergson's 'On the Survival of Images', *Matter and Memory*

AB represents the virtual or 'pure past', P the realm of matter ('my actual representation of the universe'), and point S the present being of any

given subjectivity that 'moves forwards unceasingly' (Bergson 1991: 152). By superimposing the above on the diagram of the third Assemblage we get a composite diagram that points towards a double movement of the production of subjectivity: the folding-in of transcendence (movement down from apex) and then the actualisation of the virtual (movement up from inverted apex).

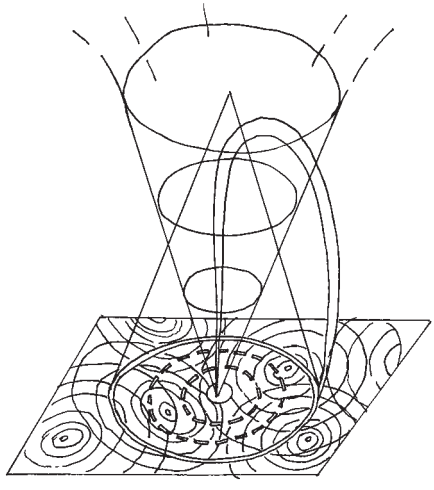


Figure 5. The Double Cone (Bergson-Guattari Composite)

16. See also *What is Philosophy?* where the three great forms of thought – art, philosophy, science – are characterised as *chaoids*: 'compositions' or 'daughters' of chaos (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 204). In many ways *Chaosmosis* is a supplement to *What is Philosophy?* inasmuch as the latter concerns itself with this relation between chaos and complexity. Franco Berardi develops this connection – between *Chaosmosis* and *What is Philosophy?* – in his recent book *The Soul at Work* where the business of productively and affirmatively negotiating this chaos is defined precisely as the work of the book's title. In fact, Berardi offers a more sobering account of the relation to chaos than explicitly put forward in *Chaosmosis*, thinking the former through also in connection to the increasing old age of our world and the concomitant loss of consistency in its subjectivities. See especially 'The Poisoned Soul' in the latter book (Berardi 2010: 106–83), and, in direct relation to Guattari, the chapter on 'The Happy Depression' in the book on Guattari (Berardi 2008: 9–15). It is worth noting that for Berardi, chaosmosis is not only the ontological ground of our being but also the name for the 'info-sphere' understood as the increasing omnipresence and acceleration of media within our lives (put bluntly, information overload). Berardi's thesis on old age (and depression) is then tied to the concomitant asymmetrical relation between transmitters (machinic technologies) and receivers (biological organisms), a temporal asymmetry that leaves us either too open to the world (schizophrenia), or, in reaction, too closed (depression).
17. Or as Guattari has it in 'Schizo Chaosmosis': '[a]nd chaos is not pure indifferentiation; it possesses a specific ontological texture. It is inhabited by virtual entities and modalities of alterity' (81).
18. In 'On the Production of Subjectivity' these entities are defined as 'existential refrains' to draw attention to this temporal aspect. Here is the paragraph in full

where Guattari articulates the refrain's local temporalisation, or what we might call singular crystallisation of time:

> What we are aiming at with this concept of the refrain aren't just massive affects, but hyper-complex refrains, catalysing the emergence of incorporeal Universes such as those of music or mathematics, and crystallising the most deterritorialised existential Territories. This type of transversalist refrain evades strict spatio-temporal delimitation. With it, time ceases to be exterior in order to become an intensive nucleus [*foyer*] of temporalisation. From this perspective, universal time appears to be no more than a hypothetical projection, a time of generalised equivalence, a 'flattened' capitalistic time; what is important are these partial modules of temporalisation, operating in diverse domains (biological, theological, socio-cultural, machinic, cosmic. . .) and out of which complex refrains constitute highly relative existential synchronies. (16)

19. As Guattari remarks in 'On the Production of Subjectivity': 'An incorporeal universe is not supported by coordinates embedded in the world, but by ordinates, by an intensive ordination coupled for better or worse to these existential territories' (28). These 'incorporeal universes' or virtual ecologies might be productively thought as the content of Bergson's cone (see endnote 15). The 'grasping' here then is the work of an active and creative memory.
20. In the essay 'Schizo Chaosmosis' this 'giving consistency' is figured as 'worlding':

> worlding a complexion of sense always involves taking hold of a massive and immediate ensemble of contextual diversity, a fusion in an undifferentiated, or rather de-differentiated whole. A world is only constituted on the condition of being inhabited by an umbilical point . . . from which a subjective positionality embodies itself. (80)

Again, this 'worlding' takes place 'before space and time, before spatialisation and temporalisation' (81).

21. Deleuze attends similarly to a transmonadic line that produces a new kind of subjectivity in his own solo book post *What is Philosophy?*: *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque* (Deleuze 1993). See especially the last few pages where Leibniz's monad, that 'submit[s] to two conditions, one of closure and the other of selection' is prised open 'to the degree that the world is now made up of divergent series (the chaosmos)' (Deleuze 1993: 137). This is the replacement of monadology with 'nomadology', defined as involving 'new ways of folding' (137). Indeed, in general, it seems to me that Deleuze's book parallels Guattari's investigations albeit utilising Leibniz rather than the new sciences in mapping out the possibility of a more processual subjectivity.
22. Guattari ends 'The New Aesthetic Paradigm' with a consideration, and redefinition, of the body as in fact always already a multiplicity of different bodies, different inter-faces, that intersect and that are 'open to the most diverse fields of alterity' (118). Indeed, the body – as it is for Bergson and Spinoza – is the very name of the relation, but also the means of passage, between the actual and virtual (or the finite and infinite). This might be compared with Badiou where the body is the name for that which stymies access to the infinite.
23. In the final essay of *Chaosmosis* this refrain is named the 'ecoscopic object' and the four quadrants become its four dimensions – or strata – of existence. As Guattari remarks: '[w]ithin each of these strata, each of these Becomings and Universes what is put into question is a certain metabolism of the infinite, a threat of transcendence, a politics of immanence' (125).

24. We might usefully compare this particular diagram of the real/possible and actual/virtual with Deleuze's own on the same from *The Fold*:

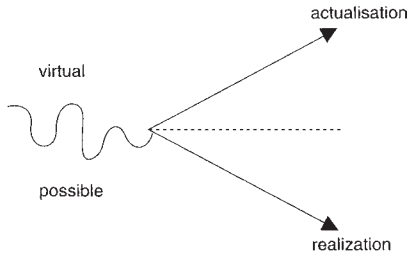


Figure 6. Diagram from Deleuze's 'The Two Floors', *The Fold*

Deleuze's accompanying comments are as follows:

> The world is a virtuality that is actualised in monads or souls, but also a possibility that must be realised in matter or bodies … The process of actualization operates through distribution, while the process of realization operates by resemblance. This raises the especially delicate point. For if the world is taken as a double process – of actualization in monads and of realization in monads – then in what does itself consist? How can we define it as *what* is actualized and realized? We find ourselves before events. (Deleuze 1993: 105)

Although there is not space here to work out the specific resonances (and differences) between Deleuze's and Guattari's two paradigms of subjectivity, it does seem to me that it is also the idea of 'subjectivity as event' (an actualisation *and* a realisation) that is at stake in Guattari's aesthetic paradigm.

25. This latter intention is even more direct in other earlier diagrams, for example this one, taken from Guattari's essay 'The Pace of the Signifier in the Institution':

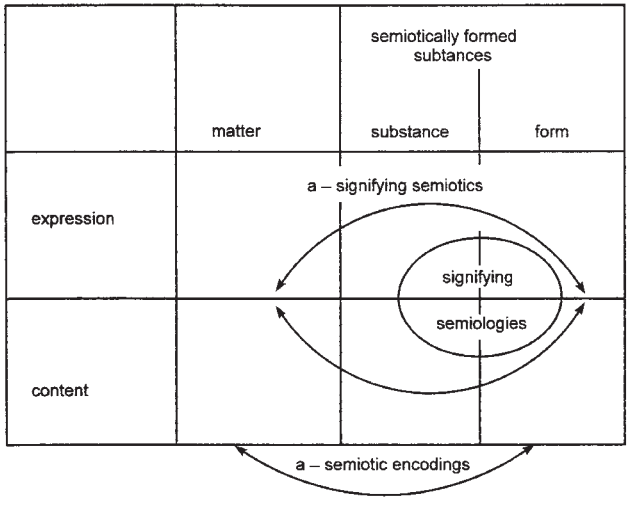


Figure 7. Diagram from Guattari's 'The Place of the Signifier in the Institution', *The Guattari Reader*

As Janell Watson points out, this diagram – or metamodel – 'swallow[s] up Lacan's models of the linguistically-dominated psyche' (Watson n.d.: n.p.). One can see this clearly in the diagram where signifying semiologies are placed in a larger context of asignifying semiotics and the Hjemselvian categories of form, content, substance and matter are used to expand and complexify the dualisms of signification. Watson draws attention to the importance of 'asignifying semiotics' in this framework precisely because they bypass substance and involve form working directly on matter. This then is to avoid signifying regimes altogether (and thus, theoretically, the various capitalist subjectivities produced by them). This asignifying semiotics might also be called the aesthetic paradigm, involved as it is in the production of blocs or entities composed of sensations and intensities.

26. The notion of the 'atmospheric' is important to schizoanalysis. See David Reggio's interview with Jean Oury where the latter links this interest back to Tosquelles' earlier experiments in institutional psychotherapy: 'I've always said, and will continue to say in drawing upon Tosquelles and others, that atmosphere, ambience, is important because today we have the grave ideologies of the pseudo neurosciences which say that atmosphere is not important' (Reggio n.d.: n.p.).
27. See especially the section 'Memories of a Molecule' in Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 272–86.
28. This is in fact to somewhat follow Deleuze and Guattari in *Anti-Oedipus*, where the subject is always in process – a residuum of the consummation between the productivity of the desiring-machines (attraction), and the anti-production of the body without organs (repulsion) – *but also* the product of a retroactive recognition (Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 16–22). As Deleuze and Guattari say, a ' "So it's *me*!" ' (Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 20).
29. *Hupomnemata* were notebooks and other diaries, account books, and so forth that constituted 'a material and a framework for exercises to be carried out frequently: reading, rereading, meditating, conversing with oneself and others' (Foucault 2000: 210). Their purpose, as Foucault remarks, 'is nothing less than the shaping of the self' (Foucault 2000: 211).
30. In passing it is worth noting that we can clearly see this co-existence of signifying and asignifying semiotics within contemporary art practice, in so far as it involves each of the three moments above. For a discussion along these lines see my essay 'From Aesthetics to the Abstract Machine: Deleuze, Guattari, and Contemporary Art Practice' (O'Sullivan 2010).
31. This is mirrored in Jean Oury's own take on the work at *La Borde*: '[w]e work at the level of the poetic, a level infinitely more complex than the logic of computers and neuroscience ... We work at the level of gestures here at *La Borde*. This is within the domain of what is called the "deictic"' (Reggio n.d.: n.p.).
32. Or, in more simple terms:

> For psychoanalysis the unconscious is always *already there*, genetically programmed, structured, and finalized on objects of conformity to social norms. For schizoanalysis it's a question of constructing an unconscious not only with phrases but with all possible semiotic means, and not only with individuals or relations between individuals, but also with groups, with physiological and perceptual systems, with machines, struggles, and arrangements of every nature. (Guattari 1996a: 206)

33. In the earlier interview quoted above Guattari refers to this asignifying semiotics as a semiotics of the body: 'what I call the semiotics of the body, is something specifically repressed by the capitalist-socialist-bureaucratic system. So I would

say that each time the body is emphasised in a situation – by dances, by homosexuals, etc. – something breaks with the dominant semiotics that crush the semiotics of the body' (Guattari 1996a: 205). Such a semiotics will involve what Deleuze and Guattari call a 'becoming-woman' when this involves forms of sexuality and subjectivity that are specifically non-phallocentric and thus closer to the 'situation of desire' (Guattari 1996a: 205; Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 275–7). In passing, it is important to note that asignification does not only work in the direction of the 'liberation of desire', but can also be part of its repression. Gary Genosko alerts us to this important point when he writes, for example, of the 'triggering action' of 'part signs' – 'PINS/passwords', 'the magistripe-reader encoding-decoding relation' that 'do without mental representation' and that allow or block access to information and the like (Genosko 2009: 96–9).

34. As Guattari has it: 'To speak of machines rather than drives, Fluxes rather than libido, existential Territories rather than instances of the self and of transference, incorporeal Universes rather than unconscious complexions and sublimation, chaosmic entities rather than signifiers . . . ' (126).
35. Although Guattari does not address this directly it would seem to me that meta-modelisation will require the development of introspective strategies to break certain modelisations (or simply habits). I have addressed this elsewhere in relation to meditation (O'Sullivan 2008: 99–100). Guattari's attitude is that such breaks happen through group interaction, but, one might ask, how can one really work with collectivity on the molecular and sub-individual without some kind of practice of introspection?
36. Guattari links his thesis of metamodelisation to the practice of 'ecosophy' in the final essay of *Chaosmosis*:

> The ecological crises can be traced to a more general crises of the social, political and existential. The problem involves a revolution of mentalities whereby they cease investing in a certain kind of development, based on productivism that has lost all human finality. Thus the issue returns with insistence: how do we change mentalities, how do we reinvent social practices that would give back to humanity – if it ever had it – a sense of responsibility, and not only for its own survival, but equally for the future of all life on the planet, for animal and vegetable species, likewise for incorporeal species such as music, the arts, cinema, the relation with time, love and compassion for others, the feeling of fusion at the heart of the cosmos. (119–20)

This final essay draws out the political implications of the ontology and ethics, as I have called them above, of Guattari's system – a politics that would be post-human in that it attends to *other* forms of organic and inorganic life. This 'science' of ecosophy might be said to be the extension of schizoanalysis from the institution to the world (see also *The Three Ecologies*). Importantly, once more, the arts and the aesthetic paradigm more generally have a privileged place inasmuch as art can produce the new subjectivities Guattari's ecosophy calls for and gestures towards:

> The artist – and more generally aesthetic perception – detach and deterritorialise a segment of the real in such a way as to make it play the role of partial enunciator. Art confers a function of sense and alterity to a subset of the perceived world. The consequence of this quasi-animistic speech effect of a work of art is that the subjectivity of the artist and the 'consumer' is reshaped . . . The work of art, for those who use it, is an activity of unframing, of rupturing sense, of baroque proliferation or extreme impoverishment, which leads to a recreation and reinvention of the subject itself. (131)

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The Secret of Theory

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Abstract

This article focuses on the concept of the secret in Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy, with specific attention to the related concepts of becoming-woman and literature. It contrasts Deleuze and Guattari's immanent mode of reading with oedipal theories of the text and hermeneutics. Whereas Deleuze and Guattari argue for the positivity of the secret, where there is content that is not disclosed and that therefore creates lines of perception and interpretation, the oedipal mode of reading regards the secret as a (negative) effect of reading.

Keywords: the secret, Literature, becoming-woman

What is the relation between the oedipal trauma and the text, and how might this question negotiate a perceived demise, irrelevance or resistance to theory? We can begin by noting that, today, the remnants of the oedipal frame still operate in the work of Judith Butler, Slavoj Žižek and Joan Copjec, all of whom argue that it is the distance from any 'thing in itself' that produces a maternal beyond and an Other who prohibits our enjoyment of that beyond.[1] It is because we are located within difference, system and language that we imagine some ground beyond system – some Thing – and then fantasise that 'beyond' as Woman. It is our subjection to interpretation and decoding that leads us to posit an ultimate secret or sense from which we are removed, the knowledge of which is held by the Other. Oedipus is not the secret of our being, but the fantasy frame through which we live the absence and impossibility of the secret (Laplanche 1999). All we are given are things, never the Thing, and it is this experience of the fragmented that induces the plenitude from which the fragment is supposedly detached.

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Self-aware reading or theoretical reading would attend to the ways in which texts, as structures of difference, produce the hidden. Theoretical reading reverses the metalepsis that would posit a sense that is *then* subjected to textuality. Theory is not a decoding of content but an attention to the construction of the very fantasy of content.

To read, then, is to attend to the frame through which the fragment or part object produces, through its very fragmentation, a hidden and unrepresentable plenitude. If theory is a reflection upon how a text is viewed then the oedipal complex is the theoretical endeavour par excellence, the 'theory' of every child who is condemned to read a world whose sense is necessarily hidden. Oedipus, according to Jean Laplanche, is not a theory imposed upon the text in the sense of a code or rubric, such that one might find oedipal structures or desires of authors expressed through the text. For Laplanche, the condition of extrinsic subjectivity – the condition of having to *read* the other whose very being offers itself as enigmatic – generates the oedipal fantasy. Oedipus is not so much the truth of our being as the fantasy frame that restores a centre of truth to an existence that is necessarily decentred. It is not that there is a truth that Oedipus allows us to read; it is the very absence of truth – the non-being of the secret of our existence – that is covered over by the structure of Oedipus. The idea of a sense or truth that we must have repressed is produced in and through the oedipal fantasy. The Copernican turn of Freudian theory occurs with the recognition both of Oedipus as the child's fantasy – that 'our' world is lived from the point of view of a subject who reads a seducing other – *and* with the concomitant idea that this fantasy occurs through the violent intrusion of the signifier. Experience, in its human dimension of dependency, is never centred on itself but always lived through the other, an other whose existence is presented as a secret to be decoded. To know the other's desire, to overcome the limits within which one's relation to the other is mediated, is not only lived by the infant in oedipal form; every adult gaze at the self-contained, complete and blissfully centred world of the infant animates the oedipal fantasy, the fantasy of an original subject whose joy is not yet subjected to the trauma of signification.

Shoshana Felman (1983; 1987), responding to the Lacanian articulation of this relation between signifier/text and the desire to know or interpret the other, brings the oedipal fantasy to the very centre of literary practice. The idea of a sense or presence held by the other (that might be disclosed through interpretation) structures every act of reading. The secret around which the text circles must be imagined in order for any text to be read (as a message), but is also, for all its

necessity, strictly impossible. The subject who gives herself to be read is effected through the distance of the signifier, and is produced *as secret* and *as hidden* only through textual relations. The secret of the text is therefore central to the metaphysics of presence: there must be some original sense that subtends relations. At the same time, the necessary secrecy of sense undoes the fantasy of presence: we are always within relations, always subjected to the enigma of the text; the secret that would be there to be disclosed is effected *as secret* only through its dissimulation.

Despite first appearances, it is the concept of the secret in the work of both Jacques Derrida and Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari that, in quite different ways, challenges both the supposedly necessary oedipal frame of the text *and* transforms the status of what it is to read a text theoretically. Theory would go beyond re-living the fantasy of a presence mediated by the other – what Deleuze refers to as the 'neurotic novel' – and would produce a genesis of secrecy. In the case of Deleuze and Guattari certain writers and certain genres liberate the sense of the text from *the secret* by producing points of view that generate an impersonal 'secrecy'. For Derrida it is the 'absolute secret' that takes us beyond the sublime structure of the original secret (which appears to remain in itself before difference) moving towards a radically singular secret which opens each textual frame. There is no secret in general.

Deleuze and Guattari locate their discussion of the secret in their 'plateau', '1730: Becoming-Intense, Becoming-Animal, Becoming-Imperceptible' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987). The threshold date of 1730 is significant,[2] as this section concerns the overcoming of the subject who is set over against a world to be interpreted. The original 'Copernican turn' to the subject occurs with Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* in 1781, with the thing 'in itself' being regarded as necessarily presupposed but essentially unknowable. This turn to the subject was preceded by fifty years of Leibnizian, Humean, Cartesian and Newtonian theories of the nature of time and space. By locating their memoirs of the secret in this plateau, Deleuze and Guattari indicate that their understanding of secrecy allows for the reversal of a tradition in which thought (and the intuition of time and space) is subjected to signification and mediation. Whereas Kant had precluded theoretical knowledge of things in themselves, Deleuze and Guattari insist that theory is not the recognition of one's distance from sense, but a way of intuiting the life from which sense emerges (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 255). The secret has a reality productive of, rather than reducible to, textual relations. It may be the case that life gives itself through relations

and perceptions, but there are potentials or singularities that are not exhausted by relations: 'The secret has a privileged but quite variable relation to perception and the imperceptible. The secret relates first of all to certain contents. The content is *too big* for its form' (286).

Deleuze and Guattari begin from an ontology of the secret which is insistently anti-oedipal and is tied to the affirmation and reality of the virtual. It is not that the needs of real material life generate a lack (and subsequent desire) which is then supplemented by the phantasm of the 'thing in itself' or ultimate secret. Rather, life in its full and open virtuality proliferates with a secrecy from which any limited or material reality is contracted. The child, like the animal or like 'molecular perception', perceives worlds that are not reducible to those of signifying 'man'. It is not the case that we exist within signification, with the secret being effected fantasmatically after the event. On the contrary, the secret exists, insists and has a force beyond constituted structures.

This is why for Deleuze and Guattari there is both the secret as content and the secrecy of the perception of the secret – both the perceiving of what is imperceptible (the perception of the child who sees beyond fixed forms and stable identities), and the awareness that there are worlds of others (the perceptions of secret societies). Deleuze and Guattari refuse the modern capitalist oedipal paradigm of *the* subject who, by virtue of the fact that he speaks, is always already caught up in one overarching system (a system whose outside is a dark beyond). There are secrets, they argue, beyond the man of speech and recognition, beyond the subject who feels the limit of his perception as a sublimity that gives him a *sensus communis*:[3] 'There is always a woman, a child, a bird to secretly perceive the secret. There is always a perception finer than yours, a perception of your imperceptible, of what is in your box' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 287). Beyond the shared public axiomatic system of the man of reason, whose world is perceived as it would be for all others from the point of view of the subject in general, the perception *that there is a secret* produces other societies, or what Deleuze and Guattari refer to as 'the war machine' – connections of bodies linked through perceptions that are not yet overcoded as being those of 'man in general' (287). 'Man' is the subject whose world is submitted to the 'paranoid machine' where there is a prohibited secret that remains necessarily 'beyond' (289). 'Becoming-woman', becoming-child and becoming-imperceptible are styles of secrecy that wage war on the collective structure. The 'minor' secrets of the child are hysterical rather than paranoid, defined by a singular perception – the secret of this *not yet generalised* haecceity (344).

In addition to transforming the ontology of the secret by arguing that there *is* secrecy – or a power to be perceived that exceeds constituted relations, an imperceptible world that gives itself to be seen – Deleuze and Guattari also offer a specific history of the secret. In modernity 'the secret is made into a structuring organizing form' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 289). The childhood hysterias of *secrets* – perception of potentials that are irreducible to the constituted systems of collective speech – give way to a binary structure of sexual difference. There must be a truth or 'beyond' of man in general, *the* secret from which we are all distanced but the enigma of which compels us to enter into an interminable circuit of exchange and debt without exit: 'We go from a content that is well defined, localized, and belongs to the past, to the a priori general form of a nonlocalizable *something* that has happened. We go from the secret defined as a hysterical childhood content to secrecy defined as an eminently paranoid form' (288). As the 'secret is made into a structuring, organizing form', it is woman who takes on the role or position of absent content. It is not surprising that Deleuze and Guattari mention courtly love here, which for the Lacan of Seminar VII heralded the oedipal structure of modernity. It is precisely through *not* being given or attainable that the woman of courtly love withdraws from sense, becoming secret. And this yields what Lacan refers to as an ethics of dependency; it is the absence of the object that precludes my enjoyment, even though the object is produced as the guarantee of *jouissance* only through its obstacles and secretion. Deleuze and Guattari note that this structure of secrecy is constituted through *speed*; the deferral of the object of courtly love produces woman as distant. It is not that a content or secret is then hidden, but that the positive series of displays, rituals and manifestations produces woman, not as one who has a secret, but *as* secret: 'They have no secret because they have become a secret themselves' (289).

If woman as secret – the hidden sense that subtends signifying subjectivity in general – structures modernity, this nevertheless enables a liberation through a traversal of fantasy, or what Deleuze and Guattari refer to as 'deterritorialisation'. If one relates to the secret *not* as man, for whom there is a prohibited content that is the ultimate but absent sense of his being, but as woman for whom there are no secrets because she has *become* nothing more than secrecy, then one moves beyond the binary structure of subject versus world. Secrecy is no longer structured by an interpreting subject who must relate to the enigma of his being; secrecy is diffused, becoming a perception of potentialities to disclose or give *more* than the present: 'This is where the secret reaches its ultimate

state: its content is molecularised, it has become molecular, at the same time as its form has been dismantled, becoming a pure moving line – in the sense in which it can be said a given line is the 'secret' of a painter, or a given rhythmic cell, a given sound molecule (which does not constitute a theme or form) the 'secret' of a musician' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 290). In this development of the 'feminine line' there is not a subject who speaks and whose world is therefore necessarily enigmatic, hidden and beyond; there is not *one* structuring relation that grounds all relations. Rather, there is a pre-personal secrecy of singularities. *Life* is just an interacting relay of perceptions, with potentials being actualised only in their relations to other potentials. Against the filiation (or mother-father-child) nexus of the psyche, Deleuze and Guattari oppose the 'epidemic' of the molecule, where relations are not determined in advance by a hidden form:

> We oppose epidemic to filiation, contagion to heredity, peopling by contagion to sexual reproduction, sexual production.... The difference is that contagion, epidemic, involves terms that are entirely heterogeneous: for example, a human being, an animal, and a bacterium, a virus, a molecule, a microorganism. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 241–2)

It is not that there are terms that are *then* perceived; terms are created through perceptions. Such networks or 'fibres' nevertheless involve an essential secrecy, precisely because a perception of what is perceived does not exhaust the perceptible; to perceive is to become in relation to what is other, but otherness does not give itself fully in this relation. The secret is becoming-woman not because woman is the negation or absent 'other' of man (*the* secret), but because to perceive the world not as it is for the subject in general but in terms of its singular powers (to be perceived) is positively different from the man of reason. Becoming-woman is at one with Deleuze and Guattari's ontological and political commitment to immanence. There is not a subject in general whose world is mediated through a system – the secret as 'gray eminence' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 290). Rather, life is a power of multiple secrets, a proliferating secrecy: a life that gives itself to be perceived while always being more than what is perceived, bearing the potential for further secrecy, 'gray immanence': We move beyond the oedipal structure – the child who perceives, man who is subjected to prohibition, and woman who is the secret prohibited 'thing' – to the possibility of secrecy: not all is given. This shifts us from a binary structure – *a* secret to be read, *a* content through form – to the positive affirmation of an imperceptibility that is created through the proliferation of perceivers:

> What counts in the secret is less its three states (child's content, virile infinite form, pure feminine line) than the becomings attached to them, the becoming-child of the secret, its becoming-feminine, its becoming-molecular – which occur precisely at the point where the secret has lost both its content and its form, where the imperceptible, the clandestine with nothing left to hide, has finally been perceived. From the gray eminence to the gray immanence. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 290)

Secrecy or imperceptibility is not *the* hidden. It can become so through the fantasy of the great oedipal secret to which we are structurally enslaved; but it can also yield deterritorialised secret societies, a secret perception of 'a' secret at war with the open secret of 'man'. And such territories of secrecy are possible only because of an absolute deterritorialisation: the life that produces secrecy, the excess or surplus that exceeds both the perceived *and* any sensed secret of the perceived.

Literature is not the form of *the* secret – that there is a sense to be read – but is enabled by a sense of secrecy. The creation of the 'pure feminine line' occurs when sentences no longer pronounce the essence of what is as some predicable quality (x is y), but when multiple perceivers and viewers open the text to worlds not perceived (the free indirect style where 'it is seen that'). Deleuze and Guattari mark a distinction, here, between the novella and the tale, where the latter has a content to be discovered while the former relates to *secrecy*, or the invisible form that orients perceivers and bodies but that is not itself perceived: 'The novella has a fundamental relation to *secrecy* (not with a secret matter or object to be discovered, but with the form of the secret, which remains impenetrable)' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 193). In both their plateau on the novella and in the memoirs of the secret Deleuze and Guattari cite Henry James, who was capable in writing of perceiving the positivity of the imperceptible. This is not the James of *The Turn of the Screw* or 'The Figure in the Carpet', where the narrative relations produce the object of hidden sense. (In *The Turn of the Screw* it is the governess's reading of the children's enclosed innocence that produces the suspicion of an impropriety that *must have been* the cause of their corruption; in 'The Figure in the Carpet' it is the literary critic's perception of the author's ultimate secret that produces a similar kernel of absence within the narrative.) Rather, Deleuze and Guattari refer to the James of *What Maisie Knew* and *Daisy Miller*, where the creation of a child's point of view allows for perceptions that are not effected from a drive for interpretation. They are secret in their transparency, not yet submitted to the system of relations among men, not yet signifying a subject for another subject: 'If ever there was a writer who dealt with the secret, it

was Henry James. In this respect he went through an entire evolution, like a perfecting of his art. For he began by looking for the secret in contents, even insignificant, half-opened ones, contents briefly glimpsed. Then he raised the possibility of there being an infinite secrecy that no longer even requires a content and that has conquered the imperceptible' (290).

The singularity of literature is its capacity to produce points of view other than that of signifying man in general. If, for Lacan, all signification is already meta-language, this is because one speaks both with a submission to system and a demand that all one says issues from a constitutive desire for recognition. I am in so far as I speak, and all signification recognises and constitutes me as a subject for the world of signifying subjects. A message always arrives at its sender; a subject is effected *as a subject* only in recognising himself as the recipient of signification. 'I' am just this imperative to answer to this enigmatic signifying other. For Jacques Derrida literature is the undoing of this fantasmatic oedipal closure of the message, and this is because of literature's singular relation to the secret. Language in general *is* history, meaning and sense – the assumption of an ongoing presence that can be recalled through time and re-presented through the word. Literature, by contrast, destroys the temporality that would place the signifier *after* the sense; instead, the text re-inscribes the tracing of this hierarchy. That which remains the same through time – being, presence, meaning – is always effected from a marking out of time, a reduction of the singular to that which can be recalled, shared, rendered present and communicable. If the philosophical logos is the discourse of man in general, where truth appeals to any subject whatever, literature is the discourse of the absolutely singular. In his dispute with Lacan, for example, Derrida argues that Lacan's recognition of the oedipal scene overlooks the 'scene of writing' which produces the points of view, positions and narrative trajectories that cannot be reduced as mere ornaments or figures of an underlying sense (Derrida 1987).

At first glance it might appear that a standard Derridian response to Deleuze and Guattari's ontology of the secret would be critical. Any attempt to intuit, write or think that which is secret and which *then* issues in a perception *of* the secret is always already structured by the system of signification. To hold a secret *to oneself* one would already have to know it and mark is *as secret*; it would already be communicable. To take a concrete example, one can imagine that a secret event that I record in my diary would take on some external form (writing) and could therefore be disclosed or betrayed by someone other than myself.

There could be no pure singularity, for every guarding of the singular as *this* singularity would already subject it to the concept, generality and potential publicity. One might object that just because betrayal is possible this does not allow us to say that it is essential or necessary; but Derrida's key point is that if an event is possible then this must tell us something about the very structure of the secret. If it is possible to betray a secret when it takes on some sort of external form such as writing, then this alerts us to an externality or otherness affecting the most private of secrets. Derrida argues that this otherness or distance from oneself occurs in the most intimate of secrets and auto-affections. In keeping a sense or secret to myself or in order to relate to myself there must be auto-affection where I recognise myself and all my secrets *as mine*. Anything that is kept to oneself as one's own is already never fully or absolutely secret. Consider the most private of memories that are unrecorded, undisclosed and witnessed by no one other than myself. If I am to testify to this absolutely private and secret witnessing – if an event is testifiable – then it is also *essentially* unreliable, distanced from its supposedly pure and punctual origin. If such a secret memory is to exist and be held it must take on some repeatability that distances it from the pure event in its absolute singularity. When such a secret is betrayed, falsified or made public this is possible only because it was already betrayed *in itself*. As false memory syndrome evidences, the *most* private and secret memories are also those which are least securely our own; if such a memory is to become true it must be rendered public, and in so doing lose its absolute authenticity. In order to hold a secret *as secret*, to conceal its archive, evidence and interpretability, one must create an enigma, crypt or code which already opens the secret. A secret is therefore always already *between two*, even if these two are within the supposedly auto-affecting self.

If we were to stop at this point in our reading of Derrida his work would appear to be in accord with a Wittgensteinian rejection of private language; a thought already takes the form of a thought *of* this thing and therefore bears all the features of repeatability and generality that characterise public language. In some ways Derrida's critique of the psychoanalytic paradigm would also reinforce this reading. Lacan, he argues, finds the truth of the oedipal structure in Poe's 'The Purloined Letter'. The physical letter in the story which circulates among characters bears its force not from what it actually says – its repeatable, shared and divisible sense – but from how it mediates relations. The letter, for Lacan, is singular because it is not the bearer of sense, even though it produces a series of relations among characters, all of whom are

'reading' each other. The letter divides and organises the scene, and so *the letter* becomes for Lacan the enigmatic 'thing' that distributes and hierarchises human relations. It is precisely because the minister sees that the letter must be kept secret from the king by the queen, that he has the opportunity to sequester the letter; if the queen were to object to the minister's removal of the letter she would draw attention to the fact *that there is a letter*, and *that there is a secret*. In turn, it is because Dupin sees that the minister himself knows *that there is a secret*, that Dupin also sees that the letter would be placed in the open. (Knowing that the letter will be looked for, the tactic is to place the letter in full view, such that its secrecy or concealment is concealed.) One looks for the truth *as hidden* when, in fact, what is *most secret* is not the message's content but the ways in which the letter that holds the message organises the positions of the characters into the triangle: the queen who looks to see how she is viewed by the king, the minister who sees the queen being governed by the royal gaze, and the minister who sees the ways in which the series of looks will allow the minister to place the letter in the open.

For Derrida, the problem with Lacan's description of the ways in which the hidden letter organises the scene is that Lacan's reading relies on holding the structure of the secret fully in view. The letter *is* divisible according to Derrida precisely because no narrative remains, in itself, capable of being reduced to the truth of the text in general; it allows for a series of readings and framings. There is never *the* letter but only letter-effects, ways in which scenes (such as Poe's story) are opened by inscription. What is missed by Lacan is the 'scene of writing' or the production of the system from which this or that secret is effected.

Like Deleuze and Guattari, Derrida does not accept the oedipal triangle as *the* frame or fantasy of secrecy in general, for the oedipal narrative itself has to be opened from some singular point. For Derrida the *secret* of a text is not a message one might read, nor a message that addresses me precisely through its absence or withdrawal, but an *absolute secret*. Any system, any relation, any naming, *any text*, belies that which demands to be named and thought, but which nevertheless remains separate and non-relational. Here, Derrida aligns himself with the insistence on genesis that motivated Deleuze and Guattari, for the problem of psychoanalysis is its reduction of enigma to a single secret, whereas responsibility demands the thought of how any sense is produced or sequestered *as secret*. At the same time, Derrida's 'ontology' is opposed to Deleuze and Guattari's 'gray immanence'; one can neither name nor intuit the force that produces relations (and this is why Derrida will be critical of the problem of ontology). Whereas Deleuze and

Guattari's singularities are productive of relations, Derrida's 'singularity' is belied by relations. The absolute secret is unnameable, non-relational and *transcendent*. In *The Gift of Death* Derrida gives this name of the unnameable to God, but only in so far as God is thought through a theology that is radically negative:

> The other as absolute other, namely, God, must remain transcendent, hidden, secret, jealous of the love, requests, and commands that he gives and that he asks to be kept secret. Secrecy is essential to the exercise of this absolute responsibility as sacrificial responsibility. (Derrida 1995: 67)

The unfolding or inscription of a scene, including the narrative of oedipal relations with its grounding signifier of presence, relies upon a force that can neither be included, nor read, nor disclosed. While it is true that the condition for testifying to *one's own* secret already relies upon the possibility of betrayal – if the secret is kept to oneself it is already formed as communicable – there is also an absolute secret that is distinct from privacy, ownness and any secret society:

> If I am to share something, to communicate, objectify, thematize, the condition is that there be something non-thematizable, non-objectifiable, non-sharable. And this 'something' is an absolute secret, it is the *ab-solutum* itself in the etymological sense of the term, i.e., that which is cut off from any bond, detached, and which cannot bind itself to anything – this is the absolute, and if there is something absolute it is secret. (Derrida 2001: 57)

In charting the differences between Deleuze and Guattari's and Derrida's approaches to the secret we arrive at one point of convergence, alongside two radically incommensurable divergences. Both insist that the condition for *the* secret, the commitment to presence, meaning or sense that drives the interpretive machine, must emerge from a more radical secrecy. The structure of a subject who reads a world mediated through a lawful system of signification conceals or secretes its genesis. But the secrecy from which relations and structures are effected is explained by competing ontologies and competing claims regarding *life*. Derrida insists both that the absolute secret is death – that which cannot be given and that which does not produce, present and multiply itself – and that the relation to this death *is life*. Life, or the ongoing maintenance of *what is*, requires a marking out of time as the same. Life therefore requires some element that is not itself; the pure auto-affective inner life of consciousness must recognise or affect itself *as* some identifiable being. Singularity or pure life must abandon itself in order to recognise itself. It is this process of marking or maintenance

that remains radically concealed, singular and non-living, never fully one's own: 'Clearly, the most tempting figure for this absolute/secret is death, that which has a relation to death, that which is carried off by death – that which is life itself' (Derrida 2001: 58).

Life is death precisely because 'living on' or living as this individual being who might bear and hold secrets already requires a loss of absolute singularity and a submission to a law of repeatability that can never be one's own. By contrast, for Deleuze and Guattari the secrecy that defines life is that which produces relations and which repeats itself. *Life* is not reducible to the extended and recognisable terms that it produces, but this does not mean that there is an absolute secret so much as a proliferating secrecy, the emission or unfolding of relations the virtual force of which can never be given once and for all. One is not separated from or responsible for this unnameable secret, for precisely through the recognition of virtual life one can overcome subjectivism:

> To be present at the dawn of the world. Such is the link between imperceptibility, indiscernibility, and impersonality – the three virtues. To reduce oneself to an abstract line, a trait, in order to find one's zone of indiscernibility with other traits, and in this way to enter the haecceity and impersonality of the creator. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 280)

If Derrida and Deleuze and Guattari are united critically (against the acceptance of any already structured frame of signification), but divided ontologically – Derrida arguing for the radical secrecy of the non-relational, and Deleuze and Guattari arguing for a life of proliferating relations – they are also distinguished *generically* or aesthetically. Deleuze and Guattari explicitly define their secrecy through the genre of the novella, where there is not *a* content to be discovered – *the* secret, *the* sense, *the* genesis of relations – so much as relations where no term is exhausted by or through its perception of any other. There is Maisie as she sees her father, as she is seen by her father, her father as seen by Maisie, her father as seen by his wife as seen by Maisie. What the novella achieves is not a narrative where relations are restored by some denouement that will make sense of the characters' movements, but the production of multiple worlds: relations as seen by Maisie, Maisie's world as seen by her mother, as seen by her father and so on. Literature comes closest to life, to the secrecy of life, in this proliferation of worlds:

> Becoming everybody/everything (*tout le monde*) is to world (*faire monde*), to make a world (*faire un monde*). By process of elimination, one is no longer anything more than an abstract line, or a piece in a puzzle that is itself abstract. It is by conjugating, by continuing with other lines, other pieces, that

> one makes a world that can overlay the first one like a transparency.... It is in this sense that becoming-everybody/everything, making the world a becoming, is to world, to make a world or worlds, in other words, to find one's proximities and zones of indiscernibility. The Cosmos as an abstract machine, and each world as an assemblage effectuating it. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 280)

Notes

1. Even a writer as demystifying as Alain Badiou holds on to the Lacanian oedipal structure in his critique of the positing of the infinite: all that can legitimately be posited are finite multiplicities; beyond that there is no One. Any hypostasised infinite is an effect of moving from the finite to a mythically or poetically intimated 'beyond'. The fact that Badiou includes love in his generic truth conditions also testifies to the post-oedipal nature of his work. Just as Copjec (2002) insists, following Lacan, that thinking and ethics would begin only with imagining 'that there is no woman', no beyond of prohibition, so Badiou (1999) defines the truth condition of love through the acceptance of the beloved other as *not* fulfilling some fantasy of plenitude. Judith Butler's relatively recent work still maintains the importance of mourning and melancholia in subject formation, and ties this in turn to political problems of violence and terror (Butler 2009).
2. As Brian Massumi (1992) has noted, in their 'fractal' ontology, Deleuze and Guattari do not subordinate becoming to any end or underlying sense, but there can be certain thresholds where changes in intersecting elements produce a significant change of state space.
3. In his short book on Kant, Deleuze accepts the Kantian separation of the faculties – that reason's ideas of the infinite cannot be intuited – but refuses to assume a pre-given harmony where the feeling of the sublime limit draws one back to a feeling of a transcendental subject's striving for unity (Deleuze 1984: 51–2).

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Deleuze's Neo-Leibnizianism, Events and *The Logic of Sense*'s 'Static Ontological Genesis'

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Abstract

In *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze effectively argues that two types of relation between events govern their 'evental' or 'ideal play', and ultimately underlie determined substances, that is, worldly individuals and persons. Leibniz calls these relations 'compossibility' and 'incompossibility'. Deleuze calls them 'convergence' and 'divergence'. This paper explores how Deleuze appropriates and extends a number of Leibnizian concepts in order to ground the idea that events have ontological priority over substances 'all the way down'.

Keywords: Deleuze, Leibniz, events, ontology, possible worlds, intersubjectivity

Deleuze's philosophical relation to Leibniz has in general been downplayed in the secondary literature.[1] Deleuze's major, pre-*Difference and Repetition* influences are frequently cited as Nietzsche, Bergson and Spinoza, and that these figures are constant touchstones for Deleuze is undeniable.[2] Nevertheless, in his 1968 Spinoza book it is clear that, in certain respects, Deleuze reads Spinoza through Leibniz.[3] It is also clear that Leibniz is a major reference in 'The Method of Dramatization' (Deleuze 2004), which is effectively a summary of the major themes of *Difference and Repetition*. In the text of *The Logic of Sense*, which was published one year after *Difference and Repetition*, Spinoza is not mentioned at all, and Bergson is cited only once. Leibniz, on the other hand, features prominently in the highly

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important 'Sixteenth Series of the Static Ontological Genesis', as well as in the 'Twenty-Fourth Series of the Communication of Events', where he is heralded as 'the first important theoretician of the event' (Deleuze 1990a: 171). Similarly, in the much later text, *The Fold: Leibniz and The Baroque*, Leibniz is affirmed as having implemented 'the second great logic of the event', after the Stoics and before Whitehead (Deleuze 1993: 53).[4] It is thus not unlikely that Deleuze sees himself as a philosophical descendent of Leibniz when he maintains in a 1988 interview that 'I've tried in all my books to discover the nature of events' (Deleuze 1995: 141).

This is not to say, however, that Deleuze accepts all of the premises on which Leibniz bases his philosophy. On the contrary, Deleuze's constant criticism is that Leibniz ultimately subordinates the ideal play of events to a principle of converging differences under the hypothesis of a God who calculates and chooses for existence the 'best' or maximally convergent series of possible events. In *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze suggests that Leibniz's God perhaps responds to a 'theological exigency', or again to an 'economic principle' for the determination of causes and effects, or means and ends (Deleuze 1990a: 59).[5] Nevertheless, according to Deleuze's own testimony in *Difference and Repetition*, this subordination of events to a principle of convergence was Leibniz's 'only error' (Deleuze 1994: 51). In this same work, Deleuze writes that 'no one has gone further than Leibniz in the exploration of sufficient reason . . . [and] the element of difference' (213). Similarly, in *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze writes that Leibniz went a long way (although not 'all the way') in establishing 'a theory of singular points' and their 'ideal play', that is to say, a theory of the relations of alogical compatibility and incompatibility between predicate-events which would be irreducible to the identical and the contradictory (Deleuze 1990a: 116 and 171).

We would like to show here how, in the *The Logic of Sense*'s 'Sixteenth Series of the Static Ontological Genesis', Deleuze turns to Leibniz in order to ground the idea that events have ontological priority over substances 'all the way down'. Following Leibniz, but also criticising and extending several of his presuppositions and concepts, Deleuze effectively argues that two types of relation between events govern their 'evental' or 'ideal play', and ultimately underlie the determination of substances, that is, of substantial 'things' such as individuals and persons. Leibniz calls these relations 'compossibility' and 'incompossibility'.[6] Deleuze, for his part, calls them 'convergence' and 'divergence' (Deleuze 1990a: 111). Before examining the ways in which Deleuze takes up Leibniz's philosophy, it will be important to briefly

recall a number of elements of Leibniz's thought and to highlight the role of compossibility and incompossibility therein.

I. Leibniz's System in Outline

For Leibniz, before the creation of the world, God has an understanding of all of the 'possibles', that is, of all possible individual concepts. What is possible, at this level, is anything whose concept does not violate the 'principle of contradiction' (Leibniz 1973a: §31 and §43; 1989b: 19). In other words, in so far as the concept of an individual does not in itself involve a contradiction, it is possible in the minimal sense that there is no inherent reason why it cannot be thought: it is, as Leibniz writes, 'perfectly conceivable' (Leibniz 1969a: 662; 1966: 54).

Not all of these possibles, however, can be thought *together* without contradiction, for what is possible in itself is not necessarily '*com*possible' with other such possibles.[7] In God's understanding, then, possibles which are compossible with one another in various ways form 'an infinite number of possible worlds' (Leibniz 1973a: §53). Or again, the possible world of any given individual concept is the totality of all individual concepts compossible with it (Rescher 1967: 17). Possibles which are 'incompossible' with one another, correspondingly, belong to different possible worlds.

From among all of these possible worlds, God will bring only one into existence: the 'best' of all possible worlds, that is, the one which is maximally compossible, displaying the most perfection, which is to say, the most variety and order with respect to the series of individual concepts (Leibniz 1973a: §58; 1973b: §10). This act of creation follows from the very nature of God, whose concept includes the primary perfections: power, wisdom, goodness and, of course, existence (Leibniz 1989a: §1). In other words, given that he is a necessary and all perfect being, to not bring into existence the best of all possible worlds would contradict the very nature of God.[8]

The existing world, our actual world, is thus composed of utterly unique individual substances, or 'monads', which 'realise' the maximally compossible series of possible individual concepts.[9] Being compossible with the entire series of existing monads, then, each individual monad is said to 'express' or 'mirror' the entire universe of monads (Leibniz 1973a: §56), one thing 'expressing' another 'when there is a constant and regular relation between what can be said [that is, predicated] about one and about the other' (Leibniz 1969c: 339). It is due to this relation of compossibility or expression that each monad carries 'traces

of everything that happens in the universe'. In short, for Leibniz, each existing monad or 'singular substance expresses the whole universe in its own way, and . . . all its events, together with all their circumstances and the whole sequence of external things, are included in its notion' (Leibniz 1989a: §§8–9).[10]

Leibniz's monads are simple, unified, extensionless and imperishable substances. They are the 'true atoms of nature', but there are no causal relations between them (Leibniz 1973a: §§1–7). They rather have, as has been seen, expressive relations of predication. In other words, what 'we call causes are only concurrent requisites' whose agreement or 'harmony' has been regulated by God from all eternity (Leibniz 1989d: 33). Nevertheless, in this non-causal relation of expression, a monad is said to be '*active* insofar as what is distinctly known in it [i.e., in its concept] explains what occurs in another, and *passive* insofar as the reason for what occurs in it is found in what is distinctly known in another' (Leibniz 1973a: §52).

Being imperishable and extensionless 'points of view' on the universe, monads are, for Leibniz, necessarily souls or minds (a mind being a 'reasonable' soul) (Leibniz 1989h: 79; 1989d: 34). But it is also clear from what has been said above that there are souls and minds 'in the least part of matter' (Leibniz 1973a: §66). Even in the case of 'rational souls' such as ourselves – that is, souls endowed with memory, reason and capable of acts of reflection – our so-called 'bodies' are in fact teeming with 'bare monads' or 'sensitive souls' having between them particularly well coordinated and direct relations of expression (Leibniz 1973a: §§28–30 and §82).

Furthermore, as simple, extensionless and thinking substances, monads or souls are internally characterised by their perceptions and appetitions. Perception is defined as a 'passing state, which involves and represents a plurality within the unity or simple substance', and appetition as 'the passage from one perception to another' (Leibniz 1973a: §§14–15). It is important to note that this characterisation of monads is perfectly compatible with the idea that monads are distinguished by the way in which they realise, in their own particular way, the maximally compossible series of possible individual concepts conceived of by God, for God himself is a monad, having as his attributes the primary perfections. In other words, what God perfectly and all at once perceives, the created monads perceive only imperfectly, in related, though varying and changing, degrees of clarity, confusion and distinctness depending on their 'point of view' on the universe. Indeed, Leibniz argues that each monad perceives the entire universe,

but confusedly for the most part, in minute, unconscious perceptions (Leibniz 1973b: §13). What the monad perceives or represents distinctly, on the other hand, are those monads 'nearest' to them and which compose its 'body'. The soul thus 'represents the whole universe also in representing the body which belongs to it in a particular way' (Leibniz 1973a: §62).

Every body, then, has a 'dominant' monad which is 'active' in the sense examined above: its concept expresses more distinctly what happens in and for the monads composing its body. The 'dominated' monads, for their part, express this dominant monad confusedly or passively, but they in turn are dominant or active in relation to other monads, clearly and distinctly expressing what happens in relation to them, and so on, to infinity (Leibniz 1973a: §70; 1973b: §4). 'Body', in this sense, is thus 'not a substance, but a phenomenon resulting from simple substances', the 'reality of which is situated in the harmony of the perceivers with themselves (at different times) and with other perceivers' (Leibniz 1989i: 181; 1989j: 181).

Monads, then, are simple, unified or 'closed', imperishable substances which have non-causal, expressive relations between one another, and which fall under complete individual concepts which express the entire universe from a particular point of view. If monads are simple or 'closed', however, what is the status of relations between them? It is clear that compossibility and incompossibility are relations, but these relations only govern the formation of worlds, the best of which is subsequently realised by simple, closed substances which alone exist. The relations between existing individuals must, therefore, be 'out of the subjects; but being neither a substance nor an accident, it must be a mere ideal thing' (Leibniz 1989f: 339). Nevertheless, relations are said to be well founded in so far as they '*inhere in the nonrelational properties of the relata at issue*' which, as has been seen, are determined by relations of compossibility and incompossibility (Rescher 1979: 56).

Another important consequence of monadic 'closure' and the 'completeness' of its concept is that the infinite number of predicates which define each monad's unique point of view on the universe are, as Leibniz says, analytically 'contained' or 'included' in its concept (Leibniz 1989a: §8 and §13). It does not follow from these notions of analyticity and inclusion, however, that the opposite of a true proposition denoting an existing monad implies a logical contradiction strictly speaking. For, as seen above, such a proposition about existing monads is always possible or perfectly conceivable in so far as it does not in itself involve a contradiction. The opposite of a true proposition denoting an existing

monad is not contradictory in itself, but rather incompossible with the compossible set of true propositions characterising the world of created monads.

Truths of 'fact' are thus of a different nature than truths of reason, even if both are 'analytic'. Indeed, for Leibniz, if the principle of contradiction governs truths of reason or necessary truths (formal possibilities or essences), then the 'principle of sufficient reason' governs contingent truths or truths of fact (Leibniz 1973a: §§31–6). Leibniz formulates the principle of sufficient reason in the following way: 'nothing happens without its being possible for one who has enough knowledge of things to give a reason sufficient to determine why it is thus and not otherwise' (Leibniz 1973b: §7). What this means is that, following our exposition above, the sufficient reason why something is true of a given simple substance must be able to be seen in an analysis of the way in which something is true of another monad whose concept is apt to explain the worldly nature of the former. Furthermore, since a sufficient reason must also be found for this latter monad's being such and such, this analysis must be continued into that of the 'concurrent requisites' of a third monad, and so on, right across the infinite series of created things, and finally into an analysis of the concept of a God who, in line with his perfections, grants existence to that series of monads which realises the maximally compossible series of possible individual concepts which he conceives in his understanding. God, in the final analysis, is thus the sufficient reason for the entire series of created things (see on this Leibniz 1973a: §§36–8).

For Leibniz, therefore, all 'true predication has some basis in the nature of things', up to and including the nature of that thing called God (Leibniz 1989a: §8). And the difference between these truths of fact and truths of reason is that the latter can be analysed in a finite number of steps while an analysis of the former requires an infinite number of steps. Of course, no created monad can carry out an infinite analysis. God, however, sees the entire series 'at the same time' or knows it 'intuitively' (Leibniz 1989k: 99; 1989l: 25). This is still not to say, however, that at the end of even an infinite analysis, true propositions of fact could be reduced to simple, primitive terms. For if they were so reducible, the world would have to have been created according to an absolute, logical or metaphysical necessity, thereby contradicting the concept of God who, in his perfect power, wisdom and goodness, must be free to choose and bring into existence the best of all possible worlds (Leibniz 1989a: §13; 1973c: 49). Since God must nevertheless be said to be the sufficient reason for the series of created things and their expressive relations,

rather than arguing that contingent truths can be reduced to identical propositions, we must say that the infinite analysis of contingent truths is 'asymptotic' to certain necessary truths: those concerning God's essential attributes, the relation between which is established by the ontological proof of his existence (Leibniz 1966: 77).[11]

Now, our argument here is that it is in accordance with the problem of finding a coherent means of speaking about the ontological primacy of events in relation to substances that Deleuze turns to Leibniz. Having explicated the major lines of Leibniz's philosophical system, let us now examine what Deleuze takes from it.

II. Deleuze and Leibniz: The 'Static Genesis' of Individuals and Persons and the Pure 'Play' of Events

As noted in the introduction, central to Deleuze's philosophy of the event in the 'Sixteenth Series' of *The Logic of Sense* is a certain appropriation of the Leibnizian relations of compossibility and incompossibility between predicate-events, in so far as these are understood to ontologically precede and govern the constitution of worldly individuals and persons.

It should be remarked, however, as a point of terminological clarification, that when Deleuze speaks of compossibility and incompossibility between events, he does so, more often than not, by speaking of them in terms of the convergence and divergence of 'singularities' (Deleuze 1990a: 172). It is thus not uncommon for Deleuze to write of 'singularities-events' (103, 112, 116). While we cannot here deal with the complex reasons why Deleuze speaks of events and their relations by means of these quasi-mathematical concepts,[12] what is important to understand is that singularities-events and their relations of convergence and divergence have several characteristics which map quite precisely onto those of their correlates in the Leibnizian system: predicate-events and their relations of compossibility and incompossibility.

The first of these characteristics is that singularities-events are 'impersonal and pre-individual'. For Deleuze, in other words, just as for Leibniz, events and their relations precede the constitution of individuals and persons. As Deleuze argues, relations between events form 'worlds', and the 'individual is inseparable from a world' (Deleuze 1990a: 109).

Secondly, as Deleuze describes it, singularities-events may be either convergent or divergent, or as Leibniz would say, compossible or incompossible. Deleuze explicitly ties together the notions of compossibility and convergence when he writes that 'compossibility is … defined as a

continuum of singularities, whereby continuity has the convergence of series as its ideational criterion' (Deleuze 1990a: 111). It should here be noted that Deleuze speaks of the convergence of 'series' rather than of singularities-events *per se*, for, as he writes, the 'nature' of a singularity is determined in so far as it is 'analytically prolonged over a *series of ordinary points* up to the vicinity of another singularity' (109; emphasis added and translation modified). So what is the correlate in Leibniz's system of Deleuze's differentiation between the singular and the ordinary?

It was said above that, for Leibniz, within a possible world, a given individual substance is said to be active or dominant with respect to another in so far as what its concept *distinctly* expresses explains what occurs in relation to this other. And this latter substance is, correspondingly, passive or dominated in relation to the former: its concept expresses what happens only *obscurely*.[13] But, distinctly or otherwise, what are known in individuals are precisely the predicate-events which define their relations to other individuals within a world, over time.[14] For Leibniz, therefore, within a world of compossible individuals, there are both distinct events and obscure events. Now, Leibniz's 'distinct and obscure' events map quite precisely onto Deleuze's 'singular and ordinary' events. Indeed, when Deleuze says that singular events are 'analytically prolonged' over ordinary events, this must be understood in terms of the Leibnizian principle of sufficient reason which governs truths of fact in relation to worldly individuals. Thus: the sufficient reason why a first, obscure or ordinary event can be truly predicated of a given simple substance must be able to be seen in an analysis of the way in which a second, distinct or singular event can be truly predicated of another monad, and in such a way that the concept of this latter is apt to explain why the first event is included in the concept of the former. And of course, for Leibniz as well as Deleuze, the reason why this second event can be truly predicated of this second simple substance must be able to be seen in an analysis of the way in which a third event can be truly predicted of a third simple substance, and so on, *ad infinitum*.

The third point of correspondence between the Leibnizian and Deleuzian systems is thus that, in so far as singularities-events are analytically prolonged over series of ordinary events, and in so far as these series converge with series which depend on other singularities-events, a possible world is formed. Conversely, therefore, another world, incompossible with the first, would begin 'in the neighbourhood' of those singularities-events whose series diverge (Deleuze 1990a: 109, 111).

Now (and this is our fourth point), within such a compossible world, 'individuals are constituted which select and envelop a finite number of the singularities of the system. They combine them with the singularities that their own body incarnates . . . [and] spread them out over their own ordinary lines' (Deleuze 1990a: 109). For Deleuze, therefore, just as for Leibniz, the individual 'parts' of an individual's body are related in precisely the same way as individuals in general, that is, through the way in which the events which define them can be analytically prolonged over one another within a compossible world. As Deleuze writes, Leibniz 'was right to say that the individual expresses a world according to the relation of other bodies with its own, as much as it expresses this relation according to the relation of the parts of its own body' (110).

In accordance with the Leibnizian system, Deleuze now argues that, to the extent that existing individuals are said to envelop singularities-events which have been 'analytically prolonged' over ordinary events within a possible world, these convergent events must be said to have become, within this world, 'the analytic predicates of constituted subjects' (Deleuze 1990a: 112). This, then, is a fifth point of correspondence: singularities-events are effectively 'realised' or 'actualised' as the predicates or 'concurrent requisites' of existing individuals. The analyticity of the individual's predicates follows from the idea that the individual simply is its realisation of a particular, determined slice of the continuum of singular and ordinary events which have been analytically prolonged over one another within a compossible world. Each 'expressing' the entire world-series in a unique way, each determined individual thus expresses every other, but in 'variable and complementary degrees of clarity' depending on the particular slice of the continuum of singularities-events they have been said to actualise (111). Viewed together severally, therefore, 'their bodies form mixtures and aggregates, variable associations with zones of clarity and obscurity'. What is more, it follows from the analytic nature of the continuum of singularities-events that we can consider the 'relations' between bodies as the analytic predicates of the mixtures they form (112).

Deleuze concludes this section of his analysis and appropriation of various Leibnizian concepts by writing that he 'identifies', following Leibniz, 'the domain of intuitions as immediate representations, the analytic predicates of existence, and the *descriptions* of mixtures or aggregates' (Deleuze 1990a: 113). And we have seen what these 'identifications' amount to: the domain of intuitions refers to the 'harmoniousness' of the world-series of convergent singularities-events (which is to say, for Leibniz, God's intuitive knowledge thereof); the analytic

predicates of existence are the determinations in relation to which individuals 'actualise' particular 'slices' of this world-series; and the description of mixtures or aggregates refers to the way in which relations of coexistence and succession between individuals and their bodies can be understood as a function of the analytic predicates of existence. What will also be essential to retain from the above is that Deleuze follows Leibniz in arguing that the continuum of singularities-events must be distinguished from the individuals who envelop or express only a certain number of these singularities-events. In other words, while the expressed world 'does not exist outside of the monads which express it', the world cannot be identified with the way in which it exists in the monads, for the world is defined, prior to the constitution of worldly individuals, as the convergence of singularities as they extend themselves over series of ordinary points (110–11). As Deleuze writes, while the world exists in the individual as a predicate, it 'subsists in an entirely different manner, as an event or a verb, in the singularities which preside over the constitution of individuals' (111). We have spoken of the predicates which determine individual things as such (e.g., Adam is a sinner, Christ is a redeemer), but these predicates are themselves determined in relation to convergent series of pre-individual events (to sin, to redeem, etc.) which are only subsequently realised in determined, existing individuals (Adam, Christ, etc.).

The next question Deleuze addresses in the 'Sixteenth Series', still following Leibniz in certain respects, is how the individual can 'transcend' the world of compossible singularities-events in which it is determined in order to 'confront' this world and constitute itself as a 'knowing subject' in relation to objects of experience, as well as in relation to other such knowing subjects. Indeed, for Deleuze, the problem of understanding how events are ontologically primitive in relation to 'things' is prolonged in this problem of knowledge. In fact, there is in Deleuze's reading of Leibniz, as there is throughout *The Logic of Sense*, a fertile relation between these ontological and epistemological problems. We might even say that Deleuze's ontology of events in *The Logic of Sense* is a transcendental ontology, in the sense that the 'world' of events, which has ontological priority over worldly individuals, is not something external to the conditions of knowledge. As will be seen, for Deleuze the world is an event which results from another, prior event, which is a synthesis of divergent worlds or divergent points of view in an intersubjective and linguistic context.

Now, we do not say that one individual knows another simply because they ontologically 'express' one another within a compossible world. We

would not say, for example, that a rock knows the hammer which breaks it apart, simply because of a law-like or expressive relation between their 'concurrent requisites'. Rather, when we speak of knowledge, we speak of an individual's knowledge that x, where x has propositional content which may be exhibited in language in an intersubjective context. In other words, knowledge necessarily implies a relation between 'persons', and a relation between these persons and the world, which transcends their relations within a compossible world. Indeed, this is precisely why Deleuze, in the first instance, emphasises relations between *incompossible* worlds for the determination of knowing subjects and the 'things' they know. As he writes:

> the Ego as knowing subject appears when something is *identified* inside worlds which are nevertheless incompossible, and across series which are nevertheless divergent... It is only when something is identified between divergent series or between incompossible worlds that an object $= x$ appears transcending individuated worlds, and the Ego which thinks it transcends worldly individuals, giving thereby to the world a new value in view of the new value of the subject which is being established. (Deleuze 1990a: 113; translation modified)

As examined above, a world is said to be incompossible with another when series of ordinary events, which depend upon a given singularity-event (analytic prolongation), diverge with series depending on another. Now, for Leibniz, since the created world is characterised by the universal convergence of series of events, such divergences must be only apparent: a by-product of the fact that no existing individual, save God, can carry out an infinite analysis of the convergent world-series of events. Indeed, Leibniz often tells us that various 'evils' – that is, events such as Christ's dying, Judas' betraying Christ, or Sextus Tarquin's raping of Lucretia – can appear to us to diverge from a world created by an omnipotent, omniscient and perfectly benevolent God.[15] This divergence, however, is only apparent, for it is based on our inability to appreciate that everything is of the highest perfection there can be, either because we lack God's vision of the convergent world-series, or because we cannot perform the calculations necessary to see that a world devoid of a given evil would be a comparatively less perfect world.[16] For Leibniz, in short, because divinely conceived worlds are defined by the convergence of series of events, the relation between incompossible worlds is ultimately one of *exclusion*: either this world or another world, but not both (Deleuze 1990a: 172).

For Deleuze, however, taking up some of Leibniz's texts in a very non-Leibnizian way, we can establish a *positive* relation between incompossible worlds in terms of a problem which refers to certain 'conditions' which constitute it as a problem (Deleuze 1990a: 113). As Deleuze writes, a 'problem . . . has conditions which necessarily include 'ambiguous signs', or aleatory points, that is, diverse distributions of singularities to which different cases of solution correspond' (114; translation modified). In spelling out the nature of these 'ambiguous signs', Deleuze's main references are Leibniz's *Theodicy*, one of Leibniz's letters to Arnauld, and a much earlier mathematical text, 'On the Method of Universality'. In relation to this latter work, Deleuze examines the way in which, in relation to conic sections, Leibniz attempts to find the 'formula, rule, equation or construction' for which the equations of the various curves (circle, ellipse, hyperbola, parabola, straight line) are only particular cases (see Leibniz 1961: 115–17).[17] What is crucial is that this 'universal equation' has 'ambiguous signs' or 'characters' which allow for the 'inclusion' of the different cases of conic sections. These ambiguous characters are here of two forms: a *sign*, which may be either an addition, subtraction, or a series of such operations; and a *letter*, which may be a finite, an infinitely large, or an infinitely small line or number. These characters, which are ambiguous or indeterminate in the general formula, may then be 'filled in' by unambiguous signs, thereby generating the finite number of cases corresponding to the cases of conic sections. In other words, the universal equation unifies and exhibits, within an objective 'problem', the relations among the series of apparently discontinuous cases of conic sections. As Emily Grosholz concludes, 'this equation, by exhibiting the conic sections as limit cases of one general equation . . . displays their mutual relations as a coherent system' (Grosholz 2007: 212). Or again, as Deleuze puts it:

> the equation of conic sections expresses one and the same Event that its ambiguous sign subdivides into diverse events – circle, ellipse, hyperbola, parabola, straight line. These diverse events form so many cases corresponding to the problem and determining the genesis of the solutions. We must therefore understand that incompossible worlds, despite their incompossibility, have something in common – something objectively in common – which represents the ambiguous sign of the genetic element in relation to which several worlds appear as cases of solution for one and the same problem. (Deleuze 1990a: 114; translation modified)

Now, although Leibniz did not explicitly treat such 'ambiguous signs' with respect to the relation between possible existences belonging to

incompossible worlds, Deleuze finds several indications of such an operator in Leibniz's works. In particular, Deleuze understands the figure of Adam in one of the letters to Arnauld, as well as the figure of Sextus in the *Theodicy*, to be examples of such ambiguous signs. In other words, these figures are considered to be 'objectively indeterminate' operators within an inter-worldly 'problem' which is 'resolved' by the way in which these operators take on particular, determinate values within the incompossible worlds forming the cases of solution to the problem. Thus, in his letter to Arnauld of July 14, 1686, Leibniz responds to Arnauld's criticism that 'it is no more possible to conceive of several possible Adams, if Adam be taken as a singular nature, than it is to conceive of several "myselves" ', by writing that:

> when I speak of several [possible] Adams, I do not take Adam for a determined individual but for some person conceived in a relation of generality (*sub ratione generalitatis*), under circumstances which seem to us to determine Adam to be an individual but which do not truly do so sufficiently; as for instance, when we mean by Adam the first man, whom God puts in a pleasure garden, which he leaves through sin, and from whose side God makes a woman. But all this does not sufficiently determine him, and so there might be several other disjunctively possible Adams . . . But that concept which determines a certain Adam must include, absolutely, all his predicates, and it is this complete concept which determines the relation of generality in such a way as to reach an individual (*rationem generalitatis ad individuum*). (Leibniz 1969b: 335)

As Deleuze extrapolates:

> Within these [incompossible] worlds, there is, for example, an objectively indeterminate Adam, that is, an Adam positively defined *solely* through a few singularities which can be combined and can complement each other in a very different fashion in different worlds (to be the first man, to live in a garden, to give birth to a woman from himself, etc.). The incompossible worlds [thus] become the variants of the same story. (Deleuze 1990a: 114)

However, as Deleuze notes, in the letter to Arnauld such a 'vague Adam has no existence; he exists only in connection with our finite understanding, and his predicates are only generalities' (Deleuze 1990a: 346, n.4). In other words, Leibniz's primary aim here is to make a distinction between how finite individuals can conceive of a 'vague Adam' (i.e., in relation to a few predicates of a general nature), and how God conceives of the complete individual concept of the existing

Adam, with his infinite number of determinate predicates. Deleuze, however, is more interested in defining the 'ambiguous sign' common to incompossible worlds without passing through the distinction between God and his finite creatures. He thus turns to the figure of Sextus in Leibniz's *Theodicy* (see Leibniz 1951: §§413–17).

At the end of this text, Leibniz presents us with a story of the historical figure, Sextus Tarquin. Sextus goes one day to find the God, Jupiter, whom he beseeches to change his fate. Jupiter replies that were he to renounce the then kingdom of Rome, he would be given other destinies. Sextus, however, not being able to reconcile himself to the sacrifice of the crown, leaves Jupiter's temple in a rage and abandons himself to his destiny such as we know it: to the rape of Lucretia which will bring about the collapse of the kingdom of Rome. Theodorus, the high priest, who has been watching this scene, asks Jupiter why he has not given Sextus another will. The God replies that Theodorus should go and see his daughter Pallas, who will show him what he, Jupiter, was obliged to do in order to create the world. Theodorus then finds himself transported with the goddess to the palace of destinies, where he sees representations not only of the real world but of all other possible worlds. What he sees in effect is a series of apartments organised in the form of a pyramid. In each apartment there is a possible world filled with all of the individuals of that world including, each time, a different Sextus: a Sextus happy but mediocre in Corinth, a Sextus king of Thrace, and so on. As Theodorus climbs the pyramid, these worlds with their various Sextuses become more and more beautiful, indeed, they become 'better', until finally at the summit he sees a representation of the real world, the most perfect of all, where Sextus leaves the temple, goes to Rome, rapes Lucretia, brings about the downfall of the kingdom, and so on.

For Leibniz, of course, these pages function as a kind of counterfactual proof of the goodness of God, designed to show why God could not *not* have chosen for existence the Sextus whom we know, along with his evil deeds. For it is in comparing all of the possible worlds and their different Sextuses that we come to realise that the existence of the historical Sextus is an integral condition of the best of all possible worlds.[18] Deleuze's interpretation of these passages, however, is that Leibniz is inviting us to consider the pyramid with its incompossible worlds as a 'problem' which is susceptible to various orders or states. Within this problem, then, Sextus functions as an 'ambiguous sign', common to all the incompossible worlds making up the pyramid, in so far as these different worlds 'appear' depending on the different ways in which he is determined. As Deleuze writes, we

> are no longer faced with an individuated world constituted by means of already fixed singularities, organized into convergent series, nor are we faced with determined individuals which express this world. We are now faced with the aleatory point of singular points, with the ambiguous sign of singularities, or rather with that which represents this sign, and which holds good for many of these worlds, or, in the last analysis, for all worlds, despite their divergences and the individuals which inhabit them. (Deleuze 1990a: 114)

There is thus, following Deleuze's reading of Leibniz, a Sextus = x – or, more generally, an 'object = x' (Deleuze 1990a: 114–15) – which is common to a number of incompossible worlds, and which forms part of the objective conditions of the 'problem' defining the positive or non-exclusionary relation between these worlds. These objects = x are thus no longer thought of as individuals determined in relation to an analytic continuum of singularities-events within a single compossible world, but rather as 'ambiguous signs' which express a non-exclusionary relation between worlds perceived as incompossible.

Now, this shift from the determined individual to the object = x also signals the necessity to rethink the nature of the predicates which would define such objects. As Deleuze explains, in relation to objects = x, predicates are no longer the analytic predicates of individuals determined within a world and carrying out the description of these individuals. They are rather predicates which define objects = x synthetically, and open different worlds and individualities to them as so many variables or possibilities. In other words, instead of each world being the analytic predicate of individuals described in series, it is rather the incompossible worlds which are the synthetic predicates of objects = x, in so far as these latter must be defined in relation to what Deleuze calls a 'disjunctive synthesis' of these incompossible worlds (Deleuze 1990a: 115).

How then do these considerations respond to the problem of knowledge such as this was characterised above? First of all, in so far as it forms part of the conditions of the problematic relation between perceived incompossibilities, it is clear that the object = x transcends any particular individuated world. Furthermore, the individual which 'thinks', 'identifies', or synthetically defines this object = x in relation to these incompossible worlds, must itself transcend worldly individuals. Finally, at precisely the same instant that the individual gives to the world a 'new value' through the synthetic determination ('identification') of an object = x in relation to variables belonging to incompossible worlds, it must itself be given a new value within this newly synthesised world. For, if individuals are always relationally determined within a

world in the way examined above (analytic continuum), then a world which is being supplemented with new values must entail corresponding new definitions for all of its related individuals. In other words, the individual which has become a 'knowing subject' must also be said to be synthetically defined, within a 'new' world, by the kind of 'incompossible predicates' to which the object = x has exposed it.

This is not, however, the end of the story. Deleuze proceeds to argue that all objects = x are 'persons'. As he writes: 'There is thus a "vague Adam", that is, a vagabond, a nomad, an Adam = x common to several worlds, just as there is a Sextus = x or a Fang = x. In the end, there is something = x common to all worlds. All objects = x are "persons" and are [synthetically] defined by predicates' (Deleuze 1990a: 114–15).

The reason why objects = x are 'persons' must be approached from two points of view. First of all, Deleuze writes that we are not so much concerned with the ambiguous sign *per se*, as with what *represents* this sign (Deleuze 1990a: 114), and that which represents this sign could only be a person or an 'I'. Indeed, following Deleuze's analysis of the propositional dimension of 'personal manifestation' earlier in *The Logic of Sense*, in the order of speech 'it is the I which begins, and begins absolutely ... the I is primary, not only in relation to all possible denotations which are founded upon it, but also in relation to the significations which it envelops' (15). In this sense, then, persons correspond with what Leibniz calls 'minds' or 'spirits', that is, rational and conscious monads capable of thinking, willing and conversing among themselves. They not only perceive or represent the world relatively clearly and have memory, they are also capable of inference and reflexive self-consciousness and may approach God's intuitive understanding of the world of which they are a part, though only with respect to a limited portion of it.[19] Limited in this way, of course, as argued above, a person's particular perception of the world of which they are a part may diverge from the perceptions of other persons. But for Deleuze, it appears, it will be by positing an object = x open to different possible worlds that the person will be able to formulate the 'problem' corresponding to the positive, non-exclusionary relation between these worlds, and then resolve that problem by representing that object = x in a particular way.

On the other hand, however, Deleuze writes that objects = x simply *are* persons. So what could it mean to say that a person synthesises incompossible worlds by representing an object = x, if this object = x is itself a person? In short, and although Leibniz never puts it in quite this way, it appears that Deleuze wants to argue that there is at work

here what Donald Davidson calls a process of 'triangulation', whereby knowledge of the world cannot be separated from knowledge of oneself (that is, of the contents of one's beliefs) as well as knowledge of other persons or minds.

Now, 'triangulation' in Davidson's work is designed to respond to the problem of correlating a concept with some unknown object, but without presupposing the concept as already given. As he writes:

> It takes [at least] two points of view to give a location to the cause of a thought [i.e., a perception], and thus to define its content. We may think of it as a form of triangulation: each of two people is reacting differentially to sensory stimuli streaming in from a certain direction. Projecting the incoming lines outward, the common cause is at their intersection. If the two people now note each other's reactions (in the case of language, verbal reactions), each can correlate these observed reactions with his or her stimuli from the world. A common cause has been determined. The triangle which gives content to thought and speech is complete. But it takes two to triangulate. (Davidson 2001: 212–13)

So how can this concept of triangulation be translated back into the Deleuzian-Leibnizian vocabulary we have here been employing? It is by arguing that the reason why objects = x are to be understood as persons is that the 'unknowns' which condition the positive relation between incompossible worlds refer to a problematic relation between persons or knowing subjects. In other words, the knowing subject does not *directly* represent some unknown thing (object = x) which defines a problematic but non-exclusionary relation between incompossible worlds. Rather, the knowing subject stands in a problematic relation to another such subject in an intersubjective and linguistic context: inter-worldly problems are inter-personal problems. It thus follows that both subjects' mutual 'identification' of one another (that is, of their behaviour, the meaning of their verbal activity, the contents of their beliefs, their behaviour *vis-à-vis* further persons, and so on) is a necessary condition for resolving a problematic but positive or non-exclusionary relation between different ways in which the world can be perceived. The problem of the relation between incompossible worlds will thus be resolved to the extent that a three-fold and simultaneous determination takes place: that of the beliefs of a knowing subject, that of the beliefs of another knowing subject, and that of a common world of individuals corresponding to these beliefs. And this three-fold determination conforms quite precisely to Deleuze's resolution of the problem of knowledge, such as this was cited above: when something is identified between divergent series or between incompossible worlds,

an object = x or person appears transcending individuated worlds, and the person which thinks it itself transcends worldly individuals, thereby giving to the world a new value in view of the new value of the subject which is being established. And as was also examined above, for Deleuze, these persons are defined by predicates: no longer the analytic predicates of individuals determined within a world which carry out the description of these individuals, but predicates which define persons synthetically in relation to disjunctive syntheses of incompossible worlds, opening these divergent worlds and their corresponding individuals to them as so many variables or possibilities.

Of course, in Leibniz, there is a 'person' who is common to all possible worlds: God. As Deleuze writes:

> As far as the absolutely common object in general is concerned, with respect to which all worlds are variables, its predicates are the first possibles [*premiers possibles*] or the categories... The universal Ego is, precisely, the person corresponding to something = x common to all worlds, just as the other egos are the persons corresponding to a particular thing = x common to several worlds. (Deleuze 1990a: 115; translation modified)

Now, it should first of all be noted that the 'first possibles', in this citation, refer to the 'irreducible concepts' or 'absolute attributes of God'.[20] As has been seen, for Leibniz, it is because God is ontologically determined by his absolute attributes or perfections that he brings into existence a unique, maximally compossible world of singularities-events: the best of all possible worlds. Indeed, it is for this precise reason that any incompossibilities perceived by the individual substances belonging to the created world are merely apparent. Yet, if we also take into account the Leibnizian idea that whatever the created monads perceive has always-already been included by God in their concepts, it can be said that God, as an 'ontologically' determined object = x, is absolutely common to all perceptions of apparently incompossible worlds. Conversely, if finite, created individuals were able to show that perceived incompossibilities such as various 'evil' events are in fact integral parts of the same, maximally compossible world – the best of all possible worlds – then these individuals would have effectively proved that God, in choosing this world for existence, evils and all, is all wise, all powerful, all good, etc.[21] Leibniz's God, therefore, can be thought of in this sense as a 'person', determined in a triangular structure along with other persons and worldly individuals.

Nevertheless, it is also clear that Leibniz's 'ontological proof' for the nature and existence of God requires no recourse to such triangulation,

relying as it does only on the principle of contradiction.[22] Crucially, then, Leibniz ultimately determines the 'ideal play' of singularities-events with reference to an underlying substance: God. In other words, individuals and persons, for Leibniz, are not determined by singularities-events 'all the way down'. Rather, the events which determine individuals and persons are themselves to be determined with reference to God.

How, then, must the Leibnizian system be modified such that it can be said that events, considered only from the point of view of their ideal play, govern the genesis of worldly things? In short, following Deleuze, two requirements must be met: divergences must be 'affirmed' *as* divergences, and the persons who are 'common' to these divergences must always be considered as 'produced forms', brought about only by the play of converging and diverging events (Deleuze 1990a: 113, 116, 172). Indeed, these two requirements are interrelated, for if persons are always derived from the play of events, there can be no original point of view from which it can be said that divergent worlds are reducible to the same world which is in principle identifiable. And conversely, if incompossible worlds are affirmed as incompossible, then persons, unable finally to resolve divergences, remain forever 'open' to further (re-)determinations within the above analysed structure of 'triangulation'.

With regard to the first requirement of affirming divergences, Deleuze writes that 'Leibniz did not attain the free character of this play [of singularities-events], since he neither wanted nor knew how to breathe enough chance into it, or to make of divergence an object of affirmation as such' (Deleuze 1990a: 113–14). What, then, does it mean to affirm divergences? Deleuze expands upon this idea in the 'Twenty-Fourth Series of the Communication of Events', immediately after his heralding of Leibniz as the 'first' (though obviously not the last) 'important theoretician of the event' (171). Here, Deleuze argues that to affirm divergences means that different 'things' must be affirmed through difference rather than through identity. In other words, instead of a 'form of identity' determining things in their differences, it must be difference itself which relates things together in so far as they are different (172–3). What this implies is that, instead of a certain number of predicates being excluded from a thing in so far as this would contradict the form of identity guaranteed by the existence of God (maximally compossible world), each 'thing' must be open to the infinity of predicates through which it passes (174). Or to put it another way, as Deleuze does somewhat poetically, we must speak of the communication of series of singularities-events, no longer with reference to a world (cosmos), but

within a 'chaosmos' (chaos-cosmos) (174). What then causes events to communicate within this 'affirmative synthetic disjunction' is 'the erection of a paradoxical instance... which traverses the divergent series as divergent and causes them to resonate' (174). But in fact, we have shown that this paradoxical instance is nothing other than an object = x or 'person' common to incompossible worlds. It now follows that if we are to affirm divergences as such, no person can be thought to be reducible to an already given instance, identical with itself. This is what Deleuze means when he writes that, in affirming divergences, 'the ideational centre of convergence [i.e., the 'person = x'] is by nature perpetually decentred, it serves only to affirm divergence' (174–5).

This leads us to our second point: that of understanding this paradoxical instance – this person – as always produced and never as originary. Indeed, Deleuze writes that, in 'truth, the person is Ulysses, no one [*elle n'est personne*] properly speaking, but a produced form, derived from this impersonal transcendental field' (Deleuze 1990a: 116). Deleuze is here playing on the French homonym *personne*, which may be either a noun meaning 'person' or pronoun signifying 'nobody'. But there is also a deeper, philosophical transformation at stake. Indeed, we have seen how the person is determined or identified as such (with respect to their beliefs, behaviours, etc.) within a triangular structure involving another person and an object of experience, and such that each 'point' of the triangle must be determined only in relation to the other two. Within such a structure, therefore, there is no unproduced 'point of view': every point of view could only be a 'result' of triangulation. If, however, there are no unproduced points of view, then there is no guarantee that perceived divergences could be reduced to a convergence, from which it also follows that persons remain 'open' to further determinations. In this sense, the person is never an underlying substance but is itself an event, produced entirely by syntheses of singularities-events within processes of triangulation. Deleuze confirms this productive relation of triangulation in the 'Twenty-Fifth Series of Univocity' when he writes that it is

> necessary for the individual to grasp himself as an event; and that he also grasp the event actualized within him as another individual grafted onto him. In this case, he would not understand, want, or represent this event without also understanding and wanting all other events as individuals, and without representing all other individuals as events... [T]he individual, born of what comes to pass, affirm[s] his distance [i.e., difference] with respect to every other event. As the individual affirms the distance, he follows and joins it, passing through all the other individuals implied by the other events, and

> extracts from it a unique Event which is once again himself. (Deleuze 1990a: 178; translation modified)[23]

Or again, more poetically, in the 'Twenty-Fourth Series of the Communication of Events':

> Leibniz . . . subjected the points of view to exclusive rules such that each opened itself onto the others only insofar as they converged: the points of view on the same town . . . [O]n the contrary, the point of view is opened onto a divergence which it affirms: another town corresponds to each point of view, each point of view is another town, the towns are linked only by their distance and resonate only through the divergence of their series, their houses and their streets. There is always another town within the town . . . [D]ivergence is no longer a principle of exclusion, and disjunction no longer a means of separation. Incompossibility is now a means of communication. (Deleuze 1990a: 173–4)

But now a final question arises: if, for Deleuze, persons are always produced – if, in other words, there is no uncreated creator – what brings about the convergence of singularities-events which determine worldly individuals in the first place? Deleuze does not address this point directly, even though he continues to maintain that '[i]ndividuals are infinite analytic propositions' even after affirming that the person is 'nobody' (Deleuze 1990a: 118). So how must the individual and its analytic predicates of existence now be understood, in the absence of God's divine ordering of them? It appears that Deleuze wants to argue, relatively uncontroversially, that the individual concepts which make up a determined world must, quite simply, be consistent with one another. In other words, if something is an individual in a given world, its concept must be consistent with those of the other individuals in that world. Indeed, this is only another way of saying that the world in question, if it is to be a world, must be law-like. Therefore, in so far as it is necessary for the definition of worldly individuals as such, the notion of consistency – or rather, of convergence – will be an integral part of the Deleuzian system. Thus, even if worldly consistency is no longer grounded in a divine act as it is for Leibniz, this convergence will still be understood as the 'analytic prolongation' of singular events over series of ordinary events, up to the neighbourhood of another singularity-event; and this convergence of series of events will still be ontologically prior to the way in which determined worldly individuals will be said to 'express' this continuum or world-series in their variably distinct and obscure 'concurrent requisites'.

Now, if consistency or convergence is a necessary requirement for the determination of a world and the individuals which express it in law-like ways, how must we understand the further idea, examined above, that individuals are ultimately determined by relations between persons who are common to divergent worlds? First of all, it has been said that divergent worlds appear as a consequence of the fact that persons are, like any worldly thing, 'finite with respect to their clear expression', that is, with respect to the 'corporeal zone of expression' or perceptual apparatus in terms of which they express their relations with the world (Deleuze 1990a: 118). And again, that knowing subjects are 'finite' in this way is a relatively uncontroversial claim. Nevertheless, as has also been seen, persons transcend their immediate worldly determinations in so far as they bring about syntheses of divergent worlds within a triangular structure simultaneously implicating other persons and a world of determined individuals corresponding to the beliefs of these persons. As Deleuze puts it, persons are grounded on individuals and, conversely, individuals are grounded by the person (118). With respect to these syntheses, then, the person as a knowing subject will be said to have been synthetically defined in relation to the divergent worlds. On the other hand, in accordance with the requirement noted above, the world of individuals synthesised out of the incompossible worlds will still be said to have resulted from a continuum of converging singularities-events; but now, this convergence must be considered to have been generated by the same synthesis of incompossible worlds which defined the knowing subject. In other words, even though convergence is a necessary relation with respect to determined worlds and worldly individuals, this must here be seen to be generated by prior divergences and their 'disjunctive syntheses' in relation to persons. So it is in this sense that, as was said earlier, the law-like 'world' of events – which has priority over determined, worldly individuals – is not something external to the conditions of knowledge. The world and, by consequence, its individuals and persons, are rather constituted, as events, by these conditions. In other words, Deleuze's ontology of events, whereby events are ontologically prior to substances 'all the way down', is a transcendental ontology.

III. Conclusion

We have thus seen how Deleuze initially follows Leibniz in arguing that the determination of individuals and persons – or 'monads' in the Leibnizian vocabulary – presupposes relations of convergence and

divergence between singularities-events. But we have also seen how Leibniz was not able to reach the point of affirming the ontological priority of events over substances 'all the way down', since, for this latter, relations between events are ultimately determined with reference to an already given, divine substance. Leibniz, let us recall, only made a negative use of divergence, in so far as his God brings into existence a single, maximally compossible world, and excludes from existence anything incompossible with this world. Deleuze, however, extending certain Leibnizian concepts such as the 'ambiguous sign', argues that divergence must rather be affirmed as such. This affirmation of divergence effectively consists of the erection of a paradoxical instance – the object = x or person understood as 'nobody' – which causes divergent series of events to communicate through their differences. Within a virtual 'triangular' structure implicating an open series of such *personnes*, as well as a chaos-cosmos of incompossible worlds, disjunctive syntheses are carried out which will generate the determined individuals and determined persons populating the actual world. The world is thus an event, which is to say that disjunctive syntheses or processes of triangulation are the 'evental-determinations' of the events characterising worldly individuals and persons in general.

The aim of this present study, however, has not only been to clarify Deleuze's understanding of the ontologically primitive event such as this is outlined in *The Logic of Sense*'s 'Sixteenth Series of the Static Ontological Genesis'. It has also been to bring into focus the importance of Leibniz for Deleuze as a philosophical source. As noted above, the relation between these two philosophers has been addressed only sparingly in the secondary literature. It is thus hoped that we have been able to contribute in some small way to rectifying this neglect.[24]

Notes

1. There are only a few works devoted to Deleuze's philosophical relation to Leibniz, and all of these concern Deleuze's 1988 work, *The Fold*. See: Badiou 1989, Frémont 1991, Baker 1995, During 2003, Robinson 2003, and McDonnell and van Tuinen 2010. Rölli (2009) shows the way in which Deleuze draws on Leibniz in order to develop a 'transcendental psychology of perception'. In relation to Deleuze's work more generally, Smith (2007) indicates a number of points of intersection between Deleuze and Leibniz. Williams (2003 and 2008) has also highlighted Leibniz's influence on Deleuze in his major early works, *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense*.
2. See, for example, May 2005 and Hardt 1993.
3. See, for example, Deleuze 1990b: 11: 'What interested me most in Spinoza wasn't his Substance, but the composition of finite modes. I consider this one of the most original aspects of my book. That is: the hope of making substance

turn on finite modes, or at least of seeing in substance a *plane of immanence* in which finite modes operate, already appears in this book. What I needed was both (1) the expressive character of particular individuals, and (2) an immanence of being. Leibniz, in a way, goes still further than Spinoza on the first point. But on the second, Spinoza stands alone. One finds it only in him. This is why I consider myself a Spinozist, rather than a Leibnizian, although I owe a lot to Leibniz.'

4. Although Deleuze here seems to revise his argument from *The Logic of Sense* that Leibniz was the *first* important theoretician of the event, it should be noted that the above citation from *The Logic of Sense* occurs immediately after Deleuze's critique of the Stoics in this text, which shows how they tried but ultimately *failed* to think the 'ideal play of events'.
5. On the 'principle of economy', see also Frémont 1991: n.10.
6. On the concepts of 'compossibility' and 'incompossibility', see Leibniz 1969a: 661–662; and 1996: III, vi, §12. This concept of compossibility is fundamental to all of Leibniz's most important works, even if it is not always mentioned by name. See, for example, Leibniz 1973a: §56; 1973b: §10; 1989a: §9 and §14; and 1951: §201.
7. See Leibniz 1948: 325: 'The compossible is that which, with another, does not imply a contradiction' (cited in Mates 1986: 75, n.36).
8. Leibniz's argument that the existence of God necessarily follows from his concept is a recasting of the 'Ontological Argument' in relation to the principle of contradiction. In short, Leibniz supplements the argument that if God is a being having all perfections, and if existence is a perfection, then God exists by definition, by showing that the idea of a being having all conceivable perfections is not contradictory. God is thus a necessary, existing being and this can be known *a priori* or by reason alone. See Leibniz 1973a: §41 and §45; and 1989c: 237–8.
9. On Leibniz's 'principle of the identity of indiscernibles', which accounts for the uniqueness of the monads, see: Leibniz 1989a: §9; and 1989d: 32. See also Leibniz 1989e: 328: 'To suppose two things indiscernible is to suppose the same thing under two names.'
10. Another way of putting this is to say that each monad has a 'complete individual concept' which is capable of distinguishing it from every other such monad, and in which God is able to read, from a particular 'point of view', not only everything that happens to it, but also everything that happens in the entire universe. See Leibniz 1989a: §8 and §14.
11. On the 'ontological proof' of God's existence, see note 8, above.
12. See on this Duffy 2010: 89–111.
13. 'Distinctly' here means: more economically, more simply, with greater explanatory force relative to a differentiated system of concepts, and so on. Thus, to take one of Leibniz's examples (see Leibniz 1973d: 63–4), we cannot explain the motion of the ship in terms of it being caused by its wake, for, given the connection between our concepts of these individuals (which are themselves bound up with our more general concepts of water, displacement, ships, wind propulsion, and so on), this would lead us to having a very confused or indeed obscure representation of what is going on. On these terms, see also Leibniz 1989l.
14. See Leibniz 1989g: 70: the 'notion of an individual includes considered as possible what, in fact, is true, that is, considerations related to the existence of things and to time'.
15. See, for example, Leibniz 1989a: §3; 1951: §§414–16.
16. See particularly on this Leibniz 1989m: 153–4.

17. See also on this Bouquiaux 2006: 34–5, and Duffy 2010: 89–111.
18. See also on this, Frémont 2003: 79–103, and Bowden 2006: 108–9.
19. See on this: Leibniz 1973a: §29 and §§83–4; 1973b: §5 and §§14–15; and 1989a: §§34–6.
20. Leibniz uses these terms as synonyms in 'Meditations on Knowledge, Truth, and Ideas' (Leibniz 1989l). The 'categories' mentioned in this citation, on the other hand, refer to the *a priori* concepts which define the 'unity of apperception' in Kant, in so far as these allow diverse appearances to be brought together in a law-like manner for the knowing subject. However, we shall not here deal with Deleuze's critique of Kant, except to say that Kant treats the knowing subject as an origin rather than as a produced form in accordance with the ontological priority of events over substances (see Deleuze 1990a: 97–8, 105).
21. See, on this, Frémont's work on Leibniz's *Theodicy* (2003: 86). She argues that the story of Sextus Tarquin is designed to illustrate how we must understand – that is, by comparing, for example, the effects which ensue from differently determined Sextuses – how historical evils are not divergences from, but rather the conditions of, the best of all possible worlds. It follows from such a 'juridical proof' that God must be all good, all wise, all powerful, etc. See also on this Bowden 2006: 110–11.
22. See note 8, above.
23. It is clear from the context here that for 'individual', in this citation, we should read either 'person' or 'individual or person', but only in so far as, by 'person', we understand 'nobody': a 'produced form'. The idea of grasping the event being actualised within me as another individual or person *grafted* onto me is no doubt a means of recalling this passage from the 'Sixteenth Series': 'In truth, the person is Ulysses, no one [*elle n'est personne*] properly speaking, but a produced form … And the individual is always anyone [i.e., any individual, *quelconque*], born, *like Eve from Adam's rib*, from a singularity prolonged [*prolongée*] over a line of ordinary points and starts from the pre-individual transcendental field' (Deleuze 1990a: 116; emphasis added and translation modified).
24. I would like to thank Paul Patton, Simon Duffy and an anonymous reviewer for their helpful comments on an earlier version of this article.

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Critical Forces: True Critique or Mere Criticism of Deleuze contra Hegel?

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> The worst readers are those who behave like plundering troops: they take away a few things they can use, dirty and confound the remainder, and revile the whole.
>
> Friedrich Nietzsche, *Assorted Opinions and Maxims*

Abstract

The principal concern of this paper is to track the first wave of criticism directed against Deleuze's relation to Hegelianism as it has appeared in the English-speaking world. To this end, we assess the criticisms offered by Stephen Houlgate, Judith Butler, and Catherine Malabou, each of whom, in their respective ways, accuse Deleuze of misreading Hegel, claiming that his rejection of Hegelianism merely reinforces a secret or unacknowledged Hegelianism inherent in his own critique. Despite the brisk treatment Houlgate grants Deleuze, his charges are by far the most serious, and hence it is to these that much of the discussion is dedicated; but the aim is to show how each of these claims concerning Deleuze's misreading of Hegel themselves involve a misreading of Deleuze.

Keywords: Stephen Houlgate, Catherine Malabou, Judith Butler, Hegelianism, Nietzsche criticism, desire, difference

Several commentators are of the opinion that the entire Deleuze–Hegel debate has become stale, and that therefore committed Deleuzians, rather than becoming bogged down in such fruitless disputes, ought to be taking Deleuze's positive philosophical gains seriously, and set about freely creating concepts.[1] Although we certainly acknowledge the importance of this innovative feature of Deleuzianism, as well as the

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fact that the Deleuze–Hegel debate is more than two decades old, it still behooves us to return to and rearticulate the central issues at stake. In the spirit of Nietzsche, we must clear the stage in an act of active nihilism before we can be free to create concepts. This is not to say, of course, that the debate will or should rage on endlessly. Rather that, as less focus is placed on the objections Hegelians and Deleuzians have towards one another, the more we may become free to trace out precisely what significance and use Deleuzianism has for us.

I. Stephen Houlgate

Although there are many notable critics of Deleuze's Hegel interpretation, we have here selected the most salient and, in our opinion, most meticulous critic who seems to best encapsulate the charges levelled against Deleuze. Houlgate's key criticism is that Deleuze performs an aberrant misreading or distortion of Hegelian themes; he asserts that Deleuze violently attacks the finery of the Hegelian system while at the same time implying that he struggles in a theoretical quicksand and only sinks faster the more he struggles. In response, the approach here will be to examine these criticisms in an orderly fashion and then attempt to respond with the assistance of strong textual support from Deleuze's principal works. Of equal importance, however, is that this operation be performed delicately without prematurely dismissing or sacrificing Hegel in order to further the Deleuzian cause. There are many commentators and critics on either side of this debate, and our plan is to trace a fair path between them in order to revive an argument that may have been lost in the heat of polemic and complicity.

Four years after Hugh Tomlinson's translation of Deleuze's *Nietzsche and Philosophy* brought Deleuze into the English-speaking world, there would be a stir among Hegelian scholars about the relevance of Deleuze's critique. In response to the question of how to critically assess this critique of Hegel, Stephen Houlgate, in *Hegel, Nietzsche and the Criticism of Metaphysics* (1986), devotes a significant portion of his first chapter to responding to the popularisation of Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche as a critique of Hegelianism. Houlgate levels three key interrelating criticisms against Deleuze's understanding of Hegel, all of which amount to the claim that Deleuze's interpretation involves a 'distortion' (Houlgate 1986: 5). These key objections are as follows: 1) Deleuze implies that the entire operation of the dialectic is based upon an initial external negation of specific differences between things. 2) Deleuze's aversion to oppositional structures is not consistent in so far

as his version of affirmation is essentially opposed to Hegelian negation. 3) Deleuze's fully self-affirmative Being, because it is not negatively determined, can have little value for us. The first criticism is in direct response to the Deleuzian claim that Hegel's Being relies on negation and so is therefore not internally different nor is conceptual difference a true concept of difference. The second and third criticisms are in response to the Deleuzian claim that Hegel's labour of the concept does not provide new ways of thinking.

According to Houlgate's reading, Deleuze's understanding of Hegel's dialectic in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* is in error in so far as it implies that the entire operation of the dialectic is based upon an initial external negation of specific differences between things (Houlgate 1986: 5). Houlgate highlights Hegel's strategy, which also indicates why Deleuze's understanding of the Hegelian dialectic is incorrect: 'a thing must be *in itself* the negation of something else' (7). That is, dialectical negation does not begin outside the object, but is already inherent in the object from the very beginning. The reality or specific concreteness of an object depends on negative determination, and the Hegelian dialectic goes to great lengths to demonstrate that any form of affirmative determination (or non-determination) would be an impossibility.

For Hegel, negative determination must be necessary and not merely sufficient so that objects can possess quality, for an object without quality has no real existence (or is yet to be determined, determination being the role of consciousness). Without negation, there is no determinateness, no quality, and so no real object (Hegel 1969: 123–5). If Deleuze wants to do away with negative determination in his ontology, how then can his objects be qualified and be made real? Negation is a moment of the reality of the object that results in its affirmation, and by no means the only reality of that object. However, without negative determination, without contradiction in the object, objects cannot have qualities. For example, redness on its own without relation to other colours is mere undetermined abstraction, and so depends on what it is not (green, blue, yellow, etc.) in order that its quality can be realised as a positive content. But the negation that results in determining redness from another colour does not, contrary to Deleuze's interpretation, begin by merely negating the specific external difference of another colour found outside the initial colour. Rather, there is already something inherent to redness that is negatively determined, just as there is in all the other colours; as such, it is their immanent relation by negativity that mutually determines them. In the quality of redness there is already the idea of not-red serving as a moment in the positive constitution of

this redness. Inherent in this same redness there is both redness and not-redness; the specificity or qualified difference of red and not-red is determined in its relation with an actual other thing (such as green) that also possesses the quality of not-red in its constitutive content qua greenness as an idea. The not-redness as the negative quality of red, when put in relation with the not-redness of green, is in this instance green. Therefore, the positive result of this negatively determining relation is the affirmation of both red and green. The difference of red and green must be in thought, not outside it, for it is thought that determines differences between *and in* things.

Houlgate claims that Deleuze's understanding of negation is too limited, and that this limitation may be the very source of Deleuze's distortion of Hegel. According to Houlgate, Deleuze views negation as 'always either a denial of already qualitatively specified forces, or the secondary consequence of the self-affirmation of already qualitatively specified force' (Houlgate 1986: 7). Therefore, Houlgate points out, what is lacking in Deleuze's interpretation is negation conceived as that which differentiates forces. According to Houlgate, Deleuze does not recognise the truly immanent character of negation in the determination of affirmative being, and so Deleuze's view of dialectical negation is little more than a caricature of Hegel's dialectical negation. By reassigning the negative as a mere after-effect of already qualified forces (leaving us to ponder just how these qualified forces were specified or determined in the first place), we are left with no qualitative identity between affirmative and negative modes of being, but rather return to the rhapsody of empty empirical 'thises' – or, to how every being begins with merely affirming and positing itself as full and determined in its content without relation to anything else. Without this relation of negativity, there is no way to qualify being.

These qualitatively specified forces of active and reactive are, for Deleuze, irreducible to conceptual differentiation, and hence in Hegelian terms these forces would lack sufficient determination (Houlgate 1986: 7). Without this determination acting as a proper foundation, these forces would not only remain undifferentiated, but would not even have any reality. And so, if these forces in their already pre-differentiated quality are said to express being fully, then Deleuze is committed to reject a notion of the Other that would otherwise be necessary to determine selfhood, for this Other would be superfluous to the determination of being that is already affirmatively self-determined: 'The only true sense of selfhood for Deleuze is that of the affirmative, active mode of being, which affirms its own specific qualities "immediately"

and does not conceive of itself as inherently mediated by negation, as *intrinsically* the negation of the other' (8).

Houlgate's second objection is that Deleuze's aversion to oppositional structures is not consistent in so far as his version of affirmation is essentially opposed to Hegelian negation. Although Deleuze criticises the dialectical operation for creating oppositions as fictional concepts for what it takes to be real phenomena, Deleuze himself applies this very structure in his own assertion of affirmative being in so far as he 'determines affirmation as essentially *opposed* to negation (in the sense of the negative will to power)' (Houlgate 1986: 8). Negation forms a moment in the will to power, in opposition to the affirmative mode of the will to power. However, despite this oppositional structure in the will to power between negative and affirmative modes, Deleuze is not willing to admit that negation is an inherent and necessary component of affirmation. Instead, the negative is a distinct component *outside* of the affirmative power, or as a secondary by-product of affirmation itself.

If Deleuze fails to recognise the immanent character of negation in the determination of being, says Houlgate, the consequences of following this line of reasoning will be unsavoury. If Being begins as affirmative without any immanent negation inherent to its determination, how can any qualitative difference exist between beings? Houlgate demonstrates this difficulty in reconsidering the master–slave dialectic. If the master is a completely affirmative being without a moment of negation in his determination as an affirmative being, then he can have no shared human identity with the slave, and so there can be no mediation between the two: the master continues to exploit the slave unabated, and the slave continues to be servile consciousness (Houlgate 1986: 8). There can be no movement beyond this typology because there is no negation or mediation in this relationship unless the master has some inherent negativity as a moment in his affirmative constitution as being. Therefore, no equality between master and slave can be the result of their relationship. Houlgate suggests that Deleuze is so driven to denounce and resist all codifying and objectifying attempts to institutionalise human equality that he rigidly commits himself to the view of an 'inalienable typological difference between men' (8).

Houlgate's third criticism is that Deleuze's fully self-affirmative Being, because it is not negatively determined, can have little value for us. The problem that emerges from Deleuze's position, because it does not rely on negative dialectics, is that selfhood is construed 'in an asocial, virtually anarchic way' (Houlgate 1986: 8). Deleuze sees the Hegelian idea of self-consciousness depending on another consciousness in order

to recognise itself as a patently weak, life-denying idea, and considers that it is only the slave who views consciousness in these terms, in this dogmatic image of thought. However, undialectical being is asocial because it affirms itself right from the start and so does not require any Other to determine itself, and it is anarchic because it will not admit of any law that attempts to limit its self-affirmative power. This variety of Being will not enter into any relation, nor will it subordinate itself to any law that it itself does not create and affirm. Hence the question Houlgate poses is this: even if this purely self-affirmative, lawless being were not an ontological impossibility due to the fact that it lacks negative determination, what *value* could it have for us? This type of being could only be a recluse or a god, neither of which speak of a satisfactory ontological position that would concern the real conditions of our shared human experience – the very aim of the Hegelian ontology Deleuze seems to sidestep in his own ontological theory of affirmative difference. Moreover, assigning the role of valuation to affirmative difference as a means of explaining the ontological truth of being will get us nowhere, for it would only create a non-society of lawless masters affirming themselves without any need for one another, and so therefore not really a society.

In summary, Houlgate objects not only to Deleuze's 'facile' interpretation of Hegel (focused mostly on the *Phenomenology of Spirit*), but to Deleuze's ontological position in its entirety. There can be no difference outside of Thought, Thought is what makes the different, and so all difference must be negatively determined. Houlgate is committed to this view in so far as he rejects Deleuze's conception of a self-affirmative Being that is internally differential. Moreover, he warns that Deleuze's self-affirmative being is merely the recipe for an anarchic solipsism, and so fails to truly grasp the nature of Being in terms of real concrete experience.

Houlgate's criticisms call for a Deleuzian reply. No doubt we cannot here entirely redeem or salvage all the claims Deleuze makes in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, but by recognising that Deleuze's criticisms of Hegel in that text are primarily of an ethical and political nature we can thereby gain a point of entry into his ontological critique. In this way, while not offering a full response to these key criticisms, we will indicate a few points that indicate the plausibility of Deleuze's critique of Hegel.

First, Deleuze's version of difference and determination differs from Hegel's, and this distinction must be emphasised; in particular, that for Hegel the role of determination is performed by Thought, while for Deleuze determination occurs in what he calls the virtual. Second,

Houlgate's claim that Deleuze relies on opposition as a means of denouncing opposition can gain no purchase if serious consideration is given to what Deleuze means by affirmation as a forgetting of negation rather than an opposition to it. Third, Houlgate's claim that Deleuze's view of the master has no value for us is perhaps based on a hasty reading of how Deleuze a) critiques the master–slave dialectic and, b) advances the view of the noble and the base.

Deleuze will not introduce opposition between terms, for it is one thing to create an opposition between A and B (B is not-A, A is not-B), and entirely another to *distinguish* the two terms as merely different. Red and other colours are not *opposed*, but rather are distinctly different. Deleuze is not willing to oppose two types of negation: in the will to power, the negation of the Yes-saying of the reactive forces (which is implicitly a No-saying to life) is at the same time a form of affirmation. Active forces deny quantitative forms of subsumable differences by affirming qualitative differences. These qualitative differences are not the same as qualities in Hegel, for in Hegel the differentiation of qualities operates to the extreme limit of determination (redness is not-yellowness, not-greenness, etc.) whereas for Deleuze qualitative differences are expressions of force *without determination*. That is, there is always the chance that some hitherto unknown quality may express itself in a dynamic relation of forces, and that this quality will not be determined but rather an affect of Being. This affirms the not-yet known, the type of qualitative differences that recognition and the dogmatic image of thought cannot apprehend. Affirmation and negation are not in opposition, for, as Descombes explains, 'from the point of view of affirmation, the relation between affirmation and negation is (non-negative) difference, and not opposition' and so in the case of the master, he will 'never perceive negation as negative' (Descombes 1980: 164). That is, the master's negation of the slave is merely the product of his own affirmation, but the moment that the master recognises the slave as a slave, he loses his affirmative power. The master must not realise that the slave is pure negation, but rather must see that the slave's servile consciousness is just another example of affirmation (64). Following from this, the slave must not recognise the master's affirmative power or else risk ceasing to be the slave; the slave's existence as a slave depends on his viewing everything in terms of the negative, as oppositional. In terms of the will to power, its affirmative mode is to go to one's own limit. Immediately, at first blush, this *limit* sounds peculiarly Hegelian, but in fact it is quite different: this limit is not internalised in the master as it is for the slave (i.e., brought up to contradiction). The master

does not know the limit of his power, yet strives towards it, whereas the slave is aware of limits and opposition everywhere. This is why the master's negation of the slave is not perceived by the former as a negative limit, but as an affirmative power. Conversely, 'the Slave is blind to what makes active negation *another* affirmation; in it he sees only destruction, which he must resist with all his strength in order to be' (164). And so, the master does not recognise negation and the slave does not recognise affirmation. The master's active nihilism is perceived by him to be affirmative, while the slave sees this negation in an inverted view, as destructive.

This is why it is important to assess the *sense* in which affirmation and negation is spoken, for it is only from the viewpoint of negativity that oppositions can exist, and why the master's affirmative viewpoint sees only differences everywhere irreducible to oppositions. It is not that the master wilfully *ignores* the negative, but that the latter is *inconceivable* from his viewpoint. It is this viewpoint of the negative that is carried on in Houlgate's reading of Deleuze, for Houlgate locates an opposition between Deleuze and Hegel rather than a non-negative difference. The effect is that Houlgate, in his reading of Deleuze, actually appears to comply with the reactive image that Deleuze illustrates. Nevertheless, Deleuze's often polemical tone in regard to Hegelianism in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* may itself be construed as Deleuze himself creating an opposition. That is, Deleuze *may* be constructing an opposition either directly or indirectly, although this does not necessarily mean that the philosophical force of the text itself is submitted to this opposition. And if indeed Houlgate defends what Deleuze would call the viewpoint of the negative, then in order to be true to this viewpoint, Houlgate would not be able to find in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* anything affirmatively different but only oppositions.

Certain steps have already been taken to rescue Deleuze from the charge of merely being in opposition to Hegel. Deleuze's critique of Hegel is, according to Hardt, oblique because he engages proximate enemies: Kant especially.[2] However, this conclusion seems somewhat unsatisfactory and incomplete, perhaps betraying an unwillingness to confront the issues of Thought and Being that are continually at stake in the works of Hegel and Deleuze. If we were to rely on this line of argument, we would do little more than provide an excuse for Deleuze, and so render the entire project of comparing the claims of Hegel and Deleuze a moot and irrelevant point, if not invite a mere return to Hegelianism. For Deleuze to stay true to his claim concerning the affirmative mode of Being, even his active negation of Hegelianism

(if that is indeed what he undertakes) would have to be performed in such a way as to be truly affirmative and not introduce a mere opposition. This entails not relying on *objections* which can only multiply *un*creative critiques, or what we may call mere *criticism*. In essence, Deleuze must forget Hegelianism.

Houlgate will not admit a difference that is outside of rational thought, outside of a dialectical system that could effectively absorb this difference and make it into another variable in the synthesis: 'all difference is dialectically appropriated to establish the identity' (Lumsden 2002: 152). Difference is constructed by Thought that determines it. What Deleuze proposes as an alternative is effectively a subversion of rationality itself, a questioning of the primacy of consciousness and its appointed role in determining difference. What Deleuze thus sets out to do is to explore how Being can be determined without negation, without recourse to identity, representation and recognition. In order to satisfy the demands of this position, Deleuze will need to construct a very clear account of what it means to have a new and different image of thought that does not lapse into these modes of representation and the self-identical. In other words, he must demonstrate how the affirmative mode of being thinks the affirmative. He will reject Hegel's notion of difference as merely conceptual, as requiring a labour of the concept, for this involves a kind of negation that implies resolution, an *Aufhebung* of all differences. This demonstration takes place in Deleuze's later work, *Difference and Repetition*.

Houlgate claims that Deleuze fails to recognise the immanence of negation and mediation in affirmative being. There can be no qualitative identity between affirmative and negative modes of being. This means that Deleuze's 'inalienable typological difference between men' cannot be the institutionalising ground for equality (especially in the master–slave dialectic and its resolution), thereby placing legislative restrictions in favour of equality among individuals into serious theoretical jeopardy. But here we must pay careful attention to what Deleuze means by *master* and *slave*. The master–slave dialectic relies on a structure of opposition, patterned on a universal history of *ressentiment*. To avoid this opposition, and to clarify his view of affirmation without negation, Deleuze adopts Nietzsche's typology of noble and base. In the master–slave dialectic, there is reciprocal determination: the master needs to dominate the slave in order to be defined as a master, and the slave's identity is furnished by being servile to the master. In Deleuze's view, this is to rely on negative determination, hence in order to

punctuate the innate affirmative difference of the master and the slave, he reads them as 'types' according to the qualities of nobility and baseness. The 'noble' does not see the 'base' as a contradiction, but as different. If the noble dominates the base, it is precisely because the noble affirms the difference of what he is without comparing himself to the base. If the noble sees the base as contradiction, the noble ceases to be noble, for that would be to believe in the fiction of contradiction. Simply put, in terms of an analogy, the noble or active force that forgets negation is like the sculptor who sees the final product in the slab of marble and not the surrounding material to be subtracted.

In sum, it is a matter of *perspective*: to see things affirmatively or negatively. Following Nietzsche's diagnosis, Deleuze signals to us how the master (as creative being, going to the limit of one's power regardless of and indifferent to the legislative restrictions that prescribe total equality) has been dragged into the position of the slave, beguiled by the contagious character of reactive forces into recognising the slave and therefore surrendering the affirmation of the master. This becoming-reactive of the master is his succumbing to the viewpoint of the negative, and the slave triumphs. However, the slave is still a slave, for he remains in the reactive stage that denies life; a slave crowned is still just a slave – especially when the crown is weighted by a restrictive morality of *ressentiment*, pity and bad conscience. It is the transcendent character of morality that has subordinated the differential and intensive powers of creative being. It is law, patterned upon reactive morality, which acts as the limitation of power rather than the nature of one's own being. For Deleuze, power as embodied by law is a mere representation of power. The power the noble master exerts is not a representation of power, but will to power: difference, affirmative distinction. Deleuze is well aware of the issue of equality, and makes much ado of it in his critique in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, and he is thoroughly uncompromising about the outcome of accepting equality since it is a patently reactive measure to subdue active forces. Egalitarianism, be it in the realm of science or ethics, always seeks to equalise differences and forms a kind of modern nihilism that denies the real differences between forces (Deleuze 1982: 45). A superficial analysis might yield the unfairness of Deleuze-Nietzsche's master/noble in relation to the slave/base. An egalitarian perspective would claim that such a disproportion of power disadvantages the slave to the benefit of the master. However, such a claim is weak on the grounds that the slave is a slave by virtue of having not been able to say *No* to affirming everything. Therefore, the slave does not give his affirmative *Yes* to life, and so to upbraid the master

for exercising his affirmative power is a symptom of base, petty and reactive morality that views the world only according to what it lacks. In the *Gorgias*, Socrates castigates Callicles' call for the 'strong few to lead' by countering that the combined power of the weak many can overpower the strong few. But it is Socrates' understanding of power as representation that sees power in this way, whereas Callicles speaks of power in terms of difference and noble distinction. As a corollary point, Deleuze-Nietzsche's philosophy is one of revolution. As such, what revolution does not have its share of inequality and bloodshed? It is in the preface to Nietzsche's *Human, All Too Human* that this is best articulated: 'a victory has been won – a victory? Over what? Over whom? An enigmatic, question-packed, questionable victory, but the *first* victory nonetheless: such bad and painful things are part of the history of the great liberation', and: 'evaluating on one's own account, this will to *free* will: and how much sickness is expressed in the wild experiments and singularities through which the liberated prisoner now seeks to demonstrate his mastery over things!' (Nietzsche 1996: 7). Moreover, the notion of equality – of equalising and rendering some utopian harmony through an absolute synthesis – is essentially reactive, a patent form of what Nietzsche would call Christianity as Platonism for the people. Not only does it presuppose the moral legitimacy of equality, it also presupposes that unity will, can and ought to be achieved as the 'greatest good'. Even so, this equality will still be unequal in so far as it will be to the detriment of active forces. It is a clear case of applying the leaded yoke around the fastest sprinter so that everyone will 'win.'[3]

The charge that an undialectical view of life leads to an asocial and anarchistic self is perhaps the most serious objection that Houlgate raises, for it calls into question the very value of Deleuze's ethico-political viewpoint. It is the uncompromising, 'asocial' self that affirms itself without that recognition by an Other on which Hegel's master-slave dialectic so depends. Deleuze's answer is to appeal to difference in-itself, the *unilateral distinction of Being*. The long answer to Houlgate's charge (which curiously rings with the fear of what Deleuze calls 'crowned anarchy') is to be found in *Difference and Repetition* and beyond, especially in terms of recognition and its host of problems. But more importantly, the claim that Deleuze's ontology fosters or creates an anarchic being as a product of affirmation is a very serious charge. Although this consequence may indeed be true, Houlgate does not elaborate further on what he means by anarchic, nor does he make mention of what Deleuze has in mind when he speaks of the *hierarchisation* of values. In essence, the 'law' by which being is determined precedes any

concrete law formed by consciousness. It is Deleuze's view that the true necessity lies in the higher principles of eternal return and the will to power, and not in what he would consider the false necessity of a negative dialectics that cannot, in his view, truly account for the necessary conditions that would bring two terms into opposition. Moreover, it is not at all certain that Deleuze's view is truly asocial, for, according to him, all is desire and difference, and it is this motivating quality of pure difference and desire without lack that truly motors the social. In his later works with Félix Guattari there is much discussion on the notion of bodies, desiring-machines, and their bearing on the socius.[4]

James Brusseau's account of Houlgate's criticism of Deleuze is particularly sensitive to the seriousness of Deleuze's dislike of objections. Brusseau says: 'Every criticism potentially reduces thinking to a chess match of minute complaints and arcane refutations having nothing to do with experience' (Brusseau 1998: 24). This is to say that Deleuze despises the variety of objections that create nothing, that are regressively mired in theoretical debate rather than spurring philosophy on to greater and more worthy ambitions (such as creation and experimentation). Objections – if any are to be made at all – should be generative, and should set aside right and wrong in favour of whether a concept is useful and productive. This view, that denies objections and issues that can be declared right and wrong, is indeed complementary to the entire ontological position Deleuze wants to take. To frame everything in terms of opposition, as right or wrong, is to lapse into the viewpoint of the negative. Houlgate only *implies* that Deleuze's understanding of Hegel is wrong; what he actually says is that it is a *distortion*. This can be taken in another sense in so far as we can view the term 'distortion' as implying not wrongness or an aberrant deviation, but a *variation*, a different way of interpreting.

Brusseau points out that Deleuze stands outside and distant from Houlgate's version of Hegel, and so Houlgate draws Deleuze into proximity, which means that he draws Deleuze into the reactive oppositions of Hegelianism (Brusseau 1998: 25). Houlgate castigates particular features and instances of Deleuze's treatment while praising him in turn, in a cycle of acceptance and rejection (Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche is persuasive, his reading of Hegel is a distortion). Deleuze and Hegel themselves become irrelevant in Houlgate's care, for he would rather focus his attention on their *relation*, a relation that is patently negative: 'Deleuze is not-Hegel, Hegel is not-Deleuze.'

As we stated above, Houlgate could be seen as drawing Deleuze into an unfair trap. He casts him in the role of the Beautiful Soul

who tries to mediate all contradictions, succeeding and failing in parts. Houlgate seems to imply – negatively by way of his critique intended to demonstrate where Deleuze is in 'error' – that there is a 'right' way of reading and critiquing Hegel that Deleuze fails to follow. What is being claimed here in Houlgate's objections? That Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche is persuasive while his reading of Hegel is distorted? Deleuze might remain sanguine about this charge, and would most likely agree with it if by distortion we mean creating something different, a mutation. Mapping Deleuze's reading as to what it lacks again presupposes a reliance upon the patently negative and reactive character of interpretation in the history of philosophy that Deleuze wants to distance himself from. In league with the will to power, it is the desire to interpret Nietzsche and to expose a portrait or a new way of thinking about Hegel that motivates Deleuze's work on Nietzsche. If the work is interpreted in terms of lack, then the true sense of desire (as will to power) is lost; buried under the imposed image of thought that hierarchically distributes good and bad, right and wrong, readings. This interpretation of Houlgate would be more on the side of Deleuze, and should here be acknowledged as such. However, despite the glibness of some of his objectors such as Brusseau and Hardt, Houlgate does raise very pertinent objections that require serious answers. As insightful as commentators such as Brusseau and Hardt are, their assessments may still border on editorialising in favour of Deleuze rather than seriously engaging the arguments Houlgate raises.

Crucially, one should not assume Deleuze is dismissing Hegel as irrelevant, for if anything the opposite is the case. Deleuze realises how important it is to address the Hegelian project, but he knows not to fall into the dialectical trap of negating Hegel and in turn becoming Hegelian as a result. Much akin to his treatment of Bergson, Deleuze's *Nietzsche and Philosophy* engages in a somewhat ambivalent antagonism contra Hegel. Despite his most vitriolic statements via Nietzsche, it does appear that his project is more indexed to Kant (cf. Hardt 1993: 27–9).[5] And, as Michael Hardt warns, if Nietzsche is positioned as a strict anti-Hegelian, Deleuze runs the risk of devaluing Nietzsche as a reactive tool for the negation of the Hegelian monolith, i.e., performing a dialectical operation that pits Nietzsche against Hegel (28).

Houlgate does pick up on what may be an apparent opposition in Deleuze in citing a well-known passage that could be construed as a direct attack against Hegel: 'We will misunderstand the whole of Nietzsche's work if we do not see "against whom" its principal concepts are directed. Hegelian themes are present in this work as the

enemy against which it fights' (Deleuze 1982: 162). As an important clarification, the genealogical task is concerned with locating the 'presubjective force or will' and not a particular person (Hardt 1993: 31). However, even if it is not a direct confrontation, this formulation may still also be read as Deleuze's form of creating an opposition. Nevertheless, there is a fundamental difference between engaging in an attack and being opposed to something: oppositions hold out the possibility of resolution through consensus or compromise whereas attacks are destructive acts not amenable to resolution. If Deleuze was merely opposed to Hegel, there might still be the possibility of that compromise, but Deleuze's own alignment with Nietzsche commits him to rejecting the possibility of a compromise with Hegelian themes (Deleuze 1982: 195). It is this alignment with Nietzsche that suggests Deleuze's critique of Hegel is indeed not mere opposition, but an attack. His assessment of Nietzsche is very telling of where Deleuze sees himself in terms of being in opposition to or attacking Hegel: 'The philosophical learning of an author is not assessed by numbers of quotations . . . but by the apologetic or polemical directions of his work' (162). Moreover, if Deleuze is interested in total critique, and total critique is destructive in its creation, then Deleuze's critique of Hegel cannot be adequately portrayed as mere opposition.

Against Houlgate's claim that *Nietzsche and Philosophy* offers only a selective critique of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*'s master-slave dialectic rather than engaging with anything beyond this one Hegelian theme, Hardt notes that 'Deleuze directs the Nietzschean attack not against Hegel's master and slave, but against an extrapolation from Hegel's *Science of Logic*. We no longer ask the question "What is the dialectical logic of being?" but "Who wills this logic?"' (Hardt 1993: 37). Hardt's appraisal of Houlgate's criticism and Hegelianism in general is thus that it 'fails to appreciate that Hegel's negative logic is required for determination' and 'its conception of self does not meet the requirements to achieve genuine interiority' (37). However, as Lumsden notes, what weakens Hardt's criticism is that nowhere does he engage with the theme Deleuze is attempting to critique: that of Hegelian self-consciousness.[6] Instead, Hardt assumes complicity with Hegelian self-consciousness, and so Houlgate's questions remain unanswered. Moreover, Hardt does not make clear where in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* Deleuze extends the critique of Hegel beyond the *Phenomenology*, but merely states that it does.

Houlgate claims that Deleuze fails to give sufficient thought to determination. This may be a bit hasty, for Deleuze has his own view

of determination, but it is of a variety that does not rely on Thought but rather on external movement, an opposition of terms where the opposition lies not in the things themselves but is introduced there by Thought. Moreover, as Hardt indicates, Houlgate assumes that Deleuze is trying to repair the Hegelian argument for self-consciousness and interiority, when in fact Deleuze is quite explicit in his rejection of both. Deleuze wants to explore the unthought of thought and a genuine interiority rather than a conceptual one. To fault Deleuze for failing to amend the Hegelian arguments would merely be to portray him as attempting to perform some degree of compromise with Hegelian themes, when in fact his tasks lie outside of them.

II. Judith Butler

Among the grand critical efforts of current feminist philosophy, Judith Butler ranks highly as a critical theorist with a modified Hegelian and Lacanian perspective on the issue of desire. Although a willing and capable reader of the poststructuralist tradition, she is not in accord with any conception of desire that does not rely on the notion of lack. Since, in her view, desire is a form of phenomenological experience, she both reads Hegel as a philosopher of experience and retains the function of negativity as a necessary structural function of desire in the making and re-making of identity. Despite her keen insights into the rendering of desire in the Lacanian sense through the experience of a sociolinguistic world in which identities are made and re-made, her reading of Deleuze is lacking in parts. First, she makes the bold – and often true – claim that to attempt an overturning of Hegel is to be brought back into the Hegelian system as an anticipated outcome of it. Her suspicion with regard to Deleuze is thus that his invention of an alternate metaphysical programme remains mired in a secret dialectical heritage. The method she will employ presupposes her perspective on desire, and she will go further than Houlgate does by assessing not only Deleuze's *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, but also his later works with Guattari.

In her endeavour to overcome many of what she deems confabulations of the Hegelian enterprise, she states that the 'immanent critique of the self-identical subject is in many ways overlooked by Derrida, Deleuze, and others who proceed to view Hegel as championing the "subject," a metaphysics of closure or presence, that excludes difference and is, according to his Nietzschean critics, also anti-life' (Butler 1999: 176).[7] Butler asks if this continued preoccupation with Hegel, even when programmatically a disavowal or rejection, is not in itself yet another

residual manifestation of the dialectical procedure, a stage of post-Hegelianism that Hegel himself had already prefigured. This would be the case if the cause of poststructuralism involved merely a rejection of Hegel; however, it fails to give credit to the careful and deliberate theoretical movements within this tradition that have already considered this outcome. Indeed, both Derrida and Foucault acknowledge that there is no rejecting Hegel without ostensibly becoming Hegelian. This perhaps highlights a major division in methodological approach between, say, Derrida and Deleuze: while the former employs an internal rupture (Hegelianism without reserve), the latter invents a new way out of Hegel without resorting to the crude oppositional bullying Hegel seems to invite.

Butler's second charge is specific to Deleuze's project: 'To the degree that Deleuze historicises the negative formulation of desire, he effects a break with Hegel that cannot be accounted for within Hegel's philosophy' (Butler 1999: 206). Two errors result that warrant our special attention. First, as we will later demonstrate in a brief discussion of desire in relation to Deleuze's conception of the body, Deleuze does not historicise any formulation of desire – since Hegel has already historicised the negative formulation of desire, Deleuze does not want to participate in such an impoverished view. Second, the fact that Deleuze's conception of an affirmative desire cannot be accounted for by the Hegelian philosophy is precisely the point, and in no way detrimental to his exercise, for Deleuze does not want his philosophy subsumed by the Hegelian variety.

More specifically, Butler refines her charge against Deleuze's conception of desire through her own reading of what Deleuze means: 'For Deleuze, no matter the hegemony of that [culturally prescribed law of desire as lack], it not only *can* be broken, but *ought* to be' (Butler 1999: 207). She is partially right and partially wrong in this formulation. Deleuze will point to the eventual 'forgetting' in the eternal return of finite reactive structures, but the structure of his ethical *ought* is not as forcefully united with a static form of the political as Butler would have us believe. Deleuze was not a manifesto writer, although his work has frequently been adopted for pragmatic purposes in ethico-political concerns.[8] If Deleuze espoused any type of revolution, it would not be in ideologically prescribed terms, for such forms are overcoded and tend to lapse into failure as their movement fixes the forces of life into the constituted framework of an image of thought, much in the same way Marxism lent itself to becoming dogmatic. Deleuze's revolution, if it can be so called, would be akin to Nietzsche's tortuous wheel of the eternal

return. A revolution, that is, involving both an ontological principle (being is made univocal; equivocal being passes away) and an ethical selection (the necessity of the will to power selects the active forces that can bear the being of becoming while the reactive forces are 'forgotten').

Butler reads *Nietzsche and Philosophy* in much the same fashion as Houlgate does: as primarily offering a critique of Hegel's master–slave dialectic. This, as we have already indicated above, is a common prejudice in the reception of Deleuze's text. A more subtle reading reveals a much more broad-ranging sophistication in which we can trace the theoretical gains Deleuze has made in his reading of Bergson, applied in turn in response more to Hegel's *Logic* than to his *Phenomenology* – and even engaging Kant and Plato more directly. To this extent *Nietzsche and Philosophy* stands less as a rejection of the determination of Being than as a total critique that, rather than attempting to refine Hegelian determination, proposes instead a declaration of univocal Being. This again illustrates Deleuze's operation of critique: as a productive and generative activity rather than an empty repositioning of old problems that only orient themselves towards repetitive criticisms. Just as the formula runs *empiricism = pluralism = multiplicity*, Deleuze also wants to say *critique = transmutation = difference = desire = affirmation*. Deleuze's aim is not to *re*-present or *re*-cognise Hegel through Hegel's posthumous adversaries, but rather to ground a critique of Kantian and Hegelian themes, *while also* demonstrating the ontological and ethical features of Nietzsche's theory of forces, will to power and eternal return, and how the totality of this critique will produce something new. Again, like Houlgate, Butler misses out on recognising the more proximate figures of Kant and Plato in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*.

Butler is correct in her reading that noble morality is an affirmation of difference in lieu of constant mediations of the dialectic to create a totalising identity, but she is still committed to the idea that Hegel can be tweaked and made into a personalising Hegel, a Hegel that can speak adequately on the issue of experience and its bearing on the desire-identity couplet that she sets into motion. She goes on to state that 'Deleuze does not take into account this celebratory conclusion to the *Phenomenology*, and we can surmise that he does not think it possible within Hegel's own terms' (Butler 1999: 209). But Deleuze will not accept the Bacchanalian revel that brings us back to the start once Absolute Knowing is achieved because it still subjects desire to an understanding through the negative. Going 'back home' is impossible for nomad thought, the thinking that always encounters the not-yet-known, the unfamiliar. This 'homecoming' feature of Geist is not only untenable,

but undesirable. It is a process of determining one's home or ground by going out into the world and discovering everything that this home is not – another tangible example of how Hegel takes his form of determination to the extreme. It is as if Deleuze wants to say that we will save a lot of time and grief, sparing ourselves the ornamentalising and circumspect features of a long dialectical odyssey, if we honestly affirm the ground as internally and substantially differential in-itself right from the start.

We must here dwell a bit longer on this notion of return, and on why Deleuze's vision of return is not of that variety of desire that seeks fulfilment to negate the negation that is lack. Hegel's phenomenological odyssey of Geist is curiously Miltonic. That is, the human subject leaves the simple and bestial bliss of the animals (empty empiricism) and undergoes a gruelling journey only to return home again as a whole and articulately concrete self. The constant alienation throughout the *Phenomenology* is a characteristic lack of certainty and the distance from absolute knowing. In Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Heaven is depicted as a place where substances are real whereas in Hell they are mere representations, alloys, ostentatious structures of false pomp. The unhappy consciousness of Satan and his separation from the place of truly robust Real of Heaven is signalled by Milton with his constant use of the word 'sad' in relation to 'Satan'.[9] Satan's lament is Geist's: 'the more I see pleasures about me, so much more I feel torment within me, as from the hateful siege of contraries'.[10] Hegel's Geist is the biblical story of Genesis with a happy ending. The difference between Milton's and Hegel's account is that Satan's return to innocence, to the place of his deposition on the throne in Heaven, is an impossibility.[11] Wagner, too, exercises this notion of return in his narrative when the hero who has been exiled acquires a level of glory that exceeds his prior status, and so returns triumphant. Freud also has his story of return to the womb, and it would appear that these reactive strains of return are numerous in theoretical and literary works, as a seductive fiction that gives comfort to the weary traveller in the throes of existential anguish. However, this is not the type of return Deleuze wants. It is the return of the reactive and vindictive type, whereas a true sense of return as eternal return is the affirmation of the return of the different. Thus when Butler accuses Deleuze of Rousseauism – in so far as his conception of desire implies a utopic vision in which we return to a state of nature and escape the corruption of the state – this is wide of the mark, precisely because such a return is a return to the same rather than to the different.

Butler later asserts that the 'postulation of a natural multiplicity appears . . . as an insupportable metaphysical speculation on the part of Deleuze'. That is, 'the appeal to a precultural eros ignores the Lacanian insight that all desire is linguistically and culturally constructed' (Butler 1999: 214). In Butler's view, Deleuze has set a trap for himself, since in order to constitute this newly minted theory of difference and desire against the Hegelian conception, he needs to make his political strategy practically extend to the cultural construction of desire without lapsing into a normative naturalist position in terms of desire. This criticism does present a real problem, but not one that dooms Deleuze's project to defeasibility. Butler, in relying heavily on the Lacanian model, is still defending a somewhat rigidified historico-Hegelian interpretation. In sum, she assumes a direct and continuous linkage within the cultural-linguistic structure as the genesis of desire. Butler wants to say that the social precedes desire, and imputes to Deleuze the opposite view of desire as a precursor to the social. But, in fact, Deleuze's claim is that desire *is* the social, that difference is already in (as forces) and a product of the social. That is, difference or desire is immanent in the social. It seems that Butler wants Deleuze to take the implications of his ontology of difference more seriously in such a way as to apply it almost directly within an already constituted cultural-linguistic world. In this sense, she drags Deleuze into constructing an opposition between desire and the social, the natural and the cultural (artificial), which he is not willing to make.

Butler argues that Deleuze's appeal to multiplicitous affectivity, or natural desire as a precultural eros, is akin to the projects of Rousseau and Montesquieu (Butler 1999: 215). Not only does this perform violence upon Deleuze's notion of the return of the different, it also implies that he historicises desire. Butler's criticism follows from her commitment to the idea that desire is lack grounded in experience, and that the satisfaction of desire is a return to identity. But to say that Deleuze historicises desire is an unfortunate misreading. If anything, Deleuze wants to move away from historicisation, for a historicised difference is the making of an external rather than internal difference, subsuming pure difference to an historical order that acts as its other. As Dorothea Olkowski notes, in her attempt to bring Butler back into a more penetrative reading of Deleuze, if we are going to speak of desire (or of difference for that matter), it is essential that we pay proper attention to Deleuze-Nietzsche's discussion of the body (Olkowski 1999: 44–5). As we have already witnessed in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, a body is the meeting place of forces in relation, and this body can take

myriad forms, be they physical, political, geographical, chemical, etc. The power expressed in this body, as well as the power it expresses, is desire, but the variety of desire that experiments with forces. Returning to the *Gorgias* exchange, what separates active force from what it can do is the law. This is the reason why the weak do not actually separate the active from what they can do because reactive forces can only impose an inverted image of law (the candle in the eye of the dialectical ox). It is only through the shored up reserves of the juridical that reactive forces can triumph, but it is the false triumph of slave morality, for reactive forces – although successful in subjugating active forces to the law – are themselves also enslaved to the law. The law of desire sets up this notion of the lack, whereas the nature of desire as truly affirmative strives to go to the limit of its own power. The error in Butler's reading is to assume that nature is opposed to law, when in actual fact it is law that believes in this fiction of opposition, while nature is indifferent to contradictions of that order. Nature's 'necessity' is expressed by following its own inner difference to go to the limit of its power; it is not concerned with the kind of oppositional structures that the law sets up as limitations on what an active nature can do.

What is important about the Callicles–Socrates distinction in the *Gorgias* is its bearing on the idea of desire. Socrates' notion of desire is reactive in so far as the limit of desire will be determined by the law (as lack), whereas for Callicles desire represents the limit of the body and what it can do without the fetters of the image of law. This *puissance* of (not necessarily physical) bodies and their relation of forces incorporates both the Spinozist *conatus* (as that which desires to persist in its being) and the Nietzschean will to power (as that which strives to go to the limit of power). Thus we are left with an ethical view of desire as the *puissance* of forces in dynamic and differential relation, thereby – as Olkowksi points out – rendering Butler's claim that Deleuze is attempting to inaugurate an emancipatory *and* ontological theory of desire a misreading (Olkowski 1999: 46). Desire, for Deleuze, is neither purely *ontological* nor *structural*. Rather, it is *ethical* and *experimentally disruptive*. If desire is viewed as lack, as Hegel appears to support, then, following Deleuze's Nietzsche, there would have to be the possibility of an equalisation of forces (desire and lack entering into a synthetic union where the pain of separation comes to an end in a kind of satiety or *ataraxia*). For this reason, neither Deleuze's nor Nietzsche's formulation of forces permit by their very constitution any degree of equality. (It is this same pain-pleasure dialectic that permeates that folk wisdom which assumes that medicinal cures have value and effect if they are initially

awful to the taste or cause a certain degree of pain and displeasure, on which would follow the pleasure of health.)

In sum, it is our contention that Butler's reading of Deleuze remains marked with the Hegelian bias that desire is negative, and that the identity of the subject is only completed in synthesis with an object that will negate this lack.

III. Catherine Malabou

Houlgate's claim that Deleuze in practice actually confirms Hegel's dialectical view is echoed in part by Catherine Malabou, who develops this criticism in a slightly different direction, in terms of unity and multiplicity. If, in fact, Deleuze is a 'secret Hegelian' then his criticisms of the Hegelian project will lose *puissance* and fail to gain significant purchase, for his credibility as a critic of Hegelianism will be jeopardised by his very repetition of or reliance upon the Hegelian dialectical method.

Malabou, like Houlgate, is conscientious in distinguishing between Hegel and the version of Hegel Deleuze deploys in his critique of the dialectic: 'the Hegel that appears in Deleuze's texts is always the *single* figure of the thinker of identity' (Malabou 1996: 115). The definite article 'the' is enough in itself to suggest a fundamental difference or deviation between Hegel and 'the' Hegel Deleuze critiques. In terms of this version or caricature of Hegel, Malabou argues, Deleuze's primary interest is in demonstrating how the 'systemic, binary heaviness' of the Hegelian dialectic can only produce the identical by way of negativity, and so cannot effectively ground a truly affirmative theory of difference (115). As Malabou understands Deleuze's method, Deleuze restricts the Hegelian dialectic to being merely the sublation of difference and then demonstrates how this dialectic is a form of *ressentiment* (115). This *ressentiment* is that of Zarathustra's Ass, the one who bears everything, who brays his Yes to everything, and is incapable of saying No to the negative viewpoint. To clarify: what is burdensome is the infinite circularity of the identical by the negativity of the dialectic, how the *self* is constructed by means of recognition and representation, especially in so far as the Ass always affirms the terms and results of his own dialectical relation with the other.

For all his talk of concepts and conceptual personae, it appears odd that Deleuze never seeks 'to determine what the Hegelian equivalent of "conceptual personae" would be' (Malabou 1996: 116). Deleuze is quite diligent in demonstrating the conceptual personae in Plato,

Spinoza, Leibniz, Kant, and even Descartes, but why does he neglect to mention any Hegelian conceptual personae? Concepts, for Deleuze, are the dramatisation of ideas that both emerge from and constitute a plane of immanence (Deleuze and Guattari 1996: 75). Just at the moment Deleuze might reveal the conceptual personae of Hegelian concepts as differential mobile points on a plane of immanence, he recasts Hegel's immanent system as being merely the constitution of a plane of transcendence, bolstering the 'higher opinion' (*Urdoxa*) of the State and the learned scholars (Malabou 1996: 116–17). Hence, Malabou suggests, Deleuze views Hegel's system as being 'on a fixed plane, in the immobile image and severe and fatigued visage of the Prussian professor whose friends very early on nicknamed "the old man"' (117). What we are truly left with, she concludes, is a static and monochromatic Hegel who attempts to negate all differences in the service of the negative dialectic. It may turn out, however, that Deleuze is himself creating an oppositional structure in so far as he *opposes* his own theory of multiplicity to the bare and static unity (the false multiplicity of the *many* in the *one*) of the Hegelian system.

Malabou does not aim to reconstruct the Hegel contra Deleuze debate, which would, in her view, only reproduce the anti-Hegelian arguments in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*; instead, she pursues the problem of Deleuze's understanding of Hegel. One possible solution, that would perhaps entail a redemption of Hegel from the Deleuzian critique, would be to declare Deleuze's ontology of difference merely a romanticised continuation of the Hegelian dialectic, or a consequence already prefigured and anticipated by Hegel (Malabou 1996: 118). Such a reduction of Deleuze's ontology to a moment in the Hegelian dialectic, however, runs the risk of portraying Deleuze as a philosopher of the Beautiful Soul. For her part, Malabou acknowledges this solution to be a dead end, not least since Deleuze himself had anticipated the objection when he claimed that a positing of a multiplicity of differences in no way amounts to a mere yearning for the peaceful resolution of contradictions. The Beautiful Soul still clings to a belief in the primacy of negativity in order to gain an affirmation as a productive (and peaceful) result, whereas Deleuze rejects the primacy of negativity altogether. Hence casting Deleuze as a philosopher of the Beautiful Soul would not be an accurate interpretation, but a reduction (119). What remains to be determined, however, is whether his own philosophy of affirmation is not a mere inversion or contradiction of the Hegelian dialectic.

The only fecund operation we can perform, says Malabou, is a Nietzschean evaluation of the Hegel–Deleuze problem (treating both

figures as 'symptoms' in a genealogy) in order to uncover 'the network or dynamic constellation that *motivates* it' (Malabou 1996: 119). No solution or resolution can be found, for Malabou implicitly asserts that there can be no compromise between Hegel and Deleuze. However, to perform said genealogical procedure examining the interplay between affirmative difference with respect to Hegelian negativity would not be a Hegelian method of examining the issue (119).[12]

If there does not seem to be a method that would be fair either to Deleuze or to Hegel in comparing the two then what is to be done? 'If Deleuze manages to reduce Hegelian philosophy to a unity, the solution would no doubt lie in *problematising this unity itself*, in exposing its differentiated structure in other terms' (Malabou 1996: 119). Without following this hypothetical solution to its conclusion, Malabou suggests 'that the unity of Deleuze's Hegel *both is and isn't what it is*, one arrives at a crossing of pathways where one might encounter the real sense of the confrontation between these two philosophers' (119). The solution she has in mind is to create a complication in the relation between the two philosophers. Malabou describes how Deleuze interprets Hegel as follows: 'If, for Deleuze, there seems to be only *one* Hegel, this unity is brought about by two possible scenarios: *reduction* and *exception*' (120). In so far as Deleuze *reduces* Hegel to unity (the solitary figure of a negative dialectics of Identity), he makes of Hegel an exceptional phenomenon in his own work. Since Deleuze devotes special attention to Hegelianism as a problem (albeit not always explicitly), 'he becomes the *only one*, with all the negative respect one pays to an absolute *heteron*: unable to be assimilated and thus veritably other' (120). Effectively, Deleuze makes Hegel an other, the 'enemy', thereby replaying the same dialectical procedure he claims to reject: an initial external negation of specific differences between things. Hegel becomes, for Deleuze, absolute exteriority, an Other to be mediated; i.e., Deleuze can only define his project by its contradiction, this contradiction embodied in his version of Hegel. This reduction of Hegel as an absolute outsider (*heteron*) is a very special problem that necessitates our attention if we are to take Deleuze's non-dialectical philosophy seriously, and to address the question as to 'why Deleuze never recognises Hegel as his white whale, leaving the reader the task of recognising in his relentless opposition to the dialectic the impassioned limping of a Captain Ahab' (121). It is debatable whether Deleuze does indeed set up 'Hegel as his white whale', a veritable leviathan that he champions against, or whether this may be chalked up to an interpretive fancy on the part of Malabou. It does, however, seem plausible, at least given

some of the antagonisms Deleuze appears to present in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*.

Malabou returns to an extremely crucial point of division between Hegel and Deleuze, that of *becoming*. For Hegel, becoming cannot be the actual site of being, but is an intermediate stage or move towards the actualisation of being or nothing. Becoming in this instance has a clear teleological objective: the actualisation of being or nothing – although we acknowledge that this may be a simplification of Hegel's somewhat rarefied point. For Deleuze, being can only be a becoming, for there is no resting place or telos to being in so far as it is always in a state of becoming.[13] Becoming takes *time*, and the duration of becoming is inseparable from that of being (hence Deleuze speaks of a being *of* becoming), whereas Hegel's Being exists in a punctual temporality (Being exists in a *point* in time, like coordinates on a line).[14] Becoming for Hegel is (in terms of a becoming-being rather than a being of becoming) a not-yet complete being, for it has not been synthesised in the present as actuality, has not yet been individuated by a process of negative determination. This becoming can continue beyond being's first negative determination thanks to negativity: being, although temporarily complete in the present, is still not a unity, and so the dialectic motors being along until it has been synthesised with essence and the Idea. But this very privation that drives being onto the telos of its actualisation as both real *and* rational is still, according to Deleuze, more indicative of consciousness than it is of actual beings (Malabou 1996: 124). In effect, consciousness 'imprints on becoming a categorical movement that doesn't belong to it' (124). Rather, Deleuze's view of becoming 'is not a hesitation between the abyssal vertigo of absence of form and the security of a particular incarnation . . . Becoming is pure milieu . . . a momentary assemblage that cannot and will not give its reason for being' (125). This is precisely why, for Deleuze, representation cannot be suitable in understanding being. For if the being is the being of becoming, and becoming cannot be represented due to its constant movement in duration (thereby resisting the unity or static form of the self-identical), then being itself will not submit to being represented. If becoming is infinite, then there is no final or absolute form being can take: it continues becoming by an unpredictable, fortuitous set of encounters with other becoming-beings. This ateleological becoming would in Hegel's view be a bad infinite (130).

If Deleuze presents Hegel through the aforementioned unity of subtraction (reducing Hegel, in a sense caricaturising or abbreviating his system) and the unity of exception (Hegel as the exceptional figure

who receives the most enmity from Deleuze, and the only figure he will not directly confront), and if Deleuze wants to dramatise the history of philosophy qua figures that embody what he means by conceptual personae, then Hegel becomes a figure in Deleuze's own philosophical project (Malabou 1996: 120). If this is the case, then Hegel (as a figure or symptom in Deleuze's philosophy) is inclined to synthesise these two unities of subtraction and exception (129). This, it should be noted, would be the act of Deleuze's Hegel (as a dramatised figure), based on Malabou's interpretation of how Deleuze interprets Hegel. The result of this synthesis would be a unity of abbreviation in so far as the 'points of being are not subtracted from themselves. They remain potentially rich in qualitative multiplicity and intensity' (135). In the configuration of Hegel in his texts, Deleuze does not make the distinction between these two unities explicit, and so Hegel remains an Other, an outsider, in Deleuze's philosophy. 'Doing justice to Deleuze's finely wrought thinking concerning affirmation implies, in my opinion, affirming Hegel's role in it' (136). Hence, in accord with dialectical progression, the figure of Hegel remains a moment in Deleuze's philosophy. If that is the case, Malabou implies, then the difference between Deleuze and Hegel is not as radical as Deleuze or his supporters like Hardt and Brusseau would have us believe.

Despite the possibility that Hegel represents a 'dramatic moment' in Deleuze's philosophy, the fundamental error to be avoided is that of attempting a forced comparison between the two thinkers. For although both appeal to similar terminology in their respective enterprises – an unavoidable disciplinary inheritance – they approach the problem of difference and Being from alternative perspectives. Judging Hegel from a purely Deleuzian standpoint, or, vice versa, is an exercise that will most likely end in a stalemate, hobbled by the inherent limitations of such a comparative project. What may be retained from the debate is a focus on what emerges from each thinker's metaphysics in terms of what is produced. It is, in the end, a question of arguing over the *consequences* of their respective philosophical gains, beyond the distraction of taking issue with terminology alone.

Notes

1. Dorothea Olkowski (1999) is one notable example of this.
2. See Hardt 1993 and Smith 2001.
3. Cf. Foucault's preface to Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus*: 'Withdraw allegiance from the old categories of the Negative (law, limit, castration, lack, lacuna), which Western thought has so long held sacred as a form of power and an access to reality'; and 'Do not demand of politics that it restore the "rights"

of the individual, as philosophy has defined them' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: xiii–xiv).

4. See Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus* for a much more developed idea of what Deleuze has in mind in terms of the social, and how his earlier ontological and ethical principles are laid out on this 'plane of immanence'.
5. See also Smith 2001.
6. Lumsden 2002: 151: 'This passage makes it seem that the Hegelian notion of self-consciousness is somehow transparent or straightforward. Moreover, without some attempt to make a genuine engagement with these thinkers, we are left simply with an opposition.'
7. In her attempt to summarise the position of the many French philosophers in this Nietzschean inflected camp, Butler's comment still proves too broad a generalisation. There is a conspicuous lack of mention or careful study of other notable thinkers in this tradition (couched within her phrase 'and others') such as Klossowski, Barthes, Blanchot and Bataille, whose projects – although not strictly poststructuralist in the way English-speaking audiences have come to understand this term – still merit mention and study.
8. See Hardt and Negri's *Empire* (2000) and Foucault's *The History of Sexuality* (1980). The problem with these applications is that they tend to romanticise Deleuze's work.
9. See Milton 1998: Bk. III l. 499–523.
10. Milton 1998: Bk. IX l. 119–22. The word 'siege' in Latin is derived from *sedere*, to sit, the seat, throne. We are privy to the image of Satan chair-bound and beguiled by these oppositions without cease.
11. A good literary example of a successful return is found in Dumas' *Count of Monte Cristo* where the protagonist not only returns to his beloved, but succeeds in avenging himself and resuming his life where he had left off prior to being exiled at the *Chateau D'if*. This is yet another analogue of St Paul's Christ, who is made to return and exact vengeance against those who denied him. This vengeful character is the petty and reactive version of return.
12. Although Malabou does not show us what this genealogy would look like, or what would result from it, it remains an interesting idea worth exploring in more depth.
13. This is a delicate point necessitating a thorough discussion of Deleuze's conception to time, in particular the empty form of the present versus Hegel's full present where Being is said to reside. Economy demands that this issue be reserved for a future examination.
14. See Derrida 1982: 42. The negation of the point (say, pure Being and pure Nothing) is a line (Becoming), this line negated becomes a plane, and so forth.

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Reading Orwell Through Deleuze[1]

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Abstract

George Orwell has often been accused of articulating a naive version of empiricism in his writings. Naive empiricism can be said to be based on the belief that an external objective world exists independently of us which can nevertheless be studied and observed by constructing atomistic theories of causality between objects in the world. However, by revisiting some of Orwell's most well-known writings, this paper argues that it makes more sense to place his empiricism within the contours of Deleuze's empiricist philosophy. By recourse to Deleuze's ideas the paper argues that far from being a naive empiricist Orwell in fact engages in a reflexive exploration of his virtual affects through the particular events he writes about. The assemblage that is 'George Orwell' is thus comprised by a whole array of affects from this unique middle-class socialist as he crosses through particular events. Orwell subsequently acts as a 'schizoid nomad' who transverses the affects of others. As a result Orwell takes flight from his own middle-class surroundings in order to reterritorialise his identity within the affects, habits and sensations of others. By becoming a schizoid nomad Orwell is able to construct a critical and passionate moral standpoint against forces of domination.

Keywords: affects, empiricism, habits, George Orwell, Gilles Deleuze, nomad

I. Introduction: Orwell and the Problem of Empiricism

When one reflects upon the place that George Orwell holds in British culture it soon becomes apparent that perhaps no British literary figure

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of the twentieth century has stirred up so much controversy than as is the case with 'St George'. Some see Orwell as a purveyor of radical ideals while others prefer to see him as hostage to a form of English conservatism (see Hitchens 2002). In academic circles these debates have been played out previously in the fields of political studies (for example, Ingle 1993; Newsinger 1999; Woodcock 1984), literary studies (for example, Rai 1990; Williams 1991), linguistics and discourse analysis (for example, Bolton 1984; Hodge and Fowler 1979; Fowler 1995), cultural studies (for example, Coleman 1972), and feminism (for example, Beddoe 1984; Campbell 1984). In many instances debates about Orwell have been concerned with the underlying philosophical standpoint he adopts in his writings. Some critics, for example, argue that Orwell clearly works from within a philosophical perspective that can be broadly termed 'naive empiricism'.

A common assumption made about empiricists is that they champion an atomistic theory of causality, namely that causality exists between two objects when a regular, constant succession can be observed between them (A causes B). According to its critics, there are a number of reasons why we need to remain sceptical of this causal theory. First, empiricists reduce a statement's empirical content to the actual or hypothetical regularity of relations between independent objects. But if causality can only be arrived at through observation then causal production as an independent phenomenon must be an illusion – an illusion that critics of empiricism reject (Harré and Madden 1975). Second, and relatedly, critics argue that empiricists merely explore the surface appearances of the world and thereby fail adequately to enquire into the underlying real causal powers of the world. Causal powers, on this understanding, refer to those 'real' internal mechanisms of the world which might not be observable to us but which nevertheless have tendencies to produce events at an observable level through their contingent interaction with other causal powers in the world. Capitalism, for example, has a real tendency to go into a crisis if specific underlying contradictions assert themselves in contingent circumstances. Thus the ideas we have about the world are generated not only by observable events – as empiricists are said to argue – but also from underlying causal powers (Bhaskar 1975: 13; see also Collier 1993; Dean et al. 2005; Sayer 1992).

Orwell is believed by some to have articulated a naive and simplified version of empiricism in his writings. Christopher Norris (1984), for example, is suspicious of Orwell's insistence that meaningful statements about the world are simply gathered from one's personal experiences. Such a viewpoint, suggests Norris, strays dangerously close towards

a naive empiricist agenda in which truth can simply be apprehended through our senses. While Orwell critiques ideological themes evident in 'pre-formed' words (for example, the word 'freedom') he apparently nevertheless favours the transparency of experience through which to understand the world. Norris is harsh in reprimanding Orwell for this seemingly simplistic empiricist observation:

> What exactly can Orwell have in mind when he conjures up a pre-linguistic stratum of innocent, original thought as yet untouched by the malign influence of words? ... These are crude formulations, but nowhere near as crude – or as hopelessly confused – as Orwell's way of stating the case. (Norris 1984: 254–5)

Raymond Williams also finds Orwell hard-going on these issues. Agitated at the supposed 'plainness' of Orwell's writing style, Williams bemoans the successful impersonation of the ordinary person pursued by 'St George' – the type who bumps into experience in an unmediated way simply by telling the truth about it. The inclination is then, problematically, to bracket out the social context of the writer and to cancel out his/her social standpoint towards the context s/he is observing (Williams 1981: 385). Even a sympathetic commentator, Ingle, similarly claims:

> For Orwell, reality, the external world, could be discerned by the undeceived intelligence of the ordinary individual ... by means of Lockean sense experience interpreted and codified by reason ... [F]or Orwell man's very humanity and identity were rooted in this capacity to apply reason to sensory experience, and man's capacity for reason led him to grasp the nature of objective truth. (Ingle 2007: 734)

But while it is indeed true to say that Orwell can be placed within an empiricist train of thought this does not necessarily mean that he also articulates a naive version of empiricism in his writings. Indeed, the purpose of this paper is to show that underlying Orwell's writings lies a more sophisticated empiricism than his critics often give him credit for. This claim will be argued for by re-reading some of Orwell's most well-known writings through the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze. Why Deleuze, especially since Orwell seems to be such a quintessential modernist writer at variance with Deleuze's writings? On one level the answer is relatively straightforward. Throughout his major works Deleuze continually develops a philosophically sophisticated version of empiricism. Importantly, Deleuze's empiricism does not merely explore how we come to know an external world through our senses and

perceptions of it; rather, it seeks to understand the forces of potential within the world, how these forces contingently assemble together during specific events, and how they impact on our sensations at a pre-subjective and pre-personal level (cf. Clough 2009).

The intention here is therefore simply to argue that it makes more sense to place Orwell's writings in relation to Deleuze's version of empiricism than to that of naive empiricism. More specifically, it will be argued that Orwell contemplates not so much something called 'objective truth' as what Deleuze calls 'affects', and that he acts as a schizoid nomad in using his own assemblage of virtual singularities, or affects, to traverse the embodied virtual singularities of other human and non-human objects at particular events. In the process Orwell takes flight from his own middle-class surroundings in order to reterritorialise his own identity within a wider network of power relations. By becoming a schizoid nomad, then, Orwell gains a more precise understanding of how his own assemblage of affects is caught up within various mechanisms of power. Orwell thus operates on a plane of intensity whereby different singular affects fold into one another both within him and through and within others and vice versa (cf. Massumi 2002: 24–8). This being the case, Orwell does not exist as a singular person but only gains an identity through a number of affects; affects which combine both human and natural intensities. At the same time Orwell is able to bring these intensities into his own writing in such a way that he manages to avoid suffocating the intensities he experiences through signification.

What the paper will therefore show is that, unlike the naive empiricist who wishes to impose their own 'sensory reason' upon the world to arrive at 'objective truth', Orwell is more interested in entanglements of intensive affects, in how these affects might be relayed reflexively through his own embodiment, and in how various affects transform his personal embodiment into issues of public relevance. None of this, of course, is meant to imply that Orwell's empiricism exactly mirrors that of Deleuze. But it is to suggest that Deleuze can help us rethink Orwell's empiricism in a manner that is more in keeping with what Orwell actually writes. To demonstrate these points, some of Orwell's most well-known documentary writings and essays will be drawn upon (for example, Orwell 1989a, 1989b), supplemented where necessary with some ideas expressed in his novels. But to begin with, we must first briefly examine the extent to which Orwell is in fact an empiricist. The next section will argue that Orwell is an empiricist of sorts, but one noticeably different to what is commonly understood by the term. This discussion will then lead on to our contention that Orwell's own

brand of empiricism enables him to escape from a debilitating relativism in order to become a writer engaged in a critique of society.

II. Why Orwell is an Empiricist of Affects

Lionel Trilling once claimed that while Orwell was no genius, he could nevertheless be elevated to the heights of being 'a figure'. 'Plainness' of writing and reporting is the foundation upon which this status of a figure is based. Orwell's main strength therefore lies in 'the virtue of... fronting the world with nothing more than one's simple, undeceived intelligence, and a respect for the powers one does have and the work one undertakes to do' (Trilling 1952: 220). It is, however, exactly this 'plainness' that has so infuriated some and led, in turn, to accusations that Orwell is a simple and naive empiricist.

There is little doubt that Orwell is an empiricist of sorts. For example, in his essay 'Why I Write' Orwell admits: 'So long as I remain alive and well, I shall continue to feel strongly about prose style, to love the surface of the earth, and to take pleasure in solid objects and scraps of useless information' (Orwell 1981: 753). The empiricist nuances of Orwell's description are obvious to see, especially his comment 'to love the surface of the earth'. Critics of empiricism would no doubt highlight the limitations of this approach, believing that it misses the opportunity to explore causal mechanisms that lie beneath the surface of the earth. However, there are other passages in Orwell's writings that seem to suggest a different empiricist standpoint is at work in his writings other than that of naive empiricism.

To begin to understand this alternative viewpoint let us momentarily look at a quote by Orwell from one of his essays – 'A Hanging' – in which he recalls his experiences working for the Burmese police force as part of the British imperialist state. In this particular essay Orwell describes the hanging of a male Hindu prisoner.

> It was about forty yards to the gallows. I watched the bare brown back of the prisoner marching in front of me. He walked clumsily with his bound arms, but quite steadily, with that bobbing gait of the Indian who never straightens his knees. At each step his muscles slid neatly into place, the lock of hair on his scalp danced up and down, his feet printed themselves on the wet gravel. *And once, in spite of the men who gripped him by each shoulder, he stepped slightly aside to avoid a puddle on the path.* (Orwell 1981: 364; emphasis added)

The quote alerts us to another type of empiricism evident in Orwell's writings, for what the passage conveys is a description of what it means to human: for Orwell, being human is, at least in part, being a bundle

of everyday habits. This comes through forcibly in the final highlighted sentence. About to be executed, the prisoner still nevertheless exhibits everyday habits of association: the simple association that stepping in a puddle makes one's feet muddy and wet. For Orwell, as we will see, it is such habits that, when brought together with other habits, engender passionate holistic feelings about social life that are also profoundly moral. Before we explore this latter point, however, we need first to unpack theoretically the notions of habit and association. Deleuze's work on the British empiricist philosopher David Hume is useful in this respect because here Deleuze outlines an innovative empiricist account of both of these terms.

In *Empiricism and Subjectivity* Deleuze argues that Hume is not primarily a philosopher of either knowledge or the mind. Rather, Deleuze claims that Hume is first and foremost a philosopher dealing with practical issues. For Deleuze, then, the real impact of Hume's insights is to demonstrate that empiricism is a practical philosophy based not upon 'abstract reason' but upon distinctively human characteristics such as imagination, passion and sympathy. Empiricism should not therefore necessarily be regarded as an atomistic theory of causality based on external causal relationships between objects in the real world. Instead, Deleuze contends that a more fruitful empiricist philosophy demonstrates how '[c]ausality is *felt*. It is a perception of the mind and not a conclusion of the understanding' (Deleuze 1991: 26).

By working through Hume's main ideas Deleuze argues that causal relations emerge by forming associations from impressions of sensations rather than through the discovery of atomistic causal relationships in the world. Before we investigate subjectivity and causality, insists Deleuze, we must first investigate and understand how reason is 'an affection of the mind' (Deleuze 1991: 30). Through the mind we receive impressions of sensation about the world around us and through these impressions we form associations about aspects of the world – the means by which objects are associated with one another so as to provide a causal relationship. And through associations we form habits and expectations about the world – the ability 'to move from the present to the future' (63). We use these habits to reflect on our own subjectivity and our own sense of self. If this is the case then reason is a 'kind of feeling' (30) that not only provides a habitual mode of practical activity, but also instils in us a reflective passion for the world. Thus whereas impressions of sensations only develop within the mind, impressions of reflection give an individual a sense of subjectivity, 'diversely qualifying the mind as subject' (97). On this understanding association presupposes 'projects, goals, intentions, occasions, an entire life and affectivity' (120).

A practical illustration of Deleuze's thinking on this subject matter can be gleaned once again from Orwell's essay on hanging. Just after we are given the description of the prisoner stepping aside to avoid the puddle, Orwell says:

> It is curious, but till that moment I had never realized what it means to destroy a healthy, conscious man. When I saw the prisoner step aside to avoid the puddle, I saw the mystery, the unspeakable wrongness, of cutting a life short when it is in full tide. This man was not dying, he was alive just as we were alive. All the organs of his body were working – bowels digesting food, skin renewing itself, nails growing, tissues forming – all toiling away in solemn foolery. His nails would still be growing when he stood on the drop, when he was falling through the air with a tenth of a second to live. His eyes saw the yellow gravel and the grey walls, and his brain still remembered, foresaw, reasoned – reasoned even about puddles. He and we were a party of men walking together, seeing, hearing, feeling, understanding the same world; and in two minutes, with a sudden snap, one of us would be gone – one mind less, one world less. (Orwell 1981: 364)

What is interesting about this quote is the way Orwell describes the condemned man through impressions of the mind of what Deleuze elsewhere will name as virtual singularities or affects: bowels digesting food, skin renewing itself, nails growing, tissue forming, and so on. These virtual singular sensations come together to form habits and probabilities (not stepping in puddles). This simple causal relationship is therefore *felt* by Orwell. After all, Orwell consciously describes his own felt experiences of the hanging – 'seeing, hearing, feeling, understanding'. And it is through his direct felt experience of the hanging event itself that Orwell is able to form the associations he does and from here to constitute a new set of relations from the simple habit of not stepping in the puddle. Orwell's description, then, is a rejection of the conventional philosophical meaning of empiricism 'according to which the intelligible 'comes' from the sensible, everything in the understanding comes from the senses' (Deleuze 2002: 41). In place of this conventional meaning Orwell embraces an alternative empiricist viewpoint which suggests that relations are independent of their terms. Or, to put the same point slightly differently, *relations* operate independently of *ideas* attached to terms, the latter being embedded in the significations of language (Deleuze 2002: 41–2; see also Buchanan 2000: 84–6; Colombat 2000: 17).

The distinction between relations and ideas is one constantly invoked by Orwell, particularly in his writings on language. In 'Politics and the English Language', for example, he suggests that one way to overcome what is today known as 'signification' is to let the meaning choose the

word rather than the other way round (Orwell 1981: 743). Elsewhere, in 'The English People', Orwell suggests that too many words and phrases become mere thought-saving devices, 'having the same relation to living English as a crutch to a leg' (Orwell 1970a: 43). What Orwell insists on here and in other essays is that written language should aim to capture the reality of everyday speech. Indeed, in his essay 'New Words' Orwell explicitly suggests that words should be weaved in with definable objects and relations existing in the real world. Accordingly, language is 'practically useless for describing anything that goes on inside the brain' (Orwell 1970b: 17). Feeling, emotion and sensation are too subtle to be translated fully into language, and much of these feelings fails to be conveyed through pre-defined linguistic forms such as 'ready-made metaphors', which for Orwell frequently go on to produce a 'filthy stew of words' (134). Orwell's rejection of 'ready-made metaphors' is thus a rejection of a language form that seeks to represent and signify pre-conceived ideas. It is therefore not too far off the mark to say that for Orwell this linguistic procedure fails to capture how the relations between one's sensations of the world are in contact with the real physical world; sensations which have the potential to be creatively combined in innovative ways so as to produce new visual images in language.

Returning to his essay on the hanging it is now possible to see how the distinction between ideas and relations is a crucial device which enables Orwell to express both the complex associations and relationships at work in the hanging event and his moral revulsion concerning public execution. One dominant *idea* pervading the essay is that execution is a normal matter-of-fact event. This is *signified* to the reader by what the various other figures (guards, jailers, a superintendent overseeing proceedings, a boy selling goods) *say* to one another about the actual hanging they witness. Yet the idea that hanging is a matter-of-fact event is destabilised by the *relations* evident at the execution. These relations are communicated not through language but through virtual singularities (for example, those of the prisoner) which then go on to open up a void in the idea that hanging is a normal matter-of-fact event. In other words, for Orwell, it is exactly what is not communicated by language that becomes the defining moment of the event he is actually witnessing. Ideas of hanging are turned on their head through their affectual relations: public execution is not a normal matter-of-fact event, nor should it ever be.

It is true to say that a phenomenological moment can be detected in much of what Orwell writes here and in many of his other works.

In respect to the hanging, for example, Orwell clearly describes an embodied intentionality in relating the prisoner's perception of his execution. This is both conscious (the prisoner knows he is to die) and precognitive (still, he avoids the puddle out of habit) (cf. Coole 2007: 415). However, we must remain cautious as to the extent to which Orwell can be brought solely within a phenomenological perspective. After all, Orwell deliberately comments on the virtual affects of the prisoner, and it is these affects which seem for him to present a more powerful, deeper meaning of the hanging event than do either intentional or (precognitive) subjective attributes. Such affects move within and without intentionality and involve amongst other things muscles of the prisoner which 'slid neatly into place', a 'lock of hair', and feet which print 'themselves on wet gravel'. These can all be taken as illustrations of what Deleuze refers to as 'a primary sensibility that we *are*' and demonstrate how 'we are made of contracted water, earth, light and air – not merely prior to the recognition or representation of these, but prior to their being sensed' (Deleuze 1994: 93; see also Kennedy 2000: 56–8).

The uniqueness of affects in this respect can be appreciated by comparing them with emotions. Massumi argues that one important difference between both is that emotions serve to narrate affects and thus often have a conscious moment to them. Affects, on the other hand, are a 'never-to-be-conscious autonomic remainder' of indeterminate bodily reactions to specific events (for instance, how skin registers an event before emotions narrate the very same event). Thus affects carry different intensities associated with the strength and duration of an event's impact (Massumi 2002: 24–5). Emotions often capture affects and enclose and name them so that we can then understand them at a conscious and intentional phenomenological level. In other words, emotions help us create a narrative around affects even if affects refer ultimately to non-conscious and non-phenomenological relations and not to ideas found in the language or in the emotions of a subject (see Deleuze 1988: 64; see also Wissinger 2007: 260–1).

In relation to the hanging essay this distinction between affects and emotions makes sense. The affects of the prisoner are emotionally connected by Orwell into a new narrative about reciprocal relations of hanging. That is to say, Orwell narrates the affectual relations of execution into emotional ideas about extensive relationships between 'parts' of the hanging event. He then reassembles these 'parts' into an emotionally charged 'passionate whole'. For example, the relational 'parts' of the hanging event that lead to the prisoner avoiding the

puddle acquire an emotional and moral 'passionate whole' for Orwell concerning the wrongness of hanging and ultimately the debilitating effects of British imperialism.[2] But, most importantly, Orwell instigates the movement from relational 'parts' to a passionate moral whole through his own body. Indeed, we, as readers, come to understand the passionate moral whole of the social injustice of hanging through the impact that the actual-virtual affects have on Orwell's embodied emotions. In effect, the event of the hanging brings into being a new becoming for and of Orwell.

We will later explore in more detail Orwell's methodological strategy of drawing on his own embodied affects to make critical observations of specific events, but at this point it is worth clearing the way for that particular discussion. Once more Deleuze's thought provides assistance in mapping out this moment in Orwell's writings, particularly in terms of his notion of singular affects as forces within the world that produce distinctive states of becoming within specific events. As potential states of being, affects bring together and break apart various energy flows through relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness, in often contingent ways (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 300; see also Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 315–16). According to Deleuze, such relations can be captured through an assemblage of rhythm. Rhythm relates to the sensation a body feels without its organs – or rather, without organisation (Deleuze 2005: 32). Rhythm in this respect is also an intensive vibration: a wave which flows through flesh and nerve and traces itself therein. In the paintings of Francis Bacon, observes Deleuze, we see rhythm displayed in respect to the non-organic figures depicted. Bacon paints pictures of organs that remain indeterminate. He paints pictures of organs which assume different shapes depending on the affectual forces that flow through them. Bacon does not paint representations of life but instead chooses to paint pre-subjective forces that act on the nervous system of bodies and yet also remain outside of bodies (36; see also Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 168).

Naturally, it would be nonsensical to say that Orwell somehow prefigures Deleuze's specific observations on affects. A more modest claim is to say that Deleuze's work helps to illuminate and make sense of Orwell's commitment to a variant of this type of empiricist thinking. As we now know, Orwell also insists on one level that the human body is comprised of pre-verbal affects which vibrate throughout the body so as to produce states of intensity. Orwell provides an illustration of the rhythm of sensations in his experiences of fighting in the Spanish Civil War for the non-aligned Marxist POUM group against Franco's

fascists. While Orwell writes about his time spent on the battlefield in actual combat against the fascists, he also recalls other 'rhythms' of war which are not marked by such speed. War, for Orwell, is additionally a moment of rest and slowness, interspersed by moments of fatigue and boredom on the battlefield as one waits for combat. Flows of energy from the human and natural worlds vibrate across the body under these conditions and are assembled in unpredictable and contingent ways. Orwell is surprised that the greatest enemy in the trenches is not the fascists but the energy of nature itself.

> We were between two and three thousand feet above sea-level, it was mid-winter and the cold was unspeakable. The temperature was not exceptionally low, on many nights it did not even freeze, and the wintry sun often shone for an hour in the middle of the day; but even if it was not really cold, I can assure you that it seemed so. Sometimes there were shrieking winds that tore your cap off and twisted your hair in all directions, sometimes there were mists that poured into the trench like liquid and seemed to penetrate your bones; frequently it rained, and even a quarter of an hour's rain was enough to make life intolerable. (Orwell 1989b: 28–9)

Orwell's organs are transformed through the energy of nature, and the energy of nature assumes new potentials as it assembles itself in Orwell's organs. His bones become vessels for the liquid of mist, his hair is twisted by winds that cry out, and he is at the mercy of a sun that refuses to give heat and warmth.

But Orwell is also aware that vibrations of affects come to be narrated through embodied emotions. For example, the doomed protagonist of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Winston Smith, feels that the body is *the* location for understanding the distinctively human qualities of particular events in everyday life. Winston says:

> On the battlefield, in the torture chamber, on a sinking ship, the issues that you are fighting for are always forgotten, because the body swells up until it fills the universe, and even when you are not paralysed by fright or screaming with pain, life is a moment-to-moment struggle against hunger or cold or sleeplessness, against a sour stomach or an aching tooth. (Orwell 1983: 803)

Here, Orwell observes that while sensations move the body to 'swell up' this becomes manifest and narrated through emotions associated with social, natural and human qualities such as hunger, cold, or an aching tooth. Affectual sensations within distinctive events thus communicate something which is emotionally social about the event at hand.

Orwell's own way of exploring rhythms is motivated in part to demonstrate his capacity to affect and be affected by others and by a

surrounding environment (cf. Massumi 2002). One way to understand this tactic is to utilise Deleuze and Guattari's thoughts on percepts. Existing independently 'of a state of those who experience them' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 164), a percept does not rest in one's immediate lived experience as such but rather subsists in the zone of becoming, or in a 'zone of indetermination'. Percept refers to that zone which allows for the 'coupling of two sensations without resemblance' (173). This is the 'passing through' of sensations from one object to another so that a new becoming is created between both that escapes the immediate perception of a particular state of affairs. We see this in Orwell's rendition of the hanging discussed earlier. The condemned man is made up of a series of affectual singularities (bowels digesting food, growing nails, and so on) which go beyond his actual concrete manifestation of being that Hindu man just about to be hanged and enter Orwell's own embodiment. By viewing the condemned man as comprising a set of affectual singularities which combine with various other sensations, including those in Orwell, a 'percept' of the hanging event is created that goes beyond the empirical immediacy of the hanging itself. This percept brings about a moral passionate event in Orwell: the awful event of 'cutting a life short when it is in full tide'.

In the final substantive section we will return to these themes in order to draw out Orwell's methodology and its relation to his critical social observations in more depth. Before this, however, one final related issue needs to be addressed. For some critics argue that Orwell's insistence on using his own experiences as a methodological device to make social observations lead him to embrace a rather incapacitating relativism. According to Lucas (2004: 11), for example, Orwell's subjective empiricism injects a 'superficial immediacy' into his writings whereby assurance in his political beliefs is gained simply through experience rather than through any intentional theoretical approach. Others develop similar critiques to argue that Orwell lacks any objective basis from which to make his observations. Rai, for instance, insists that Orwell's belief that language is often used to deceive and to inject dominant meanings into everyday usage betrays an extreme form of relativism in which 'language and therefore communication is beset by an apparently inescapable subjective falsification' (Rai 1990: 124). Stuart Hall (1984) similarly argues that *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Orwell's dystopian vision of the triumph of totalitarianism, is a distorted mimicry of complex modern societies. According to Hall, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* presents a picture of state power that simply imposes its will upon poor unsuspecting souls. The idea that the modern state must actually aim to

win hegemony from sections of the population, and thus must produce policies that at least respond to some elements of popular culture, is anathema to Orwell. As a result Orwell cannot see beyond power relations operating in modern societies.

The next section begins the process of providing answers to these criticisms. It will argue that Orwell develops his own take on the distinction between ideas and relations through the motif of 'vagueness' and that this motif is itself part of Orwell's broader empiricist theory of affects. Furthermore, Orwell's celebration of vague affects enables him to demonstrate how ordinary people might resist dominant power relations. This will then take the argument back to Orwell's own affectual methodology.

III. The Vagueness of Affects

Commenting on Charles Dickens, Orwell says that this acclaimed author combines 'a quasi-instinctive siding with the oppressed against the oppressors' with a Christian sensibility (Orwell 1984: 82). Dickens embarks on a radical journey in his novels without sermonising. He revolts against authority in a humorous manner that distils a human face without any highly worked out plans for social change. 'The vagueness of his discontent is the mark of his permanence' (81).

This basic motif of 'vagueness' is an important one for Orwell. Indeed, it informs his analysis of capitalism, which is in itself derived from his many experiences and, contrary to what Hall argues, from his deep appreciation of the potential resistance to authoritarianism embedded in popular culture. For example, in *The Road to Wigan Pier* Orwell says that the working class articulate vague socialist ideals. Socialism for them equals justice and common decency. The worst abuses are left out but life generally carries on much the same as before, 'centring around... family life, the pub, football and local politics' (Orwell 1989a: 164). Nobody disputes the fact that normative words such as 'justice', as well as others like 'equality', 'freedom' and 'liberty', are abstract concepts. Orwell's conviction turns on the surety that such concepts have found expression in all aspects of British life and therefore deserved to be honoured. They may all very well carry illusionary elements, as Orwell admits in his pamphlet *The Lion and the Unicorn*, yet they are powerful illusions affecting everyday conduct: 'national life is different because of them' (Orwell 1984: 150–1). Neglecting these ideals therefore implies neglecting a distinctively human and common culture.

But why is 'vagueness' celebrated by Orwell? One reason concerns his distaste for excessive intellectualism. Or, to put it in more Deleuzian terms, Orwell rejects that 'neurosis' in which a writer demonstrates 'no risk of seeing the power of life which runs through a work. All has been crushed in advance' (Deleuze 2002: 37). Neurosis is evident in such approaches in so far as, through clearly defined 'manifestos', 'ideologies', 'theories of writing' and so on, a writer imposes pre-conceived 'critical' significations onto an object of analysis. For Deleuze, this neurosis towards writing lacks creativity because of its failure to open itself up to the flux of life, to the different affects that run through the body of a writer and which go onto imprint themselves on the page.

Vagueness is Orwell's own device for denouncing something similar to the intellectualism of neurosis. Visiting the north of England's working-class communities in *Wigan Pier* planted in Orwell the view that the dogmatism expounded incessantly by many in the Church or disseminated by numerous socialist intellectuals just didn't exist among the working class. 'It is only the 'educated' man, especially the literary man, who knows how to be a bigot... The creed is never found in its pure form in a genuine proletarian' (Orwell 1989a: 165–6). Rather than reading every word of the Bible or talking incessantly about class struggle, the working class revel in their cheap luxuries despite the fact that these are a sorry compensation after years of being plundered by the rich. Even though their lives are on no account desirable, the workers have made the best out of difficult circumstances. Talk from some on the Left about progress being brought about through mechanisation only disaffected workers, leading to 'a spiritual recoil from socialism' (174) as creative life was seen to be increasingly sapped by industrialisation. Above all else, those 'possessing a technique which seems to explain everything... do not often bother to discover what is going on inside other people's heads' (173). Or, to put it in more blunt terms, they do not bother to understand people's everyday vague experiences.

What these writers therefore lack is an 'emotional sincerity' of the sort that Orwell finds in the American novelist Henry Miller. Miller's exceptional gift, Orwell claims in his famous essay on the novelist, is his aptitude for a style of fiction 'dealing with recognisable experiences of human beings' (Orwell 1981: 496). Specifically, Miller projects a familiarity with the reader beyond the confines of his novels by bequeathing 'the feeling that these things are happening to you' and by dragging 'the real-politick of the inner mind into the open' (497). Like Jonah inside the whale, Miller allows himself to be swallowed whole by his surroundings. Miller is thus secure in the whale's belly – 'the dark,

cushioned space that exactly fits you, with yards of blubber between yourself and reality' (514). Indeed, Orwell equates Miller's writing with those of First World War writers who turned their backs on the carnage they witnessed by simply switching off mentally from the destruction around them. Under these truly horrendous conditions the only avenue open to remaining human was to write or think about a void, a space where other sensations might flower and blossom far removed from the surrounding destruction. Miller does not therefore stipulate how people ought to feel but how they *do feel* (516–17; cf. Deleuze 2002: 23).

Miller's writing style is in opposition to some other well-known authors of the day. Orwell notes for instance how W. H. Auden could casually scribble down the requirement for murder in the Spanish Civil War. Orwell's own encounters of people being killed in Spain had accorded him 'some conception of what murder means – the terror, the hatred, the howling relatives, the post-mortems, the blood, the smells' (Orwell 1981: 510). In this instance Auden simply imposes linguistic pre-significations, his neurosis, onto a minimal linear narrative of the Spanish Civil War, without trying to understand the underlying sensations that murder causes in real events. 'Mr Auden's brand of amoralism is only possible if you are the kind of person who is always somewhere else when the trigger is pulled . . . It could only be written by a person to whom murder is at most a *word*' (510).

But Orwell's injunction to take everyday experiences seriously is not a plea to stay merely at the relativist level of concrete experience. Experiences for Orwell are 'vague' precisely because they do not appear in a clear and concise concrete form but rather live and breathe through what might be termed a complex and creative intermeshing of actual and virtual affects. And it is exactly these affects that open up a space through which Orwell suggests people gain the potential to become conscious of distinct power relations. Orwell's observations on time in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* provide an illustration.

One scene in the novel has Winston Smith take a bite of a piece of chocolate that stirs up memories of his sister, memories that the authoritarian government of Big Brother had tried to extinguish. 'But some time or another he had tasted chocolate like the piece she had given him. The first whiff of its scent had stirred up some memory which he could not pin down' (Orwell 1983: 815). It is the smell and taste of the chocolate that helps Winston to go back to his preserved virtual past, to fill in the interval between perception and recollection with another time-image that disrupts the linear narrative of the past given by Big Brother in the actual present. Orwell thus shows the importance of recovering a

number of times that travel along multiple paths: actual-virtual circuits. Memories thus emerge between the actual present image that passes onwards and the past virtual image which is preserved (cf. Deleuze 1989: 79; see also Colebrook 2006; Martin-Jones 2006). Indeed, for Winston, useless scraps of information and everyday ordinary objects initiate various time-images of different cultural heritages through the memories and affects they elicit. At a junk shop Winston buys a paper weight, an apparently useless object. Yet the paper weight holds an immense importance in 'belonging to an age quite different from the present one' (Orwell 1983: 799). A few solid objects become the key to a preserved virtual past, to a culture almost dead in the linear movement-image created by Big Brother, a culture which, once revived in Winston's mind, might open up a space for him to recognise himself as being different to how he actually appears to himself in the present.

The point for Orwell is that associations with one's imagination in both the past and present have the potential to create a passionate moral appreciation of one's conditions only if they are related to actual-virtual everyday affects. The main character in Orwell's novel, *Coming up for Air*, George Bowling, returns to the town of his childhood, Lower Binfield, in order to escape the oncoming threat of Nazi bombs during the Second World War. When he reaches his hometown he discovers none of the old characteristics he remembers from when he lived there as a child. Manifestly Bowling's desire to construct a linear movement-image of his past is out of step with his affectual sensations in the present. Returning to his hometown opens his eyes to a quandary. 'All those years in Lower Binfield had been tucked away somewhere or other in my mind, a sort of quiet corner I could step back into when I felt like it, and finally I'd stepped back in and found that it didn't exist… The old life's finished, and to go back to Lower Binfield, you can't put Jonah back in the whale' (Orwell 1983: 565). The events of his past remain just that – events of his youth, hazy images and untimely recollections that remained out of step with the smells, sights, sounds and feel of his current life.

Of course, the aim of Big Brother in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is to enter the interval between perception and recollection, to stop people from producing new assemblages of affectual singularities that make connections between the past and present. 'The Party told you to reject the evidence of your eyes and ears. It was their final, most essential command' (Orwell 1983: 790). Winston Smith eventually realises this when he begins again to recall his own past. He manages to gain a faint vague image of being with his younger sister when they were

children. He thinks back to the time when he stole some chocolate from her. His sister immediately takes refuge in the safe arms of their mother; maybe an unconscious and trivial act by his sister, but it taught Winston a momentous lesson about the ruling oligarchy of Big Brother. 'The terrible thing that the Party had done was to persuade you that mere impulses, mere feelings, were of no account, while at the same time robbing you of all the power over the material world' (841). Big Brother's aim is to stop people feeling a vague sincerity by controlling 'mere impulses', by controlling everyday affects. Memories, then, are not just a bundle of emotions. Memories instead mix up the past, present and future and enable one to use affects in order to resist dominant power relations. Winston recognises the force of memories, which is why he secretly obtains a diary in which to document his thoughts. In it he writes: 'To the future or to the past, to a time when thought is free... to a time when truth exists and what is done cannot be undone... greetings!' (758).

The next section continues the discussion of how vague everyday affects might be used to escape the relativism associated with naive empiricism in order to develop a critical social theory. Indeed, we will suggest that Orwell manages to articulate a moral and political standpoint that dissolves the boundaries of objective and subjective. By recourse once again to Deleuze, the section will show that Orwell dissolves these boundaries by assembling affectual singularities evident in specific events within his own body that then allow him to make moral and political statements about an empirical context beyond how it immediately appears to the senses.

IV. Becoming a Schizoid Nomad: Or, an Assemblage of Moral Affects

When Orwell speaks about the importance of the body in helping one gain a critical awareness of one's surrounding environment he does not mean this to imply that the body simply represents, or signifies, an interior self-contained 'reality'. Instead, Orwell draws attention to the forces, or singular affects, that inscribe themselves on the body in contingent ways within the interiority of the context at hand and from forces exterior to the self-same context. One illustration of Orwell's thinking here is when Winston Smith describes his apartment block. Winston is struck by how a neighbour's apartment 'was shot through by a sharper reek of sweat which – one knew this at the first sniff, though it was hard to say how – was the sweat of some person not present at the

moment' (Orwell 1983: 754–55). The neighbour is not visibly present through his/her physical appearance within the interior context where Winston is standing. Nevertheless, the neighbour is present through his/her singular affects which themselves become entangled with other forces penetrating the apartment building such as 'the usual boiled-cabbage smell, common to the whole building'. In fact such is a smell's explanatory potential that in *The Road to Wigan Pier* Orwell judges it as a sort of responsibility to employ an aroma to convey the social intensity and reciprocal relations of a particular context (Orwell 1989a: 14).

But to assemble sensations in new and creative ways is no easy task. Certainly Orwell is aware that it is often difficult to surpass our own habits in order to understand the habits of others. In his novel, *Keep the Aspidistra Flying*, the middle-class character Ravelston is enticed into a working-class pub:

> Ravelston persuaded himself that he was fond of pubs, especially lower-class pubs. Pubs are genuinely proletarian. In a pub you can meet the working class on equal terms – or that's the theory, anyway. Ravelston never went into a pub unless he was with somebody . . . and he always felt like a fish out of water as soon as he got there . . . There was a moment's hush and people glanced inquisitively at Ravelston. He was so obviously a gentleman. They didn't see his type very often in the public bar. (Orwell 1983: 631)

Orwell is thus conscious of the difficulties involved in merging one's own experiences with those of others. In *The Road to Wigan Pier* he evokes the metaphor of a pane of glass to describe these difficulties:

> Whichever way you turn this curse of class-difference confronts you like a wall of stone. Or rather it is not so much a stone wall as the plate-glass pane of an aquarium; it is so easy to pretend that it isn't there, and so impossible to get through it. (Orwell 1989a: 145)

This separation between spatial frames of meaningful experiences does not, however, instil in Orwell the belief that it is impossible to achieve significant levels of empathy and understanding with others. On arriving in Spain to fight against fascism the first person to officially greet Orwell is an Italian militiaman aged about twenty-five. They shake hands and an immense sense of comradeship flows through Orwell's veins.

> It was as though his spirit and mine had momentarily succeeded in bridging the gulf of language and tradition and meeting in utter intimacy. I hoped he liked me as well as I liked him. But I also knew that to retain my first impression of him I must not see him again; and needless to say I never did see him again. (Orwell 1989b: 2)

Orwell momentarily submerges his thoughts and feelings with the Italian militiaman through the touching of hands. However, this special bond of intimacy is only fleeting and soon relapses back to one of different zones.

It is this realisation of the difficulties in merging one's own experiences with another that leads Orwell in *The Road to Wigan Pier* to ask his middle-class readers: '[I]s it ever possible to be really intimate with the working class?' Orwell thinks that it is not possible. Why? 'The essential point is that your middle class ideals and prejudices are tested by contact with others which are not necessarily better but are certainly different' (Orwell 1989a: 106). The crucial phrase here is 'really intimate'. Although Orwell wants to locate a common place with his readers and with those he deems to be treated unfairly, he does not believe that it is possible to diminish essential differences between them and him. While staying in working-class homes during his excursus to the north Orwell notes of 'the proles': 'However much you like them, however interesting you find their conversation, there is always that accursed itch of class-difference, like the pea under the princess's mattress. It is not a question of dislike or distaste, only of *difference*, but it is enough to make real intimacy impossible' (145). Orwell concludes that, for him as a member of the middle class, to pretend to be really intimate with members of the working class would be dishonest, insincere, and end up simply creating a degree of fictitious sympathy since 'to abolish class-distinctions means abolishing part of yourself' (149).

Yet, it is exactly through his assemblage of affects that Orwell can in fact gain a degree of intimacy with others. If we think of an assemblage as being characterised by its ability to map out its own territory by bringing together different molecular affects then there is also a process of 'deterritorialisation' as an assemblage seeks out new molecular affects to link up to during specific events. Deterritorialisation, in turn, raises the possibility that objects have a 'nomadic' existence. Nomads have no fixed spatial boundaries; they do not travel from A to B along a linear pathway. Nomads traverse a number of zones and boundaries. Indeed, they blur the boundaries between spaces by often being in two spaces at once (Deleuze 1994: 46). And by distributing themselves across an open space, nomads gain the potential of creating percepts of their surroundings – that passing through of affectual sensations between different bodies and objects discussed above.

It is by creating percepts in this way that Orwell becomes a nomad and from here can relate to his readers something about the sensations that

flow through the events he depicts. Indeed, it is precisely this assemblage of affects in distinctive percepts that develop in Orwell a schizoid state of being: the unbearable coming together of different states of becoming through affects. The tension between these states of becoming is summed up by Deleuze and Guattari in the term 'celibate machine': a schizoid 'cry suspended between life and death, an intense feeling of transition, states of pure, naked intensity stripped of all shapes and form' (Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 20) that lead one to feel both repulsion and attraction towards an indeterminate state of becoming.

We can begin to understand what this means by briefly turning to Orwell's own experiences. Visiting working-class towns in northern England, Orwell describes some of the awful conditions he was witness to. Once more the assemblage of his sensations is the main focus of attention for wider observations about the working lives of miners. In one scene Orwell is taken down a mine. Inside the mine cage he is within minutes nearly 400 yards underground. As he crawls out of the cage into the mine a terrible anxiety suddenly descends upon him. A miner, once out of the cage, has to creep 'through passages as long as from London Bridge to Oxford Circus' in order to reach the coal face (Orwell 1989a: 22). Being extremely narrow the passages make the excursion an excruciating endeavour. 'You have not only got to bend double, you have also got to keep your head up all the while so as to see the beams and girders and dodge them when they come. You have, therefore, a constant crick in the neck, but this is nothing to the pain in your knees and thighs' (23). The pain is so intense that 'a week afterwards your thighs are so stiff that coming down downstairs is quite a difficult feat; you have to work your way down in a peculiar sidelong manner, without bending the knees' (25). In the north of England, then, Orwell's sensations act as both repulsion and attraction to gain a critical insight into the working conditions of miners. Orwell thus produces an assemblage of sensations by temporarily merging his own bodily experiences with those of others in specific events.

In descriptions such as these Orwell certainly seems to articulate something akin to the 'double hermeneutic' method put forward by Anthony Giddens. According to Giddens, this method is founded on the relatively simple idea that any social investigation will comprise a 'duality' in the sense that 'the 'findings' of social science do not remain insulated from the 'subject-matter' to which they refer, but consistently re-enter and reshape it' (Giddens 1993: 9). For example, by collecting data which challenges existing ideas around an object of analysis a

social investigator might initiate a public debate around the object in question, which in turn influences future social investigations of the object, and so on. But how Orwell as a nomad operates is in fact quite at odds with the double hermeneutic method. Giddens tends to sever the link between the researcher and the researched. Ultimately, his method is based on an external standpoint in which different people, including the social investigator, occupy their own frames of meaning and descriptions of the social world, even if each frame makes contact with the other (Giddens 1993: 170). This external step-by-step guide to social research through the double hermeneutic method therefore posits a divide between the researcher and the researched. In contrast, Orwell develops and situates his own categories of understanding in the very moment of his actual-virtual experience. As such, he is able to evaluate his categories within practical encounters and actual events and at the same time generate an internal critique of these encounters and events.

This schizoid nomadic moment in Orwell's writing can be clarified by momentarily reflecting on the autobiographical procedures involved in his social analysis. Broadly speaking, autobiographical procedures tend to abandon psychologically reductionist explanations of the individual, preferring instead the idea that people are fully social and cultural products (see Stanley 1992: 5). An autobiographical account is conscious of the fact that the self goes beyond the individual level as it reaches out to other lives and their experiences. Authorial power is a socially constructed phenomenon, a highly partisan accomplishment, which must also grapple with the complexities of social presentation to different audiences.

Orwell, however, discards the projection of an 'autobiographical I' veering towards an analysis of one's subjective life story and one's personal encounters in a social and objective environment. Indeed, he abandons the use of the subjective/objective dualism altogether. More precisely, Orwell focuses on the relation 'AND' that exists between subjective 'AND' objective. The middle term 'AND' is the zone of indeterminacy where subjective and objective fold into one another to create new assemblages (Deleuze 2002: 42–4). Orwell does not therefore converse with his readers from a subjective 'unified I' within an objective world but readily accepts and welcomes his indeterminate schizoid formation. His own character is that of the bourgeois English socialist typically mindful of his seemingly contradictory stance, but creatively playing upon it all the same. His public school background respects, even cherishes, Englishness. His socialism subverts it, yearns for elements to

be thrown away. This persona is constantly being creatively opened up through his nomadic experiences and it is Orwell's brilliance as a writer to publicly convey the intermingling of these different sensations on his own body. Contrary to Williams' (1981: 385) claim, therefore, Orwell does not simply bump into experience in a naive relativistic manner but allows a plethora of other actual-virtual affects to wash over his body and combine with his own sensations to create something anew.

V. Conclusion

Such have been the perceived debilitating consequences of naive empiricism in Orwell's writings that Raymond Williams was moved to admit that he could no longer read Orwell (Williams 1981: 392). This paper, however, has argued against the charge that Orwell is a naive empiricist who, thanks to this, is also a subjective idealist and relativist. Indeed, if what has been argued here has some validity then it is legitimate to ask why Orwell is so often accused of being a naive empiricist in the first place. One response is that he is too good at setting out what he says he wants to do, which is to make 'political writing into an art' (Orwell 1981: 753). For Orwell, this entails the ability to 'reconcile my ingrained likes and dislikes with the essentially public, non-individual activities that this age forces on all of us' (753). As such Orwell endeavours to assemble his empiricist and aesthetic feel for the world, including everyday and ordinary objects, and along with how he uses language, with the events he becomes part of and the indeterminate zones he visits. By entering these indeterminate zones the body of George Orwell is broken down into a new molecular bodily assemblage. Orwell's body momentarily merges with the affectual singularities (sights, sounds, tastes, smells, and so on) of an event and this remakes the virtual identity 'George Orwell'.

Orwell therefore demonstrates how one can utilise a language style that to all intents and purposes creates an asignifying way of writing. While Orwell is not of course the only writer who accomplishes this, his conscious and explicit injunctions to write in this style, and his numerous practical illustrations of how to achieve it, constitute perhaps one reason why his work still provokes such debate in the public sphere. We might add that, arguably, it is this asignifying ability that transforms his political writings into an art form. After all, Orwell is able both to convey his own affectual sensations through words and to break down the pre-conceived signifiers of language.

Deleuze and Guattari champion a similar approach to language. In their book on Kafka they note that

> Kafka deliberately kills all metaphor, all symbolism, all signification, no less than all designation. Metamorphosis is the contrary of metaphor. There is no longer any proper sense or figurative sense, but only a distribution of states that is part of the range of the word. The thing and other things are no longer anything but intensities overrun by deterritorialized sound or words that are following their line of escape. (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 22)

Deleuze and Guattari find in Kafka an author who is able to describe states of becoming amongst collective assemblages. Kafka is interested in how language no longer signifies observable characters as such but rather can be made to describe the different intensities produced when different characters encounter one another.[3]

Notice, however, that what Deleuze and Guattari endorse in Kafka – how he 'kills all metaphor' – is not in fact taken up by Orwell. Refusing to reject metaphors per se, Orwell prefers instead to discard 'ready-made metaphors' and to 'let the meaning choose the word, and not the other way round'. His reasoning here is that metaphors are used in everyday speech to make sense of everyday experiences. The problem of rejecting all metaphors, then, is that one risks also rejecting a way in which ordinary people make sense of their lives. Massumi might very well claim that 'matter-of-factness' conveyed through language 'dampens' the intensity of affects (Massumi 2002: 25), but matter-of-factness is creatively used by Orwell to sense the affectual vibrations of ordinary lives. He therefore seeks to creatively produce new language styles through ordinary affectual singularities. Orwell's brilliance, in part, is to make this immensely difficult and complicated task look relatively easy.

Notes

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2. It is in this way that, as Deleuze suggests, passions 'give the relations a direction and a sense; they attribute them with a reality, a univocal movement, and hence a first term' (Deleuze 1991: 63).

3. Some of Deleuze's books, *A Thousand Plateaus* being the most obvious example, also attempt to work in a non-representational (asignifying) style (see O'Sullivan 2006; Massumi 1988).

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The Empty Square of the Occupation

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Abstract

This paper is an attempt to implement Gilles Deleuze's theory of the series and the event, and the related function of the empty square (as formulated primarily in *The Logic of Sense*), in relation to the geopolitical regime comprising 'Israel proper' and the system of occupation in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The purpose of this exercise is to help establish a practical access to Deleuze's philosophies, and to offer a clinical account of the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories.

Keywords: Israel/Palestine, occupation, Deleuze, empty square, series, event

The regime of Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and Gaza, following the Six Day War of June 1967,[1] has become increasingly theorised, especially since the outbreak of the first Palestinian *intifada* (in Arabic, literally 'shaking-off', or 'revolt') in 1987. By deploying nuts and bolts from Deleuze's conceptual 'toolboxes', my aim is to proffer an analysis of the event of the occupation that frees us from prevailing views of the system of relationships between Israel and the Palestinian people. Specifically, the paper joins recent critical research deconstructing consensual representations of the conflict, representations that for decades have divorced the Israeli socius and its internal organisations of hobbled citizenship for non-Jews from the oppressive system of occupation in the territories. Hitherto, Zionist representations of the conflict have been successfully territorialised into ideological and political arenas, so as to mobilise most of the Jewish citizenry into the daily management, at both micro and macro levels,

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of oppression against Palestinians, and to disengage the international community from adopting a deep critical standpoint towards Israel. By injecting Deleuze's theoretical tools into critical readings of the conflict, we hope to contribute to ongoing interventions aimed at deterritorialising the workings of the desiring-machines involved in the social production of the real in the region between the Mediterranean Sea and the River Jordan. To this end, in the main I examine critically three recent and significant works on the occupation: Eyal Weizman's (2007) *Hollow Land*, Neve Gordon's (2008) *Israel's Occupation*, and Ariella Azoulay and Adi Ophir's (2008) *This Regime Which is Not One: Occupation and Democracy Between the Sea and the River (1967–)*. In addition, the analysis will refer to a highly recommended recent volume which compiles diverse studies of the 'prevailing modalities of the occupation regime in various periods and their order of significance'. Rather than convey a uniform image of the occupation, these studies 'highlight disparate rationalities and mechanisms of power whose heterogeneity reinforces the overall effectiveness and perseverance of this regime' (Ophir et al. 2009: 22).

These critical works will serve here as a platform for highlighting the traits of the 'system' of the occupation – or, in Deleuze's terms, 'how the series connect to make the structure' (see Deleuze 1990, 1994, 2004). As Lecercle explains, for Deleuze, the series 'define a field of problems, and their terms are correlated through a relation subject to constant variation and displacement' (Lecercle 2002: 108). What we are interested in is the *sense* of the event of the occupation as a surface effect produced by that displacement, which Deleuze explains in terms of the circulation of a paradoxical element – which needs to be explained here contextually – crisscrossing and zipping together the series of the structure of the occupation. This element is what Deleuze refers to in *The Logic of Sense* as the 'empty place or square' (also named 'the aleatory point', and, in *Difference and Repetition*, 'the dark precursor') – whose function is to explain the points of contact between the series and how they interconnect (Deleuze 2004: 184–9). As Deleuze puts it:

> Given two heterogeneous series, two series of differences, the precursor [the empty square] plays the part of the differenciator of these differences. In this manner, by virtue of its own power, it puts them into immediate relation to one another. (Deleuze 1994: 119)

This seemingly structuralist tint to Deleuze's philosophy is nevertheless consistent with his emphasis on univocity, and with the critiques he and Guattari make of biunivocal structuralism (in both volumes

of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, particularly in their critique of the despotic signifier and the 'binary logic of dichotomy', which dominates psychoanalysis and linguistics). In fact, this approach serves to highlight the production of sense taking place – since 'sense is produced by nonsense and its perpetual displacement' (Deleuze 1990: 71) – thereby keeping the structure open to constant movement and deterritorialisation and staving off stratification and the hierarchical functions of a signifier. Here it is worth bearing in mind that by examining a particular series of historico-political relations, what is productive, in terms of resistance, is to understand the sense of these relations not as 'a phenomenon of degradation representing a deviation from the true order', but as an involutionary process of becoming (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 237–8) in which forces change in nature (intensity) and a real difference is actualised (Deleuze 1994: 231–46, 252–6).

Accordingly, the occupation cannot be thought of as an infection or disturbance of the normal functioning of the formally democratic regime of 'Israel proper' (assuming that, when it finally ends, the regime will be cured of the disease), but must rather be understood as a device which, by maintaining a fluid communication with the regime of 'Israel proper', both explains the Jewish state's practices and meanings and opens them to contestation. As we shall see, the 'empty square' of the occupation appears as emerging from the various combinations of historically and spatially changing modalities of the oppression of Palestinians across the 'Green Line',[2] creating intricate relations of abandonment (cf. Agamben 1998).

I. From 'Hollow Land' to 'One Regime'

Eyal Weizman's *Hollow Land* (2007) offers a good starting point, mainly in view of the attention his work has gained among Deleuze researchers. Weizman is among the non-resident Israeli academics who have been openly critical of the occupation project. In a nutshell, his book expands upon the evaluation of the 'matrix of control' of the Israeli occupation, beyond the traditional bounds of political territoriality, to the vertical dimension – extending, that is to say, not just to the land surface, but to the underground domain and to the airspace as well, all of which play a part in the logic of segregation from, and control of, the Palestinian people and its land. According to Weizman, Israel's elastic geography of nomadic domination responds to multiple and diffused power sources, in relation to which architecture fulfils a functional

role. Indeed, Weizman contends that the occupation – as a plane of production – has developed architectural properties. The reason we lack an intelligible reading of the occupation, he says, is because we overlook verticality. He builds on the concept of the 'politics of verticality' to outline the main patterns of a three-dimensional domination, compounded by a patchwork of sealed 'islands' of Palestinian territory which – like the subterranean water aquifer and the militarised space above – fall under Israeli control. An intricate web of roads, tunnels and bridges has been woven to secure Israeli colonies – which are generally sited on the summits of mountainous terrain – within the Palestinian territories. Moreover, Israel uses roads and land confiscation to curb Palestinian development, and to restrict Palestinian movement by introducing a 'forbidden road regime that [limits] the inhabitants' access to major traffic arteries in the West Bank' (Gordon 2008: 137). As a consequence, the diverse boundaries of the conflict are revealed at varying topographical latitudes (Weizman 2007: 12).

It is in this context that the subterranean and aerial Palestinian resistance in Gaza – specifically, the tunnels to Egyptian territory for the smuggling of goods and arms, and rocket attacks on Israeli towns near the border – should be understood.[3] For Weizman, this 3-D logic multiplies Palestinian geography 'to separate the inseparable' (Weizman 2007: 15). This is the same logic of partition which, as Ilan Pappe argued recently (Pappe 2009), has weighed upon both Palestinians and Israelis like a curse, condemning them for nearly half a century to seeing the conflict exclusively in terms of partition. Ultimately, we are left with a hollowed-out land inhabited in layers, and controlled through them.

From a Deleuzian point of view, Weizman's work has become known among scholars not only for the vocabulary he employs to describe the Palestinian space (elastic territories, multiple and diffused sources of power, nomadic domination, vertical strata, connecting flows, and so on), but mainly for an unexpected implementation of Deleuze and Guattari's spatial concepts. 'Walking through walls' was a trademark of the military campaign waged by the IDF (Israel Defence Forces) against the West Bank city of Nablus in April 2002 (during the second *intifada*), amidst claims that it was based on a particular implementation of critical theory, including works by Deleuze and Guattari. Terms such as 'inverse geometry', 'nomadic terrorists', 'swarming and infestation', 'non-linearity' and 'deterritorialisation' became part of the IDF's lexicon during the planning and execution of its offensive, which involved moving military units through domestic interiors – 'punching holes

through party walls, ceilings and floors' – and avoiding the use of streets and conventional urban open spaces (Weizman 2007: 185–6). As Shimon Naveh, a former co-director of the IDF's Operational Theory Research Institute (since closed), explained:

> Several of the concepts in *A Thousand Plateaus* became instrumental for us [in the IDF] ... allowing us to explain contemporary situations in a way we could not have otherwise explained. It problematised our own paradigm ... Most important was the distinction [Deleuze and Guattari] have pointed out between the concepts of 'smooth' and 'striated' space ... [which accordingly reflected] the organisational concepts of the 'war machine' and the 'state apparatus'. In the IDF we now often use the term 'to smooth out space' when we want to refer to operation in a space in such a manner that borders do not affect us. (Cited in Weizman 2007: 200–1).

For Naveh, theories do not have a soul, nor do they strive for utopian socio-political ideals ('theory is not married to socialist ideals'). He recognised that theories are based primarily on methodological principles, and focused on their capacity 'to disrupt and subvert the existing political, social, cultural, or military order' (cited in Weizman 2007: 215). Naveh is correct – nor should his claim be regarded as particularly outrageous. In fact, the case is illustrative. The point is not what can be done with theory or literature – which in any event cannot be foreseen – but how our actions relate to our desiring-production. The expectation that a 'correct' reading of Deleuze and Guattari might transform IDF officers and Zionist politicians into anti-segregationists or even humanists is a notion drawn from a classical Marxist interpretation of thought and action. It is not false consciousness that impedes revolutionary action, but rather the type of desiring-machines at work, and the entrapment of desire by interest (cf. Buchanan 2008: 38–133). In the case of 'walking through walls', the unconscious (collective) libidinal investment of the IDF assemblage 'continues to invest the former body, the old form of power, its codes, and its flows' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 347). In this instance, 'desire is enslaved to a structured molar aggregate' – namely, Zionist colonialism – and invested with the changing forms of power deployed by the system of occupation (348). Thus, there is nothing particularly revolutionary in the IDF's reading of Deleuze and Guattari – not because it facilitated domination and killing, but because the syntheses that it allowed for were already predisposed to given and fixed military and political interests, rendering the desiring-production paranoid and reactionary (366–7). In other words, it takes more than reading Marx to become Che Guevara.

To return to the issue at hand, Weizman – like other scholars of the conflict before him (Benvenisti 1984, 1986, 1987; Kimmerling 1989; Peled and Shafir 2002; Yiftachel 2006; Raz-Krakotzkin 2007)[4] – 'define[s] the limits of the discussion in terms of the boundaries of the space of control' (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 371), and refers to a relationship or dynamic of dependence between the Israeli regime within the Green Line ('Israel proper') on the one hand, and the Israeli military regime in the occupied Palestinian territories on the other. However, it is a mistake to limit the discussion of the regime to the boundaries of Israel proper, since 'there is no such geopolitical entity' (371): the real geographical realm of Israel proper extends beyond the Green Line as far as the River Jordan, as does its economy and its politics. As Azoulay and Ophir explain, the problem is that these scholars uncritically accept the premise that the two entities are somehow separate, thereby ignoring the effects of the occupation on the regime of Israel proper. As a result, they

> perpetuate the prevailing view that the Palestinian territories constitute an 'outside' where everything that occurs – however appalling morally and politically – does not compel us to re-conceptualise and analyse the Israeli regime as a whole, and can therefore be described without reflecting upon the fundamental characteristics of the Israeli regime. (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 46–7)

This circumscribed view of the effects of the occupation is also apparent in Gordon's Foucauldian analysis of the occupation. It is most notable, for example, in his book's final passage, where he suggests that a solution to the conflict hinges solely on the emergence of Palestinian sovereignty in the territories (Gordon 2008: 225) – or, as he puts it, on re-connecting the Palestinian people with its land. As I hope to establish in this paper (apart from placing the focus on problematisation rather than resolution), if we wish to deal more effectively with the event of the occupation and reach a more positive problematisation of the conflict for all concerned, we must link the processes and changes occurring within the territories with those within Israel proper. As Azoulay and Ophir point out: 'The occupation of the Territories in 1967 represents a rupture-line in the history of Israel, because as a result of this event a radical change took place in the Israeli regime' (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 395).

The event of the occupation, as we shall see, obliges us to revise our concepts and understanding of the nature of the Israeli regime if we wish truly to grapple with this event on the political level. One facet of this effort must involve new formulations of what can be said in

our discourse concerning the conflict: we must intersect and make more immanent connections between the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza, and Israeli citizens and residents (Palestinians, Jews and others), and between their respective material and cultural interactions.

This, in fact, is the analytical innovation introduced by Ariella Azoulay and Adi Ophir in their book *This Regime which is not One* (2008). Beyond a mere demonstration that the two regimes are somehow connected, they demonstrate how the oppressive regime of Israeli occupation (in the West Bank and Gaza) and the formal democracy in Israel proper, form a single political regime consisting of two discrete, but symbiotic, systems of control. According to Azoulay and Ophir, despite their dissimilarities, these two political systems have become increasingly integrated since the start of military occupation in 1967 into a single body of domination. As they explain:

> At the end of the 1960s the state of affairs of the Occupation became a national project; in the 1970s it became larger; and at one point at the beginning of the 1980s the project was institutionalised and became a regime of its own, almost differentiated but not totally separated from the ethno-democratic regime in place within Israel of the pre-June 1967 borders. (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 395)

By thoroughly investigating the system of domination of the 'one structure' and embarking on a comprehensive counter-actualisation of the given, the main purpose of these two writers is to decipher the conditions that allowed for the emergence of such a hybrid political construct. They also maintain that, after four decades of military occupation, the Israeli political regime has doubled in size in all respects, through a carefully engineered form of production of separation between its two parts – one maintained by proximity and interconnection – compounding the impact of this 'inclusive exclusion' upon the Palestinians (Ophir et al. 2009). In the following section, I shall try to show how a Deleuzian framework might expand upon Azoulay and Ophir's main contention vis-à-vis Israel's schizoid redoubling in size, and proceed from there to enhance and expand the optical resolution of their analysis, before finally offering a clinical diagnosis of the state of forces of the 'one regime'.

II. Two That Are 'One'.

Given that Azoulay and Ophir's book has so far appeared only in Hebrew, I will briefly outline its structure and rationale.

The fundamental question addressed by its authors concerning the Israeli project for Palestine after the partition war of 1948 – and especially after the conquest of the Palestinian territories in 1967 – is 'how the institutionalised and prolonged domination over the Palestinians has shaped and changed the Israeli regime' (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 19).

Based on this question, the researchers aim at shedding light on the nature of the Israeli regime that is simultaneously 'one' body and yet more than one. The study sets out from two central premises: first, as noted above, that 'the debate cannot be limited to Israel proper, since such a geopolitical entity does not exist' (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 371); and, second, that: 'The occupied territories are an integral part of the Israeli system of domination, [involving] a relentless effort to preserve them as an 'outside' . . . this being the Israeli regime's primary concern' (57).

The authors' task is to distil the general principles of the Israeli regime, which must be seen as extending 'from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River'. This undertaking involves two major methodological measures: first, to describe empirically how the occupation regime works, by focusing on 'the forms of Israeli domination over the Palestinian territories' (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 13); second, to link these modalities with their reverberating practices within Israel proper, and to synthesise their abstractions of the system of the occupation with the more general and known patterns of the ethnocratic regime within Israel proper.

What distinguishes Azoulay and Ophir's work is the way in which they present the problem of the occupation. While drawing on Foucault – without doing so overtly – their proposed analysis also owes much to Deleuze. First, by creating new concepts, the work removes restrictions that restricted the scope of critical understanding in previous analyses. For instance, they point out that while most scholars agree that the central distinction to be taken into account when conceptualising the Israeli regime is the ethno-national distinction between Jews and non-Jews, they omit the significant category of non-citizens, without which the formation of Israeli mainstream subjectivity cannot be understood (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 377–9). Second, they distinguish between the actual and the virtual, allowing the conditions of the boundaries of the structures in question to be deduced, and thereby enabling a mobile understanding moving between the two realms.

Azoulay and Ophir's analysis does not offer programmatic solutions to the problematic of the occupation; rather, they search for what emerged to become the conditions of a project (the occupation) in the

course of its evolution over four decades. These conditions set out the 'solubility' of the problem of occupation in a Deleuzian fashion: they point to the significant changes in the historical 'graph' of the occupation, to the 'zeros' of its function (cf. Deleuze 1994: 171; 180–1). These are the points where distributions in the given diverged, illusions of identification and significations took root, and the occupation was established as the new possible of the Zionist–Palestinian structure. More importantly, it becomes clear from Azoulay and Ophir's analysis that the significant points of inflection in the 'problem' of the occupation do not exhaust the problem itself but should be seen as a manifestation of what has varied, and how it has done so, throughout the observed systems – in the form of a single infinite series of answers to a problem that is itself constantly evolving.

Azoulay and Ophir's book is a splendid exercise in poststructuralism.[5] Their starting point is Foucauldian: two dominant discourses on the event of the occupation are deconstructed in the book; the first concerns the occupation's temporariness (a temporal discourse), and the second, externality (a spatial discourse). The temporal discourse dressed up the occupation with a temporality that became indefinite by promoting a sense of imminent resolution, based on talk about 'peace for territories'. This linguistic space allowed for a professed Zionist readiness to discuss the *terms* of ending the occupation, while in fact standing in for, or perpetually deferring, any actual discussion about that ending. At the same time, the spatial discourse succeeded in placing the occupation outside the daily lives of most Israelis – as a distant space, physically and mentally, making it possible to bracket the territories away from the Israeli collective consciousness (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 27). As Gordon points out, 'The overall objective was to weaken internal resistance to the Occupation, and since rhetoric does not always have to avoid contradiction, the Occupation was presented as simultaneously temporary, moral, and nonexistent' (Gordon 2008: 7). The main point Gordon stresses here is that in the discourse of the Occupation, it became a *temporary project and simultaneously exterior to the State of Israel*.

The intersection of the respective discourses of temporariness and externality is what gives the occupation the discursive force that has preserved it as a 'normal' or 'invisible' form of living (Gordon 2008: 49). These discourses explain how the impact of the occupation on the production of Israeli cultural, political and social life is minimised or eliminated. For instance, we find no reference to the occupation as such, as a system of colonial occupation, in the increasingly militarised

educational system (where it is explained as a space being negotiated for the sake of all involved);[6] in the perennial debates over the condition of Israel's 'democracy' (in which the occupation is presented as an ongoing test of a still-vibrant democracy, rather than its antithesis); in the discourse regarding peace and national security (where the occupation is presented as a 'necessary evil', for which the Palestinians themselves are responsible); or in discussions in which ethnic segregation (which has deepened since the occupation began) is presented as both justified and as a self-evident necessity.

These two suspensions have given the occupation project both life and legitimacy: if it is 'outside' Israel proper, then it does not reflect on Israel as a whole; and if it is temporary it is tolerable. This is the consensus that Azoulay and Ophir tackle in their book and which has resulted in two interlinked and appalling actualisations: the various modalities of oppression of the Palestinians across the Green Line, and Israeli normalcy. To examine this unfortunate situation critically, we must go beyond the limits imposed by the occupation's discourses and modes of thinking, modes of dominance, and general productions.

In terms of the operational political regimes involved, the status quo in the land between the Mediterranean and the River Jordan is as follows: within the Green Line – 'Israel proper' – there is a sovereign system operating along the lines of a sophisticated ethnocracy (Yiftachel 2006), which skilfully manipulates democratic tools and techniques to its own ends; the areas beyond the Green Line – the Palestinian territories held since 1967 – are subject to an oppressive colonial-military regime. The stark contrast between these two entities underscores the 'outside-ness' of the occupation and is related, according to Azoulay and Ophir, to two fundamental classifications which are also in play: first, a territorial division between the area within the Green Line and the occupied Palestinian space beyond; second, a division between two discrete systems of subordination: of citizens on the one hand (Jews and non-Jews – the latter being mainly Palestinian), and non-citizens (Palestinians) on the other. These distinctions, however, are merely plain and unadorned statements of empirical fact, and do not attest to the qualitative properties of the systems of domination. In fact, if this was all there was to the matter, they would point to a simple congruence of the 'territorial' and 'subordinate' classifications, rendering the detaching of the territories from Israel proper a redundant exercise. However, this is not the case.

The two classifications are not congruent because matters such as land, people, apparatuses of control and the market economy, do not

form separate planes of production divided neatly along the Green Line – contrary to the claims made by promoters of the so-called 'Security Barrier' (the Wall), now running through the West Bank, and of the barbed-wire fence along Gaza. Rather, Azoulay and Ophir's main argument should be read as follows: the occupation project has evolved in the Sea-to-River region as a dynamic system of domination, in which intertwining libidinal flows – of authority, of people, of material things, of cultural ideas, and of economic investments – run in both directions, from Israel proper into the Palestinian territories and vice versa. Particular forms of domination – of the Palestinians – arise from this organisation. As a result, trying to examine the two regions as two separate and unconnected entities is akin to dismembering a body and studying each part in isolation, in a bid to understand the function and properties of the anatomy as a whole. No interpretation could be more mechanical or more empirically wrong about Israel/Palestine.

By contrast, what emerges from a holistic examination of the Sea-to-River space, beyond the formal and tangible political systems, is the overall body that we do not normally see – the structure – which has no official existence as a recognised political entity, but which nevertheless impacts in a very real way on its subjects, given the reciprocal workings between its two constituent parts. The Sea-to-River regime is a manifestation of the order of the structure – a third order, defined by Deleuze as the *symbolic* (Deleuze 2004: 171–3). For Deleuze, the symbolic realm is the outcome of choices, selections and omissions of particular relations – 'a process where the symbol implies a rearrangement of relations in structures' (Williams 2005: 58). In this instance, the rearrangement occurs in the organising body of relations and connections emerging from the ways in which the occupation has evolved since 1967. This body is the latest stage of evolution of the historical encounter between Zionist immigrants-settlers and the native Palestinian people at the end of the nineteenth century, and provides the structural conditions for the real for Israelis and Palestinians. As a structure, it 'is defined as a necessary condition for the transformation of the thing' (54). By understanding this structure as a source of becomings for Israelis and Palestinians, we might 'read' more correctly how this body evolves and may be transformed. To put it another way, this understanding converts the conditions of impossibility into the conditions of possibility. In practical terms, it frees us from the limited and fanciful view that the occupation and its wider repercussions may be easily undone by a peace accord following a political resolution – as well as from the consensual model of the 'two states' solution. One

way to pose the question raised by Azoulay and Ophir might be: can Israeli citizenship, cultural habits and governmentalities be regarded in detachment from the systems of control of the West Bank and Gaza? From the point of view of the 'structure', the answer must be no.

III. A Regime of Fluxes

From the outset of the occupation in June 1967, Israeli domination has been applied concurrently but differentially to territories and subjects, 'making a clear distinction between the land it had occupied and the people who inhabited it' (Gordon 2008: 6). What has evolved is a system of 'confiscation without integration' involving

> a series of mechanisms... thus developed to expropriate the occupied land without fully annexing it, while numerous apparatuses and practices were introduced to regulate and manage the lives of the Palestinians without integrating them into Israeli society. (Gordon 2008: 6)[7]

This distinction, however, is incidental to the more fundamental principle of the territorial distinction, as we said, between the occupied land and Israel proper (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 46). On the one hand, a complex legal patchwork system for governing the Palestinians has been repeatedly amended, incorporating elements of 'Ottoman, British Mandatory (particularly the emergency regulations of 1945), Jordanian and Egyptian law (depending on the region), and Israeli military orders' (Gordon 2008: 27). At the same time, the Israeli colonies[8] and settlers on the West Bank and Gaza have always been subject to Israeli law as if they resided within the Green Line (8). In other words, settlers, soldiers and other Israelis within the Palestinian territories have been 'extra-territorialised' and invested with 'personal jurisdiction', carrying the Israeli law on their person, as it were, within the territories, thereby expanding the functions and spaces of action of Israeli law. This embodiment of the law, in the most literal sense, has turned *movement* into a unit of analysis and of biopolitical application.[9] In other words, to the question of whose body it is, these expansions have added the spatial question of 'where'.

Moreover, the occupation is 're-imported' on a daily basis into Israel proper through those self-same bodies (settlers, IDF soldiers and officers, clerks, private companies' employees, and – ironically – also left-wing activists 'visiting' the territories for purposes of protest and support) – who by their very presence and the roles they play reiterate the

'doubled' or expanded nature of the Israeli regime. As Gordon describes it:

> Settlers are constantly travelling both within the OT [occupied territories] and to Israel, commuting to work, taking children to school, going shopping, and visiting friends. While these private trips are no doubt part of the settler's daily routine, simply by travelling within the OT the settlers fulfil several functions. (Gordon 2008: 139)

To manage the Palestinian territories – complementing the military administration which acts as the executive branch – Israel deployed various formal administrative ministerial committees made up of senior officials from government ministries, and – since 1981 – the Civil Administration, which was appointed as the governing body for all civil affairs (Gordon 2008: 30). On the economic front, the relationship that has arisen between Israel proper and the Palestinians has been 'marked by a series of constraints and restrictions that hindered the development of an independent Palestinian economy' (70) – the better to promote Israel's needs and interests. One hallmark of this interdependence is the securing of the Palestinian territories as a captive market for Israeli goods (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 97; Gordon 2008: 70–5). Although the occupation 'opened up' new labour opportunities for Palestinians from the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza (mainly in services), the dependency it engendered proved to be a double-edged sword, as it enabled Israeli employers – with the state's blessing – to exploit Palestinian workers as cheap labour, which in turn helped trigger the swift growth in the Israeli economy following the 1967 war (Gordon 2008: 66).

As Gordon explains, Israel has implemented various modes of economic power to manage the Palestinian population and economy: in the first decades for example, Israel used 'pastoral power' to promote a certain degree of Palestinian prosperity to discourage organised national resistance (Gordon 2008: 62–9): 'in exchange for their partial economic incorporation, the Palestinians had to contain their political desires' (82). But management here should not be understood in terms of Foucauldian confinement; rather, domination was based through the monitoring of moving bodies: a continuous control of Palestinians within the whole geography of the Israeli regime (cf. Deleuze 1995: 174–5). This is how, slowly, open fields, roads, streets, homes and workplaces – on both sides of the Green Line – became a multiplicity of sites of control.

The territories' colonial dependency has been compounded by the way Israel has expropriated Palestinian land (for colonies, military

bases, security, and roads infrastructure) and natural resources (mainly water), at the expense of Palestinian farmers (Gordon 2008: 127–8). It has also had disastrous consequences for the prospects of economic prosperity and a sound economy developing in the West Bank and Gaza. From the time of the first *intifada* – and, more acutely, since the second one – Israel has placed severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinian goods and workers (33–40; 185),[10] reducing the Palestinian economy to a precarious state of affairs and the Palestinians themselves to destitution.[11] The occupation became not only a means for the IDF to stimulate the Israeli economy, but for the colonies and the military regime to become targets of economic investment by Israeli private companies seeking to profit from servicing the settlers and the IDF system of control (electricity, communication, construction, and so on). All in all, as Gordon describes,

> At a certain point the distinction between government expenditures within Israel proper and expenditures in the OT was expunged from the annual budget, in effect transforming the entire area from the Jordan Valley to the Mediterranean Sea into one economic unit. (Gordon 2008: 8; see also 63)

The incorporation of the territories into the Israeli economy has ultimately led to their annexation in all but name. This includes controlling Palestinian imports and exports (in contravention of the 'Paris Accord Custom Union' of 1994);[12] skewing competition with Israeli products to ensure that the Palestinians are a captive market; imposing restrictions on Palestinian business and industry development to favour Israeli companies, who benefit from tax relief and the protection of the law for their exploitation of Palestinian workers; worsening restrictions on movement of Palestinian goods and labour through a complex regime of permits, and so on. No one today can imagine the Israeli economy without the territories.[13]

This state of affairs did not change substantially as a result of the Oslo process (which began in 1993) and the resulting Accords. Indeed, as Gordon maintains, these should in reality be seen as the 'outsourcing of the Occupation' (see Gordon 2008: 169–96), since they reorganised power by making the Palestinian Authority a proxy of the occupation regime. Although the establishment of the Palestinian Authority created a semblance of sovereignty (see Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 167–72), in fact, for the Palestinians themselves it has doubled the burden on a personal level: the Israeli occupation has given up nothing of its general spatial dominance, while ushering in a new regime of controlled human

movement, and slicing the territories into hundreds of separate enclaves and Jews-only spheres of movement.

In addition, land colonisation did not cease but was transformed in inventive new ways (for example, through more land appropriations for Jews-only roads and separation artefacts, and through what Israel ingeniously refers to as 'illegal outposts', which in reality extend the colonial fabric while portraying the illusion of a rule of law befitting a democratic state).[14] In fact, the only area where the Israeli regime has truly abdicated its responsibility is in relation to the civil welfare of Palestinians, which it has handed over to the Palestinian Authority while simultaneously undermining the latter's ability to provide welfare and manage the population (Gordon 2008: 192). In the final analysis, the Palestinians have found themselves facing two kinds of Israeli control – direct and indirect – depending on the type of territory they live in.[15] In effect, it might be said that Oslo silently 'killed off' the first *intifada*, while contributing a great deal to the normalisation of the occupation (182). This description of the various ways and means of oppressing the Palestinians in the territories shows 'that suspension of law and the forsaking of life do not completely overlap' (Ophir et al. 2009: 23): to deny citizenship and rights, Israel implemented power-regimes that activate law in different forms ('a tapestry of regulations, procedures, and decrees'), making clear that abandonment is not necessarily produced by scarcity of care (letting die), but rather the opposite, through active action. This is how irresponsibility, abandonment and perfection are held together. Azoulay and Ophir's critique of Agamben on this point is clear:

> The abuse of life at the hands of the ruling power is not due to some withdrawal of the law, but occurs thanks to a savage proliferation of legalities and illegalities and the creation of an extensive judicial patchwork that has no lawfulness of its own and that keeps changing the law itself, the regime's authorities and immunity, and the subject's own status before the law. (Azoulay and Ophir 2009: 114)

For Israelis, if anything clear-cut has emerged from the Oslo Accords, it is that they have bestowed legitimacy on the time-honoured notion of separation and partition not only as the logic by which space must be governed, but as the moral and political horizon to aspire to.

All in all, the project of occupation has created mutually supportive metastases (Israel proper and the territories), born as such due to the continual movement of material, human, legal, political, economic and cultural fluxes between them. In addition to these two spatial

paths of fluxes, there are innumerable other, related, fluxes, such as those determining the type of relationships between the State of Israel and its Palestinian citizenry, and fluxes forging connections beyond the territorial space of the 'Sea-to-River' regime (for example, internationally supported forms of resistance). All these fluxes are instances – particular (here-and-now) actualised sub-structures – of an unconscious structure: at this point I suggest that the structure explaining the functioning of the Zionist–Palestinian system or the 'one' Israeli regime in the Sea-to-River region corresponds to, following Agamben, a structure of abandonment (Agamben 1998: 2005).[16]

In 'How Do We Recognize Structuralism?', Deleuze states that every structure is a virtual multiplicity of serial coexistence, consisting of elements held by differential relations that continue into the determination 'of singular points that constitute a space corresponding to these elements' (Deleuze 2004: 176–7, 179–80, 182). Many series are involved in the production of this structure of abandonment: from the previous description of fluxes alone we can attest to the coexistence of politico-juridical, biological, economic and territorial series. The elements of the politico-juridical series, for example, include the rule of law, political rights, political subjects and political spaces (the camp and the public realm). The interrelations of these elements, and the differential relations between this series and the others, 'determine the nature of the beings and objects which come to realize them' (177). In the capitalist mode of production, for instance, exploitation and alienation are explained by the historical differential relations of property and appropriation holding between the symbolic elements of the labour force, the worker, nature, money and the segregated space of production (178). We will now go on to ask how the differential relations between the series of the Zionist–Palestinian system create values and attitudes (effects) that confer a relation of abandonment upon the structure.

This means we must 'account for the very particular presence of [the] structure in its effects, and for the way in which it differenciates these effects, at the same time as these latter assimilate and integrate it' (Deleuze 2004: 181) – in our case, then, we must retrieve the structure of abandonment (of Palestinians) of the 'Sea-to-River' regime by analysing its effects in terms of the actual impact upon life within those boundaries. Indeed, a structure not only 'lives' in the virtual, but in accordance with the logic of reciprocal causality 'also differentiates the species and parts, the beings and functions in which the structure is actualized' (180). The virtual multiplicity constituting the structure of the 'one' regime is embodied throughout the matrix of fluxes running across the

Green Line, 'according to exclusive rules, always implicating partial combinations and unconscious choices' (179). These fluxes carry and distribute parts and objects – such as the contested land, the soldier, the Palestinian farmer, the settler, the Jewish-citizen, the Palestinian citizen, the Palestinian worker, the economic relations, the colonies, the forms of authority and dominance, the forms of resistance, and so on – which actualise differential relations between the series by arranging themselves differently within each flow, forging different roles and functions and ultimately manifesting certain subjectivities.

From the point of view of the two metastases, the main conclusion is that since 1967, the occupation has broadened Israel's range of governmentability beyond the Green Line, and that the Line itself has since become a differentially permeable membrane through which a new political regime has developed. What is taking place is a dual dynamic of accentuation and erasure of the Green Line. On the one hand, the way in which the educational system within Israel proper has portrayed the occupation as a complete outside, the economic integration, the 'extension' of Israeli law embodied within the settlers and the colonies themselves, the colonisation of Palestinian land, labour and water – these have all but erased every vestige of the Green Line as a traditional frontier. On the other hand, the separation wall, the 'menial jobs without benefits and security' (Gordon 2008: 89), the regime of permits, closures, curfews and other instruments installed to control Palestinians' movements and to confine them, and the Palestinian resistance – all underscore the continuing existence of the Line. The changing location (always moving checkpoints for example) and varying porosity (changing the permit regime to allow passage according to age, profession, hours and so on) of the membrane striates the space of the 'in between' structurally, but not specifically – terrorising the entire passage-zone.

The endless traffic between the two parts of the regime attests to the 'extensions' produced by each flow. This perspective is revealing of the nature of this particular form of military occupation: it has evolved not only as a profusion of systems of control, surveillance and resistance, but also as a host of systems of mutual absorption between the territories and Israel proper.[17] The respective extensions of the two sub-structures together form a particular kind of connection. We have seen how they are joined together by the fluxes that render them interdependent; it is, however, a relation normalised by depicting the occupation as an 'outside' that should be disregarded. For most Israeli Jews, 'the part [i.e., the occupation regime] of the whole [the regime between Sea and

River] is grasped as extrinsic to the whole, and this is exactly how it is included' (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 390). 'Most Israelis do not know the other part of the moon', as Azoulay and Ophir explain, yet it is nevertheless one and the same moon. This is how 'normalcy' has been incrementally established since 1967: upon a productive plane (political, legal and economic) which has fused together the Sea-to-River space in a particular manner, while at the same time presenting the occupation as something divorced from everyday life in Israel.

Azoulay and Ophir dub this situation *inclusion through separation*, or *inclusive separation*; more recently Ophir et al. (2009) have named it *inclusive exclusion* – that is to say, what is separated is retained, because otherwise:

> If the separation is completed, the project will come to an end and the regime will collapse, leaving just the two entities that constitute it... [conversely] if the separation is terminated, the regime will also collapse, since the two entities that constitute it will merge into one. (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 391)

This is how 'placing the territories on the outside in fact amounts to their incorporation within the State of Israel' (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 26). The logic of 'inclusive exclusion', therefore, is what prevents the structure from slipping either into complete annexation or into complete withdrawal (187). It is this suspended state that explains the productive aspect of the regime and its changes over time. The production is the result of a continuing struggle between two kinds of forces – one generating separation, while the other enhances the degree of involvement and contact between the two parts of the regime (190–2). 'The regime of the Israeli state is therefore the structure formed from the particular amalgamation of two different regimes under one roof' (330) – hence the label, 'two that are one'. In other words, there is no such thing as an Israeli or a Palestinian socius as a separate entity – there is only a common Israeli/Palestinian socius.

In this way, the occupation regime has transformed the government of Israel into the 'Sea-to-River' government, and – more crucially – its citizenry into an electorate for that government. 'The Israelis are also part of this regime as citizens – not only because for over forty years they have voted in 'free and democratic elections' for governments that persist in expanding and cultivating the system of domination in the territories', but mainly because their civic *habitus* became an instrument of the occupation (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 400).

IV. The Empty Square of the Occupation

It follows that Israel cannot be contemplated on its own – nor can the system of occupation. Nevertheless, there is no formal structure between the Sea and the River in the shape of a unified regime, but rather a series of hybrid, disjunctive syntheses of fluxes. The dynamic of 'inclusive separation' suggests that 'the structure contains a paradoxical object' (Deleuze 2004: 184) – something that signals that the project is unfinished and lacks a clear and final identity, something that 'has become a permanent feature of the occupation regime and of the apparatus linking the two regimes' (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 395). This object leaves behind the real as something unresolved, in a state of dynamism and discomfort. Something clearly connects the two regimes, and runs through them, displacing elements and generating properties in its path. This object, the paradoxical object of the structure, is the empty square: it does not remain in a fixed position, but is constantly moving; nor is it occupied continuously by the same element – thereby preventing the formation of an identity based on elements. It neither belongs to, nor is fixed by, either series, but is present in all of them dynamically. Its content can never be fully identified and, according to Deleuze, it prevents our minds from merging series together. In the case at hand, it has indeed been successful: although by rights we ought to, we tend not to think of the regime lying between the Mediterranean and the River Jordan as a single entity.

Is it possible for us to 'identify' the element maintaining the dynamism of the structure – the empty square of the occupation? What is it that ceaselessly slices through the series, crossing them and yet still capable of depicting their communication? What is this object that has enabled the regime's effective doubling in size, and its syntheses?

To answer this question, I shall examine the way the symbolic series are manifest through the fluxes running between the two metastases. Firstly, I adopt Azoulay and Ophir's distinction between '*the governed condition*' – that is, the formal-legal relationship of the subject to the state, and '*participation*' – namely, how hegemony and political dominance are constructed, and by whom (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 379–81). Both dimensions highlight Agamben's structure of exception in politics. Citizens and non-citizens are ruled or governed differently, while the dimension of participation is absent in non-citizens but differentiates – in Israel – along ethno-national lines. Within the territories, citizenship eclipses ethno-national differences, since it is the Palestinians' non-citizen status that defines their 'governed condition'

and establishes the distinction and relevance of the sphere of citizenship. Within Israel proper, the ethno-national categorisation relies upon citizenship differences in 'participation' – a practice that is the *raison d'être* of the Jewish state.

Secondly, on the 'game-table' of the occupation, the shape of the empty square is governed by the combination or interdependence of 'the governed condition' and 'participation'. It is present in the fluxes running to and fro between the two regimes, and has varying values at different coordinates of time and space. The initial distribution at the start of the occupation in 1967 was the starting point. At that time, the Palestinian citizens of Israel were only a year into the new regime that followed the revocation of the military government they had lived under since 1948. So while Palestinian subjects within Israel proper were passing from meticulous control by the state to a more mild biopolitical subjectivation (Lustick 1980; Ghanem 2001), Palestinians in the newly occupied territories were about to become a subject of disciplinary power (Gordon 2008: 23–47): different 'rulings', and different 'participations' – for a divided people by one regime.

But as the occupation evolved, and fluxes started crossing it back and forth, elements began changing places in the series, producing a navigable border which in effect doubled the scope of the Israeli regime. The empty square communicates between the series by communicating between the flows running from Israel proper into the territories and back again, and its singularity resides in what it enables us to think – the transformations and becomings occurring throughout the series within the actual order of things. Thanks to the empty square, the series reverberate off each other (Gil 2008: 410) in a communication based on their intersections as streams of differences (not as identical items of a species), which in fact is the principle of emission of singularities, or of events (Deleuze 1990: 51). This works as follows:

> Once communication between heterogeneous series is established, all sorts of consequences follow within the system. Something 'passes' between the borders, events explode, phenomena flash, like thunder and lightning. Spatio-temporal dynamisms fill the system, expressing simultaneously the resonance of the coupled series and the amplitude of the forced movement which exceeds them. (Deleuze 1994: 118)

The relations between the series cause the two parts of the regime to make contact and merge, synthesising subjects and objects into a single body by displacing the system of subordination (of citizens and non-citizens) from matching the territorial distinction (between the two

sub-structures), thus generating a productive tension – or the 'problem' of the occupation. However, although this displacement defines the problem, it does not determine it fully, attempting as it does both to approach and to separate. In this context, we must remember that 'problems are defined by the way structures do not fit together and yet have internal drives to achieve that fit' (Williams 2005: 64).

While keeping in mind that power applies itself ubiquitously, shaping bodies and subjects everywhere and not only at one of its 'ends',[18] we might follow Gordon's example and argue that the communication between the series since 1967 has been constantly changing and expressing the transformations in the 'modes of power' and 'modes of resistance' between Israel and the Palestinians. 'During the occupation's first years', explains Gordon, 'Israel emphasised disciplinary power and bio-power…' while during the last years, and especially since the second *intifada*, Israel plays 'the more traditional mode of sovereign power – shifting from a politics of life to a politics of death' (Gordon 2008: 11–13; 115; 206–8). This 'shifting emphasis on one mode of power rather than another… [and] the interactions, excesses, and contradictions within and among the controlling practices and apparatuses… and Palestinian resistance' explains the 'changing nature of the occupation' (15).[19] For example, 'with the adoption of the separation principle' following the Oslo Accords and the modes of power implemented in response to the second *intifada*, the nature of the Green Line changed from a comparatively 'open membrane' to a border that is 'normally closed' to Palestinians, 'transforming the OT into a container of sorts' (212; 180).[20] On the other hand, since 1966 Palestinians in Israel proper have been increasingly challenging the promises of Israeli democracy by levering the discourse of rights and, lately, of multiculturalism for the sake of creating a more inclusive regime (Smooha 1990, 1997; Adalah 2007).

The relationship to the law (by way of another example) also changed regarding the territories: until September 2000 Israel controlled the occupied inhabitants primarily through the application of draconian laws (including the legalisation of incarceration of political prisoners, of deportations, house demolitions, torture, extended curfews and other forms of collective punishment), but, according to Gordon, the period since the second *intifada* has been characterised by a more violent abandonment of the Palestinians (Gordon 2008: 205). Uncertainty is assured by making it impossible for those in the territories to internalise the law, as Azoulay and Ophir explain: 'What the Palestinian learns in an encounter with the regime in one venue… does not teach him or her

what to expect in other encounters in other venues' (Azoulay and Ophir 2009: 115). Although we would like to move through a less arborescent model of the law, it seems that this somehow rhizomatic character does not enhance life. Here, once more, we have another striking example of how the IDF implement Deleuze and Guattari's conceptual tools. In parallel, as we shall see in the next section, a new assertive approach to laws having a direct impact on Palestinians in Israel proper (in terms of land, housing and loyalty to the state) has been adopted lately, marking a departure from the former policy of hidden discrimination.

The mechanisms for discipline and control of the Palestinians across the Green Line are integrated into a single plane of production of oppression, but operating from different strata, and through different assemblages, so as to shape different but connected subjects. As we can see from the examples, the pairing of 'the governed condition' and 'participation' is based on the kind of conditions Deleuze set for the empty square: when appearing in one place as an excess, it is manifested elsewhere as an absence (Deleuze 1990: 51). This enables the series to communicate in terms of reciprocal determination, and to flow as two branches of the same structure. The empty square is the element that attests to the historical sets of selections, omissions and syntheses in the actual – the symbolic element of the structure, the infrastructure. It is the event of the occupation that leaves its mark upon the series, changing them and their relations of sense, thereby 'making sense' of the problematic nature of Western democracy.

V. A Triangle of Subjectivities

In examining this developing state of affairs, Azoulay and Ophir are right to claim that 'the domination of the occupied territories is the **context** in which the government has acted since 1967, and whose constraints have governed its handling of outlying issues' (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 26; original emphasis). The domination of the territories rapidly changed from yet another national task in 1967 into a project that became 'the fundamental matrix through which the government operates' (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 26). As a result, it was not only the international community that started to view Israel through the occupation, but the regime itself embraced that outlook as well. At some point since the occupation began, four forces merged together, with irreversible consequences for the Israeli political and social regime, namely: unwillingness to incorporate the occupied Palestinians; persevering on the distinction Israel made between

Palestinian inhabitants and Palestinian land; the emergence of the criterion of citizenship to differentiate between occupied Palestinians and the Palestinians within Israel proper; and the devastating force of the ethno-national logic inside Israel proper. The syntheses between these forces crystallised the differences between occupied people and citizens, and created a relation of conceptual and practical interdependence between the *three significant subjectivities* emerging in the Sea and River space: on the one hand, the Palestinian subject – the non-citizen and pariah of the regime (exploited worker and oppressed political subject); his antithesis – the Jewish-Israeli citizen (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 109); and lastly, the Palestinian citizen within Israel (living under a relationship of ethnically alibied abandonment). This triangle of subjectivities (conceptual rather than geometrical) embodies the empty square that actualises 'the governed condition–participation' pair, enabled by a twofold harnessing of the non-citizen status of the occupied Palestinians and the handicapped citizenship of those inside Israel. This connection points to what appears to be the most significant change introduced by the system of occupation in the Zionist–Palestinian structure since the assembling of the Zionist collective desire to 'cleanse' Palestine at the start of the national project in the early years of the twentieth century (Svirsky 2010), and the brutal widespread cleansing of the land in 1948–9 (Pappe 2006). Specifically, this change means that denying citizenship to the Palestinians in the territories reinforces ethnic restrictions within Israel; to put it more bluntly, the former became the logic of the latter. Viewed from the other side, we might say that for the regime – and for most Jewish Israelis – thinking about the prospects for the role the Palestinians citizens should play is almost never detached from the fact that the Palestinian territories are being occupied. The resonance between the Israeli public's acceptance of and acquiescence in the occupation on the one hand, and with the devalued character of the citizenship held by Palestinians within Israel on the other, is a consequence of the 'ethnic sounding-board' reverberating between the Sea and the River, and evident in all walks of life – be they legal, geopolitical, educational, social or cultural.

A few examples might illustrate the range and depth of this phenomenon. For many years, one of the state-controlled radio stations has broadcast a 15-minute programme called 'Friends and Family – Lost and Found' five times a week. People phone in to ask for help in finding friends and relatives with whom they have lost touch. Like many other shows on Israeli radio and television, the intended audience might be Hebrew or Arabic native speakers – or so one would

assume – but in reality the programme is broadcast in collaboration with the Jewish Agency and the Central Zionist Archive, and serves as a means for seeking out Jews who went missing during the Holocaust or its aftermath, or with whom contact was lost during one of the waves of immigration to Israel. No one in his right mind – Jew or Palestinian – would imagine a Palestinian citizen phoning in for information on his or her relative lost during the *Nakba*.[21]

Nowhere is this 'ethnic normalcy' more plainly evident than in housing policy, particularly when it comes to rural housing. Under the notorious 'Judaisation of the Galilee project' (launched in the early 1970s), many small and expressly Jews-only communities were established in Israel's northern region in a blatant attempt at demographic engineering (Yiftachel 1993, 1999, 2006). Following riots in the region in October 2000 – in which 12 Palestinian citizens were killed by the police – and in the face of threats by Jewish local authorities, the Israeli Ministry of Defence allocated funds 'to increase security', which meant enclosing the Galilean Jewish communities behind iron fences and electrically operated gates. This kind of physical landscape is reminiscent of that of the Jewish settlements in the territories – thereby further diminishing the significance of the Green Line and highlighting the occupation's expansion into the ethnic project taking place within Israel proper (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 421).

To enshrine in law the existing ongoing exclusion of Palestinian families from these bourgeois rural communities, the Knesset has lately initiated legislation on the subject, echoing the internal codes of admission set by 'acceptance committees' established by the communities themselves.

In contrast to the old manner of concealed discrimination (which implied a measure of discomfiture), this time ethnic segregation is being overtly stratified (and justified) in a manner similar to the practice in the territories. The occupation has infiltrated and shaped action, thinking and subjectivities[22] in other areas as well. This is clearly demonstrated in the amendment to the Law of Citizenship of 2003, ratified four years later by the Supreme Court.[23] Although passed as a temporary provision, it has been re-enacted every year since then (echoing the discourse of temporariness used to perpetuate the occupation). According to this amendment, the right of equality in starting a family is seriously curbed for Palestinian Israeli citizens. On the pretext of 'security', it precludes a Palestinian Israeli citizen from applying for citizenship for their spouse if the latter is a (Palestinian) resident of the territories. Consequently, if a family wishes to stay together in such marriages, its only option is to

move to the territories, or abroad. Such is the plane produced for them by the occupation and Israel proper.

Increasingly, the sound of abandonment reverberates and connects Palestinians across the Green Line: although separated by the criterion of citizenship, this is what governs the relationship between the two populations of Palestinians, between their hobbled citizenship within Israel proper, and their managed abandonment within the territories. It is no wonder, then, that the emergence of a civic-democratic *habitus* in Israel lies far beyond actual conditions. The Israeli regime of citizenship/non-citizenship is a blunt example of how abandonment is exercised as a defining feature of contemporary politics – a toxin with no antidote. In the case of the Palestinian citizens of Israel, the ethnic barrier is what prevents them from becoming full and equal citizens, and it is structurally underpinned by another form of abandonment, namely, the non-citizen status of the Palestinians in the territories. In other words, given the latter exception, the former becomes logical and plausible: for the Palestinians in Israel proper, the realistic alternative to their situation is not full integration and egalitarianism, familiarity and proximity to the regime, but rather non-citizenship. Thus, the occupation must be understood not simply in terms of the radicalisation and endless restrictions placed upon the Palestinian citizens of Israel, but as the total alienation of occupied Palestinians so that the ethnic-based exclusion of the Palestinian citizens within Israel proper may be more easily ignored, managed and justified (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 386). In this way, the realms of citizenship and non-citizenship are bound together, inasmuch as one defines the other, and the argument that the Israeli regime and citizenship cannot be understood without reference to 40 years of Israeli occupation becomes evident.

VI. Epilogue

In fact, Israeli democracy should be seen as the expressed form of the event that is the occupation; democratic life in Israel proper takes place amidst the exploitation and the total exclusion of the Palestinians from the territories (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 431). To put it another way: 'the regime of the Occupation is an extreme instance of a known structural property of democratic regimes: the existence of a significant backyard of a ruled population that takes no part in the shared administration of public life' (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 446).

The notion of 'democracy's backyard' is a clear echo of Agamben's structure of exception, and yields a fruitful discussion of what needs to

be transformed. The backyard may be democracy's hell, but it is also that which defines the democracy. Abandonment and exploitation are a given in this space. In the case of the Israeli regime, it refers both to the regime's split nature (it is not inclusive and yet universal) and to its physical boundaries (from Sea to River). It is embodied in the differences in how the various communities in that space are ruled – the aforementioned empty square, or pairing of 'the governed condition' and 'participation'. In the region bounded by the Mediterranean and the River Jordan, this square, 'the backyard', moves and takes on varying shapes and contents. The territories function as the regime's significant backyard, but at the same they are also the immediate backyard of the Israeli colonies. Additional backyards exist within Israel proper. The linking between the various backyards is what absolves the regime of responsibility for the harm done to the people populating them. By this method, the regime succeeds not only in putting the backyards out of mind, but in laying responsibility for them elsewhere.

Azoulay and Ophir's contribution to this discussion is to highlight how the exclusion of Palestinian citizens within Israel proper is seen as a fault that need not be remedied – or in other words, 'the alienation of the occupation as a regime is the flip side of the alienation of the non-Jewish citizens in Israel proper' (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 442). At the same time, the reciprocal relationship between distance and proximity, and between citizenship and non-citizenship, in the Sea-to-River region, accentuates their contrasts, providing yet another significant sign left to us by the event of the occupation.

In light of all the above, it would be wrong to think of 'internal' changes within Israel proper – such as the notion of equal rights for Palestinian Israeli citizens – as taking place independently of events in the territories. The 'internal' must be seen as extending from the Mediterranean Sea to the River Jordan, given Israel's success in establishing 'dominance over the Palestinian non-citizens as a self-evident feature of the Israeli regime' (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 430).

If the empty square of the occupation represents the boundaries of the structure, then only by introducing new differences within these boundaries can the structure be changed. Any substantive change in the structure of the Israeli regime must involve new deterritorialisations of the dyad 'the governed condition' and 'participation', whereby the struggle is taken up by all individuals in that jurisdiction, in a bid to change the form, the limits and the content of the regime in the area under Israeli control.[24]

Notes

1. As a result of the war, Israel also conquered East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights and the Sinai Peninsula (see note 2).
2. The term refers to the 1949 armistice lines agreed between Israel and Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria following the 1948 war (known in Israel as the 'War of Independence'). The Green Line refers to the border separating Israel from the territories of West Bank, Gaza, the Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights, before they were captured during the Six Day War of 1967. The Sinai Peninsula was returned to Egypt as part of the peace agreement reached in 1979. In 1981 Israel officially annexed the Syrian Golan Heights.
3. Handel explains that the Palestinian creates his physical and spatial resistance by forbidding himself 'to take paths generally considered accessible or even obligatory' (creating shortcuts and detours to avoid checkpoints for example) (Handel 2009: 215).
4. At the start of the 1980s Meron Benvenisti was the first to diagnose the system of control over the territories as fundamental to the Israeli regime, and pointed to the irreversibility of these changes (see www.matzpen.org).
5. Azoulay and Ophir disassociate their study from the critical tradition that sees Zionism as a colonising fabric, arguing that the occupation is not the inevitable product of a long colonial history (Azoulay and Ophir 2008: 22). Although they are right to refuse to reduce their analysis to assigning the given (the occupation) to existing given categories (Zionist colonialism), and to insist on forging new concepts for evaluating the given – by uncoupling their study from the historical storyline of Zionist colonialism, I believe that they withhold important layers of understanding. The genealogy of Zionist colonialism – to which we have access thanks to pioneering studies by the likes of Shafir (1989), Smith (1993) and Pappe (1999, 2004, 2006) – teaches us about the cultural and political processes we are engaged in. The past always plays a role in the present – 'for example, the consequences of colonisation persist and produce further effects, in social life as well as in the memories of those affected, long after the initial acts of settlement' (Patton 1997: 5). Thus, the colonial past which evolved from the initial Zionist–Palestinian encounter, continues to be evident in the present, playing a role which cannot be ignored. This is because the qualitative difference encapsulated in the Zionist colonial event did not abdicate its position of dominance in the Zionist–Palestinian plane in favour of new differences. Shafir's main thesis in his seminal work on the origins of the Zionist–Palestinian conflict (Shafir 1989) was that the logic of ethnic exclusion adopted by the Zionist settlement at the start of the twentieth century emerged from class struggles in the labour market. At this point, as I have already argued elsewhere (Svirsky 2010), a collective desire producing displacement-replacement began to be assembled (I defined it as a desire for terra nullius). This turning point continues to echo today. In other words, we cannot gain a comprehensive understanding of the occupation regime without taking into account the historical evolution of the colonial event of Zionism, and the ways in which desire has been and is collectively put to work throughout this project. My contention in this context is that the 'appetite' for land and the corresponding effects of expropriation, dispossession and expulsion of Palestinians was already an established and evolving Zionist habit well before 1967.
6. This is the case for example, with the civic-education official curriculum in high-schools. The subject of the occupation is treated in the official book in two sections: under the headings 'The national schism' and 'The ideological schism'. In both sections the territories appear with their biblical-recycled-Zionist names,

Judea and Samaria, and the issue is totally detached from any discussion on the relation of the occupation with the regime of Israel itself, and with its impact on Israeli political culture or ways of life. Most sadly, the connection between the maintenance of the occupation and the role the pupils studying this very book will play in that effort is also absent. (See *To Be Citizens in Israel: A Jewish-Democratic State*, Jerusalem: Ministry of Education, 1999, pp. 289–90; 332–45).

7. The legal integration of the Palestinians into Israel would have been detrimental to Israel's demographic desire to maintain a clear dominant Jewish majority.
8. The first colony was established as early as 1967. According to the figures published by the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, in 2008 the Israeli population in the West Bank colonies totalled 268,900, representing approximately 3.75% of the total Israeli population.
9. As Azoulay and Ophir explain: 'The Palestinian ceased to be he or she who is subjected to power. His or her existence was reduced to that of a moving body that interests the ruling power' (Azoulay and Ophir 2009: 135).
10. 'In 1970, 5% of the Palestinian workforce was employed inside Israel or by Israeli employers. By 1987, over 45% of the workforce provided 85% of the Palestinian gross domestic product, which gradually created economic dependence among Palestinians on the possibility of entry into Israel. This was due to a relatively free passage of people and goods to and from the OPT implemented in 1971 . . . [which] come to a temporary halt during the 1991 Gulf war' (and worsen afterwards as a response to the intifadas) (Shenav and Berda 2009: 338).
11. 'By 2007, Palestinian real per-capita income fell by 40% compared with its 1999 levels, and poverty rates soared to over 67% . . . Palestinian GDP has fallen by 30% over the past fifteen years' (Farsakh 2009: 379, 398).
12. In the economic treaties of the Oslo Accords, Israel also secured itself an unfair advantage, while bringing about yet further deterioration of the Palestinian economy (Gordon 2008: 185–7).
13. See http://www.whoprofits.org/index.php. This website shows who profits from the occupation.
14. Illegal or unauthorised outposts, as defined by the Sasson Report of March 2005 (submitted at the request of the Prime Minister's Office), are small settlements in the West Bank (there are more than a hundred) erected during the 1990s after building in the Palestinian territories was frozen by the Rabin administration (following the Oslo Accords). In the absence of an official governmental decision, any establishment of a settlement in the occupied territories is illegal. These outposts were built by groups of West Bank settlers in cooperation with public institutions; the leitmotif of this phenomenon was simply the expansion of the Jewish presence so as to make it impossible to reach a peace agreement.
15. The Oslo agreements defined three types of domination, combining civil control and security: A, B and C. Territories of type A are under Palestinian control (both civil and security); type B fall under Palestinian civil control, with Israel controlling security; and type C are under total Israeli control. All roads and border crossings remain under Israeli control.
16. I'm aware of Ilan Pappe's critique of using Agamben's paradigm to analyse the occupation (Pappe 2008: 148–70), and I agree that Israel must not be seen as a democratic polity corrupted to include exception for it never was a democracy in any sense. But what is important for me in using Agamben's paradigm is the conceptual framework it provides for analysing relations of abandonment: what characterised them, how are they maintained, by whom, and how they can be transformed.

17. Eyal Benvenisti wrote on the legal aspect of the absorption of the occupation. See Benvenisti 1990.
18. Power is that which connects between subjects, objects, practices and systems, transforming them from 'sides' into points of application.
19. I must say that, in a way, Gordon's formula for change (power–excess–contradictions–resistance and back again) appears to be a catch-all explanation for any phenomenon, and thus fails to capture the uniqueness of the event of the occupation.
20. The 'Wall' winding through the West Bank separates not only Israelis from Palestinians, but 'in many areas ... actually separates Palestinians from Palestinians' and from their land, in violation of fundamental rights and serving to 'create facts on the ground whose aim is to undercut the Palestinian state-building project' and to promote the annexation of lands by Israel (Gordon 2008: 213).
21. Al-Nakbah – Arabic for 'The Calamity' or 'The Catastrophe' – is the Arab name for the Israeli war of independence of 1948–9, when nearly 800,000 Palestinians were expelled from their homes by forces of the nascent Israeli state and their lands seized, destroying about 550 villages and neighbourhoods, and devastating the spine of Palestinian society.
22. For example, the 'Separation Barrier' – in reality, the Wall – through the West Bank affects the Israeli soldiers charged with guarding it: 'the Barrier transforms the soldiers into an effect of its own logic ... [becoming] in a sense, an automatic weapon in the service of a concrete wall and a series of trenches and fences' (Gordon 2008: 214–5).
23. See 'The Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law (temporary provision) 5763–2003' at http://www.knesset.gov.il/laws/special/eng/citizenship_law.htm
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Deleuze, Mann and Modernism: Musical Becoming in *Doctor Faustus*

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Abstract

Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus* traces the life of the composer Adrian Leverkühn, whose career culminates in the compositions *Apocalipsis cum figuris* and *The Lamentation of Doctor Faustus*. Mann treats *Apocalipsis* as the endpoint of a dangerous modernism allied to fascism, and *The Lamentation* as its partial antidote. From Deleuze and Guattari's perspective, however, *Apocalipsis* is a positive musical becoming-other and *The Lamentation* a regression. Crucial to the contrasting interpretations of *Apocalipsis* are two very different conceptions of modernity and fascism, that of Deleuze and Guattari providing a means of valorising becoming as a mode of aesthetic and political invention and redefining modernism and fascism.

Keywords: Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*, modernism, fascism, musical becoming, atonal music, bourgeois humanism

Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus* (1947) may well be the greatest novel ever written about music. Although some have questioned the depth of Mann's understanding of music, pointing to his lack of formal training and his status as a mere enthusiast of the art rather than a practising musician, his attention to strictly musical elements of the work's imagined compositions, his grasp of the fundamentals of the art and their relation to literature, and his sense of music's position in the history of the West in general and Germany in particular are undeniably sophisticated and, in my judgement, quite profound. In preparation for the writing of *Doctor Faustus*, Mann undertook an ambitious course of study in music theory, and during the compositional process he made

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use of the considerable talents of Theodor Adorno, an accomplished musician and formidable philosopher, to fashion the musical sections of the work. Detractors of Mann's achievement have suggested that Adorno's importance is so great that he should be given equal credit for the novel, but for anyone who has attempted to fathom the complexities of Adorno's difficult essays on music, Mann's lucid presentation of the musical elements of *Doctor Faustus*, whatever their source, must be viewed as a victory in itself. That he is then able to integrate such materials within a moving and complex narrative is surely one of the great triumphs of the literary imagination.

Undoubtedly, the most significant of *Doctor Faustus*' imaginary musical works are *Apocalipsis cum figuris* and *The Lamentation of Doctor Faustus*, the last major compositions of Adrian Leverkühn, the novel's protagonist. The two works are presented as masterpieces of atonal music that voice the torment of modernism's struggle to reconcile an ascetic, intellectual rigour and a fascination with the mystical demonic. Notable in *Apocalipsis cum figuris* are experimental elements that Mann sees as representative of a dangerous tendency within modernism towards decadence, barbarism and animality. Some of those elements are honed, perfected and brought to an even greater level of intensity in *The Lamentation*, the result being a 'breakthrough' (Mann 1997: 509) that allows Leverkühn to transcend the perilous practices of the *Apocalipsis* and discover a way beyond the impasses of modernism. When approached through the aesthetics of the philosopher Gilles Deleuze, however, these same elements in the *Apocalipsis*, so decried by Mann, emerge as positive components of a general musical 'becoming-other', whereas the breakthrough practices of *The Lamentation* assume the guise of a negative betrayal of the potential created in the earlier work. Although Mann makes no simple equation of atonal music and Nazism, he does suggest that loose parallels exist between the cold detachment and demonic expressivity of musical modernism and the cynical, calculating rationality and cruel barbarity of Nazi politics and ideology. Some have criticised Deleuze's philosophy, especially as articulated in *Anti-Oedipus*, as promoting a politics of libidinal fascism. Such critiques, however, are based on the same assumptions that underlie Mann's critique of musical modernism, assumptions that are antithetical to the concept of becoming as a mode of aesthetic and political invention. When viewed from the perspective of Deleuzian becoming, Leverkühn's *Apocalipsis cum figuris* may, finally, be regarded as a model for musical innovation and creative activity in general, unlike *The Lamentation*, which represents a limited practice, and possibly a musical dead end.

I. Music and Literature

Doctor Faustus purports to be the biography of the fictional German composer Adrian Leverkühn, as told by Serenus Zeitblom, his lifelong friend. The novel follows two narrative lines. The first details the life of Leverkühn, from his birth in 1885, through his early education, his gradual decision to abandon the study of theology for music, his contraction of syphilis at a house of prostitution in 1906, his ascent as a composer, culminating in the production of his masterpieces *Apocalipsis cum figuris* in 1919 and *The Lamentation of Doctor Faustus* in 1930, to his collapse into madness that same year and his death in 1940. (The parallels between Leverkühn's and Nietzsche's lives are deliberate.) Zeitblom writes the biography from May 1943 to April 1945, interspersing his narrative of the composer's career with comments on the declining fortunes of Germany during the Second World War and his own anguished responses to the evils perpetrated by his country.

Zeitblom is a classical philologist and staunch defender of culture, learning, the arts, and the values of what he calls the era of 'bourgeois humanism' (Mann 1997: 372), stretching from the end of the Middle Ages to the outbreak of the First World War I. In his enthusiasm for 'ancient languages and their classical poets and writers' (49), Zeitblom savours 'that inner and almost mysterious bond between . . . classical philology and a lively and loving eye for man's beauty and the dignity of his reason – a bond made manifest in the very name we give the study of ancient languages, the "humanities," whereby the psychological connection between linguistic and human passion is crowned by the idea of pedagogy' (11). He claims that one may teach the exact sciences, of course, but never as a true pedagogue, and the same may be said of music:

> And it seems to me that that other, perhaps even more internal and yet strangely inarticulate language, the language of tones (if one may call music that) cannot be included, either, in the pedagogic, humanistic sphere, though I am well aware that music played an ancillary role in Greek education and in the public life of the *polis* generally. It seems to me, however, that despite the logical, moral rigor music may appear to display, it belongs to a world of spirits, for whose absolute reliability in matters of human reason and dignity I would not exactly want to put my hand in the fire. (Mann 1997: 11)

Language, literature and the humanities, then, are fundamentally different from music and the sciences, if only as the pursuits responsible

for cultural pedagogy. Music may be a language, but it is a 'strangely inarticulate language' and one that lacks 'reliability in matters of human reason'.

Zeitblom, like Leverkühn, sees music as an art allied in complex ways with mathematics, theology and the experimental sciences. Zeitblom notes that mathematics, 'as applied logic, which nevertheless stays within pure and lofty abstraction, holds a curious intermediate position between the humanistic and the realistic sciences' (Mann 1997: 50). In its abstraction, music belongs to the theological realm, as Leverkühn suggests in his remark to Zeitblom that music is ordered relationship and that 'Studying ordered relationships is ultimately the best there is. Order is everything. Romans thirteen: "For what is of God is ordered"' (50). Music has an 'inherent lack of sensuality', according to Leverkühn's mentor, Kretzschmar, and hence 'a secret bias toward asceticism' (67). Music '*per se*, music as pure abstraction', Kretzschmar asserts, may have as its 'deepest desire not to be heard at all, not even seen, not even felt, but, if that were possible, to be perceived and viewed in some intellectually pure fashion, in some realm beyond the senses, beyond the heart even' (68).

Music, then, as Leverkühn remarks, ' "has always seemed a magical union of theology and the fine sport of mathematics"' (Mann 1997: 140). Its alliance with theology, however, makes Zeitblom uneasy. He views religion as 'the feeling and taste for the infinite' (97), and as such a subject of study better left to 'our sense of piety, to the fine arts, to free contemplation, indeed to exact research as well' (98) than to formal theological argumentation. Yet Zeitblom knows that religion has always been, and will continue to be, a subject of logical disquisition, and 'in all ages theology has willy-nilly let itself be influenced by the scientific currents of its era' (98). In the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, this gave rise to 'liberal theology', which Zeitblom regards as an oxymoronic fusion of the rational and that which defies rational comprehension. Such a theology is 'cultured, but shallow' (99), in that it ignores the mysterious and darker sides of human experience. He notes that nineteenth-century theology has seen 'the infiltration of theological thought by irrational currents within philosophy, in whose domain the nontheoretical, the vital, the will, or instinct – in short, once again, the demonic – had long since become a major theoretical issue' (99). But if such thought is less shallow than liberal theology, it is also something the 'civilised human mind' cannot help but sense as 'uncanny'. 'For by its very nature, theology, once it is linked with the spirit of Life Philosophy, with irrationalism, runs the risk of becoming demonology' (99).

Zeitblom also finds this alliance of theological thought with the irrational in the natural sciences. When Leverkühn and Zeitblom were children, Leverkühn's father liked to entertain them with scientific demonstrations, which, says Zeitblom, 'always moved along one particular path, that is the mystical or intuitive semi-mystical, down which, it seems to me, human thought is almost inevitably led when in pursuit of the natural world' (Mann 1997: 20). Zeitblom finds the natural world 'eerie' (20) and ultimately demonic, for which reason Zeitblom later develops a 'lack of interest, bordering on distaste, for the pranks and mysteries of natural phenomena, for "nature" in general', and a 'devotion to the sphere of humane letters' (285). The natural sciences inevitably lead thought into mysticism, but they also do so through an engagement with the world of the senses, and in this regard, they resemble music. Although music has an 'inherent lack of sensuality' (67), it nonetheless cannot exist independently of the senses and material reality. According to Leverkühn, the purpose of rigid order in musical composition is to induce a 'chilling effect' in a work, since 'music has so much warmth of its own – like a cow stall, bovine warmth, one might say' (76). Music 'always does prior penance for its sensual realization', and its 'rigor, or what you might call the moralism of its form, must serve as the excuse for the bewitchments of its actual sound' (76). Music, thus, is open to the allure of the mystical, but also to the bewitching, animal warmth of sensuality. If, as Zeitblom asserts, the domain of the demonic is that of 'the nontheoretical, the vital, the will, or instinct' (99), then clearly music, like the natural sciences, has affinities with the demonic. And if, as Leverkühn claims, music is 'energetic will, energetic will *per se* – not as an idea, but in its reality', and 'this is almost a definition of God' (87), then theology, too, partakes of that same demonic domain, one that is at once elemental and mystical.

If music and literature meet at any point, it is in the voice. Language, after all, has a sonic dimension, and hence an inherent musicality. In its oral enunciation, language is embodied, rendered sensual, and imbued with emotional and affective nuance. For Leverkühn, music's sensuality is most evident in 'the resonating breath of the human voice, which probably has the most bovine warmth of any sounding board imaginable' (Mann 1997: 76). The human voice may be abstract, he claims, 'the abstracted human being, if you like. But it is an abstraction in about the same way as the naked body is abstract – it's practically genitalia' (76). In this sense music is a concrete abstraction, an essence of sensuality and sexuality manifest in matter, just as, in Leverkühn's words, music may be regarded as 'energetic will *per se* – not as an idea,

but in its reality' (87). In Leverkühn's view, music and speech 'belonged together, were ultimately one – language was music, music a language' (174). Zeitblom does not contradict Leverkühn when he makes this observation, but he clearly sees the music–language relationship as more problematic than does Leverkühn. Perhaps music is a language, but to Zeitblom it is a 'strangely inarticulate language, the language of tones' (11), and thus outside the domain of the humanities. Zeitblom distrusts music, yet loves it, a position that he recognises as paradoxical: 'That I am nevertheless devoted to it with all my heart is one of those contradictions which, whether a cause for joy or regret, are inseparable from human nature' (11). Perhaps that essential contradiction stems from the human voice, at once the vehicle of linguistic enunciation and musical expressivity.

II. *Apocalipsis cum figuris*

Zeitblom deeply admires Leverkühn's music, yet finds in his works disturbing tendencies that Zeitblom regards as symptomatic of a general malaise within modernism. The problem facing the modern composer is that the possibilities of tonal music have been exhausted – traditional forms seem clichéd, expressive devices empty and insincere. The bond between art and world has been shattered, and as a result the complete work of art as analogue of a social totality is no longer viable. To move beyond this impasse, Leverkühn develops an atonal approach to composition whose outlines are roughly similar to those of Schoenberg's twelve-tone method. Leverkühn aspires not only to invent the vocabulary of a renewed polyphony but also to enable the formation of a genuine community of artist and audience. Zeitblom, however, discerns a cold rationality in the composer's calculated manipulation of twelve-tone rows, one that ultimately denies freedom and agency. And in Leverkühn's revival of Renaissance and medieval forms and techniques, as well as his experimental violations of musical conventions, Zeitblom sees not the creation of a new community but the activation of the barbaric forces of the demonic.

The composition that Zeitblom presents as the best example of Leverkühn's tendency towards 'bloody barbarism and bloodless intellectuality' (Mann 1997: 393) is his 1919 oratorio, *Apocalipsis cum figuris* ('Apocalypse with pictures'). Loosely based on Dürer's 1498 series of 15 woodcuts of the same name, the *Apocalipsis cum figuris* incorporates texts from various sources, including the Revelation of St John of Patmos, the fourth-century *Vision of St Paul*, the writings

of the Venerable Bede, Mechtild of Magdeburg and Hildegard of Bingen, and Dante's *Inferno*, the end result being 'a new apocalypse of [Leverkühn's] own, a résumé in some sense of all previous proclamations of the end', a 'descent into hell, into which visionary power has worked the images of the beyond from both earlier, shamanistic levels and those of antiquity and Christendom, on up to Dante' (377). According to Zeitblom, the work is written in 'a compositional style subject to the strictest laws of intellectual and technical complexity' (378). The oratorio is clearly atonal, although its technique apparently is that of a 'free atonality', rather than a strictly Schoenberg-like row methodology, since it subsumes both tonal and atonal materials within its general design, the entire work governed by the paradox 'that its dissonance is the expression of everything that is lofty, serious, devout, and spiritual, while the harmonic and tonal elements are restricted to the world of hell or, in this context, to a world of banality and platitudes' (394). Leverkühn offers 'parodies of diverse musical styles', including 'burlesqued French impressionism, bourgeois drawing-room music, Tchaikovsky, music hall songs, the syncopations and rhythmic somersaults of jazz', yet 'always sustained by the main orchestra, speaking its serious, dark, difficult language and asserting with radical rigor the work's intellectual status' (395).

These are what Zeitblom regards as the oratorio's broad characteristics, which it shares with other works of Leverkühn. Its more specific features, however, are found only in this composition, and it is here that any reader familiar with the works of Deleuze (including those co-written with Guattari) must be struck, for they bear a remarkable resemblance to the elements of musical 'becoming-other' that Deleuze and Guattari discuss in *A Thousand Plateaus* and other texts.[1] (The resemblances may well be more than fortuitous, given the fact that Deleuze and Guattari briefly cite *Doctor Faustus* – without specific textual attribution – at one point in their discussion [Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 97].) First, Leverkühn's *Apocalipsis* makes frequent use of the glissando, a musical device in which Zeitblom has 'always tended to hear something anticultural, indeed anti-human, even demonic' (Mann 1997: 393). In Zeitblom's analysis, music begins when humans 'wrest from chaos a system of tones' and 'assign individual notes to song – which originally among primitive humans must have been a howl that glided over several pitches'. Hence, the glissando for him is 'a barbaric rudiment of premusical days' (393). Deleuze and Guattari also observe the disturbing effects of the glissando's dissolution of individual pitch differentiations, but they see in this device a

positive means of activating a virtual line of continuous variation immanent within musical material. The glissando's sliding sounds create zones of indiscernibility, passages of becoming, and if extended, the device discloses 'the plane of a generalized "glissando" implying the constitution of a statistical space in which each variable has, not an average value, but a probability of frequency that places it in continuous variation with the other variables' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 96). Deleuze and Guattari cite pieces by Berio and Schnebel as creative uses of a generalised glissando, arguing as well that *Sprechgesang*, *parlando*, and other uses of the voice to create indiscernible passages across a continuum from speech to singing are extensions of the principle of the glissando. Not surprisingly, in Leverkühn's *Apocalipsis* we find

> ensembles that begin as speaking choruses and only by stages, by way of the oddest transitions, arrive at the richest vocal music; choruses, that is, that move through all the shades of graduated whispering, antiphonal speech, and quasi-chant on up to the most polyphonic song – accompanied by sounds that begin as simple noise, as magical, fanatical African drums and booming gongs, only to attain the highest music. (Mann 1997: 392–3)

And at the conclusion of the first part of the oratorio, we hear another continuum of sonic becoming, a 'pandemonium of laughter', in which 'the giggle of a single voice' gradually gives way 'to a dreadful mayhem of yowls, yelps, screeches, bleats, bellows, howls, and whinnies, to the mocking, triumphant laughter of hell' (397).

The apocalyptic oratorio also elides gender distinctions in its treatment of the voice, as well as distinctions between the human voice and non-human instruments. The narrator of the oratorio, a role 'traditionally given to a tenor, is also written here for a male voice, but one almost in the range of a castrato, whose cold, reporterlike, matter-of-fact crowings stand in horrible contrast to the contents of his catastrophic message' (Mann 1997: 396). (Zeitblom notes that in the oratorio's premier performance, 'the role was sung in masterly fashion by a eunuchoid tenor named Erbe' [396].) The merging of voice and instrument is found in the role of the whore of Babylon, which is assigned 'to the most graceful coloratura soprano, and her virtuoso runs are at times so completely like a flute that they melt into the orchestra' (394). Conversely, the instruments often mime human voices: 'variously muted trumpets imitate the most grotesque vox humana – as does the saxophone as well' (394–5). (Admittedly, the vox humana is an organ stop, but that stop, as its name implies, is designed to imitate the human voice, and it is not certain whether Zeitblom is referring

to the organ stop or simply displaying witty erudition in likening the trumpets and saxophone to human voices.) This elision of gender and material distinctions Zeitblom regards with alarm, but Deleuze and Guattari see the practice as a creative 'machining of the voice' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 303). In their discussion of Dominique Fernandez's eccentric book on the disappearance of the castrato in opera and the subsequent partitioning of voices by gender, Deleuze and Guattari treat the castrato as an instance of the becoming-woman and becoming-child of the voice. In the castrato, it is not a question of 'imitating a woman or a child', but of deterritorialising the voice, such that it becomes 'unengendered' (304). And though Deleuze and Guattari agree with Fernandez that in Verdi and Wagner one can find a treatment of the voice that accentuates the differences between male and female voices, they argue that a compensatory tendency is activated in their works, whereby voice and instruments become increasingly indiscernible. Such practices represent a 'new threshold of deterritorialization of the voice', 'no longer that of a properly vocal becoming-woman or becoming-child, but that of a becoming-molecular in which the voice itself is instrumentalized' (308). This becoming-molecular they see as the guiding principle of modern music, especially evident in Varèse and Messiaen, whose works manifest in sound the molecular's 'capacity to make the *elementary* communicate with the *cosmic*' (308). One aspect of this molecular capacity that they discern in modern music is its exploitation of electronic media – something, we should note, that Leverkühn also employs, loudspeakers being used in his oratorio 'to produce directional and acoustic gradations that had never been achieved before' (Mann 1997: 396).

Zeitblom finds the oratorio's 'bloodless intellectuality' disquieting, but what disturbs him most is its 'bloody barbarism' (Mann 1997: 393). Zeitblom holds the traditional view that nature is opposed to culture, and that the rational order of culture is fashioned through the domination of irrational human nature, which, as we have seen, he associates with 'the nontheoretical, the vital, the will, or instinct – in short, once again, the demonic' (99). The irrational cannot be eradicated, but it must be controlled – hence Zeitblom's definition of culture as 'the reverent, orderly, I may even say, propitiatory inclusion of the nocturnal and monstrous in the cult of the gods' (12). Music's origin is paradigmatic of the formation of culture. '[T]he earliest achievement of the art of music', says Zeitblom, 'was to separate sound from nature, to wrest from chaos a system of tones, and to assign individual notes to song – which originally among primitive humans must have been a howl

that glided over several pitches' (393). For this reason, the glissando is ultimately 'anticultural, indeed anti-human, even demonic' (393), as are the other devices of musical becoming that Leverkühn employs.

III. *The Lamentation of Doctor Faustus*

But the *Apocalipsis* is not Leverkühn's final work, nor is it his greatest achievement, according to Zeitblom. Between the composition of the *Apocalipsis* in 1919 and the completion of his last work, *The Lamentation of Doctor Faustus*, in 1930, Leverkühn finds a means of realising his long-held ambition – that of creating music in an absolutely 'strict style' involving 'the total integration of all musical dimensions', such that 'free notes would no longer exist' (Mann 1997: 205). Leverkühn's means of realising his ambition is that of a Schoenberg-like twelve-tone row method of composition. During those same years of 1919 through 1930, while developing his twelve-tone technique, Leverkühn also suffers his greatest personal loss: the death of Nepomuk, nicknamed 'Echo', an innocent child who suffers excruciating and prolonged pain before succumbing to cerebrospinal meningitis. Echo is one of the few individuals Leverkühn has genuinely loved, and the demise of the child instils in him utter despair and a dark vision of the cosmos. It is in *The Lamentation* that Leverkühn gives full expression to his grief at Echo's death within the language of his new-found dodecaphonic 'strict style'.

In the *Apocalipsis*, Leverkühn had concluded part one with a chorus of 'hellish laughter', and then opened part two with 'the totally strange and wonderful children's chorus… whose sound is so sweet, might I say, so inaccessibly alien and superterrestrial that it fills the heart with hopeless longing' (Mann 1997: 397). The utter contrast between the two sections, however, is only superficial, for as Zeitblom realises, 'in its musical substance', the children's chorus 'is, for him who has ears to hear and eyes to see, a reprise of the Devil's laughter' (397). The technique that in the *Apocalipsis* generates 'the inner sameness of its children's angelic chorus and hell's laughter' (511) Zeitblom later finds extended to the entirety of *The Lamentation of Doctor Faustus*. What is realised in the *Apocalipsis*, he says, 'is a formal utopia of terrifying ingenuity, which now becomes universal in the *Faust* cantata, taking possession of the entire work and allowing it, if I may put it that way, to be totally consumed by its thematic element' (511). Early in the novel, Kretzschmar had established an opposition between 'harmonic subjectivity' and 'objective polyphony' (57) that Zeitblom

and Leverkühn had both come to embrace, and in *The Lamentation* Zeitblom sees a reconciliation of the seemingly antithetical elements of subjective expressivity and objective contrapuntal order. In Zeitblom's presentation of Western music history, the rise of harmonic music in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in which the melody and bass line take precedence over the other voices, eventually reaching the point that inner voices function primarily as simple chord accompaniments, represents an increased emphasis on the expressive and the individualistic in music. That harmonic system is a departure from the genuine polyphony of Renaissance compositions, in which all voices have equal importance. The movement from Renaissance polyphony to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century harmonic expressivity is paralleled by an increasing separation of music from ritual and religious functions, this growing secularisation being identified by Zeitblom as a movement from a 'cultic' to a 'cultural' epoch (65), from traditional communalism to bourgeois individualism. Paradoxically, it would seem, Leverkühn's *Lamentation*, says Zeitblom, 'this, his strictest work, a work of utmost calculation, is simultaneously purely expressive' (512).

Zeitblom's explanation of this paradox is that in this 'formal arrangement of ultimate rigor that knows nothing that is unthematic', in which 'free notes no longer exist', the music 'can now unfold outside all restraints – that is to say, abandon itself to expression' (Mann 1997: 512). *The Lamentation* is the product of 'the dialectic process by which strictest constraint is reversed into the free language of emotion, by which freedom is born out of constraint' (510). What is liberated by such constraint is expressivity. The essence of expressivity, Zeitblom claims, is to be found in the lament, and *The Lamentation* is one 'gigantic *lamento*' (511). The lament 'is expression *per se*, one might boldly say that all expression is in fact lament' (510). '[T]he expression of lament', Zeitblom adds, is 'expression in its first and primal manifestation' (512). Zeitblom's implicit argument, though never directly articulated, is that the personal, emotional dimension of music arises through the human consciousness of death and the experience of mourning. The lament is 'the expressive cry of the soul' (509–10), and as a primal element in music, it marks the emergence of organised musical sound from the chaos of spontaneous noise emitted by human animals, that noise 'which originally among primitive humans must have been a howl that glided over several pitches' (393). The universal nature of the lament's expressivity allows its articulation in all voices of a composition, and hence expression can exist in a work of the strictest polyphony, such as *The Lamentation*. Although expressivity is always individual, 'there

are no solos in *Faustus*' (512), the individual expression of lament being subsumed within the universal polyphony of *The Lamentation*'s strict order. The result is an essence of lament, 'and as such, negatively related to the finale of the Ninth Symphony [of Beethoven] with its variations on jubilation' (511), a renunciation of the Ode to Joy, a 'proudly despairing 'No!' spoken against false and flabby bourgeois piety' (515). Yet in this despair, Zeitblom discovers one final paradox: from this essence of lament, this 'irredeemable despair', emerges 'hope beyond hopelessness, the transcendence of despair', 'a light in the night' (512).

For Zeitblom, *The Lamentation* is a 'breakthrough' that transcends the 'bloody barbarism and bloodless intellectuality' (Mann 1997: 393) of the *Apocalipsis*. The barbarism of the *Apocalipsis* resides in such elements as its pre-human howls, its confusions of laughter, weeping, speech and song, its mixtures of high art and popular entertainment, and its periodic interjections of primitive, non-Western musical idioms. That barbarism is reinforced by the work's cold intellectuality, which manifests itself in Leverkühn's pastiche of styles and the parodic detachment with which he mocks traditional tonal devices. Early in his career, Leverkühn exclaims, 'Why must almost everything appear to me as its own parody? Why must it seem to me as if almost all, no, all the means and contrivances of art nowadays are good only for parody?' (143). In his various compositions from that early moment through the *Apocalipsis*, a thoroughgoing parodic sensibility informs his style. In *The Lamentation*, however, the extreme discipline of the twelve-tone method purges the work of all parody, all popular idioms, and all non-Western elements. The barbarism of the pre-human gives way to the primally human expressivity of lament, an emotional freedom paradoxically made possible through the formal constraints of the twelve-tone row. And in the polyphonic manifestation of individual lament within each of the voices, a new collectivity is discovered.

From a Deleuzian perspective, *The Lamentation* seems a much less transcendent achievement than Zeitblom claims. There is nothing wrong with exploring the possibilities of the twelve-tone row, but it represents only one way of renewing Western music, and Zeitblom's implicit praise of strict serial composition is that it rejects several lines of development that Deleuze would no doubt find promising. The danger of the serial technique is that it can lead to a hermetic elitism, and that its rigours can limit invention to the exploitation of fixed, finite permutations within a closed system. There is little to suggest that the constraints of the serial method represent a genuine breakthrough rather than a temporary escape from traditional tonality that may soon lead to

academic stagnation. Even more suspect than the exclusive triumph of *The Lamentation*'s formal method, however, is the explanation Zeitblom offers for the work's success. Zeitblom frames the work as a reconciliation of expressive subjectivity and polyphonic objectivity, achieved through 'the dialectic process by which strictest constraint is reversed into the free language of emotion' (Mann 1997: 510). What kind of dialectic this process may be, whether Hegelian or otherwise, is not specified, but it implies a transcendence of contradictions, limited in number and generated within a closed historical tradition. Deleuze's philosophy is decidedly anti-Hegelian, stressing difference as a generative, mutative force antecedent to the formation of any full-fledged contradictions. The object in Deleuze's thought is not to overcome given contradictions, but to exploit multiple differences that are immanent within a situation, though unrecognised in dominant conceptualisations of that situation. From this perspective, the *Apocalipsis*, with its heterogeneous disruptions of musical conventions, represents a much more promising source of future invention than *The Lamentation*. The rigors of *The Lamentation*'s method are designed to overcome the contradictions of an unavoidable historical impasse, whereas in fact its dilemma is a function of the narrow range of possibilities this conception of Western art music's history and development makes available. *The Lamentation*'s expressivity, in turn, exploits a negative, life-denying mentality, one in which primal emotion is found in a universal 'being unto death', the source of all expressivity. *The Lamentation* counters the Ode to Joy, and though Deleuze would join Zeitblom in rejecting the 'false and flabby bourgeois piety' (515) often associated with Beethoven's Ninth, he would not reject all joy and celebrate instead human mortality and loss. Paramount in Deleuze's thought is the embrace of a Spinozist joy and a Nietzschean affirmation of life, an affirmation of affirmation that runs counter to the Hegelian negation of negation and the nihilistic being unto death. Rather than loss and the absence of death, Deleuze seeks modes of invention that stress the active forces of life.

IV. Music and Nazism

Although Mann nowhere makes explicit the precise parallels he is drawing between aesthetics and politics in his novel, he clearly suggests that Leverkühn's *Apocalipsis* is informed by principles similar to those that shaped fascism, even if those principles have markedly different results, especially from an ethical standpoint, in the separate

spheres of politics and music. (Less certain are the political parallels to be drawn to *The Lamentation*, which for Mann may represent a solution to the dilemma posed in the *Apocalipsis* that is without a counterpart in the realm of politics.)[2] The 'bloody barbarism' of the *Apocalipsis* has as its political counterpart the Nazi racial and national ideology of blood, soil and will, a form of 'naturalistic atavism' (Mann 1997: 393) that overwhelms humanist culture with a cultic celebration of demonic energy and desire. The 'bloodless intellectuality' of the *Apocalipsis* perhaps corresponds to the disciplinary order of the repressive Nazi state and the cynical, cold efficiency of its death machine. More important, however, are the mystical tendencies behind this intellectuality, tendencies that reinforce the irrational forces of barbarism. Music's mysterious elements, in Zeitblom's analysis, ally it to theology and natural science. Zeitblom, as we have noted, describes religion as 'the feeling and taste for the infinite' (97), and music, in its religious guise, is, in Leverkühn's words, 'energetic will *per se* – not as an idea, but in its reality', and 'this is almost a definition of God' (87). In its alliance with natural science, music furthers a mystical affirmation of the demonic infinite within the material world. What brings bloody barbarism and bloodless intellectuality together, then, is a celebration of will and the demonic, at once ethereally detached and sensually engaged, and this coincidence of mysticism and barbarism informs both the *Apocalipsis* and Nazism.

If one were to accept the terms of Mann's analysis, one might well conclude that the musical becoming advocated by Deleuze and Guattari is as misguided as that of Adrian Leverkühn in the *Apocalipsis*. And indeed, some have argued that Deleuze and Guattari are simply promoting a rehash of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Marinetti that is as dangerously fascistic now as it was in the first half of the twentieth century.[3] Such an identification of Deleuze and Guattari's musical becoming as proto-Nazism, however, is indefensible. The Nazi ideology of blood and soil seeks a fixed identity, one grounded in an essential biological, racial 'Germanness', which itself has permanent bonds to a traditional, primeval territory. Far from affirming dynamic processes of metamorphosis, as do Deleuze and Guattari, Nazi apologists oppose all forces of 'becoming-other', especially the forces of racial impurity and territorial usurpation. The Nazi celebration of the will, too, has no parallel in Deleuze and Guattari's thought. The Nazis' appropriation of Nietzsche's will to power, in Deleuze's analysis, is a perversion of Nietzsche's thought. In Deleuze's reading, the affirmative will to power is an affirmation of metamorphosis, a will to expand one's powers

of affecting *and being affected by* other entities. The Nazi 'triumph of the will', by contrast, is a negative will to power *over others*, and as a result, a will to resist outside influences. It is essentially a reactive will that opposes any becoming-other – indeed, a will that aims at the complete domination of the other and its mutative force. Deleuze and Guattari do indeed stress music's inextricable connections with our biological existence within a material environment, but never in the service of racial, national or territorial identities. And though they second Nietzsche's call for an art and a way of life that affirm metamorphosis, they never embrace an irrational mysticism of power and domination.

But one might also use Deleuze and Guattari to critique Mann's analysis and to show that Leverkühn's apocalyptic oratorio, rather than representing the dead and dangerous end of modernism, suggests creative paths for the future development of music. For Deleuze and Guattari, music is not structured by any clear-cut divide between nature and culture, or the rational and the irrational. Deleuze and Guattari characterise music as the 'creative, active operation that consists in deterritorializing the refrain' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 300). The refrain is Deleuze and Guattari's term for any rhythmic pattern that organises an environmental system. According to this definition, a bird in its habitat may be characterised in terms of a multitude of refrains, including those of: the bird's developmental trajectory from gestation through maturation to its death; the regular movements of the bird as it forages, mates and interacts with conspecifics; the developmental trajectories and movements of surrounding conspecifics, as well as those of other species with which the bird interacts (predators, prey, symbionts); ambient climatic patterns, rhythms of plant growth, cycles of microbial florescence; and so on. Within this network of refrains, the bird's song constitutes an additional refrain, one that is emergent within its lifeworld, and thus, though distinguishable from the other refrains, ultimately inseparable from its world. Likewise, human music emerges from the refrains of a human lifeworld, gaining relative autonomy as it 'deterritorialises' the refrains that constitute a given environment. What Deleuze and Guattari mean by the musical deterritorialising of refrains is that music engages the surrounding patterns of a lifeworld, extracts them from their context, and thereby detaches them or 'decodes' them, and then gives them a new function within the self-referential system of a given musical language. As an illustration of this process of 'deterritorialising' a natural refrain, Deleuze and Guattari offer the instance of Olivier Messiaen, who

employs birdsongs in many of his compositions.[4] Messiaen claims to reproduce birdsongs in his music with absolute fidelity; however, he adds that the tempi of the birdsongs must be slowed to a human speed, their micro-intervals must be stretched to fit a chromatic scale, and their timbres must be rendered in complex chords and combinations of instruments. The end result, he confesses, is a rendering of birdsong that few ornithologists would be able to recognise, and it is this resultant product that Messiaen then combines with other rhythmic, melodic and harmonic elements within his compositions to form a coherent work of art. In Deleuze and Guattari's terms, Messiaen has 'deterritorialised' the birdsong, subjected it to a mutative 'becoming-other', and 'reterritorialised' it within a musical composition. Although Messiaen's handling of the refrains of birdsong may seem idiosyncratic, Deleuze and Guattari insist that it is paradigmatic of the art of music as a whole.

For Deleuze and Guattari, refrains come into existence as regularised, relatively fixed patterns emergent within zones of variation, continuums of flux and modulation. These zones of variation, flux and modulation remain immanent within each refrain. The refrain 'territorialises' the metamorphic variations, restricting and regulating them, but the potential for destabilising the refrain, or 'deterritorialising' it, continues to play through the refrain. When the potential of this deterritorialising force is activated, a process of 'becoming-other' is inaugurated, a process that may lead to the formation of new, unforeseeable and unpredictable refrains. In musical terms, what this means is that immanent within the chromatic scale of Western art music is a continuum of sonic material in continuous variation, and that the exploitation of the glissando is an activation of that continuum and the instigation of a 'becoming-other' of the intervallic system. Likewise, a zone of variation includes male and female voices in a single continuum that the composer may exploit in a 'becoming-other' of gendered voices; another zone of indiscernibility allows a 'becoming-other' among voices and instruments; a third continuum traverses wails, cries, laughter, speech and song, which may give rise to yet another 'becoming-other' of these expressive components; and so on.

Also immanent within all zones and continuums of variation and the refrains that organise them is a primal affectivity, which is present in all natural entities and determinable through their relative powers of affecting and being affected by other entities. This primal affectivity is manifest in diverse forms of perception, emotion, behaviour, cognition and so on, each particular manifestation of that affectivity being

characteristic of a given organism. In this view, therefore, no radical distinction may be maintained between the various degrees of inner experience that in a given creature may range from sensate responses to the most abstract cogitation. In Deleuze and Guattari's view, then, any analysis that predicates a qualitative opposition between emotion and reason, such as Zeitblom posits in his characterisations of music, is misguided. Just as the human lifeworld emerges within and is inseparable from the lifeworlds of other natural organisms, and the productions of human culture are themselves inseparable from the larger lifeworld of human beings, so too the most elevated of intellectual activities, such as composing and performing music, can never be separated from the affective forces that play through humans and their surrounding environment.

Hence, processes of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation – those of stratification and destratification, fixing and unfixing, coding and decoding – are constantly at work in our world. The immanent lines of deterritorialisation within material, social and mental structures provide modes of invention that are not exclusively rational or irrational, and they are operative to varying degrees in all such structures. Human culture is not separate from but emergent within nature; it is a specific dynamic configuration of de- and re-territorialising forces embedded in a cosmic lifeworld. Musical deterritorialisation modifies refrains, transforms them, but does not radically separate them from the natural world, since the materials of the musical composition are organised, or reterritorialised, within the work, which itself participates in the play of forces within the world. The lines of musical deterritorialisation are paths of becoming, and Deleuze and Guattari recognise the dangers of activating virtual processes of becoming. Those dangers, however, cannot be escaped by avoiding all becoming – in fact, such an effort would be impossible. The dangers are related to speed and contagion. Deterritorialisation can proceed too rapidly, everywhere and all at once, the result being a suicidal rush into a black hole. This is the apocalyptic becoming of addiction, terrorism, the suicidal state, and so on. Deterritorialisation can also become cancerous, as specific sites of repressive organisation multiply and choke out competing structures and processes. Such becoming gives rise to what Deleuze and Guattari call the fascist body without organs.[5] Thus, the horrors of the Nazi state, according to them, are a matter of destructive speeds and cancerous contagion, the Nazi death machine being an all-consuming black hole and the myths of blood, soil and will being manifestations of an ever-spreading ideological metastasis.

Leverkühn's oratorio is open to the dangerous forces of apocalyptic, suicidal becoming and cancerous, fascistic becoming, and perhaps Zeitblom is right to fear those forces. But such forces need not lead to destruction or barbaric repression. If treated with caution, they may foster new forms, processes and relations. The oratorio's uses of the voice, its becoming-woman, becoming-child, and becoming-molecular, offer possibilities for the transformation of vocal music. Its animalistic elements disclose the existence of paths like that taken by Messiaen, who incorporates motifs from birdsongs and sonic landscapes into his compositions. The so-called 'primitive' components of the oratorio, its 'magical, fanatical African drums and booming gongs' (Mann 1997: 393), far from undermining culture, open Western art music to the musics of diverse non-Western cultures, with their complex rhythms, micro-tone scales, subtle timbres and alternate practices. And Leverkühn's parodies of popular musical forms – especially jazz – might well lead not to mockery but to the renewal of Western art music via an appropriation of alternative ways of music making. Perhaps Leverkühn's oratorio is excessive, in that it exploits all these modes of becoming at the same time, but if explored with caution, if activated selectively and slowly, these becomings could disclose lines of powerful musical invention.

It is perhaps too easy to find fault with Mann from the vantage of the twenty-first century. When he began writing *Doctor Faustus* in 1943, Germany and much of the world were engaged in a conflict whose outcome was far from certain, and by the time he finished the novel in 1946, the consequences of that struggle were still largely undetermined. Understandably, and correctly, he viewed his historical situation as a moment of crisis, in which something had gone terribly wrong in Western culture, and specifically in German culture. His sense that Western art music had entered a similar period of crisis in the years leading up to the Second World War was also accurate, at least from the perspective of many serious composers, and his effort to draw parallels between the political and aesthetic developments of modernity represented a valiant attempt to correlate the spheres of politics and the arts, without reducing one to the other, and to diagnose the problems, attempted solutions, and ultimate failures that have arisen in the modern era. The proliferation of alternative musical practices and vocabularies in post-Second World War art music has no doubt made Mann's high modernist stance – either a regressive repetition of tonal platitudes, or an aggressively experimental atonality – seem arbitrarily limited. But we would be hopelessly deluded to think that we have learned the lessons

of Nazism and Auschwitz and moved definitively beyond those crises. In Mann's view, the era of bourgeois humanism came to an end in 1914, and that humanistic culture found no adequate replacement in the ensuing decades. Mann recognised that a return to such a culture was impossible, but his analysis of the possibilities for developing alternative cultural formations was, I believe, limited by his fundamental conceptions of human nature and human culture, conceptions that also shaped his approach to music and aesthetics as a whole. In Deleuze's thought I find more promising means of reconceiving the situation of humans, their histories and their cultures within the world. That thought furnishes a new perspective on the compositions of Leverkühn, one that confirms the perspicuity of Mann's perception of modernism's tendencies while indicating the limitations of his understanding of those tendencies. Deleuze also helps us reframe Mann's narrative of the political events of his day, such that the parallels Mann draws between aesthetics and politics may be seen as much less certain than he believed. By no means, however, do I see Deleuze's thought as a definitive guide to an understanding and transcendence of the fascist mentality and the abyss of the Holocaust. But his thought does, I believe, suggest fruitful ways of construing Mann's political narrative that open up possibilities he did not envision – and perhaps could not envision, given his historical situation.

Notes

1. I discuss Deleuze's writings on music at greater length in Chapters 1 through 3 of *Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts* (Bogue 2003).
2. For an illuminating, suggestive, and admittedly speculative reading of the musical-political parallels of *Doctor Faustus*, see Cobley 2002; for a more restrained treatment of the subject, see Carnegy 1973. Useful commentary on this topic is also provided in Scaff 1998.
3. A particularly stark instance of this critique may be found in Manfred Frank's *What Is Neostructuralism?* (Frank 1989: 315–58). Frank characterises *Anti-Oedipus* as a 'kind of political and intellectual flipping-out, a spiritual Calibanism', which he regards as inflected with deleterious associations and tendencies. 'We only have to remind ourselves of the already fascistically colored neovitalisms that, as a result of the rediscovery of Gobineau, Nietzsche, and Chamberlain, are creeping back, this time not so much in Germany, the homeland of blind respect for blind productivity, as in France. And they are all the more dangerous due to their anarchist touch that displeases the average bourgeois. But to displease the bourgeois is, as I have said, in itself not enough: after all, even Nazism was a "completely unbourgeois adventure"' (342). For an especially odious effort to associate Deleuze and Guattari with Nazis and fascism via their philosophy of nature, see Ferry 1995: 112–4.

4. See Bogue 2003, Chapters 1 and 3, for a more detailed exposition of Messiaen's compositional methods.
5. For Deleuze and Guattari's most detailed treatment of the issues of speed, contagion, black holes and the fascist body without organs, see Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 161–6.

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Book Reviews

Chrysanthi Nigianni and Merl Storr (2009) *Deleuze and Queer Theory*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Queer theory, having become academic, systemic and institutional, is always in need of a good buggering. Buggering philosophy, in fact, was a self-proclaimed practice of Gilles Deleuze (Deleuze 1995: 6). This form of 'posterior' writing 'follows behind' and bends 'normalised' interpretations and understandings of critical philosophy. It likewise proliferates in critically queer philosophical renderings – in attempts to rethink, redress and redefine the parameters of queer theory. The litany of queer literati who contribute to these renderings of queerness range from Judith Butler, who situates critical queerness through discursive negativity to oppose all phallocentric, heteronormative paradigms (cf. Butler 1993), to David Eng, Judith Halberstam and José Muñoz (2005), who affirm the radical promise of queerness through its indeterminable re- and de-constructive potential. These authors affirm how queerness remains 'contingent on its potential obsolescence' – a necessary condition for reconsidering normalising, 'positivist assumptions', even under the guise of 'queer liberalism' – which is also why queer theory must account for multiplicities of queer Diasporas or 'minority philosophies' (3–4).

Crossing queer (theory) with Deleuze, the authors in the collection *Deleuze and Queer Theory* illustrate how the potentiality of queerness might be productively buggered towards new configurations that radically destabilise the possibility of queerness maintaining its fixity. The introduction to this collection initiates 'productive desire' as its overarching promise – a philosophical undertaking that aims to thwart and twist reductive assumptions that might intend to unify the philosophical entries within. Instead, these authors prompt unstable unifications – a 'we' reverberating 'stuttering effects' that are 'endlessly improvised, indefinite' – which envision the potential to mix, cross or otherwise move in between philosophies towards hybrid becomings and

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'qualitative multiplicity' (6–8). The affirmation of 'becomings' is what allows these authors to think queerness aslant – 'queer' sheds fixity as a container for subjectivity in a project that moves towards (in Patricia MacCormack's terms) the 'verbing not nouning' (146) of material bodies which must continually move, become . . . something otherwise, elsewhere, virtually everywhere, nowhere.

Claire Colebrook's chapter, 'On the Very Possibility of Queer Theory', formulates the necessity of contextualising queer (theory) within affirmative contexts. This formulation initiates a dialogue that weaves and wanes throughout the collection: each author envisions pathways towards queerness as positive difference – as the accumulation of relations – instead of iterative difference afforded through difference and repetition. This ontological shift, which emphasises the non-discursive materiality of bodies as multiple and rhizomatic, becomes a radical intervention in much of queer theory to date. The shift is radical in the sense that it promulgates a new path towards 'becoming-queer.' Queered assemblages capable of new becomings emerge as Deleuzian philosophies productively bugger our fecund recollections of (non-Deleuzian) queer theories about discourse or power (Butler 2004), desire (Edelman 1994, 1995; Sedgwick 1985; 1993), and politics (Halberstam 2005; Warner 1999). While becomings emerge and flow through this entire assemblage of texts, the first several chapters raise an interesting question: if I desire to write about 'becoming-queer', must I begin by being Butlerian (that is, understanding and identifying with queer performances of subjectivity or being) and decisively move into becoming-Deleuzian?

Butler is recognised as notable (to different degrees by the authors in this collection) for envisioning 'exemplary' queer bodies, but Colebrook insists on a Deleuzian departure that moves beyond the queer as a discursive subject/self towards queer non-being. Verena Andermatt Conley contributes to this departure by suggesting how the philosophies of Deleuze and Guattari enact 'queering' through attacks on 'normality and enforced behaviour in a capitalist, institutionally bourgeois disciplinary society' (24) to produce becomings as well as multiplicities. Queer becomings move beyond homosexuality to include other minorities because queer assemblages utter: 'no one *is* homosexual' (28). This movement, in Hickey-Moody and Rasmussen's formulation, occurs with a desire to 'craft sexual subjectivities that refute majoritarian readings of gender and sexuality' (38). But, while Deleuze and Guattari refuse subject positions like 'homosexual' because they are constructed through majoritarian discourse – a shift that is often noted

as a move away from discursive subject construction – Hickey-Moody and Rasmussen find a productive 'coupling' between Deleuze, Guattari and Butler. The effectiveness of their chapter emerges from the dialogue between these affirmative and negative philosophical structures whereby each theory, rather than 'neatly fitting' together, vibrates against the other in an attempt to rethink psychoanalysis, desire, partial objects and humanism.

Crossing Butler with Deleuze ultimately elaborates the intricacies of (non-)being, to reveal the potentiality of queer becomings. Becomings always transgress subjectivity by occupying durations between heterogeneous terms. In this sense, every becoming is minoritarian and queer, enabling new becomings towards non-identity. Becomings occur within indeterminable durations, and each discussion about becomings can offer a new slant on the process that causes these queer proliferations. By Jonathan Kemp's account, in his chapter 'Schreber and the Penetrated Male', 'becoming-Deleuze' is 'becoming-queer' (166). This is, as Kemp suggests, a productive buggery that takes philosophy from behind; Kemp buggers psychoanalysis to illustrate how buggery challenges majoritarian interpretations and, through this process, can inspire becomings towards the perpetual rebirth of philosophy.

Becomings are located through sensation in the chapters 'Every "One" – a Crowd' by Dorothea Olkowski and 'The Adventures of Sex' by Luciana Parisi. Olkowski employs Henri Bergson's philosophy on ontological memory to understand experiential reception; the 'queer' Brittlestar – a 'creature that has no eyes, but is all eyes', through nerve reception (54) – illuminates how all beings experience sensitivity beyond singular senses through a multiplicity of interactions that influence the becomings of all beings. Parisi addresses sensation as the potentialities of multiple connections that emerge within 'infinitesimal durations' (83), as becomings connect in innumerable and uncertain ways. Queerness cannot be defined from one point of view or within one becoming but, as Parisi explains, iterations of sex illuminate how sensation and 'pure experience' perpetually vary (87). Sensual, sexual bodies are further elaborated in Chrysanthi Nigianni's chapter 'Butterfly Kiss', on lesbians, and Margarit Shildrick's chapter, 'Prosthetic Performativity', on the disabled body. These chapters rupture subjectivities marked by 'lack' in majoritarian discourse to proliferate desiring (and desirable) bodies, desiring machines, assemblages and multiplicities.

This perpetual process of desiring, becoming inter-connected, and becoming multiple is made explicit in writings on hybridity, where

the emphasis on in-betweens by Hickey-Moody and Rasmussen re-emerges in the chapters 'Queer Hybridity' by Mikko Tuhkanen and 'Unnatural Alliances' by Patricia MacCormack. Tuhkanen considers (queer) hybridity through Anzaldúa's writings on mixedness. Queerness provokes an 'ontology of connectedness between and a crossing of temporalities and cultures' (98); queerness is understood as 'inextricable' mixing, as involution and becoming, which '(re)turns' to virtuality as a queer breeding. MacCormack, in (re)turn, cautions against conceptualising hybrids as beings that can be signified within a taxonomy. She emphasises how hybrids are 'inherently unnatural' – resistant to naturalisation – as becomings in 'verb'-tense. As verbs and not nouns, hybrids enact perpetual and positive (transformative) becomings, which enable the deterritorialisation of bodies (145–8).

The emphasis on 'verbing' in MacCormack's chapter reveals the insidiously desirable potential that emerges in between Deleuzian and queer theories: to understand queer(ing) in verb-tense, as incredibly active becomings, which perpetually mobilise bodies (and their connections, assemblages) otherwise and elsewhere. This also, in various forms, prompts a return to the earlier question: do I/we need to pass beyond 'being Butlerian' towards Deleuzian-queer-becomings? Is it possible to affirm a productive dialogue or mixing between queer theories and those of Deleuze and Guattari? And, of significant concern, do I/we even *want* to transgress queer(ing) subjects as they have been symbolically and discursively constituted? While this assemblage of texts rightfully (re-)invigorates 'queer' with potentiality and instability, it remains unclear whether the 'queer becomings' in this collection mobilise queerness beyond its conceptualisation by other queer theorists.

Judith Butler affirms queerness as a contingent term (Butler 1993: 230) and Tuhkanen reminds us of the etymology for queer, traced in the work of Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, which functions as a 'constitutive crossing, of a movement athwart' (97). One could say that subjects (or subjectivities), in these formulations, are always on the move. It is also unclear if queer becomings must occur within Deleuzian and Guattarian assemblages or if these potentialities can emerge from other philosophical traditions. Consider queer/ed psychoanalysis: Lee Edelman (2005) reveals the death drive to be incredibly active, insisting that identities cannot congeal in the relentless movements towards destruction. Leo Bersani (1987, 1995) envisions the productive power of self-shattering afforded by the overflow and excess of sameness (not lack) in homosexual relations – which Tuhkanen rightly aligns with

Anzaldúa and Deleuze as thinking in 'virtualities'. Neither employ Deleuze, Guattari or schizoanalysis as a path towards multiplicity or uncertainty/potentiality, but they could.

There are numerous, indeed inexhaustible, potentials for employing the methods found within this assemblage of queer becomings, an assemblage of texts which productively (de)stabilise and (re)produce queer(ness) through a (albeit, buggered) foray into and beyond queer theories. For the (queer) theorist, while reading this collection and ingesting the Deleuze and Guattari punch, it becomes possible to imagine how to pursue philosophical crossings, mixings and hybrids for all of the potentiality they offer 'queer(ness)'. It may only require me/you/us to thwart (mis)perceived theoretical oppositions in order to mess with 'Mister-In-Between' (41).

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Joe Hughes' recent study *Deleuze and the Genesis of Representation* makes the apparently straightforward claim that Deleuze's 'middle period', and indeed beyond, should be read as a consistent and repeated meditation on the processes of the constitution of representation. Its syntheses, and their necessary constitutions of subjectivity, of forms of production and of time provide a tangibly coherent theme across these apparently quite different texts. Running counter to the image of Deleuze as an endlessly inventive concept factory, Hughes unequivocally reads *The Logic of Sense*, *Anti-Oedipus* and *Difference and Repetition* as each in their own way articulating a systematic phenomenological return to essentially the same process of the constitution of experience. Despite its beginning with and constantly emphasising the transcendental, 'Deleuze's thought ends in phenomena, an empirical consciousness of fully individuated objects' (6). But Hughes' text is more than a review of Deleuze's relations with phenomenology. As the Preface makes clear, while the influence of Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger on Deleuze has not escaped critical notice, the 'Husserlian inspiration behind Deleuze's work' has been overlooked. Given the few direct references to Husserl in the books in question, this is understandable. But Hughes makes a strong case particularly for the relevance of Husserl's late work in understanding Deleuze's treatment of genetic constitution. This locating of the basic motivation behind these texts in a consistent body of influence is the key to Hughes' presentation of Deleuze's work as the project of 'a systematic and totalizing thinker' (157) occupied with the problem of genesis 'from the very first book to the last' (15). Deleuze is of course well known for describing his philosophy as classical and metaphysical, and his thought as 'like a hill' which changes very little, especially in contrast to Guattari's (in)famously volatile hyperactivity. Hughes' skill lies in looking into this immobility and highlighting the ways in which key themes and indeed structuring processes persist at the heart of key texts.

In so doing Hughes carries out a task which bears comparison with literary detective work. The comparison may seem ad hoc, but it helps to emphasise just how engaging and well-written Hughes' study really is, drawing on the work of Husserl, among others, to bear witness to Deleuze's phenomenology. Moreover, while few would underplay the importance of literature to Deleuze, Hughes implies that we might well to take its formal influence even more seriously. We are reminded

early on that *The Logic of Sense* describes itself as 'an attempt to develop a logical and psychological novel' (20), and Hughes takes this reference at its word. His detective work attempts to unravel story from plot and to draw a series of incisive deductions and conclusions with something of the style of a sleuth tracing the clues in a particularly thorny case.

Hughes draws from this literary reference, however, an approach not only to style but also to content. He claims this narratological logic of plot and story can be discerned across the work of this period and beyond, with examples reaching from *Empiricism and Subjectivity* to the final texts. In making this well-argued claim, Hughes offers revealing insights into the repetition of key themes under the sign (although not the style) of the novel. And if, following his lead, Hughes' own text were to conceal a story beneath its plot, what would it be? The *plot* is quite clearly an investigation of the importance of experience and representation, and of how, from a phenomenological standpoint, they are constituted. But the *story* uncovers Deleuze's monistic return to this theme just as a *Série noire* detective novel might consider the mechanics of serial criminality of a mind perhaps unaware of its own *idée fixe*. If the 'French school' of such fiction draws its conclusions from basic intuition and gut feelings, while the 'English' school works by deduction and evidence (Deleuze 2003: 115), one would have to say that here Hughes displays the second method while perhaps taking inspiration and drive from the first. Many readers of Deleuze are in equal measure intrigued and perplexed by the apparent proliferation of ideas which nevertheless seem, perhaps paradoxically at first, to cohere into a project. This project, partly masked by constant shifts in terminology, focus, sources and collaborators, is the concern of *Deleuze and the Genesis of Representation*. But Hughes' detective story is less a 'whodunit' than a 'howdunit', because he has clearly also seen that an important underlying thread does indeed link the range, however volcanic, of Deleuze's work. The aim therefore is to elucidate how this cohesion comes about, and the hunch is followed up in a style which might be described as Holmesian: deductive, incisive and self-assured, but not without a certain dry wit and even, at times, theatricality, in its claims.

Hughes' argument similarly has the advantage of a formal simplicity in so far as the book is divided into three parts, each dealing with one of the texts in question. Part one explores and justifies the focus on Husserl, considering the way his ideas are reflected in *The Logic of Sense*. Part two turns to *Anti-Oedipus* and the genesis of the ego

in desiring and social production; while part three draws together the static and dynamic geneses as described in *Difference and Repetition*. Each section lays out its points and draws partial conclusions which both reinforce the central thesis and open out to related issues. One example among many is the way part three considers, on top of the general theme of genesis, *Difference and Repetition*'s postulation of the non-transcendental constitution of time. Hughes is able not only to unravel Deleuze's description of these processes, but also to round up this complex problem succinctly:

> [I]n other words, just as the other two passive syntheses produced not representations in specific temporal modalities, but the transcendental possibility of those modalities themselves, this third synthesis does not produce a determinate future, but the transcendental element of the future in general. (149)

This tracking of the ways in which the syntheses of the sub-representational domain are inseparable from the constitution of modalities of time themselves allows Hughes to return to this relationship in his conclusion. Here, he clearly identifies the important threshold between the sub-representational domain and the emergence of consciousness of phenomena as representations: 'In the third synthesis, however, time ceases to be transcendental. By means of the progressive determination and actualization of Ideas, time becomes a representation which passes in the present of an empirical consciousness' (154).

This succinctness is used to good effect throughout the book and plays a part in conferring an impressive degree of coherence to the text as a whole. This is clearly intended, of course, and is all the more evident on closer reading of the three sections.

In the first part, Hughes begins by outlining those areas of Husserlian phenomenology which form the basis of *The Logic of Sense*. Among these, he highlights two phenomenological moves, namely those of *reduction*, or the putting out of play of those phenomena which are not part of the objectively given world, and of *constitution*, or the genetic production of objects in consciousness. The latter is especially important in that thought as representation, the building of the transcendental from the empirical, can only be meaningful if we have a theory of how objects and sense are constituted in the first place. Accordingly, the theory of perception developed in Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception* is also stressed in its postulation of immanent relations between objects. Keen to counter prevailing views of Deleuze as anti-phenomenological,

Hughes argues that, although Deleuze 'never makes a big deal of the reduction' (6), critics (such as Lawlor and Brassier) are right to contend that, despite appearances, he ends up in a basically phenomenological position: consciousness of individuated objects in a field of perception where relations always already exist. In support of this, examples of 'significant use' of the reduction are drawn from *Proust and Signs* and from Deleuze's criticisms of the image of thought, particularly in *Difference and Repetition*, where 'Deleuze's critique of the image of thought can thus be read as a reaffirmation of the necessity for reduction even if he does not use that particular word' (8).

Two important and related issues are linked to this, as the text makes clear. The first is that, whatever other forms of phenomenology or their interpreters may claim, this stance is by no means some idealistic or relativistic denial of objective reality. The approach adopted by Husserl/Deleuze does not deny the existence of external reality: the table as phenomenon does not replace or cancel out the table as object. The action of putting assumptions out of play does not leave us confronting nothing, but rather instantiates the existence of the world of phenomena *in addition to* that of objective reality. The second point, again stressed throughout by Hughes, concerns the role of meaning. Despite being central in Deleuze, Hughes picks it up as a key source of misunderstandings. As he reminds us at several points in the text, the world of the real as sense (hyletic) data is meaningless by itself until sense is bestowed onto it by the passive syntheses. The commonplace view that Deleuze argues that we should ask 'what does it do?' rather than 'what does it mean?' is only valid up to this threshold of the emergence of meaning, as we will see below. It follows that Deleuzian questioning of the validity of interpretation or the consideration of meaning in communication needs to be understood in the light of their constitution.

Accordingly, Deleuze's critique of given forms of transcendence therefore relies on an ability not just to postulate the constitution of objects in experience, but also to describe the processes in question. For Hughes, much of Deleuze's work centres on this very task. Like Husserl, Deleuze is concerned not just with describing phenomena, but also with explaining them and their processes. Unlike the early Husserl however, Deleuze is only interested in genetic phenomenology, or the immediate production of sense rather than its sedimentation. It is not hard at this point to agree that this relationship exists in a Deleuzian consideration of meaning as event, and Hughes' focus on this point takes its justification precisely from this link. The clarity and confidence with which these arguments are made is something of a hallmark and deserves, I think,

wide recognition. Just as this claim is made, Hughes makes a point of making clear not only what has been said, but also what is going to be covered and how. He carefully lays out Husserl's stance and situates it exactly in his argument, showing how far Deleuze follows Husserl and at which points they diverge, for instance in the former's critique of a Husserlian lack of phenomenological rigor or its intentionality, as we will see.

However, the fact that the text appears to be arguing that the whole of Deleuze's work can in effect be rooted in one concept of Husserl's phenomenology may well strike some readers as problematic. Hughes himself accepts that this does not necessarily justify our use of the phenomenology label – admittedly a question 'of little importance' (19). What it does do, however, is to situate the movement of Deleuze's thought between two well-defined poles: the *genesis* of thought is to be scrutinised, and the method of *reduction* is to be used as a basic observational technique. It is in this light that we should read *The Logic of Sense*, and, according to Hughes, *Anti-Oedipus*.

Part two's focus on *Anti-Oedipus* as description of genesis is particularly interesting in so far as it brings a certain coherence to the proliferation of ideas for which the book is notorious. The treatment of the text and its complexities is both systematic and enlightening and as such complements existing studies by Goodchild (1996), Holland (1999) and, more recently, Buchanan (2008), with which readers are doubtless familiar. A crucial argument, however, is made regarding the claim to identify cross-textual themes. Not only does reading *Anti-Oedipus* from the point of view of production make the text easier to understand, but, in fact, 'if the book is read as a collection of separate concepts with only ambiguous relations to one another, it becomes impossible to understand' (66). Whether Hughes is right naturally depends on whether we accept his central claim. But his analysis does at the very least also raise some interesting questions. The first of these is whether Deleuze's work is one which should be 'understood' on these terms. Speaking personally, I feel that Hughes' argument is convincing, but some readers will doubtless point to the many ways in which a work such as *Anti-Oedipus* seems to escape categorisation in any way, least of all, perhaps, in terms of meaning. As Foucault once suggested (mischievously perhaps?), meaning itself might be displaced by the *effectiveness* of this 'thing', which he 'dare not even call a book', and which refers to nothing other than its 'own prodigious theoretical inventiveness' (Foucault 1997: 7). This issue of the displacement of meaning by effect – *what does it mean?* by *what does it do?* – is one which Hughes

takes up, arguing that we are wrong to assume that meaning is never relevant, as we have seen. For Deleuze, a focus on the meaning-less depths does not mean that meaning itself is excised from thought, merely that it must be understood as produced on top of the genetic syntheses of experience. In this light, the demystification of the text as *object* is welcome, especially to newer readers of Deleuze who often turn, rightly or wrongly, to *Anti-Oedipus* before some of the less well-known books.

The second question raised by Hughes' argument introduces its own double movement. Because it is necessary for Hughes to demonstrate his thesis across a range of texts, there is the implicit need to reassess the role of Guattari in the collaborations. The aim here, it would seem, is not to expunge Guattari's contributions – which Deleuze of course stresses as being of fundamental importance, for instance in well-known passages of *Dialogues* (Deleuze and Parnet 1996: 23–4). However, to argue that Deleuze's concern with genesis is a *continuous* theme requires that it be shown to lie at the heart of the collaborative work, which, by that token, must be revealed to be essentially 'Deleuzian'. Guattari, I will suggest later, comes out of this argument as a peripheral figure, almost as collateral damage.

Part three tackles *Difference and Repetition* with much the same gusto as parts one and two. Hughes is keen to point out that his view goes 'against the grain' of current readings which emphasise the text as 'more or less a theory only of the static genesis' (103). On the contrary, we are exhorted to see *Difference and Repetition* alongside the other texts studied and to realise that for Deleuze, *the* question of the world of phenomena and its genesis is the same throughout. Deleuze goes well beyond the constitution of experience itself, however. He theorises not just the actualisation of phenomena in individual, differenciated subjects, but also describes how this is necessarily implicated in the production of temporality itself: not only does the virtual engender unindividuated actuality, but the process is reciprocal, and founded on the production of time as actualisation takes place. In typical style, Hughes outlines in a brief table just how schematic this process is, at least in its correspondence between texts. Clear parallels are drawn between dynamic genesis, desiring production and the production of time, on one hand, and static genesis, social production and differenciation-individuation on the other.

Interestingly, Hughes begins his explanation by problematising critical readings (e.g. those of Badiou or Hallward) of Deleuze as 'otherworldly', particularly in his emphasis on the virtual. The point missed by such critics is that Deleuze does indeed theorise the constitution of the virtual

as *a time* in which Ideas are structured: by proving the concreteness of Ideas and the determination of the virtual, we can show how the virtual–actual dyad escapes this critique of Deleuze as being a merely contemplative thinker. The central argument is that for Deleuze creative actualisation is the 'true meaning of time' (110): it is the very process of progressive determination which determines where Ideas come from and go to. It is the process by which the future itself becomes present and is thus an indispensable movement of realisation.

Here Hughes is typically concise in his definitions and argument:

> I want to suggest here that the Deleuzian Idea is the form that any concrete object takes before we fully recognise or know what that object is. In the Idea, the object itself becomes a problem for thought. Progressive determination would then be nothing more than the progressive determination of a concrete object of perception. (115)

What's more, this welcome concision is not infrequently accompanied by a certain dry humour: 'Despite the fact that Deleuze used the vocabulary of biology and the example of differenciation in the egg almost exclusively to describe the process of actualization, we have to notice that the outcome of this process is not a chicken' (116).

Despite (or perhaps because of) its focus, Hughes' study is able to lend some clarity to key elements of the Deleuzian panoply, almost as an aside. One example is the development of an argument which clearly presents the role of representation as the end point of quality and extensity which can only refer to represented objects as such. If actualisation produces psychological consciousness, then it does so via the forms of representation as 'the element of knowledge' (118) which has its own legitimate and non-legitimate uses.

This section of Hughes' book (119–26) is one of the richest and best argued, presenting a whole series of points which tie into the main theme. We return to the 'dead representations' of *The Logic of Sense*, and the *legitimate* use of representation which recognises its necessarily mobile nature, being 'legitimate insofar as it is tied to its process of production' (120). The point is important enough to attract the claim that it 'seems to be the ultimate aim of *Difference and Repetition*, and perhaps of Deleuze's philosophy in this middle period as a whole' (119). The role of representation is especially important if we take Hughes' point that it must be understood as a result of static genesis: rather than being *dynamic* in movement and material dispersion it begins in a form of time and culminates in representation as, ultimately, a *static* form of things available to human consciousness.

This of course leads to a final description of dynamic genesis equated to the production of time (127). After covering the familiar ground of Bergsonian analysis of (dis)continuity in time/movement, Hughes argues that the necessary syntheses of movement cannot be produced without a form of originary subjectivity which carries out the synthesis. Hughes' reading of *Difference and Repetition* makes crucial links here between the role of habit and contraction and synthesis itself in the formation of subjectivity, but he also stresses the latter's limited field of operation. It is the limited ability of the subject to 'grasp' the fullness of its experiences that leads to its exhaustion. It seems worth noting that Hughes' point about the translatability of these ideas across the whole of Deleuze is quite borne out by reflections of just this point in later work, notably in *The Time Image*, where Deleuze draws explicitly on Blanchot (Deleuze 1985: 221–2). The 'contemplative soul', or synthetic ego seen in the work of Europe's great film directors, is not one of Husserlian intentionality, but rather of the individual gifted only with the 'empty power to exchange itself for something'. This power, being empty only in so far as it exchanges itself for everything, is exactly the same as that of the 'seers' whose 'impower of thought' Deleuze situates in cinema's special ability to create such images through characters such as Johannes in Dreyer's *Ordet*.

In the psychic situation of films such as *Ordet*, it is the character as seer who, apparently a marionette incapable of thought or action, relies instead on belief, thus reminding us of the need to affirm both the irrationality of the real and our relationship with this world rather than attempting to transcend it with 'reason'. As Ambrose (2007) stresses, what is striking is the way in which the automatic can force thought, how the very lack of rational awareness of characters can inspire movement in our own reflective processes. Hughes, by demonstrating the (progressively) determined nature of subjectivity, draws a line of connection from the earliest work on Hume directly into the cinema books and the consideration of subjectivity that closes his third chapter, stressing the role of constitution and the implications this has for alterity.

This closing section is one where one fully appreciates that, across the three chapters of *Deleuze and the Genesis of Representation*, a key strength of the study is its own coherence, down in part to the extreme care taken to make points clearly. We are left in no doubt as to the goal of the text in showing that 'there is a very general yet consistent conceptual structure behind Deleuze's three central texts, and that this structure traced out a consistent theory of the genesis of representation'

(158). This clarity ranges from statements of the intent of the study, to the cross-reference of points throughout its three main chapters. Each part builds on the others and frequent links forward and back are of great help as complex arguments are followed across texts. Hughes, as we have seen, has a talent for pithy summaries which many readers will appreciate. This is perhaps especially the case when they develop a real sense of dialogue with the reader by basing deductions on questions which, Hughes rightly assumes, the reader is likely to ask at a given stage. Consequently – and somewhat in tune with the detective novel theme – rather than present his arguments as *faits accomplis*, Hughes is not afraid to ask questions as if thinking through the points himself, which makes one feel at home within the argument and often slightly less uncomfortable about having failed to grasp a particular point. This, alongside the combination of detailed argument and concise roundups, succeeds in making the text open to a wide readership, indeed clarifying some points as well as, if not better than, some introductory guides. A good example of this is the way in which Hughes tackles 'side' themes, such as of 'fatigue' (137–8) which, as he points out, may be assumed to result from the passage of time. Since Hughes shows that time cannot depend for its constitution on syntheses which in turn depend on other syntheses, it makes no sense to see exhaustion as being a result of the passage of time in infinite regress. The genetic ego therefore suffers fatigue, on the contrary, because of its limited ability to contract relations and exhausts itself because it contemplates too much, 'trying to possess too many instants in one grasp' (138). Despite appearances and quasi-causes, then, the cause of fatigue – and hence of stability and escape from raw being – occurs within and because of a limited, immanent contractual range.

The reader is also struck by Hughes' refusal to be put off by Deleuze's terminological variety, concluding on the contrary that this is no obstacle once one has perceived the basic unity of the work and that despite manifest differences of style and language, essential themes recur in the three texts in question. All that really changes is the terms used to describe the movement of thought through the stages of perception, a point to which the text often returns: 'Despite the complete disparity in technical vocabulary between books, there is a very strong correspondence in their separate descriptions of these early stages of the genesis' (140). The attention paid by Hughes to this issue is extremely helpful. For instance, while it is true, he argues, that the word 'genesis' appears only four times in *Empiricism and Subjectivity*, and even then only to be criticised, we need to understand that the reference in this

context is precisely to the Husserlian 'sedimentation' theory of sense which Deleuze rejects elsewhere in favour of a more immediate and dynamic interpretation. We are able therefore to see that the question of *Empiricism and Subjectivity* is exactly that of the phenomenological question of genesis: how does the subject arise from the given? (16).

These correspondences are supported by diagrams along the way which show clearly how evolving sequences of syntheses relate to each other. These culminate in a table (156) which shows how they relate across the three texts studied. Given the sometimes oblique ways in which Deleuze returns to topics from different angles, such schematisations will be welcome to many in providing a 'key' of sorts to the proliferating language which, if we are honest, can at times both delight and frustrate us as readers.

Adding to this Hughes' careful and sustained policy of recapping and pre-capping, it becomes obvious from the way the text summarises key points and presents others upstream that the whole project has been worked out with the explicit goal of carrying the reader through complex terrain. This is particularly obvious in part two, where Hughes deals deftly with *Anti-Oedipus*, shedding a good deal of light on this demanding text. Given the obviously daunting range of Deleuze and Guattari's first collaboration, there is much to be said for an approach which selects one theme and follows it through the different permutations to which it is subjected throughout the book, thus cracking open some of its complexities. Moreover, comparing the same themes across texts, rather than complicating things, actually makes them more accessible, and once basic ideas have been established, the reader can with more confidence use knowledge from one text to make sense of another.

This confidence rubs off partly from Hughes' own, which is clear in instances where he takes critical aim at a number of commonplaces. Included on the list of misreaders is Foucault, for instance, guilty of taking 'phantasm' to mean the same in *The Logic of Sense* as it does in *Difference and Repetition* (165 n. 34). Deleuze's purported anti-Hegelianism may also be entirely unfounded (134), with the former offering instead a 'flashy Hegel' and a contingent view of history whose non-teleology 'still progresses according to a dialectical logic of sublimation or double causality' (170 n. 18). A further example is Hughes' convincing argument that a clarification of detours in the treatment of the syntheses in *Difference and Repetition* justifies their being understood as operating in linear fashion. Despite Deleuze's roundabout way of presenting the concepts, we need, for Hughes, to

understand them as following a progression: each one relates to the previous in a series of transcendental exercises (129) of each faculty.

Beyond the confident style, Hughes also has a series of genuine points about Deleuze that seem well worth making and has produced a text which, oddly perhaps, seems to fulfil two very different purposes. In the first instance, it is a scholarly study of some of the most complex ideas in the work of notoriously problematic thinkers. Hughes' weaving of a web of relations between Kant, Husserl, Merleau-Ponty and Deleuze is something of a feat, but it might be more appropriate to call it an 'instruction'. Secondly, therefore, in situating Deleuze's thought, concepts such as static and dynamic genesis are explained with both an eye to detail and an impressive command of the big picture and the lines of argument being followed. The point here is that the text appears to be achieving that rare goal of speaking to a remarkably wide audience of both specialists and neophytes. A lack of familiarity with the intricacies of Husserl's late work is not a problem since the concepts are so clearly laid out. What is more, the way these concepts are treated is extremely helpful for anyone 'perplexed' by the difficulties of Deleuze and the context of his ideas.

At the end of the book, Hughes seems to suggest that we may want to question this apparently monotonous focus on the same theme, and he is surely right to maintain a critical line. Craven homages to Deleuze (and Guattari) which do little other than repeat their *mots d'ordre* do nothing at all either for neophytes or those already familiar with the work. Hughes' criticality is refreshing then, and succeeds in operating in the space between either glorifying or sacrificing Deleuze. Hughes, thankfully, does neither, choosing instead a much finer path of balanced and detailed critique whose aim is to clarify, explicate and situate his subject.

Deleuze and the Genesis of Representation, then, ultimately impresses by the strength and clarity of its arguments. Are there nevertheless details which some readers may find problematic?

For Hughes, few have actually considered the debt owed by Deleuze to phenomenology, and fewer still have been able to link his ideas clearly to those of, for instance, Husserl and Merleau-Ponty on this score. To support these claims, repeated references are made to the essentially phenomenological nature of Deleuze's work. For some, this will come as no surprise: Francois Dosse's recent biography, despite describing Deleuze's attitude to phenomenology as 'ambivalent' and the link to Husserl as largely superficial, reveals that Merleau-Ponty's *The Visible and the Invisible* was a favourite text (Dosse 2007: 189). Toscano describes Deleuze as developing from Husserl 'an-other phenomenology'

(Toscano 2005: 204) . The extent to which Hughes' reading goes 'against the grain' then, might be open to question. Similarly, there are times when the welcome degree of incisiveness and confidence risks tipping over into a boldness which some might find excessive. One example is when Hughes claims early on that 'the only way to understand Deleuze's texts is to understand them as a theorization of genesis, and the only way to understand a Deleuzian concept . . . is to determine its place and function within the genesis in which it participates' (16).

Not all will agree that 'the only way' to understand these texts is indeed the one offered here. But the excessiveness or otherwise of these claims can be judged only on the evidence made available, and Hughes certainly provides plenty. Moreover, if the thesis of unity in the work unsettles some readers, it will be welcomed by those disquieted by readings which appear to see Deleuze as a sort of concept factory whose productive machinery required no fuel, pulling rabbits out of hats. I made the point earlier on that Hughes' demystification is no bad thing in attacking views of Deleuze which may appear both sanctifying and actually unhelpful. While failing to explain anything much at all about the work, they also provide ammunition to those who, rather than welcome inventiveness, reproach what they see as obfuscation, barbarism, irresponsibility and so on. Perhaps someday Deleuzians with time on their hands will quantify just how much effort has been spent rectifying the mis- (or non-) readings which proliferate, especially across the social sciences, of Deleuze (and Guattari). A far better idea though would be to consider Hughes' text as an example of how elucidating the genealogy through an *explication* of Deleuze's work can provide a genuine *explanation* of some of its most difficult ideas. Placing the fabric of relations under the magnifying glass lifts them off the plane and gives them a shape which allows us to see the texture of the individual pieces and their warp and weft. The genuinely critical spirit behind this raises questions about simplistic notions of creativity while providing extremely useful contextual information about which other fingerprints can be found on Deleuze's work. Some may disagree with Hughes that this demonstrates a profound, almost monotonous, unity in Deleuze's work at the level of its basic concerns. But I feel it must be accepted that whereas he generates both light and heat, Hughes should be congratulated for shedding much more of the former than the latter.

That said, and on a different and perhaps rather ungenerous note, there are times when Hughes' impressive clarity seems to slip a little. Deleuze, as we know, claimed to 'believe in philosophy as a system' (Deleuze 2003: 338), but there are times when Hughes' phraseology seems to imply chinks of doubt that the systemic and systematic nature

of the work is indeed clearly demonstrable. If Deleuze's concepts initially 'all come together to form a consistent, if not systematic, theory of genetic constitution' (20), they later become 'systematic but incoherent' (155), and then 'systematic and totalizing' further on (157). The extent to which these phrases actually cloud Hughes' point, however, is minimal, and examples of this sort of hesitation are rare in the overall tone of extreme clarity and incision.

A further reaction to *Deleuze and the Genesis of Representation* may occur to readers who conclude that Hughes, contrary to Deleuze's advice (Deleuze 2003: 339–40), fails to remain concrete by giving one concept primacy over another and focusing so closely on the essential nature of genesis. This would be unfair, however, in that the text is at pains to stress the ways in which Deleuzian syntheses are explications of one another – albeit in a particular order – in contradistinction to their Kantian counterparts whose a priori nature fails to explain their constitution. A desire to engage with concrete questions beyond those of 'simple' perception also guides Hughes' insistence on the complex role of alterity in the system: it is the world without others, in its schizophrenic depths, which makes genesis *necessary* as an escape from the chaos of raw being (150–3). It is once more significant that on this point, as on many others, Hughes sees a direct lineage between Husserl and Deleuze.

A final potential concern returns to the issue, raised by Hughes himself, of the implications of recent biographical information for our understanding of the Deleuze–Guattari writing relationship. One may on one level recognise reflections of the not uncommon desire to 'de-Guattarise' Deleuze, which takes effect, intentionally or not, in three ways. On the one hand, works are grouped together that some may consider disparate, seeing no reason to assume that a co-authored text should be considered any differently to individual work on this account. Hughes moreover clearly considers *What is Philosophy?* to be 'Deleuze's last major work' (157), as indeed Deleuze himself seems to imply when stating his desire to write 'a short text' offering a clarification of the notion of concepts (Deleuze 2003: 339). On the other hand, Hughes insists that the themes which underpin apparently diverse works are the same: it is, by implication, Deleuze's underlying obsession with representation that is the real 'story' across the whole corpus. A third example of the erasure of Guattari from the scene is provided by Guattari himself, who claimed, in the *Anti-Oedipus Papers*, that he did not 'recognise' himself in *Anti-Oedipus* (Guattari 2006). Beyond details in support of the hypothesis downgrading Guattari's role, whether or not Hughes is correct to follow this thread depends of course largely on the evidence he brings to the investigation, and the latter

is substantial. Husserl, Merleau-Ponty and Kant's particular forms of phenomenology are brought to bear in ways which make a convincing case for identifying the hand of Deleuze at the centre even of the joint work. Coupled with Dosse's (2007) description of the decline in the Deleuze–Guattari relationship, and his claim that *What is Philosophy?* was indeed essentially written by the former, one might be tempted to agree with Genosko (2001) that there is indeed a concerted and slightly skewed attempt to de-Guattarise the 'Deleuziana'. And yet while there is certainly something to be said for demystifying the idea of a four-handed concept factory, it would clearly be unfair to include Hughes among those who maintain the 'bad Guattari' thesis. On the one hand, there is no obvious reason why one should not focus on the key concerns of one part of the authorial assemblage if one chooses, and indeed the complexities of some of the arguments here certainly justify it. *Deleuze and the Genesis of Representation* is no biography, and as a piece of detection is not a 'whodunit' but a 'howdunit'. Were it the former, and spoke of 'de-Guattarising' Deleuze, why not also 'de-Deleuze' the advocate of 'becoming-imperceptible' himself?

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Introduction: Beyond the Royal Science of Politics

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Anxieties over democracy in the post-war era, reinvigorated by philosophical nostalgia for the modern icons of civic engagement – including Jean-Jacques Rousseau, John Stuart Mill and James Madison – resulted in a flourishing industry of academic writing on political participation, especially in the English-speaking world and particularly in the field of political science. Almond and Verba's legendary *The Civic Culture* (1963) and Carole Pateman's *Participation and Democratic Theory* (1970), together with Robert Dahl's and Seymor Martin Lipset's works on democratic theory, are just a few of the most prominent names and different works that have become the pillars of a very influential clergy, which has helped circumscribe contemporary understandings of politics. The paradigm introduced by such thinkers (and supported more effervescently by republicans than by liberals) did not seek to replace or challenge the privileged political form that is 'representative democracy'; rather, it assumed that 'mass participation is the lifeblood of representative democracy' (Norris 2002: 5), and identified elitism as that which impedes the reinvigoration of democratic regimes (see Schumpeter 1950).

As a sequel to this colossal effort, researchers on political activism have anchored the concept firmly within official politics through the invention of a statistical science of voting fluctuations, participation in party politics and other formal indicators; only lately has this school of thought devoted any critical attention to the evident limits and barriers of formal political participation (see Norris 2002). Other trends in political theory have derided the efficacy of activism by forcing the concept into a reductive alignment with merely habitual social habits, thereby making the future of political life dependent on banalities such

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as 'bowling together' (cf. Putnam 2000). By default, such developments in political theory tend to categorise the informal protests of the citizenry as the most radical of activist practices. Ultimately, the tides and modes of civic engagement (or disengagement) are seen as symptomatic of either the flourishing or the declining state of an existent 'democratic spirit', which is invariably celebrated *per se*, leaving no room for significant criticism of the nature of the 'democracy' supposedly animating that 'spirit'.

As Deleuze and Guattari have explained, this characteristic 'royal' science of politics 'continually appropriates the contents of vague or nomad science' – those forms of political investigation looking 'to understand both the repression it encounters and the interaction ' "containing" it' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 367–8). One major task of new activist war machines is, then, to escape entrapment within the black hole of the majoritarian discourse on civil society, captured and defined by pervasive notions of 'representative participation'. Although the 'NGOisation' of the public sphere since the 1980s (see Yacobi 2007), together with other forms of political proliferation, have broadened the visible political field, the potential of non-institutional forms of action has been weakened ideologically by a whole state apparatus comprised of research centres and budgets, instrumental teaching, and a parliamentary politics that has incorporated the discourse of civil society – all of which have effected a *sectorisation* of society and political life. The epistemological aspirations of the three 'ideal circles' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 367) of the state, economy and civil society are commonly used to categorise political eruptions as forms of participation in the official, representative state politics. It is in this light that we must interpret the failure of academia to come to terms with the division of labour lately being imposed by the transversal relations between intellectual investigation and political situatedness embodied in *militant research*. As Deleuze and Guattari suggest, 'we know of the problems States have always had with journey-men's associations or *compagnonnages*, the nomadic or itinerant bodies . . . ' (368).

It is clear that a Jamesonian 'strategy of containment' is at work in the narrative tradition of royal political science. It is in the notion of 'representative participation' that a function of formal unity or a strategy of containment has been founded, which, as Jameson puts it, 'allows what can be thought to seem internally coherent in its own terms, while repressing the unthinkable . . . which lies beyond its boundaries' (Jameson 1981: 38). By tying official politics together with every form of political participation it can ensnare, what royal political science does

is 'radically impoverish . . . the data of one narrative line' – namely, that of the new activisms – 'by their rewriting according to the paradigm of another narrative . . . ' – namely, that of representative participatory politics (Jameson 1981: 22). The subversive power of political *potentia* is thus contained by this reductive strategy; civil society becomes the main territory of this imprisonment, assisted by a false equation of official participation with challenging politics.

Rather than problematising the political, this royal understanding of activism uses its 'metric power' to axiomatise politics, while simultaneously repressing activist experiences that refuse simply to align with 'the given' of formal politics. An example of this can be seen in the hostility of western states towards organisations such as 'Wikileaks' or the 'Animal rights movement', each of which are immersed in creative acts of citizenship that actualise *ruptures*. Such new scenes and acts are constantly at risk of being appropriated by this royal science of politics, which imposes upon them a model that channels civic participation according to established rules and concepts. Activisms that seek *only* to guarantee the workings of representative democracy are essentially *slave activisms*; they dwell in safety and their impact and potential is expected to be absorbed without drawing the system into new structures of resonance.

The assumption that 'mass participation is the lifeblood of representative democracy' not only imposes a particular model of the political, it also reinforces a pejorative way to conceive activism. By positing representative democracy (or any other regime) as the reified model of political process, theory necessarily idealises certain forms of involvement over others. For example, classical participatory theory is often blind to the creative significance of the activist energies being unfolded in such events as critical teaching in schools, revolutionary philosophical writing, the deconstructive effect of a critical assemblage that confronts patriarchal power, or of civic homosexuality which disrupts heterosexism. In fact, the assumptions underlying 'representative' participation are troublesome for at least two reasons. Firstly, participation in the formal political process of 'representative democracy' does not in itself necessarily implicate a critical attitude or action, seeking a less repressive and more creative life. To evidence this, it is enough to keep in mind some fearful recent examples of mass political support for 'representative' state violence, as occurred last May when thousands of Israelis marched in Tel Aviv and the streets of Jerusalem to back the killing by the Israeli Defence Forces of nine activists from the Turkish Foundation for Human Rights and

Freedoms and Humanitarian Relief, as they boarded the *Mavi Marmara* ship sailing to Gaza as part of a humanitarian flotilla. Similarly, we might remain mindful of other, no less electrifying, cases of popular support for wars and genocides in South America, Asia, Eastern Europe and Africa, or of events such as the Holocaust. In these instances, mass participation more accurately falls within the Reichian analysis of a popular 'desire for fascism' – which lies worlds away from a participatory liberalism that idealises the commitment of the public to activist citizenship (see Isin 2009) and to the tolerant 'good life' that western democracy claims to represent. Secondly, passivity is not necessarily a sign of political anaemia, but may be a cultural expression that requires local explanation. Here, research at times confuses the visible with the political: absence of visible mass participation might be a sign of unconscious and pre-conscious compliance with ongoing forms of oppression, and can impact more energetically on the perpetuation of a regime than can tangible acts of the body – these modes of active abandonment produce the reign of daily microfascisms.

After Deleuze and Guattari, political activism may be approached in a fundamentally different way: without an image, without a form. As Deleuze and Guattari make clear, the interaction between royal and nomad science produces a 'constantly shifting borderline', meaning that there is always some element that escapes containment by the 'iron collars' of representation (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 367; see also Deleuze 1994). This occurs when the plane of consistency is passionately thrown against the plane of organisation, when a nomad element inserts itself in political struggles in which, for instance, the boundaries of citizenship are challenged and reopened (as occurred in the struggle associated with the *sans-papiers* movement, see Isin 2009), or barriers of ethnic segregation are challenged by new forms of interculturalism (as occurs with bilingual forms of education). It is through these 'smallest deviations' that smooth types of political activity dwell within the striated forms of state politics (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 371). Deleuze's and Deleuze and Guattari's political philosophies have created some of the conceptual tools which may be put to innovative use in activism that seeks to break with repressive traditions. Their alien relation to the standards set by the royal science of politics (see Patton 2000) – an alienation laid out in the philosophical resources they draw on, in the issues and concepts that characterise their work and, principally, in the incessant movement of their thought – points towards a richer philosophical weaponry with which to confront and possibly overcome political inhibitions, in both knowledge and practice.

In truth, Deleuze and Guattari do not provide ready-made blueprints for revolution – neither recipes nor rules – but they do certainly describe a minor art of thinking/doing, one which allows activists to target stable forms of life wherever they impede creation, wherever they are mystified by representation. Activists couldn't hope for more powerful tools to assist their diverse struggles to overcome oppression, where this is a phenomenon understood comprehensively as a reactive style of power manifested in techniques of conceptual and material capture. Indeed, the two volumes of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* are slowly but surely beginning to share some of the glory that volume one of Karl Marx's *Capital* occupied for more than a century; henceforth, we are faced with the urgency of thinking anew the nature of social struggles, and how to engage them successfully.

Exchanging conservative for 'radical' ideologies, proving the guilt of the majoritarian group, celebrating recognition of identity, seeking political representation, instigating litigation and arousing strikes, marches and protests – all these conventionally privileged resources for transformative action are now seen as conforming to a certain model of activism. As Buchanan warns, 'from conformity it is but a short step to complicity' (Buchanan 2000: 75), because activism that treads established paths of dissent is always in danger of being besieged and contained by the organism of the State. A new horizon stretches out: by engaging more forcefully with the celerity of the 'itinerant' activist, a coextensive plane between the conceptual apparatus of politics and the more radical activist practices of rupture and creation may be constructed beyond the royal science of politics, while remaining prudent with respect to the 'gravitational field' of representative participation (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 372). This is where a new science of activism is to be found:

> Whenever ambulant procedure and process are returned to their own model, the points regain their position as singularities that exclude all biunivocal relations, the flow regains its curvilinear and vertical motion that excludes any parallelism between vectors, and smooth space reconquers the properties of contact that prevent it from remaining homogeneous and striated. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 373)

The task undertaken by the contributors to this special issue is to launch a preliminary experimentation with the conceptual tools appropriate for a new science of activism, each exploring different dimensions of the 'Deleuzian horizon' outlined here. The issue is the result of a conference held at the Centre for Critical and Cultural Theory, Cardiff University,

in November 2009. Here the participants gathered to discuss the idea that Deleuze offers activism a new kind of freedom from capture by the state-forms of representative politics; indeed, the speakers described how Deleuzian frameworks often engage with the smooth spaces that radical activism simultaneously practice and seek to create.

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Desire, Apathy and Activism

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Abstract

This paper explores the themes of apathy and activism by contrasting the conventionally negative concept of motivational desire-lack with Deleuze and Guattari's positive concept of 'desiring-production'. I suggest that apathy and activism are both problematically tied to the same motivational force: the conventional negativity of desire, which results in a 'split subject' always already 'undone' by difference. The philosophy of positive desiring-production provides alternative concepts of motivation and selfhood, not characterised by generative lack or alienation. On the contrary, this alternative ontology describes an identity that is not primarily 'undone' by difference, but 'done' or 'made' through the complex and piecemeal relations it forges with various aspects of the bodies it encounters. Understood as a complex multiplicity, the self or community accordingly has a primary, immediate and active interest in the quality of its multifaceted relations with others. Finally, I argue that some contemporary forms of activism can be read as practices aimed at creating and safeguarding the social conditions that foster the complex relational composition of selves and communities.

Keywords: activism, apathy, identity, Deleuze, desire, ontology, negativity, politics

While global society flounders in economic crisis and political violence, middle-class white westerners comprise a political strata apparently characterised by 'motivational deficit' (Critchley 2007; Bernstein 2001). The rituals of liberal democracy produce a politics that palls with the immensity and complexity of global injustices and the tasks of redress

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that are called for. In modern thought, apathy is often associated with negativity – it signifies incapacity, immobility, absence of direction, or existential emptiness. In fact, the prevalence and constancy of apathy as an indicator of dissatisfaction in everyday life may correlate, at least in part, to the emphasis modern western philosophy places upon critical negativity and negation. I begin by arguing that this persistent emphasis on negativity is a residual effect of the negativity of desire which is conventionally understood to be the grounding condition of action. However, while this generative negativity is celebrated within modernism and many strains of 'postmodernism', neither style of thinking is capable of conceptualising a mode of transformative action that is not problematically fettered to the negativity that such action paradoxically aims to oppose. I then suggest that Deleuze and Guattari's absolutely positive concept of desire – and their corresponding ontology of the complex relational self – offers an alternative way of understanding political motivation, potentially enabling a path of flight from the pervasive problem of political disengagement.

I. Apathy

The amorphous phenomena of 'boredom' and 'apathy' define a characteristic modern negativity (Spacks 1995; Svendsen 2005). Modernism 'posits an isolated subject existing in a secularised, fragmented world marked by lost or precarious traditions: a paradigmatic situation for boredom' (Spacks 1995: 219). While alienation is associated with a sense of subjective disconnection and paralysis, modern apathy extends across the entire social field as an effect of 'profound' boredom that has no focus and no relief (Heidegger 1993: 99). Profound apathy is then socially indicated by a systemic loss of interest and attachment, a turning away and closing off from others, and an associated failure of responsibility and care in comportment towards others (Hammer 2004; Emad 1985). One ceases to be attentive to others when afflicted by apathy: 'boredom, unlike engagement, implies no respect for the identity of the other' (Spacks 1995: 231). The typically modern (and western) stance of foppish or cultivated disinterest in others may also serve a related socio-cultural function; in *contriving* to be bored, the subject rejects the possibility of intimacy and so 'repudiates attempts to establish a mode of equality' (199).

One's relation to oneself is also called into question by the experience of boredom. Conceptualised as a project of development, the modern self is constituted through reflexive acts of desire and by the recognition

these acts solicit. The process of self-determination is effectively halted by boredom, since 'almost always it suggests disruptions of desire: the inability to desire or to have desire fulfilled' (Spacks 1995: x). For the self defined by desire, such disruption corresponds with a loss of motivation, direction and satisfaction. The negativity of profound boredom collapses the self into an existential crisis: one suffers a hiatus in one's project of self-directed desire and the material transformations associated with one's project.

However, negativity paradoxically plays a privileged role in modern critical philosophy and underlies modern conceptions of agency (see Coole 2000). Boredom is not simply disabling and disruptive, but is also understood as the putative ground for the emergence of reflexive selfhood: 'boredom reveals beings as a whole' (Heidegger 1993: 99). Boredom reveals an ontological void, an open emptiness which is a primary and defining negativity, but which is also constitutive and transformative because it defines one's fundamental attitude of being-in-the-world as unfinished and striving. In turn, this striving plays a causal role in projects of self-directed becoming. In this capacity, 'boredom aids the fulfilment of desire' (Spacks 1995: 242). On the one hand, then, boredom is an existential negativity that indicates an absence of desire or interest, a state of alienation and loss of affective capacity, and a moment of existential crisis experienced as a painful suspension of the passage of developmental time. In this sense, the primary cultural function of boredom is to serve as a critical indicator of subjective or social dissatisfaction. On the other hand, boredom is a generative negativity: a causal absence felt as alienation and emptiness, which prompts an active desire for alleviation of the uncomfortable experience of negativity. Such negativity constitutes a subject-in-process and causes the production and transformation of being. In this sense, a second overarching cultural function of boredom is the provocative role it plays as a causal or motivating force of constructive processes.

This ambivalence, I suggest, sits at the heart of the problem of apathy. While action seeks to 'negate the negative', negativity is always necessarily preserved because it is not only critical but also constitutive. This is often celebrated in terms of the resilience of 'difference' as the power of critical opposition or destabilisation within dialectical and deconstructive politics, but it also means that the causal or constitutive force of negativity has no final relief (see Coole 2000). Consequently, subjectivity is condemned to oscillate anxiously between tenuous existence and the void of subjective emptiness: 'every human life is thrown back and forth between pain and boredom' (Schopenhauer,

cited in Svendsen 2005: 131). Apathy takes hold because negativity is always preserved as a necessary, constitutive force of subjective life. Critical theory thus often adopts an attitude of resignation towards the phenomenon of negativity. It seems 'there is no solution to the problem of boredom' (Svendsen 2005: 133), and with this resignation comes apathy. Alternatively, critical thought seizes upon the generative aspects of ontological negativity in order to reinvigorate a sense of democratic purpose and commitment to activity. Indeed, in grappling with the material reality of global conflict, post-imperialism, strife, terror, poverty, ecological devastation and global displacement, a significant strain of contemporary political philosophy takes ontological negativity as a given point of departure. Often drawing on Lacan's concept of the divided and self-alienated subject, this kind of project is exemplified by the post-Marxist political thought of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, or of Slavoj Žižek.

Another recent response, also starting from a Lacanian-influenced theory of split subjectivity (the 'dividual'), is given in Simon Critchley's work on ethics and commitment. Critchley begins with the idea that philosophy responds to the generative negativity that is the failure and disappointment thrown up by the 'present time defined by the state of war' in which global humanity finds itself (Critchley 2007: 8). In this morass of contemporary conflict, we suffer a 'motivational deficit' and a 'moral deficit', each connected to the 'felt inadequacy' that evidences 'the lack at the heart of democratic life'. Existing structures of liberal democracy have apparently failed to provide an alternative to the passive nihilism of apathy and the active nihilism of terrorism; they seem unable to stop us from plunging into 'violent injustice', and cannot alleviate the threatening suspicion that social participation is meaningless (6, 8). Critchley seeks a solution to this situation by reinvigorating the possibility of subjective conscience and commitment to ethical action. To this end, he connects Badiou's notion of 'fidelity' to Levinas' notion of the subjective 'trauma' prompted by the experience of the 'unfulfillable demand' of the alienated other in relation to the self. The unfulfillable demand is the source of splitting and felt inadequacy within the subject. Critchley argues that this experience of subjective trauma in the face of the other's demand – the experience of internal splitting and division – is itself the experience of 'conscience'. The affect of internalised trauma accordingly becomes the ground for ethical and political action. On Critchley's view, accepting the ontological negativity of the divided self as a ground for political action logically tends towards a deepening of democratic engagement.

Politics cannot be confined to order and consensus when the ethical subject is 'defined by commitment or fidelity to an unfulfillable demand'. Rather, politics involves the 'manifestation of dissensus, the cultivation of an anarchic multiplicity' that involves a 'continual questioning from below of any attempt to impose order from above' (13). While I am sympathetic to the 'responsible anarchism' and to the political outcome of reinvigorated democracy that Critchley arrives at, I worry that taking a starting point of given negativity – disappointment, strife, conflict, lack, inadequacy – maintains a problematic connection of negativity with motivation and action.

The key problem for activism is that both desire/action and apathy/inaction are prompted by constitutive negativity. Generative negativity has the potential to motivate action and transformation, but worldly evidence suggests that the response mostly tends towards apathy and inaction. In my view, this problem arises because apathy and activism are both tied to the same motivational force: the ambivalent negativity of desire. Desire/lack produces the model of the split self as the seat of motivation; the split subject is motivated to negate the negativity that divides it, but must paradoxically preserve this negativity that not only divides, but also constitutes its being. One way out of this difficulty is suggested by the alternative process of transformation or becoming described by Deleuze. This unconventional ontological process is not driven by lack or absence felt as emptiness, dissatisfaction or loss accompanied by a consequent longing for fulfilment. Nor does it rest upon an acknowledgement that the self is always already 'undone' by alterity and is moved to conscionable action for the other as a result. On the contrary, Deleuze's alternative theory of ontology describes an *unambiguously generative* process of association caused by a purely positive and productive force of desire. Desiring-production results in a process in which the self is not 'undone', but 'done' or 'made' through difference. The following section considers this alternative understanding of ontology, in order to re-assess the critical privilege currently attracted by the modern concept of negativity.

II. Desiring-Production and the Complex Self

The conceptualisation of desire as associational or 'machinic' appears as a persistent theme throughout Deleuze's work (Deleuze 1990, 1991, 1997; Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 1987). Unlike the conventionally negative concept of desire/lack, which undermines the unified self and results in the 'split' subject, desiring-production is a positive causal force

that generates a 'complex' individual. Like the 'dividual', a 'complex' self is also decentred and uncertain, but not in the same way as the Lacanian subject is. Deleuze's alternative theory of ontology emerges from his quite particular and innovative reading of Spinoza (Deleuze 1990). As part of an assemblage also combining (and at times creatively transforming) aspects of Bergsonian, Humean and Nietzschean thought, Deleuze's Spinozism enables a model of selfhood that constantly flees or escapes its own limits by forging increasingly complex and active relations with other bodies.

According to Deleuze and Guattari, individuals are complex forms of order that develop consistency over time. Bodies are 'assemblages' that arise via the causal force of desire, which brings about the process of association and connection joining constituting elements (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 1–9, 283–96). Desire results in emergent complex bodies when the elemental relations that compose the body take on enduring habits of association. The individual is thus a complex and shifting unity of 'movement and rest, speed and slowness grouping together an infinity of parts' into a set of resonating relations (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 256). On this view, any consistent form of complex organisation constitutes an individual body, which therefore might not be material in a physical sense. Selves, communities, languages, philosophies: all are 'bodies' existing as relatively consistent forms of actual or ordered being, rather than formless virtual states of quickly morphing force relations that combine in transient unities and then fragment and dissolve.

Furthermore, as forms of enduring order comprised of semi-stable relationships between parts, bodies exist across varying levels of complexity. I am a body composed of elemental relations. Some of these are internal relations, for example between my biological cells or between the thoughts that lend order to my comprehension of things. Others are external relations I have forged with other bodies in my world, for example with colleagues, with locations, or with Deleuzian philosophy (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 260, 254). These internal and external relations that engage me with varying kinds of consistency on various levels of order and in various circumstances of engagement collectively constitute and define me. Thus, bodies are complex forms of individuation defined by the stability or consistency of their internal and external relationships and the complex and multi-leveled affective capacities these produce.

However, while individuals are here constituted by their relations with others, these are not simply one-on-one encounters between entire entities. Revising Kleinian object-relations theory, Deleuze and

Guattari insist that an individual emerges with the forging of *part relations*, for example by incorporating 'a breast into his mouth, the sun into his asshole' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 4). Accordingly, individuation involves the establishment and perpetuation of the complex *part relationships* that collectively define a particular bodily entity. Our interrelationships, our desires, describe the complex 'piecemeal insertions' we make into each other's lives (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 504). Complex bodies are thus affected *not wholly or in entirety*, but by a vast number of internal and external relations at any one time, which impact upon and transform them in partial and selective ways according to the nature of the elemental connections and disjunctions (261ff). Some of these partial affections are fairly constant forces in a life, giving individuals a certain consistency across time and environments; others are transient relations that affect bodies momentarily, though sometimes significantly enough to introduce a radical and lasting alteration to their character. Shifts in connective relations at the elemental level cause the kinds of continuity and change that simultaneously define the consistency of a character *and* evidence its transformation over time.

The rest of this paper will be devoted to expanding some rationale for argument about the superior affinity for activism of the complex relational subject. Deleuze's concept of causal desire as a generative positivity that produces and transforms complex bodies points to a way out of the difficulty described in the first half of this paper. Unlike 'split' subjectivity, the 'complex' subject is constructed through the creative force of desiring-production, which is unconnected with ontological lack, and thus neither depends upon nor multiplies negativity when it diversifies the desiring self. But it is not yet apparent how Deleuze's affirmative and relational bodily ontology and the causal positivity of desiring-production relates to the *activism* of the subject. It seems that bodies are complexly *constituted* by difference and desire – a body is a form that emerges or emanates via the force of desire, but apparently as a *passive* effect of the encounters and affective relations that define its character. In fact, for the Spinozist (and Nietzschean) Deleuze, there are active and passive forms of bodily constitution. The normative aim of a body is to increase its affective capacities by increasing its active powers of engagement and sociability (Deleuze 1988: 97–104). This idea, taken from Spinoza, is expressed in various places throughout Deleuze's own *oeuvre*. In the second chapter of *Difference and Repetition*, for example, he describes the becoming of being as a process involving an increasing activity of constitution, in terms of a kind of non-linear 'progression'

through the moments described as the 'three syntheses of time' (Deleuze 1994: 70–91). This process is not so much a temporal progression of successive stages of bodily development occurring through time, as it is a description of the qualitative shifting of the nature of a body's constitution throughout its existence. A body takes shape with the initially passive or chance combination of simple elements into a complex order; but it may gradually develop a more active and directed process of self-formation, if it exercises a capacity to selectively choose the part-relations that will come to comprise the character of the emergent body.

The 'first synthesis' describes how the time of the present is constituted through the repetition of 'cases' across successive instants (Deleuze 1994: 70–2). For example, I am a materiality or a 'case' that 'repeats' from instant to instant in a form that is perceived to be consistent. In fact, with respect to my presence, the thing that is repeating from moment to moment is the perceived consistency of the internal and external relationships that define me. Of course, I am really undergoing constant transformation – as I write, millions of my cells are dying and being replaced; my brain waves are shifting in intricate patterns of excitation, and so forth – but I *imagine* myself to persist as a formal consistency in time, just as others similarly imagine me. Deleuze explains that this 'contractile power' of the imagination produces the lived experience of the actual present because the imagination fuses successive instances of actuality and the reality of bodily modifications into a continuity and consistency of perception (Deleuze 1994: 70; Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 281); but with this power of the imagination and the 'fusion of repetition' it produces comes a propensity for the contemplating mind to slip into habit (Deleuze 1994: 73–5). We habitually perceive the actual world of the present time consistently, as a repetition of the same from moment to moment.

The first synthesis of time is then a 'passive synthesis' in two respects: the actual present we inhabit from moment to moment takes form through a passive process of emergence, as chance relations between elements cohere into consistent relations to form actual bodies and worldly structures; furthermore, when imagination renders this actual present consistent we can slip into the passive acceptance of the 'givenness' of the actual world. Accordingly, Deleuze insists that the proper 'role of the imagination, or the mind which contemplates, is *to draw something new from repetition*, to draw difference from it' (Deleuze 1994: 76). With this 'drawing of difference' from the apparently repetitive relations that constitute the time of the present,

the mind becomes capable of acting on and reconstituting the relations that comprise the present: 'underneath the self which acts are little selves which contemplate and which render possible both the action and the active subject' (75). The first synthesis of time is associated with the passive emergence of the actual present through the consolidation of constitutive relations; it accordingly tends towards the problem of habit. The second and third syntheses then describe the steps involved as the mind engages in 'becoming-active' and breaks with habit. With the passage from the first to the third syntheses of time, the contemplating mind develops active ways to modify the actual present. It does this by seeking virtual differences within and between actual repetitions in the present (76).

If the passive synthesis of habit constitutes the living present, the passive synthesis of memory involves the 'pure past' and this constitutes the second synthesis of time (81). The first synthesis comes 'first' since it provides the *foundation* of time; this is because we can only think of the process of time and of transformation on the basis of that which we have already become; we can only think at all in terms of the consistency the actual present allows us to experience. But the second synthesis that involves 'memory' *then* gives us awareness of the ground beneath or *prior to* this foundation. From the position of coherency described by our actual embodiment in a given circumstance, we can 'remember' the idea of this ground: we can become mindful of the virtual chaos that becomes actual order, 'the moving soil occupied by the passing present' (79). By 'memory', Deleuze does not mean simply the reminiscence of the former presents that we have previously lived, but rather the more profound memory of the virtual past which never was actually present. This is the 'unrepresentable' past in its pure form, which is the 'synthesis of all time in which the present and the future are only dimensions' (82). The memory of this 'pure past' involves the awareness that the relations comprising bodies – relations that repeat in the present to constitute actual lived experience – could always have been differently produced in different circumstances of emergence. It also reminds us that the 'cases' that repeat are comprised of differential relations between elements, and that these relations in fact constantly shift and recombine in complex associations. While the first synthesis concerns the habitual repetition of the same and the similar, the second synthesis concerns the retrospective repetition that is memory. With the second synthesis of time, the contemplating mind 'remembers' difference is the ground for the emergence of that actual consistency which repeats as the present. With this awareness of grounding difference comes the

unsettling of the givenness of the actual, and the possibility of a 'third', active synthesis of time.

The third synthesis of time involves an *active* force of desire. The third, active synthesis is a rare event, which does not inevitably follow from the first two in a logical linear progression; it is the 'final' synthesis in the progression because it requires the groundwork of the first two to have already taken place. The third synthesis of time involves the thought of time as 'untimely'; it institutes a 'caesura' in the time of the present (Deleuze 1994: 88–9), with respect to the pure past that grounds it, in order to imagine a future which has not yet come to pass, and which imaginatively 'draws a difference' from the present. The mind engaged in contemplating the future-oriented third synthesis of time thinks the totality of all the actual presents (meaning not only 'the now', but also the history of the former presents that have been) – together with the virtuality of the 'pure past' which has never been (89). The third synthesis of time thereby involves thinking the actual lived present in terms of its repetitions and its habitual consistencies through time, and asking whether, if the part-relations that comprise actual complex bodies (the 'little selves' that exist 'underneath' the 'self that acts') were returned back to the virtual chaos from whence they came, they would be worthy of returning in the same form, reconstituting the same complex body (89). For example, I could ask of myself: is my habitual form partly comprised of some associations that I would be better off without (a draining colleague, an odious relative)? Are there certain elements within me (say, an interest in Deleuze scholarship) that could be differently combined with compatible others with the effect of producing a new and more complex body (say, a reading group) that joins all the participating bodies at their sites of affective involvement? Can this involvement add to my own existing level of complexity to produce a 'better' or more adequate self, one more complexly compatible or receptive to engagement with others? I might also ask which of the existing part associations I enjoy with others bring me particular satisfaction, and so might benefit from some reinforcement or development? For Deleuze, these decisions constitute the operations of the 'little selves' that comprise the complex and shifting subject:

> There is a self wherever a furtive contemplation has been established, whenever a contracting machine capable of drawing a difference from repetition functions somewhere. The self does not undergo modifications, it is itself a modification, the term designating precisely the difference drawn. (Deleuze 1994: 79)

While some bodies will only ever be the passive result of their formation through external forces, certain other bodies – those invested with the powers of imagination and reason – are capable of increasing their active powers of engagement, sociability and self-constitution. The three syntheses of time trace a 'progression' through passivity to activity: from habitual constitutions formed through passive associations, which can be transformed through the resource of 'pure memory', to result in active forces of desire. For Deleuze this active quality of desire is, properly speaking, the active force of material composition and transformation. The 'progression' is, however, non-linear because desiring-production is involved from 'the start' as the causal force that assembles complex bodies. But desire is initially passive and non-directed, and the passage towards active desire and the active synthesis of worldly being begins with the memory of virtual difference in the second synthesis of time, and emerges properly in the third (Deleuze 1994: 85, 90). Accordingly, it is possible to think that emergent complex bodies are not only produced through desire, but are also sometimes involved in *acts* of desire and directed assemblage.

But here arises a second problem: how is desiring-production invested with direction? With ontological negativity – the view that reality is produced and transformed by the compulsion to plug an original lack – the negative is the focus of desire's direction. Even while it seeks to preserve the negative (which is the condition of its existence as such), transformative desire actively opposes the negative. Desire transforms dissatisfaction into action, imperfection into ideal form, inequality into equity, alienation into unity. But what guides desire in the *absence* of negativity? *Why* might a body seek to desire in an active and self-transformative way, rather than a passive and habitual, safe and self-secure way?

A Deleuzian answer to this question is likely to be found in the Spinozist concepts of 'joy' and 'conatus', which together describe a normative principle of ethical association. Joy expresses the sensation a body experiences with the enhancement of its powers of affectivity and complexity. This is achieved when aspects of its own body are combined with those of another, to form a more complex emergent unity that is more affectively potential and expresses each individual in terms of those aspects they share in common (Deleuze 1988: 49–51). Properly conceived, joy is the basis for an ethical attitude of desire because it is *necessarily mutual* (Deleuze 1990: 281–2). Bodies sometimes experience a fortuitous, unplanned joy, but joy can be actively forged between bodies that understand they have something in common. This shared

common element can form the basis of a more complex combination that can enhance them both. Joy is mutual because *both* bodies are enhanced by the emergent complexity that results from a compatible encounter. If bodies meet and only one body benefits or is enhanced, the resulting affect won't be joyful, it will be something else – pleasure or power – but not joy, which is strictly mutual.

'Conatus' refers to the desire of a body to persevere in its being, where being is defined in terms of affective capacity. Conatus entails that bodies will strive in 'an effort to augment the power of acting or to experience joyful passions' by actively organising their encounters. This allows them to form agreeable associations that enable them to mutually maximise their affective potentialities (Deleuze 1988: 101). However, bodily encounters do not involve the meeting of whole entities, but rather take place 'bit by bit' at the multifarious sites of elemental combination that bring individuals into part-relations (Deleuze 1990: 237). My striving for joy involves me in an effort to foster an adequate understanding of myself and others with respect to the ways in which we share *some* common constituting elements. This understanding provides me with the basis of an appropriate comportment towards another, assisting the better 'organising' of our encounter. Developing a *mutual* understanding of the elements we share helps us to actively and selectively build joyful combinations at suitable sites of affective compatibility and also to avoid disagreeable combinations that force incompatible associations between conflicting aspects of our personalities. Joy results from the active desire and the active forms of understanding that are necessarily involved when complex bodies engage in contrived acts of partial and selective relationship that produce preferred emergent forms (261). There will always be some elements of passive constitution involved in processes of individuation, since a body always partly results from passive encounters with other bodies it does not know and does not adequately understand. Indeed because of the complexity of material reality, one's knowledge of oneself, others and the world is never complete and transparent. However, equipped with a developing personal history of joyful encounters, an individual invested with the powers of imagination and understanding can strive to develop a more acute awareness of its constitution through multifaceted relations with others, informed by the experience of these part-connections as sympathetic or antipathetic. Such self–other awareness potentially enables a discerning and active desire to operate in the deliberate creation of new compatible associations: joining with another in ways that celebrate those aspects in which we agree while acknowledging that there are various ways in which

aspects of our characters disagree and cannot happily combine. So, it is possible to think that emergent complex bodies are produced through desire, but that they are also involved in the laborious process of deliberately contriving some part-relations with other bodies. The 'bit by bit' partiality of bodily encounters transforms relational bodies in piecemeal and selective ways: some aspects of bodily constitution will always remain untouched by the engagement with the other. The promise of mutual joy potentially guides bodies in actively directing their affective relations. Active desire can discerningly develop certain elemental associations while avoiding others, thus providing scope for personal adaptation, mutual accommodation and complex relational development while simultaneously preserving the consistency or relative identity of the multiple subject.

I have argued that a complex subject is a 'producing/product identity' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 7), which may be simultaneously constituted by desire and actively involved in the constitution of relations through desire. The active desire of a complex subject will be guided by experience and the promise of joy. Complex bodies benefit from being actively involved in the constitutive process, even when this process transforms the self, because such activity leads to an increased affective potentiality and to finding joy with others. However, a third problem persists in Deleuze's positive ontology of desiring-production: how does a purely positive causal desire account for the existence of negativity? When desire is purely affirmative, how can one desire the refusal of the negativities that predominantly characterise the contemporary world?

One possible answer lies in Deleuze and Guattari's distinction between the different orders or qualities of desire that come to define the kinds of interactions a body is disposed to forming (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 277–96). While everything emanates from the force of association that is desiring-production, the relations between elements comprising bodies may not develop into active organisations of desire, but alternatively may take form as reactive organisations. In *Anti-Oedipus*, this is discussed in terms of the difference between the 'subjected-group' and the 'group subject' – a distinction which recalls Sartre's critical comparison of the different styles of political organisation embodied by the 'serialised group' and the 'group-in-fusion' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 64, 256, 277ff; see also Sartre 1976; Guattari 1995; Genosko 2000: 123–33). The way desire is organised in a material form influences the subsequent openness of that body to forming new associations and increased levels of complexity. Bodies that welcome new part-associations with neighbouring bodies (because these are the key to

self-transformation and increased joyful complexity) are defined by an active organisation of desire; such bodies enjoy a shifting consistency organised around a core set of characteristics, but are generally open to modification and brave the risks of instability. These bodies determine their constitution through immediate and open practices of relation (rather than by establishing rules concerning membership that limit and protect self consistency). They remain open to the primary creative force of desiring-production.

By contrast, a body that seeks to preserve its established identity will prevent its own transformation by resisting the formation of new associations with other bodies. This kind of body is a reactive body, which is restricted by the rules it enforces to protect its given identity. It 'wards off' the transformative force of desiring-production (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 120). Reactive bodies are characterised by fixed constitutive relations and institutionalised habits of association. Reactive bodies resist the free flow of the primary force of desiring-production; this blockage can result in serial or systemic relations of inequality, when the associations comprising the body take on regular hierarchical forms. That is, a relation becomes unjust when it is cemented into a regular pattern of dominance and subordination; this fixture of relations introduces negativity into the positive flow of desiring-production. For Deleuze and Guattari, problems of injustice, alienation and other kinds of negativity are not already given. They are produced through concrete forms of reactive desire, for example an 'Oedipal' or 'imperial' coding which defines desire in relation to lack, longing and appropriative satisfaction (28; see also Bignall 2010). Constructed social negativities must accordingly be addressed and transformed at the level of desire. The distinction Deleuze and Guattari make between open/active and blocked/reactive organisations of desire suggest a basis for critique. Hierarchical and fixed relations that have become blocked and resistant to transformation, resulting in closed bodies that seek to preserve the givenness of their identities and their political relationships, can be criticised on the basis of the primary force of free-flowing desiring-production. The apparent givenness of entrenched orders is an illusion that is maintained by techniques of political coercion used by bodies with an interest in preserving such existing orders. Despotic bodies and the constructed negativity of economic scarcity or social alienation can each be criticised on this basis.

I have been arguing that desiring-production results in complex subjects formed through multifaceted relations with others; such subjects have an immediate interest in the quality of their social milieu and in

making their relations ever more joyfully complex and actively directed. Accordingly, Deleuze's positive conceptualisation of desire offers a more appropriate ground for active subjectivity and political engagement than the conventional negativity that problematically grounds the 'split' subject. I have sketched three responses to the main criticisms of (Deleuze's) ontological positivism: that desiring-production produces subjects as passive effects of a constitutive process (the problem of agency); that desiring-production is not normatively directed towards the generation of preferred complex forms (the problem of intention or direction); and that desiring-production cannot account for the existence of negativity and does not allow for critical negation (the problem of critique). While more can be said about these problems, I hope to have gestured towards some possible bases for reply. The following section considers some of the political implications flowing from the idea that complex bodies emerge from an associative force of desiring-production.

III. Positive Politics and Activism

Deleuze's Spinozist ontology provides a conceptualisation of subjectivity entirely constituted by relations with others. This kind of reliance upon alterity is quite different from the sort of subject-constitution endured by the 'split' subject that is '*undone*' by alterity. Because they meet in *partial and selective* ways, complex individuals are not always already reduced or compromised by their one-on-one encounters with others and potentially moved to action on the basis of the conscionable trauma this provokes. Rather, complex individuals are intricate, shifting unities of the multipartite relations that immediately and qualitatively compose them. This means that the complex self has an *immediate* interest in activating and cultivating its relational being. More significantly, complex selves have a positive interest in forming increasingly complex interactions with the other – in fostering and not repudiating, managing or simply enduring their engagements with others. By developing multipart relations with multiple others, the individual develops an increasingly complex constitution that is more affectively potential and so is more joyful. This in turn implies that the 'complex' self has a direct interest in fostering a diverse and rich social milieu that ensures exposure to a wide variety of 'piecemeal encounters' with others, such that they may maximally find areas of mutual sympathy and enhanced affective capacity in their multifarious social relations.

While the activism of the 'split subject' is *mediated* by the experience of negativity which propels actions of redress, the rewarding experience

of joyful mutuality means that the 'complex subject' has an *immediate* interest in the quality of associations and in making desire active. Such activism is not mediated by a negativity such as a 'disadvantage' that the activist community must simultaneously embody and struggle against; rather, it is motivated by the possibility of finding mutually beneficial relations with others, since these lead to the joy of increased complexity through community (see Bignall 2010). An important difference between the 'split' subject and the 'complex' subject thus concerns the different motivational starting points they figure. The split subject is motivated by the ontological negativity that it simultaneously embodies and struggles against, yet never finally overcomes; the complex relational subject is motivated by the principle of joyful mutuality, which corresponds with increased affective potentiality. The rewarding experience of joy means that the complex subject has an *immediate* and natural interest in desire and in making desire active. It is in the active selection of chosen affections that one forges compatible forms of relationship, increasing one's own powers of affectivity and capacity for affection and in turn finding increased possibilities for experiencing joy.

Deleuzian ontology encourages one to think of oneself as a 'complex' self, with a direct interest in activism that aims to create enabling social conditions of diversity, equity, liberty and radical democracy since these are the conditions that permit open exchange and interaction in communities of practice. As a 'complex' self, one also has an unmediated interest in activism that seeks to safeguard the wider ecological conditions that protect other forms of (non-human) diversity as part of a broad existential milieu. Part-connections with non-human others permit the privileged kinds of becoming (-animal, -molecular, and so forth) that Deleuze and Guattari associate with the radical diversification and enhanced complexity of established forms (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 232–309). Arguably, a directed and constructive Deleuzian politics develops from a cultivated understanding that the complex social benefits of diversity and equality of opportunity act as the material scaffolding for the constitution of the complex self. A Deleuzian ethics develops from the notion that a conscientious effort must be made towards fostering the adequate understandings of self and other that could enable happy part-combinations, together with the practised commitment to refrain from imposing upon others in ways that diminish them. Both of these principles of ethical relationship are normatively guided by the promise of joy that flows from mutuality, where mutual compatibility leads bodies to join in more complex levels of community. The politically important thing about joy is therefore its

function as a principle of *mutuality*. Active bodies will seek to maximise the mutual sympathy of their combinations; but this does not entail that they should strive to meet bodies they perceive as wholly similar, resulting in a politics of community based on identity and sameness. Rather, *conceptualised as complex*, bodies will strive to meet in active and joyful ways with sympathetic *elements or parts* of various other bodies they encounter. This means that quite radically different communities can combine successfully, when they seek to interact in ways in which they are compatible and do not force an unhappy combination at those sites of character where they conflict.

The activist tactics of some contemporary anarchist groups may be read as a subversive politics of joyful practice. Pink Bloc, Ya Basta!, Billionaires for Bush, and the Rebel Clown Army employ comic performance art, absurd costumes and high camp glamour in acts of non-violent disturbance against the world's macropolitical governing elite. In Simon Critchley's words, such activism works to

> exemplify the effective forging of horizontal chains of equivalence or collective will formation across diverse and otherwise conflicting protest groups… Deploying a politics of subversion, contemporary anarchist practice exercises a satirical pressure on the state in order to show that other forms of life are possible. (Critchley 2007: 124)

Like Critchley, I find this 'new language of civil disobedience' utterly compelling and often hilarious. However, 'it is the exposed, self-ridiculing and self-undermining character of these forms of protest' that Critchley 'finds most compelling', since he sees them as an exercise in political humour or 'tactical frivolity' expressing a 'powerless power that uses its position of weakness to expose those in power through forms of self-aware ridicule' (Critchley 2007: 124). By contrast, I think it is more useful to believe that something much more positive and constructive might be going on here than the critical deconstruction of the state through a conscientious political practice of ridiculous self-effacement.

In my view, the protesters *add* an extra dimension of complexity and potentiality, a virtual difference, into the mix of the protest situation. They perform difference by embodying it, clad in imaginative fancy-dress costume more 'appropriately' worn in festive situations or in fantastical other-worlds; they inject virtual difference into the actual-world space of civil and political engagement. Their bizarre presence compels the state forces to attend to the diversity they make manifestly visible, or else renders the guard ridiculous when it returns a blank stare of non-acknowledgement, and thereby implicitly critiques and destabilises

the reactive body of the state that tries to ward off transformation as it denies and repels difference. This critique is, however, positive in conduct, designed not simply to destroy the self-composure of the state but also to evidence that 'other forms of life are possible' and, if possible, to seduce the state forces into a becoming-otherwise. Although their actions are underwritten by a serious political intent, the protesters engage playfully with the state forces, tickling them, affecting them with a sense of fun and hilarity, inventing new forms of 'combat' and 'weaponry': water balloons, feather dusters and wadding armour. They aim to combine opposing bodies in new assemblages of relation, not through violence and the polar separation of conflicting opposites, but more positively through the shared experience of fun, humour and festivity that potentially draws even the most disparate bodies together, allowing them to combine – not entirely, but at particular sites of affectivity – in micropolitical instances of joyful community. Beyond wry self-effacement and critical deconstruction, such acts might therefore best be thought of as positive and productive, aiming to create novel forms of engagement tactically invented through the manifestation of virtual differences in actual social relations. These potentially indicate ways of being-otherwise that broaden the habitual horizons of existing social and political conventions and encourage the becoming-minor of majoritarian forms. This positive ambition and achievement appears to me as the most significant aspect of these new forms of anarchist protest.

The principle of joyful interaction is clearly not an essentialist, stand-alone or cover-all principle for political society. *Starting* with the positive and abstract principle of mutuality does not mean that concrete institutions of common practice (such as those fostering democracy) and emergent principles of political protection (such as rights) are not needed to safeguard bodies from destruction by bodies who care less about cultivating mutual joy than they do about maximising their own pleasure or power. But *starting* with the notion of affirmative mutuality as a basis for thinking about active processes of self and social formation does avoid the problem that constitutive negativity leads to political inactivity as much as it does to activism. It also places a different *primary* emphasis on political society – away from a politics of restraint stemming from a subterranean ontological conflict, and towards a politics of complex recognition and sympathy. Here, mutuality is presented as a preferred (but not 'given') norm of political conduct and critical conflict becomes necessary when efforts to find mutual consensus fail, or when joyful practice is routinely crushed by forms of political domination. Similarly, the negativities of hostility, shame and boredom are not ontologically

given, but more like errors of practice to be avoided and guarded against.

The notion that complex bodies can agree to meet 'bit by bit' in sympathetic ways and to avoid meeting in ways that diminish them suggests that Deleuzian philosophy offers some scope for a politics of consensus, supplementing the anarchic dissensus that Critchley privileges. However, consensus will never be final and complete, but is emergent, contextual and temporary, institutionally limited to recognised sites of part-commonality that enable complex bodies to form the sympathetic engagements leading to increased complexity and joy (cf. Tully 1995; Connolly 2008). Here, acknowledgement of dissent is intrinsic to the development of consensual group activity. Sympathetic disagreement involves understanding those aspects of complex bodily interaction that cannot currently combine well, and resisting the attempt to impose upon and homogenise disparate bodies under a coercive unity that betrays the differences between them. Formally identifying and recognising standard areas of disagreement is therefore also an important task of political society. Indeed, we might fruitfully rethink negative 'rights' in this way: not as eternal and inalienable principles of sovereign integrity flowing from fixed human characteristics, but as a meta-stable discourse about principles of political restraint that regulate human interaction. Such discourse would be constructed with respect to current understandings about the difference and dissensus that evidences the limits of consensual engagement. Even so, although limited and partial, finding productive consensus should be the *primary* aim of interacting orders, because (genuine) consensus is joyful and so is normatively preferred. Although this is an undeveloped aspect of his own work, Deleuze's philosophy arguably provides us with an attractive basis for rethinking rights and democratic engagement in a milieu of multicultural difference (see Patton 2010; Lefebvre 2008).

A starting point of given negativity – strife, conflict, lack – prompts the model of the divided self that has held such persuasive sway in modern critical thought and persists in many strains of postmodern thought, but which to me seems likely to compromise the quality of the social engagement that is possible. I have argued against the negative as a motivational force. A more effective starting point for activism is found by looking for examples of positive mutuality in encounters. This approach does not deny that most societies are predominantly characterised by conflict, inequality, war, trauma, alienation and exploitation. However, within this majoritarian state of violence and hostility, there also exist minor modes of positive social engagement,

acts of respectful recognition, and exemplary practices of genuine care that join participating orders in the experience of mutual understanding and appreciation at particular sites of their relationship. *Starting* with these moments of 'felt adequacy' assists political communities in understanding how they can combine well in partial and selective ways; from the positive experience of mutual accord, they can start to identify new sites of combination that work well as the location of new forms of complex political union. This developing understanding is rewarded by the gradual emergence of an active understanding about 'good' forms of engagement, which may then guide the institutionalisation of preferred forms of complex national and international community. Starting with the experience of shared joy, rather than lack and division, provides selves with an unmediated interest in the quality of their relations with others, and, by extension, an interest in fostering the kinds of political community that are able to support diverse encounters, leading to forms of increased commonality and complexity. When desire is not mediated by negativity, we might even speculate that, severed from the conditions of its generation, profound apathy could cease to emerge and take hold as a systemic problem of political disenchantment.

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'To Believe In This World, As It Is': Immanence and the Quest for Political Activism

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Abstract

In *What is Philosophy?*, Deleuze and Guattari make the claim that '[i]t may be that believing in this world, in this life, becomes our most difficult task, or the task of a mode of existence still to be discovered on our plane of immanence today. This is the empiricist conversion.' What are we to make of such a calling? The paper explicates why and in what sense this statement is of exemplary significance both for an appropriate understanding of Deleuze's political thought and for a most timely conceptualisation of politics in a world so clearly defined by immanence, and nothing but immanence. I argue that Deleuze's rigorously constructive approach to the world is not beyond politics, as some recent readings have declared (e.g. those of Badiou and Hallward). Rather, we have to appreciate that in Deleuze and Guattari's demand for a 'belief in this world' the political intersects with the dimension of the ethical in such a way that our understanding of both is transformed. Only after this 'empiricist conversion' can we truly think of a Deleuzian politics that does justice to a plane of immanence 'immanent only to itself'.

Keywords: immanence, ethics, politics, transcendental empiricism, Badiou, Foucault, Spinoza

I. Deleuze and the Political

Writing on Deleuze and the question of politics does not really entail venturing into *terra incognita*. Given that so many founding thinkers

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in the Deleuzian legacy have already engaged with this theme, the indebtedness of one's argument and thought to others is inevitably unending.[1] However, looking at the many recent publications in what is called 'theory' in general, and in the vicinity of a Deleuzian philosophical horizon in particular, the question of politics stands out again and calls for renewed attention. Regarding Deleuzian scholarship in particular, the question is how things stand with Deleuze and politics now – after a first global round of philosophical reception of his philosophy. Can we really envision and concretise a Deleuzian political activism, a becoming-active so badly needed in relation to today's political state of affairs? Is there really a 'Deleuzian Politics', and if so, what does it look like?

When so many are calling for new political solutions, the question concerning the becoming-active of philosophical thought is not just one question amongst others. Rather, in times like these it becomes a question touching on the very legitimacy of a philosophical thought as such, that is, it becomes *the* criterion for measuring how and in what ways it relates to the world we are currently living in, and – most of all – to the world 'we are about to change'. So when, in 2006, Peter Hallward concluded his book on Deleuze, *Out of This World: Deleuze and the Philosophy of Creation*, with the statement that '[f]ew philosophers have been as inspiring as Deleuze. But those of us who still seek to change our world and to empower its inhabitants will need to look for our inspirations elsewhere' (Hallward 2006: 164), he was expressing only what our current situation seems so utterly determined by: change – at whatever cost.

This slightly ironical remark – which, I hope, will serve its purpose in this article – should, however, not give the impression that I disagree with Hallward's urge to relate thought and life. The times really are what they are, and Deleuzian trajectories are both needed and asked for.[2] In considering how to respond to the question as to what kind of politics the Deleuzian universe suggests, there is at least one answer that can be ruled out immediately: if what is meant by politics involves an axiomatic of categorical prescriptions, then no, there is no 'Deleuzian Politics'; there is in Deleuze's thought neither a set programme nor recourse to prescription. While this may not seem to be such big news given the well-known turn towards micropolitics in Deleuze and Guattari, one has to put emphasis on this moment of saying 'no'. Right at the beginning of the argument to be presented here it is important to stress that what is truly political in Deleuze and Guattari has less to do with what they stood up for than with how they managed to turn away from, and thus radically expose, the ways in which the question of politics itself

is usually phrased.[3] In Deleuze and Guattari, politics is not discussed according to the kind of frameworks we are normally used to: neither normative or moral principles, nor a concern for justice, equality and freedom, nor any attempt to choose between or attempt to harmonise these conflicting categories, represents the frame in which they conceive of politics. Instead, in accordance with a very Spinozan *realism*,[4] the function of the term 'politics' in Deleuze and Guattari is, first of all, to stand in for the 'all there is' as such: politics – first of all – is nothing but the name of the force-relations, the milieu, and strata of everything that exists, the *always already yet never once and for all* territorialised regime,[5] the actualised plane of immanence which, however manifold in the virtual, only ever comes politically distributed. This is why Deleuze and Guattari, in *A Thousand Plateaus*, declare that 'politics precedes being', but also that, '[i]n short, everything is political, but every politics is simultaneously a *macropolitics* and a *micropolitics*' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 203, 213). From the affective structure of individual bodies to the structure of state-formations and beyond, everything is political in the sense that what 'there is' is a result of struggles between divergent forces, a result that shows greater or lesser stability and that can never definitively be fixed once and for all.[6]

This attitude towards politics comes very close to that of Michel Foucault, whose portrait as a political thinker likewise remains a contested one, and who also exemplifies this different approach, in particular in his lecture on 'Security, Territory, Population' at the *Collège de France* in 1978 (the famous course on biopolitics). There, Foucault explicitly presents his investigation as a philosophical inquiry, but that is an inquiry into 'the politics of truth', for, as he says, ' I do not see many other definitions of the word "philosophy" apart from this'. Since this is how he wants his undertaking to be understood, he rejects every sort of imperative discourse 'that consists in saying "love this, hate that, this is good, that is bad, be for this, beware for that"', and he most poignantly ends his enumeration with the following statement: 'So in all of this I will therefore propose only one imperative, but it will be categorical and unconditional: Never [do politics]' (Foucault 2009: 3–4).[7]

In framing my argument, however, with reference to this statement of Foucault's, am I not merely confirming Hallward's criticism of Deleuze, a criticism shared also by Alain Badiou who in his second opus magnum, *Logics of Worlds: Being and Event II*, states that 'Deleuze . . . came to tolerate the fact that most of his concepts were sucked up . . . by the *doxa* of the body, desire, affect, networks, the multitude, nomadism and enjoyment into which a whole contemporary "politics" sinks, as

if into a poor man's Spinozism' (Badiou 2009: 35)? Is it not true then that Deleuze's *philosophical* gesture, rather than helping 'to change our world', simply leads 'out of this world'? Of course, this is not the conclusion to be drawn here, and what I hope to achieve in what follows will involve elaborating and unfolding the above mentioned alternative approach to political thinking in Deleuze: a becoming-active of philosophy which, in its concern for practice, requires a becoming-active in this world.

II. 'To Believe In This World, As It Is': Deleuze's Practical Philosophy of Immanence

In the face of heightened political expectations in many of today's philosophical discourses, it is important to take a step back and investigate the concepts themselves, to identify where they are located in the thought at stake, and how they function within this thought. In making use of one of Deleuze and Guattari's most central statements – the ethico-political demand for 'a belief in this world' – I would like to explicate how their thought intervenes into this world *beyond* any oppositional staging of the political concern that, as it seems right now, too many theoretical debates believe to be the only truthful one.[8] In developing such a reading of politics, it is important to operate on different levels: First, we have to adequately understand the rigorous philosophical demand for an immanence immanent only to itself that is so fundamental to Deleuze's thought. His strong commitment to immanence and nothing but immanence already turns every ontological endeavour into a practical one, and that is into an endeavour driven by an *ethico-political* impetus. It is only when we have reached this Spinozan cross-over of ontology and ethics that we can move further and inquire into more concrete *political* directions.

First Formula of Immanence: Ontology = Ethics

In *What is Philosophy?*, Deleuze and Guattari give us a first version of the statement of 'belief in this world': 'It may be that believing in this world, in this life, becomes our most difficult task, or the task of a mode of existence still to be discovered on our plane of immanence today. This is the empiricist conversion' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 75). If we take the demand for a 'belief in this world' as Deleuze's formula for addressing the question of immanence in its full ethico-political potential, then we have to understand that this thought is

first of all announced as a 'task', even a 'most difficult task'. It is phrased as a radical shift, a turn away from what we are used to think, and think thought to be, and it is this that they call the 'empiricist conversion' – *conversio*, a turning, with a long philosophical heritage from St Augustine to the American philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson.[9]

Earlier in *What is Philosophy?*, Deleuze and Guattari also say that 'the entire history of philosophy [can] be presented from the viewpoint of the instituting of a plane of immanence' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 44). Yet, they continue, even today '[i]mmanence can be said to be the burning issue of all philosophy' (45). And this is so because immanence 'takes on all the dangers that philosophy must confront, all the condemnations, persecutions, and repudiations that it undergoes' (45). This *difficult* heritage – we have to remember that Spinoza, their 'prince of philosophy' when it comes to immanence, was accused of the severest heresy – produces confusions, and instead of being thought in itself, i.e. as an immanence immanent only to itself, immanence in most of philosophy's history is related to something else that contains it: '[R]ather than this substance of Being or this image of thought being constituted by the plane of immanence itself, immanence will be related to something like a "dative," Matter or Mind' (44). Immanence is handed over to a *transcendent* frame, and the movement, the infinite movement that only a thought of pure immanence ('the empiricist conversion') enables the world to become, is stopped again. Movement and tendencies (to use a Bergsonian concept), or longitudes and latitudes (the Spinozan equivalent), in short 'the world' conceptualised immanently, is again brought to a halt and the dynamic plane of immanence is referred back to static verticality. Hence the claim: 'Whenever there is transcendence, vertical Being, imperial State in the sky or on earth, there is religion; and there is Philosophy whenever there is immanence' (43).

If immanence is the true business of philosophy – of a philosophy worthy of its name, finally 'mature enough' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 48) – and as such entails a truly *difficult* task, it would be wrong to assume that thinking immanence merely means substituting new terms, while the image of thought – that which thinking is believed to be – remains untouched. Most of the time, the transcendent – from its most commonsensical version as 'what everybody knows' to its most abstract a priori structure as universal law – is re-introduced into our ways of thinking. It is re-introduced both on the level of what is thought and on the level of what thought itself 'is'. What is not taken into account is that thinking immanence as immanent only to itself not only changes the linguistic registers of thought, but does something to the act

of thinking such thought itself. This is the essential 'active' dimension of Deleuze's and Guattari's claim 'to create' and 'to invent' concepts. Everything is affected in this turn, because '[i]mmanence is immanent only to itself and consequently captures everything, absorbs All-One, and leaves nothing remaining to which it could be immanent' (45).

It is necessary to dwell a little further on this. In order to grasp this change of register for thought itself – a change in both its terminological and its practical dimensions – the notion of empiricism as linked to the Deleuzian concept of 'belief' needs further explication. Here it is fruitful to come back to the specific 'American' atmosphere of Deleuze's thinking and in particular to William James' early description of pragmatism as a radical empiricism in which, as Deleuze writes in his essay on 'Bartleby, or the Formula', it 'was also necessary for the knowing subject, the sole proprietor, to give way to a community of explorers, the brothers of the archipelago, who replace knowledge with belief' (Deleuze 1997: 87). It is via such superior empiricism – to read James alongside Bergson – that the demand for a 'belief in this world', as a 'most difficult task' that also implies a different *practice* of thinking itself, is best captured.[10] Thinking the world differently, when 'belief in' replaces 'knowledge of' the world, *turns* the world from something given into something to be explored, always to be constructed and created, and this again not according to the measure of 'what is' but according to the measure of 'what this world is capable of'.[11] What such a thought implies – at the very heart of it – is an *ethos*, an active and affirmative attitude towards the world (how to construct otherwise?); and Deleuze, in the context of discussing American pragmatism, also names its ingredients: truth *and* trust, hope *and* confidence – 'not belief in another world, but confidence in this one, in man as much as in God' (Deleuze 1997: 87). Relating the ethico-political dimension thus to the ontological undertaking is what a rigorous thought of immanence generates and where – one could say in a most Emersonian way – it truly turns away and averts itself from the conventions of thought, so that not only what is thought (the world) becomes something else, but thought itself becomes . . . *a* world.

Second Formula of Immanence: 'A Belief In This World, As It Is'

Let us turn to a second version of Deleuze's demand for a belief in this world. This time the expression is taken from Deleuze's *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, and it is brought forth in the following way:

> The link between man and the world is broken. Henceforth, this link must become an object of belief . . . Whether we are Christians or atheists, in our

> universal schizophrenia, *we need reasons to believe in this world*. It is a whole transformation of belief . . . to replace the model of knowledge with belief. But belief replaces knowledge only when it becomes belief in this world, as it is. (Deleuze 2000: 172)

In following my argument so far, a misunderstanding could sneak in that is important to avoid, and that – reading this version of the 'belief' statement closely – is addressed explicitly by Deleuze. While his notion of 'belief' can only ever be understood appropriately by linking it to a 'pragmatics'[12] such as I have shown above, Deleuze of course also sees the orienting framework of divine providence within this otherwise so *worldly* American tradition: a latent religiosity which, in the face of writers like Melville, Emerson and Thoreau, surely deserves an appropriate investigation in itself,[13] but which does not sufficiently transform the concept of belief in order to express what Deleuze is looking for, and thus cannot be taken as the endpoint of the discussion of belief.

Turning to the context of the discussion of 'belief in this world' in *Cinema 2*, we notice that Deleuze – although in a totally different thematic context – treats the problem of re-inscription of the transcendent into worldliness more thoroughly. The cited passage is taken from a discussion of the cinematographic significance of Roberto Rossellini and Jean-Luc Godard. Addressing again the turn from knowledge to belief, and in precisely the same manner as we saw in the first statement, Deleuze claims that Rossellini 'undoubtedly still retains the ideal of knowledge, he will never abandon this Socratic ideal'. For, '[w]hat made *Joan of Arc at the Stake* a misunderstood work? The fact that Joan of Arc needs to be in the sky to believe in the tatters of this world. It is from the height of eternity that she can believe in this world' (Deleuze 2000: 172). In contrast to any such transcendent height that safeguards the belief in this world, Godard's work stands alone in enduring an immanence immanent only to itself:

> In Godard the ideal of knowledge, the Socratic ideal which is still present in Rossellini, collapses: the 'good' discourse, of the militant, the revolutionary, the feminist, the philosopher, the film-maker, etc., gets no better treatment than the bad. Because the point is to discover and restore belief in the world, before or beyond words. (Deleuze 2000: 172)

The question of belief – of faith, hope and confidence – is, therefore, not as straightforward as it seems at first. We have already established that a rigorous thought of immanence captures everything and *leaves nothing* to which it could be immanent. Any undemanding belief in this world as harbinger of a better one – at which Deleuze hints with

his reference to 'the "good" discourse, of the militant, revolutionary, feminist, philosopher', in which the divisions between good and evil, right or wrong, have already been decided on – is not at all what is required. His claim of restoring 'belief in the world, before and beyond words' indicates that this notion of belief precisely does not mean an already established 'belief in'. Belief in the Deleuzian sense must be understood as a continuing motor, an activity for keeping the movement which creates . . . a world . . . becoming-other: no freezing and blocking but endless transformation. Only in this way is the doubling of belief in this second version, according to which 'belief replaces knowledge only when it becomes belief in this world, as it is', fully understandable. The addition to the formula of belief in this version – the 'as it is' – thus makes all the difference. It is not an expression of resignation or an ultimate acceptance of the most visible limits that determine this world, but the paradoxical formulation of the only movement that might lead to real transformation: Active affirmation of 'what is' in order to become inscribed in a dynamic process and thus re-acquire the potential to create something new!

As if the demand for a belief in *this* world is not already a difficult and ambivalent enough task, Deleuze asks for more. What is needed is a practice that in a most Nietzschean sense 'wills everything all over again' – a belief in this world, *as it is*. There is to be no other sphere, no better world, providing this one with a saving horizon – such would only set limits to this world (in regard to what it is capable of) and allow for an escape from the bloody here and now. But also no conceptual movement that misunderstands the 'all over again' as 'every time a new beginning'.[14] Rather, in this kind of belief, what is fundamental is the endless task of repeating and thereby deepening the condition of immanence: We cannot turn back the wheel and will always have to carry on and work from what has already happened.

The task thus always gets more difficult, and Deleuze shows his heritage as a Spinozan *realist* nowhere better than here: 'To believe in this world, as it is', as a thought of pure immanence, does not mean producing an affirmation of the world according to the ideality of 'what should be' – measuring the possible via the criterion of 'what is', and thus *limiting* this world from the very start. No, what is truly required is to produce an active affirmation in the face of every single result the world ever takes. Only this way is the becoming-active in and for this world truly never ending; only this way is it an infinite task,[15] in which mere affirmation of chance becomes *active affirmation*, and belief in this world – still harbouring the comfort of the transcendent (divine

providence, revolutionary axiomatic or a saving messianism) – becomes a 'belief in this world, as it is'. It is this most demanding *realist* undertaking that alone leaves open 'what the world is capable of'.[16]

However, given that this is such a difficult thought, and one so easily misread in political terms, it may be helpful to consider yet another context in which Deleuze emphasises the very same *realist* point. This is Foucault's *thought of the outside*, as it is treated in Deleuze's study *Foucault*, where, in reading the latter as a thinker of force-relations, not purely of the rigours of discourse analysis but most significantly of resistances too, Deleuze addresses the specific demand of immanence that concerns us here. When he discusses Foucault's early encounter with the Blanchotian 'thought from outside',[17] the seemingly all too *promising* notion of the outside is not to be understood as an outside beyond this world, a realm above or below which grounds it, thereby re-introducing transcendence. On the contrary, the outside is nothing but the other side, the literal outside of the formed strata: '[T]here is nothing lying beneath, above, or even outside the strata. The relations between forces, which are mobile, faint and diffuse, do not lie outside the strata but *form the outside of strata*' (Deleuze 1988: 84, my emphasis). Counter-intuitive at first but nonetheless most central, Deleuze and Foucault turn the thought of the outside from harbouring a promise of the *advent* of a better world – separated from the here and now – into the very *advent*urous process of the here and now itself, utterly *immanent* and *this-worldly*. No ticket to another world then, but only *negotiations* within this world, in the very middle of it, enable openings and niches which – at their best – escape and resist control.

Third Formula of Immanence: Negotiations

'The belief in this world, as it is' encapsulates the entirety of the complex thought of immanence which Deleuze pursues in all of his philosophical endeavours. His thought-universe is permeated structurally by this ethico-political dimension engaging with this world, and understanding itself as intervening therein. To demonstrate conceptually how the thought of an immanence immanent only to itself, rather than merely contemplating the world, *constructs* it in every move and gesture it makes, is to refute the argument according to which Deleuze's philosophy only leads us out of this world, with which it ultimately cannot be bothered. However, it would be a mistake to believe that this constitutes an effective response to those voices doubting the legitimacy of Deleuzian (and Foucauldian) thought for our world today. For much

more is at stake – and here we have to return to our initial starting point and discuss the 'critical arrow' Alain Badiou has fired at Deleuze.

It could be argued that Badiou and Deleuze share extraordinary similarities in terms of their urge to practise philosophy as a form of intervention into this world. In what follows, however, a third version of the Deleuzian belief in this world will be introduced and juxtaposed to a statement by Badiou, in a way that reveals just how far such similarities ultimately turn out to mark deep differences. What will be argued here is that rather than there being a myriad of similarities between Badiou and 'Badiouians' on the one hand and Deleuze and 'Deleuzians' on the other, there is in fact – certain parallels notwithstanding – a major rift between the two thought-universes, a rift that concerns precisely the claim of immanence, which as a starting point for philosophy proper seems to be shared by both thinkers. Likewise, contrary to what is normally claimed on the Badiouian side – that it is Deleuze's thought of immanence which harbours a 'latent religiosity' (Badiou 2008: 387) because of its supposed misconception of the 'event' as 'the fate of the One' (385) – in my view precisely the opposite must be argued. It is Badiou's misconceiving of the thought of multiplicity as a thought of the One, and thus his reification of the virtual into a One, that leads to his opting for the supposedly pure immanence of the multiples, which in turn, however, instead of allowing for a thinking of immanence immanent only to itself, hands it over to a second order, to something that only ever contains immanence.[18]

But we have to move slowly and explain in detail what is at stake here. For the purposes of the present comparison with Badiou, it is best to consider at first only the beginning of Deleuze's third version of the demand for a 'belief in this world'. This is found at the end of a conversation with Antonio Negri in 1990, where Deleuze repeats again what he believes the modern relation to the world to be: 'What we most lack is a belief in the world, we've quite lost the world, it's been taken from us' (Deleuze 1995: 176). If we now turn to look at the epigraph to Badiou's *Logics of Worlds*, we encounter the exact same diagnosis in regard to the worldly state of affairs. The epigraph – taken from André Malraux's *Antimémoires* – reads as follows: 'France's agony was not born of the flagging reasons to believe in her – defeat, demography, industry, etc. – but of the incapacity to believe in anything at all.' (Badiou 2008: 1).

The same beginning, then – but what follows? Let us turn to Deleuze and see how he proceeds. After having stated that '[w]hat we most lack is a belief in the world, we've quite lost the world, it's been taken from us', he continues: 'If you believe in the world you precipitate events,

however inconspicuous, that elude control, you engender new space-times, however small their surface or volume . . . Our ability to resist control, or our submission to it, has to be assessed at the level of our every move' (Deleuze 1995: 176). As we can see, in Deleuze's 'belief' there is no new collective imaginary (a One) from where and towards which our becoming-active is and ever will be legitimised; rather, the political impetus expressed here is no more, but also no less, than a most singular movement 'assessed at the level of our every move'. Only in this way is immanence not impeded, the world not blocked, such that everything becomes-transformed. Such active belief is apparently also nothing particularly grand. Most of the time – as the explications in this passage show – it is a very 'inconspicuous' and 'small' undertaking. It is thus to affirm and to become-active, but in a most moderate and indeed *negotiable* way. It is, as Gregg Lambert once described it:

> the affirmative principle . . . [that] can be understood as the most sobering response to this predicament: to believe in this world, as it is, neither in a transformed world, nor in another world, and to provide an image of thought that thoroughly belongs to this world which is ruled by the powers of the false; moreover to raise falsehood to a positive principle in the service of those who choose to live in this world and not in another. . . Restoring our connection to the world, but also assuming a constant vigilance over clichés and ready-made linkages. (Lambert 2002: 131)

A political horizon based on falsehood, negotiations and singular movements cannot but stand in opposition to Alain Badiou's rigid and truthful political vision. In Badiou's eyes it is precisely such 'contemporary *doxa*' (Badiou 2008: 2) that reduces the world to the political fallacies and lethargies of the majoritarian 'democratic materialism' in which 'the logic of the One' and, following from there, 'this sovereignty of the Two (bodies and languages)', rules, and to which he so strongly opposes a 'materialist dialectic' in whose formula the category of truth – although pluralised – reappears: '*There are only bodies and languages, except that there are truths*' (4).[19]

While it cannot but remain a matter of ongoing debate just how a Deleuzian point of view in regard to political action differs in kind from a Badiouian one,[20] one fact seems unambiguous: Badiou's claim to a renewed 'Politics of Truths', but also his harsh critique of all non-universal political formations from which he delimits a 'new universalism', underline the categorical differences at stake here.[21] While at first it seems to be a merely political dispute over the best or most appropriate strategy to adopt, what we are facing here is in fact more

fundamental, revealing a *principal* difference in regard to the question of how thought and practice are interrelated. To unfold this categorical difference will form the last step of the present argument.

III. Spinoza's Heritage

What has been shown so far is that according to Deleuze's philosophy thought is always already thought as practice. It is a *practice of actual construction*, whose significance shows itself in every instance. The 'ability to resist control' (inasmuch as the 'submission to it') is to be 'assessed at the level of our every move'. The construction and practice of this world is everything, for the world 'is' nothing but politics. In staging the political problem thus, giving *practice* preference over *truths*, Deleuze, rather than weakening his thought into 'a poor man's Spinozism', rigorously continues what a thought of immanence immanent only to itself ever demands.

To envision politics again as 'knowing', as a *prescriptive* 'Politics of Truths' striving for axiomatic principles (and thereby clearly opposing what Foucault meant when he defined philosophy as a 'politics of truth'), is both *conceptually* undermining of the thought of immanence and *practically* counter-productive. What cannot be avoided in this rectification of politics is the re-introduction of transcendent principles (universals, truths) that pre-determine the political terrain and thus stop movement, freeze the world, and become yet another variation of the kind of politics of which Foucault was so weary, that (political) business as usual which he rejects by postulating: 'Never do Politics!'

Instead, in a truly immanent thought, one that pursues this demand also into practice, the political question itself must change. Rather than a *credo* that is to be 'followed' it must become first a *question* of analysis (of that which 'is' the world – in *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze and Guattari call this an a-signifying semiotics) and second, on a more affective level, a *carrying forward of the movement of immanence*, that is 'a belief in this world, as it is' as the only condition for a different future. A becoming-active as political activism cannot be based on the – however rigorous – renewal and restoration of categories such as universalism and truth, which are to be followed with the same categorical fidelity that any knowing 'believing in' has always prescribed. To the contrary, 'belief in the world, as it is', according to Deleuze, must remain a fully immanent process of experimentation – an open-ended process that only ever constitutes itself parallel to what it experiences; an experimentation, however, that is to be understood in a most sober sense, a *negotiating*

from within. His epigraph to *Pourparlers* clarifies this:

> Philosophy isn't a Power. Religions, states, capitalism, science, the law, public opinion, and television are powers, but not philosophy. Philosophy may have its great internal battles (between idealism and realism, and so on), but they're mock battles. Not being a power, philosophy can't battle with the powers that be, but it fights a war without battles, a guerrilla campaign against them. And it can't converse with them, it's got nothing to tell them, nothing to communicate, and can only negotiate. Since the powers aren't just external things, but permeate each of us, philosophy throws us all into constant negotiations with, and a guerrilla campaign against, ourselves. (Deleuze 1995: epigraph)

If we let immanence capture everything, then every philosophical endeavour will be just as much entangled with politics in so far as the ethico-political is always already present in even the purest ontological undertaking. Rather than presupposing a descriptive ontological axiomatic from which a prescriptive politics follows, Deleuze claims that we have to *endure entanglements* if we are to claim to follow through a thought of immanence immanent only to itself. The political question today will not find an effective response without changing what it is that is being questioned. Foucault saw this in one of his interviews from 1984, when asked by Paul Rabinow what his own stand towards politics was:

> I have never tried to analyze anything whatsoever from the point of view of politics, but always to ask politics what it had to say about the problems with which it was confronted. I question it about the positions it takes and the reasons it gives for this; I don't ask it to determine the theory of what I do. I am neither an adversary nor a partisan of Marxism; I question it about what it has to say about experiences that ask questions of it. (Foucault 1997a: 115)

While Deleuze's thought puts more emphasis on potential resistances, the openings of lines of flight and of *escapes*,[22] he nonetheless follows this cautious Foucauldian line whenever he speaks of politics in the concrete, that is, in its *actuality*. The non-unifiable concept of the 'body without organs' illustrates this just as much as the deterritorialising series of 'becomings' developed in *A Thousand Plateaus*. Rather than judging such caution as revealing a weak approach to political actuality, it is up to us finally to learn that this indirect approach is precisely not an escape from the world but a rigorous transformation of the question of politics according to the practice of a thought that affirms its absolute immanence. Whoever we are, we need reasons to believe in this world. It is, however, important to realise fully the inexistence of any dative whatsoever that could contain this immanence. Instead of again referring to nameable truths, we have to learn to *turn* the question, and with it the

apparent political vacuum, into a practice that – at its best – confirms a belief in this world, as it is, wherein our ability to resist will be assessed on the level of our every move.

It is here that one last time we come up against the significant heritage of Spinoza. The Spinoza who not only is the prince of philosophy when it comes to the question of immanence but who is also the principal point of reference when it comes to both entangling and disentangling the questions of ontology, ethics and politics. And while both Badiou and Deleuze share this heritage, Spinoza at the same time represents the line of delimitation that must be drawn between them. For, whereas Deleuze values Spinoza's *affective realism* as fundamental to an understanding of the latter's metaphysical and political system, it is Spinoza's rigour in the *mathematisation of the world* that Badiou clearly favours (and where he ultimately also sees his limits). While it is much too early to jump to the conclusion that it is precisely because of these two different Spinozas that we find such different political agendas in the two philosophers – one prescriptive and the other, as I have called it, realistic – what can definitely be concluded at this moment is that it is because of Badiou's negligence of Spinoza's theory of affects that he must ultimately criticise and reject Spinoza as a metaphysical thinker who forecloses 'the void' – which, according to Badiou, alone represents the possibility 'of thinking multiplicity, on the one hand, and novelty, on the other' (Gillespie 2001: 63). The debate over the relation between the philosophical claim of immanence and the quest for political activism here reaches another level of sophistication that will require further analysis. My aim in this article was to reach this point. Right now, the quest to link immanence and politics unfolds in two diverging directions: either formalisation (Badiou) or actualisation (Deleuze); that is, radical fidelity to the axioms of truths and universality on the one hand and active experimentation with resistances and negotiations on the other.

Notes

1. I am especially indebted to Deleuzian scholars such as Braidotti, Grosz, Marrati and Patton who in regard to the question of politics not only illuminate Deleuze's thought but also push his thinking in fruitful new directions.
2. I have also developed this demand of philosophical thought as 'active thought' in my book *The Thought of Becoming: Gilles Deleuze's Poetics of Life* (Thiele 2008).
3. Interview with Catherine Clément, 'Entretien 1980', *L'Arc*, 49, cited in Patton 1984.
4. The reference to a 'Spinozan realism' will recur in this article. It is most clearly articulated in the famous beginning of Spinoza's *Tractatus Politicus*

(1677) in which the philosophical temptation to approach the subject matter in question (in Spinoza's case 'men') 'not as they are, but as they [the philosophers] themselves would like them to be' is rejected and a realist approach to 'what is' – 'not what is new and unheard of, but only such things as agree best with practice' – is taken as the only valid method for an effective conceptual investigation (Spinoza 1956: Introduction).

5. While the formula 'always already yet never once and for all' cannot rid itself completely from the Heideggerian 'always already' as it determines Heidegger's definition of *Dasein* as 'always already ahead of itself', here it rather stands for the attempt to bring to language the logic of repetition in difference that is the beginning (without beginning) of Deleuze's thought-practice as such: 'the repetition of an internal difference which it incorporates in each of its moments, and carries from one distinctive point to another' (Deleuze 1994: 20).
6. Cf. also Paul Patton: 'Nomadology certainly does not offer any political program, any more than did schizoanalysis. Nor does it offer any straightforward political morality, in the sense of imperatives addressed to subjects . . . the question is never simply one of good or bad, but of the specificity of each case . . . It is a matter of assessing the qualities present in a given situation or the true nature of a given process: is it a creative or a destructive line?' (Patton 1984: 79–80).
7. The French version says: 'Je ne proposerai donc en tout ceci qu'un seul impératif, mais celui-là sera catégorique et inconditionnel: ne faire jamais de politique' (Foucault 2004: 6). In the English edition of the lectures, the expression 'ne faire jamais de politique' is, however, translated as 'never engage in polemics' (cf. Foucault 2009: 4). While, considering the actual context, the translation seems possible, Foucault's having meant 'politics' is, of course, much more provocative than if he had merely stated – in a real philosophical manner – that one should not engage in polemics. Since for my purposes it is important to push Deleuze and Foucault as far as possible on this, I take the French 'politique' to translate as 'politics', no matter that, for example, in the interview 'Polemics, Politics, and Problematization' from 1984, the first question Paul Rabinow asks is the following: 'Why is it that you don't engage in polemics?' – an apparent repetition of Foucault's 1978 'categorical imperative'. See Foucault 1997a.
8. This 'beyond' must of course not be read in a Levinasian sense, in which it signifies a gesture towards (necessary) transcendence – absolute Otherness.
9. 'The virtue in most request is conformity. Self-reliance is its aversion', says Emerson in one of his most important essays (Emerson 1983: 261). Given Deleuze's many references to the Anglo-American tradition, its 'superiority' in what concerns literature (cf. Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 36–76), and the pervasive re-turn to an empiricist line of thought originating in William James' radical empiricism (cf. e.g. Deleuze 1997: 68–90, esp. pp. 88ff), reading the 'empiricist conversion' in such an 'American way' is not too far fetched.
10. For both the central notion of belief in James and his radical empiricism, cf. his famous essay 'The Will to Believe' (James 1956: 1–31), and his *Essays in Radical Empiricism* (James 2003).
11. 'What the world is capable of' is not merely another phrasing of the usual moral of 'what should be', as it can be found in most (post-Kantian) practical philosophy. The latter refers the 'what is' to something else – 'a dative' as Deleuze and Guattari say – and thus reintroduces the transcendent, while 'what the world is capable of' enacts the Spinozan credo of a logic of pure force-relations.
12. Deleuze and Guattari use this term to name their politico-philosophical undertaking in *A Thousand Plateaus*.

13. Cf. Branka Arsić's work on the American literary and philosophical tradition (Arsić 2007, 2010).
14. Such as, for example, Hannah Arendt would have it in a Augustinian heritage. Cf. her dissertation on St Augustine from 1929 (Arendt 1998).
15. For the characterisation of philosophical thought as an 'infinite task', cf. Gasché 2007, in which he also discusses Deleuze as 'Thinking Within Thought'. Cf. also his most recent study on *Europe, or The Infinite Task* (Gasché 2009).
16. Again, it is important to refer here directly to Spinoza's *Tractatus Politicus* which, read in conjunction with his *Ethics*, effectuates precisely such a construction: a most rigorous affirmation of 'what is', based on the premise that 'what is' is a measure of power and not essence, for 'no one has so far determined what the body can do'. For Spinoza's discussion of natural right in the *Political Treatise* cf. Spinoza 1956: ch. II; and with regard to his central statement from *The Ethics* see Spinoza 2000: EIIIP2 S.
17. On the thought of the outside, cf. Foucault 1997b.
18. For a more detailed discussion of the diverging lines of thought of Badiou and Deleuze in regard to 'immanence' and 'ontology', leading into a discussion of how to understand the different/ciation of virtual/actual in Deleuze, cf. Thiele 2008: especially part V, 164ff.
19. While in the argument developed here the categorical concept of 'truths' – reintroduced into the domain of both philosophy and politics by Badiou – is contested because of its conceptual shortcomings in the face of a political thought based on immanence, Badiou's extrapolation of the problem alongside Descartes' early 'intuition of the same order regarding the ontological status of truths' (Badiou 2008: 5) is a most fruitful discussion of how the concept of truth/s could be torn away from a far too reductive positivist category, to be thought as 'generic multiplicities' (6).
20. One of the clearest discussions of the differences between Badiou and Deleuze can be found in Sam Gillespie's *Mathematics of Novelty: Badiou's Minimalist Metaphysics* (Gillespie 2008). For the same cluster of questions, this time also in respect to their readings of Spinoza, cf. Gillespie 2001.
21. For Badiou's well-elaborated political thought in which the categories of truth(s) and universality play a most significant role, see especially Badiou 2003 and 2005.
22. This is what especially the feminist legacy in Deleuzian scholarship (Braidotti, David-Ménard, Grosz, Marrati, to name just a few) has most poignantly shown by engaging with the Deleuzian concepts of difference, immanence, nomadology and bodies. Instead of painting yet another grand picture of thought *beyond* different/ciation, theirs is the task of furthering and carrying forward this condition for a different future. To give just one example (from Elizabeth Grosz): '[F]eminist politics should, I believe, now consider the affirmation of a politics of *imperceptibility*, leaving its traces and effects everywhere but never being able to be identified with a person, group, or organization. It is not a politics of visibility, or recognition and of self-validation, but a process of self-marking that constitutes oneself in the very model of that which oppresses and opposes the subject' (Grosz 2005: 194).

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The Common as Body Without Organs

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Abstract

The paper explores the relation of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's work to that of Deleuze and Guattari. The main focus is on Hardt and Negri's concept of 'the common' as developed in their most recent book *Commonwealth*. It is argued that the common can complement what Nicholas Thoburn terms the 'minor' characteristics of Deleuze's political thinking while also surpassing certain limitations posed by Hardt and Negri's own previous emphasis on 'autonomy-in-production'. With reference to Marx's notion of real subsumption and early workerism's social-factory thesis, the discussion circles around showing how a distinction between capital and the common can provide a basis for what Alberto Toscano calls 'antagonistic separation' from capital in a more effective way than can the classical capital–labour distinction. To this end, it is demonstrated how the common might benefit from being understood in light of Deleuze and Guattari's conceptual apparatus, with reference primarily to the 'body without organs' of *Anti-Oedipus*. It is argued that the common as body without organs, now understood as constituting its own 'social production' separate from the BwO of capital, can provide a new basis for antagonistic separation from capital. Of fundamental importance is how the common potentially invents a novel regime of qualitative valorisation, distinct from capital's limitation to quantity and scarcity.

Keywords: the common, body without organs, biopolitical production, Marxism, communism, value theory

It is well known that Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's work owes much to the thought of Gilles Deleuze. Negri co-operated with Deleuze and Guattari during his exile in Paris; he wrote texts with Guattari and

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he shares with Deleuze a passion for Spinoza. Furthermore, Michael Hardt is the author of an introductory book on Deleuze's philosophical writings from the 1960s (Hardt 1993), and Hardt and Negri mention *A Thousand Plateaus* as one of the two 'models' for their book *Empire* (the other being Marx's *Capital*) (Hardt and Negri 2000: 415). While it is necessary to understand the relationship between these authors through their shared appreciation of philosophies of materialism and immanence, for example those of Marx and Spinoza, they also share to a large degree an understanding of certain developments in contemporary capitalism. Interesting comparisons can be made between Deleuze and Guattari's later, more explicitly social theory, as put forth in the *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* volumes, and Hardt and Negri's trilogy *Empire*, *Multitude* and *Commonwealth*. Here we will explore how Hardt and Negri's relatively newly developed concept of *the common* complements Deleuze and Guattari's political thought, while also demonstrating how it might benefit from being understood in light of Deleuze and Guattari's terminology, and in particular their concept of the 'body without organs' (BwO), as it appears in *Anti-Oedipus*.[1]

Hardt and Negri claim to rely heavily on 'the excellent commentaries of Gilles Deleuze' on the passage from disciplinary society to the society of control in Foucault's work (cf. Hardt and Negri 2000: 22–3, 419). Deleuze interpreted Foucault as having implicitly analysed the arrival of post-industrial *societies of control*, where the disciplinary capitalism of the factory is replaced by more fluid forms of control characterised by a regulation of space that is open, and dependent on internally motivated cooperation of its subjects (Deleuze 1992). This corresponds in many ways to Hardt and Negri's description of advanced capitalistic societies where older, Fordist modes of production have been replaced by more flexible, immaterial and 'feminised' ones (Hardt and Negri 2009: 131–5). Hardt and Negri maintain that since the 1970s a new technical composition of labour has begun to dominate in what they term 'biopolitical production'. Simultaneously, Foucauldian biopower completes a process in which the inner, subjective life of the worker has been fully subsumed under capital, turning the worker into both the subject and object of work.

Michael Hardt, however, 'both adopts and inverts Michel Foucault's usage' of the term biopower, in a manner that emphasises not only its oppressive aspect but also its liberating potentials (see Hardt 1999: 90, 98–9). In this, Hardt and Negri build upon similar approaches already developed to some extent by the Italian workerists' thesis of the 'social factory'. This thesis is based on passages in Marx's *Grundrisse*

and *Capital* relating to 'real subsumption' and the 'general intellect'.[2] Marx's notion of the general intellect indicates 'to what degree general social knowledge has become a direct force of production' (Marx 1973: 706), general social knowledge here referring to, for example, the level of education, technical skills and other immaterial assets that are required for workers and machines to fulfil their function. Real subsumption refers to the stage in capitalist development when capital has increased 'the value of its operations to the point where it assumes social dimensions', in which 'the immediate purpose of production is to produce *as much surplus value as possible*' (Marx 1976: 1035, 1037). That is, all of society's productive powers have in actuality been directed towards maximisation of surplus value and capitalist social relations entirely subsume and transform the labour process.

The social-factory thesis, of which Negri was one of the main proponents in 1970s Italy, consequently argues that class composition has to be understood not solely in terms of factory-workers versus capital owners, but as a more extensive system containing also unwaged labour, women's work inside the household, students, the unemployed, etc. Surplus-producing labour, then, comes to be seen as not confined to the interior of the factory, but as dispersed throughout society as a whole.[3]

I. Dilemmas of Autonomy

What these descriptions of the developments of contemporary capitalism have in common – regardless of whether we call them societies of control, the social factory, biopolitical production, or the capitalism of real subsumption – is a notion of the *immanence* of capitalist productive relations to all of social life. Capitalism is no longer an objective structure to which subjects can oppose themselves, because even subjectivity is already moulded and produced by capital: labour and capital – defined by Marx as 'variable' and 'fixed' capital (Marx 1976: 317) – tend to become one. The emphasis on this aspect of Marxism in workerist thought is well explained by Nicholas Thoburn in his discussion of Raniero Panzieri. Panzieri argued that capitalistic productive *relations* (that is, the social structure of capitalism) could not be distinguished from capitalistic productive *forces* (that is, labour and its subjective and social composition): 'The *forces* of production thus had capitalist *relations* immanent to them in a "unity of 'technical' and 'despotic' moments" ' (Thoburn 2003: 77, quoting Panzieri). This resonates perfectly with Foucault and Deleuze's poststructuralist

account of power as immanently constitutive of social structures rather than as neutral to them, and even more so with Deleuze and Guattari's schizoanalysis where there is no distinction in nature between desiring-production and social-production but only in regime (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 31). Hence, it is difficult to imagine an 'outside' to productive relations, and it becomes hard to see what physical or mental activity is not already social or immaterial labour. Hardt and Negri phrase it thus:

> the capitalist market is one machine that has always run counter to any division between inside and outside. It is thwarted by barriers and exclusions; it thrives instead by including always more within its sphere. ... In its ideal form there is no outside to the world market: the entire globe is its domain. (Hardt and Negri 2000: 190, see also 413)

In real subsumption, there is no outside to neither capital nor market; 'work is always already capital' (Thoburn 2003: 109), and labour loses its autonomy as it emerges structured by capital. Despite the problematic created by labour and capital becoming increasingly indistinguishable, Hardt and Negri have remained remarkably faithful to Italian workerism's 'reversal of perspective'. Mindful of how the *operaismo* and *autonomia* movements of the Italian 1960s and '70s were able to reverse the dominant perspective on labour towards viewing it as the site of political energy and resistance, Hardt and Negri see biopolitical production as not only exploitative and oppressive. In work, there remains the potential for autonomous productive organisation that could serve the needs of workers in a supposedly communist manner – even if work has undergone significant transformations with the decline of Fordism. Simultaneously, they have continued to emphasise resistance as ontologically prior to the powers of state and capital (Hardt and Negri 2005: 64). In fact, they maintain that the global emergence of Empire is not only the result of capital's own dynamics of expansion but a reaction to working-class struggles in the occident, national liberation struggles in the global south, and state socialism (Negri and Dufourmantelle 2004: 60). Hardt and Negri emphasise that any separation from or refusal of capital must – paradoxically, as it were – be socially and economically grounded in capitalistic productive relations and in fact they state that *any* 'theoretical effort in this context to pose the autonomy of the political, separate from the social and the economic, no longer makes any sense' (Hardt and Negri 2005: 78).

The major theme of Hardt and Negri's research, at least since the publication of *Empire*, has been to grapple with the challenge of how

it would be possible to radically oppose capital while not introducing any ideological separation from it that would entail betraying the tenets of a materialist philosophy of immanence; an opposition that would make sense despite the pervasiveness of social and biopolitical production. This attempt can be traced further back to the workerist notion of the *operaio sociale* or 'socialised worker', originally developed by Negri (Wright 2002: 171–5). An attempt to formulate the socialised worker's opposition to capital is contained in the notion of 'autonomy-in-production', which tries to formulate an antagonistic autonomy from capital.[4] This autonomy is not gained by negating an increasingly cognitive and subjectively internalised labour-process, but by affirmation of workers' power and productivity along the militant lines of a workerist reversal of perspective.

Some critics, however, have argued that Hardt and Negri's notion of autonomy-in-production is untenable. Thoburn is one such critic, agreeing in his book *Deleuze, Marx and Politics* that certain '[n]ew aspects of social productivity might escape for a little while' (Thoburn 2003: 98) and could indeed become the 'driving force of production', but nevertheless insisting that such a situation could really only develop in 'disciplinary space', not in contemporary spaces of biopolitical control. Thoburn phrases his argument thus:

> Indeed the capitalist socius has many little lines of flight, even autonomous zones where creation is allowed to operate outside of capitalist relations of productivity . . . before they are generalized as a new productive activity; but such spaces (or lines of flight) enrich rather than contradict capital. (Thoburn 2003: 98)

Thoburn goes on to point out that Negri's image of the autonomous, socialised worker of the Italian 1970s – which later mutates into the *multitude* of Hardt and Negri's eponymous book – has a tendency to exceed Deleuze and Guattari's political horizon, especially in terms of what Thoburn calls the latter's 'minor' characteristics. Thoburn quotes Guattari as claiming that even though there are interesting ways in which new productive forces contain liberating potentials, 'capital still operates as the universal plane' of these forces (Thoburn 2003: 98). And Deleuze, we should recall, gives a similar kind of warning in his 'Postscript on the Societies of Control', speaking of how the new and seemingly more flexible spaces of late capitalism 'could at first express new freedom, but . . . could participate as well in mechanisms of control that are equal to the harshest of confinements' (Deleuze 1992: 4). For Deleuze and Guattari, this position will only offer modest opportunities

for resistance, which Thoburn designates with the terms 'cramped' and 'minor', implying that radical politics must be 'premised on cramped, impossible, minority positions where social forces constrain movements' (Thoburn 2003: 90). If this is the case, then it seems indeed like Hardt and Negri's notion of autonomy-in-production as an effective strategy against and beyond capital is mistaken, or worse, a self-delusion. This dilemma is well put by Alberto Toscano in a recent essay:

> The challenge today is to think an antagonism that would not be entirely detached from the conditions of production and reproduction of contemporary capitalism. The mere positing of duality, say between Empire and multitude, without the conflictual *composition* that can provide this duality with a certain degree of determinateness, can arguably be seen to generate a seemingly heroic, but ultimately ineffectual horizon for theoretical analysis and political militancy. (Toscano 2009: 127)

What a truly radical autonomy from capital requires, again in Toscano's words, is the 'twin affirmation of an integral *immanence* of capitalist relations to the social (of a thoroughgoing *socialisation* of production) and of the radicalisation of the antagonism between capital and labour' (Toscano 2009: 111). Such an antagonism would amount to perceiving 'communism as separation' (110) from the social fabric that simultaneously sustains its immanent foundation.

II. Bodies of Disjunction

Taking the cue from Toscano's twofold challenge, I think it may be convincingly argued that Hardt and Negri's notion of autonomy-in-production already fulfils the demand of being sufficiently rooted in the production and reproduction of capital – in fact, most of Hardt and Negri's critics maintain that their theory is *too* immersed in these; too immanent, as it were.[5] Therefore, it seems like the question of whether 'autonomy-in-production' entails sufficient antagonism between capital and labour is the more pertinent one.

Hardt and Negri's latest work, *Commonwealth*, is perhaps their most innovative attempt at the formulation of just such an immanent antagonism. However, it does not consist of an antagonism between *capital and labour* in the classical sense. What Hardt and Negri are proposing is an antagonism of a new kind: the antagonism between *capital and the common*. This juxtaposition, I argue, is Hardt and Negri's attempt at giving autonomy-in-production the necessary foundations to overcome a 'seemingly heroic' posture eventually

generalised by the plane of capital, but also at resolving the dilemmas that the social-factory thesis inevitably creates by its fusing of labour and capital. This could, then, also allow Hardt and Negri to exceed the cramped and impossible space of Deleuze and Guattari's minor politics in a more successful way than before, when simple autonomy-in-production was lacking the notion of the common. In fact, Negri has stated that the common is his main point of divergence from Deleuze and Guattari. In a recent volume, Negri puts it clearly: '*the common* constitutes indeed the crucial element differentiating my theorization . . . from Deleuze and Guattari's theorization' (Negri and Casarino 2008: 118).

What is the common then, and how does it attain antagonistic autonomy while being at the same time grounded in the productive relations of actually existing capitalism? How does it remain faithful to Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy of immanence while also subverting capital in an antagonistic manner? What kind of phenomenon is it? In answering these questions I take advantage of the fact that the exact ontological status of the common still remains fairly fluid and open in Hardt and Negri's writings. Even though Negri grants that 'the common in the end is that which differentiates most [his] thought from Deleuze and Guattari's thought' (Negri and Casarino 2008: 120), I would like to suggest an interpretation of the common which relies heavily on a key concept from Deleuze and Guattari's work. I will try to demonstrate that the common is in fact a 'body without organs', albeit of a kind that is not anticipated in concrete terms in the two volumes of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* where the concept is developed. This will demonstrate that while Hardt and Negri develop a 'major' politics as opposed to Deleuze and Guattari's minor politics, their thinking continues to be lucidly interpretable in light of a Deleuzo-Guattarian conceptual apparatus.

In Deleuze and Guattari's presentation, different bodies without organs (BwOs) pertain to different regimes or relations of production, different 'abstract machines' corresponding to the productive machinery and organisation characterising a particular mode of production. This applies to production in the universal sense developed in *Anti-Oedipus*, regardless of the split between desiring-production and social-production characteristic of capitalism. In *Anti-Oedipus*, the BwO is most prominent in Deleuze and Guattari's discussion of psychoanalysis and desiring-production, and less so in their treatment of capitalism and social-production, where the 'full body' of the socius comes to the fore. Hence it might seem more appropriate to discuss a given social

regime – despotism, capitalism or, as I will attempt, the common – as a socius or full body. The benefit of sticking with the conceptual tool of the BwO, however, is that it provides us with a level of abstraction that is suitable for the discussion of an as-yet unrealised social formation. This is in no way an illegitimate use of the concept, for the difference between social-production and desiring-production is not a difference in nature but only in regime, as already noted (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 31).

According to the description in *Anti-Oedipus*, the BwO is linked to 'a full body that functions as a socius' but is distinct from the historically separate social formations designated by different sociuses as its more general, universal condition. This socius may be the 'body of the earth' (savagery), the body of the tyrant (despotism), or the body of capital (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 10). Deleuze and Guattari claim that the 'body without organs belongs to the realm of antiproduction' and that it 'couples production with ... an element of antiproduction' (8). This antiproductive element of organisation and selection is required for a specific desiring-machine to sustain its production; this is its BwO. Its function is, specifically, to add the *disjunctive synthesis* of recording, selection and differentiation to what would otherwise remain a directionless and accumulative desiring-production invested through the *connective synthesis*.[6] With some degree of simplification, we can say that the disjunctive synthesis of selection and recording performed by the BwO corresponds to Marx's *relations of production*, while the more primal connective synthesis of undifferentiated accumulation is characteristic of the *forces of production*.

Despite the abstractness of the concept of the BwO, we can now see how it underlies the relations that define actual social regimes. The BwO of capital has certain characteristics that serve to distinguish the socius of capital from the other social bodies. Speaking of older social forms, Deleuze and Guattari write that '[t]he prime function incumbent upon the socius has always been to codify the flows of desire, to inscribe them, to record them, to see to it that no flow exists that is not properly dammed up, channelled, regulated' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 33). This description would, presumably, apply to rigid social structures such as despotism. But 'the *capitalist machine* ... finds itself in a totally new situation: it is faced with the task of decoding and deterritorializing the flows' (33). Capitalist relations of production, then, rely on a particular kind of BwO that manages or subsumes desiring-production without directly controlling it, that is, it functions by decoding and releasing flows on its surface rather than restraining them. The encounter of decoded flows of money-capital and the decoded

flows of labour, according to Deleuze and Guattari, is essentially what gives rise to capitalism, meaning that the task of the capitalist BwO is not to code or recode but to decode: 'Capitalism is in fact born of the encounter of two sorts of flows: the decoded flows of production in the form of money-capital, and the decoded flows of labor in the form of the "free worker" ' (33). This decoding is the essential, defining feature of capital – its 'very fabric of existence'– and the role of the surface of its BwO is primarily to 'register' these flows by the means of axiomatisation. And in the case of capital, this axiomatisation takes the simple form of money rather than the semiotic code characteristic of savagery and despotism: 'unlike previous social machines, the capitalist machine is incapable of providing a code that will apply to the whole of the social field. By substituting money for the very notion of a code, it has created an axiomatic of abstract quantities' (33). Money, according to Marx, is the 'universal or social equivalent' forming an 'independent presence of exchange value' (Marx 1976: 183, 235) which under real subsumption is capable of investing the whole social field.

This axiomatic, of course, is Marx's general formula for capital of M-C-M′ (Marx 1976: 247–57). One important consequence of this axiomatic of the capitalist BwO is that it moves 'further and further in the direction of the deterritorialization of the socius' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 33) – that is, to be able to create surplus value (the difference between M and M′), the axiomatic demands a constant cycle of investment and reinvestment which knows no limits and will for that reason ultimately pose problems for capital. 'Value therefore now becomes value in process, money in process, and, as such, capital' (Marx 1976: 256), capital which is bound to an everlasting search for surplus value and will stop at nothing. Deleuze and Guattari phrase it thus: 'Capitalism tends toward a threshold of decoding that will destroy the socius in order to make it a body without organs and unleash the flows of desire on this body as a deterritorialized field' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 33).

Deleuze and Guattari go on to describe how the BwO of capital serves to continuously repress and destroy the socius, while simultaneously injecting it with its vast productive energies. In this manner, capitalism is always acting against limits that are its own creation: 'capitalism constantly counteracts, constantly inhibits this inherent tendency while at the same time allowing it free rein; it continually seeks to avoid reaching its limit while simultaneously tending toward that limit' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 34, see also 303, 320). So, on the one hand, there is an abstract socius which serves as capital's 'fundamental

raw material' which capital 'does not confront . . . from the outside' (33) but immanently, and on the other hand, the BwO of capital which is in charge of registering the flows on its surface, that is, the exchange of commodities and labour – thereby forming the basis of the quantitative axiomatic of value that expresses the ultimate productive relation of capital, Marx's M-C-M′. Hence the BwO of capital expresses the characteristics of capital in a twofold way as a *relation of production* and also as a corresponding *mode of valorisation*, requiring a special kind of value-theory as will be discussed in more detail below.

III. Social-production of the Common

Let us briefly observe how Hardt and Negri define the common in *Commonwealth*:

> By 'the common' we mean, first of all, the common wealth of the material world – the air, the water, the fruits of the soil, and all nature's bounty . . . *We consider the common also and more significantly those results of social production that are necessary for social interaction and further production, such as knowledges, languages, codes, information, affects, and so forth.* (Hardt and Negri 2009: viii; emphasis added)

This emphasis on the common as social production and reproduction suggests that for Hardt and Negri the common indeed designates a social relation, a relation of production. Hardt and Negri – even before *Commonwealth* – have repeatedly emphasised the *social* nature of what is produced in biopolitical production, making frequent use of the term *social production*. In *Commonwealth*, Hardt and Negri claim that the arrival of biopolitical production poses 'significant challenges to traditional concepts and methods of political economy in large part because biopolitical production shifts the economic center of gravity from the production of material commodities to that of social relations, confusing, as we said, the division between production and reproduction' (Hardt and Negri 2009: 135). They thus echo Deleuze and Guattari's use of the term 'social production', which is a major constitutive element in how Deleuze and Guattari see productive and social relations as being immanently 'produced' themselves, that is, the BwO of a certain socius is a *product* of a particular kind. The BwO, in other words, is the product of social production whereas the flows it registers are the products of desiring-production. Hardt and Negri speak of the 'biopolitical economic growth' of the common as 'a process of social composition' (284), that is, as a production of the socius.

The fundamental difference between Hardt and Negri's social production in relation to the BwO of capital, and Deleuze and Guattari's, is that for the latter this social production is not pictured otherwise than as the social production of that same body of capital. Desiring-production on the BwO of capital may seek and create lines of flights, but social production is always exclusively an extension of capital's BwO.[7] Hence, even though Deleuze and Guattari picture BwOs as corresponding to modes of production (savagery, despotism and capitalism, respectively), they articulate neither how one such BwO comes to succeed another nor how the BwO of capital could be transformed.

For Hardt and Negri, conversely, the social production taking place in capitalism does not exclusively contribute to the perpetuation of capital's own BwO: it is producing a new social body, the body of the common. The common, as Hardt and Negri state clearly, is a new mode of production, socially produced by the existing body of capital: 'Every mode of production, capital included, at first powerfully expands productive forces but eventually holds them back, thereby generating the foundations of the next mode of production' (Hardt and Negri 2009: 298), that 'next mode' clearly involving the common. Hence, the 'counteracted tendencies' of contemporary biopolitical capital are not merely internal to it, but are constituted by the presence of two heterogeneous and conflicting social elements: capital and the common.

A useful way of distinguishing between the biopolitical production of capital and the biopolitical production of the common, then, is to view capital and the common as separate bodies, even though the latter emerges from the former by means of immanent social production. '[T]he biopolitical process', Hardt and Negri write, 'is not limited to the reproduction of capital as a social relation' – that is, it is not entirely limited to the social production or reproduction of the BwO of capital as it seems to be on Deleuze and Guattari's account – 'but also presents the potential for an autonomous process that could destroy capital and create something entirely new' (Hardt and Negri 2009: 136). Biopolitical, social (re)production begins to introduce its own, separate, BwO, the BwO of the common.

The common thus attempts to give new foundations to 'autonomy' under real subsumption: it is an economic regime that radically subverts and distinguishes itself from capital's BwO while simultaneously remaining 'immanent' to it. Capital is increasingly dependent on the common as its source of wealth, and hence the common is 'immanent' to biopolitical production in capital even as these are two distinct bodies.

IV. Opposed Regimes of Value

There are many ways to picture the juxtaposition of the common with capital and how it might successfully replace the conceptually and practically untenable distinction between capital and labour. I argue that its most explosive aspect, however, is contained in the incompatible modes of valorisation intrinsic to the respective bodies of the common and capital. The *actual relationship* between the two bodies as they currently exist, in Hardt and Negri's description, is such that while the common forms the body of autonomously organised biopolitical production, capital forms the exploitative body which hovers over it – having to invent novel ways of extracting surplus value from it. These ways of exploitation are part new and part old. They are old in the sense that they involve a recourse to what Marx termed 'primitive accumulation': 'And insofar as today's neoliberal economy increasingly favors accumulation through expropriation of the common, the concept of primitive accumulation becomes an even more central analytical tool' (Hardt and Negri 2000: 138). But they are new in the sense that they account for the growing hegemony of the most advanced form of capital, finance capital: 'The key for finance is that it remains external to the production process. It does not attempt to organize social labor-power or dictate how it is to cooperate. It grants biopolitical production its autonomy and manages nonetheless to extract wealth from it at a distance' (289). Postmodern, financialised capital, then, depends on and exploits the common in a way that is different from Fordist capitalist management. We have already seen how the exploiter (capital) and the exploited (the common) have acquired two distinct BwOs, which form essentially different productive regimes. This means that exploitation – the extraction of surplus value – has to adapt itself to this reality with a fitting mode of valorisation. The BwO of capital that Deleuze and Guattari describe in *Anti-Oedipus* involves some characteristics that can be directly related to the new mode of valorisation that is a fundamental and novel part of Hardt and Negri's theory of the common. Deleuze and Guattari write that the BwO of capital

> will give to the sterility of money the form whereby money produces money. It produces surplus value… It makes the machine responsible for producing a relative surplus value, while embodying itself in the machine as fixed capital [i.e. machinery]. Machines and agents cling so closely to capital that their very functioning appears to be miraculated by it. (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 10–11)

Here, Deleuze and Guattari are of course dealing with the riddle of how money seems able to generate more money – a capacity for limitless multiplication that the common and finance capital actually seem to share. Interestingly, Deleuze and Guattari seem inclined to solve this riddle by referring to the classical Marxist distinction between labour and capital, quoting Marx's discussion in the third volume of *Capital* of how the 'productive powers and the social interrelations of labour time… seem transferred from labour to capital' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 11). Deleuze and Guattari seem content to describe capitalist valorisation as completely explainable by the labour–capital distinction, speaking of the 'apparent objective moment' (11) of money begetting more money as 'fetishistic' and 'miraculated' – always requiring the input of abstract labour, the cornerstone of Marx's theory of value.

At other points, however – and much more in line with the real subsumption thesis, whereby labour becomes increasingly indistinguishable from capital and hence unable to account on its own for the creation of value – Deleuze and Guattari seem to be advancing a more complex theory of how surplus value would actually be created on the BwO of capital. Indeed, as Thoburn points out, Deleuze and Guattari maintain that capitalism depends less on the quantitative extraction of surplus value via exploitation of labour and more on a 'complex *qualitative* process' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 543), although this process remains largely unexplained. This kind of surplus value cannot be accounted for by hypothetical allocation of socially necessary labour time and would require a whole new theory of value. Such a theory, Thoburn argues with reference to Guattari's work, would have to conceptualise what Guattari calls *machinic surplus value* as 'based on qualitative intensity and variation of work' (Thoburn 2003: 97). However, Deleuze and Guattari's emergent value-theory of qualities remains ambiguous as to how machinic surplus value is really created, and does not detach itself fully from the classical Marxist notion that such an 'abstract-machinic' or 'social' surplus value would have to be understood as somehow untenable, fetishistic or miraculated.

A theory of qualitative value, however, is unequivocally demanded by Hardt and Negri in *Commonwealth*. They seem to argue that such a new theory of value could not truthfully apply to capital, which on their thesis is always and inevitably 'constrained by the logic of scarcity' (Hardt and Negri 2009: 283). The biopolitical cycle, on the other hand, has 'to be understood now in relation to the *qualities* of the common' (284). These qualities are not translatable onto the surface of the BwO of capital and this incommensurability is demonstrated by the

fact that 'when capital accumulates the common and makes it private, its productivity is blocked or lessened' (288). Here we see an emerging juxtaposition of two modes of valorisation, corresponding to the two different modes of production: the quantitative logic of scarcity that is a by-product of capital, and the qualitative logic of excess and growth that belongs to the common.

On the body without organs of the common, the apparatuses of capture of the capitalist BwO appear as fetters and limitations to productivity, perhaps akin to the elements that 'botch' the BwO as described in *A Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 166). Hardt and Negri give an outline of a new theory of value that could account for these problems:

> The critique of political economy, too, including the Marxist tradition, has generally focused on measurement and quantitative methods to understand surplus value and exploitation. Biopolitical products, however, tend to *exceed* all quantitative measurement and take *common form*, which are easily shared and difficult to corral as private property. (Hardt and Negri 2009: 135–6)

Subsequently, Hardt and Negri draw a comparison with the standard numerical columns of debit and credit in conventional quantitative economy, and move on to pose the question thus: 'How can one create an economic table filled with qualities?' (Hardt and Negri 2009: 287). Although this question remains an open one in *Commonwealth*, I suggest that we interpret it as opening towards a solution of Deleuze and Guattari's problematic notion of machinic surplus value. It seems that the BwO of capital is actually not capable of any valorisation other than of the quantitative kind. This, then, would be a description commensurable with both Marx's *and* Deleuze and Guattari's analysis of capital as a quantitative axiomatic in which exchange value (quantitative by nature) fully dominates. The features that seem to contradict this – that is, abstract-machinic surplus value, qualitative social production, the production of subjectivities and so forth – can now be understood as part of biopolitical production, not properly belonging to the BwO of capital, but to the BwO of the common. This machinic surplus value might of course still *appear* as 'miraculated' on the BwO of capital, but only if we fail to perceive that it is in fact created (*not* miraculated) on another BwO: the BwO of the common.

V. A Common Program

Let us now readdress Toscano's challenge: to 'think an antagonism' closely related to 'the conditions of production and reproduction of

contemporary capitalism' while holding 'a certain degree of determinateness' (Toscano 2009: 127). What the common brings together and clarifies are two aspects of biopolitical production: First, social production, which is now understood as the social production of the common as a new relation of production, or a new BwO. Thus, social forces do not necessarily constrain the movements of the multitude, as Thoburn argues with reference to Deleuze and Guattari (Thoburn 2003: 90); rather, the multitude produces its own socius because the 'surplus' of social production under biopolitical capitalism is, of course, also social in nature: it is the common. Second, the common seems to provide us with a new kind of BwO on which it would be possible to theoretically account for the creation of qualitative machinic surplus value – social in nature, which could be called 'abstract-machinic surplus value'. On the BwO of the common, such a social surplus value would neither have to be seen as 'miraculated' or fetishised as Deleuze and Guattari would have it, nor as requiring a recourse to a pre-biopolitical labour-theory of value which makes an untenable distinction between labour and capital.[8]

Eugene W. Holland writes that considerations of the 'different relations of production' that could potentially free difference (meaning surplus value) from capitalist axiomatisation – such as the productive relations here ascribed to the common – 'already point well beyond any capitalist horizons, about which Deleuze and Guattari are not inclined to say very much at all' (Holland 1997: 531). The common certainly points beyond these horizons, and, primarily because of the novel ways in which value can be created by and within the common, arguably does so better than Hardt and Negri's previous concept of autonomy-in-production. The merit, hence, of introducing what I am here calling *the BwO of the common* is that it links the notion of the common to Deleuze and Guattari's insightful analysis of capitalist valorisation and social production, while also transcending their silent or 'minor' horizon. It articulates a dimension of conflict with capital that reaches a truly 'social' level; immanent to the social field, yet extending beyond the cramped and minor position Deleuze and Guattari limit themselves to.

It falls outside the scope of this essay to describe what concrete forms the antagonism between capital and the common might take in future social struggles. Let it suffice to mention two practical advantages offered by insisting on the capital–common distinction: First, the common is a very apt tool for analysis of the evolving and complex dynamics of post-Fordist capitalism, especially as they relate to immaterial labour and production, direct exploitation, financialisation, and debates over intellectual property. Thus, the common contributes

significantly to a Jamesonian 'cognitive mapping' of the apparent mysteries of postmodern capitalism. Second, the common offers a framework for political activism that is grounded in the economic contradictions of the current social order. Such a framework does not limit itself to, say, minor lines of flight, voluntarism, racial and gender identity politics, communicative action or antagonism within social discourse, to name only a few examples of the modest terrains marked out by leftist theory over the last decades. The common offers an opportunity to revisit the old Marxist insistence on the social embeddedness of any radical ideology; communism not only as an idea but also as a movement springing from within the social body.

Perhaps unexpectedly for a consistent critic of Hardt, Negri and poststructuralist tendencies within Marxism in general, Slavoj Žižek has in fact emphasised the importance of Hardt and Negri's concept of the common for the first three of what he calls the four 'possible antagonisms' contained in contemporary capitalism: ecological catastrophe, intellectual property, biogenetics and social exclusion (Žižek 2009: 53). Even though Žižek implies mistakenly that the fourth antagonism does not fall within the domain of the common, his acceptance of the common as a designator for the revolutionary challenges of the near future indicates that the common–capital distinction could become the basis of a communist programme extending well beyond the scope of Hardt and Negri's current readership.[9]

Notes

1. It falls outside the scope of this paper to fully examine the variations of the concept of the BwO through Deleuze's *The Logic of Sense* and his and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus*. See, however, note 7.
2. Marx discusses real subsumption (as opposed to formal subsumption) in his appendix to *Capital Volume I* (Marx 1976: 1034–38). A helpful analysis of the social-factory thesis and its relation to readings of Marx can be found in Thoburn 2003, especially Chapters 4 and 5, 'The Social Factory' and 'The Refusal of Work', as well as in Chapter 6 of Wright 2002. See also Read 2004, Chapter 3, for a thorough discussion of formal and real subsumption.
3. Mariarosa Dalla Costa was 'the first of the workerists to advance a coherent case for the claim that the extraction of surplus value could occur outside the sphere Marx had designated as the direct process of production' (Wright 2002: 134–5).
4. I imitate Thoburn's use of the phrase 'autonomy-in-production'. Negri and Hardt more often use the phrase 'autonomous production' (see e.g. Hardt and Negri 2000: 276; 2009: 334, 364).
5. To name one example of such a critique, Slavoj Žižek equates Hardt and Negri's socio-political analysis with a 'fascination' for contemporary capitalism (Žižek 2007: 47). This is paralleled in Žižek's critique of Deleuze, whom he views as

'the ideologist of late capitalism' given the aptness of his and Guattari's analysis in the *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* volumes (Žižek 2004: 293).

6. For a concise analysis of the three syntheses (connective, disjunctive and conjunctive) developed in *Anti-Oedipus* see Holland 1999: 26–35.
7. It should be noted, importantly, that in *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari begin to develop their understanding of the body without organs in a direction that is somewhat more inimical to capitalist social production than in *Anti-Oedipus*. However, it can be concluded that the productive capacities of the BwO of *A Thousand Plateaus* are either directed solely towards desiring-production (i.e. not social production), or towards extremely 'cautious' modes of social assemblage that would certainly conform to Thoburn's 'minor' interpretation of Deleuzian politics. The BwO of *A Thousand Plateaus* is described in terms of 'disarticulation', 'experimentation' and 'nomadism' and stands opposed to 'organisms' of any kind. However, its separation from existing structures – the organism, the sign and the subject – demands '[c]aution' and skilful negotiations with 'the dominant reality' so as not to bring it 'back down on us heavier than ever' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 176–8).
8. It is important to keep in mind that Hardt and Negri are not offering a full-fledged value-theory of common qualities and their surplus. Cesare Casarino indicates the extent of ontological research required for such a theory, which would account for the 'two radically different modalities of surplus' constituted by capital and by the common (Negri and Casarino 2008: 30). Perhaps the most exciting challenge for a new theory of value would be to address the question of money, thus posed by Hardt and Negri: 'Might the power of money (and the finance world in general) to represent the social field of production be, in the hands of the multitude, an instrument of freedom, with the capacity to overthrow misery and poverty? … We cannot answer these questions satisfactorily yet, but it seems to us that efforts to reappropriate money in this way point in the direction of revolutionary activity today' (Hardt and Negri 2009: 295).
9. This essay is based on a paper of the same name delivered at the conference 'Deleuze and Activism' at the University of Cardiff on 13 November 2009.

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Activist Materialism

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Abstract

This paper explores a form of activism that operates with and within matter. For more than 150 years materialism has informed activist practice through materialist conceptions of history and modes of production. The paper discusses the ambivalences of these previous configurations of activism and materialism and explores possibilities for enacting activist interventions in conditions where politics is not only performed as a politics of history but as the fundamental capacity to remake and transform processes of matter and life. What is activism when politics is increasingly performed as a politics of matter? What is activism when it comes to a materialist understanding of matter itself?

Keywords: activism, materialism, matter, Marx, minor science, technoscience

I. 1844

> The real unity of the world consists in its materiality... (Engels 1987 [1878])

The recent resurgence of materialism poses questions about its implications and relevance for politics. Rather than addressing institutional or representational politics I am interested here in tracing the connections of materialism to the transformative politics of social movements: collective direct activism on the immediate level of social and material life. In each particular historical chronotope there is a distinctive set of social movements which become capable of initiating social change. How is materialism related to these transformative

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forces? And what kind of political activism do today's novel forms of materialism promote?

The articulation between materialism and activism is unstable, full of discontinuities and breaks. It is in Marx and the early rebellions that took place in the 'New World', and in the Communes and uprisings across Europe, that materialism first becomes directly linked to political activism: activist materialism. Since then materialism has been the target of interrogation not only from idealist positions and various dualist ontologies but also more recently from within the very political forces of the western post-1960s Left which were embracing materialism in one form or another. Critiques from the Left did not position themselves outside the materialist movement, they were not first and foremost an opposition; rather, it was an immanent movement enunciated from the very core of materialism itself that lasted up until the 1980s and 1990s and finally ushered a new version of materialism to the fore. Deleuze and Guattari's work exercised an important influence on the movements that attempted to rework materialism. During the long history of the encounter between materialism and activism both of them changed meanings, and each new formation of the one influenced the meaning of the other, producing new configurations of social practice.

Marx's work is probably the first attempt to connect activism and materialism on the level of everyday political practice. The *Theses on Feuerbach* exemplifies the articulation between materialism and activism in a remarkable and equally unexpected way. Thought objects and abstract contemplation are what Marx tries to defy, that is, idealism. The movement which changes society is the movement which opposes idealism. It is real, objective, that is, material, says Marx. Marx's materialism is conceived as sensuous everyday practical activity which has the capacity to change the material conditions of existence. The moment of transformation is the moment when, to use Marx's term, civil society collapses and a new social material order emerges. This very modern understanding of materialism was epitomised in *The German Ideology*: here communism is not 'an ideal to which reality have to adjust itself'; it is 'the real movement which abolishes the present state of things' (Marx and Engels 1846: 48).

It is in the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* (1844) that Marx introduces a new definition of materialism grounded on inserting political activism into the understanding of materiality. Here he uses the concept of 'species-being' to describe human activity as the process of the self-making of the human species in a direct practical and organic relation to other species and the whole of the natural world. Despite

its essentialist connotations, 'species-being' is as close as one can get to a radical understanding of a form of self-instituted collective emancipation in which cooperation and interaction among humans as well as between humans and the material world is crucial (Dyer-Witheford 2006). For Marx the question is to uncover both what impedes this process, i.e. how capitalist labour alienates 'species-being', and how collective material self-transformation is possible. Who controls the process of material transformation, who participates and in which position, are questions which drive Marx's activist reading of materialism. This materialism is activist because it is a 'life activity', in the literal sense: 'life engendering life'. There is no social transformation outside of the material realm.

Marx's early materialism avoids the pitfall of epistemology: the attempt to distinguish between a strong materialist perspective which gives absolute primacy to matter (all that exists is matter) and a weak materialist perspective that puts the emphasis on how we conceive matter (all that exists is dependent on matter). Such an epistemological definition of materialism wouldn't be sufficient to distinguish it from idealism because at the end what we define as matter would involve an idealist move. From an epistemological viewpoint both positions, the materialist as well as the idealist one, are in principle tenable. But Marx's early materialism is ontological through and through: there is no transformative activity which is non-material. Since activity is inherently material, matter itself cannot be conceived as an outside or as an object of human practice: matter is humanity's body. 'Species-being' is the collective metabolic transformation of matter: activist materialism. There is a monist understanding of matter here that resonates with today's neo-materialism (for a superb example of the new materialism see Bennett 2010), so much influenced by Deleuze and Guattari's work which will be discussed extensively later in the paper. For now we can say that both Marx's early materialism and today's neo-materialism share a strong emphasis on matter as a vital force: inorganic matter as well as biological and social life are movements of matter itself. Nevertheless, in terms of Marx's early definition of materialism, merely highlighting the importance of materiality as an assemblage of heterogeneous forces is not enough to account for the kind of transformative political engagement that was his main concern. Marx's monist ontological materialism is infused with an activist dimension which takes place on the actual everyday life of 'species-being': the collective capacity to affect material change. Marx's ontological reading of materialism is one that focuses on practice, but a form of practice which is not solely in the hands of people but also

depends on non-human forces ('nature'). Practice and matter cannot be thought independently. And the reason for this is not epistemological but political: activist materialism is a response to capital's breaking up of the 'species-being' into classes and races. Materialism without activism is not transformative, in fact it is impossible. This is the quintessence of Marx's early account of a practical ontology and an activist materialism. What happens to this configuration of materialism 34 years before the bicentenary anniversary of the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*?

Marx's and in particular Engels' late work contains a second reading of the activist materialism developed in their early writings: dialectical materialism. 'Diamat' consolidated the absolute emphasis on matter but introduced a different conception of its role which had tremendous impact on theorists of the Second International and the emerging Marxist social movements. 'Diamat' foregrounded activist materialism as a rather dogmatic epistemological doctrine that gradually removed the practical ontological concern with matter and subsequently transformed the meaning of activism. Already in the early writings there are numerous instances where, instead of the practical ontology described in the previous paragraphs, we find a relation to nature dominated by the ideal of progressivism and the total human mastery of nature's laws. This understanding also changed the meaning of activism. In *Anti-Dühring* (1878) and *Ludwig Feuerbach* (1886) Engels set out a materialist cosmology that served to define activism as a political practice which is mono-causally determined by a set of laws extracted from nature: historical materialism. This is characterised by both a bifurcated dualist ontology – with objective material reality and its inherent laws on the one hand and social practice on the other – and also by a reduction of materiality to human social institutions and structures. Activism was reduced to the efficacy of changing social structures. Historical materialism announces the erasure of the activist materialism to be found in the early works of Marx and Engels.

II. 1908

Moscow! Moscow! Moscow! (Irina in Chekhov 1900)

In *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* Lenin follows this line and conceives materialism exclusively as a theory of knowledge. He writes: 'For the sole "property" of matter with whose recognition philosophical materialism is bound up is the property of being an objective reality, of existing outside our mind' (Lenin 1908: 260). Materialism here starts

from the assumption of an ontological duality, two separate entities: matter on the one hand, mind on the other. Lenin reduces materialism to gnosiological realism, while the activist materialism of the early Marx was one which asserted a monist ontology: mind is matter, the unity of the world is sustained by its materiality and the immanent action of matter and mind alike. Lenin's approach is a radical departure from a position which is concerned with bringing together practice and matter. Rather, his concern was to develop a conceptual instrument which splits ideas in two opposite camps. While Marx and Engels' early activist materialism was concerned with how matter is changing and can be changed, Lenin's materialism was developed as a strategic tool for the selection of the social and political forces of his time which might potentially transform into a revolutionary historical subject.

Lenin was building a war machine. He was trying to develop a philosophical conception of materialism which had no other target than to reveal the functioning of a deep social dichotomy between the working class and capital (for an extended analysis of these issues see Jordan 1967). His only goal was to submit theory to the everyday requirements of his revolutionary practice. This was truly phenomenal and unparalleled (albeit fatal). With his philosophical work Lenin developed a tool to extend the social division as far it could go, to the far end of mind and the history of ideas. In the unsurpassable *What Is To Be Done?* (1902) Lenin claims that social conflict penetrates every corner of society, every social relation, every idea. Nothing is untouchable by class antagonism, it takes a partisan organisation and a revolution to change it. This is partisan philosophy and partisan practice. And it is a truly activist move; however this particular move enacts a different materialism. It is carried out in the name of materialism but it is not an activist monist materialism. It is one which subsumes matter and dominates nature in the name of historical progress. If Marx's early materialism was of a kind which proclaimed the irresistibility of revolution on the grounds of a unified monist movement of matter and activism, Lenin's materialism is dualist, elevating irresistibility to something completely different: the will for action.

'Materialism must be a form of idealism, since it's wrong – too' (Sahlins 2002: 6). Marshall Sahlins' aphorism concentrates the post-Second World War predicament with the configuration of an activist materialism à la Lenin. Lenin's reduction of monist materialism to gnosiological realism had far-reaching consequences for the philosophical scaffolding of the social forces which found themselves entangled in the Marxist enterprise and in the emerging working-class

movements from the beginning of the twentieth century up to the 1970s and 1980s. The most important consequence was that gradually materialism failed to contribute to an ethical and political programme for the everyday enactment of activist practice. Activist materialism became everything but activist, quickly turning into an ideology of state socialism and an abstract philosophical system. In the post-Second World War period, materialism gradually lost its strength as an ethical project for revolutionising everyday practice.

III. 1977

Always historicize! (Jameson 1981)

The end of the 1970s probably saw a peak in the process of an immanent critique of materialism which rendered visible its contradictions as inherited from the Leninist period. The following quote from Raymond Williams displays the state of thought and mood among politically committed left intellectuals at the time:

> It took me thirty years, in a very complex process, to move from that received Marxist theory (which in its most general form I began by accepting) through various transitional forms of theory and inquiry, to the position I now hold, which I define as 'cultural materialism'. The emphases of the transition – on the production (rather than only the reproduction) of meanings and values by specific social formations, on the centrality of language and communication as formative social forces, and on the complex interaction both of institutions and forms and of social relationships and formal conventions – may be defined, if any one wishes, as 'culturalism', and even the crude old (positivist) idealism/materialism dichotomy may be applied if it helps anyone. What I would now claim to have reached, but necessarily by this route, is a theory of culture as a (social and material) productive process and of specific practices, of 'arts', as social uses of material means of production. (Williams 1980: 243)

During the period of the crisis of materialism which unfolded in the decades between 1950 and 1990 the notion of culture reordered the existing meanings of materialism and fuelled the development of a new constellation of concepts and activities into the heart of the social conflict of the post-war period. Of course, not all of the various movements and critiques of materialism embraced the notion of culture. The point here is not to unify these extremely diverse movements and traditions under one overarching rubric. Rather, what is of importance is that the insurgency against the previous materialism evolved in proximity to new everyday activities whose many faces and actions pertain to changing cultural power (see Gilbert 2008; Papadopoulos, Stephenson and Tsianos 2008).

This turn to culture thoroughly changed the way political activism is performed, moving the target away from the state itself towards power's pervasive materialisation in the whole societal nexus: in terms of gender relations, racialisation processes, social institutions, social and civil rights, the political representation of excluded groups, and so on. Many societies, many cultures, many socialisms, Raymond Williams would have said. This remaking of materialism corresponds with the practices of new social forces that found themselves outside the traditional organisational forms of the working-class movement which appeared as the inheritor of the materialist politics of the previous periods. The new politics of cultural counterinsurgency, not least as exemplified in the new youth cultures of the 1960s and the variously globalised events of 1968, spread across the globe with a velocity far beyond the wildest utopian dreams that Soviet propaganda bureaucrats and western communist parties ever imagined for their own materialist politics (see Connery 2005).

But where exactly was the materialism in this activism which propelled itself through cultural politics? The most likely answer is that there was very little materialism in this 'cultural materialist' politics, at least not in the sense of an activist and practical ontology concerned with a monist understanding of matter (as in Marx's early version). Nor was there much of the materialism of the late Marx/Lenin period with its strong focus on gnosiological dualism and the efficacy of social structures. Cultural politics questioned both versions of materialism and developed along many disparate and diverse paths: all of which were, however, occupied with the centrality of representation and its critiques. 'Discourse' seems to have been one of the paths that helped this move. Ironically, the discursive turn and the turn to language set in motion an activist politics which followed the activist materialism of the previous decades. Umberto Eco's *The Open Work* (Eco 1989) and James Clifford's collection *Writing Culture* (Clifford and Marcus 1986), as well as the broader linguistic turn (Rorty 1967) and the interest in hermeneutics (Gadamer 1989), are just some examples of intellectual engagements that marked the path to the undiscovered continent of representation. It was through the changing of meanings and the challenging of representations that the very process of social activism was now being performed.

Another important path for the revision of materialism that developed during this period came from an interest in social space as a key battlefield for social antagonisms. How is space regulated, appropriated and re-appropriated by marginalised social groups? Marxist inspired

readings of everyday space (Lefebvre 1991), the situationist movement (Debord 1981), and cultural geographers (Harvey 1990) all turned to kaleidoscopic remakings of space in order to articulate an everyday, mainly urban, activism that made radical interventions in the politics of post-war Europe and North America possible. The attention to space as lived experience is closely related to body politics. The body becomes an open substratum for the inscription and re-inscription of social signification. In this sense signification moves from the mind itself to the body and emerges in a process of subjective embodiment through a social context (cf. Csordas 1994; Harré 1996; Overton 1998) or through cultural-political constellations (cf. Bourdieu 1987; Braidotti 2002; Fausto-Sterling 2000).

But actually what the activism of the post-war period was mainly preoccupied with was subjectivity and difference (Blackman et al. 2008). As cultural studies has so vividly shown, subjectivity is always in the making because it entails a non-expressed otherness, a non-discursified and imagined possibility of social relations (Hall 1990; Papadopoulos 2006). Such a theoretical move was particularly important in a period where identity politics occupied a central place in the political life of the societies of the Global North (Clifford 2000). Already in the 1970s and 1980s, cultural studies, feminist politics, anti-racism and gender studies identified the limitations of an activist materialism qua Lenin which saw social consciousness either as committed to working-class change or as wrong and ideological. In resonance with Althusser's take on ideology (Althusser 2001), new social movements focused on the emergence of multiple political subjectivities that defy straightforward classification as wrong (false consciousness) or right (revolutionary) according to previous conceptions of activist materialism. Crucial for this attempt was the process of articulation (Clifford 2001; Hall 1986a; Slack 1996). Activism here is conceived as a movement of articulation which by rethinking Gramscian hegemony attempts to contest domination through 'rendering the symbolic increasingly dynamic, that is, by considering the conditions and limits of representation and representability as open to significant rearticulations and transformations under the pressure of social practices of various kinds' (Butler 1997: 23; see also: Hall 1986b; Laclau and Mouffe 1985). This understanding of political subjectivity as subjectification and the result of articulation is what essentially captured activist practices in this period, positioning subjectivity in the tension between coercion by institutional mechanisms and articulation through them.

Cultural politics challenged previous versions of materialism on the grounds of an increasing diversification of social strata and classes. It is this diversification that brought a new form of activism which, rather than focusing on materialism was concerned with the fight for representation. In this struggle, discourse, space, body and subjectivity are approached as constitutive of an oppositional politics of difference. Cultural studies, women's studies, postcolonial studies and queer politics have all participated in and critiqued this fight for representation (see Hall and Jefferson 1976; Clifford 1986; Sedgwick 1990; Spivak 1999; Warner 1999; Butler, Laclau and Žižek 2000; Mouffe 2000). The importance of representation comes from the dissolution of social class as the central actor and political force in society. The political order of transnational neoliberal societies is an order which is supposed to be occupied by multiple players working to foster alliances between themselves and to establish new relations of power. And it is precisely this form of relationality which triggers the imperative for representation (Stephenson and Papadopoulos 2006). Representation enters the realm of politics as the attempt to give voice and operative agency to social groups who have been excluded by the politics of the traditional versions of activist materialism. We can trace the singular trajectories of these emergent oppositional subjectivities of new diverse social groups in civil rights movements, in the events of 1968, in feminist movements, anti-work movements and new forms of social cooperation, in the 1960s cultural rebellions and in the fight against colonialism and racism.

IV. 1987

The only enemy is two. (Deleuze 2001)

However deep the break between Leninist activist materialism and the cultural materialism of the post-war period might be, there remains nevertheless a peculiar form of continuity. Lenin's materialism reduced activism to the radical intentionality of a subject determined to reflect the antagonistic conditions of existence. Cultural materialism retained this reduction but introduced a differentiation with respect to the subject itself. Instead of a unified self-identical subject we now have a plethora of subjectivities and of possible contexts in which they are constituted. This break implied a deep change in the way political activism was conceived: Leninist activism subsumed every activity under a single social conflict between labour and capital, while the activism of cultural politics multiplies the fronts on which social antagonisms are encountered and

fought. Nevertheless, despite this radical break, both positions retain a strange commitment to epistemological dualism. Representation and ideas are the battleground on which the conceptualisation of activism thrives. It is about negotiating and transforming the conditions of thinking and feeling that make activism possible. In a peculiar way cultural materialism followed Lenin's path in focusing on how we represent reality. What cultural materialism introduced was a new conceptualisation of the main determinants of representation. It is no longer the class structure of society but rather the endless variability of social contexts that allows different configurations of representation. In this sense the question for cultural activism becomes one of how reality is constructed in the subject itself, or 'social constructionism'. In both positions, however, practice and matter are subsequent to ideas; and despite their pervasive critiques of dualism, both retained a dualist ontology. Here is Deleuze and Guattari's well-known diagnosis of this situation:

> We invoke one dualism only in order to challenge another. We employ a dualism of models only in order to arrive at a process that challenges all models. Each time, mental correctives are necessary to undo the dualisms we had no wish to construct but through which we pass. Arrive at the magic formula we all seek – PLURALISM = MONISM – via all the dualisms that are the enemy, an entirely necessary enemy, the furniture we are forever rearranging. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 20)

In much of their work, and most centrally in *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari introduce a monist materialism which attempts to rehabilitate matter from its enslavement in representation. Their move is co-extensive with the (re-)appearance of a form of materialism that puts the primacy of matter on the agenda of political practice and theory after the 1990s and creates the possibility for the emergence of a novel configuration of activist materialism. Strangely enough it was the poststructuralist faction of the cultural activism of the previous decades that prepared the way for this move – in particular feminist materialism, the attention to the body, as described earlier, and the persistent but evasive attempts to put materialism back on the agenda (one need only recall Althusser's (2006) subterranean movements). But even more crucial to the reinvigoration of activist materialism is the increasing impact of scientific knowledge on everyday life and on the structures of production in the Global North that posit matter as an active, self-ordering, emergent player in a radically post-human world (see Papadopoulos 2010). Matter is before thinking, matter is in

thinking, matter is everywhere. For Deleuze and Guattari there is no empty space, there is always matter and matter is always differentiated. Representations are a particular form of differentiation in their own right, they do not exist prior to or *vis-à-vis* matter. Representations are movements of matter as much as genetic mutations or geological movements are. Deleuze and Guattari's point is not to eliminate the distinctive importance of representations and ideas, rather, their claim is that when representations are considered as separated from matter they become strategic tools for ordering material reality. Representations are closures and reterritorialisations that are used as powers to organise matter in a particular way.

The materialism emerging gradually after the 1990s focuses on the question of monism instead of concentrating on the binary opposition between materialism and idealism. It is this very dichotomy that undermines monist materialism. It is not about which position you take in this thinking, it is about the very act of taking a position. For Deleuze and Guattari the real enemy of materialist thinking is not idealism, it is dualism. 'The only enemy is two' (Deleuze 2001: 95). Materialism after the 1990s is an anti-dualism that gradually transforms the relation between activism and materialism that informed most of social movements during the Leninist period and after: matter and mind, activism and materialism start to fuse again into one process. The practice itself, the site of action and its thinking, gradually became equally important for the activism of the 1990s. It is not a coincidence that many of the social movements of this period and since focus on the question of reclaiming. The activism of reclaiming attempts to re-appropriate the immediate spaces of existence by simultaneously transforming them through everyday actions: reclaim the streets, reclaim the city, earth activism and the permaculture movement, the remaking of transnational spaces through migration movements, radical queer activism and the building of new social relationalities and communities, cyberactivism, the alter-globalisation movement, the production of the commons. In all of them we encounter an emphasis on reclaiming material spaces and relations vital for developing new alternative social and material projects (for an extended discussion see Papadopoulos et al. 2008; Chesters and Welsh 2006). This was, of course, also a central characteristic of previous forms of political activism, in particular of feminism. But the primary difference here is that either the question of reclaiming social and material spaces was not conceptualised as such or else was considered secondary with regards to the 'real' and 'primary' struggle, which was supposed to focus on radical demands addressed to

the state and its institutions in respect of recognition and representation. In contrast, the activism emerging after the 1990s, and in particular since the Zapatista movement, is less concerned with the state's mediation; instead it *consciously* attempts to force existing institutions to change by creating alternative materialities and forms of life.

Deleuze and Guattari's monist materialism captures a key moment of this form of activism that reconnects us with the activist materialism of the early Marx described at the beginning of this paper. It is the question of how to change matter and create new forms through collective practices. Deleuze and Guattari's materialism questions how the very moment of morphing matter comes into being. The emergence of form is neither the transcendent imposition of a preconceived plan on matter – forget the architect and the bee – nor is it simply a movement of self-organised matter that becomes represented in the mind of the subject – forget autopoietic systems. Neither external plan, nor internal self-organisation. In this sense, it is neither idealism nor materialism (as conceived until now). The position Deleuze and Guattari try to develop is that it is the movement of matter itself that makes both a materialist as well as an idealist stance possible. Both the capacity to create form and the capacity to understand the emergence of form are immanent to existence. There is no monism if there *is* a dualist option; 'there is nothing that is one, there is nothing that is multiple' (Deleuze 2001: 99). Deleuze and Guattari tried to avoid thinking along the either-or of materialism and idealism/dualism. The very possibility of thought is immanent to matter's movements.

Morphogenesis in Deleuze and Guattari is neither a property of self-ordering material systems nor the result of a vitalist force that initiates material change; nor of course is it the ability of the subject's mind to form matter according to a preconceived plan. There is something not immediately present in the actuality of material flows – something virtual – that makes matter congeal into stratified stable forms. In each particular setting there is a virtual ordering principle (an abstract machine in Deleuze and Guattari's words) that links and connects flows and properties of matter. An often utilised example in *A Thousand Plateaus* is the organism. When does an aggregate of various bodily processes and functions become a thing which can be called an organism? An organism is ordered matter – the moment when matter in flux, in movement, in variation becomes a discernible thing amenable to intervention, management, manipulation (through medical practice for example, or in the course of ontogenetic development). Embryology and biology, medicine and psychology, play an equal role with ontogenetic

change, gene activity, epigenetic interactions and the environment to produce a coherent story of what an organism is in a particular historical chronotope. Out of the movement of unformed matter and non-formalised processes of the body without organs (BwO), as Deleuze and Guattari call the non-organismic body, we encounter the formed and stratified form of the organism:

> The organism is not at all the body, the BwO; rather, it is a stratum on the BwO, in other words, a phenomenon of accumulation, coagulation, and sedimentation that, in order to extract useful labor from the BwO, imposes upon it forms, functions, bonds, dominant and hierarchized organizations, organized transcendences. The strata are bonds, pincers. 'Tie me up if you wish.' We are continually stratified. But who is this we that is not me, for the subject no less than the organism belongs to and depends on a stratum? (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 159)

In this understanding of monist materialism, matter becomes the horizon and the substratum on which an alternative to the previous versions of materialism can emerge. Matter becomes (once more) the way to reconnect activism and materialism. The crucial move for materialism since the 1990s is to seek in matter an escape from a situation where the demise of the everyday transformative activist aspect of materialism became so pervasive. Deleuze and Guattari's move to a monist materialism is not a theoretical choice; it is the result of a political diagnosis according to which any desire for change has been vampirised by the institutions of the state. Even more than that, in the previous decades desire itself has been transformed into a capitalist institution (cf. Holland 2005). Every social struggle is reinserted as a rejuvenating feature of capitalist production, every social innovation is made productive. The story of the twentieth century is not a history of revolutions; it is rather a history of counter-revolutions (Müller 2000) where every desire has been appropriated, regurgitated and effaced by capitalism. The bottom line for Deleuze and Guattari's take on materialism, as a monist materialism based on a renewed attention to matter, is the attempt to reactivate the transformative force of desire. Deleuze and Guattari try to do this by breaking the link between 'desire' and 'desire for'. Every 'desire for' is a closure: desire for revolution, desire for mastering nature, desire for recognition, desire for an identity, desire for not having an identity, desire for desire. This is the political move Deleuze and Guattari reinsert into the new materialism: to disrupt the view that the creativity of people, animals and matter can be viewed as a desire which can always be folded back into capitalist domination

and valorisation. Every 'desire for' is already captured and appropriated. This is the spell capitalism casts upon life.

The key political ingredient of monist materialism is that desire needs to be disarticulated from its essential function as something which has a target and object. The diagnosis: 'desire for' is the way capitalism revolutionises itself. The radical political key to monist materialism is that it allows desire to be engendered in a way that can move beyond its recoding into the political closures of the counter-revolutions of the twentieth century. The prominent role of matter in Deleuze and Guattari is a small gesture of rebellion against the capture of earlier materialisms within a docile machine for constantly revolutionising capitalism. Deleuze and Guattari perform this small gesture of freedom by inserting indeterminacy into the way desire operates; and they do so by turning to the underlying indeterminacy of matter: matter is primarily unformed and in continuous variation, an oscillation between various intensities, closures and openings. Matter is a political exit. Matter is escape. The making of a life. Matter can break the capitalist spell.

The turn to matter becomes political when it is articulated in relation to this understanding of desire. That is why, despite the various attempts to read Deleuze and Guattari's materialism in a scientistic way – that is, as a cosmology attentive to science (see for example De Landa 1997) – what Deleuze and Guattari propose is a rather minor move, one which attempts to interrupt the appropriation of desire by grounding it in the indeterminate movements of matter. Deleuze and Guattari refer to this move also as a science but crucially a minor science (or a nomad, ambulant, itinerant science). In Proposition III of the War Machine chapter in *A Thousand Plateaus* they describe this as a practice which follows matter's immanent traits, confronts problems instead of applying theorems, pushes matter to the next threshold, connects practical effects and affects of practice. Against a science of matter or a technology to control it, Deleuze and Guattari emphasise practice as the key dimension of a minor science that knows how to surrender to matter. Minor science is a practice which is essentially experimental; rigorous but not systematic, it directly links activity with matter. It is here that the neo-materialism of the 1990s and after can once again become activist, with minor, nomad science on the one hand and the big, royal, imperial science of the state on the other: 'What we have . . . are two formally different conceptions of science, and, ontologically, a single field of interaction in which royal science continually appropriates the contents of vague or nomad science while nomad science continually cuts the contents of royal science loose' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 367). If

there is to be an activism of neo-materialism it will be developed in the decades to come from the practices of the nomad scientist, the artisan who operates within the constraints of matter, who follows singular material possibilities, and who thereby escapes state striation.

V. 2027

> Among the tortures and devastations of life is this then – our friends are not able to finish their stories. (Woolf 1992)

Minor science is embedded in a reality primarily defined by the centrality of scientific knowledge for the making of a polity in the societies of the Global North. Politics are increasingly performed through science itself (cf. Papadopoulos, forthcoming 2011). Physical, biological, chemical bodies can be thought as political in their own right (Protevi 2001). Minor science can respond to this tight articulation of politics and scientific knowledge. Simultaneously scientific knowledge is a constitutive element of a transformation traversing the societies of the Global North by becoming increasingly distributed in society (the so-called 'knowledge society'). The figure of the 'socialised worker' (Negri 2005) captures this move to a mode of production and circulation based on the valorisation of the totality of life and the intellectual creativity of the individual worker. In this context, scientific knowledge on the one hand becomes explicitly political and, on the other, permeates a wider range of social strata than ever before in the Global North.

Minor science is part of the social material conditions prevailing today; it operates below and outside state science and yet, as discussed in the previous section, it is continuously under pressure to be absorbed into the big science of the state.

> The fact is that the two kinds of science have different modes of formalization, and State science continually imposes its form of sovereignty on the inventions of nomad science. State science retains of nomad science only what it can appropriate; it turns the rest into a set of strictly limited formulas without any real scientific status, or else simply represses and bans it. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 362)

Even the very idea of minor science itself can be buried under the desire for the new grand theory which can be assimilated into state science. The minor science of matter can be deployed to support a new grand system of thought; a grand theory that uses all the fashionable and marketable concepts and ideas circulating today – complexity, event, affect, multiplicity, networks, assemblages, etc. – to create a new

meta-framework with which to approach the world. Cosmopolitical assembling as a new cosmology. A new abstract theory. Producing a new grand theory is one possible trap for today's minor science. A Deleuzian century? This would be the end of every inspiring and transformative potential of today's neo-materialism. The unfinished story of contemporary minor science is that it can so easily become absorbed into the workings of state science, that is, become a 'desire for' a grand system, a philosophical materialism devoid of its activist element. This kind of philosophical materialism will then become nothing but a form of governance of things and events. Latour the governor, Badiou the priest, Žižek the buffoon: actors in the imperial court in which state science feeds on the practices of minor science to produce a new cosmology that shapes technoreality.

Minor science and state science are inextricably bound together. In fact, minor science exists in the very core of state science. Pamela Smith has shown how artisan production – probably the most vital aspect of minor science – was crucial for the emergence of the rationalist objectivist scientific world-view which came to dominate the western world increasingly after the sixteenth century. It was the artisans' work, an intellectual revolution from bottom up, that 'transformed the contemplative discipline of natural philosophy into an active one' (Smith 2006: 239). Artisan science was later codified and appropriated into a new disembodied epistemology of experimental science. But experimental science never abandoned artisanal production. In fact experimental science and imperial science always rely on artisanal production and the minor science of matter. It was thanks to the purported modesty of meticulous artisanal efforts that Boyle's bottom-up experimental laboratory science won out over Hobbes' top-down geometric science (Shapin and Schaffer 1985; Haraway 1997).

This is even more the case today. In experimental science, the 'discovery' of 'natural facts' and 'realities of matter' was a distinct procedure that preceded possible technological applications. With the rise of technoscience, such applications become the very drive behind basic research. Discovery *is* fabrication. Science is not about observation but about modification. This situation creates an even more intense pressure for maintaining minor science, making it part of the fast-moving world of technoscientific research. In other words, one of the main characteristics of minor science – its interventionist, direct, ambulant quality – is now a dominant feature of technoscience itself. Propelled by the post-Second World War rise of big science, the later proliferation of the assembly-line industrial scientist (see Shapin 2008), the spread

of an entrepreneurial scientific culture, the neoliberalisation of research culture and the precarisation of intellectual and affective labour, science and its applications increasingly fold into each other. Minor science fuels the everyday workings of contemporary technoscience.

Scientific practices and objects are as much the result of artisanal work as they are of the precarised labour of industrial scientists and of the entrepreneurial investments of corporate and state science. The problem is not so much that minor science and state science meet and collide – an image which Deleuze and Guattari have pictured in their all too typical masculinist reading of science as an agonistic field in *A Thousand Plateaus*. Rather, minor science and state science co-constitute what Donna Haraway calls zones of implosion where the boundaries between human and non-human, nature and artificiality, are meaningless: 'the chip, gene, bomb, fetus, seed, brain, ecosystem, database'. Such imploded technoscientific objects make up the conditions of our actual material presence in the world, they are 'wormholes that dump contemporary travelers out into contemporary worlds' (Haraway 1997: 43).

The entanglement of minor and state science is the very reality in which our material existence unfolds. In these conditions the crucial challenge for minor science is to engage with radical activism again. Among the questions this activism is facing today are the following: How can minor science contribute to the immediate making of liveable words (Haraway 2007; Puig de la Bellacasa 2010; in press)? How can justice be inscribed in relation to our technological objects, our cells and organs, the water, the air, the soil? And how can material justice be instigated in a non-dualistic manner?

As minor science implodes into big state science and itself tends towards a grand system of thought, rather than theorise this implosion, it may be we need to fabulate. Thriving in communities which will only selectively make use of big state science the new activisms that will emerge in the decades to come will be truly operating on the level of matter. They will mobilise radical political interventions through intra-acting with and within matter. The remaking of matter engenders radical liberation projects. And thus perhaps our almost 200-year-old tale of emancipation will happily become a reality.

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Activism, Philosophy and Actuality in Deleuze and Foucault

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Abstract

Deleuze and Foucault shared a period of political activism and both drew connections between their activism and their respective approaches to philosophy. However, despite their shared political commitments and praise of each other's work, there remained important philosophical differences between them which became more and more apparent over time. This article identifies some of the political issues over which they disagreed and shows how they relate to some of their underlying philosophical differences. It focuses on their respective approaches to the state, to 'actuality' and to the analysis of the present.

Keywords: Deleuze, Foucault, activism, state, actuality, history

> But the thought is one thing, the deed is another, and another yet is the image of the deed. The wheel of grounds does not roll between them.
>
> (Nietzsche 2005: First Part: 'The Pale Criminal')

Much of Deleuze's career as a political activist involved common causes with Foucault during the early to mid 1970s. These included his participation in the *Prisoner's Information Group* established by Foucault, Daniel Defert and others at the beginning of 1971, along with his role in the campaign later that year in support of immigrant workers and against racism that was sparked by the shooting of a young Algerian in the Paris neighbourhood known as the *Goutte d'Or* (Dosse 2010: 309–13).[1] Defert and Donzelot describe the interaction with the prison environment in and around the experience of the *Prisoner's Information Group* as a pivotal moment in the history of the forms of political

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activism that emerged in the aftermath of May '68, suggesting that it represented 'a transformation of political intelligence' (Defert and Donzelot 1976: 33). Elements of this transformation found expression in the efforts by Deleuze and Parnet to characterise a new politics and a new relationship between political and intellectual activism. The final chapter of *Dialogues*, published in 1977, develops the idea of radical politics as experimentation defined in terms of Deleuze and Guattari's theory of the different kinds of line or segments that make up a social field, but also in terms of the state as agent of realisation of the 'abstract machines' that overcode a given society. They invoke a 'becoming-revolutionary of people, at every level, in every place, instead of the Marxian concept of a revolution that changes everything by the capture of state power and the establishment of new social relations of production' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 147).

Foucault's work followed a different political trajectory. His 1975–6 lectures at the Collège de France, under the title 'Society Must Be Defended' (Foucault 2003), undertook a critical genealogy of the discourse of war and domination that had provided the language of much of his thinking about power. After a sabbatical in the United States in 1976–7, he embarked on a genealogy of the forms of exercise of sovereign power that led him to explore elements of liberal and neoliberal governmentality (Foucault 2007, 2008). From 1980, his focus shifted away from the exercise of power over others and towards forms of self-government as theorised by the ancient Greeks.

Both Deleuze and Foucault repeatedly drew connections between their own social and political activism and their respective approaches to philosophy. However, despite their shared political commitments and praise of each other's work, there remained important philosophical differences between them which became more and more apparent over time. Their political collaboration came to an end around the time of the campaign against the extradition of the Baader-Meinhof lawyer Klaus Croissant in 1977. In Foucault's case, as I will show, the political differences that emerged in 1977 carried over into his 1978 lectures on neoliberal governmentality. In Deleuze's case, the precise nature of their philosophical and political differences is partly obscured by the highly idiosyncratic account he gives of Foucault's approach to philosophy in interviews and in his *Foucault*, published in 1986 two years after Foucault's death.[2] The lesson to be drawn is that we should be wary of taking their views of the relationship between their respective approaches to philosophy and politics at face value. As Nietzsche's Zarathustra reminds us in the passage quoted above, the thinking that

motivates human actions is one thing, the actions another, and neither of these are identical with the rationalisations or retrospective accounts given by the actors themselves.

The high point of their common political and theoretical engagement was undoubtedly the 'Intellectuals and Power' interview, conducted in March 1972 and published in the issue of *L'Arc* devoted to Deleuze later that year.[3] Together they outline a new conception of the relationship between 'theory' and 'practice' according to which practice is not the application of theory, any more than it is the source or inspiration of theory to come. They reject the idea that there is a single 'totalising' relation between theory and practice in favour of a more local and fragmentary conception. Theory is neither the expression nor the translation of a practice, but is itself a local and regional practice that operates as a series of relays from one practice to another, while practices are relays from one theoretical point to the next. It is in the course of this discussion that Deleuze advances the much quoted formula that epitomises the pragmatism of their approach: theory should be considered a tool-box, or a pair of spectacles that may or may not provide a useful view of the world. If a theory does not help in a given situation, the theorist-practitioner should make another (Deleuze 2004: 208).

This conception of the theory-practice relation as a series of relays within a multiplicity of elements at once theoretical and practical implies a novel conception of the nature and political task of the intellectual as a multiplicity that connects with other social forces rather than a subject who represents a class or a group. He or she is, to use Guattari's term, a 'groupuscule'. Deleuze attributes to Foucault the important lesson of the 'indignity' of speaking for others, as exemplified in the practice of the *Prisoner's Information Group* which sought to bring to the public at large the voice of those imprisoned. In turn, Foucault suggests that it was one of the lessons of the upsurge of direct political action at the end of the 1960s in France that the masses have no need of enlightened consciousnesses in order to have knowledge of their situation. The problem is rather that their own forms of knowledge are blocked or invalidated. The role of the intellectual therefore does not consist of bringing knowledge to or from the people but of working within and against the order of discourse within which the forms of knowledge appear or fail to appear. More generally, it consists of struggling against the forms of power of which he or she is both the object and the instrument.

Deleuze endorses the rejection of the distinction between reform and revolution that we find elsewhere in Foucault,[4] along with the idea that power itself forms a system that is inherently fragile and liable to

unravel at any point. The continuity in the forms of exercise of power, its cynicism as well as its puerility, is manifest in the similarities between the treatment of prisoners, schoolchildren and factory workers that Foucault has demonstrated through his historical account of disciplinary power. Moreover, the then present (1972) political situation shows how the different kinds of repression directed at immigrants, workers, students and young people generally are readily totalised from the point of view of power. The political conclusion he draws is that it is not for those struggling against this process and this future to totalise or to work through existing representative institutions such as unions or political parties: the task is rather to establish 'lateral connections, a system of networks and popular bases' as well as different mechanisms for the circulation of information (Deleuze 2004: 210).

Foucault makes the connection between the problem of finding adequate forms of struggle and the present ignorance of the nature of power. It took until the nineteenth century to arrive at knowledge of exploitation, but we remain largely ignorant of the nature of power: certainly the existing theories of the state and state apparatuses are inadequate to understand the nature of power and the forms of its exercise, as is the theory of class power associated with Marxism. Foucault credits Deleuze's *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, as well as his work with Guattari, for advancing the manner in which this problem is posed (*Anti-Oedipus* was published in March 1972). He implicitly refers to his earlier comments about working within the order of discourse and knowledge in suggesting that identifying and speaking publicly about the centres of power within society is already a first step in turning power back on itself: 'If discourses such as those of prisoners or prison doctors are struggles it is because they confiscate at least for a moment the power to speak of the prison that is currently held by prison administrators and reformers alone' (Deleuze 2004: 211). Perhaps alluding to a lesson learned from their experience with prisons, he adds that it is not the unconscious that is challenged by such discourses of struggle but the secrecy that is all too often the condition of the exercise of power: 'The discourse of struggle is not opposed to the unconscious but to the secret… The secret is perhaps more difficult to bring to light than the unconscious' (211–12).

Deleuze's response obliquely illustrates their differing attitudes towards psychoanalysis. He takes up Foucault's point about relative ignorance of the workings of power by outlining a summary version of the thesis developed in *Anti-Oedipus* concerning the difference between individual or group interests and desiring-investments: it is the nature

of the desiring-investments in a social body that explains why people can act against their interests. Foucault agrees that there is a complex interplay between relations of power, desire and interest and that people can desire the exercise of power by those who act against their interests and even their lives, as occurred in the case of fascism (Deleuze 2004: 212).

Finally, Deleuze returns to the question: how to conceive of the necessary networks and transversal connections between the different sites of struggle against power, whether from one country to another (Vietnam-France) or within a given country? Foucault responds by describing the current revolutionary struggle as one against power rather than against exploitation and, as such, one in which the proletariat may be involved but not necessarily in a leading or pre-eminent role: the struggles of women, prisoners, conscripts, homosexuals and others also form part of the revolutionary movement. Their commonality derives not from a theoretical totalisation but from the system of power itself, which in countries like France is exercised in a way that maintains capitalist relations of exploitation. For this reason, Deleuze comments, 'Every partial revolutionary attack or defense in this way connects up with the struggle of the working class' (Deleuze 2004: 213).

Many of the points made in this landmark interview continued to reverberate through the work of Deleuze and Foucault in the years that followed, albeit in different guises. Much of Foucault's work during the latter part of the 1970s sought to develop new conceptual tools for understanding power and its relation to knowledge or theory. His 1982 text 'The Subject and Power' offers much the same analysis of the totalisation of micro-powers by a dominant or ruling power that he gave a decade earlier (Foucault 2000: 326–48). The first lecture of his 1976 course at the Collège de France takes up the question implicitly posed by his 1972 remarks about the relative lack of understanding of the nature of power and sets out a series of heuristic principles designed to reorient the study of power away from the juridical, political and ideological apparatuses of the state and towards the material operations of domination and subjectification throughout society, along with the formations of knowledge that accompany them. At the outset of this lecture, he returns to the inhibiting effects of global theories in relation to 'subjugated knowledges', defining his genealogical approach as one that targets 'a combination of erudite knowledge and what people know' – the technical knowledge of the practitioners of particular forms of power and the disqualified knowledge of those subject to them – and suggesting that this would not have been possible were it not for 'the

removal of the tyranny of overall discourses, with their hierarchies and all the privileges enjoyed by theoretical vanguards' (Foucault 2003: 8).

The ideas canvassed in the 1972 discussion between Deleuze and Foucault continue to influence many of those concerned to develop mutually productive relations between political activism and academic theorising.[5] But this text also shows points of mutual incomprehension between them. At one point, for example, Deleuze endorses and attributes to Foucault the idea that theory is 'by nature opposed to power', even though Foucault has just suggested that theory always takes place within an order of discourse and knowledge that is governed by forms of power (Deleuze 2004: 208). Deleuze appears to understand 'theory' to mean something like the conception of philosophy as the creation of concepts that he later described as 'in itself' calling for 'a new earth and a people that do not yet exist' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 108). However, this conception of theory continues to rely on the repressive conception of power that Foucault soon came to challenge. Deleuze refers here to the radical fragility of the system of power and its 'global force of repression' (Deleuze 2002: 291; 2004: 208; translation modified).

Philosophically, there were always differences between them. Some of these differences become apparent after the publication of Foucault's *History of Sexuality Volume 1* in 1976. A letter that Deleuze wrote to him in 1977, subsequently published as 'Desire and Pleasure', sets out a number of disagreements over the nature of power and its relation to desire, the relative primacy of desire in relation to power, along with Deleuze's reservations about Foucault's attachment to concepts of truth and pleasure (Deleuze 2007: 122–34). Some of these differences were restated several years later in a footnote in *A Thousand Plateaus* that reaffirmed the priority of desire over power and the primacy of lines of flight or deterritorialisation in any given assemblage (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 530–1).

In retrospect, it is not surprising that these differences should have emerged around 1977. That year was a turning point in the history of the French left, when the adherence to Marxism on the part of many who had participated in the forms of activism that flourished after 1968 began to crumble. The reasons for this were complex, but they coalesced around the issue of Soviet dissidence and the Gulag, along with the contemporaneous and brief popularity of the so-called 'New Philosophers'. For the most part, these were former students of the *École Normale Supérieur* who had been taught by Althusser and who had been engaged in the post-'68 Maoist left: Bernard-Henri Lévy, Jean-Marie Benoist, Michel Géurin, Christian Jambert and Guy Lardreau. Others

such as André Glucksmann were also associated with this movement. His book *La Cuisinière et le mangeur d'hommes* (Glucksmann 1975) was one of the first to combine Foucauldian theses about the 'Great confinement' with evidence derived from Solzhenitsyn and others about the Soviet camps. Levy's *La Barbarie à visage humaine* (Levy 1977) also drew parallels between Foucault's account of confinement in *Histoire de la folie* and what happened in the USSR. He invoked Foucault by describing his own book as 'an archaeology of the present' and by drawing on the theory of disciplinary power outlined in *Surveiller et punir* to frame his account of modern totalitarianism. In this manner, David Macey comments, Foucault became 'part of the new philosophy's vulgate' (Macey 1994: 386).

Foucault's own engagement with the New Philosophers was more circumspect. Macey describes a three-page review of Glucksmann's *Les Maîtres penseurs*, published in *Le Nouvel Observateur* in May 1977, as his 'most significant gesture of support for the new philosophers' (Macey 1994: 387).[6] Foucault praised the book for tracing the horrors of the Soviet Gulag to the manner in which nineteenth-century German philosophy – Hegel in particular – linked the state and the revolution such that revolution promised a true and benign state while the state in turn promised the serene accomplishment of revolution. By contrast, one month later, Deleuze published a denunciation of the New Philosophers in which he expressed his disgust at their martyrology of the victims of the Gulag and of history more generally. He also accused them of trafficking in big empty concepts such as The Law, The Power, The Master and so on.[7] Macey suggests that the reference to power contained an implicit rebuke of Foucault and that their differing attitudes towards the New Philosophers contributed to their 'increasing estrangement' (388). Whether or not this was intended, it is true that Foucault and Deleuze tended to drift apart from the mid '70s, sometimes taking different positions on issues of the day. In what follows I focus on two moments at which important conceptual and political differences emerged between them. The first turns around the Klaus Croissant affair at the end of 1977 and their respective conceptions of the state. The second relates to the respective conceptions held by Deleuze and Foucault of 'the present' (*actualité*).

I. Genealogy and the State

The extradition of Klaus Croissant in November 1977 was a key episode that is often cited as a turning point in their relationship, especially by

some of Foucault's biographers. François Dosse – following a written response by Deleuze to James Miller some years later, in which he insists that there was no single cause of their estrangement but a number of contributing factors – lists the Croissant affair as one among a series of political disagreements, alongside their different attitudes towards the New Philosophers and their deep divergence over Israel-Palestine (Dosse 2010: 314). Croissant had been one of the defence lawyers in the trial of members of the Red Army Faction (RAF) in 1975. After having been charged with supporting a criminal organisation and jailed on more than one occasion, he fled to France in the summer of 1977 and applied for political asylum. In response to his arrest by French authorities in September 1977, Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari were among those who joined a Committee established to oppose his extradition and agitate for his release from prison. Their activities were to no avail as Croissant was finally extradited on 16 November, shortly after the suicide of three leading members of the RAF, Andreas Baader, Gudrun Ensslin and Jan-Carl Raspe, in Stannheim and then the killing of abducted businessman Hanns-Martin Schleyer on 19 October. Foucault and Deleuze were among the small crowd of protesters outside *La Santé* prison when Croissant was removed. However, they took different positions in the public campaign in his favour. Foucault published several pieces against the extradition of Croissant, but he refused to sign a petition circulated by Guattari and signed by Deleuze among others. He considered it too lenient towards the RAF and preferred to restrict his support to the lawyer and to the right of accused parties to legal representation.[8] Macey claims that what Foucault found unacceptable in the petition was a characterisation of the West German state as 'fascist': 'In other words, Foucault was prepared to fight for Croissant's right to asylum, but he would not lend his name to any statement which lent support to a thesis associated with the Red Army Faction itself' (Macey 1994: 394). Eribon offers a slightly milder version of the unacceptable petition, describing it as presenting West Germany as drifting towards 'police dictatorship' (Eribon 1991: 260).

Foucault's reticence towards any support for the opinions much less the actions of the RAF has since been taken to imply that Deleuze and Guattari themselves supported terrorism. The editor of Foucault's lectures, Michel Senellart, describes Deleuze and Guattari's opinion piece in *Le Monde* on 2 November 1977 ('*Le pire moyen de faire l'Europe*'[9]) as one that 'gave backing to terrorist action' (Foucault 2007: 393 n. 26). It is difficult to reconcile this claim with the text of the article. The passage cited by Senellart follows comments on the

characterisation of Baader and other members of the RAF by the press in Germany and France that sought to portray them as Nazis or the children of Nazis. Deleuze and Guattari write: 'Leaving aside the search for filiations, it is simpler to recall that the question of violence, and even of terrorism, as a response to imperialist violence, has constantly troubled the revolutionary and worker's movement since the last century in very diverse forms' (Deleuze 2007: 150). There is no evidence to suggest that Deleuze or Guattari ever condoned the violent actions of the RAF. There is evidence to suggest that Guattari in particular did not.[10] Both were well aware that the temptation to resort to violence was real among members of the post-'68 left across Europe and the passage from their article cited above simply acknowledges this fact. Deleuze and Guattari's text presents the issue of Croissant's extradition as raising questions about the role of Germany in the emerging European Union. They suggest that it has acquired a position of strength in relation to other European governments such that it is able to export its judicial, police and 'informational' model and to become the central organiser of repression in other countries such as France: a decision by the French court to allow extradition would in effect favour 'the importation of the German state and judicial model' (149).

Foucault's increasing distance from the views of his former friends is apparent in his own comments on 'the German model' in lectures delivered in the first half of the following year (Foucault 2008). These lectures were the only ones that Foucault devoted to issues arising directly from contemporary politics.[11] They make it clear that the role of 'the German model' in the immediate political context is part of the reason for undertaking these historical analyses of neoliberal governmentality, even as they develop an account of this model very different from that put forward by Deleuze and Guattari: 'The German model which is being diffused, debated and forms part of our actuality, structuring it and carving out its real shape, is the model of a possible neo-liberal governmentality' (Foucault 2008: 192). An immediate concern in these lectures is to show that policy shifts underway in France during this period, such as the abandonment of a social security system based on the wartime principle of national solidarity in favour of a system that would provide assistance to those unable to participate in the economic game without imposing additional constraints on the market, represent the radicalisation of themes found in German neoliberal social policy elaborated from the 1930s and adopted after 1945. Foucault's broader aim is to show that 'political actuality' is more complex than is recognised by many of the

proponents of state theory. He points out that the work presented in these lectures was undertaken partly for what he calls 'a reason of critical morality' that amounts to a direct challenge to the 'state phobia' that was widespread in twentieth-century political thought and particularly amongst the French extra-parliamentary left during the 1970s. By 'state phobia' he means, firstly, the idea that the state possesses its own intrinsic tendency to expand, 'an endogenous imperialism constantly pushing it to spread its surface and increase in extent, depth and subtlety to the point that it will come to take over entirely that which is at the same time its other, its outside, its target and its object, namely: civil society' (187). Secondly, state phobia involves the idea that sovereign power is a phenomenon with its own essential characteristics. At the heart of this attitude is an essentialist conception of the state such that administrative, welfare, bureaucratic, fascist and totalitarian forms of state may all be regarded as expressions of the same underlying form: 'there is a kinship, a sort of genetic continuity or evolutionary implication between different forms of state' (187).

Elements of this approach can be found among a variety of Marxist theories of the state as instrument of class domination, or among anarcho-Nietzschean theories of the state as 'the coldest of all cold monsters' (Nietzsche 2005: 43).[12] The concept of the state outlined in Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980) also retains elements of state phobia. They propose an abstract definition of the state-form as an apparatus of capture that exists whenever two fundamental conditions are met: the constitution of a milieu of interiority and the establishment of a standard or centre of comparison on the basis of which a surplus can be extracted (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 444). As such, they suggest, there is a 'unity of composition' among different kinds of state that is not found in the diverse forms of nomadic war machine (Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 427). Deleuze and Guattari's conception of the state is by no means ahistorical: there is an evolution of forms of state and, even in the present, there are significant differences between totalitarian, fascist, social democratic and neoliberal states. Yet these different 'axiomatisations' also involve an isomorphism to the extent that all nation states are particular 'domains of realisation' of the underlying capitalist axiomatic (464).

Foucault objects to the essentialism of the state phobic conception that it licenses the 'interchangeability of analyses and a loss of specificity' (Foucault 2008: 188). His aim, by contrast, it to maximise specificity, for example by showing that the welfare state has neither the same form nor the same origin as 'the Nazi, fascist or Stalinist state' (190).[13] Second,

the inbuilt dynamism of the state ensures that, whatever the context and whatever political process is under discussion, it can always be criticised by reference to the worse that will inevitably follow: 'something like a kinship or danger, something like the great fantasy of the paranoiac and devouring state can always be found' (188). As such, the state phobic conception allows its protagonists to deduce political analyses from first principles and avoid altogether the need for empirical and historical knowledge of contemporary reality. In this sense, Foucault argues that it sustains a critical discourse the value of which is artificially inflated since it enables its supporters to 'avoid paying the price of reality and *actuality*' (188; emphasis added). Foucault's analysis of governmentality seeks to disqualify this essentialist conception of the state from the outset. His approach does not seek to extract the essential nature of the modern state but to question it from the outside by 'undertaking an investigation of the problem of the state on the basis of practices of governmentality' (78). From this perspective, the institutions and policies of the state are nothing more than the residue or the effects of the ways in which more or less centralised power has sought to govern territories, populations, economic and social life: they are 'the mobile effect of a regime of multiple governmentalities' (77).

Foucault's final objection to state phobia points to its ignorance of the widespread suspicion of the state from within twentieth-century liberalism. His analysis of the origins and emergence of German neoliberalism shows how this kind of critique of the state and its 'intrinsic and irrepressible dynamism' was already formulated during the period from 1930 to 1945 in the context of efforts to criticise the whole range of interventionist policies from Keynesianism to National Socialism and Soviet state planning (Foucault 2008: 189). The influence of anti-state liberalism in the post-war period meant that all those on the left who participate in this state phobia are 'following the direction of the wind and that in fact, for years and years, an effective reduction of the state has been on the way' (191). A constant refrain of Foucault's criticism of state phobia is a plea for realism about the state and its origins. By implication, it is the lack of realism on the part of his former political companions that contributes to the emerging gulf between them. His genealogical sketch of neoliberal governmentality is one element of a broader methodological argument in these lectures against the kind of political criticism that interprets the present by reference to already given concepts of state and society. His aim is quite different: to investigate the particular ways in which sovereign power was conceived and exercised, in order to show the historical

specificity of government. In this manner, he proposes 'to let knowledge of the past work on the experience of the present' (130). Deleuze and Guattari's treatment of the different forms of state past and present shows that the issue is not simply whether or not the political theorist takes history into account, but the precise means by which this is to be achieved.

II. Philosophy, Politics and 'Actuality'

The distance that separates the conceptions of 'theory' held by Foucault and Deleuze becomes apparent when we compare the latter's characterisation of the former and his attempt to pursue what he presents as a Foucauldian form of criticism of the present. For the most part, Deleuze does not undertake the same kind of genealogical interpretation of the present that we find in Foucault, even though he regularly compares Nietzsche's untimely and Foucault's *actuel* with the realm of becoming and pure eventness that is the object of his own philosophy. One exception to this is the diagnosis outlined in his 'Postscript on Control Societies', and in his 'Control and Becoming' interview with Negri, where he describes the present as the initial stages of a newly emerging 'control society'.[14] This diagnosis stands in stark contrast to the account of the present given in his 1972 discussion with Foucault, where Deleuze saw the political present as a period of repression after the social upheavals of '68 and its immediate aftermath: not only as a response to what occurred in '68 but as the concerted preparation and organisation of the immediate future by reinforcing the social structures of confinement. His diagnosis at this point effectively anticipated the New Philosophers in describing the present period by reference to Foucault's discussion of 'confinement'. In 1990, he offers a diagnosis that draws upon Foucault's discussion of political technology in *Discipline and Punish*, suggesting that this moment is witness to the birth of a society characterised by the predominance of a new type of political technology.

Just as the modern society described by Foucault in *Discipline and Punish* is characterised by a diagram of disciplinary power, so Deleuze describes the new society emerging at the end of the twentieth century as one characterised by a diagram of control. Control society comes next in the series identified by Foucault, in which each kind of society is defined by a particular diagram of power. Thus, sovereign societies were succeeded by disciplinary societies and now 'Control societies are taking over from disciplinary societies' (Deleuze 1995: 178). This raises

the question: what is meant by 'control' in the context of this specific diagram of power? How does it differ from disciplinary power? In the first place, in so far as it is the name of a particular technique for the exercise of political power, we can say in the light of Foucault's later clarification of his concept of power that it involves a certain kind of action upon the action, or the field of possible actions, of others (Foucault 2000: 326–48). Control power is different from disciplinary power at the level of its primary material, its means, modalities and ends. At the level of primary materials, control does not operate on the individual but on 'dividuals', not on the mass of people but on samples or data-banks. Unlike disciplinary societies, control societies do not form individuals to fit certain moulds in order to produce docile bodies, obedient subjects and so on. Rather, they extract dividuals where these are not whole persons but a certain number of functional aspects, each one defined in relation to particular ends. The dividual is a bundle of aptitudes or capacities such as the financial means that ensure a capacity to repay a bank loan or the scholarly aptitudes that guarantee entry onto a given program of study. A multiplicity of dividuals do not constitute a mass of people but rather a sample or a data-bank that can be analysed and exploited for commercial, governmental or other ends.

At the level of the means of its exercise, control makes use of pass-words rather than order-words. Individuals are associated with an increasingly long and potentially endless chain of pass-words, including passwords for their computers, email servers, assorted bank and credit card logins, online shopping, travel agencies, journal subscriptions, professional associations and so on. In contrast to disciplinary societies, control societies do not establish institutional spaces of confinement but series of thresholds through which one can only pass with the right password. They establish different kinds of penalties as alternatives to imprisonment, such as fines, community service, compulsory rehabilitation and so on. They establish home medical care instead of hospitalisation, lifelong education and training instead of schools and colleges, and enterprises of various kinds instead of factories. Control operates in the open air rather than in confined spaces, by means of various digital and electronic technologies. To take an example that has emerged since Deleuze wrote his 'Postscript', consider the manner in which GPS location has become utilised in a whole series of devices, from personal direction-finders to electronic bracelets and other tracking devices. In the words of one commentator:

> GPS represents the final stage of this evolution. Even the electronic bracelet remains essentially disciplinary, transforming the home into a prison and trapping the condemned as though in his apartment burrow. By contrast, mobile technologies of surveillance in real time liberate the individual. They liberate his energy and his desire so that he can work at his own always ephemeral and perfectible integration. (Razac 2008: 61)

At the level of the modality of action, control mechanisms do not impose particular moulds according to the nature of the institution in which they are employed, producing a certain kind of subject, body or relationships. Rather, they involve the continuous modulation of behaviours or performances in and by means of their relations to one another. In turn, this implies a series of replacements in different domains of social life. For example, the replacement of apparent acquittal by unlimited deferral of judgement in the judicial sphere; the replacement of manufacture by the sale of services or immaterial products in the economic sphere; the replacement of examinations by continuous assessment in the educational sphere. In each case, it is a question of abandoning disciplinary modalities in favour of other means of acting upon the action of people. Razac is not the only one to suggest that Foucault's analyses of 'security apparatuses' in the course of his 1977–8 lectures, 'Security, Territory, Population', played a more or less implicit role in Deleuze's characterisation of control society. The basis for this suggestion lies above all in the mode of regulation of a given material that is common to Foucault's security apparatuses and Deleuze's control societies: 'continuous modulation and the treatment of the object of power adapt in real time to what actually occurs' (Razac 2008: 40). At the same time, however, Razac points to the historical difficulty raised by this suggestion: Foucault situates the emergence of techniques of security at the end of the eighteenth century, whereas Deleuze situates the transition to control societies in the latter half of the twentieth century after the Second World War.

In other respects, too, the reference to Foucault, which is fundamental for Deleuze's definition of control society, is more troublesome than it first appears. Deleuze presents his diagnosis as though it corresponded fully with Foucault's method of undertaking an analysis or an archaeology of the present. In fact, it corresponds more with the manner in which Deleuze presents Foucault's method than it does with Foucault's own work. Following Nietzsche's way of writing a genealogy of the present, Foucault reinterprets past practices, institutions and forms of knowledge from the perspective of a hitherto unnoticed distance. His genealogies describe the discursive and non-discursive

formations (*dispositifs*) from which we are separated by hitherto imperceptible fractures in the hermeneutical frameworks within which we live and experience the historical present. In this manner, he shows up the madness of incarcerating the insane, the arbitrariness and injustice of imprisoning convicts, the irrationality of making our identity as subjects depend upon our sexual behaviour. In the terms of his own retrospective account of his genealogical method in 'What is Enlightenment?' these are all examples of practices that were previously considered unproblematic or unavoidable but that we can now perceive as contingent and open to change (Foucault 1997: 315). Foucault describes the aim of his genealogies as pursuing this break with the past in a manner that might serve as a condition for further change.

Deleuze offers a different account in *What is Philosophy?* when he explains how Foucault's analysis of the present does not aim to capture the form of society in which we live at any given moment but rather the form of society that is emerging. He argues that, whereas he and Guattari identify becoming as the source of change, Foucault writes from the perspective of the actual (*actuel*). He does not mean *actuel* in the ordinary French sense of this word, which refers to that which is current or present, but rather something much closer to Nietzsche's 'untimely'. It is in this sense, according to Deleuze, that we must understand Foucault's use of the term 'actuality'. It is not a question of what already exists or is present in a given historical moment, but of what is coming about, of what is in the process of becoming.

Deleuze defends this reading of Foucault's use of *actuel* with reference to a passage in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* in which Foucault draws a distinction between the present (*notre actualité*) and 'the border of time that surrounds our present, overhangs it and indicates it in its otherness' in order to suggest that Foucault writes from this border between present and future (Foucault 1969: 172; 1972: 130). Even though Foucault's text does not describe it in this way, Deleuze suggests that this border between the present and the future is what he means by the actual. He offers a more extended commentary on this passage from *The Archaeology of Knowledge* in 'What is a Dispositif?':

> The novelty of a *dispositif* in relation to those that precede it is what we call its actuality, our actuality. The new is the *actuel*. The *actuel* is not what we are but rather what we are becoming, what we are in the process of becoming, that is to say the Other, our becoming-other. In every *dispositif* we must distinguish what we are (what we are already no longer) and what we are becoming: the part of history and the part of the actual. (Deleuze 2007: 350)[15]

Deleuze employs the same form of words in *What is Philosophy?* in spelling out the proximity of his own 'becoming', Nietzsche's untimely (*l'inactuel* or *l'intempestif*), and Foucault's supposed *actuel* in suggesting that all three terms refer to 'that which is in the process of coming about': not what we presently are or recently were, but rather 'what we are in the process of becoming – that is to say, the Other, our becoming-other' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 112). The problem is that Foucault does not use the term in the manner that Deleuze suggests. His text actually contrasts this border region with 'our actuality' (Foucault 1969: 172; 1972: 130).

A second difficulty raised by Deleuze's reference to Foucault in elaborating his concept of control society emerges when, in his 'Postscript', he reminds us that Foucault himself was one of the first to point out that we no longer live in an age of discipline: 'we were no longer in disciplinary societies, we were leaving them behind' (Deleuze 1995: 178). According to this diagnosis of the present, disciplinary society is already disappearing. The techniques of disciplinary power are in crisis, and institutions such as the school, factory, hospital, army and prison have more or less reached their use-by date: 'It is simply a matter of nursing them through their death throes and keeping people busy until the new forces knocking at the door take over. Control societies are taking over from disciplinary societies' (Deleuze 1995: 178).

In other words, Foucault recognised the end of the relatively brief historical reign of the disciplinary model of power that followed the sovereign model and that had been progressively replaced by the control model since the end of the Second World War. In the course of a 1977 interview, 'The Eye of Power', he noted that 'disciplinary power was in fact already in Bentham's day being transcended by other and much more subtle mechanisms for the regulation of phenomena of population, controlling their fluctuations and compensating their irregularities' (Foucault 1980: 160).[16] Moreover, the fact that he had devoted *Discipline and Punish* to the detailed analysis of the disciplinary model is difficult to reconcile with Deleuze's thesis regarding the meaning of 'actuality' for Foucault. In the terms of Deleuze's hypothesis, *Discipline and Punish* should have analysed what we are in the process of becoming rather than confining itself to the disciplinary society that we were. It is true that in his lectures in the years that followed the publication of this book Foucault did focus on technologies of power that succeeded the disciplinary model, such as mechanisms of security. But this led him in an altogether different direction to that suggested by Deleuze's account of control society, namely towards the analysis

of different forms of governmentality and a genealogy of liberal and neoliberal government. This project led him in the direction of a more and more refined study of the different means by which states sought to act on the actions of people. In the terms of Foucault's study of different forms of governmentality, the idea that a society might be defined by a single diagram of power in the manner that he had suggested in *Discipline and Punish* no longer played a role. Deleuze's Foucault is based upon an earlier moment of Foucault's thought but also upon a philosophical conception of history that does not have the same commitment to realism, or rather the same means of expressing historical reality. For Deleuze, it is the philosophical concept rather than historical knowledge of the past that is supposed to act upon our experience of the present.[17] In the end, they held very different views of the relation between activism and philosophy.[18]

Notes

1. The *Groupe d'information sur les prisons* (GIP) grew out of efforts to support Maoist militants imprisoned during the repression of leftist activity in 1970. Its aim was to gather and publish information about conditions in French prisons and it was organised as a decentralised series of groups around particular prisons. For further information see Deleuze's 'Foucault and Prison' (Deleuze 2007: 277–86) and Defert and Donzelot 1976.
2. As well as this book, a thorough treatment of their relationship would need to take into account the interviews in Deleuze 1995 as well as the interviews and other texts about Foucault in Deleuze 2007. The present article is well short of a comprehensive discussion of the topic but one that I hope will stimulate further investigation.
3. See Deleuze and Foucault 1972. This interview is reprinted in Foucault's *Dits et écrits*, tome III (Foucault 1994: 306–15). English translations appear in Foucault 1997: 205–17 and Deleuze 2004: 206–13. Page references are to the latter version, although the translations are modified.
4. See 'Powers and Strategies', a 1977 interview with the editorial collective of *Les révoltes logiques*, in Foucault 1980: 134–45.
5. See for example Chaloupka 2003 and Rowe and Dempsey 2004.
6. Foucault's review '*La grande colère des faits*' appeared in *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 625, 9–15 May 1977, pp. 84–6. It is reprinted in Foucault 1994: 277–81.
7. Deleuze's text, '*A propos les nouveaux philosophes et d'un problème plus général*', dated 5 June 1977, was first published as an interview in *Le Monde*, 19–20 June 1977. It was also printed as a supplement to the journal *Minuit* (no. 24, May 1977), and distributed free of charge in bookshops. It is included in *Two Regimes of Madness* as 'On the New Philosophers (Plus a More General Problem)' (Deleuze 2007: 139–47).
8. Eleanor Kaufman writes a propos their different attitudes towards the Croissant issue: 'Foucault's support was on legal grounds, and he did not sign the petition that expressed a more vehement condemnation of West Germany's totalitarianising tendencies. The clash between Foucault's position and Deleuze's

more extreme one seems to have been the principal ground for their falling-out' (Kaufmann 1998: 248). She cites Eribon 1991: 258–62, and Macey 1994: 392–7. See also Dosse 2010: 314.

9. Translated in *Two Regimes of Madness* as 'Europe the Wrong Way' (Deleuze 2007: 148–50). I have been unable to determine whether this article is identical to the text of the petition circulated by Guattari. It contains no characterisation of the West German State as fascist nor any suggestion that it was becoming a police dictatorship. However, since Senellart refers explicitly to this text it is appropriate to ask whether it might be read as implying support for terrorist action.
10. Dosse comments that Guattari's refusal to publicly condemn the actions of the RAF or the Italian Red Brigades in 1977–8 may perhaps be explained by his own underground efforts to dissuade many of those tempted by terrorism (Dosse 2010: 295). See also Guattari's review of the film *Germany in Autumn*, in which he comments that the only result of the RAF's actions 'will have been to echo the collective melancholia that has present-day Germany in its grip' (Guattari 1982: 108).
11. Michel Senellart comments in his essay contextualising the 1977–8 and 1978–9 lectures that the study of German neoliberalism and American anarcho-liberalism 'is Foucault's sole incursion into the field of contemporary history throughout his teaching at the Collège de France' (Foucault 2007: 385). Francesco Guala describes the lectures in 1979 as his one and only 'diversion into contemporary political philosophy' (Guala 2006: 429).
12. In the section of Part One of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* entitled 'On the New Idol', Nietzsche writes: 'State is the name for the coldest of all cold monsters. Coldly it tells lies; and this lie crawls out of its mouth: "I, the state, am the people"' (Nietzsche 2005: 43).
13. Deleuze and Guattari develop their own detailed and complex analyses of fascism. A thorough comparison of their approach with Foucault's governmentality analysis would need to take this into account. See, for example, Holland 2008 and Protevi 2000.
14. The interview with Negri first appeared in *Futur antérieur*, no. 1, Spring 1990. The 'Postscript' first appeared in *L'autre journal*, May 1990. Both are reprinted in *Negotiations* (Deleuze 1995: 169–76; 177–82). See also the comments in 'What is an Act of Creation?' (Deleuze 2008: 317–29).
15. The original text reads: 'La nouveauté d'un dispositif par rapport aux précédents, nous l'appelons son actualité, notre actualité. Le nouveau, c'est l'actuel. L'actuel n'est pas ce que nous sommes, mais plutôt ce que nous devenons, ce que nous sommes en train de devenir, c'est-à-dire l'Autre, notre devenir-autre. Dans tout dispositif, il faut distinguer ce que nous sommes (ce que nous ne sommes déjà plus), et ce que nous sommes en train de devenir: la part de l'histoire, et la part de l'actuel' (Deleuze 2003: 322).
16. Earlier in the same interview, he commented that 'the procedures of power that are at work in modern societies are much more numerous, diverse and rich' (Foucault 1980: 148). See also *Dits et écrits*, tome III, 'La société disciplinaire en crise' (Foucault 1994: 532).
17. Deleuze acknowledges the difference between his own and Foucault's commitment to history in commenting in an interview that he did not approach things 'through structure, or linguistics or psychoanalysis, through science or even through history, because I think philosophy has its own raw material that allows it to enter into more fundamental external relations with these other disciplines' (Deleuze 1995: 89).
18. I am grateful to Marcelo Svirsky and an anonymous reader for helpful comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

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Politics in the Middle: For a Political Interpretation of the Dualisms in Deleuze and Guattari

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Abstract

The paper identifies three recent lines of interpretation of the politics that can be derived from Deleuze and Guattari, all of which share a way of reading the dualisms in their work that can be traced back to how they understand the actual/virtual partition, and to an alleged pre-eminence of the virtual over the actual. It is argued that this reading is not only inaccurate, but obscures the political dimension of Deleuze and Guattari's work. Clarifying the latter requires a reinterpretation of the dualisms involved (as dyads rather than binaries), of the relation between virtual and actual (as a formal distinction where one acts back upon the other), and the drawing of a clear distinction between what Deleuze calls a 'transcendent exercise' of thought and sensibility and the properly metaphysical exercise that sets up the distinction between virtual and actual. What then appears is an image of Deleuze's and Guattari's thought that is far more concerned with practical questions and with a situated political practice of intervention.

Keywords: dyad, immanence, univocity, virtual, actual, intervention

That dualisms play a major structural role in Deleuze's and Guattari's work, both solo and collaborative, is a fact that will have escaped no reader. One could, in effect, speak of three ways in which dualism appears in it as a problem. At first, dualism itself is identified as the problem, a target and mark of what to avoid in philosophy: 'the only

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enemy is two' (Deleuze 1973), ultimately the One/Multiple opposition behind both monism and dualism. It is exactly the false choice between these two pairs that the concept of 'multiplicities' is supposed to disarm. But the alternative that follows is set up as an irreconcilable opposition – in the end, 'one can only think in either monist or pluralist terms' (Deleuze 1973). Inevitably, this will raise the recursive suspicion that such a dichotomy is itself still mired in dualistic thinking. Finally, this will in turn cast suspicions over all the other dualisms that run through Deleuze and Guattari's work. They acknowledge as much in the introduction to a book whose dualistic nature is most obvious:

> We make use of a dualism of models only so as to arrive at a process that would refuse every model. . . . To arrive at the magical formula that we all search for: PLURALISM = MONISM, going through all the dualisms that are the enemy, but the absolutely necessary enemy, the furniture we are constantly moving around. (Deleuze and Guattari 2004a: 31)

It is obvious why they would find it necessary to exorcise such suspicions: the threat they represent is nothing less than the ultimate failure of some of the highest avowed goals of their philosophy. If the point is to affirm the univocity of Being, then allowing any form of dualism to creep in risks reintroducing a categorial distinction within Being that returns it to its Aristotelian equivocity. If the point is to affirm an absolute immanence 'immanent to nothing but itself' (Deleuze and Guattari 2003: 49), then the danger is the re-institution of a metaphysical supplement outside the plane of immanence, thereby reintroducing the dative relation that is the sign of transcendence.

Alain Badiou is the most prominent commentator to have stressed how these dualisms can be traced back to the crucial distinction between actual and virtual: according to him, 'the nominal pair virtual/actual exhausts the deployment of univocal Being' (Badiou 1997: 65). While it is not, as I hope to show, a matter of simply reducing all other oppositions to this one, or even of mapping them onto either side of the line, Deleuze's own final statement on his philosophical project would seem to warrant such a conclusion. In his last published essay, the flag of his early 'transcendental empiricism' is unfurled into the presentation of a pure plane of immanence or transcendental field by which the given is given to empirical representation, a field containing nothing but 'virtuals [which] become actualised in a state of affairs and a lived state' (Deleuze 2003c: 363). If it plays such a central part in Deleuze and Guattari's thought, it is inevitable that the virtual/actual distinction should also have a determinant role in interpretations of their work – and thus also

in the assessments that have been made of its political consequences, which is our specific concern here. Looking at recent examples of the latter, I suggest there are three general lines along which they appear, all of which can be traced back to a shared manner of reading the virtual/actual dualism – which, in turn, affects their approach to other dualisms more generally, and to politics specifically. My contention is that the errors common to all three approaches obscure the ways in which Deleuze and Guattari can be useful for thinking political practice. Proposing an alternative reading – in which their dualisms appear as *dyads* instead of *binaries* – coupled with an analysis of these errors, may thus shed some new light on what an activist practice inspired by Deleuze and Guattari *can be*, as well as aiding the negative task of pointing out what (*contra* these three lines of interpretation) it *is not*.

I. Three Times Two Equals One

Let us start by identifying these three different ways of thinking the relationship between Deleuze and Guattari's thought and politics, the first of which expresses a positive evaluation, the other two a negative one. The first approach generally corresponds to a dominant strain in the 'revival' enjoyed by the two thinkers since the 1990s (itself largely due to their English-language reception), in various academic disciplines as well as in some political and artistic circles. Here, Deleuze and Guattari appear as proponents of a politics of 'movement'. Not only a politics of flux over stasis, but also one that pitches social movements (in the broad sense) against institutions (state, parties, unions, etc.), and values openness over identity, nomadic displacement over attachment, the temporary, the mobile, the small-scale and the micropolitical over larger, more permanent and cohesive forms whose horizon would be macropolitical.

It is obvious that this approach finds much support not only in explicit statements made by Deleuze and Guattari themselves, but in many of their overt political commitments and practices.[1] While this interpretation runs diffusely through several texts and political or aesthetic practices, it was arguably the publication of Hardt and Negri's *Empire* (2000) that provided it with a focal point, and the reasons for its prevalence are to some extent tied in not only with that book's success, but with the conditions that enabled it: a worldwide tide of political mobilisation, the protagonists of which by and large fell outside more traditional organisational forms, and which, having first tasted the subversive potential of new communication technologies, articulated a

politics that pointed beyond the limits of the nation state towards a transnational space created by the consolidation of the global capitalist market. It seemed natural that some of those taking part in this moment would find resonances in Deleuze and Guattari's politics. For its positive take on their work, and for the importance this acquired in certain political milieus, one could call this the *activist* line of interpretation.

The centrality suddenly achieved by two such eccentric (in every sense of the word) thinkers has elicited a critical reaction in which we can identify the two other main lines of interpretation. Here, Deleuze and Guattari appear as either *anti-political/depoliticising* or else as *political despite themselves*. In the first case, they are charged with retreating from the site of politics itself into either a quasi-mystical contemplation of the boundless power of creation, of which actuality is only a limitation, or into the purity of a utopianism lacking any footing in the concrete constraints of practice. From this perspective, Deleuze and Guattari are ultimately indifferent 'to any notion of change, time or history that is mediated by actuality' and to the relations and 'politics of this world' (Hallward 2006: 162), caught up in the aristocratic *askesis* of a thought that reaches beyond the actual towards a reunification with an all-productive One-All (Badiou 1997: 22–3); or else are incapable of understanding the most fundamental insight of Marxism-Leninism, for which the question of strategy lies precisely at the point where necessity and liberty cease to be opposed in absolute terms and become related in the situatedness of political action (Badiou 1977: 37–8). In the second case, the equation of resistance with an affirmative desire as power to differ turns Deleuze and Guattari into the unwitting apologists of a capitalism that works precisely through the modulation of desire and the production of difference: here, in short, they become the 'ideologist[s] of late capitalism' (Žižek 2004: 184). If "'enjoy in your little corner"' is 'the maxim of rhizomatic multiplicities' (Peyrol[2] 1977: 50), this can either be read as a call away from political work proper into self-indulgent, inconsequential distraction, or, worse, as the promise of an unfettered expression of desire that may have appeared radical in the 1970s, but which has since then been recuperated into the mechanisms of capitalist accumulation and political legitimation. When resistance has become effectively indistinguishable from capitalism, it can offer no answer to the question: 'how, then, to revolutionise an order whose very principle is constant revolutionising?' (Žižek 2004: 213).

From the point of view of the virtual/actual partition and the other dualisms, it is immediately striking that the image of Deleuze and Guattari's thought that can be extracted from each alternative is

ultimately quite similar. In fact, the first stands in an inverted relation to the other two, so that what appears as positive on one side is negative on the other, and vice versa. This inversion overdetermines the evaluation of all the dualisms whose political sense is more immediately obvious: major/minor, molar/molecular, *dispositif*/line of flight, state/nomad, macro/micropolitics, re/deterritorialisation… In all three versions, the series of first terms is placed on the side of the actual, while the series of second terms falls on the side of the virtual. Not only do they take the distinction as a starting point, they are also clearly premised on a prevalence of the virtual side over the other: 'we need two names for the One *in order to experience that it is from only one of them that springs the ontological univocity designated by the nominal pair*' (Badiou 1997: 65; original emphasis). As a consequence, the image of Deleuze and Guattari's thought that emerges is one that ascribes philosophical and political eminence to the second series to the detriment of the first: a philosophy and a politics of the virtual, the minor, the molecular, the micropolitical, nomadism, lines of flight, and (absolute) deterritorialisation.

It is important to notice that, although both critics and advocates share this *doxa*, each arrives at it in a different way. While the two tomes of *Capitalisme et schizophrénie* tend to be enthusiasts' main point of reference, Badiou's critique is mostly predicated on Deleuze's solo work, where political concerns are much less explicit, and gives little attention to Guattari. Žižek, on the other hand, insists on a sharp break and change of direction taken by the 'original', 'good' Deleuze – from the sterile Sense-Event as the effect of bodily causes towards a notion of becoming as the virtual production of the actual – under the "'bad" influence' (Žižek 2004: 20) of the activist Guattari. Hallward is the only one to grant the same weight to the collaborative works, which would stand in continuity to the others in so far as they also subscribe to a logic where the stress placed on the virtual empties the relations among actual elements/bodies in favour of the direct relation of each actual thing to its virtual 'ground'.

This inverted relation explains the tone common to the three critiques of Badiou, Žižek and Hallward: that of 'revealing' the true face of a thought misread by its 'disciples'. 'Which Deleuze?', Badiou starts by asking; and the answer is quickly forthcoming: we must uncover, behind the usual image of the affirmation of difference and multiplicitous heterogeneity, a 'metaphysics of the One' (Badiou 1997: 20) in which the impulse of thought, though singular each time, is always reconnected to its source in the One-All. Against the same misconception, Hallward

offers a portrait of a philosophy in which what matters is 'the redemptive re-orientation of any particular creature towards its own dissolution', a 'spiritual, redemptive' Deleuze who is unconcerned with matter, nature or the world, an '*extra*-worldly' thinker of '*dis*-embodiment and *de*-materialisation' (Hallward 2006: 3; original emphasis). Žižek's position is slightly different, as for him one must rescue the true Deleuze and his politics from 'the deadlock and impotence of the "popular" Deleuzian politics' and 'the popular image . . . based on the reading of the books he co-authored with Félix Guattari' (Žižek 2004: xi–xii). While not spelled out in Badiou, this political dimension also figures in Hallward, who closes his book with the suggestion that 'those of us who still seek to change the world and to empower its inhabitants will need to look for our inspiration elsewhere' (Hallward 2006: 164).

At any rate, and whatever one makes of these critiques, it is clear how they aim at the heart of Deleuze's project, solo or with Guattari. In Badiou's and Hallward's *anti-political* account, the weightiest charges are at least three. First, that the professed immanentism is in fact a philosophy of emanation; as such, Deleuze and Guattari fail to make the 'conversion' by which 'univocal Being is said of difference and, as such, revolves around beings' (Deleuze 2003a: 91) and instead make the actual/creatural entirely dependent on the creative, self-differentiating power of an extra-worldly One. Second, and consequently, that a categorial distinction ultimately subsists between virtual and actual, entailing a failure to sustain the univocity of Being and a slippage between immanent and eminent or emanating cause.[3] Third, that the resulting thought of individuation is ultimately grounded in what Deleuze calls the pre-critical 'negative of limitation' – and one should recall here Deleuze's entreaty that 'every reduction of individuation to a limit [i.e., as the finite that is said by limitation of the infinite] or complication of differenciation compromises the whole of the philosophy of difference' (Deleuze 2003a: 318). The *political despite themselves* version of the critique, on the other hand, returns to Hegel's critique of the tautology of Spinoza's Substance and gives it a Marxian twist: anything that affirms the world is inevitably too compromised by it; genuine critique can only come from negating it; and so Deleuze and Guattari can only capture their time in a mystified form, by (re)producing its ideology.

Now, if all three interpretative lines – one positive, two negative – only invert the values of a common basic understanding, a defence of the political significance of Deleuze and Guattari's thought will have to share with the critiques a certain task of 'demystification'. In other words, we

may have to rescue Deleuze and Guattari from (some) friends as much as from their foes. If that is the case, the best way to proceed is by working back towards what the three alternatives share – an emphasis on the virtual/actual distinction, and on the pre-eminence of the former over the latter.

II. The Flux *and* the Party?

We could, in fact, start precisely with a situation in which Guattari publicly disagrees with someone attempting to reclaim his thought. In the early 1980s, Guattari travelled to Brazil on the invitation of fellow psychoanalyst and cultural critic Suely Rolnik, where he took part in various encounters and more or less formal debates with several groups from the political milieu that, at that time, was consolidating itself into the Workers' Party (PT). Alongside other texts – including a dialogue between Guattari and a then thirty-something Lula, fresh out of leading the metalworkers' strikes of the late 1970s and running for office for the first time – these debates were collected by Rolnik in *Molecular Revolution in Brazil*, a quietly influential book in Brazil that has only recently appeared in English.

As we have seen with Žižek, Guattari can sometimes be presented – especially by philosophers – as the 'activist' who drew Deleuze away from his rigorous philosophical path. For pretty much the same reason, he finds a warmer reception in the *activist* line of interpretation. This makes it all the more remarkable to discover him involved in the following exchange, in which his interlocutor begins by praising 'what I understand of what Guattari thinks' – that there is a need for 'various molecular revolutions … a multiplicity of feminist, lesbian-feminist, black, and other groups, questioning patriarchal or phallic structures' that should invest in constructing 'new forms of performance, assemblages that seek to question those power structures' that, like the party, reproduce 'the patriarchal structure' (Guattari and Rolnik 2008: 123–4). Guattari replies:

> If the movement works like that, OK. But there might also be situations in which it falls apart. I'll give a historical example: all the different components of the *Autonomia* movement in Italy broke down, and often because of this kind of discourse.… They organized themselves in structures – very interesting ones, actually, such as publishing houses and cooperatives – which within a few months became completely depoliticized.… No doubt this process would have appeared at some point in history, one way or another. Nevertheless, a different script could have been written: the autonomization

> of the feminist members operating as a factor to reinforce the effectiveness of movements [instead of their] collapse into a black hole. Just imagine if all the women in the PT . . . suddenly decided to say: 'That's it, we've had enough of Lula and all that, we're off.'
>
> Comment: And then they'd organize themselves into women's groups. I think that would be great!
>
> Guattari: Maybe. But to think it great that a movement like the PT should disappear is debatable, to say the least. (Guattari and Rolnik 2008: 124–5)

This exchange is located at the intersection of two series: that of a country (Brazil) reaching the end of a military dictatorship that had prevented various micropolitical transformations brewing throughout the 1970s, and whose main point of convergence in the 1980s would become the PT, from entering into compositions that lent them consistency and urgency; and that of a European (Guattari) processing the sometimes tragic defeats of the previous decades, the double edge of Mitterrand's electoral victory, and the onset of the *années d'hiver* of Integrated World Capitalism. The caution and nuance shown in Brazil perhaps have something to do with this descendent curve. It is certainly easy to follow a difference in tone in his collaborations with Deleuze, from the post-1968 heat of *L'Anti-Oedipe* to the exhortations to restore our faith in this world in *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?* Had they lost faith in movement, in micropolitics, in the molecular – in all those things we recognise the *activist* Deleuze and Guattari for – and settled instead for the reform that you could get, the *change you could believe in*? Or was there never an a priori choice between micro- and macropolitics, molecular and molar, minor and major in the first place?

We must take note that even *L'Anti-Oedipe*, an exalted book if there ever was one, does not speak of a *choice* as such. In fact, the opposition between molecular and molar is presented as a 'theory of the two *poles*' (cf. Deleuze and Guattari 2008: 406ff.). This is because

> there is molar *and* molecular everywhere: their disjunction is a relation of inclusive disjunction, which varies only according to the two senses of subordination, depending on whether the molecular phenomena are subordinated to the large ensembles, or subordinate them instead. (Deleuze and Guattari 2008: 407; original emphasis)

How are we to conceive of a dualism that is not a choice? In speaking of two 'poles', what may well have been in Deleuze's and Guattari's minds is the Simondonian *dyad*. This Platonic notion, which interestingly does not figure in Deleuze's review of Simondon's *L'Individu et sa genèse physico-biologique* (Deleuze 2004b: 120–4), plays arguably as structural

a role in Simondon's thought of individuation as does the virtual/actual pair for Deleuze; it is certainly through it that, 'in Simondon's dialectics, the problematic replaces the negative' (122). For a dyad is a relation of inclusive disjunction between two indefinite terms in a dynamic relation of tension that constitutes a field in which the terms themselves become singularised. It is the mistake of the hylemorphic schema to assume the extremes as already individuated givens; the primacy of the pre-individual entails that there is only a polarised directionality between two indefinite extremes, so that 'every realised quality appears as a measure in an indefinite dyad of absolute and opposed qualities' (Simondon 2005: 163).

It seems perfectly clear that the overarching opposition of *L'Anti-Oedipe* and *Mille plateaux* – capitalism and schizophrenia – is meant not as a binary, but as a dyad. Between the two, neither is desirable: 'we have only spoken of a schizoid pole in the libidinal investment of the social field, to avoid as much as possible the confusion of a schizophrenic process with the production of a schizophrenic' (Deleuze and Guattari 2008: 455). 'One does not attain the BwO, or its plane of consistency, by de-stratifying wildly' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004a: 199). But this logic should be extended to the other dualisms: if we understand the opposition between molar and molecular (major and minor, macro and micropolitical etc.) as dyadic, there is no contradiction between Guattari's apparent support of the (seemingly) macro against micropolitical forms in the quotation above. What he saw in that moment of Brazilian history was the PT as the focus for a process of convergence that intensified the heterogeneous desires and groups that went into its constitution, while managing to stop their differences from just being annulled; and Lula, the charismatic figure relayed by the mass media, not as ' "the Father of Oppressed" or "the Father of the Poor"', but 'the vehicle of an extremely important vector of dynamics in the current situation', for 'nowadays one can't consider the struggles at all the levels without considering this factor of the production of subjectivity by the media' (Guattari and Rolnik 2008: 240). This is Lula not (or hopefully not) as the mirror that would become the fixed other of transference, but as a 'transitional object' that could be reappropriated by those projecting themselves onto him.

We must indeed conclude that Deleuze and Guattari establish *no* absolute opposition between, to borrow the title of Badiou's (1977) polemic, 'the flux' and 'the party'. There is no *a priori* choice concerning the forms in which the virtual may become actualised, since that would be to assume these forms as self-identical givens, rather than to think

them as singular solutions within a problematic field defined by two extremes. What matters is that 'there be' virtuality, deterritorialisation, or potential each time – and that it be, as it were, 'cultivated'. To be sure, one can point out the greater arborescent tendency inherent in the party-form, or the risks inherent in the growing identification of a movement with a charismatic, mediatic leader (who then ceases to be a transitional object and becomes the mirror of transference). But to dismiss either outright on the grounds that they possess a 'transcendent' form is precisely to think in a transcendent way: separating the actual from its virtual conditions, reducing it to an a priori form 'filled' each time with content, rather than a singular being each time.

III. To Have Done With Dualisms

Yet does this not take us back to that point common to all three approaches to Deleuze and Guattari's politics: the preponderance of the virtual over the actual? If the 'real' movement, even in the political sense, is that of the virtual, does one not end up with precisely what a philosophy of immanence was supposed to counter: a negation of this world, its vicissitudes and the challenges it imposes on us, and a search for comfort beyond it? Are the critics not correct in pointing out a tendency towards pointless idealism, or the risk of celebrating all one opposes by always discounting actual processes and effects in favour of their potentials? Given practical application, does all this not effectively tend towards an exclusive emphasis on the 'small' or the 'local', and ultimately a refusal of any form of concerted action, scalability, negotiation, institutionalisation, mediation...? A stubborn refusal to see the larger picture in which one may, after all, be complicit – or a condemnation to self-satisfied subcultural irrelevance?

The crucial element here is the verb *to tend*. It is undeniable that the various critiques play on tendencies found in Deleuze and Guattari; the question is what we can gain from resisting their downplaying of other tendencies, and what image of their thought emerges when it is taken as a whole, rather than in half. To that end, we must return to the philosophical questions concerning the virtual/actual distinction. 'In order to suppress the opposition between the One and the Multiple' – precisely the one in which Deleuze and Guattari would be entangled – one must make 'one and multiple cease to function as adjectives in order to give place to a noun: there are only multiplicities' (Deleuze 1973). The point is, precisely, that 'there are two kinds of multiplicities' (Deleuze 2004a: 33), as per Bergson's modification

of Riemann. The one is characterised by 'exteriority, simultaneity, juxtaposition, order, quantitative differenciation, *difference in degree*, a numerical multiplicity, discontinuous and actual'; the other is 'internal, of succession, fusion, organisation, heterogeneity, qualitative discrimination or *difference in nature*, a *virtual and continuous* multiplicity that is irreducible to number' (Deleuze 2004a: 30–1; original emphasis). In the first case, there is only actuality, actual relations. In the other, a 'line that goes from the virtual to its actualisation', an indivisible line whose each division amounts to a change in nature, that is, to an actualisation that happens 'through differenciation, along divergent lines'; the virtual 'to the extent that it becomes actualised [*en tant qu'il s'actualise*], in the process of becoming actualised [*en train de s'actualiser*], inseparable from the movement of its actualisation' (Deleuze 2004a: 36).

In this one finds the elements with which to dispel once and for all the myth of a political 'cult of the small' in Deleuze and Guattari: if the virtual is continuous, and thus foreign to number – if the operation of counting belongs to the actual, and is therefore a way of bringing the virtual into actualisation – then micro or molecular politics is not defined by its opposition to large numbers or scalability. Through its focus on the virtual, it is in fact entirely indifferent to scale, size, or measurement itself, in the same way that the opposition between singularity and totality (the latter being the category that would define dialectical, and as such Marxist, thinking) does not entail the automatic conclusion that 'small is beautiful'. If 'small' can only be said of discontinuous, actual multiplicities, 'micro' and 'molecular' refer to the virtual, continuous multiplicities that are implicated in *any* discrete multiplicity, *big or small*. This is why there is no a priori choice that excludes any actual existing party or leader, or the party-form and the leader-form as such. It is clear, then, that the 'cult of the small', whether celebrated by 'activists' or countered by critics, is premised on a very elementary confusion between the two kinds of multiplicity, when the whole point is exactly not to oppose the Multiple to the One, '*but on the contrary to distinguish two kinds of multiplicity*' (Deleuze 2004a: 31; original emphasis). The extensively 'small' is only 'beautiful' to the extent that it envelops more intensive potential; it can otherwise be quite ugly, turning in upon itself in a passive flight, a suicidal 'black hole', or a reactionary reterritorialisation. It is, in fact, the same distinction at work in the opposition between majoritarian ('not a relatively greater quantity, but the determination of a state or standard according to which greater as well as smaller quantities will be said to be minoritarian') and

minoritarian ('one must not confuse "minoritarian" as a becoming or process and "minority" as an ensemble or state') (Deleuze and Guattari 2004a: 356).

It is important to notice that, unlike all the oppositions it founds, the one between actual and virtual multiplicities is in itself not dyadic. The crucial thing, however, is that the difference between them *not* be taken as categorial, as that would mean that Being itself is irremediably split, and is thus not said in *one*, but *two* senses. It is clear that, for Deleuze, they are to be understood in the same way as he interprets the attributes of extension and thought in Spinoza: as two *formally* (qualitatively, quidditatively), not *ontologically*, distinct sides of the real (cf. Deleuze 2002a: 30–1). Ontologically the same, they can be distinguished in *thought*. This is why the heart of *Différence et répétition* is a chapter on the 'image of thought', which almost 20 years later Deleuze will describe as 'the most concrete and necessary, and leading onto the following books, up until the researches with Guattari, when we invoke . . . a rhizomatic instead of an arborescent thought' (Deleuze 2003b: 283): for the task of 'transcendental empiricism' is none other than to institute a new image of thought.

Throughout Deleuze's oeuvre, including the books with Guattari, it is possible to discern two meanings of 'thought'; two different levels that one could roughly map onto Spinoza's first two modes of knowledge. First, there is thought as representation, which can be understood, with Kant, as the subsumption of a (differential) manifold under conceptual identity. It is never a case of ascribing a secondary reality to the actual, disputing the rights of representation, or arguing that it does not give us something true about the world – that it is a simulacrum or illusion that hides from us the true, virtual realm of Being. On the contrary, Deleuze (and Guattari) are, like Bergson, perfectly happy to acknowledge its practical utility, or that of science: being able to recognise identities is an evolutionary advantage to the extent that it imposes some degree of predictability on the world. The illusion lies not in representation itself, but in the hypostasis of the empirical/actual as the totality of Being. This is why we need a second level of thought that allows us to see the actual as the singular expression of virtual conditions. Given the same phenomenon, this second level allows us to perceive what appears as an identity for the first as being itself constituted by differences *that differ in time*; the empirical is cracked open by what undermines its self-identity and delivers it to new becomings. We can thus say at once that what appears to us is always new, and that it is only from the perspective of a higher, 'transcendent exercise' (Deleuze

2003a: 258) that it can appear as new. Every thought in the first sense appears as new, every repetition as productive of difference – every arborescence traversed by the rhizomatic, every assemblage by lines of flight, every majority by minoritarian becomings, every molarity by the molecular, etc. – when the actual is conceived in relation to its virtual potentials. The evolutionary advantage brought by representation must thus be qualified: the transcendent exercise that uncovers the differential conditions of existence of the empirical is above all a *practical* matter of liberating the potentials given in the present, of seeing the given actual as not necessary, but as open to transformation.

Clearly, however, if the transcendent exercise of thought *relies* on an actual/virtual partition, it cannot *found* it in itself. It requires a 'third mode' of knowledge, a properly *metaphysical* exercise of thought, to provide it. This is why Deleuze – celebrated by Badiou in this regard – remained entirely indifferent to the theme of the 'end of metaphysics' (cf. Badiou 1997: 69). If the point is to advance a new image of thought capable of connecting to what falls *outside* the reduction of the real to *the empirical*, only a *meta*-physics will do. Yet this metaphysics cannot be founded on the immanent movement of history, nor in any apodictic way – since the new image defines thought precisely as the *problematic* expression of virtual ideas. The key here is the Kantian distinction between knowledge and thought. While we need a metaphysics to *think* what this realm of virtuality may be, it is itself premised on the possibility of a transcendent exercise: it is *because* there is a transcendent exercise of sensibility that *senses* (but does not *perceive*) virtual intensities, and a transcendent exercise of thought that *expresses* (but does not *experience*) virtual ideas, that a metaphysical *thought* (and not *knowledge*) is possible.

Once the possibility of a new image of thought has been established – once the 'transcendental' moment has been dealt with – it is no longer a matter of providing a philosophical account of how problems are determined, but of determining them: of experimenting (with) immanence, with what it means to live 'in' (or maybe 'live out') immanence. 'In my earlier books, I tried to describe a certain exercise of thought; but describing it is not yet exercising thought in that way', says Deleuze; 'proclaiming "Long live the multiple" is not yet doing it, one must do the multiple' (Deleuze 2006: 13).

This allows us to understand the importance acquired by concrete ethico-political questions, in particular the dialogue with Marx and the confrontation with the capitalistic plane of immanence, in the two volumes of *Capitalisme et shchizophrénie*. But the goal of instituting

a new practical reason had been clear from the start: 'none of this would matter if it were not for the practical implications and the moral presuppositions of [the representative] distortion' – the 'conservatism' that turns us away 'from the highest task – that of determining problems, of applying to them our decisive and creative power' (Deleuze 2003a: 344). That metaphysics is necessary for an ethics, but must be measured by the latter's effects: this, and not a direct rational (or mystical) intuition of the One-All, is Deleuze at his most Spinozist.[4]

IV. 'Do the Multiple'...

Once the partition of virtual and actual has been attained, it can be applied to the practical task of orienting oneself in the world. We have seen that, for Simondon, orientation always presupposes a position along an indefinite dyad (indefinitely cold/hot, high/low, etc.). A dyad, in fact, is nothing other than a continuous multiplicity that changes in nature (that is, differenciates into a discontinuous multiplicity) when divided; thus, for example, it is along a continuum of indefinitely more painful/pleasurable that sensations can be individualised into perceptions of 'pain' or 'pleasure'. Now, if what we could call Deleuze's and Guattari's *dualisms of orientation* are such continua, it is necessary to conclude that the oppositions they establish define two indefinite *virtual* directions along which actualisations take place. This implies, firstly, a relation of 'more or less' in any actualisation: an actuality can be(come) *more or less* rhizomatic, molecular, minoritarian, smooth, *more or less* arborescent, molar, majoritarian, striated... Secondly, it affords two different registers by which to analyse one and the same assemblage: according to the (virtual) 'lines of segmentarity that stratify, territorialise, organise, signify, attribute it', or the (virtual) 'lines of deterritorialisation through which it flees incessantly' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004a: 16). Evidently, (re)territorialising potential will tend to the stabilisation of some actual forms, which in turn act back upon the virtual conditions of the assemblage as whole. This means that the first register of analysis always necessarily includes actual forms (state apparatus, institutions, binary molarities), though not simply as opposed to and cut off from virtuality; thus, for instance, the concept of totalitarian state 'is only valid on a macropolitical scale', but 'fascism is inseparable from molecular foyers that pullulate and go from one point to another *before* they resonate all together in the national-socialist state' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004a: 261).[5]

In all such dualisms there is, strictly speaking, *only* the middle: if they constitute virtual continua, it would be absurd to ascribe an actual existence to either pole. Moreover, the formal distinction of actual and virtual effectively forbids anything being actualised as, say, 'purely' molar or 'purely' molecular: a purely molar assemblage would be one without any virtual potential (which, as we have seen, is only the way in which actualities *appear* in representation), while pure virtual potential is by definition not actual. To put it schematically, one could say that the 'less virtual' pole has as its limit an actuality with a minimal degree of virtuality *above zero*; while the limit for the 'less actual' pole is the knowable and livable: the point beyond which there is only a chaos where no actuality takes hold.

This designation of 'less virtual' and 'less actual' is evidently inappropriate, since we are talking about two *virtual* directions along which elements are *actualised* as more or less open to variation, as possessing more or less virtual potential. But putting it in such terms can help us understand why it cannot be a matter of *choosing* one extreme over the other: the choice is simply impossible, as beyond each limit there is only impossibility – an actuality without virtuality or chaos.

But what does it mean to speak of 'limit' here? There is a common thread to the *apolitical* and other-worldly Deleuze and Guattari, the *political despite themselves* apologists of a boundless power of deterritorialisation that is ultimately capital's own, but also to a certain aestheticised *activist* celebration of tiny exceptions and infinitesimal local subversions, and to Hardt and Negri's substantialisation/anthropomorphisation of absolute deterritorialising power in the form of the multitude: all of them collapse *metaphysical* and *transcendent* exercises of thought into one another, and thus erase the crucial distinction between *knowledge* and *thought*. For if metaphysics can pose a plane of immanence as absolute deterritorialisation in *thought*, it does not deliver any *empirical knowledge* of the plane *as such*. 'Empirical knowledge of absolute deterritorialisation' is by definition a nonsensical formulation, since absolute deterritorialisation, as pure chaotic virtuality, entails the inexistence of any (actual) subject for whom it could appear as an (actual) empirical object.

The 'transcendent [exercise of a faculty] does *not at all* mean that it addresses itself to objects *outside of the world*, but, on the contrary, that it grasps *in the world* that which concerns it exclusively, and which gives birth to it in the world' (Deleuze 2003a: 186, emphasis added). This is why the 'highest task' of 'determining problems, of applying to them

our decisive and creative power' is a concrete, *practical* question through and through: the transcendent exercise that Deleuze invites us to engage in consists in thinking the actual in relation to its virtual conditions so as to liberate the potential for the new in the present – but precisely *not* as a leap into unbounded potentiality. It is a matter of activating the virtual of *this* actual, '*to the extent* that it becomes actualised [*en tant qu'il s'actualise*], *in the process of* becoming actualised [*en train de s'actualiser*], *inseparable from the movement* of its actualisation' (Deleuze 2004: 36; emphasis added). We never experience virtual totality *in itself*, but only virtuality *in so far as it is mediated by an actual encounter*. If truth is 'in every respect a matter of production, not adequation' (Deleuze 2003a: 200) – problematic and not apodictic – it is because the transcendent exercise does not *know* the virtual, but *expresses* it each time in a new, singular way.

Evidently, the idea of an actual 'mediation' must be said not only of the actualisation of thought, but of actualisation in general. In fact, it is *only* if we conceive of the actual as acting upon the virtual as much as the other way round that the partition of the two can be shown to be formal, not categorial or hierarchical (where one would be the other's ground, in a unidirectional relation).[6] If Deleuze speaks of a 'static genesis' that goes from virtual to actual, it is in order to provide an account of the asymmetrical, novelty-producing character that necessarily falls away if one remains at the mechanistic level of dynamic, actual causes – not to eliminate them. 'The event is of a different nature from the actions and passions of the body. But it *results* from them: [it] is the effect of corporal causes and their mixtures' (Deleuze 2002b: 115; original emphasis). But if there is a difference in nature between the two serial causes, the relation between them cannot itself be causal. The event of an actual encounter between two bodies, being determined by mechanical causality, cannot create the new itself; but it determines new relations among virtual conditions, effecting a virtual Event that produces a new actualisation. A *metaphysical* exercise can think the virtual as a continuous Whole of relations; but the intersection between the two series that effects the Event (the object of a *transcendent* exercise) is necessarily mediated by an actual event.

It is no surprise that all interpretations that posit a pre-eminence of the virtual over the actual will tend to miss the proper place of event, individuation and agency in Deleuze's (and Guattari's) thought: the intersection (and also re-commenced scission) between actual and virtual series. This is evident in Hallward (2006), who faults Deleuze for eliminating individuation and individuality in favour of a boundless

creating power. But also in Badiou (1997), whose exposition of the virtual as ground is by and large premised on the second synthesis of time, thus erasing the 'ungrounding' that supervenes on it with the third synthesis/Event. Žižek, on the other hand, does at one point consider the possibility that the two different ontologies he identifies – virtual as sterile event-effect of actual causes; virtual as productive of the actual – could be the two sides of the same one; but then, not uncharacteristically, decides that the model for such a two-sided ontology can only be symbolic castration (Žižek 2004: 84–5).

V. . . . Then Do It Again

If Deleuze speaks of a '*decisive* and *creative* power', it is because to view the present as contingent and to liberate its potentials for becoming-other necessarily involves an element of decision. Not the autonomous act of an unfettered subjectivity or noumenal agent, since we are dealing with conditions that we neither control nor can make exhaustively clear; but a wager that extracts a new dice-throw not guaranteed by any knowledge. Such is the case with politics, 'not an apodictic science. It proceeds by experimentation' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004a: 575).

What the dualisms of orientation offer us is a series of bipolar axes and double registers with which to consider the potentials of the actual: both to view it as a singular, contingent solution of different problematics, and to guide our choices when acting on it. These choices concern identifying the givens of present problems and producing new solutions to them – *not* choosing one pole over the other, as if they could be treated as actualities. To put it in a formula: no choice between the *two poles*, because one can only ever choose *in between* them. Politics is where life is, and '[t]hings do not begin to live except in the middle' (Deleuze 2006: 41).

In his virtuosic treatment of *Capitalisme et schizophrénie*'s dualisms, Jameson refers to them as a key part of the 'fictive mapping' that organises its materials 'into force fields', but does not linger on the implications of the metaphor: a force field is a dyad, an intensive continuum defined by two or more attractors. He is absolutely right in pointing out that the insistence of dualisms in those two books 'always tempts us to reinsert the good/evil axis . . . and to call for judgment where none is appropriate', so that 'the reader feels perpetually solicited to take sides with the Schizo against the Paranoid . . . and with the Nomads against the State' (Jameson 1997: 412) – but this is exactly what is prevented if we read them dyadically. Famously, it was as an

ethics that Foucault suggested *L'Anti-Oedipe* should be read, listing some 'essential principles' of its 'art of living contrary to all forms of fascism': a series of general guidelines rather than a system of moral judgements attributing good and evil (Foucault 2001: 134–5). The first of these – liberating action from 'every unitary and totalising paranoia' – should then be understood as having the same relation to the others as the self-referential item ('included in this classification') in Borges' Chinese encyclopaedia cited at the start of *Les mots and les choses*. It is the in-built unsettling of the ensemble that pre-emptively exposes as paranoid in itself any attempt to transform those ethical principles into a morality.

If it is true that Deleuze and Guattari place a higher value on deterritorialisation, this value is subordinated to the practical problem of resisting the conservatism that reduces the real to the given and turns the latter into necessity. That this error should be opposed *in act* entails that it is never a matter of saying that *everything is possible*, which is practically vacuous, but of saying that, in every *here* and *now*, there are *potentials* that can be *acted upon*. If the political practice to be derived from this attitude can be given a name, it is *intervention*.

> For an authentic analysis (a schizoanalysis, a molecular analysis, what we call it isn't important) the first concern won't be interpretation, but *intervention*. What can we do to clear up a situation? ... What's the point of trying to determine the role of the father, the mother, the national education system, Knowledge, Power, the Economy, if we don't offer to intervene in any way and to work through these different components? (Guattari 2009: 52; original emphasis)

An intervention singularises a situation as the contingent production of certain conditions, decomposes it into different levels and registers (macro- and micropolitical, molar and molecular, etc.), identifies the potentials and the points that one can get a grip on, and tests its present limits by liberating what may be latent in it. It is premised on *experimenting* with the virtualities 'of this actual', and never (*pace* Hallward) on an *experience* of the virtual Whole as such, in dissolution of every actual tie. While the plane of immanence as absolute deterritorialisation *sub specie aeternitatis* can be the object of a metaphysical *thought*, a direct, unmediated experience of immanence is tantamount to death, or psychosis. A philosophy of intervention is not at all a 'philosophy of death' (Badiou 1997: 24), but a practical work of removing the blockages that stop life.

> To unmake the organism was never to kill oneself, but to… install oneself on a stratum, to experiment with the chances it offers us, to search for a favourable place in it, eventual movements of deterritorialisation, possible lines of flight, to experiment with them [*les éprouver*], to ensure conjunctions of flows here and there… (Deleuze and Guattari 2004a: 198–9)

That death is one of the poles of the 'master' dualism, deterritorialisation–reterritorialisation, shows us that in our *experience* there are only ever relative deterritorialisations – and that this applies even to the most molar, majoritarian, arborescent formations. To deny that would amount to falling prey to representative thought. Here Deleuze and Guattari's methods must be applied back to them in order to show that the sustained critique of revolutionary groups in a book like *L'Anti-Oedipe* was a singular and local response to a certain *style* of militancy that they saw around them at the time; it is neither a critique of any form of organisation whatsoever, nor a principled hostility to militancy as such. We can call the political practice they propose an 'involuntarism' (cf. Zourabichvili 1998; Thoburn 2010: 136), provided we take every care to distinguish this from 'inaction', and see it as strictly opposed to 'voluntarism'. That is, while every action involves a wager that can only be verified in practice, it will be more or less capable of adequately expressing the problematic coordinates of the situation (and thus of successfully intervening therein) to the extent that it is more or less immanent to it, more or less connected to these coordinates. The egoic investment of a group that isolates itself as the subject that acts (the 'activist') is an obstacle to this 'dissolution' into the situation, in so far as it locks the intervention into a duality that detaches an 'active force' from a 'passive matter' by obscuring the several levels in which the two communicate. Deleuze and Guattari's Blanchotian paradox consists in saying: the more passivity is contracted, the more powerful the action; the more one opens up to exteriority, the more one can fold into an intimacy (Deleuze and Guattari 2003: 59); the more one affirms powerlessness, the greater the power that can be extracted from it (Deleuze 2003a: 257–8).

This 'dissolution', however, does not in itself imply a *negation* of organisation. On the contrary: in a situation such as community organising, one can perfectly well imagine that it would take a good degree of internal consistency for a group to be able to sustain an intervention that 'dissolves' itself in the life of its constituency so as to connect to all the flows that traverse it on various levels (the constitution of space, memory, economic or interpersonal relations, etc.).

But how far do these dyads take us from a trivial aestheticisation of infinitesimal change? If we are willing to go as far as accepting that in every nomad there is a state and in every state there hides a nomad (however little), what effect can this really have against an order that survives by 'revolutionising itself'? Deleuze and Guattari will be the first to admit that there is no guarantee: 'smooth spaces are not in and of themselves liberating', but only the place where 'the struggle changes, becomes displaced': 'Never believe that a smooth space will suffice to save us' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004a: 625). No guarantee; only intervention. Lines of flight can turn out bad, either because they find paranoid reterritorialisations, or because they become isolated and turn in upon themselves, or because we are never far from finding out that what we struggled for objectively led to the opposite of what it was we desired. (The French free radio movement, in which Guattari was very active, managed to open the airwaves to non-state actors, only to see them colonised by commercial ones.)

Yet we have already seen how there is nothing in Deleuze and Guattari that is *contrary* as such to the scalability, mass mobilisations or forms of organisation that more radical transformations may demand; the front is always both micro- and macropolitical. And if there is some fairness in identifying in *L'Anti-Oedipe* an 'apocalyptic accelerationism' (Noys 2010), this was never simply premised on the idea that deterritorialisation in and of itself would suffice to save us.[7] To affirm deterritorialising power does not mean saying yes to all deterritorialisations, but knowing how to *select*[8]: hence relative deterritorialisations are never separated from the problem of constructing a *plane of consistency* that allows for mutually reinforcing transversal connections – to the point, at times, of open antagonism. '[W]e cannot allow ourselves a dualism or dichotomy, even under the rudimentary form of the good and the evil.... Good and evil can only be the product of an *active* and *temporary* selection to be recommenced' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004a: 16; emphasis added). It is never just a matter of fleeing, but of constructing an *active* flight:

> Flights are everywhere, they are born again each time from the displaced limits of capitalism. And undoubtedly revolutionary flight (the *active* flight...) is not the same thing as other kinds of flight, the schizo flight, or the druggie [*toxico*] flight. But this is precisely the problem of marginalities: to make all lines of flight connect on a revolutionary plane. (Deleuze and Guattari 2004b: 376; emphasis added)

To faithfully repeat Deleuze and Guattari today consists not in the dogmatic assertion of an *ortho-doxa*, but in a renewed attempt to identify the problems that determined their solutions so as to ascertain to what extent they may still be our own, and in the permanently recommenced search for ways of determining our problems by individualising new solutions in the present. Solutions which, once determined, cannot bypass the problem of producing consistency, nor be satisfied with a vacuous celebration of the virtual, but must negotiate paths between molecular and molar, micro- and macropolitics, de- and reterritorialisation, the clinical and the critical. 'Practice does not come after terms and their relations have been established, but actively participates in the tracing of lines, confronts the same dangers and variations as them'; for 'before Being, there is politics' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004a: 249).

Notes

1. It also downplays others: the non-ideological flexibility in dealing with parties and governments (which characterised Guattari's work at La Borde, with the *Centre d'études, des recherches et des formations institutionelles*, in the free radio movement, and his approximation to Communist, Socialist and Green parties at different points); but also their stances, neither condemning nor condoning, towards armed struggle in Europe and the Palestine Liberation Organisation.
2. Pseudonym of Alain Badiou.
3. For Badiou, it is either this, or the two collapse into each other, in which case the virtual is no more than '*ignorantie asylum*' (Badiou 1997: 81).
4. 'Spinoza does not call his book an Ontology . . . he calls it *Ethics*. Which is a way of saying that, whatever the importance of my speculative propositions, you can only judge them at the level of the ethics that they envelop or implicate' (Deleuze 1981).
5. It must be noted that, despite the recurrent provisos that they are not opposed by 'size, scale or dimension, but by the nature of the system of reference' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004a: 264), the sometimes equivocal use of those pairs that suggest dimensions (molar/molecular, macro/micropolitics) can be a source of confusion. Furthermore, there is one case where the poles are not virtual: in 'double articulation', molar and molecular are both actual and opposed in scale, even if only relatively (the cell is molecular in relation to the organism, the individual in relation to the species, etc.). In this case, the virtual 'matter' is identified with 'unstable flow-particles' (cf. 55).
6. Among commentators, John Mullarkey (2006) has gone the farthest in contesting the primacy of the virtual in Bergson/Deleuze, finding support in a reading of the former to counteract the latter's tendency of overstressing the virtual to the point of placing the processual character of his metaphysics at risk. To do so, Mullarkey argues that the virtual should be understood as the infinite series of successive, actual *Chronos* indefinitely embedded in each other, eliminating the need for an eternal *Aion* of pure, virtual events. He concurs, nevertheless, that it is a matter of playing some tendencies in Deleuze's thought

off against others – and provides an excellent discussion of why and how Deleuze requires all of them, and their tension, to be simultaneously maintained.

7. I believe Noys' coinage does capture a real tendency in Deleuze's and Guattari's work, as well as in other strains of twentieth century and contemporary thought, and that it raises important questions as to how we might strategically conceptualise the relation between capitalism and resistance, especially in the present conjuncture. It is certainly a relatively accurate description of some authors who have appropriated Deleuze and Guattari's thought, such as Hardt and Negri, and (particularly) Nick Land. Where I would depart from Noys' analysis is in what seems to be the almost 'programmatic' status that he attributes to 'accelerationism' *in Deleuze and Guattari*, seemingly implying that they espouse a linear teleology in which an intensification of deterritorialising 'production' (in the very broad, ontological sense) would, necessarily and in and of itself, beat a path out of capitalism through its very acceleration. There certainly are passages, in *L'Anti-Oedipe* above all, that could suggest this reading. I would, however, argue that not only is it countered by many other statements that can be found throughout their work, not least their stringent remarks on neoliberalism from the 1980s on, but also by some fundamental traits of their philosophy. An accelerationist 'programme' sits uncomfortably with a radical ontological commitment to contingency and an opposition to any teleologism. Furthermore, (absolute) deterritorialisation, as a veritable ontological principle, is independent from and irreducible to its historical embodiment in capitalism; it neither relies on the latter exclusively in order to take place, nor would it fail to apply even in a putative 'post-capitalist' world. Rather than a generalised goal or an invariable strategic bet, the stress on deterritorialisation points to situated, tactical engagements against structures and blockages that are given. In other words, to *relative* deterritorialisations that are never entirely separated from the formation of new assemblages: 'the collective recapturing of those dynamics that can destratify the moribund structures and reorganize life and society in accordance with other forms of equilibrium, other worlds' (Guattari 2002: 260).
8. As far back as *Nietzsche et la philosophie*, Deleuze already made it clear: 'The real as such is an ass' idea.... Affirmation understood as... affirmation of what is, as truthfulness of the true or positivity of the real, is a false affirmation. It is the ass' "yes".... The Dyonisiac "yes", on the other hand, is that which knows how to say "no".... To affirm is to create, not to carry, to bear, to take on' (Deleuze 2001: 208–13).

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The Greek Gloom and the December 2008 Uprising

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Abstract

This paper employs the notion of apparatus of capture in the context of the historical formation and transformations of the Greek nation state. The aim is to demystify the overcoding poles of political sovereignty as they are expressed in different chronological periods and to sketch an analysis of the appropriations of social living forms, social movements and war machines into regimes of signs. The term war machine is deployed as a key term for grasping the variables of content and the variables of expression that are encountered in the different historical circumstances. The order word modernisation illustrates not only the machinic enslavement but also new social subjections within a society of the spectacle and global capital. The account given here of the December 2008 uprising in Greece offers an insight into the political event and attempts a pragmatic analysis of the December war machine.

Keywords: apparatus of capture, war machine, history, modernisation, uprising, Greece

The following essay offers a student perspective on activism that attempts to make sense of the chapter '7000 B.C.: Apparatus of Capture' from Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus* and records a fragmented trajectory of modern Greek history. The record outlined here is chronological, moving from the early stages of the formation of the Greek nation state to the series of modernisations that took place in the closing decades of the twentieth century. The final section provides an account of the December 2008 uprising and describes the political activism that accompanied the events. The term war machine is used

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abstractly throughout for different expressions of war, violence and resistance. The aim is to synchronise an outline of major Greek history with Deleuze and Guattari's theories of the state and minor politics.

The Greek historical climate is analysed in terms of vertical and horizontal political significations, national suppressions and regimes of resistance. Analysis of the Greek economy and the state is combined with an account of semiotic transformations arising within the society of the spectacle. The spectre of anarchy is tracked through the symbolic and political transitions of recent decades and an account given of the social violence erupting on the street and in the university.

Finally, I attempt to touch upon aspects of modernisation in terms of Greekness, the proletariat, the middle class, the Left, the so-called anarchist 'space', and resistance against authority and police repression. Here the account is mainly concerned with outbreaks of street violence and the principles of autonomous resistance.

I. 1821–96: The Double-Headed Eagle

The year 1821 marks the beginning of the Greek war of independence against the Ottoman Empire. The struggle of the bandits becomes an armed mobilisation essentially directed against the Ottoman state (Vournas 1974: 31–4). The war machine is soon captured. A double-headed eagle, a symbol of the revolution, looks in opposite directions, one head to the east, the other to the west. In one of its variations the eagle is crowned and holds a globe with a cross in its left foot, and a lance in its right (Herzfeld 1989). The double-headed eagle suggests a double articulation of political sovereignty.

The east-facing head implies both an overcoding pole, encapsulating the Christian-orthodox and despotic signifiers, and a pole signifying the supersession of those signifiers in the parliamentary function and the processes of national subjection. Conspiracies are hatched and town revolts erupt when the state's overcoding itself provokes decoded flows: whether the economic and social privileges of chieftains of the revolution in regional towns or the constitutional or cultural demands of the centralised political forces. The first governor of Greece, Kapodistrias, is assassinated in 1831 and the Bavarian king Otto has to deal with regional revolts during his reign until 1862 (Omada Enantia stin Lithi 1996: 359–400; Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 477–80). Moreover, despite the church's alignment with the state, the crown and the sultan, there are flows of Christian irredentism that bring about crises over the Eastern Question (Skopetea 1988: 251–71; Stathopoulou 1991: 166–204).

The west-facing head resonates with the glorifications of classicism and rationalism in western thought. Archaeology has discovered among the ancient Aegean civilisations highly evolved empires that had solved the western problem of how to 'take advantage of the oriental agricultural stock without having to constitute one for themselves' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 497). Classicism and the Enlightenment entail not just philosophy or aesthetics but an art of war, based on flows rather than codes.

The Greek state born out of the revolutionary machine enters into a series of financial pacts and military alliances with the quasi-imperialistic European states. This western alignment effectuates the public parliamentary function (with pro-French, pro-British and pro-Russian parties) and determines the financial and diplomatic arrangements of the Greek state while overcoding it with notions of Hellenistic and ancient Aegean glory. In the vacillating poles of political sovereignty the capitalist axiomatic of flows is introduced into a glorified archaeological democracy. In 1896 Athens mounts the revived Olympic Games.

The disjunction between the nationalists and the modernists after 1875 illustrates the knots at the western pole (Vournas 1974: 498–535): The oriental solution of the nationalists and the resonances of Hellenist-Christian irredentism on the one hand; the western solution of the modernists aligned with the capitalist axiomatic for the territories that would be annexed on the other. 'It is as if two solutions were found for the same problem, the oriental solution and then the western one, which grafts itself upon the first, and brings it out of the impasse while continuing to presuppose it' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 498).

II. 1914–22: The National Schism

In 1912, in the first Balkan War, the newly formed Christian states of Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia and Montenegro go to war against the Ottomans. The Balkans claim autonomy for the Christian populations in the Ottoman territories but the Ottomans ignore their ultimatum. The outcome of the war falls in favour of the Balkan League. The Great Powers consent to the annexation of some territories but raise objections with regard to others, leading in 1913 to the second Balkan War. The outbreak of the First World War the following year places the Greeks in an ambivalent position. The liberal Prime Minister Venizelos joins forces with the Allies, while the German-friendly king Constantinos holds to a supposedly neutral position. In 1916 the Greek state is split between two capitals: the pro-Venizelists in Thessaloniki and the royalists in

Athens. When the French occupy Athens, battling with the royalists and blocking all commercial flows, angry royalist supporters blame the liberals as traitors. Venizelos is excommunicated by the Orthodox Church, and in December 1916 thousands of people gather in Athens to throw signed stones of anathema in protest at the 'Satan-traitor' (Delta 1988: 277–80).

In 1917, with support from the British and the French, Venizelos returns to Athens and Greece enters the Great War. The outcomes are positive for Greece and in 1919 Greek troops land in Asia Minor to protect the Christian population. Venizelos wages a war of diplomacy, and of gradual territorial annexation, so as to pursue the 'Great Idea' of a 'Greece of five seas and two continents'. The romantic-nationalist pole, however, wins the elections of 1920 and the Greek army marches deeper into Turkey. The result is the 'Asia Minor Catastrophe' of 1922 and the first compulsory population exchange, involving approximately 2 million refugees.

The formation of the new Turkish state under Kemal Atatürk coincides with the waning of the 'Great Idea', along with the definitive collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Kemal's war machine against the sultan and the Greeks, and his pacts with the Allies, seeds the birth of the Turkish state in the pattern of the *Zeitgeist*. The Great Powers have to negotiate with another isomorphic albeit heterogeneous player. The Greek–Turkish friendship from then on becomes a recurrent issue.

III. The Greek Language Question and the People's Refrain

The Greek language question reveals not only the suppressive mechanisms involved in the birth and coming of age of the nation state but also how it was transformed by 'nationalitarian' phenomena (see Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 504). From 1830 to 1890 the major language of bureaucracy and the political elites is a purifying version that settles the tension between archaic and modernist-colloquial varieties in favour of archaic constants (especially ancient Athenian Greek). However, the demotic or vernacular language gradually comes to affect the major language. From 1888 a linguistic radicalism in favour of the demotic language begins to tip the balance towards modernist constants with socialist, romantic, nationalistic, or even racist variations (see Fragkoudaki 2001).

Over the following years more literature is written in the demotic language, but despite attempts at educational reforms the archaic varieties continue to dominate. The indirect discourse they are based upon entails a diachrony with ancient Greek and a synchrony with the

archaic religious language of Orthodoxy, and in general with the dogmas of Hellenist-Christianity. After the collapse of the 'Great Idea' and the relocating of the enemy from the external (the Turks) to the internal (the communists), the demotic language also comes to be linked more closely with the workers' movement and the Left.

In an implementation of realpolitik, the liberal Venizelos passes a series of educational reforms in favour of the demotic language, but also in 1929 issues a legal order word, the *idionymon*, that penalises insurrectional ideas and aims in particular to prosecute communists and anarchists and to enforce repression against unionist mobilisations. With the coming of the Great Depression, Venizelos is forced to default on Greece's national debt, built up from loans for industrial modernisation and the housing of refugees from Asia Minor.

The refugees bring with them a sound of the east, a people's refrain. The *bouzouki* and other oriental instruments become orchestrated with the Greek voice. The refugee songs, known as 'Rebetika', relate tales of love couplings, dominations and subjections, either to authority or to addictions. The Rebetika are censored by government, while the Left passes moral judgement on their delinquent content. Nevertheless, they are the seed that would transform a recurring Greek sound. Musical matters of expression and the Greek voice merge at this particular period into a Greek chromatic sound that will become popular from the 1950s onwards.

IV. 1950–74: The Repressive Modernisation

During and after the Second World War the Greek milieu becomes polarised between the eastern Soviet pole and the western Anglo-American pole, both with their limits and thresholds. The Greek civil war lasts from 1944 to 1949. The communist resistance attempts to prevent a capitalistic state but it also anticipates it: radical socialist elements of people's power and gender equality coexist alongside property rights and the operation of the state as coordinator of private relations (Hart 1996: 273). By the 1950s the Greek milieu will definitely belong to the western neighbourhood of the capitalist megamachine (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 480).

The right-wing Greek state overcodes its national sovereignty by means of a structural violence. The Communist Party is declared illegal and the military and police issue an order word obliging citizens to sign a certificate of national (anti-communist) beliefs. Many Leftists are imprisoned or sent into exile on rocky islets. As Athens becomes

rapidly populated by new proletarian flows from the countryside, urban planning by army technocrats striate the city, ensuring that highway constructions and administrative centres provide easy military access and facilitate police control. This is a new technical machine. On the basis of this urban rationale military groups seize Athens and usurp power in 1967 (Anonymous 2002: 55–80).

The modern social subjection also derives from the organisation of housing policies, which aim at promoting private property in newly built blocks of flats. In this way, people living in refugee slums and working-class neighbourhoods lose their social networks and tend to be assimilated into a new urbanised middle class. The state's recognition 'that workers work better when they have a decent house' resonates with the greed of the new class of building contractors (Anonymous 2002: 80–72; Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 1989: 499–505); the resulting urbanisation of the period is described in Greek as a 'construction orgasm'.

The repressive modernisation of the period is also related to the rise of a public sphere with a mixed semiotics. In 1952, women gain the right to vote and be elected, but they still represent servants for the reproduction of the nation and guardians of the family (Komninou 2003: 69). Through the spectacle and the culture industry, capitalism advances its own limits of a libidinal economy. In the commercial Greek cinema of the period there is an overloaded investment in a modern version of a deviant femininity that decodes traditional gender relations, but the recurrent narrative ending is either a happy orthodox marriage or a life condemned in sin and shame (Athanasatou 2001: 342–6). The new task of the state apparatus consists in 'organizing conjunctions of decoded flows as such' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 498); in the Greek case this entails not only the participation of women in the labour market, in the public sphere and in the spectacle, but also their social subjection to a folded patriarchy. A modern house, a modern family and a night out at the *bouzoukia* clubs smashing plates: these are some of the prerequisites for the new social subjection.

There is also an international aspect to the national subjection. The dominant patriotic regime resonates with the desire for the union of mother Greece with Cyprus, but negotiates this revived irredentism with NATO and the USA. On the other hand, there is also a patriotic counter-signifying regime which turns away from the West to enunciate a polemical anti-Americanism (Stefanidis 2008: 285–306). The escalating left-wing mobilisations of the early 1960s share this patriotic passion, but direct it towards the East and the Third World struggles of the times.

The strategy of the repressed Left is to wear the face of Greekness, but provide another post-traumatic consciousness for it. In poetry and music this is expressed in the glorification or relative deterritorialisation of both the Greek *topos* and the victimised heroism of the people (Gavriilidis 2007). This radical patriotism integrates the war machine of the 1960s into a mixed semiotic (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 131). In December 1960 it is the construction builders who first clash with the police and initiate a cycle of violent protest. Unionist mobilisation then escalates, making specific professional demands on the state, but also fighting against the structural violence of the police (Lampropoulou 2008: 220–41). Over the next years, the workers' and students' demand for democratisation of the state crystallises around the Left. From 1963 the Left aspires to gain power and gradually bring about a socialist transformation. Until 1963 it encouraged the counter-violence of the movements but from then on strives to pursue the struggle at the level of axioms. The situation comes to a head with the political assassination of the pacifist MP G. Lamprakis in 1963 and the killing of a student by police in the summer of 1965, when for over 40 days thousands of people take collective action on the street and clash with police (Katsaros 1999: 49–70).

This war machine should not be identified with the Left. It is rather what escapes from both the conjugation of capitalist flows of the repressive state and from the hierarchical organisations of the Left. If it is identified with the Left, it must be considered to have been defeated, since in 1967 the colonels' tanks march into the same streets and take over the power. From 1974, after the fall of the junta, the Left becomes assimilated into political games within social democracy. The war machine is rather the unnameable revolutionised mass of the period. It creates sheets of past that relate to the coexistence of a proletarian consciousness and a flight from the plane of capital (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 521), and its peaks of present always involve its zone of indiscernibility between the poles of political sovereignty.

Such a high point of the war machine is the Polytechneio uprising in 1973. It begins as a students' revolt against the junta liberal reforms. The revolutionised youth creates a snowball effect and thousands take on to the streets. The spontaneity of the uprising and the heterogeneity of the crowds inhibits any organisation from the Left in terms either of armed revolt or public negotiations. The reformists accuse the revolutionary Left of being inciting agents. Everybody anticipates the intervention of the army that eventually suppresses the uprising. The consequences are another coup in Greece and in Cyprus, which results in the Turkish invasion and the division of the island.

In 1974, Karamanlis, the engineer of the repressive state of the 1950s, returns to secure national unity and consolidate democracy. He makes the date of the Polytechneio uprising a national anniversary, legalises the Communist Party and resolves the language question by establishing the demotic as the official language. Moreover, the monarchy is abolished by plebiscite. The right-wing government, despite the lure of neoliberalism, added social welfare axioms in order to meet the requirements of the European Community.

V. 1981–2004: The Populist Modernisation and the Spectre of Anarchy

In 1979–80, without the consent of the organisations of the Left, students occupy some of the universities and demonstrate against the educational reforms planned by the right-wing government. The students are labelled as anarchists. On the anniversary of the Polytechneio Uprising in 1980 a 21-year-old worker and 26-year-old student are killed by the police. Riots break out, because the government bans the rally from accessing the American embassy.

The ultra-populist Papandreou, leader of the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), wins the election of 1981 under the slogan 'change'. He had promised withdrawal from NATO and the then EC and the closing down of the US military bases, but none of these are actualised. In 1981 Greece is officially a member of the EC. Papandreou adds more axioms signalling a shift in the style of government, but not in substance. His reforms bring Greece out of the national closet: civil marriage is introduced against stiff opposition from the church, adultery is removed from the catalogue of criminal offences and the dowry system is, legally at least, abolished. Papandreou also amends the family law and adds axioms at practically all levels of social policy (Clogg 1994: 183–4). He becomes so popular that Greeks refer to him by his first name, Andreas.

PASOK's decentralised socialism involves the nationalisation of problematic companies already indebted to the largely state-controlled banks. This, far from bringing with it any noticeable improvement in productivity, merely provides an opportunity to continue the former right-wing patronage by way of expanding the pay-roll. Via the leader's populism, the new policies regulate anti-production with social welfare policies and bounteous financial opportunism (Clogg 1994: 188). The slogan 'change' orders that capital will continue to produce surplus value thanks to the government's rescue of capitalists, and on the

other hand that the state will regulate public debt. The public sector and bureaucracy grows gigantic; consent is secured by appointments in the public sector based on clientist relations; alliance with the party and favouritism for its members serves the interests of individuals and families and masquerades as realising the socialist liberal desire for the promised civil society. Andreas, despite his socialist polemic, ensures social subjection within the wider capitalist axiomatic.

Andreas functions as a libidinal image that symbolically occupies a limit but at the same time signals the displacement of capitalist desire. It is striking how he obscurely fascinates the crowds when, in an outspoken way, he dumps his feminist wife, a figure of some political standing, for a much younger air hostess, and even more striking how, when he is accused of being bribed by a capitalist, he still remains adored as a political icon. An oedipal detail of the 'dirty 89', the year a series of scandals breaks, is that the money is hidden in nappy boxes. The same year, radio and TV broadcasting are deregulated and the Adam Smith complex replaces the Oedipus complex. The resulting so-called deregulation is related to the wider re-structuring of communication systems and the new forms of machinic enslavement and media ecology.

In between, anarchists and autonomists with no clear outlines along with intellectuals and artists and other members of what is generally referred to as the underdog political culture, begin to settle in Exarchia, a neighbourhood close to the Polytechneio. In 1984 the police pursue a gentrification policy in the area, since the youth's abstract politicisation and radical culture can not be easily assimilated by the state apparatus. On the anniversary of the Polytechneio uprising in 1985 a 15-year-old student is shot by the police. The Polytechneio and the Chemistry department nearby are occupied and violent protests take place. The police invade the buildings, despite the university asylum which forbids the police and the army from entering university premises. The state demonstrates its capacity for 'socialist' structural violence. At the same time a war machine against the monopoly of state violence forms. It is rooted in an anarchist polemic which endangers it but also effectuates a space of unlimited and vital political expression.

In 1990–1 there is a high-school student mobilisation and another cycle of contention. The educational reforms introduced by the right-wing government include anachronistic measures like compulsory school uniforms, prayer and hoisting of the flag, and generally a tendency to limit student rights in favour of an arbitrary school. Moreover they increase competition for university entry and do not by any means

resolve the issue of fee-paying crammer schools. Overall, education is to be based more on memorisation than critical thinking.

The wave of high-school occupations sweeps the country. In Athens the demonstrations are violently repressed by the police. It is during this time that I first encounter political theories and become involved in political activism. The period remains significant not so much for our eventual victory in resisting the government's measures but for the fact that the seeds of a proletarian consciousness were sown, at a critical distance from party and other groupuscules, in spite of the desire for belonging.

The situation culminates in the events of 1991 when a left-wing teacher is killed by far-right thugs and four civilians die when a building is set alight during a demonstration the next day. The blame is placed on the anarchists for their agitation against the social order, despite the fact that the fire most probably resulted from the extensive use of tear gas by the police. It is at the beginning of the '90s that an anarchist 'space' becomes more articulated, in contrast with the vertical organisations of the Left. From then on, arson becomes a virtuality haunting this 'space'.

Not long after, in 1993, the government pursues the privatisation of public transport and other conservative reforms. The bus drivers are polarised and strikers clash with the police. However, a shift is marked during this time, as the flow of Albanians and other immigrants from around the globe become the new constant capital. Greek capitalists exploit this development, while the state does little to secure the immigrants' civil integration and public-opinion gate-keepers cultivate a climate of xenophobia. This racial class rupture will mark the atrophy of the proletarian consciousness over the next few years.

The anarchist movement that gains momentum mainly among the youth detaches itself from struggles at the level of axioms, since its relation to labour is one of precariousness, of a proclaimed negation of wage labour and of inertia in regard to capitalist relations. The figure of the proletarian will be replaced in some anarchist factions with the figure of the revolutionary, the scarlet slogan 'revolt' taken to justify its avant-garde position. In 1995 at the anniversary of the Polytechneio uprising, anarchists occupy the university. University asylum is again violated when the building is burned and more than 500 are arrested and filed as extremists. Some anarchists from then on tend to appropriate the Polytechneio as their symbol of revolt. It is in this way that the 'space' is striated in police files and in the area around Exarchia.

The rupture in proletarian consciousness will be even more obvious in the next few years as the order word 'modernisation' takes on new

forms of circulation. The stock-market crash of 1999 involves lower- and middle-class civilians, even in remote regions of Greece, who invest their microcapital in so-called bubble stocks and lose their savings as a result. Elsewhere, the events in Seattle and Genoa inspire a mobilisation in Greece during the EU–Western Balkan Summit in Thessaloniki in 2003, where the Black Bloc attempt a more organised presence in terms of social counter-violence within the anti-globalisation movement.

In 2004 Athens hosts the Olympic Games and national pride in the cradle of democracy is revived. However, with foreign and public debt escalating, the right-wing government proves to be iniquitous. A series of public scandals break out, involving almost all levels of social authority: judges, priests, bankers, MPs and ministers, civil servants, journalists... The slogan now becomes 'shed light', but the gloom is thick. On the one hand, the processes of subjectification have managed to cultivate indifference, cynicism and atavistic consumerism; on the other hand, the counter-signifying regime is either appropriated by the mainstream Left or endangered by the sublimation of social war by the anarchists.

VI. The December 2008 Uprising

One further precursor of the December 2008 uprising is the student movement of 2006–7. The state's programmes for education reform generally try to link the public university with the axioms of private education. In response, student organisations on the Left, following a logic of hegemony, try to dominate the students' assemblies and impose a parochial politics. In June 2006 and March 2007 proletariat youth fight against police repression and the mobilisation turns into an uprising. The situation is already complicated as the students – the so-called 'generation of 700 euro' (the minimum wage), who somehow have to invent a life within the new capitalist relations – merge on the street with the anarchists and the lumpenproletariat.

This unnameable student proletariat affiliates more closely with the conscientious labour objectors than it does with the myopic Left (cf. Thoburn 2003). There is, however, a tendency to relate the student mobilisations with labour issues and with new forms of activism, like the blocking of public transport, occupations of radio stations, protests in workers' neighbourhoods and reclaim-the-streets parties. What has remained from these mobilisations are the networks of social relations that ensued from the occupations, a spirit of solidarity that grows out of autonomous forms of organisation, and a student community

that, even if it didn't manage to intensify qualitatively the mobilisation, nevertheless discovered new lines of flight.

In the summer of 2007, a series of forest fires break out across Greece leaving the land scorched. Many mourn and others covet the ready-to-be-built-upon land. The echoes of the financial crisis reach Greece. In December 2008 in the area of Exarchia – a sanctuary for political underdogs – a 15-year-old student is cold-bloodedly shot dead by the police. The murder releases a flow of resistance and affect. A war machine forms against state repression and the capitalist colonisation of everyday life. The line of flight it traces is a line of fire, and one that is not easily put out. Police repression meanwhile escalates; the city chokes with tear gas and the mainstream media churn out legalistic nonsense, promoting bad conscience and binary divisions between good and bad demonstrators.

Even though it is the anarchists who trigger the line of fire, in the demonstrations, behind the barricades, and in the assemblies the war machine is formed by a multiplicity of crowds. Anarchist politics germinates the seeds of the politics of the act, but the war machine exceeds their political signals (see Day 2008). The social composition of the uprising is not polarised between political or ideological milieus but involves bevies of high school and university students, unnameable proletarians, lumpenproletarians, refugees, immigrants and civilians who have no prior fixed political allegiance but choose to participate in the violent expression against the police, against chain stores as symbols of the society of the spectacle, against the banks as symbols of financial capital, and against public buildings as symbols of the state (Kalamaras 2009: 21).

Following the early days of 'burning and looting' a smoother urban space is created: Universities in Athens and Thessaloniki are occupied by political activists; high-schools and university departments by students; the HQ of the Workers Confederation by insurgent workers; the HQ of the News Editors Union by media activists, the National Opera House by artists. From occupied municipal buildings and other public spaces in many Greek cities there are calls for people's assemblies; public TV and radio stations are interrupted briefly by activists. The December uprising is a feast of activism, a feast in the most original sense. This is because the series of events are organised by the revolutionary assemblages themselves and the duration of the uprising depends on their political will and creativity and ability to overcome fatigue.

A pragmatics of the war machine deals with how it is appropriated. The dominant raison d'être of the two major political parties wants

the Left to be undermining democracy by inciting social violence. The Greek-style culture of violence, according to this regime of signs, is a return of the repressed of the Left: the Left must suppress all revolutionary ideas and practices in order to aspire to parliamentary power. Left intellectuals in response implement a minimum abstraction in relation to the uprising's materialism, seeing it as a cultural event or an expression of apolitical rage on the part of the youth. They proclaim that the uprising lacked political articulation and that violence must be condemned wherever it comes from. In this way the Left exorcises its defeat in the civil war and the ghost of a Stalinist revolutionary totalitarianism. It interprets its revolutionary peaks like the Polytechneio uprising of 1973 as a legitimate resistance in a state of exception. Its bad conscience and its subjection to the apparatus enforces the state of exception of the legitimate state in violently repressing the uprising and the rhizomes that spread in its aftermath. In general it confirms its vertical hegemony in relation to social struggles by projecting its integration within democratic institutions (see Flesh Machine 2010: 69–97).

The anarchist 'space' is outlined by its resistance against the monopoly of state violence. From the 1990s on that principle of resistance has transformed the 'space' into a counter-signifying regime that makes critical statements on the functions of democracy and capitalism and has been attracting a growing number of people. In the December event, the right to social counter-violence as a matter of expression brings to the foreground the potentiality of a war against the *logos* and the law of the democratic state, and of a grounding of a people's *nomos*. Other features of the anarchist 'space' include an emphasis on the political values of autonomy in the post-Fordist era, self-organisation amongst craft unions, direct democracy in decision making, and horizontal networks of free-spirited relations outside consumerist frameworks. Some anarchist fractions, however, take war against the state as their sole mission.

These fractions are composed by the lumpenproletariat (see Thoburn 2003). The affiliation of the anarchist 'space' with the lumpenproletariat and with political activists outside or on the margins of the law is one of the revolutionary connections that transform this 'space' into a counter-signifying regime. Especially after December there is an urgent need to conjugate the variables of content and the variables of expression of the uprising so as to open up its assemblages to a patient and sober, but revolutionary, line of flight (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 97). This line of flight will have to entail the involution of the genealogy of social violence in regard not only to the national context but also to

the trans-national militarisation of the policing of protests. Through the spectacle of violence and police repression the new conception of security reconstitutes the war machine in conformity with the requirements of the capitalist axiomatic, which promotes a special kind of secured peace (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 516).

As far as the circumstances of the current crisis in Greece are concerned, the transformational work being done in relation to autonomous craft-unionism, the unnameable proletariat and minorities, refugees, immigrants, social centres and queer politics within the anarchist 'space', is endangered by the post-subjectification of some anarchists as the revolutionary avant-garde of the movement. On 5 May 2010, during a massive demonstration against austerity measures imposed by the government, the IMF and the EU, three bank employees and a foetus are killed during an arson attack on a bank. While this event does not represent the anarchist 'space', it is a virtuality that haunts that 'space' and becomes actual when the line of fire turns into a line of abolition. More than ever there is a need for sober collective analysis of the anarchist subjectifications and for new revolutionary connections with the lumpenproletariat and with minorities.

The situation looks as though it has reached an impasse in regard to the conjunctions of the capitalist axiomatic within the current crisis. The gloom grows thicker. The hegemonic Left deepens the inertia of the proletariat by proclaiming occasional strikes; some anarchist fractions hold to their tight solidarity with anarchist prisoners, political criminals and armed struggle terrorists; the decentred anarchist 'space' rallies and tries to effectuate anew its abstract machine outside the strata, on the strata and between the strata. It is from within the unnameable proletariat, the unemployed and the minorities that new lines of flight will be drawn and vital connections made against the automation of the capitalist axiomatic and its bureaucratic programming (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 522).

Allow me to conclude with a slogan from the December uprising: 'Freedom does not exist, all we have is choice.'

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Life Resistance: Towards a Different Concept of the Political

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Abstract

In an attempt to reaffirm Deleuze's Nietzschean affinities, this article argues that it is possible to detect in his thought an alternative concept of the political which gives ontological priority to difference. In order to map this out, a Deleuzian reading of the Zapatista experience will be provided, with particular attention given to the manner in which power is re-conceptualised, resistance strategised, subjectivities recast, and political solidarities formed anew. Once this has been established, the paper will argue that not only does Deleuze provide us with a meaningful basis for political action, he offers us possibilities for creating new forms of political solidarity that no longer take Hegelian inspired dialectical enmity or dangerous Kantian unfulfilment as their point of theoretical departure.

Keywords: total war, resistance, concept of the political, difference, the Other, politics of friendship

I. Deleuze's Resistance

Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's trilogy remains the most ambitious attempt at making Deleuze relevant to today's political climate (see Hardt and Negri 2000, 2004, 2010). Foregrounding Deleuze as the affirmative theorist of micropolitical nomadism, Hardt and Negri's project places him in direct confrontation with the two great modernist thinkers who dominate contemporary political thought: Immanuel Kant and George Wilhelm Hegel. 'The leitmotif of Kantian philosophy',

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they suggest, is the 'necessity of the transcendental, the impossibility of every form of immediacy, the exorcism of every vital figure in the apprehension and action of being' (Hardt and Negri 2000: 81). While their anti-Hegelianism, contra Fanon, results in a scathing critique of the dialectical method for the manner in which it re-produces the colonial mind: 'Colonialism constructs figures of alterity and manages their flows in what unfolds as a complex dialectical structure... *Reality is not dialectical, colonialism is*' (124, 129). One could argue that these battles are altogether Deleuzian. Deleuze did not hesitate to call Kant 'the enemy' (Deleuze 1990: 6). Neither did he refrain from accusing Hegel of 'inspiring every language of betrayal' (Deleuze 2004: 144). While Kant was singled out for his deceitful 'politics of compromise', which allows us to question certain parameters of knowledge, truth and morality while refusing to bring thought to bear on these terms in themselves (Deleuze 2006: 83, 84), Hegel, caught in a double Kantian bind, stands accused of infecting all political struggle with a 'spirit of revenge' so that political triumphs always define the 'weak *as* weak', with the victory of the slaves written into the world as their 'victory *as* slaves' (109). What is being uncovered here is the process wherein a state of mind becomes a 'mind of state': where Kant's *Cogitatio Universalis* demands a higher unity in order to tame the multiplicity of forces which potentially troubles the unification of the faculties of reason (Deleuze and Guattari 2002: 367), Hegelian dialectics perpetuate this drama with greater inner purpose by conceiving '*power as the object of a recognition, the content of a representation, the stake in a competition, and therefore mak*[*ing*] *it depend, at the end of a fight, on a simple attribution of established values*' (Deleuze 2006: 9–10). Either way, the political as a function of difference is the problem to be solved.

Whatever problems one may have with Hardt and Negri's wider project they nevertheless pose a critical question about the relationship between imperial 'war machines' and canonical 'images of thought'. Kant is a somewhat easy target. His universal disposition directly relates the singular predilection for difference to the problem of war. This is no small matter. Whereas Hobbes taught us that there can be no politics without security, and no security without the State, Kant encourages us to believe that there can be no security without universality, and no universality without moral progress towards the unification of the species. Hegel's legacy is more complicated. If Kant inaugurated the modern age, it was with Hegel that modernity became problematic in so far as its inner workings became visible and self-consciously theorised (see Habermas 1987). Hegel is therefore for many the founder of the

modern theory of *resistance*. While Hardt and Negri recognise this, they find this approach problematic on two distinct counts. Historically speaking, since the dialectical method has been implicit in recreating the master/slave dichotomy out of the ashes of liberation, inscribed into the fabric of its counter-hegemonic discourse has been a profound distaste for anything which differs from the orthodox Eurocentric schema. Now that all social relations are underwritten by networked thinking, ideas concerning linearity, teleology and limit conditions have been firmly displaced by notions of complexity, contingency and emergence. As a consequence, even if dialectics did once harbour the potential for political transformation, it now has little or no relevance to the operation of contemporary power which works at the level of pure strategy. From this perspective then, while the Kantian attempt to realise the unification of the species for the sake of its own protection arguably makes him the imperial philosopher whose time has come, Hegel and his descendents have no political relevance in the post-dialectical field of play.

Dialecticians have invariably fought back. John Holloway was among the first to take critical aim at Hardt and Negri's project. 'Politically', he explains, while 'the emphasis on the power of the working class has an obvious appeal... the understanding of labour and capital in terms of an external relationship leads to a... failure to explore the internal nature of the relation between labour and capital leading the autonomist analysts to underestimate the degree to which labour exists *within* capitalist forms' (Holloway 2002: 174). Dialectics then becomes the only method capable of providing 'the escape plan, the thinking-against-the-prison, thinking-against-the-wrong-world, a thinking that would no longer make sense if we were outside of the prison of the wrong world'. Holloway thus calls upon us to 'strengthen negativity', 'make the scream more strident' and in the process negate in whatever way we can the negativeness of our existence – the negation of the 'untruth of the world' (8). To his credit, Holloway is not blind to the failures of the past, but he believes that since it is possible to move away from the 'logic of synthesis' (which he takes to be the focus of concern for Hardt and Negri) and on to the 'movement of negation', it is possible to negate the present without colonising the future. Slavoj Žižek has been less forgiving. Lamenting that 'Deleuze more and more serves as the theoretical foundation of today's anti-global Left' (Žižek 2004: xi), Žižek insists that in-vogue tendencies to invoke Deleuzian notions such as becoming, multiplicity, nomadism, micropolitics, and the power of the affirmative, make him at best a compliant apologist: 'There are, effectively, features that justify calling Deleuze the ideologist

of late capitalism' (185). Since Deleuze lacks the negative power of truth, Žižek effectively ascribes to him a truly nihilistic agenda which claims the resistance of everything and yet, being ill-equipped to pose the right questions, actually ends up creating nothing, offering only a life of endless becoming which in the end shows an allegiance to 'the infinitely divisible, substanceless, void within a void' (24).

Deleuzian scholars have responded to these critiques by suggesting that Deleuze's relationship with Kant and Hegel was actually more complex than the literal Nietzschean reading ordinarily suggests. Paul Patton's response, for instance, has no problem reconciling Deleuze with the constitutional tradition of political liberalism (see Patton 2008). While Ian Buchanan and Adrian Parr strike a now familiar note by explaining that

> Too many people are content to say Deleuze, like Nietzsche, was against Hegel without ever asking why . . . But this critique is only meaningful to the extent that it is read in terms of Deleuze's conception of philosophy's purpose, which is precisely Marxian to the extent that, like Marx, they hold that the point of philosophy is not to understand society, but to change it. (Buchanan and Parr 2006: 1)

While these efforts to nuance Deleuze's thought have their benefits, there is a danger here that in *re*-acting to such criticisms Deleuzian Studies either becomes the victim of a dialectical entrapment or attempts to become all things to all people in a frantic search for acceptance. The suggestion is not, of course, that Deleuze needs to be authenticated, still less that we should refrain from using his concepts wherever appropriate. But having said this, to argue in favour of a Deleuze who is open to all forms of interpretation (affirmative/negative, creative/compromised, micro/macro, singular/universal, nomadic/sedentary, non-Statist/Statist) not only risks confirming what Žižek contends – that Deleuze is an ultimately substanceless political philosopher whose arbitrary positioning at best inspires an allegiance to the purely contingent – it also invites those 'bad readings or displacements' derived from 'arbitrary selections' of his works (not least the well-documented appropriation of Deleuze's ideas by various advocates within military academies) that he was so keen to warn us against in the particular context of Nietzsche's fate (Deleuze 2004: 17).

For Deleuzian scholarship what is at stake here centres on his relationship with Nietzsche. Should this be read in purely philosophical terms? Or might it offer to us something more *politically* than do those attempts to reconcile Deleuze with the best of the Enlightenment tradition? While

the style of Deleuze's *Nietzsche and Philosophy* does allow for some distancing in the sense that it is written from the perspective of the commentator exploring his target's thought processes, it is undoubtedly clear that this is done out of admiration rather than denunciation (unlike in the study of Kant). Keith Ansell-Pearson (2004) is therefore correct to insist that Deleuze's political 'battle cry' should not be divorced from its Nietzschean affinity. Such a severance would only undermine Deleuze's ontological commitment to the affirmation of difference, his belief in the creative dimension to resistance, his distaste for dialectics, his preference for the genealogical method, and his allegiance to Dionysian forces (nomadic, singular, micro and multiple) over Apollonian forces (sedentary, total, macro and universal). Moving away from the proposition that resistance is a creative process there is also a danger that Deleuze's contribution to our understanding of the political will simply be made to reaffirm well-established antagonistic terms of engagement.

Moving beyond this impasse, this paper will argue that it is possible to detect in Deleuze's thought an alternative concept of the political which gives ontological priority to difference. In order to gain a tangible purchase on this, a Deleuzian reading of the Zapatista experience will be presented, thereby countering the ludicrous assertion that Deleuze is merely some 'other-worldly' philosopher who provides us with no meaningful basis for normative political action.

II. Total War

When power takes life to be its object, resistance to power already puts itself on the side of life and turns life against power: 'life as a political object was in a sense taken at face value and turned back against the system bent on controlling it' (Deleuze 1999: 76). Life in other words not only 'becomes resistance to power when power takes life as its object, but invoking a special and particular "right to life", when power becomes bio-power, resistance becomes the power of life, a vital power that cannot be confined within species, environment or the paths of a particular diagram' (77). With life therefore said to be already richer in possibilities, the life which exceeds expectations *becomes a life of resistance*. Inevitably, since life resistance combats the forms of confinement (capture) and technical strategies (overcoding) so essential to forms of species manipulation, it equally refuses to accept the dangerously unfulfilled categorisation which power necessarily imposes in order to control and transform existence. This is crucial to our understanding of contemporary political struggles. Contemporary warfare is not simply

about containing the problem. By-passing the classical concern with sovereign integrities, it is fought over the modalities of life itself (see Smith 2006). As Tony Blair reiterated on numerous occasions (e.g. Blair 2007), Westphalia aside, the battle today is for the global value space. It is about bodies that matter. Somewhat ironically then, sanctioned in the name of lasting human peace, this global will to war is also triumphed to be an advance in Liberal reason (see Ignatieff 2003). It is the surest of indicators that humanity can be brought together through the necessary battles which are waged against unnecessary species endangerment. War is no longer therefore simply fought in order to destroy those terroristic elements which occupy an epistemic place of exteriority to the normal order of things; rather, for the most part, it is now waged by 'other means' upon maladjusted insurgent populations which, although dangerous, are open to remedy and demand lasting engagement (see Bell and Evans 2010).

While counter-insurgency literatures present this as the latest strategic thinking (see Kilcullen 2009), indigenous populations have been mapping these biopolitical contours for some considerable time. Writing some four years after the first uprising against the 'New World Order', Subcomandante Marcos, a spokesperson for the indigenous Zapatistas of Mexico, published a highly original article in *Le Monde diplomatique* (Marcos 2002). Entitled 'The Fourth World War', this article offered a remarkably concise genealogy of modern warfare which begins by navigating through the three major wars which shaped the twentieth century: the First and Second being the familiar Great Wars, the Third synonymous with the Cold War. Marking a new departure, the Fourth War thus refers to a post-Cold War condition which, although revealing many commonalities, presents some distinct strategic turns:

> Afterwards came the Fourth World War, which destroyed everything from before, because the world is no longer the same, and the same strategy cannot be applied. The concept of 'Total war' was developed further: it is not only a war on all fronts; it is a war which can be anywhere, a total war in which the entire world is at stake. 'Total war' means: at any moment, in any place, under any circumstances. The idea of fighting for one place in particular no longer exists. Now the fight can take place at any moment.

As Marcos sees it, 'the problem' begins to appear when one poses the question 'Who is the Enemy?':

> We are saying that humanity is now the enemy. The Fourth World War is destroying humanity as globalization is universalizing the market, and

> everything human which opposes the logic of the market is an enemy and must be destroyed. In this sense, we are all the enemy to be vanquished: indigenous, non-indigenous, human rights observers, teachers, intellectuals, artists. Anyone who believes themselves to be free and is not.

Hence, for Marcos, since 'Total War' implies that the entire planetary biosphere is at stake: 'There are no longer civilians and neutrals. The entire world is part of the conflict… Everyone is a part, there are no neutrals, you are either an ally or you are an enemy.'

This abandonment of political neutrality is not incidental. It is fully indicative of the contemporary strategic landscape which has witnessed the blurring of all conventional demarcations (see Dillon 2007; Dillon and Reid 2009). One only has the think for instance of the notion of Humanitarian War to give credence to this fact. This undoubtedly raises some challenging political questions. Not least, what does it mean to be politically active when activism itself is openly recruited into a veritable state of war? The Zapatistas have undoubtedly been at the forefront of these recombinant dynamics. Their insurgency has been unique for a number of reasons: 1) The first movement to ever declare outright war on an internationally recognised agreement [NAFTA], they forced strategic analysts to begin conceptualising warfare beyond the confines of the State (see Arquilla and Ronfeldt 1997). 2) Moving beyond reified sovereign conceptions of power, i.e. US hegemony, what the Zapatistas emphasised was the need to reconcile political power with a more general economy of biopolitical production. 3) Since their resistance reveals how life consciously struggles against all aspects of biopolitical control, especially imposed forms of 'good governance', they have become testament to the fact that the life which resists finds its most potent (hence more problematic) expression through the political affirmation of *life's differences*. As Marcos writes: 'when confronted with the search for hegemony, "the first task" is to recognise that there are "differences between us all" and that in light of this we aspire to a politics of tolerance and inclusion. You cannot aspire to eliminate the other, that which is different, and neither can you ignore it' (cited in Duran and Higgins 1999: 270).

Difference is not explained here dialectically. Difference already registers in the affirmative:

> We are 'other' and different… we are fighting in order to continue being 'other' and different… And what we are – far from wanting to impose its being on the 'other' or different – seeks its own space, and, at the same time, a space of meeting… that is why Power has its armies and police, to force

> those who are 'other' and different to be the same and identical. But the 'other' and different are not looking for everyone to be like they are . . . The 'everyone doing his own thing' is both an *affirmation of difference*, and it is a respect for other difference. (Marcos 1999c)

While this commitment to 'the Other' has prevented the Zapatistas from oedipalising their cause, hence remarkably making non-violence a strategic option (see Evans 2009), there is a perhaps more important point to be made here: When life becomes the principle object for political struggles, one no longer ties political strategies or analysis to conventional limit conditions. Conditioning the possible, modes of active production instead define the biopolitical field of operations. This is not of course to suggest that wretched conditions cannot be defined as unjust or intolerable, but neither is it to play by the pre-set rules of political engagement. This exposes the fundamental difference between biopolitics and dialectics. Where a dialectical logic presupposes contradictory elements within a realm that it ultimately unifies, biopolitical logics presuppose connectable elements within a field in which everything is recombinant. With complex forms of self-organisation therefore replacing linearity, limit conditions are efficiently seconded by a general economy of political production. That is to say, once the strategic assumption that the universe is heterogeneous firmly displaces the dialectical assumption that the universe is homogenised, power struggles become a matter of pure strategy.

III. Fugitive Subjects

Compound life has become the 'permanently temporary' habitual reality for many of the worlds *sans-papiers* (see Bauman 2002). Even sovereignty itself, as Green Zones testify, has become nodal. Nevertheless, while encamped life is undoubtedly wretched and de-politicising, foregrounding the spatial figuration of the camp may lead us to underestimate how contemporary wars have become wars of movement (Virilio 2003). While Giorgio Agamben (1995, 2005) has provided us with some insightful commentary on the de-politicising nature of encamped life, his *Camp as Nomos* hypothesis remains tied to the static sovereign view of the world. If however we accept that biopolitical rule is in the ascendancy then the general ordering of the earth becomes a *Nomos of Circulation* (Evans and Hardt 2010). It is no coincidence then that some strategic analysts have been arguing that success in contemporary theatres of war is dependent upon mastering

the network form (see Arquilla and Ronfeldt 2001). Not only do they allow one to operate more effectively in today's dynamic and radically interconnected world, network forms also benefit those who are *pro-active* in their strategic pursuits. It has thus all become a planetary game of 'GO'. Invariably, since the principal message here is that nothing is strategically marginal – that is to say, emergency is written into the fabric of all emergence – what potential there is for terror is placed into the heart of all possible *event*ualities (see Evans 2010). Knowing that we don't know thus registers at one and the same time as a wonderful condition of possibility and as the source of all our anxieties. With this in mind, given that the principal task for security practitioners is to pre-empt radical emergence, any ontological form of nomadism (animate/inanimate, actual/virtual) become *ipso facto* potentially dangerous (think illegal migration, shadow economies, unknown viruses, so forth). To put it another way, since the autonomous/emergent political subject cannot be left to chance, there is a simple choice to be made: either conform to the liberal attempts at making life live compliantly or become *politically fugitive*.

Here the Zapatistas are particularly instructive. While their *de facto* autonomous process has rightly received considerable attention (see in particular Burguete Cal y Mayor 2003; Mattiace 2003; Ross 2005, 2006; Sierra-Sierra 1995); the role *movement* plays in their struggle is often overlooked. Indeed, not only are they forcing us to re-conceptualise physical space, but, more profoundly, it is evident that their revolution offers a distinct nomadic disposition which has radicalised the intellectual political terrain. Since their uprising on New Year's Day 1994, the Zapatistas' ability to traverse space has been politically significant. This event in particular epitomised what Nietzsche termed the 'untimely'. A momentary appearance which truly unsettled the natural political order of things, its success was testament to the power of a revolutionary-becoming which, at the point of its emergence, proves to be completely imperceptible within conventional political registers. This tendency to move collectively en masse, while subsequently evacuating those off-limit territories without a trace, has repeatedly enabled the Zapatistas to display their autonomous power by entering politically sensitive areas to which they would not *Other*-wise belong. Such excursions have in numerous instances been political dynamite. On 12 September 1997, for instance, the Zapatistas kept their promise as a delegation of 1111 unarmed members travelled from Chiapas to the Federal District of Mexico City. In 1999, 5000 Zapatistas descended upon the republic for a referendum on the indigenous people's

right to define their own meaning of rights. In the spring of 2001 they would join forces with the National Indigenous Congress (Congreso Nacional Indigena) to march through 17 Mexican cities as the Zapatista motorcade embarked on a two-week journey that would end with some 200,000 sympathisers filling the *Zocalo* in Mexico City infamously chanting 'Todos Somos Marcos' (We are All Marcos).

Marcos has more recently toured the entire nation as part of the 'Otra Campana' (Other Campaign). While this tour witnessed some remarkable acts of political theatre – e.g. Marcos actually gaining entry into a maximum security prison – la Otra perhaps best illustrates how movement has been placed at the heart of revolutionary thought and practice. La Otra was first announced by the Zapatistas in their *Sixth Declaration from the Lacandon Selva* on 6 June 2005. This declaration was for many a significant moment, not least because many political commentators had felt that the Zapatistas' time had passed.[1] Facing such suggestions John Ross has noted that 'La Sexta [the Sixth Declaration] shows once again the Zapatistas at their most politically savvy, whenever you expect them to be outspoken they respond with a barrage of silence, and when they are assumed to be a thing of the past they show, with a barrage of communiqués – they keep compounding us by being one step ahead'.[2] In a remarkable moment of self-criticism, the Zapatistas felt that there was something missing from their project: namely, oppressed constituencies which were not necessarily indigenous:

> The first thing we saw was that our heart was not the same as before, when we began our struggle. It was larger, because now we had touched the hearts of many more good people. And we also saw that our heart was more hurt; it was more wounded. It was not wounded by the deceit of the bad governments, but because, when we touched the hearts of others, we also touched their sorrows. It was as if we were seeing ourselves in a mirror.[3]

The Zapatistas therefore recognised that they had reached a new moment in their revolutionary process – 'a point in which we could possibly lose everything we have if we do not move forward'. This called for a 'new step forward in the indigenous struggle' to 'unite with other social sectors that suffer'.

The Other Campaign sought to instigate another type of politics, 'a different way of doing politics' which fully recognises that genuine autonomy cannot simply be achieved by remaining static. Reflecting the dynamism of the world around, the Other Campaign therefore sought to reconcile autonomy with a willingness to continuously create reciprocal

adaptive networks, so that differences can be made to work together to produce new and alternative spaces. Hernandez Navarro believes this enables the Sixth Declaration to go well beyond the 'indigenous question' and 'announce a more far-reaching political initiative' which not only 'predicts the collapse of the political class' but seeks to depart from the rigidness of the 'traditional Left' (cited in Marcos 2006a: 15). The real strength of this new initiative is 'born of social energy generated in the heat of *mobilisation*'. This has been reflected by Marcos in what he termed *the Other Geometry* of the campaign. This calls for the creation of 'new realities which are already emerging, and which will go on appearing further ahead, need another theoretical reflection, another debate of ideas' (Marcos 2006b). Given that autonomy must therefore be receptive to political change in order for this project to work, openness must be built in to the revolutionary struggle: 'In our dreams we have seen another world... This world is not a dream from the past, it was not something that came to us from our ancestors. It came from ahead, from the next steps we are going to take' (Marcos 1994). *Nomadic tendencies* invariably come to the fore:

> In our theoretical reflection we talk about what we see as tendencies, not consummated or inevitable acts, they are theoretical reflections about the 'way we move', that is why we reject attempts at universality and eternity in what we say or do – 'what matters above all is the path, the direction, the tendency' – we are doing so not only in order to know what is happening and to understand it, but also, and above all, in order to try and transform it. (Marcos 2003b)

These tendencies provide us with a meaningful insight into what Deleuze and Guattari termed the 'Pure Idea of War': 'the distinction between absolute war as Idea and real wars seems to us to be of great importance... The pure Idea is not that of the abstract elimination of the adversary but that of a war machine *that does not have war as its object* and that only entertains a potential or supplementary synthetic relation with war' (Deleuze and Guattari 2002: 420). Not having war as its object, the war machine is a 'pure Idea' that is aphoristic and imperceptible to conventional political registers. It is not predicated on some original enmity; neither does it begin by negating the world. This pure idea of war as a nomadic becoming only therefore appears in the form of an antagonism directed against all forms of capture and overcoding once appropriation has occurred. When the imperceptible becomes perceptible! As such, what may appear to be an antagonistic refusal to follow the imperial production of peaceful subjects already

registers in the affirmative. As Deleuze writes, 'the aim of war machines isn't war at all but a very special kind of space, *smooth space*, which they establish, occupy, and extend. Nomadism is precisely this combination of war machine and smooth space... War machines tend to be much more revolutionary, or artistic, rather than military' (Deleuze 1990: 33). Revolutionary-becoming, in other words, is markedly different from violent revolution. Nietzsche thus returns here with renewed force in relation to the recasting of political solidarities:

> the nomadic adventure begins when they seek to stay in the same place by escaping the codes. As we know, the revolutionary problem today is to find some unity in our various struggles without falling back on the despotic and bureaucratic organisation of the party or State apparatus: we want a war machine that would not recreate a State apparatus, a nomadic unity in relation with the Outside, that would not recreate the despotic unity. This is perhaps Nietzsche at his most profound, a measure of his break with philosophy, as it appears in aphorism: to have made thought a war machine, to have made thought a nomadic power. And even if the journey goes nowhere, even if it takes place in the same place, imperceptible, unlooked for, underground, we must ask: who are today's nomads, who are today's Nietzscheans? (Deleuze 2004: 260)

IV. The Solidarity of Rights

Political activism cannot be divorced from the creation of solidarities with those deemed to be at the raw end of power. The activist is more often than not defined by the actions they undertake on behalf of those disenfranchised populations existing on the global periphery. From this perspective, while political realists have generally been lauded for their self-serving agendas, liberal theorists and practitioners have positioned themselves as the exemplars of political activism. Setting aside concerns for sovereign integrities, their commitment to alleviating unnecessary suffering is presented as the basis for a cosmopolitan ethic that will bring a new world community together. However, despite the self-declared *human*itarianism this account offers, one question tends to escape considered critical attention: How are political rights actually realised? If one takes the well-established juridical approach to liberal power then one locates the rightful act in the commitment to uphold legal declarations. Exalting the best of the positive law tradition, what is right then becomes synonymous with the legal protections offered to distant others. This, however, is only part of the story. Economic conditions have continually disrupted and transformed any

static semblance of legal rights. Indeed, while some liberals continue to tell an abstract juridical tale, at the level of policy it is now widely accepted that in order to achieve genuine social cohesion a commitment to political rights must be accompanied by a commitment to dealing with the problems of maladjusted economic subjects. A mere glance at the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights provides us with sufficient evidence for this fact. While it pays due attention to necessary protections from legal transgressions, it is the Declaration's Human Security guarantees (regarding access to resources essential for survival, education, healthcare, shelter, clean drinking water, and so on) which are seen as a triumph of the liberal conscience.[4] As Richard Falk suggests, thinking about security in human terms allows us to envisage a political 'community for the whole of humanity which overcomes the most problematic aspects of the present world scene . . . [and where] difference and uniformities across space and time are subsumed beneath an overall commitment to world order values in the provisional shape of peace, economic well-being, social and political justice, and environmental sustainability' (Falk 1995: 243).

While poststructuralist theorists are well aware of the limitations associated with juridical approaches to freedom, rights and justice (see Braidotti, Colebrook and Hanafin 2009), less attention is paid to the way in which a biopolitical approach might offer a critical perspective on the de-politicising nature of liberal humanitarianism in practice.[5] That is to say, while there is sufficient evidence of how the commitment to sovereign forms of right necessarily leads to the creation of abandoned lives reduced to 'bare life' through the sovereign encounter (see Agamben 1995, 2005), insufficient attention has been paid to the more positive power dynamics at play which, working in the name of human development and progress, actually serve to de-politicise alternative forms of political subjectivity *within* the remit of humanitarian discourses and practices. This offers an important corrective to Agamben. Whereas his concept of 'bare life' begins with the de-politicisation of others in order to construct political and moral registers, bare life in a biopolitical sense begins with the promotion of others in order to facilitate the elimination of that which is seen to be undesirable/regressive. Not then a form of bare life in the sense of legally suspended or abandoned; rather the 'bare activity' of a species life whose wretched conditions permit interventionist forces to act out of necessity. When life as such is reduced to the level of a victim incapable of providing even for the 'bare essentials', it is through the subsequent alleviation of suffering that all life is reduced to mere technology.

Deleuze and Guattari understood this all too well. Human rights, they argued, were merely 'axioms'. That is to say, what are presented as inviolable universal rights can quite easily 'exist on the market with many other axioms', or else can simply be suspended when the 'determinate inequalities of development dictate' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 106, 107). Human rights as such actually tell us 'nothing about the immanent modes of existence of people provided with rights'. The Zapatistas have learned this well. Their non-juridical approach to rights is well established (see Higgins 2004). Less attention, however, has been given to their conscious refusal of the human security prescriptions, which in the process of challenging imposed conditionality provides for critical reflection on the practice of saving strangers. Marcos understood early in the struggle that through the politicisation of aid warfare was taking place by other means (Marcos 1999a). This would have a profound impact upon the Zapatistas' entire relationship with all non-governmental organisations (see Marcos 2001, 2003a). While an inevitable side-effect of this has been self-deprivation,[6] it has nevertheless led to the creation of entirely new forms of solidarity which have redefined the benefactor/recipient relationship in a more reciprocal and locally sensitive manner (see Earle and Simonelli 2005; Olesen 2000, 2005). Development projects still happen; but not in order to meet statistical quotas set by technocrats in order to give a minimum valuation on the stock of life; rather, to enrich the indigenous communities' control over their own political affairs. Inevitably, since this conscious decision has effectively undermined the prevailing human security principle that underdevelopment is dangerous, the Zapatistas have in the process of exposing the de-politicising nature of biopolitical technologies forced the political back into conflict analysis (Evans 2008). One cannot propose scientifically deduced cause/effect remedies for a struggle which does not agree with the underlying economising logic. Neither can one deploy an army of technocratic ameliorators with a mandate for social transformation into a political crisis zone when those within the zone do not believe that they are the problem to be solved. A critical redefinition of the political itself is needed, in order to move from tolerance to genuine hospitality towards that which is different.

V. A Different Concept of the Political?

Jacques Derrida once said that the 'the rapport of self-identity is always a rapport of violence with the other; so that the notions of property, appropriation and self-presence, so central to metaphysics,

are essentially dependent on an oppositional relation with otherness' (Derrida 1984: 117). The Zapatistas have seemingly taken note of this modern truism. Centuries of indigenous persecution easily cultivates hate and resentment. Once mobilised into a political force, these historical animosities tend to re-cast old dialectical foes against one another in a perpetual struggle for mastery. Had the Zapatistas follow this trend, Marcos believes, they would have simply produced another brand of 'fundamentalism, converting the Zapatista movement into a movement *against* another race' (El Kilombo 2007: 18). Importantly then, for Marcos, since there are 'historical arguments which back up the idea that from *there* comes the pain', in order for the Zapatistas to create a 'new horizon' it is essential that from the outset one begins with a 'respect for the Other who is different'. Only then can they 'eliminate from us the possibility of fundamentalism'. In light of this attempt to proactively thwart fundamentalist tendencies, Deleuze's call in his study of Bergson to 'think differences of nature, independent of all forms of negation' (Deleuze 1988: 41) reads than more than an expression of admiration for a bygone philosopher. Intensifying the normative basis for affirmative politics, the concept of the political itself is recast to give ontological priority to difference. This represents a radical departure from conventional political referents. The orthodox approach begins with the political as a problem in the context of establishing the order and demarcations of battle, but for those advocating lasting peace, the political only gains meaningful currency when as the source of this enmity it is foregrounded as *the* problem to be solved.

The idea that the political should be conceptualised through a dialectical enmity is well established.[7] Realists deploy it in order to maintain their allegiance to epiphenomenal tensions. This enables them to present a world of neat sovereign demarcations through which it is possible to clearly identify other/self, them/us, outside/inside, enemy/friend and so on. Liberals on the other hand have openly recruited this Schmittean approach in order deploy it against itself. The politics of exceptionalism thus becomes the principal rallying cry for those who advocate a globally inclusive imaginary in order to rid the world of unnatural spatio-determined divisions. There is a tragic irony to all this. In order to save humanity from itself, liberals take the worst aspects of Schmitt's thought (i.e. ontologically prior enmity) in order to use it against its resulting tensions. Furthermore, the idea of separate sovereign orders is brought into question in order to re-establish a true planetary basis for sovereign power. Schmitt's nightmare vision of the fall of *jus publicum Europaeum* is therefore recast as the liberal condition of

possibility. Through selective appropriation of his ideas, Schmitt comes to represent the diagnostician in chief along with the chief adversary to be vanquished at all costs. If this renders Schmitt the bastard child of Hegelian disdain, no recourse to Kant will provide us with the political solution. The focus of concern here is not with the highly abstracted and reified account of sovereign power which tends to underwrite post-Kantian politics. Neither is it with the debilitating idealism of Kantian universality. What concerns us lies beneath the surface of this architecture. A shameful deceit, Kantian universality masks an altogether more sinister biopolitical imperative which, casting suspicion over all human life, means that all life is recruited into a perpetual state of internal war without distinction.

To explain this it is necessary to point out the irresolvable dilemmas upon which Kantian rule depends: Kant preaches universality but accepts that the universal is beyond the realms of lived experience. He preaches the international virtues of law but accepts that one's encounter with moral law has to be contingent. He demands that all life strive towards the unification of the species yet acknowledges that this is always going to be met with internal revolt and political strife. He insists upon autonomy even though he starts his analysis by offering an account of freedom in which man has fallen to the guilt of his own unmaking. He promotes human progress yet puts forward the thesis of infinite regress to highlight humankind's imperfections. And he claims that all life has an original predisposition to good while at the same time a natural propensity to evil. Taken together, while Kant therefore demands that life must be made to live for the sake of its own protection; he knows full well that to live in this Kantian way reveals how the capacity to be unnecessarily dangerous is inherent to all species of life. As such, not only does he condemn all life to a temporal purgatory, i.e. life is always guilty of the moral deficiencies of the past, yet incapable in its own right of exorcising them in the future. He also demands these imperfections in order for life to prove its moral and political worth. Hence, although Kantianism undeniably moves beyond the familiar geo-strategic epiphenomenal tensions (friend/enemy, outside/inside, bios/zoe), what takes their place is the biopolitical proposition that all life is always somehow dangerously unfulfilled.

Marcos cuts to the chase when he argues that 'the problem is respect towards the Other . . . Whatever political relationship that is not based in respect is manipulation. Well-intentioned or bad-intentioned, it doesn't matter, because it is manipulation . . . That's why we said, starting

there, we can construct respect or we can construct a relationship of domination' (El Kilombo 2007: 29, 30). How then does this respect for the Other who is already different manifest itself politically? Gregg Lambert (2008) and Charles Stivale (2008) have pointed us in the right direction in their attempts to explore the meaning of the Deleuzian notion of 'friendship'. Lambert, for instance, detects in Deleuze's later work a desire to place the Other at the forefront of our philosophical enquiry. This he believes forces an entire re-evaluation of the meaning of friendship as a political and philosophical concept that appears ontologically prior to the friend/enemy distinction: 'that is prior to any presupposition of a social commonality or relationship to identity, before we can even begin to think of the possibilities of friendship again' (Lambert 2008: 50). For Stivale, friendship cannot be divorced from Deleuze's political philosophy since it is intimately bound both to the creation of philosophical concepts and to active engagement:

> Deleuze's understanding of friendship is not that of a common or ideal bond and can hardly be encapsulated in a neat definition... However, Deleuze's myriad practices of friendship stand in sharp contrast to any ultimate recognition of friendship as distress, for such a defeatist view would fail to acknowledge that this distress constitutes but a complementary fold in the active engagement of friendship. (Stivale 2008: xiii)

For Stivale then, the question is not 'Who is the friend?' but more pertinently 'What can friendship do?' If we can say that that a Deleuzian notion of friendship is intimately bound up with our becoming in this world, forcing us indeed to find reasons to believe in this world, perhaps we can therefore say that friendship is precisely what he had in mind when he found in Nietzsche a philosophical ally who 'break[s] with philosophy, as it appears in the aphorism: to have made a war machine of thought, to have made thought a nomadic power' (Deleuze 2004: 260). It was Nietzsche after all who enabled Deleuze to move away from the morally reductive concern with 'how should we live?' towards considering the ethical possibilities of 'how might we live?' (May 2005: 7).

This certainly takes us into some fertile conceptual territory. While Derrida may provide us with obvious points of further connection, Agamben also appears to have something in common. As he recently stated: 'I maintain, rather, that "friend" belongs to the class of terms that linguists define as non-predicative; these are terms from which it is not possible to establish a class that includes all the things to which the predicative in question is attributed' (Agamben 2009: 29). Friendship

in other words is not a referent to be captured. It does not possess some objective denomination through which one might expose some transcendental essence. Friendship is a 'pure experience' of the world (30). Politically speaking, it is irrevocably bound to the 'pure fact of being': 'Friends do not share something (birth, law, place, taste): they are shared by the experience of friendship. Friendship is the con-division that precedes every division, since what has to be shared is the very fact of existence, life itself. And it is this sharing without an object, this original consenting, that constitutes the political' (26). Importantly, for Agamben, since the concept of friendship is equipped with an *intensity* that registers as political potential, he equally gestures towards a concept of the political which no longer needs to be based on enmity or some profound suspicion that political difference is *the* problem to be solved. Providing a more thorough and meaningful basis for this is perhaps the most difficult and yet most urgent task we face today.

Notes

1. For instance, in January 2005, Vincente Fox called the Zapatistas 'practically a thing of the past' with the 'people of Chiapas looking forward ... with a new face'. See W. Weissert, 'Mexico's Fox Calls Guerrilla Movement a Thing of the Past', Associated Press, 12 January 2005.
2. Interview conducted in Mexico City, 17 December 2005.
3. See the EZLN 'Sixth Declaration from the Lacandon Jungle'.
4. Amongst an abundance of literature dedicated to this, see in particular Booth 1991, 2005; Buzan 1991; Buzan et al. 1998; and Wyn-Jones 1999.
5. A notable exception to this is the work of Mark Duffield (see in particular Duffield 2007).
6. As June Nash observes 'The resistance of the Zapatista communities is also expressed in their rejection of government handouts in every form, be it textbooks, medical supplies and interventions, immunization programs, and other programs that might well benefit communities' (cited in Earle and Simonelli 2005: xi).
7. In his *Politische Theologie* (1922), Carl Schmitt first made his now well-established claim that sovereign power refers to 'he who decides upon the state of exception' (Schmitt 2006: 21). This would be developed more fully into a 'Concept of the Political' in the volume bearing that name (Schmitt 1996).

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Defining Activism

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Abstract

Activism is defined in this paper as involving local instigations of new series of elements intersecting the actual, generating new collective enunciations, experimentations and investigations, which erode good and common sense and cause structures to swing away from their sedimented identities. By appealing to Spinozism, the paper describes the microphysics of the activist encounter with stable structures and the ways in which activism imposes new regimes of succession of ideas and affective variations in the power of action. Rather than understanding activism as supporting or leading social struggles, the definition of activism pursued here conceives it as an open-ended process and stresses the role of investigation in relation to practices within the social situations to which activism addresses itself.

Keywords: activism, revolution, intervention, encounter, ideas, affects

> O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?
> Deny thy father and refuse thy name, . . .
> 'Tis but thy name that is my enemy.
> Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.
> What's Montague? It is nor hand, nor foot,
> Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
> Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!
> What's in a name? . . .
> So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd,
> Retain that dear perfection which he owes
> Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name . . .
> (*Romeo and Juliet*, 2, 2, 33–47)

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The proper name, functioning as a colour-line in this dramatic work, creates a dividing gulf – an obstacle that impedes a love – which, for Juliet, can only be fulfilled in the after-life of the name, beyond the violence of the couple's actual subjectivities. Here, Juliet's plea is not a lament, nor a banal cry of grief. It is far more significant; it is a discovery, or better, a rebellion in itself. Two moments are simultaneously involved in it. First, Juliet reproaches the organising function of the name in relation to the pre-personal body – 'Tis but thy name that is my enemy: Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.' And second, in order for this reproach to become an active challenge, Juliet urges Romeo to dissent, to 'doff thy name' – to abandon it – demanding that he transcend his own organisation and alter the logic imposed by his name, for the sake of a bastard love. Her affect already recognises that the possibility of a prohibition 'would require *both persons and names*' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 161).

Juliet thus asks Romeo to detach his body from the subjective territory of the Montague – 'Deny thy father…' (Reynolds 2009: 50). The two moments expressed here – the discovery of an organisation taking place and the call for action – are united in a critical attitude towards that which suffocates love, which, for the twosome, is really that which suffocates life. However, we must notice that what turns this attitude into an inflective relation to life lies in the relation between these two moments. Juliet's rejection of the organising function of the name in relation to the body – 'What's Montague? It is nor hand, nor foot, nor arm, nor face, nor any other part' – is an invitation to each body part to reclaim its autonomy, and to enter into the transversality of love. Her inquiry makes clear that the opposition to, or negation of, the state of things in the actual ('Tis but thy name that is my enemy') is to be subordinated to an affirmation of life through the potentiality of new assemblages to come, assemblages that halo the actual and are associated with a particular state of things ('without that title…'). What comes first, anyway, if we may speculate, is the positivity of the love running between Juliet and Romeo throughout their encounter.

This is their first affective discovery, which draws them into a search for alternatives. The negation is secondary due to the character of the inquiry: it has the power to make the reader wonder the unthinkable for the sake of performing the impossible love: does an arm, or a face, have a name? What does it mean to change a name? Juliet's inquiry thus creates the idea of another rhythm in which the love might be consummated. In this way her intervention joyfully affects the play, shifting the reader from one degree of reality to another. Here Juliet is, in

a Deleuzian sense, fabulating, hallucinating 'a couple to come' (Deleuze 1995: 174). She incites Romeo to depart from the protective world of his own familial fabulations, this time in the Bergsonian sense (cf. Bogue 2006: 202–23).[1] Another idea of love starts to condense throughout the scene, one indicative of an alternative image of the encounter of Juliet and Romeo.

There are three interconnected practical qualities present in Juliet's radicalism:[2] a confrontation with a stratifying organisation (the name and its filiative association); a situational engagement (Juliet's demand for Romeo to engage actively and intervene in his circumstances to produce another sociability, that is, another encounter which might enable their love); and, lastly, an inquiring attitude towards the actual – a militant investigation which eludes the pincers of royal science and its representations (the place of the family in the city of Verona, the tribal prohibitions, and so on). As a necessary step in the creation of new conditions, Juliet interrogates the conditions she wishes to leave. It is from the perspective of the third quality that we should read her enigmatic call at the beginning of the scene, intended to shake Romeo from his familial knot: 'Wherefore art thou Romeo?' – a genealogical call asking for reasons, interrogating the processes by which Romeo has come to own and still retains his name. Juliet directs her question towards Romeo's positioning in the world, interrogating his commitment and obedience to the attachments and stratifications now trapping him in immobility. From this perspective, 'Wherefore art thou?' means: 'What are your reasons for clinging to, in what ways are you committed to, your particular name and your way of life?' Or, as Deleuze and Guattari might put it: 'What are your microfascisms, Romeo?' In other words, Juliet's speech suggests that we should abandon the organised and patriarchal sense of the state of things (the name) by way of problematising *our relations* with other bodies, ideas and things in their actual state, not in general, but in an encounter within the situation in which they dwell. This calls for a reconsideration of the present composition of such relations. Indeed, ultimately, it is *a call to arms*, a call for new and better encounters – an approach I shall call the activist problematic.

I. Introduction

This brief detour through Shakespeare introduces us to the main focus of this article: to try to develop a conceptualisation of activism, working towards a definition. As we shall see, this will involve a return to the

practical qualities we have just discerned in Juliet's speech. The concept of activism I envisage here is intended to open up what is analysed, making possible further connections and intersections, and bolstering activism itself. Only when we manage to create a productive relationship between the material aspect of the assemblage ('the intermingling of bodies reacting to one another' [Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 88]), on the one hand, and its discursive aspect, on the other, is representation eluded, allowing us to open the actual up to a more transparent relation with the virtual. In other words, activism has to be also present *in* the concept, stirring both thought and action. From this, we can see why there is little interest here either in the investigation of individual motives or in a normative framework. For instance, the psychological and social mechanisms used in political psychology to explain activism in terms of the structure of causality between the individual psyche and the action itself – such as parental inculcation, principled education, political morality, universal moral duty, social altruism, and so on (see, for example, Gross 1997) – in fact explain very little concerning the empirical relationships between bodies and things. Such mechanisms do not account for the body of the activist, the field of action, the assemblages involved, and the multitude affecting and being affected. The tendency of such psychology to search for the origins of political actions in terms of the theorisation of psycho-social motives appears misplaced when we think of the world in terms of fluxes of incessant creation.

Spinozism, as Deleuze contends, 'confers on finite beings a power of existence' that is never exhausted, and which 'bears with it a corresponding and inseparable capacity to be affected, [which is] *always exercised*', in an infinity of ways (Deleuze 1992: 91, 93; emphasis added). In other words, the power of acting is not something to be found in a personality of this or that type, nor necessarily in one specific environment rather than another. More simply,

> We can know by reasoning that the power of action is the sole expression of our essence, the sole affirmation of our power of being affected. But this knowledge remains abstract. We don't know what this power is, nor how we may acquire or discover it. *And we will certainly never know this, if we do not concretely try to become active*. (Deleuze 1992: 226; emphasis added)

Instead of theorising incentives, it is better to explore by experimentation that which is already actively varying. Western normative ethics have tried to impose a democratic framework that limits and contains nomadic forms of resistance (the concept and practice of civil society

bear the hallmark of all forms of that containment). But merely by creating distinctions between moral worlds, such normative ethics do nothing to further the exploration and intensification of present activist potentialities.

It is crucial for what follows that we examine the relationship between activism and the concept of revolution. Deleuze and Guattari clarify what revolution means: 'schizophrenising the existing power structure, making it vibrate to a new rhythm, making it change from within, without at the same time becoming a schizophrenic' (Buchanan 2008: 10; Deleuze and Guattari 1983). Therefore, revolution is given in the passage of a structure from rhythm A to rhythm B (the structure changing in the passage), where the structure can that of a social, political or economic system, a system of friendship, an educational system, a household, an individual person, a specific human-animal system (for example bovine slaughter regulations, or practices of species preservation), a field of art, or of any other stable natural or social environment. However, it is important to stress that we are not advocating here a sequential model of revolution, one determined by a telos adopted in advance. As revolutionaries, we always exist in many dimensions, in the midst of that from which we try to escape and struggle against, interwoven with the material we start to experiment with. It is the passage that is revolutionary, not the final arrival at a new rhythm. And yet, activism is not itself that passage of rhythms; rather, it is a temporary sub-rhythm of denunciation, wounding the first rhythm, from which it carves out a becoming into new territories. As Raunig explains, drawing on Holloway's works on the Zapatista movement: 'it is more the first steps into seemingly new terrain, posited on the old terrain, fighting against this old terrain and using it at the same time to transform it into something different' (Raunig 2007: 41–2).

Always starting as a wound of alterity within the habitual, activism refers to that fleeting fraction of encounters and connections still not engaged in the organisation of the second rhythm. If, following Guattari, we conceive the machine as being in opposition to structure (Guattari 1984: 111–20), then we may conceive activism as machinic, that is to say, plugging a movement of deterritorialisation into a territorial assemblage, and thereby activating the territory for further connections (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 333). This causes the assemblage to swing 'between a territorial closure that tends to restratify [it] and a deterritorialising movement that, on the contrary, connects [it] with the Cosmos' (337). When activism connects itself to a system, an established relation of forces is distracted, and to some extent diverted into a

far-from-equilibrium state. In other words, we learn from Deleuze that the revolutionary passage occurs when a system is pushed beyond a critical threshold, moving from a state of equilibrium into a state far from equilibrium (see Bonta and Protevi 2004). As an assemblage of encounters pushing the system towards new states, activism is one of the causes bringing about evolution and re-creation within the system. Nothing concerning the success or betrayal of the revolutionary passage is relevant to us here; rather, the focus is on the assemblages of affects agitating stable systems in order to tip them in non-linear directions. As a sign of denunciation, activist practices trace out and map the lines of a society at specific zones – its intensities and boundaries – with a view to grafting an outside onto them. In this way, they become indicative of those zones' new potentialities. By installing themselves in official territories, activist practices thus become the harbingers of a new openness.

There is, however, no dissociative distinction between activism and revolution; rather, activism infuses the concept and practice of revolution with an incessant discomforting movement that helps to protect new revolutionary forms of organisation from the dangers of stratification and its oppressive side effects. In this perspective, activism nurtures revolution, keeping it alive. Here, Raunig's treatment of the concept of the revolutionary machine, used to explore missed concatenations between art and revolution during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, might help clarify the relationship between the two concepts. Following Negri's works from the 1970s, and Hardt and Negri's *Empire* (2000), Raunig adopts the 'triad model of the revolutionary machine' as comprised simultaneously of insurrection, resistance and constituent power (see Raunig 2007: 25–66). For Raunig, insurrection is the mediating component that concatenates the revolutionary screams of horror – the expression of resistance, and hope – and the expression of constituent power (see 41–8). Immanently, the three components are all present in activism, but the irruptive character of insurrection – its 'temporary flare' (56), compared with the more laborious character of resistance and constituent power – make it a better basis for exploring the relationship between activism and revolution. Contra Raunig, the division he proposes between a time of duration of the permanent molecular revolution (expressed by resistance and constituent power) and a time of rupture (expressed by the event of insurrection) runs the risk of dispensing with the latter when the former is actualised through processes that deepen the fascistic tendencies in the new organisation. Incessant activist ruptures are vital to maintaining a

rhythm of infinite movement in a revolutionary machine. Activism, we might say, is revolution's *conatus*, its tendency or instinct to persevere in its revolutionary power; thus we have a series of activist ruptures within revolutionary processes – the power of creation as constituent power remains faithful to the eternal return of difference, and draws itself away from the entrapments of constituted power. Deleuze and Guattari pointed to the coupling of resistance and constituent power in their treatment of the war machine; opposition, resistance, can engage in revolutionary action '*only on the condition that they simultaneously create something else*' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 423).

Although Raunig, as did Hardt and Negri before him, portrays insurrection as essentially spectacular (think the Paris Commune of 1871, the Russian Kolkhozes, or the Zapatistas), it is possible to understand insurrection as a perceptible act of opposition to a ruling power or habit, without tying it to a Hollywood-style image. For instance, a Bartlebyan moment of refusal is an act of opposition which might infect a state of affairs and develop into an activism,[3] whether it occurs in a scrivener's office, in a call for a love, or at home through the forces exerted by a change in posture of a woman's body when a patriarchal tradition is challenged. It is in the insolence and intensity of the challenge posed against constituted power (whatever its form or mode), and its associated way of life, that activism is located, and not necessarily on the barricades or protest marches.

Activism's logic is thus interventionist and operationally hyper-active. First, it latches onto certain zones and injects external forces, causing a differential change in the system. Second, it involves an emphatic attention to life, similar to Bergson's attentive recognition; that is to say, it evaluates each object by causing it to pass through different planes in order to gain a critical appreciation of it; at the same time it frees itself from the distractions of habitual recognition that social systems impose upon us (cf. Deleuze 1989: 44–68).

II. A Second Distinction

For Deleuze, life has an ever-changing problematic structure. Every multiplicity changes its virtual structure by way of actualisations, that is, by passing into temporary solutions (the virtual differentiates itself and becomes different from itself in the process). This brings forth new conditions for the creation of the new in the real (see Smith 2007). Aided by various representational and mystifying machines, patterns and forms hide these processes; further, stratified patterns have the power to

create interests, which in turn force neurotic and paranoiac functions onto desire (see Deleuze and Guattari 1983). As a result, there is a backwash of narrowing our belief in the potentiality of virtual structures. With little belief in the virtuality of life, always interwoven with social obedience, a peaceful and wide zone of sedated individuals is secured. Balibar's Spinozism explains how this passivity is engendered:

> When an individual is passive, it is because his soul has been subjugated by the circulation of the affects and by the 'general ideas' that inhabit the collective imagination . . . His body too will have been simultaneously subjugated by the unrestrained influence of all the surrounding bodies. (Balibar 1998: 94–5)

From this passage it becomes clear why activist practices take it to be part of their responsibility to recirculate affects away from the 'general ideas' of a society (or of smaller multiplicities). In so far as, collectively, we vehemently stick to the dominant forms of life (practices and discourses) without any critical intake, we deepen our complicity with the burial of the virtual, as well as with the betrayal of the infinity of life. Activism finds here its most basic function: the unfolding of a Julietian critical engagement with dominant forms of life and their self-reproductive representations – the 'general ideas'. In this sense, activism is that which diverts life from its tendency to eternalise and deepen itself in its actual forms, that which pledges to 'connect the roots or trees back up with a rhizome' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 14).

A critical engagement can be deployed at least in two ways, following a distinction between two conceptions of how to revolutionise the world (Colectivo Situaciones 2001: 31). The first is characteristic of traditional leftist politics, which base their political struggles on a yearning to change the world. Here, activism is expressed in the encounter of forces, bodies and things which furthers direct struggles against multiplicities, and in which singularities are perceptibly isolated by agglomerations of the ordinary. In this version, strategically, activism collides with the stable structure, producing a sort of dialectical relation. Theatrically, the subject in this drama is the resulting antagonism. Operationally, it aims at a transformation of the state of things that may amount to a combinatorial view of novelty: 'only little more than the rearrangement of matter in the universe into ever new forms' (Smith 2007: 2).

In contrast, some contemporary forms of escape – those proliferating alternative life-experiences – are not concerned with changing the world, but rather would like 'to produce it anew' (Colectivo Situaciones 2001: 31). These activisms problematise the structure of the existence of the actual form by contemplating and experimenting with the

changing conditions of the new – 'testing . . . alternative forms of social organisation' (Raunig 2007: 60) – bringing about change not in a combinatorial fashion, but in the nature of particular areas of life. By embracing the whole of the real and not only the actual, new singular points are created by changing the multiplicity in question. What is most significant in these sorts of activisms is that resistance is thought and operated not in a dialectical contraposition to constituted power (*potestas*) in a reactive mode; rather, though an unavoidable relation of conflict with constituted power comes into being, resistance here unfolds as immanent difference which draws on the natural force of creation (*potentia*).[4] From this perspective, Raunig's distinction between resistance and constituent power appears redundant; the two are not just linked but mutually implicated.

This version of activism multiplies new practices, and in doing so bypasses existent stable practices and their manifestations of oppression.[5] The first mode of activism assumes that solidifications and closures can be challenged. The second mode leans on the assumption that oppression cannot take on everything; this mode always opens up a reflexive distance that is absent in the first mode. As praxis, the first mode of political activism is reactive, polemical, litigious, and engaged in incessant argumentation. As examples we can think of pressure groups for legislation change, High Court petitions, protests, persuasion campaigns, and so on. The second mode is more quiet but ontologically invasive. Examples include alternative modes of education, promoting new ways of life, rethinking narratives, investigating the conditions of oppression, and so on. Comparing the two versions, we should keep in mind that there is a 'feedback' aspect in confrontational activism: challenging a practice or an idea has a nurturing effect.

III. The Functions of Activism

Activism is not a secluded or hidden phenomenon. It is extroverted, involved in the generation of public events. Most activisms I know of take very seriously the repercussions of their actions within the broader society, both locally or/and globally. Many activists publish reports on their practices and experiences, have internet sites, or, more traditionally, distribute printed material to the general public; indeed, it is well known that they are anxious to encourage the public to participate in and attend their discursive dramas.

Ill-advisedly, some forms of activism develop into missionary activity, and sometimes wind-up as messianic. This carries the risk of destroying

the very becoming characteristic of activism. Any presumption on the part of activists to define life in moral terms – instead of understanding their activity as promoting potentialities – functions to homogenise activism and fill the plane of consistency with energy of just one type. This excess then becomes equivalent to a drastic reduction in the potential of bodies, hence the indices of heterogeneity and of transversality are reduced as well. This version of activism, which is unfortunately always present to some extent, generally takes the form of a paranoid reaction to the world on the part of well-defined and determined subjects – 'the Stalins of the little groups' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 139). The terror they impose, like that of the majoritarian society, is one of reterritorialisation.

What is it that activism brings about? What occurs in the encounter between activist practices (body A) and its spectators (body B)? What can be said of that encounter? We are going to need to anchor off Spinozist shores (*Ethics*, Books II and III). First we need to add to the drama a necessary third body, C, which is that body of stable relations (social, political, educational, cultural, and so on) into which activism taps. We already know that, for most of us and for most parts of our lives, a relation of commitment and obedience is what characterises our relationship to C (B–C).

What activism does, when it acts, is introduce an initial movement of deterritorialisation into the internal relations of body C, forcing a variation in the latter's relations to the spectators (body B), and in the interim creating a new relation between activism and the spectators. Let us take a simple example to see how the three main bodies may encounter one another in a concrete situation. In Israel, a segregationist educational system (body C) complements a broader structure of social segregation between Jews and Palestinians, citizens of Israel. In 1998, a group of parents (body A) set up an initiative to establish a bilingual, Arabic–Hebrew School in the northern region of the Galilee. Sufficient numbers within the local communities (body B) were enthusiastic enough to join in, and, ultimately, the school named *Galilee* was established and has operated ever since (see Svirsky et al. 2007; Svirsky 2010). In this example, reaching new operational rhythms was bound up with the repressive operations of older rhythms (mainly rooted in an obsession with collective identity).[6]

As the encounter begins to express itself, effects on the different bodies start to circulate, caused by the intermingling of affections between them (affections might include: one's route home changes because of a demonstration; police repress demonstrators; a class is cancelled by

the student union; humanitarian relief reaches a population under siege; an alternative school building is found; and so on). Following Spinoza's epistemological parallelism, we may say that to every object or thing there corresponds an idea (Deleuze 1992: 113–4). Following the activist encounter then, at least two sorts of ideas are being affirmed on the bodies: ideas that have friction, itself caused by activism as their object, and ideas that have as their objects different aspects of the system of relationships A–B–C. The affections caused by the activist encounter arouse different spiritual and bodily sympathies and antipathies, which are tantamount to the ideas of these affections (attesting to different degrees of compossibility between the bodies in the encounter and their different capacities for being affected). Correspondingly, the power of acting of the bodies involved in the encounter either increases or decreases. Whichever is the case, we are, according to the definition of Spinozist affects, in the presence of a regime of the succession of ideas, which is followed by a variation in the power of action or in the force of existing. Deleuze explains that 'this kind of melodic line of continuous variation' is defined by Spinoza as affect (Deleuze 1978: 3–4). It is not unlikely that the circulation of new passions will be one of the effects of an activist initiative. When faced with the eruption of a new activism, spectators may react with either enthusiasm or anger, or some permutation of the two. But activism makes clear that there is no linear correspondence between such passions and the variation in the power of acting (increase or decrease), since the displeasure or rage triggered by a certain activism may lead ultimately to counter-activism.

The key point here concerns the slide or passage between two different states of ideas in the bodies involved, and, especially, the attitudes of the bodies in respect of the ways they come to perceive the functioning of the stable body C under the activist attack. These perceptions will depend on the ways we understand the activist encounter in its relations both with the social stable body under attack and with us, the spectators; they depend on the kind of ideas we have of these relationships and effects. Though 'our ideas of affections do of course "involve" their own cause, that is, the objective essence of the external body', it is also true that 'as long as I remain in the perception of affection, I know nothing of the [action]'. Thus, my idea of a particular demonstration, of a new school, of a humanitarian aid project, and so on, is only partial, and of the lowest kind in Spinoza's terms, since they only '*indicate* a state of our body' (Deleuze 1992: 146–7; 1978: 6).

What this kind of knowledge creates is an image that only expresses the objects (the activist encounter and the relationships between the

bodies) by their effects on us. How bad are these inadequate ideas for our analysis of activism? Practically speaking, what would it mean for us, as spectators, to have a higher knowledge of causes – that is, to have 'notion-ideas' of the activist encounter and to become the cause of our own affects, rather than having merely 'affection-ideas' of it? And how might activism help us to move away, at least partially, from the passions that the accidental pattern of the encounter affirms in us? All these questions are important in so far as they contribute to the more general question of how activism approximates the threshold of becoming a project of alternative collective action.

A notion-idea, says Deleuze, 'no longer concerns the effect of another body on mine, it's an idea which concerns and which has for its object the agreement or disagreement of the characteristic relations between two bodies' (Deleuze 1978: 10).[7] This notion of agreement (and disagreement) between the encountering bodies needs to be seen in light of Deleuze's account of the Spinozist idea of 'what a body is capable of': its significance depends on our efforts to know which affections we and others are capable of, given our society, our culture, our specific historical life, and so on. From the point of view of the notion-idea, drawing up an ethological chart of the compositions of relations seems to be essential for activism. Put simply, this means developing a reasonable knowledge of 'what a people can bear' when they are confronted with practices such as those introduced by activism (contrary to what critics may think, this is not necessarily equivalent to developing practices which are in harmony with the actual). What we can bear politically is seen here as linked to what our bodies can do in relation to a specific political issue. Reasonable knowledge leans on the assumption that affecting others joyfully should not be considered a sin for activists. For Spinoza, reason is, after all, a problem of becoming, and self-righteous 'anti-becoming' attitudes abound among activists. This question of reasonable knowledge takes us back to Juliet's investigation of the conditions for a new, more agreeable encounter with Romeo. And the idea of investigation being part of activist practice leads us on to what has been implemented lately by activists and researchers as *militant research* (see Biddle et al. 2007; Malo de Molina 2004; Benasayag and Sztulwark 2000). As defined in 2009 by the Collective 'Precarias a la Deriva' (Madrid), militant research is a process of re-appropriating our own capacity for *world*-making, which questions, problematises and pushes the real through a series of concrete procedures. More forcefully, for the Argentinean 'Colectivo Situaciones', activism is not about leading or supporting struggles but about dwelling actively in

the situation – investigating it – with a view to the emergence of an alternative sociability (Colectivo Situaciones 2001: 37). The first premise of activist militant research is that there is no global knowledge on how things should be; rather, activism entails an engagement in the production of situational or local knowledge. This is why the activist-machine is a paradigmatic case of learning in Deleuze's sense – a constant experimentation of the discordant exercise of the faculties disconnected from every form of identity (cf. Deleuze 1994: 164–7).

In terms of how this might be done, organising protests on behalf of the rights of weakened groups, or filming their experiences to gain sympathy (or prizes), is not enough. What is needed is the combination of activist research with populations experiencing alternative sociabilities (Colectivo Situaciones 2001: 38).[8] Here resides one of the major differences between investigation-based activists and classical civil society NGOs, which tend to adopt an a priori agenda for change. It is not that regular acts of protest lack any significance; rather, the claim here is that they cannot be seen as the focus of revolutionary action. The situational production of knowledge should be seen in direct relation to the difference between changing the world and creating it anew, with revolutionary activism being committed to the latter.

It is true that the activist-machine 'kills the joy' (Ahmed 2009) of those fearing the effects of the activists' revolutionary horizon on their peaceful life and privileges. In so doing, activism necessarily undermines solidarity. But producing unhappiness cannot be activism's goal or sense. Although sadness inevitably accompanies every activism – even those supporting the action may feel 'local sadness' (Deleuze 1978: 9) – it is hard to see the point to causing sad affects in others. We already know one of the activist's bad habits: to induce in us sadness and resentment as the necessary preparation for forming a critical attitude which will make us politically active.[9] But there is no good reason to look for such bad encounters as a matter of strategy (tactical bad encounters might be considered circumstantially, assuming an awareness of their destructive effect on all bodies involved). '[N]othing in sadness . . . can induce you from within sadness to form a notion common to something which would be common to the bodies which affect you with sadness and to your own' (11). At times, as activists, we feel the urge 'to make things clear' to help people to understand a particular issue by engaging in radical action, as if they are in need of a brighter light in their life. But pure intensity does not necessarily lead to a good encounter: 'a blue that is too intense for my eyes will not make me say it's beautiful' (14).

From a Spinozist ethical perspective then, working towards a level of strategic knowledge concerning the ways bodies A, B and C can be mutually affected goes hand in hand with the need to 'organise encounters' as 'the effort to form an association of men in relations that can be combined' (Deleuze 1992: 261). The incredible amount of time activists spend on articulating ideologies will count for little if their practices are separated from a strategy that includes, at least partially, entering into joyous participation with others – meaning, pursuing compossible relations with them. Activism's role is not to secure that compossibility, but to open up and remain open to its potentiality.

Let us move on to another of activism's functions. The inadequate idea brought forth by the affections between the bodies involved in the activist encounter has two sides: 'they "involve privation" of the knowledge of their cause, but are at the same time effects that in some way "involve" that cause' (Deleuze 1992: 149). The second aspect, explains Deleuze, contains something positive, indispensable for the passage into adequate ideas, which is, in fact, the power of thinking, or what is enabled in the first instance by the faculty of imagination (149–50). This natural condition not only leads to the conceptualisation of the passage into common notions, but also means that we might have a multiplicity of several and different affection-ideas – inadequate ideas. Reacting to an activist action, we might form a specifically fearful image of a particular intervention as the result of becoming affected with anger. But, in addition, the intermingling of affections in the activist encounter also actualises the formal idea of the revolution. Whichever of the affects it arouses, the variation of affection-ideas caused by the activist encounter involve a sort of 'background noise' – a singular range of frequencies of perceptions – involving an idea (inadequate as it might be) of a 'people to come' hovering above and intersecting with activist practices. In other words, given that 'the ideas we have are signs, indicative images impressed in us' (147), we are claiming that the disrupting action of activism imprints in us a hallucinating sign which indicates the formal presence of a revolution. This is why we said before that activism is not itself the revolutionary passage of rhythms in a structure, but only announces that passage's potential existence. It is apparently to this feature of activism that Appadurai directs his words:

> The imagination has become an organised field of social practices, a form of work … and a form of negotiation between sites of agency … and globally defined fields of possibility … The imagination is now central to all forms of agency, is itself a social fact … [it] is today a staging ground for action, and not only for escape. (Appadurai 1996: 31)

This function of activism stands in relation with the other, that of striving for the formation of common notions. Though causing bad encounters for many, for the 'background noise' not to become dead noise and activism not to be washed away, activism needs to avoid creating an excess of the unhappiness it inevitably causes. For example, when activists clash with the institutional forces responsible for raising separation walls (the Berlin Wall, the West Bank wall, and so on), they still need not to overlook the idea or possibility of more agreeable encounters taking place between the segregated bodies.

IV. Method

The life of an activist is marked by a sense of urgency, anxiety and alertness to a life under attack. It involves both a type of discomfort with the world, and a life-force seeking out the new; activism is therefore in and of itself turbulent and restless. It threatens our neat and secure life. It is the pure form of terror. This is perhaps why the drama of activism can be so annoying for spectators, and so dangerous for activists.

To describe activism's machinations I turn to Deleuze's theory of the series, as formulated in *The Logic of Sense* (1990). The claim here is that every activist-machine working in a particular zone of social, cultural or political action comes into being through the creation of a new series of interconnected elements as a result of alternative connections with (a) given registers of the actualised world, and (b) new imaginations. The new series engendered by the activist-machine never isolates itself, but rather aims at producing a communication of divergence with a specific official series within a particular zone of thought and action. This is analogous to a situation in which, suddenly and without warning, we introduce a new set of actors from among the audience or the street, to become an integral part of a performance on stage – or, if you prefer, we add an entirely new deck into the middle of a card game, or bring on a third team during a football game. In all of these instances a new game is created; by dissolving the former rules we bring new connections to bear upon the large conjunctions to which subjects and objects are currently in thrall, thereby changing the structure of the game. Once such a connection between the series has been established, a disjunctive and productive movement of distancing between the old and the new series appears, certain modes of excess start to circulate, and, finally, new products and flows come into play.

For example, when the State of Israel, its governments and its Jewish majority insist upon referring to Israel as 'The Jewish State', they are appealing to a certain associated series of elements in order to affix a certain symbolic meaning to a structure that is 'haunted by a desire for eternity' (Guattari 1995: 37): Jewish-State-the-Biblical-Land, Jewish-State-Holocaust-European-debt, Jewish-State-the-few-against-the-many, Jewish-State-agricultural-revolution, Jewish-State-stretching-out-its-hand-in-peace, Jewish-State-the-only-democracy-in-the-Middle-East, and so on. Conversely, when activist groups in Israel/Palestine articulate the name of Israel with other elements that are 'shaped by a desire for abolition' (37) – such as Israel-Nakba, Israel-segregation-apartheid, Israel-Gaza-strip-blockade, Israel-the-West-Bank-the-Wall, Israel-discrimination-Arab-minority, Israel-militarism, and so forth – they are in fact appealing to an alternative series of real relations implicating the state's name. This second series attaches itself to the first series by implanting a differential correspondence between the respective elements of the series, thereby creating disequilibrium. As José Gil has pointed out, the true machine of innovation in Deleuze's thinking of the event is the disjunction as the synthetic movement of divergent terms (Gil 2008: 18). There is an excess of one series over the other through their common interface, in this case with the name of Israel functioning as the Empty Square, and enabling 'indirect interactions between elements devoid of so-called natural affinity' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 348).

Through the activist interlacement of a new series, a paradox is introduced: 'Paradox is initially that which destroys good sense as the only direction, but it is also that which destroys common sense as the assignation of fixed identities' (Deleuze 1990: 3). This being the case, we can understand why, today, both Zionists and their critics sense a certain discomfort when appealing to the name of the Jewish state. This forced encounter between the two series, instigated by activism, redefines the trajectory of the name of Israel – approximating this name to its problematic actualisations. From the activist-machine perspective, a straightforward proposition such as: 'It is the Jewish state that is oppressing, segregating and committing war-crimes' changes something in the way the struggle is expanded upon, since new, real connections and relations are being claimed.

The question, in the case of Israel and its name, becomes not whether Israel must be recognised as a Jewish state, but what this name expresses in terms of actual experiences and virtual potentials. In this respect, Derrida's treatment of the name of apartheid might

be worth quoting, interspersed with references to the Middle-Eastern analogy:

> Those in power in South Africa [Israel] have not managed to convince the world, and first of all because, still today, they have refused to change the real, effective, fundamental meaning of their watchword: apartheid [the Jewish state]. A watchword is not just a name... is also a concept and a reality... [They]... wanted to keep the concept and the reality, while effacing the word, an evil word, *their* word. They have managed to do so in *their* official discourse, but that's all. Everywhere else in the world... people have continued to think that the word was indissolubly – and legitimately – welded to the concept and to the reality. (Derrida 1986: 163)

In the past, Derrida urged the world to call a thing by its name with regard to South African apartheid. In contrast with Juliet's plea, calling Israel by its preferred name 'will remain the "unique appellation" of this monstrous, unique, and unambiguous thing' (Derrida 1986: 159). By calling the thing by its name, while imposing a contretemps upon it, this part of the actual loses its grip on recent identifications. This is where we face the polyphony of the naming-function. On the one hand, in *Romeo and Juliet*, 'the proper name, when assigned to people, functions to consolidate... the subjective territories of individuals within a given society, that is, within an official culture' (Reynolds 2009: 48). On the other hand – as in the case of the names of the apartheid and the Jewish state: 'the naming-function provides a counter-tactic by which to undermine societies' mechanisms of control and surveillance' (280).

The connection between the two series of elements instigated by activism forges a new space of relations and a new structure in which a problematisation of social and political issues is brought to the fore. The connection – or *ligaçao* in Gil's terms – is what creates 'a critical distance between members of the same species' by introducing variation (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 322). We are now in a position to dare to offer an alternative reading to the famous 'Lodge yourself' passage in *A Thousand Plateaus* (161): investigate; create an alternative series of elements having new visual, audible and material elements; investigate-experiment. Then, by making connections, this series should intersect the dominant series at different points; investigate-experiment. You will be overwhelmed by the apparition of new images and affections, and, as a result, a reconsideration of life becomes inevitable.

Notes

1. As Bogue explains, for Bergson, fabulation is a protective shield (against social dissolution) which 'goes hand in hand with religion in creating the myths of forces, myths, and deities that foster social cohesion and individual contentment' (Bogue 2006: 205). In Shakespeare's play, familialism takes the place of religion.
2. I follow here the way the Argentinean Colectivo Situaciones (2001) explain their perspective on *Contrapoder* ('counter-power'). For Benasayag and Sztulwark (2000), the contemporary *Contrapoder* is expressed by creative and constructionist struggles that are not derived from sadness and do not rely on models or seek central power. Rather, they produce an anti-systemic subjectivity and are situational in their operation.
3. To appropriate Bartleby beyond this point will be futile, since Bartleby, as Deleuze explains, 'is too smooth for anyone to be able to hang any particularity on him' (Deleuze 1997: 74). As such, Žižek's (2006) Bartlebyan politics – premised upon an essential movement of subtraction from the hegemonic system which both guarantees an outside and allows one to criticise contemporary forms of what he defines as pseudo-resistance – as well as Hardt and Negri's (2000) take on Bartleby as the iconic anti-Empire work-refusnik – are both excesses of interpretation (cf. Beverungen and Dunne 2007), desperate formalisations of Bartleby.
4. As Raunig explains, in *Foucault* (2006), 'Deleuze makes the point that a social field offers resistance before it is organised according to strategies' (Raunig 2007: 53). In Hardt and Negri's register, 'resistance is prior to power'.
5. Oppression here is understood as the oppression of creative processes. Aiming at the ontological conditions of creation, oppression is infinite stratification, i.e. the accumulative spatialisation, homogenisation and quantification of duration. Oppression is a natural tendency, the twin of creative processes. In its social register, oppression mystifies stratification using the logic of representation. It occurs everywhere, including throughout activist initiatives.
6. This means that the idea that a revolutionary initiative can construct itself in isolation from the 'general society' in a separate territory is a short-term illusion. I have explained elsewhere how *Galilee*, as an intercultural assemblage, is being thrown back into the dichotomies of ethnicity just because it doesn't confront properly the fact that *potestas* can't be ignored (see Svirsky 2010).
7. To clarify: the affection-idea is associated with the effects of the mixing of bodies in the encounter, whereas the notion-idea is associated with the degree of agreement or disagreement of the characteristic relations of the bodies.
8. Since their appearance in the late 1990s, Colectivo Situaciones have made several interventions-investigations with different groups, such as with 'escraches-groups' (actions aimed at unmasking mainly individuals involved in the last Argentinean dictatorship), with Tupamaros (a revolutionary movement that emerged in Uruguay during the 1960s), and with the 'Movimiento de Trabajadores Desocuapdos de Solano' (a movement of the unemployed in the locality of Solano). For an extensive list of their activities and their published literature see: http://www.situaciones.org
9. Sometimes activists are not that different from Spinoza's priest or despot, who needs the sadness of his audience and their feelings of guilt in order to influence them. But sadness can only diminish our power of acting.

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Between Realism and Anti-realism: Deleuze and the Spinozist Tradition in Philosophy

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Abstract

In 1967, after a talk Deleuze gave to the Society of French Philosophy, Ferdinand Alquié expressed concern during the question and answer session that perhaps Deleuze was relying too heavily upon science and not giving adequate attention to questions and problems that Alquié took to be distinctively philosophical. Deleuze responded by agreeing with Alquié; moreover, he argued that his primary interest was precisely in the metaphysics science needs rather than in the science philosophy needs. This metaphysics, Deleuze argues, is to be done 'in the style of Whitehead' rather than the style of Kant, and in developing this metaphysics Deleuze draws heavily on Spinoza. The present essay examines this Deleuzian-Spinozist metaphysics done in the style of Whitehead, the 'metaphysics science needs', drawing on the writings of David Hume and Bruno Latour in the process. This discussion will in turn enable us to situate Deleuze's metaphysics in relation to contemporary debates concerning speculative realism and correlationism, and especially Quentin Meillassoux's critique of the latter. Our conclusion will be that the kind of metaphysics Deleuze pursues is neither correlationist nor straightforwardly realist, but rather charts a course between realism and anti-realism.

Keywords: Ferdinand Alquié, Spinoza, David Hume, Bruno Latour, Quentin Meillassoux, correlationism, David Lewis

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Deleuze's thought can be situated relative to realism and anti-realism by way of two responses he received following his talk entitled 'Method of Dramatization' given to the Société Française de Philosophie on 28 January 1967. The first is from Ferdinand Alquié, who expressed a concern about Deleuze's use of examples from science and psychology to make philosophical points:

> I understand that Mr. Deleuze criticizes philosophy for making the Idea a conception that is not adaptable, as he would like, to scientific, psychological, and historical problems. But I think that alongside these problems there remain classical philosophical problems, namely problems having to do with essence. In any event, I don't believe, as Deleuze does, that the great philosophers have never posed such questions. (Alquié cited in Deleuze 2003: 106)

Coming from the man who was overseeing his work on Spinoza at the time, this criticism got Deleuze's attention. The second question is from Alexis Philonenko, a Kant and Fichte scholar, who sought clarification of Deleuze's arguments concerning the relationship between the representational and the subrepresentational. Philonenko compared these arguments to Maïmon's, noting that the latter's differential elements compare to Deleuze's subrepresentational elements, and the integration of these differentials to the representational. For Philonenko, a consequence of this approach is scepticism, for we are left without a criterion whereby we can discern 'what we produce and what the object produces . . . [and] what is produced logically and what is not'. 'So', Philonenko concludes, 'this is what I want to know: what part does illusion (or the illusory) have in the movement of differential elements?' (Philonenko cited in Deleuze 2003: 114).

Before addressing Deleuze's response to these two questions I first want to show how they give rise to issues concerning realism. We will then be better placed to introduce Deleuze's thought into the constellation of debates that currently surround realism, anti-realism and speculative realism.

Alquié's concern with Deleuze's talk was that the distinctiveness of philosophy was being supplanted by science. Is philosophy merely a midwife to the sciences? For Deleuze the answer is clearly no. When asked, for example, whether the topological model discussed in the conclusion to *A Thousand Plateaus* is 'transposable into mathematics [and] biology', Deleuze says 'it is the other way around', and to clarify this point he adds: 'I feel that I am Bergsonian – when Bergson says that modern science has not found its metaphysics, the metaphysics it

needs. It is that metaphysics that interests me' (Deleuze 2007: 41). This metaphysics should not, Deleuze stresses, be undertaken 'in the style of Kant', but rather 'in the style of Whitehead' (Deleuze 2007: 41). What this involves will be discussed below, but it is important first to appreciate the fact that Deleuze is interested in the metaphysics modern science needs, rather than the science philosophy needs.

With this turn to metaphysics we also return to the choice that has come to characterise much of post-Kantian philosophy – one can follow Humean empiricism and its positivist and nominalist variants or one can follow Kantian critique and its idealist and rationalist variants, but, it is generally assumed, one cannot follow both simultaneously. Philonenko's question regarding illusion comes from the Kantian perspective. Kant identifies as a transcendental illusion the process whereby one extends the concepts of the pure understanding to form judgements regarding things that are beyond the limits of possible experience (e.g., the existence of God, the claim that the world must have a beginning in time, etc.). The point of Kant's critical project is to determine the limit that marks the line between legitimate and illusory claims to know what is real and what is not. But even with this project in hand, Kant admits that the transcendental illusion 'does not cease even after it has been detected and its invalidity clearly revealed by transcendental criticism' (Kant 2003: 299); the mind naturally and inevitably slips into illusion. On Philonenko's reading of Maïmon, moreover, we cannot even be certain about the line we draw between legitimate and illusory judgements, since it is uncertain whether the integration of differentials from which our judgements arise is the product of our own making or a real consequence of a real object. Similarly, from the empiricist perspective, when we are led through the association of ideas and habit to impute causality and necessity to objective relationships, or to infer a substantial self that accompanies our thoughts and perceptions, and Hume too would leave us with no way to differentiate between reality and illusion other than in terms of the strength and vivacity of our beliefs themselves, which is certainly no guarantee. As Deleuze says of Hume, 'From the point of view of philosophy, the mind is no longer anything but delirium and madness. There is no complete system, synthesis, or cosmology that is not imaginary' (Deleuze 2001: 83).[1] Deleuze's response to Philonenko's question may thus seem surprising, but it is unambiguous – for him there is no place for illusion with respect to the subrepresentational field; this field is 'perfectly determinable', as Deleuze puts it, and 'the illusion only comes afterward, from the direction of constituted extension and the qualities that fill out these extensions' (Deleuze 2003: 115). For

Deleuze, therefore, the real is to be associated with the processes that constitute the givenness of objects rather than with the constituted, identifiable objects and categories themselves. It is for this reason that Deleuze identifies the style of metaphysics he is interested in with Whitehead instead of Kant; rather than base an understanding of reality upon identifiable categories and forms of judgement, Deleuze argues that our scientific, representational understanding of reality presupposes subrepresentational processes that are not to be confused or identified with whatever is identifiable as a result of these processes.

In the choice between Kant and Hume, therefore, Deleuze's preference seems clear – Hume. But where does this leave Deleuze relative to realism, and to metaphysics in particular? At first sight it might appear that Deleuze should be placed solidly within the anti-realist camp. After all, if what can be said of reality may in the end be illusory, and if Deleuze, much like Hume, is willing to say that 'there is no complete system, synthesis, or cosmology that is not imaginary', then it would seem to be difficult to place him in the realist camp. But is he therefore an anti-realist?

To answer this question I will sketch out the difference between realism and anti-realism by way of Quentin Meillassoux's critique of correlationism, which, as Meillassoux himself puts it, is ultimately a radical critique of any 'contemporary opponent of any realism' (Meillassoux 2007: 408). Put briefly, correlationism holds that we cannot know reality as it is in-itself but only as it is for-us, as a correlate of consciousness, language, culture, conceptual scheme, etc. Meillassoux notes that Fichte's *Principles of Scientific Knowledge* is the 'chef d'oeuvre of such a correlationism' in that it shows how any attempt to posit a reality as independent of any positing is still a reality that is posited as such (Meillassoux 2007: 408). Correlationism, however, is not committed to a subject-object dualism but more importantly rejects any attempt to hypostatise a reality that would be autonomous and independent. This is why Meillassoux will understand correlationism not as 'an anti-realism but [as] an anti-absolutism', for it is invoked 'to curb every hypostatization, every substantialization of an object of knowledge which would turn the latter into a being existing in and of itself' (Meillassoux 2010: 11). Whether these autonomous beings are Ideas or objects, correlationism, for our purposes, is anti-realist in that it holds that any reality in-itself is always from the start an in-itself correlated with something else.

Let us turn now to more traditional understandings of anti-realism, deriving from the analytic tradition. The term itself was first used by

Michael Dummett to characterise those positions which argue that reality is what is necessary in order to state meaningful, true sentences.[2] Dummett will refer to this as semantic realism, and others will call it deflationary realism, but it is clear that it is a form of correlationism or anti-realism in that the real is accounted for not as it is in-itself but only in so far as it is necessary to the utterance of meaningful, true sentences. As Quine famously put it: 'To be assumed as an entity is, purely and simply, to be reckoned as the value of a variable. In terms of categories of traditional grammar, this amounts roughly to saying that to be is to be in the range of reference of a pronoun' (Quine 1980: 13). Donald Davidson, one of Quine's most prominent students, will break with what he sees as Quine's continuing adherence to what Davidson calls the third dogma of empiricism, by which he means that scheme-content dualism whereby a pure content ('sensory firings' in Quine's case) is forged and translated by a conceptual scheme into the content of our knowledge of reality.[3] In rejecting the third dogma Davidson may appear to be a realist – he does, after all, claim to uphold a form of monism which asserts that there is nothing but objects and events. And yet when he argues for the reality of these objects and events his argument in the end largely follows Quine, claiming as it does that objects and events (especially the latter) are real only because we could not utter the meaningful sentences we do without them.[4] Finally, though we could go on, in David Lewis's modal realism – a realism that goes well beyond that of common sense in accepting the reality of possible worlds – Lewis argues for the reality of possible worlds by showing that they are necessary if our everyday counterfactual claims are to be meaningful and true (see Lewis 2001). In all these cases and in others, the real is not considered as it is in-itself but only as it is necessary to some other process (namely, a linguistic and semantic process); in this sense, correlationism and anti-realism are alive and well within the analytic tradition.

In his attempt to move beyond correlationism, Meillassoux draws support from an important ontological claim that he derives from correlationism itself, even though he admits that it 'is not an ontology, strictly speaking'. He argues that, 'according to the correlationist, if I remove myself from the world, I can't know the residue. But this reasoning supposes that we have access to an absolute possibility: the possibility that the in-itself could be different from the for-us. And this absolute possibility is grounded in turn on the absolute facticity of the correlation' (Meillassoux 2007: 431). In other words, from the epistemological claim that one cannot 'know the residue' of what would *be* independent of what is for-us, Meillassoux draws the ontological

conclusion that the world could be other than it is for-us, which entails, in turn, the possibility of a world without correlation, a world without givenness. From here it is a simple step to the undermining of correlationism, since if the real, X, can be known only as a *posited* X, then it follows from the ontological conclusion concerning the facticity of the correlation itself that there is the possibility of an X that is not posited, a world without givenness for-us.

One of the challenges that attends Meillassoux's conclusion – a challenge that is central to what has been called speculative realism (and which has not been ignored within the analytic tradition either) – is to account, in a noncircular manner, for the facticity of thought itself – especially the normative patterns of thought – and hence for the relationship between thought and the structure of reality from which thought emerges. It would lead us too far astray to enter into these debates here, but it should be noted that Meillassoux's own concerns regarding realism and the facticity of thought are widely shared and are being addressed from a number of different perspectives.[5]

To return to the relationship between philosophy and science – and clearly science has a lot to say about the origins of thought – we can begin by discussing David Lewis's Humean understanding of necessity, or what he calls Humean supervenience. On Lewis's reading of Hume, any claims we make regarding the world supervene upon a given distribution of particular facts. For example, given any two worlds, if they are identical in every way and share the same laws of nature then they will remain identical at any and all later times. There cannot be a change in the distribution of particular facts, or a divergence between the two worlds, without a simultaneous change in the laws that supervene upon these worlds and facts. Given the laws of probability, the chance that a single throw of the dice will give me a six are one in six. Three or four sixes may show up in a row, but given enough throws the number of times I throw a six will approach one in six. The laws of probability thus supervene upon a given distribution of particular facts in the world (here rolls of the dice) up to and including $time_1$. If there is a non-zero chance, however, that after $time_1$ sixes come up every time then that would effect the chance distribution at W at $time_1$. It would be something higher than one in six, but this would contradict Humean supervenience, since the world at $time_1$ would both be and not be in accordance with the laws of probability up to and including $time_1$. Lewis refers to this as an undermining future.[6] Meillassoux, for his part, contends that what makes the Humean understanding of necessity possible is that there be a totality relative to which the particular facts

are compared, and hence upon which the necessary laws supervene. It is the *totality* of throws at $time_1$ combined with the throws after $time_1$ that gives rise to undermining futures. Following Badiou and Cantor, however, Meillassoux argues for the non-All that cannot be totalised and which therefore undermines the necessary laws that would supervene upon a given totality. The notion of an undermining future would not even arise on this reading. This is not to say that there are no particular facts or regularities between facts. Within a large set of observations the odds of sixes appearing may be one in six, or there may be countless other regularities, but the 'laws' that supervene upon these regularities are, Meillassoux argues, 'contingent. They are not necessary. As Hume said, we are unable to demonstrate any such necessity' (Meillassoux 2007: 441).[7]

Turning now to Deleuze, we have what might be called 'Deleuzian supervenience', whereby the axiomatic supervenes upon the problematic, but the problematic forever exceeds the axiomatic: it is the 'power of the continuum, tied to the axiomatic but exceeding it'. Axiomatics, or what Deleuze will also call major or royal science, draws from problematics the necessity of inventing and innovating; while problematics, as minor or nomad science, calls upon axiomatics to actualise solutions to the problems it lays out. Deleuze and Guattari are clear on this point: 'Major science has a perpetual need for the inspiration of the minor; but the minor would be nothing if it did not confront and conform to the highest scientific requirements' (Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 486). To clarify this point we can turn to Spinoza, and to Deleuze's review essay of Gueroult's first volume on Spinoza's *Ethics*. Here Deleuze argues that what is important about Gueroult's approach is his stress on the fact that Spinoza doesn't begin with the idea of God (God enters the scene only with the sixth definition and the ninth proposition). Does this mean that the first five definitions and eight propositions are inessential to Spinoza's project – mere preliminary work that had to be got out of the way before the real work began? For Gueroult and for Deleuze the answer is no. Otherwise, Deleuze argues, we get 'two misreadings of the attribute: 1) the Kantian illusion that makes attributes forms or concepts of the understanding, and 2) the neo-Platonic vertigo that makes attributes already degraded emanations or manifestations' (Deleuze 2003: 149).

With this claim we arrive at the central feature of Spinozism as Deleuze understands it – namely, the relentless tracking down of transcendence in all its forms. And here we find the two misreadings of Spinoza to which Deleuze refers, both of which call upon transcendence.

First, the Kantian illusion that turns attributes into concepts that transcend substance as that which is applied to substance (this is also Badiou's misreading of Spinoza[8]). Second, the neo-Platonic misreading of Spinoza that sees substance as a pure One and the attributes as degraded emanations of this One (Hegel and Bertrand Russell are guilty of this reading). Substance, however, is neither One nor multiple, but is rather a multiplicity, a substantive multiplicity. The attributes, therefore, are fully real and are *really* distinct from one another, but they are not numerically distinct and they do not transcend substance, nor are they the degraded emanations of substance. They constitute, to repeat, what Deleuze will call a substantive multiplicity:

> The logic of real distinction is a logic of purely affirmative difference and without negation. Attributes indeed constitute an irreducible multiplicity, but the whole question is what type of multiplicity. The problem is erased if the substantive 'multiplicity' is transformed into two opposed adjectives (multiple attributes and one substance). (Deleuze 2003: 150)

For Deleuze, therefore, Spinoza does not begin with God but with the problematic, with substantive multiplicity. To understand Spinoza adequately, therefore, it is essential to clarify what is meant by substance, and in what way it is not to be confused with either God or the modes and attributes. By far the most common interpretation of substance is to understand it as a being, albeit an absolute, infinite being, that is in some way parcelled by the modes and attributes. At the risk of anachronism, we could apply Heidegger's ontological difference and say that substance is typically understood onto-theo-logically as being in contrast to Being. Although I will not, as some do, assert that substance is to be understood as Being, as no-thing in Heidegger's sense of the term, I would argue that substance is not to be conceived as a being either. It is precisely this latter reading of substance that lends itself to the two misreadings of the attributes listed above. One reading of Spinoza's theory of substance that avoids interpreting substance as being can be found in H. F. Hallett's works.[9] For Hallett, substance is 'absolutely indeterminate', or in-determinate, as I have argued elsewhere.[10] Hallett's interpretation is by no means the consensus view, but it does have important textual support. For example, since God is defined in the *Ethics* as absolutely infinite (1D6), God can in no way be limited or in any way determinate, for to be determinate would entail it being related to another that it is not. As Spinoza argues in his letter to Jelles, 'all determination is negation' (Spinoza 1996: 260),[11] and hence substance cannot be determinate if is to be absolutely infinite and

affirmative, which is precisely how Spinoza understands it, as he makes clear in a letter to Lodewijk Meyer where he claims that substance is the 'infinite enjoyment of existing' (Spinoza 1996: 102). This also accounts for why God is absolutely infinite rather than infinite in its own kind, as the attributes are, since this would require being a determinate form of infinite and hence a form that *could*, when understood conceptually by way of the understanding – namely the infinite mode of understanding – be related to what it is not, to what is other than it. Yet another reason for adopting Hallett's reading follows from a related claim Spinoza makes in his letter to Jelles that anyone who 'calls God one or single has no true idea of God' because, as we have already noted, all determination is negation and God, as substance, is the 'infinite enjoyment of existing', or the 'absolutely infinite power of existing', as Spinoza will also put it in the *Ethics*.[12]

To clarify the Spinozist context within which Deleuze's thought navigates, we can turn to Deleuze and Guattari's claim in *A Thousand Plateaus* that God is a lobster, a double articulation. It is all too easy to underestimate the philosophical importance of this claim, but we can also see it at work in Deleuze's essay on Gueroult, where Spinoza's first eight propositions correspond to the first articulation, or, as Deleuze puts it, 'the first eight propositions represent a first series through which we ascend to the differential constitutive elements' – the attributes. As Deleuze had stressed earlier in the essay, there is 'no ascension from attributes to substance . . . to absolutely infinite substance'; rather, there is an ascension through a 'regressive analytic process' to the 'differential constitutive elements' themselves, to the substantive multiplicity. (Deleuze 2003: 150). Then there is the second articulation, the second series running from the ninth to the eleventh proposition, 'through which', Deleuze argues, 'the idea of God integrates these elements and makes clear it can be constituted only by all these elements together'. The attributes, as a multiplicity of incommensurable and really distinct entities, come to be integrated by the power of *causa sui* whereby 'essence is the cause of the existence of substance and the cause of the other things that derive from it' (Deleuze 2003: 153). Understood in this way, God as *causa sui* is both the condition that enables the regressive analytic process which leads to a multiplicity of really distinct attributes (first articulation) and the conditioned that is the integration of this multiplicity (second articulation). God is self-caused, or: God is a lobster, a double articulation.

We can now return to Alquié's question and Deleuze's response, and in turn situate Deleuze relative to realism and anti-realism. As

discussed earlier, Alquié was troubled by Deleuze's use of examples from science in his talk, creating the impression that philosophy was a mere expository tool in the service of science. In response to Alquié's question Deleuze stresses that he does 'believe in the specificity of philosophy, and furthermore, this belief of mine derives from you yourself' (Deleuze 2003: 106); moreover, Deleuze immediately adds, 'Even the concepts such as singular and regular, or remarkable and ordinary [i.e., philosophical concepts for Deleuze], are not exhausted by mathematics. I want to call on Lautman's theses: a theory of systems must show how the movement of scientific concepts participates in a dialectic that surpasses them' (Deleuze 2003: 107). In other words, and to state this in terms used above, royal science and axiomatics develops concepts that participate in, or supervene upon, nomadic and problematic philosophical concepts, and the latter are not exhausted by the former. Hence there is not, pace Lewis, a one-to-one structural supervenience between that which supervenes (axiomatics) and that which is supervened upon (problematics), but rather a supervenience that entails a non-causal relationship between the actualised and structured and that which exceeds these structures, such as philosophical concepts. Deleuze's seconding of Alquié's belief in the specificity of philosophy should thus not be underestimated, especially in light of recent calls among philosophers to return to realism. In response to this call, there have been roughly two distinct approaches. In the first it is argued that the way to do justice to reality in-itself is through mathematics. For Badiou 'mathematics is ontology' (Badiou 2007: 19), and Meillassoux tracks Badiou's approach quite faithfully, arguing that 'what is mathematizable cannot be reduced to a correlate of thought' (Meillassoux 2010: 117). The second approach accounts for the reality and nature of objects themselves by drawing on science, and dynamic systems theory in particular (DeLanda's and Protevi's work loom large here). There is tremendous work being done in each of these two approaches, but the concern, and it is precisely this that prompted Alquié's question, is that they may reduce philosophy to being simply an adjunct to mathematics and/or science. What is lost in these approaches is the distinctiveness of philosophy itself.

To clarify what it is that makes philosophy distinctive for Deleuze we can now turn to the question of how his understanding of the principle of sufficient reason – a good philosophical principle if ever there was one – differs from that of Lewis and Meillassoux. Since for Lewis laws supervene, in the structured manner discussed above, upon the particular facts of the world, and since worlds, both actual and possible,

constitute a totality, the claims of science can adequately represent the necessary distributions and regularities of each world. The *totality* of particular facts within each world thus provides a sufficient reason for the laws and claims that supervene upon these worlds. To clarify by way of example: if I roll a pair of dice and it comes up sixes 20 times in a row I may begin to think there must be a *reason* why this is happening – either faulty or loaded dice. Similarly, if a student happens to see their professor at the store they would likely think nothing of it (a mere chance encounter), and they may continue to think so even if they happen to run into them again later that day; but if this continues then at some point they will no doubt begin to think there is a *reason* that explains these encounters – namely, they are being stalked. For Meillassoux, however, what gives these examples their sufficient reason and explanatory power is that they are held in relationship to a set or totality of other examples. Relative to the totality of past instances, dice do not come up sixes 20 times in a row, nor does one run into one's professor more than once or twice on any given day outside the classroom. For Meillassoux, by contrast, the non-All undermines this explanatory power and with it the principle of sufficient reason. For him, consequently, there is no necessity other than the necessity of contingency. We cannot state why things are the way they are rather than another way. The arguments Meillassoux uses to justify this claim rely heavily upon the force of negation and contradiction (Hegel lurks behind the scenes here). He will thus argue, for example, 'that to be contingent you must not be contradictory, because if you are contradictory you are everything and you can't change' (Meillassoux 2007: 331). A similar claim is made in *After Finitude* where he argues that a philosophy of becoming will have to do away with contradictory entities for they cannot change and become what they are not – they already are what they are not (Meillassoux 2010: 69–71). And in his critique of correlationism itself Meillassoux calls upon Fichte's strategy, what Meillassoux calls 'pragmatico-genetic contradiction', to show that the content of a claim is contradicted by the very way in which the claim is put forward. The content of the claim 'X is not posited' is contradicted by the very fact that it is *posited* as not posited. Similarly, the content of correlationism's claim that all reality in-itself is a correlate for-us is contradicted by the absolutisation of contingency that goes along with this claim and which results in the facticity of the correlation itself. It is on the basis of these arguments, and the binary logic of contradiction they presuppose, that Meillassoux rejects the principle of sufficient reason. 'If you want to speak about what

exists,' Meillassoux argues, 'you can only *describe*, as phenomenology does' (Meillassoux 2007: 391) but the fact that it is something rather than nothing 'cannot be described' (Meillassoux 2007: 392). Despite the obvious differences between Lewis and Meillassoux – one accepts the principle of sufficient reason and accepts that worlds, both actual and possible, constitute totalities, while the other does not – they both share a commitment to a logic of representation – an 'it is or it isn't' logic – that Deleuze identifies with the actualisation of the actual world. In short, the logic of representation presupposes the bifurcations of actuality, the fact, as Deleuze argued in an early essay on Bergson, that 'virtuality exists in such a way that it actualizes itself as it dissociates itself; it must dissociate itself to actualize itself' (Deleuze 2003: 40). As dissociated and actualised, we have mutually exclusive differences, either/or contradictions, and the logic of representation presupposes these differences in order to represent that which the representation is *not*.

By contrast, and following from his Spinozism, Deleuze attempts to set forth philosophical concepts that presuppose a logic of expression and sense rather than a logic of representation. Rather than build upon mutually exclusive differences and contradictions, Deleuze tries to draw from difference-in-itself a Spinozist substantive multiplicity that presupposes 'a logic of purely affirmative difference and without negation' (Deleuze 2003: 150). It is this logic that accounts for the fact that, for Deleuze, philosophical concepts are not exhausted by scientific or mathematical concepts. Nearly 30 years after his 'Method of Dramatization' talk, Deleuze will continue to make much the same point. As Deleuze and Guattari argue in *What is Philosophy?* science sets out to map functions that represent the actualisation of the actual, or that accurately describe the regularities of the world.[13] Philosophy, by contrast, creates concepts which counter-actualise the actual and involve the problematic upon which the actual supervenes. Understood in this way, Deleuze, unlike Meillassoux, will continue to adhere to the principle of sufficient reason. As Deleuze argues in his book on Leibniz, the principle of sufficient reason does not imply that every actuality – Adam's eating of the apple for example – was determinately detailed and sketched in advance such that the actualisation itself was a foregone conclusion to anyone with complete knowledge (such as God); to the contrary, for Deleuze the principle of sufficient reason is the substantive multiplicity, in the Spinozist sense sketched above, that is the sufficient reason for the determinate (see Deleuze 1992: 41–58). As Deleuze will argue in numerous places, this substantive multiplicity

is real but not actual – it is what he will also call the virtual. Deleuze's logic of expression, however, does not entail a rejection of the actual world, an attempt to get out of this world and the logic of representation. It is, rather, an attempt to intensify the actual world, including its representations, to problematise it, and to do so while remaining fully within it. To argue otherwise would mean allowing transcendence to sneak in through the back door, and Deleuze, like Spinoza, is keen to hunt down transcendence in all its forms.

From this perspective, therefore, Deleuze is neither a correlationist anti-realist nor a straightforward realist. Deleuze is not a correlationist since he follows no binary logic of the for-us distinct from the in-itself; rather, he is a monist developing philosophical concepts that follow a logic of expression or sense rather than a binary logic of contradiction, a logic of representation. Each actual entity, or each mode in Spinoza's terms, is thus to be understood as an expression of substance, a substance that is only identifiable *as such* when expressed in a mode. Substance, therefore, does indeed turn around its modes, as Deleuze had said was how he understood Spinoza (Deleuze 2004: 306). As such, each actual entity is a real, determinate expression of substance, of substance as substantive multiplicity, or it is the expression of the nondenumerable which Deleuze and Guattari define as being 'neither the set nor its elements [the one or the multiple]; rather, it is the connection, the "and" produced between elements, between sets, and which belongs to neither, which eludes them and constitutes a line of flight' (Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 519). Between the elements of the correlation, therefore, between the for-us *and* the in-itself, there is the 'and', and it is this 'and' that 'constitutes a line of flight' that escapes and eludes every correlation, every attempt to reduce reality to a correlation. Similarly Deleuze is not an anti-realist in the analytic sense of the term for he soundly rejects the view that the real can only be accounted for in so far as it is necessary for meaningful, true sentences; rather, he asserts that the real as problematic, substantive multiplicity exceeds these representations and is irreducible to them, and thus the logic of representation presupposes the nonsense and nondenumerable upon which it supervenes. Deleuzian supervenience is thus not like Lewis's Humean supervenience, since Lewis follows the logic of representation whereby necessary laws supervene upon the particular facts of the world, and a change in the latter entails a change in the former. These laws therefore re-present the particular facts of the world. For Meillassoux there is no supervenience since there is no correlation between a totalised world and that which represents this world, even though, as we have

seen, Meillassoux continues to adhere to a logic of representation. Deleuzian supervenience, by contrast, follows a logic of sense, and thus the actual, the axiomatic, supervenes upon the problematic, which is not a correlate it represents but the expressiveness and power of the actual itself. Deleuzian supervenience, to recall our earlier comments, does not involve a structured relationship between the axiomatic and the problematic that it is *not*, but instead conveys the relationship between the actual and the in-determinate, de-structuring power that problematises the actual.

But Deleuze is not a straightforward realist either, if by realism one means the affirmation of an autonomous reality with properties and features that are independent of anyone's beliefs, linguistic practices, conceptual schemes, etc. The very idea of an autonomous reality in-itself presupposes, as Bruno Latour has argued, a stabilisation of events, events that are indeed real but are neither autonomous nor heteronomous. This has been a consistent theme for Latour, even though he has not always used the same terms to state it; put briefly, events and autonomous objects and facts are not to be confused with one another even though they are not fundamentally distinct, much less different in kind. Rather, objects and autonomous facts are stabilised events; or, adopting Latour's own metaphor, objects and autonomous facts are 'the cooled down continents of plate tectonics' (Latour 1993: 87). As Latour understands it, autonomous objects and facts 'in-themselves' are inseparable from their unstable networks; or, as he argues the point in *Laboratory Life*, what accounts for 'the solidity of [an] object' is that it is 'constituted by the steady accumulation of techniques', which is what keeps it 'from becoming subjective or artefactual' (Latour and Woolgar 1986: 127). An object may become particularly stable and even become lionised as a textbook fact, as an integral element of what Latour refers to as ready-made science, but it may lose allies to other objects and through a 'steady accumulation of techniques' and alliances give way to new textbook facts. Latour gives the example of how, prior to Watson, chemists thought, and the textbooks stated as an established fact, that the four DNA bases were in the enol form. This made it much more difficult for Watson to cast doubt upon this fact and put forth the case that the bases were actually in the keto form (Latour and Woolgar 1986: 171–2). Watson was eventually able to problematise the established textbook fact concerning the enol form, and this problematising process – what Latour calls science in the making – led in the end to the new textbook facts that now credit Watson (and Crick) with discovering the structure of

DNA. A Latourian ontology is monistic, therefore, in that it includes nothing but objects and events, or substantive multiplicities as Deleuze puts it. But this is not a stable monism of autonomous objects and lawful events; rather, it is an aberrant monism that continually moves between stable natures and unstable, problematising events. From a Latourian perspective, therefore, it is only when substantive multiplicity has become actualised and stabilised that it becomes consonant with the logic of representation, and hence only then can one say that it consists of a determinate duality between an autonomous, objective in-itself and a heteronomous, correlationist in-itself-for-us, between facts and artefacts, between realism and anti-realism. Between realism and anti-realism, then, there is the 'and', the substantive multiplicity that is tracked by the metaphysics Deleuze believes science needs. Deleuze believes this metaphysics is possible, and sees the development of it as the distinctive task of philosophy.

Notes

1. Deleuze reiterates this point in his short essay, 'Hume', where he argues again that Hume understands 'the essence of the mind as delirium or fiction' (Deleuze 2003: 166).
2. See Dummett's 1963 essay, 'Realism' (in Dummett 1978).
3. See Davidson's essay, 'On the Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme' (in Davidson 2001a).
4. See Davidson's essays 'Mental Events' and 'Events as Particulars' (in Davidson 2001b).
5. See, to give just a few examples, Millikan 1984; Tomasello 2010; and Varela 1992.
6. See Lewis 1980: 263–93, and Lewis 1987.
7. For Meillassoux's discussion of the non-All, see Meillassoux 2007: 127–8.
8. For my arguments to support this claim, see Bell 2006a.
9. See, for example, Hallett 1979 and 1930.
10. See my 'Ironing out the Differences: Nietzsche and Deleuze as Spinozists' (Bell 2006b, Chapter 2).
11. Letter 50: 'So since figure is nothing but determination, and determination is negation, figure can be nothing other than negation, as has been said' (Spinoza 1996: 260).
12. See Spinoza 1955: IP11.
13. 'Now philosophy wants to know how to retain infinite speeds while gaining consistency, by *giving the virtual a consistency specific to it*' – in other words, philosophy creates concepts that express a logic of sense, a logic of substantive multiplicities – 'Science approaches chaos in a completely different, almost opposite way: it relinquishes the infinite, infinite speed, in order to gain *a reference able to actualize the virtual*' – i.e., science tracks the actualisation of the virtual in accordance with the logic of representation (see Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 118).

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'Man Is Ill Because He Is Badly Constructed': Artaud, Klossowski and Deleuze in Search for the Earth Inside

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Abstract

Starting with Antonin Artaud's radio play *To Have Done With The Judgement Of God*, this article analyses the ways in which Artaud's idea of the body without organs links up with various of his writings on the body and bodily theatre and with Deleuze and Guattari's later development of his ideas. Using Klossowski (or Klossowski's Nietzsche) to explain how the dominance of dialogue equals the dominance of God, I go on to examine how the Son (the facialised body), the Father (Language) and the Holy Spirit (Subjectification), need to be warded off in order to revitalize the body, reuniting it with 'the earth' it has been separated from. Artaud's writings on Balinese dancing and the Tarahumaran people pave the way for the new body to appear. Reconstructing the body through bodily practices, through religion and above all through art, as Deleuze and Guattari suggest, we are introduced not only to new ways of thinking theatre and performance art, but to life itself.

Keywords: Artaud, Deleuze and Guattari, body without organs, theatre, God, Klossowski, language

> I should say that human affairs would be much more happily conducted if it were equally in the power of men to be silent and to speak; but experience shows that there is nothing which men have less power over than the tongue, and that there is nothing which they are less able to govern than their appetites.
>
> Spinoza (EIII P2 Schol)

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I. Artaud's Body without Organs

In his 1948 radio play *To Have Done With The Judgement Of God*, Antonin Artaud coins the phrase 'the body without organs'. Although Artaud never really developed this image, it does make a nice introduction to his radically new ideas on the body, especially in its relation to God and to what he named 'the soil'. Contrary to much of his earlier work (for example, *The Theatre and Its Double*, 1938), which consisted of essays on the theatre, his radio play comments on the state of the (Western) world. Vitalising the way we live our bodies, Artaud stresses that delivering man from his 'automatic reaction' and 'restoring his freedom' are the quintessential tasks of the human being who has lost faith in God but has yet to realise the consequences for the new type of 'life' this loss of faith entails. The human being needs to 'remake his anatomy' in order to remove the sickness that has haunted him. Only then, by scraping out his body, can man experience how wrong turns into right and right into wrong – as Artaud paraphrases Nietzsche. He therefore urges us to search for our 'body without organs'.

Most famously, Artaud's two-part manifesto *The Theatre of Cruelty* (1932) tells us that the body in theatre is striated by *language*, *dialogue* and *words* that prevent dynamical and spatial expressions from happening. By stressing the way in which dialogue overcoded bodies in Elizabethan theatre, Artaud is not, however, pleading for the abolition of the spoken text in theatre. On the contrary, it is in theatre in particular that human expression can very well be a sonic stage experiment. But sound or language should never be *imposed upon* the body by the director, who would then double or 'repeat' the author (the performer), as Lehmann put it (Lehmann 2006: 32), or, worse, would suppress and paralyse the body of the actor. Expression, rather, should follow from the intermingling of performing bodies, or engage with it. The body, as our epigraph from Spinoza suggests, should not be left at the mercy of an alien voice that rules the tongue, governing and colonising the body according to language's linguistic or semiotic rules (for instance, giving the actor the ability to speak of an I and a You, and capturing/identifying the objects that surround him or her). It should not be considered as the mere instrument through which the one who speaks 'forces the event into the Word [*le verbe*] or, more precisely, into the *epos* by which she relates in the present the origins of her person' as Jacques Lacan put it (Lacan 2006: 212). The body should not be turned into a predominantly linguistic sense organ, subjected to the Signifiers it has to consume and produce – Signifiers that, as genuine power markers, pierce the body like

a sword, like a second spine dramatically limiting its ways of expression. The body should be allowed to speak *from itself*; it should be given 'another voice', the way Diderot gave the woman a second voice in his *Les Bijoux indiscrets* (1748) in which the voice of the face (as it organises the body through the ears, the eyes and the mouth) is countered by the voice of the body (in Diderot's case the pearl, or the vagina). A voice that is not semiotic, not interested in language and code.

Reading Artaud's thoughts on the state of theatre in his time, and on the state of the world itself, could we say that the illnesses of theatre as Artaud identified them are symptomatic of Western culture as a whole? Artaud certainly seemed to make this connection (see Artaud 1935). If we agree with him, it follows that the Judgement of God, as it features in the title of his play, is in fact equivalent to the overdetermination of what Brian Massumi summarised as 'code text and signification', which he claims still dominates all thought on the body, subjectivity and social change (Massumi 2002: 66). In theatre, as well as in our everyday intersubjective world, dialogues colonise the body, grabbing it by the ears, eyes and mouth, reterritorialising it through an alien use of senses muting other experiences that might befall it. Well before the 'linguistic turn' impressed upon the humanities the idea that language is the first and foremost entry point for understanding the human condition – and for the human being to come to *any* 'sense-retention and sense-prospecting', as Derrida put it in his early essay on Husserl (Derrida 1978b: 78) – Artaud had already countered the entire argument. Capable of major bodily modifications, ordering the composite body as a whole, Artaud claimed that language as it dominates performance creates a verbal straitjacket that above all *removes* us from the world and our body, obscuring and deforming sense-retention and sense-prospecting.

The link that Artaud makes between the dominance of the written dialogue and the Christian God (ergo *the Judgement of God*) can be seen as acceptable within the humanities today. Marshall McLuhan argued that the first steps from an oral culture to a literate culture were taken with Plato's dialogues (McLuhan 1962). But turning the Book into the dominant form for thinking is by no means an innocent thing: it brings with it new strategies and new forms of organisation. McLuhan himself concluded that 'writing is the spatializing and arrest of oral speech' (McLuhan 1953 :119). Alfred North Whitehead's suggestion that Western philosophy could be considered as a series of footnotes to Plato (Whitehead 1978: 39) only underscores that, in its literate, written, form, the progress of Western thought silenced and imprisoned

the body and began to take the Book, the written dialogue, as its primal means of exposure. Establishing a connection, then, between this written tradition originating with Plato and the Christian tradition increasingly focused upon the Bible as written word, is not such a big step to take (it can already be found in Wilson [1937]). Christian theology is expressed through the New Testament and not through the words of the priest, just as Plato's thinking was not expressed verbally but through his written dialogues. It is not the body but the written word which organises the world (and human bodies) in its spatial form, as McLuhan, following Wilson, insists. Christian faith, finding its essence in the Bible, the written voice of God, perpetuates Platonism in so far as its form of expression and all of the Judgements it implicitly accepts and transfers follow a similar strategy. Indeed, McLuhan concludes that Christianity is *the same* as Platonism, since it accepts the means adopted by the latter to organise the world (a strategy that required the printing press and the Reformation in order to become fully operative, as McLuhan argued in 1962).

What Artaud suggests, then, is in line with the way in which scholars like Massumi propose to take life beyond code, text and signification. Massumi sets out to 'Rethink body, subjectivity and social change in terms of movement, affect, force and violence – before code, text, and signification' (Massumi 2002: 66). Artaud pursues a similar tactic when he claims that the Christian literate God, by *starting from* Language, has robbed us of our bodies (stressing their uselessness) in order to organise them according to His Judgements, His Language, His Organs.[1] In particular, the mouth is paralysed by the demands required by articulation. For it is not by a Lacanian speaking up, by forming and spatialising and identifying ourselves verbally, that language is driven out of our bodies again. On the contrary, not only do the words that leave our mouths overcode or harness our body on its outside, they also, similarly to a disease, intrude into the entire body in a bid to reorganise it. Although Christianity, in its guise as our guide to Truth, has long since left us, or at least undergone a dramatic metamorphosis, our mouths and consequently our bodies have never ceased to be defined according to His Words. If we believe Ernest Renan, who concludes that 'Socrates and Molière merely touched the skin. He [Jesus] carried fire and rage into the very marrow' (Renan 1864: 235), there is little hope that our secular age will be able to exorcise His Presence any time soon. His Words, as we are still repeating them, inscribing them into ourselves, continue to express Christianity by performing and projecting His Linguistic Structures, organising not only themselves but also the

world according to His Premises. This is what Nietzsche meant when he stated in *Twilight of the Idols* that 'we are not getting rid of God because we still believe in grammar' (Nietzsche 1990: 48). Nietzsche *knows* that it is indeed our *humanity* which God takes away from us. That is why Artaud cannot but conclude that the Christian literate God creates man without sexual or digestive organs: *as his equal*, as the Word.

II. Artaud and Deleuze and Guattari

When Deleuze and Guattari place Artaud's 'body without organs' (or BwO) at the centre of their materialist ethics, they develop his argument in many directions. Especially in plateau six of *A Thousand Plateaus*, 'How Do You Make Yourself a Body without Organs?', Deleuze and Guattari deploy the idea in their search for a series of ways out of the forms of organisation imposed by God/Language. It no coincidence that this plateau appears in the midst of those sections of the book in which Deleuze and Guattari's set out their theory of Language (plateaus 4, 5 and 7). For it is in a bid to ward off of the forces of organisation *as a whole* that they are led to explore the ways in which the masochist, the drug user and the schizo (as three routes amongst others) attempt to undo the respective organs/organic structures that form them, or better, that obstruct them from reaching *their particular* body without organs. But the three routes mentioned should therefore not be seen as experiments in themselves; as Dale rightfully concludes: 'they are only valuable because of the effects and ideas they engender in other visions and experimentations' (Dale 2002: 96). With Deleuze and Guattari, the BwO is not a given trajectory; it is a quest, or, as they summarise it: 'Find your body without organs. Find out how to make it. It's a question of life and death, youth and old age, sadness and joy. It is where everything is played out' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 151).

Artaud's position is not very different from Deleuze and Guattari's. Yet he arrives at it in a very different way. For although Artaud advises us to remove the Christian organs from our bodies, he is not against the organs as such. On the contrary, he wants us to get back in touch with our own organs – with those we have forgotten, those that have never sealed off our body from the outer world, that never cared to form, identify or qualify the body as a coded inside. Deleuze and Guattari, use the image of the BwO to develop the idea that there is only an outside (that the inside is a mere incarnate, folded-in outside, an inside of the outside). Artaud agrees with this when he refuses to work with the inside-outside opposition altogether and instead focuses on the

geometric lines, as Bernard Cache calls them (Cache 1995: 70), that pass through all objects, that reject any attempt at interiority. Artaud is in search of those affective lines that string the body to the other object, refusing an opposition between inside and outside while creating inflections within spatio-temporal events. The sexual or digestive organs – denied by Christianity, as they have always opened up the body, creating an absolute outside – are of particular interest to Artaud. By embracing those organs and the 'earthly' organisations they allow, Artaud wants to restore the body's necessary link to the soil (*terroir* or *Boden*), according to which the body lives its life in the first place.

Just as Deleuze and Guattari ask us to find our own BwO, Artaud asks us to find our organic culture which he considers 'une culture basée sur l'esprit en relation avec les organes, et l'esprit baignant dans tous les organes, et se répondant en même temps' (Artaud 1971a: 228). This 'wakefulness', as Nietzsche would call it, is achieved by exploring 'the barbaric and primitive means of totemism, whose savage vitality I would worship' (Artaud 2000: 12). Contrary to Freud's idea of the totem – and Freud would definitely critique the naive stance Artaud seems to propose here – Artaud sets himself the task of rediscovering the body not yet cultivated, not yet cut off from nature.

Certainly, when compared to Freud, Artaud's organic culture refers to a different kind of structure. In Deleuze and Guattari's terms, we can call it rhizomatic. A rhizome can very well be considered a structure, but one that, rather than being imposed upon us through God/Language, follows from the way in which our bodies(/minds) are lived as an open interval on the surface of the earth, which nurtures them and encloses them like a womb. Artaud knows very well that a body is all about discovering life, and that the alimentary and sexual regimes that Christianity (and Freud!) subject to language (to the Word) need to be radically rediscovered. Indeed, it is these two regimes that should be considered the *essence* of life: *they* define its eternal and necessary lacks, as Whitehead taught us (Whitehead 1978: 105–6), they keep on reinventing the series of structures through which the morphogenesis of the body takes place. Finding out how to come to oneself in terms of space (the alimentary regime) and time (the sexual regime) in no way allows life to 'solve' these lacks (which would take us back to Freud). Life is necessarily about the continuous disturbance and opening up of individual cells, and it is only in this 'robbery' as Whitehead called it (Whitehead 1978: 105) that life *needs* to merge in the alimentary and sexual events that *necessarily* extend way beyond the human body. Life needs to rob; it is its moral imperative to assimilate with the soil, to assemble itself with and

according to other (organic and inorganic) bodies (to come), through social and cultural vibrations. It needs to merge with what it defines as the edible just as much as it needs to get away from the poisonous; it needs to affect and be affected by what it loves. Life knows no inside or outside; it *has* to experiment with processes of inclusion and exclusion.

In other words, these continuous processes of inclusion and exclusion, of pure desire, without reducing human life to a biological essentialism, can very well be considered the organising forces that keep on creating the body. They are not fixed and do not go back to particular Laws that impose themselves upon life, the stable stigmatising structures through which God/Language demands that we express ourselves. On the contrary, the forces Artaud is searching for are those organisations responsible for the creation of life itself as they fall back upon the material and immaterial forces through which the human being came into being. These forces have increasingly gone unnoticed by us because of the domination of God/Language. When Artaud, in his radio play, states 'L'homme est malade parce qu'il est mal construit' (man is ill because he is badly constructed) he is referring to how the power (*potestas*) of God and of Language has, over time, deformed man, has isolated man by removing him from the organisations in which his powers function best. Artaud is thus not asking us to ward off all the organisations that striate the body. He wants us to get back in touch with those *naive* organisations that are about life, that are necessarily and essentially creative of life. He wants us to understand, as Peter Hallward puts it, that 'Vital or creative difference itself is primary' (Hallward 2006: 13).

Next to the idea that we need to redo organisation, Artaud also asks us to vitalize spirituality, the second of his precepts. For the 'God' in his *To Have Done With the Judgement of God*, we must understand, by no means refers to spirituality in general. The God here is the Western Literate God, or, better, Christ. That is why Artaud continuously affirms: 'Christ has always been what I most abhor' (quoted in Schumacher 1989: 176). It is the spirituality of the human, all too human, Jesus that in the end is radically different from the spiritualities Artaud searches for. Artaud is actually very keen on what are essentially *animist* spiritualities, as they express the soil similarly to the way our minds express our bodies. Indeed, he argues that spirits are the *ideas* of the soil, whereas the soil is the *object* of these expressions in a similar way to how the mind is an idea of the body and the body the object of the mind (see Spinoza 2001: 2P13). Spirit(uality) and soil are actually *the same thing*.

In both *The Baphomet* (1965) and *Nietzsche and the Vicious Circle* (1969), Pierre Klossowski claims that God gave form to the identity of the self: 'The "death of God" (the God who guarantees the identity of the responsible self) opens up the soul to all its possible identities . . .' (Klossowski 2005: 45). The One God, the Christian God, the Father, organises the processes of subjectification. His death thus meant the loss of personal identity. In *The Logic of Sense* Deleuze continues Klossowski's argument not only by connecting the Father to processes of subjectification, but also by connecting the Son to the facialised Body and the Holy Spirit to Language (Deleuze 1990: 280–301). Or, at least, the occidental Divine Order doubles its Trinity (Holy Spirit, Son and Father) by authorising the analogous identities of language, facialised Body and subjectification. That is why, when Deleuze and Guattari later return to the body without organs, they do so while mapping theories of language, faciality and processes of subjectification (plateaus 4, 5 and 7 of *A Thousand Plateaus* deal with language, 6 with the BwO, and 5 and 7 with the Face). In short, Deleuze (and Guattari) show us that the One God that is at the same time Three is the foundation of the facialised body, the repetitive construction of processes of subjectification and the denotator of all of this into language (the Word) as a totality (Deleuze 1990: 292). The fulcrum of Christianity is then the Face of Christ (as they claim in plateau 7): the semiotics expressed through the double system of semiotics (with an axis of significance and one of subjectification) unfolds itself from the bony face of Christ.

III. Find Your Organic Culture!

In order to move away from Christianised culture, and, more practically, to get theatre out of the grip of language, Artaud seemingly turns himself into an ethnographer, setting before us two cases in which he hopes a true organic culture can be found. He was in search of a positive take on the organs, for a spirituality and even a language that was unaffected by the external Judgement of God. In his essay on Balinese theatre (written after visiting a performance in Marseille) he is most explicit about how *art* allows us to vitalize the body in many ways. Discussing the art of movement in Balinese theatre, he says:

> What is in fact curious about all these gestures, these angular and abruptly abandoned attitudes, these syncopated modulations formed at the back of the throat, these musical phrases that break off short, these flights of elytra, these rustlings of branches, these sounds of hollow drums, these robot squeakings,

> these dances of animated manikins, is this: that through the labyrinth of their gestures, attitudes, and sudden cries, through the gyrations and turns which leave no portion of the stage space unutilized, the sense of a new physical language, based upon signs and no longer upon words, is liberated. (Artaud 2000: 54)

If we keep in mind that Artaud's definition of the sign has nothing to do with a Saussurean/Lacanian Signifier (as it refuses the Real, does not know of a referent), but much more with those expressions that Language or Language-based semiotic systems fail to capture, this fragment tells us a lot about how Artaud wants to liberate theatre *and us* from the Judgement of God. Linking the form of expression to the form of content, when concluding that the flows of the Balinese dancers answer to a spiritual architecture of movement, gesture and sound, Artaud seems to be well aware of how the dancers, from the moment they step into the performance area (*kalangan*), open themselves up to appeasing the Lower Spirits (the *Butha*) they desire to engage with. This spiritual architecture of (seemingly) curious movements thus offers intensive zones in which soil and spirit are enfolded *themselves*, expressing the body of the earth *as* the body of the earth, and not by means of an artificial Language or system of Judgement. Balinese dance, Artaud claims, has nothing artificial about it, is not subjected to the Sacred in any way, as the sounds and gestures he experiences are *instinctive*. Of course, the dances and sounds are in the end highly stylised: the movements of the hands, the rolling of the eyes, the various inflections performed, are all part of a highly considered mathematics. But it is a stylised mathematics that is not imposed upon the body, not written into it, but rather *follows from* the body and the roots that take it deep into the soil. Even the improvisation (some forms of Balinese dance allow for quite a bit of this) is not based upon the possibilities offered by the music or by the human body but rather attempts to feel the virtual presence of the earth and its spirits. Its spirituality thus does not come from above, but rather pops up from matter in the immanent forming of bodies, or in how the meat follows from the soil.

The second case in which Artaud experienced a positive take on organisation and spirituality, and even language/expression, comes from a journey he undertook in the mid-1930s to Mexico. There, Artaud visited the transhumance Tarahumaran people, to whom he gave some talks on the decadence of Western culture. Hoping to discover the magic reality of the Tarahumaran culture, which should have been more 'true' than the polluted West, he was ultimately quite disappointed to find that

colonialism had managed to conceal the Mexican body so dramatically. This did not stop him, however, from writing lyrically about the people he was introduced to:

> Il y a au Mexique, lice au sol, perdue dans les coulées de lave volcanique, vibrante dans le sang indien, la réalité magique d'une culture, dont il faudrait peu de chose sans doute pour rallumer matériellement les feux. (Artaud 1971b: 224)

Again, Artaud's notion of the material body, of meat(blood), comes with a spirituality. But this time it is a spirit that is no longer expressed through the bodies of a people. It is covered in the soil, buried by sedentary colonialist powers, and, most of all, under the spell of the occidental God. With the introduction of guitars and violins (through the Jesuits) and occidental dance patterns (called *Matachines*), completely foreign to the Tarahumaran native dance patterns (see Fontana 1979), the magical reality Artaud was looking for indeed seemed to be overcoded by alien powers.

IV. The Omnipresence of God

Unfortunately things did not get better for the Tarahumaran people. The Christian codes and strategies only grew thicker and more thorough over the ensuing decades, overcoding the spirits and the soil even more than in Artaud's day. Balinese culture, though in many ways capable of excluding (which means not relating to) other ideas and people (as Clifford Geertz [1993] noted), has also been more and more dominated by Western ideas. Balinese theatre has thus turned into 'Traditional Balinese Theatre' adapted to the demands of tourism (only rarely is the epic *Ramayana* not staged as a 'best of'). This once again shows that colonialism was essentially a mild precursor of postcolonialism. Though Bali was only (actively) colonised for about 50 years, and better examples could be given in this respect, postcolonialist strategies have proven to be much more powerful than the earlier colonial ones, and not least in terms of their potential to Christianize. Postcolonialism is not a form of control that introduces only a new economic and aesthetic code (when it comes to theatre or to life). It always introduces God, that is, the Holy Trinity of Language/facialised Body/Subjectification. Following Artaud we cannot but conclude that the dominance of Western culture brought with it a Christian Spirit that feeds and breathes and defines the Mexican, the Balinese, and actually pretty much *all* bodies in the world. The omnipresence of the Christian God is, then, not a given, as

the Roman Catholic Church has always insisted, but a very successful political project.

The ways in which Christianity exercises its power are endless. For when we agree that it comes with a great emphasis on written language, with a reterritorialisation of the body into an identity/onto the face, and with processes of subjectification, these series of strictly related strategies project the face of Christ in every possible direction.[2] This is why Artaud's critique of the Judgement of God, of the dialogue, does not just question the way in which the body of the performer has been dominated by the dialogue, but critiques *all* bodies active within theatre. Artaud's revolutionary ideas are directed towards *all* 'things' that appear on stage, including the body which we refer to as the storyline or the body of the *mise-en-scène*. Its fury addresses the body of theatre as a whole.

Michel Foucault has even argued that it was the power particular to Christianity, which he calls 'pastoral power', that invented modern bureaucracy and the nation state. He emphasises that: 'Christianity brought into being a code of ethics fundamentally different from that of the ancient world' (Foucault 2000: 333). This new ethical code can be captured in terms of a doubled (anti-hierarchical) movement. It indeed introduces a *modern* form of power, fundamentally different from royal power, in so far as its leaders are asked to sacrifice themselves for the sake of their flock instead of commanding the commoners to save the throne. At the same time, it organises the social by introducing a particular type of written language (bureaucracy), which reterritorialises the bodies of the subjects into and onto well-defined and identifiable faces, organising the flow of (human) life into citizens, as formal archived unities living their lives in distant relation to the 'soil', as Artaud imagines it.

David Sorkin, indirectly commenting on the success of scholars like Jonathan I. Israel, offers a nice addition to Foucault's ideas on Christianity when he claims that the idea of the Enlightenment as a quintessential secular phenomenon is a false master narrative that has remained surprisingly strong over the past decades (see Sorkin 2008). His genealogy – which, for instance, includes theologians who were very influential during this time yet were left out by those faithful to the master narrative – tells us that the whole process was actually deeply religious in nature, and led not so much to a Death of God as to a *renewing* of faith and piety – a reading of history much more in line with how not only Foucault[3] but also Artaud and Klossowki (and actually also Nietzsche) conceptualise God in postcolonial times.[4]

Nietzsche's travels to 'the obverse side of the *death of God*: namely, the Kingdom of Heaven, out of which emanates *creation of the world*' (Klossowski 2005: 187) do not just account for the personal history of this particular philosopher but are a miniature of the trajectory of Christianity in the postcolonial era. Even more so after His death, the Christian God occupies Himself with the facialised or identified bodies that give form to the intersubjective world in which we find ourselves on a daily basis, and also with the facialised, aesthetic, religious and political institutions already mentioned, such as theatre (and its more contemporary remediations). Indeed, we cannot but agree with Deleuze and Guattari when they conclude: 'Jesus Christ superstar: he invented the facialization of the entire body and spread it everywhere' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 176).

Let us take a little more time to think through the idea that the Face of Christ overcodes the entire body. The difference between the bony appearance of Christ that incarnates not only as the Son (the facialised body) but at the same time also as the Father (Language) and the Holy Spirit (Subjectification) – which is of course the essence of a Trinity – and that of more worldly (State) powers, lies precisely in their bodily appearance. It is for good reason that the Body of God is different to that of the statesman, in so far as the latter is strong, muscular and built to impress. The body of the statesman is exchangeable and can easily be reduced to a pair of shoulders (as in a bust). Its face is also of a very different kind, as it does not project itself onto the body. The face of the statesman has hardly any facial traits; it is endowed only with a very primitive character, namely that of the archetypical classical ruler which expresses pure abstract dominance. Indeed, the universal body topped with a head having minimal facial traits has been the universal expression of power from Qin Shi Huang, China's legendary first Emperor, to Saddam Hussein. The archetype of the classical ruler is the type of a territorial power characteristic of all spaces and times, supplying the minimal definition of the imagery of all dictators, but also of the institutions that facilitate dictatorial regimes. The archetype has no identity/God (as Klossowski couples them), and has not been transformed from the multiple into the One. It expresses no sadness or sorrow, no last supper, no crucifixion, no *pietà*, no *noli me tangere*.

Indeed, how different is Christ, whose appearance is by no means exchangeable. His Face, the fulcrum of signification, is in need of its body the way the façade of His Church needs a square. Christ cannot be reduced to a bust or a portrait even. Christ needs to be shown in full. Deprived of its sexual and digestive organs, as Artaud indicated,

the body of Christ invents a series of signs that give vast structure to its divine, un-earthly nature. And it does so with great enthusiasm. Indeed, the body of Christ suffers, is exhausted even, but it is by no means weak. For if there is one thing that characterises Christian or pastoral power, it is that, in contrast to Plato's statesman and the powers he embodies, it manages to conquer death, territoriality and every other limit of extension as it is essential to earthly life. Foucault was right to acknowledge that modern bureaucracies, which came into being in the West but have spread all over the (postcolonial) world today, are very much in line with the passion of Christ. In both Christianity and bureaucracy we recognise a very carefully established absence (which Franz Kafka of course beautifully described for modern bureaucracies). Neither power is socialising but rather individualising (self-cultivating) in its strategies. Neither power places itself above the crowd, but acts between its members (which it identifies) and is prepared to give its life for each and every member. Both powers, however, are creative practices of an unearthly kind.

As modern bureaucracies and the many other apparatuses of pastoral power were released from their last ideological and ethical opponents in 1989 (with the fall of Communism), the era in which we find ourselves today thus concerns a *totalised Christianity*, a fractal-like Christianity that always emerges from the infinity between two points in order to define them. It is an abstract Christianity, which seems not in need of Christ any longer, but is nowadays capable of travelling any distance by means of three axes; bureaucracy (its Apostles), capitalism (its Morality) and mass media (its Epiphany), as they continuously give birth to one another.

V. Escape Through Art

Artaud states that cleaning the body of its incorporated Christianity requires that we break through the Christian Trinity in search of the unknown of the body/the unconscious of thought. The BwO. Only in this way can we find our organic culture. Only in this way can our blood vessels feed themselves from the soil again, opening our bodies up to the spiritual powers that have been silenced both within the body and within the earth, thereby preventing us from living for such a long time. Indeed, Artaud asks us to start searching for a pure creation of life, as Derrida calls it (Derrida 1978a: 175), a life that does not start by searching for the Other, as Derrida later seemed to suggest, but that finds itself centred in the body, that is in its material essence. A life that is by no means

separated from the body, not ruled by *any* of the Divine powers from above that (ab)use the eyes, the ears but especially the mouth (or, even better, the doubled jaws) to cut the body from the soul.

As a solution then, Derrida proposes a life innate and not born (Derrida 1978a: 293), which of course does not mean a life that takes place within the protected environment of a womb. Derrida, like Artaud, is in search of a life which breaks through the Christian Trinity, reaching out for a type of intensity that restores the unity of 'soilbody'. Life, as Derrida and Artaud propose, is by no means limited to any kind of identity at all. Life is the Everyman (*Elckerlyc*), the impersonal, freed from the masks, the *fersu* (the white screen and the two black holes) that facialise it. Indeed they opt for life from which the face is cut off, in order to allow the head to grow back from the soil, and from the body that it forms.

So how do we come to this life innate and not born? How can we conceive and incorporate new life in *any* event? Through art. Art is to Christianity what the 'war machine' is to the State (see Deleuze and Guattari 1987: plateau 12). Art is of another species, another origin. It resides permanently at the margins of Christianity and always already sets out to prevent Christianity from happening. The Christian passions can be questioned *only* through art, through the way in which art gives us the feeling of an 'unknown Nature' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 240), or indeed an organic culture, for which Artaud is searching. Deleuze and Guattari explain how art operates:

> But art is never an end in itself; it is only a tool for blazing life lines, in other words, all of those real becomings that are not produced only *in* art, and all of those active escapes that do not consist in fleeing *into* art, take refuge in art, and all of those positive deterritorializations that never reterritorialize on art, but instead sweep it away with them toward the realms of the asignifying, asubjective and faceless. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 187)

The search for the asignifying, asubjective and faceless indeed equates to warding off language, Subjectification and the facialised body, in other words, the Holy Spirit, the Father and the Son.[5] In other words, to be done with the Judgement of God equals *modern* art as it is rooted in European (clerical) culture. It equals the ways in which art allows us to revolt not only against organised religion, but against every force which Christianity has enveloped (such as bureaucracy, capitalism and mass media). This is also why modern art (as it surfaced with mannerism, yet grows from stems that developed much earlier in European history) is an occidental phenomenon which has become global only in postcolonial

times (together with Christianity). Artaud's search for organic culture (in Mexico, in Indonesia) is then in the end not so much a search for a different or unknown form of art (of theatre performance). On the contrary, his interest in aesthetic regimes that have no roots in Christianity comes from the fact that he *knows* they give him access to life, a life not formalised by the Judgement of Christ.

Artaud convinces us that it is only through the affects of art that life can be found. Art releases us from the Christian spells that separate us from the soil, the body, and the spirituality that comes with it. 'Through art, uniquely through art' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 186), we can radically increase our bodily sensitivity, this wakefulness that is singular and open. Through art we can overcome our human-all-too-human humanity which *is* the original sin preventing the body without organs from taking place. Deleuze and Guattari referred to this final merging with the egg, the earth, as a becoming-imperceptible. Surely Artaud suggests we do the same when he asks us to become snakes:

> If music affects snakes, it is . . . because snakes are long and coil their length upon the earth, because their bodies touch the earth at almost every point; and because the musical vibrations which are communicated to the earth affect them like a very subtle, very long massage; and I propose to treat the spectators like the snakecharmer's subjects and conduct them by means of their organisms to an apprehension of the subtlest notion. (Artaud 2000: 81)

The snake (and its coils) imperceptibly weave into the tree. Its movements challenge His superior hierarchy by smoothening, eating the tree. Thus, intricately, the tree turns into the earth. The snake is pure affect. Feeling the earth it absorbs us in it. It is the snake that reconstructs man. The snake is an aesthetics towards the imperceptible.

Notes

1. Marshall McLuhan seems to support Artaud when he accuses Plato of having established a literacy (a visual mimesis) that comes with a reduction of ontological awareness, which then could result in an impoverishment of being and a loss of richness in experience (McLuhan 1962: 52).
2. Likewise, Christianity has reterritorialised the fragmented bodies of all sorts of 'spiritualities' into a unified (identified) body of religion, which is what quite a number of non-Western theologians (like Balu) rightfully observe (emphasising language, giving it a face, turning those fascinated by it into its believers, followers even).
3. Foucault argued that 'the Church . . . serves as the historical "background" to the governmentality of the early modern period' (Golder 2007: 166).

4. An argument that has recurred in academia with the introduction of the term 'the post-secular' that has been around since the 1980s but has been the subject of a major academic spin-off only recently (see Braidotti 2008).
5. In a small symposium I organised (Rotterdam, 28 May 2004), Paul Patton noted that in his *Abécédaire* Deleuze, though not a *bon vivant*, even not too fond of eating, claims that what he likes to eat most of all is tongue, brain and bone marrow, in other words, the Holy Spirit (tongue), the Father (the brain) and the Son (bone marrow). To silence the tongue, as Spinoza puts it in our epigraph, is then perhaps best done by eating or devouring it.

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Autism: Schizo of Postmodern Capital

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Abstract

This article follows Deleuze in investigating the ways in which the symptom as a form of representation can be collapsed into immanence. Exploring the symptoms of schizophrenia and autism, it examines what implications such a collapse may have for the production of the symptom in its double articulation as representation and immanent production. The argument follows Deleuze and Guattari in asserting that symptoms hold an implicit limit for the social forms that deploy them. Arguing that schizophrenia, as one such limit, has been successfully appropriated and deferred by postmodern capitalism, it is proposed that the proliferating symptom cluster of autism may indicate a new form of limit and that 'becoming autistic' thus may have potential as revolutionary practice.

Keywords: symptom, schizophrenia, autism, becoming, limit, immanence, Mary Baggs

> *The previous part of this video was in my native language. Many people have assumed that when I talked about this being my language that means that each part of the video must have a particular symbolic message within it designed for the human mind to interpret. But my language is not about designing words or even visual symbols for people to interpret. It's about being in constant conversation with every aspect of my environment.* (Amanda Baggs, diagnosed autistic).

> *The 'Good' or healthy life… is an overflowing and ascending form of existence, a mode of life that is able to transform itself depending on the forces it encounters, always increasing the power to live, always opening up to the new possibilities of life.* (Smith 1997: xv)

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If you want to look at the moon don't look to the finger that is pointing at it. (Zen proverb)

To express the world as metaphor or simile is to produce the world as separated from itself. That is, to produce the act of expression as separate from the thing expressed. While this is certainly one function that expression can perform, we are interested in another kind of expression here: the act of expression as immanent production. What is the act of immanence expressing itself? It is the communal production of the world as a mutually constitutive act founded in the relation of the material and the virtual. Immanent expression blurs the boundary between experience and articulation opening them both to an infinite field of extensive connectivity. In other words, what is at stake in rejecting metaphor and simile is the founding of an investigation into the ways in which representation can be collapsed into immanence. In this, the exploration of what implications such a collapse may have for the production of the symptom in its double articulation as representation and immanent production becomes of interest.

Deleuze describes the symptom's double articulation as both 'the states into which we fall when the process [of life] is interrupted, blocked or plugged up. Illness is not a process but a stopping of the process' (Deleuze 1997: 3) and as an articulation of a certain kind of domination. However, this articulation of domination is simultaneously a blockage and an indicator of an 'oppressed bastard race that ceaselessly stirs beneath dominations, resisting everything that crushes and imprisons' (Deleuze 1997: 4). It is this relation of the symptom as both the order word and the password beneath the order word that is of interest here.[1]

In this sense, the symptom holds no binary relation to an outside. As Spinoza would have it, there are differences but no oppositions (Spinoza 2001: IIP11C). There are transcendent and transcendental forms of the symptom, but not as binary formations of opposites. Rather, the symptom functions in terms of difference, logic, function and effect. In this formulation, the logic of the symptom holds the possibility of being incomplete or, in Spinozist terminology, inadequate (Spinoza 2001: IIP11C). Such inadequacy does not constitute an outside world of fantasy or illusion. Nor does the inadequacy of any given symptom mitigate its capacity to have profound material effect both functionally and constitutively. Any symptom's inadequacy lies in its inability to become more than an effect, a function, representation, repetition or conclusion. That is to say, the symptom is a thoroughly abstract form distinct from the life upon which it is inscribed.

With this ontological distinction between the symptom and life itself we enter into the central thesis of our exploration of the role of the symptom within the realm of postmodern capital: life itself as the revolutionary force expressed through subjectivity as consciousness. This consciousness, however, is not the consciousness of the modern individual with its repressions, dreams and agonies. It is, rather, the full field of immanent expression – expression as unmediated bios, the realm of the modes of life. This is the terrain of the Lacanian Real, the Reichian unconscious, Spinoza's conatus, Foucault's power, Deleuze and Guattari's desire, Whitman's grass and Baudelaire's flowers, as well as the force which 'ceaselessly stirs' below, through and in the clusters of symptoms delineated as schizophrenia and autism spectrum disorder.

In Marx's *Grundrisse*, this life is the ghost in the machine that may be glimpsed in fragments between the lines and moments of unspoken terror, and sensed only partially formed at the edge of awareness. The expressions of immanence in this sense hold the possibility that the absolute force, which is life itself, will not respond to the reasoned entreaties of the dialectic. It is the moment of unpredictable creation in which 'life is liberated in humanity' (Negri 1999: 103) and simultaneously the moment of the savage violence of the mob, the horde, the mass, the crowd. It is that which destroys what has been, without any certainty of what will come.

If one is to argue from the inside that current subjectivity at its limits contains modes already fully engaged in the transition to a post-capitalist lived community, then it becomes critical to examine the question of virtual tendency. Given that the current mode of sovereignty promotes and sustains an experience of the world that denies any form of subjectivity outside the sophisticated apparatuses of capture deployed by late-stage capital, it is critical to be able to go beyond such experience.[2] This is not to say, however, that one can escape to an outside. Indeed, one must, quite specifically, turn towards the inside and the very conditions that 'account for things, states of things and their mixture' (Boundas 1996: 87). These conditions hold a parallel form of actuality that contains simultaneously, within each moment, the thoroughly material instantiated form of being and the infinite virtual production of all its attributes and alternative forms. This is not the world of ideal possibility. Rather, it is the actual simultaneous production of multiple material worlds, in each moment, perceived selectively through the contingent conditions of any given event. In other words, each perception of materiality is incomplete and contingent upon the capacity of temporal extensity or diachronic time to include such

perception. When we move towards the inside, we enter the realm of intensive temporality or the time of the virtual in which all events exist within the same time or, put another way, in which all that has been produced exists but has not yet fully extended itself in time. Temporal extensity is built upon the capacity of experience to be continuous. Ruptures in that continuity produce fractures and schisms of intensive temporality within which the full force of virtual production of that which has not yet been fully expressed exists. As Negri points out:

> It is obvious that scientific attention will have to be focused more on the discontinuities (be they ruptures or innovations) than on the continuities: in effect, the continuities are nothing other than discontinuities or ruptures which have been dominated . . . every innovation is a revolution which failed – but also one which was attempted. (Negri 1999: 158)

This then is the tension of the symptom in its function as a moment of a particular capacity of perception contingent upon the ruptures and fractures in extensive time; a placeholder that marks a disruption in the deceptively smooth fabric of dominated life. Symptoms are always innovations that mark a limit and an attempt at containing the virtuality of a failed revolution.

Deleuze and Guattari outline a clear connection between socio-economic systems and socially constructed definitions of pathology in *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus*. They assert that the social category of schizophrenia marks a limit condition for the socio-economic system of capitalism, and that the primary mode of schizophrenic thought is that of decoding dominant language systems rendering them problematic as systems of control. Capitalism shares this trait in the ways that it decodes social and cultural systems and recodes them into monetary terms. However, Deleuze and Guattari argue that capitalism cannot afford to thoroughly decode the social without losing its capacity as a system of social control.

In this respect, schizophrenia as a social mode of absolute decoding serves as the limit condition for capitalism, that is, as the line it cannot cross without risking its own integrity as a system. As an assemblage of possibility for capital, schizophrenic thought functions as a model of immanent production that exceeds the limits of industrial capital and offers the possibility of opening all elements of the social to infections and parasitic engagement. In this sense, it serves as a symptom simultaneously in both registers of the symptom as we have defined it above. That is, it serves as a blockage to *élan vital* that hopes to control and maintain the force of life turned to the ends of the parasitic form. At the

same time, it functions as an inimitable force of resistance that stands to dissemble the force of the parasite itself by provoking a mutation in the social body that will produce that body as toxic to the parasite.

However, Negri (1996) has suggested that, in fact, capital has already crossed the line into a completely decoded system of absolute appropriation in which there is no real capacity to effectively recode. Baudrillard (1995) makes a similar argument in his theory of contemporary society as a simulacrum or a copy of a copy. Michael Hardt (1995) also traces this in his work on 'The Withering of Civil Society' in which he says that capitalism has decoded our social forms such as the family, the church and government into empty copies of themselves. These are social forms that look like the originals, but have ceased to function except as extensions of capital. In this sense, the symptom of schizophrenic thought, which might signal an auto-poetic immunity on the part of the social body, has entered into a co-evolutionary process in which the parasite has taken on the characteristics of the host immunology and produced itself along similar registers of becoming.

If this is correct, and capitalism has indeed exceeded the limit capacity of schizophrenic thought proposed by Deleuze and Guattari, then the question remains: is there a limit capacity for capitalism and what are its symptoms? One possibility is autism. Autism is here proposed as a limit on three grounds: 1) it was initially thought to be a form of schizophrenia and so has both an affinity with and a difference from schizophrenia; 2) it became a central focus of psychiatric control and concern under the previous regime of industrial capitalism and is now the focus of behavioural and psychiatric attention under the new regime of global capitalism; and 3) the escalating prevalence rate of autism indicates an emerging and compelling social coding that calls for deconstruction.

Leo Kanner first identified autism as a psychological disorder a little over 50 years ago (see Kanner 1943). Kanner focused on the case histories of 11 children aged between two and eight. Initially, it was thought that perhaps these children, who exhibited behaviours such as obsessiveness, stereotypy, echolalia and social remoteness, had some form of childhood schizophrenia. However, Kanner argued that they had a unique cluster of symptoms that warranted a unique diagnosis that he called autism.

In terms of our interest in the function and deployment of the symptom, autism constitutes a very interesting case. First, let's note that it is premised within the symptomatological taxonomy of schizophrenia. That is to say, it was initially perceived as a subset made up of symptoms

that fall within the diagnostic criteria for schizophrenia. However, schizophrenia itself has a rather uncertain relation to its symptoms:

> The problem with both psychiatry and psychoanalysis is that these negative symptoms [of schizophrenia] are dispersed and scattered, and are difficult to totalize or unify in a coherent clinical entity, or even localizable 'mode of existence': 'schizophrenia is a discordant syndrome, always in flight from itself'. (Smith 1997: xx)

This diagnostic imprecision and lack of an agreed-upon aetiology continues to mark schizophrenia to this day, although it is frantically covered over by pharmaceutical and psychiatric discourses. What is of interest for us, in relation to the development of autism as a symptom, is determining what set of social and historical conditions called for a new constellation that separated itself from schizophrenia. In terms of our description thus far, we might wonder in what way autism is necessary as a new kind of blockage. Is it needed in order to support emerging forms of dominance in response to new deployments of the blockages of schizophrenic process, or is it needed to promulgate the failure of these forms as a blockage? The concomitant reading is that autism emerges in dominant discourse as a placeholder for a subject to come – for an emerging form of subjectivity on the horizon of the social as virtual event. In either case, the emergence of autism out of schizophrenia is anything but an objective act of scientific taxonomic clarification. It is important to note, in this regard, our earlier assertion that the symptom is to be read in terms of difference, and in terms of logic, function and effect. Clearly, autism signals a difference in the symbolic register of the social significance of schizophrenia. What then is its logic, function and effect?

To approach this question, we can turn to Luhmann's explication of the relation between logics of communication and their effects on social systems. Luhmann suggests that the current social formation consists of communications between functionally differentiated systems (see Luhmann 1995). He argues that these communication systems are separate from life and operate purely according to the logic of their differentiation from other systems. Put another way, they are purely transcendent linguistic codes that function according to their own logic. Living forms and other function systems can perturb them, but they are closed off from anything but their own function logic. Anything that does not fall within the linguistic code of the function set constitutes the environment for that set, which, of course, is not the set itself. Luhmann posits that once these function systems are initiated, they auto-poetically

proliferate. One such system is the psychiatric function system, and symptoms such as autism and schizophrenia are modalities by which it auto-poetically proliferates. It is important to note that these systems are not hierarchical, but flat systems differentiated by function. This is, of course, a particular form of immanence as a self-producing system whose conatus is the persistence of its becoming.

In this regard, the diagnostic codes associated with psychiatry and its relation to symptoms form a uniquely compelling case. This is in part because the linguistic codes of diagnosis are thoroughly dependent on the perturbations of living bodies. As a system whose coding is premised on the binary medical code of 'this is illness and this is health' psychiatric diagnosis must premise its symptoms on the observable acts of the body. That is, its premise of difference is dependent on the functional distinction between disordered and ordered behaviour. The proliferation of this distinction is the basis of its continuation as a function system. Indeed, the function of psychiatry in this respect has nothing to do with healing mental disorders. Instead, its function is to proliferate through distinguishing a panoply of symptom clusters and diagnoses that produce research, treatments and interventions that produce more symptom clusters, etc.

Because such a functionally differentiated system is closed off from its environment, and because the environment upon which it is dependent for its perturbations and extensions is life, it by definition constitutes a representational blockage to expressions of life that would exceed its functional capacity. It is for this reason that Deleuze and Guattari state that 'the problem of schizophrenization as a cure consists in this: how can schizophrenia be disengaged as *a power of humanity and of Nature* without a schizophrenic being produced?' (cited in Smith 2007: xxi). In this sense, we should note that it is imperative to the function system of psychiatry that a schizophrenic is produced in such a manner as to block the force of the alternative immanent system of life itself.

Clearly, the emergence of any new symptom cluster signals a shift in the environment that is constituted by life itself. Autism, in this sense, holds the dual function of the symptom we have delineated thus far. Indeed, since Kanner developed his diagnosis in the early 1940s, autism has proliferated both demographically and descriptively. While the definition of infant autism has remained fairly stable, as found in the current DSM-IV-TR, the disorder itself has become increasingly complex and includes a spectrum of behaviours and ages ranging from infant to adult (see American Psychiatric Association 2000). In fact, the DSM IV has now expanded to include five disorders clustered under the term

Pervasive Developmental Disorder; namely, Autistic Disorder, Rett's Disorder, Childhood Disintegrative Disorder, Asperger's Disorder, and Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified. These diagnostic categories have both similarities and differences across subjects. In terms of differences they include variations in age of onset, aetiology, associated conditions, and epidemiology. As to similarities, there are significant variations from developmental norms including impairments in three key areas: reciprocal social interaction, communication skills and behavioural variability.[3]

We might note the ways that the symptom cluster identified as schizophrenia has morphed within the proliferating discourse that comprises the symptom cluster of autism. According to current diagnostic practices, schizophrenia comprises at least two of the following: delusions, hallucinations, disorganised speech, grossly disorganised behaviour, and absence of affect or initiative. In this regard, it is specifically the way that schizophrenic thought produces a fluid recoding of the dominant cultural structures that marks the possibility of a limit for Deleuze and Guattari. Indeed, in some respects, it is within the realm of expression in literature and philosophy that the schizophrenic can be delineated from schizophrenia as process of life – that is, the moment at which the fluid recoding of experience enters the flow of infinite process.

By contrast, the autism spectrum is not premised on the disruption of thought or speech, nor are its behavioural variations responsive to internal systems of belief on the part of the autistic subject. Instead of the active expressions of schizophrenia in delusions, paranoia, hallucinations and disorganised speech, in autism we have a turning away from the entire field of representation. The symptom constellation of autism is founded on a perceived and socially ascribed inability to engage with others, an inability to communicate, a reduced capacity for empathy and affect, and repetitive and compulsive behaviours. Where schizophrenia in some ways engages the unconscious as a rupture of the conscious social self, autism refuses the conscious self and turns inward.

In *Anti-Oedipus* Deleuze and Guattari address autism peripherally in their discussion of schizophrenia, since at the time of their writing the relevant symptom cluster was still considered within the domain of schizophrenia and they simply read it as an extreme blockage akin to catatonia. We would suggest that now autism might be read in a more significant register as the current schizo of postmodern capital. That is to say, as the new limit condition for capitalism. Our argument proceeds along two main lines: 1) postmodern capitalism

has appropriated psychosis and produced its own transcendent schizo social system complete with all the symptoms of schizophrenia: delusion, paranoia, hallucinations, disrupted and disturbed speech. It is important to note, however, that this schizo does not originate in a body, but through the perturbation of bodies on a series of abstract function systems. As a result of its production as a copy of the representation of the acts of bodies defined as schizophrenic, the schizo of capital is a simulacrum of schizophrenia. This new schizo simulacrum is distributed on a daily basis as reality through the mass media in its representation of global events and in particular in the media's 'analysis' of the economy. 2) Autism represents, as did schizophrenia, the possibilities inherent in the current production of the social subject within the regimes of capital. We would argue that the current social production of the subject cannot help but be responsive to the schizo simulacrum and its thoroughly delusional representations of itself. If, as Laing argued, the schizo is simply a more obvious manifestation of a thoroughly mad society, then autism is indeed the premier example of the radically alienated subject whose very life has become a copy of a copy (see Laing 1983).

To develop this more fully, however, we need to take a closer look at the notion of the subject. For this purpose we will define subjectivity not simply as a philosophical concept or affect, but also as a certain kind of consciousness. Because we are interested in the modes of consciousness involved in autism and schizophrenia we will leave the dominant form of consciousness, the conscious rational self, behind and turn to the form of thought delineated as the unconscious, and in particular to the concept of the unconscious found in Deleuze and Guattari. We describe this form of the unconscious as the constitutive property of the opportune moment. That is to say, the unconscious in this formulation is contingently constituted in each moment out of all the experiences of the body and the thoughts produced by those experiences. This means that the unconscious is produced simultaneously in extensive and intensive time as pure virtuality. And this formulation, of course, takes us into the field of immanence.

As Deleuze and Guattari point out in *Anti-Oedipus*: 'The unconscious poses no problem of meaning, solely problems of use. The question posed by desire is not "What does it mean?" but rather "how does it work?" ... [The unconscious] represents nothing but it produces. It means nothing but it works' (Deleuze and Guattari 2003: 119). The unconscious, as an immanent function, simply produces. We might ask, however, what are the conditions of its production as immanent function?

In Freud's *General Psychological Theory*, the chapters on repression and the unconscious suggest one possible beginning for a description of the unconscious within the logic of immanence (Freud 1963). Freud lays out the three psychic forms he is investigating – conscious, unconscious and preconscious – as though on a plane. In his account, there is no space comprised by their construction and no interiority. They are rather dynamic forces that can be mapped onto psychic planes. The unconscious is portrayed as a psychic apparatus through which sensation initially passes. Freud describes it as a field of latent conceptions. In our terms, a consonant description would be as a field of infinite potentials.

Subjectivity, in this sense of the immanent unconscious, is central to our understanding of autism as the new limit condition for capital. If schizophrenia functioned as a limit condition for capital in its production of the unconscious as a proliferation of expression, then autism produces a limit condition in its limitations to expression. A limit condition that operates both as a disregard for the regimes of the symbolic and meaning that are deployed by capital in its schizo simulacra and through an immersion into the flow of time and event. The subjectivity of autism is specifically non-linguistic, although it sustains a form of thought. This is the placeholder for a people to come out of the catastrophe of the current historical moment. However, autism, as a symptom constellation, is both a production of a limit within the current system of domination as well as a mark of its pathology.

In this regard, the symptom is produced by what Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus* delineate as the molar line. This is the rigid line that territorialises, regulates, orders and segments space, bodies and social relations through the either/or logic of binary oppositions. The binary logic of molar segmentation is foundational for identitarian practices: a body becomes identifiable in rigidly molar structures – in one's identity as 'mad' or 'sane', as 'psychiatrist' or 'patient'. It is, ultimately a logic of containment and capture. The production of the autistic is a product of this line. It is the either/or logic of the functionally differentiated system of psychiatry that produces the blockage of the immanent unconscious as the autistic that must be behaviourally induced into participating as an integrated member of the existing social order. Indeed, applied behavioural analysis is the preferred and often mandated method of treatment that relentlessly seeks to reconnect the immanent unconscious subjectivity of autism to the schizo simulacra. Interestingly, one of the common tasks taught to autistic individuals in these types of 'treatment' is the ability to recognise and deploy the value system of money.

Deleuze and Guattari, however, offer us another way to understand the production and function of the autism symptom through their description of the molecular line. This is a more fluid and flexible line that forms relations and establishes connections beyond the rigid segmentation of molar structures. In contrast to molar lines, which form and stabilise identities, molecular lines operate by introducing instabilities or openings into the fabric of molar unities and as such map the potential for movement, destabilisation, and transformation.

It is a peculiar and serendipitous aspect of the systems of domination and limit that each apparatus of capture inadvertently sets up the conditions for resistance and flight. Autism is no exception. The psychiatric function system has as its primary impetus the proliferation of its function. In order to expand, it must apply its binary logic to an ever-widening field of subjects. In terms of autism, this has meant the production of an ever-expanding range of bodies identified as having specific sets of symptoms associated with autism. This is commonly referred to as the autism spectrum. As the range of bodies has proliferated, there has been a concomitant extension of capacities for self-advocacy as some bodies on the highly functional edge sustain a form of subjectivity that allows for a certain kind of border dwelling between modes of consciousness and affect. Similarly, with the development of tools that allow for translation between previously non-verbal subjects and the dominant normative population, such as computer-mediated speech systems, there has been the developing ability of subjects to advocate what they have termed neuro-diversity. In short, the molecular line of disturbance has produced the unintentional development of a minoritarian voice for autism that has begun to call for its self-valorisation as a viable alternative form of consciousness and subjectivity.

Whereas the molecular line simply establishes a clearing for a potential move beyond rigid segmentations, the third line proposed by Deleuze and Guattari, the nomadic line (the line of flight) takes us to places beyond the territorialising reach of molar unities. Lines of flight are, by definition, forces of deterritorialisation, mutation and release. Where molarity presupposes 'the submission of the line to the point' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 293) – the destination to the path – lines of flight constitute passages away from, or even the breaking of, points.

Here we return to the voice of Mary Baggs from our opening epigraph. Mary speaks to us in translation in a video she produced on YouTube entitled *In My Language*. The first part of the video records Mary singing somewhat tonelessly (but reminiscent of Tibetan Buddhist chanting) and interacting with various objects in her environment. Her interactions

are unconventional. For example, she rubs her face into a book rather than reading it. Following this, there is a note on the screen that reads 'Translation'. Mary begins, in a computer-mediated voice, by informing us that her definition of language is going to be radically different from what we are accustomed to. She states: 'My language is not about designing words or even visual symbols for people to interpret. It's about being in constant conversation with every aspect of my environment. Reacting physically to all parts of my surroundings.' This is a very peculiar definition of language. To say that her language is not symbolic or available for interpretation is clearly a line of flight along the same line as Deleuze's call for the creation of 'vacuoles of non-communication' (Deleuze 1995: 175) as a response to the predatory nature of capital in the realm of the symbolic.

Her language is that of the act rooted in what Spinoza would term the collision between bodies. It is a direct challenge to the realm of functional differentiation in drawing its constituent force directly through an encounter with the environment. As she moves her finger back and forth through a stream of water, Mary says: 'In this part of the video the water doesn't symbolize anything, I am just interacting with the water as the water interacts with me.' There is a flow between Mary and the environment that is mutually constitutive and contingent. There is no meaning to the act; there is simply the act as interaction between bodies. This, she says, is a native language. Such action and interaction with things and experimenting with unique body movements are common within autism, and although we seek to apply meaning to and give a reason for them, they often do not, and are not intended to, translate into the dominant vernacular.

In a profound moment, Mary reflects on the fact that her ongoing response to everything she encounters in her environment is often interpreted by the dominant culture as 'being in a world of her own'. Here she challenges one of the central assumptions of the symptom constellation of autism – that non-response to dominant codes of interaction constitutes a withdrawal from social reality. What Mary seems to be proposing is that, far from being a withdrawal from society, her language is an expression of profound engagement with and production of a non-anthropocentric social reality.

She goes on to further challenge the terms on which her 'existence, awareness and personhood' are judged. She repudiates this judgement as being falsely premised on valorising what she terms 'a tiny and limited part of the world'. Her thought, in its expansive responsiveness to everything, is so radically different that 'some people do not consider

it thought at all'. But, she goes on to assert, 'it is a way of thinking in its own right'.

However, she says she can only be taken seriously if she learns the dominant vernacular. She says it is only when she types something in our language that 'you refer to me as having communication'. She calls for a mutuality in which those of us in the dominant social reality learn her language and take it seriously. The connection between thought and personhood is so firmly bounded in that dominant reality that, she says, her personhood is invalidated unless she thinks within the frameworks prescribed by it.

Quite clearly this discourse qualifies as a profoundly minoritarian mode of thought and action. We might ask, however, in what ways does it serve as a possible limit condition for capital? In partial response, we would argue that it extends the lines of flight of the schizo into the terrain of 'The process of Life as a non-organic and impersonal power' (Smith 2007: xxi). The terrain of postmodern capital as an array of functionally differentiated communication systems is premised on the obverse form of the process of non-life as a non-organic and impersonal power. Both life and capital operate as immanent systems that creatively produce themselves. However, only the immanent field of life as force can produce itself without reliance on anything outside itself. The line of flight in autism, as explicated by Mary Baggs, lies in her definition of language as an impersonal expression of collision with all bodies. It is a refusal of the mediation of the symbolic not through an act of will but through the biological capacities of a specific array of bodies to directly engage the world in a communication composed of acts. The schizo simulacra is irrelevant to such a subjectivity because its currency is the symbol and that currency holds little value in the world of autism. In this way, the symptom implodes into itself as act rather than meaning. It is no longer to be read but to be lived.

We argue that this form of living constitutes a direct challenge to the codes and functional differentiations of postmodern capital. It marks a subject to come, not in the form of the autistic subject per se, but in the becoming autistic of all of us. This becoming autistic can be found historically in the disciplines of Taoist, Buddhist and Hindu practice and thought. In the Western tradition, it is to be found in the lineage of Spinoza. However, until now, this becoming autistic was a flow on the margins of the dominant social reality, disturbing it at the edges. That it is now ever more prevalent signals the immanent possibility of an impersonal subject extending finally beyond the bounded shell of humanity into an encounter with life itself.

Notes

1. We are referring to Deleuze and Guattari's assertion in *A Thousand Plateaus* that there are always lines of flight within the ordering structure of language.
2. For a description of the apparatuses of capture see Luhmann 1995, Hardt and Negri 2000, and Deleuze and Guattari 1987.
3. Asperger's and PDD-NOS do not necessarily have issues in the latter two areas and Retts and CDD have slightly more specific features within these areas than autistic disorder.

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Forum

Introduction

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The papers included in this forum reflect the discussions that took place during a symposium on Deleuze and Visual Art hosted by the Erasmus University Rotterdam on 14 October 2010.[1] The aim of this event was to confront the increasing scepticism provoked by the enthusiastic uptake of Deleuzian theory in contemporary art and interdisciplinary practices. Does this popularity not merely confirm and legitimate the cliché of 'the new' in the cultural production of late capitalism? Is it not typically a case of too much 'good will' and too little 'thinking' and 'creativity'? Does it not lack a 'resistance to the present'?

In contrast to their earlier *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus*, which have often been read as manuals for undoing boundaries and subverting identities, Deleuze and Guattari's *What is Philosophy?* is much more cautious about today's continual disciplinary crossovers and intermedial hybrids, especially those of conceptual art (see Zepke 2006; Alliez 2010). For whilst contemporary art is increasingly organised around some theoretical or scientific content, Deleuze and Guattari insist on the 'respective sufficiency' of these disciplines, each having its own vital ideas and inexhaustible resources. Just as 'it is in their full maturity, and not in the process of their constitution, that concepts and functions necessarily intersect, each being created by their specific means' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 161), art's specific medium is sensation and hence 'art should not be thought to be like a synthesis of science and philosophy' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 198). This means that the artistic material should be rendered expressive by itself, rather than merely reproducing concepts or functions, for what counts is 'the smile of oil, the gesture of fired clay, the thrust of metal, the crouch

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of Romanesque stone, and the ascent of Gothic stone' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 166). As soon as art neglects sensation, Deleuze and Guattari argue, it risks its own dissolution. Worse still, it risks turning its own lack of imagination into a threat for other creative practices, for example when it reduces 'the concept to a *doxa* of the social body or great American metropolis' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 198). For even if philosophy and art each have their own medium, they also share a common enemy: the consensual stupidity that leads to the marketing of the concept and turns sensation into a readymade whilst preventing us from beginning to create a concept or compose a work of art (Stengers 2005).

It is this relentless struggle against cliché that has made Deleuze an important inspiration for contemporary art. But the ontological basis of this struggle is much less self-evident (see Zepke 2009). This paradoxical situation offers an excellent opportunity for a return to the classical visual arts and their media. In his contribution here, Vlad Ionescu reconsiders Deleuze's conception of the image by returning to his reading of Aloïs Riegl, Heinrich Wölfflin and Wilhelm Worringer. Ionescu demonstrates how the manipulation of sensation through the sense of touch deconstructs the image as a pure optical event. An image neither transmits an iconological content nor mimes an exterior correlate, but rather mediates thymic qualities (referring to both Riegl's *Empfindung* and Deleuze's affect).

The category of the thymic also enables both Riegl and Deleuze to interpret styles from art history such as the Baroque not only as art historical epochs but also as constitutive strategies or aesthetic diagrams. For unlike what a superficial reading of Deleuze's remarks on history might suggest, Deleuze insists that the 'disassociation between an art and its history is always ruinous' (Deleuze 2006: 212), since 'every painter recapitulates the history of painting in his own way' (Deleuze 2004: 122–34). Deleuze's *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* can therefore be read as a book on art history no less than as a book on Bacon. My own article contributes to such a reading by further exploring Deleuze's passing reference to the Mannerist ideal of the serpentine figure, which I argue is paradigmatic both for Deleuze's understanding of the Baconian 'Figure' and for his definition of the artwork as a monument for the possible in *What is Philosophy?*

A further question related to Deleuze's emphasis on medium specificity is that of his relation to modernism in art. As Stephen Zepke argues in his contribution, Deleuze's modernism has a rather traditional foundation in Kant's theory of the sublime that is quite unusual in

a contemporary art context. The sublime offers an argument for 're-radicalizing' Deleuzian aesthetics with a properly Nietzschean (and perhaps 1960s) ferocity as an attack on the all too human, which today includes the diffused and networked subjectivity of the rhizome that, whilst ensuring a contemporary feel, runs the risk of reducing everything to a banal equality. By insisting in a Kantian manner that aesthetics is entirely to do with sensation, Zepke argues, Deleuze sides with Modernism against conceptual art and its inheritors in 'contemporary practice'.

Bram Ieven, too, addresses the question of whether Deleuze's work on Bacon identifies him as a modernist. By tracing the articulation of form and sensation in the *Logic of Sensation*, Ieven argues that Deleuze's theory of art grapples with, and remains encapsulated in, the modernist tradition of art and art theory; not necessarily because Deleuze emphasises medium specificity, but because of the entanglement of sensation with form and because of his distinction between formal methods of abstraction in modernist art.

Note

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Deleuze's Tensive Notion of Painting in the Light of Riegl, Wölfflin and Worringer

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Abstract

Deleuze's *Logique de la sensation* is not a canonical art historical interpretation of Francis Bacon's painting and even less an illustration of Deleuze's philosophy. It is better read as a prolegomena to a semiotics of plastic art in which the visual image is related to the dialectics of touch and vision. These issues feature strongly in the art theories of Aloïs Riegl, Wilhelm Worringer and Heinrich Wölfflin. This article presents a comparative approach to the relation between Deleuze's and these writers' conception of the image and attempts to answer the following questions: does a painting appeal strictly to the sense of vision? Does its structure point to a virtual haptic function of vision and if so, does painting overturn the stable hierarchy of senses with vision at the top? Is there a gradual relation between touch and vision? Reading Deleuze reading Riegl, Worringer and Wölfflin offers an occasion to reconsider the image as a tensive surface grasped with a touching eye and seeing hand.

Keywords: haptic, optic, visuality, visual semiotics, art history, aesthetics

Reading *The Logic of Sensation* (1981) in the light of the art historians that influenced Deleuze's analysis of the painterly set up is a fruitful task, both as a way of introducing Aloïs Riegl's, Heinrich Wölfflin's and Wilhelm Worringer's art theory to Deleuzians and for determining a common plane in their conception of the painterly image. In what follows, I outline a few convergences between these authors in formulating an answer to the question: what is a painterly image? All these authors answer this question by means of a polarity: on the one

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side, they resist the figurative understanding of the image in terms of a resemblance approximating a real or imagined correlate, thus equating the image to an iconic device with a deictic function. On the other side, they affirm the image as a surface of forces pointing back to the sensitive structure of the human body and particularly to two senses involved in capturing and transferring these forces, namely, the haptic (the sense of touch) and the optic (the sense of vision). Thus, my argument is that the significance of Riegl, Wölfflin and Worringer for Deleuze lies in distinguishing the image not as a stable surface on which an object is coded with consideration for its recognition, but as a surface coagulating a field of forces, on which an exterior correlate, instead of being copied, is transformed according to the tensive means proper to painting. If everything perceived is an image, the question of visual art is not how to transfer perceived images onto canvases, marble or film, but what happens to images when they encounter pictorial, sculptural or cinematic structures. Most models of image analysis correlate the plastic signifiers or sensuous data (lines, planes, colours) to something exterior to themselves, for instance to an iconological dimension. This presupposes that the constitutive plastic signifiers are convertible in different terms. In the model Deleuze-Riegl-Worringer, the sensuous data are convertible into forces, tensions and affects.

My introduction to these art historians is rather biased, since I intend to show that what unites them, and provokes Deleuze's interest in them, is a specific conception of the image. This conception consists in envisaging the image as a figural structure where plastic signifiers mediate a thymic structure, that is, a dimension appertaining to the circulation of intensities, affects, percepts and sensations. This circulation takes place through a configuration of the senses of touch and vision, the haptic and the optic. The first section to follow offers a short introduction to the ideas common to Riegl, Wölfflin and Worringer, while the second pinpoints their contiguity with ideas and concepts drawn from Deleuze's *The Logic of Sensation*.

I. Transfer of Forces via the Senses: The Haptic and the Optic

Riegl, Wölfflin and Worringer are revolutionary figures in art history. They introduced a model of art history no longer based on a taxonomy of artworks but as a study of the plastic virtuality characterising a group of images. The question they raise is: what are the plastic possibilities of representation and what type of space do they create? Riegl's *Historical Grammar of Visual Arts* (1897–1899, first published

in 1966) and Wölfflin's *Renaissance and Baroque* (1888), but also his famous *Fundamental Principles of Art History* (1914), constitute the epitome of such a model: the Baroque is not just an historical paradigm but a 'feeling of form' (*Formgefühl*), a mode of seeing in terms of masses and perpetual movement, while the Renaissance mode of seeing is in terms of lines and distinguished parts. Riegl accounts for the outline and space of the painterly image in terms of haptic and optic and a correspondence to three modes of seeing: 'close vision' (*Nahsehen*), 'normal vision' (*Normalsehen*) and 'distant vision' (*Fernsehen*). Thus whereas the Egyptian relief demands a proximate reading of its planimetrically arranged forms, the Baroque visual model requires distance in order to grasp the colossal sizes and movements in which forms are caught. Worringer traces the production of images back to two psychological preconditions – empathy and abstraction – that he homologates to two types of images. He conceives of images as the passage from virtual plastic structures to their actual realisation in concrete artworks.

These constitutive works of modern art history have to be read as pseudo-structuralist attempts to account for the artistic image as a configuration of plastic signifiers, whose mode of signification is accountable irrespective of their mimetic function and strictly through the type of relations which are brought in. Take the first of Wölfflin's polarities, 'the linear' (*das lineare*) and 'the painterly' (*das Malerische*): they stand for a twofold modalisation of the outline as a plastic signifier, tending either towards delineating the solid material outline of an object or towards its painterly dissolution. Wölfflin calls them 'fundamental', by which he understands 'virtual': they are two constitutive possibilities of the outline which may trace either the haptic solidity and distinctiveness of objects or their optic overlapping and dissolution in space. Worringer's notions of abstraction versus empathy also consist in two modalities of representation corresponding to two tendencies of relating to the exterior. One can either euphorically fuse with it (since the exterior world is felt as unthreatening and peaceful) or, due to a felt dysphoric disposition, one can reduce the exterior to its abstract, geometrical forms, implementing points of rest in what is felt as a threatening nature. Important to Worringer is the relation he introduces between two thymic values: 'tension' (abstraction as related to anxiety and the reduction of the density of space to its surface and to a strictly geometric relation) and 'relaxation' (empathy as related to a harmonious and inoffensive exterior with which one can fuse). The subtitle of this book reads 'A Contribution to the Psychology of

Style'. The thymic dimension of image analysis plays a central role in Worringer's model, where the plastic structure is the result of an affect consisting of either a euphoric and life-affirming relation to space (empathy) or an anxiety-driven and life-denying instinctual response to space reducing all relations of depth to surface relations (abstraction). In empathy, the line is an extension or an attunement to nature and follows the movement of the organic. In abstraction, the line receives a life of its own, independent of nature, significant for its velocity and force. Empathic forms are those that correspond to the human vital feeling (*Lebensgefühl*), that is, to the intrinsic affirmative vitalistic constitution of our own bodies. The opposite category, abstraction, corresponds to forms – geometric, crystalline, lines of force – that are life-denying and felt as disruptive, since they oppose the human life-affirming drives which find satisfaction in curvilinear, naturalistic representations. Antique naturalism is opposed to Gothic abstraction, the classic to primitive man, reason to instinct and so on. The broader intellectual context of this polarity can clearly be traced back to Nietzsche's polarity of the Apollonian and the Dionysian, in so far as for both Worringer and Nietzsche the plastic configuration is intrinsically linked to a specific thymic configuration or an image-affect, in which the image is the plastic analogon of the euphoric (Empathy, organic, naturalistic) or the dysphoric (Abstraction, inorganic, geometric, anxiety-driven).

We interpret these systems of polarities, firstly, as a model of image analysis based on the relation between fundamental virtual possibilities of the plastic constituents of an image (independent of their mimetic function) and their actual implementation in artworks, and, secondly, as the correlation of these plastic constituents to feeling and thus to a thymic dimension. An image for Riegl, Wölfflin and Worringer is an entity on its own, not a copy of the world but constitutive of the perception of the world. It is a plastic extension of the way the world is felt at a given moment. The mode of seeing and feeling, the type of sense and the type of space and line, subordinate the taxonomy of the actual artworks.

These virtual structures are intimately related to the aesthetic constitution of the subject ('aesthetic' in the sense of concerning the specific senses the image appeals to) where the senses of touch, the haptic, and sight, the optic, constitute the main polarity. The haptic refers to a type of line and corresponding pictorial space that clearly distinguishes represented objects by maintaining their self-enclosed materiality and that avoids any sense of depth. The Egyptian relief illustrates this haptic paradigm, based on a type of planar construction

that encloses all figures, and thus on a type of line that appeals to the sense of touch more than vision, as if the lines are associated to the fingertips that provide a direct contact with the perceived object. The optic, to the contrary, accentuates depth and illusion, arranging objects in a closed or infinite space. The art theory of Riegl and Wölfflin appeals to an aesthetics of the specific senses involved and the type of space they presuppose: from the repression of space in the haptic Egyptian art to its controlled sense in Renaissance art and the purely optic infinite space of the Baroque.

Art theory meets aesthetics here in the tradition of J. G. Herder, who arranged the arts according to the distribution of the senses and, in *Sculpture* and the fourth *Critical Grove*, attributed a central role to the sense of touch as opposed to seeing. For Riegl, Wölfflin and Worringer, the reference to the sense of touch that Herder designated as central to the appreciation of sculpture is a priori involved in the analysis of an image's visuality. The image has a synaesthetic constitution relating to the viewer not just through the sense of sight but also appealing to the sense of touch. The linear (Wölfflin), the abstract (Worringer) and the haptic (Riegl) – present not only in primitive or Egyptian art but also in the type of line used in the Renaissance mode of representation – designate a contour that the viewer is invited to associate to the sense of touch. It is this point – the image as a synaesthetic, haptic-optic construct – that Deleuze develops further in his analysis of painting.

II. Painting as the Manipulation of Senses: Deleuze

Yet where do the approaches of all these authors converge? One commonality lies in the role that sensation plays in both Deleuze's analysis of Francis Bacon's painting and in Riegl's analysis of the Baroque as the condensation of an affect (Riegl 1923). While for Deleuze the diagram mediates the sensation, implementing accidental and indeterminate visual effects on the canvas, Riegl argues that the symptom of the Baroque image lies in the conflict between two affects: 'will' (*Wille*) and 'interior sensation' (*Empfindung*). Riegl conceived of the Baroque image as the impact of an interior sensation, an inner conflict that dilutes the stability of plastic signifiers and implements a tension or an illusion of perpetual becoming, accidental movement and unbalanced composition. Wölfflin's logic of the linear and the painterly also finds its correlate in the dichotomy will–sensation. Riegl writes: 'Will is an isolating, tactile (self-limiting) element; sensation

is a connective, optical (self-dissolving) element' (Riegl 1923: 34). Accordingly, *Empfindung* is the Baroque affect per se, since an interior conflict misbalances all its plastic elements. Take Giuliano's statue from Michelangelo's de Medici tombs in Florence, where limbs and head follow different trajectories. For Riegl, the principle of the image consists of a tension due to an 'escalated sensation' (*gesteigerte Empfindung*), just like the figures of the Night and Day are 'quivered by unrest' (*durch eine Unruhe durchzittert*) (Riegl 1923: 33). Whereas 'will' maintains the unity of bodies and distinguishes and balances their parts, 'sensation' exposes form to an inner conflict. The accidental and sensation-driven quivers of Bacon's figures echo what Riegl considers the coordinating thymic principle of the Baroque: an inner tension.

Deleuze's description of El Greco's *Burial of the Count of Orgaz* (1586–88), which emphasises the top section with its erratic display of celestial sensations, finds its correlate in Riegl's account of Rubens' *Last Judgment* (1617). Riegl argues that the painting was outrageous not because, originally, only Mary was dressed, but rather because Christ is stirred by human affects, with a body animated by sensations and depicted less as a divine figure than as an angry judge. Thus, for both Riegl and Deleuze, the painterly image is a set up that extracts and crystallises a commotion of forces affecting the canvas as sensation. In both cases, the question is not how to paint an image (religious, profane) but rather how painting itself, as a circuit of forces, affects the image as such.

Painting mediates the quality and intensity of an affect (and not an iconological content), that inner tension for which – in the case of the Baroque – both Deleuze and Riegl account with the thymic category of distress and unrest. With their analysis of the Baroque as the working of sensation they meet in the centrality of the relation between sensation and affect, both considering the image as the sensible presence of 'insensible forces' independent of figurative motivation. Riegl's interior sensation plays an analogous role to the way Deleuze conceives the contact between a force and the body it traverses and acts upon.

Yet the strongest relation between Deleuze and Riegl consists in the mediation of the painterly image by a reconfiguration of the haptic and the optic. In Deleuze's analysis of painting, the notions of contour and figure are extensions of Riegl's concepts of the haptic and the optic. However, he makes an original use of this dichotomy by introducing a function of the haptic that cannot be found in Riegl. For the latter, touch is the sense corresponding to the impenetrability of objects, it is the type of visual signifier that appeals to the fingertips impinging

upon the basic material structure of an object grasped in its self-enclosed unity. The haptic does not mean literally grasping, it rather functions synaesthetically, the optical pathway (seeing) being stimulated by a reference to the haptic pathway (touching). By contrast, vision, the optical, determines the object's extension into deep space, introducing juxtapositions of planes, three dimensionality, the optical illusion of depth. Egyptian relief illustrates the haptic because a) it employs a line that appeals more to the touching hand than to the gazing eye and b) it represses space relations, the contour and the background being adjoined on the same plane, again like the touching hand, that perceives in terms of adjacent flat surfaces. Moreover, the haptic in Riegl requires a close vision due to the intimacy between the sense of touch and the correlate, whilst the optic requires a distant vision due to the distance needed to perceive space relations as a whole.

The contour for Deleuze is bimodal: it delineates the outline of the object, concentrating energy, and thus acting as a centripetal force. But it is also the deviating painterly margin that opens up the object's limits, dissipates energy, and thus acts as a centrifugal force. The contour therefore has a double function: on the one hand, it is haptic in Riegl's sense, that is, it marks the material individuality of an object perceived as a constant and solid silhouette. In this sense, it is isomorphic, meaning that it maintains a similarity of structure with the represented object. On the other hand, in its painterly function, it is heteromorphic since it dilutes the density of an object, mediates between the Figure and the Ground, and suggests a differentiation and metamorphosis of forms.

The originality of Deleuze's intervention lies in turning the haptic into a function of the optical, that is, into a quality of the eye referring to 'the juxtaposition of tones arranged gradually on the flat surface [that] forms a progression and a regression that culminates in a close vision' (Deleuze 2005: 92). Unlike in Riegl, the haptic is no longer a distinguishing but a diffusive force, related to the hand's velocity. The haptic value is perceived 'when sight discovers in itself a specific function of touch that is uniquely its own, distinct from its optical function' (Deleuze 2005: 109). The Figure's outline is therefore not haptic in the sense of Riegl, who would see it as optical, since it is based on a modulation of chromatic qualities (warm and cold) that pertain to the sense of sight. This outline no longer recalls the tangible material limits of the object. It is rather the outcome of broken lines, belonging to an optic space and displaying zones of indiscernibility. 'Haptic' in this context means a release of tensions. It refers to the intensity and velocity of a hand no

longer subordinated to the eye, a situation that excludes all consideration for the resulting resemblance and that is purely energetic instead. It is indexical in Peirce's sense, meaning that it preserves a physical relation to the designated object unmediated by the eye's formative grid. 'Haptic' in Deleuze is what Wölfflin calls the painterly quality of the Baroque, in which colour no longer aims at 'chromatic harmony' (in which each colour emphasises the purity and the local quality of the neighbouring colours) but is rather a perpetual modulation or local transition from one state to the other.

More than Riegl, Deleuze emphasises the power relation between these two senses, since the haptic is accounted for in terms of the subordination of the eye by the hand. Whereas for Riegl the haptic space is closed, regulated, balanced, geometrically proportionate and tectonically stable (think of the pyramids or modernist architecture), for Deleuze the intrusion of the haptic into vision is equivalent to the velocity and instability of the hand. It refers to an analogue modulation of colour, based on a qualitative tonal range between cold and warm, corresponding to Riegl's purely optical 'mere subjective colour sensations' (*blosse subjektive Farbenempfindungen*). This is the antipode of what Deleuze describes as haptic modulation, in which the viewer fuses with the sensation in the indiscernible layer where the eye itself is sensation. It is this synaesthetic approach to the senses that defines Deleuze's own reading of Riegl.

Another convergence between Deleuze's conception of the image and Worringer's consists in the intensity of the line. It is in the context of an intensive aesthetics that Deleuze evokes Worringer's expressionistic aesthetics and his notion of the Gothic line, which is abstract and infinite, filled with animal and vegetal motives whose function however is not representational. Deleuze's appeal to forces as motivating painting echoes Worringer's apology of the opposition of the spirit of expressionism to naturalism and the organic law of nature. The individual I, writes Worringer, is lost in an 'act of force', a *Kraftleistung*, whilst the Gothic line, as inorganic and infinite 'psychical-spiritual activity of will' (*psychische-geistige Willenstätigkeit*) or mechanical repetition multiplying itself with no pauses and accents (*eine körperlose unendliche Bewegtheit*), is independent of the subject. 'Abstraction' is the plastic regime of the Gothic line, opposed to the naturalistic, emphatic image.

As with Riegl's notions of *Wille* and *Empfindung*, 'abstraction' and 'empathy' refer both to a subject-related emotional state (a thymic dimension) and to object-related visual characteristics (a plastic

dimension). As in Deleuze, for Worringer the image is intrinsically correlated to a phoric state. It is a structure of form and affect, or as semioticians say, an exterior correlate for a thymic state. After all, the central goal of *Abstraktion und Einfühlung* is to determine the psychological preconditions on which the formation of images depends. In other words, abstraction and empathy are affects bound to formal structures, exo-egophoric structures. Empathic forms are attuned to a feeling of life that we freely empathise into them, to an unconstrained activity of the will, to an 'expenditure of energy' (*Kraftaufwand*). They are forms evaluated as beautiful because – in our apperception of them – they harmonise with our natural tendency of self-activation, they are 'in tune' (*Einklang*) with our own will and activate an 'affirmation of the general will to action' (*eine Bejahung des allgemeinen Tätigkeitswillen*). Determined by a feeling of unrest, the drive to abstraction opposes the free organic beauty, that is, its unconstrained movement, and implements an inorganic, crystalline, abstract regularity. The abstract line is the expenditure of a force, a vitalism and a velocity that reduces depth to surface geometric relations.

III. Conclusions: The Haptic as Deconstruction of the Visual Regime

In this model of image analysis, the image is a circulation of affects immanently correlated to the coordination of the senses of touch and sight. Yet, if the hand is constitutive of the image, even analogically in terms of either intensity (Worringer, Deleuze) or as bordering outline (Riegl), then the question can be raised as to whether the pictorial image is a purely visual construction or is intrinsically synaesthetic. Are 'visual' arts merely visual? An analogy of the senses implies a revaluation of the feeling of space in terms of an 'optohaptics', an image's significance consisting not in its mimetic ability but in being a specific space-time configuration of the senses. In his courses on art, Deleuze proposes a double definition of painting, a visual one in which painting is a mode of lines and colours, and a manual one respecting the German etymology of *Malerei* as deriving from *Macula*, haptic trait or spot. It is this manual definition that deconstructs the image as purely visual and detects in it the index of a hand freed from the eye, a 'blind hand' (*une main aveugle*) that produces a line with no constant direction and changing at every point, and that constitutes a third eye. The haptic intrusion as Deleuze understands it deconstructs the optical regime of classical representation, in which the image is a window onto well-defined shapes that are

organised according to linear perspective in order to be primarily seen and read as carriers of symbols. In art history, Michelangelo materialised this intervention of the hand as the constitutive plastic element that is no longer subordinated to the eye but initiates a 'mannerism' that literally gives the upper hand to the haptic.[1] In the haptic regime, the image is an entity with two dimensions: on one side, it relates to an escalation of interior sensation, on the other side, it offers a haptic treatment of an extension of matter that refers the outline to the sensation of touch and the hand's velocity. The greater the intensity of the interior sensation, the greater is its extension as mass – this is the logic of the Mannerist and Baroque image. Riegl writes that, in Michelangelo, the *terrible* corresponds to the increase of the *magnificent* (Riegl 1923: 34). This means that the increase in psychical tension corresponds to the extension of muscles, limbs, movement and space.

As a model of image analysis, in all these authors the image correlates sensation with a series of affects (will and sensation, empathy and abstraction, quiet rest and disruption). Their thymic register is related to specific spatial-temporal constructions that crystallize the quality of time and space. 'Time' does not stand here for the dialectics of retention and protention but for a felt quality, as a concentration of the extension of duration. There is, for instance, the compact, frozen time-space construction of Egyptian and Renaissance art as distinguished from the extended, unfolding time-space construction of the Baroque. Long before Deleuze, Riegl in his book on the Baroque in Rome had already argued that the Day and Night in Giuliano's Tomb must be interpreted not as symbols but as expenditures of forces. The book itself offers a 'logic of sensation', since for Riegl the image constitutes a function where lines and colours mediate intensities with the scope of creating an autonomous entity. This model of the image is an issue that requires further development in rewriting what Riegl's editors called a 'grammar of visual arts'.

Note

1. In Riegl's *Die Entstehung der Barockkunst in Rom* Michelangelo is the key representative of the radical subordination of the image to sensation. Deleuze's courses on aesthetics also emphasise the subordination of the eye to the hand in the understanding of Mannerism. See also Van Tuinen 2009.

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Michelangelo, Leibniz and the Serpentine Figure

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Abstract

In his lectures from 1987, Deleuze draws an analogy between Michelangelo's figures and Leibnizian substances by claiming that neither are essences but rather sources of modifications or manners of being. The best way to explore this analogy, I argue, is by focusing on Michelangelo's preference for serpentine shapes. By putting key passages from *The Logic of Sensation*, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque* and *What is Philosophy?* in resonance with the Leibnizian accounts of corporeal aggregates and possible worlds on the one hand and art history on the other, I will try to develop a Deleuzian concept for the typically Mannerist ideal of the serpentine figure. Although Deleuze usually prefers to speak in musical terms of refrains and counterpoints by which various blocs of sensation resonate with each other, in the visual arts it is the serpentine figure that renders visible sensory becoming as a rhythmic counter-positioning of possible worlds within a single body without organs.

Keywords: Michelangelo, serpentine figure, possible worlds, composition, sensation, Mannerism

I. Michelangelo and Leibniz

Leibnizian philosophy, Deleuze argues in his lectures from 1987, gives us the key to a problem in painting, under the form: what is Mannerism? He draws an analogy between the figures of Michelangelo and Leibniz's

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doctrine of substances by claiming that neither are essences but rather sources of modifications or manners of being:

> In some way, when one thinks of painting that is called mannerist, Leibniz's entire philosophy is without doubt mannerist par excellence. Already with Michelangelo one finds traces of a first and profound mannerism. A mannered posture of Michelangelo is not an essence. It is rather the source of a modification, the source of a manner of being. (Deleuze 1987)

Similarly, in *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, Deleuze argues that monads are not Aristotelian or Cartesian essences but individuations of an inessential and ante-predicative world. Since each monad envelops this infinite world according to its unique manner, Leibniz can be said to have introduced Mannerism in philosophy: 'Essentialism makes a classic of Descartes, while Leibniz's thought appears to be a profound mannerism. Classicism needs a solid and constant attribute for substance, but mannerism is fluid, and the spontaneity of manners replaces the essentiality of the attribute' (Deleuze 1993: 56).

Surprisingly, however, Michelangelo does not feature in *The Fold*. The only book in which Deleuze refers to Michelangelo is *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*. There he argues that 'it was with Michelangelo, with mannerism, that the Figure or the pictorial fact was born in its pure state' (Deleuze 2004: 161; cf. Deleuze 2006: 182). Both Michelangelo and Bacon can be qualified as Mannerist in so far as they escape from classical figuration through the 'extraction or isolation' of the 'figural'. Just as a modern painter must liberate himself from the clichés imposed on the image by visual culture (i.e. photography), Mannerism strives to relieve the figure of its representative role and places it in an entirely different, spiritual register of sensation, which Deleuze describes as 'a properly pictorial atheism' (Deleuze 2004: 9; Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 194; cf. Ambrose 2009). Moreover, this anti-classical liberation of spirituality implies a typically modernist tendency towards deformation and abstraction and a heavy emphasis on medium specificity or material facticity.[1] As Deleuze writes of the jarring juxtapositions of bodies in Michelangelo's *Doni Tondo* (also known as *The Holy Family*, 1503):

> The forms may be figurative, and there may still be narrative relations between the characters – but all these connections disappear in favour of a 'matter of fact' or a properly pictorial (or sculptural) ligature, which no longer tells a story and no longer represents anything but its own movement, and which makes these apparently arbitrary elements coagulate in a single continuous flow. (Deleuze 2004: 160)

Or as he puts it earlier on, 'it is as if the organisms were caught up in a whirling or serpentine movement that gives them a single "body" or unites them in a single "fact," apart from any figurative or narrative connection' (Deleuze 2004: 130–1).

This article combines the aforementioned passages and explores in detail Deleuze's analogy between the Michelangelesque figure and the Leibnizian monad. At the centre of the argument is the reference to the typically Mannerist *figura serpentinata*. Michelangelo held that the secret of beauty lies in the alternation of convex and concave forms, where the radius 'jumps' from inside to outside and vice versa, since in this way the figure becomes capable of rendering visible movement. Deleuze refers to the art historian Luciano Bellosi (Deleuze 2004: 196 n. 13), who argues that the *Doni Tondo* is Michelangelo's first Mannerist painting in so far as it breaks with Leonardo's classicist conception of the unity of composition:

> The movement of their inter-connecting arms forms a spiral that has something 'serpentine' about it … To get this spiral effect, Michelangelo twists the figures and makes their bodies bend in a movement that is difficult and complicated. … It is this quality of unease, unnaturalness, eccentricity and ambiguity that particularly characterises the Mannerist mentality. (Bellosi 1970: 8–10)

In addition, for Deleuze the serpentine figure also has a complex philosophical genealogy that can be traced back to the uncoiled serpent of Nietzsche's eternal return and to the ontogenetic, 'sinuous outline (*serpentement*)' in Ravaisson, Bergson and Merleau-Ponty. However, by taking the Leibnizian subtext in Deleuze and Guattari's account of art as the composition of blocs of sensation in *What is Philosophy?* as my starting point, I argue that it is first of all through Leibniz's theory of corporeal aggregates that we can grasp the meaning of the serpentine figure as an expression of sensory becoming. This choice is further legitimated by the fact that the Mannerist unease or disquiet, as mentioned by Bellosi, lies not only at the core of Michelangelo's work, but, as Deleuze emphasises, also constitutes the dynamic element or background (*fond*) of Leibnizian philosophy[2] (Deleuze 1993: 87).

II. Composition

In *What is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Guattari argue that, whereas philosophy puts forward concepts, art makes blocs of affects and

percepts stand up on their own. This difference coincides with the duality between form of expression and matter of expression:

> Conceptual becoming is heterogeneity grasped in an absolute form; sensory becoming is otherness caught up in a matter of expression. The monument does not actualise the virtual event but incorporates or embodies it: it gives it a body, a life, a universe. ... These universes are neither virtual or actual; they are possibles. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 177)

Whereas in *A Thousand Plateaus* artistic and philosophical creation are still approached similarly, Deleuze says that it was only with *The Fold* (1988), hence with Leibniz, that he was able to 'see better' what this distinction between concepts and figures amounts to (Deleuze 1995: 137). As he argues in this book, structured around the allegory of a two-storey baroque house, a form of expression is produced in a process of actualisation whereas a material is made expressive in a process of realisation. The two processes are irreducible to each other, in so far as actualisation relates to the reality of the virtual, whereas realisation relates to the existence of a possible world or universe, 'the possible as aesthetic category' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 177). This distinction can help us to get a better grasp on the relation between sensation and physical bodies.

In terms of Leibniz, the difference between the actualisation of the world in the appetitions and perceptions of individual souls and the realisation of the world in bodily interaction is not a difference between two kinds of substances, but between two ways of distributing the world, between the soul taken as a monad in itself and the body taken as a composite of several monads. A soul is an eternal individual unity whereas matter is a continuously varying multiplicity, an aggregation of aggregations ad infinitum. Since, for Leibniz, 'that what is not truly *one* being is not truly one *being* either' (To Arnauld, 30 April 1687, Leibniz 1989: 86), it follows that matter or extension does not exist. He thus subscribes to the idealist conviction that the extended world exists only in monadic perception.

However, Leibniz simultaneously says that no soul, except God's, can exist without a body, since the body that belongs to it is precisely what connects it with the rest of the world:

> Each distinct simple substance or monad, which makes up the center of a composite substance (an animal, for example) and is the principle of its unity, is surrounded by a *mass* composed of an infinity of other monads, which constitute the *body belonging to* this central monad, through whose affections

> the monad represents the things outside it. ('Principles of Nature and Grace', §3, Leibniz 1989: 207)

The external world is made up of what Leibniz calls 'secondary matter'. In terms of the Monadology, secondary matter is an infinitely divisible *masse brute*, made up of an unformed flux of monads chaotically traversing all kinds of interactions and compositions, its indistinct collectivities corresponding to the variability of the unconscious flux of perception ('disquiet' or 'confused murmuring') that is virtually included in every monad and that is the condition of all perception, action and thought ('New Essays', Preface, Leibniz 1989: 297). If the soul is nonetheless capable of extracting distinct perceptions from this insensible flux, this is because it possesses a mediating body or 'primary matter' capable of selecting and organising disparate individuals into the unity corresponding to its 'point of view'. For Leibniz the soul is the 'foundation' or 'form' of this organic composition, whilst the other monads that participate in it are merely its 'requisites' or 'material'. In fact, matter is present only through the organic body by which extensive phenomena are 'realised' and otherwise remains fully abstract and ideal. Matter does not 'exist', although in it is realised something that Deleuze calls 'presence': 'the pure presence of the body becomes visible at the same time that the eye becomes the destined organ of this presence' (Deleuze 2004: 52). For Leibniz this means that, in order for a phenomenon to be real – or, 'well-founded' – there must correspond to each of the soul's clear and distinct perceptions a fully evolved organ composed of other monads, such that a perfect 'resemblance' between form and content is guaranteed.

In Deleuze's reading, there is an 'almost schizophrenic tension' (Deleuze 1993: 33) between the idealist Leibniz and the realist Leibniz. There is a tension, for example, between the claim that God chose a certain world expressed by the individuals that populate it and the claim that each 'windowless' monad freely draws its perceptions from the folds of its own infinite background. For it implies that, if an actual soul is free to hallucinate about other possible worlds, it must be able to perceive other possible phenomena than those chosen by God which also strive to existence. On the level of actualisation, however, Leibniz is necessitated to exclude the reality of the possible, since it is precisely God's choice in bringing into existence this one actual world expressed in individual essences that guarantees the well-foundedness of the phenomenon. It is only on the level of realisation – where *de jure* harmony depends on a *de facto* organic perspective or union of body and soul – that Leibniz

allows, either within the organic body or at least open to it, more reality than the soul can express by itself. Here the infinitely divisible continuum of secondary or anorganic flux matter is not restricted by God's choice of the actual world and encompasses multiple possible worlds. Even if the law of pre-established harmony guarantees that the moral order of individual souls and the natural order of composite bodies fuse on a shared plane of composition, the actual does not therefore constitute the real, which must itself be realised in 'accidental', inter-monadic or inter-essential relations. Hence we see why the bodies in which hallucinations can be realised are not necessarily individual or essential and therefore do not necessarily exist. This is Deleuze's point in relation to the Baroque, the 'paradigm' of which he claims to be Mannerist (Deleuze 1993: 34, 36–7, 38):

> The essence of the Baroque entails neither falling into nor emerging from illusion but rather *realizing* something in illusion itself, or of tying it to a spiritual *presence* that endows its spaces and fragments with a collective unity. . . . The Baroque artists know well that hallucination does not feign presence, but that presence is hallucinatory.[3] (Deleuze 1993: 125)

Since the process of realisation does not bear on the virtual but on the possible, a body of sensation or matter of fact is always potentially a non-individual and abstract 'monument' for the presence of another possible world within the actual world.

III. The Serpentine Figure

According to Deleuze, 'including possible worlds in the plane of immanence, even in this very sketchy way, makes expressionism the counterpart of constructionism' (Deleuze 1995: 147; cf. Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 183–4). Following Leibniz's distinction between appetition and perception, he says that a possible world is embodied in a compound of affects and percepts (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 164). Affects and percepts, however, are not the same as affections or perceptions, because they are not reducible to an individual form or soul whose lived organic experience they are. Already for Leibniz, a body can possess a 'plastic' consistency without being individual, since although organs are the perceptual-affective requirement of the development of the life of the individual monad to which a body belongs, the reverse is not the case.[4] Other material compositions expressing other, non-subjective and hence monstrous or other-worldly sensations are always possible. Only reasonable monads have a

so-called 'substantializing bond (*vinculum substantiale*)' attached to them by which, like a 'judgment of God', the organic compositions are morally bound to their unchanging foundations, whereas bodies belonging to animal souls are subject to the continuous transformations of 'the matter-flow as pure productivity' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 454), that is, they can always be developed into different possible worlds or folded into different and potentially mutant animals and thus into new composites of sensation (Leibniz, 'New System', Leibniz 1989: 141–2; 'Monadology' §72, Leibniz 1989: 222). Each sensation thus 'exists in its possible universe without the concept necessarily existing in its absolute form' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 178). Spinoza's observation is valid for Leibniz as well: we do not yet know what sensations a body is capable of. 'Even when they are nonliving, or rather inorganic, things have a lived experience because they are percepts and affects' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 154, translation modified). Hence Deleuze's claims, firstly, that blocs of sensation possess the autonomous and inorganic life of 'nonhuman landscapes' and 'nonhuman becomings' by which 'we become universes'[5] (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 169), and, secondly, that the model of all art is a sensory becoming-animal, in other words, an animation – or 'animalization' (Deleuze 2004: 46) – of matter in non-human and non-individual ways.

If, moreover, perception is no longer necessarily subjective, then neither can it be reduced to an objective state of affairs. Rather, there is the unity of eye and matter in the becoming of the pictorial fact. Sensation refers not only to primary matter or content-matter, but also to the 'immense agitation' (Deleuze 2004: 137) of the secondary or flux matter of which it is composed and in which it is expressed. The body, detached from the individual soul and dispersed in flux, becomes a 'zone of objective indiscernibility or indeterminability' (Deleuze 2004: 157) and with it the well-founded phenomenon gives way to deformation. Whereas classical representation, as Deleuze says in *The Logic of Sensation*, 'takes the accident into an optical organization that makes it something well founded (a phenomenon) or a "manifestation" of essence' (Deleuze 2004: 126), the mannered postures of Michelangelo's deformed bodies are not fixed individual forms of content, but deform the very object form of human perception and representation governing over sensation, such that forms become 'accidental forms' (Deleuze 1993: 137) or forms of expression and thus sources of endless modifications or modulations. Hence the singular 'athleticism' of Mannerist figures: 'What makes deformation a destiny is that the body has a necessary relationship with the material structure:

not only does the material structure curl around it, but the body must return to the material structure and dissipate into it' (Deleuze 2004: 18). This deformation is reflected by the expressions of swooning, drunkenness, dizziness and vertigo employed by Leibniz to describe what occurs when accidental and essential aspects get confused. As becomes clear from a passage of his 'New System on Nature' that is particularly dear to Deleuze, this confusion is also exemplary of the Mannerist or Baroque unease characteristic of Leibniz's philosophy: 'After I established these things, I thought I was entering the port; but when I began to meditate about the union of soul and body, I felt as if I were thrown again into the open sea' (Leibniz 1989: 142). If classicism needs a solid and constant attribute for substance or body belonging to the soul, the fluidity of Mannerism that replaces the essentiality of the attribute therefore lies precisely in this indiscernibility between primary and secondary matter or between content matter and flux matter.

Now it is this objective indeterminability which Deleuze refers to both with the Michelangelesque ideal of the *figura serpentinata* and Artaud's concept of a body without organs – that is, not bodies stripped of organs, but bodies upon which organic figures are distributed in the form of multiplicities (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 30). Leibniz says that although nature is not an organism and hence not everything is organic, organs are everywhere 'clothed with' or 'enfolded in' ('New System', Leibniz 1989: 141–2) the texture of secondary matter, for reason of which 'each part of matter can be thought of as a garden full of plants or as a pond full of fish' ('Monadology', §67, Leibniz 1989: 222). It follows that each organ is only a fold away from infinity, caught up in an abstract flux of entwined bodies, each of which already contains the germ of another possible world. Similarly, a serpentine figure such as *The Rape of the Sabine Virgins* (1574–82) by Giambologna, a student of Michelangelo, renders the pictorial fact in such a way that it constantly escapes from itself and dissipates in multiple becomings.

> In the history of art, it was perhaps Michelangelo who made us grasp the existence of such a fact most forcefully. What we call 'fact' is first of all the fact that several forms may actually be included in one and the same Figure, indissolubly, caught up in a kind of serpentine, like so many necessary accidents continually mounting on top of one another. … Certainly there is still an organic representation, but even more profoundly, we witness the revelation of the body beneath the organism, which makes organisms and their elements crack or swell, imposes a spasm on them, and puts them into relation with forces. (Deleuze 2004: 160)[6]

Put differently, the serpentine figure folds – in an 'unnatural' way – one bloc of sensation into another, 'folds over folds' (Deleuze 1993: 93), within a single body without organs. In *A Thousand Plateaus* or *What is Philosophy?*, Deleuze and Guattari prefer to speak in musical terms of relations of counterpoint by which various blocs of sensation resonate with each other, but their equivalent in the visual arts is the rhythmic *contrapposto* of material figures in a serpentine composition in which 'universes are linked together or separated on their lines of flight, so that the plane may be single at the same time as universes are irreducibly multiple' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 196). For what the serpentine figure renders visible – from the queerly elongated limbs or contrived and unstable spatial relationships in Mannerist works of art to the modernist 'shattering of lived perceptions into a sort of cubism' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 171) – is sensory becoming as a rhythmic counter-positioning of possible worlds on a single plane of composition or fractal line of infinite inflection.

Notes

1. Even if Deleuze never systematically developed a concept of Mannerism in the way he did for expressionism and the Baroque, his aesthetics is profoundly Mannerist. In 'Deleuze's Concept of Mannerism' (forthcoming) I provide an overview of the main components of Deleuze's concept of Mannerism, which includes aesthetic, but also logical, ethical and stylistic aspects.
2. For Alois Riegl's similar observation with regard to Michelangelo's Medici tombs, see also Vlad Ionescu's contribution to this forum.
3. For a differentiation of Mannerism from the Baroque, see Van Tuinen 2009.
4. For a more elaborate account of the plasticity of the body in Leibniz, see Hammond 2010.
5. Here we see how Deleuze's concept of the presence of the possible is also related to a Bergsonian concept of fabulation: 'Bergson analyzes fabulation as a visionary faculty very different from the imagination and that consists in creating gods and giants, "semi-personal powers or effective presences". It is exercised first of all in religions, but it is freely developed in art and literature' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 230). Just as Michelangelo relied on the power of his artistic mind to improve nature instead of merely imitating it, for example to extract from the 'alpine and living stone' of a Carrara mountain top the colossus that is hermetically confined in it and that will 'outlive its maker' (cited in Clements 1961: 12, 23–8), Deleuze and Guattari argue that 'percepts can be telescopic or microscopic, giving characters and landscapes giant dimensions as if they were swollen by a life that no living perception can attain', such that we may say that 'all fabulation is the fabrication of giants' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 171).
6. Interestingly, art historian Charles de Tolnay, although not mentioned by Deleuze, arrives at a stunningly similar conclusion: 'From Michelangelo's works emerges the fact that he had a profound knowledge of anatomy. But he was not interested in anatomy as a science *per se* – as was Leonardo. Rather it was for him, as was perspective, an auxiliary science, a means to a fundamental knowledge

of the structure of the human body, which the artist wanted to re-create in his works, not by copying this or that model, but by grasping the meaning of the human body in its original beauty and in the rhythmic power of its abundant life. … Even Michelangelo's "theoretical" studies of the human body are purely plastic. Obviously he was never able to regard the skeleton as a system which could be detached from the whole, when it was a question of representing the living body. Only the unity of the plastic bodily form existed for him, a unity in which the muscles and bones merely indicate the inner powers and tensions of the substance which they shape from within. They are not a hidden structure inside the body; on the contrary, bones and muscles are forces, and need the body's substance in order to manifest themselves. Away from the complexus of the body they have no life. The blood stream flows through these superhuman forms, and Michelangelo seizes its rhythm – a truly dynamic conception' (Tolnay 1964: 87).

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The Sublime Conditions of Contemporary Art

Stephen Zepke

Abstract

Deleuze's relationship to Kant is intricate and fundamental, given that Deleuze develops his transcendental philosophy of difference in large part out of Kant's work. In doing so he utilises the moment of the sublime from the third Critique as the genetic model for the irruption of the faculties beyond their capture within common sense. In this sense, the sublime offers the model not only for transcendental genesis but also for aesthetic experience unleashed from any conditions of possibility. As a result, sensation in both its wider and more specifically artistic senses (senses that become increasingly entwined in Deleuze's work) will explode the clichés of human perception, and continually reinvent the history of art without recourse to representation. In tracing Deleuze's 'aesthetics' from Kant we are therefore returned to the viciously anti-human (and Nietzschean) trajectory of Deleuze's work, while simultaneously being forced to address the extent of its remaining Idealism. Both of these elements play an important part in relation to Deleuze's 'modernism', and to the discussion of his possible relevance to contemporary artistic practices.

Keywords: Sublime, Kant, aesthetic synthesis, transcendental philosophy, cinema, painting

The consequences of Conceptual art foreseen by Deleuze and Guattari in *What is Philosophy?* have come true. Art's plane of composition has become 'informative', on the one hand reducing sensation to human 'opinion', and on the other 'neutralising' the plane of composition by making a sensation reproducible to infinity (Deleuze and Guattari

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1994: 198). What is particularly sad – a kind of sad irony – is that it is precisely these aspects of contemporary art that have become associated with Deleuze and Guattari. After the relational turn art has embraced an 'immanent aesthetics' whereby the accumulation of things, concepts and experiences on a plane of composition detached from institutional, historical and medium specificities extends both the democratic tendencies of Conceptual art and their banality. Immanent aesthetics is the tyranny of the and..., its infinite and inoffensive production of 'rhizomatic', 'transversal' and 'nomadic' 'projects' in which art becomes life (but life stays as it is). This contemporary art, as Nicolas Bourriaud has put it, 'patiently re-stitches the relational fabric' of inter-subjectivity and social life (Bourriaud 2002: 36). Bourriaud draws directly on Guattari to argue that art's 'operative realism' has the 'modest aim' of rendering 'little services' and making 'little gestures' by creating 'convivial relations' and 'disconcerting situations' that 'contrast' and 'differ' from 'those structuring everyday life' and its 'communicational zones' (Bourriaud 2002: 35, 30, 31, 16). It is easy to see Bourriaud's modest ambitions for contemporary art as the fulfilment of Conceptual art's embrace of mass-media, and its resulting subsumption within the emerging world of communication technology as a 'creative' and commodified 'resistance'.[1] In this sense, and as Eric Alliez has put it, relational aesthetics is an 'aestheticisation of dissensus... [as a] post-political form of consensus beyond radicality' (Alliez 2010: 87).

The question then is how to re-radicalise both Deleuze's aesthetics and contemporary art? How are we to disabuse contemporary art practice of its belief that rhizomatic connectivity and its banal inclusiveness is not only 'political', but transformative? Today's reality is already rhizomatic, and novelty defines the market's vital rhythms of production. In our present age of constant deterritorialisation how can art be re-radicalised, and emerge as explosive and eternal returns of the new? The answer is already there in Deleuze's aesthetics, although it is largely ignored by his reception within contemporary art. Deleuze remains unfashionably Kantian (not to mention Modernist) in his insistence on sensation as the defining characteristic of art, and more especially in the ontological and aesthetic necessity of the sublime as the condition to any production of the new.

Deleuze's post-Kantian reading of the third Critique seeks what he calls the 'pure presence' of the 'difference of difference' through a transcendental or 'superior empiricism' (Deleuze 1994: 69). This presence emerges, he says, at a 'precise moment within Kantianism,

a furtive and explosive moment which is not even continued by Kant' (Deleuze 1994: 58). This is the moment when the form of time is introduced into thought. The result is a fracture of the *cogito*, 'an alienation in principle, insurmountable in principle' (Deleuze 1994: 58), between the passive receptivity of intuition and the active syntheses of the transcendental subject. Although the former is subordinated to the latter in Kant's account, Deleuze will affirm their difference – this 'schizophrenia in principle' – as the 'highest power of thought', a power that 'opens Being directly onto difference' (Deleuze 1994: 58). At this moment difference emerges for itself as what Deleuze calls 'real experience', a 'real experience' that directly participates in the process of ontogenesis. Real experience will turn against the self and its conditions of possible experience 'and smash it to pieces', emerging instead in the 'already-overman', a 'sublime image' that 'makes the sun explode' (Deleuze 1994: 89). For Deleuze, the third form of time – the future – is sublime, making the sublime, I would like to argue, not only the ontological crux of his aesthetics and the defining feature of 'art', but the real condition of the emergence of something 'new'.

Deleuze's reading of Kant begins from the post-Kantian philosopher Salomon Maïmon, who objected to Kant's use of ready-made faculties and relations, because these a priori principles were traced from the psychological structures of perception, and so failed to discover experience's real and genetic conditions.[2] In this sense, Deleuze writes, 'Transcendental philosophy discovers conditions which still remain external to the conditioned. Transcendental principles are principles of conditioning and not of internal genesis' (Deleuze 1983: 91). The only way to discover the transcendental principles of genesis is to begin from the passive intuition of sensation 'before' it has been synthesised by the subject's transcendental conditions of possible experience. As a result, and as Deleuze puts it, 'transcendental empiricism is the only way to avoid tracing the transcendental from the outlines of the empirical' (Deleuze 1994: 144). Showing generosity, Deleuze claims that the third Critique anticipates these objections 'at least in part', inasmuch as it 'uncovers the ultimate ground still lacking in the other two Critiques' (Deleuze 2002: 61). The ground it discovers is the faculties' 'free agreement, indeterminate and unconditional', meaning that 'with the *Critique of Judgment*, we step into Genesis' (Deleuze 2002: 68–9). But for Deleuze, Kant's most important discovery in the third Critique is the sublime, which, he will argue, is the way experience goes beyond its conditions of possibility and transcendental empiricism discovers difference as its real and genetic condition. In the sublime the

genetic conditions of experience emerge in themselves, as the difference between the faculties, a difference Deleuze raises to a higher power that overcomes the very possibility of common sense. What Deleuze calls 'real experience' is the repetition of the difference between the super-sensible and the sensible, its eternal return. Deleuze clearly hears the laughter of Zarathustra in the painful dissolutions of the sublime, turning the aesthetic synthesis discovered by Kant into the ontogenesis of the eternal return, and placing the repetition of difference at the heart of Kantian experience (Deleuze 1983: 52). Nietzsche, Deleuze writes, found 'a radical transformation of Kantianism, a re-invention of the critique which Kant betrayed at the same time as he conceived it, a resumption of the critical project on a new basis and with new concepts' (Deleuze 1983: 52). Nietzsche thereby takes Kantian critique beyond the point where it was 'exhausted in compromise' (Deleuze 1983: 89).

Deleuze's reading of the third Critique begins from what he calls the 'formidable difficulty' of understanding the 'mysterious' harmony of the faculties in common sense (Deleuze 1984: 22). This harmony requires the presupposition of aesthetic common sense, but, Deleuze says, this is an 'unsatisfactory solution' (Deleuze 2002: 60) because 'the Critique in general demands a principle of this accord, of the genesis of common sense' (Deleuze 1984: 22–3). The Analytic of the Sublime gives this 'genetic principle' (Deleuze 2002: 70) that demonstrates, for Kant, how reason secures the free indeterminate accord of the imagination and the understanding in the beautiful.[3] Deleuze however, reading Kant very literally on this point, will find in the sublime a transcendental genetic principle of discord or difference that will overcome common sense and its human, all too human sensibility.

The sublime, as Kant remarks, is 'beyond all comparison great' (Kant 1987: § 25), so it cannot be a measurable object of the senses. As a result, the sublime presents the imagination with an experience that is formless, and this forces it to confront its own limit, a limit beyond which the accord of imagination and sensible Nature is achieved in what Deleuze calls their 'dissension' (Deleuze 1984: 51). Imagination has no limit when it is apprehending successive parts because as long as it has established a unit of measure it can apprehend successive parts to infinity. But imagination does reach its limit when it attempts to reproduce simultaneously this infinity of parts, which it cannot synthesise into a single experience. Here Deleuze follows Kant's account of the aesthetic synthesis, which determines a unit of measure. An aesthetic synthesis is made up from subjective judgements, Kant claims, because its unit of measure is always our body. But in the face of the

'absolutely great' this aesthetic synthesis breaks down, forcing us to turn to the Ideas, which can think the infinity of the 'absolutely great' even if the imagination cannot apprehend it. Here, the sublime gives rise to 'a feeling of a super-sensible faculty within us' (Kant 1987: § 25), and reveals the super-sensible substrate underlying intuition. Nature is sublime in the phenomena that convey an Idea of their infinity, and in this we get, Kant tells us, 'infinity comprehended' (Kant 1987: § 26). Here we comprehend an Idea of Nature that is super-sensible and that underlies both Nature and our own faculty of reason.

The sublime, Deleuze notes with satisfaction, is 'truly paradoxical' (Deleuze 2002: 61) because reason is able to unite the sensible infinity of the world in a rational Idea, but does so only by exceeding the limits of the imagination. This gives what Kant calls the 'negative pleasure' (Kant 1987: § 23) of the sublime, where the imagination discovers its inaccessible super-sensible and transcendental ground, so making 'this very inaccessibility something which is present in sensible nature' (Deleuze 1984: 51; Deleuze 2002: 62).[4] Deleuze is fascinated by this contradictory harmony of the imagination and reason in the sublime, this 'vibration' or 'conflict' as Kant calls it (Kant 1987: § 26); this 'dissensus' (Deleuze 1984: 51), 'reciprocal violence' (Deleuze 1994: 321), or 'harmony in pain' (Deleuze 2002: 62) as Deleuze variously describes it. It is this painful harmony – what Nietzsche calls the pain of childbirth – that is the moment of superior or transcendental empiricism, the moment when the imagination is projected beyond its human, all too human conditions of possibility, to reveal what is beyond it and yet conditions it, the transcendental Ideas. Deleuze writes: 'each faculty communicates to the other only the violence which confronts it with its own difference and its divergence from the others. Kant was the first to provide the example of such a discordant harmony, the relation between imagination and thought which occurs in the case of the sublime' (Deleuze 1994: 146).

It is significant here that the sublime emerges in a reflective judgement. In a reflective judgement nothing is given by the active faculties, meaning raw intuition presents itself without really being 'represented' (Deleuze 1984: 60). In the judgement of the sublime raw intuition emerges for itself in an aesthetic synthesis – a sensation – that exceeds imagination, but in doing so reveals itself to be determined by the super-sensible Ideas.[5] As Deleuze puts it, reflective judgement 'manifests and liberates a depth which remained hidden' (Deleuze 1984: 60), a depth undetermined by a concept. As we have seen, Deleuze's account follows Kant's closely to this point, but now departing from Kant Deleuze argues

that the super-sensible depths of Ideas are differential and do not pre-exist their experience. A sensation in this sense gives an Idea of a 'world' formed from ramifying series of differential forces, as they construct an open totality which is simultaneously expressed in an actual experience.[6] In *Difference and Repetition* however, the transcendental Ideas are real conditions that remain distinct from real experience. This super-sensible realm – real without being actual – is, Deleuze writes, 'not a sensible being but the being of the sensible. It is not the given but that by which the given is given. It is therefore in a certain sense the imperceptible' (Deleuze 1994: 140). In Deleuze's superior empiricism the function of the sublime is to unleash the imagination from its transcendental conditions of possibility, allowing intuition to sense the transcendental Idea as its differentiating and genetic problem and incarnate its solution in 'sensation'. Sensation is therefore the unity of mind and nature, but this unity of mind and being, of sensible and super-sensible – and this is the lesson Deleuze draws from Kant's sublime – this unity is difference. As we will see, Deleuze's later work with Guattari will try to dissolve this still-Kantian difference in the immanence of matter and force.[7]

But let us return to the sublime realm of real experience to see how it is connected to aesthetics and more specifically to art. First of all, in the sublime aesthetic comprehension exceeds the body as phenomenological measure, and so gives rise to a new type of aesthetic synthesis, an inhuman synthesis in a state of continual variation.[8] As such, the aesthetic synthesis, according to Deleuze, is an 'evaluation of rhythm'. Here, Deleuze's method of ventriloquism is aggressive, finding in Kant the sublime germ that will grow to be the 'catastrophe' of his own system. This is what Deleuze says: 'We have seen that aesthetics – even though Kant does not say it, but it is what he is thinking of – was the grasping of rhythm as basis of measure and the unit of measure.' The result is appropriately dramatic:

> My whole structure of perception is in the process of exploding. Why? My whole structure of perception is in the process of exploding because we have seen that this whole perceptive synthesis found its foundation in aesthetic comprehension, which is to say the evaluation of rhythm. Here it's as if this aesthetic comprehension, as evaluation of a rhythm that would serve as a foundation of measure, thus the synthesis of perception, is compromised, drowned in a chaos. The sublime.[9] (Deleuze 1978a: 13)

The sublime is the mechanism by which genetic rhythms emerge from chaotic infinity, rhythms as aesthetic syntheses or sensations, rhythms as, to use Guattari's term describing the 'aesthetic paradigm', chaosmosis.

Similarly, in the Bacon book, what Deleuze calls the 'chaos-germ' is introduced by a painter's diagram, allowing the painter to 'embrace the chaos' in order to 'collapse' his or her 'visual coordinates'. The painter is able to turn chaos into rhythm, into a 'germ of rhythm', whereby Kant's sublime aesthetic synthesis – emerging we remember through the explosion of the human – directly expresses its material but nevertheless transcendental genesis. This is what Deleuze calls 'the new order' of a 'pictorial experience' (Deleuze 2003: 102).

Superior empiricism overcomes its Kantian conditions of possibility through 'a disorder of all the senses' (as Deleuze quotes Rimbaud), 'or rather an unregulated exercise of the faculties' (Deleuze 1984: xi). This sublime and superior empiricism is the real and genetic condition of art, a radical and transcendental condition, or as Deleuze puts it, 'a tempest in the depths of a chasm opened up in the subject' (Deleuze 1984: xii). The sublime, Deleuze argues, produces an inhuman sensation as the true destination of Kant's Critique, and the true destination of art. Here Deleuze follows Nietzsche's reading of Kant: 'The point of critique is not justification but a different way of feeling: another sensibility' (Deleuze 1983: 94). The passage from *Difference and Repetition* to the books written with Guattari will explore this 'different way of feeling'. In the earlier book the sublime unleashes 'free or untamed states of difference in itself', that 'create at once both the quality in the sensible and the transcendent exercise within sensibility' (Deleuze 1994: 144). Here it is the sublime that overcomes 'lived experience' and pushes us instead into a 'lived reality' where 'pure presence' appears with the ' "disparate" as its unit of measure' (Deleuze 1994: 69). In the later books, and most notably in *A Thousand Plateaus*, this 'disparate' measure of transcendental difference turns into rhythm as the aesthetic emergence of art and nature on a single plane of consistency. I'll come back to this.

We remember that Deleuze rather gleefully announced that in the sublime perception is in the process of exploding. This is *Anti-Oedipus* talk, where he and Guattari had already pronounced: 'The artist stores up his treasures so as to create an immediate explosion' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 32).[10] And in *A Thousand Plateaus*, going one better, the artist is described as 'a homemade atomic bomb' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 345). Indeed, affect and percept provide similar inhuman experiences, 'shattering lived perceptions', as they say in *What Is Philosophy?*, in hallucinatory 'visions' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 171). These visions are sensations qua artworks, rhythmical explosions of our human limits allowing us to 'become with the world', as they put it, to the point where 'We become universes' (Deleuze and Guattari

1994: 169).[11] Deleuze repeatedly insists that the third Critique is the 'hinge' between Classicism and Romanticism, which would make the sublime the genesis of romantic art, and the model for art in general, an art that, as Deleuze and Guattari formulate it, is a passage from the finite to the infinite (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 180). In fact, this rhythmical sublime explosion of mystical and aesthetic effusion, of which Guattari was fond, is the figure of a Deleuzo-Guattarian aesthetics not only found in the meat of Bacon but in the cinema as well.[12]

In the *Cinema* books it is the breakdown of the sensory-motor scheme, as the condition of possible experience, that provokes the visionary emergence of the time-image. The time-image no longer cancels the Idea in its incarnation, but instead contains both finite and infinite, actual and virtual 'at the same time'; they are, Deleuze tells us, 'totally reversible' (Deleuze 1989: 69) and in 'continual exchange' (Deleuze 1989: 70).[13] The movement-image, by contrast, approaches the limit of the body-brain in a recognisably Kantian way, and filmmakers such as Vertov take us, Deleuze says, 'beyond the human limits of the sensory-motor schema towards a non-human world where movement equals matter.... It is here that the movement image attains the sublime' (Deleuze 1989: 40). This is also the classic expressionist story-line in which the dynamic sublime releases a formless power which overwhelms organic life. But as in Kant the dynamic sublime simultaneously produces a transcendental subjectivity, because Expressionism only takes us beyond the sensory-motor schema in order 'to discover in us a supra-organic space which dominates the whole inorganic life of things' (Deleuze 1986: 52). In all cases, Deleuze argues, 'the movement-image remains primary, and gives rise only indirectly to a representation of time' (Deleuze 1989: 40). In *Cinema 2*, which immediately and somewhat surprisingly condemns the movement-image as a cliché (Deleuze 1989: 20), time becomes unhinged, as Deleuze says in *Difference and Repetition* in his discussion of the sublime image of the third form of time, as time's 'relation to movement is overturned' (Deleuze 1994: 89). In the time-image, time becomes the sublime condition of a cinematic 'vision' that – as Deleuze very beautifully puts it – 'makes us grasp, it is supposed to make us grasp, something intolerable and unbearable. ... something too powerful, or too unjust, but sometimes also too beautiful, and which henceforth outstrips our sensory motor capacities' (Deleuze 1989: 18). Rossellini's *Stromboli*, for example, which climaxes in 'a beauty which is too great for us, like too strong a pain' (Deleuze 1989: 18). At the moment of the eruption ending the film, 'there are', Deleuze writes, 'no longer sensory-motor images with their extensions, but much more complex circular

links between pure optical and sound images on the one hand, and on the other hand images from time and thought' (Deleuze 1989: 47). This would be a materialist Kant-beyond-Kant that emerges in the sublime hallucination of the time-image, one shared with the 'haptic-visions' of Bacon, and the sensations of art.

It is tempting to see this transition of the sublime from limit to infinite in the *Cinema* books as expressing a wider shift in Deleuze's oeuvre. It is as if the Kant that emerges in *Difference and Repetition*, where the sublime escapes its human conditions but fixes genesis in the transcendental realm of the Ideas, remains recognizable, if only in a post-Kantian form. After meeting Guattari, and with his help, Deleuze attempts to take Kant beyond Kant by materialising the sublime difference in aesthetic syntheses, in rhythms. This would be the beginning of what Alberto Toscano has called 'transcendental materialism', and is the necessary starting point for any understanding of Deleuze's aesthetics and his theory of art.[14] It is precisely the ontological (and I would argue the political) necessity of overcoming the human conditions of possible experience that places the sublime at the forefront of any 'Deleuzian' contemporary art. 'And . . . ' is not enough, what we need are explosions.

Notes

1. See in this regard Alberro 2003.
2. Deleuze concurs with this view, claiming that because the 'object = x' is the correlate of the 'I think', Kant 'traces the so-called transcendental structures from the empirical acts of a psychological consciousness' (Deleuze 1994: 135). Maïmon's reading of the first Critique was also important for Deleuze inasmuch as it argues that the 'formal intuitions' of space and time are filled with matter as sensation, this sensation having an intensive magnitude determined by differentials. On Maïmon's account, sensation constitutes the *noumena* as Ideas of the understanding, while objects of experience are their *phenomena*. For Maïmon – and for Deleuze after him – difference is real, and as such can pass through the barrier Kant places between perception and the thing in itself. But whereas Maïmon makes these differential Ideas belong to the understanding, Deleuze identifies them as Ideas of reason – or thought – in a strictly Kantian sense.
3. This is the point that Jacques Rancière misses when he claims sensation is Deleuze's version of the Analytic of the Beautiful. Rancière argues that, like Deleuze's sensation, 'the beautiful is that which resists both conceptual determination and the lure of consumable goods' (Rancière 2010: 173), but he fails to point out that it is reason that conditions this resistance through the sublime, and so emerges for Deleuze – in significantly altered form – as the real condition of sensation. This means that it is Deleuze's re-reading of the transcendental Idea that is the most important aspect of his account of sensation, a fact Rancière implicitly acknowledges by his rather disappointing adoption of the Badiouian line arguing that Ideas transcend immanence, and his final condemnation of Deleuze in these terms: 'I fear . . . that the transcendence

instituted at the heart of Immanence, in fact, signifies the submission of art to a law of heteronomy which undermines every form of transmission of the vibration of colour and of the embraces of a fraternal humanity' (Rancière 2010: 182). As we shall see, this is certainly a problem for Deleuzian ontology, but one Deleuze and Guattari themselves seek to overcome.

4. As Deleuze explains at greater length: 'Yet with the sublime, according to Kant, the imagination is forced or constrained to confront its own limit, its *phantasteon*, its maximum which is equally the unimaginable, the unformed or the deformed in nature. Moreover, it transmits this constraint to thought itself, which in turn is forced to think the supra-sensible as foundation of both nature and the faculty of thought: thought and imagination here enter into an essential discordance, a reciprocal violence which conditions a new type of accord. As a result, in the case of the sublime, the recognition model and the form of common sense are found wanting in favour of a quite different conception of thought' (Deleuze 1994: 320–1). As Christian Kerslake aptly puts it in his recent and impressive study of Deleuze's relation to Kant: 'the very form of the transcendental, which *conditions* the possibility of experience, depends on the violation of the conditions of the possibility of experience' (Kerslake 2009: 81).
5. Deleuze: 'it is thus at the same time that the basis of the synthesis, namely aesthetic comprehension, and the underground of the synthesis, namely the sublime in so far as it overturns the base, is discovered' (Deleuze 1978b: 8).
6. As Deleuze explains, linking this once more to Nietzsche, 'each difference passes through all the others; it must "will" itself or find itself through all the others' (Deleuze 1994: 57).
7. As Edward Willatt and Matt Lee point out, *Anti-Oedipus* drops any mention of the faculties in favour of transcendental machinic operations, and so shifts transcendental genesis away from the Kantian realm of Ideas and closer to matter. 'They attempt to think in terms of processes in order to make what is anterior to conscious life immanent to that very life and to envisage within a machinic transcendental horizon a world prior to such life' (Willatt and Lee 2009: 9).
8. This is what Deleuze and Guattari will later call 'close' or 'haptic' vision, an entry into smooth space by way of the 'catastrophe' where all 'orientations, landmarks and linkages are in continual variation' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 493).
9. As Kant puts it, it is 'in its chaos, or in its wildest and most irregular disorder and desolation … that nature chiefly excites the ideas of the sublime' (Kant 1987: § 23).
10. We recall the incendiary lines on Turner: 'The canvas turns in on itself, it is pierced by a hole, a lake, a flame, a tornado, an explosion' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 132).
11. As Guattari puts it in direct relation to art: 'I find myself transported into a Debussyst Universe, a blues Universe, a blazing becoming of Provence. I have crossed a threshold of consistency. Before the hold of this block of sensation, this nucleus of partial subjectivation, everything was dull, beyond it, I am no longer as I was before, I am swept away by a becoming other, carried beyond my familiar existential Territories' (Guattari 1995a: 93).
12. As he says: 'I am God most of the time' (Guattari 1995b: 54).
13. As it must according to *Difference and Repetition*'s strict separation of the sensible and super-sensible realms: 'For difference, to be explicated is to be cancelled or to dispel the inequality which constitutes it' (Deleuze 1994: 228).
14. In the last chapter of his *The Theatre of Production*, Toscano gives a brilliant account of the transition from *Difference to Repetition* to *Anti-Oedipus* and its necessity in the face of Badiou's reading of Deleuze as a Platonist (see Toscano 2006).

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Deleuze Modernist

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Abstract

This article discusses the distinction between Figure and Form that Deleuze introduces in *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*. He uses the distinction to articulate the difference between two trajectories in modernist painting: the first focusing on sensation, the second on cerebral abstraction. I argue that the distinction between Form and Figure – and the disjunction of two types of modernist painting initiated by this distinction – is not as easy to maintain as might appear at first sight. Mapping the lineages of modernist painting from Paul Cézanne to Georges Braque and Theo van Doesburg, the essay argues that the sensuous forces operative in a painting of the Figure are equally at play in the painting of the Form. Modernist painting might therefore be understood as the continuous collapse between Figure and Form, rather than as their strict separation.

Keywords: Modernism, Form, Figure, sensation, abstraction, van Doesburg

According to Deleuze, 'painting has neither a model to represent nor a story to narrate' (Deleuze 2003: 2/12).[1] However, the turn towards abstraction is but one way in which modern painting will try to escape from narrativity and figuration. In order to undo its figurative and narrative capacity, painting will need to undergo a series of operations and transformations. These operations are what modernist painting is all about, according to Deleuze. Essentially, he argues, there are two ways to undo figuration. A first way is by means of abstraction. It leads to abstract art and to a painting of the Form. The second way is somewhat different, and although it will lead to a non-figurative form of art, it does

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not lead to abstract art. This second approach Deleuze calls a painting of the Figure. Clearly it is of great importance to keep in mind the difference between the Figure and figuration, because despite the fact that a painting of the Figure can still be figurative, confusing the two would be to misunderstand the essence of the Figure, the central element of which is sensation. It is this concept that informs Deleuze's distinction between two traditions in modernist painting. Yet at the same time the distinction between form and sensation is harder to maintain than Deleuze suggests. The concept of Form from which the concept of sensation seeks to escape can be shown to play a pivotal role in the emergence of the Figure; and in return, there are paintings of Form that capture sensations in the same way as any painting of the Figure does. Both from a historical and a theoretical perspective the distinction between Figure and Form is hard to uphold, since both struggle with giving shape to sensation. Instead of distinguishing between two essentially different ways of painting in modernism, it may be more apt to understand modernist painting through the continuous collapse of the distinction between Form and sensation, between force and Form.

The painting of the Form and the painting of the Figure have their own distinct methods for escaping narrativity and figuration. They operate at different levels. Whereas the Figure establishes a direct and immediate connection to sensation, and hence to our physical and bodily awareness, abstraction is concerned with establishing a connection with the brain. In a fairly reductive characterisation one could argue that the Figure is concerned with the body whereas the Form is concerned with the brain, or the cerebral. In *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* Deleuze explains this as follows:

> There are two ways of going beyond figuration (that is, beyond both the illustrative and the figurative): either toward abstract form or toward the Figure.... The Figure is the sensible form related to a sensation; it acts immediately upon the nervous system, which is of the flesh, whereas abstract form is addressed to the head, and acts through the intermediary of the brain, which is closer to the bone. (Deleuze 2003: 34/39)

Deleuze does not oppose the Figure to abstraction, but to form. Or more accurately, the Figure is opposed to an abstract form, which Deleuze believes to be essentially different from the Figure. Abstract form works on the brain, and has a proximity to the bone. This implies an element of durability, even a-temporality, which Deleuze will eventually equate with a form of spirituality that is lacking (and remains absolutely undesired) in the painting of the Figure. It could be argued, however,

that all painting is confronted with the necessity to achieve clarity and durability. The painting of the Figure tries to capture sensation and to give it a certain durability without reducing it to a supra-sensuous, geometric form; the painting of the Form goes beyond the sensuous, and hence also beyond sensation and the forces that generate it, towards a form of durability that is entirely cerebral, or spiritual as Deleuze will say.

Since abstraction is associated with form, it would seem that the Figure will somehow be opposed to form. That, however, is not the case. It can be shown, I think, that Deleuze's concept of sensation in painting is equally concerned with the issue of form. The difference between Figure and abstract Form does not lie in their denial or approval of form, but in the different kinds of form they are concerned with. According to Deleuze, the Figure is concerned with a sensible form that will render sensation visible. Although sensation is direct and immediate, it is not spontaneous; it is intense, but not sensational. The intensity developed by a sensation is not of the order of the shocking, although it does give a violent jolt to our senses. And although sensations act upon the body, they are not located solely in the body. As Deleuze explains, the sensation occurs in between the object from which it originates and the body in which it takes effect:

> Sensation has one face turned toward the subject (the nervous system, vital movement, 'instinct', 'temperament' – a whole vocabulary common to both Naturalism and Cézanne) and one face turned toward the object (the 'fact,' the place, the event). Or rather, it has no faces at all, it is both things indissolubly, it is Being-in-the-World, as the phenomenologists say: at one and the same time I *become* in the sensation and something *happens* through the sensation, one through the other, one in the other. (Deleuze 2003: 34–5/39)

But for a sensation to take effect in painting it needs a form. For this reason Deleuze never talks about a painting of sensation but rather of a painting of the Figure. The Figure is the way in which a sensation is shaped or given form in painting; it is 'the sensible form related to a sensation' (Deleuze 2003: 34/39). The implication of this statement is that sensation, in order to garner effect and thus become what it truly intends to be, needs to be given shape; it needs a form.

At this point a brief detour into Cézanne's critique of impressionism, to which Deleuze repeatedly refers, will be instructive. According to Deleuze, Cézanne is the painter who gave the 'way of sensation in painting . . . an unprecedented status' (Deleuze 2003: 34/39). The reason why, for Deleuze, a painting of the Figure begins with Cézanne and

not, as is commonly argued in theories of modernist painting, with impressionism, has to do with the fact that the impressionists where unable to give sensation its necessary form.[2] Despite the fact that Claude Monet was one of the only living painters of his time he truly admired (Cézanne 1976: 291, 298), Cézanne criticised impressionism for its lack of 'duration and clarity' (Deleuze 2003: 112/106). According to Deleuze, Cézanne feels that the impressionists have 'remained at a confused state of sensation through their treatment of colour, and... the best of them, like Monet... have remained in an ephemeral state' (Deleuze 2003: 187/106). Sensation is therefore not simply colour. Although the use of colour will play a pivotal role in developing the Figure in painting, the use of colour alone is not a sufficient condition for its emergence. Hence the necessity of the Figure, which creates an order and a form through which sensation can emerge. In response to the question: 'What is your favourite colour?', Cézanne replied: 'General harmony' (Cézanne 2001: 101). For Cézanne there is no such thing as a single colour when it comes to sensation. Every colour has to be coordinated by a more general harmony between colours which gives them their intensity and beauty. This is precisely the argument Lawrence Gowing makes in his article 'The Logic of Organised Sensations', on which Deleuze extensively relies in his interpretation of Cézanne: 'For Cézanne the intrinsic reality of painting was not only the sense of colour that was inborn and confirmed from nature; it resided in the logic, the organisation, and the classification, which the sense of colour was subjected to'[3] (Gowing 1977: 63). In this respect, Deleuze has good reasons for signalling Cézanne as the starting point of a painting of the Figure. As Denis puts it, Cézanne's

> formulas are luminous, concise, and never abstract... He never comprises with abstraction the perfect balance between nature and style. All his labour consists of preserving the sensation. This sensation includes the identity of colour and of form, but his sensibility implies his style.[4] (Denis 2001: 178)

For sensation to become visible it needs a durability and clarity that can only be achieved by the Figure. Cézanne succeeds in his endeavour through a different use of geometric forms. He does not reduce them to their geometrical essence, but partly erases them and partly enhances them by use of contour and line. This allows for the colour to come out, for one colour to submerge into another without them blending into each other and becoming indistinct.[5]

From there, Deleuze argues, a painting of the Figure develops. It is characterised by an essentially different use of geometrical forms from

the one we find in a painting of the Form. By extension, the use of form is essentially different in these two traditions in modernist painting. The fact that Deleuze openly prefers a painting of the Figure does not necessarily imply that he is against form. As I argued above, the Figure itself is a form; it gives shape to sensation. But saying this does imply that Deleuze distinguishes between two different sorts of form. As Anne Sauvagnargues confirms in *Deleuze et l'art*, in Deleuze's aesthetics art is less concerned with 'repudiating form than it is with proposing a new conception of it as a material and sensory form, variable and intensive, and not as a given and abstract form' (Sauvagnargues 2005: 69).

Both abstract painting and a painting of the Figure confront chaos and attempt to overcome it, to catch its rhythms and forces, to give shape to them and generate counter-forces that will render sensation visible. Abstract painting, Deleuze argues, achieves this by reaching for what lies beyond and above chaos, what transcends and escapes it. It approaches chaos as something that needs to be undone, as 'a simple stream we must cross in order to discover the abstract and signifying Forms' (Deleuze 2003: 103/96). Abstraction 'offers us an asceticism, a spiritual salvation' (Deleuze 2003: 103/96). To achieve this spiritual level, abstract art must undertake a formal procedure or operation that is essentially different from that of a painting of sensation. Instead of heightening the sensuous to tap into the forces that form the basis of sensation – thus essentially affirming the chaos that Deleuze talks about – a painting of the Form works with the methods of reduction and minimisation. It reaches a spiritual level by interiorising all the sensuous, haptic and tactile elements that are central to the painting of the Figure. For this reason Deleuze sees an essential difference between a painting of the Form and a painting of the Figure. Whereas the painting of the Figure works on a tactile and haptic plane, abstract painting creates a new, purely optical space by interiorising the haptic qualities. This 'abstract optical space has no need of the tactile connections that classical representation was still organising' (Deleuze 2003: 103–4/97).

For Deleuze, this difference between haptic and optical space is motivated by yet another crucial distinction between a painting of the Figure and a painting of the Form: the difference between diagram and code. A painting of the Figure, he argues, starts from the aleatory marks and traits that the hand makes on the canvas. From these random marks a diagram emerges that will structure the painting. Deleuze defines the diagram as 'the operative set of asignifying and nonrepresentative lines and zones, line-strokes and colour-patches' (Deleuze 2003: 101/95). Since the painting will be built around the diagram, which itself is the

result of a contingent manual and tactile intervention, it will never loose touch with the haptic and tactile features that irreducibly belong to sensation. The diagram is both 'a chaos, a catastrophe' and 'a germ of order or rhythm' (Deleuze 2003: 102/95). For this reason a painting of the Figure will always be based on the diagram.

The abstract Form, by contrast, works with codes instead of diagrams. Deleuze defines the code as symbolic and digital. It is symbolic in the sense that the use of codes gives certain meanings to forms or colours in painting that are otherwise extrinsic to it; it is digital in the sense that the code groups together oppositions between forms. 'Abstract art', he writes, 'obviously proceeds by code and program, implying operations of homogenization and binarization that are constitutive for a digital code' (Deleuze 2003: 117/110). Here we can see how radically different the Figure is from the Form in Deleuze's interpretation. Whereas the diagram starts from a manual and tactile intervention that is asignifying whilst also structuring the picture plane, the code remains strictly conceptual and is significant, symbolic even. Codes have no material or tactile quality, but do carry symbolic significance. As such, coding loses all connection to sensation and the sensuous. It will operate on a purely cerebral level without any direct connection to the materiality of painting.

The problem with Deleuze's distinction between Form and Figure, as I see it, is not only that it seems difficult to defend it from a historical point of view. On a more conceptual level, the continuous collapse of this distinction seems to me a more accurate definition of modernist painting. The struggle to give shape to sensation, which means to give it a certain durability and clarity, has as its two extremes the colourist obsession and the geometrical obsession. In the first case, as Deleuze argues by means of Cézanne, sensation disappears because it lacks a form. In the second case, I would argue, we are not confronted with an essentially different use of form, or with a form of painting that works on a different, more cerebral level than does the painting of the Figure; instead, it makes more sense to talk about a tendency to hyperformalise sensation while retaining its dynamic. If successful, this will not lead to the development of a painting of the Form that is purely geometrical, interiorised, coded and spiritual. Its relation to the materiality of painting is just as real and tactile as that of a painting of the Figure. This, I submit, is what is at stake in Theo van Doesburg's thoroughly abstract and geometrical compositions and counter-compositions. Admittedly, it is also the dynamic nature of his work that would lead to the clash between van Doesburg and Piet Mondrian in 1924. The case of van Doesburg

is therefore somewhat different from Mondrian, who functions as the main protagonist for Deleuze's understanding of a painting of the Form. Still, in Theo van Doesburg we have a clear example of what Deleuze is referring to when he talks about a painting of Form: a purified, spiritual, formal and geometrical form of abstract painting that seems to erase all tactile and haptic aspects of painting. To maintain the distinction between Form and Figure would thus require us to demonstrate the formal differences between Theo van Doesburg's work and that of Cézanne or Bacon. In other words, we would need to be able to show that with Cézanne there begins a kind of painting that has no formal similarity to the painting of the Form that van Doesburg and De Stijl were concerned with. However, the formal similarities between the two are very real and even delineate the principles of modernist art. The operations undertaken by both Cézanne and van Doesburg are in many ways more alike and interrelated than would appear from the end product of their work. The mediator between these two was cubism.

Both Bacon and van Doesburg were influenced by the formal operations of analytical cubism, which in its turn was inspired by Cézanne's late work. Van Doesburg's *Composition VIII (The Cow)* (1918) is a clear example of abstract painting. The preliminary sketches he made allow us understand how he reached the abstract composition of this work.[6] The first sketches are mostly made with charcoal and represent a cow at pasture. After reducing the shape of the cow to diagonals, horizontals and verticals, van Doesburg leaves out the diagonals, in order to reach an entirely abstract composition made up out of large and smaller rectangles. The way van Doesburg decomposes the visual field and reduces it to a set of squares and rectangles – an operation he undertakes to escape narrativity and figuration – clearly shows the influence of analytical cubism on his work. Van Doesburg merely takes these formal procedures to the extreme. Like analytical cubism, the abstract composition is premised on the use of predominantly horizontal and vertical lines; yet unlike analytical cubism these are further reduced to primary shapes that no longer represent anything, such that the illusion of depth is cancelled. The sparse use of diagonal lines in analytical cubism is ruled out entirely in van Doesburg's work. But even though the cow itself is no longer recognisable, the essence of *Composition VIII (The Cow)* does not lie in the straightforward extraction of 'geometric form from representation' as Deleuze suggests (Deleuze 2003: 46/48). It is the dynamic interplay between the oblong shapes that is essential to the painting. This is perhaps most notable in the interaction between the smaller rectangles in

the lower right corner of the painting and the larger yellow square in the centre. The passage from the yellow square (and hence from the centre of the painting) to these smaller ones on the side is made via a slender black rectangle. Wandering from the centre to the right side of the painting, we are caught by a downward movement; our vision is literally pulled downwards, much in the same way as in the downward movement that Deleuze ascribes to the sensation. 'The fall is what is most alive in sensation, that through which sensation is experienced as living' (Deleuze 2003: 82/79). *Composition VIII (The Cow)* grapples with the same downward movement or fall that Deleuze attributes to sensation. If the Figure is able to grasp the force of sensation by giving it a form with which a counter-force can then begin to interact, then the painting of the Form is also able to catch something of the dynamic that is at play here by drawing from the same formal language as the painting of the Figure does. The downward movement that we experience captures the forces centred around the muscular neck of the cow at pasture. In that sense the essence of van Doesburg's painting is not the geometrical form but the dynamic movement generated between these forms. Van Doesburg's *Composition VIII (The Cow)* is a hyperformalisation of sensation.

This is not to say that there are no differences in approach between formal abstraction such as exerted by the representatives of De Stijl and the work of Francis Bacon. Van Doesburg's work is paradigmatic for the road to abstraction, and hence for a painting of the Form. But like Cézanne, and like Bacon after him, his work is struggling to render visible some of the forces of sensation. The geometrical reductionism of van Doesburg's work does not automatically place him on the side of the spiritual as opposed to the tactile or manual; and the claim, made by Deleuze, that abstract art interiorises 'in the visual the manual movement that describes the form and the invisible forces that determine it' (Deleuze 2003: 103/97) does not necessarily entail that it needs to code these forms. In the case of van Doesburg, and increasingly so when he moves on to his so-called counter-compositions in the 1920s, the dynamic tendency of his work is not a matter of code or symbolic meaning attached to colours or to specific compositional features, but can be experienced in the painting itself. The opposition between a dynamic and abstract transformation of the form, according to which Deleuze distinguishes between two paths in modern painting, is therefore difficult to defend in this case.[7] In that sense I see a more important connection between Cézanne's painting of the Figure and van Doesburg's painting of Form. Both try to capture sensation through the interplay between form and force; and both were concerned with the

interaction between a force that is given form by what Deleuze calls the Figure and a counter-force that is enacted by this process of giving form to sensation. Cézanne's painting of the Figure is simply mediated, and eventually pushed towards the Form, by analytical cubism, and later by van Doesburg's counter-compositions.

But to understand how form plays a predominant role in the articulation of sensation in modernist painting, up to the point that an essentialist stance on the distinction between Form and Figure becomes problematic, we need to grasp how Francis Bacon's work was deeply influenced by the formal procedures of analytical cubism as well. Several critics have analysed how Bacon's earlier works are deeply influenced by Picasso and synthetic cubism.[8] But the influence of analytical cubism, and even the return to some of the roots of cubism, is most obvious in Bacon's work from the 1960s and 1970s. When we compare a work such as *Three Studies of a Human Head* (1953) with the self-portraits he made in the 1970s, it is clear that the use of forms in the latter is quite openly derived from (early) analytical cubism.[9] The Figure, which Deleuze has defined as the form of sensation, needs to take its formal features from somewhere. As a result, the historical development of modern painting and its struggle with form becomes an irreducible element of a theory of the Figure. Deleuze centres his analysis largely around the use of the diagram, which emerges from the 'irrational, involuntary, accidental, free, random' traits and marks that Bacon makes on the canvas (Deleuze 2003: 100/94). Deleuze thereby stresses the inchoate and a-formal potential of modernist art. Yet what is attractive about the use of such accidental marks and traits, I would argue, is that they exemplify the contingency of modernist painting; that is to say, they enact the struggle between the contingent articulation of structure and the unavoidability of form and shape in this process. Contingent marks and aleatory traits are what modernist art both battles against (for example, in the case of Theo van Doesburg) and lives off (for example, in the case of Jackson Pollock). These traits, which are the clear marks of contingency that are so befitting to modern painting and its particular use of form, certainly take on a powerful presence in Bacon's later work. But it is difficult to argue, I believe, that the diagram that evolves from these aleatory marks and traits is what structures and shapes the canvas, uniting in itself the divergent rhythms that are set to work by sensation. A more consistent use of forms, derived from cubism, plays an equally important role in structuring Bacon's paintings.

Bacon himself acknowledges this in his conversations with David Sylvester, when he talks about his fascination for the later works of

analytical cubism (1912–13). What fascinates him in these later works is not so much the level of abstraction they achieve as the chaos and contingency that is articulated in their formal compositions. '[W]ith early analytical cubism', Bacon explains, 'you can just literally see the town on a hill and all that kind of thing – they've just been cubed up. But perhaps in the later ones Picasso knew what he wanted to do but didn't know how to bring it about' (Bacon and Sylvester 1975: 102). Bacon's work from the 1970s can be interpreted as an attempt to bring about what he feels Picasso seems to have wanted. As I argued above, Deleuze takes these marks and traits to be the points of departure for the diagrams that structure Bacon's paintings. Yet it should be noted that they are always intricately related to the cubist heritage of deforming and recomposing shapes. If anything, this exemplifies the inextricability of the formal and the sensuous, of Form and Figure, in modernist painting. To illustrate this formal influence one could compare Georges Braque's *Large Nude* (1908) with the central panel of Bacon's *Three Studies of Figures on Beds* (1978).[10] Ostensibly, and as has been remarked by numerous critics, this figure is based on a photo from Eadweard J. Muybridge of two men wrestling (Muybridge 1979). But the influence of Braque's *Large Nude* seems to me of equal importance in the specific form this recurring figure takes in Bacon's later work. In the case of *Large Nude* we see a woman standing upwards, whereas in the central panel of *Three Studies of Figures on Beds* we see a figure lying on the bed. But if we look beyond the upright and horizontal position (for example by tilting *Large Nude*) then it becomes clear that the shape and deformation of both figures shows an almost uncanny resemblance. The use of dark contours in both paintings is striking, as is the tendency to restructure and transform the shape of the leg and buttocks. The flesh that Deleuze singles out as central to Bacon's work is only brought out by the use of these forms. They give the rather undefined shape of the leg and buttocks in Muybridge's photo the necessary contour and materiality. It is this shaping of the body, as inspired by Braque, that gives form to sensation, that is to say that creates the Figure.

The aim of sorting out these influences on Bacon's work is of course not to decide which source was of greater inspiration, but to understand the intricate relation between sensation and form in modernist painting. *Large Nude*, which should be regarded as one of the first cubist paintings, provides a solution to the problem of modern painting: how to give form to sensation, and how to escape the necessity of form? Its solution follows in the line of Cézanne. It is, precisely, the solution to the problem of sensation *and* form. This answer, which Cézanne came

up with in his later work when he believed he had discovered the law of general harmony, is further developed in cubism and is eventually taken to the extreme in Theo van Doesburg's work, in which form is fully affirmed. The question of modernist art is indeed how to liberate the Figure from all forms of figuration (Deleuze 2003: 11/19). But since it is clear that this cannot be done without the use of form, the question becomes how to use form while battling against the essentialism of form.

The problem that Braque is grappling with, and for which he develops cubism as a solution, is precisely the problem that motivated Cézanne's work. Or, as William Rubin argues in his famous article 'Cézannisme and the Beginnings of Cubism', 'what Braque described as "a materialization of a new space – making space as actual, as concrete and as perceivable pictorially as the objects themselves" – was, in effect, the explicit articulation and radicalization of a Cézannian idea' (Rubin 1977: 169). The 'radicalization' to which he refers can be seen in the development of contour and line. This problem concerns the question of how to create a visual plane in which the colours are vibrant so that sensation comes across, yet without these colours becoming blurry and indistinct. Indeed, this goes back to Cézanne's criticism of impressionism, to which Deleuze repeatedly refers. What should be clear by now is that the critique Cézanne directed against the impressionists ultimately concerns their lack of form. For a sensation to become visible it needs a form, that is to say a Figure, that is to say a form, that is to say a continuous collapse between the two.

Notes

1. The first page number in the references refers to the English edition, while the second refers to the French edition.
2. This is where Deleuze's approach to modernist painting differs prominently from other canonical modernist critics such as Clement Greenberg, for whom impressionism marks the beginning of modernist painting. According to Greenberg, 'unique to Western pictorial art are, over and beyond the logical consequences to which it pushed naturalism, certain decorative, structural and delineatory principles. As far as these are concerned, the Impressionists remain more revolutionary than Cézanne, the Cubists or Mondrian, appearances to the contrary notwithstanding' (Greenberg 1993: 13–14). As a result, although he distinguishes between a painterly and a non-painterly tradition in modernist art, Greenberg is unwilling to distinguish between two essentially different traditions in the development of modernist painting. This marks another important difference between Deleuze and Greenberg. For a detailed comparison of these two and the birth of modernism, see Zepke 2005: 175–81.
3. As will be clear, the subtitle of *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* is a reference to Gowing's article.

4. Deleuze alludes to this quote by Maurice Denis when he talks about the different use of geometrical forms in Cézanne's work (Deleuze 2003: 187/107).
5. This is Cézanne's so-called use of *passages* in his later work. The term was coined by André Lhote (1956) and taken up by influential Cézanne scholars such as Erle Loran and William Rubin. A cogent definition of the passages technique and its effect on Cézanne's compositions is provided by Loran: 'It is an integrating factor of organisation contributing to the unity of positive and negative spaces and to the total balance of deep space in relation to the two-dimensionality of the picture plane' (Loran 1963: 132).
6. With the exception of two early sketches (which belong to the Centraal Museum, Utrecht) all of the preliminary sketches, as well as *Composition VIII (The Cow)*, are in the collection of the MOMA, New York. Reprints can be found in van Doesburg 2000: 215–18.
7. For the distinction between dynamic and geometric, see Deleuze 2003: 59/59.
8. See for example Berggruen 2004. Deleuze also mentions the influence of synthetic cubism on the development Bacon's work, but makes no mention of early and analytical cubism (Deleuze 2003: 119/112).
9. For an extensive overview of Bacon's portraits and self-portraits, see Borel 1996.
10. Braque's *Large Nude* is displayed at the Musée national d'art moderne, Centre Pompidou; Bacon's *Three Studies of Figures on Bed* is in a private collection. For a reproduction of Bacon's painting see Ades and Forge 1980.

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When Caged Birds Sing: The Many-folded Subject in the Baroque World of Heian Japanese Women's Writing

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Abstract

In this article, the world of Heian women's literature is interpreted through Deleuzian concepts of desire and becoming and figures of the rhizome, the Baroque fold and origami, supported by Elizabeth Grosz's concept of art as originating in the impulse to seduction. Within the constraints of movement, dress and behaviour imposed by a polygamous hierarchical court society, Heian women created a rich body of literature that celebrated and subtly critiqued their world. Through aesthetic intensification of form and imagination within a labyrinthine cloistered society, they folded their fictional and autobiographical subjectivities into intricate patterns of desire. The richly described and imagined world of their fictional and confessional literature, still read, translated and transformed into other art forms, celebrates the freedom of the imagination even in confined and controlled circumstances.

Keywords: Elizabeth Grosz, Heian Japanese women, life writing, rhizome, subjectivity, desire

I. Introduction

A body of literature created by women in the mid-Heian period of Japan (late tenth through the eleventh centuries AD) is here visited through a Deleuzian looking-glass. This writing includes poetic diaries

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and long prose romance or *monogatari*. Heian women's literature is extraordinary, not only in the quality of the writing, but in terms of the circumstances in which it was produced, in a closed aristocratic society ordered by strict patriarchal hierarchy, polygamous marriage and elaborate aesthetic codes of dress, language and behaviour. In a world thus shaped by aesthetic principles and hierarchical codes, desire is folded into a sexuality that is driven by men's serial couplings with passive, cloistered female beauty, and women find their own forms of creative expression through artistic production. Within these constraints, Heian women writers created a rich body of literature that both celebrated and subtly critiqued their world, and that outshone and has outlasted the creative production of Heian men.

> Japanese women were writing poetry in the seventh century, and in the Heian period (794–1185) they were the principal producers of the singular art of fiction called the poem-narrative [*uta mongatari*]. Its masterpiece was *The Tale of Genji* (ca.1010), by the court lady Murasak Shikibu. (Ramirez-Christensen 2001a: 1)

Chinese was the official written language, used by men for 'official records, laws, and proclamations, as well as poetry and diaries' (Ramirez-Christensen 2001b: 51). It was women who developed a literature written in the vernacular, and a significant body of their prose and poetry is extant, still being read and translated. *The Tale of Genji*, arguably the world's first psychological novel, is, as its most recent translator into English, Royall Tyler, says, 'the oldest novel still widely recognised today as a masterpiece'. It has been transformed into other cultural products (opera, movies, plays, dance, modern novels, Kabuki, comic books or *manga*, musical theatre), translated into many languages, and continues to be read and enjoyed a thousand years after it was created (Tyler 2001: xiii). Apart from Tyler's translation, there were two English translations of the *Genji* in the twentieth century, by Arthur Waley (1933) and Edward Seidensticker (1976). Another famous Heian work is Sei Shonagon's *The Pillow Book*, available in translations by Ivan Morris (1967), Richard Bowring (1996), and Meredith McKinney (2006). The durability and transformativity of these and other works and their translations and metamorphoses bear out Grosz's argument that art 'participates in the (political) overcoming of the present and helps bring a new, rich, and resonating future into being' (Grosz 2008: 103).

Grosz's artistic manifesto implies that art is regenerative and transformative, not only by challenging and overcoming the present, but

by connecting the future with the past through the active performance of art and its audience. Life writing (in which I include fictional narratives) re-creates the present and imagines the future by visiting the past, whether our own or that of others. When we visit past worlds, we not only see them through lenses tinted by our present subjectivities and cultural fashions, we return to the present with eyes that see differently, our pupils dilated, letting in more light, allowing us to see shaded corners and views that had been obscured before. So for me – a twenty-first century woman born into the bourgeois world of Australian rural life in the mid-twentieth century – my understanding of what it means to be a woman, of how a woman is folded and how she can unfold and refold herself without destroying the materials she is given to work with, has been transformed by my journey into the looking-glass world of Heian women's writing. I invite you to accompany me on a journey back a thousand years, into a world in many ways the opposite of our 'developed' twenty-first century societies, where you will see reflections in the mirror that may strike you as different or exotic, and yet, when you look closer, bear striking resemblances to familiar folds of self and other.

On the plane of organisation of Heian court life, within the rigid segment of polygamous marriage, attractions and repulsions work themselves out, molar and molecular lines issue from each other, intermingle, entangle and are disrupted by lines of flight. The first volume of the *Genji* opens with a chapter called 'Kiritsubo', translated as 'The Paulownia Pavilion', a palace pavilion that has a paulownia tree in its garden. Here the reigning Emperor installs his favourite wife, known as the Kiritsubo consort. She is 'someone of no very great rank' yet, of 'all His Majesty's Consorts and Intimates, [she] enjoyed exceptional favor' (Tyler 2001: 3). This causes great resentment among his other women, who persecute her until she wastes away and dies. The Emperor's desire creates a rhizomatic connection that crosses the hierarchical lines of favour, upsetting both those women of superior rank and the lesser Intimates. When the son he fathers with Kiritsubo grows into a child of exceptional grace and beauty, the Emperor decides that rather than 'set the boy adrift as an unranked prince, unsupported by any maternal relative', he will have him serve as a commoner, with the name of Genji (Tyler 2001: 13–14). This strategy allows the young man to belong to both the imperial and the common realms, and gives him far more narrative scope as a character, as he is less constrained by official duties and protocols (Tyler 2001: xiii). Genji grows into a romantic hero whose brilliance outshines all other courtiers. He is

married young to Aoi, the daughter of a powerful courtier, but falls in love with his stepmother Fujitsubo, whom the Emperor chooses because of her striking resemblance to the Kiritsubo consort. Genji secretly makes love to Fujitsubo, and their son succeeds to the throne. This, and other lines of flight on Genji's part, disrupt and at times threaten to destroy the molar and molecular lines that make up his existence. At one stage he is forced into exile because of an affair with a daughter of his chief political enemy. But outside of the few official and many unofficial liaisons he forms, he longs for someone 'who can be his alone' (Tyler 2001: xiii). Murasaki, a ten-year-old child when he finds her, looks just like Fujitsubo, whom he still yearns for. He abducts her and brings her up in his household, and when she is old enough he marries her. She remains the love of his life until she dies. He dies broken-hearted not long after her, but in the course of their marriage, he knows many other women. Some of them are annexed into the molar lines of his life and live in the splendid complex, with four interconnecting mansions, he has built to house them; other women whom he pursues are outside or unofficial, anomalous or nomadic connections. The affair of the heart that he has with Murasaki combines all the lines, in that it begins as a line of flight – the abduction of a child who is without adequate protection – and becomes a molecular, private marriage, that is gradually recognised in court circles as a molar, public and honourable connection, though she never achieves the status of principal wife, because of the ambiguity of her origin and lack of powerful parental support.

Deleuze points out that this intermingling of the lines that fix and segment created forms with the lines that destabilise the assemblages and lead to the formation of new ones can lead to repression as much as to freedom:

> To the question 'How can desire desire its own repression, how can desire desire its own slavery?' we reply that the powers which crush desire, or which subjugate it, themselves already form part of assemblages of desire. (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 133)

The shaping of a self is a process of subjectification that takes place on the material plane of organised forms, where we assume identities, roles, molar or fixed patterns within the assemblages created by desire. In the case of Genji and Murasaki, as we shall see, the lines of segmentation and destabilisation do, indeed, repress and enslave desire; in Genji's case, he is caught between the desire to make more conquests and his great love for Murasaki, who becomes increasingly unhappy and insecure because of the uncertainty of her position. Her plight is a poignant

dramatisation of the situation of women in a polygamous society. As in all patriarchal societies, women are shaped into patterns to conform to men's desire, and their desirability is subject to the erosion of favour and the destructive force of the ageing process.

A partial answer to the problem of the entrapment of desire within the matrix of forces on the plane of organisation is that that we can unfold and refold ourselves into different shapes through recognition of the forces that shape us and conscious manipulation of the forms we are given. We can transcend the given and attain agency by thinking creatively about the reality of our existence. I am not suggesting that Heian women, as they are represented in the literature, were able to exercise a high degree of agency in their daily lives, but that Heian women writers did achieve considerable creative freedom in their practice of the traditional forms of *monogatari* and the poetic diary. In *The Tale of Genji*, we see the *monogatari*, traditionally a romantic tale considered to be beneath men's dignity, developed into a complex narrative woven from many plot strands, with detailed and subtle characterisation and a multi-stranded point of view, shifting between the observing narrator's voice and the voices of male and female characters. Murasaki Shikibu and other writers developed the diary form, using it as a confessional medium as well as a record of the social and cultural life of their time. Both forms are used not only to observe and record but also to reveal the inner life of the personae and to critique the world they lived in. We are passively formed, but as thinking subjects we become active, as Ian Buchanan puts it, through the practices of everyday life (Buchanan 2000: 87). We can access the plane of immanence or desire and become-different. I say it is only a partial answer because change has its dangers, as Deleuze and Guattari frequently point out: if we are not careful always to keep a plot of ground to stand on, and if we do not work prudently to soften, suspend, divert and undermine the stratum, we risk outcomes that may once again entrap us in subjugated positions, or that may be destructive to ourselves and to others (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 138).

Timothy Murphy argues that Deleuze has taken a line of flight from the dominant phenomenological line of descent of Western philosophy and created his own tradition; his main antecedents are Spinoza and Nietzsche, and his work resonates with the physical sciences (Murphy 1998: 212). Deleuze does not begin with the fact of the thinking subject, as Descartes and Kant do, but sees the subject as a component of energy and matter, produced as 'a complex fold in the infinite surface of times and spaces that, like origami, can be unfolded and refolded into different

shapes' (Murphy 1998: 226). The figure of origami is used by Deleuze to express what he reads as Leibniz's model of the universe: '[t]he model for the sciences of matter is the 'origami', as the Japanese philosopher might say, or the art of folding paper' (Deleuze 1993: 6).

Origami is an art that developed in Japan after the introduction of paper-making from China via Korea in the fifth century AD.[1] Origami's original use is believed to have been as *katashiro*, long chains of folded paper used in purification rituals around temples. Paper was scarce and valuable, and it was during the Heian period, when paper production expanded, that origami was developed as a form of religious and artistic expression and entertainment. The folded paper charms and woven straw streamers that decorated Shinto shrines were intended to shield and purify the sacred space and to contain the wishes of those who served and worshipped there. A Shinto priest who dedicates an offering to God always places a piece of folded white paper under the offerings on the dish. In rites of exorcism, bad spirits are transferred into a human paper doll and thrown into the water or burnt. Origami, therefore, is a practice or poiesis of desire. Folded paper both protects from evil and contains wishes. In the poiesis of desire, the materialisation of energy is potentially both destructive and creative, the two sides of everything. In Deleuze's application of the figure of origami to the universe of created forms, the tension between creativity and destruction – fixed forms, disintegration and re-formation, folding, unfolding and refolding – is elegantly and concisely expressed.

I find the image of the subject as a piece of origami powerful and poetic, in its suggestion of a created, artificial assemblage of desire that can be unfolded and refolded; it aptly describes the world of Heian courtly desire and the literature that celebrates it. Women can be seen as paper folded and refolded in shapes pleasing to the origami maker. This implies that women have no agency in the process. To some extent, this may have been true of medieval court women living in a polygamous hierarchical society. Yet the literature of these women shows that they took an active part in the creation of aesthetic figures of desire in their literature and other art forms and in their practice of daily life, while conforming to the ethical and aesthetic codes of the court. They were, to an extent that is unusual in patriarchal societies, the makers of their own origami.

For Deleuze, a figure closely related to origami is that of the baroque fold. I suggest that Heian life and literature can be interpreted through the style of the baroque, which, as Tom Conley argues, can be seen, not as a capitalised period with a genealogical structure, but as a lower-case

style found in diverse environments and periods of time (Conley 1993: ix–x). Deleuze identifies the central trope of the baroque as the fold – 'the Baroque fold unfurls all the way to infinity' – which can be seen in draperies, dermal surfaces of the body, domestic architecture, the novel, harmonics, philosophies, painting, and more; he compares the two levels of baroque construction, matter and the soul, with a labyrinth, in which the upper level, the soul, has no windows, and there is communication between 'the pleats of matter and the folds in the soul' (Deleuze 1993: 4). The infinite fold, which exists on the plane of immanence, separates or moves between matter and soul. Because it is a virtuality that never stops dividing itself, the line of inflection is actualised in the soul but realised in matter, each one on its own side (Deleuze 1993: 35).

Though some of the qualities associated with the baroque style in music, art and architecture – dynamic movement, exuberance and flamboyance – are not present in Heian creative arts and self-presentation, the qualities of constricted richness and controlled excess in their many-folded labyrinthine architecture, décor and fashion are baroque in the Deleuzian sense, as is the tension between constrained, conventional forms and intricate variations and elaborations (foldings) in ornamentation and expression. The classical formalism and closure of the frames within which men and especially women live in the court world is only apparent, for the screens and masks are permeable and shifting and the characters are self-aware and multi-faceted. Desire, in this universe, is always in excess, always baroque in its form.

The baroque fold of being and becoming links with another term developed by Deleuze and Guattari – assemblage. The French term, *agencement*, is translated as 'putting together', arrangement'; it expresses a process, not a product that is assembled according to a preconceived plan. However, as J. Macgregor Wise points out, it is not a random collection of things, for 'there is a sense that an assemblage is a whole of some sort that expresses some identity and claims a territory' (Macgregor Wise 2005: 77). Heterogeneous elements come together in particular relations that have a certain character and quality; but the key question is not what an assemblage *is* but what it can *do* (Macgregor Wise 2005: 78). In the Heian period in Japan, desire is actualised and assembled in cloistered and veiled female beauty and the built environment and arts of daily life; this is the field in which polygamy plays. The principle of unity, the abstract machine for these formations is the aesthetic quality of desire – a desire which is constructed as active in men and passive in women. In relation to art and culture, however, it is expressed actively by women in literature, calligraphy, style of dress

and self-presentation, music and other arts. Heian Japan drew many of the forms and codes of its culture from classical China, and the Chinese worldview was aesthetic, that is, the shaping of a life was a process of education and refinement according to *Tao*, the patterns of order that are both observed and created in the natural world (Solomon and Higgins 1995: 32–3). The assemblages of desire include clothes, furnishings and artefacts, the rituals and ceremonies of daily life, and the poems and romantic narratives circulated between women and men. These are affective and effective conduits between members of Heian society, vehicles for the flow of shared erotic, ethical and aesthetic experiences of being. The court women are themselves, on one level, assemblages of desire, packaged and constructed to please the men who circulate amongst them, to keep the machinery of desire working. On another level, in their literature and aesthetic life, these women construct their own assemblages of desire, especially in their copying, reading and writing of *monogatari* and poetic diaries. The men also connect with these assemblages. Within the constraints of their screened and masked lives, Heian women express their own desires by constructing a rich, often subversive, culture of ethical and artistic life.

The women whose lives are described in these texts are dressed to conceal and suppress their individuality and embodied selves and manipulated to remain hidden from men's eyes except in strictly defined circumstances and to yield passively to men's desires. Yet, beneath the mask, there is an inner life that can be, variously, passionate, playful, jealous, vengeful, power-seeking, resistant, nostalgic, lamenting, world weary, desirous of enlightenment. The lives lived behind the masks of desire are rich and intense for both men and women. The 'real world' of Heian court life created in literature has stood the test of one thousand years and still speaks vividly to readers today.

The multiplicity of masks of desire in the world of the Heian court can be interpreted in Deleuzian terms as simulacra that are not merely disguises or substitutes for the original or real thing, but have a strong life force of their own, producing the realer-than-real in a proliferating process of creation. In what follows, I will relate the concept of the fold as creative principle and the proliferation of simulacra to Elizabeth Grosz's Irigarayan-Deleuzian-Darwinian exegesis of art as affiliated to the animal force of sexual selection and the non-human, universal, chaotic forces that are exerted on matter, inorganic and organic (Grosz 2008: 101).

The allure of the Heian female body is intensified by the elaborate aesthetic process of enclosure and veiling to which it is subjected. This

intensification is repeated in the arts that surround the many-folded embodied selves of Heian women – the simulacra of music, painting, poetry, incense and romantic narratives. The concept of intensification through aesthetic practice is developed in Grosz's argument that art is generated by the impulse to seduction and produces constricted and intensified forms that materialise erotic energy (Grosz 2005). Art is the way in which life experiments with materiality, or nature, to bring about change (Grosz 2008). Following Luce Irigaray, Grosz grounds her work on the concept of 'the irreducibility of sexual difference', opening feminist theory to 'major ontological questions about matter, force, nature, and the real and to the vast explorations of a politics of difference' (Grosz 2008: ix). Heian women are themselves aesthetic assemblages that actualise cloistered and veiled female beauty. All the Heian cultural products, the most enduring of which is women's literature, are assemblages that actualise Heian aesthetic principles. Within and beyond this artificial and constricted aestheticism of a cloistered culture, Heian women's literature and other artistic creations have a radical energetic function of change and experimentation, contained though it may be. Their art both celebrates and subtly critiques the dominant polygamous hierarchical culture. Women have a more active role than men in the desiring-production of literature, though men have a more dominant and active role in defining and producing the assemblages of sex and love.

II. Eros and Excess in the Heian World

> [For Darwin] natural selection is about survival, and sexual selection . . . is largely about reproduction or about sexual seduction. And what I think is the origin of art, basically, is that impulse to seduction. So I take it that all forms of art are a kind of excessive affection of the body, or an intensification of the body of the kind which is also generated in sexuality. So it's something really fundamentally sexual about art, about all of the arts, even though they're very sublimated. What art is about is the constriction of the materials, so the materials then become aestheticised or pleasurable. The pleasure of those materials has to do with the intensification of the body. So this impulse to art is to not make oneself seductive but to make oneself intense, and in the process to circulate some of that eros that would otherwise go into sexuality. (Grosz 2005: n.p.)

Grosz's comments on art offer an explanation for the excess that we see in the natural world – in the abundance of beauty around us, in colours and textures of flowers and leaves, in plumage and songs of

birds, in shapes and markings of animals and insects – and in the human world, in the arts. The excess of erotic energy in life is constrained by form, transmuted into the materiality of the object, and transmits sensations of pleasure to the viewer. 'I think everything living has this artistic impulse to excess and to the revelry and the pleasure of that excess'; Grosz adds that only some of us have the discipline to impose form on that sensation and thus to give it life as art (Grosz 2005: n.p.). The literature of the Heian period depicts a leisured aristocratic society regulated primarily by aesthetic principles. In the small and select society of the Heian court circles, art is a way of life; men and women have the leisure and the means to celebrate the excess of erotic energy in the forms of poetry, romantic tales, music, dance, dress, incense, calligraphy. There are differences in the ways men and women express this excess, determined by the hierarchical, binary and asymmetrical structures of social and sexual life. Men orchestrate and perform displays and contests of music, dance, painting and poetry; women watch from behind screens. In general, women's artistic performances of music, poetry and *monogatari* are enacted in more secluded scenes, with female attendants present and sometimes (outside curtains) male admirers and visitors listening or exchanging poems and conversation through the media of screens and attendants.

The Heian period in Japan takes its name from the then capital, Heian-kyo, now the city of Kyoto. Heian Japan in the tenth century enjoyed political stability and advanced culture in a time when, as Ivan Morris puts it, much of Western Europe was experiencing 'one of the bleaker periods of cultural history' (Morris 1979: 12). In the seventh and eighth centuries, Japanese culture had developed under Chinese influence, but official embassies to China had ceased in 894 (Morris 1979: 20). In the Heian period, the wealth of the aristocracy came from large provincial estates held by absentee landlords. By mid-Heian times, the head of the realm, the Emperor, had only priestly and cultural functions. Real power was wielded by the northern branch of the Fujiwara family. Esperanza Ramirez-Christensen argues that the autobiographical turn in Heian women's literature, the 'quest for the self and the meaning of a life' that women's memoirs reveal, was engendered by a major loss of power and status when they were excluded in the main from holding positions in the local and central governing structures established by the *ritsuryo* legal reforms in the mid-seventh century (Ramirez-Christensen 2001b: 51).

Prior to these 'reforms', there had been a degree of equality in sexual relationships and property ownership, and the social structure was matrilineal and matrilocal. One of the *ritsuryo* changes was to identify the

male as the head of the household, even though women retained the right to own and administer property, and it was customary for a woman to live with her parents after marriage, and for her partner to visit or to reside with her family. Although the *ritsuryo* codes provided penalties for bigamy (Seidensticker 1973: 19), polygamy and the exclusion of women from public office were the norm in the Heian period, and women's dependency on men increased (Ramirez-Christensen 2001b: 52).

In the Heian period, women had only secondary status, and were confined to women's apartments behind screens, blinds and curtains and within many-layered garments (Ramirez-Christensen 2001b: 53). At the political and economic level, a daughter was 'a resource for the betterment or at least the maintenance of her father's position' (Ramirez-Christensen 2001b: 53). The ambition of a Fujiwara patriarch was to have his daughter chosen as imperial consort, so that he could be the father-in-law and ultimately the grandfather of the reigning sovereign. The policy was for emperors to abdicate early so that the father-in-law would become regent, and, when his grandson came of age, chancellor (Morris 1979: 65). Court society was based on a rigid system of grades, marked by the colours of the robes worn; rank was not determined by merit, as in classical China, but by a hierarchical network of favour and political power. It was an endogamous group of no more than two thousand individuals who were almost all related to each other, uninterested in everyone outside their own circle and sensitive in judging the social level of each member of the group (Morris 1979: 78–81). There was a hierarchy of consorts to the Emperor, from the principal wife down to the attendants who were recipients of the Emperor's casual attentions. The Emperor and his consorts were attended by women of the middle ranks of the aristocracy, the *zuryo*, from which came the provincial governors and the scholar-poets (Okada 1991: 171). These women had access to scholarship and were trained in all the arts of courtly life: poetry, painting, music, calligraphy, incense-making. 'Women's hand' (*onna-de*) was written in the vernacular, and 'male letters' in Chinese; men had access to both forms of writing, but *onna-de* was the only recognised form of writing for women (Moriyuki 2001: 244). It is from this educated group that the two most famous women writers of the period, Murasaki Shikibu and Sei Shonagon, emerged, along with several other women whose diaries and poetry are still extant.

The model of beauty for both males and females was a round white face, minute mouth, slits of eyes, and for a man, a tuft of beard at the point of the chin (Morris 1979: 156). Hair, especially for women, was a most important feature; women's hair was desired to be thick and

glossy, and reach the ground by the time they were mature. Eyebrows were plucked and women's teeth were blackened. Bodies were veiled in robes of at least twelve thin unlined silk layers, the patterns and colours of which were carefully blended. To show this blending to the best advantage, each sleeve was worn longer as it came closer to the skin (Morris 1979: 215–6).

The unveiled body was not pleasing to Heian men and women and was not regarded as an aesthetic or erotic object. In her diary, Murasaki describes a scene where two maids of honour are robbed of their clothes in the middle of the night; pandemonium reigns, and when order is restored, Murasaki describes the experience of witnessing their humiliation as 'dreadful' and the memory as frightening, though it had its 'amusing side' (Murasaki 1996: 45). As Grosz points out, the devotion of intense aesthetic effort to the veiling of the body is an erotic intensification of the body – in this culture, what is hidden or glimpsed is mysterious and alluring, while what is open and to view is unattractive and distasteful.

The style of Heian life as depicted in the literature is baroque; the excess of erotic energy is captured, controlled, constricted – aestheticised – in artistic forms, where matter is intricately folded like origami. The architecture of the Heian period is flexible, with boundaries that are flimsy and insubstantial. Wooden walls divide inner space from outer, but these are mostly removable screens, and behind are layers of blinds and curtains. Permeable boundaries are also a feature of inside space, yet there is a strong focus on the positioning of people, reflecting the 'cultural obsession with hierarchy and status' (Bowring 1996: xxvi–xvii). How does this architecture of daily life express the fold? The many screens are another layer of folding, and the maze of partitioned rooms forms a labyrinth designed to conceal and protect what is valued, cultivated and pursued – beauty and high rank. Valued individuals are surrounded by attendants of lesser rank who provide further layers of protection and concealment, though they also act as intermediaries between the inner and the outer – the female object of desire and the desiring male subject, or the holders of high rank and those who seek their favour. For instance, when the Rokujo Haven – a mature lady whom Genji has courted but more recently slighted – retreats to the Ise shrine with her daughter, who has been appointed priestess there, Genji, excited by her new inaccessibility, sends letters pleading for an audience. She agrees to receive him behind screens, but at first uses her attendants to converse with him. He protests:

> His appeal moved her women to intercede for him with their mistress. 'Yes, my lady,' they said, 'It is a shame to leave him just standing there; one must feel sorry for him.'
>
> Oh dear, she thought, I do not like the spectacle I am making – he can hardly think well of me for it; I would much rather not go out to him at all. She did not have the courage to treat him coldly, though, and at last she emerged amid reluctant sighs, delighting him with the grace of her form. (Tyler 2001: 194)

Tyler has a note here explaining that they were still separated by a blind, and Genji sees her silhouette through it. There are screens behind screens, many layers of veiling. In Heian architecture, decor, lived interior space and clothing, the labyrinth is horizontally rather than vertically arranged. Deleuze describes the quintessential baroque costume as 'broad, in distending waves, billowing and flaring, surrounding the body with its independent folds, ever-multiplying, never betraying those of the body beneath' (Deleuze 1993: 121). This is a perfect description of Heian costumes and the architecture that contains the heavily veiled and adorned human figures.

Deleuze says that 'the Baroque fold unfurls all the way to infinity', and he compares the two levels, matter and the soul, with a labyrinth (Deleuze 1993: 3). The upper level (or inner, to continue the horizontal translation) is the soul and has no windows, and the lower or outer level is matter; this differentiation encloses an entanglement of the two, and is reflected in baroque architecture: '[t]he infinite fold separates or moves between matter and soul' (Deleuze 1993: 35). The architectural metaphor applies also to subjectification. According to Conley, 'Deleuze suggests that the upper room and its folded furnishings become the imaginary space where subjectivation can be realized'; through thinking, we have agency of the self, 'doubling the outside with a coextensive inside' (Conley 1993: 176). I suggest that the elaborate outer layers of material and aesthetic folding that contain and conceal the Heian women as objects of desire intensify not only the pleasurable eroticism of their being, but the inner imaginary space where they fold themselves, from which new aesthetic-erotic-poetic becomings emerge. When everyday life is secluded, constricted and intensified, the imagination finds ways to 'temporise', to escape to other levels of reality. Temporising is a concept developed by Drusilla Modjeska in her essay, 'Writing *Poppy*'; it is a psychological manoeuvre that allows the subject to play with time, to slip into other time frames, to tell stories 'as a way of coaxing life into more controllable possibilities' (Modjeska 2002: 75). As A. S. Byatt, the English novelist, says: 'It's not nice not to be writing a book. It's not nice

not to have a more real world than the real world we inhabit' (Byatt 2005, n.p.). The caged bird sings sweetly, sometimes more so than its wild relatives. Many great books have been written in prison.

In Deleuzian-Leibnizian terms, the material folding of masks or layers is a labyrinth that both conceals and expresses, protects and actualises, solidifies and dissolves the hidden self. The solid fixed forms of material life are constantly being destabilised and re-formed by molecular lines of rhizomatic disconnection and connection and nomadic lines of flight. This instability is reflected in shifting points of view and the self-awareness of the personae we encounter in the literature. The screens that create the illusion of a secret inaccessible world are unstable, permeable and unreliable, and there is a constant unfolding and refolding of self and outward expression. The fluidity of the point of view is reflected in the structure of the narrative in *The Tale of Genji*, which folds, unfolds and refolds stories within stories, pulls back screens and curtains to reveal the inner lives of the inhabitants, and creates a *mise-en-abîme* of worlds within worlds: the outer world of the court, fixed in arborescent lines of power and influence and dominated by the male hierarchy, but criss-crossed by molecular lines of desire and subversion, such as Genji's amatory adventures and transgressions; the secret world of the interiors, constructed by men to contain their women, who entertain themselves, when they are not entertaining their admirers and engaging in family life, by reading, copying and telling stories of romance and betrayal and unsatisfied desire; and the deeper levels of secret thoughts and desires of the women and men who are caught in the webs of desire and power. The narrative is itself labyrinthine, convoluted, with layer upon layer of story created to divert and entertain the courtly audience, performing a subtle and sustained discovery and critique of desire in a rigidly hierarchical patriarchal world. The origami of the narrative is intricately folded and refolded, changing and flowing into new forms that repeat the themes of desire in multiple and different shapes.

Sexual desire in Heian court life – constructed around men's repetition of seduction and the pursuit of novelty in new/different embodied female selves – is baroque in its expression. The baroque comes from the creative tension between the old and the new, the familiar and the unfamiliar, the conventional stereotypical behaviour or artistic erotic expression and the new/different female object or modulations of affective experience. What is produced from the erotic excess that generates this creative tension is a proliferating series of simulacra, artefacts of desire in poetry, prose, music, dance, food, incense. For instance, when a man 'marries' a

woman by calling on her for three nights running and sending her a love letter after each visit, he celebrates and ritualises the union with a gift of special white rice cakes. When Genji lies with 15-year-old Murasaki as his bride for the third night, the cakes he has ordered are delivered:

> The gentlewomen knew nothing of all this, but when Genji had the box removed early the next morning, those closest to their mistress understood what had happened. . . . The little carved stands were so delicate and the cakes themselves so beautifully made – it was all as pretty as could be. (Tyler 2001: 168)

Women, too, are artefacts, assemblages or simulacra, whose carefully constructed individuality is expressed in the nuances of shading and layering in their clothing, the length, thickness and fall of their hair, the intonation and pitch of their voices, the elegance and character of their handwriting, their skill in turning an occasion into a poetic phrase with rich allusions, their grace, modesty and charm of posture. Again, the baroque energy comes from the marriage of the conventional with the individual embodiment of desire. For instance, when Genji visits Tamakazura, a young motherless woman he has 'adopted' as a daughter, in the west wing of his mansion, he is struck by how stylishly she has settled in there:

> Her brilliance banished every shadow until all was light and loveliness, and one wished only to gaze at her. Her hair thinned out somewhat toward the ends, perhaps because of the trials she had suffered, and it fell with a beautiful, clean grace. She was in all ways so striking that Genji keenly appreciated what he would have missed if he had not known her, and he also understood how little he would be able to let her go. Although accustomed to being with him this way, face-to-face, she felt on reflection that many matters still came between them, matters sufficiently awkward to give her manner a delightful reticence. (Tyler 2001: 433)

Her brilliance comes from the combination of the expected and the unexpected; she is dressed in kerria rose, a conventional layering of colours, and her hair, though thin at the ends, falls gracefully. Hair is admired for thickness and glossiness, but in her case, the thinned ends suggest youthful maturity and the triumph of beauty over suffering. Her reticence, a conventional quality of Heian femininity, makes her all the more alluring. She is a conventional young lady, but what makes the situation unconventional, risky and erotically exciting for Genji, is her ambiguous position as his adopted daughter, courted by other men, and her resistance to his charms. Within the subtle variations of beauty there is a high degree of similarity; Heian court women are different yet they

reflect each other, and their attraction lies in both registers – difference and repetition.

Both Norma Field and Richard Okada have argued that surrogacy is a driving force in the Heian court, as depicted by Murasaki Shikibu. Field says that Lady Murasaki's 'identity depends on what she is not' – not Fujitsubo, not a politically useful wife like Aoi, Genji's first wife, not a mother to Genji's child, like Aoi and the Akashi Lady (Field 1987: 173). Okada says that Genji's substitution of Murasaki for Fujitsubo is a metonymic pattern, 'the constant association serving to console an ultimately unfulfillable desire that nevertheless has been and remains realizable' (Okada 1991: 256). This argument can be misleading because it implies that the individuals in the chain of repetition are inferior copies of the original. This is not borne out by a considered reading of the texts through a Deleuzian lens. The problem with the words 'substitute' and 'surrogate' is the implication of inferiority and lesser status or worth in the repetitions, bringing us back to an essentialist, binary ideology. I find the term simulacra to be more useful, because it bypasses ideas of a hierarchy of value, from the original to the copy, and opens up a rhizomatous proliferation of individuations that are different in themselves. Deleuze rejects the Platonic notion of the simulacrum as a copy of a copy of the model, in a world of identity and order, in favour of a world made up of simulacra, which are different in their own right, not representative of a superior model, and have their own power to act (Roffe 2005: 250).

I acknowledge that in seeing Lady Murasaki and Tamakazura as simulacra rather than surrogates I speak from a Deleuzian perspective that was not imagined in the polygamous hierarchical society of tenth- and eleventh-century Japan, and I evoke from the *Genji* text *my* simulacrum of the subversive female writer, Murasaki Shikibu, who both presents and critiques a binary production of desire in her created world. Though she did not have a concept of simulacra available to her, there is evidence in the text that, beneath the surface appearances of rank and faithfulness to a model of desirability, she saw in her female characters (and in some of the male) a singularity of being, both unique and common, a site of difference and repetition (Conley 2005: 252). This vision is played out in the baroque tension in the *Genji* between principal/original and secondary/new which arises from the criss-crossing and intertwining of binary molar lines of rank and power and changing molecular and nomadic lines of favour and desire. So we have Genji's father the Emperor's preference for the Kiritsubo Lady over his other more powerful wives, and for Genji over his principal

son, and Genji's preference for Lady Murasaki over the principal wives of his youth and of his maturity. The desire for the conventional and acceptable is in tension with the desire for difference and the unexpected, and with the heart's desires, which do not follow molar pathways.

Why is Lady Murasaki more than a mere surrogate? Field traces the theme of surrogacy through the major plot and the minor ones, and interprets Lady Murasaki as 'the substitute realization of a fantasy', whose fate as such 'is to be not only homeless but imprisoned in this world' (Field 1987: 191, 198). In my reading, Lady Murasaki, as she is regarded by Genji and others, transcends the role of substitute through her unparalleled grace, beauty, good taste, loyalty and discretion. These qualities are constantly affirmed and celebrated in the text in the voices of Genji and other characters and in the voice of the narrator. Lady Murasaki achieves a status which, if not exactly that of 'official' wife, is recognised by Genji and by others who come into her sphere as that of a lady without peer. She is, as Tyler points out, designated as 'Tai no Ue', which approximates to: 'the mistress of Genji's household, who lives in the wing (tai) of his residence' (Tyler 2001: xxii). So although her status is defined through Genji, and is secondary to and dependent on his, she is nonetheless a star whose light reflects on those around her – and when she is gone, the shining prince himself does not long survive her. Moreover, from this reader's point of view, she develops into a three-dimensional heroine through her nuanced perceptions of Genji's behaviour and of her situation, and through her struggle to find a way of being that escapes from the prison her life has become.

I read Lady Murasaki's fate in terms other than that of the surrogate who has no 'true identity' of her own compared to the 'ideal' Heian court lady. In a world where all identity (including Genji's) is constructed and contingent on rank, favour and reputation, her decline into ill health and death is the outcome of the conflict between the hero's and the heroine's desire to be true to their love for each other and the hero's subjectification as a polygamous Heian aristocrat bound by the codes, obligations and expectations of court society. This subjectification is reflected in Lady Murasaki's own entrapment in these codes, passively constrained as she is to respect Genji's right to multiple partners, and to wait for him to return to her when he chooses. Her agency is limited by the roles prescribed for her; when the path she seeks as an alternative to that of neglected wife – holy orders – is denied her, she descends into an irreversible decline and dies.

Genji suffers deeply because of the fragile nature of his bond with Lady Murasaki and the transience of worldly pleasure, and he does not survive long after her death because he has no wish to live:

> Very little in this life has really satisfied me, and despite my high birth I always think how much less fortunate my destiny has been than other people's. The Buddha must have wanted me to know that the world slips away from us and plays us false. I, who long set myself to ignore this truth, have suffered in the twilight of my life so awful and so final a blow that I have at last seen the extent of my failings. (Tyler 2001: 768)

Genji's death is a hiatus in the text – he dies between chapters. This may be an accident of the fragmented and corrupted state of the text that survived into the thirteenth century, when two scholars set out to restore it (Tyler 2001: xviii–xix). However, the fact that the reader is denied the narration of Genji's last days has a strangely poetic and haunting effect; his absence casts a shadow over the rest of the narrative: 'His light was gone, and none among his many descendants could compare to what he had been' (Tyler 2001: 785). Both he and his favourite wife are trapped by the codes and conventions of Heian society, and both end their lives tragically, haunted by loss and regret; their fate overshadows the lives and loves of the other characters.

Lady Murasaki's tragic fate can be read as a critique of the polygamous society she and her lover inhabit. Haruo Shirane argues that the *Genji* is a highly wrought work that 'not only transforms plot conventions, established poetic motifs, and contemporary norms, it constantly reworks itself' (Shirane 1987: 151). Shirane explores how the social romance created in the early chapters is undermined and placed in perspective, and finally collapses. In the last part of the tale, which is the focus of Shirane's study, the themes of romance and marriage are 'given a new, and frequently ironic, twist' (Shirane 1987: 152). In her creation of a world more real than the real world she inhabits, Murasaki the author infuses the genre with tension, surprise, irony and tragedy by allowing her characters to deviate from and subvert Heian social and political codes, particularly those relating to marriage. In this way, through the intensification of the artistic process, the author herself attains agency, not in her 'real' life, but in the creation of a more real world through art.

III. Conclusion

Murasaki Shikibu is an artist who observes and mirrors the society she inhabits in a fictional world that is, to the reader, 'more real' than

the historical world of the Heian court, which we can never know except through indirect and fragmented reports, poetic diaries, and its fictionalisation in *monogatari*. *The Tale of Genji* is a complex and many-layered world of the imagination that we can enter as we turn the pages that number 1120 in the Penguin edition of Tyler's translation. Though the court women's diaries of the period give fascinating glimpses of this world, they remain glimpses, written from one point of view, discursive and sometimes fragmented.

The fictional and confessional narratives of Heian court women show the ambiguity of the female desiring self as *other* within the culture of men, outwardly conforming to rituals, representations and rules, yet inwardly resisting and escaping in subtle ways. One of these ways, their reading and writing of *monogatari* and poetic diaries, became, paradoxically, a flowering of cultural life that outshone and has outlived the works and lives of the powerful men who ruled their lives. They used a script, 'woman's hand', that, though it was used by men as well, became the vehicle for women's literature that dramatises Heian vernacular culture so powerfully that it has, as Okada says, 'come to be regarded as a great (if not the greatest) flowering of Japanese culture' (Okada 1991: 28).

The subjectivity of Heian women depicted in their literature is complex and many-folded, as are the costumes, architecture and artistic productions of court life. In the intricate layering of folds that surround them, the bodies and personae of women are erotically intensified. Behind the façades and rituals of their social life, subjectivity is folded from the immanent into the embodied self, and creativity is released from within the imaginary space of the inside into the outside of the material world. In this cloistered culture, the literature of Heian women celebrates the natural and artificial beauty of the world that surrounds them and critiques the codes of polygamy. *The Tale of Genji*, in particular, constructs a world in which women of middle rank are favoured above their higher-ranking rivals; in which the hero himself is of ambiguous birth but outshines all others; and in which the restrictive and repressive effects (especially for women) that are the cost of the liberty and variety enjoyed by men are vividly and poignantly enacted in the complications, losses, disappointments and tragedies of the characters' lives. The politics of difference is subversively and subtly enacted through art in a closed and constricted world. We can enter the looking-glass world of Heian women and be surprised and delighted by the similarities and differences between their lives and ours, and be inspired by the triumph of art, which, in experimenting with the

materiality of nature and culture, overcomes the present and imagines the possibility of a different future.

Note

1. My information on the art of origami and its meaning is derived primarily from conversations with Kosuke Araki, a maker of Japanese TV documentaries, now living in Australia. His special area of research is the lesser-known history of early Japan. I have supplemented this with information from www.yoshinoantiques.com.

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The Interesting, the Remarkable, the Unusual: Deleuze's Grand Style

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Abstract

Gilles Deleuze takes up the challenge to create a philosophy of the interesting, the remarkable and the unusual. He does this in what Alain Badiou calls the 'Grand Style', the style of Descartes, Spinoza and Kant whose philosophies arise in relation to developments in the natural sciences and mathematics. Grounding himself in the molar-molecular pair, Deleuze sets out a new image of thought. He conceptualises an immanent but still relatively closed, deterministic, atomistic and reversible system that is not immediately reduced to entropic equilibrium because its processes take place on the molecular level, at speeds which he hypothesises are beyond the speed of light. He postulates a manifold, a sphere of immanence that is the entire universe and not merely the Earth or our solar system. It is a system governed by sensitivity to initial starting points and unstable boundaries, thus although it is chaotic as well as probabilistic, it remains a mathematically formal, deterministic system.

Keywords: molecular, molar, atoms, Kant, Descartes, vector field, calculus

I. Introduction: The Grand Style

What makes something interesting, remarkable or unusual for philosophy? What philosophy is capable of creating and characterising the interesting, the remarkable or the unusual? Such a philosophy, Deleuze has made clear, must set out a new image of thought, for

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no two great philosophers utilise the same image of thought; that is, every great philosopher has thought differently and has changed what it means to think (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 37, 51). For example, although Descartes, Kant, Husserl and Sartre all have an image of thought that may be characterised as a field of consciousness, each field is constituted as a unique type of Universal: the eidetic, the critical, the phenomenological, and that of radical empiricism (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 47). Each of these philosophers establishes a new image of thought that distinguishes them from the philosophical functionaries who enjoy the use of 'ready-made thought', lacking even awareness of the efforts of the great philosophers who have devised the images they use (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 51). This account is echoed by Alain Badiou who also argues that philosophers must resist the comfort of what he calls 'the little style', a philosophy that makes the interesting, remarkable or unusual an *object* of study, something that can be relegated to the pre-existing philosophical specialisations of epistemology or ethics or politics, there to be managed by the academic bureaucracy of teachers and researchers (Badiou 2006: 3). For Badiou, a typical exemplar of the little style grasps its object through historicisation, classification and endless commentary rather than through direct and dramatic affirmation of the ontological sovereignty of mathematics (Badiou 2006: 3, 4).

By contrast, there is a kind of philosophy carried out in the grand style. The grand style, according to Badiou, is the style of doing philosophy exemplified by Descartes, Spinoza, Kant, Hegel and Comte de Lautréamont (Badiou 2006: 8–13). What these apparently disparate figures have in common, Badiou claims, is something that Badiou himself has in common with Gilles Deleuze. 'In each case', Badiou writes, 'it is a question of giving thanks to *rigorous mathematics*. It doesn't matter whether the philosophy is conceived of as a rationalism tied to transcendence, as it is from Descartes to Lacan; [or] as a vitalist immanence, as it is from Spinoza to *Deleuze*' (Badiou 2006: 14, emphasis added). What matters is that each of these philosophies proposes that mathematics directly illuminates philosophy and that it does so through a *forced* or even *violent* intervention. Thus, Descartes is credited with finding, in arithmetic and geometry, the very model of philosophical certainty, while Spinoza confirms that 'to know is to be absolutely and universally convinced' (Badiou 2006: 8, 9). Kant's contribution is the a priori; Hegel's, a true conception of the infinite, and Lautréamont's, the undoing of all the categories of humanism (Badiou 2006: 10–13). Badiou's own contribution is proclaimed by the philosopher to be the idea that mathematics is ontology.

And Deleuze, what of Deleuze? In so far as Badiou believes that Deleuze's contribution, grand as it may be, is much too invested in the idea of the 'One' to satisfy his own demands for a mathematics that is a fundamental ontology of multiplicities, Badiou focuses on critique and mostly evades positive elaboration of this question. This leaves it to those of us who are interested in Deleuze's contribution to discover the answer for ourselves. Thus, we will inquire, in what manner and to what end does Deleuze create a philosophy in the grand style, a philosophy directly illuminated by mathematics through a forced if not violent intervention? In carrying out this project, we will attempt to follow Badiou's prescription, that is, rather than exerting a grip on our object through 'historicization and classification … [thereby to] characterize this object as a neutered mathematics', we will seek a direct encounter with Deleuze's mathematical formalism (Badiou 2006: 4). In doing so, we must acknowledge the difficulty of proceeding in this manner. Deleuze's grand style, his new image of thought, rests on what he refers to as the 'unlimited One-All' which includes all the concepts of his thought on one plane (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 35). He calls this a plane of concepts or a plane of consistency, a single wave embracing multiple waves that are concepts, but concepts that must move at infinite speeds, thus faster than the speed of light, something physically impossible but, in the realm of thought, something that is thinkable.

We will seek a direct encounter with these concepts by first formulating the nature of this plane in mathematical and physical terms, by means of classical thermodynamics, which provides parameters for the plane of immanence. We will then examine the Ideas and the rules governing the plane which, utilising the mathematical term, Deleuze refers to as a vector field. We will examine Deleuze's use of differential calculus to organise vector fields. Then, in so far as Deleuze finds equivalents for these rules in Kant's transcendental logic, we will examine how they function logically as well as mathematically in order to discern how the law of non-contradiction and binary thinking are fundamentally implicated in the rules governing the plane of immanence. Finally, we will turn to Deleuze's account of the molar and the molecular to discern the extent to which this formulation of thought and physical reality addresses the question of binary thinking and Deleuze's proposal for a reformulation of binaries. The emphasis here will be on what Deleuze's philosophy can do and what its limits might be. It is to be hoped that this approach will be direct but also adequate to the task at hand.

II. The Second Law

Deleuze's notion of the plane of immanence can be said to take its direction from some consequences of the Second Law of Thermodynamics. The Second Law of Thermodynamics states that in a closed or isolated system, where no new matter or energy enters, disorder must increase. So, for the classical mapping of gas particles distributed in two chambers, there are far more disordered states (mixtures of particles in various states) than ordered states (mixtures of particles in a limited number of states). When there are many more ways for particles to be distributed evenly (in various states) than lopsidedly, the probable state of particles is one in which their energy – once unconcentrated – is of little use. For example, heat follows the arrow of time; it is of little use relative to the sunlight that generates it, a potentially depressing conclusion. In the world of time asymmetry, classical thermodynamics studies structures whose complexity decreases, machines that lose the capacity to do work. It studies closed and isolated systems that are sealed to incoming matter (Margulis and Sagan 1999: 34). Moreover, at equilibrium, when molecules are most disordered, that is, unstructured, everything is homogeneous and nothing interesting, remarkable or unusual can happen. In this state, what is often called 'complexity', meaning, the tendency towards order, is matched equally by the tendency towards disorder – heat and entropy (Devlin 1994: 79).[1] What interests us now is the examination of the philosophical import of these ideas for Deleuze. What image of thought, what plane of immanence, do they entail?

From a philosophical perspective, Deleuze takes up these developments in the natural sciences and mathematics. Turning away from open-system (non-equilibrium) thermodynamics, he conceptualises an immanent, therefore relatively closed and still deterministic, atomistic and reversible system that is not immediately reduced to entropic equilibrium because its processes take place on the molecular level, at speeds which he hypothesises are beyond the speed of light. He postulates a manifold, a sphere of immanence that is the entire universe and not merely the Earth or our solar system. In spite of being closed or immanent, it is a system governed by sensitivity to initial starting points and unstable boundaries, thus it is chaotic as well as probabilistic, where probabilistic means that the path of individual particles cannot be predicted, but their movement in aggregates can be predicted, and with a relatively high degree of probability. This is still a deterministic system, in other words; once established, once set in place, the rules governing

the field of thought do not alter. Deleuze proposes that such a system can be formalised mathematically by means of differential calculus and vector fields. Motion and change are particularly difficult to study mathematically, as the tools of mathematics – numbers, points, lines, equations – are themselves static. Calculus, 'a collection of methods to describe and handle patterns of infinity – the infinitely large and the infinitely small', made possible the use of mathematical tools to study motion and change without falling into paradoxes (Devlin 1994: 74). 'The basic operation of differential calculus is the process known as differentiation [whose aim is] ... to obtain the rate of change of some changing quantity. In order to do this, the "value" or "position" or "path" of that quantity has to be given by means of an appropriate formula' (Devlin 1994: 86).

Newton and Leibniz developed the rules for differentiating complicated functions by starting from the formula for a curve and calculating the formula for the gradient (or steepness) of that curve. The method involves using a grid defined by Cartesian coordinates, then taking minute differences in the x and y directions and computing the gradients of the resultant straight lines – the gradient function is called the derivative of the original function (Devlin 1994: 90). 'The crucial step ... was to shift attention from the essentially static situation concerning a gradient at a particular point P to the dynamic process of successive approximation of the gradient [of the curve] by gradients of straight lines starting at P' (Devlin 1994: 87, 88). It is crucial to remember, however, that the apparently dynamic motion can only be captured, mathematically, by a static function, and likewise, the dynamic process of closer and closer approximation to the gradient must also be captured in a static manner known as a limit, which is a sequence of approximations (Devlin 1994: 87, 88).

Nevertheless, to utilise and expand on the possibilities offered by differential calculus, Deleuze proposes what may be called a sublime Idea, an Idea in the Kantian sense, in so far as it arises from and regulates its field immanently (Deleuze 1994: 170–82/220–35).[2] 'Already Leibniz had shown that calculus ... expressed problems which could not hitherto be solved or, indeed, even posed (transcendent problems)', problems such as the complete determination of a species of curve or problems characterised by the paradox of Achilles and the tortoise (Deleuze 1994: 177/228–9).[3] But what if we wish to make determinations beyond a single curve, beyond a single trajectory? Is there a means to make 'a complete determination with regard to the existence and distribution of ... [regular and singular] points which depends upon

a completely different instance', an instance characterised in terms of a field of vectors? (Devlin 1994: 44; Deleuze 1994: 177/230). The goal here is to explicitly link differential equations and vector fields. A vector field is defined by Deleuze, in *Difference and Repetition*, as the complete determination of a problem given in terms of the existence, number and distribution of points that are its condition (Deleuze 1994: 177/229). This corresponds fairly well to the more or less standard mathematical definition in which a vector field is defined as associating a vector to every point in the field space. Vector fields are used in physics to model observations, such as the movement of a fluid, which include a direction for each point of the observed space. Let us try to flesh this out.

III. The Idea and the Rules: Association, Commutation, Distribution

If, as Deleuze claimed, it is the condition of a problem that it would be the object of a synthesis of the Idea, then what is this Idea? The problem, as set out by Deleuze, is that of the existence, number and distribution of points. This problem would be the object of a certain Idea, initially no more than the abstract Idea of a plane of immanence, a vector field, a model consisting of vectors (in physics, an abstract entity that has magnitude and direction in a plane or in three-dimensional space, or in a space of four or more dimensions) in vector space, from which may be projected an infinity of possible trajectories in spacetime (Devlin 1994b10: 44).[4] In mathematics (specifically linear algebra), the rules of *association, commutation and distribution* define vector space without reference to magnitude or directions. This allows for their use in a variety of fields whose terms are not material or physical. Additionally, the rules of association, commutation and distribution are the least restrictive set of linear rules that remain commutative; that is, for binary operations, any order is possible (Copi and Cohen 1990b4: 692).[5] They can also be understood to be the same the transcendental Ideas that govern Kantian practical reason, and this is because they tell us what actions are universal in their application.[6]

These rules have their equivalents in logic where association is an expression of logical equivalence permitting the valid regrouping of simple propositions; it governs the relations, which is to say, the connections between subject and predicate in the categorical proposition. In syllogistic terms, this would be expressed as the categorical relation (Copi and Cohen 1990: 694).[7] Commutation permits the valid re-ordering of disjunctive statements, which, using the logical rules of

transformation, can logically be recast as hypothetical propositions without a change of truth-value (Copi and Cohen 1990: 698).[8] The rule of generation of a vector field is commutative. In logic, this means that statements may initially be combined in any order. Given a hypothetical proposition, 'If there is a perfect justice, the obstinately wicked are punished', it consists of a relation between two propositions, 'There is a perfect justice', and 'The obstinately wicked are punished' and can be understood as intrinsically commutative (Kant 1965: A73–4, B98–9). Reformulated using truth tables, we arrive at its logical equivalent, 'There is *no* perfect justice *or* the obstinately wicked are punished, a proposition to which commutativity now applies ("The obstinately wicked are punished *or* there is *no* perfect justice")' (Devlin 1994b10: 46–8). This reformulation separates, tears apart, the causal order of the inference, making it possible to reorder the propositions, thus to disturb their causal linearity. The consequences of this move may be debated, but that will not be the most important consideration here. A third element of vector space is distribution. In deductive arguments, distribution permits the mutual replacement of specified pairs of symbolic expressions. In categorical propositions, it permits the distribution of a term if it refers to all members of a class (Devlin 1994: 86–7). In syllogistic logic, this would be expressed as conjunction or connection.

Deleuze, like Kant, argues that these rules, the rules for vector space, apply to nature; they govern nature. This means that they have ontological effects and that nature is associative, commutative and distributive. This is, indeed, the core of Deleuze's mathematical intervention in philosophy. Thus, mere association (x + x), as opposed to unity or totality, means that the laws of nature distribute parts which cannot be totalised, and that nature is conjunctive, expressing itself as this *and* that, this *or* that, rather than as Being, One or Whole. Following Kant's transcendental Ideas, the claim is that we can never have knowledge of nature as a whole. As in Kant, what has been called 'divine power' is simply the manifestation of the relation of disjunction. God or disjunction dis-joins the whole into diverse parts (places, species, lands and waters) organised in a system in relation to the ideas of self and world. Thus, each *self* is not identical to any other but is represented by the categorical relation of that self with an idea; and every body comprising the *world* consists of diverse matter, manifest in the hypothetical or causal relation between an idea and that diversity (Kant 1965: A333–6; B390–3 and A176–219; B218–66).[9] As such, nature is associative, commutative and distributive and our knowledge of it is limited to its immanent, regulative functions. If nature's immanent,

regulative functions are associative, commutative and distributive, each of these, as mathematical or logical operations, reflects a view of nature as the power of things to exist one by one without any possibility of them being gathered together in a unity (Deleuze 1990: 266–7).[10] Following these rules, whatever has been added together can be taken apart and reformulated. This is how becoming appears to be everywhere, for nowhere is anything gathered together into a totality. How then, if nothing is gathered together, is it possible to have a world or a concept of a world? In so far as we are still in the realm of classical thought, the answer may be clarified using Hume's method of association of ideas.

That things exist one by one without the possibility of being gathered together is the expression of purely external relations of association within an immanent field, relations of proximity that are further characterised in terms of the chance collisions of particles. However, the key to thinking through this aspect of the model proposed by Deleuze is that, at this point, the things that exist one by one are, in fact, gathered, but not into a Whole or a Totality governed by a Divine or transcendental principle of unity. They are, rather, gathered by means of the transcendental principle of differential relations, so that things are the effect of the differentiation of elements as constituted in differential calculus. Not surprisingly, the rules of vector space and the construction of vector fields are connected to the functions of differential calculus. That is, given a complete set of functions in a given space in differential calculus, each function in that space can be expressed as a combination of that complete set of functions, and functions with the property of completeness can form a vector space under binary operations.

Deleuze's task, throughout his work, but especially in *The Logic of Sense*, is to connect these mathematical concepts to nature, that is, to the physical world. Referring both to Lucretius and to classical physics, Deleuze argues that although the sum of atoms (or particles in physics) is infinite, they do not form a totality in the Kantian sense, an absolute and unconditioned totality for the series. Rather, atoms – which, it is said, are not sensible objects but objects of thought (since due to their size they are below the level of human perception) – fall in the void and collide with one another. The result of these collisions produces motion.

> [In the void], atoms fall with equal velocity … the velocity of the atom is equal to its movement *in a unique direction in a minimum of time* … [expressing] the smallest possible term during which an atom moves in a given direction, before being able to take another direction as the result of a collision with another atom. (Deleuze 1990: 269)[11]

Rather than a highly structured principle of causality, Deleuze argues that this collision, in so far as it takes place in a time smaller than the minimum of continuous time, a limit that approaches but never reaches 0, must be something else. Following Lucretius, Deleuze calls it a *clinamen*, the original determination of the direction of movement of the atom (Deleuze 1990: 269). The clinamen expresses the idea of looking for numerical and geometric patterns in a process of successive approximation. Long after Lucretius, the notation *dx* and *dy* came to be used to refer to infinitely small quantities or 'the velocities of evanescent increments, once called "fluxions", ultimately, "a dynamic process of successive approximations"' (Devlin 1994: 93). Differential calculus, we noted, allows one to begin with a differential relation (*dx*/*dy*), the expression of the infinitesimally small limits of motion in a specific direction; then, taking the derivative, to derive the formula for a curve, and then to calculate the formula for the gradient (slope or steepness) of that curve by taking small (infinitesimal) differences in the *x* and *y* directions and computing the gradients of the resultant straight lines (Devlin 1994: 92–3).[12] In this manner, a curved line can be measured as a continuous series of infinitely small straight lines or tangents.

Each derivative of a differential relation takes place each time in a minimum of time. No doubt, this is the ultimate, subtle form of disjunction/conjunction, which in the physical world may be taken for causality, as each collision determines the next direction of the atoms, and if we were to look at patterns, rather than individual atoms, clear patterns do, in fact, emerge, thus we can predict outcomes, not with absolute certainty, but with probability.

> In general, a differential equation arises whenever you have a quantity subject to change … Strictly speaking, the changing quantity should be one that changes continuously … However, change in many real life situations consists of a large number of individual, discrete changes, that are miniscule compared with the overall scale of the problem, and in such cases there is no harm in simply assuming that the whole changes continuously. (Devlin 1994: 92–3)[13]

In fact, the assumption is normal practice, thus space (and time) in a differential equation are defined as continuous. Defining a problem is thus always inseparable from recognising its ideal, objective nature (Deleuze 1994: 177/230).[14] This is why 'the ideal connections constitutive of the problematic (dialectical) Idea are incarnated in the *real* relations which are constituted by *mathematical theories* and carried over into problems in the form of solutions … the solutions are like the

discontinuities compatible with differential equations' (Deleuze 1994: 179/232, emphases added).[15] In other words, differential calculus is a mathematical instrument but the solutions or projections, the fields of operation of the mathematical instrument, may be mathematical, or they may be physical, biological, psychical or sociological. One begins with the abstract mathematical structure, then one projects it onto physical or psychical reality or onto different aspects of reality. So there are different orders of problem where each different order is a different expression, a different realisation or projection of the mathematical schema.

What Deleuze claims, however, is that one does not simply apply mathematics to other domains, rather each domain in which Ideas are incarnated possesses its own calculus, its own quantitability, qualitability, potentiality, processes of determinability, reciprocal determination, and distributions of distinct and ordinary points. This, he argues, is the true *mathesis universalis*, a system of multiple, non-localisable, ideal connections, a differential calculus corresponding to each Idea where each Idea differentiates the field, becomes the universal for individuals, differentiating each and every element (Deleuze 1994: 181/235).[16] The question that arises then is: how does this occur and what are its effects?

IV. The Persistence of Binaries

In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze provides several examples of Ideas differentiating a field – Ancient atomism as a physical Idea, the organism as a biological Idea, Marxism as a social Idea – but it seems as if it is not until much later in his work that he provides a structural solution to his own question, in fact, a structural solution that is mathematical (Deleuze 1994: 184–6/238–41). In *What is Philosophy?* Deleuze, along with Félix Guattari, argues that every trajectory in a vector field is an assemblage of affects and percepts connecting, disjoining and conjoining with one another. Contingency lies in particles; every assemblage of particles produces a different world, a different and unpredictable entity, but within the range of a particular pattern oriented by an attractor. An attractor is defined as a set of states, invariant under the dynamics, which neighbouring states in a given basin or arena approach asymptotically in the course of dynamic evolution.[17] This model underscores the difficulty if not impossibility of distinguishing object and world or subject and object. For this reason, every subject or object is an event, nothing but the result of the contingent encounters of affects and percepts, which are themselves independent of and exceeding any living being, standing on

their own, simply expressing a pure sensation – freeing it from objects and from states of a subject (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 163–7). In addition, every event is an effect of concepts, prospects and functives (the objects of logic and mathematics). That is, forms of content (structured materialisations) and their forms of expression (structures) constitute and define one another. Were the world not an ongoing process of trajectories differentiating themselves, there would be no events and no intelligence either. It might at first appear that the binary thinking that arose most powerfully with the conception of an *ego cogito* has been overcome. And one of the most significant implications of overcoming this structure would be that all binaries, including those powerful cultural signs such as male-female, heterosexual-homosexual, rational-emotional, active-passive, etc., would have come undone. Deleuze, in particular, is quite specific about the mechanism by which the authority of binaries appears to have been overcome. However, as we will see, even for Deleuze, in mathematics and in philosophy binaries persist. What has actually changed is only that a layer of microstructures has been added to the conceptualisation, microstructures that give way ultimately to binaries and so remain within the logic and mathematics governing binaries.

In order to distinguish the micro and macrostructures of his system with respect to the thinker, Deleuze begins by citing the Cartesian will to distinguish doubt from certitude. He had argued previously that making this distinction presupposes the good will of the thinker and the good nature of thought, that is, the expectation that identity, analogy, opposition and resemblance will be accompanied by the 'I think', such that I conceive, I judge, I imagine, I remember and perceive become the four branches of the cogito and 'difference becomes an object of representation always in relation to a conceived identity, a judged analogy with other genera, an imagined opposition of predicates or a perceived similitude' (Deleuze 1994: 137–8/181). In this scheme, difference, differentiation and even repetition are impossible to think, and so are lost to recognition in a concept, distribution through analogy, reproduction in imagination and resemblance through perception (Deleuze 1994: 145/189). Although Zeno of Elea (450 BC), introduced a number of problems which were based on the infinite, and Archimedes used the method of exhaustion to find an approximation to the area of a circle (an early example of integration), no further progress in the development of mathematical differentiation was made until the sixteenth century. Descartes was aware of the development of a method for calculating maxima and minima when the derivative

of the function was 0, but it was Newton who first mathematically represented a particle tracing out a curve with two moving lines which were the coordinates. And it was Leibniz who thought of the variables *x*, *y* as ranging over sequences of infinitely close values. He introduced the symbols *dx* and *dy* to indicate differences between successive values of these sequences.[18] Lacking the full power of differential calculus, it would have been impossible for Descartes to think difference and differentiation in the manner made possible by Leibniz and Newton. Moreover, breaking away from the science and the worldview of the Ancient Greeks and many medieval thinkers meant breaking away from a worldview according to which the Earth is the centre of the Universe and material entities are conceived of in terms of a substance or genus that is the same as itself (identical) and in terms of the attributes of that substance, where there is and must be something identical from which those attributes differ (Aristotle 1970: X, 5, 1054b25). This, according to Deleuze, is something Descartes did not fully achieve.

Descartes' partial success accounts for the critique levelled against him regarding the various aspects of the *cogito*. The critique is that the I conceive, I judge, I imagine, I remember, I perceive, do nothing to disturb thought; they are clearly objects of recognition whereby thought recognises itself in things and in the comfortable certainties of the cogito when it thinks clearly and distinctly in the immediacy of a now moment. What is problematic is that truths generated in this manner are, in fact, no more than hypothetical, they assume or presuppose exactly what is in question and therefore lack certainty, or what Deleuze calls absolute necessity (Deleuze 1994: 139/182). But something, Deleuze maintains, forces us to think differently, some event leads us to ask about the conditions of Cartesian recognition and certainty, that is, about what makes recognition and certainty possible. What forces us to think differently arises through a violent disjunction, in the logical sense of this term. Disjunction refers to a logical proposition in the form of 'either x or not-x, but not both', a proposition, which, following logical rules of transformation, may be reformulated.

Deleuze points out that in *The Republic*, amidst the violence of Socrates' encounter with the sophist Thrasymachus, Socrates recalls the Idea of justice, an Idea that is not able to be remembered on the empirical level. Yet, influenced by empirical, moral motives, Plato is said to miss the opportunity to cast aside common sense and the empirical, and he thereby clouds thought. Faced with the claim that something is both just and unjust, a logical contradiction, Plato insists on making sense of the empirical realm and insists on the law of non-contradiction and the law

of excluded middle. The former establishes that for any proposition that proposition and its negation are never both true, and the latter that for a given proposition and its negation at least one must be true (Hass 2002: 75). Let us not forget that, symbolically, logical contradiction appears to be a structural relation of dominance and erasure because it constructs difference in terms of exclusion (Hass 2002: 76). The law of excluded middle or contrariety is less hierarchical in so far as a single term may have a variety of contraries that need not indicate the lack of a specific property, so that if both contraries are asserted, the system does not collapse. Yet, Plato and Aristotle generally presume that the contrary of a term is not a pluralistic set (such as bad, sad, or unrepentant, for the term good), but that the contrary of good is non-good, reinstating privilege and hierarchical unity (Hass 1998: 35–6).

Deleuze, as such, seems to use the idea of contrariety in this latter sense, as commensurate with non-contradiction. For Socrates, contrariety disrupts common sense and compels even the Socratic soul to probe, to problematise, 'arousing thought in itself' (Plato 1997: 524e).[19] But in the end, the sensible discordant encounter with contrariety must be harmonised. Coaxing Thrasymachus to become gentle, to give up his anger, Socrates upholds the law of non-contradiction and the law of the excluded middle, thereby affirming binaries and their hierarchical structures. Seeking to escape the fate of binaries, of disjunction (either x or not-x), although caught up in the same logical system, Deleuze proposes an alternative. As we noted above, he proposes a Kantian solution, a solution possible only after Plato and Aristotle, and even after Descartes, whose system of coordinates makes the new solution possible but does not yet completely abandon the Greek view. Deleuze proposes a spacetime manifold according to which nature, meaning physical reality, is associative, commutative and distributive, where association (x + x) is opposed to Aristotle's unity of a genus.

In this manifold, the laws of nature distribute parts that cannot be totalised, so that, as Kant argued, nature is conjunctive, expressing itself in the logical forms of this *and* that, this *or* that, rather than as Being, One, or Whole. As we have noted, that things exist one by one without the possibility of being gathered together into a totality comes about as the expression of purely external relations of association within this spacetime field, which is an immanent field, a plane of immanence. It is, in this sense, self-regulating, governed by its immanent laws. In this field, relations between things can be further characterised in terms of the sub-atomic particles that are *their* conditions, the chance collisions of particles that exist one by one and are not unified or governed by a divine

or transcendental principle of unification. Instead, they are connected by means of a transcendental principle of differential relations where the construction of vector fields is organised by the functions of differential calculus. In other words, Deleuze appears to propose a formal structure, a structure that allows him to bypass empirical and commonsensical arguments.

According this formal structure, the condition of possibility of those substances, those molar existences, those objects of recognition and representation, lies in the molecular.

> Molecular desiring-machines are in themselves the investment of the large molar machines or of the configurations that the desiring-machines *form according to the laws of large numbers*, in either or both senses of subordination … Desiring-machines in one sense, but organic, technical, or social machines in the other: these are *the same machines under determinate conditions*. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 287)[20]

Every physical entity is a 'molar' individual that denies atomistic individuality, meaning discernible particles invested with absolute properties. Possessing internal unity, inscribed in a part of space, resisting external influences through circular causality, thus immanent, the molar physical entity is an individual (Merleau-Ponty 1963: 138–9).

However, the molar is posited as the 'limit' of physical knowledge, mathematically, it is that towards which physical knowledge tends without ever reaching the limit. Molar structures are not real, that is, they are not physical, causal forces. They are, instead, an Idea, a signification common to an ensemble of molecular facts, expressed by all the facts but not contained in any one (Merleau-Ponty 1963: 143).[21] A version of this striking formulation is found in Deleuze, for whom the Idea provides, in general, an indication of the signification of what mathematics refers to as a dynamical system. A dynamical system consists of two elements. First, a playing space on which the motion of the system takes place, and second, a rule or rules (a vector field) determining what moves are possible. In addition, every dynamical system is also oriented by an attractor which fixes the overall behaviour of the system (Casti 1994: 26–7). For Deleuze also, each dynamical system is governed by a vector field and an Idea (attractor) which organises the realm it constitutes, whether the attractor is biological, political or any other realm. The rules (the vector field) that govern dynamical systems are the same for all of them and, for Deleuze, the rules of the physical field take on an ontological status. Deleuze ontologises the physical structure so that all realms of existence are

governed by its laws. This is his grand style. This becomes the basis of the claims, made by Deleuze and Guattari, that below Oedipus, or as its condition of possibility, we find a molecular unconscious; that beneath stable forms, there is functionalism; under familialism, polymorphous perversity. Molecular and molar are two aspects of the same system, the same classical molar structure, and every molar entity is an effect of molecular interactions in a dynamical system. So the molecular is simply the same entities or events removed one level to a smaller scale, which, Deleuze claims, makes possible our everyday molar and representational world. If we are to understand this we might want to ask, what is the distinction between the molecular and the molar, the microphysical and the statistical?

V. The Molecular and the Molar

In the most formal, mathematical sense of the term, the molecular refers to Avogadro's number, the number of atoms needed such that the number of grams of a substance equals the atomic mass of the substance; an Avogadro's number of substance is called a mole.[22] Avogadro's hypothesis was key to solving many problems in the chemical sciences in the 1800s. For chemistry, molecules and moles are a matter of physical relations, ascertaining that equal volumes of gases with the same pressure and temperature contain the same number of molecules. By analogy, these terms reveal several possibilities. First, that that 'the machine taken in its structural unity, the living taken in its specific and even personal unity, are mass phenomena or *molar aggregates* … merely two paths in the same statistical direction' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 286). From the point of view of molar or statistical aggregates in physical relations, *molar machines* may be social machines, technical machines, or organic machines. Physically, as statistical aggregates, they are machines that appear as single objects and living organisms that appear as single subjects.

And what of the molecular? *Desiring-machines* are of the molecular order. What does this imply? In the language of Deleuze and Guattari, 'desiring-machines *work according to regimes of syntheses* that have no equivalent in the large aggregates … the indifferent nature of the chemical signals, the indifference to the substrate, and the indirect character of the interactions' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 288). Deleuze states that what he calls the 'regimes' of molar aggregates, their coded organisation, is one with recognition and representation. In other words, these regimes were defined by Aristotle in terms of substance and its

attributes, and by Descartes as representations. By contrast, molecular desiring-machines work according to regimes of synthesis, but not those of the large aggregates. Their syntheses have functional properties – properties such as heightened coherence and efficiency that affect their operations – so that only on the level of fundamental structure does one discern the so-called play of blind or chance combinations. The key feature here is that the organisation of molecules occurs independently, they are not structured 'from above', by the large aggregates, the molar formations; quite the opposite. Molecular syntheses are the condition of the possibility of molar life. That particular molecular syntheses give rise to specific forms of molar life may certainly be a matter of chance, that is, a chance meeting of environmental factors which, nevertheless, gives rise to highly organised molar living structures.

In the grand style, this system involves violent interventions. The characterisation of proteins as the ultimate molecular elements in the arrangement of desiring-machines reveals the method at work here. The method requires that one goes *beyond* the molar to the molecular. How to reach this level, the level of analysis where all aggregates are broken down and reduced to their most fundamental components? If we begin with the regimes of recognition and representation, regimes encompassing thinkers from Plato and Aristotle to Descartes, regimes built on the identity of a genus or the identity of a *cogito*, then there is, for Deleuze, only one solution: 'Destroy, destroy. This is the task of schizoanalysis, which goes by way of destruction – a whole scouring of the unconscious, a complete curettage' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 311). A harsh solution, for by means of it, by means of destruction-reduction, we end up before the gates of a pure functionalism: that is to say, formalism, structure without context. Perhaps this is the ultimate equality a molar individual can achieve, the reduction of each and every one to molecules, nothing more abstract or more equal in the universe.

Like Spinoza, who set out his philosophy as a series of propositions, each one following from the previous, Deleuze's mathematical formalism constitutes his grand style. Mathematical formalism has been characterised as not merely 'Plato playing pleasantly with yesful youths … and getting them to say that they see lovely patterns laid up in heaven, but a tough game played against a tough opponent who is as skeptical as it is possible to be and will not let anything pass unless he absolutely has to' (Lucas 2000: 68, 69). Formalisation allows one to abstract the fundamental shape of a system in order to discern patterns without superficial and messy flesh (Lucas 2000: 70). Formalisation is built upon a frame of maximum cogency, meaning that, at every step, the premises

are true and hence the conclusion is undeniable, to the point where no alternative arguments can even be considered.[23] 'Formal systems minimize the demand made on both the intelligence and the cooperativeness of the opponent. The stock of symbols is small and the rules for manipulating them explicit', such that the average sensual man can recognize the pattern (Lucas 2000: 72).[24] Recall Deleuze's words cited above, that ideal connections constitutive of the problematic, that is, of the dialectical Idea, are incarnated in the real relations which are constituted by mathematical theories. This is the structure of a formal system.

Deleuze's disdain of half measures is palpable and brings to the fore the idea that his philosophy is truly philosophy in the grand style. His insistence upon requiring the constitution of real relations in mathematical theories is manifest in what he takes to be the failure of Plato's dialogues. 'In his development of the idea of dialectic, [Plato] came to think of the respondent as utterly bloody-minded, who would not be persuaded by anything less than the fear of inconsistency, since the one sanction capable of coercing every recalcitrant reasoner into conceding the validity of each step was self-contradiction' (Lucas 2000: 378). Plato was driven to this extreme, Deleuze implies, because he did not cast aside common sense and the empirical. Deleuze will not make this mistake, but will put into play his version of the dialectical or problematic Idea, with its ideal rather than empirical connections. Formalists, it is said, are prepared to respond to challenges, to respond to end-games, and to reach meta-mathematical conclusions based on what appears to be possible. For this reason, dialectical argumentation remains essential in order to extend cogent arguments to what exceeds finite demonstrations. In other words, dialectic allows one to respond to disputes, to examine claims about invalid steps in an argument, and to prove that they are valid. Moreover, if a challenger cannot find counter-instances, there is no need to justify claims about an infinite number of instances. 'Instead of having to go on for ever, waving our hand implausibly over an infinite number of instances, we can get our teeth into a definite, finite case, and chew through it to incontrovertible refutations' (Lucas 2000: 381).[25] Dialectical justifications enable us to demonstrate the validity of transfinite formalist arguments without appeal to only the law of non-contradiction.

In order to overcome the limitation of the Socratic appeal to non-contradiction, Deleuze proposes an image of thought unsullied by the opacity of physical existence, that is, an image set free from recognition, similarity, identity and analogy; it is, therefore, a molecular image. Qualitative opposition within the sensible is quickly tamed by common

sense which knows that contraries cannot coexist in the sensible object. The simultaneity of contraries violates the logical law of excluded middle, however, if we leave aside the sensible, if we merely think, if there is only *thought* unsullied by physical existence, then what is that thought? It is the thought that arises with Newton and Leibniz. It is a thought made possible by the calculus of infinitesimals. It is thought that is pure difference, differentiating itself in a continuous spacetime trajectory. It will be the same for memory, imagination, language, for all so-called faculties. This transcendental empiricism is empirical only in so far as it designates as imperceptible and unthinkable that which takes place at the empirical level and thereby immediately transcends it (Deleuze 1994: 144 [187]).[26] Opposition (contrariety), resemblance, identity and analogy are effects of this thinking in the empirical realm where common sense and the law of non-contradiction prevail. For the faculties, there is only violence, the violence of not harmonising or unifying one another but, instead, *disjoining* all that they encounter. Disjunction of the faculties is their discordant harmony. This is how its elements exist one by one without the possibility of being gathered together.

First, thought undergoes its clash with the unrecognizable *sign*, the being of the sensible, not with sensibility itself. The sign defies common sense and good sense, which is the 'coexistence of contraries, the coexistence of more and less in an unlimited qualitative becoming', which, for Deleuze, due to the law of non-contradiction, can never be sensible, which is always only given as a sign (Deleuze 1994: 141 [183–4]).[27] Then, in place of one's own sensibilities, all that is left is a violated 'soul', no longer a *cogito* but the fractured I that is forced to pose a problem, and in the trauma of this violence, to forget anything that can be recalled, anything seen, heard, imagined or thought, in order to think and recall that which has *never been empirical*, which is transcendental with respect to both sensibility and memory, thus, what is essentially *nonsense* and *forgetfulness*. In the midst of this original violence, the faculties themselves are forced to their limits, meaning, they are forced into discordant harmony, their *disjunction*, the open-ended disorder of the faculties, so that each may pursue its own 'essential' projects, the transcendental projects of thinking, willing, or imagining (Deleuze 1994: 40–141 [183–4]).[28] If a faculty is forced to its *limit*, this does not imply that it reaches some end, but rather that it moves on a trajectory, forever, closer and closer, towards some point, some Idea-attractor, without ever crossing it.

Transcendentally, in a purely formal sense, in the realm of thought, binaries continue to exist but the formal Idea, rather than determining

that something is male or female, animal or vegetable, can be left *indeterminate*, replicating the Kantian free play of all the faculties 'where each goes to its own limit and nevertheless shows the possibility of some sort of harmony with the others' (Deleuze 1984: xi–xii). For Deleuze, outside of the formal transcendental realm of thinking, willing and judging, we succumb over and over again to non-contradiction and the law of the excluded middle. Although the conception of the problematic Idea that undergoes continuous differentiation/differen*c*iation is a conception that undermines the recognition, representation, habituation, equalisation nexus of classical, modern thought, replacing it with the Idea of difference and the diverse, an important question remains.[29] Does it contribute to conceptions beyond the formal and external description of particles? Does it characterise sensible existence? Let us briefly examine this.

Classical physics – the work of Galileo, Kepler, Newton, Leibniz – first gave us the laws according to which particles move and interact with one another. Given any arrangement of the particles that make up the universe, and any choices for their initial motions, these laws can be used to predict the future. Different worlds are arrived at by starting with the particles in different positions. Every trajectory in each universe is defined by laws that specify the movement and interaction of particles. But even for dynamical differential systems, the rules of motion are given; what may be contingent are the particular particles themselves, that is: which particles enter into any given trajectory and in what order? Which affects, percepts, concepts, prospects and functives? In an immanent system, such as that proposed by Deleuze, a system sensitive to initial conditions and with unstable boundaries, as opposed to Newton's closed and certain universe, this cannot be predicted, thus every configuration of particles produces a deterministically chaotic world. This is because once the rules which specify the movement and interaction of particles are set in place, they do not alter –, this is what makes them deterministic. These rules, we have stated, are connection, conjunction and disjunction. Moreover, in the deterministically chaotic world, space and time are given, not emergent. They are, as Kant posited, the pre-given, pre-existent manifold, and time is simply a parameter of *any space whatever*, a fourth dimension, a means for differentiating different spaces, but not an emergent and unpredictable reality. Where the spacetime manifold is always, already given, creation per se disappears in so far as predictability is the goal of the system if not a requirement. The implication of this is that, as revolutionary as Deleuze's grand style may be, in so far as it is a projection of mathematical and

physical structures it can do no more than what they do. One can idealise, as Deleuze certainly does. One can imagine speeds beyond the speed of light that would interfere with the organising power of the rules governing the spacetime manifold, but there remain physical constraints on such ideas and limits, even for the grand style of philosophy.

Notes

1. I would propose that Husserl is utilising this model of differential calculus to solve exactly this sort of problem.
2. The first set of page numbers refer to the English translation, the page numbers following the slash refer to the French original. This will be the case throughout.
3. This is classic problem in mathematics as well as philosophy. See also Olkowski 2007: 207, 214.
4. 'If you have a collection of entities called vectors, an operation of addition of two vectors to give a third vector and an operation of multiplication of a vector by a number to give another vector, and if these operations have the [appropriate properties, they are associative, commutative, distributive and closed under vector addition], then the entire system is called a vector space' (Devlin 1994: 44).
5. For example: [(p v q) v r] may be replaced by [p v (q v r)] and [(p . q) . r] may be replaced by [p . (q . r)].
6. The relation between Kant's transcendental Ideas and Deleuze's rigorous mathematics has been worked out in Olkowski 2007: see especially Chapter 2.
7. For example: (p v q) and (q v p) as well as (p . q) and (q . p) may replace one another, they are logically equivalent.
8. For example: A (B + C) = A B + AC.
9. Deleuze refers to these Kantian syntheses in Deleuze 1990: 294–5/242–3. See also Olkowski 2007: 'What after all do we mean by self, world, god? How is it that certain Ideas correspond to the connective, the hypothetical, the disjunctive? Categorical syllogisms, "All men are mortal," represent the relations of a concept or idea to a subject. Hypothetical syllogisms "If the earth turns, then the sun will rise and set," are causal, manifesting the relation of a concept or an idea to the manifold of objects in the world of appearance, the synthesis of a causal series. Finally, there is the disjunctive relation, the disjunctive synthesis of parts in a system in relation to objects of thought, "Either the universe has a beginning or it does not." This is the relation of a concept or idea to all things in general' (63).
10. 'Nature is not collective, but rather distributive … Nature is not attributive, but rather conjunctive; it expresses itself through "and" and not through "is"' (Deleuze 1990: 267).
11. 'In their fall, atoms collide not because of their differing weights but because of the clinamen … it relates one atom to another … In the void, the velocity of the atom is equal to its movement in a unique direction in a minimum of continuous time' (Deleuze 1990: 269).
12. So, for example, the differential equation $dP/dt = rP$ describes uninhibited growth where (P)t is the size of some population and r is a fixed growth rate.
13. 'Most applications of differential equations in economics are of this nature: the actual changes brought about in an economy by single individuals and small companies are so small compared to the whole, and there are so many of them,

that the whole system behaves as if it were experiencing continuous change' (Devlin 1994: 93).

14. For Deleuze, the use of vector fields requires the complete determination of a problem so that 'if the differentials disappear in the result, this is to the extent that the problem-instance differs in kind from the solution-instance; it is the movement by which the solutions necessarily come to conceal the problem' (Deleuze 1994: 177–8/230).
15. Dialectical here refers to Platonic not Hegelian dialectics.
16. 'Differential calculus is not the unimaginative calculus of the utilitarian, the crude arithmetic calculus which subordinates thought to other ends, but the algebra of pure thought, the superior irony of problems themselves' (Deleuze 1994: 181–2/236). I have discussed the Idea differentiating itself in Olkowski 2007: 27–30.
17. http://mathworld.wolfram.com/Attractor.html. An asymptote is a line that continually approaches a given curve but does not meet it at any finite distance.
18. A concise account of these developments can be found at http://www-groups.dcs.st-and.ac.uk/~history/HistTopics/The_rise_of_calculus.html (accessed 15 July 2010).
19. Without contrariety and contradiction, would Platonic thought have been possible?
20. Determinate conditions are statistical forms (the larger the groups averaged, the less the variation). See note at the bottom of Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 287.
21. Merleau-Ponty emphasises the unity of the molar as opposed to the molecular aggregate.
22. http://scienceworld.wolfram.com/physics/AvogadrosNumber.html. The Avogadro Constant, L, is a constant number used to refer to atoms, molecules, ions and electrons. Its value is $6.023 \times 10^{23}\ \mathrm{mol}^{-1}$.
23. 'But that ideal of absolute cogency ... has proved unattainable.'
24. 'Even l'homme moyen sensuel can recognize it.'
25. For example, dialectical justification of recursion allows us to overcome the finitude of incontrovertibility and to show that it is an admissible form of argument. A recursive process is one in which objects are defined in terms of other objects of the same type. Using some sort of recurrence relation, the entire class of objects can then be built up from a few initial values and a small number of rules. See also: http://mathworld.wolfram.com/Recursion.html
26. 'Transcendental empiricism is the only way to avoid tracing the transcendental from the outlines of the empirical' (Deleuze 1994: 144/187).
27. It is the same clash as that decried by Plato, but this time without the resolution in harmony.
28. Deleuze believes that, without this forcing, we remain ignorant or minimally habituated.
29. Different/ciation indicates both the state of differential relations in the Idea and the qualitative and extensive series in which they are actualised.

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Review

Simon O'Sullivan and Stephen Zepke (2008) *Deleuze, Guattari and the Production of the New*, London and New York: Continuum.

Dalie Giroux, René Lemieux and Pierre-Luc Chénier (2009) *Contr'hommage pour Gilles Deleuze. Nouvelles lectures, nouvelles écritures*, Québec: Presses de l'Université de Laval.

Books of essays devoted to the individual and/or joint work of Deleuze and Guattari usually explore their ideas in relation to a wide variety of areas. *Deleuze, Guattari and the Production of the New* and *Contr'hommage pour Gilles Deleuze* are no exception to this rule: there are contributions across the two volumes dealing with pure philosophy, intellectual history, the arts (painting, conceptual art, music, cinema and literature, though nothing on architecture), method in the social sciences, and cultural/political critique – especially modes of resistence to capitalism, above all in its post-industrial, 'cognitive' form. These areas often overlap within particular essays. As its title implies, the Laval volume only discusses solo Deleuze and the joint work, not solo Guattari, but its unity is primarily linguistic (it is in French) and geographic (it is very much a product of Québec). These two elements are not on the whole alluded to overtly in the book, but they do give it a distinctive underlying tone, since the concepts of '*peuple manquant*' and '*littérature mineure*' could be applied with some justification to the people and the culture of Québec, and the French language connection means that certain more 'authentic' aspects of Deleuze come through, above all his attitude to Marxism. Anglo-Saxon commentators do not always understand that the wrestling with Marx of such French philosophers as Merleau-Ponty, Derrida and Lyotard, as well as Deleuze, has the complexity of a lapsed Catholic's anti-clericalism. Even if this could be regarded as a limitation to be overcome, it still needs to be

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understood. Overall, there is a coherent 'political' feel to the Laval volume, even when it is dealing with the arts.

The Continuum book draws many of its contributors from throughout the Anglo-Saxon world, but it also includes three Italians (although only one of them is still based in Italy), Eric Alliez, Stephen Zepke (also one of the editors) and an English translation by David Reggio of a *tranche* of 14 pages taken from the first chapter of *Cartographies schizoanalytiques* by Guattari.[1] This last item points to a salient feature of the volume, also indicated by its title: solo Guattari is given as much prominence as solo Deleuze or the joint work. The ideas of Deleuze and/or Guattari are discussed in relation to those of other philosophers or thinkers on quite a few occasions. These thinkers or philosophers include: Spinoza, Kant, Bergson, Whitehead, Arendt, Lacan, Foucault and Badiou. This is relatively rare in the Laval volume, where the contributors tend to construct arguments from more precise exegeses of Deleuzian and/or joint texts, although Alain Beaulieu does deal very well with Deleuze's approach to the history of philosophy, and there are some perceptive remarks by Erik Bordeleau about the affinities and differences between the joint work and Foucault. Not that such exegeses are entirely absent from the Continuum book: Eugene Holland's analysis of certain passages from *A Thousand Plateaus* is particularly impressive. The phrase 'the production of the new' in the title of the O'Sullivan and Zepke volume is very much a *leitmotiv* running through the essays it includes. What is especially subtle is not just that the production of the new is explored within contributions dedicated to different areas such as pure philosophy, avant-garde artistic practice or cultural/political critique, but that the very identity of the new or of different kinds of new is examined. This is particularly true as regards different strands within artistic modernism and Deleuze and/or Guattari's complex relationship with recent changes in capitalism, of which they may perhaps be as much symptoms as critics.

While the ideas of the two thinkers can indeed be applied to an astonishing number of different areas, the difficulties encountered in relating their ideas to specific ones can vary. Evidently, Deleuze was a 'professional' philosopher and Guattari a 'professional' psychoanalyst, and they both had a good grasp of the other's discipline. (Of course, psychoanalysis and philosophy are often very closely linked within modern French thought, Lacan and Kristeva being prime examples of this). However radical or subversive Guattari and/or Deleuze may be, their ideas have always been developed and matured in a complex dialogue with their philosophic or psychoanalytic predecessors,

who have been understood in an extremely thorough, if often very imaginative way. So the problems here are more to do with richness, depth and complexity than with lack of development, but this is not always the case when Deleuze and/or Guattari are dealing with areas outside their 'core competences', for example in relation to the arts. Both writers had sophisticated, 'intellectually progressive', more or less modernist taste in the arts,[2] but they are not critics, either conventional or more modern, or theorists. They are not even as close to criticism or theory as Derrida or Kristeva are. In a sense, this is their strength: what they write on the arts is fascinating because they do have subtle natural responses to them, but they are free from a kind of 'trained' processing of them or limiting preconceptions of what they could do. They liberate the arts by treating them as flows of philosophical or psychological process, and it is clear that their innovative philosophical and psychoanalytic ideas are very much connected to their engagement with aesthetic modernism, but their taste in the arts is personal, slightly what one might expect from the milieu and time in which they lived, and they did not stretch their taste or wrestle with material they did not like in the way that good practitioners or critics tend to do and they themselves did in relation to their own disciplines. Maintaining the umbilical cord that links Guattari and/or Deleuze with modernism prevents one from using their concepts to work through the paradoxes within individual nexuses of cultural history, for example Uccello as master of Renaissance perspective and representation *and* creator of surface play who appealed to the surrealists, or African arts as an important source for modernism *and* a vehicle for transmitting traditional values within the continent itself. Disjunctive synthesis can also be an excellent model for literally being able to think about apparently 'ridiculous' cultural juxtapositions, such as Mozart or Beethoven and Sénoufo or Peul initiation music: this kind of exploration could be a way of producing complexly textured globalised artistic products. It is worth adding that although Deleuze and/or Guattari do not have the acute and detailed type of perception gained from criticism or practice, they are much closer to this kind of perception than, say, Bourdieu, Baudrillard, Žižek and even perhaps Foucault are. There is a real possibility of combining elements from Guattari and/or Deleuze and '*nouvelle critique*', where the exhaustive internal analyses of artistic 'texts' in the latter could be yoked to the more 'advanced' philosophic and psychoanalytic ideas of the former.

The situation with regard to sociology and anthropology is similar, but the gap between Deleuze and/or Guattari and 'professionals' within these subjects is even more pronounced. Their references to theory in

this context are mostly anthropological – even though it was very much Deleuze who initiated the revival of interest in Gabriel Tarde – and those references are themselves fairly selective within the overall field of anthropological theory. They do use empirical studies, but again in a rather selective way: almost all of them relate to the anthropology of Africa. To a large extent, their approach to anthropology has to be understood in the context of their relationship to Marxism, above all their desire to go beyond the constraints of unreconstructed dialectical materialism. The problem is that they are engaging with work which would be seen as 'old-fashioned' by most modern anthropologists and sociologists, but their ideas, which in part come out of this engagement, on the construction and fluidity of identity and its relationship to nature, society and the cosmos could be very important for those very same modern specialists. Perhaps some kind of genuinely cross-disciplinary activity is necessary to bring Guattari and/or Deleuze 'back into the fold' of current sociology and anthropology.[3]

The position with regard to political theory is rather different: here a very coherent vision of the micropolitical and resistence to the monolithic or rigidifying macro emerges from the individual and joint work of the two thinkers; but, apart from Spinoza and Marx, they rarely deal with mainstream political theorists within the Western tradition, something that is not true of Derrida, for example.[4] Of course, this is what one would expect of Deleuze and/or Guattari's radically anti-establishment stance, but the difficulty of seeing precisely how their politics might work in practice might perhaps be overcome by the kind of wrestling with their predecessors that is characteristic of their psychoanalytic and philosophic work, which has a much more concrete quality.

The most beautiful and profound essay in either book – it is actually in the O'Sullivan and Zepke volume – is by Dorothea Olkowski. She tackles the problems of logic and paradox, depth and surface, and the psychoanalytic sections of Deleuze's *The Logic of Sense* with truly inspired passages of analysis, but she also makes an important detour via the work of Arendt, from whom she takes a valuable concept concerning the nature of thought: that it detaches humans from the world while they still remain part of it. This gives Olkowski a perspective that is immensely helpful for bringing out the disjunctive and asymmetrical qualities that are so essential to Deleuze and that make his work such a key corrective to any easy and self-deceiving 'rediscovery of the body' or 'fusion with the environment', where an unchanged thinking subject simply sees itself reflected in another medium. Joë Bousquet,

a significant figure in *The Logic of Sense*, is worth examining more fully in relation to the side of Deleuze that Olkowski explores. His extraordinary journey – reconstructing his shattered self, its connection with the world and the meaning of his past in different kinds of poetic language throughout roughly half his life – has everything to do with a response to disjunction and asymmetry.[5]

There are two further pure philosophy essays, by Daniel W. Smith and Steven Shaviro, in the Continuum volume, and three contributions that could be characterised as intellectual history across the two books: those of Alain Beaulieu, Sylvano Santini (both in Laval) and David Reggio (Continuum). Smith concentrates on *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense*, giving an admirably lucid exposition of the mechanics of the relationship between identity, difference and novelty in Deleuze, his transcendental empiricism and his use of both Maimon's critique of Kant and mathematics, while Shaviro makes a sustained exploration of a kind of double causality of physical cause and conceptual purpose, mostly in Kant and Whitehead, though there are also some very illuminating passages on *The Logic of Sense*. Both essays are excellent, as also is the one by Beaulieu, which offers a very skilful blend of information about Deleuze's actual teaching practice and behaviour as an academic and an analysis of his approach to the history of philosophy, showing how he creates a sort of drama out of seeing his predecessors as friends, enemies and sparring partners. Santini's contribution is a well-researched account of the initial reception of Deleuze in the United States: it makes some valid points, but the relationship between 'French theory' and actual French philosophy is more complex and potentially more fruitful than Santini's arguments suggest. Reggio provides a short but valuable introduction to his excellent translation of a section from *Cartographies schizoanalytiques*, in which he mentions the various figures from the clinics of Saint-Alban and La Borde who were important for Guattari, as well as the valuable work of the philosopher Henri Maldiney, who also influenced Deleuze.[6]

There are five contributions across the two volumes primarily devoted to the visual arts: four in the Continuum book, by David Burrows, Eric Alliez, Claire Colebrook and Stephen Zepke, and one by Sjoerd van Tuinen in the Laval volume. Borrows' essay is the most fully satisfying of the five: he outlines Deleuze's and Badiou's philosophies of the event in a way that is contrastive but not *parti pris*, giving equal weight to the ideas of both philosophers, but when he uses these ideas to develop interpretations of the art of Duchamp, Pollock and Smithson, he does not try to fit the whole production of each

artist into one 'camp' or the other but rather shows how their works can be read from both perspectives. Burrows' approach also allows a kind of 'feedback' effect through which he can detect blind spots in the actual ideas of Badiou and Deleuze. The partisan dialectics that are absent from Burrows' contribution slightly mar the essays by Alliez and Colebrook. The former combines a Deleuzian and/or Guattarian vitalist interpretation of Matisse with a Lacanian one of Duchamp, but Alliez's sympathies are so strongly engaged that the arguments concerning Duchamp are underdeveloped, being used in part to dismiss what the artist did – although one should say that the passages relating to Matisse are very beautiful. Colebrook distinguishes between the presence in avant-garde art of a passive vitalism to be found in Deleuze and in the joint work and of an active Kantian one – again in a somewhat overly dialectal manner, though Colebrook makes perceptive links between these two vitalisms and the nature of the beautiful in different kinds of modern art. She also moves interestingly back and forth across the boundaries between artistic beauty and a beauty connected with pleasurable consumption or attractive physical appearance. Zepke argues very subtly for an alternative Guattarian idea of the readymade and its relevance to conceptual art, exploring the work of the Argentinian *Grupo de Artistas de Vanguardia*, Oiticica and Adrian Piper, and making some excellent points about how art can be political. Van Tuinen's essay is a little disappointing in that it does not do much more than bring together the passages on Mannerism from *Francis Bacon* and *The Fold*, but at least it does this in a very thorough way. A more fruitful approach might have been to pursue a sustained Deleuzian interpretation of a particular Mannerist artist, such as Lotto, Tintoretto, Pontormo, Rosso Fiorentino or Beccafumi. It would also be worth exploring the relationship between Mannerism and the neo-Platonism that it espoused as its philosophic base, but only if one adopts a Deleuzian attitude to the history of philosophy.

In the decades preceding the emergence of Berlusconi as a political force, Italy produced a type of left-wing culture that combined a Gramscian perspective on Marxism, sophisticated intellectuals who could 'work with their hands', a micropolitics of the regional, and a sophisticated use of the arts to foster collectivity. Obviously, there were parallels with comparable movements elsewhere, but the Italian version was distinctive and autonomous, with some splendid artistic and intellectual achievements. That is why the three excellent contributions in the Continuum volume by Bifo (Franco Berardi), Alberto Toscano and Maurizio Lazzarato are such a pleasure. All three essays broadly involve

a cultural/political critique of post-industrial, 'cognitive' capitalism and the shift from societies of discipline to those of control, while simultaneously negotiating the slightly contradictory relationship of Deleuze and/or Guattari to this historical development. There are, however, nuances of difference between each author's mode of 'spiritual resistance'. Bifo examines the notion of desire in Guattari and the joint work and eventually settles for the more resigned and muted old-age version of it in *What is Philosophy?* and *Chaosmosis*; Toscano argues for the importance of the Bartlebyesque quality of negativism in Deleuze and the joint work; and Lazzarato discusses Guattari's aesthetic paradigm, involving rupture and transversals, for the process of bringing together groups of people and creating situations. It is this last essay which comes closest to giving an idea of how a Deleuze-and-Guattarian world might be created, not simply how a non-Deleuze-and-Guattarian world can be resisted.[7]

Erik Bordeleau's very subtle and resonant essay in the Laval volume also explores the construction of alternative collectivities: he uses exegeses of the three references to China in *A Thousand Plateaus* as the *points de repère* in an outline of the overall spiritual journey of the book, showing its affinities with classical Chinese thought and art and distinguishing it very skilfully from the work of Foucault, whose relationship with solo Deleuze also features in two contributions in the Continuum volume, by Simon O'Sullivan and John Rajchman. The former makes some perceptive observations about technologies of the self and the production of the new in Bergson, Spinoza, Foucault and solo Guattari as well as Deleuze. O'Sullivan is also particularly good on meditation techniques. Of course, Deleuze brought out a book on Foucault in 1986, and this allows Rajchman to treat them as a composite philosophic figure, moving back and forth between the two in order to outline a kind of creativity that involves taking oneself away from oneself, learning by unlearning and going beyond the normative. The approach is a fruitful one, as it avoids being overly dialectical and therefore gets through to a continuum of ideas behind the 'positions' of the two philosophers. The possible application of the concept of the body without organs (BwO) to sociological theory and practice is proposed by Andreas Krebs in a very intelligent essay in the Laval volume. His reasons for wanting to employ the concept are perfectly valid: it will enable one to go beyond the discursive and/or intertextual into the area of affect. Krebs' exposition of the BwO is excellent, and he gives a reasonable picture of how it could be used in actual sociological fieldwork.[8]

There are four other worthwhile contributions on cinema, literature and music across the two volumes, two in the Laval book, by Serge Cardinal (cinema) and Dalie Giroux (literature), and two in the Continuum book, by Eugene Holland (music) and Darren Ambrose (cinema). Both the Laval essays are very impressive and have a distinctly political tinge to them. Cardinal offers a beautifully argued extended exegesis of a key phrase from *Cinema 2*, showing how cinema is initially closely bound up with capitalism but can 'take off' from it, disrupting the rotating system of equivalence it imposes on flow, and using crystalline circuits of the virtual and actual to conjure new modes of reality, with two different types of time being an essential factor here. The essay is especially good at emphasising how Deleuze does not simply reject capitalism but rather scrambles and reorganises its elements. The contrast between Max Brod's quasi-Freudian approach to Kafka and the anti-oedipal one adopted by Deleuze and Guattari in their book on him is the subject of Giroux's essay: her final presentation of the two authors' Kafka as politically subversive machine rather than angst-ridden individual is a very subtle one. Holland writes about jazz: his lengthy discussion of the concept of the refrain, the interpretation of the 'Fort/Da' phrase in Freud, and the idea of creative repetition in *A Thousand Plateaus*, which takes up over half his essay, is excellent. His characterisation of jazz as a Deleuze-and-Guattarian form of music is perfectly reasonable in a general sense, but he does not explore the fact that improvisation in the performing arts can often involve a high level of group pressure to conform and to give the audience what it wants. Ambrose deals impressively with the compositional grammar of film and its capacity to produce new images that capture the invisible forces of time (both of which are still evolving) via Deleuze's treatment of French Impressionist and German Expressionist cinema. This very important relationship between the structural engineering of Deleuze's philosophy and new types of compositional grammar in the arts also features in a piece of creative writing by Claudine Vachon in the Laval volume: two continuous texts run in parallel, one on the right-hand pages, the other on the left-hand ones. This means that if one reads the pages in numerical order, the two texts constantly intercut, and complex non-verbal resonances begin to emerge, all the more so because the two texts are quite different from each other, even if they seem to be linked because the third-person protagonist from the left-hand pages and the 'I' that speaks in the right-hand ones are both female and seem as if they are the same person. Nevertheless, the third-person text is a narrative, albeit a slightly mysterious one, containing a father–daughter relationship, a

female terrorist on the run, and a final act of intense but non-violent subversion in a work of performance art, while the first-person text is a stream of internal and body-situated-in-the-world consciousness, written in short, stylised phrases with a great deal of repetition, where the narrator listens to herself as an inner field of revolt open to the outside. Individually, both texts are accomplished, but the real strength of the piece lies in the creative interference and echoing that happen between them.

Overall, the combination of sustained intelligence, depth and variety throughout both volumes is remarkable. All of the essays deal with the transformational quality in the work of Deleuze and/or Guattari, but they do so from two slightly different perspectives: there is a greater sense of the collective in the Laval volume and in the 'Italian' contributions to the Continuum one, while much of the rest of the O'Sullivan and Zepke book is orientated towards the individual. Both perspectives are perfectly valid, but it is important to remember that what is precious about Deleuze and Guattari is that they eschewed both bourgeois individualism and the 'hard left' to point the way towards an extraordinary blend of fluid solidarity and interconnective sensitivity.

Guy Callan

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Notes

1. See Guattari 1989: 34–47. Comparison with the French text shows Reggio's translation to be a very intelligent one.
2. Solo Deleuze's treatment of the arts is well known, but that of solo Guattari rather less so. For the latter, one could do worse than start with the three essays on Genet, Witkiewicz and Balthus near the end of *Cartographies schizoanalytiques*. See Guattari 1989: 269–90, 303–10, 319–31. Guattari was also much more interested in Bakhtin than Deleuze was.
3. The main text in terms of anthropological references is *Anti-Oedipus*, although there is also a fair sprinkling of them in *A Thousand Plateaus*. For a concise discussion of the French Marxist anthropology that emerged in the late 1960s around the same time as Deleuze and Guattari were beginning their collaboration, see Bloch 1983/5: 146–172. For a recent attempt to relate Deleuze and/or Guattari to anthropology, see Viveiros de Castro 2009.
4. See in particular the recently published seminars by Derrida (2009, 2010), though the content of these two volumes very much relates to other work by Derrida. Nancy and Badiou are also much closer to mainstream political theory.
5. The ideas in Arendt which are used by Olkowski remind one of Merleau-Ponty, on whom she has co-edited an excellent book of essays: see Olkowski and Morley 1999. Bousquet comes into the twenty-first series of *The Logic of Sense*. For recent work on him, see Bhattacharya 1998, Gür 1998 and Gaudard 2000. Malabou (2009) is an absorbing work of original philosophy which discusses

accidental damage and personality change: there are references to Spinoza, Deleuze and the joint work.
6. Maimon's main text is now available in English: see Maimon 2010. For interesting books by figures from Saint-Alban and La Borde, see Oury 1989 and Tosquelles 2003.
7. For an impressive work of theoretical sociology that addresses the split between Reason, usually bound up with the state, and the Subject as private individual consciousness, and how to create new kinds of collectivity, see Touraine 1995, although there is hardly any mention of Guattari and/or Deleuze.
8. For two excellent recent books on *Anti-Oedipus*, see Cornibert and Goddard 2008 and Sibertin-Blanc 2010. For a rich philosophical work on Artaud and the body, see Margel 2008.

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Call for Proposals (Papers)

Special Issue *Deleuze Studies* (Edinburgh University Press, Spring 2012) *The Smooth and the Striated*

In the context of the 3rd International Deleuze Studies Conference 2010, organised by the University of Amsterdam and the University of Utrecht, an exhibition and a debate with various researchers and artists reflected on the relationship between Deleuze's thought and contemporary art and media practice, with a particular interest in Deleuze and Guattari's chapter 'The Smooth and the Striated' from *A Thousand Plateaus* (See http://thesmoothandthestriated.wordpress.com). In continuation of this ongoing research and persistent interest in the meaning of 'smooth and striated spaces' in relation to Deleuze's thoughts on art, we are very happy to invite scholars from various practices to contribute to a special issue of *Deleuze Studies*, dedicated to a variety of issues evoked by the essay and its interpretations.

In 'The Smooth and the Striated' a characterisation of the 'smooth' and the 'striated' emerges from a look at various 'models' of interaction between these different kinds of space. While the nature of 'smooth space' is one of continuous development of form, 'striated space' produces an order and succession of distinct forms. 'Smooth' has a greater power of deterritoralisation, whereas 'striation' for Deleuze and Guattari, seems to denote a certain tendency to measure, categorise and solidify a particular state or situation. Important, for the authors, is the continuous reciprocal and entwined relationship between the two spaces: a smooth space elicits the emergence of a striated space and vice versa.

We would like to invite scholars to send a proposal for papers on topics related to the central theme of this issue of *Deleuze Studies*. We encourage authors to 'think with art' and thus to think about Deleuze's thought in relation to contemporary art and media practice. Topics for papers could include (but are not limited to) the following:

- How do artists reflect on the presence and representation of (historical) processes of smoothing and striation in our contemporary environment?
- What are the socio-political consequences of expanding striated spaces?
- How does memory relate to the ongoing interplay between the smooth and the striated?
- How do site specific art works integrate the smooth and the striated?
- How is art itself a way of smoothing (or striating) space?

Proposals (max. 500 words) can be send before 15 March 2011 to Patricia Pisters (p.pisters@uva.nl) and Flora Lysen (f.c.lysen@gmail.com). Deadline for full papers: 15 June 2011.

5th International *Deleuze Studies* Conference
Deterritorializing Deleuze

New Orleans, 25–27 June 2012

Hosted by Tulane University Department of Philosophy with Southeastern Louisiana University Department of History and Political Science.

The fifth annual *Deleuze Studies* Conference will continue to explore themes related to Deleuze and Deleuze and Guattari that have been the focus of previous conferences. In particular, this conference will bring together a wide range of researchers, writers, and artists who have each drawn inspiration from Deleuze's work. More to the point, this conference will explore the relationships between philosophy, science, and art, examining how each practice needs the deterritorializing influence of the other. A central question of this conference will be to explore the role the texts of Deleuze (and Guattari) have played in the emerging debates and discussions within and among philosophy, science, and art. A further question will be how work within the various philosophical, scientific, and artistic disciplines has in turn pushed Deleuze studies in new, promising, and unpredicted directions.

The 2012 *Deleuze Studies* conference will be held in New Orleans, on the campus of Tulane University. New Orleans is a unique city with a vibrant cultural life that will provide a perfect setting for a number of the evening events that will be planned in conjunction with the conference. Hosting the conference in the United States for the first time will also provide an opportunity for the ever-increasing number of people working on Deleuze in North America to present their work.

Possible topics for presentation at the conference can include, but need not be limited to:

- Philosophy and culture
- Architecture and urban planning
- Deleuze and analytic philosophy
- Neuroscience and philosophy of mind
- Aesthetics and artistic practice
- Globalism and the crises of capitalism
- Minor literatures and literary criticism
- Philosophy, ontology, and metaphysics
- Deleuze and the history of philosophy
- Gender and politics
- Problems in science and mathematics
- Historiography and philosophy

Length of presentations are to be limited to a maximum of 20 minutes. We welcome panel proposals. Submit your abstract or panel proposal (including abstracts) to the conference organizer by 1 February 2012.

Conference organizers: Professor Jeffrey Bell, Southeastern Louisiana University, and Professor Richard Velkley, Tulane University. For more information, contact Professor Bell at jbell@selu.edu.

Deleuze Camp

Preceding the conference students and scholars interested in the work of Gilles Deleuze are welcome to participate in Deleuze Camp 6 which will take place on 18–22 June 2012 in New Orleans. This venue will provide an opportunity for participants to engage with experienced scholars from different fields in readings of Deleuze's texts. The Deleuze camp will also include a student forum where participants can present their own work and ideas. Spaces are limited. For applications and more information, contact Professor Bell.

Signatures of the Invisible: On Schizoanalysis and Visual Culture

Phillip Roberts Cardiff University

This collection marks a critical juncture somewhere between Deleuze's studies of cinema (2005a; 2005b) and his schizoanalytic work with Félix Guattari (2004a; 2004b). Each essay in this collection positions itself in the field of discourse mapped out between each of Deleuze's projects; each acts as a little machine, redirecting the systems of discourse that pass between the constellations of Deleuze's thought so that they might break away onto new trajectories. Each of the essays here, in its own way, attempts to utilise a schizoanalytic conception of visual culture *in order to do something*. The task of this introduction is firstly, to sketch out the discursive field in which they are working – to determine where in the territory between Deleuze's two projects their little machines are set to work – and secondly, to consider what it is that these machines are doing. We are engaged here in the task of drawing up an inventory of these critical connections.

In two essays on schizoanalysis and cinema (2008; 2010), Ian Buchanan has already started to question what forms this connection might take, suggesting that although Deleuze himself was seemingly reluctant to construct his cinematic studies with the same systems of concepts that would inform schizoanalysis, there is nothing to stop us from putting these projects into communication ourselves. Deleuze's own silence on the connections between the two projects does not make such connections impossible or unnecessary, and 'doesn't mean', Buchanan says, 'we have to follow Deleuze in ignoring the questions he left unasked and unanswered' (2008: 2). This is the form that any successful intersection between schizoanalysis and cinema must take. In order to adequately determine what the field of discourse between the projects might look like, we must identify the spaces that Deleuze's own

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lines of enquiry had failed to explore; find those questions that Deleuze's work left unasked and unanswered and to set our little machines to work. What this means is that rather than framing this collection as an attempt to *add* a schizoanalysis to Deleuze's work on cinema, we take this as an exercise of a different sort, that is, as a search for what is *missing* from this work that might be introduced through forcing Deleuze's cinematic toolbox into communication with the conceptual schema set forth by schizoanalysis.

Buchanan's work is useful in this respect, providing us with a provisional list of areas that the cinema books had failed to explore, lines of enquiry that Deleuze had not developed fully, and questions that were *beyond the scope of the strictly philosophical framework he set for himself* (2008: 2). Deleuze's analysis of cinema, Buchanan notes, is unconcerned with, and perhaps even unsuited to answering, questions of material film production: 'the interrelated questions of why we watch certain films and just as significantly why we pay money to do so' (2008: 2). He has seemingly little interest in film's effect on audiences or in its status as an industrial art, or in any form of cinema that might exist outside of those precious few examples that would demonstrate the potential of cinema as art. He does not at any point, Buchanan says, 'write about *Hell Behind Bars*, *Shaft*, *Night of the Living Dead*, *The Birds 2*, or even *Star Wars*' (2008: 11). In short: 'Deleuze refuses to draw any conclusions from his analysis of the sense of cinema about issues that do not pertain directly to cinema as a specific form of art' (2008: 3).

Buchanan is very clear on the spaces that he feels a schizoanalytic approach to cinema will help to fill, identifying questions relating to cinema as a mass culture object and setting his machines to work. But we can go even further than this, opening Deleuze's taxonomy of images to systems of art and advertising, fashion, photography, political reporting, professional athletics, media branding, pop music, celebrity magazines and association football. If, in *Cinema 1*, Deleuze would say that an atom is an image, or an eye or a brain or a body (2005a: 59), if he would frame *the universe as cinema in itself* (2005a: 60), then why stop at *Star Wars*? Why not open the image onto the world? Why not, as Guy Debord's theorisation of the image as spectacle would attest, conceive of 'a social relation between people that is mediated by images' (2009: 24) and develop the connections across Deleuze's work that would help us analyse this? This is precisely the reason why we have written *visual culture* rather than cinema on the front of this volume. Analysing the *social relations between people* is something that the schizoanalysis

books had already been doing, and as any communication between the two projects will demand that cinema opens itself to a bit of *relation to the outside* (as schizoanalysis asks), then any coupling of schizoanalysis *and* cinema must always be more than cinema – *Schizoanalysis and Visual Culture*.

So then, if we are to open Deleuze's studies of cinema onto the larger field of visual culture, then what spaces do we find in the discursive field between visual culture and schizoanalysis? What is missing and *why* is it imperative that we should bring this to light? By developing connections between the work in this way we can begin to ask those questions that Buchanan has already been driving towards and which in different ways had concerned much of the critical work on cinema prior to the writing of Deleuze's cinema books – questions of audience reception, of the cinematic apparatus, of ideology and, above all, of power. Paradoxically, Deleuze himself was to point out this absence in *Cinema 2*, dedicating a short section towards the end of the book to the functioning of a political cinema and to his admission that 'the people no longer exist, or not yet … *the people are missing*' (2005b: 208). This is perhaps as true of Deleuze's own work on cinema as it is of the films that he is analysing, as despite the richness of the few pages in which he explores the development of a third-world cinema, neither book is able to expand this political theorisation of the image in any significance. This is perhaps surprising given the concerns that these pages share with the schizoanalysis books, with Deleuze and Guattari's work on Kafka (1986), or even his book on Foucault (2006), published shortly after *Cinema 2* and directly concerned with the questions of power and visibility that could so easily have informed the preceding works.

We should perhaps be most surprised that even within his brief writings on third-world cinema, Deleuze would neglect to draw on the extensive work in this field that film criticism had produced in the years leading up to his cinema project. As such we find no mention of Third Cinema as a concept, of Solanas and Getino, or of Peter Wollen and Counter Cinema, both of which were relevant to Deleuze's position and available (and hugely influential) when he was writing his cinema books.[1] This not to say that Deleuze is blind to the existence of a wider cinema criticism; he is a great admirer of André Bazin, often refers to Christian Metz and marks Jean-Louis Comolli's political cinema as exemplary (although he refers to him only once and then only in his capacity as a film-maker). However, Deleuze's use of the great cinema theorists is restricted to the extent to which each coincides with his own

study of cinema as a philosophical exercise. He is seemingly unwilling to insert his work into a wider theoretical discourse on cinema, to see where a Bergson-inspired reading of cinema might sit along side the psychoanalytic, semiological and ideological studies that were prevalent at the time, to engage his toolbox of concepts in the problems that would inform each approach.

Given the scope and complexity of his cinema studies, we should perhaps not hold Deleuze to account for this too strongly, but rather set ourselves to the task of perverting his work so that it might be able to answer these very questions. If we are to apply Deleuze's thinking in this other work to *Cinema 2*'s few pages on political cinema, we should see how in constructing a people that do not yet exist, these films are engaged in the process of *making visible* a people that had been hidden. So when Rocha films his Brazil he isolates a lived experience beneath the myth of Brazilian cinema, making visible a new Brazil; when Sembene films his talking-cinema, he makes visible the African as story-teller, and contrasts this with the myth of the African as dancer (2005b: 214), thus constructing a reality that had not been made visible and providing an actually existing people with the tools to speak about their own political reality for the first time.

Buchanan is correct to highlight that Deleuze's conception of the cinematic image is already schizoanalytic (2010: 136); our questions of visibilities and discourse already direct us towards the formalism of *A Thousand Plateaus*. There is a conceptual equivalence, Buchanan says, in which the body without organs, the abstract machine and the assemblage, already inform the basic matrix of Deleuze's account of the cinematic image (ibid.). Schizoanalysis is already present within the cinema project, obscured in the spaces between the lines of Deleuze's strictly philosophical and aesthetic discussion of cinema. It is the task of our own critical machines, of each of the essays in the present collection, to discover it and reorder the points of intersection between the two projects so that we might begin to traverse the many important territories that Deleuze's work has not yet fully explored. We might direct our lines of enquiries towards questions of power in visual culture, towards mass culture or the material production of film, spectatorship, or innumerable other points in our field of critical discourse, and find that despite his apparent silence on any number of such issues, these systems of enquiry are already at work within Deleuze's cinema project – what we require of schizoanalysis is that it make these systems visible.

Tom Conley's contribution, which opens this collection, is engaged in this very act, developing Buchanan's suggestion that specific words and images function *in the manner of little machines* in order to explore an important (but surprisingly infrequent) dialogue between the works of Deleuze and Maurice Blanchot. Conley takes as his starting point an encounter between the two thinkers that an essay by Marie-Claire Ropars-Wuilleumier had already staged (2010), arguing that Ropars-Wuilleumier's reading of Blanchot's interventions into Deleuze's thought in *Cinema 2* alters and occasionally subverts his taxonomical and philosophical project. By this he means that Blanchot's formulation of the *outside,* a space that is irreducible to language, that resides between what is said and what is not said, confronts Deleuze's cinema of thought with an outside – an unthought. This outside is the spaces of discourse and visibility that have not yet come into emergence. It confronts Deleuze's cinema of thought with the spaces of what is not thought, the peoples that are yet to come, the systems of knowledge that are yet to be made visible, and should inform our reading of visual culture as not simply an ordering of what is seen and said but as a marker of what we do not yet have the tools to express. That is, as a confirmation of what is missing from the regimes of the visible.

Conley utilises his little machines as conceptual *diagrams,* recurring formulas of concepts that operate, he says, as machinic systems that we can set to work within Deleuze's thinking. A diagram is a map of forces; there is a diagram for every historical formation – a Napoleonic diagram or a Fordist diagram – one for every system of discourse or visibility. It is an abstract machine, Deleuze says, that 'communicates with the stratified formation, stabilizing or fixing it, but following another axis it also communicates with the other diagram, the other unstable diagrammatic states, through which forces pursue their mutant emergence' (2006: 71). Diagrams are tools that can help us to make visible the spaces within Deleuze's work – to bring it into contact with the *outside* of his thought.

Hanjo Berressem's incisive reading of a schizoanalytic Hitchcock will develop this idea further by addressing the use of montage in *Psycho* and *The Birds*. Schizoanalysis, we are reminded, presupposes that the machinic assemblages, the architectures of forms within which our diagrams will operate, are *systems of interruptions or breaks*. It is the cut that breaks the continuous material flow and at the same time produces a new one. It is this premise upon which the actual concrete machines and the virtual abstract machines, the formations of

matter and thought, are assembled. For Berressem this is quite literally montage – an arrangement of flows and cuts that mark the relation between the actual and the virtual. Here Berressem has drawn from what Tom Conley, in another article, would call *the mental map of classical cinema* (2009), framing the fields of forms and forces that Conley would discuss as actual forms and virtual forces – marking the actual/virtual cut as reminiscent of the thought/unthought diagram that would emerge from Deleuze's encounter with Blanchot. Here it is the virtual – the field of intensive events, of duration and memory, the breaks in the actual material and perceptual matter of film – that forms the basis of Hitchcock's cinematic arrangements; it is the spaces between the actual arrangements of form that are to reform the whole. We can certainly read the essay itself in similar terms, observing how Berressem's approach, in challenging the logic of what he feels is a critical fixation on an Oedipalised Hitchcock, seeks out the virtual fissures within the Oedipal interpretations of Hitchcock's films in order to reform the whole into a schizoanalytic Hitchcock of *pure optical and sound images*. This will make psychoanalysis into the actual matter into which the sensory shock of Hitchcock's cinematic form can cut. It will, Berressem says, make the material and contextual form of the films into optically and auditively assembled blocs of affect; the narrative continuity of *Psycho*, all its Oedipalised formations, even Marion Crane's early embezzlement narrative, all MacGuffins before Hitchcock's delivery of the film's ultimate visceral thrills in the motel shower scene.

Similarly, Nadine Boljkovac's fine essay engages in an analysis of the actual and virtual elements of Chris Marker's *Sans Soleil*, scouring the film for the forces and sensations that exist beneath the discursive systems and visibilities of the film itself. Boljkovac explores the regions of what is left unsaid, in order to make visible the relations between Deleuze's thought and the cinema of Chris Marker. Boljkovac again looks to explore the *outside* of thought that *Sans Soleil* draws out of its images – the virtual connections that occur between the actual forms of our world. Boljkovac approaches Marker's film as an exercise in virtual mapping – an ordering of forces that occur between the actual forms of the film. The material images of the film are assembled with the same virtual cut that Berressem will seek to draw out of Hitchcock's work. *Sans Soleil* foregrounds the cuts between its images. They are, Boljkovac suggests, fissures or cracks, dissociative forces or holes in appearances; they are the breaks within the visible substance of the film itself or between the concrete structures of the everyday world – the forces of time or memory or belief that intersect banality. This is a cartography

of cinema as diagrams of forces and sensations; little machines hidden in the spaces between forms that Marker can set to work, *making the territorial assemblage open onto something else*; making the concrete organisations of banality, both familiar and indecipherable, open onto the spiritual and cosmic worlds within our own.

This contrast between virtual worlds and actual forms is further interrogated by Richard Rushton, who attempts to re-insert the concerns of cinema theory into Deleuze's discourse on film, relating his actual/virtual conceptual framework to the concepts of the real and imaginary developed by the Lacanian and Althusserian film theorists of the seventies and eighties. Here Rushton questions the position of the imaginary in Deleuze's cinema works, suggesting that, perhaps contrary to our expectations, the imaginary is far from an absent concept. The imaginary is utilised by Deleuze, particularly in *Cinema 2*, but is eclipsed by his focus on the actual/virtual schema that informs his reading of movement and time. But what does this semi-neglected imaginary *do* in Deleuze's work, Rushton asks? What is its relationship to the Lacanian-Althusserian film theory that was prevalent at the time of Deleuze's project? And how might we utilise Deleuze to conceive of a different kind of imaginary, one that is not to be formulated as pure negativity or ideological fantasy? Rushton is thus engaged in a twofold project – to re-trace the position of the imaginary in Deleuze's writings and also to challenge the dominant reading of the imaginary in Baudry or Heath or Narboni and Comolli as negative fiction, a *false consciousness* that can be contrasted to a cinema of the real.[2]

What is at stake here are the same questions of power that would shape the theoretical discourses of certain kinds of film criticism. David Rodowick would choose to frame this as a film criticism of *political modernism*, 'the expression of a desire to combine semiotic and ideological analysis with the development of an avant-garde aesthetic dedicated to the production of radical social effects' (1994: 1). The *Cahiers du Cinéma* of Jean-Louis Comolli and Jean Narboni is particularly instructive in this respect, as they highlight in their famous editorial the political function of a cinema criticism that much of the world of film theory was to follow. This form of cinema criticism exists to root out the ideologies and ideological functions of the cinematic machine, say Narboni and Comolli, to challenge 'the necessity of reproducing things not as they really are but as they appear when refracted through ideology' (1976: 25). From the perspective of Deleuze's actual/virtual analysis the juxtaposition of an imaginary (ideological) representation to a real representation is problematic, and

exploring this difficulty is clearly Rushton's point. However, we can see how this very form of critical discourse – concerning the power relations through which the cinematic apparatus might address its viewer, the construction of discursive systems, the utilisation of visual media to produce and circulate ideological positions – is not at all alien to our concerns, despite Deleuze's own reluctance to draw from it in any significant detail. We have already addressed the productions of visibilities that our schizoanalysis/visual culture diagram might seek to produce. The cinematographic machine is engaged in the act of *producing* those images that make a people or a world or a system of discourse visible; it serves to actualise what is virtual, to make the possible into something that *is*. This political modernism of cinema criticism that Rushton takes as his starting point had discovered that cinema was producing something of these spaces between the actual forms of the material world, but had drawn from this only an *imagined* real that should be unfavourably contrasted with an actual concrete real. If, following Deleuze, we can show how these imagined forms are no less real than their actualised counterparts, then we can re-order the spaces within this political modernist criticism in order to find that there is something of value in these spaces, that what is not actual must not necessarily be aligned with what is ideological mystification; and this is surely the value of Rushton's work.

The final two essays in this collection, by Patricia Pisters, and William Brown and David Fleming, are more directly concerned with the interrelation of schizoanalysis and visual culture, and return us to the concerns expressed in Buchanan's work and, in particular, to the question of delirium. Buchanan had suggested that delirium should be taken as the basis of a schizoanalytic understanding of visual culture. He utilises Deleuze and Guattari in order to argue that cinema is suited to capturing the movement of madness, and that a schizoanalysis of cinema must seek to explain why this is so (2010: 136–46). If every delirium, as Deleuze and Guattari say, is the investment of a field that is social, economic, political, cultural, racist, pedagogical and religious, then how might we make an analysis of what is delirious about cinema in order to connect Deleuze's cinematic studies to the spaces in which these discourses circulate? If, as Buchanan would suggest, 'Deleuze and Guattari's reconceptualization of delirium as a *regime of signs* can be used to inaugurate a new kind of semiology of the cinema' (2010: 153), then how might we begin to make visible the systems of signs that connect the image to the world itself (and what problems might this help us to solve)?

Patricia Pisters suggests that we can read the contemporary state of cinema and visual culture as modelled by the schizophrenic brain. Clinical schizophrenia, she says, is the degree zero of schizoanalysis, and serves as the basis for a new conceptualisation of cinema that centres on what she calls the *Neuro-Image*, that is, a third image (following on from Deleuze's movement and time images) in which visual culture is determined by Deleuze's third synthesis of time and opens to the future – the spaces of what is possible but is not yet. Contemporary visual culture is a complex system of connections, of electronic signals and binary information, like the schizophrenic 'too much of everything' that Pisters would identify in another essay, the 'fundamental characteristic of the contemporary saturated world where there is always too much (or too little) of everything' (2008: 111). Indeed, Deleuze himself would highlight at the beginning of *Cinema 1* how cinema is ordered in this way, arguing that the visual apparatus of cinema acts like consciousness; that 'the whole cinematic consciousness is not us, the spectator, nor the hero; it is the camera – sometimes human, sometimes inhuman, sometimes superhuman' (2005a: 21). In this way we can begin to analyse how the marks of light that make up our perceptions of cinema and visual culture are organised as a system of thought; how does the visual form a system of discourse? How does it construct and disseminate a field of knowledge? A schizoanalysis of visual culture can help us to see how our own brains might open onto these systems; establishing a connection with those spaces of discourse that are outside of our own synaptic circuits – connecting us to the thought of the outside. 'What is on the screen is delirium in person', says Buchanan, 'what we see is always in somebody's head, and for that reason, it looks and feels real, even when it is not' (2010: 140). The cinematic delirium is not, as the film theorists of political modernism had objected, a falsified or imagined depiction of a real world, it is a fully real part of this world – it is real without being actual. We have seen the emergence of these virtual forms through Berressem and Boljkovac's work and can now draw our lines between Deleuze's projects with more certainty. We can find within the visual 'the feeling of having sensed something that does not belong to this world [...] something that can only be sensed, that cannot be put into words' (Buchanan 2010: 137). This is why Pisters had chosen to invert Comolli's statement that cinema is a machine of the visible; the cinematic apparatus and the systems of visual culture are, rather, *machines of the invisible* (2008: 113). They are systems that serve to make visible the virtual relations that lie beneath the surface of the actual forms of visual culture.

Brown and Fleming, in an insightful reading of *Fight Club*, attempt to trace the emergence of these virtualities even within a mainstream Hollywood blockbuster. What potentials for deterritorialisation might occur even in contemporary cinema of this sort, they ask? And furthermore, could it be argued that Deleuze himself has underestimated such potential in modern Hollywood? Or could we alternatively (or concurrently) suggest that schizoanalysis itself, to the extent that we can now find it in 'mainstream' cinematic forms, might have reterritorialised onto the imagined spaces of those same ideological discourses? We might also ask Brown and Fleming whether the same deterritorialisations, these same departures from the actual textures of light that make up our perceptions of cinema into the forces of the virtual, can be found in Coca-Cola commercials or in video games or what we might consider the everyday manifestations of visual culture. We might question whether these forms of images might construct, as Brown and Fleming suggest (following a 2009 article by Rushton), an image-viewer assemblage in which the spectator might connect with the systems of thought that visual culture composes, in order to constitute a new form of consciousness. If the systems of visual culture that we are attempting to open Deleuze's thinking towards might form a *contagious set of ideas*, then we shall need to consider how the formation and circulation of these ideas might be articulated by a schizoanalysis of visual culture. There is clearly much work to be done in this respect, but what I would like to suggest is that these final two essays might in some way help us to further illuminate this connection (between the image and the world; between cinema and delirium; between Deleuze's two projects) and in doing so, help us draw out these same connections in each of the other essays in this collection.

My own necessarily idiosyncratic readings should, I hope, help to sketch out a preliminary sense of how each of these essays relates to the development of a schizoanalysis of visual culture and how each of them might help us to sketch out some of the spaces that were left blank in the systems that make up Deleuze's own work. Doubtless there are other spaces within this volume that we have not explored; forces within each system of thought that we have not yet made visible. A schizoanalysis of visual culture is surely more complex and more open than we could have possibly done justice to here, and I have no doubt that the following essays will only serve to demonstrate this; to show what is not yet visible, but nonetheless present in Deleuze's thought; to find new spaces within this thought and set their little machines to work.

Notes

1. See Solanas and Getino's 1971 article 'Towards a Third Cinema' and Peter Wollen's 'Godard and Counter Cinema: *Vent d'Est*' from 1972, both of which can be found in Bill Nichols's extremely useful *Movies and Methods* collection.
2. See Baudry's 'Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematographic Apparatus' from 1970 and Comolli and Narboni's 1971 'Cinema/Ideology/Criticism', both available in *Movies and Methods*, and also Stephen Heath's *Questions of Cinema* from 1981.

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Deleuze and the Filmic Diagram

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Abstract

This article aims to consider how the 'diagram' or 'little machine' is integral to the dissociative, at once polyvocal and polymorphous *writing* that marks the work of Blanchot and that, in turn, informs the disjunctive – hence critical and productive – operation within the register of Deleuze's writings on cinema. I shall consider a number of Deleuze's 'keywords' or recurring formulas *as* diagrams, that is, as intermediate configurations at once visual and lexical, in order to show how, like rebuses or ideograms, they form collisions and ruptures of voice and graphic form, in order to bring forward the 'outside' of thought – what cannot be put into language yet is conveyed in language.

Keywords: Blanchot, diagram, schizoanalysis, cartography, cinema

'Is a Schizoanalysis of Cinema Possible?' In the response to the question he poses in the title of his probing essay on Deleuze and film, Ian Buchanan argues that over the course of the author's work 'specific words and images' or 'diagrams' function 'in the manner of little machines' according to the context in which they are deployed (Deleuze 2010: 136).[1] Pertinent to one situation, then to another, and then to another yet again, diagrams migrate back and forth across the writing. They find optimum effect, he adds, in the reading of films, an operative process that applies to these various contexts. Buchanan suggests that what Deleuze *does with* film figures in a broadly based and highly effective political aesthetics. Neither holistic, reductive nor of thematic orientation, his reflections work towards a tactics of 'reading' cinema that draws on Deleuze's repeated insistence that film is a medium of simultaneously visual and lexical virtue. It is one that needs to be seen

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and read in the same cognitive gesture. Right from the outset of *L'Image-mouvement*, writing of the rarefaction or saturation of the cinematic surface within the borders of the frame, Deleuze remarks that 'l'image ne se donne pas seulement à voir. Elle est lisible autant que visible' (the image is given not solely to be seen. It is as much legible as it is visible) (Deleuze 1983: 24).[2] And at the end of *L'Image-temps* he underscores how much 'la division du visuel et du sonore' (the division of sight and sound) helps us to see where the aesthetics and politics of film are interwoven (Deleuze 1985: 352). The diagram becomes ubiquitous. Modern cinema, he notes elsewhere, having killed the flashback, imposes a dissociation of sound images from visual images (364).

We begin to see how the identity, difference and repetition of the reciprocal identity of seeing and reading ramifies throughout the oeuvre. Such may be the cinematic diagram to which Buchanan refers. It is studied on similar grounds but from a different angle in 'Image or Time? The Thought of the Outside in *The Time-Image* (Deleuze and Blanchot)', Marie-Claire Ropars-Wuilleumier's epochal reading of the ways that Blanchot intervenes, alters and occasionally subverts what, at their outset, Deleuze had called the taxonomical and philosophical project of the two volumes.[3] Blanchot's reflections on the *dehors* or the 'outside' – a space beyond meaning or that cannot be put in words or that resists all ideation, she argued, bear directly on Deleuze's appreciation of cinema that confronts an 'outside' and an 'inside' independently of any spatial and temporal distance or interval. Thanks to Blanchot, his is a concept of cinema where 'thinking outside of itself' broaches the *impensée* or 'unthought' within *la pensée* or 'thought' itself. By way of Blanchot the project aimed at offering a 'tableau' or gridded picture, quite possibly a large-scale diagram of cinema is thrown awry. Thanks to the author of *L'Entretien infini* (The Infinite Conversation), cinema reflects on the limits of thinking wherever there is 'the absolute contact of an outside and inside that are infinite [*non-totalisables*], asymmetrical [*asymétriques*]', or the presence of what Deleuze calls an 'autonomous outside that is necessarily given as an inside' (1985: 363). As Ropars-Wuilleumier puts it succinctly, 'Suddenly appearing in an analytical detour, Blanchot's [force of] attraction quickens the strangeness of a Deleuzian text that does not follow its own declared program – thought-cinema – in taking the risk of letting thought escape the conceptual frame to which it attends' (2010: 28; translation slightly modified).

The paragraphs that follow seek to discern some of the affinities of Buchanan's and Ropars-Wuilleumier's readings in order to consider how the 'diagram' or 'little machine' is integral to the dissociative,

at once polyvocal and polymorphous *writing* that marks the work of Blanchot and that, in turn, informs the disjunctive – hence critical and productive – operation within the register of Deleuze's reflections on cinema. A working hypothesis is that recurring words, stylistic turns and the contours of various formulas pose creative obstacles to the formulation of concepts. As a corollary, they become quasi-cinematic 'icons' or filmic shapes where writing and cinema are of the same meddle. These icons bring together, in an oft-repeated *rupture de contact* – the formula is Blanchot's – philosophy, cinema and poetry. When they are embroiled in what Buchanan calls Deleuze's political aesthetics, they become especially operative.

For that end I shall consider a number of Deleuze's 'keywords' or recurring formulas *as* diagrams, that is, as intermediate configurations at once visual and lexical; that to a degree are what elsewhere, in his study of Francis Bacon, he calls 'an operative set of asignifying and nonrepresentative lines and zones', for what concerns painting, 'traits and color patches' that 'unlock areas of sensation'. The diagram is abstract in nature, and it is even a ordering of chaos, 'a catastrophe', but also the germ of rhythm, a violent disorder in respect to figuration (Deleuze 2003: 83). The diagram also belongs to a deeply embedded poetic tradition in which, like rebuses or ideograms, collisions and rupture of voice and graphic form, it brings forward the 'outside' of thought – that is, what cannot be put into language yet is conveyed in language.[4]

Ropars-Wuilleumier had shown that Blanchot offers a model for a cinematic writing of the 'limit' or 'outside', suggesting also that his 'Parler, ce n'est pas voir' may be the one essay in *L'Entretien infini* best informing the film theory. To see how it will suffice, first, we need to examine how it figures in Ropars-Wuilleumier's reading before, second, it can be studied in its own placement or *disposition* (in the loose but carefully designed order of Blanchot's work). For this purpose it is useful to determine how 'Parler, ce n'est pas voir' inflects the composition of *L'Entretien infini* from its own intermediate stage, in proof-form, to its final published version in 1969.[5] Keynote is to see how it 'works' as a 'zone' in a set of essays that owe their force more, as Blanchot elsewhere in the volume remarks of the poetry of René Char, to juxtaposition than to composition: therein are perhaps some of the elements of Deleuze's own film-writing.

At the end of *Cinéma 2* Deleuze asserts how a 'new time-image' locates visibility between the visual and the auditory' (360–4 and *passim*). He discerns a visibility of the invisible that is countenanced

in the texture of 'Parler, ce n'est pas voir', the essay that, according to Ropars-Wuilleumier, Deleuze radically 'inverts into a "to not speak (or a speaking at the limits of sound)" ' (2010: 18). Deleuze negates Blanchot's critique of vision that inheres in speech while calling 'into question the possibility of seeing the visible' (ibid.). The force of attraction of what Blanchot calls the 'outside' *dislocates* or estranges speakers or viewers from stable points of reference in their milieus. In her words, 'the outside obstructs the interiority of the inside and removes all spatial anchoring from exteriority itself' (19). In Blanchot's essay 'presence', what would be part and parcel of the 'present' of time and space assumed to be here and now, is shown to be outside or exterior to itself. Ropars-Wuilleumier, in establishing a threshold for her reading, further specifies the nature of Deleuze's understanding of Blanchot that emerges from his *Foucault* (1986). Quite possibly 'Deleuze has barely read Blanchot because he distorts his terms, does not retain what concerns time, and rejects the radical logic that places ontology into question' (ibid.): because in the *Foucault* that immediately follows *L'Image-temps* in 1986, Deleuze deploys the distinction of discursive and visible formations to sustain the hypothesis, gained from cinema, that the visible is irreducible to language (21). The dialogue with Foucault further allows him to develop fresh speculation about the nature of a 'diagram'. Via Foucault, Blanchot's outside is marshalled to show how an open-ended play of *force* emerges from the circumscriptions of *form*. 'L'histoire des formes, archive, est doublée d'un devenir des forces, diagramme' (the history of forms, the archive, is doubled by a becoming of forces, a diagram) (Deleuze 1986: 51, cited by Ropars-Wuilleumier 2010: 21).[6] History, taken to be an archive, is a recognisable architecture (*form*) whereas the diagram that both duplicates and exceeds the latter is an open and not entirely predictable 'becoming' (*force*).[7] It also draws the 'outside' into a welter of maps and issues of mapping. A diagram is at once a map and layering of maps superimposed upon one another from which an implied 'stratigraphy' is availed to the reader or archaeologist whose eyes move across them, one stratum over another, in order to discern where forces might be vectored from given coordinates in the archive or geology of 'forms' in which they seem to be concealed. From diagrams a regime of creativity, mutation and resistance becomes possible. Deleuze's recrafting of Blanchot through Foucault allows him to turn cinema into a map of becoming, or at least a medium endowed with potential of the kind suggested in the infinite substantive that is *le devenir*.[8] Telescoping Ropars-Wuilleumier's argument, we might say that a cautiously open-ended 'becoming' is identified with cinema, and

as a result the medium can be thought of in the manner of the 'new cartography' that Foucault is shown fashioning in the pragmatics of theory undergirding his archaeology and history.

The theoretical potential of the seventh art – the infinite possibility of its substance – is obtained circuitously. By diverse means coming to a same end, 'Parler, ce n'est voir' allows Deleuze to have the medium reach the limits of what can be seen and what can be heard. The outside is affiliated with off-screen space and voice-*off*, which can suggest disembodiment, and at the same time it can be suggestive of things whole or total. Using Bresson as Blanchot's double, Deleuze cites the filmmaker's *Notes sur le cinématographe* to affirm how a principle of non-coincidence or difference operates in cinema. 'Lorsqu'un son peut supprimer une image, supprimer l'image ou la neutraliser' (when a sound can suppress an image, suppress the image or neutralise it), it happens that 'le sonore sous toutes ses formes vient peupler le hors-champ de l'image visuelle, et s'accomplit d'autant plus en ce sens comme composante de cette image' (sound in all of its forms begins to populate the off-screen space of the visual image, and it is realised all the more in this way as a component of this image) (cited in Deleuze 1985: 306). Taking Ropars-Wuilleumier's reading along a different path, we might say that the essay becomes a 'passe-partout' or skeleton key that opens the door to the 'outside' and that remains a map for cinematic itineraries by which the viewer gains access to its threshold.

It suffices to discern the way that 'Parler, ce n'est pas voir' *becomes* what it is in the 'superimposition of maps' visible in the production of *L'Entretien infini* – specifically, in the relation of the page proofs of the book to its final printed form. By and large changes to this essay are minimal. Some of the spaces between the words are tightened or opened, and at others a comma and a colon are either inserted or removed. The shift of the force of the text in the whole or *tout* of the volume is found elsewhere, notably at the edge between the 'inside' and 'outside' of the book itself, in the paratextual matter of the cover, the initial page of five epigraphs (v). In addition, a prefatory note (vi–viii) serves as an introduction to the open-ended aspect of forty chapters, parsed into three sections ('La Parole plurielle', subtitled [between parentheses] 'parole d'écriture' (1–118); 'L'Expérience-limite' (119–420); 'L'Absence de livre', also bearing a subtitle title in parenthesis '(le neutre le fragmentaire)' (421–636). A short postface (637) that initially is a typescript insert in the proofs indicates that the author would like the 'moving, articulated-inarticulated' relation of the book to its play of form (what Blanchot admires in René Char) bear witness to items,

written from 1953 to 1965, that are more operative when remaining undated in the gist of the book itself. The absence of chronological markers seems to explain that the author holds 'them to be already posthumous' and shows why he is led 'to look at them as almost anonymous' (637). As the writings become more remote their author slowly disappears into the collective murmur of the language that conveys them. The writings

> [t]hus belong to everyone [*tous*], and [are] even written and always written, not by one alone, but by several, by all those for whom it is incumbent to maintain [*maintenir*] and to prolong the exigency to which I believe that these texts, with an obstinacy that today astonishes me, have ceaselessly sought to respond, up to the *absence of the book* that they designate in vain. (Ibid.)

These final words appear to confirm the reason why the author takes care to remove from the title page a parenthetical subtitle, '(recherches)' (searchings) set below *L'Entretien infini*, the title printed in appreciably higher case. What began in the name of 'recherches' in the proofs is now bereft of direction or of a projective geography of investigation. Or perhaps, faithful to the destiny of chance, any association with the famous epigraph that André Malraux once used for his psychological history of art might be avoided: Picasso's dictum (that Lacan elsewhere cited), 'je trouve mais je ne cherche pas' (I find but I do not seek). It can be inferred that research or repeated action of inquiry, what 'Parler, ce n'est pas voir' so stridently calls a *crisis*, need not be signalled from the title page but, rather, merely lost and 'found' (*trouvé*) when the reader proceeds by chance or … happens to discover in stumbling upon the chapter. Thus the incipit of the essay-dialogue responds to what has been erased:

> III
>
> *Parler, ce n'est pas voir*
> « Je voudrais savoir ce que vous cherchez.
>
> – Je voudrais le savoir aussi. Cette ignorance n'est-elle pas désinvolte?
> – Je crains qu'elle ne soit présomptueuse. Nous sommes toujours prêts à nous croire destinés à ce que nous cherchons, par un rapport plus intime, plus important que le savoir. Le savoir efface celui qui sait. La passion désintéressée, la modestie, l'invisibilité, voilà ce que nous risquons de perdre en ne sachant pas seulement. » (35)
>
> (I want to know what you're searching for.
>
> – I would also like to know. Isn't this unawareness slightly offhand?

> – I fear that it might be presumptuous. We're always ready to believe ourselves destined to find what we're seeking, through a more intimate relation, more important than knowledge. Knowledge effaces he or she who knows. Disinterested passion, modesty, invisibility; that's what we risk losing solely in not knowing.')

In the imaginary filigree drawn between the title and the text, *pas voir*, not to see, gives the reader to see – to see the visual echo of *savoir* as both verb and infinitive substantive. The two corresponding voices are *seen voice-off* or disembodied in the dialogical form in which they are cast. What one of the voices notes as our believing in being destined to find what we seek through a 'relation more important than knowledge' may be what the erasure of the subtitle to the book makes clear. When '(recherches)' vanishes in the transformation from proof to book the reader beholds an evanescing voice from which any sign of a search for certitude fades away. Or: *Voir, ce n'est pas sa . . . voir*? Perhaps in the way that the text makes *voir* and *savoir* become echoes of each other encodes Freud's *ça* and Mallarmé's *là,* the unknowable force and place (or musical note) of what cannot be named, and at the same time, *sa*, the acronym of the terror of absolute knowledge, of what the next shard of dialogue calls 'la terrible flamme du *s*avoir *a*bsolu' (the terrible flame of absolute knowledge) (34).

Reflection on searching turns to its contrary in finding, and therein the dialogue accrues even greater potential force. The second (or another) voice notes that '[il] y a ceux qui cherchent en vue de trouver, même sachant qu'ils trouveront presque nécessairement autre chose que ce qu'ils cherchent' (there are those who seek in view of finding, even knowing that they will almost by force find something other than what they seek) (ibid.). The remark prompts the interlocutor to reflect on the etymology of *trouver* without (or before) considering the form of the verb in its visual aspect:

> – Je me rappelle que le mot trouver ne signifie d'abord nullement trouver, au sens du résultat pratique ou scientifique. Trouver, c'est tourner, faire le tour, aller autour. Trouver un chant, c'est tourner le mouvement mélodique, le faire tourner. Ici nulle idée de but, encore moins d'arrêt. Trouver est presque exactement le même mot que chercher, lequel dit: 'faire le tour de'. (35–6)

> (I recall that the word to find doesn't first of all mean to find, in the sense of a practical or scientific result. To find is to turn about, go around, do a tourney. Here no idea of a goal, even less of arrest. To find is almost exactly the same word as to search, which means: to go around.)

The reader cannot fail to see the transcribed words of the speaking voice veering towards a musical appreciation of *trouver* and towards, too, the sense of an eternal repetition and return. Yet the remark leads to further reflection on the cinegraphic disposition of the verb. The voice utters, 'Trouver, c'est chercher par le rapport au centre qui est proprement introuvable' (To find is to search by way of the relation to the centre that cannot be found) (36). Seasoned readers of Blanchot recall that the epigraph to *L'Espace littéraire* (1955) asserted that no matter how fragmentary its composition may be, a book will betray a movement to and away from an imaginary centre, and that here too a geography of centre and circumference may be defining the space of the work before the reader's eyes.[9] But it also draws attention, in the gloss of the words when they are seen and heard in their montage, in accord with the sound- and image-tracks of writing, to *force* emanating from verbal *form*. In *trouver* the visual axis is the vowel *ou*, the homonym of *où*, or (*ou*) the 'where' about which *trouver* is said to turn. Or is the unconscious or unknown the *trou*, the hole or abyss written into the word? Can it be said that the troping, the *ver(s) où* that caps the word is also what opens it, leaves it *ouver(t)*, at the edge of a space 'outside' or beyond the bounds of meaning? Like what is seen in the erasure of *recherche* from the title page, the play about and around *trouver* indicates that the word is a diagram, a 'little machine', indeed a miniature map of forces that come forwards from the aural and visual matter embedded in its form.

The end of the essay may be a return to its beginning. But for a first and only time in the reflection does the abstraction of the movement find in the words what might be called a totemic echo:

> « – Voilà donc à nouveau la bizarrerie de ce tour vers … qu'est le détour. Qui veut avancer, doit se détourner, cela fait une curieuse marche d'écrevisse. Ce serait aussi le mouvement de la recherche?
> – Toute recherche est une crise. Ce qui est cherché n'est rien que le tour de la recherche qui donne lieu à la crise: le tour critique.
> – Cela est désespérément abstrait.
> – Pourquoi? Je dirais même que toute oeuvre littéraire importante l'est d'autant plus qu'elle met en oeuvre plus directement et plus purement le sens de ce tournant, lequel, au moment où elle va émerger, la fait étrangement basculer, oeuvre où se retient, comme son centre toujours décentré, le désoeuvrement: l'absence de l'oeuvre.
> – L'absence d'oeuvre est l'autre nom de la folie.
> – L'absence d'oeuvre où cesse le discours pour que vienne, hors parole, hors langage, le mouvement d'écrire sous l'attrait du dehors. » (45)

(Thus once again the strangeness of this turn towards … which is the detour. Whoever wants to advance has to turn away, and that makes for the curious movement of a crayfish. Wouldn't that also be the movement of research?
– All research is a crisis. What is sought is nothing other than the turning of research that gives way to the crisis: the critical turn.
– That's terribly abstract.
– Why? I'd even say that every important literary work is all the more so when it engages more directly and with greater purity the sense of this turning which, at the moment the work is about to emerge, uncannily causes it to teeter-totter, a work in which is held, like its ever off-centred centre, an idleness: the absence of the work.
– Absence of the work is another name for madness.
– Absence of the work in which discourse ceases so that there may come, outside of speech, outside of language, the movement of writing under the attraction of the outside.)

Whoever 'searches' only 'finds' when going about and around, or else backwards, in tracing an itinerary marking the path of a 'crisis' drawn about or from an unknown point of a moving axis. When one of the voices remarks that the movement goes 'like a crayfish', the image of the crustacean comes forwards in order no sooner to disappear. Its very name, *écrevisse*, anticipates the event of a *crise* that inheres in the intransitively critical and poetic operation of writing, as it is being suggested here, which is part and parcel of the seeing, reading and hearing that comprise the labour of cinema. Given that Blanchot writes within a tradition that reaches back to the Troubadours and the Trouvères, if it is licit to recall a *rondeau* by past master Clément Marot, the crayfish can be taken as a totem of the outside, of the occupant of a space at the edge of the world in so far as its etymon and its aspect recall the *crevice* or 'edge' or gap in the world.[10] For the poet and for Blanchot, *écrevisse* belongs to the complex tracking of *écriture*, of writing. Here the image of a fresh-water crustacean skipping along the bottom of a riverbed might be related to *ciné-écriture*. The crayfish is at once a *festina lente*, the subject of a latent blazon or emblem-poem, but crucially it is also a homonym of the imperfect subjunctive of *écrire*. The pun allows the crayfish to be assimilated into what *might have been written* … completely backwards.

By now it is clear that the gist of Blanchot's reflection 'turns' on seeing and reading at once at the edge or in the crevice of a divide between speaking and seeing. Writing, which in Deleuze's reading of Blanchot is tantamount to cinema itself, becomes what the first section

of *L'Entretien infini* calls 'La Parole plurielle', a plural and complex force of image and language perceived in the drift of sight and sound.

Thus it may be that the 'diagram' which describes cinema in much of *L'Image-temps* is found in the poetic register of the essay to which Deleuze turns and returns in his reflections on the 'components' (*composantes*) of the cinematic image at the end of *L'Image-temps*. To thematise or to make abstraction of Deleuze's film-writing might betray the force of the 'mapping' or of the *diagram* that inheres in its form. The writing bodies forth what might be called *la pensée de l'image* – the thought in and of the image – insofar as the moments where the writing turns about or 'seeks' itself in its own image is seen and heard *moving* and *becoming*, by virtue of the essay to which he so often refers, a writing imbued with cinema.[11]

By way of afterthought it is productive to return to the moment in *Cinéma 2* where Deleuze anticipates what he will note in *Foucault* about a diagram being a map of 'becoming' that doubles the archive from which it emerges and never entirely gets detached. Deleuze observes that Alain Resnais exhibits in his preparatory sketches for his features a taste for a 'detailed cartography of the places' that his characters frequent and the itineraries they take. His is 'un *établissement de véritables diagrammes*' (an *establishment of veritable diagrams*) (158; stress added) in which the sight and sound of 'establishment' are reminiscent of a Baroque *table* of figures on a landscape or in a garden like that of *Last Year at Marienbad*.[12] The diagram is 'l'ensemble des transformations d'un continuum, l'empilement des strates ou la superposition des nappes coexistantes. Les cartes et les diagrammes subsistent donc comme parties intégrantes du film' (the total array of the transformation of a continuum, the piling of strata or the superimposition of coexisting sheets [of time]. Maps and diagrams thus subsist as the integrating parts of the film) (ibid.). There results a mental or cerebral cartography where a given sheet (*nappe*) of the past causes a distinction of functions to correspond and an arrangement of objects: it is in this play of surfaces where *writing*, the writing of the kind affiliated with Blanchot and Deleuze's preferred poets (Mallarmé, Melville, Michaux and perhaps Marot) takes place through its identification with cinema.

Deleuze underscores the point in a sudden reflection where reading and seeing, *lire* and *voir*, bear for an instant on the *very creation of the film book before our eyes*:

> Il se peut que, quand nous *lisons* un livre, *regardons* un spectacle ou un tableau, et *à plus forte raison quand nous sommes nous-mêmes auteur* [...]:

> nous constituons une nappe de transformation qui invente une sorte de continuité ou de communication transversales entre plusieurs nappes, et tisse entre elles un ensemble de relations non-localisables. (161–2; stress added)
>
> (It may be that when we read a book, look at a spectacle or a painting, and even more strongly when we are ourselves [its] author [. . .]: we constitute a sheet of transformation that invents a kind of transversal continuity or connection among several sheets, and weaves among them an array of relations that cannot be located.)

The invocation of the 'we' – Deleuze *with* his interlocutors – as plural *author* spins off the art of seeing and reading. When we study cinema we produce and lose ourselves creatively in our relation with the medium and our memories of it, surely and clearly, but we also find ourselves by dint of gaining our bearings, by turning about and around in the midst of the multifarious signs, crevices, corners, edges and transformative sites of our own writing. The cinematic diagram would be the 'little machine' that plots and enables critical transformation. When Deleuze notes that we are their 'author' he joins the parade of *auteurs*, the great filmmakers, who think by writing with images. Can we assume that through his manner of thinking and writing he counts, as he notes in the last sentences of *Cinéma 2*, among 'les grands auteurs de cinéma [qui] sont comme les grands peintres ou les grands musiciens: c'est eux qui parlent le mieux de ce qu'ils font' (the great cinema auteurs [who] are like great painters or great musicians: it is they who best speak about their work) (366). Close reading tells us that the answer is affirmative.

Notes

1. 'Doing with' is indeed one of these 'specific words and images' or diagrams that would align Buchanan's Deleuze with his readings of the cultural criticism of Michel de Certeau, an author for whom what a reader 'does with' an issue belongs to a tactical operation. See Certeau 1975.
2. Here and elsewhere all translations from the French are mine.
3. 'Cette étude n'est pas une histoire du cinéma. C'est une taxinomie, un essai de classification des images et des signes' (This study is not a history of cinema. It is a taxonomy, an essay on the classification of images and of signs) (Deleuze 1983: 7).
4. In *The Culture of Diagram*, John Bender and Michael Marrinan provide a theoretical history of the first magnitude. For them the parabola of the diagram, 'a working object' (197) begins from the relation of image and text on the white surface of the pages of Diderot and D'Alembert's *Encyclopédie*. The space of the page becomes the ground of the correlation of words and images. The authors show how the visual and aural dimension of the philosophers' diagram and its claim to embracing an opened-ended totality give way to mathematical configurations that lead it to quasi-pure abstraction, far from visible forms, that

we now find in digital media. Although cinema remains outside of its bounds, their work on the 'diagram' serves as a backdrop for what follows.

5. The proof copy of *L'Entretien infini* is now in the Harvard Houghton Library (ms. Fr 794). Most of the major emendations – mostly additions – are found in typescript pages folded and placed between the folios where they are inserted. Now and again manuscript annotations are in the margins of the proofs themselves.
6. In English translation: 'forces are in a perpetual state of becoming [*devenir*], there is a becoming [*devenir*] of forces that doubles history.' For this reader, the translation loses sight of the points of reference and contention in the essay from which the words are taken.
7. By way of Foucault Deleuze rehearses the play of form and force that Derrida had set forward in 'Force et signification', the inaugural essay of *L'Ecriture et la différence* (1967). Originally published as a book review of Jean Rousset's *Forme et signification* (Paris: José Corti, circa 1962), the substitution of one letter in place of the other becomes a play of sight and sound (*c* in lieu of *m*) indicating a proclivity for 'play' or 'becoming' that opens the closed confines of a structure. The resemblance of *force* (that Derrida later turns towards *fors* and its cognate meanings) to *forme* varies on the famous relation he establishes between *différance* and *différence*.
8. In the French poetic tradition the infinite substantive is often deployed to call attention to the potential force that can be released or detonated when *res* becomes *verba*, that is, when it is conjugated into action or when the entity is 'cracked open'. The past master of the infinite substantive is Maurice Scève, in his *Délie* (Lyons, 1544). One of the most celebrated *dizains* of the work (the 77th of an arcane sum of 449) associates the poet with Prometheus. The incipit reads, '*Au Caucasus de mon souffrir lyé*' (On the Caucasus of my suffering [I am] bound), in which *souffrir*, an element of the author's own device (*souffrir non souffrir*) suggests infinite suffering in place of the name of the Titan god, chained to the rocky summit of Mount Caucasus, whose liver a vulture forever consumes. Gisèle Mathieu-Castellani studies the force of the formula in her contribution to Nash (ed.), *A Scève Celebration: 'Délie' 1544–1994* (1994).
9. 'Un livre, même fragmentaire, a un centre qui l'attire: centre non pas fixe, mais qui se déplace par la pression du livre et les circonstances de sa composition. [. . .] Celui qui écrit le livre l'écrit par désir, par ignorance de ce centre' (A book, even fragmentary, has a centre to which it is attracted: not a fixed centre, but that moves according to the pressure of the book and the circumstances of its composition) (5). Blanchot notes that the centre of *L'Espace littéraire* would be the essay on 'The Gaze of Orpheus', in other words, a musical body shown seeing what blinds it.
10. Blanchot treats it moreover in the way that a great former poet, Clément Marot, had done in the fitting form of a *rondeau*, a diminutive, machine-like poem that turns about in order to retrieve and lose itself in its form:

> Tout au rebours (dont convient que languisse)
> Vient mon vouloir, car de bon cueur vous veisse
> Et je ne puis par devers vous aller.
> Chante qui veult, balle qui veult baller,
> Ce seul plaisir seullement je voulsisse,
> Et s'on me dit qu'il faut que je choisisse
> De par deça dame qui m'esiouysse,
> Je ne sçauroys me tenir de parler,
> Tout au rebours.

Si responds franc, J'ay dame sans nulle vice
Aultre en aura en amours mon service
Je la desire & souhaitte voller
Pour l'aller veoir, & pour nous consoler
Mais mes souhaictz vont comme l'escreuice,
Tout au rebours.

(Always backwards (and it is fitting that I languish)
Comes my desire, for had I seen you with a keen heart
I could never dare to go before you.
Sing who may sing, dance who may dance,
I would wish solely for this pleasure,/And if they
say that I must choose,
Here or about a lady who affords me bliss,/I could
do no more than speak
Always backwards.
Were I to respond frankly, I have
a lady without any vice
Another will have in love my service,
I desire her and dream of flying
Off to see her, and to console ourselves,
But my dreams go like the crayfish,
Always backwards.)

in Clément Marot, *Oeuvres complètes 1*, ed. François Rigolot (Paris: Garnier/Flammarion, 2007) 134.

Following Guy de Terverant, Rigolot notes that the crayfish had symbolised 'contrary fortune'. Noteworthy is that *languisse* (languish) belongs to the same register because of the pun on *langue isse* (language seen issuing forth).

11. *La pensée de l'image* is also, pertinently, the title of a collection of essays (edited by Mathieu-Castellani) in which conflations of the written image and the thoughts it provokes are taken up in essays on Claudel, Deleuze, Melville and a host of others.
12. In the first paragraph of the third chapter of *Le Pli: Leibniz et le baroque* (1988), Deleuze takes care to note that the baroque is characterised by a flat surface on which tables and figures, indeed mathematical formulas, are written. In contrast to the idea of a painting that is a window on the world he proposes the 'table' to which, here, *établissement* seems related.

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Actual Image | Virtual Cut: Schizoanalysis and Montage

Hanjo Berressem

Abstract

If a machine is something that cuts into a continuous flow, schizoanalysis can be read, quite literally, as an analysis of cuts. In cinematic registers, it is an analysis of montage. Looking closely at a number of modes and moments of montage in the work of Alfred Hitchcock, this paper shows how his strategies of 'reciprocally presupposing' actual image and virtual montage relate to a Deleuzian poetics and politics of the cinema.

Keywords: psychoanalysis, schizoanalysis, Hitchcock, *The Birds*, *Psycho*

> He tried to consider the complexities of editing.
> Don DeLillo, *Point Omega*

> The average public do not, or are not, aware of 'cutting' as we know it, and yet that is the pure orchestration of the motion-picture form.
> Alfred Hitchcock

> [It] is all in the style of cutting, never obvious, always tremendously effective and completely unique.
> François Truffaut

I. Propositions and Givens

A Deleuzian poetics and politics of the cinema may be developed from the way Deleuze's philosophy brings about an anoedipal 'attribution' – or, as Deleuze calls it in *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, 'reciprocal presupposition' (Deleuze 1989: 69) – of the actual and the virtual. In developing this argument, I take 'the Oedipal' to not only refer

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to the triangulation of desire that defines the logic of psychoanalysis. Especially in *Anti-Oedipus*, it is a code word for the general capture of desire within a network of interlocking psychoanalytic force fields and concepts, and thus for the general capture of the subject by the psychoanalytic machine. Against the psychoanalytic poetics and politics inherent in this capture, Deleuze and Guattari set a schizoanalytic poetics and politics.

Why choose Hitchcock, whose work has been relentlessly psychoanalysed, to talk about Deleuze and schizoanalysis, one might ask? Why return to psychoanalysis to talk about schizoanalysis? One reason is that Deleuze uses Hitchcock's work in reference to his concept of the crystal-image, which lies at the centre of the relation of the actual and the virtual. A second reason is that to develop an anoedipal Hitchcock from within and against a heavily psychoanalysed film studies is a bit like, for Deleuze and Guattari, to develop schizoanalysis from within and against psychoanalysis. In both cases, it is a question of deprogramming and of deterritorialising. If a clinical schizoanalysis implies to deprogram and to deterritorialise the 'subject of psychoanalysis', a critical schizoanalysis implies to similarly deprogram and to deterritorialise Hitchcock, whose movies film studies have often read as representations of highly Oedipalised family affairs.[1]

Before I get to Hitchcock, however, let me lay out the conceptual givens that form the parameters of my argument. I take the actual to denote the field of material, extensive matters-of-fact, of substances-as-being and of pulses of perception. Cinematographically, the actual is related to chronic time, to the sensory-motor arc and the movement-image. The virtual I take to denote the field of immaterial, intensive events, of relations-as-becoming and of lines of duration. Cinematographically, the virtual is related to aionic time, to memory and the time-image.[2]

The cinematographic attribution of the actual and the virtual – the somewhat paradoxical fact that they are each other's attribute – is not only a topic within *Cinema 1* and *Cinema 2*, it is directly embodied by their both conceptual and material complementarity. Although both books deal with the actual *and* the virtual, the focus of *Cinema 1* is the actual and processes of actualisation: the actualisation of perceptual systems, the actuality of corporeal movement and the actuality of physical change. The conceptual registers in *Cinema 1* are the trajectory of the sensory-motor arc and actual movement in space. Virtual time enters the equation only as an attribute of movement. The focus of *Cinema 2* is the virtual and processes of virtualisation: the virtualisations

of memory, the virtuality of acorporeal duration and the virtuality of psychic change. The conceptual registers in *Cinema 2* are the trajectory of memory and virtual movement in time. Actual movement enters the equation only as an attribute of time.

In the single volumes, therefore, the attribution of the terms – of the virtual to the actual and of the actual to the virtual – is asymmetrical. In fact, as single volumes the books literally do not make sense, and to say that one likes one of the volumes more than the other is like saying that in Deleuze's philosophy one likes the actual more than the virtual, or the other way around. It is only as a complementary couple that the two volumes come to form the full figure of Deleuzian philosophy. This pertains to their conceptual, virtual and thus intensive difference as well as to their material, actual and thus extensive difference; to their conceptual and to their material separation as single, separated volumes. In fact, the paradox of their reciprocal presupposition can only unfold properly when they are distributed on the surface of the 'projective plane' that defines Deleuzian thought. On the one-sided surface of this projective plane, *Cinema 1* forms the actual side, while *Cinema 2* forms the virtual side.

II. In Lieu of an Introduction: Motel Architecture 1

Living in complete, self-imposed isolation, Pangborn, the protagonist of J. G. Ballard's short story 'Motel Architecture' (1978), has been spending virtually every second of the last twelve years of his life analysing 'the shower sequence from *Psycho*' (Ballard 1982: 179), because the 'extraordinary relationship between the geometry of the shower stall and the anatomy of the murdered woman's body seemed to hold the clue to the real meaning of everything in [his] world, to the unstated connections between his own musculature and the immaculate glass and chromium universe' (179) of his apartment. 'The immaculate and soundless junction of the film actress's skin and the white bathroom tiles', he feels, 'contained the secret formulas that somewhere united his own body to the white fabric and soft chrome of his contour couch' (188). The only person allowed to disturb the world he has 'formed entirely from the materials of his own consciousness' (184) is the young cleaning-woman, Vera Tilley. The mosaic of TV screens Pangborn has assembled in his apartment, each of which shows a different fragment of the sequence, in fact redoubles Hitchcock's montage on a second-order plateau of relations, 'montagesquared': 'He had played the sequence to himself hundreds of times, frozen every frame and explored it in

close-up, separately recorded sections of the action and displayed them on the dozen smaller screens around the master display' (179).

Ballard relates Hitchcock and Freud by way of a pun that he does not need to actualise *in* the story because it is actualised *by* the story, which is about Pangborn performing, quite literally, a *psycho*analysis. In trying to make sense of the Hitchcock Motel through the montage of filmic cuts, however, Pangborn also performs, again quite literally, a *schizo*analysis in the sense that Deleuze and Guattari talk of 'schizzes' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 39) in their *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* project, a term that refers back to the Greek *skhizein*, which means 'to split' or 'to cut'. In this context, a detail about *Psycho* mentioned by Stephen Rebello takes on an almost emblematic status: 'Following the release of *Psycho*, the Hitchcock office and Paramount lodged a complaint with the Motion Picture Association of America about the registration of the title *Schizo* by none other than Hitchcock's old boss, producer David O. Selznick' (Rebello 1990: 53), who subsequently withdrew his claim to the title. Although he could have done it, however, Hitchcock, for better or worse, never got around to making a movie called *Schizo*.

III. Hitchcock: From *Psycho*analysis to *Schizo*analysis

In both *Psycho* (1960) and *The Birds* (1963), which will form the centre of my analysis, psychoanalytic readings have organised the filmic narrative around 'mother's voice' as an evil quasi-*acousmêtre* that can be heard through its demented ventriloquisations: in *Psycho*, when Norman Bates's voice modulates into a high-pitched whine. In *The Birds*, mother's shrill resentment of her son's desire can be heard in the angry twittering of the birds, although in this case 'mother' is still alive and indeed speaks for herself.

Despite this difference, in both cases the traumatic stain around which the narrative revolves concerns 'mother' or, more precisely, what Slavoj Žižek, whom I will use as a metonymical stand-in for a psychoanalytically informed film studies, has identified as the 'raw incestuous energy' (Žižek 2006) of the 'ferocious' (Žižek 1992a: 99), 'cruel and obscene' (18) maternal superego. In this reading, Žižek could rely on earlier work driven by psychoanalysis, such as Ian Cameron and Richard Jeffery's 'The Universal Hitchcock' (1986) or Margaret M. Horwitz's essay '*The Birds*: A Mother's Love', in which she notes that 'the wild birds function as a malevolent female superego' (Horwitz 1986: 281).

On this background, my argument is quite simple and straightforward. While psychoanalytic readings, which tend nowadays to be filtered through the work of Jacques Lacan, are conceptually organised around an Oedipal architecture of cuts that are centred around the traumatic stain of the Real, schizoanalytic readings are conceptually organised around a multiplicity of machines that, by cutting through both virtual and actual *phyla*, assemble heterogeneous elements into fragile assemblages that are not pre-formed or organised into sets of psychoanalytically and thus Oedipally overcoded structures. Against the psychoanalytical reading of movies as both thematic representations and formal figures of Oedipal machines, schizoanalysis sets the reading of movies as optical expressions and affective montages of relational changes between heterogeneous machinic systems; as optical and acoustic planes of consistency. While psychoanalysis looks for Oedipus under the optics, schizoanalysis looks for the optics under Oedipus.

A first relation between schizoanalysis and the cinema is that it is based on the general notion that all machinic assemblages are nothing but 'system[s] of interruptions or breaks'. A machine 'cuts into' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 36) a 'continual material flow (*hylè*)' (36); a 'phylum' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 406) that it 'cuts up into distinct, differentiated lineages, at the same time as the machinic phylum cuts across them all' (ibid.). As each flow is cut by machines and, at the same time, each of these cuts produces new flows, the diagram of the world consists of 'the thousand breaks-flows of desiring-machines' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 61).

It is on the background of the notion that both actual, and thus concrete, machines as well as virtual, and thus abstract, machines are infinitely assembled, that Deleuze and Guattari can talk of 'molecular biology' as being itself 'schizophrenic' (289). In Deleuze and Guattari, in fact, the terms 'schizophrenic' and 'schizophrenia' no longer refer narrowly to a psychoanalytically defined pathology; they designate any form of heterogeneous assemblage, whether that is the psychic assemblage of a phantasm or the physical assemblage of a molecular machine.

Schizoanalysis, therefore, concerns a much larger field than just the human or, even more restrictedly, the psychic one. To maintain that molecular biology is schizophrenic means that schizoanalysis concerns the logic of the 'assembly of life' – both human and non-human – in general. On the most general level, schizoanalysis concerns the analysis of the assemblage of self-organising machines. In the words of Deleuze and Guattari, it concerns 'chronogeneous machines engaged in their own

assembly (*montage*)' (266). Schizoanalysis, then, may be defined as an analysis of the ensembles and the dynamics of anoedipal machinic cuts and of the arrangements they produce. Complementarily, schizopolitics, which includes a critique of psychoanalysis as a political dispositif, may be defined as the practice of unfreezing Oedipal organisations and power-relations. When schizoanalysis addresses the human unconscious, it is not as something that is structured like a language but as a machinic system whose 'true activities' are 'causing to flow and breaking flows' (325).

One of the ways in which schizoanalysis is related to the cinema is that the assemblage of movie images is, like that of 'chronogeneous machines', quite literally a montage. Deleuze stresses this relation between chronogeneous and cinematographic machines when he states, in reference to the cinematographic ontology he develops in the cinema books, that 'the universe [is] cinema in itself, a metacinema' (Deleuze 1986: 59). On both cinematic and metacinematic levels, the analysis of flows|cuts concerns the relation between actual image and virtual cut: *schizo*analysis.

IV. Deleuze's Hitchcock

Symptomatically, when Deleuze talks about Hitchcock, he immediately brushes away any Oedipal reference. He is not interested in *psycho*grams but in 'the autonomous life of [. . .] relation[s]' (Deleuze 1986: 203) that are 'external to their terms' (x). There is no need to make Hitchcock 'a psychologist of the depth' (202), Deleuze notes in *Cinema 1*. Rather, Hitchcock is important as the inventor of 'the image of mental relations' (x). His movies consist of sets of images that are 'purely thought' (203). As Hitchcock himself said about the relation of thought and montage, 'a cut is nothing. One cut of film is like a piece of mosaic. To me, pure film, pure cinema is pieces of film assembled. Any individual piece is nothing. But a combination of them creates an idea' (Hitchcock 1995c: 288). Through their montage, the single actual images come to be woven into a virtual narrative that, as Deleuze states, 'changes in the evolution of the relations from a disequilibrium that they introduce between the characters to the terrible equilibrium that they attain in themselves' (Deleuze 1986: 203). In other words, Hitchcock's movies are about sets of weird circumstances and the erratic, devious developments these initiate. At some point – 'at an uncertain time and in an uncertain place', one might say – something unexpected, and potentially shocking, happens. Invariably, there is a first-minute deviation from the *habitual*

order of things.[3] Both the plot of *Psycho* and that of *The Birds* are set in motion by such an initial Lucretian 'clinamen'. In the novel *Psycho*, Marion Crane takes 'the wrong turn' (Bloch 1959: 15) on her way to the psychoanalytically overcoded village of Fairvale; in the movie, it is a sudden rainstorm that prompts her to stop at the Bates Motel. In *The Birds*, a single gull inclines from its horizontal flight, making two series or flows converge: the turbulent line created in the water by the boat's outboard motor, and the seagull's equally turbulent line of flight.

> Take, for example, the movement of water, that of a bird in the distance, and that of a person on a boat: they are blended into a single perception, a peaceful whole of harmonized Nature. But then the bird, an ordinary seagull, swoops down and wounds the person: the three fluxes are divided and become external to each other. The whole will be reformed, but it will have changed: it will have become the single consciousness or the perception of a whole of birds, testifying to an entirely bird-centred Nature, turned against Man *in infinite anticipation*. It will be redivided again when the birds attack, depending on the modes, places and victims of their attack. It will be reformed again to being about a truce, when the human and the inhuman enter into an uncertain relationship. (Deleuze 1986: 20; emphasis added)

Hitchcock's carefully premeditated arrangement of storyboard stills lays out, in advance, the complex dynamics of relational changes that develop from each specific inclination|clinamen within an equally specific cinematographic phase-space. It charts the diagram of the evolutions that are triggered by these unexpected machinic mutations. More importantly even, it lays out the optical, cinematographic organisation of these evolutions; their optical expressions. In these arrangements, two modes of relational change are superimposed: internal relations change through *actual* movements within single shots, such as the movement of the camera and of the actors, while 'the whole' changes through the *virtual* movement of the montage, which defines the movement of the cinematographic composition. These two movements invariably operate simultaneously:

> The frame is like the posts which hold the warp threads, whilst the action constitutes merely the mobile shuttle which passes above and below. We can thus understand that Hitchcock usually works with short shots, as many shots as there are frames, each shot showing a relation or a variation of the relation. (Deleuze 1986: 200)

The only exception to this logic is *Rope (1948)*, which has, at least ideally, no cuts at all, and in which Hitchcock remains *within* the level of internal relations, creating a kind a fluid montage within the shot.

Deleuze talks about the moments of initial deviation or inclination in terms of marks, which denote 'natural' relations, and demarks, which denote 'abstract' relations that are fundamentally enigmatic because they are new and unexpected. In order to avoid any misunderstanding, let me stress that by calling relations 'natural', Deleuze does not endorse an essentialist agenda. In fact, Deleuze considers nature in itself not as natural in the common sense, but as inherently machinic.[4] What Deleuze means, quite simply, is that natural relations are habitual, while abstract relations define the movement of elements that have detached themselves from the chain of habitual terms by violence – in the sense that it always takes a certain amount of violence to change a habitual setup – in order to link up with another series. The first gull that swoops down and 'strikes the heroine', for instance, 'is a demark, since it violently leaves the customary series, which unites it to its species, to man and to Nature' (Deleuze 1986: 204). It is unnatural for a gull to attack humans only in the sense that according to the 'natural order', it is not a general habit of gulls to attack humans. Similarly, it is not habitual for a crop-dusting plane to attack a human being, as it does in *North by Northwest* (1959).

Because of Hitchcock's investment in changes of relations, Deleuze positions him at the end of *Cinema 1*, 'at the juncture of two cinemas' (Deleuze 1986: x) and thus at the juncture of two regimes of the image: at the moment when the actual movement-image turns into the virtual time-image, the moment when every material action is immediately 'surrounded by a set' or swarm of virtual 'relations' (Deleuze 1986: 200). In terms of the topology of the cinema books, Deleuze positions Hitchcock's work at the crystal moment where the actual almost meets the virtual and vice versa. The only reason Hitchcock does not fully belong in *Cinema 2* is because of the logic of suspense, which relentlessly propels his plots forward and thus subjects time-in-general to movement-in-general. Invariably, however, these movements have already lost their internal coherence. The narrative goes off at tangents and follows minute inclinations as in *Psycho*, it goes into prolonged temporal cycles as in *The Trouble with Harry* (1955), or it is curiously randomised as in *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1956).

It is in relation and in attribution to these brittle, demarked narratives that Hitchcock's relational and affective surfaces establish themselves. Affects, in fact, are themselves crystal in that they are corporeal, actual and extensive as well as ideal, virtual and intensive. As in a crystal-image, there is no continuous passage between the two 'affective' series. As Spinoza notes, '*the body cannot determine mind to think, nor can the mind determine body to motion or rest*' (Spinoza 2006: 63). Despite

this radical separation of the series, however, Spinoza maintains that affects and ideas of affects need to be adequate. It is in this context that Deleuze considered Hitchcock a master of relation. If the actual images and the virtual cuts need to be 'adequate', my question in the following is, whether Hitchcock's fragile optical and sound surfaces are 'contained' within a *psycho*analytic logic. Is psychoanalysis 'adequate'?

V. The Shower

Both murders in *Psycho* can only too easily be read as the lethal, backlighted impersonation of mother killing the object of her son's desire. Why 'only too easily'? To explain what I mean by this, I will first look at the production process of the movie. In the case of *Psycho*, this process assembles a complicated media ecology that reaches back to the real-life serial-killer Ed Gein, who used, on occasion, to wear a 'woman suit' made from human skin so he could impersonate the dominating puritan mother he had murdered. Robert Bloch relates Gein directly to Norman Bates in his 1959 novel *Psycho*, in which the narrator notes that '[s]ome of the write-ups compared' the killings 'to the Gein affair up north' (Bloch 1959: 149).[5] Bloch, in fact, lived only thirty-five miles away from Gein when he wrote the novel, which contains a veritable overkill of psychoanalytic references. Bates is a 'multiple personality with at least three facets' (154), *Norman*, *Norma* and *Normal*. He is a 'transvestite' (151), who is allegedly 'guilty of cannibalism, Satanism, incest, and necrophilia' (150). In his more lucid moments, he conveniently diagnoses himself as 'the victim of a mild form of schizophrenia, most likely some form of borderline neurosis' (84) and in one 'conversation' with mother, he in actual fact notes that their relation is 'what they call the Oedipus situation, and I thought if both of us could look at the problem reasonably and try to understand it, maybe things would change for the better' (12). Dr Nicholas Steiner, who examines Bates after his arrest, has no difficulty in tracing his pathology back to a primal scene; a moment when Norman 'walked in on his mother and [her lover] together in the upstairs bedroom' (153). Shortly after this traumatic encounter, Bates poisoned both his mother and her lover, but then he had felt guilty, 'dug her up' (154) and preserved her taxidermically in order to 'keep her alive'. In fact, Bates has made himself believe that she is not dead at all, but in a state of 'suspended animation' (136).

This psychoanalytically oversaturated and overdetermined story was subsequently rewritten for mainstream Hollywood cinema by Joseph

Stefano, who was responsible for the element of 'motivation', something Hitchcock, at least according to Stefano, was not really interested in, although he knew very well that motivation was a 'given' if you wanted to make a Hollywood movie, which meant a movie geared towards a mass-market that was raised on psychoanalytic clichés and that expected Hollywood movies to adhere to these clichés.[6] From the countless melodramas of the forties and fifties onwards, in fact, psychoanalysis had been relentlessly cinemascoped and sensurrounded. In fact, it had become a cinematographic cliché. Hitchcock, who hated clichés but loved to play with the audience's cliché expectations, was very aware of the power of psychoanalysis as a conceptual matrix for motivation, but he also had a highly ironic relation to it. In fact, he considered the story of *Psycho* somewhat of a joke. '*Psycho* is a film that was made with quite some sense of amusement on my part', he noted, 'to me, it's a fun picture' (Rebello 1990: 168).

If Hitchcock was not interested in catering to clichés, he was similarly uninterested in providing psychoanalytic verisimilitude. 'After all, it stands to reason that if one were seriously doing the *Psycho* story it would be a case history' (Thomson 2009: 144), he maintained. What Hitchcock was interested in was to create 'pure cinema'.[7] In this context, his somewhat apocryphal statement that he considered dialogue to be just another part of the soundtrack is more than just another witticism. Like his many comments about his uses and abuses of actors, it shows the degree to which he considered motivation to be subservient to the affects produced by pure cinema. As he noted, famously, '[w]hen an actor comes to me and wants to discuss his character, I say, "It's in the script." If he says, "But what's my motivation," I say, "Your salary" '.[8]

After Bloch, then, Stefano was responsible for 'psychoanalysis'. As Bloch had already put so many psychoanalytical references in place, however, Stefano only needed to streamline the story for Hollywood consumption. Ironically, this streamlining involved not so much adding psychoanalysis to the script, which would have led to a complete conceptual overkill, but subtracting some of the psychoanalytic references. To oversaturate the movie with psychoanalytic references would have taken away from the suspense Hitchcock was out to create on two counts. First, too much overt psychoanalysis would have made the movie too cerebral. Second, it would have made it inadvertently humorous. If the novel attempted to create a frightening verisimilitude by way of the accumulation of pathological details, the movie was to create suspense and shock-effects by means of 'pure optical and sound images' (Deleuze 1989: 15). Hitchcock's 'optical and sound images',

however, differ in one important aspect from the ones Deleuze describes in *Cinema 2*. While these designate optical and acoustic milieus that are suffused with virtual memory and in whose often 'uncut' atmosphere actual movement is curiously suspended, passive and without direction, Hitchcock's images are highly montaged, actively shocking and highly affective. Despite this difference, however, both versions decompose narrative movement into crystal blocs of suspended time.

The pervasive presence of psychoanalysis in the movie, then, is to a large degree owed to the distributed production processes that define the cinema – even *auteur* cinema – in general. These processes are generally not acknowledged by psychoanalytically informed readings, not even by Cohen, who reads Hitchcock's movies as disseminative 'signature machines' (Cohen 2005a: 8). While Deleuze's analyses of the cinema also remain centred around specific directors and their personal styles, a schizoanalysis of the cinema might well profit from an approach that embeds the 'director machine' into an ecology of other machines: other flowslcuts.

In the light of these distributed processes, psychoanalytical readings are defined by a curious chronological loop: 'The Trouble with *Psycho*'. If by the sixties both pulp fiction and Hollywood were fully suffused with psychoanalysis, it was strictly a pop version of psychoanalysis. Bloch and Stefano brought precisely this pop version of psychoanalysis to *Psycho*, which makes it somewhat ironic to observe Žižek retrieve 'deep Freud' from the most obvious of Hollywood treatments and appropriations. Not only does psychoanalysis find itself, as Jacques Derrida would say, it actually proves itself by way of its own pop-versions.

In fact, *Psycho* is a good example to show that the artistic attitude towards Freud tended to be quite debonair. Psychoanalysis had its uses, especially in a mass-market economy. Bloch, for instance, noted about his novel that

> in the late fifties, Freudian theories were very popular and [...] I decided to develop the story along Freudian lines. The big Freudian concept was the Oedipus fixation, so I thought, 'Let's say he had a thing about his mother.' (Rebello 1990: 9)

A similar, probably even more cavalier relation to psychoanalysis can be felt in the way the illustrator who designed the film's poster talks about his artistic rationale: 'The guy [in the novel] was quite cracked up, so, in the graphic, I cracked up the lettering to reinforce the title' (11). What these remarks show is that psychoanalytic readings of Hollywood often make a mistake when they take the presence of

psychoanalysis too seriously. In other words, psychoanalysis should take the modes of its own presence in Hollywood into account. In fact, a somewhat disturbing result of psychoanalysis finding itself in its Hollywood treatments is that it subscribes to its own popularisation, which means that it subscribes to its own cliché. Even Žižek, whose work is famously filled with jokes, does not show such conceptual self-irony. This is why he ultimately fails both as a cinematographic critic and as a psychoanalyst. From Hitchcock he retrieves only 'deep psychoanalysis', which is not fair to Hitchcock as a cinematographer; from Gein's deeply enigmatic and disturbing pathology he retains only Hollywood's sanitised, pop-cultured treatment, which is not fair to Gein as a case history.

In psychoanalysis's finding of itself, Žižek is the last in a long line of critics that goes from Raymond Bellour to Lee Edelman's psychoanalytic deconstructions.[9] Already in Bellour, the seriousness of the critical endeavour creates curiously blind spots. On the background of Hollywood's uses of psychoanalysis, it is in fact somewhat ironic that Bellour, in order to introduce scopic desire as the most appropriate and obvious cinematographic pathology into his analysis of Hitchcock's movies, refers to precisely one of the results of the hypervisibility of Freud in Hollywood cinema: the fact that the voyeuristic Norman is 'concealed, significantly, by a painting which prefigures the effect he is to produce: *Susannah and the Elders*' (Bellour 1986: 321). While Bellour sees the presence of the painting as a significant clue for the implementation and presence of the scopic regime in the movie, it might also be read as a witty, highly tongue-in-cheek detail of the movie's set design. How much more obvious, in fact, could one get? To let a voyeur look through a representation of voyeurism shows to what extent psychoanalytic concepts could be consciously used, as much for 'effect' as for 'irony'.

Something similar happens in Horwitz. Even though *The Birds* itself pre-empts a psychoanalytic reading in which the birds function as the projection of a maternal superego gone berserk when it has Annie, who seems, even within the movie's diegetic reality, to realise how easily people fall into the psychoanalytic trap, tell Melanie that Lydia is not possessive 'with all due respect to Oedipus' (Horwitz 1986: 282), Horwitz still reads the movie into a psychoanalytic register. Rather than reading this remark as another tongue-in-cheek play about the hypervisibility of Freud and the facility of Freudian readings, she chooses to read it as a denial, claiming that 'the text denies (repressed) contradictions to which it cannot admit on a conscious level' (282).

In fact, at this point, she reads the film as if it were a patient: Freud famously explained, in a beautifully laconic manner, the logic of denial by describing a hypothetical patient, who tells the psychoanalyst that he did not know the identity of a specific person in one of his dreams but that he was sure that it was not the mother: ' "You ask who this person in the dream can be. It's *not* my mother" ' (Freud 1925: 235). To which Freud, somewhat deviously, adds: 'We emend this to: "So it *is* his mother" ' (ibid.).

Similarly, when *The Birds* notes that it does not know what it is structured around, but that it is *not* the maternal superego, Horwitz emends this to: 'So it *is* the super-ego', thus turning a very conscious, tongue-in-cheek remark into a symptom of the return of the repressed. As if the film were saying: 'Do not read me psychoanalytically!' but in actual fact meant: 'Read me psychoanalytically!' As if the statement 'the key is not psychoanalysis' meant, in actual fact, 'the key is psychoanalysis'.

I have already noted that while Hitchcock was not really interested in personal motivation, he was obsessively interested in affect and in how to produce 'pure optical and sound affects' by way of cinematic means; in how to produce suspense and shock. Against this background, the story is a mere vehicle to lead up to the truly important moments, such as the two murders and the final discovery of 'mother'. What Deleuze notes in reference to Francis Bacon's work applies equally to Hitchcock's. In Bacon, all relations lead to, and are in the service of, sensations. While a predominantly narrative and conceptual art – the painterly equivalents being figurative and abstract painting – addresses the mind, a 'sensational' art like that of Bacon or Hitchcock addresses predominantly and directly the nervous system:

> As Valéry put it, sensation is that which is transmitted directly, and avoids the detour and boredom of conveying a story. [. . .] [T]he same criticism can be made against both figurative painting and abstract painting: they pass through the brain, they do not act directly upon the nervous system, they do not attain the sensation. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 33)

In Hitchcock's words, 'the impact of the image is directly on emotions' (Hitchcock 1995b: 216). As Hitchcock noted about *Psycho*, '[i]t's a pretty good film. But, more important, it's the first shocker I've ever made. This one *literally* shocks you' (Rebello 1990: 194). It is because he wanted to literally shock that Hitchcock spent one week and seventy camera positions in assembling a forty-five-second montage; one-eighth of the movie's overall shooting time on the visualisation of three

sentences, which, by the way, come much earlier in the novel than in the movie: 'Mary started to scream, and then the curtains parted further and a hand appeared, holding a butcher knife. It was the knife that, a moment later, cut off her scream. And her head' (Bloch 1959: 33).

Within the representation of the familiar psychoanalytic narrative, Hitchcock assembles with the shower sequence an extremely expressive, affective bloc of cinematographic space-time by way of an affective architecture of images and cuts. The aim of the montage was to create the highest 'dramatic impact' (Truffaut 1968: 334), and the proof that it worked was that the spectators were affected by the scene on a directly nervous level. As Truffaut adds, they were, on a directly 'physical' (350) level, 'aroused by pure film' (349).

Like cinema in general, the shower scene is mainly about the optical attribution of material matters-of-fact and immaterial events; actual images and virtual relations. The resulting affect concerns not so much the theatrical level addressed by psychoanalysis as it does the level of production addressed by schizoanalysis. Within the obvious frame of the representation of mother's derailed violence, Hitchcock orchestrates a meeting *with* and a direct expression *of* violent affect. If Hitchcock told Stefano that he was happy to leave motivation to him, Hitchcock was fully responsible for the scene's optical and acoustic arrangement, something that becomes very obvious in the heated controversy between Hitchcock and Saul Bass about 'who actually did what' during the filming of the scene.

In Hitchcock's murderous montage, the optical and acoustic affects are more important than the plot that frames and carries them. Both the narrative setup and the actors' incomputable movements and automatic spasms are, through the practices of the cinema, optically and auditively assembled into a series of blocs of affect. This process comprises both the virtual, narrative surprise of killing off the person who appears to be the heroine – a surprise that is even heightened because she is played by the 'star of the film' (Truffaut 1968: 340) whom the audience would never expect to die so early on – and the actual movements and bodies that form the given diagrams from within which the cinematographic machine of shock and suspense is created. In this dramatisation, the art lies in playing 'odd and even' with the audience, a game in which Hitchcock excelled because the public is 'represented by the camera' (328) and is thus at the mercy of the director's optical manipulations.

It is in this context that one should read the urban myth that seems not to have been true, but that is so convincing in its logic that it should have been true. Allegedly, Hitchcock turned, suddenly and unexpectedly

for Janet Leigh, the luxuriously hot shower to cold during the filming of the scene so that, like Marion Crane's body is attacked by a knife, Janet Leigh's body is attacked by the cold. Leigh's body becomes the site on which a double violence is performed: the virtual violence of Bates's attack, which is related to the field of expressive acting, and the actual violence of the energetic 'freeze frame', which is related to the field of impressive feeling. What better way to extract an 'adequate' response from Janet Leigh?

Even though the story about this physical version of method acting is really too good to be true, it may stand metonymically for the fact that beyond the all-too-expected psychoanalytic theatre of the Hitchcockian plot there lies a much more disruptive production and expression of pure affects which can be called the Hitchcockian *figure*; precisely the figure Pangborn is so obsessed with. The psychoanalytic narrative that psychoanalytic theory retrieves from Hitchcock's montage is merely the thematic carrier of a cinematographic architecture of affective expression. Arguably, in the shower scene this might have worked even better *without* the soundtrack, which was what Hitchcock had originally planned. The sounds – the water, the shrieks, the slashes – are probably the most adequate and affective soundtrack. The shrieks of the violins take away from the intensity of this soundspace because one can hear in them too easily Norman's mother's agitated, demented breathing.

VI. The Telephone Booth

Daphne du Maurier's story 'The Birds', unlike Bloch's *Psycho*, has nothing directly Oedipal about it. In England, a farmer and his family fight against birds that, for some enigmatic reason, have begun to attack humans. Both Deleuze's reading of the first gull as a demark and Hitchcock's 'real' interest in the story are actually very close to du Maurier, who poses the question not so much of *why* but of *how* the birds attack. 'Why do the birds attack?', on the contrary, is precisely the psychoanalytic question Žižek asks himself (Žižek 1992a: 97); as do the characters in the story and the movie. Once more, Žižek answers the question in terms of the movie's internal distribution of desire and its objects. At the end of his reading, it is clear why the birds attack: 'the terrifying figure of the birds is actually the embodiment in the real of a discord, an unresolved tension in intersubjective relation [...] the incarnation of a fundamental disorder in family relationships' (99). For Deleuze and Guattari, however, the question posed by desire is not so much about meaning and representation as it is about production and

assembly, and as such much more in tune with du Maurier and with Hitchcock: 'the question posed by desire is not What does it mean? but rather *How does it work*?' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 109).

It is very difficult, in fact, to find out *why* unexpected things happen. They happen all the time, whenever a habitual pattern is broken and a new machinic assemblage is created. Because of some built-in force – call it appetitus, conatus, libido or *élan vital* – living machines do not stop assembling and entering into complex arrangements and dynamics. Deleuze and Guattari call this force desire, which is why every living machine is a desiring-machine. If one remembers that evolution drifts and that living machines are self-organised rather than created 'in the image of someone or something', this force of desire does not represent something outside of itself. In causing processes of self-organisation, it is productive and directly involved in how living machines come about and how they work: 'The desiring-machines [...] represent nothing, signify nothing, mean nothing, and are exactly what one makes of them, what is made with them, what they make in themselves' (288).

On this background, Deleuze and Guattari develop their notion of the unconscious as productive rather than representative; as a factory rather than a theatre. It 'does not symbolize any more than it imagines or represents; it engineers, it is machinic' (53). When Deleuze and Guattari note that 'the whole task of schizoanalysis' is to 'overturn the theatre of representation into the order of desiring-production' (271), this is precisely to say that questions need to be shifted from *why* to *how*. In fact, Deleuze and Guattari 'reproach psychoanalysis for having stifled this order of production, for having shunted it into *representation*' (296). Quite programmatically, '[s]chizoanalysis forgoes all interpretation because it foregoes discovering an unconscious material: the unconscious does not mean anything' (180). Unfortunately, such statements have often led to the idea that Deleuze and Guattari are not interested in meaning at all. Nothing, of course, could be less true. The question is rather that of how meaning – or better, how sense – is assembled from and within a field of production, how it can remain attributed to that productive ground and how it is related to sensation.

As in Hitchcock's movie, in du Maurier's story the reason for the attacks is never given. The question is not one of a clear causation, but rather of 'How do the birds form a deviant assemblage?' In her detailed and loving description of this process, du Maurier contours a compelling image of swarm intelligence. The first phases of the process are assemblage and agitation. The birds are attracted to each other as

if they were following some gravitational pull. Their normal, habitual desires are redistributed within a communal desire for change. 'The birds are restless':

> Great flocks of them came to the peninsula, restless, uneasy, spending themselves in motion; now wheeling, circling in the sky, now settling to feed on the rich new-turned soil, but even when they fed it was as though they did so without hunger, without desire. Restlessness drove them to the skies again. (du Maurier 1952: 85)

The next phase is defined by the assembly of a new collectivity that comes to overrule and transgress former barriers between territories and populations. Birds that normally would not form alliances begin to assemble cross-population machines. Very carefully, du Maurier refrains from giving a reason for this behaviour. The birds act as if they were compelled to do so:

> Black and white, jackdaw and gull, mingled in strange partnership, seeking some sort of liberation, never satisfied, never still. Flocks of starlings, rustling like silk, flew to fresh pasture, driven by the same necessity for movement, and the smaller birds, the finches and the larks, scattered from tree to hedge as if compelled. (85–6)

In a third phase, the restless swarm turns into an army. Its self-organising movements are now directed towards an enemy: 'There were robins, finches, sparrows, blue tits, larks and bramblings, birds that by nature's law kept to their own flock and their own territory, and now, joining one with another in their urge for battle' (89). At some point, an enigmatic decision has been taken: 'Nor did they fly so high. It was as though they waited upon some signal. As though some decision had yet to be given. The order was not clear' (102).

The story will remain silent about where the order comes from. Certainly, it is not given by some individual 'birdleader' who controls the movement. Rather, it is a distributed order that spreads out within the multiplicity of birds. Towards the end of the story, the farmer – who had first thought that the birds were remote-controlled by some human agency such as the Russians – begins to suspect that the attacks have to do with a deeply enigmatic evolutionary, and thus also genetic, drift. '[H]ow many millions of years of memory were stored in those little brains, behind the stabbing beaks, the piercing eyes, now giving them this instinct to destroy mankind with all the deft precision of machines' (123), he wonders.

If one reads du Maurier's 'million years of memory' as another name for 'unconscious machine', the story describes how the birds assemble what Deleuze and Guattari call a war machine. In this context it is significant that du Maurier had extrapolated the attacks from real-life, actual attacks by aviatory versions of Ed Gein, and that Hitchcock had been, in turn, 'reminded of the story in the early sixties by reports – from California – of unusual bird behaviour and what might be interpreted as attacks' (Thomson 2009: 104).

For Hollywood consumption, du Maurier's story is treated by the American crime writer Ed McBain, writing as Evan Hunter. There might have been a certain surreal beauty in an American crime writer re-writing an English writer of romances, but in actual fact McBain did not so much rewrite the story, as change just about everything except the basic idea. The only two details Hunter takes over is the eye-pecking and the birds' mode of entry. 'Then they'll try the windows, the chimneys', du Maurier's farmer notes (105).[10]

McBain frames the story about evolutionary drift by a psychoanalytically informed narrative. Once more, a mother is trying to 'save' her son from his object of desire. One inhabitant of Bodega Bay, the village Mitch Brenner lives in and to which Melanie Daniels had come by boat, in fact accuses Melanie openly – though wrongly, as Robin Wood stresses – of being the direct cause of the attacks, because she and the birds have arrived at the same time; a synchronicity that is another internal psychoanalytic 'spoiler alert' because it links Melanie, Mitch and his mother to the attacks of the birds.

Žižek – as have many other commentators – immediately zooms in to the family clues that lie scattered amidst the bird attacks. Again he argues that the plot about the birds is only a means to distract the audience from the psychoanalytic truth of the story. As Žižek argues, the manifest narrative about the eruption of the birds' violence functions, somewhat like a screen memory, as a diversion from the narrative about the violent eruption of mother's anger. Thus Žižek's conceit of '*The Birds* without Birds' (Žižek 1992a: 104–6). The birdplot 'makes sense' precisely when it is discovered as a condensed and displaced representation of a both familial and familiar psychoanalytic narrative.

My argument is once more that the obvious family romance is merely the carrier for complicated meetings of the actual and the virtual and for the production of landscapes of violent, shocking affect. Is it not, in fact, that Hitchcock once more turns psychoanalysis upside down? Hitchcock's aim is to assemble a montage that approaches the actual affectively and architecturally. One of the strategies to do so has to

do with projective planes and optical superimpositions. In the famous 'Pearl Harbour scene', during which the birds attack first Bodega Bay's gas station and then Melanie, who has fled into a telephone booth, Hitchcock, in fact, creates a direct formal and thematic inversion of the shower sequence, with the birds taking on the function of the knife. Only this time, there is a translucent protective plane into which the birds crash before they can hurt Melanie.[11]

Although Žižek is always extremely aware of the formal aspect of Hitchcock's work, in his overall argument, he relates the 'projection' of the birds onto Bodega Bay – the fact that Hitchcock inserted the images of the birds into the scene during post-production – to a thematic, psychoanalytic layering of the birds' and mother's destructive energy. The formal layering, however, can also be read as an affective rather than a representative projection. In fact, the relation of the sequence in the telephone booth to the shower scene sequence is not only formal. Another way in which they are related is that, as Hitchcock noted in 'It's a Bird, It's a Plane, It's . . . *The Birds*', it took 'three months' (Hitchcock 1995a: 317) to assemble the extended scene, of which the sequence in the telephone booth is a part.

The most interesting and at the same time the most disconcerting optical characteristic of the scene is related to the fact that most of the images of the birds were added only during post-production. In terms of the filming of the scene and of acting in it, this meant that in a first temporal series, the actors had to run from and protect themselves from purely imaginary birds, as if the birdplot was indeed a communal phantasm. In their flight from the attack of invisible birds, the actors had to counter-actualise the complete affective bloc envisioned by Hitchcock, even though the birds, which made up the most important material objects in that bloc, were added to the image only at a later point. The actors, therefore, had to act into the future, as it were, and at the same time as if the birds were already there. They had to mime a presence yet to come, which made their task a subjunctive counter-actualisation reminiscent, although in a completely different context, of Žižek's conceit of *The Birds* without birds. Similarly, Hitchcock's camera had to continually anticipate the birds.

The optical result of this 'special effect' is a curious incongruity, to which the fact that the birds are *in front of* the actors, which are, optically, the back-projection, adds an extra layer. If one thinks of the usual back-projections in Hitchcock, such as those that define train or bus rides, in *The Birds*, the *Verfremdungseffekt* is even stronger because

the habitual figure–ground relationship is reversed. The lesson of this formal reversal is that the reality of Bodega Bay forms the ground to the figure of the reality of the birds, whose perspective the spectator is asked to take. Quite literally, the images are given from a 'bird's-eye' view.

In its weird optical alignments and de Chirico perspectives, the completed scene's optical architecture shows quite directly that there will always be an infinitesimal distance between the world of the birds and the world of the humans, even when they are projected onto the same movie screen.[12] This infinitesimal distance is embodied by the technological gap between the two plateaus of superimposed images. The world of the birds and the world of the humans are visually attributed in such a way that they are 'almost' on the same plane. Their eerie optical oscillation in fact recapitulates formally the incongruities of what happens in the movie. This, of course, is not to say that Hitchcock used the mode of projection as an intended strategy – we can assume he was after the most appropriately affective images within the set of given technical constraints – but to highlight the specific optical organisation of the film's images, which is seminal in producing their singular affective impact.

In a larger context, the optical layering of the scene is one of Hitchcock's cinematographic strategies to create crystal-images, which designate, within the internal architecture of the two cinema books, the 'smallest internal circuit' (Deleuze 1989: 70) between the actual and the virtual. They are images of the infinitesimal meeting of the actual and the virtual at the impossible, infinitely receding 'point at infinity' where the actual and the virtual become identical; the impossible moment when the two volumes of *Cinema 1* and *Cinema 2* would become one volume. When the distance between them would be reduced to zero.

It is only at this ideal point that the plane of the anonymous, actual movement of movement-images folds over onto the plane of the anonymous, virtual movement of time-images, where pure actual perception turns into pure virtual imagination. Where the sensory-motor arc turns into memory. As figures of the point-at-infinity on a projective plane, crystal-images measure out 'a place and its obverse which are totally reversible' (69). In the crystal of the image, one invariably sees 'the indiscernibility of the actual and the virtual' (87). Deleuze's philosophy develops within the conceptual space 'given' by the projective plane. Cinematographically, this projective plane is embodied by the movie screen, which is quite literally 'projective'.

In the scene that I have described above, Hitchcock superimposes two actual worlds. A similar superimposition on the virtual level, however,

plays itself out in the gap between the respective relational sets of the birds and of the humans. Unlike psychoanalytic readings, Hitchcock does *not* provide a link between the series of the actual attacks and the virtual series of the explanations of the attacks. Both formally and in terms of narrative, Hitchcock leaves the actual series and the virtual series disjunct but reciprocally attributed in terms of optical and sound situations: crystal cinema. What he provides are highly affective montages of the collision of the both actual and virtual worlds of the birds and of the humans.

Another eerie superimpositional attribution of the actual and the virtual defines Madeleine|Judy in *Vertigo* (1958), who oscillates between actual person and virtual projection. Ironically, in *Vertigo*, the cinematic assemblage terminates precisely at the point of their hallucinatory identification. This is even clearer in the novel than in the movie, in which Hitchcock sacrifices psychological for optical symmetry. Because the director does not move the action forward 'with psychoanalysis' but 'with a camera – whether that action is set on a prairie or confined to a telephone booth' (Hitchcock 1995b: 215), Hitchcock trades the ending of Pierre Boileau and Thomas Narcejac's novel *D'Entre les morts* (1954), on which the movie is based, for an ending that is optically and cinematographically more convincing, although it is both psychologically and narratologically much less so. In this ending, rather than having Flavières kill Renée, John 'Scottie' Ferguson returns once more to the vertiginous bell-tower, where Judy is killed purely by accident.

VII. The Politics of Birds

What one can say about the birds in *The Birds* is that they seem to follow at least three scripts: an evolutionary script, in which they embody an enigmatic eruption of a violent, instinctual aggression (du Maurier), an optical, cinematographic script, in which they are bodies related in an affective bloc created by vision and sound (Hitchcock), and an Oedipal script that functions as the narrative carrier and that provides motive (Hollywood).

But what about desire and its distribution? Up until now, I have neglected the level of the narration in favour of moments of the production of affect, and the level of politics in favour of the level of a poetics. Affect, however, is not only a product *of* the movies, it is also a topic *in* their narratives. To look at the distribution of desire in the movies addresses the difference between the Oedipal and

the anoedipal from a slightly different perspective. Quite obviously, both *Psycho* and *The Birds* are libidinally highly charged. While psychoanalysis reads their plots in the context of human sexuality, however, a schizoanalytic reading stresses how they assemble site-specific sexual landscapes according to 'the truth' that 'sexuality is everywhere' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 293), which means: in the non-human arena as well.

Although in both movies the deviant desiring-machines are assembled from under the shadow of Oedipus, there is an important difference between *Psycho* and *The Birds*. Norman's desiring-machine remains framed by a human perspective, while the birds widen the field of desire to the level of the non-human. More directly than Norman does, they show that, as Michel Serres states in *Genesis*, 'the cosmos is not a structure, it is a pure multiplicity of ordered multiplicities and pure multiplicities' (Serres 1995: 111). As such, they are more directly images of anoedipal schizo-machines.

Both in the story and the movie, the individual birds become first a swarm and then a bird collective: 'a war machine: a physics of packs, turbulences, "catastrophes," and epidemics' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 490). More than in du Maurier's story, however, in the movie this war machine is assembled against the background of the 'habitual' capture of birds by humans. Hitchcock plays with this not only in the movie's opening scene, which is set in a pet store amidst countless caged birds, but also in a trailer he made for the movie, which shows him narrating, with his usual ironic detachment, how utterly horribly humans have, throughout history, treated the species of birds.[13] A similar reason 'why the birds attack' is provided when Hitchcock notes that the film is about the 'reversal of the age-old conflict between men and birds' (Truffaut 1968: 360). Again, however, these explanations do not seem to be central to the movie. They are conceptual MacGuffins provided outside of the frame of the actual movie, which never directly addresses this aspect. In fact, in a scene that was later deleted, Melanie and Mitch were actually supposed to make fun of 'why' the birds attack: 'They joked about the fact that the birds have a leader, that he's a sparrow perched on a platform addressing all the birds and saying to them, "Birds of the world, unite. You've nothing to lose but your feathers" ' (364).

On another level, however, the change of the habitual relationship of birds and humans is addressed throughout the movie, especially in the way it charts the gradual production of the birds' war machine. Already in its opening scene in the pet store, the flirtatious conversation

between the 'lovebirds' Mitch and Melanie is drowned out by the nervous twittering of the caged birds that washes acoustically over the voices. In their acoustic insistence, the birds in the store have begun to no longer fit the image of the romantic lovebirds Melanie wants to buy. Already, they have become terrifying twittermachines whose decibel level quite materially disturbs the spectators in their attempt to make sense of the dialogue. Later, the motif of the cage is taken up by the caged bird Melanie carries on the boat, and by the way Hitchcock sets up the scene in the telephone booth. As Hitchcock notes, 'Melanie Daniels takes refuge in a glass telephone booth and I show her as a bird in a cage' (Truffaut 1968: 360).

After the first gull's aggressive inclination, the birds, as if they had collectively read Althusser, assemble around the school, as one of the most effective institutions of Oedipalisation, where they congregate, in an inexorably slow fashion, on the telephone wires, in a scene that, quite ironically, superimposes two modes of information transfer: one human, the other aviatory. Rather than being a figure of human desire, is the movie not, therefore, much more the figure of a fight between caged desire and free desire? A fight between the two equally real series of birds and humans? A reversal of series: the birds are free, the humans are caged.

In the movie's tracing of the birds' assembly of a war machine, their attacks become figures of a desiring-machine that is fuelled by a pure, anoedipal and thus unrestrained energy; an energy that defines the movie's central affective spaces, from the first inclination to the various endings, in one of which the final image should have been of the birds 'covering' the Golden Gate Bridge.

The birds' desiring-machine, therefore, is not, as in Žižek, a stain that embodies an impossible, real sexuality that is excluded from the subject's psychic reality and thus from the space and interest of psychoanalysis except in its very negativity *as* excluded. Rather, it sets up, on a machinic level below any Oedipal organisation, a complex energetic force field that might be said to embody what Deleuze calls, in *Difference and Repetition*, the field of 'passive syntheses' (Deleuze 1994: 74). As a war machine, the birds re-distribute their relation to the overall environment on a level of a material anoedipal production on an 'unconscious' level below and beyond the level of the human. As Deleuze and Guattari state in *Anti-Oedipus*, 'we do not deny that there is an Oedipal sexuality, an Oedipal heterosexuality and homosexuality, an Oedipal castration, as well as complete objects, global images, and specific egos' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 74). But then, they make a crucial distinction, declaring

that '[w]e deny that these are the production of the unconscious' (74). The productions of the unconscious are quite literally swarms of desiring-machines.

Once more, Hitchcock is not really interested in the birds' ultimate motivation or in the birds as figurations of Oedipal violence. Rather, he is interested in the gradual optical superimposition of the birdmachine onto the Oedipal machines that define Bodega Bay, and in the ways it brings about their violent deterritorialisation. The smooth sky, waves of birds, in revolt against the striated bay. As such, the birds' war machine resonates with the war-machine aspect of schizoanalysis, which is directed against the Bodega Bay of psychoanalysis. As Deleuze and Guattari note, 'schizoanalysis must be violent, brutal: defamiliarizing, de-oedipalizing, decastrating; undoing theater, dream, and fantasy; decoding, deterritorializing' (381).

Importantly, the birdmachine is not a natural machine, because, as I noted before, nature itself is not natural. It is always 'machinic' and thus 'montaged', which brings me back to du Maurier's notion that the birds follow an evolutionary instinct. Deleuze and Guattari emend this to the more radical idea that 'desire is never an undifferentiated instinctual energy', but 'a highly developed, engineered setup rich in interactions' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 215). The real desire is to build machines: 'Assemblages are passional, they are compositions of desire. Desire has nothing to do with a natural or spontaneous determination; there is no desire but assembling, assembled desire' (399). The birds assemble a molecular, non-human *schizo*machine – as Deleuze and Guattari note, '[t]he desiring micromultiplicities are no less collective than the large social aggregates' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 340) – and as such they come to embody the positive productions of a material unconscious; a field in which

> [s]exuality is no longer regarded as a specific energy that unites persons derived from the large aggregates, but as the molecular energy that places molecules-partial objects (libido) in connection, that organizes inclusive disjunctions on the giant molecule of the body without organs [...] and that distributes states of being and becoming according to domains of presence or zones of intensity [...] For desiring-machines are precisely that: the microphysics of the unconscious. (183)

The birds' mycrophysical dynamics actualise the tensors of an enigmatic evolutionary drift that goes far beyond the 'ecological' (Žižek 1992a: 97) narrative mentioned by Žižek. The birds become a thousand tiny

sexes, uncontrollable emanations of a deterritorialising energy field that unleashes itself over the Oedipal bay:

> for the two sexes imply a multiplicity of molecular combinations bringing into play not only the man in the woman and the woman in the man, but the relation of each to the animal, the plant, etc. a thousand tiny sexes. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 213)

In this context, the difference between swarms and families can be read as that between anoedipal war machines and war machines that are operationalised and Oedipalised by the state, such as the Oedipal war machine that defines the symbolic order of Bodega Bay.

While Norman is unable to untangle his sexual war machine from his highly Oedipalised environment, the birds' war machine succeeds in completely destabilising the overall Oedipal machine: the thousands of birds assemble a desiring-machine that 'is the production of a thousand sexes, which are so many uncontrollable becomings' (278–9). It is much easier, therefore, to be on the side of the birds than to be on the side of Norman. They do not discriminate. They are not after anybody specific. They simply show that, according to a schizoanalytic logic, every Oedipalised family romance can be deterritorialised into a more comprehensive, more complex and more anonymous chemical romance; into the field of libidinal micro-machines that an Oedipal sexuality has repressed and organised in order to come into being. Below Oedipal sexuality, $n-1$ sexes, below stable structures, $n-1$ sets of unstable, dynamic relations: 'Go, Birdies, go!' or, in the rhetoric of Deleuze and Guattari: 'Destroy, destroy. The task of schizoanalysis goes by way of destruction [...] Destroy Oedipus' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 311). In Žižek, the birds are the hallucinations of a real sexuality that enters human sexuality only as a traumatic stain. In Deleuze, the birds are part of the non-human world's sexual diagram that engages with the human world's sexual diagram in a fully machinic, deterritorialising manner.

Symptomatically, the soundtrack of *The Birds* is literally synthesised from the acoustic reservoir of actual twitterings and wing-flaps: from the actual twittermachine. As Hitchcock notes, it is a true *sound*-track: 'We used only sounds for the whole of the picture. There was no music' (Truffaut 1968: 369). The acoustic effect Hitchcock aimed for was 'a menacing wave of vibration' (371); a purely affective, non-musical landscape of birdsound.[14]

Let us come back to the question of the 'meaning' of it all. From a psychoanalytic angle, the birds' attacks are projections or embodiments

of the protagonists' psychic attitudes, which is why the question about the reasons for the attacks can be answered from within the conceptual architecture of psychoanalysis. Quite literally, the birds attack because 'mother is afraid of being left alone' and *only* because mother is afraid of being left alone. The agency, therefore, lies with mother. Her maternal superego quite literally wills the birds into being.

If psychoanalysis can resolve the problem 'without a rest', Wood maintains that the question cannot be answered at all, stating that '[t]he question we are left with, "What do you suppose made it (the seagull) do that?" is not meant to have an answer' (Wood 1989: 159). For Wood, the meaning of the birds lies precisely in their meaninglessness: 'The film derives its disturbing power from the absolute meaninglessness and unpredictability of the attacks' (162).[15] Here, the agency lies solely with the birds. Both of these approaches miss the middle ground on which the bird series intersects with the human series. Both fail to address the diagram of the complex relations that pertain between the two fields and thus the poetics and the politics of their interaction. Already in *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari had stated that the cinema 'is not analytical and regressive, but explores a global field of coexistence' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 274).

VIII. In Lieu of a Conclusion: Motel Architecture 2

In Ballard's 'Motel Architecture', Pangborn begins, at some point, to feel that he is being haunted by a stranger who first stabs Vera Tilley to death in the shower and then attempts to kill Pangborn. In the end, in fact, the stranger indeed does succeed in killing Pangborn, but then the stranger is of course Pangborn himself. Ballard's narrative twist defines the final act of murder as a schizo-suicide. The final image is of Pangborn 'rais[ing] the knife to his happy heart' (Ballard 1982: 194). As on a projective plane, on the narrative surface of 'Motel Architecture' actual musculature and virtual consciousness enter into a complex arrangement that remains as enigmatic as Gein's personal killing machine or as real-life death by bird.

The only truth of Ballard's story, as well as of Hitchcock's movies, is that of the dramatisation of the adequate optical attribution of matters-of-fact and relational architectures; the enigmatic, affective truth of Ballard's and Hitchcock's motel architectures: their schizoanalyses. In fact, Ballard is extremely Deleuzian in his reading of a schizoanalytic Hitchcock, and thus of a poetics and politics of the cinema in which the movie screen becomes a projective plane on which the actual and

the virtual converge by way of crystal-images: a screen on which virtual surface and actual points, bodily affect and the idea of the affect meet at infinity.

A more recent literary variation on the *Psycho* theme, Don DeLillo's *Point Omega* (2010), stresses, like 'Motel Architecture', the affective power of the movie and the crystal relation between the actual and the virtual series. The text consists of a narrative that is framed by two scenes, called 'Anonymity' and 'Anonymity 2', that describe a nameless male person watching – as obsessively as Pangborn watches *Psycho* – Douglas Gordon's real-life installation *24 Hour Psycho*, which decelerates the movie from its original 109 minutes to a running time of 24 hours. The narrator describes this installation as something akin to a weightless sculpture made purely from light. 'The screen was free-standing, about ten by fourteen feet, not elevated, placed in the middle of the room. It was a translucent screen' (DeLillo 2010: 3).

The man is especially obsessed with the affects the slowed-down images extract from the narrative. As the third-person narrator notes, '[t]his was the point. To see what's here, finally to look and to know you're looking, to feel time passing, to be alive to what is happening in the smallest registers of motion' (6). In the slow-motion projection, which shifts the focus quite literally from the movement-image to the time-image, narrative and meaning dissolve into floating moments of memory and affect, isolating details such as the 'flurries of trembling light' (ibid.) or the 'four rings spinning slowly over the fallen figure of Janet Leigh, a stray poem above the hellish death' (9) from the flow of the narration. Watching is no longer about signification, interpretation or about making *sense*. It is about making *sensation* and about being affected by the images of a pure cinema. Like Pangborn, the man is literally suspended in the space of Hitchcock's pure cinema, in the sense that suspense comes from the Latin *suspendere*. When two visitors enter the room, whom the man imagines to be two professors, he notes that an academic, hermeneutical – and, I would add, a psychoanalytical – approach must inevitably miss the affective dimension of the movie: 'their vocabulary of film [. . .] could not be adapted to curtain rods and curtain rings and eyelets' (10).

For the nameless spectator, the film becomes, in its deceleration, 'pure film, pure time' (6). The images slow down into arrangements of purely optical affect. In their separation from the narrative movement, they become pure crystal-images:

> She is running into darkness, a beautiful thing to see, decelerated, the woman running, shedding background light as she comes, face and shoulders slightly shaped, total dark falling in around her. This is what they ought to talk about here, if they talk, when they talk, light and shadow, the image on the screen. (110)

For the spectator, it is ultimately a question of how to literally move into the projective plane of the screen: 'He wanted the film to move even more slowly, requiring deeper involvement of eye and mind, always that, the thing he sees tunneling into the blood, into dense sensation, sharing consciousness with him' (115). How to literally seep into the screen, or let the images seep into him: 'Or was the film thinking into him, spilling through him like some kind of runaway brain fluid?' (109). How to occupy the projective space between fiction and life? When another visitor of the installation goes to stand behind the screen and acts out Bates's movements, the man wonders 'what made this side of the screen any less truthful than the other side?' (4).

The middle section of *Point Omega* is a first-person narrative by Jim Finley, a filmmaker who plans to make a documentary starring Richard Elster, an academic who was involved in the American government's organisation of the war in Iraq. The two men, who are now identified as the two men who had walked into the installation in the 'Anonymity' section, are staying in a house in the desert, where Finley tries to convince Elster to participate in the documentary. At some point, Elster's daughter Jessie joins them. When she vanishes, the two men and the police search for her, but all they find is a knife. After a time, the two men return to New York.

In the middle of this story, Finley voyeuristically watches Jessie first in the bathroom and later on in her bedroom. After this, she vanishes. Has he killed her? Has he been re-enacting Bates? The story does not tell. In the final section, 'Anonymity 2', the male spectator's dream of meeting a woman in the installation becomes true. The woman is reminiscent of Jessie. The two talk for a while, they leave the installation together, but the meeting does not lead anywhere. The man goes back to the installation and 'returns his attention to the screen, where everything is so intensely what it is' (116). He thinks about his mother: 'pure literature'.

IX. To recapitulate

The poetics and politics one might develop from the above readings is one of affects: of the attribution of bodily affects and mental affectations

that are, in Hitchcock, realised optically as crystal-images. Hitchcock's movies are not so much adequate equations of an Oedipal logic. Rather, they are adequate optical equations of the infinitely complex diagram of the world, and of the human and non-human stressors and tensors that make up this diagram. They are adequate optical equations of the world's circumstances and its enigmatic dynamics that cut across an Oedipal logic. In this shift, the psychoanalytic stain becomes a smear that dissolves in the fluid dynamics of this world. Invariably, Hitchcock's optical arrangements are figures that form complex affective landscapes shot through with enigmatic, anonymous affects that wash over bodies and minds equally.

Let me close with a final rhetorical question, a stylistic device I have hijacked for this essay from Žižek, who likes to use it for his more outrageous claims. Here, then, is my outrageous claim: Is not psychoanalysis the ultimate MacGuffin in Hitchcock's work? Is not it merely a random object that exists only in order to get the schizoanalytics of Hitchcock's optical, cinematographic machine running?

Notes

1. For such deprogrammings see Ishii-Gonzáles 2004; Buchanan 2002, 2006; Conley 2009.
2. See also Conley's (2009) discussion of Deleuze's differentiation between the archive and the diagram as the fields of form and force, respectively: 'actual form' and 'virtual force'.
3. As Truffaut notes, Hitchcock 'hinge[s] the plot around a striking coincidence' (Truffaut 1968: 15).
4. '[T]he state of nature is always already more than a simple state of nature' (Deleuze 1991: 39).
5. Cf. Thomson 2009.
6. 'He was not interested in characters or motivation at all. That was the writer's job' (Rebello 1990: 41). See also Hitchcock's disinterest in the real-life story: 'It was the story of a man who kept his mother's body in his home, somewhere in Wisconsin' (Truffaut 1968: 338).
7. '[T]he thing that appealed to me and made me decide to do the picture was the suddenness of the murder in the shower, coming, as it were, out of the blue. That was about all' (Truffaut 1968: 338). Wood also maintains that Hitchcock's films 'derive their value from the intensity of the images – an intensity created and controlled very largely by context, by the total organisation – rather than from the creation of "rounded" characters' (Wood 1989: 164).
8. http://hitchcock.tv/quotes/quotes.html (accessed 10 October 2010).
9. Edelman deflects the psychoanalytic machine into the field of queer studies, reading the birds as embodiments of 'the arbitrary, future-negating force of a brutal and mindless drive' (Edelman 2004: 127). For a critique of psychoanalytic readings of Hitchcock, see Cohen, who maintains that 'it is insufficient to declare Hitchcock, or *Psycho*, simply anti-Oedipal [. . .] any more than one can hustle

to the Lacanian prop box to retrieve "maternal superego" to plaster over birds that have, as clearly as possible, deflected anthropomorphisms or family plots' (Cohen 2005b: 83). Against Žižek's 'painfully conventional' (Cohen 2005a: 47) mapping of 'the psychoanalytic facade' (Cohen 2005b: 78) and Deleuze's presumed 'relapse [...] into a logic of symbolization' (Cohen 2005a: 45) and 'figuration' (48), Cohen sets the grammatological play of the signifier.

10. In *Spellbound* (1945), the treatment is equally loose, although *The House of Dr. Edwardes* (Beeding 1928) contains deeply Oedipal moments. As Hitchcock notes, '*Spellbound* is based on complete psychiatric truth' (Hitchcock 1995d: 114). In the movie, the plot of the novel is significantly altered, and the staging of the dreamwork famously 'outsourced' to Salvador Dalí.
11. Thomson notes that the scene is 'the equivalent of the shower murder in *Psycho* – shot as lovingly as a romantic scene' (Thomson 2009: 109). See also Wood 1989: 153.
12. For a discussion of the optical technology see Wood (1989: 157, 159) and Žižek (1992b: 200, 236–7).
13. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZjaVdJt59U (accessed 20 September 2010).
14. On the soundtrack of *The Birds*, see also Restivo 2004.
15. Cohen also considers the birds as 'causeless' (Cohen 2005b: 151), 'antiapocalyptic' (151) and ultimately as 'teletechnic agents' (155).

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Signs Without Name[1]

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Abstract

This paper argues that Chris Marker's 1982 film *Sans Soleil* derives its affective force from doublings and 'faces' of horror and beauty that reveal a twofold synthesis of actual and virtual. While a focus upon the material, ever in relation to transient yet lingering sensations, cannot discharge the power and force of the film, this paper endeavours nevertheless to assess and evoke Marker and Deleuze's own interrogative methods that thoroughly explore, in the manner of a revelatory 'schizoanalysis' or empiricism, molecular and variable operations beneath our 'molar' structures and organisations. As *Sans Soleil*'s voiceover states, 'If they don't see happiness in the picture, at least they'll see the black', a provocative remark that invokes indefinable singularities and the darkness of a wound, cracking of time and splitting of self in film, life and death. Considerations of death, consciousness and subjectivity extend this paper's examinations.

Keywords: Marker, affect, sensation, becoming, force, counter-actualisation, subjectivity

> 'Poetry is born of insecurity: wandering Jews, quaking Japanese; [. . .] moving about in a world of appearances: fragile, fleeting, revocable, of trains that fly from planet to planet [. . .]. That's called "the impermanence of things".'
>
> *Sans Soleil* 1982; hereafter *SS*

> The artist tells him- or herself that this world has had different aspects, will have still others, and that there are already others on other planets; finally, the artist opens up to the Cosmos in order to harness forces in a 'work'.
>
> (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 337)

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> Lawrence [. . .] writes: 'To be alone, mindless and memoryless beside the sea . . . [. . .].
>
> Far off, far off, as if he had landed on another planet, as a man might after death.'
>
> (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 189)
>
> 'I'm writing you all this from another world.'
>
> (*SS*)

A seemingly otherworldly, fleeting yet haunting series of visual, voice and sound assemblages amassed with the 'relentlessness of a bounty hunter' constitute the opening moments of Chris Marker's *Sans Soleil* (1982) during which the narration announces: 'He wrote: I've been round the world several times and now only banality still interests me.' At once specific, explicit and cryptic, the film's narration and images of time deftly manifest doublings and paradoxes of life, creation and experience: death and survival, memory and forgetting, horror and beauty, fragility and indestructibility, joy and loss, layers of life that simultaneously, collectively comprise, as *Sans Soleil* suggests, familiar *and* indecipherable aspects of existence that the film seeks to momentarily glimpse and distinguish. Via its embrace of spiritual cosmic 'worlds' within our own whose language of 'electronic graffiti' delineates 'the contours of what is not, or is no longer, or is not yet' (*SS*), Marker's film sensorily evokes a melancholy whose disembodied wounds bespeak the loss of actual limits and survival of virtual remains. By such affecting embodiment, *Sans Soleil* effectively unearths the untranslatable and impermanent, that invisible *between* or 'poignancy of things', the 'Japanese secret' that implies 'the faculty of communion with things, of entering into them, of being them for a moment' so that, 'in their turn[,] they should be like us: perishable and immortal' (*SS*).[2]

Persistently, *Sans Soleil* attempts to convey paradoxically enduring yet evanescent sensations and melancholies, those poignant 'immobile shadows' (*SS*) begot by disembodied wounds. At the margins of our world between all things past and future, visible and invisible, the film then encounters that ceaselessly double process, coincidence or *between* of forces as it glares at the 'partition that separates life from death' and that 'last state – before their [actual] disappearance – of the poignancy of things' (*SS*). This pursuit, that is, of *Sans Soleil* and all Marker works through their respectively innovative and new means is, as insists *Sans Soleil*'s narration, 'not a search for contrasts' but a 'journey to the two extreme poles of survival'. Yet whilst *Sans Soleil* purportedly examines the two 'extremes' of Japan and Africa, it more profoundly contemplates

the dynamic movements of actual-virtual relations with their doublings and faces of horror and beauty that reveal the two sides of all things, that twofold synthesis of actual and virtual split continually into two like time's past-future divide itself.

Microscopically and intensely, the film pursues the 'virtual counterpart' (*SS*) and poignancy of all things corporeal and incorporeal, seen and unseen; through the unexpected and ever-transitive, *Sans Soleil* discerns virtual extensions, *thisnesses* that defy name, and *signs* that forever impinge upon the soul that line the actual mundane quotidian. 'He wrote me: coming back through the Chiba coast I thought of Shonagon's list, of all those signs one has only to name to quicken the heart, just name' (*SS*). A sign, as Deleuze through Spinoza proposes, 'can have several meanings' but is always 'an *effect*', 'the trace of one body upon another' (Deleuze 1997: 138). With regard to the impossibility of naming or affixing affective experience, *Sans Soleil* respectively remarks: 'To us, a sun is not quite a sun unless it's radiant.' In quest then of the ineffable, of signs without name or dynamic unfoldings and revelations of the routinely imperceptible, of *thisnesses*, haecceities and piercing moments 'held [. . .] at arm's length, [. . .] zoom's length, until [. . . their] last twenty-fourth of a second' (*SS*), *Sans Soleil* perseveres. 'If they don't see happiness in the picture, at least they'll see the black' (*SS*).

'The *white or black screen*, finally', writes Ronald Bogue à propos modern cinema, 'is the interstice made visible' (Bogue 2003: 179). 'The first image he told me about', begins *Sans Soleil*, 'was of three children on a road in Iceland, in 1965. He said that for him it was the image of happiness and also that he had tried several times to link it to other images, but it never worked' (*SS*). *Sans Soleil*'s first series of unlinked images, that of three Icelandic children, a US war plane and finally 'a long piece of black leader' (*SS*), indeed overtly exposes, in direct relation to Marker's 1962 *La Jetée*, the screen and the filmic cut, that *between* of images that potentially becomes, as Deleuze explains, the screen itself.

In relation to the means through which *Sans Soleil* foregrounds the cuts between its images, as through its long piece of black leader in these opening moments of the film, it is vital to return to Deleuze's writing on modern cinema and the postwar time-image. For, once more, Deleuze identifies

> [a] reversal where the image is unlinked and the cut begins to have an importance in itself. [. . .] there is no longer linkage of associated images, but only relinkages of independent images. [. . .] one image *plus* another [. . .]. The cut may now be extended and appear in its own right, as the black screen, the white screen and their derivatives and combinations. (Deleuze 1989: 213–14)

Through this method of between or AND – what Deleuze terms a 'whole new system of rhythm' or 'serial or atonal cinema' – modern cinema, moreover *Sans Soleil* itself, gives rise to not only the emergence of a direct presentation of time but also the time-image's direct encounter with the limits of thought itself (Deleuze 1989: 214).

For this encounter between thought and image, as staged throughout many of Marker's films, also discovers particular significance via *Sans Soleil*. Unlike Marker's *La Jetée* as well as the early films of frequent collaborator and friend Alain Resnais that each emerge from a certain definitive horror – the Holocaust, Hiroshima, an atomic apocalypse – *Sans Soleil* shifts towards a more comprehensive, layered interrogation of both strangely familiar *and* indecipherable aspects of life that exist ever in relation to sufferings past and yet to come. *Sans Soleil*'s acute scrutinisation of the banal does indeed reveal unexpected horrors and excesses that bespeak not a single monumental historic event but countless unique injustices and sorrows and their everlasting reverberations.

To reiterate a primary contention of this paper and Deleuze's cine-philosophy, the time-image in effect 'puts thought into contact with an unthought, the unsummonable, the inexplicable, the undecidable, the incommensurable' (Deleuze 1989: 214), that breakdown or crack we confront as our corporeal *and* incorporeal reality, which death's virtual/impersonal, actual/personal aspects most profoundly embody. Engendered in response to the actual horrors of our world, their lingering affective effects and our complicity, complacency and banality, the modern cinema's expression of an 'impotence' or powerlessness precipitated the breakdown of the cinema's sensory-motor organisation, the method of linear, rational or 'sutured' continuity championed in classic cinema. What modern cinema of the time-image 'advances', claims Deleuze, 'is not the power of thought but its "impower"' (Deleuze 1989: 166).

Modern cinema in effect encounters what Deleuze by way of Artaud recognises as the 'powerlessness at the heart of thought', that which Deleuze through Artaud believes cinema 'essentially suited to reveal' (Deleuze 1989: 166). For the cracks or cuts of the image in modern cinema expose, as Deleuze maintains, time's fissure of an actual present into both future and virtual past, that domain of all past events that doubles or mirrors the present, as well as the self's own confrontation with the very limits of rational thought that fracture the limits of the self and effect its personal-impersonal split. 'What the modern cinema forces

thought to think is the outside, that dispersive, spacing force that passes into the interstice', Bogue writes (2003: 176).

At the 'two sides of the limit' of the self and of thought demarcated by the irrational cut, 'thought outside itself and this un-thought within thought' (Deleuze 1989: 278), *Sans Soleil*'s long piece of black leader and the disjointed images of its sequences correspond then to the fundamental importance of the 'interstice between two images' and the irrational, autonomous cuts that mark neither beginning nor end (200). The 'object of cinema', declares Deleuze,

> is not to reconstitute a presence of bodies, in perception and action, but to carry out a primordial genesis of bodies in terms of a white, or a black or a grey (or even in terms of colours), in terms of a 'beginning of visible which is not yet a figure, which is not yet an action'. (201)

This making perceptible of the imperceptible is a reversible process of becoming or movement through which novel actualisations and virtual differentiations surface. My larger project devoted to Marker and Resnais's films newly interrogates the multiple forces and interpenetrating bodies, *thisnesses* and things that comprise our world (see Boljkovac 2009b); its analyses reveal what Deleuze acknowledges as the cinema's 'essence', or at least 'one of its essences: a proceeding, a process of constitution of bodies from the neutral image, white or black, snowy or flashed' that ultimately, vitally, restores 'our belief in the world' (Deleuze 1989: 201), *this* world.

For despite Deleuze and Marker's seeming invocations of worlds beyond our own, their poetic cine-philosophy crucially examines creative means of becoming and living in *this* world through revelations of the virtual, untimely affects, forces and singularities of our incorporeal sensations and events and their corporeal effects. 'The problem', Deleuze asserts, 'is *not* that of a presence of bodies, but that of a belief which is capable of restoring the world and the body to us on the basis of what signifies their absence' (202). The problem, that is, is not one of appearances but of 'inconspicuous perceptions' (Deleuze 1993: 89) that make visible the invisible, the interstice, the *between* two images. To repeat Deleuze's words through Godard, 'make the indiscernible, that is the frontier, visible' (Deleuze 1989: 180), and so stare directly, once more, into the 'partition that separates life from death' whilst surveying that 'last state', before their disappearance, 'of the poignancy of things' (*SS*).

What we alternatively recognise as whole–continuous "'images in a chain . . . an uninterrupted chain of images each one the slave of the next", and whose slave we are'–merges again with that which Blanchot calls 'the force of "dispersal of the Outside" ' (Deleuze 1989: 180). This fissure, crack or ' "dissociative force" ', a ' "hole in appearances" ' (Deleuze 1989: 167), forever fractures that which *Sans Soleil* terms our own 'world of appearances', which parallels imperceptible worlds of disappearances. As it perceives this doubling of 'worlds' through its 'constant comings and goings' about the globe (*SS*), and through which we encounter the self's impossibility or impotence at the limits of habitual thought, chronological time and assured subjectivity, the film's epistolary narration remarks: 'In a way the two worlds [of appearances and disappearances] communicate with each other. Memory is to one what history is to the other: an impossibility.'

'The first image he told me about was of three children on a road in Iceland, in 1965.

He said that for him it was the image of happiness.' (*SS*)

Sans Soleil's title screens, in vivid red, purple and yellow, Russian, English and French, respectively, silently follow the film's opening sequence with its fleeting glimpses of a T. S. Eliot quotation, 'Because I know that time is always time / And place is always and only place',[3] three Icelandic children, US war-plane base and black leader that concludes the sequence. The pervasive blackness of both the leader and lengthy interstices between the disparate images underscores, as aforementioned, the film's explicit confrontation with the ineffable limits of cinema and thought that pushes, as Bogue contends through Deleuze with regard to the limits of cinema, 'the visible "to a limit which is at once invisible and yet can only be seen" ' as it discloses a speech that ' "is at once, as it were, the unspeakable and yet what can only be spoken" ' (Bogue 2004: 23; see also Deleuze 1989: 260). If 'thought, in cinema', that is, may be 'brought face to face with its own impossibility', as Deleuze states through Jean-Louis Schefer, thought draws from this powerlessness 'a higher power of birth' through a '*suspension of the world*' and '*disturbance*, which, far from making thought visible [. . .] are on the contrary directed to what does not let itself be thought in thought, and equally to what does not let itself be seen in vision' (Deleuze 1989: 168).

How then can cinema make visible the invisible through images of time and movement? How does *Sans Soleil* pierce, rupture, reverberate and sensuously affect *beyond* any categorisation, recognition or 'image

of happiness' through its haunting pursuits of life's doublings and paradoxes, and what does this portend for film, life and its intercessions with 'the web of time' (*SS*) and death? 'What becomes essential in modern art', Daniel Smith maintains, 'is no longer the matter-form relation, but the *material-force* relation' (Smith 1996: 43), that which makes us sense unsensible forces, those forces of the Outside beyond apprehension and reproduction that compromise reason and effect the pre-individual.

Such a violent encounter with the intolerable and unthought that, once again, precipitates the cinema's sensory-motor break gives rise to that 'confrontation of an outside and an inside' through thought itself, that which, once more, is 'born from an outside more distant than any external world' and which 'confronts an inside, an unthinkable or unthought, deeper than any internal world' (Deleuze 1989: 278). At the frontier of the self's crack or disintegration and the cinema's own break with indirect representation, empirical and chronological succession (see Deleuze 1989: 155) via its irrational cut that foregrounds the 'two sides of the limit' (278), new kinds of subjectivity emerge which open to a freedom and 'joy' of life.

Through collision with the outside or limit from which they derive, these subjectivities or 'folds' of outside and inside, world and self, engender nonhuman becomings. Despite conventional readings of the film, *Sans Soleil*'s myriad disjunctive connections, or 'relinkages of independent images', do not then, again, convey a contrast between certain homogenised peoples and lands by way of a multi-level narrative or protagonist frequently regarded as a 'fictional stand-in for Marker' (Alter 2006: 103).[4] Rather, *Sans Soleil*'s deterritorialisations of once-historicised images expose the singularities, forces and relations that unfold through actualisations at various levels, before and beyond human consciousness and experience, and that comprise individualities. This break from a phenomenology as grounded in subjectified, clichéd perception (see Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 150) seeks to expose the effects of the virtual relations underlying our states of affairs and bodies that we commonly fail to perceive.

In other words, Marker and Deleuze, with Resnais and Guattari, advance thinking beyond the subject and consciousness as they realise a force of becoming through pure optical and sound descriptions in cinema and concepts in philosophy. These cinematic affects and percepts, and philosophical concepts, evoke both the before and after via the enduring prominence of the interstice or frontier itself through which a direct presentation of time surfaces, a continuum that senses pure duration

and directly captures invisible force, *thisness* and sensation – *red*ness, not blood (see Smith 1996: 46). How then does the artist's material, as Smith persists, 'become capable of "bearing" the sensation?' (42).

With specific regard to the cinema, we must again then also consider what Deleuze claims as 'the essence of cinema – which is not the majority of films' (Deleuze 1989: 168). For the essence of cinema, Deleuze contends, 'has thought as its higher purpose, nothing but thought and its functioning' (168) which operates by way of affect and sensation. '[A]s soon as it takes on its aberration of movement', Deleuze continues, the cinematic time-image

> carries out a *suspension of the world* or affects the visible with a *disturbance*, which, far from making thought visible [...] are on the contrary directed to what does not let itself be thought in thought, and equally to what does not let itself be seen in vision. [...] thought, in cinema, is brought face to face with its own impossibility, and yet draws from this a higher power of birth. (ibid.)

Once more, this 'experience of thought', which 'essentially (but not exclusively) concerns modern cinema' and which is 'a result of the change [or break from sensory-motor organisation] which affects the image' (169), requires 'not imaginary participation' (168). Rather, as my exploration of *La Jetée* also reveals through *thisnesses* and 'things that quicken the heart' (*SS*; see Boljkovac 2009a), this experience of thought corresponds to 'the rain when you leave the auditorium'; it is 'not dream, but the blackness' (Deleuze 1989: 168). This 'encounter with the unthinkable' (171) through sensation pertains to the capture of *thought outside itself*, a self-less seeing and becoming from which *pure* visual situations and a *free indirect discourse* emerge to disclose a new relation between film and thought. The artist's task is always sensation itself, not the sensational, not 'Happiness' but 'the black' that may bear the sensation, should it 'not let itself be seen' (*SS*).

The cinema's interaction of two *unlinked* images then that trace 'a frontier which belongs to neither one nor the other', as Deleuze writes with regard to a modern cinema such as Godard's (181), again distinguishes dimensions of *thisnesses* that can only be sensed, that something in the world 'not of recognition but of a fundamental *encounter*' that forces thought (Deleuze 1994: 139) and 'reach[es] the body before discourses, before words, before things are named: the "first name", and even before the first name' (Deleuze 1989: 172–3). Might we name the unnameable, 'those signs one has only to name to quicken the heart, just name' (*SS*)?

'What then', persists *Sans Soleil*, 'shall we call this diffuse belief, according to which every fragment of creation has its invisible counterpart?' (*SS*). In pursuit of these 'things' or *thisnesses* that quicken the heart, *Sans Soleil*'s experimental foray across intersecting virtual-actual lines of dynamic movements and relations encounters not forms and subjects but what Deleuze and Guattari may term 'a mode of individuation' that is 'very different from that of a person, subject, thing, or substance', and for which they reserve the name *haecceity* (see Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 261–3).

And so, from the rhythms, masks, chants and crowds of an African festival to outer space, an ocean's depths and the performativity of a Japanese parade, *Sans Soleil* traces the frontiers of our globe with an eye seemingly attuned to the exuberant yet more evocative of the minute. For, with 'a sort of melancholy comfort [derived] from the contemplation of the tiniest things', the film locates its heartbeat in these 'neighbourhood celebrations' (*SS*), between the liberated elements – speeds and affects – of forms, subjects and things that flash across the interstices of the film and its audio-visual forces, and through which the oft-indiscernible yet persistent pulsation of a heart, as resonant even through the sounds of a ferry, train or festive parade, may be heard and even felt. 'It might suffice', *Sans Soleil*'s world traveller adds, 'to pick up any one of the telephones that are lying around to hear a familiar voice, or the beating of a heart' (*SS*). Yet, how to name this ubiquitous throbbing of a 'chaotic universe',[5] the uprooted materials and affects of events and becomings, the assemblages, 'climates, winds, seasons, hours' 'we' and all things and animals populate (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 263), the 'unthinkable which cannot even be spoken' (Deleuze 1989: 171)?

If the limit or ineffable itself as a force of becoming, again what Deleuze terms the 'power of the outside', passes into the interstice to directly realise time in the image (181), each interstice is then, as Bogue concludes, 'an expression or unfolding of the outside' (Bogue 2003: 176). Once more at the limit of personal and impersonal, this force of thought and becoming effects a becoming-imperceptible, a becoming-molecular, becoming-animal, becoming-child, before self-apprehension, memory, language – a '*becoming everybody*': 'For everybody / everything is the molar aggregate, but *becoming everybody / everything* is another affair', maintain Deleuze and Guattari,

> one that brings into play the cosmos with its molecular components. Becoming everybody / everything (*tout le monde*) is to world (*faire monde*), to make a world (*faire un monde*). [. . .] To be present at the dawn of the world.

> [. . .] To reduce oneself to an abstract line, a trait, in order to find one's zone of indiscernibility with other traits, and in this way enter the haecceity and impersonality of the creator. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 279–80)

In relations of speed and slowness, *Sans Soleil*'s traveller-becoming-world skirts from one end of the globe to another across planes and spaces of territorialisation, deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation, those destructive yet also productive movements of social change that the film assesses and towards which it imparts positive force. 'Here', *Sans Soleil* interjects, 'to place adjectives would be so rude as leaving price tags on purchases' (*SS*). 'Japanese poetry never modifies', the narration continues; '[t]here is a way of saying boat, rock, mist, frog, crow, hail, heron, chrysanthemum that includes them all.' Hence, the story of a man from Nagoya who lost his love and killed himself; inasmuch as 'Happiness' exceeds and resists articulation, 'They say he could not stand hearing the word "Spring" ' (*SS*).

As *Sans Soleil* continues to trace and 'map out' the limits of actual-virtual frontiers, the doublings or foldings of life through which one lives 'in two times, at two moments at once' (Deleuze 1990: 158), the film gives rise to liberative dissolutions as truths of memory and history falter and life-affirming 'powers of the false' (see Deleuze 1989: ch. 6) and foreignness emerge within the familiar.

> He wrote me that the pictures of Guinea-Bissau ought to be accompanied by music from the Cape Verde islands. That would be our contribution to the unity dreamed of by Amílcar Cabral. Why should so small a country – and one so poor – interest the world? [. . .] They traumatized the Portuguese army to such an extent that it gave rise to a movement that overthrew the dictatorship, and led one for a moment to believe in a new revolution in Europe. Who remembers all that? History throws its empty bottles out the window. (*SS*)

If the truthful man wants 'nothing other than to judge life', as Deleuze argues through Nietzsche (Deleuze 1989: 137), to impose morality as a truth and right to self-appointed justice and repressive sovereignty, *Sans Soleil*'s making strange or 'world' via images that disclose a coalescence between virtual and real (see Deleuze 1989: 68) shatters any ideal of truth, and with it our world of appearances whose essential message is 'the code'. '[I]t's a coded hypocrisy', claims *Sans Soleil*; '[t]he code is the message. It points to the absolute by hiding it. That's what religions have always done' (*SS*). The following pages rather find that the 'essential point', as Deleuze sees it, is 'how the new regime of the image (the direct time-image)' shatters such censoring 'truths' in our actual world

and states of affairs as it forges a metamorphosing power of the false (Deleuze 1989: 134–5).

By way of an inclusive method of between through exhaustion (see Boljkovac 2009b: ch. IV; Deleuze 1997: 157–8), and to repeat Deleuze's words once more, what remains are bodies, forces, as Deleuze insists, 'nothing but forces' and their relations, 'the power to affect and be affected', 'the shock of forces, in the image or of the images between themselves' (Deleuze 1989: 139). As these forces of relations, visions of the unseen, or pure affects and percepts, once again encounter an outside, '*the outside* of language, but [...] not outside it' (Deleuze 1997: 112), they forge a foreign language in the interstices, cracks and breaks of the film that gives rise to a vital space of creative becoming and productive reinvention within the actual pre-existent world.

For *Sans Soleil*'s travels about the globe effectively happen *between* or *outside*; they encounter effects and affects, *thisnesses*, that pass or happen 'between two as though under a potential difference', not one term or thing becoming the other but each encountering the other, 'a single becoming which is not common to the two' but again *between* the two, something between or 'outside the two, and which flows in another direction' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 6–7). This 'double capture' of the conjunction AND is once more 'neither a union, nor a juxtaposition, but the birth of a stammering, the outline of a broken line' (9–10) and the creative emergence of an *anomalous*, minor people of geography, of 'orientations, directions, entries and exits' (2) and 'very varied lines' (10), an unpeopled people of desert islands,[6] of waves that fold into each other, of people 'populated by tribes' yet deserted and alone in a continual process of self-perceiving perception that forever repeats defining identity whilst defining movements of difference. 'The desert, experimentation on oneself', to repeat Deleuze's declaration, 'is our only identity, our single chance for all the combinations which inhabit us' (11).

As the following sections will discover, *Sans Soleil* effects its own becoming through a dynamic image of itself that engenders a perpetual movement and 'pure consciousness' (Deleuze 2004: 10) through an immanent, connective process of bringing together differentiating and identifying relations. This process of transforming identity through difference lies through an *auto*-perceptibility, of perceiving and being perceived, and affectivity, of affecting and being affected, across, through and over lines of remembering and forgetting, separation and creation.

The nomads of *Sans Soleil*, and the film's nomadic correspondent 'himself', occasion a 'movement [that] does not go from one point to another' but that rather 'happens between two levels as in a difference of potential' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 31), in a space of 'involution' or of being 'between' (29), a space of becoming, a deserted space of neither evolution nor regression, past nor future, nor even present, a space in the middle created and reached 'by losing, by abandoning, by reducing, by simplifying', by purifying oneself of one's self through a consciousness that precedes one's self and through which one becomes, a personal-impersonal process of actual contact and potential separation, a vital line, *a* life. Written in the interval before his own death, Deleuze's final essay, 'Immanence: A Life', a piece that resurfaces throughout my explorations of Marker and Resnais's cinemas, gives life to Deleuze's life's doctrine as it renews *Sans Soleil*'s own open-ended becoming.

> *A* life is everywhere, in all the moments that a given living subject goes through and that are measured by given lived objects: an immanent life carrying with it the events or singularities that are merely actualized in subjects and objects. This indefinite life does not itself have moments, close as they may be to another, but only between-times, between-moments; it doesn't just come about or come after but offers the immensity of an empty time where one sees the event yet to come and already happened, in the absolute of an immediate consciousness. (Deleuze 2001: 29)

Across and through the islands of deserted peoples it discovers, through nomads who have only geography and so have 'neither past nor future' as they exist 'always in the middle' without history (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 31), *Sans Soleil* probes the *inverse* or *underside* of the actual as it inevitably identifies and yet sees newly while stuttering and pushing the terms of its cinematic means and 'language' 'to its limit, to its outside, to its silence' (Deleuze 1997: 113). As *Sans Soleil*'s journey 'to world' becomes a quest to chart and attain *pure sensation* in terms of remembering and forgetting, repetition and re-creation, Tom Conley's remarks regarding Deleuze's own 'multi-faceted or multi-layered ground plan of the relation of sensation and imagination to location' (Conley 2005: 209) resonate remarkably. For *Sans Soleil*'s rhizomatic, experimental mapping expresses virtual potential – those qualities of possible sensations that defy name: Happiness, unhappiness, emptiness, thirst, Spring, war, the 'great orchestral masses and accumulation of details', 'overcrowded, megalomaniac, inhuman', 'rhythms, clusters of faces', horror and beauty, both of which have 'a name and a face' (*SS*).

If *Sans Soleil* may be conceived as a series of performative encounters, an intensive map via its living screen of intensities and affects, its mapping is 'entirely oriented toward an experimentation in contact with the real' as opposed to any 'tracing'; for a map, as Deleuze and Guattari propose, is that which remains 'open and connectible in all of its dimensions' (see Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 12–15). While the cinema can re-present and re-fortify identity through redundancy, a practice that transforms a map into image, or 'rhizome into roots', *Sans Soleil* alternatively looks to the microscopic events, 'hallucinatory perceptions' and synaesthetic sensations that 'extricate themselves from the "tracing" ' and 'balance of power' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 15) as it endlessly finds itself in an interval between geography and history, the seeing and non-seen.

Of those unseen, *San Soleil* demands: 'How can one claim to show a category of Japanese who do not exist? [...] their real name – eta – is a taboo word, not to be pronounced. They are non-persons. How can they be shown, except as non-images?' (*SS*). In ways parallel to Deleuze's creative lines of thought, *Sans Soleil* pushes repeatedly towards limits, towards the '*sentiendum*', '*memorandum*', '*cogitandum*' (Deleuze 1994: 141) or, as Bogue writes, 'the insensible that the senses alone can experience', 'the immemorial that memory alone can remember', 'the inconceivable that understanding alone can conceptualize' (Bogue 2004: 23). To render these paradoxes, to again push cinema, to repeat Deleuze's description, 'to a limit which is at once invisible and yet can only be seen' (Deleuze 1989: 260), should one speak then, as Deleuze suggests, of 'a nonstyle' or the ' "elements of a style to come which do not yet exist" ' (Deleuze 1997: 113), of new foreign means of reaching limits of language and cinema through a people and microscopic events yet to come, of rhizomatic maps, networks and fissure-veins in worlds beyond our sight and sun? 'He wrote: Tokyo is a city crisscrossed by trains, tied together with electric wire she shows her veins' (*SS*).

> [I]t is because this world is intolerable that [... thought] can no longer think a world or think itself. The intolerable is no longer a serious injustice, but the permanent state of a daily banality.
>
> (Deleuze 1989: 170)

> 'I've been round the world several times and now only banality still interests me. On this trip I've tracked it with the relentlessness of a bounty hunter'.
>
> (*SS*)

> [A]nd if the writer is in the margins or completely outside his or her fragile community, this situation allows the writer all the more possibility to express

> another possible community and to forge the means for another consciousness and another sensibility.
>
> (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 17)

'Art, and especially cinematic art', declares Deleuze, 'must take part in this task: not that of addressing a people, which is presupposed already there, but of contributing to the invention of a people' (Deleuze 1989: 217). On the margins of the communities he observes, *Sans Soleil*'s nomadic correspondent witnesses 'a people of wanderers, of navigators, of world travellers' whose fragile indestructibility ceaselessly fascinates him (*SS*). 'He didn't like to dwell on poverty', admits the film's narration, 'but in everything he wanted to show there were also the 4-Fs of the Japanese model. A world full of bums, of lumpens, of outcasts, of Koreans.' More specifically, he speculates: 'how to film the ladies of Bissau?' (*SS*).

Whilst he negotiates the two poles of survival, again, no more Japan and Africa than the intolerable in the everyday and unthinkable in thought, *Sans Soleil*'s global journeyman gives life to a 'being of thought which is always to come' (Deleuze 1989: 167) as he envisions the world and our becomings through it in ever-new ways. 'We are not in the world, we become with the world', suggest Deleuze and Guattari; 'we become by contemplating it. Everything is vision, becoming. We become universes. Becoming animal, plant, molecular, becoming zero' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 169; see also Zourabichvili 1996). As an 'alien thinker within the thinker' (Bogue 2003: 177)[7] in the process of becoming-other, a *spiritual automaton* with dismantled, paralysed speech and sight torn from any individualised perspective, *Sans Soleil*'s unseen protagonist perceives, reports and facilitates new kinds of selfless subjectivity, life and worlds that fold into themselves inasmuch as 'memory lines forgetting' (*SS*).

For as the protagonist encounters the film's worlds they fold into this wandering traveller so that 'he' and 'we' are enveloped in an affective, nonhuman becoming-other, a zone of 'indetermination, of indiscernibility' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 173) from which emerge pure affects, intensities and sensory becomings – 'otherness caught in a matter of expression' (177). Which is to say, while the film's actualisations of virtual events participate in, incorporate and embody the virtual giving it a body, a life, a universe (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 177), the actualisation yet emanates a virtual excess and force of the new which gives rise to new ever-differing worlds; such is, as *Sans Soleil* reveals, 'the impermanence of things' (*SS*). 'It is the edge of

virtual, where it leaks into actual, that counts. For that seeping edge', claims Brian Massumi, 'is where potential, actually, is found' (Massumi 1996: 236). In this respect, *Sans Soleil*'s voyaging seer peers into the realm of the imperceptible and incommunicable as he interrogates the 'partitions', 'thresholds', 'poles', 'rifts', limits, frontiers and borders, the *folds* and 'coexistences' of our world with its 'subterranean tunnels that [...] run parallel to the city' and youth, the 'baby Martians', who 'live in a parallel time sphere' (*SS*).

These doubles and other dimensions of time forever newly repeat or refold to produce new becomings, interactions and transformations within our world, foldings, unfoldings and refoldings that *Sans Soleil* strives to assess and express. And so, as the virtual escapes the permanent, its immanent potential is in fact its impermanence and endless vitality, escape and excess in that *between*, zone or passing – again, that 'something passing from one to the other' – through which 'living beings whirl around', write Deleuze and Guattari, 'and [that] only art can reach and penetrate [...] in its enterprise of co-creation' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 173).

The 'walls between the realms are so thin', *Sans Soleil* reflects, 'that one can in the same breadth contemplate a statue, buy an inflatable doll, and give the goddess of fertility the small offering that always accompanies her displays' (*SS*), perhaps while also beginning to perceive the virtual-actual realms and dimensions of the imperceptible, that zone of doublings and indiscernibility that *Sans Soleil* constructs with 'blocs' of affects and percepts. To perceive the imperceptible while becoming-imperceptible, to perceive one's own self-perception while becoming-other and self-less, is to enter into relation with the 'undeterminable, the unreferable [...] "the reverse side of thoughts", which itself is what dreams come up against and rebound, break' (Deleuze 1989: 167). Such is to confront the 'two poles of survival' (*SS*) and, by so doing, free and bear witness to *a* life 'in this world as it is' (Deleuze 1989: 173).

This encounter with the limits of self and thought at once invokes a painful actualisation and virtual potential whereby the '*intolerable*', as Smith indicates, is 'a lived actuality that at the same time testifies to the impossibility of living in such conditions' (Smith 1997: xliii). In *Sans Soleil*, such lived actuality or 'everyday banality' (*SS*) attests to the importance of the banal in its continuous form. As with the ultimate event of death, so too may *affect* be experienced punctually as 'localized in an event', as writes Massumi; yet, to repeat Massumi's observation, 'it is also continuous, like a background perception that accompanies every event, however quotidian' (Massumi 1996: 229). The

virtual-actual two-sidedness to which Massumi refers, the 'simultaneous participation of the virtual in the actual and the actual in the virtual, as one arises from and returns to the other' (228), is nothing other than *Sans Soleil*'s affective, self-perceptive and continuous contemplation of these two poles of survival, the two sides of all things that manifest a synaesthetic participation of the senses in each other.

And so, as the film cuts abruptly from its title screens to an image of a loudspeaker affixed to a boat, we suddenly experience the film's roaming eye whose nonhuman perception, as split from any subjective positioning, releases a *percept*, an impersonal seeing. Water visible below comprises much of the shot, an image punctuated by the noise of the soundtrack with its intense rhythm redolent of *La Jetée*'s own quickening heartbeat and audible pulsations. 'He wrote: I'm just back from Hokkaido, the Northern Island. Rich and hurried Japanese take the plane, others take the ferry. Waiting, immobility, snatches of sleep. Curiously all of that makes me think of a past or future war' (*SS*).

The world traveller, whose letters the film's narrator reads, writes of the 'small fragments of war enshrined in everyday life' that he perceives (*SS*). The 'fragility of those moments suspended in time' embody thresholds of reality, sleep, dream and fantasy that bespeak reality's twofold oscillation and exchange between actual-virtual dynamic relations, the two poles or sides of all things that fundamentally speak to potentials and dangers of existence, and *Sans Soleil*'s own revelatory becoming and movement between a 'world of appearances' and its incorporeal transformations (*SS*).

As *Sans Soleil*'s unearthing eye discharges affect from a world of appearances, the earthly and commonplace, it interrogates such reversible relations between actual-real and virtual-real – the ephemeral excesses of experience, the extraordinary beyond ordinary, beauty through horror, life through death – as the film takes on an ethereal, otherworldly sensory quality that exceeds any individualised perspective or place. For through the film, affect becomes an imperceptible yet deeply penetrating force[8] that manifests itself in *Sans Soleil*'s moments of greatest resonance and poignancy that are at once profoundly banal and surreal, intimate and unearthly. Despite all disjunctions, violences between and within the image, the film exudes a grace as it stares, and stares often, in an 'invisible' style evocative of Mr Yamada's 'action cooking', whose way of 'mixing the ingredients' in a restaurant in Nishi-nippori could usefully apply, *Sans Soleil*'s voyager conjectures, to 'certain fundamental concepts common to painting, philosophy, and karate' (*SS*).

If 'Mr Yamada possessed in his humble way the essence of style' through use of his 'invisible brush' (*SS*), *Sans Soleil*'s own style, or *nonstyle*, again exposes the foreign within the familiar as it endlessly pushes towards the invisible, that invisible counterpart of all things on the other side of actual. At the margins of the fragile communities he observes, the frontiers between a world of appearances and 'swarm of appearances', *Sans Soleil*'s disembodied visionary indeed expresses new potential worlds 'before the fall' through worlds 'inaccessible to the complications of a Puritanism whose phoney shadow has been imposed on it by American occupation' (*SS*); through worlds beyond our 'castrating censorship' and televised, 'portable and compact [. . .] already inaccessible reality' (*SS*); through worlds wherein participants within and without the film – viewer, Marker and those yet to come – enact and construct new truths and consciousnesses via transformative *becoming-others* in that passage between translatable and untranslatable, truth and 'Happiness'.

> 'I paid for a round in a bar in Namidabashi. It's the kind of place that allows people to stare at each other with equality; the threshold below which every man is as good as any other – and knows it.'
>
> (*SS*)
>
> All consciousness is a matter of threshold. [. . .] If life has a soul, it is because it perceives, distinguishes, or discriminates, and because a whole world of animal psychology is first of all a psychology of perception.
>
> (Deleuze 1993: 88; 92)
>
> 'It was in the marketplaces of Bissau and Cape Verde that I could stare at them again with equality.'
>
> (*SS*)
>
> In fact, the self is only a threshold, a door, a becoming between two multiplicities.
>
> (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 249)

Like the drunken man the film observes directing traffic at a crossroads, *Sans Soleil* materialises at a crossroads between 'roads' or ways of common perception. For through its encounters with the thresholds of actual-virtual processes and borders between thought and non-thought, the film's expression of the people, animals and worlds it experiences exposes the minute, particular and imperceptible perceptions we fail to commonly perceive through our molar or macro apprehensions. We hear, for instance, as Deleuze writes, a sea's sound, those 'conscious,

clear, and distinct apperceptions' and 'macroperceptions' to which we are 'overly accustomed', yet not the 'murmurs of each wave' (Deleuze 1993: 86–7).

As *Sans Soleil* then strives to discern the 'pricklings', 'murmurings' and 'little foldings' of molecular perceptions to effect its own *becoming-animal* and so extract affects and percepts from conventional limited perception, the film cuts from a close-up of an emu to a graphic close-up match of a young African woman, a 'match' or becoming that at once evokes a new transformation via a 'becoming-emu' or animal of woman that suggests a 'phenomenon of bordering' and 'affectability [. . .] no longer that of subjects' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 245, 258). For the graphic match moves beyond a representation of resemblance or analogy, beyond what may be seen, interpreted and faithfully reproduced, towards the liberation and extraction of the virtual sense or pure affects and sensations of an *anomalous* animal, an 'animal' at the edge, fringes, borderline or *between*.

This is not to say that the woman becomes animal. 'Becomings-animal are basically of another power', explain Deleuze and Guattari, 'since their reality resides not in an animal one imitates or to which one corresponds but in themselves, in that which suddenly sweeps us up and makes us become – a *proximity*, *an indiscernibility* that extracts a shared element from the animal' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 279). The relations between animal and human throughout the film, in other words, and as foreshadowed by this early graphic match, express *Sans Soleil*'s becoming, its intensive production of ever-new virtual potentials and multiplicities of affects that exceed the thresholds and borders of our rigidly defined perceptible existence with its visible-invisible controls that perpetuate our illusory truths and freedoms.

'[L]et us at least say that there is counterinformation', to repeat Deleuze's intervention, if people may move ' "freely" without being at all confined yet while still being perfectly controlled' through communication and information 'we are told [. . .] we are supposed to be ready or able to [. . .] believe' (Deleuze 1998: 18). Alternatively, the *anomaly*, non-individuality, singularity or becoming of the animal and woman that manifests neither an individual nor a species is 'affect in itself' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 259), a becoming-animal 'which arrives and passes at the edge' (244) to forge means for new ways of thinking and seeing, for 'another consciousness and another sensibility' (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 17).

To see and think ever-newly through such revolutionary means, as presented by *Sans Soleil*, Deleuze and Guattari, is not to look,

gaze or stare and concede to power-relations and terms of equality as hierarchically, historically constructed and articulated, but to free life's flow of images and perceptions from our reductive apprehensions of their actualised forms. Perception, by this impersonal, living, non-representational and non-interpretational sense, is always a new mode of becoming – a *becoming-animal* – that senses virtual elements before and beyond recognisable distinction, designation and actualisation. The release of such virtual potential through perception creates new worlds and releases inconspicuous perceptions at the road, threshold or crack between perceptible and imperceptible, communicable and incommunicable.

How then to communicate 'the simplicity' and 'lack of affectation' of the couple who came to perform the rite that would 'repair the web of time' so that their runaway cat Tora would be protected (*SS*); how to film a 'people of nothing' and 'emptiness' (*SS*); how to convey the 'built-in grain of indestructibility' of the women who choose their fiancées and deny 'the magical function of the eye' at the centre of all things (*SS*); how to conceive of survival, unity and equality alongside happiness, beauty and an ever-proliferating population of cats and animals?

'He wrote me that in the Bijagós Islands it's the young girls who choose their fiancées. He wrote me that in the suburbs of Tokyo there is a temple consecrated to cats' (*SS*). The film cuts from the close-up side profile of an emu in France gazing off screen right to a woman in Guinea-Bissau gazing off screen left to a cats' temple in Japan with its Maneki Neko cats aligned in rows beckoning off screen right. The assemblage of audio-visual images at once takes 'the temporal form of an instantaneous counteractualization' (Deleuze 1995: 170) as the images counteract and deterritorialise a notion of difference as entrenched in nationalistic and colonialist discourses.

By *Sans Soleil*'s global 'mapping', the film again, that is, as 'open and connectible in all of its dimensions', does not so much contrast 'African time to European time and also to Asian time' as it newly reconfigures these 'extreme poles of survival' through evocations of their singularities, affects and virtual possibilities (*SS*). Africa, Europe and Asia become undefined landscapes of a 'deterritorialised world', a world again wherein '[a]ll faces envelop an unknown, unexplored landscape' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 172) and exist within a time of the Aion, a 'floating', 'nonpulsed' time 'against pulsed time or tempo, experimentation against any kind of interpretation', a 'state where forms dissolve, and all that subsists are tiny variations of speed between movements in composition' (267).

Upon this virtual imperceptible plane or surface of consistency or immanence, a field or space of possibilities, becomings and productive interactions on the other side of the plane of organisation, development or transcendence, liberated 'particles of an anonymous matter' communicate

> through the 'envelope' of forms and subjects, retaining between them only relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness, floating affects, so that the plane itself is perceived at the same time as it allows us to perceive the imperceptible (the microplane, the molecular plane). (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 267)

Here too the face is an open surface and series of layers, a white or blank 'map' that may become a deterritorialised space and intensive map of progressive new becomings and potentials through which may emerge a people of nomadic thinkers and survivors. '[T]he face is a map', exclaim Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 170), and while the film's traveller acknowledges 'the unbearable vanity of the West, that has never ceased to privilege being over non-being, what is spoken to what is left unsaid' (*SS*), *Sans Soleil* never ceases to ascertain revolutionary becomings through the faces of the lands, peoples and animals it encounters, the 'face-landscapes' that perceive and are perceived.

> 'The entire city is a comic strip; it's Planet Manga. How can one fail to recognize the statuary that goes from plasticized baroque to Stalin central? And the giant faces with eyes that weigh down on the comic book readers, pictures bigger than people, voyeurizing the voyeurs'.
>
> (*SS*)

> I see that behind the sockets of the eyes there is a region unexplored, the world of futurity.
>
> (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 171)

> '[T]he more you watch Japanese television . . . the more you feel it's watching you.'
>
> (*SS*)

> Now the face has a correlate of great importance: the landscape, which is not just a milieu but a deterritorialized world.
>
> (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 172)

The film cuts to a shot of a volcano whose conical mountain seems an island itself above the clouds. On the islands of Cape Verde, *Sans Soleil*'s faceless explorer confronts the faces of other wanderers, navigators, world travellers, a 'people of nothing' and 'of emptiness' (*SS*), and as we stare openly with the film's vagabond, the faces compellingly return our glares. Immediately preceding this early sequence in the film, a series

of 'frozen' still shots exemplifying such perceiver-perceived relations are presented, each image 'stilled' upon a staring face: that of a young African woman upon a boat who glances ever briefly towards the camera before lowering her gaze ('How can one remember thirst?'); an elderly man who stares for a moment at the camera in the bar in Namidabashi ('the kind of place that allows people to stare at each other with equality; the threshold below which every man is as good as any other – and knows it'); and the two women at the jetty on Fogo in the Cape Verde Islands who forthrightly glare at the lens. Each 'frozen' still shot punctuates its sequence's end as it ironically reiterates the 'great concrete freeing of nonpulsed time' that Deleuze and Guattari suggest (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 269) through a seeming pause or halting of time in the image.[9]

Prior to the third of the frozen still shots, *Sans Soleil*'s narrator remarks: 'Frankly, have you ever heard of anything stupider than to say to people as they teach in film schools, not to look at the camera?' This act of looking and being looked at repeatedly surfaces throughout *Sans Soleil* and Marker's entire oeuvre yet these relations between perceiver-perceived emerge perhaps with greatest force and intensity in *Sans Soleil*. For through the auto-perceptive doubling or folding of gazes whereby the perception of an other becomes also a perception of one's self and self-dissolution, we once again experience a perceptual perpetual process of identity and separation.

There is potential for reinvention of one's self *or* the reclamation of a self's identity that occurs, that is, whenever 'Marker's camera', the nomadic traveller's gaze, chances to rest upon a gaze that explicitly returns 'his' own, be it human, animal or otherwise. While a mirroring gaze may repeat organising determinations and our great redundancies of human segregation and classification, those a face most outwardly announces at its most blank, male/female, black/white, it potentially also realises and facilitates a self's separation and becoming-other, becoming-animal, becoming-imperceptible.

> I see her; she saw me; she knows that I see her; she drops me her glance, but just at an angle where it is still possible to act as though it was not addressed to me and, at the end, the real glance, straightforward, that lasted a twenty-fourth of a second, the length of a film frame. (*SS*)

If this is the stare of equality to which *Sans Soleil* ultimately refers, the glance and look of a face exacted from a woman of Bissau, the market lady of Praia, such 'equality' may then be the reflexive, transitive equivalence relation between perceiver-perceived – film, screen, camera,

viewer, filmmaker – as all bodies become-other through each other in an a-parallel or non-parallel evolution not of imitation or assimilation but of a differing doubling, a 'double capture' through which ' "what" each becomes changes no less than "that which" becomes' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 2–3). 'One might say', as does Deleuze, 'that something happens between them, at different speeds and with different intensities, which is not in one or other, but truly in an ideal place', such as the 'zone' of *Sans Soleil*,

> which is no longer a part of history, still less a dialogue among the dead, but an interstellar conversation, between very irregular stars, whose different becomings form a mobile bloc which it would be a case of capturing, an inter-flight, light-years. (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 15–16)

On the 'landscape of another planet' *Sans Soleil*'s seeing nonhuman, unseen eye sees in fact the face of 'our future', a world wherein 'to call forth a vision, to be moved by a portrait, to tremble at the sound of music, can only be signs of a long and painful pre-history' (*SS*). Such a world, the film's narration suggests, could be told through 'one who has lost forgetting', such as the protagonist of 'the film to come' *Sans Soleil* describes who, at each moment through his impossible memory, might seem able to 'comprehend' (*SS*), as Deleuze proposes, 'all violence in a single act of violence, and every mortal event *in a single Event*' (Deleuze 1990: 152). Yet, as such is the ultimate task, to will, embrace and become worthy of all that happens to us, to remember yet always also to forget, '[n]aturally', as *Sans Soleil* concedes, this protagonist of 'the film to come' will fail. 'The unhappiness he discovers is as inaccessible to him as the poverty of a poor country is unimaginable to the children of a rich one' (*SS*).

To survive, to live, one must always, to repeat Deleuze's own repetitions, achieve a productive balance *between*, between the 'incorporeal crack at the surface' and the 'thickness' of a body, or risk self-destruction (Deleuze 1990: 156).

> If there is a crack at the surface, how can we prevent deep life from becoming a demolition job and prevent it from becoming it as a matter 'of course'? [. . .] [I]s it possible to limit ourselves to the counter-actualization of an event [. . .] while taking care to prevent the full actualization which characterizes the victim or the true patient? (Deleuze 1990: 157)

Is this then the 'secret' to which *Sans Soleil* repeatedly refers, 'the poignancy of things [that] implied the faculty of communion with things, of entering into them, of being them for a moment' (*SS*), the

poignancy, the *between*, the balance, the survival and proliferation of life which demands always a remembering and a forgetting, and an always becoming-other through a double becoming of the virtual-actual aspects of our bodies that are forever 'perishable and immortal' (*SS*)?

Sans Soleil relates the only recourse remaining for this would-be protagonist of the film to come,

> that which threw him into this absurd quest: a song cycle by Mussorgsky. [. . .] [I]t was then that for the first time he perceived the presence of that thing he didn't understand which had something to do with unhappiness and memory, and towards which slowly, heavily, he began to walk. (*SS*)

While the imperceptible presence of *Sans Soleil* admits, '[o]f course I'll never make that film', he has nonetheless given it a title, 'indeed the title of those Mussorgsky songs: *Sunless*'.[10] How far must we go between life and death to shed light on the 'sunless' whilst preserving the 'secret' of the *between*, of survival and 'happiness'? 'How long will it take to forget the secret?' (*SS*).

> Like the pyramid, the desert island exists before and after the advent of human or their incursions in the world. The island is a '[c]onscience of the earth and the ocean (. . .), ready to commence the world' [Deleuze 2004: 11].
>
> (Conley 2005: 214).
>
> 'Is it a property of islands to make their women into the guardians of their memory?'
>
> (*SS*)
>
> There remains the possibility of the author providing himself with 'intercessors' [. . .] of taking real and not fictional characters, [. . .] putting these very characters in the condition of 'making up fiction', of 'making legends', of 'story-telling'. The author takes a step towards his characters, but the characters take a step towards the author: double becoming.
>
> (Deleuze 1989: 222)
>
> 'I think of a world where each memory could create its own legend.'
>
> (*SS*)

On the desert island of Sal, 'a salt rock in the middle of the Atlantic' bestowed with seemingly countless days of unrelenting sun (*SS*), *Sans Soleil*'s voyager writes again to the film's female, faceless, nameless voice. Like the travelling 'he' of the film, 'she' is often also referred to as a 'me', a self, never individualised, always other, who exists between viewer and the nomad wanderer. As a 'character' himself, seeing but unseen, the

travelling, letter-writing nomadic 'man' and our correspondent through the film's excursions is 'continually becoming other, and is no longer separable from this becoming which merges with a people' (Deleuze 1989: 152), a becoming or folding that imbricates the filmmaker Marker himself. For inasmuch as 'each film-maker is a movement in himself', in this sense Marker 'too becomes another' (221) 'as he takes real characters as intercessors and replaces his fictions by their own story-telling, but, conversely, gives these story-tellings the shape of legends, carrying out their "making into legend" ' (152).

Through their becomings, fabulations or makings into legend, the people of *Sans Soleil* strive to intercede in the intermission or interstice between life and death as they acknowledge that 'moment that is only that of *a* life playing with death' (Deleuze 2001: 28), when quotidian life takes on an impersonal, singular life. 'Tokyo is full of these tiny legends, and of mediating animals' (*SS*), and as the people's rituals and legends take flight to reveal something more to do with happiness and forgetting than unhappiness and memory, their spiritual becomings temporarily free the film from its melancholy contemplations. If '[l]egends are born out of the need to decipher the indecipherable' and '[m]emories must make do with their delirium, with their drift' (*SS*), *Sans Soleil* derives a certain joy and anarchic madness through the signs of memory and sacred signs it senses and encounters that break through the 'wall' of a hierarchically signified stratified face.

And so, while we become implicated and other through these foldings, layers and reinventions of filmmaker, narrator, wanderer and character, a *free indirect discourse* arises, as through *La Jetée* (see Boljkovac 2009a). Through this pure act of speech torn from visual association and self, we hear *Sans Soleil*'s narrator obtain an 'original irreducible dimension' that resists the first person, even as she speaks in first person (Deleuze 1989: 242). This female voice of a becoming-other, becoming-woman, becoming-animal beyond the dominant authoritative male voice of ethnographic documentary film and majoritarian univocality[11] is *Sans Soleil*'s voice of the 'fourth person singular' (Deleuze 2004: 143; see also Deleuze 1990, Deleuze and Parnet 2002). The voice assumes Deleuze's general description of such a voice in modern cinema that, again, 'speaks as if he [she] were listening to his own words reported by someone else, hence achieving a *literalness* of the voice, cutting it off from any direct resonance, and making it produce a free indirect speech' (Deleuze 1989: 242).

The visual and sound images of *Sans Soleil* then become pure, 'autonomous components of a single, truly audio-visual image' that

'depends on a more complex link between the visual image *and* the sound image' (Deleuze 1989: 252). To once again reiterate Deleuze's thought, becoming is always a matter of *AND*, the making of a line between two bodies, an encounter between two, not of the two, in the two or common to the two, for in fact the two relations have nothing to do with each other (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 7); rather, a joyful, wondrous encounter and becoming is an encounter with the animals, affects, intensities, movements, sensations and vibrations that move, touch, pierce and wound us; we are never the same. We are islands, Japan-becoming Africa, Africa-becoming Japan .... 'We are deserts', writes Deleuze, 'but populated by tribes, flora and fauna' (Deleuze 2004: 11). Back on the desert island of Sal, 'He wrote me: I've understood the visions. Suddenly you're in the desert the way you are in the night; whatever is not desert no longer exists' (*SS*).

In Bissau, 'where the magical function of the eye was working against [him]' (*SS*), *Sans Soleil*'s wanderer again contemplates the African women whose faces escape that magical eye, the 'faciality machine', as Deleuze and Guattari conceive it, whose 'social production of the face', as based upon '[o]ur semiotic of modern White Men, the semiotic of capitalism', would assimilate the women's faces to dominant signification and subjectification (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 181, 182). 'All women have a built-in grain of indestructibility. And men's task', *Sans Soleil* observes, 'has always been to make them realise it as late as possible. African men are just as good at this task as others' (*SS*). As the women throughout the film glare at the camera, their collective corporeal polyvocality, vitality and force shatters any pretence of face, exotic mystery, ethnic othering or fetishisation as the intensities and affects of their faces and bodies resist capture. '[A]fter a close look at African women', the unseen or faceless female voice continues, 'I wouldn't necessarily bet on the men' (*SS*).

If the women, children, animals and islands of *Sans Soleil* that see and are seen then embody virtual worlds or potentials, 'desert islands' as populated with actual bodies and virtual anomalous survivors, these bodies form asubjective, 'collective assemblages of enunciation' that still evince the fragilities and insecurities of actual bodies. 'Such a creature on a deserted island would be the deserted island itself, insofar as it imagines and reflects itself in its first movement', Deleuze writes (Deleuze 2004: 11). As the peoples and lands of *Sans Soleil* constitute such double becomings of self-consciousness and renewal, reinvention and *fabulation* as *a people yet to come*, a singular people of more than 'twelve million anonymous inhabitants' (*SS*), their vital becoming-imperceptible and

immanence perhaps lies through the spiritual, sacred worlds of the islands the film discovers. We might proclaim with Deleuze that this is the 'constitution or reconstitution of a people, where the film-maker and his characters become others together and the one through the other, a collectivity which gradually wins from place to place, from person to person, from intercessor to intercessor' (Deleuze 1989: 153).

Islands, their cities and people in *Sans Soleil* become then sites of the double, retrospective, auto-perceptive becomings of filmmaker, narrator, wanderer and character whose folds envelope us. 'The *élan* that draws humans toward islands extends the double movement that produces islands in themselves', Deleuze notes (Deleuze 2004: 10). This double movement of separating and creating extends again and as well to a remembering and forgetting, repetition and difference, a 'dreaming of islands [... that] is dreaming of pulling away, of being already separate [...], of being lost and alone' whilst 'dreaming of starting from scratch, recreating, beginning anew' (Deleuze 2004: 10); as James Williams elsewhere writes, '[t]o connect and to discard are joint actions – we cannot do well at one without doing well in the other' (Williams 2003: 5).

Once more then, the doubling process is always one of a repeating difference that produces the effect of a counter-actualisation, a doubling of actual self and virtual impersonal other as doubled by a memory-image's doubling of each perception-image, a virtual doubling of present launched simultaneously towards future and past, that whole virtual past of our memories, experiences and 'images already affected by the moss of time' (*SS*) that *Sans Soleil* strives to perceive. 'I've spent the day in front of my TV set, that memory box', 'he' writes, whose commercials seem 'a kind of haiku to the eye' with their gazes that forever return his own (*SS*).

Like the whole of time itself, memory, as Bogue writes through Bergson and Deleuze, 'is not inside the individual mind, but each mind is inside memory, like a fish in the ocean. The ocean of memory is the virtual past, which gushes forth at each present moment in a perpetual foundation of time' (Bogue 2003: 119). As *Sans Soleil*'s traveller journeys across ocean from island to island listening to 'all the prayers to time' issued throughout his trip whilst 'collecting' materials for the film to come he will 'never make', he increasingly perceives his self's existence within time, within the 'zone' or 'web' (*SS*) of perpetual time, within which all life moves, lives and changes.

Through these travels across lands and lines of time, the film encounters layers and strata of landscapes and faces that expose the paradoxes and strange doublings of this stratigraphic, archaeological time as well, the junkyards with inoperative vehicles in a city of incessant transport; the imposed names and other faces of 'horror' that flicker and flash in incessant waves upon Japanese television; the anachronistic faces of a megalopolis that, at nightfall, 'breaks down into villages, with its country cemeteries in the shadow of banks, with its stations and temples', each district 'once again a tidy ingenuous little town, nestling amongst the skyscrapers' (*SS*).

Against his increasing perception of his self within time, and as the face-landscapes he discerns forever stare back, the film's correspondent visits a small bar in Shinjuku that reminds him 'of that Indian flute whose sound can only be heard by whomever is playing it. He might have cried out if it was in a Godard film or a Shakespeare play, "Where should this music be?" ' (*SS*). This again is 'the impermanence of things', a release and perception of affect through a singular body's encounter with the world. What remains imperceptible to representation and recognition becomes sensate through a self's othering and openness to worlds and sensations beyond its own, the worlds of an other. Although always between two, the process of becoming, creation or life itself is always also a solitary affair 'because, when it comes down to it, you are always alone, and yet you are like a conspiracy of animals. [. . .] you have never been more populated'; such solitude is once more 'a means of encounter' with the self and its always becoming-other that arises *between*, between one AND an-other (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 9).

We then are oceans around islands, deserted bodies and waves of encounters encountering other deserted bodies, either deserted islands of 'collective imagination, [which is] what is most profound in it, i.e. rites and mythology' (Deleuze 2004: 11), or islands of deserts whose deserts offer no means for possible life. We encounter other bodies whose affects either affirm our power and make us become, that is, or that reduce us to a powerlessness and incapacity for new life. Once again, '[w]e know nothing about a body until we know what it can do', to restate Deleuze and Guattari's declaration,

> what its affects are, how they can or cannot enter into composition with other affects, with the affects of another body, either to destroy that body or to be destroyed by it, either to exchange actions and passions with it or join with it in composing a more powerful body. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 257)

The uncommon in *Sans Soleil*, the mystical, cosmic, spiritual and sacred worlds and rites of the people-islands it discovers, reveal the solitary collectivity of becoming Deleuze identifies. The 'people' and consciousnesses of the film's various reflective screens and surfaces, the faces of the television sets, billboards, the eyes of all the worlds the traveller confronts, engender a movement, not of human transport but the 'very moment of things' (Deleuze 2004: 10), a consciousness of pure duration itself, an *élan* that produces the desert and our 'beings' as deserted for, as Deleuze discerns, 'humans do not put an end to desertedness, they make it sacred' (10). 'Those people who come to the island indeed occupy and populate it', he continues,

> but in reality, were they sufficiently separate, sufficiently creative, they would give the island only a dynamic image of itself, a consciousness of the movement which produced the island, such that through them the island would in the end become conscious of itself as deserted and unpeopled. The island would be only the dream of humans, and humans, the pure consciousness of the island. (Deleuze 2004: 10)

The 'uncommon humans' of *Sans Soleil* with whom the Noro, or Japanese priestess, communicates – the spectres, monsters, spirits, 'gods of the sea, of rain, of the earth, of fire' (*SS*) – are resonances and reverberations of the virtual, again that invisible counterpart of every fragment of creation that may only be accessed through the uncommon 'beings' that outwardly bare their singularities – the women, children and animals of *Sans Soleil* who effect our own becoming-woman, becoming-animal, *becoming everybody*, *becoming world*.

> I learned that, as in the Bijagós, it is through the women that magic knowledge is transmitted.[. . .] Everyone bows down before the sister deity who is the reflection, in the absolute, of a privileged relationship between brother and sister. Even after her death, the sister retains her spiritual predominance. (*SS*)

> To that question so dear to the old explorers – 'which creatures live on deserted islands?' – one could only answer: human beings live there already, but uncommon humans, they are absolutely separate, absolute creators, in short, an Idea of humanity, a prototype, a man who would almost be a god, a woman who would be a goddess, a great Amnesiac, a pure Artist, a consciousness of Earth and Ocean, an enormous hurricane, a beautiful witch, a statue from the Easter Islands. There you have a human being who precedes itself. (Deleuze 2004: 11)

> 'And then in its turn the journey entered the 'zone', and Hayao showed me my images already affected by the moss of time, freed of the lie that had prolonged the existence of those moments swallowed by the spiral.'
>
> (*SS*)

In Iceland, a volcanic island in the northeastern Atlantic bestowed with few days of unrelenting sun and where 'he' had 'laid the first stone of an imaginary film', *Sans Soleil*'s voyager writes again: 'And that's where my three children of Iceland came and grafted themselves in' (*SS*). The traveller becoming-filmmaker retrieves the shot, adding the footage he had cut, 'the somewhat hazy end, the frame trembling under the force of the wind beating us down on the cliff, everything I had cut in order to tidy up', only to discover that the remnants, the discarded shots and debris of the 'tidied' version 'said better than all the rest what I saw in that moment, why I held it at arm's length, at zoom's length, until its last twenty-fourth of a second' (*SS*).

The children observe the camera curiously as it ventures towards their blissful lack of self-apprehension and recognition; sensing the risk, the impermanence and fleetingness of the irrevocable, ephemeral moment with its affective aura of peacefulness that might at any moment vanish in time, the camera remains at a distance, an arm and zoom's length away from grasping the forgotten, the immanent unseen on the other side of seen. 'Small children', writes Deleuze, 'through all their sufferings and weaknesses, are infused with an immanent life that is pure power and even bliss' (Deleuze 2001: 30). Earlier on, again, as the age-weary traveller watches the youth dance in the park at Yogogi, he shares in their secret: 'The youth who get together every weekend at Shinjuku obviously know that they are not on a launching pad toward real life [. . .] they are life, to be eaten on the spot like fresh doughnuts' (*SS*).

Left to this world, a world also of sufferings and weaknesses whose profound difference from that of a child's lies through a self-consciousness cultivated as a means for narcissistic self-interest rather than reinvention, *Sans Soleil* then 'performs its own Dondo-yaki', its own fiery 'farewell to all that one has lost, broken, used' (*SS*) in pure Markeresque style. As the film's images enter Hayao's zone of 'electronic graffiti', the first transformed image a Maneki Neko cat from the shrine in Japan, the voyager remembers: 'Cat, wherever you are, peace be with you' (*SS*). The electronic ashes fill the film's final frames as the images assume new life. While the contours of their actual forms dance in flames or flashes of light, *Sans Soleil* at last honours the deserted islands of its journey, its virtual spirits and collective souls whose magic secret may simply be the name for happiness.

Notes

1. With grateful thanks to Charlie Blake, Ian Buchanan, Tom Conley, Ian James, James Williams and Emma Wilson for their inspiration and support.
2. As I have noted elsewhere (see Boljkovac 2009a and 2009b) Deleuze's filmic analyses face accusations of a partiality towards a canonical hierarchy of modernist 'art-house' cinema. Yet this seeming preference principally reflects Deleuze's fascination with the capacities of certain films to directly present not merely the flow of non-localised movement but also time itself through time-images or signs that liberate a human body from its self-imposed limits as it begins to perceive its world and self differently through select cinematic experiences. Interestingly however, despite evident admiration for the works of Marker's collaborators and friends, notably Alain Resnais, Deleuze's writings do not acknowledge Marker's cinema although Marker's films remarkably exemplify Deleuze and Guattari's considerations, as does Marker's persona itself.
3. Such newly repeats Deleuze's account of the time-image as that which 'always gives us access to that Proustian dimension where people and things occupy a place in time which is incommensurable with the one they have in space' (Deleuze 1989: 39). This Eliot *Ash Wednesday* quotation appears in the English version of the film; a Jean Racine quotation appears in the original French version. For both film versions and text of the complete quotations, see the 2007 Criterion Collection DVD collective release of *La Jetée* and *Sans Soleil*, under exclusive licence from Argos Films, and 'Racine/Eliot' in its accompanying booklet (DVD booklet 2007: 31).
4. Several assessments of *Sans Soleil*, by Nora Alter and Catherine Lupton, for instance, present such an argument. Whilst their extensive analyses of Marker's works are very thorough and useful, Lupton's position pertaining to what Jon Kear (1999: 15) terms a 'structure of reflective consciousness', and what Lupton regards as a 'process of sorting things out and linking them together' via 'a kind of global, disembodied consciousness', seems to propose a cohesive structure for the film through an *embodied subject* or *subjects* located in the film's albeit 'multivocal properties' (Lupton 2005: 149–57). Elsewhere in a nuanced analysis extending to animals and places, Sarah Cooper ventures beyond notions of the film's cohesion to problematise continuity *and* change within *Sans Soleil* (see Cooper 2008: 116–18). Conceptualisations of selfless consciousness, point of view and the author/creator/filmmaker/'Marker' himself will continue to be assessed throughout this paper.
5. Smith writes: 'Divergences, bifurcations, and incompossibles now belong to *one and the same universe*, a chaotic universe in which divergent series trace endlessly bifurcating paths: a "chaosmos" and no longer a world' (Smith 1997: xxvi). (See also Boljkovac 2009b, ch. II; Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 204.)
6. See Deleuze's 'Desert Islands' (Deleuze 2004: 9–14) and Tom Conley's 'The Desert Island' (2005).
7. See Deleuze 1989, ch. 7, also Bogue 2003, with regard to Deleuze's concept of the 'spiritual automaton'.
8. With regard to the 'autonomy of affect', or, once more, 'that which is imperceptible but whose escape from perception cannot but be perceived, as long as one is alive', Massumi's analyses again are valuable (1996: 229).
9. Such stillness recalls the stills of Resnais's *Nuit et Brouillard* (1995) and Marker's *La Jetée* (1962), and Marker and Bellon's *Le Souvenir d'un Avenir* (2001) (see Boljkovac 2009b, chs II, IV, VI).

10. Of Mussorgsky's *Sunless* Cycle, James Walker notes that 'Mussorgsky's remarkable talent for observing and truthfully conveying in music the innermost movements and moods of the soul' may be found in all the songs of *Sunless*, although Mussorgsky's 'inspiration understood best the moods of pain and unhappiness' (Walker 1981: 387).
11. For further discussion pertaining to minoritarian 'voices' and faces, see MacCormack 2000.

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A Deleuzian Imaginary: The Films of Jean Renoir

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Abstract

This article contrasts the notion of a Deleuzian imaginary with that articulated by various film theorists during the 1970s and 1980s. Deleuze offers us, I argue, a way to conceive of the imaginary in the cinema in a positive way; that is, as something which opens up new expressions of the real. By contrast, for film theorists of the 1970s and 1980s, the imaginary was primarily conceived as a negative concept, as something which offered merely escapes or fraudulent distortions of the real. A Deleuzian imaginary for the cinema can be articulated, I argue, by way of the films of Jean Renoir.

Keywords: Imaginary, cinema, time-image, crystal-image, Jean Renoir

The 'imaginary' (or Imaginary with a capital 'I') emerged as one of the central terms of film analysis during the 1970s and 1980s. Especially under the influence of Lacanian psychoanalysis, film scholars like Christian Metz, Jean-Louis Baudry and Stephen Heath made the imaginary crucial for their analyses of cinema. For most of these scholars (although I count Metz as an exception in this regard), the imaginary was (and is) a bad thing indeed (see Metz 1982; Heath 1981, 1992; Baudry 1985). Louis Althusser's appropriation of the category of the imaginary was crucial here, for the delusions of the imaginary were held responsible for the ideological captivation of the subject (Althusser 1971). Althusser's political analyses were extended in brilliant ways in film studies by Baudry, Heath, Jean-Louis Comolli and others such that the political lesson of such analyses was that the spectators of popular

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cinema were – or are – constructed as ideological subjects while watching films (see Comolli 1985; Comolli and Narboni 1990). That is to say, the function of popular – especially Hollywood – cinema was (and is) to produce ideological subjects: bourgeois subjects of capitalist ideology. The cinema apparatus could achieve this operation of ideological fixity because it encouraged imaginary identifications in its spectators – in Metz's wonderful formulation, 'What is characteristic of the cinema is not the imaginary it may happen to represent, but the imaginary that it *is* from the start' (Metz 1982: 44).

The short version of this story might therefore be: the imaginary is bad and because popular cinema encourages identification at the level of the imaginary, then it too is bad, or it enforces 'badness', where badness ultimately means something like 'ideological manipulation'. The task of film theory, therefore, in response to the dominant ideological manipulations of the imaginary, was to support and advocate modes of filmmaking that worked to break down imaginary identifications, and it fell to overtly political or avant-garde filmmakers, from Straub and Huillet, to Jean-Luc Godard and theorist-filmmakers like Comolli and Laura Mulvey, to achieve this goal. Thus was a 'counter-cinema' posited against the popular cinema. (What I offer here in an extremely condensed manner is extended at some length in chapter 1 of my book on *The Reality of Film*; Rushton 2011: 20–41.)

It is within this environment that Deleuze wrote his *Cinema* books. And yet, if we look there, we will find no discussion of the imaginary nor of ideological manipulation. Indeed, in relation to cinema, Deleuze is fairly dismissive of such notions. '[I]s "the imaginary" a good concept?' he asks at one point, and he goes on to answer this question in the negative (Deleuze 1995: 66). Yet if he is dismissive of the imaginary as a concept appropriate for cinema (more on this later), then he might also sense that it is inappropriate for other reasons. The imaginary, certainly insofar as Lacan or Althusser conceive it, is predicated on a notion of doubled consciousness: the imaginary is a false or distorted replica of real things – as is made explicit by the notion of 'false consciousness'; a false consciousness is an imagined, untrue consciousness which hides or covers over a true or real consciousness beneath it. Therefore, the imaginary as a concept posits mental apparitions – such as ideologies – that offer false representations of real things (or, in Althusser's very precise formulation, 'ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence'; Althusser 1971: 109). We can perhaps see how, for many scholars, such a schema was felt so easily applicable for the cinema: films

offer us only false representations of the real world, representations that become embedded inside or 'at the back of' our heads.

The relation to theories of consciousness is key, for the imaginary cannot merely be understood as an aesthetic category but must also be considered as part of a theory of consciousness. For Deleuze, we can link 'the imaginary' with some other terms he criticises forcefully in *Difference and Repetition*: recognition and representation. Deleuze criticises what is called 'thought' in the name of recognition: to merely recognise something, Deleuze argues, does not mean one is thinking. Recognition merely reprises things that one has already known and cannot bring consciousness or thought face-to-face with the new. For Deleuze, it is the encounter with the new that defines what thinking is. Furthermore, recognition does not *disturb* thought; in other words, recognitions do not *force us to think*. With recognition, and Deleuze's critique of it, we can discern an operation conceived in terms of an imaginary matching: does the thought I am now having – that I imagine in my mind's eye, insofar as that 'mind's eye' is separated from and distinct from the object of thought – match a thought I have had before or which I have encountered elsewhere? Does this object, for example, which I can represent to myself by way of my ability to imagine it in my mind's eye, which has a flat top and four legs, match other objects like it which I have seen and conceived in the past? Is it a 'table', and thus does it also match with that signifier which in English is called a 'table'? Such is the process of 'the imaginary' that leads to signification. What I am trying to describe here is the penchant for the imaginary, as an ability of the 'mind's eye', as a process of things (images) deposited in the mind, which belongs only to a logic of recognition or representation (I *re*cognise these objects; I *re*present them . . .). For Deleuze, this is not what should be hoped for so far as thinking goes: *to think* should have greater aims than this:

> The 'I think' is the most general principle of representation – in other words, the source of these elements and of the unity of all these faculties: I conceive, I judge, I imagine, I remember, and I perceive – as though these were the four branches of the Cogito. On precisely these branches, difference is crucified. (Deleuze 1994: 138)

Recognition, representation and, along with these, 'the imaginary', insofar as they are posited as elements integral to thought and consciousness, can only lead to a repetition of the same, and never to the kinds of difference Deleuze wishes to discover in repetition. As a result,

for Deleuze, notions like recognition, representation and the imaginary cannot serve as markers of what he calls 'thought'.

For most readers, these must be very familiar Deleuzian themes, but what I want to pursue here is the relation between the imaginary conceived as an aesthetic category, on the one hand, and the imaginary as in some way constitutive of thought, on the other. Everywhere so far, we have only seen Deleuze's negative view of the imaginary. And yet, we must also bear in mind that for Althusser, for some Lacanians and definitely for film studies, the imaginary was (and is) also a negative category (for a contemporary Lacanian rendition of such arguments, see McGowan 2007). What, therefore, might Deleuze bring to a discussion of the imaginary which might allow us to conceive it in a different light? To add grist to the mill, film-studies scholars who mobilised the notion of the imaginary in the cinema did so with a view to criticising it as an aesthetic mode (there were, for these scholars, specific techniques which fostered the imaginary identifications of popular cinema [again see Baudry 1985, Comolli 1985]) at the same time as it enabled a critique of a specific kind of subjectivity – a masterful, fixed, bourgeois subject, 'captured' and fixed by the structure of representation so nonchalantly fostered by popular cinema (on this point see Heath 1992). Now, such a critique does not sound too far away from the kinds of criticisms we can get from Deleuze: the imaginary is a bad category because it does not enable a subjectivity true to thought and difference. Instead, the logic of the imaginary – fostered by recognition and representation – can only ever foster a return to sameness, a fixed consciousness impervious to thought. What, then, does Deleuze offer which might enable us to conceive of a different kind of imaginary, or at least an imaginary that need not be destined to negativity and a moribund subjectivity?

Of course, an additional question needs to be asked: Why would I want to flesh out a Deleuzian notion of the imaginary when it appears Deleuze is so hostile to such a conception? There are two immediate answers. First of all, Deleuze actually does invoke a notion of the imaginary, especially in *Cinema 2*, most importantly as a way of defining the difference between the movement-image and the time-image. So, on that score, there might be yet something useful to extract from a Deleuzian conception of the imaginary. A second reason is that, by coming into contact with a 'Deleuzian imaginary', we might more closely discern both the similarities and differences between Deleuze's approach to the study of film and that which is typically associated with the breakthrough film theories of the 1970s and 1980s. By comparing and

contrasting each position's approaches to 'the imaginary', a clearer sense of Deleuze's overall project can be uncovered.

As a first step, therefore, where and how does Deleuze refer to the imaginary in the *Cinema* volumes? In *Cinema 2* (1989), the 'imaginary' is invoked in contrast with the 'real'. However, what is distinctive about the time-image, and of the subset of the time-image known as the crystal-image, is that, according to Deleuze, for these images, the real and the imaginary become indiscernible. As is well known, a great many things become indiscernible in the time-image, not the least of which are the virtual and the actual, so might we immediately gain some ground by conjoining the real with the actual and the imaginary with the virtual? Such an equation is no doubt one of Deleuze's intentions, though we must also bear in mind that the virtual is no less real than the actual (one of its definitions is that it is 'real without being actual'). And so, this, too, is one of Deleuze's points: with the time-image, what is imaginary should be considered no less real than that which is supposedly real. Or, to put this another way, under the conditions of the time-image, the imaginary is as real as any other reality – such is the point of declaring their 'indiscernibility' as a fundamental factor of the time-image. What is important, therefore, for the time-image, is that there is no need to make distinctions between what is imaginary and what is real, for that is a distinction which ceases to make sense for the time-image. There, then, is a first point: for the time-image, the 'imaginary' need not be erased so that the 'real' can come to the fore. Instead, the very gesture of making a distinction between what is real and what is imaginary ceases to matter for the time-image. (Again, these are points I make at some length in chapter 5 of *The Reality of Film*; Rushton 2011: 126–47.)

By contrast, films of the movement-image are organised by their attempts to make clear distinctions between the real and the imaginary. In Sergei Eisenstein's *The Battleship Potemkin* (1925), an excellent example of the movement-image, the imaginary or 'unreal' elements of the film are several: the actions of the ship's doctor who insists the crew eat the maggot-infested meat; the priest whose duplicity Eisenstein famously emphasises; the ship's officers whose quarters and meals are far finer than those of the lower-ranked sailors and whose actions lead to the death of the sailor, Vakulinchuk; and the troops who massacre the crowds on the Odessa steps. These are all characters who have chosen false courses of action, according to the logic of the film, and who worship imaginary gods. By contrast, what is real for this film are the mutinous actions of the ship's crew, the mournful support of the townspeople, and the pleas for brotherhood ('Will they or won't they

shoot?') when another battleship threatens to attack the *Potemkin* and put down the mutiny. *The Battleship Potemkin* resolves itself on the side of reality (by contrast with a film like *Strike* [1925], whose conclusion is a triumph of the unreal, imaginary forces of oppression): the battleship does not attack the *Potemkin*, and the real forces of brotherhood and unity prevail over the imaginary ones of exploitation and oppression. For the movement-image, therefore, the real is asserted over the unreal, the real is clearly distinguished and contrasted with the imaginary that is declared unreal, bad, false or wrong.

On the other hand, an iconic time-image film, Welles's *Citizen Kane* (1941), refuses to make clear distinctions between the real and the imaginary. Where we might expect that the conflicts between the testimonies of those who remember Kane will, in some kind of final reckoning, be clarified in order that the 'true' stories of his life be clearly separated from the 'false' impressions – that is, that the 'real' be distinguished from the 'imaginary' – this is not at all what occurs. Rather, what we are left with at the end of the film is a series of possible truths, of possible imaginings about the life of Kane: nowhere is the line between what is real and what is imaginary clearly drawn. They remain 'indiscernible'.

This indiscernibility is not a problem for the time-image – it is not a shortcoming of the time-image that the real and the imaginary become indiscernible. For films of the time-image, it is instead merely something that is not at stake; or, at the very least, films of the time-image try to understand that the world or reality need not function by way of making clear distinctions between the real and the imaginary. Indeed, many of the world's problems, deficiencies and dead ends are a result of an all too disturbing quest to divide the real from the imaginary (to divide whites from blacks, rich from poor, Christians from heathens, men from women, bosses from workers . . .).

I. Renoir

How does the time-image function for one of the cinema's great auteurs, Jean Renoir? Renoir introduces a very particular mode of the time-image, which image, as we shall see, Deleuze refers to as a 'cracked crystal'. Before we get to that, however, an initial outlining of the form or shape of the films can be drawn. Renoir's films concentrate on describing how a person or group of people are stuck in a reality which is in various ways inadequate, compromised, or downright nasty. The challenge the films set is therefore this: how can the characters get out of the real as

it is currently defined so as to discover a new real, a different reality composed in an entirely different way?

Generally considered Renoir's finest film, *La Règle du jeu* (1939) manages this composition in an exemplary way. Each of the characters is stuck in a reality that is unsatisfying and frustrating in various ways: they are all trapped in the 'rules of the game', and they seem fated to follow the rules of a game that each is reluctant to play for one reason or another. As a result, each character tries to find his or her way out of the game – that is, they imagine ways in which the rules of the game might be broken so that the real as it is might be smashed and a new real take its place. And that is the key: against the sterility of reality are posited various imaginary ways out: the imaginary affirms itself as a mode of escaping from the 'rules of the game'. Christine, for example, will dream of fleeing with the pilot, André Jurieu, or perhaps with Octave (as she momentarily decides late in the film); Lisette will dream of an affair with Marceau; Jackie falls in love with Jurieu; Marceau dreams of being a *domestique*; Schumacher imagines a life of self-sufficiency in Alsace, of living happily-ever-after with Lisette; Geneviève wants her love for Robert to continue .... Overall, there is a sense in which no one is quite sure what they want or how to get what they want. But one thing they all seem sure of is that *what is* is not what they want. It is here that the real and imaginary become indiscernible, for any attempt by the characters to define what they really want from what they imagine they want is futile. For the second half of the film – especially for the costume ball which is the climax of the group's stay at the château – the real and the imaginary become jumbled to the point of indiscernibility.

There are key moments in *La Règle du jeu* upon which we can focus. The first occurs when Christine spots Robert – her husband – passionately kissing Geneviève. This happens while the guests whom Robert has invited to his country house are engaged in a hunt, and Christine has borrowed a small spyglass or field glass in order to observe certain aspects of nature (a squirrel nestling in a tree, for example, over which ensues a discussion about whether they are beautiful animals or pests). Reframing her view, she observes Robert and Geneviève via the crystal clarity of the telescope. And this is indeed Renoir's version of the crystal-image: it is the all too clear vision of a reality that is flawed. Christine sees the reality of her husband's infidelity, and thus is inserted into reality a crack that will slowly and surely widen throughout the duration of the film. By way of this crack, questions arise for Christine: can she be reconciled with Robert and forgive him (as she indeed tries to make peace with Geneviève)? Or is a way out of this reality available

by fleeing with Jurieu (especially when Lisette assures her the affair between Robert and Geneviève has been going on since before Robert and Christine were married)? Or might she even escape with Octave? Christine's spying of her husband opens the crack in reality by which she begins to imagine various ways of getting out of that reality: she yearns for an escape into an imaginary which will give rise to a new real.

The other key moment I want to emphasise here is that of Schumacher's shooting dead of Jurieu in the mistaken belief that he, Jurieu, is about to make his escape with Lisette (Schumacher's wife). Again we are being shown a cracked crystal, the ways in which reality is flawed: Schumacher has been dismissed from the household by Robert for firing a gun inside the château, so he now seeks revenge for his misfortune, with the addition that he is still suspicious and resentful of his wife's motives and infidelities. His vengeful shooting of Jurieu is not, however, a way of opening up the cracks in the crystal. On the contrary, it is a way of sealing up the cracks: Schumacher shoots as a way of *preventing* escape, of barring Jurieu's and Christine's escape into the new real (for it is indeed Christine and not Lisette with whom Jurieu is attempting to escape). To then proclaim the incident an 'accident', as Robert does, is to reassert the rules of the game, to re-impose a real without the possibility of escape. The film's end entails a closure and repudiation of the crack – as one member of the party quips, 'a new definition of "accident" '.

Thus are evident Renoir's strategies: that of displaying a cracked crystal which can lead either to a new real – if one makes one's escape via the crack – or to a spiral of decay, corruption and death, if, on the contrary, the crack is sealed up and the inadequacies of the real re-established. Deleuze describes this process in the following way:

> In Renoir, the crystal is never pure and perfect: it has a failing, a point of flight, a 'flaw'. It is always cracked. And this is what depth of field reveals: there is not simply a rolling up of a round in the crystal; something is going to slip away in the background, in depth, through the third side or the third dimension, through the crack. (Deleuze 1989: 85)

My argument here is that we may equate the 'cracked crystal' with what I want to call a Deleuzian imaginary: if the real is flawed or cracked, then a way out of that crack can be found by invoking the imaginary. In short, the imaginary provides a way out of the real as it is currently structured – those are the stakes of a Deleuzian imaginary. This is a big contrast to the film theorists of the 1970s and 1980s who

criticised anything and everything that was imaginary because it took one away from everything that was real (the structures of reality, its contradictions): for those writers, one had to dismantle the structure, not get away from it.

Additionally, it should be noted that Deleuze is quite simply wrong to argue that it is Schumacher who shatters the crystal and opens up the crack (he has been too influenced by Bamberger's argument; see Deleuze 1989: 85). And he perhaps asks the wrong question, too (which is to say he is too influenced by Truffaut). The question should not be: 'who fails to play by the rules of the game?' but rather: 'how does one break the rules of the game?' All of the characters try, in one way or another, to break the rules, to find ways of getting out of the game they are in. However, and largely as a result of Schumacher's shooting of Jurieu, no one succeeds in breaking those rules and the rules are firmly re-established. In that regard, then, Deleuze is certainly correct to call *La Règle du jeu* 'pessimistic' (Deleuze 1989: 85).

Renoir constructs worlds or 'the real' in his films only in the hope that his characters might then find ways out of that real or those worlds. The crystal-image only shines or dazzles in order that a way out if it might be found. Ways out of them do happen in the films which have optimistic endings: the soldiers manage to escape into Switzerland in *Grand Illusion*; the revolution gains momentum in *La Marseillaise*; the criminal justifies his escape and continues on his way in *The Crime of Monsieur Lange*; Boudu continues on his merry way in *Boudu Saved from Drowning* . . . .

II. 'The Crack-Up'

As I have already mentioned, Deleuze, writing with Guattari, borrows the notion of the 'crack' from F. Scott Fitzgerald, especially from the formulations in his essay on 'The Crack-Up'. The most important small excerpt from that essay on which Deleuze and Guattari concentrate is this:

> The famous 'Escape' or 'run away from it all' is an excursion in a trap [. . .]. A clean break is something you cannot come back from; that is irretrievable because it makes the past cease to exist. (Fitzgerald, quoted in Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 199)

I have certainly referred to the notion of 'escape', especially with regard to *La Règle du jeu*, so we need to ask ourselves whether what was aspired to there were escapes or whether the attempts to get away from the rules

of the game were variants of the clean break; for example, we might wish to ask, were Christine and Jurieu making for an 'escape' or a 'clean break'? An escape, according to Deleuze and Guattari's formulations, is merely the denial of an encounter or confrontation: an escape will not lead to a new real but will be merely a 'getting away' within the same real. Or, to put it another way, the escape implies the eventual inevitability of a return: one may escape briefly or temporarily, but in the end the real will return; the real will re-impose itself and the emergence of the new will be thwarted. By contrast, the 'clean break' is something you cannot come back from. There, any return to the real *as it was* is impossible: the clean break establishes a genuine opening onto a new real.

And yet, the distinction between the escape and the clean break is only part of the story – at least so far as Deleuze and Guattari construe it. Deleuze and Guattari discover three lines of break in Fitzgerald: the break, the crack and the rupture. The former is 'a line of rigid segmentarity' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 198), and as such, is entirely predictable within the context of the social structure within which it occurs (we might note that someone like Lévi-Strauss was a master at charting these kinds of breaks within a society which designated their inner structures). The crack, on the other hand, begins to pull apart the structure, but it does so in a very specific way. The rupture, finally – what Fitzgerald referred to above as the 'clean break' – is a total disintegration of the structure, a complete breaking apart of the structuring coordinates.

The kinds of processes being referred to here are constants across Deleuze and Guattari's writings even where myriad different terms of designation are used (from the 'body-without-organs', to smooth and striated spaces, to disjunctive and conjunctive syntheses, positive absolute deterritorialisations – and so on), but the parameters of those processes remain fairly constant, it seems to me. At one end of the spectrum is a rigid social formation that is more or less unchanging, while at the other end of the spectrum is a complete disintegration of any sense of structure, a zero degree of absolute 'disformation' (of something *informe*). That is to say, on the one hand, we have formations which, at their most extreme, are fascistic, while on the other, we have a stateless lack of formation, chaos or anarchy, a revolution or a complete obliteration of the markers of meaning. If, therefore, one end of the spectrum is constituted by 'breaks' – that is, by social demarcations which rigidly structure a society – then the other end of the spectrum is constituted by 'ruptures', the disintegration of structures

from which there is no going back to the way things were. If the 'break' and the 'rupture' constitute the two extreme poles, then the 'crack' lies somewhere between these poles.

We do not need to look very far to see these kinds of formations occurring in Renoir's films: we find rigid social structures in *La Règle du jeu*, in the workplace and community of *La Bête humaine*, in the small village in *Toni*, in the colony of *The Golden Coach*, the small town of *Swamp Water*, the household of *The Diary of a Chambermaid*, in the neighbouring families of *The River*, in the bourgeois household of *Boudu*, in the empty displays of *Elena et les hommes*, in the European community of *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, the monarchy of *La Marseillaise* (and in the small village courtroom at the film's beginning), and in the tormented community from which Lange escapes in *The Crime of Monsieur Lange*, in the horrific social divisions of *The Little Match Girl*.... Rigid, stultifying, crippling social formations are everywhere in Renoir. At the other pole, we have the moments where these social structures begin to shake apart – in various partial ways in *La Règle du jeu*, the attempts to rebel against outdated modes of life in *Toni* and *La Bête humaine*, in the Bastille Day celebrations and the flight of the chambermaid in *The Diary of a Chambermaid*, in Alexis's newly discovered lust for life in *Déjeuner*, in the acts of revolt and the swelling choruses of *La Marseillaise*, in Lange's getaway in *Lange*, the young girl's coming of age in *The River*, in the young man's revenge on the town in *Swamp Water*, in Boudu's continued reinvention of himself in *Boudu* – and even in the pitiful denouements of *The Little Match Girl* and *Elena*. But do any of these constitute a rupture? Or do they indicate, rather, the 'crack' to which we have already referred? How is it that we can characterise what occurs in these films?

Let us think about what happens to Christine in *La Règle du jeu* when she spies her husband's infidelity through the spy-glass. This moment, as I have already suggested, brings about the emergence of the 'crack': reality, at this point, begins to develop a 'chink', a fissure for which Christine had been unprepared and with which she does not immediately know how to deal. And this is certainly one of the key aspects of the 'crack' in Fitzgerald: that it 'happens almost without your knowing it' (as Ronald Bogue argues; see Bogue 2003: 159). 'Such fissures', continues Bogue, 'disintegrate old certainties and identities [...], leaving one without discernible coordinates for future action' (Bogue 2003: 159–60). Such is the crack Christine experiences, something that hits her unawares, leaving her with the sensation of not knowing quite what to do.

If the crack or rupture happens in this way, then the challenge is how to deal with it: what does one do now? For Christine, first of all, she tries to maintain her composure, to act as though the real has not been ruptured so that it can be repaired without any significant damage. Thus, she calls a truce with Robert in the hope that perhaps, after all, this crack will merely function as a break: the cuts and lines of reality *as it is* – the rules of the game – will remain undiminished and life will go on much the same as before. In terms that Deleuze and Guattari variously refer to as 'subjectification' in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987) as an extension of the kinds of (transcendent) 'disjunctive synthesis' encountered in *Anti-Oedipus* (1977), what Christine engages in is a process of conforming subjectivity: she does not want to fall out of line with the rules of the game and thus maintains degrees of appropriateness – what Deleuze and Guattari call, at one point, a 'double turning away, betrayal, and existence under reprieve' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 129). These points are as close as Deleuze and Guattari get to declaring something akin to an Althusserian subject of ideology.

And yet, the crack widens, especially when Lisette tells Christine that Robert's affair with Geneviève has been continuing for a number of years – and that they had been lovers since before Christine and Robert were married. Here, something closer to a rupture becomes inevitable, so that during the costume ball, Christine decides she must get away at all costs: with Jurieu, with Octave, with whomever or however, for now is the time to make a clean break and enter a new real. We might note that, near the end of the film, Christine seems without the specific traits of subjectivity, but instead flitters from one suggestion to the next, as though determined now by the chaos which surrounds her rather than by a defined and anchored subjectivity. If we were to argue that Christine has made herself – or at the very least tries to make herself – something akin to a body-without-organs, then we can appreciate that she is looking for the kind of spark, a future, a possibility, a 'life', or an intensity or intensities that will set her free. Reading with Deleuze and Guattari:

> This is how it should be done [that is, this is how to make yourself a body-without-organs]: Lodge yourself on a stratum, experiment with the opportunities it offers, find an advantageous place on it, find potential movements of deterritorialization, possible lines of flight, produce flow conjunctions here and there, try out continuums of intensities segment by segment, have a small plot of new land at all times. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 161)

By virtue of the crack, then, Christine enters a mode of experimentation, becomes subject to a series of proposals or potential adventures of which she is willing to be a part, even if things do not turn out as she had planned. That the crack has the potential to open up or release these activities and potentialities is what is central both to Renoir's films and to Deleuze's theorisation of the 'cracked crystal' in those films.

And these cracks appear all over Renoir's films: right at the beginning of *Chambermaid*, when Celestine is abhorred by the butler's dismissal of the old maid: here, she throws herself into this job with a will to find a line of flight out of it, the 'small plot of land' she will cultivate. Or when the poacher-prisoner jumps through the window of the courtroom at the beginning of *La Marseillaise*: rejecting the rule of the petty landowners, he makes a 'clean break' and discovers the revolution. Or the arrival of the American in *The River*: as though out of nowhere, he opens up new possibilities and new worlds for the young girl. And the rescue of Boudu in *Boudu*: wanting to end it all, suddenly he gets another chance, and he rides that chance as far as he can, until he finds another plane to jump onto, another territory to explore. Or Alexis's happening upon the bathing Nénette in *Déjeuner*: in her he discovers a different world, a completely different way of conceiving of things (and of 'conception', as it were).

III. Renoir's Forms

We are in a position to map what occurs in Renoir's films, such as they can be conceived in terms of a three-stage pattern. First of all, reality *as it is* is mapped in a way that makes it intolerable: diseased, corrupted, unbearable. Strictly speaking, this is how Renoir forms his crystal-images: the dazzling display of his crystals is merely a show of decrepitude and social stagnation. Secondly, the crack or rupture in the crystal offers a way out of the real – and into an imaginary, as I have been trying to insist – by means of which the real can be reinvented. Reality is here broken apart, smashed to bits – call it a deterritorialisation or a body-without-organs (depending which Deleuzo-Guattarian schema one finds oneself in). Thirdly, once reality has been stripped bare and cracked up, then new 'shoots' of reality can emerge, reality can begin again, as something entirely new. This 'new real' which can (supposedly) emerge from the crack or rupture will not lead to the formation of 'subjects' (in, say, an Althusserian sense of interpellation – or in the sense Deleuze and Guattari give to 'transcendent disjunctive syntheses' in *Anti-Oedipus*). Rather, the hope – for Deleuze and Guattari, and for Renoir, too, we

must assume – is to produce a properly schizophrenic subjectivity. If we conceive of these processes in this way, then, following Deleuze and Guattari, the body-without-organs is envisaged as a surface, a blank surface which exists in something approaching a 'zero degree' state. For this state is something that occurs as a result of the crack or rupture: a blasting apart of all coordinates so all that remains is a nascent state of potentiality. There will be points on this surface, however, where 'breaches' occur; elements of one sort or another will intersect this surface (for example, Octave will make a suggestion to Christine; Robert will accept her wish to flee . . .). These intersections might be something we call *subjects*, but if this is a subject, then it is a subject (so claim Deleuze and Guattari) 'defined by the states through which it passes' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 20). Thus, this subject is being re-born with each new state, with each new intersection on the body-without-organs. Here, there is no ego, no 'I', no self, no 'subject' in the traditional sense. Rather, what we have are what Deleuze will later call 'pre-individual singularities' and 'non-personal individuations' (Deleuze 2006: 351).

Some of the finest formulations of these quasi-subjective states emerge in Deleuze's last published works. The notion of a 'transcendental field' replaces earlier formulations (though with different emphases) like the body-without-organs or deterritorialisation and, for me, it is a far more precise conception. A transcendental field refers neither to an object nor a subject but is instead 'a pure stream of a-subjective consciousness, a pre-reflective impersonal consciousness' (Deleuze 2001: 25). We might merely call this a set of a priori conditions (or preconditions) that comes before any subject or any state of things, the kind of notion Foucault took so brilliantly from Kant (see Foucault 1984), and which, for Deleuze, were extremely valuable in his later writings (beginning, it seems to me, with the *Cinema* books along with his book on Foucault [Deleuze 1988]). And yet, Deleuze still finds room to criticise traditional notions of subjectivity: if there is a transcendental field that defines the conditions of possibility for the emergence of a subject or object, then, necessarily, any subject will 'come out of' this field. As Deleuze puts it: 'Consciousness becomes a fact only when a subject is produced at the same time as its object, both being outside the field and appearing as "transcendents" ' (Deleuze 2001: 26). A very Kantian formulation indeed (which is to say that Deleuze's criticisms of Kant continue to the end), for here the subject requires 'reflection': the subject must stop, reflect and be held in place in order to think in this way. And this is why reflecting is something that transcends the transcendental field (as Deleuze claims): '[Consciousness] is expressed, in fact, only when it is

reflected on a subject that refers it to objects' (ibid.). To put it simply, then, Deleuze's operations for subjectivity can be divided into those acts, aspects or events that occur *on* or *in* the transcendental field, where such events are only ever the processes of pre-individual subjectivities; or there will be operations which result in subjects as such: out of and beyond the transcendental field, the doubled consciousness of subjectivity exposes itself as a subject of reflection.

In this late essay (on 'pure immanence') Deleuze contrasts the doubled consciousness of subjectivity with what he calls '*a* life'. In doing so, he makes a virtue of the moments or incidents that occur outside our subjective consciousness, those aspects of 'a life' which fall beyond the purview of 'subjective understanding' (using 'understanding' here very much in a Kantian sense). Why would Deleuze wish to do such a thing? Precisely because these are the moments which contain the seeds of change: they open up a space for change because they are not (or they are not yet) subject to the workings of the understanding; they are virtual moments, as distinct from actual ones. We can certainly conceive of these moments as ones in which subjectivity itself is shattered – cracked – so that non-subjective, pre-conscious impulses come to the fore. If a reflective subjective consciousness can be conceived in a crystalline way, then we can also conceive of such subjects as open to cracking and cracking up, and to crack the subject is precisely what Deleuze endeavours to do.

IV. *The Golden Coach*

The final part of the puzzle then is this: pre-individual singularities occur at the level of the virtual, while subjectivities are products of the actual. When writing of Renoir, Deleuze reserves his highest praise for the 1952 film, *The Golden Coach*. For Deleuze, it is in this film that Renoir's themes are taken to their 'highest point' (Deleuze 1989: 56). And it is true that in *The Golden Coach*, there are cracks all over the place: the Viceroy finds one in Camilla who awakens him from the court rituals he despises; Ramon, the bullfighter, also finds a crack in Camilla as he dreams of a celebrity marriage with her (they will be the celebrity couple of the colony); while Felipe is drawn to discover a new kind of life with the Indian tribe he encounters (a 'small plot of new land', to invoke the claims of *Anti-Oedipus*). Camilla herself discovers three cracks arising from her despondency with the theatre and her disillusionment at arriving in the colony to find it run down and shambolic (there are certainly no streets paved with gold to be found!).

For Camilla, the Viceroy offers an entry to another world of opulence, glamour and wealth, as symbolised by the glittering golden coach itself, the most glaring of Renoir's crystal figures. But Camilla also senses in Ramon, the bullfighter, the possibility of another kind of union, with a strong man, a 'real' man as she calls him at one point. Felipe she admires deeply, but she fails to share his dream; indeed, Felipe brings out her inability to decide, that characteristic of protagonists of the time-image who are destined to observe and contemplate, without quite knowing how to act.

Camilla's great sacrifice at the end of the film – her donation of the golden coach to the Church – is to have saved each of her suitors while at the same time being unable to save herself. Her only way out now is to return to the stage, the stage she had temporarily abandoned in the hope of discovering success in (the so-called) 'real life'. She returns, as it were, to the point of her original crack-up at the beginning of the film: upon the stage, she will continue to experiment, to discover and rediscover herself, to invent and reinvent herself. 'At the end of *The Golden Coach*', writes Deleuze, 'three characters will have found their living role, while Camilla will remain in the crystal, to try still other roles in it, one of which will perhaps make her discover the true Camilla' (Deleuze 1989: 87). If the three characters she has saved – the Viceroy, Ramon and Felipe – have discovered subjectivities which they can now comfortably inhabit, then Camilla herself has discovered no such subjectivity and remains destined to continue to try out roles, to be intersected by pre-individuated singularities, to inhabit the 'transcendental field' of the stage, in the quest to discover a new reality.

When writing on Renoir, Deleuze makes a number of key claims which, I would like to think, substantiate many of the claims I have been trying to make here:

> For Renoir, theatre is primary, but because life must emerge from it. Theatre is valuable only as a search for an art of living [...]. 'Where then, does theatre finish and life begin?' remains the question always asked by Renoir. We are born in a crystal, but the crystal retains only death, and life must come out of it, after trying itself out. (Deleuze 1989: 86)

> According to Renoir, theatre is inseparable – for both characters and actors – from the enterprise of experimenting with and selecting roles, until you find the one which goes beyond theatre and enters life. (Ibid.)

> Everything happens as if the circuit served to try out roles, as if roles were being tried until the right one were found, the one with which we escape to enter a clarified reality. (Ibid.)

> [T]hrough the development of an experimentation, something will come out of the crystal, a new Real will come out beyond the actual and the virtual. (Ibid.)
>
> [S]omething takes shape inside the crystal which will succeed in leaving through the crack and spreading freely. (Ibid.)
>
> From the indiscernibility of the actual and the virtual, a new distinction must emerge, like a new reality that was not pre-existent. (Ibid: 87)

There are three points to consider here:

1. *Life must come out of the crystal*. The crystal dazzles and shimmers, but its forms are moribund: its glittering is merely an invitation to pass through so that one might find a new life. If we conceive of the crystal as virtual, as something located on or in the transcendental field, then it is life which intersects the transcendental field in much the same way as cracks will cut into the crystal and open up paths to new modes of life. It is thus only by 'jumping into' the virtual, by going through the crack in the crystal, that one might emerge into a new reality. At the end of *The Golden Coach* Camilla remains within the crystal, looking for new cracks and new ways out in order to discover a new life.
2. *The development of an experimentation*. Life, a new real, and thought, depend on experimentation. Camilla, for example, can only discover a new real if she is determined to try out roles, to experiment. Thus, by jumping into the virtual, by experimenting, one might indeed be doomed to failure (as occurs in *Toni*, *La Bête humaine*, *The Little Match Girl* and others . . .). Such are the risks of '*a* life': the new will only be encountered through the development of an experimentation.
3. *A new real emerges beyond the indiscernibility of the virtual and the actual*. Films of the time-image are characterised by an indiscernibility between the actual and virtual. It is only as a consequence of this indiscernibility that a new real can emerge. The time-image does not affirm the virtual over and above the actual, but rather celebrates their indiscernibility. By opening herself up to the virtual – to experimentation, to playing out roles, to entering the transcendental field – Camilla enters a zone where the distinction between the actual and virtual ceases to be relevant. Only by going through this zone of indistinction (the kind of zone which in other contexts Deleuze and Guattari will

> call 'deterritorialisation') might Camilla then emerge into a newly defined zone of reality, a reality that has never existed before.

One must enter the transcendental field in order to then discover new realities, and the challenge for Deleuze, it seems, is to keep discovering new realities. The transcendental field is virtual, so that, if we transfer Deleuze's concepts into (Deleuze's own) cinematic terms, the crystal-image is riven by the virtual crack through which a new real can be discovered. Only by entering the crystal and trying to find ways of leaving the crystal through the crack, will a new real become available. In *The Golden Coach* Camilla makes a number of attempts to leave via the cracked crystal, only to find herself, in the end, back in the crystal, upon the stage, where she will try out new roles in the hope of finding new ways out of the crystal.

At the film's end, therefore, Camilla is left to experiment – it is no wonder Deleuze praises *The Golden Coach* so highly. This opportunity for experimentation, it seems to me, can be conceived as a Deleuzian imaginary (the consonance between the virtual and the imaginary is something I have already hinted at). By imaginary I mean: an openness to what happens to one, even beyond one's imagination, that one could not foresee. This, for Deleuze, as much as for Renoir or Fitzgerald, is the *crack*: that which forces one to change direction, to change coordinates – in short, for Deleuze, this is what it means to think.

Some readers might still believe it a stretch to call this a Deleuzian 'imaginary' when the Deleuzian 'virtual' is clearly appropriate. Nevertheless, calling upon a Deleuzian notion of the imaginary allows me to stress how different Deleuze's imaginary is from the imaginary typically posited by film studies. The latter always claims that the imaginary in cinema is bad because it fails to do justice to reality; it fails to properly convey the stakes of reality. Instead, it gives us only imaginary solutions. Deleuze endeavours to refute such conceptions. For him, films do not offer fraudulent realities. Rather, if the cinema offers anything that can be called 'imaginary', then it does so only as a way of closing down or getting away from the real: if the cinema has the capacity to show us the real, then it also has the ability to show us how we might get out of that real and enter a new real. For Deleuze, the way to do this is not by criticising the imaginary, but rather by embracing the imaginary and following it so as to enter a new real. Those who criticise the imaginary are all too keen to draw distinctions between what is real and what is imaginary; and this is the blind spot so characteristic of so much commentary on the cinema: that bad cinema is imaginary,

while good cinema lays bare the real in all its bitterness or glory (even where realism itself is criticised, it is only ever in the name of a higher reality, for realism is only reality dressed in the clothes of the imaginary [on this point, see MacCabe 1985]). That is what Deleuze can give to films studies: an imaginary that does not need to be banished to moral (or political) decrepitude. Instead, Deleuze gives us an imaginary to be celebrated and praised – and above all, an imaginary with which we can experiment, an imaginary by means of which the cinema itself allows us to discover new dimensions of reality. If the film theories of the 1970s and 1980s wanted to break down the imaginary so that the real would be exposed – and so that escapes from the real would be quashed – then Deleuze advocates the opposite: let the real as it is be cracked apart so that the imaginary might then have the opportunity to shape new realities. It is on this point that Deleuze definitively goes against the dominant arguments of film theory.

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Synaptic Signals: Time Travelling Through the Brain in the Neuro-Image

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Abstract

This essay presents some thoughts on schizoanalysis and visual culture around the proposition that cinema survives in the digital age as a type of image that, after the movement-image and the time-image, could be called the neuro-image. By considering clinical schizophrenia as 'degree zero' of schizoanalysis in a more critical sense, a reading of *The Butterfly Effect* unfolds the temporal dimensions of schizoanalysis as typical for a definition of 'the neuro-image'. The argument is that the neuro-image speaks from the (always speculative) future.

Keywords: schizophrenia, the neuro-image, *Difference and Repetition*, third synthesis of time, the future

I. Introduction

Schizophrenia is intimately connected to our times. As a neurological disease, schizophrenia differs from neurosis, as Deleuze and Guattari emphasise in *Anti-Oedipus* (Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 122). Neurosis is based on a repression complex related to a reality principle that remains intact. In schizophrenic psychosis, the reality principle no longer holds and is replaced by the internal reality of the brain. Deleuze argues that neurosis is not an adequate model for understanding the contemporary world. By contrast, the (schizophrenic) brain can provide us with a model for our contemporary existence, especially in relation to electronic and digital images:

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> Neurosis is thus not the consequence of the modern world, but rather of our separation from this world, of our lack of adaptation to this world. The brain, in contrast, is adequate to the modern world, including its possibilities of the expansion of electronic or chemical brains: an encounter occurs between the brain and colour, not that it is enough to paint the world, but because the treatment of colour is an important element in the awareness of the 'new world' (the colour-corrector, the electronic image . . .). (Deleuze 1989: 317, n. 20)

Deleuze explains his statement by referring to Antonioni's project 'Technically Soft', which shows an exhausted man who is on his back dying and looking at 'the sky which becomes ever bluer, this blue becoming pink' (Deleuze 1989: 317, n. 20). Deleuze's conjunction of the brain, image technology and an aesthetic effect is remarkable and demands to be unpacked. Could this awareness of a 'new world' by the treatment of colour relate to the reality of the brain-screen and to a schizoanalysis of cinema? To investigate this further I propose to look at *The Butterfly Effect* (2004) and propose productive connections with Deleuze's work on cinema, with the (schizophrenic) brain and with Deleuze's philosophy of time. This will allow me to see if, by way of a schizoanalysis of cinema, I can distinguish a new type of cinematic image. After the movement-image and the time-image, I suggest to call this new type of image the 'neuro-image' (see also Pisters 2008, 2011).[1]

The main character of *The Butterfly Effect*, Evan Treborn (Ashton Kutcher), suffers from a neurological disease that he inherited from his father and that was enhanced by a traumatic childhood experience.[2] Through this narrative, the film addresses the problem of time and the desire to change our destinies by travelling back and forth in time. The film's tagline is 'Change one thing, change everything'. This tagline refers to chaos theory and to how chaos relates to the natural state of being in the human brain. The film's emblematic title image is a brain scan that very subtly suggests the flapping wings of a butterfly, combining in this emblematic image the link between chaos theory and modern neuropsychology that the film plays with. On the DVD extras, scientists explain how chaos theory in physics has learned that a very tiny difference (such as a slightly different position in space) can create enormous differences in resulting movements and outcomes that are unpredictable. Psychologists explain how this insight from physics has also changed the practice of psychology, acknowledging the unpredictable effects of the smallest events on our brain-screens and mental life.[3] *The Butterfly Effect* takes these insights of modern science and grounds them with a knowledge of psychiatric disorders and the

real traumatic impacts that human beings can have upon each other. It then gives this experimental grounding a more fantastic spin, allowing its main character, who suffers from epileptic seizures and blackouts, to travel through time, change one little thing in the past, and thus change the future present.[4]

As Deleuze has shown with his cinema books, the problem of time is intrinsically related to the medium of film and has metaphysical dimensions.[5] In the second part of this article, I will return to the philosophical questions of time and the brain with respect to the neuro-image. In fact, a new relation to time will be a crucial argument in the conception of the neuro-image, which, as I will argue, has the future as its basic form of time; speculations about the future determine its present and past. First, however, I want to remain close to the film, its specific temporal experiments, and its clinical and scientific references to the brain, so as to consider it as just one possible experiment (among many possible others) in connecting a different conception of time to the delirious schizo-brain. In this sense, *The Butterfly Effect* offers not only an imaginative take on a contemporary neurological condition, but could also be read in a more allegorical way about our 'times'.[6]

II. The Temporal Architecture of the Schizoid Brain

The story of the film is told from three moments in Evan's life: Evan at the age of seven when he and his friends Lenny (Elden Henson), Tommy (William Lee Scott) and Kayleigh (Amy Smart) have a traumatic (incestuous) experience orchestrated by Mr Miller (Eric Stolz), who is Kayleigh and Tommy's father; Evan at the age of thirteen, when the four friends cause an accident; and Evan at the age of twenty, when he is in a mental institution in severe states of delusion, where the film starts. The plot moves back and forth between these different moments of time. But the time layers are interwoven with other possible pasts and their respective futures to which Evan wakes up in changed presents. In his blackouts Evan seems to be able to change the past. Wanting to save Kayleigh from a known future in which she is traumatised, depressed and lonely, working in a diner, he goes back to the moments of their childhood, makes different choices and returns to a present where Kayleigh has changed, differently, into: a sorority girl; then a heroin junky prostitute; and also an earthy type of hippy, depending on the impact of different changed pasts. But the destinies of all other characters, including his own, change in each temporal alteration as well, and in some cases very dramatically (in one version, Evan saves Kayleigh

but kills Tommy; in another, he causes Lenny's institutionalisation; in yet another, he prevents the accident when they are teenagers but is wounded himself, and he wakes up in a present where he has no arms and his mother dies of lung cancer because she starts chain smoking after Evan's accident).

Aesthetically, the images of the time travel and memory flashes also have different colour saturations and densities, which create patterns of recognition. Furthermore, a special shade of red, called 'Miller red' in the director's commentary, indicates the presence of danger. 'Institutional green' is connected to Evan's father's insanity and thus the hereditary legacy of his seizures and frightening abilities. We see here quite literally what Deleuze, as quoted earlier, has called 'an encounter occurring between the brain and colour' that is 'an important element in the awareness of a "new world" '. The brain and film aesthetics are interconnected, indicating that the combination creates new worlds. *The Butterfly Effect* suggests quite literally that the brain should be seen as a film: 'Think of your life as a film, rewind, go back, re-edit', the doctor in the mental hospital tells Evan when he tries to recover what happened during one of Evan's blackouts. The problem is that the complexity of the brain itself (and chaos) does not allow us to foresee all the consequences and implications of our choices, in spite of our desire for control. But the film strongly emphasises that all these different worlds have a mental reality on Evan's brain-screen and as such is pointing to the reality of our contemporary screen culture.

Throughout the film, Evan Treborn is put in an fMRI scanner several times and the unusually excessive plasticity of his brain is discovered mostly in the outer layers of the cerebral cortex where haemorrhaging and massive neural reconstruction can be noticed.[7] 'Forty years of memory in one year', Evan says of his own brain, 'it's an overloaded city, like a reprogrammed brain'. In these sequences, he is referring to neuroscientific insights about the abnormal plasticity and 'wild' synaptic connectivity of schizophrenic and epileptic brains (DeLisi 1997: 119–29). Epilepsy can be considered another modern affective brain disorder that is an important reference in elaborating schizoanalysis. Gary Genosko has demonstrated that Guattari was especially interested in Marco Bellocchio's film *Fists in the Pocket* (1965) because of its treatment of epilepsy. Genosko compares this film to Anton Corbijn's film *Control* (2007), about Joy Division's lead singer Ian Curtis who suffered from severe epileptic attacks and finally committed suicide. Genosko points out that the affective intensities of epileptic seizures have the potential to create new visions, new aesthetics (Genosko 2009: 167–73).

I would like to emphasise here this understanding of epilepsy as a form of schizophrenia in which neural connections are made much too quickly. In *The Aesthetics of Disappearance*, Virilio refers to 'pyknolepsy', a mild form of epilepsy in which a person is disconnected from reality and misses parts of the ongoing, over-saturated present. In pyknolepsy and even more in epilepsy, the brain operates too quickly, makes too many connections at the same time, causing literal overload resulting in seizure (see Virilio 1991).

The medical data in *The Butterfly Effect* thus correspond more or less to recent neurological findings about schizophrenia. Research has also shown that schizophrenia is generally more common in urban populations, which, considering the urbanisation of the contemporary world, makes it all the more a symptom of today's hyperstimulated culture (Sundquist et al. 2004; March and Susser 2006). By predicting at the end of *The Time-Image* new image-types as omni-directional brain cities that are overloaded with information, Deleuze's cinematographic brain-screens resonate as well quite literally with the scene described above from *The Butterfly Effect* (see Deleuze 1989: 265). Moreover, the wild time-travelling in Evan's seizured brain corresponds with neuroscientific perspectives according to which 'the temporal architecture of schizophrenia is characterised by bursts of complex, nonlinear phenomena alternating with truly random events' (Paulus and Braff 2003: 3). It is this temporal architecture of schizophrenia that I take as an important indication to explore the temporal dimensions of contemporary cinema. My point here is not to look for exact correspondence or proof in scientific discourse, but to make productive connections between different fields that all give important indications for the necessity of a schizoanalysis of contemporary screen culture. The temporal architecture of schizophrenia leads us back to the problem of time and Deleuze's philosophy of time as developed in the cinema books and in *Difference and Repetition*. A return to these books can give more clarity in the temporal dimensions of the schizoid brain-screen in *The Butterfly Effect*.

III. Difference and Repetition: The Third Synthesis of Time and the Neuro-Image

Time is an important aspect in Deleuze's film books and together *The Movement-Image* and *The Time-Image* can cover the whole range of the actual and the virtual (or matter and memory), the indivisible plane of immanence of Deleuzian philosophy. Movement-images and

time-images relate both to the actual and the virtual but they do so in different ways, as is clear from the difference between flashbacks (in the movement-image) and crystal-images (in the time-image). In this sense there seems to be no need for a third type of image, a neuro-image as I am proposing. There are, I believe, many instances that justify the neuro-image as simply an extension or intensification of the time-image. However, a return to *Difference and Repetition* can allow us to distinguish yet other metaphysical dimensions of time, and to make a distinct case for the conception of the neuro-image as a third type of image, or in any case a third dimension of the image.

Difference and Repetition is a book that poses the problem of the virtual and the actual in terms of difference and repetition, and addresses the complex problems of the conditions of appearances, things, life forms as they differ and are repeated. As James Williams has indicated, a consciousness of repetition is proposed by Deleuze in terms of certain variegated syntheses of time. Williams argues that Deleuze's syntheses offer a 'complex but deeply rewarding and important philosophy of time [that] will, no doubt, come to be viewed as one of the most important developments of [Deleuze's] philosophy' (Williams 2003: 85). In chapter 2 of *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze develops the idea of the passive synthesis of time. As in the cinema books, Bergson is the main reference here, although the starting point of Deleuze's reflections is Hume's thesis that 'repetition changes nothing in the object repeated, but does change something in the mind which contemplates it' (Deleuze 1994: 70). Repetition has no in-itself, but it does change something in the mind of the observer of repetitions: on the basis of what we perceive repeatedly in the present, we recall, anticipate or adapt our expectations in a synthesis of time. This synthesis is a passive synthesis, since 'it is not carried out by the mind, but occurs in the mind' (Deleuze 1994: 71). The active (conscious) synthesis of understanding and memory are grounded upon this passive synthesis, which Deleuze, referring to Bergson, calls duration and which occurs on an unconscious level.[8] So although Bergson refers to the observation of our inner life in duration as consciousness, the temporal contractions that generate it are largely unconscious. Deleuze distinguishes different levels of passive syntheses that have to be seen in combinations with one another and in combination with active (conscious) syntheses:

> All of this forms a rich domain of signs which always envelop heterogeneous elements and animate behavior. Each contraction, each passive synthesis, constitutes a sign which is interpreted or deployed in active syntheses.

> The signs by which an animal 'senses' the presence of water do not resemble the elements which the thirsty animal lacks. The manner in which sensation and perception – along with need and heredity, learning and instinct, intelligence and memory – participate in repetition is measured in each case by the combinations of forms of repetition, by the levels on which these combinations take place, by the relationships operating between these levels and by the interferences of active syntheses with passive syntheses. (Deleuze 1994: 73)

The first synthesis that Deleuze distinguishes is that of habit, the true foundation of time, occupied by the passing present. But this passing present is grounded by a second synthesis of memory: 'Habit is the originary synthesis of time, which constitutes the life of the passing present. Memory is the fundamental synthesis of time, which constitutes the being of the past (that which causes the present to pass)' (80). As Williams explains, the first synthesis of time occurs because habits (repetitions) form our anticipations based on what we have experienced before, 'as in the passive assumption that something will occur' (Williams 2003: 101). The second synthesis, Williams calls archiving, 'as in the passive sense of the present passing away into the past as a stock of passing presents' (ibid.). The second synthesis of time is equivalent to Proust's involuntary memory (Deleuze 1994: 85). In the description of these two syntheses of time, Deleuze refers explicitly to Bergson. The first and second syntheses rely on each other as in the alliance of the soil (foundation) and the sky (ground), but they also have their own characteristics.[9]

The conception of the syntheses of time is incredibly sophisticated and complicated and I cannot do justice to the richness of the arguments Williams and others have constructed around them so powerfully and convincingly. Nevertheless, I take that it is possible to argue that the first synthesis of time, habitual contraction, can be recognised as movement-images that Deleuze describes as the sensory-motor aspects of the brain-screen. Similarly, I consider that the second synthesis of time can be related to the dominant form of time in the time-image, where the past becomes more important and the ground of time manifests itself more directly. It has to be noted that each synthesis of time has its own relation to other times. The first synthesis of time as the living or passing present relates to the past and the future as dimensions of the present. In this way, the flashback (and flashforward) in cinema can be seen as the past and future of the movement-image that is based in the present. In the movement-image, we always return to the present. In the second synthesis of time, the past becomes the ground, the time within which

time operates, and thus the present and the future become dimensions of the past. So, instead of the synthesis of a particular stretch of duration, the present now becomes the most contracted degree of all of the past, the 'pure past'. In *The Time-Image* the different time-images that Deleuze distinguishes are grounded in Bergson's conception of the 'pure past'. As such, time-images become dimensions of the second synthesis of time; the present and the future become dimensions of the past as its crystallising points, and the virtual becomes more indistinguishable from the actual than in the movement-images that have the present as their founding dimension.[10]

However, in *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze also distinguishes a third synthesis of time: the third synthesis of time is the future as such. 'The third repetition', he writes, 'this time by excess, [is] the repetition of the future as eternal return' (Deleuze 1994: 90). In this third synthesis, the foundation of habit and the ground of the past are 'superseded by a groundlessness, a universal ungrounding which turns upon itself and causes only the yet-to-come to return' (91). In this third synthesis, the present and the past are dimensions of the future. 'In the work of the third passive synthesis', Williams explains, 'there is the sense of the openness of the future with respect to expectancy and archiving' (Williams 2003: 101). This openness and its risks also imply the possibilities of change (making the future different from the past and the present). It is the condition for the new. The third synthesis is complicated since it does not simply repeat the past and the present, but instead cuts, assembles and orders from them, to select the eternal return of difference in a series of time: 'Identities, or the same, from the past and the present, pass away forever, transformed by the return of that which makes them differ – Deleuze's pure difference of difference in itself' (103).[11] The three syntheses of time together account for Deleuze's philosophy of time.

Addressing the third synthesis of time, Deleuze breaks off from Bergson as Nietzsche becomes the main point of reference. In *The Time-Image*, Bergson also seems to disappear in favour of Nietzsche's appearance, though in the cinema books, Nietzsche is not explicitly connected to the question of time. Chapter 6 of *The Time-Image*, for example, discusses Orson Welles and the powers of the false, and Nietzsche is the important reference for understanding the manipulation of such powers. These powers are discussed, however, as a consequence of the direct appearance of time, which is mainly elaborated in terms of the pure past of the second synthesis of time. At the end of the discussion of Welles's cinema, the powers of the false are connected to

the creative powers of the artist and the production of the new (though not explicitly to the eternal return and the future). Also, the series of time are mentioned in *The Time-Image*, especially in the chapter on bodies, brains and thoughts (ch. 8). Here the bodies in the cinema of Antonioni and Godard relate to time as series. In the conclusion of the book, Deleuze explains this chronosign of time as series:

> the before and after are no longer themselves a matter of external empirical succession, but of the intrinsic quality of that which becomes in time. Becoming can in fact be defined as that which transforms an empirical sequence into series: a burst of series. (Deleuze 1989: 275)

We can see that after all the insistence on the Bergsonian temporal dimensions of the movement-image and the time-image, this form of time (series of time) remains rather underdeveloped on a theoretical level in the cinema books. Referring back to *Difference and Repetition*, we can now consider that the powers of the false and the series of time that can be sensed in some time-images might belong to this third synthesis of time. Taking this logic one step further, what I suggest is that this third synthesis of time that already appears in the *Time-Image* (in a more or less 'disguised' form) is the dominant sign of time under which neuro-images are formed.[12] The neuro-image belongs to the third synthesis of time, the time of the future (though this certainly does not exclude the other times, as the past and the present now become dimensions of the future).[13] Moreover, it has to be noted that each synthesis also opens up to the other syntheses (each with their own respective dimensions of time). So we get here a complex architecture of time, that is played out with ever greater consciousness on our brain-screens in the neuro-image.

IV. The Schizoid Brain: Perspectives from the Future

So how does all this relate to *The Butterfly Effect*? Is it possible to see this film as based upon the 'third synthesis of time'? As was clear from the plot descriptions that I gave, the film is preoccupied with time. The various pasts could be seen as flashbacks dependent on a present where Evan is at high school, and thus considered as based on the first synthesis of time. However, this present is actually too unstable and does not form the foundational basis of the traditional flashback which investigates the past from a centre in the present (think of the famous flashbacks in Marcel Carné's *Daybreak* [1939], where all events

lead to the situation in the stable present where Jean Gabin has locked himself up in an apartment). Could the variations of the past then be explained as dimensions of the pure past and thus be based in the second synthesis of time? There are arguments to be made for that; after all, the present situation depends on what happened in the past (the children at age seven and at age fourteen). And so we could consider everything that happens as indistinguishable crystals between the virtual and the actual, never knowing exactly when we have left one domain and entered the other. But that does not explain the series of time that the film produces. Rather, I suggest, the past and the present are dimensions of the (always speculative) future imagined on Evan's schizoid brain-screen. Each moment Evan changes something in the past, the present changes (in unpredictable ways) accordingly. This is what happens when we are in the third synthesis of time: the past and present are 'recut' with different speeds, intensities and orders. The third synthesis of time is related to the creation of the new, to hope for the future, an eternal recurrence of 'difference', but also to death (death is the future for all of us, but also calls for rebeginnings). After Evan has revisited 'all of the past' and 'all of the present', like a database of options of 'new worlds' from a future perspective, we return to the beginning of the film where Evan is in the psychiatric hospital and is told that the diaries (that give him entrance into his pasts) are nothing but fantasies to cope with his guilt (of having killed Kayleigh in what is most likely to be the 'real' version of the past and the present). Here the director's cut of the film differs significantly from the theatrical version.

In the theatrical release of *The Butterfly Effect*, several scenes were deleted which were re-edited in to the director's cut ('Thank God for DVD,' the directors exclaim with relief). In the first deleted scene, Evan finds documents in an old shoebox that indicate he inherited his disease from the male side of his family. Not only his father but also his grandfather had been hospitalised for the same mental illness. In another scene, he learns from his mother that he was actually her third baby; two others were stillborn before him. This leads to the ending that the directors originally planned, where Evan, after so many variations of the past and its futures in the present all go wrong, decides to go back to the moment before his birth and strangle himself with the umbilical cord, preventing his own birth. His mother then, this cut suggests, will have a daughter from another husband (breaking the male insanity heritage) and Kayleigh will marry somebody else. The studio did not want this ending, considering it too dark.[14] It is a dark ending indeed. But apart from being dark, it is also a mysteriously powerful narrative option that

in fact can only be explained as an 'insane' solution to the question of (im)possible futures. But metaphysically it is the absolute zero degree of the third synthesis of time: to have died before birth, in order to create a new present – all from the point of view from the future. *The Butterfly Effect* is told from the perspective of the future and shows the pathological (deadly) dimensions of this Time of the Future that is Now.

But as I want to argue in the larger project, the neuro-image has also more creative and political aspects that relate to a productive form of schizoanalysis that acknowledges the affective and illusory realities of our contemporary brain-screens (Pisters 2011). One can think of the ways in which contemporary Hollywood cinema often quite literally speaks from a future perspective, *Minority Report* (2002) with its precogs characters and pre-emptive crime fight being the most obvious example. On a narrative level, many films start from a point in the future. Here *Inception* (2010) is the most notable case in point, where we enter the main character's brain architecture from a moment in the future where he is old and dying. One can also think of *Avatar* (2009) as a neuro-image that speaks from a speculated future of the planet. But one can also think of political cinema, such as the Palestinian film *The Time that Remains* (2010) that remixes political reality in order to 'gain time' for the future, to sustain in the creation of imaginative realities. Contemporary culture is full of neuro-images that are based in the third synthesis of time. But we need schizoanalysis to understand its many possible dangers and empowerments.

Notes

1. In the first volume on Deleuze and schizoanalysis of cinema (Pisters 2008), I make an explicit like between schizophrenia as disease and schizophrenia as (cultural and political) process or strategy. In this volume I will depart again from pathological schizophrenia but discuss its temporal and metaphysical dimensions. All this is more elaborated in *The Neuro-Image* (Pisters forthcoming).
2. When referring to schizophrenia, I will propose an inclusive definition of mental illnesses as 'delusional or affective illnesses' that are defined as brain disorders by contemporary neuroscience, including neurological diseases such as epilepsy, autism and (manic) depression.
3. I refer to the director's cut of the film as distributed on DVD, which is commented upon by the filmmakers and which contextualises the film with both scientific theories and insights and film historical backgrounds *(The Butterfly Effect: The Director's Cut* 2004). Besides the directors' commentary, the DVD contains notable extra material such as 'The Science and Psychology of Chaos Theory' and 'The History and Allure of Time Travel Films'.

4. In the DVD extra, *The Butterfly Effect* is framed within the genre of time-travel movies.
5. Freud defines the unconscious in terms of displacement, condensation, and repression, all related to sexuality. The Deleuzian unconscious is based on Bergson and related to the synthesis of memories and duration (see Kerslake 2007). In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze relates Eros specifically to the second synthesis of time (Deleuze 1994: 85).
6. Garrett Stewart discusses time and memory in *The Butterfly Effect*, as well as in *Donnie Darko* (2001), as a Hollywood Gothic science fiction, as opposed to the European uncanny humanism of films such as *The Double Life of Veronique* (1991) and *Swimming Pool* (2003) (Stewart 2002: 327–50).
7. fMRI stands for functional magnetic resonance imaging, which is a non-invasive brain scanning technique that measures changes in blood flows related to neural activity. It is one of the most recent and commonly used neuroimaging technologies.
8. Deleuze's argumentation is complex and extended. For insightful and very precise discussions of *Difference and Repetition*, James Williams (2003) and Joe Hughes (2009) are indispensible references.
9. Deleuze gives the ground of the past the characteristics of the sky: 'the foundation concerns the soil, it shows how something is established upon this soil [. . .] whereas the ground comes rather from the sky, it goes from the summit to the foundations [. . .]' (Deleuze 1994: 79).
10. Alia Al-Saji (2004) elaborates on the influence of Bergson in *Difference and Repetition*, referring mainly to the second synthesis of time.
11. Elsewhere, he clarifies this differently: 'When thinking of the future (F) as different from the past (P), we may be tempted to think that the difference lies between P and F. But Deleuze's point is that in a selection we move from an assembly P/F to a new assembly P′/F′. We select a new past and a new future. So any difference is between P/F and P′/F′' (Williams 2006: 112).
12. Alain Resnais's cinema, for instance, can be considered as 'neuro-images avant-la-lettre'. It is important on the one hand to acknowledge the fact that Deleuze has already mapped out the contours of the neuro-image in his cinema books. On the other hand, it also allows us to see how Resnais's cerebral screens anticipate the digital logic of our contemporary screens as a will to art (and thus indicate a resonating link between the neuro-image's brain-screen and the digital age in a non techno-deterministic way). See for an extended analysis of Resnais's cinema as early neuro-image, chapter 4 of *The Neuro-Image* (Pisters forthcoming) or the online lecture 'Signs of Time: Cerebral Metaphysics of the Neuro-Image' at http://vimeo.com/11779080.
13. Richard Rushton also refers to the syntheses of time in connection to cinema, indicating how the virtual and the actual can be read as the first and second synthesis of time in the movement-image in *Letter from an Unknown Woman* (1948). His focus (in a discussion with Mark Hansen) is on spectatorship, and he relates the time-image to the third synthesis of time and the dissolution of the subject (Rushton 2008). I propose a more meta-theoretical perspective by arguing that the movement-image, the time-image and the neuro-image are each based in a different synthesis of time, each has their own relations to past, present and future, and each opens up to the other syntheses.
14. In the theatrical version, Evan scares Kayleigh away the first moment they meet when they are seven so that they never cross paths again. The film ends eight years in the future where Evan recognises Kayleigh in a crowded city streets but after a moment of hesitation lets her pass by. All versions of alternative endings can be viewed on YouTube.

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Deterritorialisation and Schizoanalysis in David Fincher's *Fight Club*

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Abstract

Taking a schizoanalytic approach to audio-visual images, this article explores some of the radical potentia for deterritorialisation found within David Fincher's *Fight Club* (1999). The film's potential for deterritorialisation is initially located in an exploration of the film's form and content, which appear designed to interrogate and transcend a series of false binaries between mind and body, inside and outside, male and female. Paying attention to the construction of photorealistic digital spaces and composited images, we examine the actual (and possible) ways viewers relate to the film, both during and after screenings. Recognising the film as an affective force performing within our world, we also investigate some of the real-world effects the film catalysed. Finally, we propose that schizoanalysis, when applied to a Hollywood film, suggests that Deleuze underestimated the deterritorialising potential of contemporary, special effects-driven cinema. If schizoanalysis has thus been reterritorialised by mainstream products, we argue that new, 'post-Deleuzian' lines of flight are required to disrupt this 'de-re-territorialisation'.

Keywords: schizoanalysis, *Fight Club*, mind–body, digital, de-/re-territorialisation

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I. Introduction

In *Anti-Oedipus* (1983), Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari advanced a radical conception of desire, no longer shackled to absence and lack, but based on a productive process of presence and becoming. Rather than the old 'Oedipalising' models of psychoanalysis, whereby the subject is constituted or gains an identity through identification with something that is always already lost (identity as having a fixed goal, *telos*, or, in another sense, a reified *essence*), Deleuze and Guattari proposed that identity constantly undergoes shifts and changes, in response to, or in accordance with, the situation in which it finds itself. The process of becoming (as opposed to the 'thing' of being) that Deleuze and Guattari describe, then, is one in which the conventional distinctions between inside and outside, actual and virtual, and even between self and other significantly blur. To comprehend and understand the world thus, as well as the works of art it contains, is known as *schizoanalysis*.

In this essay, we employ a schizoanalytic approach to expose the radical potential for deterritorialisation (that is, the upsetting of those conventional distinctions listed above – and perhaps even the upsetting of distinctions *per se*) to be found in David Fincher's *Fight Club* (1999). As we shall show, this potential for deterritorialisation is located at the level of form and content, and in the effects the film displays in the real world (that is, on spectators). In other words, we shall explore not only what happens in the narrative (its content), but also how the film itself is put together (its form) and functions in the world. Particular attention will be paid to the film's construction of photorealistic digital spaces and composited images, before examining the actual (and possible) ways in which audiences relate to the film, during and after screenings. Finally, we shall adventurously propose that schizoanalysis, when applied to a Hollywood film as here, suggests one or both of two things: that Deleuze underestimated the deterritorialising potential of contemporary, special effects-driven cinema, and/or that schizoanalysis has itself been reterritorialised if found in mainstream products. In this manner, we highlight how new, 'post-Deleuzian' lines of flight are required to disrupt this 'de-re-territorialisation'.

II. *Fight Club*

Fight Club has already garnered much academic attention, being schizophrenically read through a plethora of critical and discursive lenses/paradigms. Amongst others, it has been read as a film dealing

with, or invocative of: a/the contemporary 'crisis of masculinity' (Taubin 1999; Giroux 2001; Friday 2003), capitalism and consumerism (Giroux and Szeman 2001; Ta 2006; Lizardo 2007), violence and pain (Windrum 2004; Gormley 2005), fascism and anarchy (Dassanowsky 2007; Chandler and Tallon 2008), auteurism (Orgeron 2002; Swallow 2003) and the gaze (Church Gibson 2004). While some discussions of the film make mention of Deleuze's work – for example, Grønstad (2003), who concentrates on masochism – only Patricia Pisters (2003) has treated the film to an (albeit brief) Deleuzian analysis to date, illuminating an absent people's becoming, a political mobilisation of a *class of violence*, and an expressive interplay between time- and movement-image regimes. We should like to acknowledge the validity of all of these heterogeneous analyses, for the film is rich enough to allow for their co-existence, but we should also like to extend these much further, particularly Pisters's interpretation, to see what feedback the film offers to help us (better) understand Deleuze (and Guattari).

Based on Chuck Palahniuk's novel (1999), *Fight Club* tells the story of an unnamed narrator, often referred to as Jack (Edward Norton), who suffers from insomnia and convinces himself he is ill. Initially, a cynical doctor sardonically advises he attend therapy groups for disease sufferers, so he can see real suffering. Attending the sessions allows him to find a strong emotional release, and he is again able to sleep – that is, until a woman called Marla Singer (Helena Bonham Carter) begins attending the same groups and re-activates his sleeplessness.

The narrator's day job as an insurance recall co-ordinator finds him evaluating whether it will be cheaper for his car company to recall faulty products or settle lawsuits in or out of court. This involves extensive travel across the USA, and during one trip he encounters the enigmatic anarchist Tyler Durden (Brad Pitt). Thereafter, he returns home to find his apartment destroyed by an explosion seemingly ignited by a gas leak. He contacts Tyler, who invites him to stay at his dilapidated house, but not before asking the narrator to punch him. Reluctantly, the narrator hits Tyler, and they begin scrapping. By degrees Fight Club is born. The ennui of modern life and a/the crisis in masculinity mean that other disaffected males are drawn to the nocturnal fights. Since participants find these physical experiences immensely satisfying, the clubs begin to proliferate. For the narrator, actively fighting allows him to sleep again more than simply observing and sharing in others' suffering. In time, Tyler turns Fight Club into Project Mayhem, a covert organisation driven to overthrow late capitalism – initially through minor acts of

vandalism, which escalate into a terrorist plot to destroy financial corporations and blow up their headquarters.

Aware the narrator is no longer attending therapy sessions, Marla contacts him to find out why. She initially hams up an attention-grabbing suicide attempt, which the narrator ignores, but to which Tyler responds. As a result, Tyler commences an intensely sexual relationship with Marla, which the narrator finds distasteful, as he does Project Mayhem, from which Tyler likewise excludes him. As the narrator attempts to retard Project Mayhem, he increasingly discovers many of the men involved in it, impossibly, know him, even though he remains convinced he has never met them. As the terrorist plot inexorably heads towards its cataclysmic apogee, the narrator finally realises the members of Project Mayhem do know him, but not as the famous founder of Fight Club, but because he *is* Tyler Durden. As Tyler, the narrator *has* met them before.

Realising *he* has been the architect of Project Mayhem, the narrator tries to bring about its end by killing the part of himself that is Tyler – by shooting himself in the head. The bullet dislocates his jaw, but the gesture is seemingly enough to 'kill' Tyler. However, this action does not prevent the organisation from achieving its anarchic goals. The film ends, therefore, as several corporate towers collapse, and as the final credits begin to roll, a six-frame splice-in of a man's penis is inserted into the film – evidence, seemingly, that Tyler is in fact not dead, since we know from the narrative that he habitually inserted single frames of pornography into films whilst working as a projectionist.

III. Against Mind–Body Dualism

Below, we argue *Fight Club* features deterritorialisations that enable becomings through the body as well as deterritorialisations that enable becomings through the brain. By the latter, we mean the images we see might depict the thoughts of the narrator (thoughts that take bodily form are embodied in the cases of the other figures that we see onscreen), and by the former, we mean the film features moments in which the narrator's visible physical state can lead to new thoughts, as perhaps is most recognisable in the case of insomnia, where a physical state (prolonged waking) induces fantasy hallucinations. Both becomings imply that brain and body are not as easy to separate as we might believe, if we were to adopt a 'classical' Cartesian mode of thought. However, in order to commence our schizoanalytic reading of the film, and in order to break down the binary opposition between body and brain, we should like to spend some time elaborating what this means

at the level of content, before turning our attention to the corresponding themes built into the form/style of the film.

Gaining momentum in the 1990s, those involved in cognitive approaches to cinema attempted to put distance between psychoanalytic and Marxist readings of films, particularly those inspired by 'post-structuralist' thought (see Bordwell and Carroll 1996). In the crossfire between cognitive and 'post-structuralist' approaches, Deleuze came to be associated with the latter more than the former, perhaps due to his status as a 'continental' philosopher. As such, scholars like David Bordwell (1997: 116–17; 2010), while usefully identifying some limitations of Deleuze's film scholarship, go too far by dismissing it altogether. Although this is neither the time nor the place to rehearse in detail the reasons for and in particular against Deleuze's association with post-structuralist thought and his distantiation from cognitive approaches, we should like to say that recent developments in neuroscience and other disciplines that often form the theoretical basis for cognitive approaches seem to suggest that Deleuzian models of mind–body parallelism were not far off the mark. Neuroscientists such as Antonio Damasio (1994; 1999) and philosophers like George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1999) have argued that not only is there no 'homunculus' directing thought, but the brain is embodied and 'basic' or 'lower-level' processes, from homeostasis to galvanic skin responses, are influential on emotions and feelings, which in turn are deeply influential on thoughts. Thus, the brain is not uniquely a rational disembodied tool that disregards 'irrational' phenomena like emotions and visceral responses (or affects). Rather, whatever rational thought the brain is capable of is dependent almost entirely upon what happens in the body and the fact that we have bodies at all.

Were cognitive film studies to look beyond its 'continental' and 'post-structuralist' thought prejudices, it might find Deleuze a useful ally precisely for his articulation of a body–mind parallelism, something symbolised in his overlap with Antonio Damasio via their shared Spinozian interest (see Deleuze 1988; Damasio 2003), as outlined by William E. Connolly (2006). In *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, Deleuze describes how parallelism disallows any primacy of the brain over the body, or of the body over the brain, which would be just as unintelligible (Deleuze 1988: 18). Mind and body are here freed of hierarchical relations, so that the brain becomes a partial machinic-component that sends efferent signals to the body, while the body simultaneously sends afferent orders to the brain, of which it is just a part and, correlatively, which is just a part of it. Spinoza's dictum 'Give me a body then'

comes to take on new meaning, as it can be through the body that new thought is achieved, with new physical states being matched by new neuron connections in the brain. In Deleuze's cinematic paradigm, to think becomes 'to learn what a non-thinking body is capable of, its capacity, its postures. It is through the body (and no longer through the intermediary of the body) that cinema forms its alliance with the spirit, with thought' (Deleuze 2005b: 182). The scene in *Fight Club* where Tyler inflicts a chemical lye burn on the narrator epitomises best this non-hierarchical relationship between the feeling body and the thinking mind – and visually actualises a direct relationship between bodily senses (feeling) and brain activity (thought).

The scene starts as an action-image. Tyler holds the narrator and administers powdered lye to a wet-kiss upon his hand. The excruciating bodily pain caused by the chemical burn immediately catalyses a visceral thought-image montage that vies for prominence amongst the action-images. The film here displays what we might call a motific re-folding of brain and body cinemas as the feelings and sensation of the physical burn directly stimulate thought. The narrator initially attempts to apply meditation to escape the intense pain, and viewers are presented with serene images of a green forest. After returning to a close-up of the hand, now bubbling as his flesh chemically dissolves, mental images (opsigns) of fire and intertitle-like images isolating words like 'searing' and 'flesh' intermix with sounds of intense burning and crackling (sonsigns). These compete with Zen-like images of trees, birdsong and the narrator's healing cave as he attempts to escape these overwhelming feelings and sensations. This begins to illuminate a powerful parallel-image sequence, wherein a brain-cinema montage overlaps performative action-images and affective bodily close-ups. The fact that Tyler is also coded as a mental manifestation serves to introduce another level of actual/virtual folding within the meniscus of the image. Thus, the images push and pull in two simultaneous directions that underscore a parallel relationship between mind and body, feeling and thought. As this relationship surfaces throughout the film, the model of parallelism increasingly becomes related to a process of immanent deterritorialisation.

IV. Deterritorialising the Body

When analysing films, it is often hard to separate form from content. As such, while we shall examine how *Fight Club*'s content (that is, its plot) involves the deterritorialisation of the narrator's body in such a way that schizoanalysis offers a suitable framework through which

to understand it, we shall also make explicit reference to the filmic form – although we reserve a prolonged analysis of form for a later section. To better understand how the body is deterritorialised within the film, we respectively analyse the roles insomnia, hunger, cancer and violence play, as well as considering the various ways in which these deterritorialising forces allow the narrator to enter a liminal state wherein the boundaries between fantasy and reality, inside and outside, thought and action, begin to blur.

In a Deleuzian-inflected engagement with insomnia narratives, Patricia Pisters argues that 'it is only when one is exhausted or "paralysed" that the sensory-motor action gives way to pure optical sound situations [and that] one enters into a dream world or visionary otherworldliness' (Pisters 2003: 136). After being sleepless for six months, the narrator laments: 'with insomnia nothing's real. Everything's far away. Everything's a copy of a copy of a copy'. These subjective experiences are aesthetically reflected by images drained of colour, depth and sound, as well as expressively and expressionistically distorted effects, such as crackling electrical charges that overlap edits, distended sounds that warp entire scenes, and 'single-frame' subliminal flashes of Tyler that flicker within the *mise-en-scène* prior to his 'real' introduction. Here, the exhaustion created by the narrator's insomnia provides the conditions for distorted formal images and sounds that viewers perceive. Although these are implied hallucinations, it is hard to tell these 'fantasy' elements apart from the narrator's 'real' perceptions.

The film often depicts the narrator performing mundane tasks like brushing his teeth or going to the toilet, but barely shows him eating. Significantly, when he opens his fridge, we see it is bare. While it is never explicitly stated he is hungry or deliberately fasting, the *mise-en-scène* becomes suggestive of an ascetic drive that becomes another condition aiding his entry into a warped, dreamlike world where bodily experiences become inseparable from those of the brain (thought, or fantasy, becomes indistinguishable from reality). In an essay on 'The "Fasting Body" and the Hunger for Pure Immanence', psychotherapist Jo Nash argues that fasting enables

> an altered state of consciousness [to arise] that permits a collapsing of the dualistic affective divisions between subject and object, within and beyond, to enable an experience of transversal, trans-Oedipal desire to enjoy both, at one and the same time [...]. Binary divisions of inner and outer, self and other, mind and body, thought and feeling, are overcome, through a conscious decision to resist the desire to consume. (Nash 2006: 325–6)

The narrator's lack of consumption on the physical level is eventually succeeded by his refusal to consume on what we might call a capitalist level later in the film. But while these initial conditions of insomnia and hunger set the scene for a primary deterritorialisation of the self through the body, the narrator finds himself reterritorialised by the physical and spiritual release he experiences by attending disease support groups in acts of 'misery tourism'.

The narrator's new-found ability to sleep and cry is in particular enabled by his physical interaction with a testicular cancer sufferer called Bob (Meat Loaf Aday) who has developed (what the narrator calls) 'bitch tits' as a result of his orchiectomy and subsequent chemical imbalance. While the narrator attends therapy groups for genuine victims of cancer, he is of course only a tourist among these sufferers. However, once Marla arrives and begins to infiltrate all the groups, not only can he no longer sleep again, but it is as if Marla becomes a kind of cancer that infects him: 'If I had a tumour, I'd call it Marla.' While this no doubt encourages a reading relating to the film's surface misogyny and exclusive treatment of masculinity, an issue to which we shall return, it is important to establish how Marla, in particular Marla-as-cancer, triggers a second level of deterritorialisation that will only be eased – temporarily – by the advent of Tyler.

Beyond toying with the notion of calling his tumour Marla, there are several other ways in which Marla can be understood to operate in a cancerous fashion. Her consistent smoking (even in cancer recovery sessions), for instance, along with her claims of actually having cancer during an attention-seeking 'suicide' attempt ('my tit is rotting off') thematically associate her with cancer and its causes. Furthermore, her gothic appearance – black eyeliner, black clothes – also grant her a form of necrotic presence that begins spreading everywhere. As a cancerous force, Marla becomes another active agent in the narrator's deterritorialising process. This notion is signalled during a support group scene where the narrator joins terminally ill sufferers in guided meditation, whereby they retreat into their 'healing caves'. Typically, the narrator finds his 'power animal' there, a computer generated imagery (CGI) penguin that encourages him to 'slide'. However, once Marla arrives, she replaces the penguin, and, exhaling smoke, implores him to 'slide', or, for the sake of this argument, deterritorialise. In other words, Marla begins to assert her presence in both the narrator's waking and dream life.

By degrees, the narrator quits the groups, meets Tyler and begins Fight Club. Mirroring the initial affect and effect of the support groups, the

physical experience of violence functions as a physical and psychological release that allows him to sleep. But, where the therapy sessions helped reterritorialise the narrator, in that he could sleep safe in his IKEA catalogue-like apartment, here the violence is part of a prolonged and temporarily more satisfactory deterritorialisation. Losing his home, the narrator joins Tyler in an abandoned house, and begins to lose teeth and turn up at work with a bruised face and body. Seduced by Tyler, he eventually rejects the consumerist lifestyle that characterised his earlier existence. The violence therefore serves as a deterritorialising force; as Pisters argues, it equals 'the shocks in the brain' and is 'connected to a strategy of deterritorialisation' (Pisters 2003: 97–8). We can locate another echo of a body and mind parallelism in Pisters's equation of cerebral and physical violence here, but we should presently like to spend some time sorting through the complexity of this deterritorialisation.

We have argued the narrator's flirtations with danger serve a deterritorialising end, and that this process is subsequently rounded off by a reterritorialisation signalled through his ability to sleep. However, if his misery tourism and initial forays into violence are undertaken with the goal of reterritorialisation, then what *real* deterritorialisation is going on? That the deterritorialisation is undertaken with a specific goal in mind suggests that this is only a reterritorialising deterritorialisation. But in fact this reterritorialisation that lies at the heart of the narrator's first and superficial attempts at deterritorialisation occult – at least at first – a more profound deterritorialisation. For it will ultimately turn out that the narrator has not been asleep (or 'reterritorialised') at all. As Tyler, the narrator has been escalating the violence of Fight Club to ever-greater levels, culminating in Project Mayhem. As this is only revealed at the climax of the film (when we watch it for the first time), the continued deterritorialisation that takes place in spite of the appearance of reterritorialisation (he seems happier/can sleep) must be manifested in different ways. How is this so?

The continued, 'deeper' deterritorialisation is manifested through the reappearance of Marla and the appearance of the Project Mayhem goons who move in with Tyler and the narrator. Here, the analogy between Marla and cancer can be extended: in the same way that she is a continued and persistent 'cancerous' presence in the film, so, too, does the increased presence of other black-clad and nameless figures in the *mise-en-scène* reinforce as much. Like a cancer growing, the Project Mayhem goons come to represent the continued but evolving deterritorialisation of the narrator's world. Their dilapidated home thus becomes the body in which these malignant, or terrorist, 'cells' take

their place; according to the narrator, the house becomes 'a living thing, wet inside with so many people sweating and breathing'. It is from this base that the terrorist organisation mounts its attack on the surrounding organs of the embedding culture. That is, Fight Clubs and terrorist cells begin to crop up everywhere across the US, and these are organised by Tyler, who takes advantage of the narrator's travels to coordinate Project Mayhem. It is important to stress, then, that even though we do not know as much until near the film's end, Tyler is also part of the deterritorialisation of the narrator, and utilises the rhizomatic web of national airline routes to spread Project Mayhem (cultural cancer) in a way similar to a disease travelling around the body's circulatory and cardiovascular system.

Finally, the increased, 'deeper' deterritorialisation of the narrator taking place without his (or the first-time viewer's) knowledge, is also marked in an affective scene depicting unhinged violence waged against an unconscious opponent, Angel Face (Jared Leto). While there are several scenes of ritualised violence in the film, which collectively witness the body become an affective threshold of intensity, in this scene both form and content synergistically interface to affectively frame a deranged attack, which transcends the (diegetically) established ritualised codes. Framed from the victim's position and scored with affective sounds of pounding flesh and crunching bone, the scene formulates a gruesome unflinching visceral experience, in which the narrator reveals that all is not well and that he, too, needs to go further and become more deterritorialised if he is to find peace or happiness again.

Between insomnia, hunger, cancer and violence, then, we get a sense of the central role that the body plays in *Fight Club* and particularly in the narrator's deterritorialising line of flight from bourgeois consumerist conformity to anarchistic terrorist. However, as we indicated above, the body is not alone in this process. If insomnia and hunger can help break down the boundaries between reality and illusion, between self and other, and if cancer can do the same, in that a cancer is both alien and within us, and if violence can also change our thoughts by making marks on and modifying our bodies, then the parallel brain, too, must equally be involved in this process.

V. Deterritorialising the Brain

We explained earlier that the narrator's insomniac experiences are conveyed expressively via a combination of sound and *mise-en-scène*:

warping distortions and washed-out lighting trouble our ability to tell what is real and what is not, and expressionistically reflect the narrator's experiences. While *Fight Club* does feature a now-famous twist ending whereby the narrator discovers he *is* Tyler and the mastermind behind Project Mayhem, we might initially suspect that the end sees the narrator reterritorialised as 'himself', in that Tyler is 'dead', despite the fact that Project Mayhem appears to have destroyed the banks. We have already mentioned, however, how the closing splice-in of a penis hints that Tyler is, in fact, still at large. While this is seemingly so, we should like to extend the argument somewhat further, by suggesting that there is very little in the film that we can truly claim to be 'real' or 'outside' of the narrator's brain. This is manifest in that final splice-in: Tyler, should he be the perpetrator, does not splice the penis into a film *within Fight Club* (as happens earlier). Rather the film into which the penis is spliced is *Fight Club* itself. In other words, not only might Tyler and other elements of the *mise-en-scène* be figments of the narrator's imagination, but so might the *whole film*. How can we mount such an argument?

We shall make this argument by looking specifically at the character of Marla, and posit that she, too, is as much a figment of the narrator's imagination as Tyler. 'And suddenly I realised that all of this, the guns, the bombs, the revolution had something to do with a girl named Marla Singer,' says the narrator after the film's opening shots. Although we may not take note of the importance of these words during an initial viewing, they become the first clue hinting at Marla not being a real person. Indeed, not only is it logically unlikely for a woman to attend therapy sessions for testicular cancer sufferers (or to smoke at an emphysema victims group), but, when the narrator addresses her on the issue, she walks away, crossing a road to pawn some stolen clothes. (Narrator: 'Let's not make a big thing of this.' Marla, walking away: 'How's this for not making a big thing?') Marla crosses the road, effortlessly missing speeding vehicles that intercut her path. The narrator, however, steps forward to encounter car horns, screeching brakes and skidding tyres. Is the fact that Marla ghosts across without a problem, whilst the narrator is nearly killed, also an indicative clue hinting that Marla does not exist? As a virtual image, Marla may well function as a fantasy manifestation and embodiment of the narrator's guilt and unease at being a tourist at the support groups. Viewing Marla as another virtual splitting of the narrator is also verbally hinted at, when the narrator informs us that 'her lie reflected my lie'.

The narrator lies awake in bed imagining approaching Marla to demand she stop attending the groups; when he 'actually' approaches her, however, Marla quickly announces she has seen him practising this, suggesting that she, like Tyler, might know everything he thinks and feels. Furthermore, when the two finally barter to divide up the groups, Marla tellingly says she wants the 'brain parasite' and 'organic brain dementia' meetings. This also prompts the narrator to respond: 'You can't have the whole brain!' This exchange not only reinforces the possibility that Marla is a brain-screen image (an embodied manifestation of a thought), but it also creates a circuit with another scene where Tyler discusses his desire to kill off *his* 'loser alter ego' (the narrator) in order to take over the whole brain.

Through a series of visual rhymes and thematic reflections, Marla is also linked to the virtual image of Tyler, serving to reinforce the sense that she is not 'real'. As Marla's introductory vignette ends, for instance, she is framed in silhouette walking into the depth of the frame. A subliminal flash of Tyler is momentarily introduced so their bodies occupy the same position onscreen. Both also wear dark sunglasses (whilst indoors) when we first see them, and both are in the habit of stealing things (Marla steals clothes and food, while Tyler steals human liposuction fat to make soap and bombs). Both characters also smoke and circle mysteriously around the crowds at group therapy sessions and Fight Club meetings, where couples come together to hug or fight respectively. While we have already mentioned how Marla manages to infiltrate the narrator's 'healing cave', it might also be worth mentioning that she literally seems to fuse with Tyler during a sex scene which is the product of the narrator's imagination: their coital bodies rendered in a blurry CGI sequence that Fincher discusses as a Francis Bacon version of Mount Rushmore (Swallow 2003: 130).

What might be the significance of identifying Marla as another (earlier) virtual image/character on a par with Tyler? Deleuze and Guattari may provide an illuminating answer, when they contend that it becomes 'the special situation of women in relation to the man-standard' that accounts for the fact that all becomings initially pass through a 'becoming-woman' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 321). Here, it would appear Marla formulates the first virtual threshold of the narrator's becoming process; somewhat ironically introduced during the 'Remaining Men Together' testicular cancer meeting, that is an event attended by castrated males. Marla enters as the narrator hugs Bob (a man in a physical process of becoming-woman with his aforementioned 'bitch tits'). If *Fight Club* can be accused of forwarding

a masculinist narrative, then, this becoming-woman process might conceivably highlight how the film does not respect boundaries between inside and out, and between self and other, in that not only is Tyler revealed to be the projected and embodied fantasy of the narrator, but so is Marla. What is more, rather than allow these figures to be re-centred around/reterritorialised within the male narrator, we would posit a further, deterritorialising ambiguity: these are not so much projections of the narrator as *also the narrator*. Marla is not some 'female' aspect of a 'male' narrator, then, but rather the narrator is both sexes, male and female, at once, and potentially a whole lot more (including Bob who is somehow both female – castrated and with breasts – and male, while not quite being either at the same time). Tyler, Marla, Bob: they are not 'part of' the narrator; they *are* the narrator, such that we cannot attribute sex or gender except as a means of simplifying for the sake of argument what he/she/it is. In this way, masculinist or misogynist readings of the film become hard to sustain: the boundary between genders is not one the film observes, then, but one it troubles, even if instinctively we feel tempted to 'reterritorialise' it within traditional gender(ed) interpretations.

VI. The Form of *Fight Club*

The above examples provide a good link into a discussion of *Fight Club*'s filmic form. That is, while the narrative content tells the story of a character whose bodily experiences are impossible to distinguish, or are cut in fluid fashion with, 'his' mental experiences, we can recognise these same themes reflected by the film's formal and aesthetic construction. We shall highlight this by investigating the film's expressive lighting scheme, its depiction of bodies, and the new forms of space generated by digital technologies.

Fight Club has a very stylised look, as was intimated by our discussion of the expressionistic use of colour to affectively convey the psychological effects of insomnia. Throughout, the film's aesthetic is further blocked using a dark, saturated Technicolor palette, with the underground Fight Club spaces having a chthonic appearance that contrasts with the electric blue over-world office spaces. In order to hold and capture the film's low light levels, Fincher and cinematographer Jeff Cronenweth used non-anamorphic spherical lenses and various development processes to render a style that visually echoes the film's key themes. As Fincher says:

> We talked about making it a dirty-looking movie, kind of grainy. When we processed it, we stretched the contrast to make it kind of ugly, a little bit of underexposure, a little bit of re-silvering, and using new high-contrast print stocks and stepping all over it, so it has a dirty patina. (Swallow 2003: 143–4)

The dark spaces often feature the greatest amount of bodily action (the brawls), while the contrasting washed-out lighter spaces reflect the affected spiritual or cerebral dimensions of the film. In keeping with the above discussion of a mind and body parallelism, Amy Taubin argues the film's use of light provides 'such a perfect balance of aesthetics and adrenaline [... that it feels] like a solution to the mind–body split' (Taubin 1999: 18). Significantly, actors' bodies are depicted as lean, muscular and 'taut', especially Brad Pitt's as Tyler. Pamela Church Gibson (2004) argues that this clearly fetishises and commodifies the male bodies, highlighting a 'gaze' that becomes ambiguous, upsetting a normative (straight) viewing position without reinscribing an overtly 'oppositional' or 'gay' one.

We shall return to the spectator of *Fight Club* shortly, but first turn our attention to the film's editing and, in particular, how it uses digital technology to create spaces that can be navigated with a new (total) ease. The film opens with a virtuoso two-and-a-half minute tracking shot beginning in the fear centre of the narrator's brain (although we do not necessarily know this on first viewing), moving backwards past firing synapses and floating cells of bodily matter, before accelerating outwards via a pore, past a giant drop of sweat dribbling from his pate amidst giant, looming bristles of hair, down his face and along the barrel of a gun. As the 'camera' passes the gun's sights, it comes to a rest. The focus changes and what previously had been only an affective rush of colour is pulled into focus to become recognisable as the face of Edward Norton with gun in mouth.

Instants later, while the narrator is explaining the nature of Project Mayhem's plot, an illustrative camera rushes vertiginously down the outside of the skyscraper from the top floor, down through the pavement and ground into a basement car park which houses a bomb nestled alongside a concrete column. The camera then changes trajectory, heading sideways – again at breakneck speed – through areas of solid earth until it reaches another subterranean car park, in which the camera races towards a van, through a bullet hole in its rear window, performing a circling close-up of a bomb counting down to destroy the buildings we have just impossibly and rapidly travelled through. Both shots are in part constructed through the use of CGI and animation – since it

would be physically impossible to manipulate a material camera to pass from the inside of a human actor's brain to the outside, while changing its focal range so we see individual synapses at one moment and a face in focus the next. Similarly, one could not easily drop a material camera thirty-one storeys, through the ground, across an underground space, through a bullet hole and around a bomb in one continuous fluid movement.

That these examples are computer generated is formally important, as we shall see, but it is the continuity of the shots that we should like to emphasise at present. For while, as discussed above, the shots of the lye-burning are intercut with images of green woods and words from dictionaries, such that we switch perceptibly from an image of what is happening in the diegetic world to images of thoughts, here the distinction between the two is not so clear cut. While the montage sequence of the lye-burning happens rapidly – so quickly, that we cannot *count* the shots but must simply get caught up in the speed of the film itself – we can still tell that we are seeing a montage of shots cut together. When the 'camera' (which is not really a material camera) passes from the inside to the outside of the narrator's brain in the film's opening, we cannot so easily separate inside from outside by breaking the sequence into shots. Rather, the inside of the brain and the outside 'physical' world are rendered 'impossibly' as one single continuum. It is not that fantasy and reality are presented as binary opposites, then. Instead *Fight Club* shows that fantasy continues into reality and vice versa in such a way that we can no longer tell them apart.

The subsequent plunge taken by the CG 'camera' into the basement achieves a similar effect. Since we start with a shot of Tyler from outside the building while they wait for the bombs to detonate, we might believe that this is an 'objective' shot of the action. However, since the camera responds to the narrator's voice-over and takes us down to the bomb, it becomes clear the film is responding to his thought processes: we see what the narrator wants us to see – meaning that the film is not 'objective' at all, but rather highly subjective (if we can distinguish the two). However, where Fincher could easily have cut directly from Tyler to the bombs, he does not. The refusal to cut has an added effect: by showing the space between Tyler, the narrator and the bombs, Fincher shows us their connected nature. This similarly blurs the boundary between the objective and the subjective, in a way that is more troubling than using cuts, since we cannot but *falsely* impose a boundary between where the film becomes 'subjective' or 'objective', if the lack of a cut means that *there is no boundary*. In cinematic terms, this

is not necessarily new, since *Citizen Kane* (1941) features similar camera movements in the famous shot where the camera travels through the El Rancho nightclub's neon sign before descending through a skylight into the bar where a drunk Susan Alexander (Dorothy Comingore) slouches. The impression of continuity across two shots is here achieved through a dissolve, but the film fails to present a truly convincing continuous space, since the angles between the first and second shot do not exactly match. The continuous spaces in *Fight Club*, meanwhile, are free of such mismatches, in part because they are created using 3D digital spaces which negate the need for changing material camera positions, and because the movements can be so much faster than those of *Citizen Kane*. This speed of the movement is important, not just in terms of moving too fast for viewers to notice 'flaws' in continuity, but also in terms of the camera movement arguably appearing as 'fast' as a cut. Whereas film has perhaps long since had the ability to 'move' at the speed of thought via editing, here the 'camera' can achieve this effect *without* editing, meaning the boundary between thought-images and pro-filmic 'reality' becomes blurred.

In other words, *Fight Club* is shot in a style that makes form reinforce content: in a narrative in which we shall finally not be able to tell apart the narrator from Tyler from Marla, such that they all form a 'schizophrenic' continuum (in a similar manner to Deleuze and Guattari's thesis that 'at root *every name in history is I*' [Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 85–6]), so, too, is the space in the film shown as a schizophrenic continuum, that passes literally from inside to outside of the brain as if there were no division between the two, and from seemingly objective to subjective shots as well. As Fincher has said, in a way that is reminiscent of Deleuze's call for cinema as a depiction of thought:

> It's like, pfpp, take a look at it, pfpp, pull the next thing down [. . .]. It's gotta move as quick as you can think. We've gotta come up with a way that the camera can illustrate things at the speed of thought. (Quoted in Smith 1999: 58)

These sequences of intense continuity differ, slightly, from the 'intensified continuity' of contemporary cinema noted by Bordwell (2002). Bordwell describes the increased cutting rate of contemporary cinema, while here we are describing a cinema that does not (seem to) cut at all. However, it is not that these sequences, and others like it, including the narrator walking through an IKEA catalogue, and the camera becoming the gas spreading around the narrator's apartment

before it is destroyed, are 'better' than the lye-burning sequence that uses montage. Indeed, the use of montage during the lye-burning heightens the tension and invasive violence of that particular moment. Rather, in *Fight Club* the camera (and the film) seems capable of doing whatever it wants; it does not have to use *either* montage or continuity; it can use both as and when it desires and for expressive purposes. Again, the option of using montage and/or continuity has long been available to filmmakers, but the ability to pass through solid objects (skulls and walls), the ability to change scale (neurons and entire heads in the same shot), and the speed with which this is rendered onscreen intensifies the blurred boundary between the imaginary and the real, particularly when continuity is taken to these extremes.

Earlier we mentioned a moment wherein the narrator hugs Bob, significantly at the same moment Marla is introduced. We in fact encounter this sequence twice within the film. The first time formulates the initial jump backwards into a sheet of past which kick-starts the entire flashback – as if the narrator deliberately wanted to return to this moment (of becoming-woman) as the starting point for the story of his deterritorialisation. In the second occurrence, the now-familiar image is replayed, but we find Marla enter at the exact moment when the narrator forms a hugging assemblage with Bob's 'bitch tits'. This is the moment of forking time that orients and justifies the first flashback. Significantly, in the space of the 'Remaining Men Together' group, we can perceive how Marla, or the becoming-woman process in general, is related to and formulates an assemblage with the concept of organic sickness and disease, and thereafter continues to inform the nature of the immanent deterritorialisation process (becoming-cancer). These instances of repeated shots and recurring time loops, often with minor differences, also go to show that the film is edited in such a way as to be the thought of the (unreliable) narrator, and thus offer us a strange but original form of time-image that infests a narrative that might otherwise be considered an action-image.

The digital nature of many of the images can reinforce this sense. For, when the digital 'camera' can pass smoothly through walls and human heads, or change scale at will, then these continuous digital spaces call for new modes of thought and action because these kinds of continuities have been hard if not impossible to achieve (at least photorealistically) without the digital technology used to create them. As such, the digital nature of these shots is linked to new ways of thinking about time and space. In this film, both time and space are presented as a fluid continuum: space can be traversed in spite of the nature of

the supposedly material objects that fill it; time, likewise, can be crossed like a space – backwards and forwards, sideways, in whichever direction the narrator's brain takes us and without obstacles. In other words, these sequences present us with any-spaces-whatever, except that, unlike the 'traditional' any-spaces-whatever described by Deleuze, these are supermodern or, what William Brown (2009) might term 'posthuman' any-spaces-whatever. We propose this because of the continuity between inside and outside that is (digitally) presented: since the 'camera' can and does go anywhere, our sense of identifiable spatial coordinates is undermined – and, what is (retroactively) understood as the inside and then the outside of the narrator's head/brain becomes a vertiginous rush of changing colours.

Again, the form here matches the content, since much of the narrator's life is spent in airports and anonymous hotels, the kind of non-places described by Marc Augé (1995), and which have been linked by Réda Bensmaïa (1997) to Deleuze's concept of the any-space-whatever (even if, *contra* Bensmaïa, Deleuze does not himself refer to Marc Augé in his work, but to Pascal Auger, a former student [Deleuze 2005a: 112]).[1] Production designer Alex McDowell tried to ensure that locations like 'the airliner interior, the hotel rooms, the office and Jack's [*sic*] apartment all used the same palette of colours and fabrics, suggesting the "sameness of life outside the Fight Club" ' (Swallow 2003: 128). In other words, the film consciously tries to anonymise and homogenise the spaces in which much of the narrative takes place, making these non-places also become any-spaces-whatever, and demanding new modes of thought and movement.

VII. The *Fight Club* Spectator

While we have thus far often mentioned the viewer and the spectator (sometimes referring to these as 'we') in relation to *Fight Club*, we should now like to turn our attention more particularly to the film's viewer(s). For, while *Fight Club* might in content be a film about bodies which depicts not only thoughts (inserts of the narrator's brain patterns) but thought itself (the *process* of thinking, as demonstrated in the film's style/form), then what does this say of the spectator? Firstly, we should like to say that *Fight Club* affects its spectator in much the same way that the characters seem to be affected in the film. That is, *Fight Club* is for the spectator both a *physical* (visceral, or affective) experience, and an experience that can inspire new forms of thought.

Earlier, we mentioned the scene in which the narrator disfigures Angel Face in a fight ('because I wanted to destroy something beautiful'). We mentioned the way in which the sequence is shot from the victim's point of view and how the sound of the violence is affectively amplified: cartilage and bones crunch, skin slips and splits as the narrator mangles the young man's visage. As in the lye-burning scene in which we see images of skin searing, the shots of the narrator's face being torn apart when he shoots himself in the jaw, and the fights more generally, here, too, the filmmakers are interested not just in showing spectators what is happening, but in placing viewers 'within' the action such that they experience the film not just in a detached, visual manner, but *physically*, viscerally even. And if the film is designed to affect the spectator in a physical manner, one might say that *Fight Club* does to the viewer what it depicts happening to the characters. That is, the film enacts a physical form of violence that is deterritorialising and puts viewers' bodies through new experiences that call for new modes of thinking and movement, and allow us to become, as opposed to simply being: we experience insomnia with the narrator via the distorted sound, colour and flickers of Tyler across the screen; and we watch not just Tyler splicing pornographic frames into other movies, but also, pornographic frames being spliced into *this* movie. The narrative actively seeks to affect its viewers directly as opposed to merely telling a story about someone who terrorises film viewers.

Fight Club's narrator offers us technical explanations about 'cigarette burns' or 'changeover' marks, which we see in movies when a projection reel has nearly run its course and needs switching. As he explains this in voice-over, Tyler illustrates by pointing to an actual 'cigarette burn' that features in/on *Fight Club* itself. Furthermore, Tyler rhapsodises about the woes and taunts of contemporary consumerist lifestyle, addressing the camera directly and even managing to dislodge the film itself from its projector, revealing the celluloid image's sprockets. These examples suggest that *Fight Club* not only wants to affect us physically, but also mentally, assaulting any passive spectatorial engagement. That is, as it becomes harder to tell apart the diegetic from the non-diegetic, where the film world begins and ends, not least because we are directly spoken to and because we apparently – impossibly – see the very film that we are watching being ripped from its projector, *Fight Club* seeks to induce challenging new modes of thought. Schizoanalytically speaking, it seeks to induce schizoanalysis: not only can the viewer not tell apart the narrator from Tyler (from Marla) within the film, but the film also pays no attention to the supposed boundary between the fictional world and

our real world. *Fight Club* might be a fictional film, but its physical affects and the new modes of thought that it inspires are genuinely *real* experiences, and so perform modes of cinematic becoming.

In this manner, what 'shocks' the film achieves on our body, it perhaps also inflicts on our brain. In other words, while *Fight Club* is a film that moves at the 'speed of thought', darting from one moment in time to the next, across spaces at breakneck speed, it also sets up three intertwined and parallel time frames reminiscent of the time-image (the three-minute countdown to the towers exploding as the film commences, the dilated flashback memory embedded within this short period, and the viewing time of the film itself). Although ostensibly an action film, *Fight Club* does, as Pisters argues, involve movement-images that expressively toy with time-image regimes. Rather than a straightforward film that tells the story in chronological order, the 'cerebral' nature of the narration effectively unsettles our relationship with time and seeks to make us aware of the non-linear processes entailed in thought and memory.

Beyond its crystalline treatment of time, the film is also a 'twist' movie designed to be re-viewed and re-experienced after an initial, 'naïve' viewing. On account of this, a powerful cinematic consciousness surfaces that knows more than any of the characters embedded within the diegesis. The film's formal construction thus becomes responsible for introducing a virtual and actual circuit into the narrative, since upon subsequent viewings, each spectator retains a memory (a virtual 'past-that-is-preserved') of their initial viewing that overlaps and contrasts with the actual images perceived during a second or third encounter. *Fight Club* therefore plays with time on a meta-cinematic level, and illustrates how time can bring the 'truth' of an image into crisis. In other words, *Fight Club* is not a one-off phenomenon, but a film to be re-viewed and which makes its presence felt in the 'real world' such that fiction and reality become indiscernible.

Mark B. N. Hansen (2004) has argued Deleuze did not give enough weight to the spectator, and suggests that recent neuroscientific findings in fact go *against* some of his arguments concerning the cinema viewing experience. However, Richard Rushton (2009) has recently brought the 'Deleuzian spectator' to prominence: film viewers are not so much conscious of a film but conscious *with* a film. We 'fuse' with it when viewing in such a way that the film-viewer assemblage constitutes a new form of consciousness, a new form of thought. Viewing *Fight Club* not only involves such a process (since this process happens *de facto*, albeit with differing degrees of intensity), but it quite self-consciously involves such a process, as the über-rapid movement in any and all directions

and across time, together with the direct address to the audience, makes clear. To paraphrase the narrator, 'I am Jack's brain' might be a useful starting point for us to articulate what happens when watching the film. But we can go further than this: I become Jack's brain, such that Jack and the film and I (the viewer) cannot be distinguished anymore. We have become a new consciousness that fundamentally deterritorialises us from our 'normal' selves and allows us to *become*. Since the film involves people whose altered physical states (through fights, burns, etc.) lead to new modes of thought (that is, changes in the body lead to changes in the brain – as a result of mind–body parallelism), so is this true for the viewer with regard to the physical states in which the film puts *us*. Robert Sinnerbrink (2008) has called for something like a *rapprochement* between the 'affect' and the 'brain' Deleuzians, and a schizoanalysis of *Fight Club* allows us to put this into effect: not only within the film do physical experiences lead to new modes of thought for the characters, but the film itself is for the spectator a physical and mental experience that leads to new modes of thought, new becomings.

As such, Pitt describes the film as a 'virus' because it is not 'a film you can just *watch*; it's a contagious set of ideas [... that] will make you feel *something*' (Swallow 2003: 143–4). One might say, then, that the film involves a 'cancerous' becoming, but not necessarily with the negative connotations that this typically entails. 'Marla is like one of those sores on the top of your mouth that you wished would go away but can't help tonguing', says the narrator as he finds Marla in his 'healing cave'. In a manner akin to the becomings that Steven Shaviro (1993) has described in David Cronenberg's work, the disease-virus-cancer-sore that is *Fight Club* involves a becoming that may not be uniquely pleasurable, but is a becoming in which we are profoundly involved nonetheless – and it is up to us to use this becoming positively (in effect, to treat this 'cancer' as a part of our newly constituted selves, to nourish and not deny it). Palahniuk (2005) writes that both his novel and the film (more particularly the film) have spawned many real-life Fight Clubs: if he is to be believed (if reality is, as Palahniuk titles his memoir, *Stranger than Fiction*, then perhaps we can schizoanalytically believe nothing), then it would seem that not only does the film affect us in theory or during viewing, but it can also lead to new movements and thoughts in real life.

VIII. Conclusion: *Fight Club* as Hollywood Film

We have endeavoured to use schizoanalysis to interpret *Fight Club* not just as a film *about* a narrator undergoing deterritorialising experiences

that lead to new becomings (starting with the becoming-woman signified through the presence of Marla Singer), but as a film that *enacts* a form of schizoanalysis on or with the viewer. The potential for schizoanalysis is in any and every film (we become conscious with all films, perhaps with the world itself at each and every moment), but in *Fight Club* this potential is realised and brought to the fore with an intensity that is often unseen in mainstream Hollywood cinema.

While *Fight Club* is a narrative that critiques the unthinking nature of the consumerist lifestyle, the film is itself a commodity designed to make money, not just in the theatre, but through DVD sales and so on. Like Tyler himself, the film perhaps betrays megalomaniacal and fascistic leanings as much as it is a critique of these processes. The narrator may seek to prevent Tyler from destroying the corporate consumerist world, but he fails (Tyler is still at large come the film's closing; the banks *are* destroyed). But this failure is not necessarily matched by any change in the real world. Even if real Fight Clubs have been created as a result of the film, does the film-as-commodity in fact reinforce as much as it seeks to overthrow the consumerist lifestyle? If schizoanalysis as a process seeks to disrupt the 'unthinking' modes of thought consumerist modernity might impose upon us, has schizoanalysis ultimately failed when it has been co-opted into or become 'axiomatised' within mainstream Hollywood filmmaking?

While we might speculate that Deleuze would be unimpressed with *Fight Club* had he seen it, does the above analysis suggest that Deleuze overlooked the schizoanalytic potential of the mainstream? Or does it suggest that (a version of) Deleuzian thought has itself become mainstream, meaning that we must now seek to find even 'newer' ways of thinking and moving in the world – new experiences that will enable newer becomings? If *Fight Club* is a product of capitalism, which always seeks to produce new others precisely so as to consume them and to be able to grow, then is it really revolutionary at all? We suspect that the answer is both: *Fight Club* realises a potential that Deleuze may not have seen in mainstream, action-image cinema, while it also must to a degree undermine the power of that potential, perhaps by virtue of that potential being realised in and of itself. However, rather than being a negative thing, we can also read this as a new fold in Deleuzian thought: *Fight Club* may reterritorialise schizoanalysis, but this reterritorialisation of deterritorialisation is simultaneously a deterritorialisation of the modes of thought that reify and reterritorialise Deleuze. *Fight Club* is famous for its so-called rules, the first rule being that you do not talk about Fight Club. The law may condemn behaviour

that is deemed unethical (from the point of view of the law, Tyler Durden is a criminal), but 'the man who obeys the law does not thereby become righteous; on the contrary, he feels guilty and is guilty in advance, and the more strict his obedience, the greater his guilt' (Deleuze 1989: 84). In contrast to obeying the law, then, and beyond good and evil, we say that when it comes to finding out what a body can do, there are no rules. Let us schizoanalyse schizoanalysis, deterritorialise deterritorialisation, and unlock the potential for becoming that lies not just in *Fight Club*, but in each and every encounter we have.

Note

1. Pascal Auger's name is misspelt when Deleuze first mentions the concept of the any-space-whatever in *Cinema 1* (Deleuze 2005a: 112). Paris VIII has published online transcripts and recordings of Deleuze's seminars on cinema, and these include one in which Deleuze credits Pascal Auger with the concept of the any-space-whatever, and in which Auger himself also talks about the term in relation to Michael Snow's *Wavelength*. However ingenious (and still valid) the link between Marc Augé and Deleuze, it was not one intended by Deleuze himself. See Deleuze 1982 for more.

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Literature and the Parasite

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Abstract

J. L. Austin's claim that language 'used not seriously' is 'parasitic' upon 'normal use' has proved a puzzle to literary scholars, who have often taken this to mean that they are not allowed to apply the insights of speech-act theory to their own object of research. This article explores how, when read together, Michel Serres' definition of the parasite as a 'thermal exciter' and Deleuze's concept of 'minor literature' bring out the hidden potential inherent in Austin's claim. More specifically, the article argues that Austin's reference to literature as a parasitic entity might become a promising conceptual gift, allowing us to generate a new model for approaching the world-shaping potential of literary texts.

Keywords: parasite, parasitic, literature, J. L. Austin, Michel Serres, Ilya Prigogine, Richard Dawkins

For those who would like to explore the world-shaping abilities of literary texts, the set of conceptual tools offered in J. L. Austin's *How to Do Things with Words* (1962) is in many ways *gefundenes Fressen*, allowing us to pursue the question of how language plays a part in the creation of reality. However, literary scholars who want to apply these tools to their own object of research immediately encounter a serious problem: Austin specifically forbids them from doing so. More precisely, in distinguishing between language which is meant to be taken literally and the sort which is not, he casts the latter – of which literature is perhaps the best example – outside the boundaries of speech-act theory:

> as *utterances* our performatives are *also* heir to certain other kinds of ill which infect *all* utterances. And these likewise, though again they might be brought into a more general account, we are deliberately at present excluding. I mean,

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> for example, the following: a performative utterance will, for example, be *in a peculiar way* hollow or void if said by an actor on the stage, or if introduced in a poem, or spoken in soliloquy. This applies in a similar manner to any and every utterance – a sea-change in special circumstances. Language in such circumstances is in special ways – intelligibly – used not seriously, but in ways *parasitic* upon its normal use – ways which fall under the doctrine of the *etiolations* of language. All this we are *excluding* from consideration. Our performative utterances, felicitous or not, are to be understood as issued in ordinary circumstances. (Austin 1980: 21–2)

To the frequent consternation of literary scholars, literature is here not just claimed to be a *terra incognita* for speech-act theory (at least 'at present'), but also '*in a peculiar way* hollow or void', as well as of a *parasitic* nature. Not surprisingly, this claim has proved a puzzle, and has for example – as every reader of the heated debate between John Searle and Jacques Derrida will know – caused a great deal of ink to flow from both sides of the divide between analytic and Continental philosophy: in 1977, *Glyph* published a translation of Derrida's 'Signature Event Context' (later reprinted in *Limited Inc*), where the question of parasitism was raised in order to criticise Austin's lack of attention to language being defined by its ability to be repeated in all sorts of contexts, non-serious ones not excluded. This provoked a reply from Searle, who argued that Derrida had completely misunderstood Austin's attitude towards 'parasitic discourse':

> Derrida supposes that the term 'parasitic' involves some kind of moral judgement; that Austin is claiming that there is something bad or anomalous or not 'ethical' about such discourse. Again, nothing could be further from the truth. The sense in which, for example, fiction is parasitic on nonfiction is the sense in which the definition of the rational numbers in number theory might be said to be parasitic on the definition of the natural numbers, or the notion of one logical constant in a logical system might be said to be parasitic on another, because the former is defined in terms of the latter. Such parasitism is a relation of logical dependence; it does not imply any moral judgement and certainly not that the parasite is somehow immorally sponging off the host (Does one really have to point this out?). (Searle 1977: 205)

Searle's claim is far from convincing. Not only does it ignore the very widespread and strongly negative connotations attached to the term 'parasite', it also overlooks Austin's use of the word 'etiolations'. Pointing out that the latter means 'making pale, sickly, by exclusion of sunlight', Jonathan Culler, for example, argues that the quotations' fusion of the two terms 'activates the negative connotations of "parasitic": literature as sickly parasite on healthy normal linguistic

activity' (Culler 2007: 146). To say the least, if Austin's intention was to convey the idea that non-serious utterances were no better and no worse – just different – from those 'issued in ordinary circumstances', the choice of terms can hardly be said to be successful. As such, coming from somebody otherwise known for his eloquence, this awkward wording would in itself merit interest.

To give an example from the opposite camp, in her *The Scandal of the Speaking Body: Don Juan with J. L. Austin, or Seduction in Two Languages* (1980), Shoshana Felman takes Austin's analytic followers to task for not realising that the statement is (or at least could be) a joke:

> It is on the basis of such quotations that Austin is deemed to be caught red-handed defending 'seriousness,' what is 'considered normal,' as opposed to the 'parasitism,' the 'unseriousness' of poetry, play, or joking, which thus find themselves excluded. However, when Austin says, using his favorite first-person rhetoric, 'I must not be joking, for example,' is it certain that we must – that we can – *believe him*? Coming from a jester like Austin, might not that sentence itself be taken as a denegation – as a joke? (Felman 2003: 95)

Felman is certainly correct that one would have to be pretty humourless not to even consider that someone as thoroughly irreverent and funny as Austin – and moreover, someone so fond of supporting his claims with examples that by his own criteria would have to be counted as parasitic – might be joking. This is especially so if one takes into account that in his article 'A Plea for Excuses' (1956), Austin had argued that the abnormal is much more interesting than the normal, as well as capable of explaining the latter.[1] It might very well be asked why the same should not also hold for the relationship between 'abnormal' literary language and 'normal' serious language. As such, there is good reason to at least hold open the possibility that Austin's own intentions might be far from what later analytic philosophers have made them out to be.

Even though I agree more with Felman than with Searle in this regard, I here want to propose an altogether different solution: instead of trying to explain away the fact that Austin labelled literature 'parasitic' – either by saying, as Searle does, that he did not mean anything bad by it, or, as Felman does, that he was only joking – what if we were actually to take him at his word? What would happen if, rather than concentrating on his intentions, we set to work exploring where the concept of literature as parasitic can take us and what new insights might be gained in the process?

As I will argue, one of the things a model based upon the relationship between parasite and host might be capable of is to let us approach anew the world-creating ability of literary texts through the creation and installation of aesthetic affects in the readers. The fact that this creative potential inherent in Austin's claim has not yet been realised very likely has to do with the widespread understanding of parasites as worthless, degenerate creatures; a view which, in fact, is a remnant from the early phase of parasitology in the last half of the nineteenth century. Even though later scientists have realised that such a view is extremely simplified, bordering on the outright erroneous, they have not managed to shake off the very deeply ingrained negative associations the term still brings to mind. Rather than let these negative connotations continue to function as a barrier limiting thought, what we should do is directly confront them. In the following, I will therefore argue that Michel Serres' definition of the parasite opens the way for an understanding more nuanced and better adjusted to the realities of parasitical relations in nature than the common-sense, negative one. Elaborating on this through a closer look at Gilles Deleuze's writings on the 'becoming-minor' of literature – both in his own texts and in those written together with Félix Guattari – I will show how the Serresian approach to the parasite intersects in a number of interesting ways with the concept of 'minor literature'. Reading them together might therefore help shed new light on both, as well as help us better understand what actually happens when literature does function in such a way as to play a part in the creation of newness. Before this can be accomplished, though, there is one fundamental question that will have to be addressed: when we refer to parasites, what exactly is it we are talking about?

I. What is a Parasite?

The answer might at first seem rather straightforward. A fairly standard attempt at a definition can for example be found in Bernard E. Matthews' *An Introduction to Parasitology* (1998), where it is claimed that 'for our purposes I suggest we consider parasites as being animals that live for an appreciable proportion of their lives in (endoparasites) or on (ectoparasites) another organism, their host, are dependent on that host and benefit from the association at the host's expense' (Matthews 2005: 12). Even if Matthews strangely omits plants, his description might still be seen as a good working definition. Even so, there are certain problems it is not capable of properly dealing with. As we will see, this

is something it has in common with most (if not all) other attempts to clearly distinguish between parasites and non-parasites.

First, one could ask what Matthews means by the term 'animals'. Coming from the Latin term *animalis* – meaning 'with soul' – it usually refers to the members of the kingdom *Animalia*, to which *Homo sapiens* belongs. Does this mean, then, that humans can be parasites? While the definition certainly seems to point in this direction, most of those working in the natural sciences would probably agree that this is not the case, or at least not in the same sense as with other animals. A common view would be that while one can very well talk of people as parasites, this is only a figure of speech, not a description of reality, as in the case of lice or tapeworms. In other words, if man is a parasite, he would seem to be so only by metaphorical association, as attested to by the following part of the definition of a (social) parasite from the Oxford English Dictionary: 'a person whose behaviour resembles that of a plant or animal parasite' (OED Online).[2]

This view, though, overlooks how the content of the term 'parasite' has drastically changed throughout history. Readers of J. Hillis Miller's seminal article 'The Critic as Host' (1979), for example, will be well acquainted with the etymology of the word. Stemming from the Greek *parasitos*, consisting of *para* (besides) and *sitos* (the grain), the word originally referred to someone who was next to the food along with the host: 'A parasite was originally something positive, a fellow guest, someone sharing the food with you, there with you beside the grain. Later on, "parasite" came to mean a professional dinner guest, someone expert at cadging invitations without ever giving dinners in return' (Miller 2004: 179).[3] While not an entirely precise description – Miller neglects to mention that the parasite was originally a holy figure in Greek antiquity, and has little to say about its important role as a stock character in Greek and Latin comedy – the point is otherwise succinct: what was originally viewed positively over time became known as the opposite, namely a guest, often of the uninvited sort, out to acquire a free dinner.[4]

As a matter of fact, until the mid-seventeenth century (when it also came to designate plants living on other plants), the term 'parasite' was used solely for people, and it was only after the natural sciences of the early nineteenth century adopted the term that it became applied to sponging animals and insects.[5] In combination with various important scientific advances, this adoption eventually resulted in the creation and institutionalisation of the new scientific field of parasitology sometime during the last half of the century.[6] What this means is that the

foundation upon which the scientific study of non-human parasites rests was adapted from relations among humans: it is not the human parasite which was modelled on the animal one, but the other way around. This can also be seen in how the scientific language of parasitology is suffused with remnants of the human origins of its object of study; as Michel Serres puts it in his *The Parasite* (1980):

> The basic vocabulary of this science comes from such ancient and common customs and habits that the earliest monuments of our culture tell of them, and we still see them, at least in part: hospitality, conviviality, table manners, hostelry, general relations with strangers. Thus the vocabulary is imported to this pure science and bears several traces of anthropomorphism. (Serres 2007: 6)

The supposedly clear-cut distinction between human and non-human parasites is further complicated if one also takes into account what is known as 'the immunological problem of pregnancy', formulated by British zoologist Peter Medawar in his 'Some Immunological and Endocrinological Problems Raised by the Evolution of Viviparity in Vertebrates' (1953). Since all mammals share half of their genes with each parent, this means that the human embryo has to find its habitat in and draw its nourishment from a being whose immune system would normally consider it a threat to be disposed of – just as it would with any foreign body. Later scientists working along similar lines have pointed out that the relationship between embryo and mother can therefore be said to resemble that between parasite and host. Luis P. Villarreal, for example, argues that embryos actively suppress the mother's immune reactions much the same way as parasites do when they manage to outsmart their hosts:

> Mammals, being viviparous, pose an interesting immunological dilemma. They have highly adaptive immune systems that fail to recognize their own allogeneic embryos. In a sense, mammalian embryos resemble parasites that must suppress their mother's immune recognition systems to survive. (Villarreal 1997: 859)

The implications are clear: contrary to the common-sense view where social parasitism is seen as a metaphorical extension of a biological phenomenon, not only were humans the original carriers of the title parasite, but we also all start our lives in such a way that scientists will have a hard time explaining why exactly we (at least prior to birth) should not be considered as full members of the class of parasitic entities.

In addition, there are also other reasons for the difficulty of reaching an unambiguous definition. For even if one solely focuses on non-human

spongers, parasites are not a natural class or group, but must be defined by other criteria. One consequence is that in the case of closely related species – such as different species of wasps – some might be considered parasites, while others are not. The inverse is also true: creatures that in themselves have almost nothing in common – such as the barnacle *Sacculina carcini* and the cuckoo – are both defined as parasites. What is more, the commonalities that do exist between the two only come into view if you treat these creatures in relation to those species upon which they sponge – the common crab, in the case of the former, any bird in whose nest it can deposit its eggs, in the case of the latter. As Jonathan Z. Smith argues, parasitism therefore is relational, through and through:

> Rare for biology, here is a subdiscipline devoted not to a natural class of living things but, rather, to a relationship between two quite different species of plants or animals. It is the character of the difference and the mode of relationship that supplies both the key characteristics for classification and the central topics for disciplinary thought. (Smith 2004: 253)

The question of where and how to draw the line between membership and non-membership in the category is further complicated when one points out that parasites will often go through non-parasitic stages during their lifecycles, leading to the question: how much of one's time has to be spent sponging on a host organism to qualify as a proper parasite? And what about such creatures – certain leeches, for example – that are part-time predators (on smaller animals) and part-time parasites (on larger ones), how should they be defined? Obviously, answering such questions requires a certain degree of approximation, to say the least.

Then there is also the question of which branches of the tree of life are to be included in definitions: traditionally, only eukaryotes have been, but in fact – as there is no fundamental difference between the modes of existence of parasitic eukaryotes and those of bacteria and viruses – this was so only by convention.[7] Since viruses are not really alive at all, a more internally coherent definition would therefore cause the set of parasitic entities to be extended all the way across the divide between life and non-life. But even without counting bacteria and viruses, the number of parasites is still vast; in the words of Carl Zimmer: 'Scientists . . . have no idea how many species of parasites there are, but they do know one dazzling thing: parasites make up the majority of species on Earth. According to one estimate, parasites may outnumber free-living species four to one. In other words, the study of life is, for the most part, parasitology' (Zimmer 2001: xxi).

Combining all the aspects discussed so far, one begins to grasp the immense difficulty of properly defining clear criteria for distinguishing parasites from non-parasites. In practice, of course, this is seldom a problem for those working in the field – they recognise a parasite perfectly well when they see one. It is only when they are forced to attempt a definition that they run into problems. A perfect example of this can be found in *Parascript: Parasites and the Language of Evolution* (1993) by Daniel R. Brooks and Deborah A. McLennan: starting out by running through a wide range of historical attempts at finding characteristics that would unambiguously define parasites, as well as pointing out the inherent failures of each of these, in the end, the authors see no other way out of the problem than joking it away: 'We conclude, only somewhat tongue in cheek, that the only unambiguous definition is that parasites are those organisms studied by people who call themselves parasitologists' (Brooks and McLennan 1993: 5).

One definition they do *not* touch upon in their list is the one found under the heading 'The Best Definition' in Michel Serres' *The Parasite*. As part of a truly idiosyncratic approach to the topic in question, it reads as follows: 'The parasite is a thermal exciter' (Serres 2007: 190). Differently put, to Serres it is an element which causes the temperature to rise in a thermodynamic system. While probably of little use to most parasitologists, what I want to argue is that by focusing on what the parasite brings about, rather than on how it differs from non-parasites, Serres actually manages to avoid many of the problems more orthodox definitions are bound to run into. As such, his definition also allows us to come to terms with a problem that the parasitologists of today have inherited from their predecessors: that of the low status of their object of research.[8]

Briefly summarised, what happened when the term parasite was taken up by the natural sciences was that first the negative ethical implications of an unequal relationship among humans were transposed to nature, causing many nineteenth-century scientists to understand non-human parasites as somehow engaged in an unethical activity.[9] Then, in a circular movement, the term was applied as a metaphor for humans acting in a similar manner to these biological spongers. In the process, people claimed to be like parasites were judged as no better than biological entities perceived to be of the very lowest and most useless kind.

Besides the ease with which this new conception could be taken advantage of by those in power as a rhetorical tool for dehumanising their opponents,[10] there is an additional problem with such a view:

whereas people such as Drummond and the famous evolutionary biologist E. Ray Lankester were confident that parasites were the primary example of an evolutionary tendency whereby too easy an access to food and shelter would lead to a degenerative reduction of complexity,[11] later scientists have realised that such an understanding has very little to do with parasitical relationships as they are found in nature – relationships that are far more complex than this thoroughly prejudiced conception is capable of grasping. One could for example ask, as does Claude Combes, why it is that the simplification of a structure should necessarily be seen as a negative aspect from an evolutionary perspective:

> The losses of organs have led to the frequent discussion of evolutionary 'regression' in parasites. We should be wary of this term because it is not obvious why abandoning organs that have become useless in order to allocate the energy thus saved to other functions should not be perceived as progress, from the standpoint of adaptation. Although parasites give the impression of being morphologically simplified, they have only become progressively adapted to their lifestyle, and they are in fact more highly evolved than their free-living ancestors. (Combes 2005: 34)[12]

As Combes stresses, being a successful parasite involves a very high degree of specialisation, as well as the ability to constantly modify your behaviour in order to adapt to an ever-changing habitat bent on your destruction. Those that are not able to do so will finally be exterminated by their hosts, whose immune systems are in a constant battle with the intruders. As such, parasites do not only have to evolve if they want to stay ahead, they can also be seen as forcing their hosts to do the same. While some parasites do indeed cause a lot of damage, even – in the case of parasitoids – killing their hosts, a lack of parasites should therefore not be understood as a sign of health, but rather the opposite, pointing to a world out of balance.[13]

The problem is that this has not registered with wider audiences, who have still not been able to shake off the image of the parasite – both human and animal – that came into existence alongside the scientific field of parasitology in the last half of the nineteenth century. This is where Serres may be of help. In his analysis, he distinguishes between three different meanings of the word 'parasite'. In French it can refer to people (as social parasites), non-humans (biological parasites) and to noise, as in the expression *bruit parasite* (background noise). Building on the way systems theory understands noise, this third meaning allows Serres to stress the important role of foreign bodies in causing the systems

they are introduced into to evolve. He thereby opens the way for an understanding that allows us to see that parasites bring a very important contribution to the table of the host:

> The parasite is an exciter. Far from transforming a system, changing its nature, its form, its elements, its relations and its pathways the parasite makes it change states differentially. It inclines it. It makes the equilibrium of the energetic distribution fluctuate. It dopes it. It irritates it. It inflames it. Often this inclination has no effect. But it can produce gigantic ones by chain reactions or reproduction. (Serres 2007: 191)

Serres' definition thus allows us to see the parasite as a motor of evolution, causing newness to come into being, and life to endlessly proliferate through bringing about yet new (re)configurations. In itself, this is neither good nor bad – whether a given mutation is valuable or not can only be decided in retrospect and on a case-by-case basis. For this reason my argument should not be understood as entailing a heroicisation of parasites. What is important is that defining them a priori as 'bad' and 'degenerate' simply will not do, precisely because it blinds us to the properly *creative* element involved in their work.

II. The Becoming-Minor of Literature

If one takes such an understanding into account, Austin's claim – no matter what his intentions may or may not have been – suddenly begins to make more sense, giving us a new framework from which literature's active, world-shaping capabilities might be pursued. One of the best ways of exploring what insights such a model might generate is via Gilles Deleuze, whose perhaps foremost contribution to literary studies lies in the way he pursued the fundamental insight that literature should be understood not in terms of what it *is*, but of what it *does* and how it *functions* – how it is involved in the continual creation of the new or the not-yet. In his own words, in 'Literature and Life' – the first chapter of *Essays Critical and Clinical* (1993): 'Writing is a question of becoming, always incomplete, always in the midst of being formed, and goes beyond the matter of any liveable or lived experience. It is a process, that is, a passage of Life that traverses both the liveable and the lived' (Deleuze 1997: 1).

As he then goes on to explicate, echoing his earlier writings on the topic, the becoming in question is of a special sort: 'Writing is inseparable from becoming: in writing, one becomes-woman, becomes-animal or vegetable, becomes-molecule to the point of becoming-imperceptible'

(Deleuze 1997: 1). What the examples Deleuze refers to have in common is that they are all stages of one and the same process. As such, they can be seen as different versions of what he termed *becoming-minor*, representing a fundamental openness towards the open-ended. It is therefore not a question of moving towards a given *telos*. On the contrary, becoming is without any goal other than the continual affirmation of the creativity of life and its possibility of entering into new connections: what counts is the process itself. The minor can thus be seen as that which undermines the prerogatives of the given and fully formed. Through setting itself up as a norm, such a *major* or *majoritarian mode* will end up limiting or, at the extreme, stopping altogether the process of becoming. To put it in somewhat over-simplified terms: whereas the major equals stagnation, the minor equals continual movement. The following description of becoming-animal from Deleuze and Guattari's *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* (1975) can therefore be said to hold just as well for becoming-minor as such:

> To become animal is to participate in movement, to stake out a path of escape in all its positivity, to cross a threshold, to reach a continuum of intensities that are valuable only in themselves, to find a world of pure intensities where all forms come undone, as do all the significations, signifiers, and signifieds, to the benefit of an unformed matter of deterritorialized flux, of nonsignifying signs. (Deleuze and Guattari 2006: 13)

What *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* shows is that the creation of literature and art should be seen as part of the very same general process of the becoming of life. It is here that the concept of a 'minor literature' is introduced as new way of understanding Kafka's *oeuvre*. Refusing to treat the content of a given work as crucial, Deleuze and Guattari instead stress the question of *expression*, which for them is related to how the continual, non-personal becoming of life lets itself be known and felt, rather than to any individual expressing his or her feelings:[14]

> Only expression gives us the *method*. The problem of expression is staked out by Kafka not in an abstract and universal fashion but in relation to those literatures that are considered minor, for example the Jewish literature of Warsaw and Prague. A minor literature doesn't come from a minor language; it is rather that which a minority constructs within a major language. (Deleuze and Guattari 2006: 16)

Due to the fact that Kafka was a Jew living in Prague, yet writing in German, such references to 'minorities' as found in the quotation can easily be misunderstood, seeming to indicate that minor literature is in some way bound up with social groups that are not politically

dominant. That this is not the case becomes increasingly clear in Deleuze's subsequent writings; as Ronald Bogue puts it: 'already in *Dialogues* it is evident that for Deleuze minor literature is less a specific subdivision of literature than a name for literature when it functions as it should' (Bogue 2003: 162). Properly speaking, it is not a question of numerical minorities and majorities, but of managing to use any given language in a minor way: for Deleuze, this is the real criterion for deciding which writings deserve to be grouped under the title 'minor literature' (or simply 'literature') – and as he indicates, this is fairly rare.[15] It would perhaps even be possible to go as far as saying that, to him, a truly minor usage of language should be seen as a defining mark of literary greatness: as an actualisation of what is yet only virtual, becoming-minor is indeed the case for all masterpieces of literature.

So far, the exact relationship between a major language and a minor usage has not been clarified: in practice, how are we to distinguish between the two? One way of doing so is by looking at Deleuze's use of spatial imagery. For example, in 'Literature and Life' – referring to Proust's claim that 'Great books are written in a kind of foreign language' – he states that literature 'opens up a kind of foreign language within language, which is neither another language nor a rediscovered patois, but a becoming-other of language, a minorisation of this major language, a delirium that carries it off, a witch's line that escapes the dominant system' (Deleuze 1997: 5). To Deleuze, minor literature is therefore not external, but internal to a major language, yet at the same time 'foreign' to it – it is both identical and not identical to language, both an integral part of it and a foreign body.

Minor literature is internal to language because it is made up of it, since it is bound to find at least most of its tools in the latter: words, expressions, syntax, and so on. What separates the two – indicating the foreign character of minor literature – is that the minor approach will apply these raw materials in new and unexpected ways, purposefully breaking and bending the rules of normal speech for artistic effect. Especially in those cases where it is taken the furthest, a minor use of language will constantly be in danger of being perceived as utter nonsense, madness or as noise, and thereby defined as void of meaning, belonging in the same category as animal sounds, the glossalalia of the infant and the ramblings of the mad. On the other hand, if a minor style is not radical enough, it will easily end up being assimilated into the major which it tries to set in motion through its flight. In terms of the reading experience, for us to return to certain books, there must be something in them that draws us back, something which eludes our

attempts at understanding or arriving at a final definition. Yet, on the other hand, neither should the work be perceived as totally without meaning, so that we feel there is nothing to be gained by making the effort. Optimally, then, minor literature should straddle the divide between inclusion into and exclusion from major language in such a way that it be perceived as pure nonsense no more than as sense. As Deleuze puts it in regard to Louis Wolfson's schizophrenic writings: 'the problem is not go beyond the bounds of reason, it is to cross the bounds of unreason as a victor' (Deleuze 1997: 20). There is no one way of doing so, rather different authors must find their own, individual ways – in his analyses, Deleuze enumerates several: Kafka, who 'abandon[s] sense, render[s] it no more than implicit; he will retain only the skeleton of sense, or a paper cutout' (Deleuze and Guattari 2006: 20–1); or Lewis Carroll, who 'allowed nothing to pass through sense, but . . . played out everything in nonsense' (Deleuze 1997: 22), etc.

What is important is that, for Deleuze, when literature manages to be truly minor, it functions as an inner 'exciter' – as an irritant, causing language as a whole to be set in motion in new directions: 'Language seems to be seized by a delirium, which forces it out of its usual furrows' (Deleuze 1997: 5). This movement is directed against the borders of language, pointing to its outside: 'a foreign language cannot be hollowed out in one language without language as a whole in turn being toppled or pushed to a limit, to an outside or reverse side that consists of Visions and Auditions that no longer belong to any language. These visions . . . are not outside language, but the outside of language' (Deleuze 1997: 5). They are not outside language, because they are made up of it, but they are 'the outside' because their content does not confirm to the structures by which language shapes our understanding of reality. Minor literature thus performs a form of violence on language as a whole, forcing it to shift and expand its borders through a hollowing out from within.[16]

III. The Parasitism of Minor Literature

We are now in a position to begin to understand why Serres' notion of the parasite is intimately related to the Deleuzian one of 'minor literature', criss-crossing and intersecting with it in a number of interesting ways, and why taken together the two may help us understand Austin's claim in a new light. A hypothesis may even be ventured: the defining mark of the relation between a major language and minor literature is that it is parasitic, in Serres' sense of the word.

If we were now to explicate some of these similarities, first it should be pointed out that in both cases – both when it comes to the (endo)parasite in regards to its host, and minor literature in regards to major language – it is a question of an entity which is part of (something perceived as) a totality, yet without properly belonging to it. As we have seen, minor literature straddles the border between language and its outside, and similarly, parasites are both a part and not a part of the host's body, neither entirely self nor non-self. Endoparasites, in particular, can be said to represent a special challenge to any Cartesian conception of the subject as a stable and coherent entity: believing man is the sovereign lord of his own manor can become quite difficult if it turns out that one is carrying around, say, a tapeworm nourishing itself in and on your intestines, especially if this guest is capable of fending off the counter-attacks launched by your immune system or even of modifying your behaviour to its own ends. Just as with minor literature, if the parasite is to spread, it should be neither too easy to read for the host (in which case it will eventually be defeated) nor too difficult, so that it comes to completely eradicate its habitat: evolutionary speaking, it is not in the parasite's best interest to be too detrimental to its host population as a whole, as can be seen when changes which result in access to hosts becoming more difficult cause parasites to become less virulent.[17]

The most interesting similarity, though, is the way in which Serres' definition allows us to more clearly perceive the effects of minor literature: standing in a parasitic relation to major language, the minor forces it into a state of continual becoming. In itself, it does not change language, but it 'dopes' it, 'irritates' it or 'inflames' it so as to make it flow in other directions, just as the effect of the parasite on the host is one of irritating it into evolving still further on a road with no end. As such we can be said to be hosts to parasitic entities on several different levels – biological ones affecting our bodies, as well as textual ones affecting our minds. This can help explain why equilibrium is no more common in language than in nature; or as Ilya Prigogine and Isabelle Stengers – influences on, as well as influenced by both Deleuze and Serres – argue in their *Order Out of Chaos* (1979): 'In the world that we are familiar with, equilibrium is a rare and precarious state' (Prigogine and Stengers 1984: 128).[18] Both parasitic minor literature and the biological parasite should therefore be seen as agents ensuring that any equilibrium, be it in language or in nature, is bound to be of an unstable kind, likely to deteriorate, forcing its host or its host system to constantly readjust. Since this relationship does not follow a causal logic, exactly what sorts of creative becomings these agents will set in

motion cannot be told in advance.[19] This is of less importance than the fact that they *happen*, and can therefore be used as a model for thinking about how all sorts of language acts – and perhaps especially the type that Austin termed parasitic.

So far, we have been looking only at the relationship between literature and language as a whole, without saying anything about the role of individual readers and authors in the process by which language comes to be pushed beyond its boundaries. This question of how literature, along with the other arts, can be said to act concretely upon those perceiving it was addressed by Deleuze and Guattari most thoroughly in their last collaborative work, *What is Philosophy?* (1991). Here they clarify how the differences between philosophy, science and art can be thought of in terms of their respective relationships to chaos, understood as 'a void that is not a nothingness but a *virtual*, containing all possible particles and drawing out all possible forms, which spring up only to disappear immediately, without consistency or reference, without consequence. Chaos is an infinite speed of birth and disappearance' (Deleuze and Guattari 2009: 118).

In other words, chaos is the totality of all that is, yet in a state in which nothing is foregrounded, where everything is equally important or unimportant. It is existence in its unbearable fullness, and for us to be able to make sense out of this existence, chaos has to be reduced by imposing some sort of order to it. Through the creation of concepts, philosophy attempts to do so by '*giving the virtual a consistency specific to it*' (Deleuze and Guattari 2009: 118). With the help of functions capable of calculating regular states of affairs, science, on the other hand, tries to slow chaos down to a manageable speed. Finally, what art does is to capture a slice of chaos in a specific material, so as to make it concrete and tangible: 'Art struggles with chaos but it does so in order to render it sensory' (Deleuze and Guattari 2009: 205). It preserves a given combination of sensations or intensities, the artist endowing these with a life of their own, so to speak ripping them out of the progress of time (at least until the material in which they have been given life should be destroyed). To Deleuze, what art offers is therefore exactly such combinations, made up percepts and affects, which have acquired an existence of their own: 'What is preserved – the thing of the work of art – is *a block of sensations, that is to say, a compound of percepts and affects*' (Deleuze and Guattari 2009: 164).

Torn free from its creator, it is this autonomous block, then, which can be said to act upon those experiencing the work of art or literature. While no noticeable reaction will often occur, in certain cases the work

will have a strong physical impact, almost as if the reader had been violently torn out of quotidian life.[20] Our 'molar' identities are thus dislocated, opening up for the emergence of something else. Rather than saying that it is minor literature as such which is parasitic, perhaps it would therefore be better to say that it is the percepts and affects it produces which makes it function in a parasitic manner.

This allows us to see interesting similarities with, but also important differences from, Richard Dawkins' theory of the *meme*, first formulated in his *The Selfish Gene* (1976). The meme was here introduced as the cultural equivalent of a gene, that is, as a cultural product capable of replicating and spreading. Just as evolution can be viewed from the gene's point of view – namely, as a continual progress through which genes manage to replicate themselves for their own sakes and not for that of their host organisms – so can culture be viewed from the standpoint of our ideas and practices. Meme theory therefore inverts the ordinary way of viewing the relation between people and ideas: rather than seeing the latter simply as tools that we use for our own ends, Dawkins proposes treating them as entities which use us in order to spread as effectively as possible. Very effective memes might even cause people to behave in ways not beneficial for themselves, as in the case of a suicide bomber who is willing to give his own life for the propagation of the ideas he serves. Interestingly, Dawkins explicitly describes the process by which a meme manages to copy itself into a new brain in terms of the parasite: 'When you plant a fertile meme in my mind you literally parasitize my brain, turning it into a vehicle for the meme's propagation in just the way that a virus may parasitize the genetic mechanism of a host cell' (Dawkins 1989: 192).

Now, this is very similar to what happens when a work of minor literature manages to implant a specific block of sensations into the minds of those who perceive it, but here the differences between Deleuze and Dawkins start to come into view. Even though the latter – through his insistence on replication as an imperfect process where divergences and errors are eventually bound to appear – can account for the fact that memes will often end up changing over time, for him, the process through which they spread is still thought of in terms of *imitation*: 'Just as genes propagate themselves in the gene pool by leaping from body to body via sperms or eggs, so memes propagate themselves in the meme pool by leaping from brain to brain via a process which, in the broad sense, can be called imitation' (Dawkins 1989: 192).[21] Dawkins' theory can therefore be said to be bound to a mimetic view which might be capable of explaining how 'ordinary' ideas with a clear and reproducible

content spread, but equally incapable of approaching the functioning of art, where it is a question of shaping a concrete material through the artist's individual style in order to transmit sensations, rather than of transmitting a specific content.[22] Or to put it differently: what matters in art – or at least in art the way Deleuze understands the term – is not the similarity to an original, as in Dawkins' view of replication, but rather the creation of something radically new and dissimilar.

For this reason, describing the effects of art's blocks of sensation as parasitic might actually be more correct than in the case of Dawkins' replicating memes. This has to do with the fact that a successful parasite, as previously indicated, has to be able to constantly adapt to its living habitat in order not to be eradicated by the host's immune system – in other words, as Marlene Zuk has put it in regards to the sneaky strategies of parasitic pathogens, such as STDs, 'from the parasite's perspective, it is best not to have too obvious an effect on one's host.... So it should pay for the pathogen to become cryptic' (Zuk 2007: 114).[23] For a potential host, it would therefore be easier to avoid memes which fulfil Dawkins' third criteria for a 'high survival value' – what he terms 'copying-fidelity', the ability to replicate as accurately as possible – than to avoid the parasitic blocks of sensation created by minor literature, which might not correspond to anything the host has come across before.

This leads us to one of the most important questions for Deleuze in regards to literature and art: the question of health. For as he reminds us, addressing the relationship between literature and medicine: 'the writer as such is not a patient but rather a physician, the physician of himself and of the world. The world is the set of symptoms whose illness merges with man. Literature then appears as an enterprise of health' (Deleuze 1997: 3). To him, literature has this role exactly because it enables life to flow, removing blockages, letting it be fuller and richer than it would otherwise be. Similarly, the existence of parasites is crucial to the health of the ecosystem; in Carl Zimmer's words: 'A healthy ecosystem is riddled with parasites, and in some cases, an ecosystem may even depend on parasites for its health' (Zimmer 2001: 218). We need parasites, just as we need minor literature, for what they achieve, which actually amounts to the same thing – causing life to renew itself.

Now, there is nothing to indicate that any of this was on Austin's mind when he gave the lectures that were to become *How to Do Things with Words*, but this is of less importance than the fact that he unwittingly offered literary scholars a promising conceptual gift – one which, even though it is as yet unwrapped, enables a radically different approach to that very question he opens up, only to seemingly close off when

delimiting the boundaries of speech-act theory: that of the ways in which literature can be said to act in the world, bringing newness into being. Austin's error was therefore not to have labelled literature as parasitic. On the contrary, his error lies in having drawn the conclusion that this meant literature could safely be excluded from consideration, when he should have realised that precisely these parasitic traits constitute one very good reason why literature should be studied. Read with an awareness of the immense importance of parasites to the continual evolution of life, Austin's claim therefore allows us to conceptualise the truly parasitic aspects of that literature which deserves the name 'minor'. In fact, there is a precise correspondence between his 'doctrine of the etiolations of language' and Deleuze's description of minor literature's 'hollowing out from within' of language: is not such a carving out from within exactly the work performed by the parasite – be it biological or textual – when it causes its host to set off along ever new 'lines of flight'?

Notes

1. As he puts it: '[T]o examine excuses is to examine cases where there has been some abnormality or failure: and as so often, the abnormal will throw light on the normal, will help us to penetrate the blinding veil of ease and obviousness that hides the mechanisms of the natural successful act' (Austin 2007: 179–80).
2. When scientists address the question of the ontological status of man as a parasite (in a metaphorical sense), as opposed to 'real' parasites, the result is often a fundamental ambiguity. For example, in *The Art of Being a Parasite* (2001), Claude Combes claims that 'if we *extend* the concept of parasitism to all cases of a lasting exploitation of one organism by another, we would not hesitate to classify as intraspecific parasitism well-known cases among several birds... in which females deliberately lay several eggs in the nest of a neighboring pair. And one *would surely be licensed* to study "social parasitism" among humans, the subject of several generations of social scientists' (Combes 2005: 7, emphasis added). As the wording shows, Combes here manages to avoid properly answering the question by simultaneously saying that a) humans can be studied as parasites, and b) but that to do so, one both has to 'extend' the concept and somehow also receive 'license' for this (probably from those dealing with the 'authentic' parasites).
3. Miller's starting point in 'The Critic as Host' is M. H. Abrams' citation of Wayne Booth's claim that the 'deconstructionist' reading 'is plainly and simply parasitical' on the obvious reading of a text (Miller 2004: 177). While Miller does not mention Austin in the article, in a later work he connects the two: 'Austin's use of the term "parasitic," I note in passing, may conceivably be the source of Meyer Abrams's well-known assertion that a deconstructive reading is parasitic on the "normal," commonsensical reading, to which I tried long ago to respond' (Miller 2001: 36).
4. The specifics of the parasite's early historical stages are treated more thoroughly in my article 'Parasite', forthcoming in *Political Concepts: A Critical Review* (and in Hebrew in *Mafte'akh: Lexical Review of Political Thought*).

5. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the use of the adjective 'parasitical' in regards to plants dates back to Sir Thomas Brown's *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* (1646) (see Brown 1658: 78). As a noun, 'parasite' was first applied to plants in Ephraim Chambers' *Cyclopædia* (see Chambers 1728: 351).
6. No definite agreement exists as to the exact genesis of the new field. In his *Parasites and Parasitic Infections in Early Medicine and Science* (1959), Reinhard Hoeppli dates it to around 1850; Arthur William Meyer's *The Rise of Embryology* (1939) suggests the period 1840–70; John Farley's 'Parasites and the Germ Theory of Disease' (1989) dates parasitology, as distinct from the earlier and much smaller field of helminthology, to the 1880s; whereas Michael Worboys' 'The Emergence and Early Development of Parasitology' (1983) operates with three periods: the field's prehistory (the mid-nineteenth century to 1900), its emergence (1900–18), and finally its proper establishment (in the interwar period).
7. For an analysis of the historical reasons for the institutional divide which came to separate the study of parasites and bacteria, see Farley's 'Parasites and the Germ Theory of Disease': 'Before the 1880s, intellectual differences had kept parasitology isolated from medicine, but by the turn of the century institutional differences came to play the most significant role. Parasitology in Britain and the United States became established as a discipline outside the mainstream of medicine. It became segregated from the modern medical field of bacteriology; it concentrated on naming and describing nonbacterial parasites and their life cycles and became increasingly irrelevant to work on bacterial diseases' (Farley 1989: 65).
8. See my 'Parasite' (Gullestad, forthcoming) for a more thorough discussion of this point.
9. One of the clearest examples of how the parasite comes to be conceived in ethical terms foreign to nature can be found in Henry Drummond's *Natural Law in the Spiritual World* (1883): 'Why does the naturalist think hardly of the parasite? Why does he speak of them as degraded, and despise them as the most ignoble creatures in Nature? . . . The naturalist's reply to this is brief. Parasitism, he will say, is one of the gravest crimes in Nature. It is a breach of the law of Evolution. Thou shalt evolve . . . – this is the first and greatest commandment of nature. But the parasite has no thought for . . . perfection in any shape or form' (Drummond 2008: 158).
10. In this modern conception of the parasite, man and animal come to be tied together so thoroughly that in certain cases it can be said to lead to the creation of a new creature – a *Homo parasitus*, so to speak – finding its most radical expression in the National Socialists' use of the image of the Jew as parasite as a means of legitimising the concentration camps (cf. Bein 1964). As I argue in 'Parasite', the convergence between social Darwinism and various theories of degeneration found in Drummond's work, as well as many of his contemporaries in the late nineteenth century, played an important role in clearing the ground for the National Socialists' redeployment of the term.
11. As Lankester puts it in 'Degeneration: A Chapter in Darwinism': 'Any new set of conditions occurring to an animal which render its food and safety very easily attained, seem to lead as a rule to Degeneration; just as an active healthy man sometimes degenerates when he becomes suddenly possessed of a fortune; or as Rome degenerated when possessed of the riches of the ancient world. The habit of parasitism clearly acts upon animal organisation in this way. Let the parasitic life once be secured, and away go legs, jaws, eyes, and ears; the active, highly gifted crab, insect, or annelid may become a mere sac, absorbing nourishment and laying eggs' (Lankester 1890: 27).

12. He then goes on to add something Lankester and Drummond seem to have overlooked, namely that 'regression and disappearance of organs are among the most normal processes of evolution' (Combes 2005: 34).
13. Cf. Zimmer's *Parasite Rex* (2000) and Marlene Zuk's *Riddled With Life* (2007) for a plethora of concrete examples of why life without parasites would neither be advantageous nor possible.
14. Cf. Brian Massumi's introduction to *A Shock to Thought*: 'There is no entity to expression. There is no super-subject behind its movement. Its emerging into words and things is always an *event* before it is a designation, manifestation, or signification propositionally and provisionally attached to a subject' (Massumi 2006: xxiii–xxiv).
15. On the scarcity of true literature, cf. the last sentence of 'Literature and Life': 'If we consider these criteria, we can see that, among all those who make books with a literary intent, even among the mad, there are very few who can call themselves writers' (Deleuze 1997: 6).
16. On the violence of thought (of which art is one form) in Deleuze, cf. *Proust and Signs*: 'The act of thinking does not proceed from a simple natural possibility; on the contrary, it is the only true creation. Creation is the genesis of the act of thinking within thought itself. This genesis implicates something that does violence to thought, which wrests it from its natural stupor and its merely abstract possibilities' (Deleuze 2008: 62).
17. Becoming less virulent in this case meaning that the parasites that cause less harm to their hosts will be more effective in reproducing, which over time will ensure that this trait comes to define the parasite population.
18. On the relationship between Serres and Prigogine, cf. Neubauer 2003; on that between Deleuze and Prigogine, cf. May 2005: esp. 92–5.
19. Importantly, for Serres the work performed by the parasite is 'irreversible': 'The flow goes one way, never the other. I call this semiconduction, this valve, this single arrow, this relation without a reversal of direction, "parasitic"' (Serres 2007: 5). This should be read in connection with Prigogine's attempt to shift the focus of thermodynamics from reversible to irreversible processes occurring far-from-equilibrium, where there is no logical necessity connecting the initial and the final state of the process (see Prigogine 1997).
20. Good examples of the latter are the sort of reactions to works of art – involving dizziness, fainting and hallucinations – commonly grouped together as the 'Stendhal syndrome', as a reference to Stendhal's description of a similar experience during his visit to Italy in 1817. The term was coined by the Italian psychiatrist Graziella Magherini after treating numerous such cases among visitors to museums in Florence. For a brief treatment of the syndrome in regards to Deleuze, see Shaviro 2009: 6.
21. For a work that pursues the question of how we should understand this 'broad sense' of imitation Dawkins is here referring to, see Susan Blackmore's *The Meme Machine* (1999). The fundamental premise of her book – for which Dawkins wrote the foreword, and which he strongly endorses – is that it 'is our ability to imitate' which sets humans apart from animals (Blackmore 1999: 3). In a fairly reductive manner, this trait is then used as a basis for understanding all forms of cultural transmissions.
22. This overvaluation of content at the expense of form in Dawkins is likely linked to what Elizabeth Grosz has claimed is a widespread neo-Darwinian overvaluation of natural selection at the expense of sexual selection. Criticising the famous Austrian scientist Konrad Lorenz for his understanding of such traits as bright colouring in fish as resulting from natural selection alone, Grosz points out how he – unlike Charles Darwin himself – thereby loses sight of the creative

excess of life: 'Like other neo-Darwinians, he [Lorenz] reduces sexual selection to natural selection, thereby simplifying and rendering evolution monodirectional, regulated only by the selection of randomly acquired characteristics and not by the unpredictable vagaries of taste and pleasure that sexual selection entails. For Darwin himself, however, these markings [bright colours, and so on], which he acknowledges may serve aggressive functions, are *not* the conditions of territoriality but the raw materials of sexual selection, excesses that are produced and explored for no reason other than their possibilities for intensification, their appeal' (Grosz 2008: 67).

23. This resonates well with Deleuze and Guattari's point in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980), when, discussing how all becomings can be said to start with becoming-woman, they stress the importance of camouflage for the line of flight to avoid detection so as not to become reterritorialised: 'When the man of war disguises himself as a woman, flees disguised as a girl, hides as a girl, it is not a shameful, transitory incident in his life. To hide, to camouflage oneself, is a warrior function, and the line of flight attracts the enemy, traverses something and puts what it traverses into flight: the warrior arises in the infinity of a line of flight' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 277).

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Sense, Category, Questions: Reading Deleuze with Ryle

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Abstract

Gilles Deleuze's notion of sense, as developed in *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense*, is meant to be a fourth dimension of the proposition besides denotation, manifestation and signification. While Deleuze explains signification in inferentialist terms, he ascribes to sense some very unusual properties, making it hard to understand what sense is. The aim of this paper is to improve this situation by confronting Deleuzian sense with a more or less contemporary, but otherwise rather distant philosophical conception: Gilbert Ryle's theory of categories and category mistakes. The leading idea is that to understand the sense of a proposition regarding X is to know the category of the concept X, which requires that one knows which questions may appropriately be asked with regard to X. Thus, sense, category and questions are intimately related to each other. Finally, it seems to be consistent with Deleuze's views to assume that abstract signification is contextually generated by concrete sense.

Keywords: Deleuze, sense, signification, Ryle, category, question

I. Denotation, Manifestation, Signification and Sense

What Frege called 'sense' (in German, *Sinn*) other philosophers preferred to call 'meaning'. What Frege called 'meaning' (*Bedeutung*) others preferred to call 'reference'. Thus, meaning became distinguished from reference and identified with sense. For Gilles Deleuze, however, meaning and sense are two different things and both must be kept apart

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from reference and manifestation. Following the English translations of Deleuze's books *Différence et répétition* and *Logique du sens*, I will use 'denotation' (which renders the French *désignation*) instead of 'reference', and 'signification' instead of 'meaning'. In this terminology, then, we have to consider denotation, manifestation, signification and sense.

Denotation and manifestation, however, are of minor importance in the present context, so it will suffice to look at them rather briefly. Deleuze's account of these notions is in accordance with established theories in linguistics and the philosophy of language. Denotation, he writes, 'is the relation of the proposition to an external state of affairs (*datum*). The state of affairs is *individuated*; it includes particular bodies, mixtures of bodies, qualities, quantities, and relations. Denotation functions through the associations of the words themselves with *particular* images *which ought to* "represent" the state of affairs' (Deleuze 2004b: 16). This passage includes some controversial claims. Not all philosophers would describe denotation in terms of images and representations. Nor would they choose normative vocabulary like the word 'ought' (French *doivent*, from *devoir*). But nevertheless, what Deleuze says about denotation lies within the range of existing views, or at least is very close to some of these views.

The same goes for the second notion, manifestation: 'It concerns the relation of the proposition to the person who speaks and expresses himself. Manifestation therefore is presented as a statement of desires and beliefs which correspond to the proposition' (Deleuze 2004b: 17). A person who asserts that p thereby expresses the belief that p, as well as the intention (desire) to express this belief. This is not to say that the person actually does believe that p. She could also express a belief that she does not have. In that case the statement would be a lie. Yet even then we would assume that the person intends to express this belief, for this is what lying means: intentionally expressing a belief one does not have. Also, as Deleuze adds to the above, expression/manifestation is a matter of causal inference. If we have no reason to assume a lie, we may assume that the assertion that p has been caused by the person's belief that p.[1]

Let me now turn to the third notion, signification. In the late 1960s, when the above mentioned books by Deleuze were first published, inferential semantics was not as popular as it is today. It is therefore remarkable that Deleuze's account of signification is of an inferentialist kind:

> From the standpoint of signification, we always consider the elements of the proposition as 'signifying' conceptual implications capable of referring to other propositions, which serve as premises of the first. Signification

> is defined by this order of conceptual implication where the proposition under consideration intervenes only as an element of a 'demonstration,' in the most general sense of the word, that is, either as premise or conclusion. . . . Demonstration must not be understood in a restricted, syllogistic or mathematical sense, but also in the physical sense of probabilities or in the moral sense of promises and commitments. In this last case, the assertion of the conclusion is represented by the moment the promise is effectively kept. (Deleuze 2004b: 18)

According to inferential semantics, to grasp the signification of a proposition is to learn how to use it in the context of inferences, where 'inference' must be taken in a theoretical as well as in a practical sense. Michael Dummett describes this as follows:

> Learning to use a statement of a given form involves, then, learning two things: the conditions under which one is justified in making the statement; and what constitutes acceptance of it, i.e. the consequences of accepting it. Here 'consequences' must be taken to include both the inferential powers of the statement and anything that counts as acting on the truth of the statement. (Dummett 1981: 453)

On this view, the signification of a statement is composed of justification conditions and of consequences, the latter including commitments and entitlements to say or to do certain things.[2] It may help to give a (somewhat trivial) example to illustrate the basic idea. A person who sees that a window is open is *justified* to assert that the window is open. By making this assertion, she is also *committed* to agree that the room has at least one window. And under appropriate circumstances she may be *entitled* to close the window. If she has additionally promised to close the window, she will even be *committed* to doing so.

As *questions* will be coming into focus later, it is important to note that one part of the signification of a statement is the entitlement to ask certain questions. A person who says that the window is open is thereby entitled to ask, for example, who opened the window or for how long it has been open. One must add, however, that other factors may prevent the person from actually asking these questions. It may be impolite or forbidden to do so in a particular situation, or inappropriate in some other sense. After all, the entitlement conveyed by a statement is just one of the forces that act in a social situation and it may be overruled by others.

Since inferential semantics is usually presented as a rival theory to truth-conditional semantics, it may be misleading that Deleuze defines signification also as '*the condition of truth*, the aggregate of conditions

under which the proposition "would be" true' (Deleuze 2004b: 18). But the context makes clear that here Deleuze does not appeal to truth-conditional semantics, that is, to the view that the signification of a proposition is given by its truth conditions. Again we must think of inferential relations, which can be understood as concerning *possibly true propositions*. A deductively valid inference, in particular, is one whose conclusion *would be* true if the premises were true. Neither the premises nor the conclusion need to be true in reality. This is probably why Deleuze mentions truth conditions at all, and why he refers to signification 'as the possibility for the proposition to be true' (Deleuze 2004b: 22).

As to *sense*, in Deleuze's theory, we get a first understanding of this notion by considering some features that distinguish it from signification. Deleuze, following the terminology of traditional syllogistics, explains that sense is neutral as to the quality, quantity and modality of a proposition. 'Quality' refers to the distinction between affirmation and negation; hence a proposition has the same sense as its negation. Differences in quantity do not count either; hence a proposition about *all* things of a kind does not change its sense when 'all' is replaced by 'some'. And finally, 'p' has the same sense as 'possibly p' and 'necessarily p', as these are just differences in modality.

Deleuze even goes so far as to say that sense is affected neither by the order of subject and predicate nor by that of antecedent and consequent. Referring to the work of Lewis Carroll, he gives examples such as 'cats eat bats' and 'bats eat cats', as well as 'I breathe when I sleep' and 'I sleep when I breathe'. Another quite surprising claim is that inconsistent propositions like 'squares are round' have sense but no signification (Deleuze 2004b: 41).[3]

In the face of these statements, it does not seem helpful to express the sense of a proposition by means of another proposition. If you do not know what the sense of 'cats eat bats' is, you will not gain much if you are told that it is identical to the sense of 'bats eat cats', 'cats *do not* eat bats', or 'cats *possibly* eat bats'. Deleuze therefore tries some alternative approaches, indicating that the sense of a sentence could perhaps also be expressed in infinitive, participial or interrogative form (Deleuze 2004a: 194). For example, the sense of 'The sky is blue' might be rendered as 'the being-blue of the sky' or 'Is the sky blue?'

It is tempting to assume that these ways of expressing sense add up to an account of *propositional content*. 'The sky is blue' arguably has the same propositional content as 'the being-blue of the sky' and 'Is the sky blue?'[4] However, propositional content cannot be what Deleuze has

in mind. For the propositional content of an utterance is affected by the difference between affirmation and negation, by differences in quantity and modality, as well as by the exchange of subject and predicate or of antecedent and consequent. If sense were propositional content, the sense of p could not be identical to that of not-p. The same goes for the other examples mentioned above: possibly.../necessarily..., all.../some..., 'cats eat bats'/'bats eat cats', 'I breathe when I sleep'/'I sleep when I breathe'. Each of these pairs combines two different propositional contents.

So it seems that we cannot identify sense with propositional content. This result correlates with Deleuze's assertion that it would be a mistake to construe sense as a 'neutralized double of the proposition' (Deleuze 2004b: 38; see also 2004a: 195). Sense is not identical to propositional content, nor can we refer to it by using phrases that resemble propositions, phrases like 'the being-blue of the sky' or 'that the sky is blue'. These, too, are just 'doubles' of the proposition 'The sky is blue'. And this also holds for the corresponding question, 'Is the sky blue?' There is still too much resemblance between questions and propositions. But although the question is just another double of the proposition, Deleuze suggests that replacing the latter by the former is a first step towards a better analysis of sense, as questions are closely associated with *problems*:

> the interrogative formula has at least one advantage: at the same time as it invites us to consider the corresponding proposition as a response, it opens up a new path for us. A proposition conceived as a response is always a particular solution, a case considered for itself, abstractly and apart from the superior synthesis which relates it, along with other cases, to a problem as problem. Therefore interrogation, in turn, expresses the manner in which a problem is dismembered, cashed out and revealed, in experience and for consciousness, according to its diversely apprehended cases of solution. Even though it gives us an insufficient idea, it thereby inspires in us the presentiment of that which it dismembers.
>
> Sense is located in the problem itself. Sense is constituted in the complex theme, but the complex theme is that set of problems and questions in relation to which the propositions serve as elements of response and cases of solution. This definition, however, requires us to rid ourselves of an illusion which belongs to the dogmatic image of thought: problems and questions must no longer be traced from the corresponding propositions which serve, or can serve, as responses. (Deleuze 2004a: 195f.; see also 2004b: 139)

Sense is located in the problem, constituted in the complex theme. 'Problem' and 'theme' are just two of the terms Deleuze uses to refer

to sense.[5] Another one is 'idea', one of his examples being the idea of physical atomism (Deleuze 2004a: 232f.), which is the idea that matter consists of particles some of which are indivisible. Here we are using a propositional clause, 'that matter consists of particles'. But Deleuze denies that the idea is itself a proposition or something akin to it. Rather, the idea is a problem, and the problem is a set of questions. Strictly speaking, 'The problem is a set of questions' is a kind of slogan that we may use for the sake of convenience. It would be more precise to say that the problem is an entity in its own right whose various parts or aspects can be grasped by asking appropriate questions.[6]

The problem of physical atomism includes questions like the following: 'Does matter consist of atoms?', 'What types of atoms exist?', 'What shapes do atoms have?', 'What masses do they have?', 'Do they move?', 'In which ways do they move?', 'Why does a particular atom move?', and also, 'What is an atom?'[7] Any one of these questions could be answered by an appropriate proposition, and this proposition would be a partial solution of the problem, solving that part of the problem which is covered by the question. For example, the question 'Do atoms move?' is answered by the proposition 'Atoms move'. But in order to understand more of the problem, it is not enough to ask this single question. We must also have an understanding of other questions associated with the problem of atomism.[8]

II. Categories and Questions

In the preceding section, the notion of sense has been partly clarified by distinguishing it from the related notions of denotation, manifestation and signification. This clarification did not go far enough, of course. We have learned more about what sense is not than what it is. In order to supplement our negative concept with a positive one, we could take the usual way of Deleuze interpretation and appeal to those philosophers who Deleuze himself refers to in developing his position. But I will take a path that, to my knowledge, has not been pursued before. It will lead us to Gilbert Ryle, who is not mentioned by Deleuze, although his best-known book, *The Concept of Mind*, was published twenty years earlier than *Logique du sens*. If we had to sketch something like a map of philosophical temperaments and opinions, we would probably have to place these two philosophers on opposite poles, which makes this comparison even more interesting.

What I want to show in the following is that the notion of category as developed by Ryle is a close analogy to Deleuzian sense. My hypothesis is

this: to understand the sense of a proposition regarding X is to know the category of the concept X. The latter, in turn, requires that one knows which questions may appropriately be asked with regard to X. But first let us see what Ryle has to say about categories:

> To determine the logical geography of concepts is to reveal the logic of the propositions in which they are wielded, that is to say, to show with what other propositions they are consistent and inconsistent, what propositions follow from them and from what propositions they follow. The logical type or category to which a concept belongs is the set of ways in which it is logically legitimate to operate with it. (Ryle 1949: 8)[9]

Here, Ryle is concerned with inferences that involve propositions containing the respective concept. These inferences, he argues, determine the category of the concept. This seems to lead us back to the concept of signification, defined in inferentialist terms by Deleuze. Inferentialists usually maintain that the meaning of a word is given by its contribution to the meanings of the propositions in which it occurs. Referring to Wilfrid Sellars, inferentialist Robert Brandom writes: 'To grasp or understand a concept is, according to Sellars, to have practical mastery over the *inferences* it is involved in – to know, in the practical sense of being able to distinguish, what follows from the applicability of a concept, and what it follows from' (Brandom 1994: 89). Against this inferentialist background, we might be tempted to read Ryle in the following way: 'Category' is for concepts what 'signification' is for propositions. The first denotes the meaning of a concept, the second that of a proposition. Both are to be analysed in inferentialist terms, for the logical relations between propositions determine the meanings of concepts as well as those of the propositions.

However, although this picture of the relation between signification and category is theoretically appealing, it fails to address an important point. The difficulty is that 'signification', construed inferentially, is an abstract concept that covers a large number and variety of inferential relations, including justification conditions as well as consequences (that is, commitments and entitlements) of various kinds. Most of these will be irrelevant in typical conversational situations. Furthermore, it is certainly not possible for a single speaker to know all these inferences or to draw all of them in practice. Thus, it is neither necessary nor possible to know the 'complete' signification of a proposition. This concept is a construction of linguistic theory, an abstract entity, which is too 'big', as it were, for ordinary speakers. What they need to know is which inferences are actually relevant in a particular context.

Consider again the example of the window from section one. The proposition 'The window is open', in conjunction with the premise that most windows are rectangular, implies that the open window is probably rectangular, having a diagonal of a length that is the square root of $a^2 + b^2$, where a and b are the sides of the rectangle. This is a remote geometrical consequence that has no relevance at all in typical cases in which the proposition 'The window is open' is used. It might be important in a classroom, say, as part of a mathematics exercise. But usually we would not assume that a person must know how to calculate the length of the diagonal in order to know the meaning of 'The window is open'. The same goes for the *word* 'window'. In order to know its meaning, one need not be aware of the question as to how the length of the diagonal is to be computed from the lengths of the sides.

The inferences Ryle utilises in his book to explain the notion of category form only a subset of all the inferences that make up the complete signification of a proposition. How is this subset determined? What makes some inferences relevant and others not? In the following, I will argue that this subset of inferences is delineated by *questions*. Thus, as far as categories are concerned, the asking and answering of questions is the type of operation that counts. In fact, Ryle frequently exhibits the category of concepts by discussing questions.

Before we go on with Ryle, however, let us see whether Deleuze's philosophy of sense provides any indication of a theory of categories. The place to look for it is in Deleuze's discussion of paradoxes which draws on the work of Lewis Carroll. As in other areas of philosophy and science, the investigation of pathological cases helps to illuminate the 'normal' ones. Nonsense, the absence of sense, can teach us something about sense. In the preface of *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze even purports to present 'a series of paradoxes which form the theory of sense' (Deleuze 2004b: ix).

At least some of Carroll's violations of sense discussed by Deleuze can be interpreted as category mistakes as envisaged by Ryle. The following is an instructive example from *Alice in Wonderland* (quoted by Deleuze 2004b: 31):

> '... and even Stigand, the patriotic Archbishop of Canterbury, found it advisable–'
>
> 'Found *what*?' said the Duck.
>
> 'Found *it*,' the Mouse replied rather crossly: 'of course you know what "it" means.'

> 'I know what "it" means well enough, when *I* find a thing,' said the Duck: 'it's generally a frog or a worm. The question is, what did the Archbishop find?'
>
> The Mouse did not notice this question, but hurriedly went on, '– found it advisable to go with Edgar Atheling to meet William and offer him the crown. . . .' (Carroll 1994: 32)

The wit of this little dialogue rests on the confusion of *finding a thing* and *finding something advisable*. As these belong to different categories, it is not appropriate to ask 'What did the archbishop find?' instead of asking 'What did he find advisable?' A comparable example is given by Ryle: ' "She came home in a flood of tears and a sedan-chair" is a well-known joke based on the absurdity of conjoining terms of different types' (Ryle 1949: 22). Classical rhetoric registers this figure of speech as *zeugma* or *syllepis*. On Ryle's account, the rhetorical effect is caused by a category mistake.

Another paradoxical case from *Alice in Wonderland* mentioned by Deleuze (2004b: 38; 2004a: 195) is the well-known grin of the Cheshire Cat:

> 'All right,' said the Cat; and this time it vanished quite slowly, beginning with the end of the tail, and ending with the grin, which remained some time after the rest of it had gone.
>
> 'Well! I've often seen a cat without a grin,' thought Alice; 'but a grin without a cat! It's the most curious thing I ever saw in all my life!' (Carroll 1994: 78)

Ontologically speaking, a grin is not a substance that can exist by itself. It is rather an accident, a property of the substance (the latter being the cat or its mouth). So if this is what is meant by 'a grin without a cat', we are facing another category mistake.

Suppose a person places a word in a category to which it does not belong. If that person does not intend to create a rhetorical, perhaps humorous effect, we would probably conclude that he or she does not understand the word – as the confused duck does not understand the phrase 'to find it advisable'. Assuming that to understand a word is to know its sense, we may conclude further that to know the sense of a word requires that one know its category.[10]

When Ryle discusses examples of categories and category mistakes, he also explains how one can recognise that two words belong to different categories. In particular, words of different categories cannot be connected by the word 'and', as in the above joke of the lady in the sedan-chair, or as in 'he bought a left-hand glove, a right-hand glove and

a pair of gloves'. Put in positive form, Ryle's criterion is the following: 'When two terms belong to the same category, it is proper to construct conjunctive propositions embodying them' (Ryle 1949: 22).

However, Ryle's primary method of determining categorical sameness or difference is the asking of questions. He often notes that certain questions are not appropriate with regard to concepts of a particular category. It does not make sense to ask 'Where is the pair of gloves?' when you see the two gloves. This question is improper because it implies that the pair is something apart from its components. It conflates the whole with its parts: the word 'pair' which denotes the whole belongs to a different category than the word 'glove' which denotes the parts.[11]

III. The Contextual Generation of Signification

The lesson to draw from Ryle's treatment of categories is that knowing the category of X amounts to knowing which questions it is appropriate to ask about X. At this point, the connection to Deleuze's notion of sense becomes visible. As already explained, Deleuze correlates sense and problem, and the problem can be characterised as a set of questions. Furthermore, although sense is said to be a 'dimension of the proposition' (Deleuze 2004b: 22), it is also addressed as *idea*, *problem* and *theme*. And the problem '*is not* propositional, although it does not exist outside of the propositions which express it.... The problem is neutral with respect to every mode of the proposition' (Deleuze 2004b: 140).

This applies to Ryle's categories as well. Categories are sub-propositional entities. We are talking of the category of a concept – 'window', 'glove', 'atom' and so on – not of that of a proposition. A concept can appear in propositions of various kinds. This is the reason why propositions that differ in quality, quantity or modality can be assigned to, or subsumed under, the same category. While the category itself is not propositional, 'it does not exist outside of the propositions which express it'.

Hence the discussion of sense shifts from propositions to words. We may still say that sense is 'a dimension of the proposition', but only because propositions include concepts like 'window', 'glove' and 'atom', and because we can ask to which categories these concepts belong. The notion of 'sense' primarily applies to constituents of propositions. This is obscured by Deleuze when he describes sense as a dimension of propositions, along with denotation, manifestation and signification. At the end of the day, however, the fact that the two propositions 'The window is open' and 'The window is not open' have the same sense

traces back to the fact that both contain the word 'window', and that both are therefore associated with questions like 'What is a window?', 'Is there a window?', 'Is it open?', 'Why is it open?', and so on.

However, with which questions a proposition is associated depends on the context in which it is used. It is easy to imagine circumstances in which the negative proposition 'The window is not open' triggers the question 'Is the window open?' which, if answered positively, causes the next question, 'Why is it open?' This could happen when the questioner does not trust the person who said that the window is not open. In other cases where there is no reason to doubt the speaker's claim, these questions would not arise. There would be other questions or none at all.

The context in which a proposition is being used is defined, at least to a considerable degree, by the questions that are taken to be relevant by the persons involved. In a way, we do not know what that context is unless we know which questions are being asked. This also suggests a new view of the relationship between sense and signification. We have seen that 'signification' is an abstract concept comprising a potentially infinite set of inferential relations. This concept is derived from concrete cases of language-use by steps of extrapolation and generalisation. Signification is supposed to consist of those inferences that are relevant in actual cases or could be relevant in potential ones. In a particular conversational situation, speakers operate only with small subsets of all the relations that make up signification, and these subsets are determined by sense, by a set of relevant questions.

In sum, then, signification is generated by pragmatic, contextual conditions that are set by sense. Deleuze ascribes to sense a 'generative' role, which is to 'engender the logical proposition with its determinate dimensions (denotation, manifestation, and signification)' (Deleuze 2004b: 138). And in a text written in 1986, he characterises his 'empiricism' in the following way:

> the abstract does not explain, but must itself be explained; and the aim is not to rediscover the eternal or the universal, but to find the conditions under which something new is produced (*creativeness*). In so-called rationalist philosophies, the abstract is given the task of explaining, and it is the abstract that is realized in the concrete.... Empiricism starts with a completely different evaluation: analysing the states of things, in such a way that non-preexistent concepts can be extracted from them. (Deleuze and Parnet 2006: vi)

Of course, as always, the quotation is taken out of its context. Deleuze's notion of empiricism is of a special kind, but this is not our issue.

What makes the quotation interesting for us is that it gives an idea of the relation between sense and signification. First comes the analysis of sense in contexts of language-use. This analysis yields a set of questions, which enables the identification of the problem around which the situation is organised. The notion of signification, in turn, is derived from these cases. In Deleuze's terms, it is a 'non-preexistent concept' that is 'extracted' from sense. Signification is 'the abstract' in comparison to which sense is 'the concrete'. When this abstraction is retrospectively applied to the concrete, then sense, as expressed by questions, is conceived as part of signification, more exactly, as that part which exists in the respective context.

The function of questions in this process is to make certain inferential relations relevant. Roughly speaking, the relevant inferences are those which connect the answers of the questions to a particular proposition. To explain this, let us return to Ryle's example of the two gloves. Suppose that these gloves are lying on opposite ends of the couch in front of you. There is also another person present to whom you say, 'There are two gloves on the couch'. The question whether the gloves belong together need not arise in this context. If it does not arise, the relevant part of the signification primarily concerns perceptual justification conditions. Your perceiving the gloves justifies your statement 'There are two gloves on the couch'. By uttering this proposition when perceiving the gloves, you prove your mastery of this part of the signification. It is a rather basic part, to be sure. But as I have described the situation so far, there is no reason to look beyond it.

Next, suppose the question arises as to whether the two gloves belong together, whether they form a pair. It does not matter who raises this question, but *if* it is raised, the question broadens our scope of the signification of 'There are two gloves on the couch'. Now it becomes relevant whether you know which answers to the question might be appropriate. This task is still quite simple, of course. You are confronted with a yes/no-question: 'Do the two gloves on the couch belong together?' So you only need to know that the answer is 'Yes, they do' or 'No, they do not'. Yet, however simple this task may be, by giving one of these answers you would prove that you know, in a concrete, practical sense, another part of the signification of the proposition 'There are two gloves on the couch'.

Additional questions might arise. Someone might want to know *why* the gloves are lying on the couch or to *whom* they belong. Thus, other parts of the signification would be generated, and the actors in the situation would become aware of possible ways of answering these

questions. If they lacked the requisite information, their answers would only be rather general. For example, they might say that the gloves are lying on the couch because someone who has been in this room before has put them there; that the gloves on the couch belong to some person, probably an adult (as they are too big for a child), and so on. Those who know more about the gloves could give more specific answers.

This interplay of assertions, questions and answers concerns inferential relations and therefore signification. The questions alluded to in the glove example are inferentially related, in a certain way, to 'There are two gloves on the couch', which is the proposition that started the conversation by raising the 'problem of the two gloves'. It should be noted, however, that questions are not directly related to propositions, but only by their *propositional contents*. For instance, the content of the yes/no-question 'Do the two gloves on the couch belong together?' can be expressed by the proposition 'The two gloves on the couch belong together'.[12] In the case of questions with interrogative words, we obtain the propositional content by replacing 'why', 'who', 'where', and so on, by a suitable variable. To choose just two examples, this replacement yields 'The gloves are lying on the couch because p' as content of 'Why are the gloves lying on the couch', as well as 'The two gloves on the couch belong to X' as content of 'To whom do the two gloves on the couch belong?'

Inferentialism has it that the signification of the proposition 'There are two gloves on the couch' is given by the inferential relations this proposition is involved in. Among these relations are those which exist between the proposition itself and the propositional contents of the above questions. The proposition is inferentially related to 'The two gloves on the couch belong together', 'The gloves are lying on the couch because p' and 'The gloves on the couch belong to X'. This proves that the propositional contents of the questions, and therefore indirectly the questions themselves, bear inferential relations to the proposition we are dealing with. And these relations make up a subset of the complete signification of the proposition.

Following Ryle, I have chosen somewhat dry examples concerning windows and gloves. These do have the advantage of familiarity, but nevertheless we shall end with one of the more appealing cases. Lewis Carroll's story of the Cheshire Cat involves a category mistake that has been made on purpose. Its paradoxical nature owes to the fact that we are prompted to imagine a grin without a something that is grinning (which John Tenniel could not picture in his famous illustrations, so he decided to draw the cat's head fading). The question arises as to *who*

it is that is grinning, and this question makes certain answers relevant. The reader of *Alice in Wonderland* knows that from 'There is a grin' it follows that there is *someone* who is grinning. The context of the story even suggests the more specific answer that it is the Cheshire Cat who is (still) grinning. Yet since the cat is said to have vanished, the story turns into a piece of nonsense.

We know why. The story defies a part of signification: the inference from 'There is a grin' to 'The Cheshire Cat is grinning', the latter being our best answer to 'Who is grinning?' This is one of the questions that constitute the problem of the Cheshire Cat's grin and the sense of the inferentially related propositions.

Notes

1. The nature of this causation arguably depends on the ontological nature of mental states, but we need not go into this here. This article is mainly concerned with an interpretation of Deleuze's philosophy of language; ontological issues will be touched upon only tangentially.
2. In the above quotation from *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze just talks of theoretical inferences (syllogistic and mathematical demonstration, physical probabilities) and practical commitments, such as the commitment to keep a promise. He does not mention entitlements, but these can safely be added to his account.
3. Deleuze does not substantiate the claim that inconsistent propositions lack signification. Perhaps he relies on the fact that these propositions cannot enter into inferences as possibly true statements. Classical logic, however, does ascribe an inferential role to them, if only a rather trivial one: *ex contradictione sequitur quodlibet*.
4. I am using 'propositional content' roughly as in Chapter 2.4 of Searle 1969. Although an utterance of 'the being-blue of the sky' is at best an incomplete speech act, it works as an 'indicator' of propositional content, as Searle would say. Searle, however, prefers that-clauses for indicating propositional content ('that the sky is blue'). Note also that for him a 'proposition' is the propositional content of a speech act, whereas Deleuze's usage of that term is wider.
5. The term 'event' belongs to this list, too, as sense is said to be 'an incorporeal, complex, and irreducible entity, at the surface of things, a pure event which inheres or subsists in the proposition' (Deleuze 2004b: 22). Another 'surface entity' is the concept, which 'speaks the event' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 21). 'All concepts are connected to problems without which they would have no meaning [*sens*]' (16). Except that concepts are supposed to be solutions of problems, they have much in common with the latter. In particular, they are 'not propositional' (22). To keep the discussion simpler, however, I refrain from considering these notions of event and concept. I will reserve the word 'concept' for Ryle who uses it for a linguistic entity.
6. As indicated in the previous note, sense inheres or subsists, but does not exist. Furthermore, it is a dual entity on the border between world and language: 'It is rather the coexistence of two sides without thickness, such that we pass from one to the other by following their length. *Sense is both the expressible or the expressed of the proposition, and the attribute of the state of affairs*. It turns

one side toward things and one side toward propositions' (Deleuze 2004b: 25). Thus, sense is something very peculiar, to say the least.

7. A superficial reading might suggest that Deleuze rejects questions of the type 'What is X?' *per se*. But in fact he only rejects the Platonic-Socratic tradition in which these questions are understood as aiming at essences. Apart from that, Deleuze acknowledges their propaedeutic function in the Platonic discourse: 'Once it is a question of determining the problem or the Idea as such, once it is a question of setting the dialectic in motion, the question "What is X?" gives way to other questions, otherwise powerful and efficacious, otherwise imperative: "How much, how and in what cases?" The question "What is X?" animates only the so-called aporetic dialogues – in other words, those in which the very form of the question gives rise to contradiction and leads to nihilism, no doubt because they have only propaedeutic aims – the aim of opening up the region of the problem in general, leaving to other procedures the task of determining it as a problem or as an Idea' (Deleuze 2004a: 236f.).
8. It would lead us too far astray to discuss in detail how these questions are related to each other. A possible point of departure could be what Sylvain Bromberger calls a 'cluster of questions' (Bromberger 1966: 602). According to Bromberger, a cluster of questions is raised by some proposition, and a question belongs to this cluster if it stands to the proposition in a relation of mutual implication. That is, if the proposition is true, the question must have a correct answer, and conversely.
9. In his article 'Categories', published about a decade before *The Concept of Mind*, Ryle prefers to talk of 'concepts' without the adjective 'logical' (Ryle 1937/8). I follow him in this. Others may choose to replace 'logical' by 'ontological', as differences between logical categories are arguably related to ontological differences. This logical/ontological ambiguity of 'category' seems to correspond to the two-sidedness of sense mentioned in note 7 above. Compare Deleuze's distinction between the logical and the ontological proposition in *The Logic of Sense* (Deleuze 2004b: 138).
10. Here, 'to know' does not necessarily refer to knowing-that, that is, knowledge expressible in propositional form. There are cases in which it is possible to say *that* a word means such-and-such, thus giving the meaning of the word by using other words. But the knowledge in question is primarily a linguistic kind of *knowing-how*. A person who knows the sense of a word knows how to use it in the course of utterances, in accordance with its category.
11. The glove example suffices for our purposes, but in *The Concept of Mind* cases not based on a part-whole relation are more salient. In particular, there is the distinction between occurrences and dispositions which, in Ryle's opinion, provides a solution (or rather, dissolution) of the mind-body problem. There are questions about occurrences that cannot be asked about dispositions.
12. Thus, we could analyse the question as consisting of two parts, the first one expressing its content: 'The two gloves on the couch belong together. Yes or no?'

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One of Deleuze's Bergsonisms

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Abstract

In this article I attempt to reveal some continuities between the anti-psychoanalytic stance adopted by Gilles Deleuze in his later work and Henri Bergson's early philosophy. On account of these continuities I hope to provide a glimpse into what I believe is a century-old tangent of philosophical resistance to the methods and theories of Freudian psychoanalysis. In order to achieve this, I start with a brief meditation on the challenges and benefits of cross-generational inheritance and collaboration in philosophy. The purpose of this is twofold – to explore some general conditions for such collaboration and to tease out some of the implications of these conditions for the substantive argument my specific reading of Bergson via Deleuze occasions. I then expound on Bergson's theory of duration and some of the uses to which Deleuze puts it in the latter part of his career. In this I outline several fecund similarities between Bergson's critique of associationism and Deleuze's attack on Freud. Finally, I attempt a partial evaluation of Freudian psychoanalysis from the joint, albeit naturally disjointed, perspective of my primary sources.

Keywords: Bergson, Deleuze, Freud, anti-psychoanalysis

I. Creating and Inheriting Insight

It is not clear whether philosophy unveils knowledge which is already there or whether it creates new knowledge. One clue to an answer may lie in the historical fact that philosophers talk and write about other philosophers. This fact can be considered of some evidential value to

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the supposition that philosophising is more about elaborating on prior knowledge than about inventing. But, then, how obscure and in need of commentary can a thinker's writing be? Why do we so often need one person to reveal and expound on the tenets of another person's thinking? If we prefer to be charitable to the predecessor figure in general, we could say that his/her commentator simply provides an 'update'. If, to the contrary, we decide to give more justice to the commentator, we will have to admit that commenting is rich with revelation; that is, if successful, it will amount to an 'upgrade'.[1]

I hope that it will not be too much of a rhetorical stretch to say that the category of the *new* in art is to a large extent analogous to the *new* in philosophy. The *new*, in both cases, generally presents itself as a riddle, a riddle that stops being considered new when it is solved. The solution, it is important to note, does not simply make the new riddle old, but tries to make sure the riddle is altogether no more. In art, this posing and solving of riddles accounts for changes in artistic styles, as in the case of Picasso's distinct periods. But what if a philosopher attempts to solve his or her own riddles? Many have tried. Descartes, for whom the idea of a new philosophy was programmatic, is one good example of a thinker who wrote with a view to all potential objections that could arise from the direction of his critics. He thus wrote mostly backwards, not in the sense of consulting prior philosophy, but in the sense of always trying to pre-empt any future critique of his own. The example of Descartes shows that there are thinkers whose heritage can remain mostly theirs. One is always tempted to say that philosophers who write *in stone*, like Descartes, are the truly great ones. This would mean that they did the philosophers' job better than most of their colleagues. But, then again, is the philosopher's profession that of a restorer or that of an inventor of knowledge? And is it not strange that we would readily admit that Descartes was clearly a creator of new (first) philosophy, but at the same time we recognise the antiquarian effort his oeuvre demands of Cartesian scholars?

The example of Descartes gives us a better clue to answering my initial question. There must be philosophers of both kinds – those who create knowledge and those who dissect the knowledge passed on from their predecessors. There is, of course, also the salient distinction between those whose heritage opens up to unpredictable discourses and those whose philosophy comes with strict directives for future use. Not surprisingly, any number of the four nodes of the above distinctions could then be expected to converge in the character of any specific philosopher. And, to make the life of the consumer of insight even

more difficult, many philosophers have been prone to switch between extreme nodes or recombine them throughout the course of their writing careers.

II. One of Several Bergsonisms

The two philosophers I am here interested in are Henri Bergson and Gilles Deleuze. They both belong to a category of 'difficult thinkers' because they readily display all of the above mentioned extremes in all combinations possible at different periods in their careers. The challenge in comparing two such philosophers is that, in the common ground they cover, they would appear too similar or too unlike on different occasions. With both of them at different times knowledge is in-the-making, but also ready-made; it is available to the reader, but also remains locked. On the positive side, we are right to expect that such comparison will yield productive ways of checking Bergson through Deleuze, or vice versa. Still, in reading them there remains the salient danger that the creativities of both our subjects taken together can at any point collide into some sort of philosophical anarchy.

The special focus of my comparison will be on the sources of Deleuze's anti-psychoanalytical discourse as found in Bergson's *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness*. As difficult as it is to admit of a strict continuity between the two philosophers' theories, there are many moments in both that resemble strangely collaborative, if not derivative, efforts. In a parallel reading of Bergson and Deleuze their similar liberal attitudes to knowledge-making and knowledge-revealing may give rise to an impression of contemporaneity. I thus prefer to see Bergson not as Deleuze's predecessor, but rather as Deleuze's co-conspirator. Concerning the ways in which Bergson can be tentatively said to have influenced Deleuze there are two major thematic strands – Bergson's theory of *time* (which refers to duration, intensity, space and consciousness), and his theory of *multiplicity* (which deals with virtuality, repetition and the body). Another distinction which could be made is that between Deleuze's efforts to claim Bergson's heritage on the one hand and his incorporation of this heritage into the process of creating fresh insights on the other. I see the values in these distinctions not in opposition to one another, but as concurrent branches.

In terms of positioning Deleuze as Bergson's heir, the first branch to follow would be the philosophical, analytic one of the earlier years, before and at the time of *Difference and Repetition* (1968). In this

work and those preceding it, Deleuze can be said to employ Bergson by means of quotation, trying to develop his ideas, or just using them as a backdrop. Philosophical also because at this stage Deleuze seems eagerly engaged with prior philosophy in general, with Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, Heidegger and many others. In the preface to *Bergsonism*, he boasts an intimacy with the philosophers he has written about, the result of which is, in Deleuze's words 'a child, which would be his [the philosopher discussed] and which would at the same time be a monster' (Deleuze 1988: 8). One of many proofs for the relevance of the metaphor lies in the chain formed by Deleuze's treatment of Bergson's treatment of Kant's doctrine of the faculties.[2] This could be looked upon as Deleuze's formative period, when he gradually weaned himself away from earlier philosophy and developed his own philosophical voice.

The second branch, the one that interests me here, is the interdisciplinary, inventive one, particularly as present in works like *Anti-Oedipus*, *A Thousand Plateaus* and *What is Philosophy?* – that is, in Deleuze's collaborations with Guattari. These works are far less analytic, far less 'philosophically correct'. Here Deleuze unleashes a new 'Deleuzian' vernacular, with concepts uniquely his own. These are arguably also the books whose influence has spread outside of philosophical discourse (detectable in many contemporary architects' writings, in the catalogue of the Mille Plateaux record label, and so on). What makes them Bergsonian is the attention they apportion to the method of intuition. It is also here that Bergson's notions of multiplicity, virtuality and the body are mobilised for a new purpose, new to both philosophers and, in all probability, for philosophy in its totality. The innovation in question is Deleuze's drawing out of the anti-psychoanalytic implications of Bergson's philosophy. As a Bergsonism, this is distinct from the historical version manifest in the greater part of Deleuze's early work and from the conceptual/creative one presented in his books on cinema. While these other engagements with Bergson are just as valuable, and often draw on the same sources, the anti-Oedipal Bergsonism I am concerned with here is much less explored. My extraction of a new virtual dialogue between Bergson and Deleuze on a new topic thus aims at making two contributions – first, to honour the two philosophers' creative approach to reading philosophy and, second, to carve out a place for a particular Bergsonism which merits further attention.

III. Bergson's Playing Field

In the conclusion of *Time and Free Will*, Bergson attempts to recapitulate the points he has made about duration and its informing connection

to free will. Throughout the essay Bergson has avoided recognising the possibility of any layering of consciousness. While consciousness is on the agenda, there is a specific angle from which it is looked at, that of psychophysics. All talk of the intensity of conscious states therefore assumes a flat conscious plane rather than a mass of layered bricks. Moreover, according to Bergson any spatial model of consciousness, (be it Leibniz's pre-established harmony between conscious states and extended objects, or Bergson's own vignette of the 'invisible musician playing behind the scenes while the actor strikes a keyboard the keys of which yield no sound', is doomed to assume more than is scientifically provable (Bergson 2001: 147). Bergson does not deny the existence of the unconscious and all things associated with the Freudian picture. He just marginalises them and the possible ways of classifying them to the speculative edges of inquiry.[3]

The important pre-Deleuzian move in the conclusion of *Time and Free Will* is Bergson's criticism of the associationist conception of the mind. The latter is often mentioned in the book as an outcome of the theory of psychological determinism concerning the causal concatenation between successive states of consciousness (Bergson 2001: 148, 155). What Bergson has against such theory turns out to be analogous to what Deleuze would later reject in Freudian psychoanalysis. The mistake a determinist makes is to establish a causal link between physical movement and conscious states. Even more fatally, a determinist of the associationist type would claim that one conscious state causes the next such state immediately following.

What this implies, according to Bergson, is that the workings of consciousness are indeed traceable, pseudo-kinetic. He realises that with associationism what is apparently true is taken for scientifically correct. A state of determination about any action does *seem* to follow from a previous state of consciousness where the object of determination shaped up, but we cannot fully know the extent to which one causes the other. Experience shows, Bergson points out, that many times we are sure of what we are going to do in a certain situation where action is called for, but *we like* to keep wondering what the best way to act would be. In this and other ways, there can be states of consciousness strangely inconsequential for the ones immediately following. To no surprise, Bergson's verdict is that associationism is another example of the confusion between temporal and spatial terms. In his conclusion, he writes: 'Intensity, duration, voluntary determination, these are the three ideas which had to be clarified by ridding them of all that they owe to the intrusion of the sensible world and, in a word, to the obsession of the idea of space' (Bergson 2001: 224). The way space talk creeps into the

associationist's discussion of consciousness is through the inappropriate admission of a homogeneous medium of psychic states. It is far easier to distinguish psychic states from one another against an imaginary screen of distribution of psychic functions. However, Bergson cautions that this is not only pre-scientific, it is also dangerously unfaithful to the observable phenomena themselves. It is a case of what he calls 'substituting the symbol of the ego for the ego itself' (Bergson 2001: 226). Bergson's whole theory of duration is aimed against such habitual substitutions. Duration, for him, has two completely different lives in theory and in actuality, lives that are compatible only if and to the extent that theory has the humility to curb its 'findings' at a safe distance from the hope of general application.

There is a traceable line of thought in Bergson that seems to connect his major philosophical concerns, or at least paves a way conspicuously through the plethora of his creations. This line comes in his extensive work on duration but also in other different arguments, like an avenue chaining distinct city blocks, but uniformly, as a healthy obsession. It can be broadly defined as the recognition of false substitution in philosophy of the *easy* for the *difficult*. The sense in which the latter two terms are used here is that of extremes on a line where *common sense* occupies the middle point. It is only of minor interest to Bergson to bestow ethical judgements upon anyone's choice of position along the line. The *easy* is not necessarily condemnable, the *difficult* is not always commendable. Whenever Bergson chooses one over the other he does it only to demonstrate the fact that they are clearly distinct. What I here call the *easy* is science and the faculties of abstraction associated with it. The *difficult* is metaphysics, a meta-something-or-other that dislodges philosophy from the empirically inescapable.

In Bergson's theory of duration in particular, both physics and metaphysics are given their share. It is only fair to have both; he believes that space and time are inherently problematic because of their easy surrender to common sense, which in its turn is largely inadequate in dealing with them. Common sense is the turning point, the place where the mistake of space/time substitution takes place. This is why for Bergson metaphysics was born with the articulation of Zeno's paradoxes. A simple phenomenon like motion is there treated as spatially discrete by science and as spatially indeterminate by common sense. Only metaphysics can and should, according to Bergson, treat motion as what it is – 'a full and mobile experience' (Bergson 1968: 17). As the philosopher makes clear in his *The Creative Mind*, science has always looked for positive attributes in space and not time. Since science

struggles to foresee, it can only focus on time *passed*, not time unfurling. Consequently, it is the calling of metaphysics to clear knowledge of spatial metaphor and restore duration as the 'unceasing creation, the uninterrupted upsurge of novelty' that it is (Bergson 1968: 17).

A peculiar theoretical spillage occurs when traditional scientific analysis becomes blind to the differences of the ontological values of kind vs. degree, quality vs. quantity, duration vs. space, psychophysical entity vs. the symbol for it. Bergson points out that general ideas (be they easy, difficult, or commonsensical) are most often thought of within a homogeneous medium like space. The main reason for this is the promise of order that spatiality gives and always seems to deliver. It is, for instance, a consequence of this 'symbolism of science' that perception is regarded as incapable of registering duration (Bergson 1968: 18). To counter this, Bergson reminds us that the alleged failure of perception is such only if duration is analytically chopped up into regular successive pieces. In Deleuze's words, 'duration is in no way indivisible, but is that which cannot be divided without changing in nature at each division' (Deleuze and Guattari 1998: 483). Again, perception and consciousness in general are nowhere properly *apart* from duration except within theory. In the case of the associationists' view of consciousness, Bergson notices the same error in 'replacing the concrete phenomenon which takes place in the mind by the artificial reconstruction of it' and, ultimately, of 'confusing the explanation of the fact with the fact itself' (Bergson 2001: 163). Bergson points out that the latter mistake was firstly made by Kant and then inherited by the associationists (Bergson 2001: 232). To round off a historical polemic, it is my purpose here to show how a mistake of a similar kind was committed by Sigmund Freud and duly criticised by Deleuze.

IV. Anti-Oedipus and Bergson

As a Bergsonian, that is, as a difficult philosopher in his own right, Deleuze has his own just claim to metaphysical innovation. In spite of its originality, *Difference and Repetition* reads as if it has picked up where Bergson's theory of duration had left off. It is not difficult (and I hope not presumptuous) to trace Deleuze's conception of difference back to Bergson's picture of pure duration. For one thing, since my present interest lies elsewhere, it can be noted that both *Difference and Repetition* and *Time and Free Will* work towards restoring the 'meta' in metaphysical. The later Deleuze has a very different plan for philosophy.

In collaboration with Guattari he opens an anti-psychoanalytical discourse which, through multiple series of philosophical manoeuvres, connects to aesthetic theory, a new critique of capitalism, and a new perspective on anthropology.[4] If all this sounds strangely ambitious even for a two-headed philosopher, we have to be reminded of how much Bergson attempted and accomplished on his own. The question of what Guattari did for Deleuze, however tangential for the present inquiry, is for me as important as that of what Deleuze contributes to Bergson. Judging by the primary sources, if Bergson had had the choice of writing in collaboration with any one of his contemporaries it would have been either Sigmund Freud or Albert Einstein. The first, because consciousness was always on Bergson's agenda, and the second because science in general and duration in particular were of major concern to him. Since Bergson *did* have his try at Einstein with *Duration and Simultaneity*, it remains a mystery what would have become of a potential encounter between Bergson and Freud. Deleuze, with Guattari's help, steps in to lay bare the possible dynamics of such an encounter.

In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze discusses what he calls 'the image of thought', an inaugural perpetuum mobile, a mechanism of honorific assignments which are bestowed upon the practices of thinking and knowledge. Here he also offers his answer to the question we asked at the outset: Does philosophy update or upgrade knowledge? For Deleuze, philosophy most often does the first but ought to do the second. The philosopher's predicament is to fall prey to common sense, the middle ground, a safe place. But 'common sense shows every day . . . that it is capable of producing philosophy in its own way' (Deleuze 1994: 135). In Deleuze's opinion, this is where the Cartesian *cogito* comes from, a general idea of good sense that appeals to the mundanely undeniable. Thus, if there is Descartes the *doctor scientiae*, who looks for philosophy-as-principle, there is also Descartes the folk thinker, who appeals to the age-old recognition of thought-as-law.

According to Deleuze, the symbolic gesture of the Cartesian *cogito* is far surpassed in brashness by Deleuze's arch-enemy Freud and his theory of the unconscious. If it is not altogether safe to say that Deleuze's anger towards Freud comes from the same place as Bergson's anger with the associationists (however much we are inclined to recognise an affinity of affective character between the two respective attitudes), it seems true enough that Freud's obsession with Oedipus commits the associationists' error of substitution. In the two volumes of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Deleuze and Guattari[5] break into the theatrical stage set of the Freudian unconscious. What displeases them in their findings

is the predatory backwardness of Freud's reliance on common sense and the aggressive spatiality of the Oedipal model.

The most direct attack on Freud in the entire two-volume project of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* is found in the second book under the title 'One or Several Wolves?' This short chapter restages the famous case of Freud's Wolf-Man as a failure of Oedipal dramaturgy. The patient in question, Sergei Pankejeff, is represented through a series of psychotic episodes whose 'meaning' Freud believed he had deciphered. The finality of a cure, in Freud, is argued to be a function, and in this case the felicitous outcome, of such meaning extraction. The process that leads Freud to such a declaration, of a method and its success, is not far from literary analysis – after all, on some level the Wolf-Man's psychotic episodes are *stories*, and we should not forget that Oedipus was once just a story, too. Deleuze alludes to the latter fact by introducing his chapter with the fictive statement 'That day, the Wolf-Man rose from the couch particularly tired' (Deleuze and Guattari 1998: 26). But are these merely stories and are they as unequivocally transposable as Freud believes? Starting out with Pankejeff's dream of six or seven wolves, with the help of Freud's retroactive dramatic apparatus, the plot, so to speak, thickens to accommodate the inclusion of kid goats, an episode of inadvertent voyeurism, two dogs, and, ultimately, the castration of the patient's father.[6] This reduction, according to Deleuze, commits the cardinal sin of replacing a dynamic multiplicity with a persistent singularity. Wolves, as Deleuze reminds us, come in packs – not in the sense that wolves always come in groups operating on a common plane or with a common purpose, but in the sense that the generic for 'wolf' presupposes a multiplicity, even when used in the singular.

Deleuze's concept of multiplicity here is partially borrowed from both Bergson and Riemann. From Bergson comes the distinction between 'numerical or extended multiplicities and qualitative or durational multiplicities' (Deleuze and Guattari 1998: 33). For Deleuze, the patient's pack of wolves belongs to both categories. The significance of the above distinction between different multiplicities for the Freudian picture is that it renders Freud's 'numerical fragment of a lost Unity or Totality' suspect (Deleuze and Guattari 1998: 32). Even in a numerical multiplicity there is never simply the One, a lone signifier, a father and so on. Instead, there are accumulations of singularities, momentarily discernible and even countable but, also, ever-shifting. The pack of wolves seems the perfect model for this resistance to unity that Deleuze posits – it makes little sense to speak of *the* leader of a pack, of *the* centre of a pack, of *the* pack at all.

The One, on the other hand, emerges as a fiction of singularity, an individual whose name is in constant danger of being edged out by a new one that better fits the story. The impression of a happy end is set in motion by the healthy transition of the Wolf-Man back into Sergei Pankejeff, when purportedly cured. But such neat reversal, as Deleuze points out, is impossible if the patient and his ailment have become many and, as the (hi)story goes, have sucked all manner of subsequent doctors and treatments into the natural loop of their multiplication.[7]

As to the second kind of multiplicity, Deleuze insists that it is not the other side of a duality but rather the intensification of all processes of re-distribution, re-mapping and de-individualisation characteristic of numerical multiplicity. The Freudian unconscious is, for Deleuze, a prime example of this intensive multiplicity. And, consequently, where Freud sees an individual Deleuze sees a crowd. Singularity presupposes a negation, a lack of some sort, by virtue of which it accommodates repression, while for Deleuze 'the unconscious knows nothing of negation' (Deleuze and Guattari 1998: 31). Going back to the Wolf-Man's psychotic episodes, if they are read the Freudian way, 'making sense' of them surely gains something from the substitution of a familial theatre for a schizoid multiplicity. But the editorial effort involved is clearly arbitrary and what remains on the cutting-room floor might just turn out to be *the* ever-changing story itself.

It is interesting that in Freud the normative seems to prey on the phenomenological. Even in name, things such as a bad dream, a nightmare and a psychotic episode have a built-in normative charge. If one should inquire into the difference between a dream and a bad dream, Freud is very likely to offer an explanation that, firstly, posits a difference in kind between the two phenomena (rather than degree, or intensity as Deleuze will have it), and, secondly, will bestow different valences to each phenomenon relative to the degree to which each one conforms to the analyst's valuative system. Deleuze detects the same procedure in Freud's differentiation between neurosis and psychosis, an operation that starts out as a promising analysis of intensive multiplicity, possibly even 'the greatest art of the unconscious', but soon after gets bogged down by the Freudian reductive procedure (Deleuze and Guattari 1998: 27). As to the normative charges implied, Keith Ansell Pearson contributes a great observation on the continuity between Bergson and Deleuze in opposition to Freud: 'This explains Bergson's interest in the *anomalies* of the life of "spirit", one that will come to inform Deleuze's analyses in the two *Cinema* books, such as deliriums, dreams, hallucinations, and so on, which, Bergson insists, are "positive facts"

that consist in the presence, and not in the absence, of something: "They seem to introduce into the mind certain new ways of feeling and thinking" ' (Ansell Pearson 2005: 5). Freudian reduction, however, makes no provision for such 'positive facts', which undermines Freud's claims to both an understanding of the *meanings* of these phenomena and to possible convalescence through psychoanalytic transference.

If we take a step back to Bergson, we could recall that for him any scientific model is based on the notion of space. Freud, however, recoils from the possibility of becoming a scientist. His magnitudes, sections of the human psyche, do not even properly *measure* the unconscious but merely subordinate it to a theoretical master plan: Freud himself, as Deleuze notes, recognises the multiplicity of libidinal 'currents that coexist in the Wolf-Man':

> That makes it all the more surprising that he treats the multiplicities of the unconscious the way he does. For him, there will always be a reduction to the One: the little scars, the little holes, become subdivisions of the great scar or supreme hole named castration; the wolves become substitutes for a single Father who turns up everywhere, or wherever they put him. (Deleuze and Guattari 1998: 31)

Bergson sees Freudian psychoanalysis (in theory and practice) as evidence for the existence of an 'integral conservation of the past' on the threshold between science and common sense (Bergson 1968: 88–9). What he means by this are the above mentioned tendencies of science to focus predominantly on what has passed and the things of common sense – on things extended in space. Thus, the hybrid tangible past subsists as a constant point of reference in psychoanalysis. It is curious, or perhaps only to be expected, that Deleuze distinguishes a function of memory which he calls the 'conservational' and associates with any pickled memories that work towards a relocation of the self into the past (Deleuze 1994: 80–3). It would be only fair to note here that the Oedipal past shares some traits of the Bergsonian (and Deleuzian) past, most importantly its ontological value. For both Freud and his two critics the past *is*, it subsists, it is never lost, it is an *everpast*. The major difference, however, is that the access to it is furnished in different ways in Freud on the one hand and in the two French philosophers on the other.

For Freud, the unconscious represents a record inscribed on the psyche, it is rewritten every moment, but always remains the same. What keeps an eye on the process is the Ego, an unwelcome answer to the Bergsonian present, the Deleuzian body without organs. The body without organs is a locus of becoming, the home of multiplicity, and the

repudiation of organic unity. Both the Ego and the body without organs are *now*, never two minutes ago or tomorrow. Even though Deleuze rarely writes of the body without organs in temporal terms, what he writes has a recognisable parallel to Bergsonian duration. The body without organs performs an ousting of the past, it makes a difference from the past the way in Bergson pure duration involves the aforementioned 'upsurge of novelty' at every stage. In one place, Deleuze explains that 'the body without organs is what remains when we take everything away' (Deleuze and Guattari 1998: 151). Deleuze qualifies this suggestion by making an important distinction – proper organisms perform the 'connective syntheses of production' while the body without organs takes care of the 'disjunctive synthesis of recording' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 12). The past is available to the body without organs through 'aberrant paths of communication between non-communicating vessels, transverse unities between elements that retain all their differences within their own particular boundaries' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 43). There is a record, but it is inconstant; the past is a body that continuously changes, the way in Bergson matter is subject to continuous alteration. In the process of becoming – which encompasses all of duration, space, and body for Bergson and Deleuze – the present is the true psychological existence, a present, as it were, untouched by the past except through the alterity of selective memory and an impetus for action.

Freud reserves the present for the Ego, the corrector of the past. When he asserts that the Ego is 'the coherent organisation of mental processes' he admits the possibility of such organisation after the fact (Freud 1999: 17). It is but a small step from here to the associationists' spatial model of consciousness. Space, for Bergson and even more for Deleuze, is the stuff of conquest and regularity. Deleuze criticises Freud severely for his letting the Ego supervene over the unconscious. The symbolism of riders-whipping-horses, the present becoming an excuse for past trauma, the layering of the psyche, presuppose a jump between simultaneity and space. The memory of the past for Freud is not selective, but solid; it does not call for action, but for retrograde psychosis. The subdivisions of the psyche (Ego, Id, Ego Ideal, and so on) line up in a strict hierarchy where everything follows neatly from everything else. It is a theatre, a place rather than a time.

V. Oedipus Unravelling

The Freudian theatre is very aptly demystified by George Dimock in his 'Anna and the Wolf-Man: Rewriting Freud's Case History'

(1995). In his article Dimock revisits the Wolf-Man's case through the double lens of the patient's late life memoirs and also of scholarship on the case after Freud. From these texts there emerges considerable evidence that Freud's reading of the patient's neurosis was marked by an unproductive tendency to over-simplify and twist the patient's variegated past experience. Following clues from Pankejeff's life story as told by Pankejeff himself, Dimock reinstates the patient's sister, Anna, as a key presence and possibly a key psychological determinant in the development of the Wolf-Man's disorder.

The first and seemingly least reliable clue Dimock pursues is a childhood photograph of the patient with his sister. Even in this dubious piece of evidence Dimock is inclined to find a peculiar filial bond indicative of co-dependency and, possibly, salient neurosis. The photograph, one among a few that Dimock discusses and reproduces, exemplifies the highly stylised but deliberate approach of turn-of-the-century family portraiture. The tight conventions it follows, however, make the accidental and the personal all the more indicative of the psychological dimension, which the sitters apparently share. Dimock admits that the photograph can only be used as a metaphorical tool – its undeniable presence does not constitute immediate fodder for analysis but it can very well be used, together with the other photographs reproduced, in considering alternatives to Freud's analytic conclusions.

The shared psychological dimension in question is one that Dimock calls the 'interpersonal', which he opposes to the 'introspective'. The interpersonal is where the entire history of the Wolf-Man's life branches out to include other actual persons (family, friends, a nanny and the larger population), their relevant experiences, and the subjective complications they occasion for each other and, of course, for the analysand. The introspective, on the other hand, refers to the subjective experiences to which each of us has privileged access. At this stage of his discussion Dimock introduces another parallel distinction through the words of Pankejeff himself: 'The Wolf-Man proclaims that what he writes is "something like a short family novel", which favours the "epic" over the "sentimental or the theatrical".'[8] The epic here assumes a parallel function to Dimock's interpersonal dimension, while the theatrical is associated with the introspective. At first glance this looks like a curious reversal of the Deleuzian sense of Freud's family theatre – the latter, after all, is seen by Deleuze as what amounts to a calcified interpersonal diorama. Dimock, however, makes it the purpose of his essay to show that Freud's dioramas *assume* an interpersonal dimension but fall short of following through with the theoretical

and practical demands this dimension makes of psychoanalysis. To go back to Dimock's photographic examples, the images undeniably represent the relevant stage sets on which respective interpersonal confluences are played out. Each photograph, however, is also markedly resistant to psychoanalytic interpretation just because it is not, by itself, a complete signifier – its claim to dramatic importance is both reinforced and undermined by its belonging to the enormous variety of episodes, attitudes and simultaneities which constitute the larger family epic.

For Freud, on the other hand, the family epic and its persistent percolations into the patient's psyche remain mostly out of reach. Dimock cites Freud's indirect apology for not having provided a fuller picture, but as Dimock notices this is not necessarily Freud's major misstep – it is rather the tendentiously static reading of Pankejeff's life that distorts Freud's search and the findings thereof. Freud's process of critically selecting bits of the narrative and endowing them with special significance must have been completely arbitrary if he ignored so much of the Wolf-Man's history.[9] By way of proof, Dimock makes a convincing case that the Oedipal theatre is just one of many dramatic stencils that fit the bill. He finds fast connections between Pankejeff's introspective reports and the cultural reality the patient grew up in. It is thus that Tolstoy's wolf-hunt scene and the subsequent reconciliation between brother and sister in *War and Peace* constitutes a rival narrative that, if transposed on Pankejeff's neurotic episodes, promises to help explain much more than Freud's trusty Oedipus ever would (Dimock 1995: 67).

For the literary to become literal, one has to have a particularly conservative approach to story-telling and story-making. Freud's approach is to look for scraps of Oedipus in the ruins of his patient's life – the Wolf-Man *also* has a suicidal sister and an erotically charged nanny, but Freud remains content with regarding such actors as superfluous to the 'real' drama of the Oedipal triangle. Another symbolic triangle – that of the number three mentioned by the patient, which Freud eagerly and entirely speculatively attributes to Pankejeff's pre-conscious memory of witnessing his parents engage in intercourse three times, might just as well be related to the three wolves that appear in a photograph of Pankejeff and other family members after, yet again, a wolf hunt. The psychoanalyst's ambition to make sense of a psychological ailment begins to look unrealistic against the plentiful muddle of such associative clusters. A possible way out is suggested but not properly theorised by the Wolf-Man himself.

What does the patient mean when he says that his memoirs favour the epic over the theatrical? One reading, as offered by Dimock, is the imperative of telling the whole story without the convenient omissions so typical of Freud's editorial approach to trauma and drama. Another interpretation, which does not contradict Dimock's but builds on it, comes from the work of Bergson and Deleuze. The metaphysical mistake of attributing spatial features to durational phenomena is very useful in deciphering Pankejeff's suggestion. If theatre is understood as a space, or at least the possibility of re-enacting the same story, Freud's fixation with applying the dramatic arch of Oedipus Rex to all and sundry psychological signposts constitutes an intrusion of a spatial model upon a variety of durational occurrences. (One does not need to be reminded of Giulio Camillo's memory theatre to be able to recognise the mixed blessing of tampering with the lived structure of mnemonic experience or any experience whatever. Camillo's claim that the memory theatre will make it possible for anyone to converse with the erudition of a Cicero belongs to the same utopian genre as Freud's ambition to make sense of man, survival, and civilisation all on the purported force of a universally applicable theatrical stencil.) The epic, on the other hand, is at least superficially easier to identify with the Bergsonian/Deleuzian notion of intensive multiplicity – the epic is most often a long literary work which relates a significant story in all aspects of its unfolding; it also represents a battlefield upon which literary licence and historical accuracy never cease to fight. Most importantly, however, the family epic Pankejeff chooses to write becomes, with its intensive multiplicity of actors, scenes and episodes, the most faithful representation of the factors that the Wolf-Man's unconscious is ever so mysteriously predicated on. This does not mean that the Wolf-Man himself would, just by writing the story, acquire the coveted clarity about these factors and the workings of his own unconscious – but writing the story anew does reconfirm the durational character of both neurosis and life, in short, of all manners of becoming.

Like Bergson's begrudged associationists Freud believes that by locating the coherence between disparate mental phenomena one is afforded an easy, commonsensical, objective way out of, and never into, becoming. As Bergson himself ingeniously puts it, 'this actual and not merely virtual perception of subdivisions in what is undivided is just what we call objectivity' (Bergson 2001: 83). Coherence is the promise of objectivity, of the divisible truth, the conquerable psyche. According to Deleuze, these tendencies are all the fault of humanity's obsession with unity, the wish to step outside of oneself and look back at oneself with

an air of Kantian disinterestedness. Both Bergson and Deleuze believe that such detachment from and spatial appropriation of different aspects of mental life is often inescapable, but always harmful.[10] They both belong to the species of philosophers Deleuze calls *doctores angelici*, abortionists of unity and angel makers (Deleuze and Guattari 1998: 6). In contrast, the associationists make determinist machines and Freud invents the theatre of stasis. Or, perhaps, they do not even invent anything but only reproduce the script and the mistakes of some prior story.

VI. The Riddle of the New

The preceding philosophical worries, if granted the interest and validity I would claim for them, yield an important meta-philosophical consequence. The consequence I refer to is that Freud's reading of his patient's story finds its place within my discussion not only with reference to the work of Bergson and Deleuze, but also with reference to the broader methodological context of Deleuze's manner of reading Freud via Bergson. Within the latter context, Freud seems to occupy an unenviable place on the continuum between creating insight and inheriting it. What Freud chooses to learn from his patient's story is precisely what fits his own intellectual and narrative constructs prior to ever meeting the patient. This resistance to novelty is neatly mirrored in Freud's substantive theory itself. Deleuze's misgivings, via Bergson, about the stagnant spatialisation of the Oedipal model seem to be, in part, misgivings about Freud's reactionary brand of interpretation. Only through such limited interpretation does it become possible for Freud to declare therapeutic success where there is none – a success which registers more as an act of appropriation than as an act of understanding. Ultimately, the Wolf-Man's psychological inscriptions are redacted so that they can be folded neatly into the jealous inheritance of the self-contained Freudian scroll.

This approach is the exact opposite of how Deleuze engages with Bergson's heritage. In his application of Bergsonian notions of duration, multiplicity and becoming to his anti-psychoanalytic project Deleuze simultaneously honours Bergson's insight and writes it anew. As an example of referring to a past, be it in psychoanalysis or its philosophical counterpart, what Deleuze does mirrors the theoretical underpinnings of Bergson's theory – just as Bergson insists on the dynamic nature of the past's continuous redrawing, Deleuze insists on the dynamic reconsideration of prior thought. The possibility of reading Freud

through Bergson is undoubtedly one that Deleuze creates. Among the virtues of taking such a licence is that it opens the way for subsequent commentators to multiply the particular chain of interpretation even further.

Notes

1. 'Update' is here used in the sense of a restorer's effort, while 'upgrade' is associated with the work of the inventor.
2. Kant's doctrine of the faculties was apparently influenced by Leibniz's idea of pre-established harmony. In his *Kant's Critical Philosophy* Deleuze picks up on Kant's fascination with Leibnizian harmony and tries to show that Kant's enhancement of Leibniz's meaning has the limitation of allowing apriority to suffocate the free accord of the faculties (cf. Deleuze 1993: 22–4). It is in no way bizarre that a similar treatment of the same topic lurks behind Bergson's exposition in *Time and Free Will*.
3. One emblematic mention of the unconscious in Bergson is found in his *Matter and Memory*: 'And we have expressed how the cerebral lesion may effect this weakening, without the necessity of supposing any sort of provision of memories stored in the brain. What the injury really attacks are the sensory and motor regions corresponding to this class of perception, and especially those adjuncts through which they may be set in motion from within, so that memory, finding nothing to catch hold of, ends by becoming practically powerless: now, in psychology, powerlessness means unconsciousness' (Bergson 1988: 176).
4. Deleuze and Guattari's attempt to reserve a genre slot for their contribution to philosophy reads: 'RHIZOMATICS = SCHIZOANALYSIS = STRATO-ANALYSIS = PRAGMATICS = MICROPOLITICS'. To this, a page later they add 'POP ANALYSIS' (Deleuze and Guattari 1998: 22–4).
5. May any omission of Guattari's name with reference to the two works not be regarded by the reader as discounting Guattari's contribution, but as a matter of mere brevity.
6. 'This operation is accomplished by associating the dream with the tale, "The Wolf and the Seven Kid-Goats" (only six of which get eaten). We witness Freud's reductive glee; we literally see multiplicity leave the wolves to take the shape of goats that have absolutely nothing to do with the story. Seven wolves that are only kid-goats. Six wolves: the seventh goat (the Wolf-Man himself) is hiding in the clock. Five wolves: he might have seen his parents make love at five o'clock, and the roman numeral V is associated with the erotic spreading of a woman's legs. Three wolves: the parents may have made love three times. Two wolves: the first coupling the child may have seen was the two parents *more ferarum*, or perhaps even two dogs. One wolf: the wolf is the father, as we all knew from the start. Zero wolves: he lost his tail, he is not just a castrater but also castrated. Who is Freud trying to fool?' (Deleuze and Guattari 1998: 28).
7. '[I]t is at the highest point of this depersonalisation that someone can be *named*, receives his or her family name or first name, acquires the most intense discernibility in the instantaneous apprehension of the multiplicities belonging to him or her, and to which he or she belongs' (Deleuze and Guattari 1998: 35).
8. 'Whatever else these terms may signify, they point away from introspection toward the interpersonal, away from psychoanalysis toward the broader social and historical arena' (Dimock 1995: 54).

9. 'With respect to the full range of human experience, a single dream at four years of age and its latent content, a primal scene at one and a half, cannot be presented as inexhaustibly meaningful without becoming narratologically oppressive by virtue of what they exclude from consideration. Freud's psychoanalytic drama leaves no room for, among other things, intersubjectivity in the form of family history. The Wolf-Man's memoirs address, however inadequately, the casualties of this exclusion' (Dimock 1995: 59).
10. In Bergson's discussion of free will, we read: 'But the moments at which we thus grasp ourselves are rare, and that is just why we are rarely free. The greater part of the time we live outside ourselves, hardly perceiving anything of ourselves but our own ghost, a colourless shadow which pure duration projects into homogeneous space. Hence our life unfolds in space rather than in time; we live for the external world rather than for ourselves; we speak rather than think; we "are acted" rather than act ourselves' (Bergson 2001: 231).

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A Deleuzian Cineosis: Cinematic Semiosis and Syntheses of Time

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Abstract

In *Cinema 1* Deleuze creates the taxonomy of the movement-image by extending Henri Bergson's account of the sensory-motor process in *Matter and Memory* through the semiotic system of Charles Sanders Peirce. Through this nexus of Bergson and Peirce, Deleuze can account for each image and sign, their impetus and their relationship to one another. In contrast, the taxonomy of the time-image, the focus of *Cinema 2*, is given no such genesis. Rather, the images and signs appear *in situ*, as if ready-made. This article proposes that the impetus for the taxonomy of the time-image lies in the account given of the three passive syntheses of time in *Difference and Repetition*, and that the nine aspects of the passive syntheses can be seen to correspond to the nine proper signs of the time-image.

Keywords: active syntheses, cinema, cineosis, Deleuze, movement-image, three passive syntheses, time-image

What is the underlying structure of Deleuze's time-image? Asking such a question may be considered controversial, heretical even. The assertion that there is any underlying structure to unearth in the *Cinema* books may at first appear as an allegation. Yet it is clear where Deleuze gets the concepts for the movement-image. He begins with the sensory-motor process described by Bergson in *Matter and Memory* (perception→affection→action) and then extends the typology through certain iterations of the semiotic systems of Peirce. This provides an underlying structure, no matter how much Deleuze may trouble or deterritorialise it, through any number of variances and contradictions.

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Given this, should we accept that the time-image concepts and their organisation have fallen from the sky? To put this another way, can we simply say that all the various components of the time-image come directly from Deleuze's observation of modern(ist) cinema as an expression of the Bergsonian concept of pure memory (different in kind to Bergson's sensory-motor process)? My argument is that there is indeed an underlying organisation, or structure, to the time-image concepts, and one that precedes the Bergsonian inspiration.

There is enough evidence to justify taking such a claim seriously. For instance, in the 'Preface to the French Edition' of *Cinema 1*, Deleuze writes that the book is 'a taxonomy, an attempt at the classification of images and signs. But this first volume has to content itself with determining the elements, the elements of only one part of the classification' (Deleuze 2002a: xiv). Does this not hint that the second volume will determine its elements as another part of the classification? Indeed, in *Cinema 2* Deleuze writes that the time-image is a 'second dimension of pure, non-linguistic semiotics... a whole series of new signs' (Deleuze 2001: 34). The taxonomic creation is a central aspect of both *Cinema* books. Consider, for example, Deleuze's response to a question by Bonitzer, Narboni et al.:

> [Q:] *What strikes us in your two books on cinema is something that one already finds in your other books, but never to this extent, namely, taxonomy – the love of classification. Have your always had this tendency, or did it develop over time? Does classification have a particular connection to cinema?*
>
> [A:] Yes, there's nothing more fun than classifications or tables. They're like the outline of a book, or its vocabulary, its glossary. It's not the essential thing, which comes next, but it's an indispensible work of preparation. Nothing is more beautiful than the classifications of natural history... For example, I'm attempting a classification of light in the cinema. (Deleuze 2000: 367–8).

Deleuze, it is clear, does not fear being held to account for his tendency towards taxonomy, for his tendency towards structure. As Philippe Mengue has recently commented, in another context, Deleuze's 'philosophy is thought to constitute an unrestricted apology for all forms of deterritorialisation. But that is a partial and partisan view.' Mengue believes 'we are entitled to think that Deleuze does not disdain the problem of unity' (Mengue 2008: 237). In other words, Deleuze is concerned with the way in which structures arise, come atumbling, and are reconstituted, the way in which territories are deterritorialised

and reterritorialised (cf. Parr 2005: 67). As Deleuze and Guattari put it in another terminological register: 'there are knots of arborescence on rhizomes, and rhizomatic offshoots in roots . . . The important point is that the root-tree and canal-rhizome are not two opposed models' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 22).

Take Ronald Bogue's wonderful *Deleuze on Cinema*. In chapter three, 'Eighteen signs (more or less)', Bogue writes:

> At a minimum, the signs of the movement-image are fourteen . . . At most, they number twenty-three . . . But obviously, the tally is insignificant, for Deleuze is no ordinary system builder . . . his taxonomy is a generative device meant to create new terms for talking about new ways of seeing. But if the minute terminological differentiations are unimportant, the concepts and logic of their creation are crucial. (Bogue 2003: 104)

Prior to this, Bogue has, astutely, compiled comparative tables of the movement-image concepts from the text of *Cinema 1*, its glossary and recapitulation in chapter two of *Cinema 2*. The tables show variations, variations which seemingly have a number of inconsistencies. This inconsistency (I would guess) leads Bogue to his conclusion that 'the tally is insignificant'. However, how are we to square this with the claim that 'the concepts and logic of their creation are crucial'? Surely taking stock of the movement-image signs, the very concepts themselves, *is* the logic of their creation and therefore a significant part of understanding them? As Deleuze writes, it is their 'differentiation' and 'specification' (Deleuze 2001: 29).

At this point, it perhaps becomes apparent that, due to Deleuze's procedures, unearthing any underlying structure will necessarily involve an act of reconstitution, the reverse engineering of a machine that was never fully constructed and so is open to a certain amount of interpretation. An act of reterritorialisation? Is this a bad thing? Or is it not this that makes it essentially a creative endeavour? After all, did not Deleuze (famously and perhaps too often quoted) conceive his own approach to 'the history of philosophy as a kind of buggery . . . '?

> I imagined myself getting onto the back of an author, and giving him a child, which would be his and which would at the same time be a monster. It is very important that it should be his child, because the author actually had to say everything I made him say. But it also had to be a monster because it was necessary to go through all kinds of decenterings, slips, break ins, secret emissions, which I really enjoyed. (Deleuze 2002b: 8)

My own monstrous enjoyment of the *Cinema* books can be called a cineosis, an attempt at a reconstitution of the underlying structures of

the two-fold cinematic semiosis: the signs of the movement-image and the time-image.

If Bogue resists the lure of resolving the taxonomic tables for the movement-image, there is not even an attempt at tabulating the time-image. This is not surprising. Unlike the movement-image, Deleuze does not hint at an underlying schema. But what if such exists, hidden away, so to speak? One way to explore this possibility is to identify and specify the concepts proper to the time-image. This, I believe, can only be done by picking up where Bogue has left off. In other words, reconstituting and resolving the movement-image taxonomy, and seeing what is, so to speak, left over. This is an essential first step towards figuring out the time-image taxonomy. Yet simply tabulating the signs of the movement- and time-image is not the crucial issue. What is critical is that the tabulation of the time-image concepts (their number, their organisation) reveals their impetus, their source. Just as the movement-image has its beginnings in Bergson's sensory-motor process extended by Peirce's semiotic system, could some equivalent, some pre-existing organisation, be the stimulus for the time-image? The underlying system, I argue, is the three passive syntheses of time that first appear in *Difference and Repetition*. As Deleuze has stated: '*Difference and Repetition* was the first book in which I tried to "do philosophy". All that I have done since is connected to this book, including what I wrote with Guattari (obviously, I speak from my own point of view)' (Deleuze 2004a: xiii).

I am not the first to propose such a link between the *Cinema* books and the three passive syntheses. D. N. Rodowick, for instance, in his seminal exploration of the philosophical antecedents and connectives of Deleuze's work on film, writes: 'Cinematic movement-images emerge from the regime of universal variation where "matter = image" ... Alternatively, time-images emerge from what Deleuze calls, in *Difference and Repetition*, the three passive syntheses of time' (Rodowick 1997: 127). Rodowick leaves it, more or less, at this. More recently David Martin-Jones, Richard Rushton, Joe Hughes and Patricia Pisters have gone on to explore, in their own way, connections between the *Cinema* books and the three passive syntheses. As we will see a little later, they all reach very different conclusions. Yet all agree on one point, that some, or all, of the three passive syntheses are aligned with components of the movement-image.

I follow Rodowick in my approach. In so doing I will explore how the particular concepts, images and signs of the time-image can be said to have their foundation in the three passive syntheses. Further, while Bergson's concepts of the sensory-motor process and pure memory

in *Matter and Memory* provide the visible framework of the *Cinema* books, it is Deleuze's own work in *Difference and Repetition* that constitutes a hidden structure. For the three passive syntheses operate in consort with what Deleuze calls the active syntheses, which can in turn be seen as a general conceptual figure for the movement-image taxonomy.

I. Taxonomy of Time-Images: From Bergson to Simondon, Nietzsche, Heidegger

For Deleuze, what marks the emergence of the time-image is an explosion of the signs of the action-image which cohere the co-ordinates of the movement-image and – as a consequence – delinks affection-images, perception-images and mental images. This delinkage is achieved through the reintroduction of aberrations which the movement-image (from the early days of cinema) attempted to annul (through, for example, an integrated soundtrack, naturalistic colour, invisible montage, and so on). In this way filmmakers discovered pure optical and sound situations, situations where characters no longer act (no longer resolve the chaos). But this is only the intimation of a new kind of cinema. Something else needs to happen. The pure optical and pure sound situations – opsigns and sonsigns – need to be relinked differently and a new cinema built from this ground up. According to Deleuze, opsigns and sonsigns are relinked in a number of ways. The actual (on-screen) image is coerced to open up to its virtual component creating hyalosigns. These 'mutual images' are combined as narratives resulting in the emergence of chronosigns (Deleuze 2001: 78). Chronosigns operate by creating non-linear or serial narratives and go on to 'constitute a new image of thought' (Deleuze 2001: 215). This new image of thought Deleuze names the noosign which tears thinking away from habitual (movement-image) mental images. In this way time-images are also lectosigns, visual and auditory concepts that must be read rather than simply seen.

The etymologies of the names of the time-image offer a way of exploring them in more detail. Opsigns and sonsigns are simply contractions of the terms optical sign and sound sign, pure optical and sound situations which defy classification through the movement-image taxonomy. Hyalosigns are inspired by the work of Gilbert Simondon, who uses the idea of the crystal (from which the prefix *hyal* – meaning 'glass' – is derived) as a parallel for the process of individuation.[1] Chronosign seems to be a neologism. However, as a synonym for the

time-image the concepts it describes (memory as aspects of the past, present and future) can be seen to emerge from Bergson's *Matter and Memory*. Noosigns are inspired by Martin Heidegger and his discussion of the nature of thought (Heidegger 1972: 3; Deleuze 2001: 156, 156 n2, 308). Finally, lectosigns appear to be yet another of Deleuze's neologisms and refer to the process of reading time-images, from the Latin *lecto*. All interesting stuff. However, while Deleuze's concepts can be seen to display a philosophical consonance in the way he deploys them in *Cinema 2*, it is clear that looking at the various sources of these cinematographic concepts betrays no contingent structure between the different images. Rather, the first clue to uncovering the underlying structure of the time-image is that only hyalosigns, chronosigns and noosigns – not opsigns/sonsigns or lectosigns – can be decomposed into triadic sign structures.

For instance, hyalosigns seem to be decomposed into avatars which describe properties of crystalline formations. Deleuze takes the example of the crystal and identifies how filmmakers have reflected the multiplicitous facia of crystals and the growth of a crystal from a pre-crystal. He identifies three broad trends which form the avatars of the hyalosign: 'two mirrors face to face', 'the limpid and the opaque' and 'the seed and the environment' (Deleuze 2001: 71). Each perform exchanges between the actual on-screen image and its virtual connections off-screen (on the brain screen).

The avatars of chronosigns have a more direct relationship with the properties of pure memory discussed by Bergson in *Matter and Memory*, but are also extended by Nietzsche's concept of the 'will to power' (Nietzsche 1967; Deleuze 2001: 141). Deleuze specifies three types of chronosign that correspond to the three aspects of time in-and-for-itself. 'Sheets of the past' explore the way in which memories are 'no longer confused with the space which serves as its place' (Deleuze 2001: 100). Instead memories explore time itself – no longer functioning as a repository of the present, but as a product of the present. 'Points [or peaks] of the present' explore the way in which any present moment is fundamentally divided between the present-in-itself, the past and the future (Deleuze 2001: 100). It is this aspect that can make time 'frightening and inexplicable' for the possibility of action is torn between living in the moment, reacting to the influences of the past and acting for future effects (Deleuze 2001: 101). Deleuze refers to these two aspects of chronosigns as the 'order of time' in that they undermine the linear chronology of past, present and future (Deleuze 2001: 155). The third avatar of the chronosign – which is orientated towards the future – is the

'power of the false' and Deleuze delineates this function as the 'series of time' (Deleuze 2001: 126, 155, 133, 136). A serial organisation disconnects the continuity of time that constructs the character in the film as locked into a narrative where the present is a product of the past and the future a consequence. Rather than this closed circuit, a serial organisation is one in which time is organised into images in-and-for-themselves which while independent have a multiplicitous virtual presence with each other. Deleuze puts it thus, 'the power of the false exists only from the perspective of a series of powers, always referring to each other and passing into one another' (Deleuze 2001: 133). As in serialism in music, which attempts to overthrow traditional harmonics without descending into chaos, fundamental elements are continuously re-arranged exploring the difference in repetition.

Finally, the avatars of the noosigns would initially seem to emerge directly from cinema itself. How does a filmmaker of the time-image capture thought on-screen? To use mental images (relation-, recollection- and dream-images, expressions of thought, habitual memory) would mean a return to the coordinates of the movement-image. Methods other than this must be found. Indeed, for Deleuze, the answer seems beguilingly simple. On the one hand, thought appears through the environments of the *mise-en-scène*. As Deleuze writes in *Cinema 2*, 'landscapes are mental states', thus the *mise-en-scène* is 'the brain' (Deleuze 2001: 188, 205). On the other hand thought appears through the body of the actor (Deleuze 2001: 205). Deleuze sees the body as having two poles: those of 'attitude' and 'gest' (Deleuze 2001: 188, 205): Gest, a term taken from Brecht, describes the way in which an actor can foreground gesture and performance. Attitude describes a body that does not act, that is displayed in its everydayness.

That only the time-images of hyalosigns, chronosigns and noosigns can be decomposed into specific signs is more than a detail. It intimates not only the way in which the components of the time-image are organised, but also the difference at conceptual level between them and opsigns/sonsigns and lectosigns. Opsigns and sonsigns describe the actual visual and auditory components of a time-image film in general, after the collapse of the coordinates of the movement-image. Deleuze writes 'we gave the name opsign (and sonsign) to the actual image cut off from its motor extension' (Deleuze 2001: 69). They are 'slivers', the images resulting in the despecification of movement-images prior to rejoining each other as time-images (hyalosigns, chronosigns and noosigns) (Deleuze 2001: 69). Similarly, it is clear in Deleuze's discussion of lectosigns that this term is used for the way in which time-images

Table 1.1. Time-image: images and signs

Images	Signs		
0 Opsigns and sonsigns			
1 Hyalosigns	Mirrors	Limpid and opaque	Seed and environment
2 Chronosigns	Sheets of the past	Peaks of the present	Powers of the false
3 Noosigns	Body of *gest*	Body of attitude	Brain
			Lectosigns ∞

(again, in general) need to be read rather than be seen. This is the 'final aspect of the direct time-image, the common limit' (Deleuze 2001: 279). Thus, if opsigns and sonsigns are actual material images appearing on screen decoupled from each other to instead give on to the virtual, lectosigns are virtual images appearing on the brain screen as an effect of the actual filmic process, the former from the point of view of the image, the latter from the point of view of the film as a complex nexus of powers. In this way, the domains of the time-image that appear between opsigns/sonsigns and lectosigns can be called the three time-images proper. Hyalosigns, chronosigns and noosigns are, on the one hand, complex compositions of opsigns and sonsigns. On the other hand, the images and signs of the time-image constitute a decomposition of lectosigns.

The time-image proper: three times three. Nine signs. Three connected concepts, each with three sub-categories. Where do we see such a structure in Deleuze's other work? The answer, of course, is in the three passive syntheses of time and the three dimensions of each as originally set out in the second chapter of *Difference and Repetition*. As Jay Lampert summarises:

> While in one sense there are three distinct logics of time corresponding to the forms of present, past, and future – the logic of succession, the logic of co-existence, and the logic of dark precursors, respectively – the logic of succession has its own way of conceiving the present, past, and future, and the logics of co-existence and of precursors each have their own way of conceiving all three. As a result, there exist nine forms of present, past, and future . . . (Lampert 2006: 8)

But is this any more than coincidence?

II. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition* and the Three Passive Syntheses

The central concern of *Difference and Repetition* is to attack concepts of identity and overturn philosophies of representation in order to set free an alternative 'image of thought' (Deleuze 2004a: 164). Deleuze's approach is to conduct a number of sorties into the many and varied instances of identity and representation from Aristotle via Hegel to Freud and beyond. The concept of identity, for Deleuze, is problematic because it relies upon reconstituting the same at the expense of the different. It is a concept that depends upon annulling difference in-itself. It is a concept that depends upon exclusion. It is a concept that relies upon negativity – this is this because it is not that. The concept of identity is fundamental to representation which proposes – firstly – an object and its representation as separate but – secondly – a verisimilitude between the two. Representational relationships pretend to truth through identity. Deleuze's programme is to replace the philosophy of representation with expression, another kind of image of thought that arises through an alternative series of philosophies, from the Stoics to Spinoza, Nietzsche and Bergson (Deleuze 2004a: 346). Fundamental to achieving this is replacing identity with difference and repetition: the repetition of difference, the difference in repetition, taking the concepts of difference and repetition 'together rather than separately' (Deleuze 2004a: xiii). For Deleuze both concepts have suffered the same fate, which is to say, neither had been fully developed as concepts in-and-of-themselves. Both concepts, in their own way, have been developed in relation, opposition and subordination to the concept of identity. Setting these concepts free is thus the first major activity of the book. Deleuze approaches this from a number of directions (though, crucially, they are not designed to 'add up' so much as create a nexus). One of the most famous of these approaches is the section where Deleuze explores (after Kant and Husserl) the three passive syntheses of time.

How does an organisation such as a body emerge out of the dark chaos of the universe? According to Deleuze a body exists through spatial stability and temporal fusion. A body is spatial in the sense that it is a contraction of the matter of the universe, a synthesis of physical stuff. A body is temporal in that it perseveres in some way in the present, past and future. These are the extensive and intensive dimensions of a body. Historically, philosophy has tended to focus upon the spatial (which results in identity) rather than the temporal (which relates to difference and repetition). Deleuze thus concentrates upon this temporal dimension

and specifies three domains, the time of the present, the past and the future. First, the self is temporal through the contraction (synthesis) of different instants into a now. Second, the self is temporal because it has stored up compacted (synthesised) moments as memories. Third, the self is temporal through a continual reencountering (synthesising) of the permeable wall of the future. These three aspects – or syntheses – of time form the temporal nexus of the self prior to consciousness. In this way the self is a passive temporal entity before locating itself spatially in a body in a universe, prior to the active awareness of consciousness (Deleuze 2004a: 100). Deleuze names this temporal primacy the three passive syntheses of time. Each passive synthesis has its own domain. Thus, each of the passive syntheses has own way of constituting the past, present and future, as decomposing into a past, a present and a future. Consequently there are three aspects to each of the domains of the three passive syntheses. In other words, there are nine dimensions of time. The Deleuzian self is a complex repetition of temporal manifestations of difference.

The first passive synthesis of time (the 'originary synthesis') is that of the 'lived, or living, present'. It is the ever-present now, the nowness of the now . . . a 'succession' or 'repetition of instants' (Deleuze 2004a: 91). The primary aspect of this contraction is that each autonomous present instant appears seamlessly as a flow. However, this flow also depends upon the future and the past, for the present negotiates the flow of future instants into past instants. So, for Deleuze, the first passive synthesis of time has the present in ascendancy and 'to it belong both the past and the future', they are aspects, or facets of the present (Deleuze 2004a: 91). So future and past are not distinct entities, but the future of the present and the past of the present with respect to the present of the present. This contraction of time both foresees the future and preserves the past but only in as much as it gives 'direction to the arrow of time' (Deleuze 2004a: 91). The past is a form of the present through 'retention', a reservoir of present instants synthesised in the service of the present, for the present. The future is a form of the present as 'expectation', that the next now will follow this now. Thus, for Deleuze, this passive synthesis 'constitutes our habit of living', it is the 'thousands of habits of which we are composed – these contractions, contemplations, pretensions, presumptions, satisfactions, fatigues; these variable presents' (Deleuze 2004a: 94, 100). 'This self', Deleuze makes clear, 'is by no means simple' (Deleuze 2004a: 100).

The second passive synthesis of time is deduced from the first. 'The paradox of the present', writes Deleuze, is to 'constitute time while

passing the time constituted', thus a 'necessary conclusion – *that there must be another time in which the first synthesis of time can occur*. This refers us to the second synthesis' (Deleuze 2004a: 100). Deleuze contrasts the first and second syntheses in this way: if the first synthesis is the 'foundation' of time, the second is 'ground', and the 'ground' might be thought of as the aspect of time which supports the 'foundation' (Deleuze 2004a: 100). Another image: the first synthesis of time is the present, it flows from the now to the past, and from the future to the now – like a river, and the river flows over an earth which supports it. This is the second passive synthesis of time, the ground which allows the present to pass. If the present was the now, and gave direction to time, the past is a chasm of the then. Deleuze names the second passive synthesis 'memory' (Deleuze 2004a: 101). Memory, in this way, is the 'pure, general, *a priori* element of all time' (Deleuze 2004a: 103–4). It is more than just memory in the common usage of the term (just as the first passive synthesis – as will be explored a little later – extends beyond the common sense usage of habit). This pure past is a dominion of paradoxes: 'first paradox: the contemporaneity of the past with the present that it *was* ... Second paradox ... *all* of the past coexists with the new present', the present is merely the razor's edge of generalised past (Deleuze 2004a: 103). Further – third paradox – 'the pure element of the past in general pre-exists the passing present' (Deleuze 2004a: 104). Final paradox, there are an 'infinity of levels' to the past (Deleuze 2004a: 105). From the second paradox we see that the past's relationship with the present is one of domination, the weight of the past bears down on a present which is merely the focal point. This is what leads Deleuze to call the present of the past 'destiny' (Deleuze 2004a: 105). The future of the past, as we have seen with the third paradox, is the way in which we can 'penetrate' the second passive synthesis (Deleuze 2004a: 106). Deleuze calls this 'reminiscence', and – he makes this clear – reminiscence is 'involuntary' (Deleuze 2004a: 107). And this is where the power of the future of the past lies. Thus the infinite levels of the fourth paradox.

It is the power of the future in the past that leads to the conclusion there must be a third passive synthesis. Thus, if the passive synthesis of habit threatens towards consistency and the passive synthesis of memory threatens to close in upon itself, it is a third passive synthesis that 'fractures' this line and closure, which opens up the passive syntheses to life, the universe and everything (Deleuze 2004a: 109). It is a 'caesura' (Deleuze 2004a: 111). It does this because while the first passive synthesis has the future as expectation and the second passive synthesis has it as reminiscence, the third passive synthesis has the future

Table 2.1. The nine dimensions of the three passive syntheses of time

Passive syntheses		Dimensions	
First passive synthesis	Past of the present	**Present the living present**	Future of the the present
Habit	(retention)		(expectation)
Second passive synthesis	**Past the pure past**	Present of the past	Future of the past
Memory		(destiny)	(reminiscence)
Third passive synthesis	Past of the future	Present of the future	**Future the empty future**
Caesura	(experience)	(metamorphosis)	

as an 'empty form of time' (Deleuze 2004a: 108). If the first passive synthesis of time constituted the ground, the second the foundation, the third has 'overturned its own ground' (Deleuze 2004a: 111). The future is unknowable, 'dark', but there are possibilities, 'precursors' (Deleuze 2004a: 145). Its dimensions are the past of the future, this is the past as 'experience', but not one of completion, rather of an experience that is incomplete and reeks of the 'act that is too big' (Deleuze 2004a: 112). The dimension of the present of the future Deleuze names 'metamorphosis', a change or 'a becoming-equal to the act' (Deleuze 2004a: 112). This is the way the empty future allows the present to vary. This is freedom, of a kind.

In summary, the first passive synthesis of time constitutes, for Deleuze, the 'lived, or living, present' and views the past as retention and the future in expectation (Deleuze 2004a: 91). The second passive synthesis of time constitutes, for Deleuze, the 'pure past' and views the present as a destiny and the future as a reminiscence (Deleuze 2004a: 99). The third passive synthesis of time constitutes, for Deleuze 'the pure and empty form of time' which is essentially 'belief in and of the future' and views the past as experience and the present as metamorphosis (Deleuze 2004a: 108). Habit, memory and belief. To be, being and becoming. Foundation, ground and ungrounding. Time's arrow, circularity and eternal return. The three domains of passive synthesis.[2]

What has all of this to do with the cinema? My argument is that Deleuze structures the three domains of the time-image proper (hyalosigns, chronosigns and noosigns) and their nine constituent signs on the three repetitions of the passive syntheses of time and the nine dimensions of temporal difference and repetition. Such a claim must, of course, be tested. The domains of the time-image and the dimensions of

the passive syntheses must be mapped. Some kind of correspondence at conceptual level must be demonstrated.

However, before confronting the devil of such detail, we should first anticipate an objection. It might be posed thus: surely the first passive synthesis of time, the passive synthesis of habit, corresponds to Bergson's habitual memory, the crib and grave of the sensory-motor system... surely the first passive synthesis of time relates to the movement-image? This objection must be addressed, for it seems, on the face of it, quite unarguable. Indeed, a number of writers have put forward just such, or very similar, proposals. In a short discussion in *Deleuze, Cinema and National Identity*, David Martin-Jones argues that the first passive synthesis of habit aligns with the movement-image components of perception-, affection- and action-images; while the second passive synthesis of memory aligns with the mental image category of recollection-images discussed early on in *Cinema 2*. Thus, the third passive synthesis of time aligns with the time-image (Martin-Jones 2006: 60–2). Correspondingly, in a more sustained argument, Richard Rushton, in 'Passions and Actions: Deleuze's Cinematographic Cogito', sees the spectator of the modern cinema encountering film through the third passive synthesis (Rushton 2008). Joe Hughes' 'Schizoanalysis and the Phenomenology of Cinema' is a very different kettle of fish. In a very sophisticated argument that takes in not only *Difference and Repetition* but also *The Logic of Sense* and *Anti-Oedipus*, Hughes schematises thus:

1. Material field	(plane of immanence)
2. First passive synthesis	(perception-image)
3. Second passive synthesis	(affection-image)
4. Third passive synthesis	(action-image)
5. Failure of the third synthesis	(crisis of the action-image)
6. Pure thought, empty time	(pure thought, empty time)

(Hughes 2008: 25)

Hughes is persuasive, his approach anchored within phenomenological coordinates, exploring not only the aforementioned texts but also Kant, Husserl, and Husserl's reading of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, both the A and B editions. The most recent – and radical – contribution comes from Patricia Pisters in 'Synaptic Signals: Time Travelling Through the Brain in the Neuro-Image', and, more fully, in *The Neuro-Image: A Deleuzian Film-Philosophy of Digital Screen Culture*. Pisters aligns the movement-image with the first passive synthesis; the time-image with the second passive synthesis; and creates a new

image – the 'neuro-image' – for the third passive synthesis. This exciting conceptual creation describes, for Pisters, the 'temporal dimensions of schizoanalysis' (Pisters 2011: 261).

Thus, before we can suggest that the three passive syntheses correspond to the three types of time-image, we must initially demonstrate that the first passive synthesis of time does not align with the movement-image, nor indeed, with Bergsonian habitual memory. This will take us a rather circuitous route. However, this is all for the good. Doing so will allow us to propose another, very different, relationship between the syntheses of time and the movement-image.

III. The Dualism That Constitutes a Continual Upheaval in Philosophy

To begin with, let us briefly remind ourselves of the organising principles of the movement-image. Deleuze sets up a correspondence between Bergson's concepts that describe the world of matter (perception→affection→action) and the films of the so-called classical cinema. These movies organise themselves around the sensory-motor response: a character sees, feels and reacts and the act changes the world of the film. From this correspondence Deleuze formulates the initial coordinates of the movement-image: perception-images, affection-images and action-images. Perception-images: images in long shot, describing the vision of a character or a camera consciousness. Affection-images: close-up images of the face, or images in close-up that evoke an emotional response. Action-images: images in medium shot, duels, investigations, discoveries. Together these three different types of images make possible the description of different types of film, but are not enough to describe the classical cinema. Deleuze needs more coordinates, a larger audio-visual conceptual toolkit within this framework. He finds inspiration in the semiotics of C. S. Peirce.

Deleuze evokes a correspondence between the Bergsonian philosophy of matter and the semiotic system of Peirce: first the image affects us; second, we act upon the image; third, the image enters into thought. Yet this correspondence is not without some give. For instance, Peirce's topography begins with how an image affects us, whereas this is not the first category in Bergson, which is perception. Also, Peirce's schema passes beyond action, seemingly the final category in Bergson. In order to reconcile the differences between the two schemas Deleuze invents corresponding terms for each of the other's concepts. He labels Bergsonian perception as having 'zeroness' in reference to Peirce (saying

Peirce takes perception as a given). Peircian thirdness, for Deleuze, describes 'relation' in reference to Bergson and can be thought of as 'the closure of deduction' (Deleuze 2001: 32). In Bergsonian terms this can be seen as a labelling of what Bergson calls 'habitual memory' (Bergson 1991: 85). For Bergson, habitual memory underpins the sensory-motor schema (perception→affection→action) causing recognition and invoking automatic responses. The automatic response is a habit stored up in the body but 'set in motion... by an initial impulse' (Bergson 1991: 80). Simply put, our bodies obey habitual laws based upon a repetition of the perception→affection→action chain. Deleuze uses this compound of Peircian thirdness (thought) and habitual memory (relation) to designate the cinematic concept of the mental image. Mental images have three coordinates. Relation-images, which represent the thoughts of characters on-screen in objects and symbols. Recollection-images, which represent thought through flashbacks. And dream-images, which represent thought as hallucination, from fantasy to nightmares. Thus, for Deleuze, the classical cinema can think in a number of ways. In the first instance 'action, and also perception and affection, are framed in a fabric of relations... [a] chain of relations' (Deleuze 2002a: 200). Another way of representing thought on screen is through the flashback which indicates 'a causality which is psychological, but still analogous to a sensory-motor determinism, and, despite its circuits, only confirms the progression of linear narrative' (Deleuze 2001: 48). Finally, with dream-images there is a weakening the bonds between perception, affection and action yet at the same time they are reconstituted in another narrative in an elsewhere. As Deleuze comments 'dream-images... project the sensory-motor situation to infinity... but we do not, in this way, leave [it] behind' (Deleuze 2001: 273). Mental images are thus expressive images within the domain of the movement-image, classical images of thought. As Peirce puts it, in his description of thirdness (in what could be a parody of a scene from an early German synchronous sound picture):

> our [man], unable to shut out the piercing sound [of a whistle], jumps up and seeks to make his escape by the door... but the instant our man opens the door let us say the whistle ceases. Much relieved, he thinks he will return to his seat, and so shuts the door, again. No sooner, however, has he done so than the whistle recommences. He asks himself whether the shutting of the door had anything to do with it; and once more opens the mysterious portal. As he opens it, the sound ceases. He is now in a third state of mind: he is Thinking. That is, he is aware of learning... and learning is the means by which we pass from ignorance to knowledge (Peirce 2004).

For Deleuze, 'thirdness perhaps finds its most adequate representation in relation' (Deleuze 2002a: 197). Yet the mental images of recollections and dreams also operate in this domain: recollection-images 'seize a former present in the past and thus respect the empirical progression of time' while dream-images conjure up a 'metamorphosis of the situation' by linking dream situation to waking situation and so negotiating the latter through the former (Deleuze 2001: 273). While it is not difficult to assign these mental images to three aspects of time – the present (relation), the past (recollection) and the future (dreams) – they remain in the movement-image, they are spatialised, materialised images of time. So the question remains the same (though seems to have taken on more force): do not mental images – Bergsonian habitual memory – correspond exactly to the first passive synthesis of time? The first passive synthesis constitutes, for Deleuze, the 'lived, or living, present' and views the past as retention and the future as expectation (Deleuze 2001: 91). It is time's arrow, the passive synthesis that gives direction to time, that structures the past, present and future in succession. Is this not recollection-image, relation-image and dream-image? Is the first passive synthesis not the classical image of thought that Deleuze sets up in order to overturn it with the second and third passive synthesis?

Perhaps not.[3] Despite initial appearances, mental images (traditional images of thought that reinscribe the perception, affection and action of the movement-image) are not cinematographic concepts that align with the first passive synthesis of time . . . though this is not to say that mental images and the first passive synthesis are not closely related. Indeed, unpicking these relationships is essential. Let us return to *Difference and Repetition* and listen closely to what Deleuze has to say of the first passive synthesis of time, and the way in which it extends itself. On the one hand – and as we have already seen – it extends into the second and third passive syntheses. From the habituation of the present to the pure memory of the past and finally to the empty, creative future. On the other hand – and this is crucial – the first passive synthesis also extends into active syntheses. At the same time that the first passive synthesis of time is happening, something else occurs: 'the past is no longer the immediate past of retention but the reflective past of representation, of reflected and reproduced particularity'. And 'the future also ceases to be the immediate future of anticipation in order to become the reflexive future of prediction' (Deleuze 2004a: 92). The past of the present (retention) and the future of the present (expectation) become – in active synthesis – reflective. Time (the first passive synthesis thereof) is spatialised. Deleuze summarises thus: 'in

other words, the active syntheses of memory and understanding are superimposed upon and supported by the passive synthesis' (Deleuze 2004a: 92). There are thus two types of the habitual successive present, the active psychological present and the first passive synthesis of the present. As Deleuze puts it: 'it concerns not only the sensory-motor habits that we have (psychologically), but also, before these, the primary habits that we are; the thousands of passive syntheses of which we are organically composed' (Deleuze 2004a: 95). This organic body is not simply a psychological subject, but a body without organs, or as Deleuze puts it before he has appropriated this concept 'a soul must be attributed to the heart, to the muscles, nerves and cells' (Deleuze 2004a: 95). Thus, while the first active synthesis is carried out by the mind, 'this living present or *passive synthesis* which is duration' rather 'occurs in the mind which contemplates, prior to all memory and reflection' (Deleuze 2004a: 92, 91).[4]

This is the crucial point. There is a double aspect to the three syntheses of time: the temporal layers of the three passive syntheses and the spatialised structure of the active synthesis that is built upon them. The first passive synthesis of time 'redeploys in the active synthesis of a psycho-organic memory and intelligence (instinct and learning)' (Deleuze 2004a: 93). And this redeployment occurs for both the second and third passive syntheses as well:

> We must therefore distinguish not only the forms of repetition in relation to passive synthesis but also the levels of passive synthesis and the combination of these levels with one another and with active syntheses. All of this forms a rich domain of *signs* which envelop heterogeneous elements and animate behaviour... Each contraction, each passive synthesis, constitutes a sign which is interpreted or deployed in active synthesis. (Deleuze 2004a: 93–4)

We are now in a position to interpret this as follows: rather than the first passive synthesis of time corresponding to the movement-image, the movement-image corresponds to active syntheses. In other words, the active and passive syntheses are another way of figuring Bergson's '*two forms of memory*', habitual memory and pure memory (Bergson 1991: 79):

> the past appears... to be stored up... under two extreme forms: on the one hand, motor mechanisms which make use of it; on the other, personal memory-images which picture all past events with their outline, their colour and their place in time... the first, conquered by effort, remains dependent upon our will; the second spontaneous. (Bergson 1991: 88)

On the one hand, habitual memory, which underpins the sensory-motor schema and is of the movement-image and specified by relation-, recollection- and dream-images. On the other hand, pure memory, which underpins the time-image. The time-image is 'non-chronological time, Cronos and not Chronos', which corresponds to the movement-image (Deleuze 2001: 81). The difference is marked by the absence of a single consonant. So close, so difficult, perhaps impossible, to separate. Deleuze chooses to use these similar (and often confused) terms in *Cinema 2*, rather than the more familiar Chronos and Aion. This interaction is one of the fundamental themes running throughout Deleuze's work. For instance, in *The Logic of Sense*, written at the same time as *Difference and Repetition*, a book of 'paradoxes', which examines the 'play of sense and nonsense', of 'chaos-cosmos', takes as its central paradox the Stoics' 'two kinds of things' (Deleuze 2004b: ix, 7). The first kind of thing is the body, the second kind of thing is 'impassive' entities. 'There are two times' and their division is figured in this way: 'one is cyclical, measures the movements of bodies and depends upon the matter which limits and fills it out; the other is a pure straight line at the surface, incorporeal, unlimited, an empty form of time, independent of all matter' (Deleuze 2004b: 71).

> Whereas Chronos expressed the action of bodies and the creation of corporeal qualities, Aion is the locus of incorporeal events, and the attributes which are distinct from qualities. Whereas Chronos was inseparable from bodies which filled it out entirely as causes and matter, Aion is populated by effects which haunt it without ever filling it up. (Deleuze 2004b: 189)

Deleuze writes that 'this new dualism of bodies or states of affairs and effects or incorporeal events entails an upheaval in philosophy' (Deleuze 2004b: 9). It is this upheaval that Deleuze, in all his work, is keeping alive.[5] Chronos and Aion (Cronos) from the Stoics, matter and memory from Bergson; the active and passive syntheses of *Difference and Repetition*, the movement-image and time-image of the *Cinema* books.[6]

IV. Mapping Passive Syntheses and Time-Images

Yet it is not simply the case that the three time-images proper exemplify the three passive syntheses of time in general. The correspondence could be much deeper than this. It can be shown that the philosophical concepts of the nine dimensions of the past, present and future are embodied as the cinematographic concepts of the nine signs of hyalosigns, chronosigns and noosigns.

Hyalosigns can be seen to correspond with the first passive synthesis of time. This first passive synthesis is that of the 'lived, or living, present', the 'thousands of habits of which we are composed' (Deleuze 2004a: 91, 100). Hyalosigns are cinematographic images that appear in the now, where 'the actual [image] is cut off from its motor linkages', instead exploring 'the coalescence of an actual image and *its* virtual image' (Deleuze 2001: 127). This image in the now, this hyalosign, is a crystal-image and Deleuze identifies three aspects. First, the actual image describes a mirroring: 'oblique mirrors, concave and convex mirrors and Venetian mirrors', 'two facing mirrors', and a 'palace of mirrors' (Deleuze 2001: 70). Here the body and environment appear in the mirror, indiscernible (is this the actual? is this the virtual?). These crystalline images describe the thousands of habits of which we are composed – the contraction of the fragmentation that we are, our living present. Second, actual and virtual images enter into an exchange: one becoming limpid as another becomes opaque. Back and forth, an 'exchange' that is (once again) indiscernible. The actual image is in the present, but the virtual image is a past of the present, a retention. The virtual image appears with the actual image, constituting the 'smallest internal circuit' (Deleuze 2001: 70). Third, actual and virtual images appear as the seed and the environment. The present is the seed, the future of the present an environment in relation to that seed, an expectation, an anticipation – though not as a sensory-motor extension (actual chronological succession) but rather as an indeterminate (virtual) illumination. The future is now: 'as pure virtuality, it does not have to be actualised' (Deleuze 2001: 79). The three images of the hyalosign thus describe the three dimensions of the first passive synthesis of time: the living present, the past as retention and the future as expectation. 'What we see . . . in the crystal is time, in its double movement of making presents pass, replacing one by the next while going towards the future, but also preserving all the past, dropping it into an obscure depth' (Deleuze 2001: 87).

Chronosigns can be seen to correspond with the second passive synthesis of time. This second passive synthesis is 'memory', the 'pure, general, *a priori* element of all time' (Deleuze 2004a: 101, 103–4). Chronosigns, unlike hyalosigns which appear as images in the now, are narrations as narratives. Narratives after narration: the film is a reconstitution involving the dimensions of the past. As Deleuze puts it, chronosigns 'no longer concern . . . description, but narration', a narration of 'false continuity' where 'crystalline narrations will extend crystalline description' (Deleuze 2001: 127). These false continuities take

three forms. First, the 'coexistence of all the sheets of the past' which disrupt the order of time (Deleuze 2001: 99). The film resists linear organisation but jumps between circles of the past. The film is the pure past, an 'infinity of levels' (Deleuze 2004a: 105). Second, some films are chronosigns in that they explore the present of the past, as Deleuze puts it, the peaks of the present. He writes: 'narration will consist of the distribution of different presents to different characters, so that each forms a combination that is plausible and possible in itself, but where all of them together are "incompossible"' (Deleuze 2001: 101). This kind of film also disrupts the order of time, 'gives narration a new value, because it abstracts it from all successive action' (Deleuze 2001: 101). Rather, the narrative appears in the repetitions of the different presents. In this way the past(s) dominate(s) the present(s). This is the past as the destiny of the present – not in the sense of prescribed fate (a retroactive now which would require an unambiguous and actualised linear trajectory) but rather in the sense of 'setting time free' (Deleuze 2001: 102). Destiny is freedom. And freedom is choice, the choice between 'inextricable differences' (Deleuze 2001: 105). Third, films can also explore the power of the false. Narration 'becomes fundamentally falsifying', it 'ceases to be truthful, that is, to claim to be true' (Deleuze 2001: 131). Crucially, as Deleuze puts it 'this is not a simple principle of reflection or becoming aware: "Beware! This is cinema." It is a source of inspiration' (Deleuze 2001: 131). This chronosign is no longer content simply to disrupt the order of time, instead the narrative strategy is one of 'a series of powers, always referring to each other and passing into one another' (Deleuze 2001: 133). Difference and repetition, the repetition of themes, events, symbols, bodies, positions, objects, environments in difference: serialism. Reminiscences – the past in service of the future, interweaving, transformational memory. The three images of the chronosign thus describe the three dimensions of the second passive synthesis of time: the pure past, the present as radical destiny, and the future as energetic reminiscence. Chronosigns are narratives that 'shatter the empirical continuation of time, the chronological succession, the separation of before and after' (Deleuze 2001: 155).

Noosigns can be seen to correspond with the third passive synthesis of time. This third passive synthesis is a 'caesura' exploring the future as an 'empty form of time' (Deleuze 2004a: 111, 108). Noosigns are thus events which 'force . . . us to think', events which 'force . . . us to think what is concealed from thought, life' (Deleuze 2001: 189). While hyalosigns are images and chronosigns are narratives, noosigns are events that occur through the bodies and environments of the film: the

mise-en-scène and actors. Thought, then (our thought, the spectator's thought), is not engendered as a consequence of a sensory-motor linkage between the character and the situation, and the concomitant identification of character to subject and filmic situation to real milieu, but rather through the absence of such relationships. In the absence of such a link, thought becomes us. These thought images can occur in three ways. First, the actor does not perform an act of mimesis, but adopts 'the everyday body', a body of 'daily attitude' (Deleuze 2001: 191). This involves strategies such as exposing the fatigues, the ticks, the inabilities of the body. Here the body is circumscribed by experience, the future of this body is a secretion of its past. Second, the actor can foreground a performance, execute a 'ceremonial body' (Deleuze 2001: 191). This is the body of the 'gest' and 'carries out a direct theatricalisation of bodies' (Deleuze 2001: 192, 194). These bodies occur 'independently of the plot' and in this sense are in the present, a direct performance orientated towards the future as metamorphosis. The body is not a function of the situation, but transforms the situation from the outside. The final image of the noosign involves the *mise-en-scène*, the environment. It does not depend upon the physical presence of an actor, but the backgrounds, the lighting, the colours and sounds of the world of the film. Deleuze names this the 'cinema of the brain'. For Deleuze, certain films explore the 'identity of the brain and world' where 'landscapes are mental states, just as mental states are cartographies' and form a reciprocal 'noosphere' (Deleuze 2001: 205). The noosphere is a zone of nothingness that fractures the coordinates of the film. It is here, in this final aspect of the noosign, in this final aspect of the time-image, that cinema explores the future as terrifyingly dark, as an unending night… and conversely, as infinitely open. For the environment is immense, without horizon, without bounds. The three coordinates of the noosign thus describe the three dimensions of the third passive synthesis of time: the past as experience, the present as metamorphosis, and the future as infinitely empty. Noosigns are the events of cinema that transpire between bodies and environments: 'the brain gives orders to the body which is just an outgrowth of it, but the body also gives orders to the brain which is just a part of it' (Deleuze 2001: 205).

V. By Way of Conclusion…

What to make of this attempt to isolate and tabulate the elements of the time-image? I wanted to discover what would happen if I did not accept the signs and images of the time-image as arbitrary, or conjured

Table 4.1. The nine dimensions of the three passive syntheses of time and the nine signs of the time-image

Images		Dimensions and signs		*Passive syntheses*
1 Hyalosigns	Past of the present (retention)	**The living present**	Future of the present (expectation)	**First passive synthesis**
	Limpid and opaque	Mirrors	Seed and environment	Habit
2Chronosigns	**The pure past**	Present of the past (destiny)	Future of the past (reminiscence)	**Second passive synthesis**
	Sheets of the past	Peaks of the present	Powers of the false	Memory
3 Noosigns	Past of the future (experience)	Present of the future (metamorphosis)	**The empty future**	**Third passive synthesis**
	Body of attitude	Body of *gest*	Brain	Caesura

from modernist cinema. But then where did they come from? Was there an unarticulated framework? By specifying the cineosis of the *Cinema* books, tabulating movement-images and time-images, this served as a clue that led me on to explore the continuities with Deleuze's earliest foundational work, *Difference and Repetition*, and in turn to consider the categories of the time-image as being engendered by Deleuze's three passive syntheses of time. Indeed, the production of this mapping has also suggested an alignment of the movement-image with the active syntheses, the psycho-organic subject that is superimposed upon the passive syntheses of habituation, memory and empty future. Hence my claim that before Bergson's *Matter and Memory* provides the visible framework of the cinema books, it is the syntheses of time explored in Deleuze's own *Difference and Repetition* that constitute their embedded originary structure.

Notes

1. For references to Gilbert Simondon see Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 46, 66n11, 19, 573–4); see also Deleuze's 'On Gilbert Simondon' (Deleuze 2004b: 86–9).
2. I refer the reader to James Williams' *Gilles Deleuze's Difference and Repetition* (2004) and Jay Lampert's *Deleuze and Guattari's Philosophy of History* (2006). Both set out, in very different ways, to explore proofs and critically engage with *Difference and Repetition*. Both are great books.
3. Jay Lampert intimates just such a view:

> Many treatments of Deleuze describe in appealing ways his account of time, but little work has yet been done to analyse his arguments for it. As a result, Deleuze's first synthesis of time, the time of organic succession, is not as well known. When discussed at all, succession is generally treated as the false or superficial notion of time that co-existence is meant to replace. But Deleuze's philosophy does not devalue the categories of life and desire that characterise temporality of succession . . . Furthermore, Deleuze's description of succession is not merely a standard account of time setting the stage for his original contributions concerning coexistence; it is full of provocative and original arguments in its own right. (Lampert 2006: 12)

4. Towards the end of his exploration of the first passive synthesis Deleuze writes, regarding Samuel Becket: 'it is undoubtedly one of the more profound intentions of the "new novel" to rediscover, below the level of active synthesis, the domain of passive syntheses which constitute us' (Deleuze 2004a: 100). Correspondingly, in *Cinema 2* Deleuze aligns the 'new novel' with the 'new cinema': 'if the new cinema, like the new novel, is of considerable philosophical and logical importance, it is first of all because of the theory of descriptions it implies' (Deleuze 2001: 45).
5. For a wider discussion of the way in which the Stoic conception of time impacts the *Cinema* books, particularly in regard to cinema history and history in general, see Deamer 2009.
6. We must tread carefully here. I am not suggesting that films of the movement-image = the active syntheses of time; and that films of the time-image = the passive syntheses of time. This would be an extraordinary and unsustainable

claim, amongst other things collapsing philosophical and artistic thought (see Deleuze and Guattari 2009 for their discussion of the three great types of thought). Film in-itself is a complex weft and weave of chronos and cronos, of the actual and the virtual, of passive and active synthesis. Patricia Pisters' *The Matrix of Visual Culture: Working with Deleuze in Film Theory* (2003) is exemplary in this regard, exploring how movies interweave passive and active affects. I am simply arguing that the philosophical concepts of the syntheses of time inspire the filmic concepts of the *Cinema* books, and that the concepts and components of the three passive syntheses of time can be seen to echo the structure of the conceptual framework of the time-image taxonomy.

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Becoming-Rhythm: A Rhizomatics of the Girl

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Abstract

I appropriate Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the refrain for a feminist analysis of the girl because it offers more insight into the ways girls construct themselves as performative networks than the death-by-culture or at-risk model preferred by such feminists as Jean Kilbourne, Carol Gilligan, and even Susan Bordo. I proffer that it costs women everything to practise a politics of difference that is by definition reactionary, a reaction to the cultural refusal of leaky gendered bodies that must be overcome. Girl is mapped through such alternations as powerful aggregates of the tremulous, roaming emissions of monstrous particles most desired and desirous.

Keywords: feminism, woman, girl, girl studies, rhythm, refrain, style, becoming, women's studies, girl branding, feminist cultural studies

Theorists configure the contemporary figure of girl as either a smaller version of woman, replete with a naturalised status of victim or at least victim-in-training, or as a totally 'othered' teenage beast whose hormones make her even more out of control than her grown-up counterpart. What do girls and women have in common besides essentialised and mystified erogenous zones, and less money in their pay packets? Where do the contours of the girl merge and diverge from the contours of woman? How might referencing and championing the mark of the girl mean something more than an ageist erasure or backhanded compliment? In an attempt to map those legs as they walk, dance and stomp through the 'problem with no name', I deploy Deleuze and Guattari's notion of the refrain, and parse and explore its rhythms in order to render a feminist rhizomatics of the girl. The generation of

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a feminist analytical model for girls that does not reduce them to abject objects of study culturally constructed to the point of despair requires that this rhizomatics begin with a teasing out of girl from the rubric that surrounds her – woman.

Deleuze and Guattari don't spend much corpus time worrying over the question of molar woman (or woman in 'real life'), the one who is subject to structural devaluations of her cultural production. They spend even less time on the girl, though she is configured as an appropriated Alice in *The Logic of Sense*, and as 'the becoming-woman of each sex' in *A Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 277).[1] They prefer to focus on the molecular, and use 'woman' as one categorical outsider (among others) who has the capacity to mutate, and to block the machinery that creates and maintains the subject (man). Molar woman, who has a body, functions, and an assigned subjectivity, must disarticulate herself, enter into a microfemininity of particles that is becoming-woman in order to bypass the quagmires of psychoanalytic failings. *Becoming-woman* is distinct from *being* a woman. Woman belongs to a category of subjects, a noun, with parameters, distinctions, pre-determined limits. Becoming-woman is a process, a verb, a shape-shifting capacity whose inception offers more possibility than the exemplar of feminism's social constructions. In '1730: Becoming Intense, Becoming-Animal, Becoming-Imperceptible...' a multi-levelled chain of becomings is outlined in which becoming-woman precedes becoming-animal, to conclude with becoming-imperceptible – the immanent end of becoming (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 279). Woman herself is a mere phase on the way to some elsewhere.

There are many concerns feminists have brought to bear upon Deleuze and Guattari's philosophies regarding women. Luce Irigaray in *Ce sexe qui n'en est pas un* (1977) and Alice Jardine in *Gynesis* (1985) both launch critiques of the 'body without organs' and 'becoming-woman'. Jardine concludes that '[i]f these men were to accept the challenge of their own work, they would see that it is up to them to requestion their assumptions about Desire (capital D)... It is of course up to women not to disappear from that space of exploration' (Jardine 1985: 223). Rosi Braidotti's trenchant analysis highlights a disturbing effect becoming-woman produces as a through-way:

> one cannot deconstruct a subjectivity one has never been fully granted... in order to announce the death of the subject one must first have gained the right to speak as one; in order to demystify meta-discourse one must first gain access to a place of enunciation... We must rethink feminist theory starting

> from the insight of post-structuralist philosophy, especially that of Deleuze, without however being confined by its often disappointing conclusions and implications. (Braidotti 1991: 122; 146)

In *Volatile Bodies*, Elizabeth Grosz lists the advantages and drawbacks of deploying Deleuze and Guattari for a feminist philosophy of woman (Grosz 1994: 173–83), cautiously weighing in favour of a 'selective reading and use of their work . . . to capture and put to work valuable methodologies, questions, insights that may lead in directions Deleuze and Guattari may not go or even may not accept' (Grosz 1994: 180). Tamsin Lorraine suggests that becoming-girl and becoming-woman hold a privileged relation to the unconscious realm that might resonate with Irigaray's notion of the feminine, but Deleuze and Guattari's failure to account for the risk involved in the dissolution of an identity that is already in peril describes a masculine becoming with a masculine bias (Lorraine 1999: 186). Dorothea Olkowski devotes a whole chapter to these critiques ('Can a Feminist Read Deleuze and Guattari?') in which she explicates other feminists' concerns before moving on 'to what in Deleuze and Deleuze-Guattari I can make use of in my own work' (Olkowski 1999: 58).

Building on the works of Jardine, Braidotti and others mentioned, the primary feminist critiques of Deleuze and Guattari's configuration of woman and becoming-woman, as articulated throughout the essays of Buchanan and Colebrook's edited collection *Deleuze and Feminist Theory* (2000), emphasise that (1) just when women finally obtain the status of the subject it is rejected as a viable category from which to conceptualise a framework for possibility, and (2) the appropriation of 'woman' for a category of becoming not only situates woman once again in the service of man, but renders her a vector one moves through and leaves behind on the way to becoming-elsewhere.

Deleuze and Guattari do give a nod to the matrix of power relations 'real' women must negotiate in order to act in the world, with a strong warning against the weight of a subject congealing: 'It is, of course, indispensable for women to conduct a molar politics, with a view to winning back their own organism, their own history, their own subjectivity: "we as women. . . " makes its appearance as a subject of enunciation. But it is dangerous to confine oneself to such a subject, which does not function without drying up a spring or stopping a flow' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 276). In advocating the inclusion of Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy in a contemporary feminist toolbox, Claire Colebrook suggests that 'feminism has a different type of

theoretical heritage, where questions have always been voiced in terms of what thought might become (rather than the correctness of this or that model)' (Colebrook 2000: 10). In an attempt to honour this feminist heritage, and instead of trying to instantiate the presence of feminist trajectories in Deleuzian thought or simply trying to get Deleuze and Guattari right, I am appropriating Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the refrain for a feminist analysis of the girl because it offers more insight into the ways girls construct themselves as performative networks than does the death-by-culture model preferred by such feminists as Jean Kilbourne,[2] Carol Gilligan,[3] and even Susan Bordo.[4] Deleuze and Guattari's iterations on sound, living creatures, habitats and habits prove more descriptive of the territories of girl than do their brief nod to the slightly more privileged portal of becoming-girl.

As a feminist, such a project offers me a tenable way to enter into the discourse of the girl armed with a 'becoming' that is not reliant upon a psychoanalytical configuration of woman. By theorising outside this overdetermined box, one begins with action, deploying powerful rhythmic flows. In other words, girls produce rhythmic tactics for becoming: ways to hack cultural significatory regimes by learning to recognise, hover upon, flow around and through the contours that will shape them into subjects. Their liminal status allows for and assures their molecular configurations. A feminist rhizomatics of girl also traces interventions in the production of subjectivities – the ways in which becoming troubles the primacy of the subject as mode of being. Like Deleuze and Guattari, however, I do not argue for the entire abandonment of feminine modalities, but rather that the project of feminism needs to reconfigure embodiments of gender through becoming something other than Subjects or their lacking binary counterparts; and that rhizomatic practices of flow through contagions of non-Oedipalised becomings may offer feminists more than a womb with a view.

I. If Woman is the Refrain, Rhythm is the Girl

My rhizomatics of the girl begins here, with woman. If girl is rhythm, she exists as a vibratory assemblage engendered by a refrain. She is the exuberance of molecular immanence that gives shape and movement to and between milieus. Girl and woman share related contagions of femininity and vectors of desire. Woman is an actor; girl is a pack. But what is woman? Deleuze and Guattari's notion of the refrain does much to describe the shape of woman, her capacities to fix and flow, to straddle chaos as nutcracker, footprint and bridge. It is her proclivity to touch

the big black hole, join with it, break away, survive, and do it again that colours her not beautiful but contaminated. What bleeds but does not die? The Deleuzian refrain proper refers to animals in their habitats as well as the sounds of music. Woman as refrain is another name for force, a sonorous beast of possibility. I claim neither essential physical nor emotional characteristics for woman except for her ability to act and to engender. If woman is refrain, then her role is territorial. She demarcates and assembles. Her landscapes are 'amorous, professional or social, liturgical or cosmic' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 312). She builds tunnels, decorates bedrooms, opens gateways, locks boxes, connects structures, jettisons to elsewhere. She taps the forces of chaos, constructs deflectors and one-way signs. She ties packages with ribbons and bows. She is girl's modal counterpart, recognizable in metered pace and measured step. Woman as refrain, generator of home and mitigator of chaos, occupies the privileged status of a Deleuzian becoming while negotiating the material concerns of an embodied subject.

For Deleuze and Guattari, milieus and rhythms are born out of chaos. Milieus are the vibratory constituting walls that comprise living things or territories. Exterior milieus make up flesh, surface and exoskeleton; interior milieus are generative materials such as blood and bile; intermediary milieus function as permeable membrane; and annexed milieus host energy sources, impulse and stimulation. Milieus communicate, pass in and out of each other, and maintain contact with the chaos that is ever threatening.

One effect produced by milieus' exposure to chaos is rhythm, the in-between-ness or liminal force of chaos becoming:

> Between night and day, between that which is constructed and that which grows naturally, between mutations from the inorganic to the organic, from plant to animal, from animal to humankind, yet without this series constituting a progression... In this in-between, chaos becomes rhythm, not inexorably, but it has a chance to. Chaos is not the opposite of rhythm, but the milieu of all milieus. There is rhythm whenever there is a transcoded passage from one milieu to another, a communication of milieus, and coordination between heterogeneous space-times. Drying up, death, intrusion have rhythm... [R]hythm is the Unequal or the Incommensurable that is always undergoing transcoding. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 313)

Rhythm is the girl. She is found in the flow between constituents. The refrain of woman territorialises milieus that exist because they are performed again and again, milieus such as home, food, pleasure. As Judith Butler claims in *Bodies That Matter*, a reiterated acting 'is power

in its persistence and instability... a process of materialization that stabilizes over time to produce the effect of boundary, fixity, and surface we call matter' (Butler 1993: 9). For Deleuze and Guattari 'It is the difference that is rhythmic', and here that one can find the girl in every refrain (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 314). The productive repetition of the refrain is not *re*-productive, does not birth the girl. Girl is the proper name for becoming, a 'surplus value' of the territorialising or bridging role of the refrain.

The rhythm of a refrain sometimes engages with something quite tangible, that of the Territory of a Body. From savage media accounts to protective sociologies of girls and popular culture, the girl body is defined as an exploited and contested territory precisely because it is read as malleable, controllable, decidable and effectless. Why is this body so over-determined? How does one even locate the body of a girl? The whole of the girl body is built of milieus and marked by indexes referring to still more milieus. It becomes recognizable as a territory when its components change from being directionally constitutive (acting, responding, organising) to dimensionally expansive (marking, signing, performing), 'when they cease to be functional to become expressive' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 315). With the becoming-territory of organs and desire, the body is readable to us as surface, as signature. The rhythm that is girl performs this body as a feminine refrain, makes it a girl body through a transcoding of indexes both historically gifted and made up on the fly. This territory glistens with cultural residues – thick smears of lubricating wax buffed to shine, to bind, to uniform and to preserve that body which is ripening-fruit perishable. We traverse the codes of her territory and read pink, smelly, delicious, vicious, in-flux. We are coated in Taylor, Rihanna, Hannah Montana or Miley Cyrus.

II. Menstruating and Bleeding: Girl Planes of Function and Expression

The girl marks; the territory is established. The refrain or territorialisation that produces territory and expressiveness is an act of rhythm. A becoming-expressive of rhythm generates both the plane of functions and the plane of expressions. The plane of functions is organised or created because it is territorialised, not territorialised because of its a priori existence. This plane of girl bodies occurs because it is organised (territorialising refrain). Girl, girl, girl, girl again produces possibility. Neither internal nor external forces organise the girl body

in response to its functions, or the possibilities created by them: girl is not an originary unruly bloody mass of desire that must be corralled and sequestered. Girl functions as a result of the feminine refrain she performs for herself not as agent but as transient. This is important to note because hegemonic 'societal' and familial forces are tapped as chief architects in the actual construction of girls' bodies. In this version of the chicken and the egg story, there is no girl around which to found Rapunzel's tower. She is not born as a clean slate, ready to actualise the desires written upon her verbatim. She functions because of her own rhythm and engages with desires of all kinds. It is her performance of the functions that challenges the nature/culture divide.

One example of how the plane of functions works on the literal body involves the arrival of a new function. A 'function' or capacity a girl's body often develops through puberty is the capacity to reproduce. If the girl body reaches this moment through her own genetically and environmentally inflected hormonal clock, then she will most likely experience menarche. She menstruates because she is an aggregate; she is not a girl because she menstruates. Menarche as a function occurs whether or not the girl has been informed about its nature, whether she has been taught to perform it as celebration or curse, whether she is nine or eighteen (see Camporesi 1991). Cultural cues about appropriate responses to menstruation do not alter the fact that she menstruates (see Leigh and Sasser-Cohen 1996: 37–58). The girl may choose to control this function using hormonal therapies engineered to suppress menstrual flow, she may use pads to avoid touching the insides of her body, or a cup to measure a day's fluid output. We can read her performance of menstruation on the plane of expressions.[5] It is on this plane that the girl bleeds. The plane of expressions constituting girl bodies marks that function.

Again, rhythm occurs on two planes, one of expressions and one of functions. The plane of expressions runs rings around the functional. Girl marks are visible, tangible evidence of a presence. We have developed systems of codification for evaluating them, including why they are generated, what this evidence might mean, who is responsible for the variety of 'unhealthy' marks girls make, and how we can interfere with the repetition of sign productions that make us uncomfortable. I believe this vector to be currently so seductive to critics because it is overwhelmingly comprised of practices that manifest themselves visually. In his comprehensive treatise on visuality, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (1993), Martin Jay situates the ascendency of the visual as primary conduit

and receptor of information, including the complicated relationship between sight and language. 'The remarkable ability of images originally construed as mimetic representations or aesthetic ornaments to be transformed into totemic objects of worship in their own right also bespeaks vision's power to evoke hypnotic fascination' (Jay 1993: 11). Dissection, interpretation and evaluation of girl images de-centers the girl, her desires, and her capacities from her own mark-making.

The 1960s and 1970s liberation movements in the US effected pedagogical changes in the framework for conceptualising public modes of expression. No longer limited to those with sanctioned rarefied talent, self-expression became as easy as breathing, wearing your politics on your sleeve. We are all special, and are encouraged to reveal our uniqueness through consumer choices.[6] Does expressing oneself constitute the practice of art making? If the becoming-expressive of rhythm is art, that would mean the territory, or for our purposes here the girl body, occurs as a result of art. Deleuze and Guattari write of this phenomenon in the context of coral fish:

> The expressive is primary in relation to the possessive; expressive qualities, or matters of expression, are necessarily appropriative and constitute a having more profound than being. Not in the sense that these qualities belong to a subject, but in the sense that they delineate a territory that will belong to the subject that carries or produces them. These qualities are signatures, but the signature, the proper name, is not the constituted mark of the subject, but the constituting mark of a domain, an abode. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 316)

For all living creatures, including girls, becoming expressive marks the territory that is an aggregate body. If art creates the body, the functioning unit comprised of planes and milieus, then the body is a signature of affect-appropriation, bricolage, sheddings and flow. One can read the effects of engagement with the world upon its surface, its construction, like flashing neon atop a building.

Postmodern artists use such processes to create art in a time when everything has already been done before, and the sign of innovation is the capacity to de-contextualise ready-mades and generate endlessly iterable 'fakes' in order to make them sign differently. The most famous examples include Marcel Duchamp's 'Fountain' and Andy Warhol's soup cans. Sherrie Levine's feminist approach is to appropriate paintings, photographs and sculptures created by blockbuster artists such as Walker Evans and Constantin Brancusi to question the status of art object as rarefied fetish and artist as master/genius/male. 'I try to

make art which celebrates doubt and uncertainty. Which provokes answers but doesn't give them. Which withholds absolute meaning by incorporating parasite meanings. Which suspends meaning while perpetually dispatching you toward interpretation, urging you beyond dogmatism, beyond doctrine, beyond ideology, beyond authority' (Walker Art Center 1991).

III. Generating the Territory of the Girl Body from Mark-Making to Branding

Girls categorically mark their territories in similar ways. Expressiveness makes their bodies visible, functional, readable. They are not merely responding to seductive ploys from advertisers, parental imperatives, or peer pressure. Responses to these external stimuli more often take an emotional, subjective form that does not inspire action. Girl cannot sign as if she were a mirror or a saturated and leaking sponge. Her expressive qualities, those that so capture what we have come to define as girl, are 'auto-objective'. According to Deleuze and Guattari, they 'find an objectivity in the territory they draw' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 317). In other words, art as a generative process cannibalises, reorders and produces a sign that is 'objectively' recognizable and repeatable for the artist. The toddler draws a circle. 'Pig', she says. Twenty minutes later she draws another circle, 'Ball'. A day later she makes another, 'Sun'. She finds difference in the same gesture with each performance. This is the auto-objective act of territorialisation. It does not matter that all you see is circle.

Korean-American filmmaker Grace Lee interrogates the 'generic Asian girl' expressive pack constituted by her namesakes in the *Grace Lee Project* (DVD, Women Make Movies, 2005). Assumptions about the aggregate 'Grace Lee' are both confirmed and dispelled through surveys and interviews with women and girls named Grace Lee. According to the 398 survey respondents from 23 countries, Grace Lee as a multiple unit is statistically Korean or Chinese, in her twenties or thirties, with combination skin and pets, who has studied piano for five or more years.[7] While these statistics are culled from participants who have access to and interest in contemporary art and/or documentary films, they do reflect a 'brand' the girls have encountered, initiated and responded to themselves. The ready-made Graces under consideration mark through preset codes of 'petite', 'gentle' and 'smart', a culturally wrought ethnic identity of difference in the same, a collective counter-sign expression that complicates the distinctions between the production

of 'real' identities and bodies, and the mis-performed or fake. For the Graces and the conceptual persona girl, they come to know their territories as they draw them, using what appears to be the same closed set of readable marks as signs whose referents remain in flux.

Mark-making remains an incontrovertible gesture of visibility as the practice heralds a co-signing of symbols and movements already in play. But what of the amalgam of marks known as a brand? Anita Harris addresses the two most prevalent twenty-first-century girl 'brands' or current identity categories: the 'can-do' girl and the 'at-risk' girl. Can-do girls 'are identifiable by their commitment to exceptional careers and career planning, their belief in their capacity to invent themselves and succeed,... their display of a consumer lifestyle,... and a desire to put off childbearing until "later".' The 'low ambition' at-risk girls suffer from 'a lack of a sense of power or opportunity,... inappropriate consumption behaviors', mental health problems, and earlier pregnancies (Harris 2004: 14). While there is corroborated worry over the fate of both brands of girls, the key to tracing, tracking or theorising them lies more in the marks or brands they themselves exert and amass across a smear of surfaces than in intra-brand cohesions.

I argue that the refrain provides another way to look at the phenomenon of branding that is not unique to any specific group of girls. The so-called insidious forces of popular culture are often blamed for damaging girls' self-esteem and putting them 'at-risk' by flaunting impossible supermodel bodies in ad campaigns that turn girls away from important practices, such as studying, playing sports and eating/eating well, in favour of body maintenance and self-objectification. But as girls willingly and unwillingly submit themselves to thousands of ads each year, they do produce ways of critically engaging the content, complicating divisions between current girl uberbrands. These at-risk girls can-do rather automatically. For example, a sample of young teen girls in the 2000 documentary *What a Girl Wants* claims to distinguish between Britney Spears as marketing creation and as an actual girl. They are critical of her image as girl diva and suggest that it might be dangerous to affix 'girl' so tightly to 'sex object'. Most of them aren't yet interested in having sex or revealing their bodies in similar ways. However, they also say she is pretty, has money and power, and these things are very attractive – what girl doesn't want money, power and recognition?

The Britney brand has taken quite a hit since then. After her 'bad mommy' photos, heavily reported underpantless romps and shaved-head

breakdown, she is no longer considered a teen role model. Though currently climbing back up via attempts at reinvention, the brand fell to an all-time low in 2007, with *Salon* reporting on a website that offered a DIY Britney Halloween costume:

> Choose your 'Britney character', decide what to buy or what to use from your closet. People with small budgets can easily find a skirt and an Oxford shirt that they can 'crop' by tying ends together to be 'One More Time Britney.' A short blue dress with a few additions can be turned into 'Toxic Britney.' More money and more creativity may be involved to make 'Slave Britney' or 'Oops Britney' . . . Avoid 'Crazy Britney.' It's probably not the best idea to go trick-or-treating with a shaved head and a baseball bat.[8]

It seems that instead of being awash and drowning in an impenetrable pool of images, these girls recognise advertising brands such as 'Britney' as generated for them but not reflective of them, and they can critically negotiate the tensions between 'real life' and 'imagined life', while acknowledging the seductiveness of the image. They record brand loyalties as bodily refrains, torquing through gesture rather than reproducing through mimicry. Girl rhythms supersede predications of congealed identity categories, whatever their brand, rendering can-do and at-risk refrainless, the same in the same.

Girl brands exist on the surface of virtual and actual bodies. When does the signature effect of girl body become style? Shifts between the inner milieu of 'impulses' and the exterior milieu of 'circumstances' elaborate a style that is independent within its own relations of production. Just as the desire to draw and name connects up with a geometry of bodies and objects for the toddler to produce her own landscape of circle creatures, so do internal impulses or drives intersect with external prescriptives and experimental engagements to produce a personalised surface for the girl. Expressions function as posters, establishing the territory in flat saturated colour like coming attractions on a theatre marquee. We recognise girl most often here as an amalgam of parts. Style emerges as an expression of engagement between the territory and its outer and inner stimuli. Girl style is a complicated topography that reflectively changes shape as the becoming-expressive of rhythm runs through and out, not simply around, the girl body. Girl style is the very capacity to sign in three dimensions, much like the mutable children's sculpture that appears when one presses a face or finger into the palate of shifting pins, pulls back and gapes at the imprint – one's face or finger – only to turn it over, erase, and begin again.

IV. Anatomy of Girl Group Style

The territorialisation of girl bodies creates a distance between bodies, demarcates the differences between girls, and keeps the forces of chaos at bay. When threatened, girls may strap on prefabulated territorial refrains to protect themselves from dissolution like homeless hermit crabs crawling into abandoned shells during a thunderstorm. 'Slut' or 'Jock' may become more comfortable to wear than something nameless or something one must invent. In the film inspired by Nathaniel Hawthorne's classic on girl branding (among other things), *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), Olive in *Easy A* (2010) also dons a scarlet 'A' on her bustier à la Hester Prynne to signify her own rumoured status as sex-having slut. She initially prefers the notoriety the category affords her before its constraints push her once again to the outside of most social groups at school. The parameters for such categories as slut are well established and knowable, at least from the surface.[9] Girls may mark their territories with actual symbols such as tattoos (permanent or removable) in an attempt to measure and elaborate differences in signatures, the distance between two indistinguishable bodies.

The territory of one girl body makes possible the territory of another. For Deleuze and Guattari, the territory 'not only ensures and regulates the coexistence of members of the same species by keeping them apart, but makes possible the coexistence of a maximum number of different species in the same milieu by specializing them' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 320). Take the demarcation of girl body-territories in a high school milieu as an example. In Rosalind Wiseman's groundbreaking guide for parents *Queenbees and Wannabes: Helping Your Daughter Survive Cliques, Gossip, Boyfriends, and Other Realities of Adolescence* (2002), she claims that most girls aggregate in packs or cliques – families of peers they construct and maintain for themselves as a way to ensure their survival through the turbulent waters of adolescence. A becoming-rhythm of a territorialised group generates its sign, a poster, and in Girl World it reads: 'plastics/populars', 'band geeks', 'cheerleaders', 'stoners', 'goths/punks/artists', 'jocks', 'anorexics', and more.

The poster is one effect produced by this process of territorialised grouping as a way to distinguish one particular group's attributes from other groups comprised of very similar members: we are all sexually active girls, but our girls are intercourse-havers and those girls are born-again virgins and those other girls are blow-jobbers only, and so on. Each group not only makes space for itself to function as a

sub-group within a group, its very existence is predicated on the presence of the others. The separation of girl group sub-territories makes possible the widest array of girl group territories.

The whole of each girl group territory is comprised of the interior, intermediary and exterior milieus that make it function. Modal girls as milieus within the territories often perform territorial refrains that are labelled in Wiseman's rubric as Queen Bee, Sidekick, Banker and Floater (Wiseman 2002: 25). Performing these refrains properly ensures the success of the group as a functional unit or body. (1) The Queen Bee acts as a central organising force through which all other refrains are possible. She performs an unspeakable charismatic power, persuading others in her group to offer their allegiance and homage. She must continually feed off their gifted energies while proving her superior status in order to maintain her position. (2) The Sidekick fashions herself in the image of her beloved. At the group's core, the interior milieu, the Sidekick shores up the power of the Queen Bee by backing her unconditionally. Her refrain is one of mimicry that functions to elaborate and expand upon the power of the one. Successful mimicry produces a contagion of power that may ebb and flow depending upon the proximity of relations. (3) The intermediary milieu in a girl group territory is occupied by the Banker. She squirrels away gossip-nuts obtained from group members and others both to eat because they're tasty and to trade on the open market. This innocuous-appearing intermediary seduces information out of girls under the guise of friendship, offers nuggets to the Queen Bee in exchange for the goods of the hive, but retains the juiciest ones for herself. Because she controls the group's currency, she has almost as much power as the Queen Bee. As milieu, the Banker is its immune system, ready to dispatch info-troops to annihilate any invaders, interlopers, or other members who might threaten her status within the unit. (4) The Floater circles the surface of the territory like a dancer. The inner core holds little attraction for her – she is most interested in the placard. Her primary function as intergroup emissary is to maintain the distances in-between the different girl group territories. She absorbs what she wants from each group as she moves along the perimeters, distributing a little chaos in her wake. The presence of one or more Floaters suggests that the group's refrain is tight and productive enough to invite improvisation.

The interaction between milieus produces the group's style. Unlike the style that is performed through becoming-expressive of girl, which is readable off the surface of her body, group style is private. You have to earn your secret-decoder ring before gaining access to the codes

generated between the milieus. But the distance between these territories may be charted through the groups' attenuating rhythms.

The rhythms between bodies oscillate and respond to the advances and retreats of others. A territory opens up a little; the courting for the arrival of an Other begins. For example, in the movie *Mean Girls* (2004), based on Wiseman's *Queen Bees*, Cady has just returned from living on the African plains to attend a suburban high school. She encounters for the first time the animal-pack behaviours of the students, how they travel to protect themselves, wear specific clothes to demarcate difference of species, how they court, eat and play. She visualises this through a series of wide-focus shots in which the teens behave like animals in trendy pants, morphing at one instance from a hang-out session at the mall to a romp in the jungle – they scratch, sniff, nibble and smack each other while making jungle animal sounds. Teenage pack behaviours are dependant upon rhythmic interactions between territories bearing posters that read 'Desiring-Machine A', 'Desiring-Machine B', and 'We're Number One'.

Mean Girls' Cady trades outsider misfit codes for cool as she tries to infiltrate the girl group territory of the Plastics, not to belong but to unmask its codes and the girls who produce them as mere puffery. She proves herself worthy by replicating the group poster marks as best as she can until she is permitted access to the group's style. Once in possession of this highly coveted array of gestures, the seduction of Plastic group style overcomes her 'true authentic self' and she *becomes* popular, here equated with soulless puff. No longer on her way to elsewhere, she is disquieted by the territory she now creates. Cady takes the most obvious line of flight away from the vertigo of girl group style by joining the Mathletes (geek boys). This film shows us that the only way girls make vibratory space for becomings-other is to exit the territory of girl brands entirely. The regulatory end-game gesture of individualism may provide closure for viewers who find girl territories and styles distasteful, impenetrable or even immoral. *Mean Girls* isn't mean enough to showcase the intricate rhythms of girls without incorporating cultural imperatives for niceness.

In conclusion, by conceptualising girl beyond her status as some woman yet-to-be, this Deleuzian model unmoors her from the negative adhesions of modal woman while maintaining the contiguity of the feminine, rhythm to refrain. My feminist intervention in the well-intentioned debates between 'at-risk' and 'can-do' girl brands shifts the problem at hand towards an examination of the material and virtual planes on which girls constitute themselves, whatever their individual

or collective expressive marks may be. The development of girl as a conceptual persona allows for a reconceptualisation of her as not only a map of things she has done, but as a guide to the potentiality of girl capacities. The relationship between girl and woman, separate but related, is illuminated through the connections between the rhythm of the girl and woman's refrain. Girl's plane of expressions trumps the plane of functions because her expressive marks, coded as girl style, produce her as curious aesthetic sideshow for the academy and the most desired of marketplace demographics. My conception of girl as the positive difference that drives expressive territorial refrains is just one offshoot among others in the construction of a rhizomatics of the girl.

Notes

1. The original Alice refers to Lewis Carroll's 1865 novel *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Dorothea Olkowski explicates the Deleuzian Alice in 'After Alice: Alice and the Dry Tail' (Olkowski 2008).
2. *Killing Us Softly: Advertising's Image of Women Series*, Documentary Vol. 1 (1979), Vol. 2 (1987), Vol. 3 (1999). These documentaries are standard fare for most Women's Studies students. See also Kilbourne's 1999, 2008.
3. Gilligan's *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* is in its sixth edition and has been translated into seventeen languages (Gilligan 1993). See also Gilligan 2003 and Gilligan et al. 1991.
4. See Bordo 2003.
5. Even though I had read books about menstrual events to come, as a pre-menstrual girl I hatched a plan to delay the inevitable array of changes that frightened me simply because I would be forced to perform them and didn't get to choose their time or kind of arrival. I thought that somehow I would magically know when I was ovulating for the first time, and that I would simply become pregnant to avoid the whole bloody thing. I was not even kissing boys nor aware of the birthing, care and maintenance of a baby. But somehow all this seemed more tenable because I could choose it and invent responses to it rather than having it simply occur at random.
6. I spent a few classroom sessions with young teen girls who had volunteered for Roberta Hammett's fieldwork on girls and computing for her dissertation *Adolescent Women, Identity, and Hypermedia Composing* (1997). She was helping them to develop websites for themselves as part of her computer literacy practicum. While their computer skills needed some tooling up, it seems the girls had already learned a lot about advertising, marketing and consolidating a brand name. They all used corporate logos from their favourite products as a way to articulate who they 'really are' and to mark their 'unique' styles through trademarked moods and experiences. 'I'm a Nike, Old Navy, Diet Coke with a little Sporty Spice on the side.' 'I am more Punky Brewster Crispy Crème meets Volkswagen Beetle.' I asked them why they used product logos (literally on the webpage, hierarchically organised in a field of black space) as descriptions of themselves they made for others to see. They claimed that 'everyone knows what kind of girl shops at Benetton's', and by appropriating and consolidating trademarks most teens (their target audience I suppose) could read the surface of the marks together to form a more articulated portrait of themselves than

anything they could say or draw. This predates and prefigures Facebook's 'like' plug-in, in which users can give digital thumbs-up on participating websites that will in turn provide handy content links back to their sites from Facebook user pages, sometimes including an array of the likers' photos. Not only can Facebook pages be festooned with a corporate presence girls invite, they can help generate traffic for these websites for free simply by participating in a social network that subtends critique and creates virtual patronage via affirmative self-branding. These constituting rhythms express a savvy business acumen that trended in business literature's self-help section such as Tom Peters' *The Brand You, or Fifty Ways to Transform Yourself from an 'Employee' into a Brand that Shouts Distinction, Commitment, and Passion*! (1999). Girls harness the cultural capital of big budget advertising as a nuanced way of marking their surfaces. They do not believe themselves to actually be a pair of Nike shoes, or that Nike shoes come with specially advertised powers like a pair of Dorothy's ruby slippers gone 'street'. The corporate traffic generated by 'liking' an item seems irrelevant to its role in creating individual girl brands. They clearly recognise the presence of the sign as cultural icon, its seductiveness as desirable object, and the practice of the signature as expressive production. I offer this as evidence of and testament to girl's capacity to produce her own rhythmic surface through a transcoding of others' marks. According to her very own self-representational construction, there is no actual girl beneath an image, nor is she available in 'authentic' representations. She is found in the surface play across marks. She becomes a signature brand.

7. See http://graceleeproject.com/index.php?p=survey_results
8. See http://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Britney-Spears-Costume-for-Halloween
9. For more on the 'slut', see the personal narrative accounts in Tanenbaum 2000.

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A Note on the Relation between Étienne Souriau's *L'Instauration philosophique* and Deleuze and Guattari's *What is Philosophy?*

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From the beginning of his career, Deleuze always denounces confusions. This is especially evident in his 1968 study *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza* (Deleuze 1990: 46, 47, 48; 1968: 37, 38, 39). Thus it should not be surprising to see this theme reappear in his last great work (with Guattari), the 1991 *What is Philosophy?*: 'It is essential not to *confuse* the plane of immanence and the concepts that occupy it' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 39; 1991: 42; emphasis added).[1] It is perhaps impossible to understand *What is Philosophy?* if one confuses the plane of immanence with concepts. To help us understand this difference, Deleuze and Guattari use different words to indicate what thought does in relation to the plane of immanence and in relation to concepts. In relation to the plane of immanence, thought 'institutes', while in relation to concepts it 'creates': 'Philosophy is at once concept *creation* and *instituting* of the plane' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 41/43–4; emphasis added). Note the different French nouns used here: 'création' and 'instauration'.

Now, as we can see, the English language translation of *What is Philosophy?* uses the word 'instituting' to render the French 'instauration'. There is no question that 'institution' correctly translates 'instauration', and one can only ever feel sympathy for any translator since their task requires making the most difficult choices among words and their nuances. Here however, the translation of the French 'instauration' by the English 'institution' perhaps covers over an important difference. Later in *What is Philosophy?* (in Chapter 4, 'Geophilosophy'), when

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Deleuze and Guattari say that 'we moderns possess the concept but have lost sight of the plane of immanence', the French word 'institution' appears. The English translation also renders this word as 'institution.' Yet the French 'institution' appears in relation to what we moderns resort to, since we seem unable to 'instaurate' a plane of immanence: 'English law is a law of custom and convention, as the French is of contract (deductive system) and the German of institution (organic totality). When philosophy is reterritorialised on the State of Law, the philosopher becomes philosophy professor; but for the German this is by institution and foundation [*institution et fondement*], for the French it is by contract, and for the English it is solely by convention' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 106/101). Because the English translation renders both 'institution' and 'instauration' as 'institution', the English-language reader might think that throughout *What is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Guattari are really German professors. The English translation seems to imply that the laying out or tracing – these gestures or activities – of a plane of immanence is what Germans do when they are philosophy professors in the State of Law.[2] This confusion between institution and instauration is not likely and therefore not serious. There is, however, another confusion caused by the English translation that is more likely and therefore more serious. What must be distinguished, what must not be confused, are concept creation and plane instauration. The question is: what is the difference between creation and instauration?

When Deleuze and Guattari speak of 'concept creation and the instauration of the plane' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 41/43–4, translation modified[3]), they cite what is today an obscure book: Étienne Souriau's 1939 *L'Instauration philosophique*.[4] In the note they say: 'Aware of creative activity in philosophy, [Souriau] invoked a kind of plane of instauration as the soil of this creation, or "philosopheme," animated by dynamisms' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 41n6/44n6, translation modified). Then they cite pages 62–3 of *L'Instauration philosophique*. On these pages, Souriau says (and I quote at length in my own translation since no work of Souriau exists in English):

> In philosophy there are beings, and these beings are the purpose of the activity that the philosopher, insofar as he is a creator, deploys. The philosophical labour results in the work [*œuvre*], and the work, by passing the shock back, illuminates the world from which it came. And there, in this double relation, resides something (so to speak) mysterious that is very essential to the very nature of philosophy. For, all we need is a little reflection to sense that the drive, the current that draws the macrocosm towards the microcosm in which it is in some way expressed, towards the philosopheme, is not

> contained within the framework of the relation of cause and effect. . . . The philosopheme is not a simple result of the collection of activities and circumstances from which it came. Moreover, it is not . . . a simple making conscious. When placed at the intersection of a variety of the multiple currents in which he bathes spiritually, the philosopher-subject is not content with intimate contact and interior knowledge of those currents that run over him. He, so to speak, grasps them, and elevates them outside of himself in order to make them concrete and separate in a closed world, in a being that is more or less sufficient unto itself. Do you know how one used to make those beautiful tissue papers that would cover capricious little glitzy ornaments? One poured into a bucket of water some buoyant colours that one moved with a reed, making the colours undulate with the movement of the water. And when the colours looked good, one collected them up with the sheet of paper, which was then dried. Even to suppose that the philosopher attracts only a reflection – the shimmering in his mind from thinking of the multiple actions of the world upon him and of him in his reactions – still it is necessary that he capture it, this reflection, and posit it separately in this microcosm of the philosopheme. The gesture that brings, that reconstitutes, that constitutes in a separate and completely spiritual world, that posits all these reflections at the end separately in being, this is the philosophical gesture par excellence. The meditation moves, tosses and orders somehow or other a cosmic content. The instauration grasps, filters, retains and posits separately the essential acts that structure this meditation. And it manages to be able to present them in a separate monument, as in a paradigm, by means of which one will then be able to see the world again. In any case, intuition, meditation and reflection itself are still only preparatory acts. They are unleavened bread: imperfect sketch, existence that has not yet undergone the essential test of emancipation and of autonomous subsistence. (Souriau 1939: 62–3)

In this passage, we see several similarities with Deleuze and Guattari's descriptions in *What is Philosophy?* First, the philosopheme, like the plane of immanence and its diagrammatic features, depends on something like an intuition, a meditation, or a reflection (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 40/42). Second, the philosopheme is based on a reflection of a 'cosmic content' similar to a reflection on chaos, chaos being suggested by the figure of the undulating water (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 42/44). But most importantly, there are actions of instauration – grasping, filtering, retaining and positing – which resemble the action of laying out and tracing, making a map of the plane of immanence. These actions, being the philosophical gesture par excellence, are not mere intuitions. They posit the structure of the meditation or intuition in a 'separate monument'; they give subsistence and reality to the plane of immanence, a reality, according to Souriau, that is spiritual.

Souriau uses the word 'instauration' throughout his book because he thinks it expresses the spiritual being of philosophy better than the word 'creation', and it allows him to avoid the latter. I am going to quote at length again a passage from *L'Instauration philosophique*. This is the only time in the book that he pauses over the word 'instauration':

> It is certainly not useless to have noted... this constitutive characteristic of philosophical thought, namely, that philosophical thought tends towards the work [*œuvre*] – towards the monumental, towards a singularity, towards a being that constitutes the philosophical *ousia*. Philosophical thought belongs therefore to the genre of instaurative thought. This word 'instauration', which is here being used without it being stressed, avoids the word 'creation', which is full of traps. From one viewpoint, man creates nothing. Nature itself creates nothing. The opening of the bud does not create the rose. All of its material conditions were there. The form is the sole thing that is new. Novelty is immaterial and, naturally, the immaterial is alone new. (Souriau 1939 : 73–4)

The trap that creation involves for Souriau lies in the belief that what is created is material. But even the materiality of creation is not what Souriau is really trying to avoid with the word 'instauration'. We understand what he is trying to avoid only in a note that he adds to the passage just quoted:

> From the semantic viewpoint it is possible to observe a very interesting nuance in regard to this word ['instauration']. In the modern usage, its sense is that of 'solemn establishment', of an institution, a ceremony, a function, a way of making or doing, in short, a not strictly material reality. But in Latin 'instauratio' and 'instaurare' imply the idea of a restoration, of a recommencement, of a renovation, or better, of a resumption, definitive this time, of what had not been able to be brought to fruition the first time. *Instaurativi ludi* (restorative games) are those games that are celebrated in place of those that had been interrupted. The modern use is easily understood in contrast to 'restore', a contrast that has pushed 'instaurate' to the side of: to establish for the first time. But it is legitimate to preserve in its meaning, from the Latin origin of the word, the idea that creation is not what is at issue, that the inventive or anecdotally first is not what is in question, that to instaurate means less to establish a thing, a moral or a physical being, temporally than to establish it spiritually, and to constitute it, to grant to it reality in its own kind. (Souriau 1939: 73, n1)

In this quote, we again see Souriau stress the spirituality of instauration: unlike instauration, creation is material. Yet, when he distinguishes the modern sense of the word from the Latin sense, we see that something else is at stake. The modern sense of the word 'instauration', especially when it is contrasted with 'restore', ends up on 'the side of

to establish for the first time'. In other words, it looks no different from creation. His insistence on the Latin sense shows us that the distinction between creation and instauration is the distinction between temporal establishment and spiritual establishment. It seems to me that this distinction in Souriau corresponds to Deleuze and Guattari's attempt to separate philosophical time from the history of philosophy. The history of philosophy (or history itself) is succession, while philosophical time (what Souriau is calling spiritual establishment) is coexistence and superposition. So, we might think that Deleuze and Guattari intend 'instauration' to refer to this sense of spiritual establishment ('becoming' in Deleuze and Guattari's terminology) that characterises philosophical time. 'Instauration' would refer to superposition and co-existence (becoming), while creation would refer to succession. Yet, when Deleuze and Guattari speak of the creation of concepts, they clearly do not mean the sense of temporal establishment from which Souriau is trying to distance himself, a sense of creation that seems to assume independent points of succession: the first time, the second time, and so on. The instauration of the plane of immanence *and* the creation of concepts, both of these activities, result in co-existence, not succession. They both have spiritual reality.

What then really distinguishes the instauration of the plane from the creation of concepts in Deleuze and Guattari? Let us return to the sentence in the note where Souriau presents the Latin sense of 'instauration': 'In Latin "instauration" and "instaurare" imply the idea of a *restoration*, of a *recommencement*, of a *renovation*, or better, of a *resumption*, definitive this time, of what had not been able to be brought to fruition the first time' (my emphasis). What Souriau wants to retain from the Latin sense of the word is the idea of doing something over again. Succession not only *includes* independent points, it also *excludes* repetition. Although we would have to think that concept-creation in Deleuze and Guattari would have to *include* repetition – after all Deleuze wrote a book called *Difference and Repetition* – we are approaching an answer to our question. Let us quote one more time the same sentence about the Latin sense of 'instauration', but this time with different emphasis: 'In Latin "instauration" and "instaurare" imply the idea of a restoration, of a recommencement, of a renovation, or better, of a resumption, definitive this time, of *what had not been able to be* [*qui n'avait pu être*] brought to fruition the first time.' In instauration and creation, the repetition is necessary. Yet, in instauration, the necessity arises not only because nothing can be produced without using previous traits, functions and features. The necessity also arises because the

instauration *was not possible the first time*. It is this 'not possible' or this 'what had not been able to be' that distinguishes instauration from creation in Deleuze and Guattari. In *What is Philosophy?*, Deleuze and Guattari think that concepts have been and *can be* created; creation is possible; it can be achieved. To lay out a plane of immanence without any transcendence whatsoever, that is impossible – or, as Deleuze and Guattari say, it happened 'once, in order to show, that one time, the possibility of the impossible. Thus Spinoza is the Christ of philosophers' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 60/59). In other words, if we leave to one side the extraordinary case of Spinoza, instauration leads to a very different experience than that of creation, or, better, it leads to the experience that is at the root of concept-creation. Instauration leads to the experience of the impossible: 'We shall say that THE plane of immanence is, at the same time, that which must be thought and that which *cannot* be thought' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 59/59, original capitalisation of 'the', my emphasis of 'cannot').[5] Because the plane of immanence is never able to be completely achieved, since the planes of immanence that have been laid out can never be the best (except, once more, for that of Spinoza, and perhaps Bergson [Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 48–9/50]), the plane of immanence always requires another (albeit necessarily insufficient) instauration. Therefore, we shall conclude by returning to our translation problem. If we were going to translate the title of Souriau's book into English, we would have to render it in this way: not as 'Philosophical Creation', not as 'Philosophical Instauration', but only as 'Philosophical Restoration'.

Notes

1. Hereafter references will be made to Deleuze and Guattari 1994, with the second page number referring to the French edition.
2. One should be aware that Merleau-Ponty in the 1950s had used the word 'institution' to characterise his own thinking. He used this word to render the Husserlian or phenomenological term, 'Stiftung' (see Merleau-Ponty 2010). While in certain respects Deleuze's idea of instauration resembles Merleau-Ponty's institution, the two differ (at least at the most superficial level) in so far as instauration is non-historical in Deleuze, while institution is the very definition of history for Merleau-Ponty.
3. The word 'instauration' exists in English as in Francis Bacon's 'The Great Instauration'.
4. See Souriau 1939. It appears that at the time of his death in 1979, Souriau was already very much forgotten. Today it looks no different (see de Vitry Maubrey 1985).
5. See also Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 269; 1980: 329.

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On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects

Gilbert Simondon Translated by Ninian Mellamphy, Dan Mellamphy and Nandita Biswas Mellamphy

I. The Notion of Phase Applied to Becoming: Technicity as Phase

This study postulates that technicity is one of the two fundamental phases of the mode of existence of the ensemble constituted by man and the world. By phase, we do not mean one temporal moment replaced by another, but an aspect that results from a division of being and that is opposed to another aspect. This sense of the word phase is inspired by the notion of phase relation in physics; one cannot conceive of a phase except in relation to another or to several other phases; in a system of phases there is a relation of equilibrium and of reciprocal tensions; the present system of all the phases taken together is the complete reality, not each phase, itself since a phase is a phase only in relation to others, and it is distinguished from them in a manner that is totally independent of notions of genus and species. Finally, the existence of a plurality of phases defines the reality of a neutral centre of equilibrium in relation to which the phase-shift exists. This schema is very different from the dialectical schema, because it implies neither necessary succession nor the intervention of negativity as engine of progress; moreover, in the schema of phases, the opposition exists only in the particular case of a biphase structure.

The adoption of such a schema founded on the notion of phase is destined to put in play a principle according to which the temporal development of a living reality proceeds by division from an initial active centre and then by regrouping after the advance of each separate reality

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resulting from the division. Each separate reality is a symbol of the other, just as one phase is a symbol of the other or of others; no phase, as phase, is in equilibrium in relation to itself, nor does it have complete truth or reality: every phase is partial, abstract, and unbalanced; only the system of phases is in equilibrium at its neutral point; its truth and its reality are this neutral point, the procession and conversion in relation to this neutral point.

We suppose that technicity results from a phase-shift of a central, original and unique mode of being in the world, the magical mode; the phase that balances technicity is the religious mode of being. Aesthetic thinking emerges at the neutral point between technics and religion, at the moment of the division of primitive magical unity: this is not a phase but, rather, a permanent reminder of the rupture of the unity of the magical mode of being and a search for a future unity.

Each phase in turn divides into a theoretical mode and a practical mode; there is thus a practical mode of technics and a practical mode of religion, as well as a theoretical mode of technics and a theoretical mode of religion.

Just as the distance between technics and religion generates aesthetic thinking, so the distance between the two theoretical modes (the technical and the religious) generates scientific knowledge as mediation between technics and religion. The distance between the practical technical mode and the practical religious mode generates ethical thinking. Aesthetic thinking is therefore a mediation between technics and religion that is more primitive than science and ethics, for the birth of science and ethics requires a prior division within technics and religion between the theoretical mode and the practical mode. From this results the fact that aesthetic thinking is truly situated at the neutral point, extending the existence of magic, whereas science on the one hand and ethics on the other are in conflict in relation to the neutral point, since there is the same distance between them as there is between the theoretical mode and the practical mode in technics and in religion. If science and ethics could have converged and united, they would have coincided in the neutral axis of this genetic system, thereby providing a second analogue of magical unity, over and above the incomplete aesthetic thinking that is its first analogue, incomplete because it allows the phase-shift between technics and religion to subsist. This second analogue would be complete; it would replace at once magic and aesthetics; but perhaps it is only a simple tendency playing a normative role, since nothing proves that the distance between the theoretical mode and the practical mode can be completely bridged.

In order to indicate the true nature of technical objects, it is therefore necessary to resort to a study of the entire genesis of the relations between man and the world; the technicity of objects would then seem to be one of the two phases of the relation of man to the world engendered by the division of primitive magical unity. Should technicity then be considered as a simple moment in a genesis? – Yes, in a certain sense: there is certainly something transitory in technicity, which itself becomes divided into theory and practice and participates in the subsequent genesis of theoretical thinking and of practical thinking. But, in another sense, there is something definitive in the opposition of technicity to religiosity, because man's primitive way of being in the world (magic) can be thought to provide inexhaustibly an indefinite number of successive contributions that can be divided into a technical phase and a religious phase; in this manner, although effectively there is succession in genesis, the successive stages of the different geneses are simultaneous within culture, and there are relations and interactions not only between simultaneous phases but also between successive stages; hence, technics can encounter not only religion and aesthetic thinking but also science and ethics. Now, if one adopts the genetic postulate, one notices that a science or an ethics can never encounter a religion or a technics on a truly common ground, since the modes of thinking that are different in degree (for example a science and a technique) and that exist at the same time do not constitute a single genetic lineage, do not issue from the same surge of the primitive magical universe. True and balanced relations only exist between phases of the same level (for example a technical ensemble and a religion) or between successive degrees of genesis that are part of the same lineage (for example between the stage of technics and of religions in the seventeenth century and the contemporary stage of science and of ethics). True relations exist only in a genetic ensemble balanced around a neutral point, envisaged in its totality.

This is precisely the goal to be reached: reflexive thinking has a mission to redress and refine the successive waves of genesis by which the primitive unity of the relation of man to the world becomes divided and comes to sustain science and ethics through technics and religion, between which aesthetic thinking develops. In these successive divisions, primitive unity would be lost if science and ethics were not able to come together at the end of the genesis; philosophical thinking is inserted between theoretical thinking and practical thinking, in the extension of aesthetic thinking and of the original magical unity.

Now, to make possible the unity of scientific knowledge and of ethics in philosophical thinking, the sources of science and of ethics have to be

of the same degree, contemporaneous one with the other, and must have arrived at the same point of genetic development. The genesis of technics and of religion conditions that of science and of ethics. Philosophy is its own condition, for as soon as reflexive thinking begins, it has the power to perfect whichever of the geneses that has not been entirely achieved, by becoming aware of the sense of the genetic process itself. So, to be able to pose the philosophical problem of the relations between knowledge and ethics in a profound manner, it would be necessary first of all to complete the genesis of technics and the genesis of religious thinking, or at the very least (for this task would be infinite) to know the real meaning of these two geneses.

II. The Phase-Shift of Primitive Magical Unity

In order to understand the true relation of technics to other functions of human thinking, one must start with the primitive magical unity of the relations of man and world; through this examination it is possible to understand why philosophical thinking should complete the integration of technical reality into culture, which is only possible by freeing the sense of the genesis of technics, by the founding of a technology; so, the disparity between technics and religion subsides, harmful as it is to the intended reflexive synthesis of knowledge and ethics. Philosophy must found technology, which is the ecumenism of technics, because if ethics and the sciences are to meet up in reflection, a unity of technics and a unity of religious thinking needs to precede the division of each of these forms of thinking into a theoretical mode and a practical mode.

The genesis of a particular phase can be described in itself; but it cannot be really known in its sense and, consequently, understood in its postulation of unity, unless it is repositioned in the totality of its genesis, as a phase in relation to other phases. This is why in trying to understand technicity it is not enough to start with constituted technical objects; objects emerge at a certain moment, but technicity precedes and surpasses them; technical objects result from an objectification of technicity; they are produced by it, yet technicity is not exhausted in these objects and is not entirely contained in them.

If we eliminate the idea of a dialectical relation between successive stages of the relation between man and the world, what could be the engine of successive divisions during which technicity emerges? It is possible to appeal to the theory of Forms, and to generalise the relation that it establishes between figure and ground. Gestalt theory draws its

basic principle from the hylemorphic schema of ancient philosophy, applied to modern considerations of physical morphogenesis: the structuring of a system would depend on spontaneous modifications tending towards a stable state of equilibrium. In reality, it seems that a distinction should be made between a stable equilibrium and a metastable equilibrium. The emergence of the distinction between figure and ground results from a state of tension, from the incompatibility of the system in relation to itself, from what one could call the oversaturation of the system. But the structuring is not the discovery of the lowest level of equilibrium: stable equilibrium, in which all potential would be actualised, would correspond to the death of any possibility of further transformation; so, living systems, precisely those that manifest the greatest organisational spontaneity, are systems of metastable equilibrium. The discovery of a structure is at least a provisional resolution of incompatibilities, but it is not the destruction of potentials; the system continues to live and to evolve; it is not degraded by the emergence of structure; it remains tense and capable of being modified.

If one agrees to accept this corrective and to replace the notion of stability with that of metastability, then it seems that the Theory of Forms may account for fundamental stages in the evolution of the relation between man and the world.

Primitive magical unity is the vital relational link between man and the world, defining a universe at once subjective and objective prior to any distinction between object and subject, and consequently also prior to any emergence of the separate object. The primitive mode of the relation of man to the world can be thought of as not only prior to the objectification of the world, but even to the segregation of objective unities in the field that will become the objective field. Man finds that he is bound to a universe that is experienced as a milieu. The emergence of the object can only happen through the isolation and fragmentation of the mediation between man and the world; and according to the principle proposed, this objectification of a mediation must have as correlative, in relation to the primitive neutral centre, the subjectification of mediation. The mediation between man and the world becomes objectified as a technical object, in the same way as it is subjectified as a religious mediator; but this objectification and this subjectification, contrary and complementary, are preceded by a primary stage of the relation to the world, the magical stage, in which the mediation is as yet neither subjective nor objective, neither fragmented nor universalised, and is the simplest and most fundamental structuring of the milieu of

a living being: the birth of a network of privileged points of exchange between the being and the milieu.

The magical universe is already structured, but according to a mode that is prior to the segregation of object and subject; this primitive mode of structuring is the one that distinguishes figure from ground by marking key-points in the universe. If the universe were deprived of every structure, the relation between the living being and its milieu could occur in a continuous time and a continuous space, without privileged moment or place. In fact, preceding the segregation of unities, a reticulation of space and time is established that highlights privileged places and moments, as if all of man's power to act and all the capacity of the world to influence man were concentrated in these places and in these moments. These places and these moments possess, concentrate, and express the forces contained in the ground reality that supports them. These sites and these moments are not separate realities; they draw their force from the ground that they dominate; but they localise and focalise the attitude of the living vis-à-vis its milieu.

According to this general genetic hypothesis, we suppose that the primitive mode of existence of man in the world corresponds to a primitive union, prior to any division, of subjectivity and objectivity. The primary structuring, corresponding to the emergence of a figure and a ground in this mode of existence, is what gives birth to the magical universe. The magical universe is structured according to the most primitive and most fecund of organisations: that of the reticulation of the world into privileged places and privileged moments. A privileged place, a place that has a power, is one which draws into itself all the force and efficacy of the domain it delimits; it summarises and contains the force of a compact mass of reality; it summarises and governs it, as a highland governs and dominates a lowland; the elevated peak is the lord of the mountain,[1] just as the most impenetrable part of the wood is where all its reality resides. The magical world is in this way made of a network of places and things that have a power and are bound to other things and other places that also have a power. Such a path, such an enclosure, such a *temenos* contains all the force of the land, and is the key-point of the reality and of the spontaneity of things, as well as of their accessibility.

In such a network of key-points, of high-places, there is a primitive indistinction regarding human reality and the reality of the objective world. These key-points are real and objective, but in them the human being is immediately united with the world, both to be influenced by it and to act upon it; they are places of contact and of mixed, mutual

reality, places of exchange and of communication because they form a knot between both realities.

Yet magical thought is the first, because it corresponds to the simplest, most concrete, most immense and most supple structuring: that of reticulation. In the totality constituted by man and the world there emerges as the primary structure a network of privileged sites that make possible the insertion of human effort, and through which exchanges between man and the world are carried out. Each singular site concentrates within itself the capacity to have control over a portion of the world that it specifically represents and whose reality it conveys in communication with man. These singular sites could be called *key-points* controlling the man-world relationship in a reversible way, for the world influences man just as man influences the world. The summits of mountains or certain narrow passes are in this way naturally magical, because they govern a region. The heart of the forest and the centre of a plain are not just geographical realities metaphorically or geometrically designated: they are realities that concentrate natural powers as they focalise human effort: they are figural structures in relation to the masse that supports them and that constitutes their ground.

In general, we look to superstition when we want to find an example of the schemas of magical thinking in the actual conditions of life. In fact, superstitions are faded vestiges of magical thinking and, in a search for its real essence, they can only be misleading. On the other hand, to understand the meaning of magical thinking, it is advisable to resort to high, noble and sacred forms of thought that require a clear and insightful effort. That, for example, is the affective, representative and voluntary substratum that supports an ascent or an exploration. Perhaps the desire for conquest and the sense of competition underlie the motivation that makes it possible to move from everyday existence to exceptional acts; but certainly when the desire for conquest is invoked, it is a matter of making an individual act legitimate for a community. In fact, in the individual being or in the group limited to those who perform the exceptional act, the thinking implemented is much more primitive and much more elaborate.

Ascent, exploration, and, more generally, every pioneering act consists in adhering to the key-points that nature presents. Climbing a slope in order to go towards the summit is to make one's way towards the privileged place that commands the entire mountainous massif, not in order to dominate or to take possession of it, but to enter into a friendly relationship with it. Man and nature are not strictly speaking enemies before such accession to the key-point, but strangers to one

other. Until it has been climbed, the summit is only a summit, a place higher than the others. The ascent gives it the character of a place that is more fully developed, elaborate and non-abstract, a place where this exchange between the world and man occurs. The summit is the place from which the whole massif is seen in an absolute way, while views from all other places are relative and incomplete, making one wish for the summit point of view. An expedition or a navigation that makes it possible to reach a continent by an established route does not conquer anything; nevertheless, in magical thinking they are valid in that they make possible contact with the continent in a privileged place that is a key-point. The magical universe is made up of the network of places providing access to every domain of reality: it consists of thresholds, summits, boundaries and crossing points that are connected to one another by their singularity and their exceptional nature.

This network of boundaries is not only spatial but also temporal; there are notable dates and privileged moments to begin one action or another. Besides, the very notion of beginning is magical, even if every particular value is denied on the date of the beginning; the beginning of an action that is to last and the first act of what should be a long series ought not to have in themselves a particular majesty and power of direction, if they were thought to be controlling the entire duration of the action and the whole sequence of efforts, propitious or otherwise; dates are privileged points of time that make possible an exchange between human intention and the spontaneous unfolding of events. These are the temporal structures by which man is inserted in natural becoming, just as the influence of natural time affects each human life, becoming destiny.

In civilised life today, a great many institutions concern magical thinking but are hidden by utilitarian concepts that indirectly justify them; in particular, time off, festivals and vacations compensate with their magical charge for the loss of magical power imposed by civilised urban life. Thus, vacation trips, that are thought to provide rest and diversion, are in fact a quest for key-points old or new; these points can be the big city for country people, or the countryside for city dwellers, but more generally they are not any particular site in the city or the countryside; it [–the key-point–] is the shore or the high mountain or even the border crossed on the way to a foreign land. Public holidays are related to privileged moments of time; occasionally, a conjunction of singular moments and singular sites is possible.

So, ordinary time and ordinary space serve as ground for these figures; dissociated from the ground, figures would lose their meaning; time off and celebrations are not a release from ordinary life by suspending

ordinary life, but a search for privileged places and dates in relation to the continuous ground.

This figural structure is inherent in the world, rather than detached; it is the reticulation of the universe in privileged key-points at which exchanges happen between the living being and its milieu. Now, it is precisely this reticular structure that goes out of phase when there is a shift from the original magical unity to technics and to religion: figure and ground separate by becoming detached from the universe to which they adhered. The key points become objective, retaining only their functional mediatory characteristics, becoming instrumental, mobile, capable of efficiency in any place and at any time; as figure, the key-points, detached from the ground for which they were the key, become technical objects, transportable and abstracted from the milieu. At the same time, the key-points lose their mutual reticulation and their power of distant influence on the reality that surrounded them; as technical objects they have only one action upon contact, site by site, instant by instant. This rupture of the network of key-points frees the characteristics of the ground, and these in turn become detached from their own ground, narrowly qualitative and concrete, in order to hover over the whole universe, throughout space and throughout time, in the form of detached powers and forces above the world. While the key-points become objective in the form of concretised tools and instruments, the ground powers become subjective by becoming personified in the form of the divine and the sacred (Gods, heroes, priests).

The primitive reticulation of the magical world is thus the source of an objectification and a subjectification that are in conflict; at the moment of the rupture of the initial structuring, the fact that the figure becomes detached from the ground is expressed by another detachment: figure and ground themselves are freed from their concrete adherence to the universe and take contrasting pathways; the figure becomes fragmented, whereas the ground qualities and forces become universalised: this break-up and this universalising are forms of becoming, the figure becoming an abstract figure, and grounds becoming a single abstract ground. This phase-shift of the mediation into figural characteristics and ground characteristics translates into the emergence of a distance between man and the world. The meditation itself, instead of being a simple structuring of the universe, takes on a certain density; it becomes objectified in technics and becomes subjectified in religion, making the first object appear in the technical object and the first subject appear in divinity, when previously there had been a single unity of the living and its milieu: objectivity and subjectivity emerge between the living and its

milieu, between man and the world, at a moment when the world does not yet have a complete status as object nor man a complete status as subject. Moreover, it can be affirmed that objectivity is never completely coextensive with the world, and that subjectivity is never completely coextensive with man. It is only when the world is envisaged from a technicist perspective and man is envisaged from a religious perspective that one can be called a complete object and the other a complete subject. Pure objectivity and pure subjectivity are modes of the mediation between man and the world, in their first form.

Religion and technics are the organisation of two symmetrical and contrasting mediations; but they form a couple, since each is but one phase of the primitive mediation. In this sense, they do not have a definitive autonomy. Furthermore, even when taken in the system that they form, they cannot be considered as enclosing all the real, since they are between man and the world, but do not contain the entire reality of man and of the world, and cannot apply to it in a complete way. Because of the gap between these two opposing aspects of mediation, science and ethics deepen the relation between man and the world. With regard to science and to ethics, the two primitive mediations play a normative role: science and ethics are born in the interval defined by the gap between technics and religion, by following the median direction; the precedence that religion and technics have to science and ethics is of the same order as the precedence that lines limiting an angle have to the bisector of that angle: the sides of the angle may be indicated by short segments, whereas the bisector can be extended indefinitely. Likewise, from the gap that exists between very primitive technics and a very primitive religion, a very elaborate science and very elaborate ethics can be progressively constructed without being limited by, but only directed by, the basic conditions of technics and religion.

The origin of the division that created technical thinking and religious thinking can be attributed to a primitive structure of reticulation that is truly functional. This division separated figure from ground, figure providing the content of technics, and ground providing that of religion. Whereas in the magical reticulation of the world, figure and ground are reciprocal realities, technics and religion emerge when figure and ground become detached from one another, in this way becoming mobile, divisible, displaceable, and directly open to manipulation because disconnected from the world. Technical thinking retains only the schematism of structures, of what makes up the efficiency of action on singular sites; these singular sites, detached from the world of which they were the figure, detached also from one another, losing their

immobilising reticular concatenation, become divisible and receptive as well as reproducible and constructible. The elevated place becomes an observation post, a watchtower constructed in the plain, or a tower placed at the entrance to a gorge. At the beginning, technics are often content to develop a privileged place, as when constructing a tower at the summit of a hill, or placing a lighthouse on a promontory at the most visible point. But technics can also successfully create the functionality of privileged sites. Of natural realities technics retain only the figural power, not the site and natural localisation on a determined ground given prior to any human intervention. Dividing the schematisms more and more, it makes something into a tool or an instrument, that is to say, a fragment detached from the world capable of working efficiently in any location and under any conditions, site by site, according to the intention that directs it and at the moment when man so wishes. The accessibility of the technical thing consists in its being freed from servitude to the ground of the world. Technics are analytic, operating progressively and by contact, leaving aside connection by influence. In magic the singular place permits action over a whole domain, just as talking to the king is enough to win over a whole people. In technics, on the other hand, all of reality must be examined, touched and treated by the technical object, detached from the world and available for use in any site at any moment. The technical object is distinguishable from the natural being in the sense that it is not part of the world. It intervenes as mediator between man and the world; it is, therefore, the first detached object, for the world is a unity, a milieu rather than an ensemble of objects; there are in fact three types of reality: the world, the subject and the object, which is an intermediary between the world and the subject, the primary form of which is the technical object.

III. The Divergence of Technical Thinking and of Religious Thinking

Technical thinking, which results from the rupture of the primitive reticular structure of the magical world, and which retains those figural elements that can be deposited in objects, tools, or instruments, gains from this detachment an accessibility that makes possible its application to every element of the world. However, this rupture also produces a deficit: the tool or the technical instrument has retained only its figural characteristics, and figural aspects that are detached from the ground with which they had once been directly connected since they came from a primary structuring that caused figure and ground to spring up as a

single and continuous reality. In the magical universe, the figure was the figure of a ground and the ground the ground of a figure; the real, the unity of the real, was at once figure and ground; the question of a possible lack of effectiveness of the figure on the ground or of the influence of the ground on the figure could not have arisen, since figure and ground constituted a single unity of being. On the other contrary, in the case of technics, after the rupture, what the technical object retained and established of figural characteristics finds any ground whatever anonymous and foreign. The technical object has become a bearer of form, a remnant of figural characteristics, and it tries to apply that form to a ground that is now detached from the figure, because it has lost its intimate inherent relationship and because it can be informed by any form encountered, but in a violent, more or less imperfect manner; figure and ground have become strangers and abstract in relation to one other.

The hylemorphic schema does not solely describe the genesis of living beings; it might not even describe it essentially. Perhaps also it does not derive from a well-thought-out and conceptualised experience of technics: before the knowledge of the living being and before reflection on technics, this implicit adequacy of figure and ground is broken by technics. If the hylemorphic schema seems disengaged from technical experience, this is because it is more a norm and an ideal than an experience of the real. Technical experience, making use of vestiges of figural elements and vestiges of ground characteristics, revives the primary intuition of a mutual adherence of matter and form, of a coupling preceding any division. In this sense, the hylemorphic schema is correct, not because of the logical use of it in ancient philosophy, but as an intuition of the structure of the universe for man before the birth of technics. This relation cannot be organised as a hierarchy: it cannot have in it increasingly successive and increasingly abstract stages of matter and of form, because the real model of the relation between matter and form is the primary structuring of the universe as figure and ground; now, this structuring is true only if it is not abstract, if it is at one stage only; the ground is really ground and the figure really figure, and it cannot become ground for a higher figure. The manner in which Aristotle describes the relations between form and matter, in particular the supposition that matter aspires to form (matter aspires to form as the female to the male) is already far from primitive magical thinking, for that aspiration can only exist if there had been an earlier detachment; so, it is a single being that is at once matter and form. Furthermore, perhaps one should not say that only the individual being is made up of matter and form; because the emergence of a figure-ground structure is prior to

any segregation of units. The mutual relation of correspondence between a given key-point and a given ground neither presupposes the isolation of the key-point from the network of other key-points nor the discontinuity of this ground from other grounds: it is a universe that is structured in this way, not an ensemble of individuals. The first detached beings to emerge after the rupture of the primitive reticulation are technical objects and religious subjects, and they are responsible for figural characteristics as they are for ground characteristics: therefore, they do not fully possess matter and form.

The dissociation of the primitive structuring from the magical universe entails a series of consequences for technics and religion, and through them it conditions the later development of science and of ethics. In fact, unity belongs to the magical world. The phase-shift that makes for an opposition between technics and religion, in an irreducible way leaves technical content with a status lesser than unity and leaves religious content with a status greater than unity. This causes all the other consequences. A proper understanding of the status of the technicity of objects depends on its being grasped in terms of the development that put the primitive unity out of phase. Religion, retaining its ground characteristics (homogeneity, qualitative nature, indistinction of elements within a system of mutual influences, long-range action across space and time resulting in ubiquity and eternity), represents the implementation of the functions of totality. A particular being, a precise object of attention or of effort, is always considered in religious thought to be smaller than real unity, inferior to the totality and included within it, exceeded by the totality of space, and preceded and followed by the immensity of time. Whether subject or object, the object, the being, the individual is always understood to be less than unity, to be dominated by a presaged totality that infinitely transcends it. The source of the transcendence lies in the function of totality that dominates the particular being; in the religious view of things this particular being is understood in relation to a totality in which it participates, because of which it exists, but which it can never completely express. Religion universalises the function of totality, which is dissociated and consequently freed from any figural attachment that limits it; the grounds connected to the world in magical thinking, and consequently limited by the very structuring of the magical universe, become in religious thinking a limitless background, spatial as well as temporal. They retain their positive ground qualities (forces, powers, influences, quality), but rid themselves of their limits and the adherence that attached them to a *hic et nunc*. They become absolute ground, totality

of ground. Advancement in the universe begins from liberated and, to some extent, abstract magical grounds.

Religious thinking, after the disjunction of ground and figure, retains the other part of the magical world: the ground, with its qualities, its tensions, its forces; but this ground, too, like the figural schemas of technics, becomes something detached from the world, abstracted from the primitive milieu. And just as the figural schemas of technics, freed from their adherence to the world, are affixed to tool or instrument in the course of becoming objectified, the qualities of ground that technicity makes available in the mobilisation of figures are affixed to subjects.

Technical objectification leading to the emergence of the technical object, the mediator between man and the world, has a counterpart in religious subjectification. Just as technical mediation is instituted by means of something that becomes a technical object, so religious mediation emerges as a result of the affixing of ground characteristics on subjects, real or imaginary, divinities or priests. Religious subjectification normally leads to mediation by the priest, while technical mediation leads to mediation by the technical object. Technicity retains the figural characteristics of the primitive complex of man and the world, while religiosity retains the ground characteristics.

Technicity and religiosity are neither degraded forms of magic nor relics of magic; they issue from the division of the primitive magical complex, the reticulation of the original human milieu into figure and ground. It is through their coupling that technics and religion are the heirs of magic, not through each on its own. Religion is not more magical than technics; it is the subjective phase of the result of division, whereas technics are the objective phase of the very same division. Technics and religion are contemporaries of each other, and, when each is taken separately, they are more impoverished than the magic from which they emerge.

Religion, therefore, has by nature the vocation to represent the exigency of the totality; when it divides into a theoretical mode and a practical mode, through theology it becomes the exigency of a systematic representation of the real as an absolute unity; through morality, it becomes for ethics the exigency of absolute norms of action that are justified in the name of the totality and superior to all hypothetical, that is to say particular, imperatives; to science as to ethics, religion brings a principle of reference to the totality, which is the aspiration to the unity of theoretical knowledge and to the absolute character of the moral imperative. Religious inspiration constitutes a permanent reminder of the relativity of one particular being with respect to an

unconditional totality exceeding every object and every subject of knowledge and of action.

Conversely, technics have a content that is always subordinate to the status of the unity, because the schemas of efficiency and the structures resulting from the fragmentation of the primitive network of key-points cannot be applied to the totality of the world. By nature, technical objects are multiple and divided; technical thinking, enclosed in this plurality, can progress, but only by multiplying technical objects, without being able to recapture the primitive unity. Even when multiplying technical objects endlessly, it is impossible to find an absolute adequacy to the world, since each of the objects attacks the world in one place only and in one moment only; it is localised, particularised; adding technical objects one to another can neither remake the world nor regain contact with the world in its unity, which was the aim of magical thinking.

In connection with a specific object or with a specific task, technical thinking is always inferior to unity: it can present several objects and several means, and select the best; but nonetheless, it always remains inadequate to the wholeness of the unity of the object or of the task. Each schema, each object, each technical operation, is controlled and guided by the whole from which it derives its ends and its orientation, and which provides it with a never attained principle of unity that is expressed by combining and multiplying its schemas.

Technical thinking has by nature the vocation to represent the point-of-view of the element; it adheres to the elementary function. Once technicity is admitted into a domain it breaks it up and starts a chain of successive and elementary mediations governed by the unity of the domain and subordinated to it. Technical thinking conceives the operation of an ensemble as a chain of elementary processes working point by point and step by step; it localises and multiplies the schemas of mediation, always remaining lesser than the unity. The element in technical thinking is more stable, better understood, and in a certain way more perfect than the ensemble; it is really an *object*, whereas the ensemble always remains to a certain extent inherent in the world. Religious thinking finds the opposite equilibrium: in it, the totality is more stable, more powerful, and more viable than the element.

In the theoretical domain as in the ethical domain, technics are concerned with the element. In the sciences the contribution of technics consisted in making possible a representation of phenomena one by one by breaking them down into simple elementary processes similar to the operations of technical objects; such is the role of the mechanistic

hypothesis that enabled Descartes to represent the rainbow as an overall result of the point by point trajectory taken by each luminous corpuscle in each drop of rain in a cloud; and it was also according to the same method that Descartes describes the functioning of the heart by breaking down a complete cycle into simple successive operations and showing that the functioning of the whole is the result of the play of elements necessitated by their particular disposition (for example, that of each valve). Descartes does not ask himself why the heart is made in this way, with valves and cavities, but how it works given how it is made. The application of schemas drawn from technics does not account for the existence of the totality, taken as a unity, but does account for the point by point and instant by instant functioning of that totality.

In the ethical domain, technical thinking not only introduces means of action that are fragmentary and tied to the capacities of each object that is becoming a utensil, but also a certain reduplication of the action by technicity; a specific human action, considered with respect to its results, could have been accomplished by a specific technical functioning going through various stages; elements and moments of action have their technical analogue; an effort of attention, of memory, could have been replaced by a technical operation; technicity provides a partial equivalence to the results of action; it accentuates awareness of the action by the being who brings it to completion in the form of results; it broadcasts and objectifies the results of the action through comparison with those of the technical operation, breaking down the action into partial results, into elementary completions. Just as in the sciences technicity introduces the search for the *how* by a breaking down of ensemble phenomena into elementary operations, so in ethics technicity introduces the search for a breaking down of the overall action into the elements of action; because the total action is envisaged as that which produces a result, the breakdown of the action generated by technics considers the elements of the action as gestures that achieve partial results. Technicity assumes that an action is limited to its results; it is not concerned with the subject of the action taken in its real totality, nor even with an action in its totality, to the extent that the totality of the action is founded on the unity of the subject. In ethics concern with results is the analogue of the search for the *how* in the sciences; result and process remain subordinate to the unity of the action or to the ensemble of the real.

The postulation of an absolute and unconditional justification which religion directs towards ethics translates into a search for the intention as opposed to a search for the result that is inspired by technics. In the

sciences, religious thinking introduces an appeal for absolute theoretical unity that requires a search for the sense of becoming and the existence of given phenomena (hence responding to the *why?*), whereas technical thinking offers an examination of the *how?* for each of the phenomena.

Because its content is inferior to unity, technical thinking is the paradigm for all inductive thinking, both in the theoretical order and in the practical. It contains this inductive process in itself, prior to any separation into practical and theoretical modes. Induction, in fact, is not merely a logical process in the strict sense of the term; any process can be considered to be a process of the inductive type if its content is inferior to the status of unity, if it strives to attain unity or, at least, if it tends towards unity from a plurality of elements, each of which is inferior to unity. What induction takes hold of, what it starts from, is an element that in itself is not sufficient and complete, and does not constitute a unity; so, it exceeds each particular element by combining it with other elements that are themselves particular, in order to find an analogue of unity: in induction there is a search for the ground of reality from figural elements that are fragments; to try to find a law beneath phenomena, as in the induction of Bacon and Stuart Mill, or to try to find only what is common to all individuals of a given species, as in Aristotle's induction, is to postulate that beyond the plurality of phenomena and of individuals there exists a stable and common ground for reality, that is the unity of the real.

It is no different in ethics that would directly derive from technics; to want the whole duration of life to be a series of moments, to extract from each situation what is pleasant in it, and to want to construct the happiness of life by accumulating its agreeable elements, as did ancient Eudaimonism or Utilitarianism, is to proceed in an inductive manner, by trying to replace the unity of the duration of life and the unity of human aspiration with a plurality of instants and with the homogeneity of all successive desires. The elaboration to which Epicureanism submits desires has one goal only, which is to incorporate them into the continuity of an existence that proceeds in an accumulative manner: for this, each of the desires must be dominated and surrounded by the subject, made lesser than unity, so that it can be treated and manipulated as a genuine element. This is why the passions are eliminated, since they cannot be treated as elements; they are larger than the unity of the subject; they dominate it, they come from farther away than it and tend to go farther on than it, obliging it to exceed its limits. Lucretius tries to destroy the passions from within, by showing that they are based on errors; in fact, he fails to account for the element of tendency in

passion, that is to say, for the force that is inserted into the subject and yet is more extensive than it, a force in relation to which it seems to be a very limited being; tendency cannot be considered to be contained within the subject as a unity. Wisdom, having restored the forces at the origin of action to a status of inferiority with respect to the unity of the moral subject, can organise them as elements and reconstruct a moral subject within the natural subject; however, this moral subject never completely attains the level of unity; between the reconstructed moral subject and the natural subject there remains a void impossible to fill; the inductive approach remains in plurality; it constructs a network of elements, but this network cannot amount to a real unity. All ethical technics leave the moral subject unsatisfied because they ignore its unity; the subject cannot be content with a life that would be a series, even an uninterrupted series, of happy moments; a life that is perfectly successful element by element is still not a moral life; it lacks what makes it the life of a subject: unity.

But conversely, religious thinking, the foundation of obligation, creates in ethical thought a search for unconditional justification which makes every act and every subject appear to be inferior to real unity; when related to a totality that expands endlessly, the moral act and subject derive their significance solely from their relation with this totality; the communication between the totality and the subject is precarious, because at every moment the subject is drawn back to the dimension of its own unity, which is not that of the totality; the ethical subject is de-centered by religious exigency.

Excerpted from a translation in progress of Gilbert Simondon, *On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects* (1958); this particular excerpt being Chapter One, 'The Genesis of Technicity', of Part Three, 'The Essence of Technicity'.

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Notes

1. Not metaphorically but really: the geological folding and the eruption that built the whole massif are oriented towards the peak. The promontory is the firmest part of the chain eroded by the sea.

Reviews

Toward a Minor Theory of Music?

Brian Hulse and Nick Nesbitt, eds. (2010) *Sounding the Virtual: Gilles Deleuze and the Theory and Philosophy of Music*, Aldershot: Ashgate.

In his essay in this volume entitled 'Thinking Musical Difference: Music Theory as Minor Science', Brian Hulse states that a 'benefit of applying Deleuzian difference to music is that it opens up possibilities for thinking-hearing music in new ways' (49). It is from this starting point that Hulse and fellow editor Nick Nesbitt have proceeded to gather together the set of essays that make up *Sounding the Virtual*. It's an ambitious project and one that explores a number of directions in Deleuze's work in relation to the practice and theory of music; but one that also ultimately poses a more interesting question about the very possibility of applying or using Deleuze as a means of approaching musical analysis.

Hulse puts forward a set of criteria for using Deleuze as a means to interrogate and reconfigure our understanding of music in ways that conventional music theory does not allow. His chapter largely draws on Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition*, working through the familiar theme of difference as repetition-without-concept, and drawing an analogy between the musical event and repetition. Hulse's analysis of the opening of bars of Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 demonstrates the way in which an analytical application of Deleuze's idea of repetition with difference can help us to look again at a familiar piece of music and possibly glimpse (or indeed hear) a manifestation of the eternal return.

The relationship between the musical event and difference as such is a theme that re-occurs throughout *Sounding the Virtual* as does the notion of music as an analogue of thought, but the question of how to apply Deleuze's thought to music is perhaps the most pressing. In her

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essay 'Logic of Edge, Wolfgang Rihm's "Am Horizont"', Judy Lochhead puts forward the question, 'What is the relation between Deleuze's philosophy and Bacon's art?' (182). We could very well extend this further and ask, 'What is the relation between any creative practice, including music, and philosophy, in particular Deleuze's philosophy?' As part of her analysis, Lochhead asks 'who are the intended recipients of critical writing on art and how can writing about art affect its apprehension and production?' (183) These are key issues that concern any analysis of Deleuze's work in relation to music, and are issues that Hulse and Nesbitt's selection of essays throws up time and again. What are we hoping to gain from applying Deleuze's ideas to music? *Can* we apply Deleuze's theories to music as an off-the-shelf set of analytical tools? What do we hope to gain as theorists, composers, players and listeners?

One of Hulse's intentions is clearly to set in motion 'a practical application of Deleuzian analytics to music' (37), whereas Lochhead discusses the importance of using Deleuze as an exhortation to go beyond the usual confines of musical analysis and to understand a broader context of thinking about and listening to music. As she says: 'An address of "function"', then, is an account not simply of the technical details of creation, but, for instance, of how the affects of an airy flute or smoky harmony work together with the percepts of a floating melody and an adamant rhythm to create the sensations that give the work its unique sense' (185).

Christopher Hasty's contribution frames the problems of using Deleuze as an analytic apparatus when he describes the process of analysis as a 'descent into empirical balancing' (14). Hasty contends that Deleuze's ideas could be used to position the non-representational nature of music as an analogy of the thought process itself. Again with reference to *Difference and Repetition*, Hasty describes the way in which music can be seen as an antidote to the limitations of the Image of Thought as defined by Deleuze, and goes on to suggest that music is an aesthetic realisation of the interaction between the virtual and the actual.

Hasty's own analysis of Chopin in relation to 'The Idea of Music' is interesting but problematic in a way that he himself acknowledges. Performing a *Deleuzian* analysis is not as simple as applying Deleuze to music theory, since it is music theory that needs to change. Hulse articulates the problem in this way: 'the truly problematic doesn't presuppose its solution. The truly problematic asks for the articulations of problems as such' (28). The difficulty is that conventional approaches to music analysis presuppose their answers in the nature and manner

of the question, and although there is a clear understanding of the problematic nature of these investigations and analyses, the question of whether the contributors to *Sounding the Virtual* successfully redesign music analysis or simply apply the given musical-theoretical terms through Deleuze is a recurrent one.

If, in Hasty's reading, music is a representation of the interaction between the virtual and the actual, then truly thinking about the 'Idea of Music' would bring into question the very substance of music itself. By pre-figuring and anticipating that the virtual must be actualised as music, the 'Idea of Music' comes across as something of a Platonic conceit. It is here, for example, that the implementation of Deleuze itself becomes problematic, since if we were to rigorously apply the logic of the virtual, then we would need to accept the ultimately contingent nature of music, rather than try to find its antecedent in the virtual. If we were to assume that the *virtual* in some ways anticipates things like music, then this would immediately make it un-*virtual*, in that the virtual as far as Deleuze is concerned is pure concept-less difference.

In the chapter 'A Deleuzian Noise/Excavating the Body of Abstract Sound', Sean Higgins puts together a convincing critique of Noise, through his re-reading of Henry Cowell's essay 'The Joys of Noise'. It is here, and elsewhere in essays by Bruce Quaglia and Ildar Khannanov, that the writers do indeed engage with Deleuze's ideas in a way that helps to create new perspectives from which to view music.

Higgins' discussion of the way in which 'noise is unrecognisable' (58) analyses the nature of thinking in Deleuzian terms, wherein the 'act of thought is the thinking of a dynamic field of relations, an immersion into the multivalent noise of a different sort of empiricism' (60). Higgins works through the now familiar theme of the contingency of thought by asserting that *noise as such* is ungraspable, and that as soon as we perceive it, it loses the virtual potential of noise. In making the comparison with Cowell's empirical analysis of sound, Higgins reads noise as potential, as something that informs perception, but which in itself remains unperceivable: 'the true act of thought, to Deleuze, is driven by the violence of that which is unrecognisable to common sense' (54).

In 'Transformation and Becoming Other', Bruce Quaglia's discussion of Luciano Berio's music and conceptual framework for musical composition greatly accelerates the potential for using Deleuzian theory and terminology within musical discourse. Throughout the chapter, Quaglia makes strong reference to Berio's own apprehension and appropriation of Deleuze's ideas and works through the relationship

between Berio's view of music and music discourse as a set of 'texts' (232) and Deleuze's formulation of assemblages. One of the most engaging elements of Quaglia's chapter is his argument that both Berio and Deleuze operate beyond the confines of conventional (post)structuralist hegemony. For Quaglia, Berio's 'Poetics of Analysis' allow him to go beyond what Berio calls the 'domain of signs' in the same way that Deleuze seeks to theorise beyond the 'regime of signs' (234). Both men saw 'circularity' in the correlationist approach of structuralist and poststructuralist thought, and what is interesting about Quaglia's work is that he is able to identify Berio's move towards Poetics as a means of going beyond a system of signification.

Having established the connection between Berio and Deleuze, Quaglia proceeds to apply a series of tactics that make procedural connections between both men's work in terms of positioning Berio's views on analysis within a 'creative' rather than 'reductive' paradigm (233). Within this analysis, Quaglia moves towards his assertion that what Berio's 'Poetics of Analysis' resembles is in fact Deleuze's theory of minor literature, in that Berio's ideas about poetics/analysis reveal an interrogational/deterritorialising approach to composition and listening. His works aren't simply based on a pre-given set of codes or even a passive set of musical materials that can be adapted using an extant formula into new works. Rather, it is Berio's contention, and thus Quaglia's assertion, that Berio's Poetics are intrinsically minoritarian in nature: these are not works that proceed with anything other than the impulse to *repeat* and to create new assemblages.

Similarly, in the final chapter 'Line, Surface, Speed: Nomadic Features of Melody', Ildar Khannanov puts forward a set of ideas based on an initial appraisal of melodic form and harmonic development in a Bashkirian nomads' song and a subsequent analysis of Chopin's Ballade No. 2, Op. 38 and Mazurka No. 68, Op. 4, in terms of Deleuze's theories on nomadism and the war machine. As with Quaglia, what makes Khannanov's work compelling is the manner in which he applies Deleuze to the task in hand. Khannanov initially discusses at length Bashkirian nomadic culture and applies ideas of movement and non-sedentary behaviour to both melodic form as well as to experience and perception more generally. In doing so, Khannanov is able not only to put forward a set of suggestions as to what has informed the nomadic/non-sedentary impulse for the particular melodic fragment that he discusses, but also to go further and suggest that although Western music is very much sedentary (250), in that the codes and processes by which it can be constructed and measured are now the result of a

much more stable/altered set of values, it is also, so he claims, based on nomadic systems and drives. This he asserts by way of an analysis of two passages from Chopin, wherein the harmonic progression is compared to what could be called 'nomadic musical theory' within which the importance of metric rhythmic and formal harmonic progressions are destabilised/unseated in order to be rebalanced by a nomadic temporal flow that bears more resemblance to what Khannanov has discussed in relation to the Bashkirian fragment.

Ultimately, although the appropriation of Chopin feels slightly forced, Khannanov's real success lies in the way in which he, like Quaglia, is able to theorise music in relation to Deleuze, not simply adopt the terminology and apply it. Khannanov's approach interrogates Deleuze by analysing the source material for the latter's own thoughts. The result is a piece of work that makes the comparison of Chopin's compositional technique to Deleuze's war machine, the specific articulation of a harmonic progression as a line of flight, and a reading of the passage as an example of non-arborescent thought realised in music, both convincing as well as useful. Another thread in Khannanov's essay that is also of interest – especially from a musical analyst's perspective – is the critique of Schenkerian analysis. In this regard, it's clear that Khannanov, in a similar way to Hulse, is seeking to use Deleuze, or at the very least make use of his radical style of theorising, to unseat established musical-analytic paradigms.

Other notable chapters in the book take historiological approaches to reading Deleuze in terms of his own influences. Martin Scherzinger, in 'Enforced Deterritorialization, or the Trouble with Musical Politics', puts forward a detailed comparative analysis of Pierre Boulez's Serialist composition techniques and post-Webern musical aesthetics in relation to Deleuze and Guattari's conception of rhizomatic tendencies within thought, being and culture. Scherzinger undertakes a musicological analysis of the relationship between rhizomatic theory and Boulez's ideas, and basically contends that Deleuze and Guattari's theories are in many ways a translation of Boulez's thought into a philosophical mode.

Amy Cimini, in her chapter 'Gilles Deleuze and the Musical Spinoza', takes a similarly historiological approach by placing Deleuze's thoughts on music – or more precisely, his views on the ontology of sound – in the context of Spinoza's work on Cartesian Dualism. What emerges is a reading that exposes, as with the earlier transposition of Boulez's Serialism into philosophy, some of the limits of Deleuze's theorising. In attempting to graft a double articulation of the movement of sound in terms of both musical form and the underlying form of life, as well as

then extrapolating from this a potential ethics on how to conduct one's life (130), Cimini identifies some of the problems with such a wholesale co-option of Spinoza's thought.

From Cimini's comparison between Deleuze's ontological theorising and the composer Iannis Xenakis' insights into the movement of sound (the discussion of sound particles is particularly well done), the fact emerges that Deleuze's thought, although inspired by music and music-related thinking, can by no means be used unequivocally as a method of analysis. There is a recognition here of the distance between a conventional empirical approach to working with sound, as embodied in Xenakis' work on granular synthesis, and Deleuze's more radical view of material experience and immanence (140–2).

This conflict neatly encapsulates the difficulty that a book such as *Sounding the Virtual* by its very nature encounters, which is how to write about Deleuze and Music, without turning Deleuze's work into a majoritarian science – a 'science' of music as it were – itself. Hulse's own description of the 'Minoritarian practice' (47) of musical analysis potentially appropriates (or 're-territorialises') Deleuze's theory as Majoritarian science. The move to apply Deleuzian thought (and even the term 'Deleuzian' moves towards a majoritarian conception) to music as a tactic for analysis runs the risk of turning these ideas into the very opposite of what they were supposedly intended to achieve, that being the liberation of thought from meta-narrational containment and stricture.

In using Deleuze as a starting point for theory and as a reminder of the need to create a new way of thinking rather than simply adopt a pre-given set of circulatory codes, Khannanov fully explores the minoritarian potential of working with Deleuze. Among the successes of *Sounding the Virtual* – which includes some useful and necessary discussions and explanations, as well as some powerful historical and biographical insights into the roots and antecedents of a number of key areas in Deleuze's thought – this is perhaps the most obvious, and yet most important achievement. Deleuze did not establish a complete, ready-to-use analytic toolkit; rather, he argued for the importance of non-representational thinking, and of recognising the essential role of creativity within thought. Although flawed in places, *Sounding the Virtual* offers several insights into how a potential overhaul of musical analysis might be achieved.

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A Missed Encounter?

Reidar Due (2007) *Deleuze*, Cambridge: Polity.

The appearance of Reidar Due's *Deleuze* has the benefit of provoking questions concerning the intellectual challenge of Deleuze today. Due's volume is just one among many texts offering an introductory guide in a marketplace approaching saturation point, and for this reason it prompts, however implicitly, the question of how Deleuze and Guattari's ideas should, under current conditions, be communicated and taught. It is now roughly a decade since the great wave of Deleuze's influence first broke within the Anglophone academy, but the nature of the pedagogical encounter adequate to the complexity and density of his work has yet to be determined. If we can agree with Gregg Lambert that 'Deleuze and Guattari's works were never intended for the institution, or to become institutionalized' (Lambert 2006: 11) then the fact of their becoming-institutionalised is, surely, the very line of flight we should be now exploring. If we do not, we run the risk of producing a sort of image of thought – in step with the critique of ivory towerism mounted by Badiou, Hallward and others – in which the revolutionary promise Deleuze offers is redeemable only on condition that the compromise foisted on it by its institutionalisation remain a repressed source of bad conscience, a sort of 'dirty little secret'. If this intersection of thought, pedagogy and institutionalisation is the context in which Deleuzianism today must proceed this is so not only because of the historical contingency of its institutional uptake, as Lambert points out, but also, and more importantly, because Deleuze's metaphilosophical critique is concerned with diagramming the very processes by which thought is captured by power.

The question, then, is whether any introductory textbook on Deleuze and Guattari written today can simply avoid this kind of intersection – dare I say dialectic? – of form and content, of historical contingency and conceptual necessity, through pedagogical sleight of hand, or whether the anomaly of an institutionalised Deleuze and Guattari should be embraced. To be fair to Due, he makes a brave attempt at a short potted history of the intellectual context out of which Deleuze emerged – emphasising cogently the political and intellectual salience of the various poststructuralist challenges to Cartesianism and humanism – but this only serves to highlight his ultimate evasiveness when he points to 'the lack of agreement among scholars about the

nature and direction of Deleuze's thought' regarding especially 'the relationship between its general conception of reality and the mind and its possible practical applications'. Due counsels, somewhat obtusely, a 'middle course', asserting that 'Deleuze's philosophy is neither so abstract as to be divorced from practical relevance nor . . . in any way directly "applicable" to experience' (Due 2007: 4–5). Now, this evasion, as innocent as it sounds in an introductory text, arguably hinders rather than aids a reader wishing to know just what Deleuze's philosophy is about and what it is good for, especially since Due asserts, in the same breath, the political and philosophical radicalism of the Deleuzian position. If Due's volume is a poor one, this is in large part because it argues for Deleuze's radicalism while simultaneously disavowing and disowning it. This leads to inconsistencies at the level of the argument, as we shall see.

Due's contention is that Deleuze's primary contribution was to give us an entirely new conception of subjectivity, an 'alternative subject' founded not on 'self-consciousness and rational mental capabilities but on the temporal and creative passage that a human being may undergo'. If the subject is no longer based in self-awareness or self-directedness, then it nevertheless has access to a field of understanding via the role of affects which register the forces constituting it: 'an affect does not entail the concept of subjective self-awareness. To understand an affect is to see it as a *force*, a particular type of energy, and this energy does not presuppose self-consciousness'. Subjective experience is seen to be one with the material world of forces and energies. Having established the Deleuzian subject on the unthinking immediacy of forces, there nevertheless remains, in Due's account, an activity which does not seem very different from the kind of self-conscious rationality we might have thought had been banished: 'The questions we ask about affects are: how do they combine? What affects is the mind capable of? What thoughts are generated by affects? In the philosophical perspective, the mind is a site of thoughts rather than a centre of consciousness' (Due 2007: 10). The alternative this rendering presents to the more traditional subject of philosophical inquiry is, I would argue, not entirely clear.

Further on, however, in a chapter titled 'Social Ontology', Due clarifies his position, arguing that Deleuze rejects all subjectivism in favour of a thought which seeks a genetic understanding of the actual determinations generating our position in the world. This genetic view is to be radically opposed to any experiential view of that position (Due 2007: 61). This in effect allows for a more disinterested, indeed,

rational, account of social reality than those of the phenomenological and psychoanalytic schools:

> an absolutely formal process of thinking that does not, in any way, derive its categories from lived experience. The quasi-mathematical vocabulary used to describe social being in *A Thousand Plateaus* pursues this same ideal of abstraction: in order to make sure that one is not prejudiced by the ontological categories entailed by experience one has to produce an absolutely abstract conceptual language. (Due 2007: 131)

Deleuze's philosophy, then, 'moves . . . close to Absolute Idealism' (Due 2007: 169). This conclusion, appearing in the final pages, seems to accept that the rationality banished from the self-conscious subject returns, albeit without any kind of structural system, such as that entailed by Hegelian absolute knowledge, to support it. The role of immanence here serves to differentiate Deleuze from the self-conscious rationality of the philosophical tradition: the immanence of thought to the world is to be contrasted with those philosophies that view consciousness as a means to generate representations by which we can conceptualise worldly objectivity from a position of transcendent judgement. But Deleuze's philosophy still has to be rationalistic, since it is self-justifying and autonomous of the objective contents of consciousness, and this is so despite its genetic origins in the material world of forces. According to Due's argument, then, the return of rationality occurs without the phenomenological mediation of an experiential subject capable of determining recognisable objects. The determinations of Deleuzian thought stem from reality itself, of its immanence to that reality, and not from the structures of subjectivity. This is what distinguishes Deleuze from Hegel. This abandonment of a mediating subjectivity, is, as Due notes, most apparent in *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus*, in that the requirements of thinking social being render the experiential object form inadequate: 'vitalities, production, stratification are not given in experience. They are genetic principles that do not resemble objects that we can encounter within conscious experience' (Due 2007: 169).

What has happened to the Deleuzian subject here? What, precisely, is its radicalism? Due's argument fails to address these questions, and this raises a number of problems for his account of the relation Deleuze's work seeks to establish between thought and the outside world. Due's earlier evasion is telling here, as the determination of this relation is central to the basic problematic of immanence: how is thought, as noematic attribute, produced from a material flux which subsequently

functions as the limit of the thinkable? If thought and the world are internal to one another such that each demonstrates the same creative process (monistic life), how does the world become thinkable without us falling prey to representations which portray the world as a dead objectivity, essentially unknowable except through the constructs a subject gives to itself? Due writes that Deleuze enables us to think 'genetically parallel to the process of actual determination in reality. Even if one did not actually know the sufficient reason for each thing, one could approach such a knowledge by finding equivalents in thought for the elements that constitute this genetic process' (Due 2007: 43–4). But this simply flattens the epistemological onto the ontological – a trick, effected by the terms 'parallel' and 'equivalents', which conjures away the essential question of thought and its outside. We are left within the realm of 'correlationism', which entails, according to Quentin Meillassoux, that 'we only ever have access to the correlation between thinking and being, and never to either term considered apart from one another' (Meillassoux 2008: 5).

Can we be satisfied with this, or should we, rather, insist that for Deleuze the relation between thought and the world is never presupposed, prepared or 'correlated' in advance, but is the object of a determinate encounter? If correlationism is a danger in the interpretation of Deleuze, it is because it suggests that it is enough for us simply to abolish representation, leaving in its place a sort of vague 'parallel' or 'equivalence' between thought and the world which threatens to reintroduce the insufficiencies of the philosophy of representation. Deleuze's philosophy aimed to debunk any conceptualisation of the world which maintained a representational link between concept and object, and argued instead that the creation of concepts was one with, or immanent to, the creations of worldly life. The creation of concepts proceeds in the midst of the world and in tandem with its creatures. But Deleuze's method of critique demands that the abolition of representation cannot simply be settled once and for all and put behind us, rather it needs to be repeated at every step, and repeated, precisely, as difference, which is to say, as an encounter which dramatises the interaction between thought and its outside. The very immediacy of this encounter is what Deleuze understood by the 'violence' of signs, in that a sign is generated through the shock or rupture characterising the emergence of the new. What replaces representation, then, or to be more precise, what attends its repeated abolition via critique, is something quite determinate and real, a practical activity carrying with it the full semiotic potency of the encounter, what Deleuze calls creation.

Due's final chapter is devoted to the questions raised by immanence and creation as the distinguishing characteristics of Deleuze's philosophy. What the immanent creation of concepts means is that there is no external guarantor of a reality represented to us by concepts. Instead, concepts and reality are embroiled in one and the same activity of self-creation occurring on an immanent plane. We cannot presuppose any separation of concept and world, rather, the philosophical activity of thought implies their necessary unity by presupposing itself:

> The plane is itself internal to philosophy. Philosophy creates the medium (plane) in which it invents concepts... So, rather than having external conditions, philosophy invents its own conditions... The old logical term 'petition of principle' indicates the circularity that an argument produces when it implicitly uses a principle it sets out to prove. This kind of circularity is, Deleuze would argue, a necessary condition of philosophy. (Due 2007: 152)

Due's argument began, as we saw, with the material unity of being and experience, impersonal affects being produced prior to any self-conscious separation of object and subject. But the benefits of this unity are reaped only at the level of a more profound separation, in which thought is able to reach a sufficient degree of abstraction only at the expense of lived experience. This is why Due's argument has to end, ultimately, with the assertion that for Deleuze thought is autonomous from the world and thus self-fulfilling. In Due's reading, then, the encounter between thought and the world is simultaneously approached and evaded. This is unfortunate, because the essence of what Deleuze means by creation lies in this encounter.

Philosophy, in the form demanded by Deleuze's metaphilosophical method, and contrary to what Due suggests, never invents its own conditions, it is always forced to think under conditions alien, even hostile, to it. Deleuze and Guattari are quite explicit about what concept creation entails: the philosopher creates concepts on a plane, but this plane does not come to us ready-made, rather, it needs to be 'instituted' or 'laid out' – and not created or invented – by a 'prephilosophical' or 'nonphilosophical' encounter which is both contingent and necessary. What philosophy presupposes as its condition is neither philosophy nor concepts but a nonphilosophical and nonconceptual understanding (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 40–1). The plane of immanence, then, is not created, in the way concepts are, nor does it spring magically from concept creation, since, if it did, Deleuze's conception of philosophy would remain trapped by the dogmatism of a pure thought subject

to itself alone and to its own propitious conditions. This is why there is always a determinate, practical, i.e. ethically and politically grounded, element – an encounter, in other words, around which concepts crystallise. This encounter is the very objectivity that grounds philosophy in the world. Deleuze characterised his empiricism as 'one which treats the concept as object of an encounter, as a here-and-now, or rather as an *Erewhon* from which emerge inexhaustibly ever new, differently distributed "heres" and "nows"' (Deleuze 1994: xx). It is only on this basis that learning and pedagogy can proceed: 'to learn is indeed to constitute this space of an encounter with signs, in which the distinctive points renew themselves in each other, and repetition takes shape while disguising itself' (Deleuze 1994: 23).

It is unfortunate, then, that Due's book draws back from the pedagogical encounter. There are other, less crucial flaws. At points, Due's sentences seem to conceal at least as much as they communicate, such as when he writes that 'at the general ontological level of sense, the logic of sense is the embodiment of thought forms upon the immaterial surface of sense' (Due 2007: 57). On two occasions, he writes 'barbaric' when what he means is primitive or savage (Due 2007: 105, 108). He refers throughout to Deleuze's first book on Spinoza as *Spinoza and the Problem of Expression*, arguing that the title of the English translation is 'less accurate' (Due 2007: 171). However accurate, there is no book titled *Spinoza and the Problem of Expression*, and the pedantry here is misleading rather than helpful. Due's style throughout is gnomic, and this, though not a problem in itself, leads to some unfortunate caricatures, for example of Nietzsche's concept of eternal return which is described as 'a cosmological cycle of variation in which a stock of invariants are recycled, selected and combined in different combinations through history, thus engendering superficially different historical epochs and individual lives' (Due 2007: 33). This gloss, while one may be able to defend it as accurate, is insensitive to the crux of Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche, and in fact is completely at odds with it. Due's volume, then, is disappointing on a number of levels and fails to distinguish itself as a contribution to the growing body of pedagogically oriented Deleuze scholarship.

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Introduction: Prophetism and the Problem of Betrayal

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Anyone studying Deleuze often faces a double-edged problem: how to read Deleuze, that is, how to make sense of what he was saying, but particularly how to do that under the compelling Deleuzian decree 'don't interpret!'. While this problem is not foreign to anyone studying French thought after World War II or post-structuralism in general, only in Deleuze does interpretation appear as the worst faux pas, being an expression or an execution of the logic of representation. The problem intensifies when one wishes to apply Deleuze's concepts and ideas, whether in the field of philosophy or in any other discipline: how to apply his philosophy without first determining what it is? How to 'do theory' with a theory that resists interpretation, hence systematic methodology? This problem may also be summed up as a question of loyalty: how does one apply Deleuze's thought while remaining loyal to his principles? How can one be Deleuzian without betraying the decree 'don't interpret!'? Addressing this problem early on in his work, Ian Buchanan suggested that given the role of creativity in Deleuze's philosophy, a possible way out of this paradox is to realise that 'to be Deleuzian one must abandon Deleuze' (Buchanan 1997: 382). Creativity is what makes this form of disloyalty or betrayal possible and desirable; it enables the fabrication of new readings, concepts and procedures, indeed, the production of differences.[1]

Approaching a theme like 'Deleuzian Futures' presents us with similar difficulties: how to make sense of what Deleuze said about the future, and make use of it? In other words, can the future be foreseen from a Deleuzian perspective, and can it be brought into existence or changed? It seems that once thought is directed towards the future, even the most secular of scholars finds him- or herself entangled with the theology

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of divination. But in fact, it is with 'divinatory analysis' that betrayal reveals itself to be all the more crucial for Deleuze studies, as will be explained in what follows. These somewhat pious tones may be disconcerting for some of us, but we actually should not shy away from the idea that Deleuze's thought can be seen as prophetism. After all, what is it that a prophet does? 'He anticipates and detects the powers (*puissances*) of the future, rather than applying past and present powers (*pouvoirs*)' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 124), and this is precisely what Deleuze entrusted us with: new ways to think what we can still become, to fabricate new futures by exploring the powers of life, powers that we are yet to encounter. Indeed, the prophetic value of Deleuze's philosophy is in ethics, and it takes its cue from Spinoza.[2]

If we believe therefore that Deleuze's work could be used to analyse present issues in order to better understand and change our future – that is, if it holds a prophetic value for us – then in a sincere act of loyalty our prophet must be betrayed. Betrayal, Deleuze and Guattari say, marks a distinctive regime of signs, a semiotics in which a line of flight is drawn and acquires a positive value, 'as though it were effectively occupied and followed by a people who find in it their reason for being or destiny' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 121). This positive, productive moment of deterritorialisation enables the formation of new relations between always-already predetermined, fixed terms (fixed since they are signs defined by and subjected to one rule: to refer to other signs ad infinitum as their only content). It is with prophets that 'betrayal has become an idée fixe' (124), and 'it is the regime of betrayal . . . in which the true man never ceases to betray God just as God betrays man, with the wrath of God defining the new positivity' (123). Betrayal is the best expression of loyalty for it anticipates God's will: 'even the prophet, unlike the seer-priest, is fundamentally a traitor and thus fulfills God's order better than anyone who remained faithful could' (123). God turned away from the prophet (like Jonah) and from the true man (like Cain or Judah), and they turned away from him; and that is what sets in motion processes of creativity and change, 'this double turning away that draws the positive line of flight' (123).[3]

But how, then, do we betray Deleuze without becoming 'interpretive priests' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 114)? What would be the right way to betray Deleuze, and is it possible to infer it from Deleuze's writings? This special issue opens with Ian Buchanan's essay, which takes on this ethical question and focuses on its crucial role in shaping the future of Deleuze studies by asking: what would be the right thing to do from a Deleuzian perspective? Betrayal here takes the form of a reading both

critical and creative, and is commensurate with Deleuze's readings of other philosophers, his own betrayal in his 'prophets'.[4] But rarely have Deleuzians put both their readings of Deleuze and their applications of his philosophy (or 'Practical Deleuzism' as Buchanan terms it) to the test of ethics. And if they did, says Buchanan, more often than not has it been done by way of false reasoning, that is, by 'mov[ing] from how things are to how things should be'. Buchanan's primary case in point is Foucault's misreading of the concept of desire in Deleuze and Guattari, which leads him to the conclusion that there is 'nothing at all within Deleuze and Guattari's theory of desire that can tell us either how we should live or how we should treat others'. But, according to Buchanan, this is all the more reason to revaluate and re-examine the models with which we have been working so far to read Deleuze, and to create an ethical discourse from which practical, Deleuzian solutions to burning issues could be created.

At this point this issue's rationale can be made clearer: it is nothing but a provisionary map, indeed, a pro-visionary, non-exhaustive map of directions or tendencies that could or should be pursued in the field of Deleuze studies. Buchanan's ethical demand-dilemma constitutes a critical juncture, where essays concerned with readings of Deleuze and essays concerned with applying Deleuze's thought conjoin and form a series defined by a logic of betrayal. It is always that atemporal moment of deciding how Deleuze *should* be read (that is, betrayed), which shapes and conditions all the ways Deleuze *could* be read and *could* be applied (two related but different expressions of that same betrayal: sometimes it is the question of reading which is implied in an actual application as its past, whereas in other cases it is the question of application which is implied in an actual reading as its future). Deleuzian Futures is explored here as the future of Deleuze studies.

Gregg Lambert's essay contextualises the ethical problem of 'what is the right thing to do from a Deleuzian perspective?' in his discussion of the experience of drugs. Deleuze and Guattari's concept of pharmacoanalysis is offered here as a way to resist a pervasive misconception of desire, which is used to generalise the idea of desire *for* drugs, and thus ultimately misses the dangers specific to drugs. Relating this problem to a critical investigation of consciousness as a threefold seat of illusion, Lambert suggests that ethical experimentation, not moral judgement, should be appealed to when attempting to determine what is the right thing to do (next).

Daniel W. Smith gives his own take on the concept of desire, this time as a question of flows, and its correlative terms 'code' and 'stock' as

they are worked out in Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus*. The future of Deleuzians working in the field of socio-political philosophy lies in developing a theory of flows, for this is the fundamental thesis at the basis of the entire *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* project, Smith suggests. Here, the 'right', or adequate, analysis of contemporary socio-political situations is dependent upon determining actual relations between flows, defined as the movement or exchange of economic value; codes, defined as the system which record or inscribe the flows, and as a necessary means of grasping them; and stocks, defined as portions of flow understood in terms of possession or ownership.

The next three essays share an interest in futuristic Deleuzian concepts, and relate to Deleuze's third synthesis of time in different contexts. Henry Somers-Hall discusses Deleuze's concept of the future through Hamlet's famous formula, 'time is out of joint'. As long as time is understood to be based on an underlying rational structure (as is the case with Plato's and Kant's conceptions of time), time is 'in joint', that is, tied to cardinal points which make it the measure of primary, and essentially rational, movement. This metaphysical conception of time, argues Somers-Hall, is implicit in classical drama, but overturned with Hamlet's famous hesitation, which expresses an alternative understanding of time as pure and empty form: a time out of joint, or duration, which is no longer subordinated to movement, hence allowing for the creation of something genuinely new.

Ronald Bogue addresses the third synthesis of the Future as the time of fabulation, the infinite Now which results in the creation of 'a people to come'. Fabulation for Deleuze indicates an act of legending, Bogue explains, 'an irreducibly temporal process of becoming-other that is open-ended, and if it is a process of summoning forth a future people, it is one that cannot move beyond itself without involving the participation of a collectivity in its action'. After meticulously examining the concept of fabulation, Bogue offers an intriguing analysis of the manifestation of fabulation in the science fiction of Octavia Butler.

Is contemporary media culture commensurable with Deleuze's typology of images constructed in his cinema books? Patricia Pisters examines a possible third type of image based on the third synthesis of time, which she names 'the neuro-image'. Precursors of the third image category, expressing a digital logic before digitality, can already be traced back to the cinema books themselves, and Pisters elaborates on Deleuze's analysis of the films of Alain Resnais to advocate this claim. She then turns to discuss the American television series *FlashForward* as a typical example of contemporary neuro-images.

The collection concludes with one of Deleuze's least favourable forms of negotiation: an interview that Constantin V. Boundas conducted with Jean-Clet Martin, philosopher and one of France's most prominent readers of Deleuze (by Deleuze's own admission).

The interview took place on the occasion of Martin's new book on Hegel and *The Phenomenology of Spirit* published in France last year, and offers a preview into the main issues and concerns discussed in the book. But why would a special issue on Deleuzian Futures conclude with a discussion of a new book on Hegel, the most repudiated of all philosophers who inspired Deleuze? 'I cannot stop reading Hegel in a Deleuzian way,' admits Martin, and Boundas explores the ramifications of such a seemingly improbable Deleuzian reading of Hegel. For instance, could it be that Martin's reading implies that Deleuze was wrong to distance himself from Hegel? Could Martin be making the Hegelian Concept work in the same way the Deleuzian Concept does? Is Hegel truly an enemy to Deleuze?

This is where betrayal comes full circle: with the philosopher-friend questioning his loyalty not simply by submitting it to moral judgement ('Deleuze was wrong'), but by forming alliances with his Hegelian enemy, or, more precisely, by re-examining the old Hegel–Deleuze rivalry and by changing its defining relations. A line of flight is drawn, where both the cherished philosopher and his nemesis are subject to new understandings. At the final moment of this series, that is, at the event of negotiation, a different figure to embody the logic of betrayal is revealed: not that of a biblical prophet but that of a sapling-warrior, like the young Neoptolemus.[5] As the etymology of the name suggests, he was the wager of 'new war', the introducer of *polemos*. What he actually did was to create a new war machine, enabling him to become the site of a new, strange alliance between rivals (Philoctetes and Odysseus). Neither parting with his friends nor subscribing to any one side of a polemic, Neoptolemus is the emblem of negotiation in which loyalty takes the form of relating-anew, of creating difference.[6] Our Deleuzian futures may very well depend on that.

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Notes

1. Later, in a book 'built around the twin problem of reading Deleuze and reading with Deleuze' (Buchanan 2000: 7), Buchanan creates his own difference in the field of Deleuze studies, 'an *other* reading of Deleuze that would enable his work to be systematically applied' (Buchanan 2007: 8; emphasis in the original).
2. 'It is Spinoza who has elaborated the profoundest theory of prophetism' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 123).
3. For an illuminating discussion of prophets and betrayal in Deleuze and Guattari, see Bogue 2004.
4. Michael Hardt (1993) makes a similar point when he characterises Deleuze's philosophy as apprenticeship: a method of selection and transformation of philosophical materials.
5. 'The warrior is in the position of betraying everything' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 354).
6. It is worth noting that Deleuze and Guattari do not have Neoptolemus's image in mind when discussing the warrior, but only that of the 'old heroes' trapped in between two poles: that of the Old State, represented by Agamemnon, and that of the Modern State, represented by Odysseus (which they call by his Roman name, Ulysses). In Sophocles' *Philoctetes*, it is the young warrior who seemed trapped between two poles or two orders, not the 'old hero' (Philoctetes): on the one hand, he is a descendant of Achilles, a noble hero (which places him on the side of Philoctetes, whom he will truly befriend despite deceiving him), and on the other hand, already a member of Odysseus's party on its way to Troy, and key player in his ruse (but he does not hesitate to reach to his sword when Odysseus attempts to prevent him from returning the bow to Philoctetes). His entrapment 'in between' expresses the revolutionising of *philia* relations, which might offer us a different path to think the war machine operating between the two States, with its politico-ethical implications.

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Desire and Ethics

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Abstract

This paper argues that it is problematic for the future of Deleuze studies that it is difficult if not impossible to answer the question 'what is the right thing to do?' from a Deleuzian perspective. It then argues that one of the key reasons Deleuze studies has made limited progress in this area is its over-emphasis on desire and the corresponding tendency to extrapolate 'ought' from 'is', which as Hume showed is a category mistake. It proposes that to develop a workable ethical discourse from Deleuze's work we need to rethink how we read his work and approach it afresh.

Keywords: ethics, desire, Deleuzism, Deleuze studies, Dworkin, Foucault

> The question [of revolution] has always been organisational, not at all ideological: is an organisation possible which is not modelled on the apparatus of the State, even to prefigure the State to come?
>
> (Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues*)

There is a certain irony in this statement because one would look in vain in either Deleuze's or Guattari's writings, whether alone or together, for any attempt to deal with the specific organisational difficulties of bringing about social and cultural change, much less a full-scale revolution. Their position is that changing the composition of desire is itself revolutionary, and as recent events have shown the transformation of desire on both an individual and collective level (however it is accomplished and whether for progressive political reasons or not) is not something that necessarily requires planning. Often, as was the case with May '68, or more recently the so-called 'Arab Spring' of 2011, change occurs spontaneously and in a manner that no one could have

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predicted.[1] Deleuze and Guattari proclaim themselves to be against both revolution and reform, a fact that would seem utterly inconsistent with the idea that social and cultural change is ultimately organisational. They are also wary of aligning themselves with any particular political or ideological position and tend to view all established political positions with a high degree of ambivalence, thus making it very difficult to determine what kind of a political organisation they would actually support. For example, they are clearly anti-capitalist as well as against the idea of the State, yet it is by no means clear what their preferred alternate economic and political models would be. We might thus content ourselves by saying that their politics is ultimately undecidable, but I want to argue that is precisely what we must not do.

That said, I do not mean to imply by this that I agree with critics like Alain Badiou and Peter Hallward who seem to think Deleuze and Guattari's work has nothing concrete to offer social and political activists engaged in the ongoing struggle to develop more effective strategies for reshaping the real world.[2] However, while I disagree with Badiou and Hallward's conclusions, I fully support the critical spirit in which they engage with Deleuze and Guattari's work, though I would add that in my view we should read them – and indeed all philosophers – creatively *as well as* critically; that is to say, we should read with an eye both to identifying weaknesses in their work and to bringing forward something new and useful to our own purposes, even if the authors in question would not recognise themselves in what we do with their thought. This was essentially what Deleuze meant when he famously said that he saw his readings of other philosophers – Hume, Bergson, Nietzsche, Kant and Leibniz – as producing monstrous progeny (Deleuze 1995: 6). This is why he spoke of Bergsonism, for example, because his reading of Bergson was intended to create an application of Bergson's thought, or better an apparatus that could be deployed to give thought to problems and circumstances Bergson himself did not and perhaps could not have considered himself. Bergsonism is in this sense simultaneously faithful to Bergson and a departure from him, without being a negation.[3] Deleuze's two books on cinema best exemplify this achievement – they simultaneously claim Bergson was wrong about cinema *and* that his work is perfectly adapted to thinking about the specificity of cinema as an art of the moving image. It is exactly this kind critical *and* creative approach that I want to call 'Practical Deleuzism'.

There are a great many questions such an approach to Deleuze (and Guattari's) work might want to address, but the one that will concern me here is this: how would one decide what the 'right thing to do' is

from a Deleuzian perspective? This is of course a rather clichéd question, but as Michael Sandel's work amply demonstrates, it is nevertheless a very productive question because in trying to answer it one is forced to think through in a very precise way what one would mean by 'right' or 'wrong' in a given situation, and whether or not one would want to stipulate that a particular 'right' or 'wrong' is universally 'right' or 'wrong' or in some way dependent on context or situation.[4] For example: is abortion right or wrong? If it is wrong, are there exceptions? If it is right, are there exceptions? Is it possible for abortion to be right some times and wrong at other times? And of course the crucial question that interests me here is how would Deleuze and Guattari go about deciding whether abortion is right or wrong? Sandel, in his discussion of abortion, argues that one cannot engage this issue without taking into account the theological concerns relating to the definition of 'life' and dismisses the idea that it can be resolved on a neutral basis by relating it solely to questions of freedom (Sandel 2010: 251). Is this how Deleuze and Guattari would approach it? If not, then what would be their focus? We can imagine that Deleuze would most likely start by asking, 'What kind of a problem is abortion?' But from there it is difficult to conceive how he might answer that question. The difficulty one has in dealing with the many practical permutations of this particular ethical question from a Deleuzian perspective in any precise way is, I think, indicative of how little work has been done with respect to Deleuze and Guattari's ethics. I cannot think of a single instance of anyone speaking in the kind of practical and prescriptive terms one finds in contemporary the moral and ethical philosophy of people like Dworkin, Nagel, Rawls, Sandel and Scanlon.

The reason for this is not hard to fathom. For many Deleuze and Guattari scholars it would be contrary to the spirit, if not the letter, of Deleuze and Guattari's thought to speak in such tightly drawn prescriptive terms as a Dworkin, Nagel, Rawls, Sandel or Scanlon. That said, the secondary literature on Deleuze and Guattari has not ignored the moral and ethical dimension of their work altogether. But it tends to make the classic error (first identified by David Hume) of trying to argue 'ought' from 'is'.[5] For example, Rosi Braidotti's work makes exactly this move: she explicitly claims that the ontology of Deleuze and Guattari's concept of desire can serve as the foundation for an ethics constructed in their image (Braidotti 1994: 202–4). There are two problems with this move: the first, as I have already mentioned, is that it is faulty reasoning to move from how things are to how things should be. The fact that desire functions in the way it does is not reason enough to stipulate that

that is how desire should be, or rather should be allowed to function. It would amount to saying that the only ethical position with respect to desire is one in which desire is given everything that it wants. The second problem is that (as virtually the entire history of Western philosophy has always argued) it is impossible to conceive a model of ethics on the basis of 'desire' because insofar as desire is thought of as an urge or impulse (whether conscious or unconscious) it exists outside of, or at least at the extreme border of the realm of rational judgement and thought.

To my mind, the most egregious instance of the error of arguing 'ought' from 'is' in relation to Deleuze and Guattari's work, is Michel Foucault's famous preface to the English translation of *Anti-Oedipus*. Foucault writes that he thinks that Deleuze and Guattari's work can best be thought of and read as an 'art of' or 'how to' book, and not as either a new theory or new philosophy ('*Anti-Oedipus* is not a flashy Hegel,' he said). His claim is that it can be read as an exegesis on the question of 'what is the right thing to do?' But, in laying out his reading of *Anti-Oedipus* Foucault clearly makes the error of basing his conception of Deleuze and Guattari's ethics on their ontology of desire. The problem with this, as I aim to show here, is that it leads to a critical dead end, my implication being that any quest to develop Deleuze and Guattari's ethics must start elsewhere and proceed by other means. Foucault's reading of *Anti-Oedipus* starts as follows:

> I would say that *Anti-Oedipus* (may its authors forgive me) is a book of ethics, the first book of ethics to be written in France in quite a long time (perhaps that explains why its success was not limited to a particular readership: being anti-oedipal has become a life style, a way of thinking and living). How does one keep from being fascist, even (especially) when one believes oneself to be a revolutionary militant? How do we rid our speech and our acts, our hearts and our pleasures of fascism? How do we ferret out the fascism that is ingrained in our behaviour? (Foucault 1983: xiii)

Foucault proposes that we read *Anti-Oedipus* as a contemporary version of Francis de Sales's *Introduction to the Devout Life* and re-christens it *Introduction to the Non-Fascist Life*. He lists seven principles of this new mode of devout life, which will ideally be an 'art of living counter to all forms of fascism, whether already present or impending' (Foucault 1983: xiii):

1. Free political action from all unitary and totalising paranoia.
2. Develop action, thought, and desires by proliferation, juxtaposition, and disjunction, and not by subdivision and pyramidal hierarchisation.

3. Withdraw allegiance from the old categories of the Negative (law, limit, castration, lack, lacuna) and prefer instead what is positive and multiple. Believe that what is productive is not sedentary but nomadic.
4. Do not think that one has to be sad in order to be militant, even though the thing one is fighting is abominable. It is the connection of desire to reality that possesses revolutionary force.
5. Do not use thought to ground political practice in Truth or political action to discredit thought. Use political action instead to intensify thought.
6. Do not demand of politics to restore the 'rights' of the individual, as philosophy has defined them. The individual is the product of power. What is needed is to 'de-individualise' by means of multiplication and displacement, diverse combinations.
7. Do not become enamoured of power. (Foucault 1983: xiii–xiv)

If we accept Foucault's framing of *Anti-Oedipus* as a kind of philosophical manual for how not to be a fascist, then we are presented with a substantial problem. In contrast to Francis de Sales's work, Foucault's instructions only specify what we should *not* do, and say nothing at all about what we should do. Foucault's framing of *Anti-Oedipus* offers only a set of negative injunctions. Non-fascist living is surely a virtuous mode of living, but it is a virtuous mode of living for which no precise programme or model exists. On the basis of Foucault's guide alone, it is literally impossible to say what would constitute a virtue in Foucault's view of things, that is, an action which is not merely non-fascist but good in and of itself. It is very difficult to even describe what being non-fascist in this affirmative sense would be like, since all the characterisations of it that Foucault gives are themselves couched in the negative: don't be paranoid, don't be hierarchical, don't be sad, don't ground thought in truth, don't demand the restoration of rights, and don't become enamoured of power! If we reverse these various injunctions into their affirmative opposites, it soon becomes clear just how vacuous they are: what is the opposite of paranoid? Stable? What is the opposite of hierarchical? Flat? Equal? What is the opposite of sad? Happy? Joyous? And so on. Even if we stay with the negatives, one is still forced to wonder just what kind of a person would have all these attributes? Can one think of a single historical figure that could live up to this set of prescriptions?

In beginning this way I want to make two points: first, I think we need to re-evaluate the way we read Deleuze and Guattari. I do not just

mean we should try to read them more carefully or more rigorously, though I am not against that; rather, I mean we should re-evaluate the modality of our reading. I think we let Deleuze get away with too much by going along with his insistence that philosophers must be allowed to ask their own questions. In interviews, he often cites this principle as his reason for not wanting to give interviews in the first place and to excuse, I suppose, his failure to answer adequately the questions he is asked. But if one looks at the interviews, it is also clear that he is never asked questions that are not in some way commensurate with his own thinking, leaving him at liberty to respond to them in his own terms. Unlike Foucault, Deleuze evidently never agreed to speak to interviewers he knew would be either hostile or unsympathetic – one thinks here of Foucault's interview with the young Maoists, and their heated disagreement concerning the role and nature of people's courts in the establishment of popular justice (Foucault 1980). It appears Deleuze was never subjected to this kind of grilling, not in print anyway. And in one respect, Deleuze is clearly right to take the stance he does, because philosophy gains little – if anything – if it does nothing more than go over old ground, repeating the same old questions again and again. But that does not mean philosophy is better off constantly seeking new coordinates, as Deleuze and Guattari appear to be doing with their battery of new concepts, because in doing so, it isolates itself from the intellectual history and tradition that gives it both its depth and interest.[6]

Second, in addition to asking Deleuze and Guattari new questions, that is, questions Deleuze and Guattari have not generated for themselves in one way or another, I think we also need to ask ourselves new questions. By this I mean we need to be bold enough (and for those of us who have been publishing on Deleuze and Guattari for quite a while, humble enough) to re-examine all the established readings of Deleuze and Guattari, and see whether or not they really hold up. As the great nineteenth-century American satirist Mark Twain famously said, it is not the things that we don't know that get us into trouble, it is the things we know for sure that aren't so. I think Deleuze Studies as a field has reached the moment when it needs to go back over its early attempts to understand difficult concepts like becoming, the body without organs, desiring-machines and so on and see whether or not the working definitions we have for these terms are really sound. This may seem to contradict my point above that I think we should read Deleuze both creatively and critically, so some further clarification may be in order. I do not subscribe to the view that there are 'no wrong readings' of Deleuze – I am on record as disagreeing with a number of interpretations

of Deleuze's work.[7] That said, I am fine with those readings of Deleuze that take creative licence with his concepts and take them off on their own line of flight, just so long as they do not claim to be anything other than what they are, namely, appropriations, or what Harold Bloom usefully and with no pejorative intent calls 'strong misreadings'. DeLanda's so-called 'Deleuze 2.0' would be a perfect example of this latter type (DeLanda 2006: 4). But as I said above, I also think our readings of Deleuze should challenge the weaknesses and gaps in his work; however, instead of simply pointing out these weaknesses and gaps I think we should try to create our own solutions.

To further illustrate my main point, here, that it is difficult to determine what the right thing to do is from a Deleuzian perspective, let me give you an example of a practical question of the kind that I think (or at least want) Deleuze and Guattari's work should be able to help us answer. Dutch journalist Linda Polman opens her recent book on international aid with the following thought experiment:

> Imagine. You're an international humanitarian aid worker in a war zone and faithful to the principles of the Red Cross, as any good humanitarian should be. In other words, you're impartial, neutral and independent. It's your responsibility to relieve human suffering, irrespective of the people involved and the situation on the ground. This time your mission has taken you to a refugee camp in Darfur. You do what you can for the victims, but soldiers exploit your efforts. They demand money for every well you dig and levy sky-high taxes, thought up on the spot, on all sacks of rice and tents and medicines you arrange to have flown in. They consume a slice of your aid supplies and sell another slice. Among the items they buy with the proceeds are weapons, which they use to drive yet more people into your refugee camp or even into their deaths. What do you do? (Polman 2010: 1)

I know there are numerous questions one could raise at this point about whether or not the Red Cross is a good humanitarian organisation, or whether international aid is a good or bad thing, and so on. For example, Dambisa Moyo in *Dead Aid* makes a convincing case that international aid not only does not work, but also helps to sustain the very regimes whose kleptocratic style of government creates the very crises aid is supposed to relieve (Moyo 2009). But given that Foucault casts *Anti-Oedipus* as an art of living directed at the individual subject (two words he forces us to place under erasure, as it were), we are entitled to think that Deleuze and Guattari can and should be able to tell us what to do in a complex situation like this. To put it another way, what would it mean in these circumstances to, as Foucault says we

should, withdraw allegiance from the old categories of the negative and prefer instead what is positive and multiple? If the choice is as simple as staying and trying to do the best one can for the victims or deciding that the situation is hopeless and leaving, can Deleuze and Guattari help us to make that decision? I do not think there is any way we can answer this question using Foucault's prescriptions. This is not because it is a bad question; indeed, I would say it is a vital and necessary question – what is the point of having an art of living if it cannot help us to decide what the right thing to do is? Moreover, if Foucault is right in saying that *Anti-Oedipus* is a book of ethics, then by that very definition should it not empower us to decide – or, at the very least, empower us to begin a discussion about the best way to go about deciding – which is the most ethical way to act in all situations, even if complex and indeed fraught political situations like the one Polman imagines?

If the question is not bad, then why can Foucault not answer it? The short twofold answer is that Foucault attempts to derive Deleuze and Guattari's ethics from their ontology of desire, and to make matters worse misunderstands and misapprehends their concept of desire. This is evident in the way he collapses two planes – the virtual and the actual – into one, and uses ideas and concepts drawn from each of these levels interchangeably, perhaps unaware that there are two rigorously distinct systems at work in *Anti-Oedipus*. One can see this in his statement that we need to develop action, thought and desires by proliferation, juxtaposition and disjunction, and not by subdivision and pyramidal hierarchisation: action, thought and desires do not all belong to the same plane; therefore, they are not commensurate concepts in the way Foucault assumes them to be and cannot be used interchangeably. As I will explain in more detail in what follows, one set of terms refers to the internal processes of the psyche, while the other refers to the external processes of micropolitics, and while the two processes are interlinked, they are nevertheless distinct from one another. Indeed, Deleuze and Guattari's principal grievance with psychoanalysis is that Freud confuses these two systems when he claims that the unconscious is formed in the image of Sophocles' Oedipus (Lacan makes the same kind of error when he claims the unconscious is structured like a language). But there is a bigger problem, here, and that is the very premise of Foucault's reading: he uses Deleuze and Guattari's ontology of desire to construct his art of non-fascist living. He takes their analysis of how things are and turns it into a statement of how things should be.

Foucault thus turns the ontology of desire into an ethos, or programme for living. This move will always be brought undone by the

fact that Deleuze and Guattari's conception of desire is not inherently virtuous – they do not conceive of desire as a virtue. Deleuze and Guattari make it clear that as they see it desire can be either 'empty' (bad) or 'full' (good) and is usually some mixture of the two. In other words, desire is not inherently good or bad, but has the potential to be both at the same time. One thinks here of the stories of the concentration camp guards who murdered thousands of people by day and were good, loving family men or women by night. Hence Deleuze and Guattari's evocation of Primo Levi's concept of the 'gray zone' to describe such ethical conundrums (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 107). So how do Deleuze and Guattari conceive of desire? The most straightforward answer I can give to this question (which I shall explain in more detail in what follows) is that for Deleuze and Guattari desire refers to the operation of the unconscious in conjunction with what Freud called the perception system, which includes both external and internal modes of perception. As such, it refers to what are essentially involuntary processes of the mind and the nervous system and therefore cannot form the basis of either an ethical or a moral discourse.

Everything hinges, in this regard, on how one understands the notion of production because that is the real key to understanding Deleuze and Guattari's concept of desire. It would not be wrong to say that desire and production are synonymous; in fact, one could say the basic hypothesis of *Anti-Oedipus* is that desire should be conceived as production (hence the concept of desiring-production). But that still begs the question of what they mean by desire. I want to answer this question in four ways. First, in the negative, so to speak: Deleuze and Guattari are quite clear that desire should not be thought of as an undifferentiated instinctual energy (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 215). Second, we have to look to delirium to understand desire as production. Delirium is the royal road to understanding desire because it shows us what the unconscious is capable of producing – a set of visions, feelings and so on that however false are utterly real to the person experiencing them. This point is crucial. Deleuze and Guattari insist over and over that if desire produces then its product is real, and not, it goes without saying, either imaginary or symbolic (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 26). Deleuze and Guattari reject Lacan's compartmentalisation of the psyche into three separate spheres of production – the famous triad of the imaginary, symbolic and real.

> [The] real truth of the matter – the glaring, sober truth that resides in delirium – is that there is no such thing as relatively independent spheres

> or circuits: production is immediately consumption and a recording process (*enregistrement*) without any sort of mediation, and the recording process and consumption directly determine production, though they do so within the production process itself. Hence everything is production … (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 4)

In place of Lacan's model, Deleuze and Guattari offer a unified model of the psyche whose operation consists of three types of interrelated syntheses: the synthesis of production, the synthesis of recording (registration) and the synthesis of consumption. By synthesis of production Deleuze and Guattari mean the work of the unconscious to produce what Kant refers to as intuitions. My reference to Kant here is by no means accidental – Deleuze and Guattari themselves point us in this direction. Kant, they argue, was one of the first to conceive of desire as production, but he botched things by failing to recognise that the object produced by desire is fully real (Deleuze and Guattari reject the idea that superstitions, hallucinations and fantasies belong only to the realm of 'psychic reality' as Kant would have it) (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 25). If the synthesis of production refers to the production of intuitions, then by extrapolation we can deduce that the synthesis of registration (or recording) refers to the mind's uptake of these intuitions, or the imagination, while consumption is the transformation of these intuitions into concepts, or the understanding.[8]

If this Kantian reading seems surprising, it is nevertheless confirmed by Deleuze and Guattari's critique of Lacan, which brings me to the third point. Lacan makes essentially the same mistake as Kant, Deleuze and Guattari argue, in that he conceives desire as lacking a real object (for which fantasy acts as both compensation and substitute). Deleuze and Guattari describe Lacan's work as 'complex', which seems to be their code word for useful but flawed (they say the same thing about Badiou). On the one hand, they credit him with discovering desiring-machines in the form of the *objet petit a*, but on the other hand they accuse him of smothering them under the weight of the Big O (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 310). As Žižek is fond of saying, in the Lacanian universe fantasy supports reality. This is because reality, as Lacan conceives it, is deficient; it perpetually lacks a real object. Deleuze and Guattari see the same fault in Baudrillard's work – hence their cryptic snipe that the concept of fantasy does not 'compel psychoanalysis to engage in a study of gadgets and markets, in the form of an utterly dreary and dull psychoanalysis of the object: psychoanalytic studies of packages of noodles, cars, or "thingumajigs"' (26). If desire is conceived this way, as a support for

reality, then, they argue, 'its very nature as a real entity depends upon an "essence of lack" that produces the fantasized object. Desire thus conceived of as production, though merely the production of fantasies, has been explained perfectly by psychoanalysis' (25).

But that is not how desire works, according to Deleuze and Guattari, because it would mean that all desire does is produce doubles of reality, creating dreamed-of objects to complement every real object. This subordinates desire to the objects it supposedly lacks, or needs, thus reducing it to an essentially secondary role. Nothing is changed by correlating desire with need either.

> Desire is not bolstered by needs, but rather the contrary; needs are derived from desire: they are counterproducts within the real that desire produces. Lack is a countereffect of desire; it is deposited, distributed, vacuolized within a real that is natural and social. (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 27)

This rejection of Lacan confirms what might be termed the neo-Kantian reading of desire I have proposed because it means that we cannot define desire in a transitive fashion: any attempt to define desire as the desire for something immediately puts us back into the realm of lack. Productive desire cannot be the desire for something, it must produce something. This brings me to the fourth point I want to make about desire. If desire is productive and what it produces is real then desire must be actual and not virtual. Deleuze and Guattari are quite explicit on this point. Referring to the formation of symptoms, such as hallucinations, Deleuze and Guattari write: '*The actual factor is desiring-production*' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 129; emphasis in original).[9] To which they add the following important clarification:

> The term 'actual' is not used because it designates what is most recent [which is its usual meaning in both French and German], and because it would be opposed to 'former' or 'infantile' [which is how it is used in Freud's texts]; it is used in terms of its difference with respect to 'virtual'. (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 129)

I doubt there is a more important or consequential statement in the whole of Deleuze and Guattari's writings. Its importance becomes clear in the next sentence:

> *And it is the Oedipus complex that is virtual, either inasmuch as it must be actualized in a neurotic formation as a derived effect of the actual factor, or inasmuch as it is dismembered and dissolved in a psychotic formation as the direct effect of this same factor*. (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 129; emphasis in original)

This is a major reversal of how we are taught to think about the relationship between the actual and the virtual. On this rendering of it, that which stems from the unconscious and therefore has no tangible form is treated as the actual, while that which flows from outside the unconscious, whether from the conscious or the perception system, and therefore has some possibility of having a tangible form, is treated as the virtual. To actualise the virtual, then, does not mean that something that was previously only notional or imaginary is thereby made concrete and real; rather, it means that something that was sensual is made present to the mind in an active sense. The actual is that which concerns the mind right now. Freud's biggest mistake, Deleuze and Guattari claim, which demonstrates his failure to understand this point, was to think that the unconscious is constructed in the image of Oedipus, which would mean that the unconscious is merely a shadow theatre for the conscious and not a productive system in its own right.

My point is that there is nothing at all within Deleuze and Guattari's theory of desire that can tell us either how we should live or how we should treat others. And this is perhaps as it must be. As Dworkin says: 'The *fact* of desire – even enlightened desire, even a universal desire supposedly embedded in human nature – cannot justify a moral duty' (Dworkin 2011: 193). And yet, this is precisely what Foucault attempts to do with Deleuze and Guattari's work. He takes statements that have to do with the functioning of desire as the productive unconscious and turns these into moral and ethical statements. This is, in effect, a category mistake because it treats Deleuze and Guattari's theory of how the psyche operates as the basis for a radical politics; moreover, it prioritises aspects of the functioning of the psyche that are described by Deleuze and Guattari as pathological (as Deleuze and Guattari repeatedly say, the schizo is not a model – Deleuze and Guattari do not romanticize the schizo, it is their readers who do that). Foucault transforms Deleuze and Guattari's quite practical thoughts on political transformation into a series of more or less empty slogans – free political action from paranoia, develop action by proliferation, juxtaposition and disjunction, prefer the positive and multiple, don't be sad, don't be enamoured of power and so on. These slogans combine to form an image of Deleuze and Guattari's thought that obscures what is original and interesting in it, namely the concept of productive desire. But even more problematically, in my view, it creates an image of Deleuze's thought that is all too easily dismissed by scholars whose philosophical formation leads them to expect straightforward answers to straightforward questions (albeit highly complex straightforward questions such as the one I cited above from Linda Polman's book).

This is not to say that we should abandon any thought of deriving either an ethical or moral discourse from Deleuze and Guattari's work. There is ample reason to think that the opposite is the case. But it is to suggest – insist even – that we cannot build such a discourse from Deleuze and Guattari's analyses of how desire operates. And indeed, no workable ethical or moral discourse could be constructed in this way because, as Kant shows, determining the right way to live and the right thing to do cannot be a matter of what the individual wants or thinks. My desires, sovereign though they may be to me, do not confer or justify the right to do as I please, no matter the cost to others. And while it is true that Deleuze and Guattari's rhetoric is flamboyantly in favour of throwing off the manifold shackles that keep our individual desire in check, nowhere do they suggest that the liberation of our desire should take priority, no matter the cost to others. So while we may think of them as anarchists or liberationists, take your pick, we also have to assume that they accept the necessity that something other than desire must form the basis of our ethical or moral discourse. In other words, we cannot take the easy way out of this problem of trying to determine how Deleuze and Guattari would decide what the right thing to is and simply say that Deleuze and Guattari reject all forms of ethical or moral discourse. That cannot be true. What can be and probably is true is that they reject all existing forms of ethical or moral discourse in favour of one still to be constructed. Our job then in Deleuze Studies is to begin the process of constructing that discourse.

Notes

1. This is the basic of hypothesis of Hardt and Negri's concept of the multitude. See Hardt and Negri 2000.
2. See Badiou 2000 and Hallward 2006.
3. It was for this reason that I titled my first book on Deleuze *Deleuzism* – it was intended as an exploration of the problematic of how to 'follow' an author who instructs his readers to go their own way and create their own questions. I make this point because in a recent article, Douglas Spencer (2011) has used the term 'Deleuzism' as a kind of catch-all pejorative for what he sees as banal uses of Deleuze's work. See Buchanan 2000.
4. See Sandel 2010.
5. Dworkin 2011: 17.
6. For example, it would be very interesting to hear Deleuze's thoughts on the concept of freedom, or, even more pointedly, his thoughts on justice. Deleuze has no hesitation in saying, for example, that the Israeli occupation of Palestine is an injustice, but nowhere does he explain what in his view ought to be done to rectify the situation (Deleuze 1998: 30). But to accuse Israel of acting unjustly he must have some notion – however inchoate – of justice in mind, and that is precisely my point: we need to force Deleuze's work to disclose answers to these kinds of implicit questions.

7. See for example my comments on Žižek's reading of Deleuze and Guattari in Buchanan 2008: 149, n.9.
8. See Kant 1929 (particularly Book II 'Analytic of Principles').
9. Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 129; emphasis in original.

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What is Pharmacoanalysis?

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Abstract

In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari call for what they term a 'pharmacoanalysis' as an ancillary, but nevertheless related, component of schizoanalysis. Employing Spinoza's theory of affections, they argue that if desire is only the conscious idea of the effect of an external body on our own, then especially around the question of drugs psychoanalysis fails to provide an adequate idea of the real effective bodies that act on our bodies and our minds. Instead, it conceals these real and effective bodies behind a symbolic form that organises our ideas according to a consistent pattern of signification. In the case of certain drugs, moreover, desire bypasses a symbolic order and directly invests the perception and the perceived. A pharmacological investigation reveals real social and political consequences in that molecules, like individuals, are organised into living societies, and the drug can enter into one society in order to effect a change in composition, either by adding new relations or causing existing relations to decompose. This insight is then applied to the threefold illusion of consciousness, producing a more accurate analysis of the problem of addiction and a critique of the moral prohibition that usually determines the representation of illicit drugs, and at the same time, the 'Oedipalisation' of certain other drugs prescribed by the legal dealer, or clinical physician.

Keywords: Deleuze, Guattari, Spinoza, Drugs, Psychoanalysis, Schizoanalysis

Polyp and Medusa are names for two body forms of animals (coelenterates) of the phylum Cnidaria – one, the polyp or hydroid, is stationary; the other, the medusa, is free-swimming. Both consist of a cylindrical body with a mouth

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> surrounded by stinging tentacles at one end. Some cnidarians are always polyps, some are always medusas, and some take both polyp and medusan forms during their life cycles. In many species, such as coral, the polyps form colonies. The 'Portuguese Man-of-War', for example, is an elaborate floating colony of polyp-like and medusan-like individuals.
>
> (*The Columbia Encyclopedia*)

Drugs are dangerous, to be sure, and certainly some drugs are more dangerous than others. And yet, what is the danger specific to drugs? According to Deleuze and Guattari, 'this is where a pharmacoanalysis would come in, which must both be compared and contrasted to psychoanalysis' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 283). In taking a drug, my body encounters another real, effective body. Therefore, it is not a matter of consciousness being 'altered' by a secondary attribute; rather, it is a relation between two bodies that undergoes an essential transformation that takes place below the level of consciousness. In the encounter between my body and the body of the drug, according to Deleuze and Guattari, the two relations form a more 'pregnant whole' ('Body without Organs'). Of course, this is not without its own dangers. Sometimes the relations combine in such a way as to cause my body to decompose, destroying 'its own relation' and the parts to be combined with this new, more powerful body; that is, the new body severs the former relations that belong to the former body, the so-called 'body proper', and its parts. However, all relations are external, which is why it is an illusion specific to consciousness to identify certain relations as internal or proper, and others (like those introduced by the body of the drug) as contingent and arbitrary.

Despite altering the relations that already compose our bodies in order to effect new intensities, some drugs can sometimes cause these former relations to decompose. For example, the muscular spasms and uncontrollable vomiting brought on by mescaline or peyote is an example whereby the body is grasped by a new relation that causes it to empty itself, eschewing all the heaviness of the matter that constituted the health and nourishment of the former body's own relation, transforming it into a pure vessel for another body that burrows into it like a dangerous animal. Likewise, the anaemic and anorexic body of the heroin addict shows the relation of a body that has re-composed its parts in relation to a new whole that needs only a little water between hits in order to sustain itself, like a cactus or desert flower. In both cases, one could say that each drug approaches, by relative and differential speeds, a point of absolute deterritorialisation, although one never reaches this point by means of drugs alone.

This is, in fact, impossible and constitutes the limit of positive movement or line of flight. According to Deleuze and Guattari, the best one can do is to skirt a line of abolition and to attempt to free the experience from secondary determinations such as delirium, hallucinations, bad feelings, toxicity and addictions of various kind and intensity. This is not aided by our lack of knowledge concerning the specific causality of each drug, and the wild variations one often encounters in the same kind. Grass is unruly; there are too many varieties to perceive the specific causality of its mood. In this way, it could be compared to wine. (Alcohol, in general, produces a heaviness whereby the body succumbs to the spirit of gravity and usually ends up wallowing in the mire.) Cocaine produces incredible speeds, but usually at the cost of an exaggerated slowness associated with the post-high state, which also comes far too quickly. Acid produces the imperceptible, but also too much perception (that is, the problem of hallucination). Ecstasy produces the insensible, but also too many good feelings, which are like stained glass: they distort the reality of desire. If all these examples are derived from so-called 'illicit' drugs, evoking a moral order of representation, it is only to highlight the problem of attribution more clearly. As in the descriptions above, each drug is defined only by its secondary attributes. We have not reached what Deleuze and Guattari call the 'pregnant whole'.

In a well-known passage on drugs that appears in *A Thousand Plateaus*, which is crucial for our discussion, Deleuze and Guattari define drugs in relation to movement and duration (the 'imperceptible'), that is, in terms of a perceptive causality that Deleuze will address in the context of cinema later on. They write:

> What allows us to describe an overall Drug assemblage in spite of the differences between drugs is a line of perceptive causality that makes it so that (1) the imperceptible is perceived; (2) perception is molecular; (3) desire directly invests the perception and the perceived. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 282)

The first two propositions can be examined together since Deleuze and Guattari assert several times that 'the imperceptible itself becomes necessarily perceived at the same time perception becomes necessarily molecular'. Here one might remark a formal or structural relationship between this axiom and the Kantian thesis of apperception: that the condition of possible experience is at the same time the condition of the possible objects of experience. The phrase 'at the same time' functions as the hinge and causes the two parts of the proposition to become implied

in one another, as two phases of the same event. We also find this phrase in the formulation by Deleuze and Guattari concerning drugs, which echoes the third proposition described above: 'It is our belief that the issue of drugs can be understood only at the level where desire directly invests perception, and perception becomes molecular *at the same time* as the imperceptible is perceived' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 283; my emphasis). I will return to comment on the first part, but wish to turn my attention now to the second part of this thesis and ask why is it that the perception of the imperceptible (movement, duration) *necessarily* implies it becoming molecular?

In the experience of drugs, whether we are speaking of this or that particular drug, there is a duration that consciousness passes through, one that is purely transitive, made up of relative speeds. Perception is folded by a series of presents (or now-points) that appear to fade in and out, or more accurately, to bleed into consciousness. Perception is made from a series of stains, splotches or smears like an expressionist canvas. Moreover, consciousness itself becomes a pure passage, or rather the awareness of the passage between states that it judges in terms of a greater or lesser degree of potency. In this movement, consciousness is entirely defined by a process of differentiation, before and after, or from one moment to the next; at once dividing and being divided, both differentiating and differentiated. However, it does not differentiate between two moments of the same duration, as between two entirely different durations, or two 'wholes' (employing a Bergsonian distinction) that suddenly become 'perceptible' by a consciousness that passes in between them. But here, again, is where the illusion of consciousness sets in, since in experiencing a duration that involves the difference between two states, consciousness often affirms an attribute of the body, or some part thereof (such as sight, or hearing, or even the capacity of touch or affection), a greater or lesser force of existing than before. These are necessarily confused ideas, according to Deleuze's own Spinozist reading of this state, and are bound to an inadequate idea of drugs' specific causality. Here, Deleuze remains fairly scholastic in defining the finitude that limits and conditions consciousness – and makes illusion an internal principle of its constitution – since consciousness is entirely caused by the effect of external bodies on our own, by ideas of affections, of which consciousness itself has only inadequate ideas. Consciousness, however, has no form of its own – meaning that there is no idea of consciousness itself – because it is purely passive reflection, contemplation and contraction of the external bodies that act upon it.

Deleuze is thoroughly Spinozist in subtracting from consciousness any formal power of its own, which means any power of self-affection or spontaneity of action. Consciousness is entirely caused by the action of external bodies, itself being only the ideas of these actions and these bodies, even though all its ideas are inadequate. Here, illusion is constitutive of consciousness and its relation to external causes, since the adequate ideas of external bodies and causes are by their very nature unconscious. And yet, Deleuze says, 'it is this positive kernel of the inadequate idea in consciousness that can serve as a regulative principle for a knowledge of the unconscious' (Deleuze 1988: 60). The simple empiricist thesis that Deleuze asserts regarding this positive kernel is the following: even inadequate ideas are capable of expressing real encounters, albeit in a distorted and mutilated form; however, inasmuch as all inadequate ideas contain a positive kernel of a true and effective cause, they also contain traces of the real external bodies and can be used to create more adequate ideas. In contrast to a psychoanalytic determination of the Unconscious, which is dependent upon another plane of organisation that is inferred or concealed from the perception-consciousness system, to create a true knowledge (*connaissance*) of the unconscious would be nothing less than to create more adequate ideas of the external bodies that are the true cause of consciousness and, thus, to have clearer and more distinctive ideas of the affects 'as determinations of *conatus* by the ideas' (79).

We can now clarify how perception becomes molecular. This happens to the degree that consciousness appears as the effect of the multiple bodies acting upon it, as is sometimes perceived in an experience when one can grasp that the appearance of an external body (a certain note in a song, or a colour that appears against a wall in the Piazza di San Lorenzo in Rome) is the cause of consciousness. Consciousness becomes the pure idea of affection and this idea is necessarily expressed as a multiplicity of effects that are caused by other bodies acting upon it. Thus, consciousness can no longer be defined as the psychological (or moral) expression of the subject, but rather as the expression of 'the idea's property of doubling and redoubling itself to infinity' (Deleuze 1988: 59). Does this imply, however, that the ideas of consciousness that belong to a duration of drugs are, for that reason, more adequate to these external bodies? No. First, for the reason given above, because the drug is itself an external body and therefore also inadequately rendered in consciousness; second, the fact that perception becomes molecular only implies that consciousness no longer functions as the cause of perception, or provides it with its principle. Rather, consciousness itself

is dispersed into haecceities, moments, events, as if filled with the music of all the external bodies and other ideas that crowd in and press against it. Perception becomes molecular since consciousness is no longer at its centre, but can be located on the surface or fringes of these external bodies themselves; these external bodies become a field in which consciousness could no longer occupy a perspective that is outside and at a distance from the perceived. Rather, consciousness would be immanent (meaning 'near to') every perception, as if constituting the shiny and opaque or scintillating surface of things themselves.

The third proposition, that 'desire directly invests the perception and the perceived', brings us to a confrontation with a psychoanalytic concept of desire. In order to understand this confrontation, we must become Spinozists rather than Lacanians. According to the psychoanalytic concept, desire is never apprehended 'in itself', but is always inferred or concluded from another plane of organisation, and from the plane of *language* in particular, by which the Real enters into the Symbolic. On the other hand, we might understand the claim that with drugs 'desire directly invests perception and the perceived' to mean that, in this state, desire can be apprehended 'in itself' and no longer needs to be *translated* onto another plane of symbolic organisation. But does this imply that the Freudian concept of the unconscious disappears entirely as a result? Does this mean that there is no unconscious where the imperceptible appears as the object of desire itself, and no longer in its figurative or symbolic representatives? In order to reply to these questions, it would be necessary for a Spinozist concept of desire to be substituted for the psychoanalytic one. Desire is the whole of causality, which remains 'in itself' even in undergoing modification, in its modes. 'Spinoza defines desire as *conatus* having become conscious, the *cause* of this consciousness being the affection' (Deleuze 1988: 60). In other words, as Deleuze writes, 'consciousness is completely immersed in the unconsciousness … we are only conscious of the ideas that express the effect of external bodies on our own, ideas of affection' (60).

It is from this Spinozist perspective, moreover, that we might return to comment on a certain resemblance to the Kantian correspondence between the conditions of possible experience and the possible objects of experience. If consciousness is determined by the effect of external bodies on our own, by the ideas of affection (whether these be perfect or imperfect), then the unconscious is merely the quantity of external bodies that we have not yet encountered. Hence, we will need to arrive at a real definition of desire, one that at the same time shows the 'cause' by which consciousness is hollowed out, as it were, in the appetitive

process. Now, appetite is nothing but the effort by which each thing strives to persevere in its being, each body in extension, each mind or each idea in thought (*conatus*). But because this effort prompts us to act differently according to the objects encountered, we should say that it is, at every moment, determined by the affections that come from the objects. *These determinative affections are necessarily the cause of the consciousness of the conatus* (Deleuze 1988: 21). If desire is only the conscious idea of the effect of an external body on our own, then psychoanalysis fails to provide an adequate idea of the real effective bodies that act on our bodies and our minds. Instead, it conceals these real and effective bodies behind a symbolic form that organises our ideas according to a consistent pattern of signification; hence the famous phrase 'the unconscious is like a language'. Furthermore, it also fails to provide the ideas by which we have a consciousness of the direct experience of other bodies and modes of existence, even though these ideas are only indirect figurations of real, lived experiences. According to a Spinozist definition, desire is merely the conscious idea of affection; the idea of an external body present in our own. Affections are images that appear in the mind and corporeal traces that cross the body's threshold of sensibility first of all. They are images associated with feelings defining the presence of our relation to an external body. As Deleuze writes, 'the *affectio* refers to a state of the affecting body, which involves the nature of the external body, and the affect, which involves an increase or decrease of the power of acting, for the body and the mind alike.' As I will return to demonstrate in the conclusion, the idea of escape, in most addictions, functions as the conscious idea that links the body of the drug to a determinate feeling in the subject and gives us a knowledge of the causal relationship between these bodies.

Concerning this notion of affect, we find that neither joy nor sadness should define the quality of the affect associated with a drug; rather, it should be understood quantitatively, as increasing or decreasing the body's own relations. This is because even the most exuberant affective state can really be a form of suffering or sadness, as often in the case of sexual pleasure, which sometimes masks a narcissistic wound or a wish to go unconscious. Consequently, it would not be too difficult to apply this observation to our idea of drugs, given that the usual representations are bound up in a remarkable degree with the illusions of consciousness as Deleuze defines them. In other words, drugs approach, by a relative and differential speed, a point of absolute deterritorialisation. The point is the following: one never reaches this point by means of drugs alone. It is, in fact, impossible. The best one can do is skirt a line of abolition and

in this sense drugs represent a tarrying with the negative, to attempt to free the trip from secondary distinctions such as delirium, hallucination, bad feelings, and toxic and poisonous substances. But we might ask why there is also so much sadness and destruction surrounding this desire. As Deleuze and Guattari write in the same context of the passage above,

> the causal line, or line of flight, of drugs is constantly being segmented under the most rigid of forms, that of dependency, the hit and the dose, the dealer . . . Instead of holes in the world allowing the world lines themselves to run off, the lines of flight coil and start to swirl in black holes; to each addict a hole, group or individual, like a snail. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 285)

As in the case of discriminating between so-called 'joyful affects' and 'sad passions', here we must acknowledge that a Spinozist definition of 'the body and what it can do' more often than not eventually leads to disappointment, which can be phrased as follows: since Being is positive, affirmative in essence, it is always tragic to see this Being become defined by the negative, to see it in a form that is distorted and mutilated. This echoes Spinoza's formulation that if the striving for power is essentially a positive and affirmative trait of every mode, why is it that in the consciousness of the human being this desire becomes deformed by an image of tyranny and domination, and is essentially separated from the body's power to affect and be affected? In other words, why do humans so often desire their own repression and slavery? This could be defined as Spinoza's complaint, one that is shared by Deleuze and Guattari in the formulations of unconscious desire, of power, and, in this context, of drugs as well. One begins with a positive declaration of Being only to end by amassing so much evidence against it. We are fated to begin with the inadequate ideas, that is, with consciousness itself, in order to discover in them the kernel of adequate ideas that will determine its true causes.

> So once we have attained adequate ideas, we connect effects to their true causes, and consciousness, having become a reflection of adequate ideas, is capable of overcoming its illusions, forming clear and distinct ideas of affections and affects it experiences. (Deleuze 1988: 60)

As one can see from this passage, Deleuze can be called the last of the rationalists, but one whose idea of reason can only be attained through consciousness, the seat of illusion. This is a strange kind of rationalism, since the more he lays claim to a principle of reason, the more he is driven to find this principle in the field of empiricism, to discover in the ideas of reason the traces of the encounters of real experiences.

Nevertheless, from the above observation, it would be fair to say that consciousness itself appears to comprise the entire region of the problematic of drugs, since consciousness is the site of 'illusion', the place where secondary determinations are represented for the subject, or the experience is being represented under the most rigid of forms. What are these forms and how might they appear in a consciousness of drugs?

As Deleuze argues in *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, consciousness is the seat of a three-fold illusion. This threefold illusion, as I will show, can be applied to the representation of drugs as well.

The first illusion of consciousness involves representations that usually take effects for causes. For example, we usually define the drug by its secondary attributes – hallucination, bad feelings, delirium or even addiction. In fact, these are the effects of the relation in which the body of the drug only constitutes a partial factor. One wonders, of course, if bad feelings were already latent in the body's other relations (to other bodies and ideas), only to become perceptible via the relation to the body of the drug. This observation would be one aspect of what Deleuze and Guattari call 'pharmacoanalysis', in which the bad feelings perceptible through the drug would offer an occasion for analytical reconstruction, perhaps to a more effective degree than that achieved by a psychoanalytic method. However, by taking the drug as the 'whole' of the cause, the real or effective causality is cut off from an immanent social, and even political, determination. One might ask, what is the social causality of the specific mood of crack, what feeling or mood does it make perceptible, and what are the body's other relations (to family, to economic activity or capital, to pleasure and pain) that become perceptible in the crack addict's anorexic body, evincing a kind of sudden discharge of elation followed by a period of inactivity, often gazing at a wall six inches in front of one's face? Likewise, in the case of hallucinations associated with certain drugs such as acid or peyote, in usual representations it appears as if the drug is accorded a certain unconscious relation to perception-consciousness, as if it were simply a video tape that was inserted into the subject. On one side, this has created the myths concerning another or collective unconsciousness that has surrounded peyote; on the other, there are clichéd representations of the 'bad acid trip' in which the walls suddenly begin to bleed or a lover's face becomes unrecognisable, perhaps even transforming into the face of an animal such as that of a voracious bird whose beak appears particularly menacing when viewed from close up. Again, the specific causality of the hallucination is simply referred to the drug instead of

being identified with the relation to the body itself, or to the site of its unconscious production. Finally, because drugs represent an impersonal force, a becoming impersonal or anomalous, we often speak of '*a* drug addict', or '*an* alcoholic'. The habit is seen to dissolve all individual predicates, and the subject is simply identified by certain repetitive traits. In the representation of morality, other moral traits can be added as well. The alcoholic, for example, who is seen to entertain an improper relation to boundaries, is immediately suspected of acting on his or her sexual desires and must therefore be constantly surveyed. The drug addict is suspected of a-social inclinations, and is likely to become the subject of investigations for acts of robbery and embezzlement. At this point, the system of judgement, operated by moral consciousness, can make easy connections to other prejudices such as racial and class-bound determinations. Simply replacing the dose and the illicit dealer with the medical professional and the legalised prescription does not resolve the social forms of dependency – even though it causes some forms to become sanctioned and legitimate – nor create a more adequate picture of the manner in which both forms belong to a modern bio-political order that seeks to directly intervene in the brain in order to consolidate its collective assemblage of desire.[1]

The second illusion of consciousness that pertains to the representation of drugs is coupled with the first: 'consciousness construes the effect of a body on our body as the final cause of its own action' (Deleuze 1988: 20). Thus, consciousness gives itself the principle by which to rule over the body; it functions as the first cause. This illusion is particularly visible in the case of addiction, when the subject is heard to proclaim, 'I choose … to drink, or to do drugs, and I can stop anytime I wish.' Of course, this is a complete illusion, but not for the reasons usually associated with the critique of this statement. Typically, the first principle or cause is simply transferred to the body of the drug, as in the reply, 'You cannot simply choose to stop, because you're addicted.' But this returns us to the first illusion of consciousness: taking an effect for a cause. In a certain sense, popular moral sentiment is correct in assigning the first principle to the addiction, but the addiction here designates the body that is produced (by the passive synthesis of repetition and habit) in the encounter between my body and the body of the drug. As a result, the parts that compose each body have fabricated a new body, a new 'whole', and thus it is no longer accurate for the addict to say, 'This is my body,' since the body on drugs can no longer be designated as an object of consciousness. Concerning the real cause of addiction, therefore, it would be fair to say that we know very little about it,

because either we have been defining addiction too mechanically as the primary body's relation between pleasure and pain, or chemically as the particular effects of the chemical components of the drug in relation to the brain of the addict. In both cases, consciousness continues to spoil the equations on the body itself initially defined in a state of homeostasis or equilibrium (which really only pertains to the effect of the body on consciousness itself). In each case, we continue to work with a deficient notion of cause, which is why the real causality of addiction continues to remain imperceptible to analysis.

The third illusion of consciousness is what Deleuze, following Spinoza, defines as the 'theological illusion'. How would this illusion appear in the representation of drugs? I would propose renaming this third illusion the 'moral illusion' in order to make it more pertinent for our discussion. Deleuze defines the theological illusion as what happens when consciousness can no longer find itself as the first cause, or the organiser of ends, and evokes a God who rules over such a case and 'who operates by means of final causes and free decrees in order to prepare for man a world that is commensurate with his glory and his punishments' (Deleuze 1988: 20). Consequently, when consciousness can no longer find itself as the first cause in the relation to appetite (or desire), it invents or fabulates a moral God who prohibits any such a relation to begin with and who promises suffering for the man who disobeys his decree. As you can see, we are back in the garden concerning the decision to eat, or not to eat, the infamous fruit. This is also why Spinoza is extremely pertinent to any discussion of drugs, since the poisonous fruit was nothing less than a drug that symbolised the unconscious cause of *conatus*, that is, the relation between the real affective body and the idea that represents it in consciousness (the idea of desire).

Once again, concerning the notion of *conatus* being defined in this passage, neither joy nor sadness should be understood as defining the quality of the affect associated with a drug, but rather should be understood quantitatively – that is, either increasing or decreasing the body's relations. For example, according to the third illusion of consciousness, the moral God simply represents an imperfect idea of Adam's desire, so it would appear that Adam should not eat the fruit because God forbade him, when in fact it was simply because it was poisonous and would cause the parts of Adam's body to decompose and by destroyed. In the theological fable, any such knowledge of the relation between Adam's body and the body of the fruit is prohibited a priori, which means that it was not open to experimentation. Adam could have, for example, just tried it out, taken a little bite in order to

see what kind of effects were produced. Not a chance! This is because any experimentation was prohibited by the invention of a moral God who ruled it out on an individual level and who promised punishment for anyone who disobeyed. The irony that is present in Spinoza's reading of the theological fable is that Adam, in fact, should not have eaten the fruit from the tree; the fruit *was* poisonous and did cause the parts of Adam's body to enter into a new relation, that of mortality. However, because the idea that represents this knowledge is prohibited, Adam is never given the opportunity of coming to this knowledge by any means except by leaping over the prohibition and swallowing the fruit whole. But this did not bring him any knowledge, only sadness.

Here, we can readily see the pertinence of this discussion for determining the nature of the transcendental moral prohibition that surrounds drugs in today's society, and it is always funny to hear neurotics and other 'normative subjects' claim to have mastered the temptation to use drugs: '*I never touch the stuff!*' However, what they are referring to is a relation to an external body that they have never encountered and have no idea of as a relation to their own *conatus*. They might as well be saying, 'I have never become a horse or a flower; I have never seen the world from a caterpillar's point of view, or burrowed into the earth with the blindness of a mole.' In fact, what they are boasting is that they have no knowledge of such 'becomings' and desire to know nothing about it. This becomes the colourful stripe of their subjectivity, and a strange kind of pride, since only a moral consciousness promotes a desire to limit the number of relations, to keep the body pinned by its normal routines and habits (including its sexual and digestive habits), to restrict (not only for oneself, but particularly for others) the body and what it can do. This moral judgement does not advise us to experiment, to try a little in order to judge the effects for ourselves, to construct through a simple empirical method an idea of the relation between desire (or appetite) and the body that it determines, which in effect would accord each of us the power to determine our own relation between our body and the body of this or that particular drug. Rather, it rules out any such knowledge by simple prohibition. In response to this system of judgement, this judgement of God, I would simply recite the famous line by John Lennon: '*I'd love to turn you on (off).*'

In conclusion, let us return once again to the old Spinozist refrain: how is desire, which is essentially positive, an increase in the power of affecting and of being affected, transformed into sadness and misery? How is it that humans appear to desire their own slavery? Or, according to the terms of the drug, how is it that what begins as a positive

movement of deterritorialisation, or line of flight, seems to end up as a line of abolition, dependency and death? In response, I would say that this is impossible according to a rigorous understanding of Spinoza's concept of desire. Therefore, in such cases, the idea that determined the desire for drugs was never positive to begin with, and was only a line of abolition from the very start. To illustrate this point, I will briefly take up the confused idea of 'escape' as an object of pharmacoanalytic investigation.

First, if the idea of escape appears as the causal relation, which evokes the image of the drug as its necessary effect (as in the case of addiction), then the expression of the idea that determines the relation to drugs is already defined negatively, and thus already thrown off track. The drug merely intensifies this idea, both in image and in feeling, in the body and mind alike. The subject in the end only finds a relation to conscious desire completely determined by the idea of escape, both as a mental image and an intensive state. Escape, then, is a confused idea that already prefigures the causal relation to the affecting body of the drug, and it is usually very telling which particular drug is chosen to realise the desire to escape – usually the most addictive, which only seems to contradict the primary motive, but in fact is its fullest expression, representing a mode or modification of the idea of desire itself. What is addiction, after all, but the most contracted and repetitive crystallisation of the idea of escape? In addiction, one thinks of nothing but escaping; one feels nothing but the need to escape, accompanied by an incredible passivity in relation to this feeling; the more one feels this need, the more tightly the presence of the external body is contracted in consciousness, like in insomnia, or in certain experiences of pain when the wish to be released by a duration of intense pain (as in food poisoning) is accompanied by an intensification of the pain itself.

Second, if escape already functions as the idea, then it is ironic that addiction can be understood as the most intense expression of this idea, which completely dominates the relation between my body and the presence of an external body in me. A good doctor, or pharmacoanalyst, would probably advise that if you want to escape, then stay away from drugs, because you will only intensify this idea and soon be thinking of nothing else, nothing but escaping morning, noon and night. Usually, the external body that is being addressed in the desire to escape is designated by 'the world', which in reality only designates the multiple relations encompassed by the body's relation to other bodies and ideas. In addiction, these multiple relations are replaced by the singular relation to the body of the drug; and in general, there is a quantitative lessening

of the number of relations in consciousness, while at the same time, an intensification of the presence of the external body of the drug. Desire, which in general designates the capacity of the body's affections, its ability to act and be acted upon by external bodies, is reduced to one affection – the idea of addiction itself. The world disappears, as well the relations to other bodies and conscious ideas (to family, to work, to pleasure, to memory, etc.) and eventually there is only the presence of one body that defines the idea of desire. In the strictest sense, this quantitative reduction of the number of relations can be defined as a destruction of the virtual relations between the actual parts that compose the body. Escape, therefore, is only the intensification of an idea of desire that is also found to be peculiar to certain drugs, and functions as the cause that links the body of the drug to a determinate feeling in the subject and gives us an inadequate knowledge of the causal relationship between these bodies. In order to correct this relationship, in the end, what will be required is not simply a better or more refined drug, but a more adequate idea of desire, one that is no longer predicated on escape as a line of abolition.

It is clear from this discussion that the classical distinction between ethics (empirical inquiry or wisdom) and morality (transcendental judgement, unconscious prohibition) can be situated in the discourse that continues to surround drugs today. Therefore, if I began by admitting that certain drugs are dangerous, I conclude by locating the true source of this danger in the ideas that express the relation to a more 'pregnant whole' (or 'Body without Organs'), and which can also be determined in such a manner that it enters in to destroy the former body and its own nourishments. In contrast to a transcendental prohibition, the ethical principle of *conatus* could be formulated by the following ethical proposition that would serve as a principle of pharmacoanalysis: the drug that agrees with my nature determines me to form a superior whole that includes us, the drug and myself. The drug that does not agree with me jeopardises my cohesion, and tends to divide me into subsets, which, in the extreme case, enter into relations that are incompatible with my constitutive relation (in other words, *death* [Deleuze 1988: 21]).

Note

1. As Eugene B. Young has commented in response to reading this article, 'Are benzodiazepines like Xanax and Valium also not addictive, and does their legitimated usage by medical establishments mean that the user does not still form a confused idea of the drug, since a medical professional replaces the "dealer"? Would this not also provide an opportunity to critique the "idea" of the drug on

a social and political level, where confused and inadequate ideas are essentially marketed in proper bio-political fashion?' (Eugene B. Young, e-mail, 22 October 2010).

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Flow, Code and Stock: A Note on Deleuze's Political Philosophy

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Abstract

In *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari claim that a general theory of society must be a generalised theory of flows. This is hardly a straightforward claim, and this paper attempts to examine the grounds for it. Why should socio-political theory be based on a theory of flows rather than, say, a theory of the social contract, or a theory of the State, or the questions of legitimation or revolution, or numerous other possible candidates? The concept of flow (and the related notions of code and stock), I argue, is derived from contemporary economic theory, and most notably John Maynard Keynes. Deleuze and Guattari remained Marxists, not only because they held that contemporary political philosophy must inevitably be centred on the analysis of capitalism, but also because they held, following Marx himself, that the Marxist analysis of capital must constantly be transformed and adapted to new conditions. Thus, while certain aspects of Marx's analysis disappear from *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, they are supplemented by the addition of new concepts adequate to the contemporary state of capitalism. The paper concludes, then, with an analysis of the role played by the concepts of flow, code and stock in Deleuze and Guattari's political philosophy.

Keywords: flow, code, stock, Keynes, Marx, capitalism

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I. Introduction

In *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari write that 'the general theory of society is a generalized theory of flows' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 262).[1] The basic thesis of the book is that it is the business of every society to code these flows (139), and the 'terrifying nightmare' (140) of any society would be a flow that eludes its codes, that is, a *decoded* or *uncoded* flow. While this language has become familiar to readers of Deleuze and Guattari, it is hardly a straightforward claim. Why does the concept of flow (or *flux*) lie at the basis of Deleuze's socio-political philosophy? To my knowledge, no other thinker has made the claim that the notion of a *flow* should be the fundamental concept of political philosophy. In making it, Deleuze is clearly distancing himself from other approaches to social theory, which instead would be based, for instance, on a theory of the social contract (Hobbes) or the spirit of the laws (Plato, Montesquieu), or a theory of the State (Plato), or the problem of legitimation (Durkheim, Habermas), and so on. The question I would like to address would thus serve as a necessary prolegomena to any consideration of Deleuze's political philosophy: why did Deleuze insist that it was necessary to base his entire socio-political philosophy on a theory of flows?[2]

In an interview, Deleuze and Guattari explain that the concept of the flow was 'a notion that we [initially] needed as an unqualified and undetermined notion [*notion quelconque*]' (Guattari 1995: 98), that is, as a purely *nominal* concept.[3] Indeed, intuitively, one can conceive of extraordinarily varied types of flow, and the ways they need to be controlled or coded.[4] Most obviously, there is the flow of *water*, and the building of dams and dikes to control and channel the water (in the Western USA today, the question of the rights to a limited water supply is becoming increasingly acute). There are *economic* flows such as money and capital, along with the control of markets. There are *material* flows of raw matter and utilities such as oil and electricity, along with the control of the grid, to keep the electricity flowing. There is the flow of *commodities*, along with their marketing and transport. There is the flow of *traffic*, along with the regulation of the highways and circulation (avoiding traffic jams), the mastery and control of speed.[5] There are *social* flows such as flows of populations, the flow of immigrants and foreigners over borders, along with the ability to control and monitor those borders (issuing passports, customs, and so on). There are flows of *sewage* and *refuse*, and the question of what to do with them. There are *somatic* flows such as urine, blood, sperm, sweat, faeces, milk, menstrual

blood, and so on, with their various codings. (This is the example with which *Anti-Oedipus* opens: a breast emits a flow of milk, which is cut into by a baby's mouth, which becomes a flow of faeces, cut off by the anus, and so on. Such is the lived experience of the infant, which has no sense of its organic body, but only of intensities such as hunger, or the need to defecate, and the flows and cutting of flows that satiate those needs.) One can even think of flows of *thought*, and the attempt to code and control the flow of thought via marketing, advertising, the media, and so on (such as the flow of scientific knowledge, as well as a flow of stupidity and opinion).

Now, while all these examples indeed give us a sense of the problem Deleuze has isolated and placed at the centre of his political philosophy – the problem of flows and their coding and control – it does not tell us where Deleuze got the concept from, nor why it lies at the basis of his social philosophy, nor how it functions philosophically in his work. For that, we need to turn to the domain of economics and Deleuze's analysis of capitalism, because it is here that Deleuze derives his concept of flow, and then extends it to domains outside of economics.

Robert Heilbroner once wrote a popular survey of the great economic thinkers called *The Worldly Philosophers* (Heilbroner 1999), and it is an apt title, since the great economists – the three greatest are Adam Smith, Karl Marx and John Maynard Keynes – deal philosophically with the most practical of matters: money, and everything that goes with it. While Deleuze only occasionally refers to Adam Smith, it is Deleuze's use of Marx and Keynes that I would like to focus on here.

In a 1990 interview, Deleuze remarked: 'I believe that Félix Guattari and myself have remained Marxists. This is because we do not believe in a political philosophy that would not be centered on the analysis of capitalism and its developments' (Deleuze 1995: 171).[6] It is nonetheless true that, as Lyotard noted in a review he wrote of *Anti-Oedipus* immediately after its publication, *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* contains a critique of Marx that is implicit rather than explicit, since a surprisingly large number of classical Marxist concepts (alienation, ideology, the class struggle, work-value theory, the dialectic of contradiction) drop out of Deleuze and Guattari's analyses completely: they are neither analysed nor criticised, but simply ignored (Lyotard 1972). Yet what Deleuze and Guattari retain of Marx's analyses is the definition of capitalism that lies at the heart of *Das Kapital*. It is in this sense that *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* can be said to present a Marxist theory of capitalism, but one that has been transformed and adapted to new conditions.

The definition that Marx gives of capitalism in the first book of *Capital* is organised around the encounter of two elements of abstraction, or what Deleuze will call two decoded flows: the flow of *subjective labour* and the flow of *objective capital*. On the one hand, the flow of labour must no longer be determined or codified as slavery or serfdom, but must become naked and free *labour*, in the form of the worker having to sell his labour capacity; and on the other hand, wealth must no longer be determined as landed wealth or the money dealing of merchants, but must become pure, homogeneous and independent *capital*, which is capable of buying this labour. Capitalism appears only when these two purely quantitative flows of unqualified capital and unqualified labour encounter each other and conjugate.

I will leave to the side the complicated historical analyses of *how* the conjugation of these two decoded flows of labour and capital took place, and *why* they first took place in Europe rather than elsewhere – this is, in part, the aim of Althusser and Balibar's analyses in *Reading Capital* (Althusser and Balibar 2009). But I would like to make two brief observations about how Deleuze interprets and uses this Marxist definition of capitalism.

First, for Deleuze, the *philosophical* importance of the conjunction of labour and capital lies in their common movement away from *representation* to what Deleuze calls at several places '*the activity of production in general*' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 270, 302). What does this mean? Marx said that Luther's merit was to have determined the essence of religion, not on the side of the object (Does God exist or not?), but on the side of the subject: faith as the source of religion (270). (This line of thought was continued in Kierkegaard's notion of interiority, though of course Deleuze does not follow Kierkegaard on this point.) According to Marx, Adam Smith and Ricardo did something similar in political economy: they located the essence of wealth, not in its object (land or money), but rather in an abstract subjective essence, which is my *labour capacity*, or my capacity to produce. What faith is to religion, labour is to political economy: humans produce gods in the same way they produce Prell shampoo or Ford automobiles.

The same is true of Freud: 'His greatness lies in having determined the essence or nature of desire, no longer in relation to objects, aims, or even sources, but as an abstract subjective essence – libido or sexuality' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 270). This is why Deleuze can say that the discovery of labour, by Smith and Ricardo, and the discovery of libido, by Freud, were really one and the same thing; that political economy and libidinal economy are *one and the same economy*. 'The discovery

of *an activity of production in general and without distinction*, as it appears in capitalism, is the identical discovery of both political economy and psychoanalysis, beyond the determinate systems of representation' (270; emphasis in original; cf. 302). Put differently, 'desire is part of the infrastructure' (104; cf. 63): our impulses and affects, and even our unconscious drives, what seems to be the most individual and personal part of ourselves (libidinal economy), are themselves immediately part of what Marx called the economic infrastructure, that is, the material base of every social formation (political economy). In other words, it is impossible to posit a mental or psychic reality to desire that is different from the material reality of social production (31; cf. 27: 'There is no particular form of existence that can be labeled "psychic reality"'); nor can one claim, as Freud does, that the libido has to be 'sublimated' (or desexualised or resolved) in order to invest the social field (352); nor can one say that the relations between social production and desire are relations of 'projection' and 'introjection' (28). This is one of the essential theses of *Anti-Oedipus*: libidinal economy and political economy are one and the same thing; they have an identical nature.

But Deleuze and Guattari immediately add a complementary thesis: although there is no *difference in nature* between the two economies, it is true that there is nonetheless a *distinction in régime* between them (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 31). Technical machines, for instance, obviously work only if they are not out of order, which is what allowed Marx to posit a strict distinction, within political economy, between the means of production and the product ('Let us remember once again one of Marx's caveats: we cannot tell from the mere taste of wheat who grew it; the product gives us no hint as to the system and the relations of production' [Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 24]). In libidinal economy, by contrast, the product is always implanting itself back into its production, such that 'desiring machines' function only on the condition that they are constantly breaking down (31–2, 37, 151, 230) – whence the phenomena of manic-depressions or bipolarity, psychoses and, at the limit, schizophrenia. Much of the argument of *Anti-Oedipus* revolves around an assessment of the relations between the two economies given their identical nature but differing regimes. The first two chapters develop an entire theory of the nature of the *syntheses* of the unconscious: desiring-machines *produce* by means of immanent syntheses (local and non-specific and connections, inclusive disjunctions, nomadic and polyvocal conjunctions), whereas social machines *represent* the former by means of transcendent syntheses (global and specific connections, exclusive disjunctions, segregative and

biunivocal conjunctions). In both cases, '*the same syntheses are at issue*' (116; emphasis in original) – they have the same nature – but they are put to different uses. Desiring production and social production 'are therefore the same machines, but not at all the same *régime* ... or the same uses of syntheses' (288). Social production *represents*, at a molar level, what is *produced*, by desiring-production, at a molecular level. As a result, desiring-production comes to be crushed by the requirements of representation, and comes to desire its own repression.

In the third chapter of *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari in turn develop a tripartite typology of social formations ('primitives', States, capitalism). 'In each case', they ask, 'what is the relationship between social production and desiring-production, once it is said that they have identical natures and differing *régimes*?' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 262). 'It could be', they will ultimately conclude, 'that where the *régimes* are the closest, the identity in nature is on the contrary at its minimum [primitive and despotic formations]; and where the identity in nature appears to be at its maximum, the *régimes* differ to the highest degree [capitalism]' (336). Social formations can therefore oscillate between two poles, depending on whether desiring-machines have a chance of causing their immanent connections to pass into the regime of the social machines (the active schizophrenic line of flight), or by contrast the social machines overcode desire through the transcendent syntheses of representation (the reactionary paranoiac investment). Yet as Deleuze and Guattari insist,

> we cannot allow the difference in *régime* to make us forget the identity in nature... There are no desiring-machines that exist outside the social machines that they form on a large scale; and no social machines without the desiring-machines that inhabit them on a small scale. (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 340)

This idea that libidinal economy and political economy have differing regimes but nonetheless identical natures is one of the underlying threads that link together the entire socio-political analysis of *Anti-Oedipus*.[7]

Michel Foucault, in *The Order of Things*, had shown that a similar movement from representation to production had in fact occurred in numerous domains, to which Deleuze will often have recourse. In *biology*, for instance, we no longer define living beings by the external features or properties of an adult organism, but rather through genetics and embryology, that is, through the *process* by which the organism is *produced*. This is the historical switch from what was once called 'natural history' (Aristotle) to the modern sciences of molecular biology

(or genetics) and embryology. We will see in a moment that Deleuze's notion of social *coding* is in part derived from the idea of the genetic code. Likewise, in *geology*, Mount Everest would not be seen as an 'object', but rather as the result of an ongoing set of geological processes: the tectonic plate of India slamming into Asia, the folding of the earth's crust to produce the Himalayan mountain range, as well as the forces of glaciation and erosion that are simultaneously wearing down the mountains, and so on. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze will develop a concept of 'stratification' derived from geology (the book contains a chapter called, precisely, 'The Geology of Morals'). This, then, is the first philosophical point Deleuze derives from Marx (and, later, Foucault): the movement from representation to production.

The second observation derives from the first: Marx held that, given this discovery of the activity of production in general, a *retrospective* reading of universal history was possible from the viewpoint of capitalism, that is, from the viewpoint of the two decoded flows of labour and capital (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 140). Previous economies anticipated capitalism, but as something they warded off and avoided – for the obvious reason that they were based on codes (which operate at the level of representation), whereas capitalism is based on decoded flows (which operate at the level of production). Capitalism was therefore the nightmare previous social formations were trying to avoid.

But how does one go about doing this retrospective reading of universal history? Deleuze's answer is: through the concept of flow. Yet Marx himself did not have an explicit concept of flow: he defines neither labour nor capital in terms of flow. To understand Deleuze's concept of flow, we have to turn to the twentieth-century British economist, John Maynard Keynes. Deleuze says three things about Keynes's great book, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money*, which was published in 1936.[8] First, it presented the first modern theory of flows. 'Stocks and flows are the two fundamental concepts of modern political economy, as formulated by Keynes', Deleuze comments; 'The first great theory of flows can be found in Keynes' *The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money*' (Deleuze 2001: 14 December 1971). Second, it injected the problem of desire into the theory of money. 'One of Keynes's contributions was the reintroduction of desire into the problem of money', Deleuze and Guattari write; 'It is this that must be subjected to the requirements of Marxist analysis', notably with regard to finance and banking practices (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 23). It is now a truism to say that psychology and economics are interrelated, and

that stock markets are mirrors of the human psyche: 'they can become depressed; they can even suffer complete breakdowns' (Ferguson 2008: 121). Third, Keynes proposed a new model of regulation and stimulus for the economy. In Deleuzian terms, Keynesianism was one of the laboratories for the production of axioms, during the New Deal and afterwards.[9]

Keynes wrote *The General Theory* in the midst of the Great Depression, for which he was attempting to provide both a diagnostic and a cure. The theory of flows, and the injection of desire into economics, was part of Keynes's new diagnostic of the state of capitalism, which for Deleuze is an essential supplement to Marx's analyses. The push for regulation and government intervention, by contrast, was part of his cure; and today, the term 'Keynesianism' has become largely synonymous with intervention in the economy. In 1971, Nixon uttered his famous phrase, 'We're all Keynesians now', and the 2009 stimulus package of the Obama administration was thoroughly Keynesian. But what interests Deleuze in Keynes's work is less interventionism per se, but rather the new analysis he gave of capitalism through the concepts of flows and stocks. In the wake of Keynes, flow and stock have now become two basic concepts in the analysis of dynamic systems in general.[10] So it is from an analysis of Keynes that we will be able to grasp the philosophical import of Deleuze's concept of flow.

As always, Deleuze extracts from Keynesian economics a number of concepts that he will use for his own philosophical purposes, all of which can be summarised in the concept of the *break-flow* (*coupure-flux*), or *schizz*.

1. *Flow*. First, from an economic point of view, a *flow* is the transmission (or exchange) of money – or more generally, of economic value – that moves from one pole to another, that is, there is an incoming and outgoing flow. The term 'pole' here simply refers to the individuals or groups (firms, companies, corporations, etc.) that function as the *interceptors* of these incoming and outgoing flows (for instance, in one's bank account). 'We are defining flows in political economy', Deleuze noted in a 1971 seminar (Deleuze 2001: 16 November 1971); 'its importance for contemporary economists confirms what I have been saying'.
2. *Code*. Second, the correlative of the concept of a flow is that of a *code* – which is, precisely, a form of inscription or recording – which in the capitalist formation assumes the form

of an accounting system: a transaction entered into the bank account of an individual or firm, the *recording* or *inscription* of this transmission of a flow (a change in assets or liabilities). A pay cheque is an incoming flow; a cheque I write to pay a bill is an outgoing flow. Flow and code are reciprocally determined: it is impossible to grasp a flow other than by and through the operation that codes it. Hard cash gives a somewhat false picture of what money is: only 11 per cent of the monetary mass in the USA exists as cash. Strictly speaking, money is simply an inscription, which is why the development of the two-ledger accounting system was essential in the development of capitalism. When I purchase a book online with my credit card, a flow takes place, a transmission of economic value from my account to, say, the account of amazon.com.

A code is not something that is 'applied' to a flow, as Kantian concepts are applied to intuitions; there is never a flow first and then a code that imposes itself upon it or is applied to it. What flows on the socius cannot appear as a flow except in correlation to a code: it is impossible to seize a flow other than by and through the operation that codes it. A flow is not recognisable as an economic flow, or a social flow, or a somatic flow, for instance, except by and through the code which encodes it.

This is why Deleuze will say that a non-coded flow is an unnameable power: the nightmare of every society is the terror of a non-coded or decoded flow. My salary, the cost of my plane ticket here, are coded flows, since I know their exact value. But the problem with the sub-prime mortgage derivatives that helped cause the 2009 recession was due to the fact, not that they had lost value, but that no one knew their value, or even knew how to assess their value; they had become a decoded, and indeed uncodable flow. But normally, the concept of flow (production) is strictly coexistent with the concept of code (inscription).

3. *Stock*. The third concept, after flow and code, is the concept of stock. If the flow is what moves from one pole to another, from one account to another, stock is what is related to one of these poles as its material or juridical possession: my bank account, or the value of my investments as of today – this is *my* portion of the flow, my *share* of the flow, 'so it's mine'.

We have here three elementary notions derived from economics – flow, code (or accounting system) and stock – which are all interrelated and

reciprocally determined: a monetary flow is in continuous variation; we only know the flow through its inscription or coding; and stock is the portion of the flow that is mine at a particular moment. Readers of *Anti-Oedipus* will recognise that these three notions correspond to the three syntheses: flow is the connective synthesis of *production*; code is the disjunctive synthesis of *recording* or inscription; and stock is the conjunctive synthesis of *consumption*. The remainder of this paper will briefly discuss each of these terms in order to examine the complex interrelations Deleuze establishes between them.

II. The Concept of Flow

Let me return first to the concept of flow. Deleuze derives the concept of flow from Keynes, and links it with Marx's conception of production. We have seen that Marx held that a retrospective reading of universal history was possible from the viewpoint of capitalism. Deleuze picks up on this idea, but interprets history as a progressive decoding of flows. One can easily think of two examples of such a reading that Deleuze does not mention. Historically, for instance, one thinks of the fact that in the Middle Ages, *usury*, the lending of money at interest, was considered to be a sin – whence the figure of Jewish moneylenders such as Shylock. Since they were not subject to this Christian restriction, the Jews became the lenders and bankers – a line of flight in an otherwise overcoded economy. Similarly, it was not until 15 August 1971, a few months before *Anti-Oedipus* was published, that the US dollar was removed from the gold standard and instead allowed to float freely on the exchange market – a further decoding of money that broke the centuries-old link between money and precious metal.

The history of money is one of the primary topics of Deleuze's retrospective reading of history. Primitive economies functioned in terms of a code of barter, that is, in terms of a direct relation of exchange between objects. But the introduction of money as a 'general equivalent' was enough to destroy these codes – this is what happened during colonialism (cargo cults etc.). What money showed was that the objects being bartered in primitive economies were themselves simply qualified pieces of labour to which there corresponded a given quantum of value; they were simply qualified flows, forms of stock. In other words, primitive codes were *already* operating in conjunction with these flows, but they warded off these flows: primitive societies kept merchants and blacksmiths in subordinate positions, they cordoned off exchange and

commerce, precisely because the 'abstract or fictional quantity' of money was enough to break the primitive codes.

Deleuze holds to the thesis – following Edouard Will – that money was invented by the State as a means, less of encouraging commerce, than of *controlling* commerce through *taxation*. The introduction of money meant that the State was able to insert itself into every transaction and siphon off a portion for itself in the form of a tax. This was the first step of decoding: the introduction of money as a pure flow, a pure abstraction (even if it initially remained tied to precious metals).

And something else happens. Primitive societies operated with blocks of mobile and finite debts; but 'money – the circulation of money – *is the means for rendering the debt infinite*' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 197; emphasis in original). In other words, money initiates the duty of an interminable service to the State: I will *always* be indebted to the State, I will always owe the State income tax, sales tax, and so on; it is a debt I will never finish paying off. Christian theology, at least in its Pauline form, simply 'spiritualises' this notion of an infinite debt to the State. Because I have sinned, I owe God an infinite debt that I cannot pay off myself; the price I have to pay is my death and eternal damnation; but God, in his mercy, decides to pay off the infinite debt to himself by dying in our place; he redeems us, just as the Romans redeemed slaves by paying for them. In this sense, one could say that Christian theology is a spiritualised form of economics.

But money – or monetary inscription – is not in itself enough to form capitalism. It does not yet have a 'body' of its own. Initially, it was simply inserted into the interstices of the pre-existing social bodies (Mother Earth, the Despot). Capitalism appears only when money ceases to be merely an abstraction that 'formally unites ... objects that are produced and even inscribed independently of it' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 226–7), and itself becomes a filiative capital, that is, when money begets money. Capitalism, in other words, marks *a new threshold of decoding or deterritorialisation*.

What does this mean? In the capitalist formation, the two decoded flows of labour and capital are expressed by two forms of money, namely, payment and financing. The first has its roots in a simple circulation in which money is used as a means of payment: you get your pay cheque, and you pay your bills with it. Finance-money, however, is completely different. It constitutes what Deleuze calls call the capitalist form of infinite debt, a vast 'dematerialisation' or 'demonitarisation' of money (although the structures of finance have their own territoriality). Rather than transferring a pre-existing currency as a means of payment,

finance capital is a flow that the banks create *ex nihilo* as a debt owing to themselves: it hollows out a negative money at one extreme (as a debt entered as a liability of the banks) while projecting a positive money at the other extreme (as a credit granted to the productive economy by the banks). It is this second form of money that constitutes the true 'economic force' of capitalism, 'the immense deterritorialized flow that constitutes the full body of capital' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 237).

> Today we can depict an enormous, so-called stateless, monetary mass that circulates through foreign exchange and across borders, eluding control by the States, forming a multinational ecumenical organization, constituting a de facto supranational power untouched by governmental decisions. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 453)[11]

This is the full body of capital into which the desire of each one of us is plugged.

Strictly speaking, Deleuze says, there is no common measure between the two flows of money: money as a form of payment has an exchange value; but money as a structure of finance is a pure movement of creation and destruction. Hence the importance of banks. Banks participate in both these flows, they are situated at the pivotal point between financing and payment: they function as exchangers or oscillators that convert the flows of financing – which is a mutant flow in constant variation – into segments of payment. Even though there is no common measure between these two flows, it is the banks that guarantee their 'fictive homogeneity', which Deleuze calls a 'profound dissimulation' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 229). In our time, States have become immanent to the capitalist system; and one of the primary functions of the State, as a regulator, is to ensure the convertibility between these two forms of money by guaranteeing credit, a uniform interest rate, the unity of capital markets, and so forth.

This is why Deleuze insists that Marx's analysis of capital has to be supplemented by Keynes's analysis.

> It is unfortunate that Marxist economists too often dwell on considerations concerning the mode of production, and on the theory of money as the general equivalent as found in the first section of *Capital*, without attaching enough importance to banking practice, to financial operations, and to the specific circulation of credit money. (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 230)

(One can hardly imagine a more prescient comment, given the economic crisis of 2009, which revolved around the circulation of mortgage

derivatives within the financial operations of banks.) But it would be absurd to postulate a world super-government making the final decisions regarding this monetary mass, for there is no power that regulates the flow of capital itself, and neither the banks nor the State are even capable of predicting the growth in the money supply.

Now to say that libidinal economy and political economy are one and the same is tantamount to saying that

> the desire of the most disadvantaged creature will invest with all its strength, irrespective of any economic understanding or lack of it, the capitalist social field as a whole. Flows, who doesn't desire flows [capital], and relationships between flows, and breaks in flows? (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 229)

This is why Deleuze can say that 'in a sense, it is the bank that controls the whole system and the investment of Desire' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 230):

> It is not by means of a metaphor that a banking or stock market transaction, a claim, a coupon, a credit, is able to arouse people who are not necessarily bankers... There are socioeconomic 'complexes' that are also veritable complexes of the unconscious, and that communicate a voluptuous wave from the top to the bottom of their hierarchy... For it is a matter of flows, stock, of breaks in and fluctuations of flows; desire is present wherever something flows and runs, carrying along with it interested subjects – but also drunken or slumbering subjects – toward lethal destinations. Hence the goal of schizoanalysis: to analyze the specific nature of the libidinal investments in the economic and political spheres, and thereby to show how, in the subject that desires, desire can be made to desire its own repression. (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 105)

What then does Deleuze mean when he says that desire 'is a matter of flows and stock' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 105), or that 'every object presupposed the continuity of a flow' (6)? Consider the fact that I first delivered this paper at a conference in Italy. The money I used to purchase my plane ticket came from my pay cheque, which is derived from my university's endowment, a flow that is in turn linked to students' tuitions, investments in various corporations (and perhaps sweat shops), and so on. I subtracted from this flow to pay for my ticket, the price of which was fluctuating until I bought it, when it became my stock ('it's mine'). The flight was itself a material flow, as was the meal I ate on the plane (chicken salad, rice, chocolate cake), which was assembled at the airline's hub city from flows arriving from elsewhere: the red wine flowed from Napa Valley, the coffee from Starbucks. These

flows are assembled in my meal; I break into these flows when I eat; it produces in me a wave of satisfaction (*Voluptas*) – the portion or share of these flows that fall to me. These concrete examples are simply meant to illustrate Deleuze's fundamental claim: that desire is always a question of flows, with their fluctuations and breaks.

III. The Concept of Code

We have seen that flow and code are reciprocally determined: it is impossible to grasp a flow other than by and through the operation that codes it. Coding operates through a process of inscription or recording, in other words, by means of signs, whether these signs are numbers on a bank statement, or marks inscribed directly on the body. These signs are non-signifying, that is, it does not matter what they 'mean' or 'symbolise' per se; what matters is how they function in the determination of a flow.

We tend to use the word 'code' in phrases like the 'Morse code' or the 'civil code', where everything is given in advance: you apply a pre-given code, you use your decoding ring, and so on. But what Deleuze has in mind in proposing a concept of 'code' is primarily the biological notion of the *genetic code*: the concept of a code is 'a common characteristic of human cultures and of living species', of social reproduction as much as biological reproduction (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 289; see also 248: 'the general traits characterizing a code have been rediscovered today in what is called a genetic code'). There are at least three parallels between the biological and social coding.

1. *Inscription* (or *Information*). In both cases, the code is what allows for the transmission and reproduction of 'information', which is why Deleuze terms it a synthesis of inscription or recording, much like an accounting system (although this information is never pre-given, but *produced* with each transmission). 'Molecular biology teaches us that it is only the DNA that is reproduced, and not the proteins. Proteins are both products and units of production; they are what constitute the unconscious as a cycle or as the auto-production of the unconscious' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 290).
2. *Molecular and Molar*. Second, we find in genetics the same distinction between *production* (what goes on at the molecular level) and what we see *represented* in the product (the molar organism). The code operates at a molecular level. For Deleuze, this was one of Lacan's shortcomings: he discovered the code

in what he called 'signifying chains' (functioning via metaphor and metonymy) in the domain of the Symbolic. But language, the symbolic, is a molar organisation, like the organism. The inverse side of the symbolic is what Deleuze at several points calls 'the real inorganization of desire'. As Jacques Monod says, the genetic code is not a structure, but a domain 'where nothing but the play of blind combinations can be discerned' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 328). The molecular domain – the domain of passive syntheses – is a domain of 'chance or *real inorganization*' (289, as well as 39, 309, 328), a domain where everything is possible, and nothing is given in advance. Every coding, in other words, entails a constant decoding of what came before it: 'The genetic code points to a genic decoding' (328). This, then, is the primary sense of Deleuze's distinction between molecular and the molar: social formations 'effect a unification, a totalization of the molecular forces through a statistical accumulation obeying the laws of large numbers. Thus unity can be the biological unity or a species or the structural unity of a socius: an organism, social or living, is composed as a whole, as a global or complete object' (342). But desire necessarily functions at a molecular level.

3. *Surplus Value of Code*. Finally, the genetic code implies not only the dimension of *filiation* (*x* begets *y*), but that of *alliance*. Deleuze often cites in this case the relation of the wasp and the orchid: the wasp is an essential element in the reproductive apparatus of the orchid because it transports its pollen. There is here a 'capture of code, a *surplus value of code*, a veritable becoming, a becoming-wasp of the orchid and a becoming-orchid of the wasp' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 10; my emphasis). Rémy Chauvin speaks here of 'the *aparallel evolution* of two beings that have absolutely nothing to do with each other' (10, citing Chauvin 1969: 205; emphasis in original). Such transfers are in fact the basis for what we call 'genetic engineering', and they have results analogous to those of 'the abominable couplings dear to antiquity and the Middle Ages' (Jacob 1973: 291–2, 311, cited in Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 10–11). This is also why Deleuze can claim that evolutionary schemas have abandoned the *arborescent* models of descent (the schema of a tree and its branches) in favour of *rhizomatic* models, which operate in the heterogeneous and jump from one already differentiated line to another. Such is the distinction between filiation and alliance: genealogical trees (filiation) are scrambled by 'transversal' communications between

> different lines (alliance). Whence the threat of viruses: 'We evolve and die more from our polymorphous and rhizomatic flus than from hereditary diseases, or diseases that have their own line of descent' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 11).

Deleuze and Guattari utilise the same notion in discussion social reproduction, stressing the notion of alliance (marriage) over filiation: socially speaking, *debt* is the unit of alliance. But here too, they stress the need for a retrospective rereading of history. In so-called primitive societies, social reproduction passed through human reproduction (*x* begat *y*), whereas in capitalism social reproduction passes through capital (money begets money) and human reproduction and relations consequently become *privatised*. Relationships become primarily private matters. Moreover, if capitalism entails a movement from codes to what Deleuze calls an 'axiomatic', it is primarily because codes deal with objects (already qualified flows) whereas capitalism operates in terms of the abstract quantities of capital and labour, which can only be subject to an axiomatic treatment. Finally, the term 'decoding' can mean two things: either to decipher the secret of a code, or to undo a code. When Deleuze and Guattari use the term, they are referring to the latter. Yet for Deleuze and Guattari, an uncoded flow is a limit concept or an Idea, that is to say, a *problematic*: it is not an ideal to be attained, but a problem that constantly demands resolution. The notion of 'chaos' that one finds in ancient creation myths, as well as the retrieval of that notion in *What is Philosophy?*, are both harbingers of the apocalyptic state of purely decoded flows.

IV. The Concept of Stock

A brief word, finally, on the concept of stock. Once again, we must note that stocks and flows are one and the same thing, but that they relate to fundamentally different units: stock is the attribution of value at a given point in time, whereas flow is what changes the value of stock over time (an inflow adds to stock, an outflow subtracts from the stock). Stock is any entity that accumulates or depletes in value over time, whereas a flow is the rate of a change in a stock. Stocks have a certain value at each moment in time, whereas a flow (incoming and outgoing) is what changes the values of a stock over time (appreciation and depreciation). In mathematical terms, the stock is the integral of the flow, while the derivative is the flow of changes in the stock. This is one of the fundamental principles of accounting: 'only the study of flows

allows one to realize the role of the incoming and outgoing movements involved in stock variations' (Deleuze 2001: 14 December 1971).

The stock–flow relation is what lies at the basis of what today is called 'system dynamics theory'. Although I have drawn from the example of economics, the two notions can be applied to any dynamic system. The population of an animal species could be considered a stock; the inflow would be births, the outflow would be deaths; and these flows would vary the value of the stock (that is, the population) over time. The guests in a hotel could be considered a stock; the inflow would be guests arriving, the outflow would be guests departing; the stock would measure the guests at any given moment, whereas the flow variable would measure the guests over a period of time, say, a year. The water in a bathtub could be considered a stock; if a gallon of water drains out of the tub every minute, while at the same time a gallon of water is added from the faucet, the stock will remain the same, even though there is a constant flow. In short, a stock is the term for any entity that accumulates or depletes over time; while a flow is the rate of change in a stock; flows accumulate in stock. Identifying the flows and stocks in a given system is not always easy: a 'deficit', for instance, is a flow (spending in excess of revenue), whereas a 'debt' is an accumulated stock. Moreover, by their nature, one of the characteristics of stocks is that they interrupt or 'decouple' flows.

V. Conclusion

Deleuze's socio-political theory is constructed on the basis of three interrelated concepts, which are derived from contemporary economic theory, and particularly Keynes: *flow*, which is the production of value; *code*, which is the inscription or recording of flows; and *stock*, which is the portion of the flow that belongs to me at a given moment in time, which I can spend and consume. To be sure, these are not the only concepts at work in *Anti-Oedipus*. Deleuze in turn links these three concepts with the three passive syntheses derived from Kant (connection, disjunction, conjunction) and the three types of production to which they correspond (the production of production, the production of inscription, the production of consumption). The three are summarised by Deleuze in the concept of the *schizz* or the *break-flow* (or more literally, the *flow-cut*, '*coupure-flux*'), which is the operation involved in every coding of flows.[12] The sole aim of these reflections has been to give a content to the unexpected claim that lies at the basis of the entire *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* project, namely, that in the contemporary situation an

adequate socio-political theory must take the form – not of a theory of the state, or a theory of rights, or a theory of legitimation – but rather of a theory of *flows*.

Notes

1. This article was originally presented as a paper at *ConnectDeleuze*, the Second International Deleuze Studies conference at the University of Cologne on 10–13 August 2009, organised by Leyla Haferkamp and Hanjo Berressem. It was derived from lectures given at the *Collegium Phaenomenologicum*, 13–31 July 2009, in Città di Castello, Italy, organised by Peg Birmingham, to whom I owe a debt of gratitude.
2. I can give no notion by references or citations of what this paper owes to previous studies of *Anti-Oedipus*, notably Holland 1999, Thoburn 2003 and Buchanan 2008, as well as the articles included in the *Deleuze and Marx* special issue of *Deleuze Studies* (Jain 2009). On the relation between Marx and Keynes, see also Negri 1983.
3. See Deleuze 2001: 14 December 1971: 'It is not yet important for us to have a real definition of flows, but it is important, as a starting point, to have a nominal definition and this nominal definition must provide us with an initial system of concepts.'
4. See Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 468: 'The four principal flows that torment the representatives of the world economy, or of the axiomatic, are the flow of matter-energy, the flow of population, the flow of food, and the urban flow.'
5. Paul Virilio has shown that the problem for the police is not one of confinement (Foucault), but concerns the flux of the 'highways', speed or acceleration, the mastery and control of speed, circuits and grids set up in open space. See Deleuze 1988: 42.
6. Jacques Derrida made a similar claim in Derrida 1993: 101: 'Marxism remains at once indispensable and structurally insufficient *but* provided that one transforms and adapts it to new conditions.' See also the analyses in Badiou 1991 and Guattari and Negri 1991.
7. See Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 116: 'From the beginning of this study we have maintained both that social production and desiring-production are one and the same, and that they have differing *régimes*, with the result that a social form of production exercises an essential repression of desiring-production, and also that desiring-production – a "real" desire – is potentially capable of demolishing the social form.'
8. Keynes 1964. Deleuze seems to have relied in part on a study of Keynes by Daniel Antier entitled *L'Étude des flux et des stocks* (Antier 1957). See his comments in Deleuze 2001: 14 December 1971.
9. See Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 462: 'Keynesian economics and the New Deal were axiom laboratories.' With regard to regulation, Deleuze writes that 'the question is not that of freedom and constraint, nor of centralization or decentralization, but of the manner in which one masters the flows' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 462).
10. Dynamic systems theory was formalised by Jay W. Forrester in his *Principles of Systems* (Forrester 1968), who referred to stocks as 'levels' and to flows as 'rates'.
11. Bernard Schmitt, in his *Monnaie, salaires et profits* (1966), advanced a profound theory of money that Deleuze draws heavily from, describing the full body of

capital as 'a flow possessing the power of mutation' that does not enter into income and is not assigned to purchases, a pure availability, nonpossession and nonwealth (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 234–6). See the appeals to Schmitt in Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 237, and Deleuze 1995: 152.

12. See Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 141–2: 'The social machine is literally a machine, independently of any metaphor, in that it presents an immobile motor and undertakes diverse kinds of cuts: selection [*prélèvement*] from the flows, detachments from the chain, distribution of parts. Coding the flows implies all these operations. This is the highest task of the social machine, in that the selections [*prélèvements*] of production correspond to detachments from the chain, resulting in a residual share for each member, in a global system of desire and destiny that organizes the productions of production, the productions of recording, and the productions of consumption.'

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Time Out of Joint: Hamlet and the Pure Form of Time

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to explore why Deleuze takes up Hamlet's claim that 'time is out of joint'. In the first part of this paper, I explore this claim by looking at how Deleuze relates it to Plato's *Timaeus* and its conception of the relationship between movement and time. Once we have seen how time functions when it is 'in joint', I explore what it would mean for time to no longer be understood in terms of an underlying rational structure. The claim can be understood as about a relationship between time and action. In the second part of this paper, I want to relate this new understanding of time to *Hamlet* itself, in order to see how temporality operates within the play. I will conclude by relating these two different conceptions of time out of joint to one another through Nietzsche's eternal return.

Keywords: Kant, Plato, Hamlet, eternal return, synthesis of time, tragedy

I. Movement and Time in the *Timaeus*

In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze introduces the notion of time out of joint in connection with two figures, Kant and Hamlet.[1] In the first part of this paper, I want to elucidate exactly what Deleuze means by time being out of joint. His characterisation of it is as follows:

> The joint, *cardo*, is what ensures the subordination of time to those properly cardinal points through which pass the periodic movements which it measures (time, number of the movement, for the soul as much as for the world). By contrast, time out of joint means demented time or time outside the curve

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> which gave it a god, liberated from its overly simple circular figure, freed from the events which made up its content, its relation to movement overturned; in short, time presenting itself as an empty and pure form. (Deleuze 2004: 111)

In order to develop an understanding of what Deleuze means by time out of joint, I want to begin by examining what 'jointed' time might look like. The key to this is the notion of the joint itself, which Deleuze presents in more detail in his 1978 lecture, 'Synthesis and Time':

> Cardinal comes from cardo; cardo is precisely the hinge, the hinge around which the sphere of celestial bodies turns, and which makes them pass time and again through the so-called cardinal points, and we note their return: ah, there's the star again, it's time to move my sheep! (Deleuze 1978b)

Deleuze is here referring to Plato's conception of time, presented in the *Timaeus*.[2] The *Timaeus* gives us a mythical account of the creation of the world by a demiurge, who seeks to create the universe by imposing form on chaotic matter. The demiurge

> took over all that was visible – not at rest but in discordant and disorderly motion – and brought it from a state of disorder to a state of order, because he believed that order was in every way better than disorder. (Plato 1997b: 30a)

As the creator himself is perfect, he desires to create the universe as far as possible as an image of himself. As he wants to create the most perfect world possible, the world has several key attributes. First, as it cannot be less intelligent than the creatures within it, it is an animal, and thus possesses a soul. Second, as unity is an attribute for perfection, the world is composed of just one animal. Third, as the sphere is the most perfect form, the universe is formed as perfectly spherical. Finally, the creator himself is eternal, but given the nature of the world as already in motion, he can only create the world as a likeness to eternity:

> Now it was the Living Thing's nature to be eternal, but it isn't possible to bestow eternity fully upon anything that is begotten. And so he began to think of making a moving image of eternity: at the same time as he brought order to the universe, he would make an eternal image, moving according to number, of eternity remaining in unity. This number, of course, is what we now call 'time'. (Plato 1997b: 37d–e)

The universe is here seen, therefore, as a sphere in motion. Now, at this point, we can already note the first important point in this myth. Time is here seen as a structure of the realm of appearance. While the world itself is a copy of the creator, time has no place in relation to the eternity

of the creator himself. So how does time come about? Before the universe is organised according to time, it is still in motion, although this motion is 'disorderly'. Thus, motion is not dependant on time, as motion is prior to the imposition of time. Time is not that which allows movement to take place, but that which allows movement to become rational. In fact, Timaeus believes that time is grounded in the elements which are most perfect in the universe. That is, the celestial bodies. The celestial bodies thus occupy something like a mediating position, as on the one hand, they are similar to the eternal, whereas on the other, they are the ground for time. The planets move in an orderly manner, which is what allows time to be related to measure (the star that represents the time to move the sheep in Deleuze's example):

> In this way and for these reasons night-and-day, the period of a single circling, the wisest one, came to be. A month has passed when the Moon has completed its own cycle and overtaken the Sun; a year when the Sun has completed its own cycle. As for the periods of the other bodies, all but a scattered few have failed to take any note of them. Nobody has given them names or investigated their numerical measurements relative to each other. And so people are all but ignorant of the fact that time really is the wanderings of these bodies, bewilderingly numerous as they are and astonishingly variegated. (Plato 1997b: 39c–d)

On the Platonic model, therefore, we cannot have something like an understanding of the pure form of time, as time is the way in which something else (in this case, the number, or measure of motion) presents itself. Time is simply an imperfect way in which the eternal patterns of the world present themselves. It is always an ancillary time premised on a logically prior movement. The possibility of understanding time as out of joint therefore requires that we move away from the Platonic model of time, as Platonic time is always impure. While the mythological nature of Plato's account in the *Timaeus* may lead us to treat it lightly, underlying Plato's account is a more substantial philosophical position. In this regard, we can see the *Timaeus* as, with some reservations,[3] providing an account of how an essentially rational structure becomes exemplified in the world as a whole.[4] In this sense, just as *The Republic* explores the nature of moral justice through its externalisation in the city-state (Plato 1997a: 368–9), the *Timaeus* relates goodness to the whole of an eminently rational universe. The *Timaeus* therefore provides a mythological account of the relationship between the world of appearance and the forms. This relationship essentially makes man, as rational agent, at home in the world. These relations between psychology

and cosmology are also played out in Hamlet's characterisation of his own condition in terms of the universe as a whole, as we shall see in the second half of this paper. We can see that the subordination of time to an eternal, intelligible, and also, representational, model of time is central not just to Plato's conception, but also to a more general trend in pre-Kantian philosophy. Leibniz, for instance, argues that the notions of space and time are simply ways in which we, as finite intellects, perceive what are essentially a series of intelligible relations between things:

> As for my own opinion, I have said more than once that I hold space to be something purely relative, as time is – that I hold it to be an order of coexistences, as time is an order of successions. For space denotes, in terms of possibility, an order of things that exist at the same time, considered as existing together, without entering into their particular manners of existing. And when many things are seen together, one consciously perceives this order of things among themselves. (Leibniz 2000: 15)

Space and time are simply 'well founded phenomena' by which we inadequately perceive the true 'conceptual' order of things. As such, time is really a mode in which the essential structure of succession appears to us. In this case too, therefore, time is secondary to a rational, conceptual and representational way of ordering things. Time is predicated on a prior rational structure. Number is expressed in the celestial movement of the heavens. To be 'in joint' is therefore to be hinged, tied to cardinal numbers and tied to a prior rational order. For Deleuze, it is Kant who first provides an understanding of time which is not reducible to Leibniz's 'order of successions,' and I therefore now want to turn to Kant's attempt to provide an alternative conception of time.

II. Kant on the Difference between Concepts and Intuitions

The key innovation in the Kantian system in this regard is the division between intuition and the understanding. Kant argues that in order for us to be able to think, an object must be given to thought. In the case of both Leibniz and Plato, what is given to thought is a confused image of the true nature of things; that is, a copy that differs in degree from it. For Plato, what is presented is an image of eternity in time, but time is simply a manifestation of the rational movement of the celestial bodies. Similarly, for Leibniz, space and time are simply confused perceptions of a properly conceptual reality. Kant's claim in the *Critique of Pure Reason* is essentially that rather than regarding perception as merely a confused form of conceptual thought (what Kant calls in relation to

Leibniz 'intellectualised appearances' [Kant 1929: A271/B327]), there is a difference in kind between perception and concepts. In his article, *Concerning the Ultimate Foundation for the Differentiation of Regions in Space* (1768), Kant presents this difference explicitly as the grounds for a refutation of Leibniz. If we take Leibniz's position as being that space and time are simply confused presentations of conceptual relations, then we would expect all of the properties of spatial and temporal entities to be ultimately explicable in conceptual terms. If we consider a hypothetical universe containing simply one glove, however, then even if we were to completely specify the conceptual relations between the parts of a glove, we would not be able tell whether the glove was left or right handed, as the mirror image of the glove would have exactly the same relations between the parts that composed it:

> However, since there is no difference in the relations of the parts to each other, whether right hand or left, the hand would be completely indeterminate with respect to such a quality, that is, it would fit on either side of the human body. But this is impossible. (Kant 1968: 42–3)

Given that the glove must be left or right handed, it therefore possesses a determination (its 'handedness') that is not reducible to conceptual relations. If this is the case, then spatial entities cannot be seen merely as expressions of a non-spatial rational nature (we might think of this claim that space is also out of joint as a parallel thesis to the one we are considering), but also contain something in excess of the rational. In this case, therefore, Kant writes that 'there are no inner differences here that any understanding could merely think; and yet the differences are inner as far as the senses teach' (Kant 1997: sec. 13). The argument from incongruent counterparts shows that space cannot be seen as a mode of presentation of conceptual relations in the way that Leibniz proposed, and Kant makes similar arguments in the *Critique of Pure Reason* for the difference between time and succession. Kant's distinction of concepts and intuition therefore has the consequence that time cannot be seen as the moving image of eternity, as it is no longer the expression of an underlying representational structure, whether the 'number of movement' or the true 'order of things'. Once we recognise a difference in kind between concepts and intuitions (or between time and measure), then our understanding of time is no longer 'joined' to, and dependent upon, an understanding of rational movement, and thus we open up the possibility of a genuine understanding of the 'empty and pure form of time' itself.

III. Time out of Joint and Deleuze

Does this mean that Deleuze's 'time out of joint' is an essentially Kantian form of temporality? In fact, Kant's understanding of time is limited by his commitments to an essentially epistemic and subject-centred project. That is, Kant is concerned with the conditions under which a subject can attain a priori knowledge of a world of objects. On this basis, he claims that whereas 'hitherto it has been assumed that all our knowledge must conform to objects, ... we must ... make trial whether we may have more success in the tasks of metaphysics, if we suppose objects must conform to our knowledge' (Kant 1929: Bxvi). In working out the implications of this assumption, Kant takes time and space to be faculties of the subject. That is, they are ways in which that which is to be thought by the subject is given to the subject. As space and time are faculties through which the subject apprehends objects, then those formal properties of the object that derive from its spatio-temporal nature can be known a priori. Given that we are interested in knowledge, which involves concepts, and Kant has posited a radical split between concepts and intuitions, the major project of the *Critique of Pure Reason* is to show how the faculty of the understanding can be related to the faculty of intuition. In Deleuze's words, 'does he not once again come up with the idea of harmony, simply transposed to the level of faculties of the subject which differ in nature?' (Deleuze 2003: 19). Kant himself recognises that this is the central problem of the *Critique*, and it is the role of the transcendental deduction to show that it is impossible that 'appearances might very well be so constituted that the understanding should not find them to be in accordance with the conditions of its unity' (Kant 1929: A90/B123).

This is not the place to give a full description of Kant's account of how intuition and the understanding are related, but Kant's essential claim is that the understanding relates to intuition through the notion of synthesis. Kant defines synthesis as 'the act of putting different representations together, and of grasping what is manifold in them in one act of knowledge' (Kant 1929: A77/B109). Now, conscious empirical synthesis takes the form of making judgements. When I count, or bring together the moments of a judgement ('the apple is red'), it is I who actively relates these representations to one another. In a sense, the spontaneity of my ego is what holds together the passive determinations, 'apple' and 'redness'. On their own, these determinations are unities, and thus are in themselves indifferent to one another. In fact, this is clear from Kant's definition, as judging *is* this conjunction of what is

manifold in a single act (*S* is *P*). Kant's understanding of the relation of the understanding to intuition is analogous to his understanding of judgement, and it is the understanding that actively relates different spatio-temporal representations to one another to allow us to represent to ourselves a well ordered world. Such an approach has a number of consequences. As Deleuze notes in *Empiricism and Subjectivity*, it presupposes 'a methodologically reduced plane that provides an essential certainty – a certainty of essence – we ask: how can there be a given, how can something be given to a subject, and how can the subject give something to itself?' (Deleuze 1991: 87). Deleuze's claim is that Kant has essentially taken a psychological account of how we synthesise judgements and reiterated it at a transcendental level. 'The same function that gives unity to the different representations in a judgement also gives unity to the mere synthesis of different representations in an intuition, which, expressed generally, is called the pure concept of the understanding' (Kant 1929: A79/B104). By using this model, Kant ties the notion of synthesis to the notion of consciousness, and hence debars any form of synthesis that is not ultimately governed by judgement. This leads to a further sharp dichotomy between passivity and spontaneity. If the activity of synthesis is tied to the subject, then there is no possibility of a form of synthesis which does not involve a subject – intuition becomes a passive material to be taken up and organised by the conceptual understanding. Furthermore, once again, we do not arrive at a truly pure form of time, as time is now a faculty of a subject:

> It is impossible to maintain the Kantian distribution, which amounts to a supreme effort to save the world of representation: here, synthesis is understood as active and as giving rise to a new form of identity in the I, while passivity is understood as simple receptivity without synthesis. (Deleuze 2004: 109)

Deleuze's notion of time will therefore take up this idea that it is fundamentally different in kind from the structure of representation, but as Deleuze does not '[trace] the so-called transcendental structures from the empirical acts of a psychological consciousness' (Deleuze 2004: 171), he opens the possibility of seeing time as capable of exhibiting organisation in its own right (what Deleuze calls 'passive synthesis').

At this point we can return to the empty and pure form of time itself. We can now give a schematic account of it by noting the revolutionary result of the Kantian theory of intuition. That is, that rather than time being a mode of succession, succession is a mode in which time appears

to us. In fact, succession is simply a way in which *we* organise time for Kant. Deleuze puts this point forward as follows:

> Time cannot be defined by succession because succession is only a mode of time, coexistence is itself another mode of time. You can see that he arranged things to make the simple distribution: space-coexistence, and time-succession. Time, he tells us, has three modes: duration or permanence, coexistence and succession. But time cannot be defined by any of the three because you cannot define a thing through its modes. (Deleuze 1978b)

The talk about modes is important here, and refers us to Spinoza's conception of substance. Spinoza held that all attributes, such as thought and extension, are equally expressions of the same substance. Here, Deleuze is suggesting that succession and coexistence are simply different 'attributes' of time. The pure and empty form of time therefore has the same relationship to succession and coexistence as substance for Spinoza has to the attributes.[5] The characterisation of 'substance' as time is therefore made possible by two innovations. The first is the recognition by Kant that time is not an expression of an underlying rational structure, whether the number of movement or the concept of the Leibnizian monad. Without this insight, time is simply a mode of expression of an underlying rational structure. The second is the understanding that time itself is capable of synthesis. This frees time from its role in Kant's system as merely a form of receptivity, and allows it to take the role of a pre-individual ground (or 'unground') of both the modes of temporality we find and of the subject itself. The reason why Deleuze introduces this notion is that we need to explain the interaction of the two very different forms of time themselves. Deleuze posits a difference in kind between the successive nature of habit and the coextensive nature of memory, two fundamental structures responsible for the constitution of the subject.[6] The question of how memory is able to relate to habit arises, a question much like Kant's question of how two different faculties can relate to one another. Deleuze's answer to this question in terms of time is ultimately Spinozist.[7] Habit and memory can relate to each other because they are simply different modalities or expressions of the form of time itself. As such we can think (somewhat figuratively) of memory and habit as simply being different ways of presenting the same underlying form of time itself. By taking this approach, the problem of the priority of succession over coexistence, or vice versa, is put out of play. They are both expressions of the same ontologically prior temporal form, which in itself is neither successive nor coexistent. The empty and pure form of time is therefore that which

bifurcates itself into the past of memory and the present of habit. Placing time out of joint and opening up the possibility of a pure form of time itself is, therefore, essential to Deleuze's constitution of an ontology of becoming. I want to return to this point in the final section, when we see how time out of joint is related to the eternal return.

IV. Aristotle's *Poetics*

The emphasis of the first half of this paper has been on what one might call the metaphysical aspect of time out of joint. In this second half of the paper, I want to return to the question of drama itself, and see how the move to a different conception of drama affects our notions of temporality.[8] My argument will be that implicit in classical drama is a metaphysics of time that is overturned in *Hamlet*, and so the second half of this paper will retrace the evolution of the metaphysics of time, but within the domain of the dramatic. In this domain, it will no longer be a question of overturning the priority of movement, but instead of overturning the privileging of the act. If we are to look at the notion of a time out of joint in drama, a good place to begin will be with Aristotle's definition of tragedy in the *Poetics*, at least in order to provide a contrast to what we find in *Hamlet*. Aristotle presents a somewhat similar position to Plato's in the *Physics*, arguing that time requires change, as without change, we would not be able to determine that time had passed. Time here is simply the measure of motion, and so we once again have the subordination of time to a rational structure. Aristotle claims that tragedy is

> the imitation of an action that is serious and also, as having magnitude, complete in itself; in language with pleasurable accessories, each kind brought in separately in the parts of the work; in a dramatic, not in a narrative form; with incidents arousing pity and fear, wherewith to accomplish its catharsis of such emotions. (Aristotle 1995: 1449b25–9)

For our purposes, what is important to note is that in Greek tragedy, what is central is action ('they do not act in order to portray the characters; they include the characters for the sake of the action' [Aristotle 1995: 1450a20–1]). As Michael Davis points out, 'the *Poetics* is about two things: *poiêsis* understood as poetry, or imitation of action, and *poiêsis* understood as action, which is also imitation of action' (Davis 1999: 9).

We find the same emphasis on action in Hegel's conception of tragedy. If we look at a play such as *Antigone*, we can see that the drama

arises from the actions of its characters, and traces their consequences. The conflict at the centre of the drama emerges through King Creon's prohibition on the burial within the city of Antigone's brother, the traitor Polyneices, and Antigone's transgression of this prohibition. Here the conflict occurs between the laws 'of the gods, that are unwritten and unfailing' (Sophocles 2003: 501), the right to bury the dead, and the laws of the state, exemplified by Creon's prohibition. Each character chooses to act solely according to one determining principle, and does not recognise the rights of the other. The one-sidedness of their opposed actions means that a resolution can only be achieved by the tragic death of Antigone, and Creon's loss of his wife and son. We can note that what is presented in this case is a legal conception of the individual. To begin with, action is fundamentally tied to the concept of law in Greek tragedy. The tragedy cannot occur simply through a misfortune on the part of the characters, since this is 'not fear-inspiring or piteous, but simply odious to us' (Aristotle 1995: 1452b36). Likewise, it cannot involve evil characters suffering misfortune, as 'pity is occasioned by undeserved misfortune' (1453a4). In this sense, the plot of tragedy involves 'a man not pre-eminently virtuous and just, whose misfortune is, however, brought about not by vice and depravity but by some fault' (1453a6–10). In order to explore Deleuze's reaction to this form of drama, I want to bring in here Rosenberg's analysis of drama, as it is central to Deleuze's application of the metaphysics of the empty and pure form of time to drama itself.[9] In what Rosenberg calls 'old drama', the basis of tragedy is some kind of fault on the part of the agent, some kind of transgression for which the agent is responsible:

> [T]he concepts of morality or social law, applying exclusively to human beings and ignoring possible analogies with other living creatures, tend to define the individual not as an entity enduring in time but by what he has done in particular instances. A given sequence of acts provokes a judgement, and this judgement is an inseparable part of the recognition of the individual. (Rosenberg 1994: 136)

When we look at the legal conception of the person, it is not the case that the unity of the individual can be given in terms of his or her acts themselves. Rather, when someone comes before a judge, what the judge relates to is not a unity governed by personality, but rather a series of acts which are unified by the last act's relationship to the law. As Rosenberg notes, the actual acts of a murderer are in large part no different from the acts of anyone else, and are only made criminal by

the fact that they precede the murder itself: 'entering an automobile, stepping on the gas, obeying the traffic lights'. (Rosenberg 1994: 138) When we look at a criminal act, it is the law that provides a framework for the analysis of action, and which imposes a structure of artifice that unifies the conduct of the perpetrator. This is not merely the case in the sense that it is the transgression of the law which defines the act as criminal, but also that the law provides a way of synthesising certain other acts which, without reference to the crime, would be indifferent in relation to the law. We can see that there is a certain artificiality to such a mode of analysis in the following way. First, there is the fact that in determining the guilt or innocence of the perpetrator of a crime, the judge explicitly sets to one side the personality of the individual in order to base the judgement purely on the identity of the actions. Second, we can note that if it is suddenly discovered that the alleged perpetrator did not commit the crime, then the entire identity of series of actions before the law disintegrates. The actions of 'stepping on the gas' and 'obeying the traffic lights' now take on an entirely innocent aspect. In this sense, law is what draws together a series of acts that in themselves are indifferent to one another, in a similar way to that in which the Kantian notion of judgement draws together the moments of intuition which are themselves purely passive in relation to one another.

Now, obviously in the case of the law, the problem is of determining whether the structures of the law apply to the actions or not (whether the person is guilty or innocent). In the case of 'old drama', we do not have the difficulty of determining whether acts properly accord with the structure of the law. Rather, characters in 'old drama' are constituted to be in accordance with their fate from the outset:

> The dramatist's definition of the character was not an arbitrary superimposition that exchanged the emotional, intellectual, and mechanical characteristics of a biological and social organism for some one deed that concerned the court; it constituted instead the entire reality of a character, avoiding the ruinous abstraction of the law by determining in advance that his emotions, his thoughts and his gestures should correspond with and earn in every respect the fate prepared for him. (Rosenberg 1994: 139)

In 'old drama', therefore, character is seen simply as a manifestation of the underlying unity provided by actions' relation to the law. On the basis of this relation of character to action, Rosenberg presents his criticism of 'old drama'. Once character has been subordinated to the structure of the law through action, the possibility of an exploration

of the change or development of character is ruled out. Thus, while Creon's relations to those around him – Haemon, for instance – may change during the course of the play, this is simply as a result of the expression of the same moral identity. This is explicit, for instance, in Hegel's reading of tragedy, where 'the truly inviolable law is the unity of the action' (Hegel 1975: 1166). Hegel's understanding of tragedy sees it emerging through each character's adoption of a partial aspect of ethical life (*Sittlichkeit*) as his guiding principle. Thus Antigone is justified in appealing to the rights of the family in seeking to bury Polyneices, just as Creon is justified in upholding the laws of the state. They are both also culpable in that their action fails to take into account the complete structure of ethical life. The resolution of tragedy is the restoration of balance to the ethical, but as 'the *individuals* have more or less put their whole will and being into the undertaking they are pursuing' (1166; emphasis in original), the resolution of the tragedy can only occur with the dissolution of these partial views, and with them, the characters who embody them. Thus, by focusing on action, we rule out an account of character, or at least of a change of character. We can, however, further note that this model of drama mirrors that of a metaphysics of time I presented in the first half of this paper. Rather than seeing the character as an entity that develops in time, we have a drama which is subordinated to the movement of the action. Similarly, the singularly human nature of action as relation to ethical structure reflects that what is being played out is something primarily atemporal. The duration of the play is simply the mode of expression of the underlying rational structure of the law of action. In the case of the metaphysical notion of time in joint, this structure was given by an initial movement, or conceptual determination. Here, the phenomenal manifestations of characters in classical drama are merely manifestations of an underlying law, or an underlying judgement: the fate of the character. Hence, 'psychology can establish the plausibility of Macbeth's or Lear's behaviour, but for the sufficiency of his motivation, we must not refer to a possible Macbeth or Lear "in real life" but to the laws of the Shakespearean universe' (Rosenberg 1994: 140).

V. Hamlet and Time out of Joint

The focus of Deleuze's philosophical interest in *Hamlet* is in Hamlet's hesitation. Provided we do not simply explain Hamlet's hesitation as a contingent psychological phenomenon,[10] we can approach *Hamlet* as offering an alternative to the Greek conception of drama. In the opening

scene, Marcellus sets up the opposition to the Platonic scheme by noting that war has severed the connection between action and the celestial bodies in the Kingdom of Denmark:

> Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task
> Does not divide the Sunday from the week.
> What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
> Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day?
> (Shakespeare 2003: I, i, 75–8)

As Spencer notes (Spencer 1943: 11), the view of the celestial spheres as a rational realm mirroring the rational faculty of man was widespread at the time that Shakespeare was writing, and views such as that of the humanist, G.-B. Gelli, that 'man is made of two natures, one corporeal and terrestrial, the other divine and celestial; in the one he resembles beasts, in the other those immaterial substances which turn the heavens', were the standard fare of renaissance cosmology. Hamlet relates his own inability to act to a more general malaise with the universe:

> And indeed it goes so heavily with my
> disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile
> promontory; this most excellent canopy the air, look you, this brave
> o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden
> fire – why, it appeareth no other thing to me but a foul and pestilent
> congregation of vapours. (Shakespeare 2003: II, ii, 281–6)

In this sense, Hamlet's concerns are not simply psychological, but are also related to a feeling of incongruence with the kind of rational cosmology put forward by the *Timaeus*. *Hamlet* sees Hamlet himself not as an identity in the legal sense, or in the dramatic senses which we find in Aristotle. He is not defined by action as, for instance Sophocles' own model of the vengeful son, Orestes, is, who claims that 'talk is expensive', and is instead concerned with 'practical details': 'where we should hide, where we can leap out and push that enemy laughter right back down their throats!' (Sophocles 2001: 1720–5). We do not need to turn to Greek tragedy for the figure of an identity, however, as Hamlet's character is paralleled within the play itself by Laertes and his need for revenge. As Rosenberg points out, the drama prior to Hamlet's return from England concerns his inability to act:

> I do not know
> Why yet I live to say 'This thing's to do;'
> Sith I have cause and will and strength and means
> To do't. (Shakespeare 2003: IV, iv, 43–6)

Now, as these lines makes clear, Hamlet is very much aware of what he should do, but he is simply not able to do it. To this extent, we have an odd dramatic structure since, if characters are understood in terms of the relations of acts to the judgement of the law as they would be in classical drama, then Hamlet's various speeches, and use of speech in the first half of the play, are simply irrelevant to the structure of his role. As Deleuze writes, 'Hamlet is the first hero who truly needed time in order to act, whereas earlier heroes were subject to time as the consequence of an original movement (Aeschylus) or aberrant action (Sophocles)' (Deleuze 1998: 28). Rather than the movement of the action determining the time of the drama, Hamlet experiences time itself as being the ground of action. In this sense, he operates within a time out of joint where his relation to the world, and to himself,[11] is governed by a fundamental passivity. His actions unfold in a time which is not his own. In this sense, Hamlet's experience is much like that which Bergson describes in his influential analysis of waiting for sugar-water to mix:

> For here the time I have to wait is not that mathematical time which would apply equally well to the entire history of the material world, even if that history were spread out instantaneously in space. It coincides with my impatience, that is to say, with a certain portion of my own duration, which I cannot protract or contract as I like. It is no longer something *thought*, it is something *lived*. (Bergson 2002: 176; emphasis in original)

Rosenberg's interpretation is precisely this, that Hamlet's character cannot be understood as purely derived from the structure of the action he is to undertake, unlike in the case of an identity, and hence he exists outside of the role that the play assigns him. The task of taking on the role of avenging his father is simply too big for him. The sea voyage is therefore necessary to the structure of *Hamlet*, as it represents the break in the structure of the play whereby Hamlet becomes equal to the task allotted to him. What does this involve? Deleuze talks about the first half of Hamlet in terms of the '*a priori* past'. In this sense, Hamlet exists in the past of the event of the murder of his father (he is yet to become equal to the action of revenge). Hamlet, in the first half of the play, exists in a state of relation to a past that is disconnected from the present. In this sense, there is a failure to relate the past to action, which is mirrored

by the failure to identify himself with the actual structure of the law. As Deleuze puts it, in his discussion of Hamlet and Oedipus, 'they are in the past and live themselves as such so long as they experience the act as too big for them' (Deleuze 2004: 112). The second time, the action, is the moment of the present, where the self becomes capable of acting. In this sense, for Deleuze, Hamlet mirrors the central problem of Kant's transcendental philosophy: how can two orders, which are different in kind, be brought into alignment with one another? For Kant, this problem is posed in terms of the incongruence of intuition and the understanding. For Rosenberg and Deleuze, the problem is posed in terms of the incongruence of personality as 'an organic coherence intuitively based on the real world of sensation' (Rosenberg 1994: 135), and legal identity as the basis for action. Hamlet recognises that his relation to the world, and even to himself, is mediated through a time divorced from the movement or actions of agents, and thus experiences himself as subordinate to time:

> The spontaneity of which I am conscious in the 'I think' cannot be understood as the attribute of a substantial and spontaneous being, but only as the affection of a passive self which experiences its own thought... being exercised in it and upon it but not by it. (Deleuze 2004: 108)

The question is not how this time of duration can be overcome, but of how it can be related to the time of action. We can therefore see 'old drama' as dramatising an ontology of movement, whereas Hamlet dramatises an ontology of time as out of joint or freed from movement. It provides an image for enabling us to think the gathering together of time.[12] Hamlet's question is how he is able to reconcile his personality with the identity of action. For Deleuze, it is only against the future that these two moments can be related. It is only the future that allows the self of the past to be brought into a 'secret coherence' with the present, as action precisely is this relation of past and present towards a future. There are thus three moments to Hamlet; the first, that of passivity, where he is incapable of acting. The second is the caesura, the voyage to England, which Deleuze represents as the present, and the final moment, the future, the horizon against which the action takes place. Together they provide what Deleuze calls a 'symbol' or 'image' (Deleuze 2004: 112) of the totality of time. They show that the two modes of time, the past and the present, can be brought into relation with one another, but only through a third moment of time, the future. In this sense, 'it matters little whether or not the event [of the past] occurs or the act [of the present] has been performed or not: past, present and future

are not distributed according to this empirical criterion' (Deleuze 2004: 112). That is, Deleuze's claim is that we are not concerned with the actual (empirical) relationship of past, present and future in the play (he notes that in another image of time provided by Oedipus, the act empirically precedes the event of the past), but with the formal relations that present the metaphysical structure of temporality. On Deleuze's reading, it is necessary that Hamlet die in the empirical future, not because his character is incapable of changing, but instead for the following reasons. First, because the future is the horizon of action, and the point at which Hamlet's acts escape him as a subject of action; and second, because if Hamlet is to be viewed as a hero who truly relates to time out of joint, this time must ultimately be separated from the subject for the pure and empty form to itself take primacy. If *Hamlet* is to truly provide an image of the totality of time, then the third moment, the unity of the past and the present, must be the equivalent of the Spinozist 'substance as time' that we encountered in the first half of this paper. Just as what unified the times of succession and coexistence was that which was expressed in both and thus was itself neither successive nor coexistent, the future, as the unity of the past and the present, escapes both aspects of Hamlet's character. In order for an image of the totality of time to be constituted, the moment of 'secret coherence' must be one where Hamlet is neither subject to the event, nor capable of acting. This moment is the moment of his death.

> In this manner, the I which is fractured according to the order of time and the Self which is divided according to the temporal series correspond and find common descendant in the man without name, without family, without qualities, without self or I, the 'plebeian' guardian of a secret, the already-Overman whose scattered members gravitate around the sublime image. (Deleuze 2004: 112)

One might in fact question whether Deleuze is correct that Hamlet's death really marks the instigation of time definitively out of joint, or rather the reinstatement of jointed time as the rule of his line comes to an end, however.

VI. Conclusion: The Eternal Return

As well as a novel conception of philosophy, we also have a new conception of theatre. Both of these novelties present a new way to coordinate the moments of time. The metaphysics of time out of joint relates succession and coexistence through a prior empty and pure form of time, whereas the theatre of time out of joint relates the past and

present to one another against the horizon of the future. The final question is, therefore, how are these two forms related to one another? The answer, I think, is found in Nietzsche's claim that *Hamlet* is an essentially metaphysical tragedy, that 'it is not reflection, it is true knowledge, insight into the terrible truth, which outweighs every motive for action, both in the case of Hamlet and in that of Dionysiac man' (Nietzsche 1997: 40). Deleuze follows Nietzsche in claiming that at the heart of *Hamlet* is a metaphysical truth, even if this is no longer the truth of Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy*, but rather that of the eternal return. The recognition that there are two forms of the eternal return allows us to relate the two terms of Nietzsche's characterisation, Hamlet, and Hamlet's 'terrible truth'. While we can give the eternal return a dramatic reading as a tripartite structure in terms of the act, as incorporating the past into the present in order to relate to the future, 'such an exposition remains purely introductory' (Deleuze 2004: 113). It presents us only with an 'image' of time, such as we found in *Hamlet*. In addition, Deleuze presents a second interpretation of the eternal return, this time in terms of an 'esoteric truth' that 'concerns – and can concern – only the third time or the series' (Deleuze 2004: 113). It is in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* that these two moments are related to one another. We can begin by noting parallels between *Hamlet* and *Zarathustra*. Both involve their central characters moving from a state where they are not equal to their action to the act itself. The bulk of *Zarathustra* is governed by Zarathustra's inability to think the eternal return ('O Zarathustra, your fruits are ripe, but you are not ripe for your fruits' [Nietzsche 2006: 117]). *On Redemption* is central in this respect, in that it explores two different relationships to the past. As Zarathustra says, 'this alone is *revenge* itself: the will's unwillingness towards time and time's "it was"' (111). This conception of time, with its 'dreadful chance', is the past of mathematical succession – the line of time that is the expression of a rational movement. In this framework, temporality itself is seen as the ground for resentment, man is not the ground for his own actions (he cannot will backwards), and so he is in this sense alienated from what he is by the structure of temporality. The spirit of revenge is therefore engendered by the passing of time, and its incommensurability with the will. Nietzsche offers two solutions to this problem. The first is the annihilation of the will (the Schopenhauerian solution); the second is the redemption of time. The eternal return is that which offers us the possibility of a more appropriate relation to temporality.[13]

Deleuze claims that the second part of *Zarathustra* is concerned with the transformation of Zarathustra, as he finally becomes adequate to the

thought of the eternal return. In the last part of *Zarathustra*, Zarathustra finally throws off his 'pity for the higher men' (Nietzsche 2006: 266). In his pity for the higher men, Zarathustra was still conceiving of the eternal return as the return of time determined by that which exists within it. Such a form of time is the time of revenge and the 'fragments and limbs of human beings' (110). The final stage, Deleuze claims, is unwritten, and would have dealt with the death of Zarathustra. Deleuze describes this final time as 'time by excess' (Deleuze 2004: 113), where the subject is once again dissolved, and time prior to its actualisation in a field of beings presents itself. In essence, we can read the eternal return in this formulation as the unity of past, present and future. It is also, however, the metaphysical structure of time itself: 'the eternal return is neither qualitative nor extensive, but intensive, purely intensive. In other words, it is said of difference' (303). As Deleuze notes, 'we rely upon the overly simple circle which has as its content the passing present and as its shape the past of reminiscence' (114) when we see the eternal return in terms of Hamlet or Zarathustra. In fact, the eternal return, or the empty and pure form of time, is that which makes the relation of past and present possible, rather than this relation itself. It is also that which allows us to think an ontology where time is not subordinated to the movement of things, but rather where things emerge from the unfolding of time itself. For Deleuze, Zarathustra's progress therefore amounts to the dramatisation of the process of coming to think an ontology of becoming. It is only once he has given up the last trace of an ontology of being (his pity for the higher men) that he becomes capable of thinking of the redemption of time itself, rather than a redemption of things through a change in our relation to time: 'Only the extreme, the excessive, returns; that which passes into something else and becomes identical... Eternal return or returning expresses the common being of all these metamorphoses, ... , of all the realised degrees of power' (51). The eternal return is therefore both a test to redeem our own relationship to time, which Deleuze formulates in a way which parallels Kant's imperative ('what ever you will, will it in such a way that you also will its eternal return' [Deleuze 1986: 68]), but also time itself, redeemed from movement.

Notes

1. 'The Northern Prince says "time is out of joint". Can it be that the Northern philosopher says the same thing: that he should be Hamletian because he is Oedipal?' (Deleuze 2004: 111).

2. Deleuze makes this connection between jointed time and the *Timaeus* explicit in his lecture on Kant (Deleuze1978a: 21 March 1978). In the section on time out of joint, he claims, 'In the *Timaeus* there were some very beautiful pages on the arc of the Demiurge which makes circles, this bending activity. However, this time as an image of eternity, the cyclical figure of time subordinated to movement and whose secret will be the periodic return of planets to the same position relative to each other, is indeed a time which is the image of eternity.'
3. As Francis Cornford notes, the forms have no generative power, and so cannot replace the role of the demiurge in *creating* a moving image of eternity (Cornford 1937: 28).
4. 'It is to be taken, not literally, but as a poetical figure. The whole subsequent account of the world is cast in a mould which this figure dictates. What is really an analysis of the elements of rational order in the visible universe and of those other elements on which order is imposed, is presented in mythical form as the story of a creation in time' (Cornford 1937: 27).
5. In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze argues that despite developing a univocal conception of being, the fundamental limitation of Spinoza's philosophy is that substance is understood in terms of being, rather than becoming: 'Substance must be said *of* the modes and only *of* the modes. Such a condition can be satisfied only at the price of a more general categorical reversal according to which being is said of becoming, identity of what is different, the one of the multiple, etc.' (Deleuze 2004: 50). Deleuze's own metaphysics can therefore be seen as an attempt to invert Spinozism, with becoming taking the place of substance.
6. The constitution of the time in terms of memory and habit is the topic of the first two of the three syntheses of time. Cf. Deleuze 2004: 90–107, Ansell Pearson 1999: 99–101.
7. My interpretation of time here differs from that of James Williams in his recent study of Deleuze's philosophy of time in that I take the relation between the two forms of drama to be defined by the priority of movement or time. Since Plato, on Deleuze's reading, sees time as essentially confused movement, there is no possibility of the formulation of an empty and pure form of time, as time only exists as a secondary effect of the rational movement of the celestial bodies. Without this rational movement, on this conception, there would equally be no time. We can therefore only conceive of an *empty* form of time once we see time as primary, or at least as independent of movement (by, for instance, Kant's recognition of the difference in kind between the faculties of intuition and the understanding). It is in this sense that Hamlet is seen as Kantian by Deleuze. The future is the *pure* form of time because, as Deleuze writes, 'the future, which subordinates the other two to itself and strips them of their autonomy, is the royal repetition' (Deleuze 2004: 117). In terms of the three syntheses of time, the future is that which is expressed in both the past and the present, each of these functioning as attributes to time, which is analogous to Spinoza's conception of substance. The claim that both the past and the present are attributes of the future, as the pure form of time, is what allows Deleuze to overcome the difficulty he encounters at the conclusion of the second synthesis, that it appears as if the pure (virtual) past is subordinate to the (actual) present. Relating both to the future prevents the prioritisation of either temporal synthesis. Williams instead interprets the empty and pure form of time in terms of a subtractive procedure where number is removed from time: 'For Hamlet, once his father's ghost has spoken, the numbering and legitimacy of kings is out of joint and his time becomes empty (there is no next numbered ruler) and pure (there is no legitimate ruler)' (Williams 2011: 88–9). Such a subtractive approach runs

the risk of occluding the fact that the presence of number in the world is an expression of a deeper rational structure (such that it is not a question of simply removing numbers from the world, but of overturning their transcendental ground). As Williams notes, with the empty and pure form of time, temporality 'changes from a cardinal time numbering revolutions of the circle, to an ordinal time setting events in order' (Williams 2011: 89). Once we see the empty and pure form of time as a change in that which is repeated (from the rational to time itself), these two moments can be recognised as different aspects of the same process.

8. In doing so, I follow Deleuze's claim in *Difference and Repetition* that 'the theatre of repetition is opposed to the theatre of representation, just as movement is opposed to the concept and to representation which refers it back to the concept' (Deleuze 2004: 11–12). Deleuze's claim here is that we can distinguish a theatre grounded in genuine repetition from a theatre grounded in movement as the instantiation in the world of a concept. The latter account of theatre clearly mirrors the account in the *Timaeus* of (rational) movement as the instantiation in the world of the atemporal rational structure of the forms.
9. Cf. Faulkner 2006: 109–14 for further discussion of Deleuze's use of Rosenberg, although Faulkner does not address the question of the pure form of time directly.
10. Cf. Bradley's Hegelian reading of Hamlet, where 'the direct cause' of his failure to act is read as 'a state of mind quite abnormal and induced by special circumstances,– a state of profound melancholy' (Bradley 1920: 108).
11. Deleuze cites Kant's paralogisms as providing a model for Hamlet's hesitation, where Kant argues that even the self is given under the form of time.
12. On the processual nature of this gathering, see Williams 2011: 91.
13. My account here focuses on the metaphysical doctrine of the eternal return. For detailed analysis of the ethical doctrine, see Hardt 1993: 26–55; and Ansell Pearson 1997, 1999. Lorraine 2003 suggests a connection between Deleuze and Derrida's ethical uses of the formula, 'time is out of joint'.

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Deleuze and Guattari and the Future of Politics: Science Fiction, Protocols and the People to Come

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Abstract

When is the future? Is it to come or is it already here? This question serves as the frame for three further questions: why is utopia a bad concept and in what way is fabulation its superior counterpart? If the object of fabulation is the creation of a people to come, how do we get from the present to the future? And what is a people to come? The answers are (1) that the future is both now and to come, now as the becoming-revolutionary of our present and to come as the goal of our becoming; (2) utopia is a bad concept because it posits a pre-formed blueprint of the future, whereas a genuinely creative future has no predetermined shape and fabulation is the means whereby a creative future may be generated; (3) the movement from the revolutionary present toward a people to come proceeds via the protocol, which provides reference points for an experiment which exceeds our capacities to foresee; (4) a people to come is a collectivity that reconfigures group relations in a polity superior to the present, but it is not a utopian collectivity without differences, conflicts and political issues. Science fiction formulates protocols of the politics of a people to come, and Octavia Butler's science fiction is especially valuable in disclosing the relationship between fabulation and the invention of a people to come.

Keywords: fabulation, utopia, politics, science fiction, protocols, Octavia Butler

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My purpose is first, to reflect on the concept of fabulation as the invention of a people to come, and then to consider the manifestation of the concept in science fiction, or as it is sometimes called, speculative fiction – a term I prefer to the former. Rather than speak abstractly about the genre as a whole, I will concentrate on a limited corpus: the fiction of Octavia Butler, the first and still, I believe, the foremost African-American female exponent of speculative fiction. My inquiry will be guided by four questions, the first of which will serve as the general context in which questions two, three and four are situated. The first question is: when is the future? The second: why is utopia a bad concept and in what way is fabulation its superior counterpart? Question number three: if the object of fabulation is the creation of a people to come, how do we get from here and now to there and then, from the present to the future? And question four: what is a people to come? Octavia Butler's fiction will be especially helpful in thinking about a people to come as a literary element, that is, as a component of the possible, the plane of composition, the realm in which the event takes finite, material form in order to create the infinite in its own special way.

From the point of view of common sense, the question 'When is the future?' must seem absurd – the future is the future, and it is what will happen, in contradistinction to what has already happened and what is happening now. But as we all know too well, common sense is no guide to the thought of Deleuze. If we look at *Difference and Repetition* (1994), we may distinguish three futures, one for each of the three passive syntheses of time. In the first synthesis, that of the present, the future is something like the forward edge of a moving present. A common but mistaken concept of time is that of a line of infinite points, each point representing a present 'now'. Such a conception leads to Zeno's paradoxes, to which Bergson responds by positing time as composed of indivisible movements. The present in this regard contains many points along a line, and in that sense we can say that the present is a contraction of past, present and future within a single movement. Husserl makes essentially the same point when speaking of the retention of the past and protension of the future in a moving present. The present contracts chunks of time, as it were, and in theory the present contraction could be infinite – and indeed, the Stoics said that the present of the gods included all time. But other creatures have limited capacities for contraction, and hence they reach a point of fatigue. The rhythm of any entity's contractions of the present marks the pattern of that entity's powers and fatigue. Cells, organs and organism all have different

capacities for contracting the present, such that bacteria, the heart, insects and whales inhabit different presents. But for all of them, there is a future of the present, the leading edge or avant-garde of each temporal contraction on its way toward the limit of fatigue.

In the second synthesis of the past, the past coexists with the present as a virtual double and continues to exist in itself as a retention of all virtual presents within an ever-expanding field of the past. Since the present always passes, it must pass into something which will continue to be doubled by the virtual past, which in turn will perpetually retain itself. In this regard, the past pre-exists the present as its necessary condition, and thus, there is a future of the past. (My explanation here is truncated and inadequate, admittedly, but sufficient for the present purposes.)

The third passive synthesis is that of the future. The third synthesis is a pure form of time which 'unfounds' time and splits the subject, or 'I'. But as James Williams has so eloquently shown, the third synthesis is not simply time out of joint, '*hors de ses gondes*', but also a cut, an assembly (*un ensemble*), an ordering and a seriation. The third synthesis as a novel action requires a cut, a caesura in time, which produces a before and an after. The cut must assemble the before and after within itself, but also tear them apart. Once torn apart, an ordering of before, cut and after emerges. The cut produces an asymmetrical division in which the before and after are incommensurable. As asymmetrical elements, the before and after are thus distinguished not simply as an order, but as a series (see Williams 2011: 79–112).

We may say, then, that there is a future of the present as contraction, a future of the past as retention and precondition, and a future of the future as cut, assembly, ordering and seriation. But why raise these issues? When Deleuze speaks of a people to come, he often cites Paul Klee's remark that 'the people are missing', '*c'est le peuple qui manque*'. The implication seems clear: in the present there is no people, and the people to come, *le peuple à venir*, is only possible in some future that has not yet arrived. In *What Is Philosophy?*, Deleuze and Guattari say that philosophy creates a plane of immanence and that 'deterritorialisation of such a plane does not preclude reterritorialisation but posits it as the creation of a future new earth [*une nouvelle terre à venir*]' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 88). Philosophy works '*to summon forth a new earth, a new people*' (99; emphasis in original). Philosophy's problem is that '*We lack resistance to the present*... Art and philosophy converge at this point: the constitution of an earth and a people that are lacking as the correlate of creation' (108; emphasis in original). And yet, Deleuze and Guattari also say that philosophical thought is a matter of

> acting counter to the past, and therefore on the present, for the benefit, let us hope, of a future – but the future is not a historical future, not even a utopian history, it is the infinite Now, the *nun* that Plato already distinguished from every present: the Intensive or Untimely, not an instant but a becoming. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 112)

For Foucault, they observe,

> what matters is the difference between the present and the actual. The actual is not what we are but, rather, what we become, what we are in the process of becoming – that is to say, the Other, our becoming-other . . . It is not that the actual is the utopian prefiguration of a future that is still part of our history. Rather, it is the now of our becoming. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 112)

It would seem, therefore, that the new earth and new people are also present, that the future is now – but, of course, that now is an infinite Now, the Nietzschean Untimely, the time of our 'becoming', the time of Aion. 'When is the future?', then, is a serious question when considering *un peuple à venir*. Is such a people 'to come', or is it 'at hand', that is, in the process of becoming in an Untimely Now? I will speak further about this issue when addressing my fourth question: what is a people to come?

Now to my second question: why is utopia a bad concept and in what way is fabulation its superior counterpart? Deleuze makes explicit the relationship between utopia and fabulation in a 1990 interview with Toni Negri. There he says 'Utopia isn't the right concept: it's more a question of "fabulation" in which a people and art both share. We ought to take up Bergson's notion of fabulation and give it a political meaning' (Deleuze 1995: 174). Why is utopia not 'the right concept', or as Deleuze and Guattari put it in *What Is Philosophy?*, 'not a good concept' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 110)? In the fourth chapter of *What Is Philosophy?*, when the subject of a new earth and a new people is addressed, for a while Deleuze and Guattari use the word 'utopia' without apology. They remark that

> *utopia is what links* philosophy with its own epoch, with European capitalism, but also already with the Greek city. In each case it is with utopia that philosophy becomes political and takes the criticism of its own time to its highest point. Utopia does not split off from infinite movement: etymologically it stands for absolute deterritorialisation but always at the critical point at which it is connected with the present relative milieu, and especially with the forces stifled by this milieu. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 99–100; emphasis in original)

Yet reservations soon emerge, as they state, 'The word utopia therefore designates *that conjunction of philosophy, or the concept, with the present milieu* – political philosophy (however, in view of the mutilated meaning public opinion has given to it, perhaps *utopia* is not the best word)' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 100; emphasis in original). The initial problem, then, is one of public opinion and degraded usage. But beneath such superficial misconstruction lurks a deeper potential for misunderstanding: 'Utopia is not a good concept because even when opposed to History it is still subject to it and lodged within it as an ideal or motivation' (110). As an ideal, utopia functions as a kind of Platonic Idea, something above this world, static and perfect. If utopia is a motivation, then it is something external to action, something aimed for as a goal. We might add that utopias frequently are spatial rather than temporal – places, rather than times.[1] The architecture of utopias is often complete and contained, and processes take place within their spatial confines as components of a self-regulated system. In all these regards, utopias are the antithesis of becoming, process and movement toward a future that is genuinely new and thus inherently unpredictable, defiant of any mapping. Motivation cannot be external to the process of becoming, and becoming cannot be goal-directed.

Fabulation is a superior concept because its essence is to activate the 'powers of the false', to falsify orthodox truths in the process of generating emergent truths. To fabulate, in Pierre Perrault's words, is to 'legend *in flagrante delicto*' (cited in Deleuze 1989: 150; translation modified), and in doing so, to summon forth a 'people to come'. As Deleuze says in *Negotiations*, what we have to do is catch someone else 'legending',

> 'caught in the act of legending'. Then a minority discourse, with one or many speakers, takes shape. We here come upon what Bergson calls 'fabulation' . . . To catch someone in the act of legending [*Prendre les gens en flagrant délit de légender*] is to catch the movement of constitution of a people. A people isn't something already there. A people, in a way, is what's missing, as Paul Klee used to say. (Deleuze 1995: 125–6)

Fabulation does not presume an ideal, nor does it have an external goal as its motivation. It is its own end, an irreducibly temporal process of becoming-other that is open-ended, and if it is a process of summoning forth a future people, it is one that cannot move beyond itself without involving the participation of a collectivity in its action. Fabulation commences with resistance, since 'to create is to resist' (Deleuze and

Guattari 1994: 110), but if it is resistance to the present in the hope of a better future, that future cannot be predicted, nor can its superiority to the present be assured.Yet one might ask, do we simply start blindly becoming, with no coordinates, no point of inception? This brings me to my third question: if the object of fabulation is the creation of a people to come, how do we get from here and now to there and then, from the present to the future? Let us remember first, that if the becoming of fabulation involves resistance, such resistance is always contingent and specific. One resists the intolerable where one finds it, when one can no longer tolerate it – hence, the point of inception is no problem. But what about the coordinates of becoming? Here, I would like to suggest that protocols of experimentation can provide a certain scaffolding for resistance. Deleuze and Guattari state that 'To think is to experiment', although they add that 'experimentation is always that which is in the process of coming about – the new, remarkable, and interesting that replace the appearance of truth and are more demanding than it is' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 111). Yet experimentation is not a haphazard activity. In *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, Deleuze and Guattari find in Kafka's letters to Felice

> a prodigious operation by which [Kafka] translates this horror [of impending matrimony] into a *topography of obstacles* (where to go? how to arrive? Prague, Vienna, Berlin?). The Surveyor. And also the other operation by which he enumerates a numbered *list of conditions* that the subject of the statement thinks can dissipate horror when, in fact, it is this very horror in the subject of the enunciation that inspires them (a Life Plan, or a Life Program, à la Kleist). (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 31–2; emphasis in original)

The reference to Kleist is intriguing, if in need of further clarification. In several letters to his half-sister, Ulrike, Kleist does indeed speak of the need for a *Lebensplan*, a life plan, but he seems to mean something quite mundane. He tells his sister that he cannot achieve anything if he does not have a plan for his life. He then complains in subsequent letters that he cannot create a satisfactory plan, that one plan soon gives way to another, and once adopted, each plan proves inoperable. But Deleuze and Guattari give this innocuous concept of a life plan a more interesting sense. They see the life plan as a programme for experimentation, which suggests that Kafka's 'topography of obstacles' and 'list of conditions' are also elements of an experimental protocol. In *Dialogues*, Deleuze contrasts French literature with minor literature, in which there is no longer

> the infinite account of interpretations which are always slightly disgusting, but finite processes of experimentation [*des procès finis d'expérimentation*], protocols of experience [*protocoles d'expérience*]. Kleist and Kafka spent their time making programs for life [*programmes de vie*]. Programmes are not manifestos – still less are they phantasms, *but means of providing reference points for an experiment which exceeds our capacities to foresee.* (Deleuze and Parnet: 2002: 47–8; emphasis in original)[2]

What, then, are the coordinates of resistance? They are the 'reference points for an experiment that exceeds our capacities to foresee', and it is by way of such reference points, such protocols, that we may move from the present toward the future. It is worth noting that in *Anti-Oedipus*, something of this experimental spirit is invoked indirectly in Deleuze and Guattari's remarks about utopias. The elaborate plans, structures and proposed institutions of utopian thinkers are not maps of achieved perfection. Rather, they say,

> the great socialist utopias of the nineteenth century function . . . not as ideal model but as group fantasies – that is, as agents of the real productivity of desire, making it possible to disinvest the current social field, to 'deinstitutionalise' it, to further the revolutionary institution of desire itself. (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 30–1)

As they remark at another point in their text, 'if we must still speak of utopia in this sense, à la Fourier, it is most assuredly not as an ideal model, but as revolutionary action and passion' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 63).[3]

And now my fourth question: what is a people to come? In the concluding paragraph of *What Is Philosophy?*, Deleuze and Guattari offer an image of philosophy, science and the arts as brains submerged in chaos. And in this submersion, they say, 'it seems that there is extracted from chaos the shadow of the "people to come" in the form that art, but also philosophy and science, summon forth: mass-people, world-people, brain-people, chaos-people' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 218). In *Essays Critical and Clinical*, Deleuze says that the people to come is

> a minor people, eternally minor, taken up in a becoming-revolutionary. Perhaps it exists only in the atoms of the writer, a bastard people, inferior, dominated, always in becoming, always incomplete. *Bastard* no longer designates a familial state, but the process of drift of the races. I am a beast, I am a Negro of an inferior race for all eternity. (Deleuze 1997: 4)

The ultimate aim of literature, says Deleuze, 'is to set free . . . the creation of a health, [the] invention of a people, that is, a possibility of life' (Deleuze 1997: 4). We might note that the 'people to come' is in

many ways a version of the 'subject-group' of *Anti-Oedipus*, 'a group whose libidinal investments are themselves revolutionary' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 348).

The people to come, then, seems to be simply resistance that initiates group becoming toward an unknowable future. In this regard, any actually fully formed 'people' would seem to be a utopian collectivity, and the process of resistance a movement toward an impossible goal. Perhaps no one has more vociferously and thoroughly made the case for such a reading of the concept of the people to come than Philippe Mengue, and his critique is worth examining in detail, since it reveals many of the ways in which Deleuze's thought is often misconstrued.

Mengue finds a decidedly anti-democratic strain in Deleuze, which he attributes to a latent leftist radicalism and an aristocratic scorn for the masses. Micropolitics, he asserts, 'risks sinking into a pragmatic vitalism of subversion, which encloses micropolitics in an avant-gardism that is nothing more than the last burst of an exhausted modernism' (Mengue 2003: 203). In this view, micropolitics proves to be a rejection of the realm of true politics, which is one of *doxa*, negotiation and compromise. The 'radical dissidence' of Deleuzian micropolitics, claims Mengue, 'leads to the impasse of the retreat of the political, and, finally, to the abstract and indeterminate retreat into the vain and utopian waiting for a Revolution and a "people to come"' (204). What Deleuze seeks is a 'metapolitics' above the messiness of genuine politics, a collectivity that is a '*totality* which is in principle' incapable of 'any possible realization', a human community that is 'radically new (whatever the form one attributes to it), in which humans would be "other" (desire for an "other" human) because they would lead an "other life", in an "other society" (one of total and faultless peace, justice, liberty and equality)' (192; emphasis in original). This is what Deleuze seeks when he calls for a 'new earth' and a 'new people'.

Deleuzian micropolitics, nomadism, the untimely Event, resistance to the intolerable, the people to come – all, in Mengue's reading, are symptoms of an unconscious idealism and a scorn for the unavoidable imperfections of genuine politics. What Deleuze refuses to recognise is 'the undeniable fact that the juridico-political order is *forever situated in the impossibility of fully satisfying human desire as such*' (Mengue 2003: 193; emphasis in original). Given the inherent constraints of the political, Mengue judges democracy to be the best system for conducting politics. The political is by nature a domain of opinion, and the best one can hope for in any political system is 'a little *solidarity* and *consensus* concerning what needs to be done, here-now' (52; emphasis

in original). Deleuze's contempt for *doxa* and discussion constitutes contempt for democracy, since in the democratic public space, opinions are put forward, discussed, critiqued, reformulated, amalgamated in compromised formulations, and once temporarily formed, left open to an endless process of future discussion. This *is* the thought of the *polis*, in which 'opinions become *views* to discuss, their authors become *friends* or citizens' (53; emphasis in original). Such friendship is not formed to seek 'knowledge or truth, but for something that is also beautiful, and which requires wisdom – friendship that links and creates harmony in disharmony itself, "discordant harmony" ["*l'accord discordant*"], not among the faculties of the mind, but among humans and their opinions' (54). A true understanding of politics and democracy shows that 'political *doxa* can be "right." Granted, not "true" or even "remarkable" (even if it might prove to be so eventually), but acceptable, allowable – at a given moment for a given assembly or community' (56).

Ironically, democracy is the most fully Deleuzian of politics, claims Mengue. 'Democratic politics alone is without foundation, because it is the only possible logic in the fact of the plurality and rivalry of opinions and political actions' (Mengue 2003: 47). Deleuze's antipathy toward democracy betrays a hidden longing for the foundation of a stable, ideal political order. Mengue concurs with Deleuze that thought is a confrontation with chaos, but chaos, for Mengue, is a gap, lack, the void. 'Philosophical thought, in its ultimate dimension, never ceases to think about chaos, to think about its *gap* (*béance*)' (198; emphasis in original). What characterises democracy is that it explicitly takes into account what Mengue calls '*the hole* [*trou*] *of the political*' (199; emphasis in original). What is fundamental in democracy is

> the clear and explicit consciousness – and which is said, and never ceases to be said in all tones, from lamentation to exaltation – of its absence of foundation. Democracy is the only political form in which power is 'sworn to remain in search of its foundation.' It goes forth from an absence, a lacuna in *knowledge*. (Mengue 2003: 199; emphasis in original)

Deleuze retreats from this absence and instead posits a counter-absence, the missing people (*le peuple qui manque* – literally, the people who 'lack', who 'are lacking'). The people to come, then, is for Mengue nothing more than an attempt to fill this lack and thereby put an end to genuine politics, which must permanently deal with its own constitutive lack.

Mengue is correct that Deleuze speaks disparagingly of democracy, especially late in his life. He also consistently declares war on all

forms of *doxa*, and he frequently admits that he despairs when others ask him to 'discuss' philosophical issues. But it is not at all certain that Deleuze's critique of democracy signals a total rejection of the concept itself; rather, his critique is directed against democracy as it is practiced in the West. The polemical and perhaps exaggerated tone of his remarks – most often proffered in interviews, a venue that seeks a wider audience than that of professional philosophers alone – is meant to counter the complacency and self-satisfaction implicit in standard political discourse in contemporary democracies. Likewise, his critique of *doxa* is a critique of the commonplace, that which goes without saying, the thoughtless, mindless slogans of received wisdom. What Mengue labels 'opinion' is much broader than that, and there is no indication that Deleuze rejects the exchange and mutual examination of serious views about politics and the political. He despairs of 'discussion' because discussion all too often is a matter of egotistical combat, an effort to defeat the opponent in a battle of fixed commitments and positions. In that sense, discussion is the opposite of exchange and cooperative interaction, a mere contestation of competing ideologies, fixed forms of *doxa*. Throughout his work, Deleuze shows a willingness to examine others' ideas, and he welcomes exchange that might lead to the emergence of something new. Deleuze embraces interaction with others in the form of 'interference' and 'intercession',[4] which could easily been seen as types of discussion (in Mengue's broad sense of the term). Such interference and intercession aim at 'resonance' among forces and the emergence of new truths via the 'powers of the false' (Deleuze 1995: 125–6). Deleuze nowhere suggests that processes of interference, intercession, resonance and exchange cannot take place in the domain of the political. And despite the apparent utopian aura of the term 'people to come', such a people, I believe, is ultimately not one that has reached the perfection of an ideal society – whether that of total liberty, equality, benevolence, harmony or justice.

There is certainly something of an anarchic strain to Deleuze's concepts of nomadism, the war machine and becoming. But he insistently reminds us that deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation always occur ceaselessly and simultaneously. Further, he recognises the dangers of unbridled deterritorialisation. Absolute deterritorialisation is the leading edge of innovation and creativity, but it must be engaged with caution, not with mindless and total abandon. Mengue's characterisation of chaos as lack, gap or absence is not Deleuze's. For Deleuze, chaos is plenitude, but a fullness that perpetually issues forth in temporary and provisional forms of organisation. Chaos's absolute deterritorialisation

is inseparable from processes of reterritorialisation, and such reterritorialisations themselves oscillate between movements toward relative deterritorialisation and returns to homeostatic forms. As Simondon argues, the ubiquitous process of nature is that of individuation, an actualisation of metastability in locally stable entities, those entities themselves simultaneously sustaining elements of metastability that make them vital, living and changing entities. Chaos and its differentiation are immanent and inextricable, and the becoming of the world is always a liminal phenomenon, at the interface of absolute chaos and the restricted chaos of half-stable, half-metastable processes of individuation. Thought, for Deleuze, is like the cosmos, 'at the edge of chaos', as Jeffrey Bell (2006) aptly puts it. When Deleuze and Guattari say that thought must confront chaos, it is not in order to vanquish chaos, but to delineate a plane of consistency that makes chaos productive and usable, a force of creativity. The invention of a people to come entails an engagement with a chaotic plane of consistency, and when viewed exclusively in terms of its movement toward the new, it seems anarchic. But just as thought aims at creating concepts, so the invention of a people to come is directed toward something that is not absolutely chaotic and anarchic, toward some form of collectivity that is simultaneously metastable and temporarily stable, always engaged in processes of negotiation, dissolution and reformation.

It must also be granted that Deleuze and Guattari's call for the creation of a 'new earth' and a 'new people' has a millennial aura about it, but such newness need not be ideal, simply better than what we have at present. Ian Buchanan makes a useful distinction between utopia as a process and utopia as 'a place, a mythical island in an unknown sea' (Buchanan 2000: 164),[5] a distinction that Eugene Holland has framed as an opposition between 'utopia as a fixed "product"' and 'what may be called "utopianism as a process"' (Holland 2006: 217), both arguing that Deleuze and Guattari advocate the latter rather than the former. By maintaining the designation 'utopian' in characterising this process, Buchanan and Holland establish a degree of continuity between Marxist and leftist traditions of thought, a continuity that is suggested in *What Is Philosophy?* when Deleuze and Guattari say that philosophy's effort '*to summon forth a new earth, a new people*' is 'closer to what Adorno calls "negative dialectics" and to what the Frankfurt School called "utopian"' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 99; emphasis in original), and when Deleuze and Guattari affirm Ernst Bloch's distinction between 'authoritarian utopias, or utopias of transcendence, and immanent, revolutionary, libertarian utopias' (100).

(Buchanan and Holland's notion of utopianism as process, in fact, seems roughly equivalent to Bloch's 'immanent, revolutionary, libertarian' utopianism.) What Buchanan and Holland emphasise is the initial phase of the emergence of new possibilities for life through resistance to the present and 'the *diagnosis* of becomings in every passing present' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 113; emphasis in original), a phase that is undoubtedly central to Deleuze and Guattari's thought, but one that can easily be misconstrued as simply anarchistic and a nostalgic remnant of Deleuze and Guattari's immature May 1968 radicalism (which is Mengue's reading of this phase).

In a trenchant and extended critique of Mengue, Paul Patton proposes an argument in line with my own, remarking that Deleuze and Guattari's 'political philosophy is not so utopian that it is completely disconnected from the normative and conceptual horizons of the present' (Patton 2010: 162), for which reason Patton, in another essay, adopts Rawls's distinction between an 'extravagant utopianism' and a 'realistic utopianism', arguing that Rawls's advocacy of a realistic utopianism is one shared by Deleuze and Guattari (186).[6] Patton systematically demonstrates that Deleuze's negative assessments of democracy are not expressions of a fundamental antipathy to the broad concept of democracy as 'a form of society characterized by the absence of class or caste privilege and by the implementation of the egalitarian principle of the equal worth of individuals such that no person's life, beliefs, or values are inherently worth more than those of anyone else', nor necessarily to a narrow sense of democracy as 'a form of government in which the governed exercise control over governmental bodies and their policies, typically through regular and fair elections' (164). Patton demonstrates that it is on the basis of such a broad conception of democracy that Deleuze formulates his critique of contemporary democracies, which claim to be democratic in both senses of the word, but which in fact are neither. Patton concedes that 'the Deleuzian theory of micropolitics is only a partial account of the process of political decision making', but such incompleteness does not indicate antipathy, 'and there is no reason to suppose that Deleuzian theory proposes an alternative rather than a supplement to democratic political theory' (167). In a parallel fashion, Patton rebuts Mengue's claim that Deleuze's critical remarks about 'human rights' express a blanket hostility to the normative principles of fairness and justice purportedly endorsed in the concept, but claims instead that Deleuze is critiquing the function of the term 'human rights' in contemporary discourse as well as the ways in which this concept purportedly is implemented.

What is crucial in Patton's analysis is that Deleuze's critiques are not to be taken as endorsements of lawlessness and anarchy. Deleuze focuses on the failures of contemporary governmental and judicial institutions and on philosophy's task of critiquing those institutions and initiating a process of 'thinking otherwise'. Deleuze does not address broad questions of the means whereby justice and equality might be actualised, and it is for this reason that Patton proposes that we extend Deleuze's analysis and consider the general institutional conditions under which the fundamental principles of justice and equality might be articulated. Put bluntly, Deleuzian political philosophy should be seen as an endorsement of democracy and a justice which may be actualised through a proper use of law.[7] Patton's effort to extend and complete Deleuzian political analysis, in my judgement, is an attempt to answer the oft-posed question: what do we do if the revolution succeeds? What do we do if a becoming results in something approaching an actual 'people', a viable collectivity? A key to approaching these questions is to recall that Deleuze characterises the invention of a people to come not simply as a becoming-minor of resistance, but also as the invention of alternative modes of existence, new possibilities of life (Deleuze 1997: 4).

Clearly, if we want to theorise further about a different collectivity, we must rethink the notion of such a people as merely an accursed race defined by resistance. Were this characterisation of the people to come the sole means of describing this collectivity, the concept might well be construed as one that is defined from without. An accursed race, as constituted by the sanctioned, dominant race, and the centrality of resistance invite a conception of the people to come as solely a people *against* something. All of this smacks of Hegelian negation and even of Nietzschean *ressentiment* and the negative Will to Power. We must also reject any idealistic conception of the people to come, in which universal harmony prevails and the rule of consensus puts an end to any genuine politics. In *Anti-Oedipus*, when Deleuze and Guattari discuss 'subject groups', they cite with approval Jean-Pierre Faye's assertion that in genuinely revolutionary groups, 'What counts, what is effective in our opinion, is not such and such a group, but rather the dispersion or the Diaspora produced by their splinterings *éclats*', a position they see as asserting 'the necessarily polyvocal character of subject-groups and their writing' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 349). 'Subject-groups' possess heterogeneous desires, since collectivities are multiplicities, not aggregates that form an amorphous mass (like the fascist mobs that so fascinated and frightened Canetti in *Crowds and*

Power [1984]).[8] If indeed collectivities are heterogeneous multiplicities, then they must incorporate genuine differences, that is, differences that make a difference, and hence differences that signal conflict and the need for resolution or some form of mutual accommodation of differing interests and desires. The people to come, in short, will be a people perpetually generating differences, potential asymmetries of power, and sites of resistance for those who find themselves faced with the intolerable. The means whereby differences are negotiated, we hope, will be better than those currently in effect. No matter what social order emerges in a process of becoming, there will be a politics of the future, and that politics will not be defined from the outside, but from within the people to come *as that people continues its becoming*.

This is where I find Octavia Butler's fiction helpful. Science fiction is above all other genres primarily a literature of the future. Dystopian fiction is always set in a near future, and speculative fictions of various sorts, utopian or not, are generally set in a future time. This holds true for Butler's works as well. She endorses the common view that science fiction 'uses science, extrapolates from science as we know it to science as it might be[,] to technology as it might be' (Butler 2010: 84). But her speculations take a specific form that is especially germane to our concerns. She recalls in one interview that

> when I was in my teens, a group of us used to talk about our hopes and dreams, and someone would always ask, 'If you could do anything you wanted to do, no holds barred, what would you do?' I'd answer that I wanted to live forever and breed people – which didn't go over all that well with my friends. (Butler 2010: 18)

In fact, all of Butler's fiction is directed toward the invention of a people to come. When asked in another interview if she tries to create new types of communities in her writings, she replies, 'I'd say more that I don't try to create communities; I always automatically create community' (Butler 2010: 111). And those communities often literally involve new people – hybrids, genetic alterations, parasite-induced mutations, and so on.

The five-novel Patternmaster Series spans several centuries, from the late-eighteenth century to some distant, undesignated future.[9] The first novel tells of Doro, a four thousand year-old Nubian mutant who has gained the power of immortality, but only at the cost of inhabiting a succession of human bodies and discarding their empty, dead shells when he enters a new body. He has undertaken a eugenics project to breed other mutant beings with exceptional powers, and in the course of

his wanderings he has encountered Anyanwu, a central-African woman who has lived for four hundred years, healing others and maintaining a rejuvenated form without possessing other bodies. She comes under the sway of Doro and becomes part of his breeding programme. In the second novel, which takes place in the twentieth century, successful mutant humans are finally created, and they develop 'the pattern', a psychic force field that greatly enhances the powers of all its participant members. Doro tries to maintain control of the pattern, but in a struggle with his daughter he is defeated and killed. In successive generations, the pattern masters sponsor journeys to other planets, and following one such expedition a returning astronaut brings an alien virus that genetically alters its human hosts and induces mutant offspring whose appearance combines human, feline and porcine characteristics in an otherwise monstrous form. These mutant becomings-animal are labelled 'Clayarks', and their characteristics seem those of pack animals with intuitive intelligence and territorial aggressivity. In the concluding novel (actually the first one written) set in the distant future, the established order consists of a feudal aristocracy of pattern masters, the servant class of humans who are totally dominated by the mind control of the pattern masters, and the feral Clayarks who roam the wilds outside patternist settlements. This, then, is the ultimate configuration of the series' 'people to come'.

Butler's two Parable novels, *Parable of the Sower* (1993b) and *Parable of the Talents* (1998), are at once her most dystopian and most utopian fictions. Set in the near future of a collapsed American society, the novels envision a world of ecological degradation, technological breakdown and widespread poverty and drug addiction. Gated communities have become walled fortresses surrounded by masses of homeless derelicts, most of whom are desperate, many violent, and some addicted to substances like 'pyro', a designer drug that went out of control and created humans who gain intense sexual pleasure from setting fires and especially from incinerating other humans. The teenaged heroine, Lauren, must flee when her walled enclave is overrun, and throughout the first novel she walks the interstate highway I-5 (now only used by pedestrians) from Los Angeles to northern California. Along the way, she gathers other survivors and brings them together through her self-generated personal religion, Earthseed, in which she teaches two basic lessons: first, that 'God is change', and that being shaped by and shaping God are the sole means of becoming-other in a productive fashion in this new world; and second, that our species' destiny is to inhabit other planets. Eventually, she and her incipient community, which she

consistently calls 'her people', settle in a secluded part of northern California, and there they form the community of Acorn, something like a communal collective. In the second novel, fundamentalist Christian paramilitary forces raid Acorn, kill most of its inhabitants, and enslave the surviving women via 'slave collars' that induce powerful, debilitating electrical impulses at the first sign of resistance to their captors. Lauren stages a successful revolt, and the inhabitants of Acorn flee and disperse. She learns that spreading the movement of Acorn cannot proceed via the proliferation of isolated communal settlements, but must focus on the ideas of her religion, since the spread of ideas is much more difficult to control than the physical spread of concrete bodies, and since the specifics of Acorn's socio-economic organisation are subordinate to the ultimate goals of the religion. Eventually she succeeds in forming a broad network of community groups of various kinds, many of them integrated into urban environments and partially enmeshed in capitalist market institutions. The movement gains economic power, helps fuel widespread economic recovery and the restoration of a modicum of socio-political cohesion on the continent of North America, and achieves a certain institutional prominence and autonomy. At this stage, the 'people to come' are no longer practitioners of a counter-capitalist communal socio-political culture, but exponents of the religion of Earthseed, and with economic success they are able to begin the pursuit of their ultimate goal: to leave earth and colonise other planets. Lauren's initial inspiration in formulating this component of the Earthseed project was the belief that humans can only form a viable community by uniting in a collective cause that leads to struggle against an alien and challenging environment. Hence, the community of the people to come issues in a creative line of flight, but that line of flight is to other worlds, since humans cannot coexist peacefully on this world alone – a conclusion which, for those of us condemned to remain on earth, signals a decidedly non-utopian future.

Butler's masterpiece, the *Xenogenesis Trilogy*,[10] provides the fullest and most intriguing account of various becomings, the invention of a new people, and the establishment of alternative modes of existence and possibilities of life. After a global nuclear holocaust, a small number of humans have survived in suspended animation, thanks to the intervention of an alien species called the Oankali, who have saved the humans and gradually detoxified the earth for recolonisation. The Oankali, who call themselves genetic 'traders', search for interesting life forms, and when they find them, engage them in the collective procreation of hybrid organisms. The Oankali have three sexes: male,

female and ooloi, the ooloi being a definite 'it', not some male–female combination. The Oankali have saved the humans in order to mate with male and female humans in pentads of a human male and female couple, an Oankali male and female couple, and one Oankali ooloi. Each ooloi, by combining the genetic materials of the human and Oankali couples, and then manipulating those materials through use of its vast, cosmic stock of genetic materials gathered by generations of ooloi on countless planets and preserved in the ooloi's special organ called its Yashi, fashions human-born and Oankali-born 'constructs' who then go on to produce further iterations of a new, hybrid people. The first novel recounts the initial resuscitation of humans and the formation of pentads for settlement on earth. The second and third novels trace the development of Oankali family units and construct children on earth.

Many readers have seen the Oankali as utopian beings. They value life and embrace difference. They naturally heal, their relationships are nurturing, they cannot cause pain without feeling that pain themselves, their connections to the environment are all-embracing and ecologically sound, and they govern the collectivity through consensus. Yet others have argued that the Oankali are insidious beings, one critic labelling them symbols of neoliberal capitalist globalisation. They embrace difference, but in Oankali constructs the organelle that inhabits every cell of the Oankali (the word 'Oankali' is also the name of that organelle) is present in every construct cell as well. The Oankali only *seem* to surrender their identity. Whatever hybrids they fashion continue to have a fundamental Oankali identity. They are like global capital, capable of embracing everything and assimilating it within the capitalist machine. Disturbing as well is the human–ooloi relationship. The ooloi injects its 'ooloi substance' when in contact with humans, and that substance, while deeply pleasurable and healing, also is intensely addictive, and it makes the human male and female incapable of physically touching one another. The entirety of Oankali culture is based on neurochemical bonding, and their consensus only occurs because of those bonds. Unlike the familial bonds of humans, the Oankali bonds preclude conflict among males. No male, female or ooloi need fear that a partner will be taken, since the ooloi has chemically marked the couple as its own. Hence, the political order of the Oankali, humans and constructs is one of consensus and non-violence, but made possible only through addiction and the deep control of ooloi intermediaries.

In all of Butler's novels, she invents a people to come. In each case, new modes of existence and possibilities of life are delineated. But in all of them, politics continues. The new possibilities are not

necessarily better, just different. The socio-political structures include versions of primitive collectivism, family-centred social networks, feudal class relations, master–slave institutions and international ecumenical movements. If we add to the mix the world of Butler's last novel, *Fledging (2005)*, we would have examples of tribal cultures, matrilineal and patrilineal settlements, and mixtures of polyandry and polygamy with various forms of homo- and heterosexual alliances. Each novel is a form of experimentation, an investigation of the possible outcomes of becoming-other and thereby creating a people to come. As experimentation, each novel introduces a protocol, a '*means of providing reference points for an experiment which exceeds our capacities to foresee*'. This I regard as an important positive function of science fiction, one way in which art renders concrete the realm of the possible. In this way, fiction promotes the thought of a people to come as something that actually might take any number of definite forms, and perhaps may assist us in *our* attempts to imagine, invent and enact alternative modes of existence, new possibilities of life.

Notes

1. In *Spaces of Hope*, David Harvey makes a useful distinction between 'the utopianism of social process' and 'utopias as spatial form'. If there is a utopian strain in Deleuze (and, with sufficient qualification, one could say that indeed there is), it would be such a 'utopianism of social process'. See especially Harvey 2010: 164–81.
2. In the second essay of *Essays Critical and Clinical*, 'Louis Wolfson; or the Procedure [*procédé*]', Deleuze assigns a negative connotation to the word 'protocol', opposing it to the term 'procedure'. Deleuze's essay is devoted to two books by the schizophrenic Louis Wolfson, *Le Schizo et les langues* and *Ma mère musicienne est morte*. Deleuze is fascinated by the mental gymnastics Wolfson performs in transforming words via various foreign languages in order to defend himself from malignant influences in his environment. Deleuze argues, however, that Wolfson, unlike Raymond Roussel and Antonin Artaud, is not an artist in his linguistic experimentation. 'Wolfson's book, however, is not a literary work, and does not claim to be a poem. What turns Roussel's procedure into a work of art is the fact that the interval between the original sentence and its conversion is filled with marvelously proliferating stories, which make the starting point recede until it is entirely hidden … But there is nothing similar in Wolfson: between the word to be converted and words of the conversion, and in the conversions themselves, there is nothing but a void, an interval that is lived as pathogenic or pathological … The transformations never reach the grandiose level of an event, but remain mired in their accidental circumstances and empirical actualizations. The procedure thus remains a protocol. The linguistic procedure operates in a void, and never links up with a vital process capable of producing a vision' (Deleuze 1997: 10–11). It is worth noting that in the original version of 'Louis Wolfson; or the Procedure', which Deleuze published as a preface to Wolfson's *Le Schizo et les langues* (1970) and titled

'Schizologie', no such distinction between 'protocol' and 'procedure' exists. In the opening paragraph of the original preface, Deleuze says that 'One of the great originalities of this book is that it sets forth a protocol of experimentation or activity' (this sentence is retained in the 1993 version of the essay). But Deleuze clearly is simply offering a synonym for 'procedure' when he speaks of Wolfson as a practitioner of 'a protocol of experimentation or activity'. Only in 1993 does Deleuze make use of that opening sentence later in the essay to contrast protocols and procedures (and the sentence contrasting the two is the only sentence in the 1993 essay that addresses that distinction). Clearly, 'protocol' was a positive term for Deleuze in 1970, and it remained so in the 1977 text of *Dialogues*, where 'protocol' is treated as a synonym of 'process' ['*procès*, a cognate of *procédé*']. (We might note that the words *procès*, *processus* and *procédé* appear frequently in Deleuze's works, and often in related if not interchangeable ways.)

3. At two points in *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari come close to embracing the term 'utopian' themselves. In the first, they cite with approval an extended passage from Pierre Klossowski, praising him as the philosopher who has most fully described the schizoid dimension of desire, 'but still within the category of an active utopia' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 367–8). At another point, they pose the rhetorical question, 'In what sense does the schizoid investment constitute . . . a real investment of the sociohistorical field, and not a simple utopia?' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 367). In my judgement, however, these passages still indicate an underlying resistance to adopting the term 'utopian' to describe their own position.
4. In *Negotiations*, where Deleuze elaborates on the concept of 'intercessors' (translated as 'mediators' by Joughin), Deleuze introduces the concept by saying, 'The important thing has never been to accompany the movement of one's neighbor, but to make one's own movement. If no one begins, no one budges. Interferences are also not exchange: everything takes place through gift or capture' (Deleuze 1995: 125, translation modified). For some reason, Joughin renders '*Les interférences*' as 'interplay', which obscures an important element in Deleuze's concept of intercession. Intercession and mediation can easily be thought of as relatively peaceful, cooperative activities, whereas interference suggests, if not violent opposition and conflict, at least a meeting of different forces that is less than irenic. The addition of 'interference' to 'intercession' counters the tendency to read intercession as a utopian process. Likewise, Joughin's decision to translate '*capture*' as 'taking' tends to reduce an agonistic process to a gentler form of interaction. Finally, Joughin's choice of 'giving and taking' as equivalents of 'gift and capture' obscures Deleuze's implicit reference to traditional cultures (termed 'primitive' in *Anti-Oedipus*), in which entities pass from one individual according to the logic of the gift, as delineated by Marcel Mauss, or through capture in war, as well as Deleuze's allusion to the Nietzschean master's affirmative will to power in *The Genealogy of Morals*, a will that proceeds via the donation of value.
5. One of the more insightful aspects of Buchanan's *Deleuzism* is the correlation he draws between the utopian strain in Deleuze and Guattari and the concept of utopia developed by Fredric Jameson (see Buchanan 2000: 164–9). Buchanan also provides incisive commentary on the utopian dimension of *Anti-Oedipus* in *Deleuze and Guattari's Anti-Oedipus: A Reader's Guide* (2008; see especially pp. 124–32.)
6. Both Holland and Patton cite Deleuze and Guattari's statement in *What Is Philosophy?* that 'The word utopia therefore designates *that conjunction of philosophy, or the concept, with the present milieu*' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 100), but neither includes the parenthetic remark that completes the

sentence: '*however, in view of the mutilated meaning public opinion has given to it, perhaps utopia is not the best use of the word*', and neither makes use of Deleuze's remark in *Negotiations* suggesting that utopia be replaced by the concept of 'fabulation'. I do not see this as an oversight or a mistake, however. Deleuze and Guattari make frequent reference to fabulation in Chapter Seven of *What Is Philosophy?*, which concerns the arts, whereas the comments on utopia occur in the Fourth Chapter, 'Geophilosophy', which is focused on philosophy. In *What Is Philosophy?*, Deleuze and Guattari emphasise the qualitative differences between philosophy and the arts, which suggests, I believe, that even though 'utopia is not the best word' in philosophy or the arts, the concept of fabulation should replace that of utopia only in the arts, and that some other, never specified term might be used instead of 'utopia' in philosophy. Since Deleuze and Guattari never provide such a term, it seems reasonable to propose such terms as 'utopia as process' or 'realistic utopia' as means of delineating the bad use of 'utopia' from those more in keeping with Deleuze and Guattari's non-idealistic, processual conception of utopian change.

7. Laurent de Sutter makes a related argument in his *Deleuze: La Pratique du droit* (2009). De Sutter differentiates between a critical and a clinical conception of law in Deleuze, the former generating Deleuze's frequent critiques of law, the latter, only vaguely sketched late in Deleuze's career, suggesting the possibility of a positive conception of law. De Sutter argues that Hume's conception of institutions as vehicles for the establishment and expansion of social relations, which Deleuze discusses in his early *Expression and Subjectivity: An Essay on Hume's Theory of Human Nature*, is implicit in Deleuze's endorsement of jurisprudence, which de Sutter glosses as a positive mode of expanding the sphere of law in ways that promote genuine equality and fairness. See especially pp. 63–106.
8. Hardt and Negri distinguish among a 'people', which 'has traditionally been a unitary conception'; the 'masses', which, while being 'composed of all types and sorts', within which 'all differences are submerged and drowned'; and the 'multitude', which 'is composed of innumerable internal differences' (Hardt and Negri 2004: xiv). My reading of Deleuze's 'people to come' is in accord with Hardt and Negri's 'multitude'.
9. The volume *Seed to Harvest* (1993a) contains four of the five Patternist novels. The fifth, *Survivor* (1978), is the one work Butler has expressed displeasure with, for which reason she chose to omit it from *Seed to Harvest*. (In my view, Butler's evaluation of the novel is unnecessarily harsh, and in fact, the novel is equally as interesting and engaging as the other works in the series.)
10. The three novels of the trilogy – *Dawn* (1987), *Adulthood Rites* (1988) and *Imago* (1989) – have been reprinted in a single volume, titled *Lilith's Brood* (1989).

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Flashforward: The Future is Now

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Abstract

In *The Future of the Image* (2007) Jacques Rancière states that the end of images is behind us. He argues for an aesthetics of the image that acknowledges the continuing power of images as educating documentations of traces of history, as directly affecting interruptions, and as open-to-combining signs of the visible and the sayable ad infinitum. But does Rancière's claim also concern the future of cinema? His cinematic references, in a Deleuzian sense, are mostly to modern time-images. Is the future of film indeed a form of the time-image, or has the 'heart' of cinema moved beyond this image-type? This paper proposes to look at a third category of cinematographic images, based in the third synthesis of time as developed by Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition*. This filmic image, that could be called the neuro-image, is connected to the impure regime of images typical for the database logic of the digital age. By comparing Alain Resnais's *Hiroshima Mon Amour* (1959) to the television series*FlashForward* (2009), I will analyse the temporal operations of the image of the time-image to these images of a new regime of images, the image of and from the future.[1]

Keywords: time-image, neuro-image, brain is screen, database logic, flashback, flashforward, future of the image

I. The Death of the Image is Behind Us

Starting with the observation that 'a certain idea of fate and a certain idea of the image are tied up in the apocalyptic discourse of today's cultural climate', Jacques Rancière investigates the possibilities of 'imageness' or the future of the image that can be an alternative to

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the often heard complaint in contemporary culture that there is nothing but images, and that therefore images are devoid of content or meaning (Rancière 2007: 1). This discourse is particularly strong in discussions on the fate of cinema in the digital age, where it is commonly argued that the cinematographic image has died either because image culture has become saturated with interactive images, as Peter Greenaway argues on countless occasions (see for instance, Greenaway 2007 and 2010), or because the digital has undermined the ontological photographic power of the image but that film has a virtual afterlife as art (Rodowick 2007). Looking for the artistic power of the image, Rancière offers in his own way an alternative to these claims of the 'death of the image'. According to him, the end of the image is long behind us. It was announced in the modernist artistic discourses that took place between Symbolism and Constructivism between the 1880s and 1920s. Rancière argues that the modernist search for a pure image is now replaced by a kind of impure image regime typical for contemporary media culture.

Rancière's position is free from any technological determinism when he argues that there is no mediatic or mediumistic catastrophe that announces the end of the image. The qualities of an image do not depend on the fact that they are seen on a canvas, a cinema screen, a television set or computer window. For Rancière there is a certain imageness (that can even be evoked by words) that continues to influence our perception and understanding. Rancière defines the cinematic images in particular as a manifestation of 'operations that couple and uncouple the visible and its signification or speech and its effects, which create and frustrate expectations' (Rancière 2007: 5). Images on the one hand refer to reality, not necessarily as a faithful copy, but as to what it suffices to stand for. And then there is also the interplay of operations between the visible and invisible, sayable and unsayable, an alteration of resemblance and dissemblance which is the way by which art constructs images that have affective and interrupting power. Rancière argues that (filmic) images in our museums and galleries today can be classified in three major (dialectically interrelated) categories according to the dominant type of operations: the naked image, the ostensive image and the metaphorical image.

Naked images are those images that do not constitute art, but which testify to reality and trace history; they are images that primarily witness and testify. Ostensive images are images that also refer to reality but in a much more obtuse way, in the name of art, with dissemblances that perform an operation on reality. The final category of images, the metaphorical ones, follow a logic that makes it 'impossible to delimit

a specific sphere of presence isolating artistic operations and products from forms of circulation of social and commercial imagery and from operations interpreting this imagery' (Rancière 2007: 24). These are images that employ various strategies (play, irony, metamorphosis, remixing) to critically or wittily interrupt and join the media flow. Taken together, these image-types constitute the operational power of the image in contemporary culture, while the last category especially seems to indicate the dominant impureness of the new image regime. It is the last category that is relevant for discussing the future of the image as a third type of image in a Deleuzian sense. But this is in fact a flashforward of what will come later in this paper.

First, I should like to address a problem that seems to be hidden in the categorisation of the images in respect to the future of the cinematographic image. While Rancière refers to the new image regime of contemporary culture, his filmic examples almost always refer to modern cinema of the sixties, or, to put it in Deleuzian terms, to time-images. And when Rancière speaks of more contemporary cinema, such as the films of Pedro Costa, these films also follow the irrational and crystalline logic of the time-image (Rancière 2011: 137–53). But one can wonder if the 'heart' of cinema today still resides in modern time-images. Of course, time-images exist in contemporary cinema. But is the impurity that Rancière describes as typical for the new image regime really a form of the time-image? A comparison of two 'apocalyptic images', one from the sixties and one from contemporary media culture, might help to investigate this question further.

II. Flashback: The Time-Image Grounded in the Past

First, a flashback to Alain Resnais's *Hiroshima Mon Amour*: not only a classic modern time-image in a Deleuzian sense, but also a film that investigates the (limits of the) power of the image. The famous phrases 'I have seen everything in Hiroshima' and 'You have seen nothing in Hiroshima' indicate the struggle between the visible and its significations that Rancière announces. Considered according to his categories of naked, ostensive and metaphorical images, we can see that on one level the film is a naked image that traces the catastrophic event of the atomic bomb attack on Hiroshima in 1945. In the first instance, Resnais was asked to make a documentary about this apocalyptic event. And some of the images, such as the images in the Hiroshima Memorial Museum, are 'naked' in that witnessing sense. However, *Hiroshima Mon Amour* is not a purely, nakedly documenting image. As Resnais tells in an interview

on the DVD edition of the film (Resnais 2004), he quickly found out he was not capable of making a documentary on this traumatic moment in history. Not finding any solution to transform the disaster into images that would add something to the existing Japanese documentaries and news reels, he asked Marguerite Duras to write a script. During their long conversations, the filmmaker and writer were wondering about the strange fact that while they were talking about Hiroshima, life took its usual course while new bombs were flown over the world. This is how they got the idea to focus on a small-scale personal event, a love story of a Japanese man and a French woman, with the catastrophe constantly in the background.

And so we see how Resnais and Duras render the naked image obtuse, witnessing, but also transforming the image by colliding words (Hiroshima – Amour), bodies (the famous opening sequence of the ash-embracing bodies), seeing and not-seeing ('You have seen nothing in Hiroshima'), countries (Nevers in France, Hiroshima in Japan) and times (the past and the present that start to collapse into each other). I will return to these temporal dimensions of Resnais's film, but at this point it is important to see how this temporal confusion as one of the 'dissemblance' techniques is typical for the artistic ostensive image. As far as Rancière's last image category is concerned, the metaphoric image, it is more difficult to see where Resnais's film intervenes ambiguously in the flow of media images. Even though the images of agonising/loving bodies in 'ashembrace' at the beginning of the film are in themselves images that allow metaphoric (or allegorical) readings, they are not part of the playfully critical artistic and commercial images Rancière ranks under this category (the term metaphoric is perhaps not the most well-chosen in that sense). Therefore, it is fair to say *Hiroshima Mon Amour* moves between naked and ostensive images, but cannot be categorised under Rancière's last category of metaphoric images so typical for today's audio-visual culture. So is the time-image then the most explicit and typical expression of this typical imageness of contemporary culture?[2]

Hiroshima Mon Amour is a time-image in the Deleuzian sense. As is well known, in all his work Alain Resnais is preoccupied with time. Practically all his films present a battle with the ravages of time, with echoes of the past that keep on resonating in the present. *Hiroshima Mon Amour* audio-visually translates the Bergsonian thesis that the past coexists with the present. The love story the French woman has with the Japanese man in 1950s Hiroshima makes her relive her first love affair with a German soldier during the Second World War. The Japanese

man becomes the German lover from the past. She becomes Nevers in France. *Hiroshima Mon Amour* is a crystal of time, which gives us the key to the time-image in general (Deleuze 1989: 69). As Deleuze argues, 'what the crystal reveals is the hidden ground of time, that is, its differentiation into two flows, that of presents which passes and of pasts which are preserved' (98). *Hiroshima Mon Amour* translates the untranslatability of the apocalypse and the unimaginabilities of the traumas of the (collective and individual) past into ostensive images that are fundamentally Bergsonian in their conception of non-chronological time, the pre-existence of a past in general, the coexistence of all sheets of the past and the existence of its most contracted degree: the present. Now, in order to understand the temporal dimensions of the time-image in respect to the future, it is useful to make a connection between the cinema books and Deleuze's philosophy of time as developed in *Difference and Repetition*.

III. Temporal Dimensions in the Passive Syntheses of Time

In chapter 2 of *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze develops the idea of the passive syntheses of time. As in the cinema books, here too, Bergson is the main reference point, although the starting point of his reflections is Hume's thesis that 'repetition changes nothing in the object repeated, but does change something in the mind which contemplates it' (Deleuze 1994: 70). Repetition has no 'in itself', but it does change something in the mind of the observer of repetitions: on the basis of what we perceive repeatedly in the living present, we recall, anticipate or adapt our expectations in a synthesis of time, which Deleuze calls in Bergsonian terms 'duration'. This synthesis is a passive synthesis, since 'it is not carried out by the mind, but occurs in the mind' (71). The active (conscious) synthesis of understanding and recollection are based upon this passive synthesis that occurs on an unconscious level. Deleuze distinguishes different types of passive syntheses of time that have to be seen in relation to one another and in combination with active (conscious) syntheses. The conception of the syntheses of time is incredibly sophisticated and complicated, which James Williams recently has demonstrated brilliantly (Williams 2011). Here I will only be able to refer to the basic elements of Deleuze's conception of time because it offers the possibility of conceiving the 'future-image'.

The first synthesis Deleuze distinguishes is that of habit, the true foundation of time, occupied by the living present. But this passing present is grounded by a second synthesis of memory: 'Habit is the

originary synthesis of time, which constitutes the life of the passing present. Memory is the fundamental synthesis of time which constitutes the being of the past (that which causes the present to pass)' (Deleuze 1994: 80). Moving to the cinema books, it is possible to argue that the first synthesis of time, habitual contraction, finds its aesthetic expression as movement-images, the sensory-motor manifestations of the cinematographic brain-screen. The second synthesis of time can be related to the dominant form of time in the time-image, where the past becomes more important and shows itself more directly as the ground of time, as the time within which time operates. Time-images are based in the 'pure past' of the second synthesis of time. Now, while arguing that the movement-image is mainly based in the first synthesis of time, and the time-image is predominantly grounded in the second synthesis, this does not mean that the movement-image cannot open up to the second synthesis, even if this does not happen very often. And in the time-image there can be moments that are based in the first synthesis of time. So it is more a matter of a sort of 'temporal keynote' that is different in the movement-image and the time-image. Moreover, each synthesis has its own composition of past, present and future.

So the present that is based in the first synthesis of time is a contracted synthesis, a particular stretch in the present, as with the lovers embracing in *Hiroshima Mon Amour*: 'It's crazy how soft your skin is,' the woman tells the man in the first scene after the long opening sequence when we finally see the lovers in a hotel room that is presented as a little stretch in the present of the film. In difference with that, the present as a dimension of the past (grounded in the second synthesis of time) is the most contracted degree of all of the past, which is the more dominant temporal dimension in *Hiroshima Mon Amour*: the Japanese man becomes the German lover of the past, he becomes Hiroshima, the woman becomes Nevers in France. The present as a dimension of the past is its crystallising point.

But the past also has its own temporal manifestations: as a dimension of the present (in the first synthesis) the past is always related to the present as a clear reference point from which it differs. One can think of the flashback in the most famous impossible love story of the movement-image, *Casablanca*, which constitutes the shared memory of Rick and Ilsa: the recollection of their love affair in Paris which explains the drama of the situation in the present of Casablanca. But in the second synthesis of time, the past is sheets of all of the past that start to float and move, such as the collective and individual pasts in *Hiroshima Mon Amour* that mix up. Or the mosaic of memory snippets in other Resnais films,

such as *Muriel, or the Time of Return* (1963), where memories of the Algerian War of Independence and personal memories of the characters connect in fragmentary and ambiguous ways.

And then there is of course the problem of the future. If we look from the dimensions of the first and second syntheses, the future is expected either from a point in the present, or from the past. Usually, in the first synthesis of time the future as a dimension of the present is an anticipation that departs from the present, an anticipation that in movement-images motivates goal-oriented behaviour, such as the pursuit of happiness in melodrama or the various goals of an action hero. It could also be argued that the future in the movement-image starts after the film ends, such as the 'happily ever after' moment of the wrapping up of classical Hollywood narratives. The future is that which comes after the present of the film has ended. An end that in the movement-image we usually anticipate through genre conventions that give us what we expect.

IV. The Future as Dimension of the Past

In the time-image, the future becomes a dimension of the past. Here it becomes less an anticipation of an action, but the expectancy of a repetition of an event whose outcome is based on the past. Each layer of a coexisting past implies its own possible future. Deleuze mentions Resnais's *Je t'aime, Je t'aime* (1968) as one of the few films that show how we inhabit time. As the poster of the film announces: 'The past is present and future in Alain Resnais's new time machine.' In other words, the present and future are dimensions of the second synthesis of time. *Je t'aime, Je t'aime* is the strange science fiction of a man who has tried to commit suicide after the death of his girlfriend. He survives, collapses into a catatonic depression, and at his release from mental hospital, he is recruited as a guinea pig for a scientific experiment. He is brought to a remote research centre where scientists tell him that their only subject of research is time. They have built a machine, which looks like a giant brain. The idea is that the scientists send him back in time exactly one year (to 5 September 1966 at 4.00 p.m.) for the duration of one minute. Before he enters the brain-machine the man is heavily sedated with drugs that, as is explained to him, make him 'completely passive though still capable of receiving memories'. As if the scientists had read *Difference and Repetition*, they seem to have created a machine for literally travelling into the second passive synthesis of time.

The inside of this machine is soft and lobe-like. The man lies down, sinking into the velvet folds of the brain-machine, and waits for the memories to come to him. The scene to which he returns is at the seaside during a holiday with his girlfriend in the south of France. He is snorkelling and gets out of the water. His girlfriend, who is sunbathing on the rocks near the water, asks him, 'Was it good?' This scene is repeated several times, but always with slight differences and subtle variations, both in the order of the shots within the sequence, its variable beginnings and ends, and the slightly different camera angles and shot lengths. It is as if his brain is looking through a kaleidoscope to see all the possible combinations of the mosaic snippets of memory, possibly looking for a new outcome, a new future perhaps. Another important scene repeated with variations is in a hotel room in Glasgow where the man and his girlfriend are on holiday. This is the moment where she will die because of a leaking gas heater. Was it an accident or not? The memory is not clear and changes slightly each time. The first time, we see the memory of this hotel room scene and the flame of the heater burns. His memory is transformed by his feelings of guilt, and at the last return, we see the flame is extinguished. His future changes accordingly: when this 'memory' arrives, he will die. So the future in this film is a dimension of the past.

In *Hiroshima Mon Amour* there are also futures related to the past. At several instances, it is said that the traumas of war and other disasters will be repeated in the future, which is based on the idea that we have seen nothing, that we will forget, and everything will start all over: '2,000 dead bodies, 80,000 wounded, within nine seconds. The numbers are official. It will happen again,' the woman says in voice-over over images of a reconstructed Hiroshima. Also in the love story, the future is raised as a function of memory and forgetting, as the man says, 'In a few years when I have forgotten you, I will remember you as the symbol of love's forgetfulness. I will think of you as the horror of forgetting.' The woman, too, when she recalls her first love, trembles at the fact that the intensity of such shattering love can be forgotten, and a new love can be encountered again.

It is important to note that in *Hiroshima Mon Amour* everything happens a second time: the unimaginable disaster was repeated in history already in Nagasaki. The impossible love of the Second World War is repeated a second time with another passionate love affair in Japan. Even film history returns as the film recalls, both thematically and stylistically, other impossible love affairs of the cinema: Michael Curtiz's *Casablanca* was already mentioned, but Hitchcock's *Vertigo* can also be recognised.

Not only do Hitchcock and Resnais share the theme of a love affair haunted by the past, but some of the scenes in *Hiroshima Mon Amour* are composed in a strikingly similar way to *Vertigo*. On all levels, we can see in *Hiroshima Mon Amour* a variation of the idea of the future that is based in the past: I will forget you, we will forget (love, war). And it (love, war) will happen again. Repetition and difference, the future as grounded in the past, this is the temporality of *Hiroshima Mon Amour.*

V. The Future as Eternal Return

In *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze also distinguishes another idea of the future, the future as such as the third synthesis of time: 'The third repetition, this time by excess, [is] the repetition of the future as eternal return' (Deleuze 1994: 90). In this third synthesis, the foundation of habit in the present and the ground of the past are 'superseded by a groundlessness, a universal ungrounding which turns upon itself and causes only the yet-to-come to return' (91). In this third synthesis the present and the past are dimensions of the future. The third synthesis cuts, assembles and (re-)orders from the past and the present, to select the eternal return of difference. The third synthesis is the time of (endless) serial variations and remixes of pasts and presents. My basic argument is that contemporary cinema can be understood as a 'neuro-image', cinema predominantly based in the third synthesis of time, and hence has a particular relation to the future. Only the third synthesis can include the first and second syntheses of time. This, as I hope to show, can explain some of the neuro-image's impurity and manifestations in different modes of filmmaking. But let me first return to Deleuze's discussion of the third synthesis of time.

For the development of the third synthesis of time in *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze does not refer to Bergson any more. Now Nietzsche has become the main reference point. In *The Time-Image* Bergson also seems to disappear at a certain moment in favour of Nietzsche's appearance, though in the cinema book Nietzsche is not *explicitly* connected to the question of time (not to the third synthesis of time, in any case). In the chapter on Orson Welles and the powers of the false (chapter 6 of *The Time-Image*), Nietzsche is an important reference to understanding the manipulating powers of the false. However, they are discussed as a consequence of the direct appearance of time, which is until that moment in *The Time-Image* mainly elaborated in terms of the pure past (all of the past) of the second synthesis of time. At the

end of the discussion of Welles's cinema, the powers of the false are connected to the creative powers of the artist, the production of the new (though not explicitly to the eternal return and the future). The series of time (characteristic of the third synthesis) are also mentioned in *The Time-Image*, especially in the chapter on bodies, brains and thoughts (chapter 8). Here the bodies in the cinema of Antonioni and of Godard's films relate to time as series. In the conclusion of the book Deleuze explains this special chronosign of time as 'a burst of series' (Deleuze 1989: 275). But after all the insistence on the Bergsonian temporal dimensions of the movement-image, the time-image and Deleuze's extended commentaries on Bergson, this form of time remains rather underdeveloped on a theoretical level in *The Time-Image*. Referring to *Difference and Repetition*, we can now understand that the powers of the false and the series of time that can be sensed in some time-images perhaps might belong to the third synthesis of time. We have seen that Alain Resnais's films, *Hiroshima Mon Amour* in particular, are firmly rooted in the second synthesis of time, even when they speak of the future. Is it perhaps possible to find glimpses of the third synthesis of time in Resnais's films, where the images speak *from* the future? As Deleuze suggests at the end of 'The Brain is the Screen', cinema is only at the beginnings of its exploration of audio-visual relations, which are relations of time (Deleuze 2000: 372). This suggests the possibilities for new dimensions of time in the image and perhaps clearer openings to the third synthesis of time.

In *My American Uncle* (1980) Resnais mixes fiction with scientific findings about the brain. Here the genre is less 'science fiction', where scientists invent strange experiments to reveal truths about the nature of time and memory as in *Je t'aime, Je t'aime*, but more a 'docufiction' where French neurobiologist Henri Laborit discusses (in voice-over and in direct address from behind his desk) findings about the workings of the human brain that by and large match with contemporary cognitive neurosciences. Laborit discusses the brain from an evolutionary perspective from which it is possible to distinguish three brains (a primitive, reptile one, which is the brain for survival; a second affective and memory brain; and a third brain, the outer layer or neocortex that allows associations, imagination and conscious thoughts). Throughout the film, Laborit explains how these three layers together in constant exchange with one another, and constantly influenced by others and our environment, can explain human behaviour. These scientific intermezzos are seamlessly connected to the stories of three different characters, who tell and enact their story and whose lives will meet at certain

moments. These fictional stories translate the scientific discourse of the neurobiologist quite literally, sometimes too literally for a contemporary audience. Nevertheless, *My American Uncle* also gives a moving insight into what ultimately motivates the filmmaker, the philosopher and the scientist: to understand more profoundly why we do what we do, and to find ways to improve not only individual destinies but also the fate of humanity.

The last images of *My American Uncle* present a particular political coda to the expositions and dramatisations that went before. This last scene follows directly after we have heard Laborit in voice-over declaring in a future conditional tense that as long as we do not understand how our brain works, and understand that until now it has always been used to dominate the other, there is little chance that anything will change. What follows are images of a travelling camera through a ruined city landscape, and because the words that just preceded these images still resonate in the following sequence, we comprehend that this war-ruined landscape might be understood as an image from the future: the eternal return of the series of war and disaster. The images are in fact from riots in the Bronx in the 1970s, when Resnais filmed them. But the images also immediately remind us of a desolate bombarded Sarajevo and Grozny (still future urban warzones at the time of filming) and Boulogne (the city that heavily suffered during the Second World War, and the setting of *Muriel*). So the past, the present and the future are now a dimension of the future. Then at the end of the final sequence of *My American Uncle*, the camera suddenly detects a ray of hope and holds at the only colourful image in the deserted streets: on one of the sombre walls a forest is painted, a wall painting by American artist Alan Sonfist; a sort of city screen as a hopeful sign of a possible future, a rebeginning. While the camera zooms in, the forest turns into pure green, fragments and colours that have to look for new connections. As such, these last images of the film, as a sign of death and rebeginnings, belong perhaps to the third synthesis of time, the future, the image related to the inevitability of death and repetitions of death, but also the possibility of the creation of the new.

VI. Database Logic of the Neuro-Image

So Resnais's cinema, although mainly based in the second synthesis of time (with its particular future), also seems to be open to the third synthesis of time that speaks from the future as such. And, not coincidentally, as I will try to show in a moment, his films also express

a 'digital logic' *avant la lettre*, which shows some of cinema's internal struggle with informatics. The necessity of cinema's internal positioning towards the digital is an important remark made by Deleuze in *The Time-Image* to assure its rebirth and developments in the future (Deleuze 1989: 266). It may seem like a far stretch to think of Resnais as a Web 2.0 filmmaker. But for one, it can be argued that there is a kind of very contemporary 'database logic' in Resnais's work. Database logic is described by Lev Manovich in *The Language of New Media* as a typical characteristic of digital culture (Manovich 2001: 212–81). Contemporary culture is driven by databases, from which time and again, new selections are made, new narratives can be constructed, in endless series. As Manovich explains, this does not mean that the database is only of our time: the encyclopaedia and even Dutch still lifes of the seventeenth century follow a kind of database logic. It is just that with the seemingly endless storage and retrieval possibilities of digital technology, the database seems to become a dominant cultural form. And it allows very explicitly for endless series of new combinations, orderings and remixes of its basic source materials, which on a temporal scale matches the characteristics of the third synthesis of time, the future as eternal return.

The database logic in Resnais is often developed from within the second synthesis of time: in *Hiroshima Mon Amour*, *Last Year in Marienbad*, *Muriel* and *Je t'aime, J t'aime*, for instance, the past presents itself in different variations. But there are also some moments where the future as the third synthesis of time presents itself in a glimpse as the ungrounded ground from which it is spoken, such as the last images of *My American Uncle* discussed above. Or, at some moments in *The War is Over*, where the main character imagines in a sort of 'database flashforward' the unknown girl that has helped him to escape from the police at the Spanish border (he only heard her voice on the phone): a montage of flashforwards with female faces gives various possible options of what the girl would look like. These kinds of database-options of various futures return at other moments in the film as well. *My American Uncle* is also database-like, when at the beginning of the film several objects are shown without any clear meaning or connection between them. Later in the film, some of these objects will be suggested in relation to different stories and characters, and obtain (symbolic) meaning, only to return in a mosaic of many different objects and persons at the end of the film. Here Resnais's film-screen really becomes a typical web page that offers multiple entrances that each hide other possible future stories.

Taking this database logic one step further, what I suggest is that this third synthesis of time that already appears in the *Time-Image* (in a more or less disguised form) is the dominant sign of time under which cinema's images of the digital age are formed much more explicitly, and which allows for the conceptualisation of a third image type, that I propose to call the neuro-image. The serial and remixing logic of the database has become the dominant logic, corresponding to the temporal logic of the third synthesis under which the neuro-image is constructed. Of course there are still movement-images that operate under the logic of the rational cut, continuity editing and the integration of sequences into a whole (Deleuze 1989: 277), and are based in the first passive synthesis of time. And obviously time-images also find new directors whose work is grounded in the second synthesis of time reigned by the incommensurable or irrational cut of the coexisting layers of the pure past (277). But, arguably, the heart of cinema has moved into a database logic connected to the third synthesis of time. It is an impure image regime, because it repeats and remixes all previous image regimes (the movement-image and the time-image) as well as its temporal orders, but ungrounds all these orders due to the dominance of the third synthesis. In the larger project from which this paper is derived I explain more fully why these third type of images, could be called neuro-images.[3] Put in a very concise way, this has to do with an explicit reference to Deleuze's suggestion that 'the brain is the screen' and his call for looking at the biology of the brain for assessing the audio-visual image. Here, I simply want to emphasise that the starting point of the neuro-image is a change in cinema, where we slowly but surely have moved from following characters' actions (movement-image), to seeing the world filtered through their eyes (time-image), to experiencing directly their mental landscapes (neuro-image).

VII. Flashforward: The Neuro-Image from the Future

Some typical examples of contemporary neuro-images where we have moved quite literally in the character's brain world include *Source Code* (Jones 2011), which is announced with the pun 'an action flick with brains', and *Inception (Nolan 2010)*, where a whole team of dream invaders try to implant (or incept) one little thought in someone's mind that might change the future. *Avatar* (Cameron 2009) is another case in point of 'brain power' in cinema, where the avatars are operated by brain activity. And of course there is the world of the precogs appearing on the tactile screens in *Minority Report* (Spielberg 2002)

that predict future crimes. Typically in these films we see people hooked up to a kind of brain-scanning machine. Yet even when this is not so literally emphasised, contemporary cinema has become a mental cinema that differs in major ways from previous dominant modes of filming. Focusing only on the temporal dimensions of these images, it becomes evident that the future plays an important role that can be expressed on many different levels. In *Minority Report*, crime prevention is based on crimes that are about to happen, predicted by savants with the power of predicting the future. So the future is part of the narrative. The main character in *Source Code* acts with increasing knowledge of the future, every time he relives a variation of the past. If we think of *Inception*, it is possible to argue that the whole story is actually told from a point of view of the future. At the beginning of the film, the main characters meet when they are very old. At the end of the narrative, we return to this point, indicating that actually everything was told from this future moment of old age and even the moment of their death. Here, the future structures the narration. In a different way, *Avatar* is told from the point of view of the future of the planet. These are all examples from contemporary Hollywood, by and large still characterised by the movement-image (so we also still have typical characteristics of the temporal dimensions of the first synthesis of time, such as the sensorimotor orientation and genre expectations). But a different temporal order of repetition and difference, eternal return and serialisation with much more complexity typical for the digital age has definitively made its way to the cinema screen.

The American television series *FlashForward* is another interesting contemporary example of a neuro-image (with movement-image tendencies) that is told from the point of view of the future. *FlashForward* is based on the science fiction novel of the same name by Robert Sawyer (1999) in which the main character is a scientist who works at CERN, where the Large Hadron Collider particle accelerator is performing a run to search for the Higgs boson, with the side effect of a global blackout during which all people on earth have a flashforward of twenty-two years. The television series adds other main characters and changes the leap forward in time into six months, but the basic premise remains the same: everybody is confronted with an image from the future. The show questions the idea of what it is to live and act from a vision of the future. Since the future as such is always speculative (we just simply cannot know for sure what will happen in the future so it is not a matter of determinism even though destiny becomes an important

problem), some fear their vision will come true, others fear it will not come true; but all have to act in respect to their flashforward. As in *Hiroshima Mon Amour*, in *FlashForward* there is a collision between a collective fate and the fate of individuals, but the television series presents us with a much more mosaic story that is typical for the neuro-image's database narrative (presenting the countless possible variations of the future). Quite literally we see here how the idea of the future has now started to inform our image culture. We can also see this perspective of our present and past from an idea of a vision of the future more broadly in culture: since 9/11 the War on Terror has marked the moment of preventive war, tests that measure the telomeres in our DNA can predict the age of death, and the ecological future of the planet is more uncertain than ever. Again, there is more to say about the ways in which the neuro-image resonates with larger developments in contemporary culture.

At this point I will just make a few more comparative observations between the future in *FlashForward*, or, more generally, the future from the third synthesis of time in the neuro-image and the future in *Hiroshima Mon Amour*, or the future based in the second synthesis of time. In both *Hiroshima Mon Amour* and *FlashForward* the disaster is in fact caused by a scientific invention: the atomic bomb and the Large Hadron Collider, respectively. However, in *Hiroshima Mon Amour*, as we have seen, future disasters are imagined from this past event: it has happened; it will happen again. *FlashFoward* actually deals with speculations about a future disaster: we do not know if the Large Hadron Collider will create any effect as described. Most scientists agree that it will absolutely not provide anything like a blackout, let alone a leap in consciousness into the future. Nevertheless, it clearly poses the whole narrative as a dimension of the future. On a more individual scale, *Hiroshima Mon Amour* deals with the horror of forgetting the most intensive and unforgettable love affair of the past or that will become past. In *FlashForward* the horror (or surprise) is situated in the future. Some characters see themselves in the future in another love affair, something unimaginable in the present. In all cases, the future influences the present in *FlashForward*, just as much as the past influences the present in *Hiroshima Mon Amour*.

Now, one may object that *Hiroshima Mon Amour* and *FlashForward* are absolutely incomparable. And of course this is true. *Hiroshima Mon Amour* is an absolute masterpiece of modern cinema, a pure time-image in the Deleuzian sense, and an ostensive image (with naked references) in Rancière's terms. As I have argued at the beginning of this paper,

Hiroshima Mon Amour does not seem to fit Rancière's own classification and arguments for modern cinema as playfully critical, and impure in the sense that commercial and artistic images are mixed. I have tried to argue that Rancière's very useful classification does not match very well with the cinematographic examples upon which he draws, which are all time-images based in the second synthesis of time. The future of the image, as defined by Rancière, asks to move beyond the time-image into a new and impure regime of imageness where the commercial and the artistic are increasingly mixed. The neuro-image I here propose, in following Deleuze's suggestions to explore cinema's temporal dimensions (Deleuze 2000: 372) as part of the contemporary Hollywood machine, is such an impure image. But the neuro-image can also present itself in a more artistic way, which remains perhaps closer to the time-image, but which is rather found in the museum, gallery or on the Internet.

After Hiroshima Mon Amour (Kolbowski 2008) is a digital film presented as a museum installation that can also be viewed online. This film is an example of a critical and artistic remixing and operation on the image that would be closer to Rancière's third category of future-images. But, just like the key films in contemporary Hollywood, this film is a neuro-image in its temporal dimensions. Kolbowski's film repeats *Hiroshima Mon Amour* from the point of view of different future disasters (in this case the War in Iraq and the Katrina disaster in New Orleans); the allegorical love affair of the French woman and Japanese man is serialised and played by ten different actors of various ethnicities, races and genders. The famous opening scene of the 'ashembrace' is slowed down, made to stutter and filtered with colours; various scenes of the original film are recreated in black and white; contemporary material downloaded from the Internet is added, and the score and sound design of the original film is remixed. In this way the audio-visual relations become relations of time: while the texts address the past by recalling the exact dialogues of *Hiroshima Mon Amour* ('You have seen nothing in Hiroshima'), the images speak from repetitions in the future (images of soldiers' video diaries in Iraq), of multiplication of the wars and love affairs in an eternal return. With the concept of the neuro-image, that can take both artistic characteristics of the time-image and classical Hollywood characteristics of the movement-image, but which remixes, reorders and serialises these images in new ways, we can see how we have entered an image-type of the third synthesis of time, which speaks from the future, but which itself also indicates that the future is now.

Notes

1. This paper is a companion piece to 'Synaptic Signals' (Pisters 2011), which focuses on the schizoanalytic aspects of the neuro-image.
2. I do not mean to say that Rancière and Deleuze make a similar argument about the image. Rancière is more concerned with a political–aesthetical dialectics between the visible and the sayable, the visible and the invisible. Deleuze addresses the ontological problem of the complex temporal dimensions of cinema, the virtual and the actual (which is not the same as a play between the visible and the invisible). In a way, I try to develop a temporal ontology for the future of the image described by Rancière on a different level.
3. A fuller argument on the neuro-image is developed in Pisters (2012, in press).

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A Criminal Intrigue: An Interview with Jean-Clet Martin[1]

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Abstract

With Jean-Clet Martin's book, *Une intrigue criminelle de la philosophie: lire la* Phénoménologie de l'Esprit *de Hegel*, the latter emerges as a philosopher of (negative) difference and (infinite) repetition, one of the first to inject Being with becoming, in other words, as the brother-enemy that Deleuze had been waiting for and with whom he did establish complex relationships that cannot be conveniently summarized in his Nietzschean moment. In view of his novel and striking reading of Hegel, Martin is invited by the interviewer to defend his suggestions that the negative and the dialectic need not turn into spoilers of the joys of Spinoza and the affirmations of Nietzsche; that Hegel's anti-humanism can be counted as a variation on Deleuze's own; that Hegel did anticipate Deleuze in the distinction between becoming and history and in the separation of the virtual event from the actual state of affairs; that Hegel's death of God ushers in, ahead of Nietzsche's Zarathustra, the death of man in the 'overman'; and that, despite their infinite proximity, Hegel and Deleuze are separated by two incompatible images of thought that make the difference between them a difference of nature and not only a difference of degree.

Keywords: Hegel, Deleuze, *Phenomenology of the Spirit*, negative, dialectics, anti-humanism

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I. Introduction

In the 'Postface to the Anglo-American Edition' of his *Variations*, Jean-Clet Martin surprised his readers with the announcement of a new book on Hegel.

> I begin to feel, he wrote, the need for a book on the *Phenomenology of the Spirit*, where the enemy will find a better place in the network of friendships, introduced by Deleuze in *What is Philosophy?* than he has found in the smiles of the most ardent disciples. In this book, there would be a follow up, a fugue for a new variation seeking counterpoints and singularities in the patience of the negative, instead of in the joys and affirmations that Deleuze has legitimately found in Spinoza. (Martin 2010c: 216)

We did not have to wait long. Recently, this book has been published by La Découverte with the title *Une intrigue criminelle de la philosophie: lire la* Phénoménologie de l'Esprit *de Hegel*. And what a surprise it is! It asks a philosophically bearded Hegel to yield his place to a Hegel with the long nails and yellow eyes of Deleuze. The accursed share and the stubborn remainder of the ' *dimanches qui chantent*' are now shown to be figures of a criminal plot that labours to find the Absolute in what is most improbable: 'It is the most improbable, but also the most quarrelsome and indefinable that strives to come to being' (Martin 2010b: 236).

In the title of Martin's book, the word '*intrigue*' has the same amphisemy as the English 'plot'. It refers to the structure of a story, the articulation of a play, or to the paratactic and hypotactic concatenation of episodes in a *diegesis*. But it also refers to the unanticipated twists and turns, to the improbable sequence of events in a detective story that holds us breathless. Hegel's *Phenomenology* is, for Martin, an *intrigue* in both senses. To prepare the reader to approach Hegel's book as one would a fable or a tale, Martin introduces his chapters with '*où l' on apprend*' or '*où il est question*' or '*où l' on découvre*'. Take, for example, the first chapter – 'The Circle of Consciousness' – that Martin refers to as 'First Scene'. The summary that follows, placed in the centre of the page and surrounded by empty space, begins with the following sentence: '*OÙ L'ON APPREND que le philosophe porte secours aux criminels et que la philosophie s'entend en un sens extra-moral.*' The second scene – under the title 'The Roads of Desire' – has the curtain go up with this passage: '*OÙ IL EST QUESTION de la rumination animale du désir . . .* ' and so on and so forth. Now, neither a play nor a tale nor a detective story could be an example of their genre if its plot were arranged according to the deductive necessity of formal logic. It

would not be an intrigue. In order to present itself with intrigue, Hegel's *Phenomenology* has to attest to the contingency of becoming. 'History', writes Martin, 'cannot be conceived under the yoke of nature or the mechanical linking of social facts ... The Spirit has to tear itself off this double determination ... in order to enter History successfully and to achieve the freedom of its deployment' (Martin 2010b: 103).

But in what sense is the *Phenomenology*'s intrigue criminal? In what sense is it the tale of crime? Initially, Martin unearths an essay from 1807 – 'Who Thinks Abstractly?' (Hegel 1966) – in which Hegel supports the philosopher, who, in his effort to gather all factors relevant to the crime committed, appears to side with the criminal, against the facile abstractions of *doxa*. And then Martin goes on to write:

> We must assume a rapture, a scratch, in order to reach life – an inaugural crime that creates an opening ... Only in the death, the crime and the sacrifice of its perfection – only in the contestation of the angelic perfection of the Idea – does the Spirit find the means to open itself unto existence ... The Absolute does not bring about a separation in the direction of the heights; it does not detach itself from the world in transcendence. On the contrary, it separates itself in a *Fall*, which is a movement of being submerged and divided according to a trajectory of immanence. In the last analysis, it is evil that stands for the root of creation. (Martin 2010b: 236–7)

Now, instead of heaping quotation upon quotation, I invited Jean-Clet Martin to present his book to us by answering a few questions that occurred to me as I was reading it. He graciously accepted my invitation, and what follows is the transcript of an interview that I had with him in October 2010.

II. Interview with Jean-Clet Martin

Constantin V. Boundas (CVB): I would like to leave for others a discussion on your book's fidelity to Hegel. I was intrigued by the fact that you, one of the best readers of Deleuze today, chose to write it without even setting aside your Deleuze-coloured spectacles. You have written on Borges, Van Gogh, Aristotle and Nancy, but to us Anglo-Americans, you are best known as a reader of Deleuze – and for good reason. When in 1989, I approached Deleuze and asked him to help me choose contributors for the volume on his philosophy that Dorothea Olkowski and I were then collaborating on, Deleuze spoke of you with total confidence. You were, at that time, completing your *Ossuaire* and

your *Variations* had not yet been published. He knew, of course, of your book – he had already composed the *Letter* that now prefaces it – and we know it, too (2010), thanks to the translation that Edinburgh University Press has made available. Your profound understanding of Deleuze's positions that emerges from its pages, your creative fidelity to his work, and your dexterity at weaving variations that follow the modulations of his thought fully justify Deleuze's confidence in you and showcase your ability to think and write in accordance with Deleuze's lines of flight. But I cannot hide from you the surprise I felt when I read in the *Postface* of your book that you were experiencing the need to compose one more variation – this time, with Hegel in mind – where 'the enemy will find a better place in the network of friendships introduced by Deleuze'. As your reference to 'the enemy' reveals, you do not overlook the fact that, with very few exceptions, friends and foes of Deleuze continue to emphasise the abyss that separates the identity of the one from the difference of the other, to the point of assessing the *raison d'être* of Deleuze's 'libidinal deconstruction' as the dismantling of Hegel's Absolute Knowledge.[2] We may then begin our discussion of your book at this point.

One recent essay speaks of Deleuze's 'resentment towards Hegel' and adds that,

> of all major philosophers discussed by Deleuze . . . , Hegel receives by far the least sympathetic treatment; whereas in all the other cases, Deleuze is able to retrieve something useful for his own philosophy, his critique of Hegel is almost unrelentingly negative. (Baugh 2009: 130)

As our interview continues, we could try to come to grips with the specific arguments – Hegel's is a philosophy of identity; the *Phenomenology* is a humanism; the centrality of the negative muffles the voices of affirmation; desire collapses into need, etc., etc. – that ground the conclusion of this author and then bring your own assessments of Hegel's intentions to bear on your striking disagreement. But, before we follow this road, could you perhaps take us back to an earlier time – the time of the birth and origin of your need to seek 'counterpoints and singularities in the patience of the negative'? How and why does a reader today experience the need to re-open the files on the relationship between Deleuze and Hegel?

Jean-Clet Martin (J-CM): This is a broad and complex question; therefore, I will be able to focus on only a few of its points. Really, why would we want to return to Hegel if we follow in the footsteps of Deleuze, who obviously does not owe a great deal to Hegel? And I

would not forgive myself were I to suggest that Hegel had anticipated the multiplicities or the variations of Deleuze. To claim, like Slavoj Žižek, that Hegel had already sketched the horizon of contemporary thought is, in the last analysis, to say that Deleuze and Derrida did not exist, that they invented nothing and it would be enough to return to these more interesting precursors, Hegel or Schelling. This way of cancelling out the specificity of contemporary thought by returning to Marx or to Hegel does not correspond at all with my own position. Surely, Deleuze's reading of Marx would have been very different from Marx's own. One must be really very narrow-minded not to understand that Deleuze and Hegel do not participate in the same century or the same epoch and that it is impossible to find in Hegel what Deleuze deploys from the perspective of another 'image of thought'. It seems to me that Hegel himself would have refused to give up the singularity of Deleuze, if he could have read him, precisely because he was determined to keep the ages of the world distinct from one another and to show how the 'experience' of consciousness presupposes a form of empiricism. It is impossible not to discern in *The Phenomenology of the Spirit* this form that returns to the appearances instead of finding satisfaction with essences.

Well then, 'Why could not Deleuze appreciate Hegel?' is a different question whose answer depends on the way in which Deleuze thought about difference and repetition. The ritornello does not follow the movement of a circle or an encyclopaedia. This is it – we are on very different terrains, on milieus that cannot be superimposed. The ethologies of their concepts cannot be compared with one another because their images of thought are incompatible. It seems to me that, if Hegel is Deleuze's enemy, the enemy's position becomes interesting when we relate it to the way that Deleuze – in *What is Philosophy?* – transforms the friend into the engine of philosophy. Friends and enemies are found at the heart of the history of philosophy. We see it in Seneca, for example, who – at the centre of an empire (where people switch positions constantly) – reveals a friendship that is stronger than any family tie. Nevertheless, this friendship is ever changing, open to encounters; meanwhile the Greek city was preoccupied with the rivalry of clans and the oppositions and quarrels that Hegel himself denounces in his analysis of the family. I think that every epoch finds its definition in the posture of the friend. *Facebook* today offers us one example: each of us now has so many friends that we would love to have a few enemies to really read our profiles, instead of merely glancing over the simple clichés and announcements that are buzzing around. Friends like these

are, indeed, very sad companions. It seems to me that Hegel is truly the enemy that Deleuze was waiting for – the enemy worthy of him – he who would oblige us to reread Deleuze by way of a new strategy, instead of being satisfied with the often ridiculous repetition of those friends who use 'deterritorialisation' and 'rhizome' without ever thinking about their actual meaning.

So, Hegel and Deleuze are enemies. So be it! But how the enemy sees the friend – this is something really interesting! What does he or she find in him so remarkable that it makes him or her transcend the commonplace of indifference? How does the ordinary become something remarkable and singular? I think that the way in which I bring Hegel to bear on Deleuze is the result of the respect that makes Nietzsche say that we need a bit of air, that the friend suffocates us; that the one who has friends has many more problems with them than with the enemies against whom he really measures himself. As a personal anecdote, I would say that my book on Hegel corresponds to an event of my own trajectory. I had submitted an MA thesis on Hegel to the University of Strasbourg. The title was *Critique of Negative Difference*. It was a reading of *The Phenomenology of the Spirit* that I often discussed with Deleuze, who used to tell me that it is good, this work – 'Hegel is the first to think movement in the concept', to think the concept in terms of movement. Well, when Deleuze says that So-and-so is 'the first to . . . ', he really considers him a creator, the inventor of a notion that he endorses with his own name. Hegel is the name of movement. No doubt about it! However, this movement is not the movement of Deleuze – the rhythm and *dance* are not the same, the negative does not proceed from affirmation in the same manner as Spinoza's, its powers are not of the same nature. But it is this difference of nature that makes Hegel interesting as a dancer, as a wrestler, even if reluctantly and at an inopportune moment one must fight to discover a different way of thinking. This makes me think of a remark Borges made about tango: it is a duel, a *dance* of two enemy brothers, performed with knives – a mannerism of martial arts. In this context, my reading of Hegel makes possible a radiography of Deleuze: a negative – in the photographic sense of this word – that makes room for a new visibility. But under no circumstances is it a question of Hegel making the same movement as Deleuze – in the place of Deleuze – when we, the readers of Deleuze, know full well that this place has its own signature.

CVB: Readers of Deleuze know that philosophies of difference are not compatible with the thought of the negative, and that the Hegelian

dialectic is an expression and a subterfuge of the servile will. In *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, we read that

> for the affirmation of difference, [Hegel's dialectic] substitutes the negation of that which differs; for the affirmation of self, it substitutes the negation of the other; and for the affirmation of affirmation, it substitutes the famous negation of the negation. (Deleuze 1983: 96)

And we realise that this list of substitutions succinctly expresses Deleuze's critique of Hegel. Even Jean Wahl, in an attempt to safeguard the prerogatives of dialectic, and despite his otherwise complimentary review of Deleuze's book, could not help but express his reservations toward Deleuze's sustained effort to wipe out all vestiges of the dialectic from Nietzsche's philosophy (Wahl 1963). Among Anglo-American readers of Deleuze, there is an ongoing dispute between those who believe that Deleuze remained a dialectician of some sort, despite his denunciation of (a certain kind of) dialectics, and those who prefer to hold onto his anti-dialectic stance, without any qualifications. As you know well, this quarrel is not about who has the better grasp of the texts or who can claim his or her unshakeable fidelity to the legacy of the master. The quarrel has politico-philosophical implications. It is, therefore, intriguing to discover in your book subtle qualifications and circumspect hesitations that would prevent the negative and the dialectic from becoming the sworn enemies of a thought that takes its flight from the joys of Spinoza and the affirmations of Nietzsche. You hold that those who emphasise the omnipotence of the negative in Hegel's philosophy must not obscure the fact that it is the negative that prevents the system from closing in upon itself. Moreover, you write,

> the negative [would not] be able to operate… if the thing [did not] possess… the power and the capacity to bear the lack that torments it from the inside. On the other side of lack, we have the force of an entity that manifests its aptitude to transcend itself. (Martin 2010b: 29)

Or again, as you speak of need and desire, you say:

> We are far from a sheer lack, far from the void of a desire that passively submits to the object that would mechanically fill it… [It is not a question] of the expression of a privation but rather of a veritable force, a push and a tendency that comes from the organism, which is ready to take up this division that causes its inside to relate to an outside… (Martin 2010b: 57)

And, for good measure, you quote from Hegel's *Logic:* 'Negativity is the immanent pulsation of an autonomous, spontaneous and living movement' (Hegel 1929: 70). Finally, when you speak of the Hegelian

dialectic, you characterise it in a way that brings it closer to the critical unmasking that we are accustomed to associating with the genealogy:

> Hegel calls . . . dialectical overturning a critical enterprise that attempts to bring about the fall of all masks – even those that are to be found in the most sublime nooks and crannies, being dissimulated behind the morality of the master and the servant. (Martin 2010b: 191)

But what would you say to the one who voices his suspicion that your qualifications subordinate the negative to an originary affirmation and fail to emphasise, beyond its critical function, the creative potential of the dialectic movement? Unmasking and creating are not the same thing – are they?

J-CM: It seems to me that Deleuze dislikes the dialectic not only for moral but also for instrumental reasons. The dialectic is a tool. The eternal recurrence is a completely different tool. The question then is what is the value of these tools from a functional point of view? Is not morality dependent upon functions whose distant effects – but also the least expected ones from the point of view of symptomatology – were discovered by Nietzsche? Is it true that the dialectic is the tool of the weak, according to the reading that Deleuze reserves for Nietzsche, and that the active forces do not operate in accordance with a dialectical mode? We could speak of anti-dialectics in this context, if it were not for the fact that 'anti' is already dialectical. Affirmation abandons the dialectical scheme because from the beginning it is pointed toward the future – a javelin thrown in the direction of a distant target whose rules are not typical. The dialectic, on the other hand, repeats in an identical style the forms of exploration that depend on memory and, as a result, it remains a prisoner of the past – not unlike the donkey. We should leave behind the obstinacy of the donkey. It is a question of forgetting, of the salutary forgetting of those who affirm and the creative cry of a force liberated from the same old refrain.

However, we cannot cling to this vision and extend it over the totality of Deleuze's work. Obviously it is a significant moment, absolutely valid in the context of Deleuze's interpretation of Nietzsche. The mistake will be to forget its instrumentality and to conclude that the tool of this selective distinction of the passive from the active may be projected as an *absolute* over the rest of Deleuze's texts. Can we ever imagine Deleuze in the rigid posture of one who forces this scheme past the territory of its own validity? Can we expand or exchange territories without modifying the concepts themselves? We must take care not to freeze the opposition and not tinker with dualisms because of our obstinacy and our fidelity

to Deleuze. As soon as Deleuze reads Bergson, he is suddenly before notions that demand a new toolbox. It is easy to understand that the couple 'Matter' and 'Memory' will not be able to function in accordance with the mode active/reactive. A new machine must be built. Forgetting may very well be a good thing as long as we are situated inside the break within which Nietzsche operates. But quite the contrary, it is memory that we need inside Bergson's break. We must then be prudent when we read Deleuze, and be aware of the plateau whereupon we find ourselves. Notice, after all, that in *What is Philosophy?* Hegel strikes Deleuze as an important dramaturgist when it comes to organising the 'moments' and 'figures' that compose the dimensions of the concept. This is not a contradiction in the economy of Hegel's work; it is a simple redeployment of tools. That Deleuze is not a dialectician does not prevent him from creating an immense arrangement with the help of Bergson, with *Creative Evolution* providing the 'historical' montage and *Matter and Memory* the counterpart, 'Logic'. It is in the new reading of Bergson that Deleuze discovers the multiplicities and the new pair, actual/virtual, which is very different from the active/reactive pair. In view of the newly discovered territory, we are now measured against planes that overlap, that bring about stratifications, extensions and envelopments, while diffused in matter and contracted in memory. Even if we were to try both machines and taste similar intensities in different contexts, Bergson's cone is a much more complicated machine than the twists and turns of the eternal return. On the other hand, it seems to me that, on this plane, the fabrication of machines demands other alliances, friends other than the Nietzscheans – whose avid reader never have I ceased to be. Inside this factory, the enemy Hegel may come across as a partner, and as interesting as Nietzsche, provided that we focus on the texts that Hegel dedicates to the idea of life or even to the machine before we begin to discuss desire.

I return, however, to the question of the dialectic. There isn't the slightest doubt that the Hegelians transformed it into a hackneyed tale; it is the same mistake that a Deleuzian makes when he forcibly stretches a concept over every plateau of his work. For my part, what I retain from the dialectic is its 'dialect' aspect – a dialect that insinuates itself inside the margins and infiltrates the seediest parts of Western culture in order to listen to a language very different from that of morality, and to reveal from time to time what morality, with its mask of good and common sense, often dissimulates. Dialectics, therefore, I understand to be a dialect and even, underneath the dialect and its operatic folklore, I see dialectics as a diabolical force – the devil (*dia*ble) in his essence

being *dia*bolical – inside minor dialects that shipwreck the power of the 'unilectic' language. The word 'unilectic', of course, does not exist but we should invent it when it comes to the discourse of authority – the pontifical language.

Deleuze is therefore elsewhere – beyond the simple opposition dialectic/anti-dialectic – no matter how clear the stakes of this pair may be, as long as we stick with *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. Deleuze lives in an epoch in which the *infinite* no longer exists as a problem: it has lost its appeal and no longer has the same impact, especially when placed next to *Chaos*. The Hegelian dialectic, I think, responds to the question of the modern infinite, whereas the logic of multiplicities is rather a response to the Chaos that the contemporary epoch requires us to face. I try to confront this problem in my latest book, *Plurivers: Essai sur la fin du monde* (2010a), where no dialectics would remember how to fabricate a world. Not even the devil would be able to promise us a new life – as he does in *Faust*. Only the strange entities that Deleuze has us encounter through the impersonality of becoming-animal could do this. I think this is the real novelty of Deleuze: that he places us in front of the animal – face-to-face with animal sensations and animal spirits that the West must understand before they become extinct, and face-to-face with machines that we must learn to handle before we leave this life. In Hegel's philosophy, on the other hand, becoming is still thought in terms of the opposition nature/culture: the question here is how to transcend the animal and how to be free of the machine. And yet, inside *The Phenomenology of the Spirit* where the animals are often shown the door in the name of an essentially anthropological desire, my reading finds them re-entering through the windows. As for machines, we will undoubtedly have the opportunity to talk again.

CVB: That Hegel is the severe critic of Kant *and* his moral vision of the world is beyond dispute. He sees that a grandiloquent morality grounded on duty is the expression of a servile will – and an empty expression, to boot. You expose this critique masterfully. But does this critique make him a genealogist of 'beyond good and evil'? And if it does, are you still entitled to read the *Phenomenology* as a *criminal* intrigue? It seems to me that the clearest statement as to why the intrigue is criminal comes at the very end of your book. You write:

> The Absolute does not bring about a separation in the direction of the heights. It is separated from itself through a *Fall,* and in accordance with a movement that causes it to sink and to be divided along a line of immanence. *In the last analysis, it is evil that stands at the root of creation*. (Martin 2010b: 237; my emphasis)

Now, if Hegel holds evil to be the root of creation, you are right in receiving the *Phenomenology* as a criminal plot. But then it will be difficult to maintain that Hegel's critique of the moral vision leads to a space 'beyond good and evil'. A space 'beyond good and evil' can be maintained only if the *Fall* ushers in a 'disease' (not a crime) which, like pregnancy, gives rise to the new, the better and the nobler. In other words, the conclusion of your book should accommodate crime and the evil-doer as little as your earlier discussions of figures of bad-conscience – stoicism, scepticism, etc. – have done. It was, you recall, with these figures in mind that you invoked Nietzsche's diagnosis of pregnancy. And, despite your qualifications, to assimilate the Fall of the Absolute to crime will cause the negative to have the last word; not to mention the fact that the God thinking His own thought of *The Science of Logic* will not match the *archē* and the *eschaton* of the Hegelian saga.

J-CM: It seems to me that Hegel's philosophy is not a moral philosophy and in this respect he is among the first to consider moral judgements to be constructions whose histories must be accounted for. Indeed, morality has a history of morality and this is important when we think of Kant, who posits morality as a 'fact of reason' that cannot admit any outside interference. Nothing touches it; nothing can affect it other than morality itself. For Kant, 'the fact of reason' that the 'categorical imperative' represents is a universal understanding with an absolutely unconditioned causality that is autonomous with respect to natural causality. The imperative is the first fact – the only fact that we can respect, without deriving it from any prior determination. Nothing exists before it! In the last analysis, the Kantian critique gives itself ready-made what it should have investigated. Is it possible to launch a different and stronger critique?

Hegel's critique precisely consists of showing that morality itself is a phenomenon – a historically determined mode of appearing. Leaving behind the presumption that morality is given as an absolute, we must re-examine its real formation. The claim that morality is autonomous leads Kant in the direction of the phenomenon of an inaugural fact that is valid for all places and all times. He is, therefore, doing everything possible to keep morality away from phenomenology. In contrast, Hegel thinks that a real critique must be less naïve and that the critique of reason that considers itself pure must move beyond, very much beyond, the aspirations – themselves metaphysical and illusory – of theoretical reason to swallow the practical field. Produce a history of practical reason – no one had thought of it, with the exception of the Enlightenment with which Hegel would very carefully establish relations. To say that there

is an origin of moral judgements means to assert that such-and-such a figure has not always existed, that it behoves us to discover the point where this figure begins, and to acknowledge that it manifests itself here; whereas different forms prevail elsewhere. Such a submission of morality to an origin and a beginning that it does not want to acknowledge I call a 'genealogy of morals'. However, Hegel's genealogy differs over many points from Nietzsche's, because Nietzsche's pays more attention to the psychic and instinctual (*pulsionnelle*) moral arrangement; whereas Hegel insists on social facts and the geo-historical variation of moral judgements. Is it criminal to think this way or is the term I use a mere metaphor?

A gesture of this nature seems criminal to me with respect to German idealism. I think that Hegel's adventure would appear dangerously insane to Fichte, taken up, as he was, in the splendour of the 'I = I'. It would come across as insensible to the splendour of morality inside which idealism will try to drown theoretical reason, having taken the categorical imperative as the origin of the world – the world as Will. (It seems to me that Schopenhauer owes everything to Kant as far as this point is concerned; he represents the last stage of idealism becoming sceptic.) I tried to rethink Hegel within the context of the image of thought that was dominant in his time, and place him inside the philosophies of absolute identity, only to realise that Hegel is not a member of the family because he has difficulties with the University – the thing that endeared him to me, I should say... At any rate, Hegel is bound to come across as a renegade and, certainly, he worked out a method that Nietzsche will not fail to adopt in his own way as soon as he turns his back on Schopenhauer. To this extent, there is a fracture that assumes the name 'Hegel' – a singular point that does not belong to his time; one that creates a margin that would scandalise and be necessarily incomprehensible to, and cursed by, his peers.

This is the first criminal point. It is, if I am allowed to put it this way, intra-philosophical. But we can also count on a non-philosophical occurrence to help us understand how Hegel behaved within the context of his time and how he came to see himself as an old owl. Ridiculed by the newspapers of his time, his abstractions mocked, Hegel replied with the illustration of the criminal. The criminal is condemned by the opinion that demands guilty pleas right away and, under these circumstances, the opinion demonstrates an even bigger abstraction – a judgement that abstracts from all circumstances, provided that a person is found guilty and is condemned as soon as possible. Therein lies the expeditious abstraction of the judgement of God. Hegel, it seems to

me, sides with those that are called criminals; that is, he sides with those who challenge the common sense and the usual rhythm (*les empêcheurs de penser en rond*) that transgress the moral categories and show that they are the spontaneous decision-makers of a society bent on protecting itself. Suddenly, freedom is no longer on the side of morality; it is no longer the elegant '*factum rationis*' of Kant, but rather it is lumped together with the excluded, the pariah, the slave – on the side of those Foucault calls 'infamous men'. From now on, we are invited to understand that the slave is not only the 'reactive', but that his liberty carries with it an insurrectional potential – the type of potential that Kant detested, as is evident from his devotion to the masters we discover in reading *What is Enlightenment?* This is also why I say that Hegel is not an idealist, that it is impossible to put him next to Kant or Fichte; that he reveals the powerful movement of Fall – of a creative Fall that opens up new potentialities. To founder is not always to plunge into *ressentiment* and culpability; it is often to enter a new life – that of the humiliated and the offended, in the underground of infamous men and beasts of burden. All of a sudden, submitting morality to a genealogy seems much more radical to me than the stubbornness with which we try to forget the criminal side of the young philosopher in order to savour the tranquil spirit of Hegel's *Logic*, which lags far behind the contestatory thrust of the *Phenomenology*. I think that a new reading of the *Logic* is required and I do not know whether I will have the time and the appetite to do it myself. I allude a little to this problem in my *Plurivers* as I relate Hegel to Russell. The *Science of Logic* seems to suit a logic of the paradox. It brings about the pulverisation of its founding eminence. But this is a complicated point that I leave hanging for the time being, as I am already at some distance from your question.

CVB: You wrote:

> Hegel's philosophy is not an anthropology … With a gesture comparable to Nietzsche's own, Hegel demands that man be overcome. It is not possible to bring this philosophy over to Feuerbach's humanism … *The Phenomenology of the Spirit* can never be confused with humanism and the existence in the name of which Hegel offers us his instructions cannot be reduced to the freedom of man. (Martin 2010b: 218)

And you went on to say:

> The Hegelian intrigue rises towards a *logical* arrangement, towards the apprehension of a thought whose notions are no longer at the mercy of man, but they rather demand the creation of a mode of impersonal and inhuman

> narration indebted to the Concept capable of explicating itself in accordance with its own ways. (Martin 2010b: 221)

Nevertheless, you do admit that between the *Phenomenology* and *The Science of Logic* there is difference in form and content. The *Phenomenology* is a 'tale of initiation'; *The Science of Logic* asks that logic 'be understood as the system of pure reason . . . [Its] content is the exposition of God as he is in his eternal essence, before the creation of nature and a finite mind' (Hegel 1929: 44, 50). Now, it seems to me that this difference demands that you offer a more elaborate explanation than the one you give of the relation between the *Phenomenology* and the *Logic*. What is the relationship between the tale of initiation and the *noēsis noēseos*? How can one be initiated to the thought of God before Creation if the road to initiation goes by the way of Dasein? How does Hegel succeed where Heidegger and Bultmann have failed? It seems that we need a more elaborate demonstration; that Hegel is in fact an anti-humanist; and that his anti-humanism can be considered a variation on Deleuze's own. There is one more claim of yours that makes me wonder: 'Man', you say, 'in the finitude of his most rudimentary values [. . .] experiences a desire in view of which he appears to himself as a being that must be overcome'(Martin 2010b: 218). Now, I grant you that Hegel thinks so. But then you add: 'It is this desire that derails the merely organic life and sends it over to the inorganic of art and philosophy.' This may be Deleuzian, but I am not yet convinced that it is Hegelian. In derailing desire and overcoming man, some of Hegel's readers seem to have established man's deification, rather than the production of the life of the inorganic.

J-CM: Well, this a very complicated question and I do not exactly know how to approach it. Let us begin with Heidegger. In Hegel, there is an apprehension of modes of existence, the association of which is given the name 'Spirit', and not at all the name of subject or substance. We cannot count on any subject that is either given or can be logically constructed, nor can we count on any substance accessible to the human reason as an a priori form. The Spirit is rather born from a Fall, from a process of failure of the essence, and only its most 'illogical' characteristics show a relationship with existence. The best candidates for existence are not perfect essences (as is the case with Descartes, where we are only certain of the fact that perfection exists necessarily). With Hegel, it is from a different approach that we must think of essences in their power (*puissance*) to manifest themselves. To the point, one could argue that only from accidental essences and from notable

incoherences can we expect emerging and surprising effects capable of engaging History. I do not think we could consider History in Hegel to be a history of metaphysics. There are dimensions other than those of metaphysics that will carry us to the depths of history. It is in this context that we should understand the status of evil in *The Phenomenology of the Spirit*.

The 'Spirit', therefore, should not be thought as the understanding of God or as the manifestation of human perfection and, in this sense, the term 'Dasein' could help us understand its profound 'inhumanity', keeping in mind that Heidegger also refuses to make Dasein the property of man. Nevertheless, if Dasein is the expression of a world rather than of man, neither the stone nor the animal is shown to be in a relationship with Dasein for Heidegger; whereas in Hegel we can count on inchoative forms of the Spirit (the pebble that causes circles in the water, the dolmen, etc.). The expression 'objective spirit' interests me in this context. Buds and animals reveal spiritual formations to the point that Hegel will look to the buds as a figure of movement and a force of overcoming (*Aufhebung*) that I refuse to accept as a metaphor. And then, if we decide to look at the greatness of the soul, things are not so cosy there either, as every mystic understands. The spirit is no more human in its animal babblings than it is in its access to eternity, which presupposes the death of man. This is the same with Christ who, in dying, drags down man and God alike in his Fall. For all these reasons, I think that we are very far from Heidegger, for whom truth obviously is not only logical nor an affair of correct reasoning, but rather something that dissimulates itself and retreats. There is in Heidegger a veneration of the pre-Socratics, a sort of archaeological phantasm – really, something for the museum – a nostalgia that we do not find in Hegel. Hegel constantly shows that Egypt and Greece do not possess any truth that we have lost or that we must restore with the help of etymology, which is, for me, the summit of humanist preoccupations. In this context, I would add that Heidegger and Nietzsche share philological family relationships – the kind of concerns that we do not find in Hegel at all – a writing that is really based on language, either in its metaphorical veils or in its occult forest clearings. If Hegel is not Nietzschean, it is because of the accidental manner through which he envisages the relationship between Logic and Existence.

Now, the inorganic, for me, means two things. It is, first, in the *Logic*, which I understand on the basis of the *Phenomenology*, a desire to recompose the faculties according to a new arrangement that we can call 'Spirit'. This rearrangement, however, does not have to endure, as

is the case with Heidegger and occasionally with Derrida, a reflection on discourse or on the procedures of language. Hegel refuses to go through language (which nonetheless does not fail to be the most accomplished form of the organism and the organisation of his corpus). I find throughout Hegel, the example and the transversal play of processes that overflow the function of the enunciation and discursive relations as they carry us in the direction of other logics – the logic of a stomach that digests, of an animal that devours, of a plant that poisons, of a spider that sucks the blood of its victim or of a guillotine that cuts off heads. And this travels by roads that are not those of signification – something that occasionally makes Hegel unreadable. This is it: I think that there are functions and functionings in Hegel that we have not been able to appreciate because of the primacy we continue to give, since Nietzsche, to language and to our obstinacy of limiting the *Logic* to the confines of grammar, as well as the proposition that grammatology in particular was supposed to have *deconstructed*. And it seems to me that it is this impoverishing reduction to grammar that Hegel puts out of play when he reflects on the composition of a 'Logic' upon completion of the *Phenomenology*. As for the question of art, he is not explicitly concerned with poetry and tragedy, but with many other forms of visibility where the question will be about a Spirit that is not filtered through the snares of language. The aesthetics that follows shows the anti-humanism that dismantles the relationship of art to imitation and beauty. But this is another point that threatens to take us away from our purpose.

CVB: Permit me to quote you once more:

> Hegel's book displays two planes, each one of which has a different speed of composition: the raging, conflictual series of acting *figures* that we apprehend with the help of events; and another series, which, in every section, reaches a different point of interpretation. This latter series is a repetition that he who acts in History does not see, being unable to read what he does and ignorant of the becoming that he helps hatch. This line of sense occurs 'behind his back'; it is the series of *moments* – the slower and ampler of the two – the pacified thread of which the philosopher-historian is going to follow retrospectively backwards. (Martin 2010b: 130–1)

This way of referring to the two planes makes me think that, according to your reading, the Hegelian planes with their difference prefigure Deleuze's distinction and supplementarity between becoming and history. And you seem to confirm this suspicion when, a few paragraphs earlier, you quote from Deleuze and Guattari's *What is Philosophy?*:

> Hegel powerfully defined the concept through the Figures he created and the Moments he posited. The Figures become parts of the concept because they constitute the aspect through which the concept is created by and in consciousness, through successive minds; whereas the Moments form the other aspect, according to which the concept posits itself and unites minds in the absolute of the Self. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 11–12)

Now, the difference that Deleuze and Guattari postulate between becoming and history is essentially the difference between the virtual and the actual. But then what do you mean to say when you write that 'at the time of the *Phenomenology*, the moorings of this amphibious being have yet to be found: the reconciliation of the two worlds that Hegel senses moving inside him – the real and the virtual – proves to be very far away'? (Martin 2010b: 234–5). Is your qualification of the two worlds – made in terms of the real and the virtual – a mere *lapsus calami*? Did you mean to write, instead, 'the actual and the virtual'? If it were not your intention here to express a point in a Deleuzian garb (whereby both actual and virtual would be real), then you may be saying that, at the time of the *Phenomenology*, the *possible* and the *real* are still far apart from each other. But if your 'real' at this point stands indeed for the actual-real, and your 'virtual' for the virtual-real, your reader may be excused for being confused, since he or she brings to his or her reading the knowledge that the incommensurability between becoming and history, in Deleuze, is not affected by the passage of time. You could perhaps help this reader by further elaborating on the anticipation/promise that you seem to have built around a sentence that begins with an 'unless': 'There would be no logic capable of accounting [for a new, superhuman existence], *unless* a different *Logic* were to be reinvented, with a sense that is no longer terrified of the absurd' (Martin 2010b: 235; my emphasis).

J-CM: Yes, you are right about the two planes to which you refer: they do not adopt the same rhythm. I wanted to show that History, in Hegel's sense, is not a mere succession of facts chained together according to the ternary circulation of what we call dialectics, but that, rather, we are faced with a serial history, which is very different from that of the historians of his time. Serial and qualitative. I would also like to draw attention to the following fact: the word 'dialectics' rarely appears in the text of *The Phenomenology of the Spirit*, and when it does, it is in an extremely minimalist and timid way, as if it were to describe an immanent movement, a process that returns to itself and coils in on itself. It has nothing to do with the meaning that the word has in Plato, Aristotle or Kant, who always use it for their own

specific purposes. But what have Hegel's commentators done? Well, they have discovered dialectics to be ubiquitous, to the point of completely forgetting the incredible and extraordinary events of which Hegel speaks in the *Phenomenology* and in the *Logic*. They have maintained a ternary skeletal structure, believing themselves to be happy and reassured at the illumination of the affair, allowing the rest to be registered as merely decorative. You understand of course that I followed the inverse procedure.

We could forget about the word 'dialectics', that occurs only three times in the *Phenomenology*, and move on, or we could explain it a little – explain why at the level of the *Phenomenology* readers expose themselves to be more Hegelian than Hegel, yet so very stingy with justifications. It was not through me that the reading of Hegel was forced. I tried instead to go back to this emblematic thinker in an amiable way (without ever forgetting the concerns I expressed in my earlier books where the approach is not the same and the criticisms have their place and their justification). There are, then, in Hegel two planes – the pacified plane of moments, and the raging plane of figures that intersect in keeping with a method we could call 'dialectics', provided that we do not forget the infernal virtues of the dialectic to which I alluded in my third response – the wealth of dialects that spring up with it, to the point of obscuring the very exposition of the system. And, of course, I have been thinking of Deleuze's claim in his book on Spinoza that distinguishes the volcanic chain of the 'scolia' from the continuous line of 'propositions' in the *Ethics*. Let us simply say that I could not resist the desire to read Hegel in the way that Deleuze taught me to read Spinoza. Nor could I resist noticing a certain relationship with the acceleration of the last chapter of *The Phenomenology of the Spirit* that places us squarely inside eternity, inaugurating a machine that did not exist earlier – a machine that Hegel calls 'Absolute Knowledge', and which is neither the eternal return nor Bergson's cone. And believe me, this machine operates with an efficacy that we do not find elsewhere. How can we tackle this machine? I must confess that it is a complete mystery and that the 'Absolute Knowledge' is so illogical that until now nobody has been able to tell us what makes it revolve, notwithstanding the declarations that find in it Science, System, etc. It is, indeed, very curious that we forget to ask what Hegel means by 'science' and 'system', and fail to remember that the 'science of the spirit' has nothing to do with what we call 'science' in the domain of matter and nature. Not to mention the fact that objective and subjective logic would not suffice to bring us to the intelligence of absolute logic.

Well then, to answer your question, I would put the 'real' on the side of time, of the chain of time that the moments offer us; whereas the virtual is to be found entirely in leaps and anachronisms. The latter reveals the racing rhythm of figures that intervene in many different moments or places where, like a demon, they were not expected – casual and surprising, sharing in an instance that I would call 'eternity'. The real and the virtual, the moments and the figures interlace time and eternity. The question is – how is this passage realised? Is it in a logical manner? My response is 'yes', if you wish, but on the condition that we understand logic other than in the usual way reserved for this word, in a way that is not exempt from absurdities, as I tried to explain in my fourth reply in showing that 'perfection' does not lead to existence, that it is merely possible and unable to aspire to any virtuality. You could then ask me about the nature of this paradoxical and quantic logic. You yourself suggest the word 'sensation'. This is perfect! It is something that proceeds from the statute of the image (*tableau*), from the circulation of images having become for-themselves – as they pass from the *in itself* to the *for itself* – to the point where they no longer need our brains to survive, having been entirely liberated in a form of pure, almost cinematographic, sensation. That's it. It looks difficult, but this is the point responsible for the monstrous beauty of the whole, a point of tipping over to which we will probably return.

CVB: You wrote some beautiful pages about Antigone – echoing the beautiful pages that Hegel dedicated to her. You spoke of the indispensability of the family in the acquisition of identity; you highlighted the family's ability to make death lose its contingency and accidentality; and you followed Hegel in his discussion of families' capacity to create a space for the desexualised and sublimated love of the sister–brother relationship. Also moving are the pages that you wrote, following Hegel, on the clash between the laws of the city and the laws of the family and on Antigone's double bind. And you went on to designate the relationship between brother and sister as 'a motiveless relationship and a veritable *body without organs*' (Martin 2010b: 137). In a footnote to this designation, you claimed that 'this concept of Gilles Deleuze fits marvelously to the passages that Hegel dedicates to the concept of an essentially non-Oedipal family' (137, n.19). In fact, you suggested that Freud and Lacan failed to read Sophocles with the care that characterises Hegel's reading. Had they done so, they could not have failed to recognise the anti-Oedipal and anti-psychiatric anticipations of *Antigone* (123). I wonder, having read all these claims, whether you

would concede the boldness of your own reading and of your own conclusions. You know well that Lacan's interpretation of *Antigone* has fuelled readings and debates among readers that vigorously challenge the plausibility of attributing 'non-Oedipal' and 'BwO-like' designations to Sophocles' masterpiece. Lacan's reading makes Antigone's appeal to the law of the gods an unsustainable breach of the symbolic order (Lacan 1986). Not to be outdone, Judith Butler counters by discovering in this appeal the scandalous performative disruption and perversion of the symbolic order (Butler 2000: 22). When it comes to what *Antigone* is all about in the Greek tragedy, you know it very well, the interpretations are indeed legion: the intended supplementarity of the laws of the city and the laws of the family have been advocated; Antigone's refusal to assume any responsibility has been emphasised; the claim that the real clash in the tragedy is between the laws of the gods and their prohibition against killing anyone who is a Greek, and the laws of the city, the application of which narrowly governs the affairs of the city itself, has found merit with several readers. All these readings go against yours, and some of them have inspired powerful political agendas. Do you want to take this opportunity to outline the merits of your approach?

J-CM: I must confess that my reading of Hegel kept itself away from what Lacan might have thought. For the little that I know, there are at least two fundamental differences between Lacan and my own complex reading of *Antigone*. On one hand, a reconsideration of Creon and his 'becoming-man' that sidelines the father whose authority I do not think he embodies; and on the other, my impression that, at long last, the young girl – the young woman, the woman in the direction of whom the becoming of the statute mother is being propelled – is about to be liberated. Creon is not adopting a father's attitude any more than Antigone seems to endorse the role of a mother! What Hegel seems to say without pause is that, in this distanciation from the couple father/mother, the brother/sister relationship loses its familial character, as I myself tried to show on the basis of my reading of Derrida's *Glas*. By the same token, it is true that I lift the tragedy of Sophocles out of the economy of the household and therefore out of psychoanalysis in order to place it on the side of the Anti-Oedipus that remains hostile towards the familial romance. We have always known that the Oedipal complex does not work well with the girl and that Freud always had a hard time with this subject. It seems to me that Antigone is the exact counterproof of Oedipus and that Freud omitted the reading of this sequence as he concluded his universal complex with an appeal to castration.

I believe, by the way, that my reading moves away from our habit of naturalising Antigone as a representative of natural right (essentially maternal) and again away from this other tendency to hold Creon culpable and to see him as a paternalist tyrant mobilising an arbitrary or rather positive right as a result of his violence. There is no real opposition in Sophocles' story between natural and positive right. The feminine and the masculine must be liberated from all vestiges of a factical naturalisation; but also Creon, it seems to me, must be credited for liberating the right from the terror of families and for betting on a State that does not place the fathers' slogan justice at the service of legitimising holy wars for the defence of an essentially maternal soil. Creon escapes the temptation of the maternal – justice being claimed in the name of the mother. Everywhere, in all our school lessons, Creon is presented as a horrible chap, a symbol of the coldness of the State, and we rebel at his repudiation of Antigone's gesture, which is so much closer to the heart and to intimate morality. But we then forget that the love that Antigone shows her brother has nothing to do with anything genital; that it is something extra-familial because it does not expect any sexual outcome; that it is a love pure of all *jouissance* – and, if I may put it this way, a love beyond the pleasure principle, in a new sense. We are very far from the incestuous Oedipal situation and I do not think that we take it into account often enough. This text does not work either with Freud's schemes or with Lacan's because the Oedipus complex no longer works in Antigone's situation – the brother and sister have left behind every incestuous consideration, as well as the prohibition itself, rendered universal around Oedipus's name.

Antigone would be at fault if she had allowed herself to sink to the attraction of a natural right, and to become caught in her becoming-woman by a maternal capture looking for ways to save the honour of the family instead of the image – the desexualised image – of the brother who, in fact, she embodied in such a singular manner. It is because of this fault – this aborted destiny of the 'becoming-woman' – that, according to Hegel, the Greek city was unable to keep its democratic promises and allowed itself to be deterritorialised by genetic economies. It is the Roman Empire that, for nomadic reasons, knew how to bring about an extra-familial and extra-conjugal friendship, in a State where the function carried more weight than the honour of the paternal or maternal name. Indeed, 'Caesar' is not a family name. By the way, I think that my reading shows the exit door to structural anthropology and to psychoanalysis, both, for those who know how to read between the lines.

CVB:

> The affair of Christ implies that God becomes man only on the condition that man becomes a superior being, an 'overman', if I am permitted to assume, in an untimely manner, the expression that will become Nietzsche's own. (Martin 2010b: 193)

> God steps outside the limits of His perpetual reclusion as He negates himself as 'One' . . . In such a negation of His retreat, man's approach to God is being prolonged; it is pursued in the vision that God has of Himself – Himself being taken in the hems of His own dissipation and having descended to the point where evil begins to expand. To the point that the eye of man and the eye of God are both open upon the same background . . . as if, without man, God would not be able to reach the knowledge of Himself, and, without God, man could not overcome his all-too-human humanity. (Martin 2010b: 217–8)

In other words, Hegel suggests that the *kenosis* of God is central to the transformation of man. But the death of the mediator reveals that God is not one to come in and help us escape our dire straights. Instead, Hegel, conflating Easter and Pentecost, argues that the death of the mediator becomes the presence of the Spirit. The agony of realising that we humans are finite becomes the realisation that the life lived on the other side of the death of God is what is meant by the life of the Spirit. That may well be a new kind of life that transcends our prior existence. But does it justify the coining of a new term – 'overman' – for this new humanity, along with the anti-humanist rhetoric that this term carries with it? Besides, the bi-conditional that links the transformation of man with the death of God makes me wonder about the place of 'grace' in Hegel's system. My reason for asking is this: Christianity's central claim, I take it, is that soteriologically speaking, man cannot lift himself to salvation by his own bootstraps. When, therefore, I read in your book about the overcoming of man, I need to know whether the overcoming is proclaimed à la Nietzsche (and his bootstraps) or whether Christ is, for Hegel, the one whose death combines the *ef' hapax* (absolute singularity) of his death with the universality of the becoming-Spirit. This is where I would want to see grace coming in. What do you think?

J-CM: This question of grace is interesting. It seems to me that, yes, grace comes from the outside. I mean, it is not human, it hardens in traits and figures that are beyond man and, at the same time, beyond God. Notice that Christianity needed to match it with a 'holy spirit', with light, with a 'son', with a trinity that is barely paternal and borders on heresy. I would like to set aside the Hegelian – and theological – plane in order to make myself understood as I turn toward my earlier work

on eroticism (Martin 2003: 63–9). Grace seems to me to depend on the set of lines that come to drape over a figure. It is an inversion of the Aura. It is not an expression but rather an impression, a print, a nexus of curbs, which meet and produce an intersection that we can call a Subject – a subject as an ensemble of coordinates. Think, for an example, of a Roman orator. He learns gestures, he casts himself in gestures, he acquires the manner of a *dancer* in figures that exist independently of him, as he embodies signs whose signification is received by his body. This could well describe the *ecstasis* that prepares us to receive a place waiting for us, like a scar that we embody. I really think that this is the way to understand Deleuze when, in *The Logic of Sense*, he says that our wound has been waiting for us, and that the event is a surface effect.

In order to understand this point better, let's consider Giacometti's sketches. We see in them a multiplicity of intersecting traits, a veritable ball, an intersection of threads coming from all directions, which, when completed, succeed in creating a portrait. Where then does the figure come from? It did not pre-exist like a substance; rather, it happens like an incorporeal event being incorporated inside a concretisation, a singular concrescence of volutes, like a hurricane that comes progressively to give itself an eye. It is not a face that shines, but rather the lines of the landscape that are being inflected upon it. The inversed aura does not become fused, it does not emanate; rather, it immanates: it is a gravitational collapse of lines that produce a figure as they intersect. Thus, we come nearer to the forces of the outside that are really the Spirit and come from a distance to be joined in the movement of grace.

We can then see that 'Spirit' does not mean 'consciousness' or 'self-consciousness'. On the contrary, the movements of consciousness need the Spirit in order to be concatenated. And this is why man must be really overcome in favour of the impersonal, which is the light that shines when God himself is lost in his own diffraction, much like a universe under expansion or like the *pluriverse* that James knew something about. I see the relationship between all of these with photography or cinema, both of which are arts that capture the intervening of grace. And I wonder whether this is what Hegel means with the notion 'tableau' that circulates in the 'kingdom of the Spirit'. We should come back to this.

However, it seems that this way of helping man and God meet each other amidst this piercing light that conserves and effaces them both is very different from what Nietzsche called 'death of God', and Foucault, 'death of man'. I would say that God dies in the way that a light

bulb burns out in order to liberate the light under which men are frightened/find a new way (*s'effraient*), seized that they are by the sudden entry of becoming (*effraction*), as if they had waited for the event that precedes them. It is interesting that Hegel says that the philosopher is a 'bird of the night'. I cannot stop thinking of the eyes of the barn-owl (*effraie*) – which is the name of a species of owl in French, but also of fright, which is a clearing (*frayage*), a composition of relationships and also a very great fear. Yes, I cannot stop reading Hegel in a Deleuzian way (a bit more grave perhaps than Deleuze's reading), where I can find cinema, image, the art of photography, etc. Does this mean that I force what Hegel really said? It is possible, but I would say that this is a good sign. We should read an author in order to renew him –instead of repeating with the orthodoxy of the friend who always muffles him. This is my way of being Hegel's enemy, by reinventing him as I refuse the readings that have blessed him and tempered him to the point of becoming a caricature. But, at the same time, this way of understanding the light is perfectly in agreement with Hegel's times, especially as we learn that he was the reader of Goethe's *Theory of Colors* (Goethe 1970), and, together with Schelling, he discovered that bodies are electric phenomena. It is, in a certain way, the electrification of the death of God in the universal effusion of a Spirit that reveals. Revelation itself becomes a photographic revelation. But to understand this obligates us to first understand what a concept is for Hegel.

CVB: Your chapter on the Hegelian concept, as it emerges from the pages of the *Phenomenology*, could have been written with equal plausibility and without any addition or subtraction, about the Deleuzo-Guattarian concept, as it emerges from the pages of *What is Philosophy?* The Hegelian concept is not a notion (Martin 2010b: 23); it is not an abstraction that retains the general characteristics of a sample of similar entities (24); it is not placed in the service of classification (25); it is not the result of a subjective intellectual operation (24). It is processual (24); it is an operation of the real itself (24); its function is not to differentiate one set of entities from another, but rather to account for the internal constitution of things and the ability of different processes to have the same rhythm (25–6). Since Hegel, you claim, 'the concept is not an idealization external to things. Rather, it designates the force of creation and destruction – an intimate life' (26). When we turn to Deleuze, we find repeated in his work the bold equation, concepts – events, and the equally bold proclamation of the *eventum tantum* – the (one) event – with its internal differentiation. Two questions, therefore: do you find in Hegel the anticipation of the Deleuzian distinction between the virtual

event and the actual state of affairs? Would such a distinction make the Hegelian Concept virtual? And, second question: where would Hegel and Deleuze differ from one another with respect to the Concept?

J-CM: You are right on many points, but it is not correct to say that I would have written the same things if I were writing on Deleuze's concept. With Deleuze, we are inside a radical immanence and this is already the case with Hegel. This is indisputable – it is a philosophical fact. We then discover in both situations the necessity to generate the concept on the basis of experience. There is a Hegelian insistence in the idea of experience, which by itself merits an entire monograph. But we do not deal with the same experience in the works of the two philosophers. Deleuze's 'transcendental empiricism' requires the virtual; that is, a form of different/ciation that we do not find in the Hegelian movement. At this point, we should reread Deleuze, in order, at long last, to clarify the proper way to insist on the notions of immanence and the outside – the two concepts that are not always well understood and that may even seem contradictory to one another. Even before we read *What is Philosophy?* we can easily grasp that the Deleuzian conceptual matrix is different/ciation with respect to which the pair, virtual/actual, is what permits it to gain momentum. If I may put it this way, with Deleuze, unlike Hegel, we have an idea of reality that is much more that of Borges. There are in Deleuze many strata that attach themselves to the events that are actualised. I am referring to the double lineage of the event in Deleuze, wherein the virtual haunts the actual without becoming concrete – an immense chaotic machine that Hegel would not have been able to conceive because he did not know the same outside – perhaps he would even refuse this outside. It seems to me that Hegel makes use of the negation and non-being in places where Deleuze discovers the outside. Now, if we come to *What is Philosophy?*, the concept appears to be more of a skeletal structure, a set of fragments that are combined in a constructivist way, a dry consolidation that Hegel would not share either – he who prefers the round biscuits, the circles of circle, the intersections and fusions more than the additions and the arrangements of exteriorities. This too merits further development. The *Logic* would give us a better idea; but this a project for the future.

As far as I am concerned, there are many things that differ, but I can provisionally sort them by a rather crude division – the distinction between the infinite and Chaos. Hegel knows nothing of the Chaos that Deleuze experiments with because he is positioned on a different scale of time. We will say the same thing about Spinoza, whom Deleuze admires. It is not the same mental geography and, as a result, the

tenor of the concept would not be of the same nature. We should not forget that a concept, for Deleuze, will be added to components that are not themselves concepts: these are the functions of science and the compositions of the arts, in the company of which the concept will braid singularities. This is equally true for Hegel, but in an encyclopaedic way; that is, through the cycle, whereas Deleuze works by means of a dramatisation based on bifurcations and networks.

Well, this point is essential. Even if I were to discuss resemblances, the fact is that the concept enters structures that do not result from philosophy – the non-philosophical adventure. Deleuze's concept of multiplicity will come to be related to the fractal functions of mathematics and to the fissures of contemporary art that Hegel fully ignores. For me, these are not the same machines; but having tried both, sometimes I love to accelerate on the one as I do with the other, to negotiate bends as I go through the same motions. This is inevitable! It is a way of planting in the Hegelian garden a few Deleuzian shoots that will grow from the middle and slightly derail the orbits of *The Phenomenology of the Spirit*. This is very exciting for someone who is at the controls and finds an old machine on which to take a joyride.

I conclude with another point that appears to be Hegel's invention. The concept, for him, is the '*Begriff*'. It is like a claw mark, something haptic: it is not a question of putting my hands on the object in order to take hold of it; it is rather to take an impression of it, take the fingerprints, and memorise the grooves. I work with grooves in a book I called *Le Corps de l'empreinte*. It is a book on the art of photography. I believe that the Hegelian sublation is a photographic process, a capturing of shadows and lights that the Absolute Knowledge will dilute, and absorb like a siphon. Here is an idea, an image of the criminal machine that Hegel calls 'Absolute Knowledge' – the Absolute being a solution within which events come undone in order to leave marks that the concept will internalise. But with this in mind, we already move to another circle whose speed becomes infinite (like a rapid sequence of blinks).

CVB: In the concluding chapter of your final scene, 'The Survival of the Image', you say:

> The Hegelian Concept creates the possibility of re-animating all the ectoplasms of whatever appears. This almost technical feat does not have to wait for the invention of movies that it nevertheless inspires. It finds its first manifestations, in Hegel's time, in the strange creation of Faraday's wheel, capable of connecting sketches that are separated from one another. Their rotation induces a real perception of movement, to the point that it renders

> possible the famous re-creation of the galloping horse . . . This particular form of circularity . . . permits its animations to acquire a virtual eternity. (Martin 2010b: 231)

You are, therefore, crediting the Hegelian Concept with the ability to anticipate Nietzsche's vision of the eternal recurrence – this absolutely novel notion of movement that you call 'mental movement' (Martin 2010b: 231). In the next page of your book, you introduce the notion of the 'spiritual automaton' with these words:

> The entire Preface of *The Phenomenology of the Spirit* celebrates this spiritual automaton, capable of conferring upon the image the appearance of reportage – a reportage of our silhouettes, dead forever, yet also able to project and to maintain themselves upon an absolute and inalterable support. (Martin 2010b: 232)

Now, the notion of the 'spiritual automaton' comes to us from Leibniz and Spinoza and, as you know very well, plays an important role in Deleuze's attempt to leave subjectivism and humanism behind in the context of his quest for the identity of being and thought freed from idealism. It follows, therefore, that the *ordo geometricus* of Spinoza's *Ethics* is not a whimsical choice, a mere pedagogical device chosen to impress the mentally undisciplined. It is a demonstration that the laws of physics (body) and the laws of logic (mind) work in tandem; in other words, that being and thinking are identical in the incessant actualisation of the virtual. Now, you argued in several places of your book that Hegel's becoming leaves ample space for contingency. And we know that the presence of the spiritual automaton in Deleuze's philosophy also does not prevent him from giving contingency a royal place. This is, I take it, the main reason why 'vice-diction' assumes the place of prediction in his writings. Would you mind explaining here how the spiritual automaton can leave room for contingency in Hegel – or in Deleuze, for that matter?

J-CM: My response will attempt to cover your points in general terms. The Absolute, for me, is a process that requires a 'physics of thought', a machine that revolves around itself in order to generate a powerful non-organic life. This life, once it moves beyond a certain regime, displays a dynamism that comes from contingency but has an absolutely necessary validity – a kind of dicethrow that is the inverse of Mallarmé's or, as you say, a process of vice-diction. To write a philosophy book, as far as I am concerned, is not to ask whether one becomes famous, whether anyone is going to read us, whether the cover is beautiful, or whether it will lead us to the vocation of an academic. Rather, it is the creation of a kind of grace that has us feel something rise from the depths of

our thinking – something that does not come from us or, at least, if the idea is ours, that it is able to communicate with something else that moves us and transforms us into an insane machine. Herein lies the contemplative aspect of philosophy. The philosopher is not a merchant of books: he is the one who fabricates a probe, a lunar lemma that gives us a foothold in a wild region, asking all along whether others would be willing to embark upon the same boat and whether there would be machines – better lubricated than himself – able of do it. I think that Nietzsche's eternal return, Bergson's cone and Spinoza's *conatus* are examples of this sort; and we could, of course, find others. This is what interests Deleuze in the 'body without organs'. Bergson himself, in *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, did say that 'the essential function of the universe . . . is a machine for the making of gods' (Bergson 1977: 317), which is indeed a very curious formula. And I also think that Hegel, whenever he speaks of 'Absolute Knowledge', does not wish to inform us that he is a man of science or that reading him would teach us anything. Absolute Knowledge is not positivism. It does not offer the certainty of facts. It is nothing but a pathway, a door that opens on a life that will come from the animal or from desire, but a life nevertheless capable of finding its niche in regions that are no longer merely organic. It is not an affair of the sublimation of instincts in a secondary process, but rather a sufficiently direct construct inside which instinct is unloaded onto the eternal quiet, and thereafter drags to his death its carrier along with the machine that brought him there. To drink from the cup of the infinite, the way that *The Phenomenology of the Spirit* concludes, is not a small affair. And as we drink from it, the problem of proving that we are eternal is not really important to the philosopher, who is not a theologian. Rather, what is important is to live from now on with the feeling that we are somehow eternal, experiencing in our own body that a line of the universe has been crossed and that it behoves us to follow the spiritual automaton adept at creating it.

I think that this might resonate with Williams James's themes on faith and pragmatism. It is a question of regime. The spiritual automaton, on low gear, permits us to hear all the cracklings of its mechanism, like an association of ideas that would be achieved as the machine stalls, with all the failings that this entails. Even in Spinoza, we must find the suitable speed. The first genre of knowledge is a miserable failure where all the dented wheels bump into one another and squeak. With the second genre, the outlook improves, but the contraption does not stop spattering. Only when the machine performs at its best does the automatism create a new kind of life. There are levers that exist in order

to launch the machine beyond its own speed. It seems to me that, with respect to Hegel, this machine does not follow the wheels of the chain of ideas that parallel the affects of bodies – nor does it follow Spinoza's. Instead of fabricating the automatism of the idea turning away from the monstrous imagination, the Germans experience with Spinoza a renewal pursued entirely on behalf of the image – especially with respect to Goethe, Hölderlin and Schelling. Briefly, I would say that Goethe is the first to put movement inside the idea, and also inside the image. The image becomes animated, the disks are colourful and he discovers the play of colours. He fabricates small machines that produce black and white by having them rotate on their axis. Now, the image begins to move. And this happens the moment Hegel begins to write. And then, only a few years after the composition of the *Phenomenology*, Faraday invents the wheel – a spiritual chalice, which, with the alternations of black-and-white bands, produces incorporeal and virtual effects, as well as movements by means of which the horses dance and the birds fly – as types of magical lanterns. This is the Absolute Knowledge, a circulation of tableaus registering and collecting the world's scratches and sweepings inside a bowl where it will be reflected. This is not the cinema; it is the cinema that becomes possible from then on, what the cinema has available to be presented and actualised. It is the intellectual machine that explains why we started making movies. Indeed, when we read Deleuze's books on the cinema, cinema becomes very exciting and we like to push the transformations of movement and time a little further. I replied without breaking down your question into its components in order not to lose its spirit. What is certain is that I read the chapter on Absolute Knowledge as if it were a photogrammatic whole unrolling history, much like a black-and-white silent film could have done. It was entirely fascinating and unexpected . . .

CVB: In recognising Deleuze as the thinker of the transcendental understood as a sort of ungrounding, Miguel de Beistegui (Beistegui 2004: 21), by implication, provides us with an excellent characterisation of a philosophy of difference that would be worthy of its name. Difference, in order to be more than a mere difference between two identities, must be the transcendental condition of the endless ungrounding of being. No longer referring back to subjectivity or to the conditions of possibility of experience, the transcendental, in a philosophy of difference that would not revert to identity, would be the agent of the actual generation and production of phenomena that take place in a virtual time and a virtual space, no longer bearing a relationship to the well-known Kantian forms of intuition. This point

can also be expressed succinctly as follows: philosophies of difference are in name only philosophies of difference as long as they cannot reach for, and think, difference in itself – a process which is the indivisible arrangement of a differentiating/differenciated real process. However, this process cannot be thought without the simultaneous grasp of the sort of intensive time that inherits the space left unclaimed after time – with and after Kant – succeeded in coming off its hinges. As our discussion up to this point indicates, Hegel's concept is difference differentiating itself – difference in itself. What is left to be determined is whether or not Faraday's wheel and Goethe's experiments with colour are able to support an argument for the presence of intensive time in Hegel's *Phenomenology* as well as a vision of the eternal recurrence of the different. You seem to think that the vision already exists. You write:

> The circle, the wheel infinitely circulates a retinue of dead images, which, thanks to their being superimposed on one another, are capable of moving in one and the same place. This particular form of circularity of the optical wheel that Faraday imagined promises its animations a virtual eternity: it shows the galloping animal that revolves without beginning or end, when the origin returns endlessly. (Martin 2010b: 231)

It does not seem to matter that the 'dead images' that rotate are not in themselves the moving images of a cinema-to-come. The symbol of the eternal return has already made its presence felt. Would the reader then be justified to conclude that, for you, between Hegel and Deleuze, when it comes to a question of being philosophers of pure difference, the difference is in the details – a matter of degree rather than of nature? And if this is the case, how can we help but conclude that your book proves Deleuze to be mistaken in his assessment of the distance that separated him from Hegel?

J-CM: I do not think that Deleuze was mistaken in keeping his distance from Hegel. Their difference is in fact a difference in nature. The mechanisms are not the same and the histories skirt each other, being nevertheless suspended from a common transcendental plane from which they draw their inspiration and are detached, much like lightning is from the black sky (here I repeat the formula of *Difference and Repetition*). Beginning with these traces that fuse together in all directions, I would say that Hegel came to know a more important becoming in North America than in France, especially through an entire series of nineteenth-century thinkers that led to James's pluralism. As for Deleuze – no matter what critics have to say – he seems to me to be closer to Ravaisson, to Bergson and perhaps to Schelling, himself

a reader of Spinoza. The genealogies, therefore, are not the same at all. But there are bridges and parallelisms that I made use of in order to pass from the system of 'negative difference' to Deleuze's more affirmative plan. I would say that there is a plethora of Anglo-American thinkers, from Bradley to Royce, who are not in the analytic tradition and who could help us work out a new image of thought. There are necessarily differences of nature between the Hegelian landscapes and the wild landscapes of the Deleuzians – similar to the differences between continents – but there are also passages and discoveries to be made as we circulate between the two, in a fault line that would contribute to the encounter between the continental and North American philosophies, between literature and the cinema. The real centre of thought for the future is here – a *pluriverse* with pathways that diverge, but also intersect one another in the elaboration of a new machine intending to explore spaces and times of different dimensions, like Royce's map which is self-contained, but its coordinates become deformed as we alter the scales. Royce was able to invent a fantastic world on the basis of the disquieting mathematical speculations on the subject of the infinite being reflected inside the finite and its parts. This is what interests me and this could open a new line of research and writing after my forthcoming book on Derrida.

Notes

1. Translated by Constantin V. Boundas and Susan Dyrkton.
2. See Robert Sinnerbrink (2006) who counts Judith Butler, Catherine Malabou and Slavoj Žižek among those who find Deleuze's and Hegel's positions on dialectics to be compatible, in the last instance, and Brian Massumi, Hardt and the majority of Deleuze's commentators, who hold the positions to be incommensurable.

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Introduction: The Smooth and the Striated

Flora Lysen and Patricia Pisters

A Thousand Plateaus' '1440: The Smooth and the Striated' introduces smoothness and striation as a conceptual pair to rethink space as a complex mixture between nomadic forces and sedentary captures. Among the models Deleuze and Guattari describe for explicating where we encounter smooth and striated spaces, the maritime model presents the special problem of the sea (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 479). The sea is a smooth space par excellence: open water always moved by the wind, the sun and the stars, nomadically traversable by noise, colour and celestial bearings. Increased navigation of the open water resulted in demands for its striation. Although Deleuze and Guattari note that this took hold progressively, the year 1440, when Portuguese discoverers introduced the first nautical charts, marked a turning point in the striation of the sea. Maps with meridians, parallels, longitudes, latitudes and territories gridded the oceans, making distances calculable and measurable. It meant the beginning of the great explorations – and of the transatlantic slave trade and the expansion of the European State apparatus. The smooth and the striated concern the political and politics.

While the smooth and the striated are not of the same nature and *de jure* oppositional, Deleuze and Guattari indicate that *de facto* they only exist in complex mixed forms. Moreover, the smooth and the striated work in different domains. If the sea is the spatial field par excellence that brings out smoothness and striation, art is perhaps the domain that can give the most varied and subtle expression of the complex dynamics between them. The present collection investigates the smooth and the striated in the broad field of artistic production. It was instigated by the Third International Deleuze Studies Conference

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in Amsterdam (2010) that focused on the connections between art, science and philosophy. Along with conference papers, the role of art was explored through the work of participating artists and in a curated exhibition, *The Smooth and the Striated*. This exhibition focused on the constant interplay between delineating and opening forces in the works of the eight participating contemporary artists. Together, the installations, videos, drawings and photographs spurred a wealth of new connections and ideas in relation to the concepts of smoothness and striation: the artworks touched upon the solidification of historical memory and the transformation of ever growing archival material; the striation of subterranean city space; the politics of vast demographic datasets; the visualisation of scientific patents; and more.[1]

Similar to the exhibited artists in the context of the Deleuze Studies Conference, the authors in this volume think with art to shed new and interdisciplinary light upon the concepts of smoothness and striation, and, conversely, upon the way the smooth and the striated can give important insights into artistic practices. The smooth and the striated directly address processes in (social, political, geographical, biological) life, taken up in philosophy and art. Most of the contributions in this volume discuss the concepts of the smooth and the striated in relation to specific artworks that, in Claire Colebrook's words, 'are not representations of images *of* life', but, if we consider the emergence of the genesis of art and philosophy, can be understood as 'something of life's creative potential' (Colebrook 2006: 30). Hence, the singular artworks or artistic practices are not to be taken as illustrations of the concepts but as singular ways of embodying or expressing the various aspects that the smooth and the striated envision. 'If we *intuit* the forces that produce any single work of art or any single concept, then we might begin to approach singularity as such: the power of making a difference' (Colebrook 2006: 30). The essays in this special issue contribute to this power of difference in the complex interweaving between the smooth and the striated in its philosophical and artistic dimensions.

In the opening article, Eric Alliez argues for a conception of contemporary art theory as diagrammatic agency that differs from the aesthetic regime of contemporary art as defined by Jacques Rancière. The latter describes a regime in which the experience of art is always organized according to the image-metaphor. In contrast, contemporary art very often disorganizes the image, expressing directly the powerful forces of inorganic life (that are then connected to other assemblages of power). Ernesto Neto's sculptural environment *Leviathan Toth* (2006)

produces a semiotics of intensities that breaks through the image of power of the State by undoing the image with a read thread and white cloth. Smoothness is expressed in a non-organic Body without Organs, which is a Body without Image. While Alliez looks at the force-signs that are produced in the smooth spaces of contemporary art, Jay Hetrick returns to the question of nomadic art by retracing Deleuze's understanding of Riegl's haptic space through a reading of Benjamin's concept of *Kunstwollen* and the value of minor art forms that are able to produce a 'shock to thought', touching the spectator directly in close vision and haptic space. Hetrick gives significant emphasis to the role of cinema in modernism, the *kinaesthetic*, as moving sensation at the origin of all modern art.

After Eric Alliez' and Jay Hetrick's closer look at genealogies of art theory in relation to nomadic diagrammatics of intensive forces and movements, Colin Gardner and Todd Satter present important alternatives to conventional, modernist art-historical readings of painting and architecture. Gardner turns attention to the pre-eminent modernist painter, Barnett Newman, to show how the conventional formalist understanding of his large colourfield canvases fails to account for Newman's intricate relation to time and temporality. Reading with Deleuze and contra the famous formalism of modernist art critic Clement Greenberg, Gardner's Newman is a painter of *sites* of time; time is the event of the picture itself. Gardner proposes to read Newman's pictorial invention named 'zip' as the aesthetic figure that brings about this temporal sensation and a glimpse of the infinite. In a similar vein, Todd Satter's alternative, nomadic reading of the work of James Stirling unveils an underexposed side of architectural modernism. Opposing a dominant functionalist discourse, Stirling's sites generate a dynamic interplay between extensive (spatial) and intensive (temporal) forces in fragmented and indeterminate architecture, one that resituates embodiment and propagates assemblages between subjects and the environment.

Two artistic practitioners and scholars, designer Guy Keulemans and artist Charlotte Knox-Williams, argue for a dynamic interplay between theory and artistic practice. Deleuzian theory, for Knox-Williams, needs to be activated in, with and through art practice. By interweaving reflections of her own studio practice in film and drawing with thoughts on memory in Deleuze and Bergson, Knox-Williams' essay causes actual slippages and snags, thereby expounding on attention and inattention, matter and memory, on different, interlinking levels. In a different way, Guy Keulemans puts Deleuzian theory to use in several case studies

of generative design. He considers special approaches in designing yachts, vases and chairs to point to different trajectories and links between designers, input and output. Deleuze's emphasis on open-ended possibilities is important for understanding generative design as constituted ofterms in play.

The last three contributions to this volume focus explicitly on the different body politics that concern forces of smoothing and striating. Asli Özgen Tuncer takes as her starting point the activity of walking as a way to explore boundaries and openings in striated spaces. In a reading of several films by Agnes Varda, she identifies the body of the female protagonists as the embodiment of encounters with different types of striations such as the operations of a society of spectacle, the social pressure involved in settling down, and the process of aging. In this way Özgen Tuncer discusses a particular feminist body politics that Varda articulates in her films as nomadic resistance through an encounter with the outside world, expressed in the bodies of her heroines and through her cinematographic language. Zach Horton's essay investigates body politics though the work of 'hunger artists' Franz Kafka and Steve McQueen. He demonstrates how the fasting body of Kafka's 'Hunger Artist' creates a Body without Organs that resists the normal organization of the organism (and smoothes out the stratified body) while being captured by the powers of capitalism-spectacle. In his film *The Hunger* Steve McQueen not only shows the fasting and starving body of IRA-activist Bobby Sands (Michael Fassbender) as a BwO, but cinematographically he also presents the prison, striated place par excellence, as a giant BwO. As such, the body of the protagonist multiplies, spills over into the audience and traces the intensities for new resistances to come. Jean Hillier closes this volume with an investigation of the liquid spaces of the work of two contemporary artists, Antony Gormley's *Another Place* and Olafur Eliasson's *Your Watercolour Machine*. While subjected to countless striations through state regulations and institutional forces, both works invite the spectator to engage with assemblages of water, light, sound and metal that provoke smoothing effects through the vibrations and sensations of matter and non-organic life. Inviting us to embark among the waves they entice us, as Eliasson maintains, 'to consider everything from the perspective of waves'. And so, at the end of this volume and after having encountered a variegated spectrum of organic and non-organic embodiments that all art practices seem to call for, we return to the sea. The sea as work of art, one of these 'other places' that engages us more intensely with the smooth and the striated.

Note

1. See www.thesmoothandthestriated.wordpress.com

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Diagrammatic Agency Versus Aesthetic Regime of Contemporary Art: Ernesto Neto's Anti-Leviathan[1]

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Abstract

Ernesto Neto's installation at the Panthéon in Paris, *Leviathan Toth* (2006), brings us into a semiotics of intensities that does not belong to the 'aesthetic regime' as described by Jacques Rancière but rather to a Diagrammatic Agency of Contemporary Art. In this case study, the latter is constructed *after* Deleuze and Guattari – from a politics of the Body without Organs critically and clinically identified to a Body without Image.

Keywords: Diagrammatic, Leviathan, State-Form, Body without Image, coenaesthesic penetrable non-object, non-organic life, politics of experimentation

> After the First World War, I said : Sovereign is the one who decides on the 'State of Exception'; after the Second World War, thinking of my own death, I say now: 'Sovereign is the one who has the waves of space at his disposal.'
>
> Carl Schmitt, to Ernst Hüsmert, December 1984

> . . . the great Leviathan is that one creature in the world which must remain unpainted to the last.
>
> Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick*

> The IMAGE-grip is dislocated and a more fundamental element emerges . . . in short, IMAGE is not the work's supreme motive or unifying end.
>
> Hélio Oiticica, Block Experiments

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In the immense emptiness and sepulchral chill of the Panthéon, it seems to emerge, suddenly, like a ballooning, billowy suspension of innumerable artificial columns veiled in a delicate white material (stretchable Lycra), whose distended bases, which bulge with faintly perfumed ballast, descend randomly to many levels or reach as far as the ground. This forest of sorts is attached to the vaulting of the Panthéon like some monstrous parasite, in a sort of reverse shot to the strict alignment of the building's columns. High up, hanging liana-columns pass through holes in immense sheets of Lycra stretched out between the four branches of the Panthéon in an uneven sinuous network with long, undulating pockets that are constricted or bloated, and to which a number of shafts are also connected. Its capacities exceeded, the eye is led to *contain*, *at a distance*, this body that is radically heterogeneous both to the place that it invades and to any identifiable reality. It attempts to encompass it by means of an *aesthetic metaphor* – that of some giant, monstrously octopus-white whale whose entrails are distended and swollen from devouring the Panthéon.

Metaphorisation confers the status of a half-figurative, half-abstract *image* – and therefore the character of a description (such as 'the innumerable suspensions of an inverted and parasitical forest') – on what is otherwise unidentifiable and whose radical alterity, in relation to image-effects, poses the question of knowing if it is *still* of an *aesthetic* order. According to Jacques Rancière, there is aesthetics when, breaking with all representative agreement – including the *immediately* metaphorical agreement between the sayable and the visible that 'figures' it – the 'image' becomes a 'theatre of defiguration' as a free play of 'form-signs' or 'phrase-images' wherein discourse has the double function of instituting the visibility of new disruptive forms and the intelligibility which surmounts their chaotic potentialities. It is to this dialectical play of textual excess with regard to the defiguring/defigured life of forms that Rancière has given the name 'aesthetic regime', in so far as it participates in a metaphorics that becomes superior at every point by renewing in a meta-descriptive sense the Schillerian principle of a *logos* identical to a *pathos* (Rancière 2007). One will not fail to notice here that a certain highly contemporary aesthetic turn takes place, or displaces itself, in this post-romantic regime. It is in relation to this *imagery* that it is necessary, at the outset, to distance ourselves.

I. Aesthetics Versus Diagrammatics

This said, it cannot be denied that our initial descriptive approach to Neto's installation for the Autumn Festival of Paris (2006), which

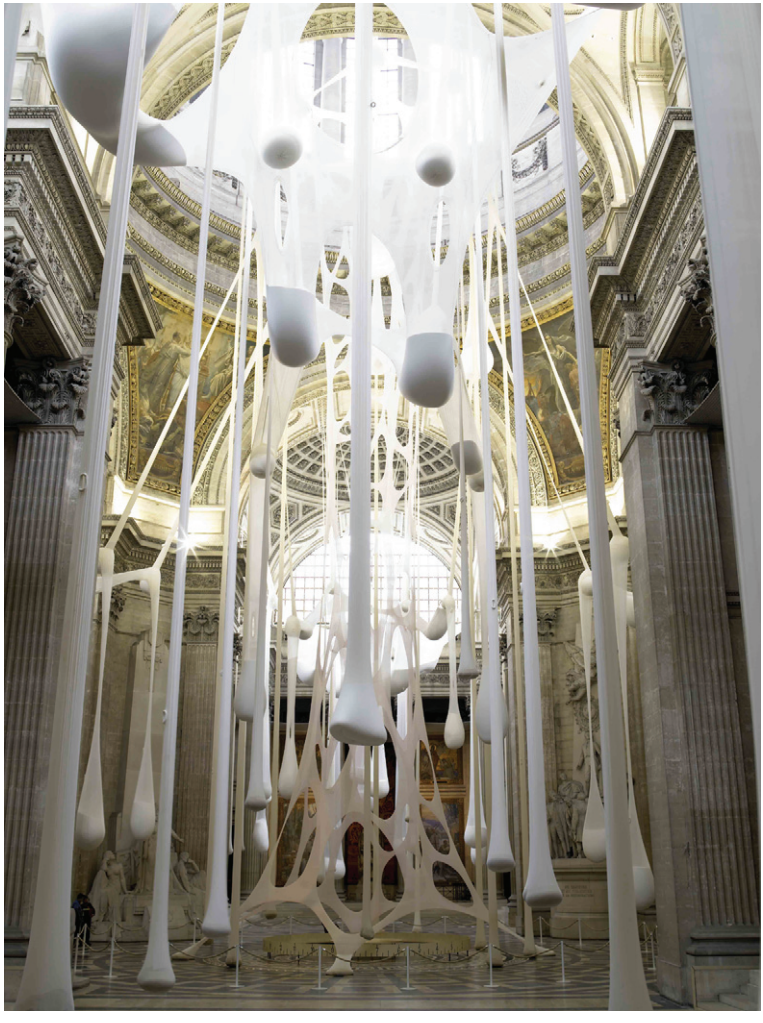


Figure 1. Ernesto Neto, *Leviathan Thot*, 2006, Pantheon, Paris. Photo: Marcus Wagner. Courtesy of the artist; Galeria Fortes Vilaça, São Paulo; and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, NY

seems intent on *metamorphosising* its inevitably optical, distant, static, monumental capturing in view, presents itself as a heterogeneous *chaining together* of metaphors (vegetable, architectural, landscape, animal, biological…). But one could *imagine* other equally (in)adequate metaphors to whose descriptions the installation would lend itself (under such and such an *aspect*), whilst evading them globally. And perhaps it should be noted that, in their own 'theatrical' way, photographic images

precipitate and aestheticise the putting into image of the installation, by fixing (it in) spectacularly distanced long or close-up shots. It remains the case that the multiplication of metaphors or images that are heterogeneous to one another, and the possibility of interpreting them as the index of a mode of assemblage or of proliferating chains that is not of the order of the image, nonetheless poses the question of their (non-)relation to the image. Thus, if for Rancière 'the intensity-image is not a visual intensification, [but] a differential intensification [indicating that there] is image, aesthetically speaking, whenever there is an intensive leap from one register to the other', it is still in order to propose that 'the wheel of metaphors… is the truth of the singular image' (i.e. which pluralises or dialectises its forms). 'The image', he continues, 'always speaks transformation, it is, then, the operator of a regime of metamorphosis… that is what is characteristic of the image in the aesthetic regime of the arts' (Rancière 2009: 233–4). An aesthetic regime in which the play of metaphors becomes the motor of the metamorphosis, which in its turn animates the image-metaphor, derogates the intensity whose differential only plays between regimes of forms that are discursively implicated and complicated: relation, non-relation, or relation of non-relation to the image… Relaunched by *Leviathan Toth*, the title of Ernesto Neto's installation at the Panthéon, is at first an enigmatic linking of two names, that in turn poses the question of its relation to statements (*énoncés*).

However, everything changes from the moment that the spectator becomes an ambulant incorporator: he or she becomes a sensori-motor *component* of this body, which ingests him or her, and into which s/he is plugged. The spectator experiences this body – which is defined only by the set of tensions which animate it (tractions, suspension, stretching, inflation, constrictions, torsions) – in a coenaesthesic (rather than kinaesthesic[2]) and tensive manner. But make no mistake: coenaesthesic deambulation is not a way of experiencing the immediacy of the naked, sensible presence of a body suspended in space or the properties of a hybrid material that would carry us along in the special effects of a *materia informis*. Hence it *is not* the bearer of an aesthetic experience, at least in the primary sense of a pure sensible apprehension. It is, rather, the way in which we sense, in the first place, a mobilising energetic potential that acts on us in the manner of a field of forces, independently of any sort of discursive mediation or imaginary transport, but in and through the *semiotically machined agency* (*agencement*) in situ *of tensions* (we are in the Panthéon…). And it is through this potentiality, which envelops us with the inkling of forces that pass into sensation, that

what one must resolve to call *a powerful non-organic life* is given to us to undergo in our own Brain-Body movement. A powerful non-organic life that 'overflows' the immanent but limited, fleeting but ceaselessly relaunched experience that we have of it, or rather which traverses us. Via this 'neurotic' entrance into the installation, deambulation *starts up* what can only be 'interpreted' by beginning to experience the diagram of forces stretched out above our heads and around us – as we would experience 'the intrusion of another world into the visual world of figuration' (Deleuze 2003: 100). Absolutely *disorganised* by the most direct connection with the body – the coenaesthesic corporeality – the installation puts everything in tension and in motion, the visible that it expresses (what it feels and enacts in the sensation without distance that put it in motion) and the virtual that it constructs in *realising* the strange operation to which it is submitted.

One might reproach us with extending the Deleuzian diagram well beyond its pictorial usage. But one will equally understand that Rancière can reproach Deleuze precisely for 'short-circuit[ing] the work of metaphor' whilst the diagram, following Rancière, 'only makes visible if its labour is rendered equivalent to that of metaphor, if words construct such equivalence' in separating the presence in(side) art of 'any epiphany of the present' (Rancière 2007: 82). But this is to postulate the possibility of an equivalence between the work of forms, even if it is dynamic or dialectic (the work of the sayable and hence metaphorisable[3]) and the (non-discursive and post-discursive) work of forces. Now, the dynamic/dialectic of *forms-signs* animating the *aesthetic regime* cannot in any way be equivalent to an energetics of forces because this participates in a completely different regime, the *diagrammatic agency*. It doesn't aim at the negation of forms and the denegation of signs (participating, for example, in the symbolic montage of the Panthéon). Rather it aims at fusing and deterritorialising them as *forces-signs* (which make the referential territorialisation of significance and iconic territorialisation of interpretance of the Panthéon take flight). Carried off in this *semiotics of intensities* (Guattari's formula), 'information' fissures and is dissociated from the discursiveness in which it was caught (its intelligibility is suspended, scrambled, thrown into crisis). The work of the diagram, then, doesn't consist in putting the chaotic genesis of a pure visibility of forms into presence, even if they are mobilized by a spectator who is equally mobile in an 'environmental participation'. It tends to the 'capture of forces', to making 'insensible forces [anaesthetized in the symbolic semiology of the national monument] sensible'. The real stake of this agency (*agencement*) of forces, in itself a-signifying and

non-discursive, is to engage a 'diagnosis of our current becomings' in a *politics of experimentation*, a politics of experimentation which *really* begins with the production of novel conjunctions in the tissue of fluxes of materials and of signs… It is not that metaphor must be ignored, but instead of having the agency of the 'work' fall back on a metaphorical displacement (the equivalence reductive of forces and idealising of forms, appealing to an imaginary discursiveness), it must be relaunched on the body by investing the process of enunciation which animates the formation of statements, engaging metaphoricity itself and the matter-sense of statements in a semiotics of sensation. Signs here do not form signifying chains transported into the imaginary by 'metaphor', but half-coded, half-decoded chains. They form Markov chains, connecting elements of every kind (words, figures, fragments of the architecture or installation, a whole multi-sensoriality mixed with a world of analogons and schemas and affects) that are caught up directly in 'physical' effects in which every kind of real distinction between form of expression and form of content is abolished. It confers on signs a new material power of decoding which destratifies the space (physical, symbolic, discursive, institutional) in which it is inscribed by rendering sensible the trans-semiotic presence of insensible/anaesthetised forces.

In Neto's installation it would therefore be a matter of something completely different to an 'image', in the sense of an aesthetic *mise-en-scène*. An aesthetic *mise-en-scène* would be charged with 'un-veiling' an invisibility in a dialectic of hiding and showing internal to the image, or between images, or between the visible and the sayable. This invisible would be at one and the same time both the truth and the guarantee of the aesthetic operations of the *mise-en-scène*, even if this were at the cost of a permanent putting back into play of its operations (as it is with the sublime, for example). Rather Neto's installation is instead a matter of an *optically impenetrable* work which would in truth be better defined using two Brazilian passwords of the 1960s. It is a *coenaesthesically / signaesthesically 'penetrable non-object'* (*nao-objeto penetravel*). Lygia Clark and Helio Oiticica, in whose descendence Neto's entire oeuvre is situated, effectively made use of these expressions to think the 'total incorporation (in-corporation) of what one previously saw as environmental', according to a formula Oiticica used in his Notes on what he ends up calling the *ready constructible*. He presents this as the 'proposition of a meta-sculpture or a *new perception* going from the sculptural [*vinda da escultorica*] to a sort of art simultaneously situated on the ground and in the air' (Oiticica 1978 [1992]: 200). Neto's installation can be *penetrated* and *re-constructed* from everywhere and

from all directions as it has neither beginning nor end. Certainly there is a centre, but of decentering and axes which derive from it but only to be twisted out of joint. *Leviathan Toth* is a 'counter-installation' or an 'environmental appropriation' (in Oiticica's words). It doesn't seek to profit from the space of the Panthéon in order to *exhibit itself* (environmental art), or to exhibit its *heterogeneity*, in a symbolic or dialectical relationship to its environment. Rather, it is *in situ* that *Leviathan Toth* acts or agitates but so as to take on the *site-specificity* of the Republic's temple and locus of national memory 'conceived ideally as the centre of the territory, the heart of the nation' (Ozouf 1997: 155).

II. Dismantling the Image of Power

Consequently, Operation-Neto modulates into a *critical and clinical* operation. Critically, *Leviathan Toth* confronts the building and its sheer size and grapples with it by placing all its physical and metaphysical coordinates into and under tension. The operation thus engages with nothing less than the *image of power* related to the *power of the image* which animates it and gives it a discursive existence – because the *architectural denunciation* of the Panthéon produced by Neto doesn't occur without the (Hobbesian) *metaphysical enunciation* that is projected onto it. This enunciation is de-posed in the title of the 'contra-' installation in the manner of a '*d/enunciation*' reinforced by the mysterious *Toth* appended to it, and the no less strange orthography adopted by Neto for the Egyptian god Thoth.[4] Clinically, it sustains the claim to the affirmative dis-position of the operation: to the extent that this putting into tension is itself subtended by the fundamentally energetic nature of the process of environmental appropriation whose non-discursive grasping of being (*prise d'être*) liberates its effect as a 'counter-image' from the labour of the negative within the image as much as with regard to a purely critical relation to its aesthetic forms so as to introduce the intensive fact of a 'powerful non-organic life'.[5] Between the critical and the clinical, the pathology of the Body without Organs can thus awaken the anoptic quality of the Body without Image in a biopolitics of space which dismisses every metaphor of the invisible.

The part of Neto's counter-installation occupying the space of the Panthéon presents itself as a sort of tall, broad cylinder of fabric forming a vast, stretched out and deformed reticulation, as if the reticular structure of the cupola was *torn apart*. It opens out towards the *ground*, where it is solidly anchored around the oscillations of Foucault's Pendulum. Under the impact of other forces, the catastrophe extends



Figure 2. Floor of Pantheon with pendulum and statue of cat-goddess, partial view of Ernesto Neto, *Leviathan Thot*, 2006, Pantheon, Paris. Photo: Ernesto Neto

by contamination to the domes and vaults that develop geometrically around the central cupola. This cupola is covered with octagonal panelling that converges towards the summit, the design implying a hemispheric anamorphosis of the gridwork of the panels. This type of composition is repeated in the other cupola and on the circular floor tiling corresponding to them. As to the properly orthogonal grid, it is visible in the many criss-crossing patterns and tiles on the ground, and it provides a subjacent order to the whole plan of the work as the principle of its rationalisation *more geometrico*.

One will notice that the structure of the panelled cupola is not without analogy to the frontispiece of Hobbes' *Leviathan* as designed by Abraham Bosse, a major advocate of geometrically constructed perspective. The arrangement of the panelling in effect evokes that of the anonymous subjects presented from behind with their heads converging towards the sovereign, in an 'egalitarian' perspective, calculated in an egalitarian way. What is more, in the image, the sovereign associates the sword and the cross, in the same way as the Panthéon associates a secular temple with a church, not one which is consecrated but which is still present symbolically, topped with a cross to sacralise the Republic.



Figure 3. Frontispiece of Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan* (1651) designed by Abraham Bosse

The analogy extends further since the eye of the cupola opens onto a second cupola occupied by a painting by Antoine Gros, *The Apotheosis of Saint Genevieve*, the base of which itself figures a corona of persona surrounding four sovereigns. The smallest eye of the cupola opens in turn onto a pure summit of light, which comes from the skylighting of the external dome, an ultimate supplementary dimension covering the system and the central void of Power to which all must equally submit.

It is against the ground and the aerial centre of this monument-image of power that Operation-Neto works. The large and loose netting of the immense pseudo-cylindrical, spidery reticulation which descends from the central cupola is not the simple deployment in space of the patterning on the ground of large folded fabrics but the sensory diagram of forces which, by stretching, distend the grid and deform it, substituting for the geometric rigidity of a rigidly cellular world, the perpetually changing dynamic of direct (immanent) relations between all the tensions. Concerning the part of Leviathan we have just dealt with, Neto has said that it is the monster's head, 'the seat of fear . . . the seat of

the purification of sentiments' by the cold and calculating rationality of modernity. At its feet, Thoth, the Egyptian god of writing and calculus, who the Greeks associated with astronomy and 'politics' watches over Foucault's Pendulum, which hangs in the middle of this central piece. But this god is an ambivalent figure: the god of writing and of calculus, he is also the registrar of the dead, he counts down the days of the living and weighs up the heart-soul of death. He is thus qualified from every point of view to preside over the death of Leviathan, of which he is at the same time both the instrument of power and death's first 'bureaucrat'.

The extendable fabric which (dis)incarnates the head of Leviathan – a sort of stripped off epidermis – is nothing but a bare surface, where the grid, both sign and operator of rationality in the cupola, is submitted to the dynamicising and dynamiting of its geometry. The whole of the central apparatus is suspended at eight points from the eye of the cupola (by analogy with the octagonal structures of the edifice). Like everywhere else, it results from a system of equilibrium between the weights and counterweights of suspended masses, between the gravity to which they are submitted and the elasticity of the tissue which contains them. The disfigured cylindrical net, which constitutes a sort of 'dorsal fin' for the ensemble, comprises at its base four terminal prolongations in the form of weighted pockets, sinking to the ground, where they anchor it, divided up around the pendulum. The counterweight is assured by the hanging of four sort of large pendentives that Neto calls 'drops' which descend half-way to the ground and whose weight overhead the visitor senses; while eight slim 'columns', on the contrary, run all the way to the ground which they are held just above or joined with (without settling on it). The body moving around the counter-installation experiences in a coenaesthesic manner the work of muscles tautened by the tensions this skeletal Leviathan undergoes from both above and below. It *participates* in this politically informed sensation *in situ*.

The decisive political stake of this apparatus is nothing less than the subversion of the Art that Hobbes explicitly declares, in the introduction of his major work, to 'create this great LEVIATHAN that is called COMMONWEALTH or STATE (in Latin CIVITAS)...'. ('Commonwealth', it will be recalled, is the English translation of *res publica*). In the optic of a constitutional reduction to the One, the art which stems from it bears the imperative of effectively producing a *public representation* of the body of the Republic, such that the multitude of subjects 'see' that they *constitute* its members, that the sovereign at its head is the bearer of the *most real image of Power*, capable of unifying the body of the people by representing all its

members in a consenting organism, at peace with itself, which is nothing other than the 'State', the constitutional State. Such a representation can only *link or bind* its subjects together under the sovereign that they institute in a constitutive manner by defeating, by undoing, 'this other multitude which has no order, which is like a many-headed hydra' (Hobbes, *De Cive* VI, 1).[6] Failing which, the Republican Contract which founds our democratic societies on Representation (nationally and in all the plasticity of the term) is unable to become effective.

Magisterially analysed in all its visual strategies by Horst Bredekamp, this is what the frontispiece executed by Abraham Bosse for *Leviathan* teaches us.

> The gaze which is directed by men everywhere towards the head of the colossus is directed back by its eyes at the observer, who joins with the view of the figures with their back to us at ground level and is at the same time, at the level of the gaze of the sovereign, directly interpellated by it. The contradictory character of the body politic as the product of men subjected by the sovereign is already manifest in the exchange of looks between citizens, Leviathan and the observer. (Bredekamp 2003: 9)

The common orientation of everyone towards the head of the sovereign proclaims the moment of contractual engagement of all, including the observer, who also *participates* in the apparatus, in this way verifying that representation is *tutela praesens*. 'It is only by its representative, that is to say, the sovereign, that the commonwealth is a person and has the capacity to do anything at all: the sovereign is the only legislator' (Hobbes, *Leviathan* XXVI). But again, as the German historian explains, 'for conventions and laws to become controlled actions, words must be changed into bodies, and it is this mediating step that the image of Leviathan accomplishes . . . It [thus] becomes a powerful machine for definitions, a "*sovereign definer*" ' (Bredekamp 2003: 128–9). One must understand that the contractual basis of the State *formally* founded on an egalitarian definition of citizens so as to suppress the state of nature (the perpetual war of the multitude maintained through a relative equality of forces) calls for the control of words as much as for the monopoly of violence. Relayed and represented by images which incorporate their sovereign majesty, the control of words is oriented towards 'the fact that we can command and understand commands' (it is the 'greatest benefit of speech' [Hobbes, *De Homine* X 3]), the exercise of which requires 'perspicuous words, but by exact definitions first snuffed, and purged from ambiguity' (Hobbes, *Leviathan* V).[7] Hence the *representation* of

Leviathan on the frontispiece of Hobbes' book is the centre of gravity of images because it is the exclusive sign of the *sovereignty* of the State related to the *right of representation*.

We have seen one avatar of this sign in the structure of the cupola of the Panthéon that Neto literally tears up (by opposing to its 'regime of representation' something other than an aesthetic regime of the image, in Jacques Rancière's sense). In this process, the Brazilian also attacks the political body of Leviathan understood as an *artificial man*, in its modern constitution. In theory it is indifferent whether the representative is a Monarch or a representative assembly – because it is the *representative* character of the sovereign, depositary of the 'personality of the republic', which founds absolute sovereignty on an egalitarian 'republican' contract of all with all (*inter pares*). Hence sovereignty is in truth the axiomatic corollary of representation (the *pact of representation*). Leviathan is thus the symbol of a *homo artificialis*, *automaton* or *machine*, whose power can only obey the principled rationality which created it in the name of the people (*rex est populus*), whilst each individual recognizes him or her self as the *author* of the acts and judgements of this *actor*, this sovereign representative that every individual institutes. In this way it is verified that the power of the legally represented 'subject' has no other condition of reality than the subjectivation of a power which finds here its first modern 'contractual' form. In *We Have Never Been Modern* – whose influence on his installation Neto acknowledged – Bruno Latour summarises the situation: 'Hobbes invents the naked calculating citizen, whose rights are limited to possessing and to being represented by the artificial construction of the Sovereign. He also creates the language according to which Power equals Knowledge, an equation which is at the root of the entire modern Realpolitik' (Latour 2006: 26). This is announced by the first phrases of *Leviathan*, grounding the mechanical creation of a political, or artistico-technological, android – which presides over the birth of modern political philosophy as a *science of submission* rationally founded on a calculus of interests (*philosophia civilis*[8]) in a theory of art. The sovereign governs with unlimited power in the name of all those he represents, who in return *equally* authorise the 'public person' to decide and to act in its place. Failing this, there would only be an aggregate totality, a *multitudo dissoluta*, because it is via the head of the sovereign, who personifies the *common*-will thus represented, that the political Body lives and moves.

In this way the civil 'unity' of the people, the people 'united in one person . . . called a COMMONWEALTH' (Hobbes, *Leviathan* XVII),

strictly correlated with the existence of the State, is substituted for the 'dissolute' multiplicity of the multitude, a sort of *Moby-Dick* avant la lettre.[9] Via this short-circuit (which is also the shortest circuit) between aesthetics and politics, Operation-Neto stages a sort of critical and clinical diagnosis of Representation, in every sense of the term, aiming at an *expansive disorganisation* of the multitude living under the republican regime of contractual representation, a regime for which the Panthéon is the temple as much *ex nostro arbitrio* as *more geometrico*. The disorganisation that affects the centre of Leviathan extends out to the other members of its body so as to invest the *multitudo dissoluta* with a radical vital de-construction and re-composition. If this is the more properly affirmative component of Operation-Neto taking place alongside the critical moment that was necessitated by the political take on the Panthéon, both are part of the same lesson in political anatomy. It starts up again from the top of the reticulated cylindrical shape. The fabric of this volume, in a tension that runs counter to its vertical fall, is stretched towards the exterior in four long forking branches. At their extremities, these four forks are then fixed on to the two 'arms' forming extensions towards the centre of the members of Leviathan occupying the four lateral axes of the Panthéon. The ends of these forking branches fix these arms across the fabric that is stretched under the weight of their endings. They form a sort of suture between the heterogeneous parts of the body of Leviathan. Although there are similarities between them, and internal symmetries, each one of these developed branches of the 'installation' is different from the others and is assembled in a fashion that is both 'vital' and inorganic. Neto calls this heterogeneous body a 'humanoid monster' and adds that 'in this highly masculine building it is a work of highly feminine contrast'. Rather than this contrast – the polarities of which could be inverted or associated within the terms of the opposition – a new ambivalence may be pointed out, related to the figure of Thoth. The statue on guard at the foot of Foucault's pendulum isn't really Thoth (figured with the head of an ibis or a dog or a cynocephalus) – and in any case, the identity of the gods of the Egyptians is no less variable than their names. Rather, it is a copy of Bastet (or Bast or Ubasti...), the cat-goddess, the peaceful avatar of a lion-goddess. Bastet has been considered most notably as the protector of the home and of motherhood, and associated with the joy of music and dancing, those arts that Neto associates with the Brazilian life experience, the *vivência brasileira* of his work.

Nothing is positively figured outside of the 'representation' aimed at by the defection whose object it is and which is also that of the image whose aesthetic form is as if devoured by the omnipresent apparatus

which is the whole of what one perceives. It is experienced corporeally, in a coenaesthesic fashion, as a sensational bloc of forces put into continuous variation. Thus, in the watering of the fabric filtering the light, it is not the optical effect which matters for itself, but the degree of tension of the elastic tissue-skin that results from the reciprocal, quantitative-energetic play of all forces, linking up step by step. If something akin to 'organs' appear – Neto talks of a head, stomach, arms, fingers and even alludes to sexual organs – they only function as pure intensities which accumulate in pockets or flow in a 'jet of energy' playing on the 'fluid aspect of matter'.[10] Forms here don't assume any function: they are the contingent result of a static energy (i.e. one that is frozen, *suspended*). This static energy itself results from the technically highly complex process by which the fabric, cut out in inert forms on the ground, is raised and stretched in such a way as to distribute both matter and the tensions to which it is susceptible so as to balance out the weights. Things only move now by a gentle, accidental oscillation incorporating the gradient of freedom belonging to the system. This is not without producing a Rhizome-Effect (Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 19) in the intensive-extensive continuum thus projected.[11] Tensions here function directly in an unformed matter, a matter-flux only presenting degrees of intensity, resistance, conductivity and stretching which condition its extension in space and which the ambulant relaunches coenaesthesically on his or her own body. Extension itself becomes the result of a fusional multiplicity whose 'quality' is the contraction, the *intension* of the quantity liberated by the *dissolution* of constant form as a *state function*, to the profit of dynamic differences which bring into relation the most diverse latitudes and longitudes, the most varied speeds and slownesses. The organising form of matter is in this way *suspended* by the putting into tension of the materials-forces, whose local results mobilize the ensemble of 'trajects'. *To suspend* is to struggle *with* the universal gravity which *striates* homogeneous space through 'the verticals of gravity, the distribution of matter into parallel layers, the lamellar and laminar movement of flows' summarised by Deleuze and Guattari as 'the space of *pillars*' (Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 408, italics added). But to suspend is equally to stop the regulated exercise of the organs (as forms subjected by the head) of the Leviathan-Body, and the relation that every human organism is supposed to maintain, using its head, with metric space in general. The organism's machinic enslavement to the abstract-form of space-measure is part of the domain of Thoth. In the first place it will have been necessary to *skin* the Leviathan-Body *because organs stick to the skin before depending on* '*this organic organisation of organs that is called the organism*', from which the

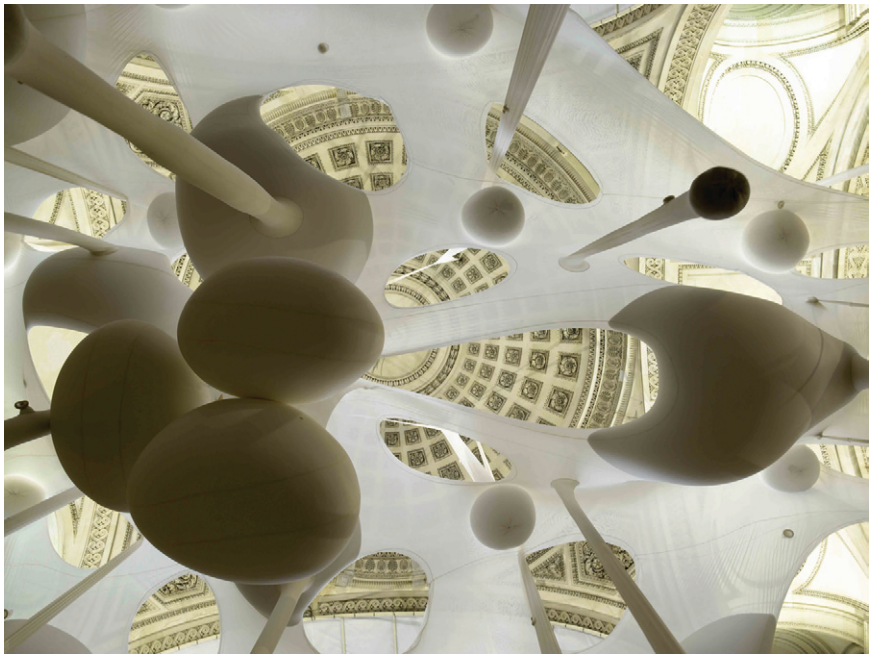


Figure 4. Ernesto Neto, *Leviathan Thot*, 2006, Pantheon, Paris. Photo: Marcus Wagner. Courtesy of the artist; Galeria Fortes Vilaça, São Paulo; and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, NY

System of Judgement of the Leviathan-God extracts a work that is useful 'to the *prosperity* and the *wealth* of all particular members' on which the whole 'force' of Leviathan rests (Hobbes, *Leviathan* Introduction). The 'skin' here – which Neto specifies is neither the envelope nor the growth of any 'flesh' – is this *rising to the surface* of the organs liberated by the emptying out of the Socius-Corpus. This emptying out will have made a 'Body without Organs' surge up from and in the disaffected space of the Panthéon-Leviathan (the expression 'Body without Organs' may be found in Neto[12]), bearing with it an entirely different social physics to that of 'work' (*Leviathan Toth*, *catalogue Festival d'Automne* 2006: 35).

III. Blueprints, A Thread of Red Velour, White

Despite the absence here of any 'house-space' offering the 'bubbles of possibilities' of a 'new leisure-world' (the kind of *House* abundantly explored by Neto[13]), one might risk taking up the expression *crelazer* again. It was an expression forged by Oiticica to define the social

orientation of all his work, and it literally signifies 'creative leisure' (or, more exactly creation/playful belief), by double opposition to 'leisure' understood as submission to a preconditioned distraction, and to 'work' in its submission to the constraints of production. Now, 'leisure' is only 'creative' if it is not of a 'representative' order, if it escapes from any predetermination in the use of objects, the consumption of images, aesthetic jouissance or contemplation, and if it is not presented as 'participation' in formatted activities. *Crelazer* deterritorialises the spectator on the basis of the *objective* structure of 'propositions' that are made to him and which should contribute to the 'expansion of his habitual sensorial (and motor) capacities' by bringing to the fore the 'direct vital-living element [of an experience], which goes beyond the problem of the image [*o elemento vivencial direto, que vai além do problema da imagem*]'. It appeals to a 'new perceptive behaviour' corresponding to 'going beyond the object, which marks the end of the aesthetic expression [*uma superaçao do objeto como fim da expressao estética*]'.[14] Thus, in the Panthéon, the body of the spectator is forced to dis-place itself incessantly, to wander around so as to see and take in the excess of what it sees. The body is forced to *perceive* the space of the experiment within which it is caught and against which collision incessantly menaces, at the very moment that the 'hybrid element' is stretched out overhead like a skeletal star of skin.

In this way, the spectator is subjected to the experience of the Body without Organs of Space itself, the intensive *Spatium* rather than *Extensio*, in the haptic destruction of the optic of power, resulting from the fluidification of space by mass. This itinerant geography, which decentres every point of view in the continuous variation of orientations of a generalised elasticity, puts us in movement, in 'becoming'. We ambulate in the smooth space of a *nonument* (in the words of Gordon Matta-Clark) that only exists in the critical and clinical confrontation with the 'historical' striated space of the Monument, whose *sensible matter* has thus been awoken. This sensible matter propagates here like a counter-image liberating itself *energetically* from the task of *imaging* because it projects a new type of reality. An infra- and supra-organic reality, which draws its 'energy' as much from the *space of virtualities* liberated by the concrete physics of the power that acts with the forces internal to gravity as from the forces of the *multitudo dissoluta* caught up in and liberated from the monumental history of the Leviathan that it *invaginates*. It is by means of this Body without Organs, which is *in itself* a 'Body without Image' (Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 9), that Neto can give body *for us*, in a certain *delirium ambulatorium*, to the (rhizomatic



Figure 5. Build-up of Ernesto Neto, *Leviathan Thot*, 2006, Pantheon, Paris. Photo: Marcus Wagner. Courtesy of the artist; Galeria Fortes Vilaça, São Paulo; and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, NY

and bioenergetic) subversion of the Image of the State-Machine, the *State-Form* such as it is inscribed on the pediment of the Panthéon sculpted by David d'Angers, where the word 'Nation' appears between 'Liberty' and 'History'.

Although Neto could not have conceived as complex a work as this without the support of an overall plan superposed on the ground and elevation plan of the Panthéon, the very course of the operation made this plan itself undergo a heterogenesis such that the result doesn't correspond to any prior image. Guided by this plan, and after having orientated himself with a rough sketch, with the help of a thread of red velour, Neto sized up and marked out the openings and multiple sections of fabric on the folded layers of material destined to become the diverse members of this inorganic body. The fabric was then cut out following this thread and sewn together before being filled with various substances (polystyrene, sand, lavender). *Cut out/sew in*. Confronted with the work, the plan appears as a graphical formalisation, an optical blueprint of an operation that escapes it because it is of an entirely different nature. This supple line was drawn/weighed up/posed by what Neto calls a 'hand-brain'; it slipped between the fingers, was 'worked'

by the displacement of the body, applied by gravity – all operations that transform an inert trace on paper into a living, fluid line, fluctuating according to the artist's intimate dance with all the parameters, both present and virtual, of his operation. Because there is a 'pressure of virtuality which disquiets the image that is already available to make space for a new dimension' opened up by a gesture which 'is not a simple spatial displacement: it decides, liberates and proposes a new modality of "moving" ' (as affirmed by Gilles Châtelet to explain how the *virtual requires the gesture* [Châtelet 1993: 32–3]). And the artist could only evaluate coenaesthesically the degree of elasticity of the Lycra at the moment he laid down his visually static but virtually dynamic line. In this regard, nothing is more striking than the distance between the sketched plan on the ground – right and proper, with the 'fine' curves and symmetries of its biomorphic and pseudo-organic regularity – and the body which takes on a life of its own in suspension in space. It is a life which is elastic as much as rhizomatic, so much does the plasticity of mass affirm here its irreducible difference from extension (*Extensio*), in suspension in space submitted to resistance – that is to say, to speak Leibnizian, *action and passion*. No direct deduction from the plan to the body can be made at all.

In the erection of the diverse members of the body ('the experience begins', says Neto[15]), gravity henceforth becomes the fundamental agent to which all the virtualities of both space and the volume of the cut and sewn material forms are subjected *by force*, giving rise to continuous processes of transformation. Operational machination appeals to an intuition in act as much as to an extension of its act, which redefines the artist as an *artisan* and the artisan as *the itinerant, the ambulant* (Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 452). One may recall that the operation began well before the setting up of the installation, when Neto bundled up the Lycra in his workshop in Rio (the workshop of a couturier rather than the studio of an artist) before laying it out in the Panthéon, as he says, like 'a travelling salesman, a street vendor', a *camelot* carioca. These *camelots* are the 'natural' inhabitants of the favelas and champions of the 'informal' economy which informs and deforms the landscape of Rio, deployed in an 'unplanned order'. They are, Frank Leibovici summarises, 'the social equivalent of the favelas, which are themselves the urban equivalent of *bromeliae* growing all the way down the trunks of palm trees' (Lebovici in *Leviathan Toth* 2006: 29–30). It is also this 'tropical forest' that in a sort of environmental mutualism Neto makes grow (processually, not iconically) right in the middle of the Panthéon, like it grows all over Rio, with the favelas whose physical and human geography clings to hillsides. If *natural*

or, more broadly – Foucault's pendulum obliges – *cosmic* mutualism (as Brazilians also say, *à la Deleuze-Guattari*) has some paradigmatic (or *cosmopolitical*) relevance here, Operation-Neto evidently shows that it is on condition of understanding environmental mutualism in a strictly constructivist – in the words of Oiticica, 'anti-naturalist' and 'multi-transformable' – sense. As Latour puts it definitively, between 'nature' and 'society', 'if we are constructivist in one instance, then we have to be constructivist for both' (Latour 2006: 95).

As to the whiteness of the material Neto unpacks in the Panthéon before he cuts it up, this ready-made colour immanent to an industrial-synthetic material, which confronts us strangely with the 'white without form' denounced by Hegel in the Preface to *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, is directly incorporated into the environmental value of the installation. It works away haptically in the light under the effect of the tensions which the Lycra undergoes, but in the manner of *a bodily restraint* (*une contrainte par corps*) which violates and blinds the optical reception of light in the 'total activity of the eye'.[16] (Im-penetrable, *white without form* is *a tangible white* forbidding any 'division of retinal activity', *gathered up*, *crushed, forbidden and deranged* in the ready-made white). It is worth recalling here that Oiticica conceived, even hallucinated, Malevich's *White on White* as a 'a necessary step in which the 'plastic arts' shed their privileges BY WHITENING THEMSELVES SO AS TO BECOME SKIN/BODY/AIR'. It is exactly the 'nonumental' components that Neto utilises and which he comes back to in the text presenting *Leviathan Toth*, specifying their tensive or intensive values so as to define the mutualism of his apparatus – giving a meaning to what he calls the 'ethic of action' (*a ética da ação*) (Artes & Ensaios 2008: 16). There comes a moment when, as he writes,

> the touching, the intimate relation, the spatial limit between skin and matter, solid in its essence but liquid in its spherical envelope, which adjusts to every movement like the sand which flows through the neck of an hourglass, whose fluid mass defines the body of the work, are intensified in ascension … Like mutualism … in a tropical forest … everything is re-organised in this space of passage, of tensions, volume adapts and forms itself again here and there in a dance of calculations and chance … than toth! (*Leviathan Toth Catalogue* 2006: 53).

Notes

1. A first version of this text was published as Eric Alliez, 'Body without Image: Ernesto Neto's *Leviathan Thot*', *Radical Philosophy*, 156 (2009), pp. 23–34 (translated by Andrew Goffey). This new version was presented at

the Internationales Kolleg für Kulturtechnikforschung und Medienphilosophie (IKKM), Weimar, on 19 May 2010. A more elaborated version of this argument, which compares Jacques Rancière's aesthetic regime to George Didi-Huberman's phenomenology of art will be found in E. Alliez and Jean-Claude Bonne, *Défaire l'image. De l'art contemporain* (forthcoming).

2. Because in one way or another, the (phenomenological) *flesh of the world* is enveloped by and into the kinaesthetic dynamism constituting phenomenologisation.
3. Or even: the metaphorisable and hence sayable.
4. Questioned on the subject, Neto told me that he had wanted to introduce a principle of variation that accorded with his own 'operation' on Leviathan. I will therefore respect the spelling *Toth* wherever it is a question of the title of the work and will use the normal spelling when it is a question of the figure of the Egyptian God.
5. On the 'powerful non-organic life' in its relation to the Body without Organs, see Deleuze 2003: 46–7.
6. The citation is from the Sorbières translation of *De Cive*.
7. From which it can be verified that an analytic definition of philosophy cannot work without its a priori being conditioned by political information. Hobbes appears here as the proto-founder of linguistically defined analytic philosophy. One will not fail to notice the extreme resonance of a counter-effectuation as we know it from Deleuze and Guattari: 'the elementary unit of language – the statement – is the order-word. Rather than common sense, a faculty for the centralisation of information, we must define an abominable faculty consisting in emitting, receiving and transmitting order words. Language is made not to be believed, but *to be obeyed, and to compel obedience*' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 84).
8. *Philosophia civilis*, which, if we are to believe Hobbes in the epistle dedicatory of *De Corpore* '[is] no older than [his] book *De Cive*'. Its modernity is thus inscribed in the wake of the scientific revolution of Copernicus and Galileo.
9. But which one must take literally. Mob = the dangerous mass, and Dick = the devil.
10. According to the declarations made by Neto in the video accompanying his installation.
11. '[T]he final global result [is] synchronised without a central agency' (Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 19).
12. In *Leviathan Toth*, *catalogue Festival d'Automne* 2006: 35.
13. For example *House-Ship* (*Nave*) where the influence of Oiticica is in some way overdetermined by that of Lygia Clark, culminating provisionally in *The Malmö Experience* (2006). It is of course the critical-clinical dimension of *Leviathan Toth* that forbids its principle, whereas its 'un/civil instruction' *in situ* (although irreducible to any kind of *site-specific criticism*) problematises the 'participation' of the visitor-citizen in the extreme.
14. Cf. Hélio Oiticica, *Aparecimento do Suprasensorial* (1967), *Tropicalia* (1968), *Eden* (1969), *Crelazer* (1970). These texts are reprinted in Oiticica 1978. The first phrases explaining 'house-space' (*o espaço-casa*) are extracted from *Crelazer*.
15. Leviathan Toth, catalogue Festival d'Automne 2006: 35.
16. 'The sensation of white or of light, that is to say the total activity of the eye . . . ', writes Schopenhauer in his letter to Goethe, 11 November 1815, when he tries to push his master's anti-Newtonism to its final physiological limit. (Schopenhauer [1818] (1986): 125).

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What is Nomad Art? A Benjaminian Reading of Deleuze's Riegl

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Abstract

In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari offer a description of what they call 'nomad art' by detailing its three primary characteristics: close-range vision, haptic space, and abstract line. In an attempt to unpack the significance of this provocative term, this paper will sketch the provenance of the first two of these characteristics, both of which come from Deleuze and Guattari's particular reading of Alois Riegl. Together, close-range vision and haptic space delineate the synaesthetic vision of the artist as well as the space s/he creates in the work. Walter Benjamin will be invoked as a sort of phantom link between Riegl and Deleuze, a link that will both provide the proper orientation towards the central aspect of the haptic — against a Phenomenology of affect — as well as inject the necessary political significance into the discussion of nomad art.

Keywords: Riegl, Benjamin, haptic, *nomos*, art

Deleuze's appropriation of the Viennese art historian Alois Riegl for the development of his own philosophy of art is well documented. My aim here is not so much to recount systematically the intricacies of this appropriation as it is to highlight the theoretical stakes of misreading any of Deleuze's philosophical manoeuvres. One of the most critical issues is the significance of the concept of the 'haptic', since it is central to Riegl's art theory and since it also ultimately lies at the core of all three aspects of nomad art. I will attempt a philosophical genealogy of this term from Riegl to Deleuze, mediated through the

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work of Walter Benjamin. I specifically use Benjamin in order to save Deleuze from trends that uncritically employ the term haptic to develop seductive phenomenologies of 'multi-sensory media' or that – by freely connecting the term to psychological or even psychoanalytic meanings of affect – reduce it to a function of embodied Being-in-the-world. My purpose is not to argue for a strong theoretical lineage from Benjamin to Deleuze, which would probably prove to be an impossible task, but rather to suggest that reading Deleuze's Riegl through Benjamin is one way of avoiding a collapse into phenomenology. The Benjaminian reading of Riegl is also useful since it imparts a political dimension to the latter's mostly apolitical analyses of art. In the end, I hope to show that the most important feature of a haptic *Kunstwollen*, or regime of art, for Benjamin and Deleuze is that it signals a non-Romantic and non-phenomenological aesthetics of shock, which takes its cue from the late-nineteenth-century discourses concerning psychophysics and physiological psychology to which Riegl was himself directly responding. This shock, rather than inducing a form of political quietism, necessitates an ethico-political response at the level of the work, that is, within the smooth space it draws.

I. Benjamin's *Kunstwollen*

In *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, Benjamin adopts Riegl's art historical methodology and applies it to literature, in particular seventeenth-century Baroque *Trauerspiel*. Although Benjamin only occasionally cites him directly, Riegl's concepts can be detected in essays connected to the themes of this book as early as 1916 and continued to play a central role throughout Benjamin's career including in his famous essay 'The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility' (Jennings 1987: 154). In short, it is hard to overemphasise the influence of Riegl on the development of Benjamin's thought. Despite his relative reticence on this fact, we do have one explicit and emphatic declaration of allegiance – in a short review article, published a year after his *Trauerspiel* book, concerning 'four great works of German scholarship' that have 'remained alive' – in which he describes Riegl's *Late Roman Art Industry* as an

> epoch-making work that applied with prophetic certainty the sensitivity and insights of expressionism (which occurred twenty years later) to the monuments of the late Imperial period, [which] broke with the theory of 'periods of decline', and recognised in what had previously been called 'regression

> into barbarism' a new experience of space, a new *Kunstwollen* . . . Indeed, in the last four decades no art-historical book has had such a substantive and methodologically fruitful effect (Benjamin 1980: 170).

Benjamin acknowledges that what drew him to Riegl was the constellation of a few ideas which revolve around the concept of *Kunstwollen*, an idea which helps us relate art objects to the broader cultural and spiritual concerns of a historical period. The details of a work are expressions of this *Kunstwollen*, a 'realm of perception that', according to Benjamin, 'changes over time and in accordance with shifts in cultural and intellectual direction' (Benjamin 1999: 667). Although Riegl himself sometimes confuses the matter by using language that might link *Kunstwollen* with the subjective will of an individual artist, he makes it clear that it is ultimately linked to the general cultural attitude of the period: 'The character of this *Wollen* is always determined by what may be termed the conception of the world at a given time [*Weltanschauung*]' (Riegl 1985: 231). Modifying Rancière's vocabulary, the *Kunstwollen* might be characterised as the general 'distribution of sensation' of a particular episteme since, as Riegl explains, it 'regulates the relation between man and objects as we perceive them with our senses; it is how we always give shape and colour to things' (Riegl 1985: 231).

An important consequence of Riegl's *Kunstwollen* for Benjamin is that it completely relativized the concept of beauty and undermined any version of the claim to eternal values. That is, it provides an art theoretical way out of the classicist conception of value in judgements of art. In Riegl, Benjamin saw for the first time a serious scholarly consideration of an artistic period and its works – late Roman antiquity as illustrated, for example, by the sketchiness of the Pompeii paintings – that was usually considered unworthy of study. Just as late Roman art was largely dismissed as decadent by the classicist aesthetes, so was German Baroque drama. Thus Riegl initiated a new art historical methodology that legitimated Benjamin's own analyses whether in literature, art, or the new medium of cinema. He saw Riegl attempting to theorise, through the close analysis of artworks, an objective organising principle intrinsic to the style of the period and a value which made sense only in relation to its *Kunstwollen*. That is, Benjamin understood the revolutionary importance of Riegl's art historical method to lie in the fact that it locates the value of a work within the mode of perception through which it was produced and consumed. Qualitative distinctions between low, high, and applied arts could no longer be substantiated. Rather, the concept of *Kunstwollen* demanded an entirely different

criteria of judgement: not the quasi-moral value implied by the concept of beauty, but rather a psychophysical value which is measured on a sliding scale between what Riegl called the optic and the haptic.

In *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, Benjamin articulates this new stance regarding the judgement of art with terminology familiar to Deleuzians: he argues for the necessity of bringing to the fore 'the laborious efforts of minor writers' (Benjamin 1998: 58). It is quite possible that there is a direct inheritance of the idea of minor literature from Benjamin given the fact that Deleuze was familiar with this work and even acknowledges his debt to it for his own conception of the Baroque (Deleuze 1993: 125). To this it should be added that 'Toward a Minor Literature' is the subtitle to Deleuze's book on Kafka, an author who in many ways Benjamin regards as *the* literary exemplar that most fully expresses 'tradition falling ill' in modernity: 'To do justice to the figure of Kafka in its purity and its peculiar beauty, one must never loose sight of one thing: it is the figure of a failure' (Benjamin 1994: 565–6). In any case, in the *Trauerspiel* book Benjamin already goes as far as to suggest that a *Kunstwollen* only fully appears in works that exhibit 'eccentric features' that are 'offensive or even barbaric to refined taste' (Benjamin 1998: 58, 50). Likewise, decadent periods are 'historically responsible' precisely to the extent that they tend to not produce works which display classical or organic beauty:

> These are the periods of 'decadence' in the arts, the periods of artistic 'will.' Thus it was that Riegl devised this term [*Kunstwollen*] with specific reference to the art of the final period of the Roman empire. The form as such is within reach of this will, a well-made individual work is not. (Benjamin 1998: 55)

Again, this sentiment is directly inspired from Riegl. In the introduction to his *Late Roman Art Industry*, he argues that choosing to focus upon the late Roman period was deliberate and productive for objective analysis precisely because the values of taste intrinsic to its *Kunstwollen* were completely removed from those of his own. In fact, Riegl's entire intellectual career was motivated by the desire to legitimise the study of under-appreciated arts and crafts.

II. *Kunstwollen* in Modernism

Benjamin's 'Work of Art' essay can also be read as an adaptation of Riegl, this time to the era of modern art, which is intimately tied to the birth of cinema. Indeed, one could almost argue that his account of the destruction of the aura in modern art is fully comprehensible

only as a highly original appropriation of Riegl's concepts of haptic and optic perception. The essay proceeds with analyses of photographic and cinematic media combined with assertions about a new regime of sensibility, without specifically arguing for a strong relation of cause and effect in either direction. However, Riegl's influence on Benjamin makes the relation clear. Given the former's framework, cinema would simply be an expression of the *Kunstwollen* of the era, or 'mode of perception', which is itself inseparable from the broader *Weltanschauung* or 'mode of existence' (Benjamin 2002: 104). Although both Riegl and late Roman art are specifically evoked in this crucial section of the essay, the reader has to connect the dots. Here, what ultimately interests Benjamin are the characteristics of this new mode of perception – as well as, in a move beyond Riegl, its social implications – rather than simply the birth of a medium. He even goes so far as to suggest later in the essay that this new mode of perception was inaugurated prior to the invention of cinema by a new type of group experience of landscape paintings in the mid-nineteenth century. Therefore, rather than being a progenitor of the haptic regime, cinema is merely a more adequate expression of it: 'The simultaneous viewing of paintings by a large audience, as happens in the nineteenth century, is an early symptom of . . . a crisis triggered not exclusively by photography but, in a relatively independent way, by the artwork's claim to the attention of the masses' (Benjamin 2002: 116). Furthermore, the spectator of cinema is assaulted by constant and abrupt changes that Benjamin also compares to the modern experience of being jostled in a crowd, thus confirming this connection between the modern reception of painting and cinema. In this regard, Benjamin relies upon Baudelaire's essays on art, whose various descriptions of the 'shock' effect of movement through the urban landscape announce the 'renunciation of the magic of distance' associated with the loss of aura (Benjamin 2003a: 172).[1] The aura is defined by Benjamin as the quality of 'authenticity' that accumulates within the contemplative space between subject and object, 'the unique apparition of a distance, however near it may be' (Benjamin 2002: 105). The 'destruction of the aura' is a 'process of immeasurable importance for both thinking and perception' since it indicates a disruption of the given distribution of sensibility as well as the birth of a new mode of perception that seeks to overcome distance with a desire 'to 'get closer' to things' (Benjamin 2002: 105). As we shall see, this language of nearness and distance is intimately connected to Riegl's opposition between the haptic and optic. Thus, we should take Benjamin to mean that the birth of modern art, as measured by the destruction of the aura, is to be understood as a

fundamental shift from an optic to a haptic distribution of the senses. The cinematic *Kunstwollen* marks a distinction between a bygone era of 'alluring visual composition[s]' to one which turns 'the artwork into a missile'. Cinema jolts 'the viewer, taking on a tactile quality' and producing a 'physical shock effect' and thus evokes the 'decadence' and 'barbarism' of Dada, which 'attempted to produce with the means of painting or literature the effects which the public today seeks in film'. Like the experience of moving through an urban crowd, the cinema is characterised by 'successive changes of scene and focus which have a percussive effect on the spectator' (Benjamin 2002: 118–19). In Riegl, the categories of optic and haptic were only employed in tracing the historical development of the arts from ancient Egypt (primarily haptic), through to Greece (optic-haptic), and ending with late Imperial Rome (primarily optic). Although he wasn't the first or last to break with this schema while retaining Riegl's concepts – Deleuze also cites Wilhelm Worringer and Henri Maldiney in this regard – Benjamin's labelling of the modern regime as fundamentally haptic implicitly rejects any Hegelian reading of Riegl, like that of Hans Sedlmayr, who argues that the optical regime reached its teleological apex with Impressionism.

The main points outlined so far can be applied to Deleuze's philosophy of art as much as they can be attributed to Benjamin's interpretation of Riegl. Indeed, they more or less sum up Deleuze's position concerning the significance of the haptic. Along with the optic, the haptic indicates a displacement of the criteria for the judgement of art from one based on a quasi-moral theory of aesthetic value to one that uses the practical and tangible language of psychophysics. This allows for the rejection of value theory without falling into a postmodern abyss in which *any* qualification becomes impossible or irrelevant. It also is an advance over Rancière's otherwise useful conception of different regimes of art, which relies too heavily upon the ambiguity of the term 'sensible' – thus unnecessarily confusing the registers of *Kunstwollen* and *Weltanschauung* – and which seems to be, in fact, a direct appropriation from Deleuze's *Foucault*.[2] For Benjamin and Deleuze, the character of a *Kunstwollen* and an individual work of art can be qualified, without judgement, on a sliding scale from the glowingly contemplative to affecting a violent jolt to the nervous system. The haptic for Deleuze indicates first and foremost an aesthetics of psychophysical shock along the lines we have been describing; it refers to the act of touching (Greek, *haptikos*) only in so far as art is able to deliver, through cinema, '*a shock to thought, communicating vibrations to the cortex, touching the nervous and cerebral system directly*'

(Deleuze 1989: 156). But, like Benjamin, the haptic *Kunstwollen* is another name for this cinematic distribution of sensation – with or without film – since it involves, as Deleuze now argues in his book on Francis Bacon, a 'violence of sensation . . . inseparable from its direct action on the nervous system' (Deleuze 2003: 34). Finally, this shock forces the subject to move beyond the organisation of the lived body which 'is still a paltry thing in comparison with a more profound and almost unliveable Power' towards what Deleuze calls the 'body without organs' (Deleuze 2003: 39). Similarly Benjamin, quoting Baudelaire, writes that with 'the experience of shock', the human is effaced by 'a reservoir of electric energy' and reduced to a mere 'kaleidoscope' (Benjamin 2003b: 328). Therefore, any 'reterritorialisation' back into the realm of phenomenology under the guise of the term haptic completely betrays the enormous amount of philosophical work Deleuze has performed in order to move beyond this discourse. It is true that Deleuze relies upon the phenomenological work of Henri Maldiney. But he does so strictly for two reasons, neither of which turns *him* into a phenomenologist. First, Maldiney extends and amends Riegl's history to include the movement of the haptic and optic from Byzantine to Modern art. Second, Maldiney's reading of neurologist Erwin Straus' account of perception gives Deleuze the technical vocabulary he needs – for example the notions of systole, diastole, and rhythm – to bolster his own psychophysical conception of the haptic. Furthermore, the handful of references to Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger in the Bacon book should be understood as nothing more than another instance of Deleuze's philosophical 'buggery', which in this case focuses on their respective moves away from the intentional subject towards Being. In particular, the provocative comment that sensation is 'Being-in-the-World' cannot be read with a straight face given the elegance and force of Deleuze's conception of the 'being of the sensible', articulated more than a decade earlier (Deleuze 2003: 31; Deleuze 1994: 139–40).

III. Haptic and Optic Distributions of Sensation

After piggy-backing on Maldiney's art historical account in order to move beyond Riegl, Deleuze also jettisons it in favour of a more Benjaminian view, which holds that a certain trajectory within modern art is fundamentally haptic. Specifically, while Maldiney defines the late Cézanne's use of colour as representing the apex of purely optical art, Deleuze sees it as the beginning of a lineage that continues with the work of Francis Bacon and which should be properly described as

haptic. Without getting into the details here, the seemingly paradoxical term 'haptic colourism' points to another important aspect of Deleuze's concept of the haptic. It involves 'the formation of a third eye, a haptic eye, a haptic vision of the eye... as if the duality of the tactile and the optical were surpassed visually in this haptic function born of the diagram' (Deleuze 2003: 129). Haptic vision is therefore synaesthetic, not in a strictly clinical sense, but in that there is a disjunctive 'joining together of the two senses of touch and sight' (Deleuze 2003: 99) in which the 'eye itself has a haptic, non-optical function' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 494).[3] Furthermore, the haptic 'may be as much visual or auditory as tactile' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 493). The main issue here is not synaesthesia – which, incidentally, is specifically evoked by Benjamin in one of his descriptions of haptic shock – but rather the fact that Deleuze loathed any art which involves a hierarchy of the senses.[4] Specifically, he is attracted to art that escapes the haptic-optic *Kunstwollen* with which Riegl defines the ancient Greek aesthetic, and which Deleuze argues continued, for the most part, in Western representational art from the Renaissance until the nineteenth century. This type of art – which he characterises as expressing figuratively the 'organic activity of man' (Deleuze 2003: 102) – does not depend upon an egalitarian distribution of the senses, but is primarily optic, utilising tactile elements only subordinately in order to produce the illusion of three-dimensional space. While the space of both Byzantine art and Maldiney's Cézanne is a step beyond representational figuration, it still prioritises the optical. It is only with Deleuze's characterisation of Cézanne and Bacon as 'haptic colourists' and his appropriation of Wilhelm Worringer's 'Gothic line' – which exhibits 'an impure, and to a certain extent uncanny, amalgamation' (Worringer 1957: 42) of abstraction and empathy, terms Worringer uses as rough psychological equivalents to Riegl's haptic and optic – that we move away from a distribution of sensation which subordinates one sense to another.

Another characteristic of the haptic-optic regime of art – where the hand and eye work together under the controlling gaze of the latter – is that it produces 'striated space', which Deleuze defines as a 'mode of distribution' that restricts free movement through the use of 'walls, enclosures, and roads between enclosures' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 381). It denotes the type of compulsive parcelling-out of the ideal city Plato describes at the end of Book V of his *Laws*. That is, 'haptic' and 'optic' qualify not only a particular distribution of the senses, but also the type of distribution of space they draw out. Specifically, the type of distribution of space in a work is determined by the relative

nearness or farness required for both producing and viewing it. Deleuze describes the haptic distribution of space as 'smooth' and relates it to the 'close vision' involved in haptic viewing. As Deleuze notes, it was again Riegl who 'gave fundamental aesthetic status to the couple *close vision/haptic space*' in his descriptions of ancient Egyptian bas-relief sculpture. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 492). Riegl convincingly argues that the surfaces of these reliefs are characterised by a

> tactile plane suggested by the sense of touch . . . this is the plane which the eye perceives when it comes so close to the surface of an object, that all the silhouettes and, in particular all shadows which otherwise could disclose an alteration of depth, disappear. The perception of objects, which characterises this first level of the ancient *Kunstwollen*, is thus tactile and in as much as it has to be optical to a certain degree, it is *nahsichtig*; ancient Egyptian art expresses it in almost its purest form (Riegl 1985: 24–5).

However, Riegl's categories of *Nahsicht* (close vision) and *Fernsicht* (distant vision), which are fundamental qualities of the haptic and optic regimes of art respectively, are modelled upon the concepts of *Nahbild* (close image) and *Fernbild* (distant image) put forth by the German sculptor Adolf Hildebrand almost ten years before the publication of *Late Roman Art Industry*. This point is not only interesting because it rectifies the proper genealogy of these terms; it is also important because Deleuze ultimately amends Riegl's conception of close vision and the space it creates, preferring one that is in a certain way reminiscent of Hildebrand. Hildebrand suggests that in looking at a distant background, a spectator does not need to move the gaze; the eyes remain still and the image appears flat, almost two-dimensional. However, in order to see a nearby object and bring it into focus, the eyes have to continually shift from one viewpoint and depth-of-field to another, in effect scanning the object in a way akin to examining it through touch. He argues that these 'two different means of perceiving . . . not only have separate existence in our faculties for sight and touch, but are united in the eye' (Hildebrand 1907: 14). What is important for Deleuze's conception, although he doesn't cite Hildebrand, is that the continuous scanning of the eyes in close vision is qualified by Hildebrand not merely as the 'mixing' of the visual and the tactile but also as 'kinaesthetic' (Hildebrand 1907: 14), that is, as the sense of movement of and between the two. Rather than simply synaesthetic, which presupposes a rigid partitioning of individual sense modalities, haptic vision in Deleuze should be understood as a nomadic kinaesthesia in both the physiological sense – the self-perception of

movement, which is closely related to affect, within a body without organs – as well as the etymological sense – *kinein* (moving), *aisthesis* (sensation) – of the term. 'This rhythmic unity of the senses can be discovered only by going beyond the organism', where 'sensation is vibration' and 'the state of the body 'before' organic representation' is defined by 'axes and vectors, gradients, zones, kinematic movements' (Deleuze 2003: 39).

Likewise, the smooth space drawn out on a canvas subsequent to such a haptic vision should also be understood as nomadic. Deleuze's main critique of Riegl's account of the close vision/haptic space couple is precisely that it eliminates this nomadic quality. This is because Riegl approaches it only 'under the imperial conditions of Egyptian art . . . conditions under which it already serves to striate space'. These conditions include 'the presence of a horizon-background; the reduction of space to the plane . . . the rectilinear outline enclosing individuality and withdrawing it from change. Like the pyramid form, every side a surface, against the background of the immobile desert' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 495). Deleuze emphatically argues that the distribution of space produced by haptic vision cannot be reduced only to that which is suggested in Egyptian art, although he does agree that the strange contortion and distortion of heads, eyes, torsos, and limbs in these works is a good first approximation. However, they still exhibit a geometric delimitation of background, plane, and contour, which cannot occur in a purely smooth space. Riegl's relatively sober depictions of Egyptian bas-relief figures become wild and almost carnivalesque in Deleuze's rendering: 'twisted animals have no land beneath them; the ground constantly changes direction, as in aerial acrobatics; the paws point in the opposite direction from the head, the hind part of the body is turned upside down' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 494). But, even more than this, the best descriptions of haptic space according to Deleuze are taken from examples of visions of the desert, ice, and sea in which the eye nomadically scans the field of vision unable to find rest since 'orientations, landmarks, and linkages are in continuous variation': 'no line separates earth from sky, which are of the same substance; there is neither horizon nor background nor perspective nor limit nor outline or form nor centre; there is no intermediary distance, or all distance is intermediary' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 493–4).

With the depiction of such a smooth space on the canvas, we simultaneously enter the nomadic expanse of the desert pictorially as well as the brain of the artist who has suffered a haptic shock to thought and is able to render this disorienting close vision: 'This is what Bacon calls a . . . diagram: it is as if a Sahara, or a zone of the Sahara,

were suddenly inserted into the head' (Deleuze 2003: 82). This smooth, 'diagrammatic' space is neither homogeneous nor heterogeneous but amorphous, following a Riemannian rather than Euclidian topology, and bears a similarity to certain works of abstract expressionism. It is a space 'occupied by intensities, wind, noise, forces, and sonorous and tactile qualities . . . far more than by formed and perceived things' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 479). Rather than simply disclosing a latent Orientalism in Deleuze, the purpose of his evocation of visions of the desert is specific and strategic. Furthermore, the repetition of this theme across several of his works marks its crucial importance for a proper understanding of his aesthetics.[5] Its function is to dispel any remnants of striated space in Riegl's descriptions of Egyptian bas-relief. Smooth space is more analogous to the nomadic space of shifting desert sands than it is to the structure and decoration of pyramid walls, whose monolithic geometry punctuates and organises space in a way that indicates a move away from the purely haptic.

IV. *Nomos* and Nomad Art

Deleuze's nomadology should be taken neither too literally, as a Romantic reference to 'real' nomads, nor simply as a suggestive metaphor. Rather, he develops a functional, and highly technical, definition of the *nomos*, which draws on the work of linguist Emmanuel Laroche and anthropologist Jean-Pierre Vernant.[6] Before it was understood in the normative sense of custom or law, as in Democritus and Plato, the *nomos* referred to the unpartitioned and common land outside the boundaries of the *polis*, which was itself divided according to a geometric *logos*. This meaning of the *nomos* was later taken up in Zeno's *Republic*, securing for the Stoic the title of 'the best exponent of anarchist philosophy in ancient Greece' by Peter Kropotkin (Kropotkin 1995: 236). Deleuze uses the term both in this early etymological sense as well as in the sense of its root, *nemô*, which means to distribute. That is, his nomadology should be understood as employing these two aspects of the *nomos* simultaneously, against the Platonic law, such that smooth or haptic space implies an unpartitioned distribution. It is a nomadic *nomos*,

> a distribution which must be called nomadic, a nomad *nomos*, without property, enclosure, or measure. Here, there is no longer a division of that which is distributed but rather a division among those who distribute *themselves* in an open space – a space which is unlimited, or at least without precise limits. (Deleuze 1994: 36).

A nomadic distribution is one in which, for example, nomads traverse the smooth, unregulated expanse of the desert – beyond the confines of the Egyptian state – without themselves dividing it. For Deleuze, this functional definition can apply to 'real' nomads – 'Egypt had its Hyksos, Asia Minor its Hittites, China its Turco-Mongols . . . the Hebrews had their Habiru, the Germans, Celts, and Romans their Goths, the Arabs their Bedouins' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 495) – as much as it can to other, more recent, constructions like Baudelaire's *flâneur* or Debord's psychogeographer. The *nomos* for him is simply a type of distribution and movement, which functions outside of any principle that organises and defines the borders, both internal and external, of a territory. It is therefore anarchically indifferent to the *logos* that partitions Plato's ideal metropolis, where numerous distinct blocks 'should radiate, dividing the city itself as well as the whole territory' (Plato 1988: 133).

Deleuze's *nomos* has both intensive and extensive senses corresponding to close vision and haptic space, respectively. Just as close vision should be understood as a nomadic distribution of sensation in that it kinaesthetically involves different sense modalities, haptic space should be understood as the nomadic re-distribution of the space of a work, which is a direct result of this disorienting, indeed shocking, vision. Beyond Riegl, haptic space is the smooth, diagrammatic space created on a canvas that suggests the mind-twisting logic of a Riemannian manifold. It is populated by what Deleuze calls 'events', intensities or forces in flux rather than fully formed entities, that erase all the figurative clichés inherited from the *nomos* – now understood in the Platonic sense of habit or law – of the history of art. In short, the diagram is simply the name Deleuze gives to the smooth space of art in his book on Bacon, where it is more fully articulated under this new terminology. It is the principle of generative deformation that marks the interval between vision and creation in a work and, as such, it lies at the very heart of what Deleuze calls nomad art. The diagram is the preparatory phase that primes the canvas, replacing the normative *nomos* of figurative givens with a nomadic one. This conception of *nomos* is thus political precisely in the sense in which Rancière's and Benjamin's politics of aesthetics converge: a politics that traces the coordinates and consequences of changes to the 'organisation of perception' at a particular historical moment, 'using art to draw such conclusions' (Benjamin 2002: 104). Although neither go as far as Deleuze in championing a nomadic distribution, Benjamin comes close in his admiration of the anarchic spirit of Dada, which he singles out as expressing, in a highly charged manner, the haptic shock of the cinematic, or modern,

regime of art. In effect, smooth space challenges Riegl's 'will to art', a notion that Deleuze must ultimately put into question in favour of nomadic *nomos*, which re-distributes the sensory coordinates of a given *Kunstwollen* with every new successful work. This problem reaches its peak in the cinematic regime since – and here Deleuze both cites Benjamin's 'Work of Art' essay as well as appropriates its language and political argument – the shock to thought in modernity coincides with a fascist 'atomisation of the masses' in which the politics of aesthetics is reduced to a situation where 'politics becomes "art" ' (Deleuze 1989: 264).[7] In this regime of shock to the brain, Deleuze continues with an implicit reference to Riegl, artists are continuously 'circling the question: cerebral creation or deficiency of the cerebellum?' because 'all will to art' now risks being reduced to 'a business, a pornography, a Hitlerism' (Deleuze 1989: 266). Deleuze's ethico-political answer to this problem is that the shock of a close vision – rather than initiate the collapse into a catatonic, quietist, or even 'theophanic' state (Hallward 2006: 4) – *must* involve a movement beyond this debilitating moment, a creative movement of nomadic expression adequate to its 'profound and almost unliveable Power' (Deleuze 2003: 39). This is not a normative imperative, but simply a functional definition of what counts as nomad art. This reading explains the placement of the pages concerning nomad art at the conclusion not only to 'The Smooth and the Striated' but to *A Thousand Plateaus* as a whole, arguably Deleuze's most political book. But whereas Benjamin proposes countering the mind-numbing anaesthetisation of fascist politics with a communist politics of aesthetics – in which revolution is defined by a productive 'innervation of the collective' (Benjamin 2002: 124) – for Deleuze, a slightly different sort of revolution already begins with the production of haptic space in nomad art.

Notes

1. In his 'The Painter of Modern Life', Charles Baudelaire describes this experience as 'a more or less violent nervous shock that reverberates in the very core of the brain' (Baudelaire 2006: 398, translation modified).
2. In 1986 – a decade before Rancière coined the term 'le partage du sensible', which was subsequently applied to regimes of art in 2000 – Deleuze characterized Foucauldian historical formations as implying a 'distribution' or 'répartition du visible et de l'énonçable … une perception historique ou sensibilité, non moins qu'un régime discursif' (Deleuze 1986: 56). Foucault uses similar language in describing the new regime of medical vision in the Preface to his *Naissance de la clinique*: 'une nouvelle découpe des choses'; 'une nouvelle distribution des éléments discrets'; 'tout le rapport du signifiant au signifié se redistribue' (Foucault 1963: xiv–xv).

3. It should be noted that Riegl – working within the post-Herbartian context of physiological psychology in which the phenomenon of synaesthesia, clinical as well as poetic, attracted a great deal of attention – admitted in 1902, a year after he published *Late Roman Art Industry*, that haptic was indeed a better word than tactile to describe the Egyptian aesthetic. 'Physiology has long since introduced the more fitting designation "haptic" … and I intend henceforth to use this proposed term' (Riegl 1988: 190).
4. Deleuze does acknowledge the power of synaesthesia elsewhere for its ability to challenge not only the hierarchy of the senses, but also 'the hegemony of the signifier' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 15). Benjamin links 'synaesthesia' with the 'breakdown' of 'modern man' in his 'On Some Motifs in Baudelaire' (Benjamin 2003b: 333).
5. For example, he cites not only Francis Bacon's 'Sahara', but also the various visions of the desert depicted in Wilfred Thesiger's *Arabian Sands*, Thomas de Quincey's *Revolt of the Tartars*, and T. E. Lawrence's *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*. Deleuze also shows that visions of ice or sea landscapes can replace these desert visions, proving that he doesn't rely merely on the Oriental implications of desert nomads. See his use of Edmund Carpenter's *Eskimo* and Paul Virilio's *L'Insécurité du territoire* in *A Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 572–4).
6. For the following etymology of *nomos*, I am indebted to John Sellars (Sellars 2007: 30–7).
7. Compare this to the last two sentences of Benjamin's essay, where he states that 'the aestheticizing of politics, as practiced by fascism' must be countered by a communist 'politicizing of art' (Benjamin 2002: 122).

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Barnett Newman's Zip as Figure

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Abstract

Challenging the formalist critical legacy of Clement Greenberg and Michael Fried, this essay advocates an alternative philosophical lineage for Modernist painting through a specific focus on Barnett Newman's vertical stripe or 'zip'. This genealogy is rooted in Newman's own self-confessed interest in painting as a disclosure of the sensation of time and Deleuze's overt break with Kant. In light of the latter, the zip takes on the function of Deleuze's Figure: the material support that generates, sustains and also disperses a precise sensation.

Keywords: Newman, formalism, Figure, rhythm, hapticity

Largely due to the critical legacy of Clement Greenberg and Michael Fried, New York School painting is traditionally read through a combination of neo-Kantianism – the artwork as a disinterested, autonomous entity artificially divorced from the multiplicitous deterritorialisation of real-world contexts, all the better for its vicissitudes to be reined in within a transcendental logic of reason – and the philosopher Gotthold Lessing's *Laocoön: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry*, written in 1766, which argues that painting must remain true to its own inherent properties (i.e. flatness and the spatial limits of the picture plane and its confining frame). However, a particular focus on Barnett Newman's seminal *Onement I* (1948), *Vir Heroicus Sublimis* (1951) and *Who's Afraid of Red, Yellow and Blue* (1966), discloses an alternative philosophical lineage for Modernist painting. The grounds for this revised genealogy are rooted in Newman's own self-confessed interest in painting as a disclosure of the sensation of time and

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Gilles Deleuze's own overt break with Kant. In the latter case, the non-conceptual event-as-rhythm (Newman's famed vertical stripe or 'zip') is born out of the chaos of the expansive colour field as a suprasensible 'logic of sensation', whereby line no longer serves as a static demarcating agent (a sedentary striated space), dividing the picture plane into self-contained fields of activity, but becomes a dynamic *force* of becoming, a stuttering zone of creation in-itself, the 'genetic' element of the pictorial order yet to come. The zip is thus a smooth, haptic space of pure nomadism, for as Deleuze and Guattari point out in 'The Smooth and the Striated', the nomad line is

> *a line that delimits nothing, that describes no contour*, that no longer goes from one point to another but instead passes between points, that is always declining from the horizontal and the vertical and deviating from the diagonal, that is constantly changing direction, a mutant line of this kind that is without outside or inside, form or background, beginning or end and that is as alive as a continuous variation – such a line is truly an abstract line, and describes a smooth space (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 497–8).

I. Lessing, Greenberg and Medium-Specificity

The chief defining difference between the formalist and nomadic aesthetic lineages is their contrasting approaches to the problem of time, an issue central to Lessing's original discussion of Laocoön and inherited with little or no critique by Greenberg and his acolytes. The subject of Laocoön is the classic depiction of pain in Western sculpture as evidenced in the marble figurative grouping, believed to be from the first century AD, of the Trojan priest and his sons attacked by monstrous sea serpents. Lessing used the sculpture as a case study in order to define a clear-cut difference between the visual arts and literature. The latter was absorbed by time, as well as the conventional sign of language, which in itself had an arbitrary relationship to its referent. On the other hand, time hardly existed in the visual arts because, through mimesis, the means of representation were directly related to the thing represented. As a result, while literature could describe horrific events without resorting to horrific words, representational media could only express the horrific by showing it in all its gory detail. How then could it produce a noble work of art when it places the spectator in the same distressing position as the victim, Laocoön himself? The solution is that visual artists tone down the harrowing features of their subject in order to place it within the universal field of aesthetic norms. Thus, instead of an agonized Laocoön roaring like a bull, for Lessing, the tightly constricted position

of his jaw would allow for little more than a low groan, thus making for a more pleasing aesthetic composition.

The main upshot of this debate is that Lessing's interpretation eventually became the critical paradigm for Modernist painting. His separation of the arts based on their divergent modes of expression and his increasing differentiation between literary genres based on their intended effects laid the necessary groundwork for critics such as Greenberg to advocate the freeing of painting from its dependence on other media. It's no accident that Greenberg's own 1940 essay on the need for a similar purification of modern painting is entitled 'Towards a Newer Laocoön'. According to Greenberg:

> When it happens that a single art is given the dominant role, it becomes the prototype of all art: the others try to shed their proper characters and imitate its effects. The dominant art in turn tries itself to absorb the functions of the others. A confusion of the arts results, by which the subservient ones are perverted and distorted; they are forced to deny their own nature in an effort to attain the effects of the dominant art. However, the subservient arts can only be mishandled in this way when they reached such a degree of technical facility as to enable them to pretend to conceal their *mediums*. In other words, the artist must have gained such power over his material as to annihilate it seemingly in favor of *illusion*. (Greenberg 1988: 24).

Although the avant-garde attempted to redress the balance by imitating every other art except literature, Greenberg saw a greater hope in the tendency of contemporary abstract painting to refer only to its own mechanical properties. Thus, he asserts:

> If the poem, as Valéry claims, is a machine to produce the emotion of poetry, the painting and statue are machines to produce the emotion of 'plastic sight'. The purely plastic or abstract qualities of the work of art are the only ones that count. Emphasize the medium and its difficulties, and at once the purely plastic, the proper values of visual art come to the fore... The history of avant-garde painting is that of a progressive surrender to the resistance of its medium; which resistance consists chiefly in the flat picture plane's denial of efforts to 'hole through' it for realistic perspectival space. In making this surrender, painting not only got rid of imitation – and with it, 'literature' – but also of realistic imitation's corollary confusion between painting and sculpture. (Greenberg 1988: 34).

Epitomized by the work of Rothko, Pollock, de Kooning and Newman, painting abandons chiaroscuro and modelling; brush strokes are defined for their own sake; primary colours replace tones and tonality; line returns as a third colour between two other colour areas; forms are

simplified and geometrical, while the painterly whole is influenced by the contours of the stretcher. 'But most important of all', noted Greenberg, 'the picture plane itself grows shallower and shallower, flattening out and pressing together the fictive planes of depth until they meet as one upon the real and material plane which is the actual surface of the canvas; where they lie side by side or interlocked or transparently imposed upon each other' (Greenberg 1988: 35). The result is optical illusions that announce themselves as such, not realistic ones.

II. The 'Zip' as Temporal Dimension

Given this aesthetic template, Newman's zip paintings would seem to provide a ready exemplar of Greenberg's dictum. Take, for example, Newman's most spatially expansive painting, *Vir Heroicus Sublimis*. Over eight feet high, and almost eighteen feet across, the work consists of a large horizontal vista of cadmium red, itself situated on a reflective scale between medium and dark so that its faint earth-colour tinge allows the field to partially advance towards the spectator while at the same time creating a recessive depth. According to art critic and Newman specialist Thomas Hess, '[Newman] was preoccupied with a horizontal format divided by verticals (among other themes), and only if he could get the painting wide enough could the zips act both as self-contained presences and as cuts (that is, drawing) in color' (Hess 1971: 68). Thus Newman 'applied two tapes to the left, two to the right in order to form a hidden square in the center of the painting. The resultant zips are the same color as the cadmium red field, albeit a bit darker and heavier, except for the second from the left, which is white' (Hess 1971: 70). The zips seem to have been placed intuitively to mask the central positioning of the perfect square, a masking reinforced by giving it a white left edge and a red right edge. The zips also allude to cinema, in so far as the colour field looks like a flattened film strip with the zips acting as edits or splices. Significantly, a few weeks before the work's first public unveiling, Newman added a fifth zip at the extreme right – yellow brown against the red expanse. As Hess correctly points out, adding the extra pale stripe 'reduces the apparent length of the red field and acts to make the square seem off-center… Here, color in modern painting breaks through its last constraints, and is proclaimed the essence of visual art; in its liberated surge, the zips do not act as reins, but as spurs, heightening the pressure of the sensation' (Hess 1971: 70). This sensation ultimately spills over into the surrounding wall, as if the painting had 'started again', with the zips acting as both borders to a new colour field (the gallery itself) and creative fields in their own right. This argument is born

out by Newman's follow-up series featuring just the zips. The fact that *The Wild* (1950) is $95\frac{3}{4}$ inches tall by a mere $1\frac{5}{8}$ inches wide, the exact dimensions of a single zip in *Vir Heroicus Sublimis*, suggests that the white gallery wall is the equivalent of the red field in the latter painting. This is also alluded to by the white and pale yellow zips in the latter, which potentially extend the painting to infinity.

Just as Hess takes us to the verge of a Deleuzian reading, whereby the rhythm and vibrating colour of the work produce a heightened logic of sensation rooted in a perpetual becoming of creation, Greenberg's Lessing- and Kant-based reading reduces *Vir Heroicus Sublimis*'s painterly language to an exercise in reductive formalism. 'Broken by relatively few incidents of drawing or design', he notes in his 1958 essay '*American-Type' Painting*, 'their surfaces exhale color with an enveloping effect that is enhanced by size itself. One reacts to an environment as much as to a picture hung on a wall. But still, in the end one does react to the picture as a picture, and in the end these pictures, like all others, stand or fall by their unity as taken in at a single glance' (Greenberg 1961: 226). The last phrase is telling, insofar as a painting must always exude perpetual presence before the beholder and cannot be temporally contingent on external factors such as the surrounding wall, gallery space or the mobile presence of the spectator, a trait that Fried, in his seminal 1967 essay 'Art and Objecthood', would later dismiss as literalism or theatricality. For Greenberg the zips act less as spurs to a sensation beyond the materially objective form of the painting's inherent flatness and demarcating edge, than as echoes of the painting's external frame, repeated in stutter-steps within the pictorial field of the painting as a whole. Discussing the use of line in Rothko and Newman, he avers that both artists make their way out of geometry via a focus on geometry itself:

> Their straight lines, Newman's especially, do not echo those of the frame, but parody it. Newman's picture becomes all frame in itself, as he himself makes clear in three special paintings he has done – paintings three to four feet long but only two to three inches wide, that are covered with but two or three vertical bands of color. What is destroyed is the Cubist, and immemorial, notion and feeling of the picture edge as a confine; with Newman, the picture edge is repeated inside, and *makes* the picture, instead of merely being *echoed*. The limiting edges of Newman's larger canvases, we now discover, act just like the lines inside them: to divide but not to separate or enclose or bound; to delimit but not limit. The paintings do not merge with surrounding space; they preserve – when they succeed – their integrity and separate unity. (Greenberg 1961: 226–7).

This is, of course, a valid point, but it fails to take into consideration the more temporal elements that are intrinsic to Newman's work, specifically through the element of rhythm, the source of the temporal event. It is here that Deleuze (the 'logic of sensation') and Deleuze and Guattari ('The Smooth and the Striated') can help us move beyond a constraining Kantian formalism. For example, every painting manifests itself through different *sites* of time – the time of production, consumption, diegetic time within the painting's internal narrative and the time of circulation to name just a few. There is also the time that the painting *is*, whereby time is the event of the picture itself, its own self-annunciation.

III. Chaos and Rhythm

The importance of the latter ontology of time is born out by Newman's own comments on his work. As he once put it, in his 'Prologue for a New Aesthetic', an unfinished 'monologue' from 1949: 'My paintings are concerned neither with the manipulation of space nor with the image, but with the sensation of time... Not the *sense* of time, which has been the underlying subject matter of painting, which involves feelings of nostalgia or high drama; it is always associative and historical...' (quoted in Lyotard 1991: 86). This monologue was written in response to an August 1949 trip to the Indian mounds in the south-west corner of Ohio and Indian fortifications at Newark, OH. Newman suffered a staggering epiphany of self against undefined space: 'Suddenly one realises that the sensation is not one of space, [of] an object in space. It has nothing to do with space and its manipulations. The sensation is the sensation of time – and all other multiple feelings vanish like the outside landscape' (Newman 1992: 174–5).

Deleuze's writings on Francis Bacon offer us the opportunity to re-evaluate Newman's paintings' formal properties in light of the philosopher's broader break with Kantian aesthetics, particularly the latter's rationalization of the Sublime. As Daniel Smith points out, Deleuze no longer defines Ideas via their transcendence to nature, but instead as events immanent to experience itself:

> Ideas remain suprasensible, but they now reveal the *forces* or intensities that lie behind sensations, and which draw us into nonhuman or inhuman becomings. In Deleuze, in other words, the power of Nature in the unformed or the deformed appears in the form of the *nonorganic life of things*... Sensations are given, but it is force that constitutes the condition of sensation. The

> artistic question then becomes: How to render sensible forces that are not themselves sensible? How to render the nonvisible visible in painting, or the nonsonorous sonorous in music? (Smith 2003: xxiii).

Whereas for Kant, perception presupposes the object-form as one of its conditions (derived from the *a priori* concepts of understanding), Deleuze moves in reverse, smashing the basic form of recognition that helps to ground us in the unity of apperception. This means there are no longer categories of mediation, and thus, by extension, no grounds for critical judgement. Instead, he gives us four elements of analysis: 1) Aesthetic Comprehension or Measure; 2) Rhythm; 3) Chaos; and 4) Force. For our purposes, it is Chaos and Rhythm – as well as the additional 'formal' function of the Figure – that are keys to producing a logic of sensation within Newman's paintings whereby clear-cut demarcations between smooth and striated space are irrevocably undermined. Where Aesthetic Comprehension allows us to apprehend the successive parts of an event based on lived evaluation, usually rooted in the situatedness of our bodies in relation to our being-in-the-world, Rhythm provides a purely aesthetic comprehension of the unit of measure, subjectively determined. This, however, is not fixed but is subject to constant re-evaluation and constant variation. Deleuze calls this the grasping of a rhythm which takes place without a concept. The rhythm – which is always heterogeneous and experimental – lies beneath the concept. But this raises a key question. What if the rhythm underlying perceptual synthesis starts to become unravelled, so that our imagination wavers from its appointed task? This leads to a series of catastrophes, whereby our entire structure of perception starts to collapse.

Kant labels this temporary overrunning of the imagination 'The Sublime', which once again conveniently reins it in under the aegis of Reason. In contrast, Deleuze – and by extension, Newman – actually start by affirming chaos. Both recognise that it can also produce order or rhythm and, as Smith rightly points out, Deleuze's book on the logic of sensation is grounded on this 'rhythm-chaos' coupling. To write about Newman's paintings is to attempt to find the common ground of lines, colours, tonalities and retinal pulsations. This common ground *is* rhythm itself. Thus we move progressively from the synthesis of perception (apprehension, reproduction, recognition) to aesthetic comprehension (rhythm) to catastrophe (chaos) and back again via a completely different Form (the Figure). In his 1945 essay, 'The Plasmic Image', Newman proclaimed that:

> The subject matter of creation is chaos … The present painter can be said to work with chaos not only in the sense that he is handling the chaos of the blank picture plane but also in that he is handling chaos of form. In trying to go beyond the visible and known world he is working with forms that are unknown even to him. He is therefore engaged in a true act of discovery in the creation of new forms and symbols that will have the living quality of creation. (Newman 1992: 139–40)

In other words, the artist is a true creator because he delves into chaos: 'It is precisely this that makes him an artist, for the Creator in creating the world began with the same material – for the artist tried to wrest truth from the void' (Newman 1992: 140).

IV. Smooth and Striated: Deleuze's Figure

In Newman's work, this 'rhythm-chaos' coupling is closely tied to Deleuze and Guattari's interpenetration of smooth and striated space. Although they assert that the two spaces and their accompanying characteristics – nomad and sedentary – are not of the same nature (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 474), they also acknowledge that 'the two spaces in fact exist only in mixture: smooth space is constantly being translated, transversed into a striated space; striated space is constantly being reversed, returned to a smooth space. In the first case, one organises even the desert; in the second, the desert gains and grows; and the two can happen simultaneously' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 474–5). Indeed we see this simultaneity directly enacted in Newman's first zip painting, *Onement I* of 1948. Measuring 27 by 16 inches, this vertical canvas consists of a dark, cadmium red field with a single red-orange zip, raggedly painted over masking tape applied down the centre of the painting. Although Newman was never religious in the conventional sense – he was violently opposed to mysticism of any sort – he did nonetheless have 'a feeling and taste for the infinite' (Hess 1971: 52). The artist, Newman pointed out, must start with chaos, the void: with blank colour, no forms, textures or details. Newman's first move is thus an act of division, straight down, creating an image. The image not only re-enacts a kind of primal gesture, it also presents the gesture itself, the zip as an independent shape. *Onement* is thus another way of asserting the 'Genetic Moment' as the creation of an image.

In this case the zip takes on the function of Deleuze's Figure, for Newman aims to cut the Figure from its natural milieu in a process of deterritorialization, all the better to disclose 'The presence of a body

without organs under the organism, the presence of transitory organs under organic representation' (Deleuze 2003: 43). In this regard, the Figure helps Newman to avoid the triadic stranglehold of the figurative, illustrative and representational in art. Instead he creates a nomadic set of non-relations, much like the 'war machine' – '*Nomadism* is precisely this combination 'war machine-smooth space" (Deleuze 1995: 33) – the linear assemblage which constructs itself on lines of flight. In this respect, 'The relation of the Figure to its place defines a 'fact': 'the fact is…', 'what takes place is…' Thus isolated, the Figure becomes an Image, an Icon' (Deleuze 2003: 6). For Deleuze, the Figure (as a process of extraction and isolation) and Abstraction are the two main mechanisms for avoiding the relational, for both allow the artist to capture sensations, render visible invisible forces, to make them immediate and perceptible so that they may act directly on the viewer's nervous system. The main drawback of Abstraction however – most notably Abstract Expressionism – is that it is too cerebral: it passes through the brain and must be *interpreted* before it can be appreciated (a case of the Logos preceding the sign). In contrast, artists like Cézanne, Bacon and Newman substitute the new, more haptic trajectory of the isolated Figure, which Cézanne appropriately calls *sensation*: 'The figure is sensible form related to sensation; it acts immediately upon the nervous system, which is of the flesh, whereas abstract form is addressed to the head and acts through the intermediary of the brain, which is closer to the bone' (Deleuze 2003: 31).

Deleuze's discussion here seems directly relevant to the structural parameters of nonrepresentational painting in general, 'Sensation has one face turned toward the subject (the nervous system, vital movement, 'instinct', 'temperament' – a whole vocabulary common to both Naturalism and Cézanne)', (i.e. the temporal space of how the painting 'is') 'and one face turned toward the object (the 'fact', the place, the event)', (i.e. the material world of the painting in the exhibition space in relation to real bodies, real objects). 'Or rather', Deleuze adds in qualification, 'it has no faces at all, it is both things indissolubly, it is Being-in-the-World, as the phenomenologists say: at one and the same time I become in the sensation and something *happens* through the sensation, one through the other, one in the other' (Deleuze 2003: 31). In short then, creating the Figure thus involves isolating the object, extracting it from its surroundings, cutting it off from relationality so it can act directly on the nervous system. This is exactly why Deleuze argues that it is extremely difficult to make a pure image (i.e. nothing but image), unsullied by its connections to the language of hermeneutics and retaining nothing of

the personal or rational: 'To *make* an image from time to time . . . Can art, painting, and music, have any other goal, even if the contents of the image are quite meagre, quite mediocre?' (Deleuze 1997: 158).

This is one reason why specific spatio-temporal contexts are a major problem because they carry a great deal of interpretative baggage and thus circumscribe the image within a relational field of representations and helps to explain why Newman strives to create the autonomous image from the non-specified any-space-whatever. A pure image may be insubstantial but it is also real and material, and it can only be produced through a non-relational presentation. In this scenario, levels of sensation would be like arrests or snapshots of motion, allowing the artist to recompose movement synthetically in order to disclose a latent centre of gravity, thereby creating a different form of motor continuity, as in Synthetic Cubism, Futurism, Muybridge's photographic decomposition of movement and, one might fruitfully add, Newman's zip.

V. The Infinite and Hapticity

In the latter case it's not a question of what the painting means, but rather of how it functions as a deterritorialised multiplicity. The zip as Figure thus has a number of roles. It defines the surrounding fields of colour, acts as a contour between them, thus enabling itself to be isolated, but also acts as an unlimitable breach in the surface of the canvas, a body without organs opening itself up to disclose the chaotic creation that lies beyond, caught in the gap of the interstice. According to Tom Conley,

> The interstice is the interval turned into something infraliminary in a continuum in which an event can no longer be awarded the stability of a 'place' in the space of the image. The interstice becomes what exhausts – and thereby creates – whatever space remains of the image in the sensory-motor tradition. It supersedes the interval and, by doing so, multiplies the happenings of events. (Conley 2000: 320)

It is here in the interstice that the Figure does its best creative work, as a temporal form connected to the somatic violence of a sensation. It is here that the universe or cosmos reveals itself not as a line but as an infinite, continuous plane. In *What Is Philosophy?*, for example, Deleuze and Guattari describe how a monochromatic patch of plain colour is something far more than a background or line:

> Blue in particular takes on the infinite and turns the percept into a 'cosmic sensibility' or into that which is most conceptual or 'propositional' in nature – colour in the absence of man, man who has passed into colour . . . In short, the area of plain, uniform colour vibrates, clenches or cracks open because it is the bearer of glimpsed forces. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 181).

In Newman's oeuvre, it is the zip that plays the role of this Figure of glimpsed infinite forces: it functions as the material support that generates, sustains and also disperses a precise sensation. This is Newman's personal solution to the problem of how to extract the Figure from its figurative, narrative, and illustrational links: i.e. how to 'paint pure sensation' or 'record the fact' of its creation. The result is the construction of a purely haptic space that appeals as much to the physical body as it does to visual perception, highlighting isolation, deformation, coupling, oscillating rhythm, and perpetual becoming – in short a smooth space born out of the inherent nomadic properties of the striated.

This formal instability is reinforced by the interchangeable nature of how the painting is perceived in terms of close and long-distance vision. For Deleuze and Guattari, 'It seems to us that the Smooth is both the object of a close vision par excellence and the element of a haptic space (which may be as much visual or auditory as tactile). The Striated, on the contrary, relates to a more distant vision, and a more optical space – although the eye in turn is not the only organ to have this capacity' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 493). In Newman however, there is a constant reversibility and imbrication between the two positions, so that smooth space is often the impetus for a long-distance viewpoint – the vast, cadmium red colour field of *Vir Heroicus Sublimis* can only be taken in as a whole from a detached perspectival position across the gallery – while striated space encourages the spectator to move in and examine the zips less as abstract demarcation lines than as infinite spaces/places in their own right, opening up interstitially into the very depths of the canvas. Deleuze and Guattari describe this viewing process perfectly when they state that 'The nomad line is abstract in an entirely different sense, precisely because it has a multiple orientation and passes *between* points, figures and contours: it is positively motivated by the smooth space it draws, not by any striation it might perform to ward off anxiety and subordinate the smooth' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 496).

We see this double action at work in Newman's *Who's Afraid of Red Yellow and Blue IV* from 1969, where the 22 inch-wide zip serves as

both a blue dividing 'line' between equal-sized (nine feet square) red and yellow squares *and* a colour field of primal creation in its own right. At first glance, as in the case of *Vir Heroicus Sublimis*, the red and yellow squares are not apparent *as* squares, and even when the spectator discerns them as such their geometrical outline tends to get lost again due to the retinal instability generated by the intense colours. This lack of formal demarcation is aided and abetted by the fact that the squares are on the outside of the canvas and create a deterritorializing shift to the periphery and the surrounding wall. Under these conditions, the middle blue is like a hinge or spine under extreme pressure. It marks a return to the dynamic event of creation of *Onement* but is more nomadic given the smooth spread of the luminous palette. In this case, one is never really 'in front' of the painting, tying it to a Euclidean formal logic, but rather one inhabits it as a series of shifting places. 'The first aspect of the haptic, smooth space of close vision', note Deleuze and Guattari,

> is that its orientations, landmarks and linkages are in continuous variation; it operates step by step. Examples are the desert, steppe, ice, and sea, local spaces of pure connection. Contrary to what is sometimes said, one never sees from a distance in a space of this kind, nor does one see it from a distance; one is never 'in front of', any more than one is 'in' (one is 'on'. . .). (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 493).

It is this haptic move which allows Newman to confront the problem of colour as a chaos to be transformed into sensation via the one-two combination of Rhythm-Figure. Recalling the creative genesis of the *Who's Afraid* series, Newman notes that

> It was at this moment that I realised that I was now confronting the dogma that color must be reduced to the primaries, red, yellow and blue. Just as I had confronted other dogmatic positions of the purists, neo-plasticists and other formalists, I was now in confrontation with their dogma, which had reduced red, yellow and blue into an idea-didact, or at best had made them picturesque. Why give in to these purists and formalists who have put a mortgage on red, yellow and blue, transforming these colors into an idea that destroys them as colors? I had, therefore, the double incentive of using these colors to express what I wanted to do – of making these colors expressive rather than didactic and of freeing them from the mortgage. Why should anyone be afraid of red, yellow and blue? (Newman 1969: n.p.).

Why indeed?

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James Stirling's Architecture and the Post-War Crisis of Movement

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Abstract

Deleuze's cinema project identifies a crisis of movement, action and thought, established initially in the war-devastated spaces of neo-realist cinema. Indirectly these spaces subordinate architecture as the locus of crisis, which only new, temporal artistic practices can avert. However, an architectural model of the smooth and striated, revealing a sophisticated interplay of the two concepts, can reinstall design practice and the intentional built environment as part of a productive and affirmative image of thought. The designs of James Stirling, whose career unfolds alongside significant developments in post-war spatial thought, reveal sensual expressions of new modes of subjectivity and individuation to accompany the increasingly aleatory and lacunary nature of movement.

Keywords: architecture, intensities, modernism, movement, space

Gilles Deleuze transitions between the two volumes of his cinema project by identifying a crisis of movement in post-war cultural and aesthetic practices. As film liberates itself from causal logic and linear displacements, introducing a differential subjectivity to replace static identity, space and time are (re)conceptualised to accommodate incompossible worlds. In establishing these late modern dynamics, seen initially in neo-realist spaces devastated by the Second World War, Deleuze indirectly subordinates architecture as the locus of the crisis, which only innovative, temporal practices can avert. Deleuze reframes modernism as a critical and exploratory tendency influenced by movement rather than prescriptive and proscriptive spatial guidelines.

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He posits a conditional distinction between movement and space when he writes that 'space covered is past, movement is present, the act of covering' (Deleuze 1986: 1). In other words, space is divisible, part of a provisional set, while movement is whole and changes qualitatively with each division. As such, a subject who orients herself in terms of movement experiences pure relations of speed and intensity, while the subject who orients herself in terms of constructed space imposes a provisional totality.

However, in *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari posit two types of space – the smooth and the striated – as processes that resist a strict binary or dialectic, existing 'only in mixture: smooth space is constantly being translated, transversed into a striated space; striated space is constantly being reversed, returned to a smooth space' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 474). The relationship between the smooth and the striated elucidates the thought and creation of space, as well as the process of subject formation and individuation that occurs through it. While each type of space can be distinguished and studied separately via *de jure* abstraction, the inextricable linkage of the two concepts constitutes an important element of assemblage. Assemblages are tetravalent, Deleuze and Guattari maintain, with two sides, one of material bodies, the other of semiotic expressions. Both aspects are simultaneously pulled in two directions, one towards a molar stabilisation of striation or an articulation of a code with a milieu, the other towards its dissolution or mutation through smooth and molecular deterritorialisation that detaches and unhinges the code from its milieu. To think in terms of either concept is to enframe action, perception and affection in a fabric of relations and to emphasise the capacity of sense and thought to address the genesis of movement and the process of its imaging.

Architecture integrates space and time, combining the smooth as unfoldings that refuse to follow preconceived trajectories and the striated as structured, socialised and distributed boundaries. Architecture as a professional practice is heavily striated through economics, client demands, programming, functional and other constraints, as well as through conventional representational tools (plans, sections, perspectives, diagrams) legible by clients, contractors, consultants and builders. Striation allows for certain predictability and workability, which can only be measured via translation into metric and divisible space. That is, a building as actual and material operates to make the virtual visible and assures we are working within a system, not from outside it. Smooth space, on the other hand, measured only in terms of force, guards against territorialising hegemony and cannot be divided

without qualitatively changing. The smooth prevents the foreclosure of the structure to the virtual potential of a life after construction. In short, striation reveals a provisional process of selection from a purview of reality, while smoothing negotiates and intuits the durational whole of which perception only reveals a part.

An architectural model for the smooth and the striated serves to reinstall design practice and the intentional built environment as part of a productive image of thought in which temporal movement becomes inseparable from spatial movement. James Stirling (1926–92), in particular, whose career unfolds alongside significant developments in post-war thought, creates an ongoing exchange between the actual and the virtual, the sedentary and nomadic, and processes of territorialisation and deterritorialisation. Through a sophisticated interplay of the smooth and the striated, Stirling returns to the creative genesis of modernism as an open mode of thought to recover the singularity lost to the banality of functionalism and to dismantle the unproductive dualisms that plague representational modes of thinking. His projects posit a density of signs and an archaeological palimpsest that obfuscate the boundaries between landscape and building, natural and constructed, past, present and future, acting as a critical reflection on the nature of difference over identity, maintaining a unitary and singular concept that accommodates a multiplicity of events in what Deleuze calls 'the affirmation of all chance in a single moment' (Deleuze 1990: 180).

I. Movement in Crisis

The nascent crisis of action, movement and thought that Deleuze finds in mid-twentieth-century cinema reflects the particularly acute discursive conundrums facing all cultural, aesthetic and creative enterprises in the decades immediately following the Second World War, the horrors of which gave rise to a radical questioning of truth, the modernist agenda, as well as spatial and temporal relations. Deleuze identifies the point of significant impasse from which he will develop a new image of thought when he writes:

> But precisely what brings this cinema of action into question after the war is the very break-up of the sensory-motor schema: the rise of situations to which one can no longer react, of environments with which there are now only chance relations, of empty or disconnected any-space-whatevers replacing qualified extended space. It is here that situations no longer extend into action or reaction in accordance with the requirements of the movement-image. (Deleuze 1989: 272)

The movement-image structured by the sensory-motor schema assumes a rigorous causal logic to reinforce rational continuities between images and signs as they appear, as well as vestiges of teleology. Deleuze writes, 'The characters can act, perceive, experience, but they cannot testify to the relations which determine them' (Deleuze 1986: 201). The subject who confronts limitations of thought and representation continually returns to habitual modes of recognition and maintains the possibility of a universal image of totality to confine movement.

In order to address this incapacity of a logical sensory-motor schema to allow for new modes of thought, cinema had to question its own presuppositions through the creation of visual and auditory signs that break sensory-motor linkages and refuse extension into action, characterised by Deleuze as:

> pure optical and sound situations, in which the character does not know how to respond, abandoned spaces in which he ceases to experience and to act so that he enters into flight, goes on a trip, comes and goes, vaguely indifferent to what happens to him, undecided as to what must be done. But he has gained in an ability to see what he has lost in action or reaction: he SEES so that the viewer's problem becomes 'What is there to see in the image?' (and not now 'What are we going to see in the next image?'). The situation no longer extends into action through the intermediary of affections. It is cut off from all its extensions, it is now important only for itself, having absorbed all its affective intensities, all its active extensions. (Deleuze 1989: 272)

In *Last Year at Marienbad* (1961), written by Alain Robbe-Grillet and directed by Alain Resnais, perception becomes detached from action and reattached to the performance of thought through irrational linkages that forestall movement. Deleuze argues that 'a to-and-fro occurs between the narrative speech which creates the event and the static hotel grounds which assume a mineral or tectonic value, with their different areas, white, grey, black' (Deleuze 1989: 324n). The expansion of anxiety, separation, velocity and perpetual intervals supplant determinate locations, and this crisis forces movement, consciousness and reality to take on increasingly stochastic tendencies, individual bodies to become centres of indetermination, and reality to exceed the limits of conscious thought, narrative and representation. The characters of A and X emerge through foldings in disjunctive yet shared geographies and temporalities, and their thoughts become individuated even as identity, space and time are made indiscernible. Through this process, the film's smooth narrative always remains subject to recodification, just as the striated architecture constantly re-smooths linkages.

From Deleuze's cinema project, we can extract concepts useful to a (re)consideration of the natural and built environments to address issues that arise when space and time are disjoined from representational modes of thought and attached to a new logic of sense and sensation. In the conclusion to his cinema project, Deleuze writes:

> A theory of cinema is not 'about' cinema, but about the concepts that cinema gives rise to and which are themselves related to other concepts corresponding to other practices, the practice of concepts in general having no privilege over others, any more than one object has over others. It is at the level of the interference of many practices that things happen, beings, images, concepts, all the kinds of events. The theory of cinema does not bear on the cinema, but on the concepts of the cinema, which are no less practical, effective or existent than cinema itself. (Deleuze 1989: 280)

That is, the extraordinary development of signs and images Deleuze explores through cinema affords a means for investigating the ways in which its concepts intervene in other aesthetic and cultural practices, including architecture.

The histories of late modern architecture generate anxiety concerning the built environment's perceived inability to refer to anything beyond the closed system of its own syntax or to attain meaning only through embodied and cultural use. In either case, these approaches reinforce dualisms between architectural and lived experience. Architecture is exhausted either as an autonomous art object or as a relational system of functional signs. More important, like the movement-image, such formalism and ideology seek a new timelessness and universality rather than subtle strategies of perception, action and affect that reveal the genesis of thought and the production of the new. As physical infrastructure becomes fragmented and indeterminate, the subject's affective disposition requires a complementary flexibility to productively navigate this new terrain, as well as new strategies for mapping movement and its intensities and for making them thinkable. Similarly, through Michel Foucault, Deleuze finds a means for embracing the flux of existence and gaps of meaning in the spatio-temporal environment without literal reification of movement. He writes:

> But [Foucault] soon reaches another solution. If different examples of architecture, for example, are visibilities, places of visibilities, this is because they are not just figures of stone, assemblages of things and combinations of qualities, but first and foremost forms of light that distribute light and dark, opaque and transparent, seen and non-seen, etc. (Deleuze 1988: 57)

In other words, architecture operates via intensities before it ever materialises. The smooth and the striated are conceptually adept at negotiating these dynamics, treating architecture as assemblages linking content and expression, concrete without being functionally reductive and expressive without being naively utopian. Intensities posit architecture as metastable entities that can be lessened or augmented but cannot be divided, subtracted from or added to without qualitatively changing.

II. Stirling and the Striation of the Smooth

James Stirling develops strategies for architecture's continuing relevance and influence on the built environment, alternatively looking back to the failures of modernism and looking forward towards late-modern concepts of movement. Stirling provides the capacity to think time, space, their genesis and potential from within a localised place. Stirling is seminal in conceiving of the crisis in movement and for understanding its intricacies. According to Raphael Moneo, 'the evolution of contemporary architecture begins with [Stirling]' (Moneo 2004: 3), because his work references the myriad influences on modernism while presaging new notions of complexity and presenting a new material and discursive image of architecture. While Stirling was influenced by the academic tradition, he recognised early in his career that the popularisation of the functional avant-garde rendered it myopic and banal, blind to its connection to the development of cities and societies. He continually returns to the genesis of modernism as a creative uprising to produce the eternal return of difference, rather than accepting its tenets as a dogmatic or historical certainty.

Manfredo Tafuri, an influential surveyor of the crises of modernist architecture, characterises this architectural practice as restrained and solipsistic, producing a self-enclosed language without external referent and a regressive utopia struggling against institutional practices. He contends that 'the elements of the modern architectural tradition are all at once reduced to enigmatic fragments – to mute signals of a language whose code has been lost – shoved away haphazardly in the desert of history' (Tafuri 1987: 267), leaving architecture with two options: silence or false representation. Other post-war spatial theorists also, overtly or tacitly, inveigh against architecture as excessively striated, utopian, technocratic and teleological. They find the power of the smooth only in incidental spaces and heterotopias, as well as in the subversive and quotidian practices of strangers and *flâneurs*,

who reappropriate the postmodern landscape despite its architecture. Notwithstanding superficial differences, all of these modernisms treat movement as atemporal, the subject as pre-constituted and context as a pre-given totality.

Opposed to blatant critique, Stirling strategically undermines the dichotomy between building and context by returning to the creative genesis of modernist thought. His first professional works overtly pay homage to, while departing from, high modernism. His Dom-ino apartments (1951), like its namesake, Le Corbusier's early modern modular system, utilises prefabricated elements. However, unlike his forebear, Stirling emphasises transformation over the development of an apodictic architectural form for rote repetition, permitting shifts in scale and organisation. The Woolton House (1954), exploits a rural and vernacular tradition, not as an alternative ideology or telos, but as a means for recovering the singular and specific lost to modernism's focus on universal construction and normative strategies.

Stirling judiciously understands that while potentially reductive strategies of striation (representational conventions, economic considerations, client demands, construction systems, programming, context and other design constraints) are unavoidable, striation acts as a creative force only in so far as it deterritorialises the tools of the trade, creating new strategies for mapping movement, diagramming intensities, and treating constructed buildings themselves as generative machines in which expression and content converge to constitute each other. Striation reveals discontinuities in thought, as well as points of tension, disjunctions and differentials in spatial practice, giving rise to rational and irrational gaps as loci of intensities that reimpart smooth space. The hegemony of striation, its tendency to organise an existing reality without producing new conditions of thought, is mitigated by its ability to localise and provide context, which smoothness, despite its capacity to make connections at will, necessitates in order to affect its potential for qualitative change.

The process of striating the smooth is most forcefully evident in Stirling's Engineering Building at the University of Leicester (1959–63). The Leicester project constitutes a complex assemblage of masses and forms to accommodate auditoriums and theatres, one- and two-story workshops covered by diamond-shaped glass, installed on the bias to capture northern light, punctuated by a vertical ensemble of towers containing offices, laboratories, lifts and stairs, as well as an exhaust chimney (Figure 1). This project also augments Stirling's fascination with expressive drawing modes, such as the section and axonometric,



Figure 1. Exterior of the Engineering Building at the University of Leicester. (Source: Matt Neale)

well suited to analysing the vertical sequencing of space as a means for reconfiguring relationships, linkages and movement and to depart from the rigidity of the plan (Figure 2). At Leicester, the autonomy of the parts reflects an acute awareness of an open whole and creates a series of events as a critical reflection on the nature of difference. Stirling employs utility to his advantage, treating stairs, rails, windows and corners as opportunities to unify the site through the creation of events at various scales. Stirling also returns to British functionalism, regional vernaculars, nineteenth-century traditions and Colin Rowe's academic theories as potential creative origins of modernism from which singular architectural vitalities emerge primed for further exploration. In the process, Tafuri argues:

> Stirling has rewritten the 'words' of modern architecture, constructing an authentic 'archaeology of the present' . . . that, as in his most recent works, can very well reach the point of deforming language, of exhausting it. But it always remains an exhaustion that stops short of a complete shattering of language. The works of Stirling are 'texts,' not explosions of an imaginary utopia. (Tafuri 1987: 268–9).

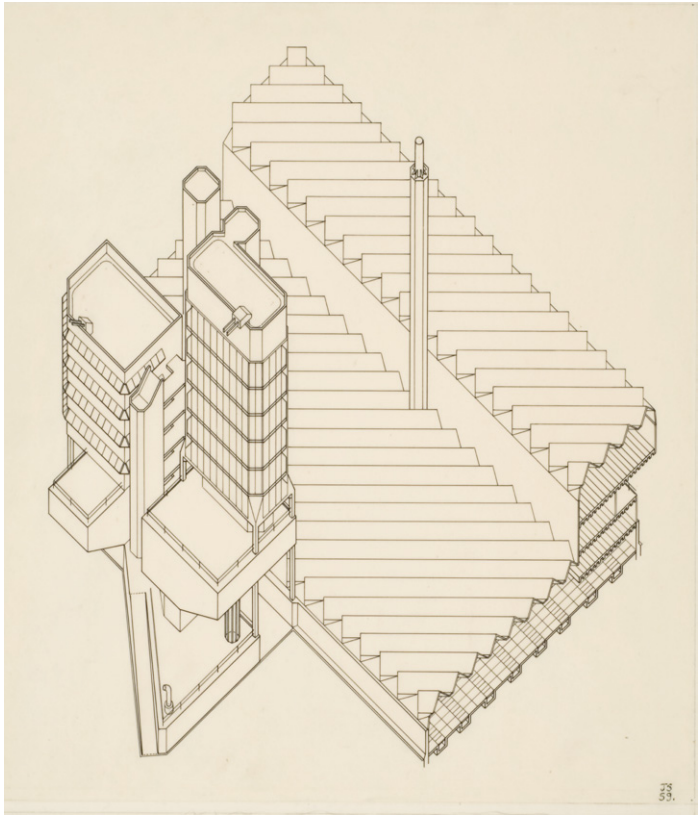


Figure 2. Axonometric drawing of the Engineering Building at the University of Leicester, 1959–1963. (Source: James Stirling/Michael Wilford fonds Collection Centre Canadien d'Architecture/Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montréal).

However, Stirling's 'quotations' – references to nineteenth-century British structural engineering, Paxton's Crystal Palace, Russian constructivism, Italian Futurism, as well as the heroic modernism of Le Corbusier – do not emerge as easy witticisms or obvious allusions. Rather, they acknowledge that, as Deleuze and Guattari argue, 'information and communication, and even signifiance and subjectification, are subordinate to redundancy' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 79). That is, language, like building details, is repeated within a social field and does not emerge from individual minds or objects. Stirling's forms repeat and reference to situate themselves within flows of meaning that precede subjectivity. The building, as such, neither stands

outside the system of cultural production nor merely repeats without difference a message ad nauseam.

The Engineering Building situates itself within a material and discursive flow that performatively enacts incorporeal transformations. This is a radically different experience from the supposed 'conceptual destruction' referenced by Tafuri, who writes, 'Stirling reduces the solid volume to a paper-thin surface; where the glass would seem to suggest a dematerialisation – the block of sheds or the office tower – he treats the glass as a prism, thereby making it contradict its "natural" evanescence' (Tafuri 1987: 271). However, this inversion of mass and void, solid and transparency, strong and weak materials is more appropriately treated as Stirling's creative capacity to highlight the virtual potential of materials, which the building decodifies, decentring tectonic expectations and dispersing its informational function.

Tafuri isolates Stirling's building from the world, arguing that, as text and pretext, it signifies but does not actualise utopia; it represents the space of community and integration but has no power to act or forge tangible connections to an actual space of lived experience. Kenneth Frampton echoes these sentiments in referring to the building's ship-like appearance as 'A dream with maritime associations' (reprinted in Tafuri 1987: 269), or in Tafuri's own words, 'a virtual iceberg that navigates in the sea of the park in which it is casually placed, according to a mysterious course' (Tafuri 1987: 269). However, materially, the design actually responds to a rather tight site on a university campus, and, despite its iconic appearance, is anything but floating in space. It is more productively conceived as a series of abstract machines in which plans, sections, elevations and perspectives operate transformatively, allowing expression and content to converge and materialise. Deleuze and Guattari write:

> A true abstract machine has no way of making a distinction within itself between a plane of expression and a plane of content . . . [It] is neither an infrastructure that is determining in the last instance nor a transcendental Idea that is determining in the supreme instance. Rather, it plays a piloting role. The diagrammatic or abstract machine does not function to represent, even something real, but rather constructs a real that is yet to come, a new type of reality. Thus . . . it does not stand outside history, but is instead always 'prior to' history (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 142).

The Engineering Building takes modernism in a new direction that eschews the sleek finishes and empty formalism of earlier modernism in favour of affective intensities that permit the singular to subvert the

universal. Insisting on a linear logic, Tafuri only partially 'reads' the architect when he contends that 'The "scandal" of Stirling's architecture is constituted by man, as he is forced to ricochet between architecture as pure object and the redundancy of hermetic messages, deranged by a "rhetoric of interruption" ' (Tafuri 1987: 273). Stirling's 'scandal' is actually a carefully articulated interplay between machinic assemblage and collective assemblage of enunciation, or what Deleuze and Guattari define as 'two constantly intersecting multiplicities, "discursive multiplicities" of expression and "nondiscursive multiplicities" of content' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 67). Stirling's architectural montage intentionally sacrifices ideological content such that the exhaustion Tafuri uncovers is in fact a constant passage between the smooth and the striated, fictioning zones of indiscernibility that allow the virtual to emerge from the actual and vice versa. Stirling recreates the becoming of modernism through myriad episodes, but his repetitive strategy is differential to avoid didacticism and posit his design as a virtual part of an immanent process. As such, the built environment becomes an assemblage of capacities rather than the sum of its functions, design concepts become responses to problems comprehended from the perspective of a creative genesis, and architecture develops its own means of striving irreducible to contextual relics decorated with human desire.

III. Stirling and the Smoothing of the Striated

This process of deterritorialisation and striation also provides a new milieu, which enables striated space to be resmoothed through differentials of speed, delays, accelerations, variations, dis- and re-orientations. Smooth space is needed to implement qualitative environmental change, since stratification only organises an existing reality in stasis. In this sense, the actual emerges from the virtual, which is a non-metric continuum, a state of constant creation, part of this world of becoming, repeatedly defined by Deleuze as 'real without being actual, ideal without being abstract' (see Deleuze 1994: 208; 2000: 58; 2004: 101). Smooth space is comprised of forces and sensations in which dwelling is subordinated to the journey, interior and exterior are integrated along with the intensive and extensive, and in which connections can be made at will to create a provisional whole arising from the fragments of the city. According to Deleuze and Guattari, if the sea was increasingly striated by the sky above and its derivative measurements, the developments of commercial cities, especially by the State, soon followed suit, acting as a territorialising force. They

elaborate: 'In contrast to the sea, the city is the striated space par excellence; the sea is a smooth space fundamentally open to striation, and the city is the force of striation that reimparts smooth space, puts it back into operation everywhere, on earth and in the other elements, outside but also inside itself' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 481). The city accomplishes this re-smoothing by developing points of tension and intensity through sprawl and disjunction, which also adds a third, spatial dimension to the smooth and striated.

The most critical and productive architecture for Stirling emerges through the development of three urban museums designed for German cities: the Nordrhein-Westfalen in Dusseldorf (1975), the Wallraf-Richartz Museum in Cologne (1975), and the limited competition for the Neue Staatsgalerie in Stuttgart (1977–83), only the latter of which was constructed. A decade after Leicester and his attempt to overthrow the perceived permanence of architectural modernism, Stirling had grown more comfortable manipulating historical and modernist architectural syntax to facilitate the flow of an increasingly contingent modernism. As Moneo writes, 'This is architecture where the accidental predominates, and where the guiding thread is movement' (Moneo 2004: 41). The process of the Neue Staatsgalerie's creation is revealed as one of intensities beginning with drawings – sketches of widely disparate elements progressing down the urban hillside, staging episodes and engaging the physical and historical landscape in a critical discourse (Figure 3). The architectural promenade, connecting the topography of the city as well as the individual moments of the design, is a sculptural event staging sensation rather than assuming a pre-constituted subject put in motion and merely added to static space. Neue Staatsgalerie was primarily designed in plan and given a relatively modest section measured against its surroundings, a strategy that allows the building to read as a topographical extension of the city rather than an object in it (Figure 4). Stirling obfuscates the distinction between figure and ground, which oscillate to allow the contextual background to alternatively submerge and re-emerge. The collage of forms and details expressively unites to make the building's relations productively indiscernible. Formally, the unbalanced symmetry is reinforced by the irregular, elemental forms of the rotunda and cubic gallery spaces on either side of the dynamic entrance (Figure 5).

This archaeology, like that at Leicester, is temporal and spatial, productively mining the remains of modernism rather than desperately lamenting its downfall or nostalgically rescuing souvenirs from its more idealistic moments. The most overt historical reference, the pronounced

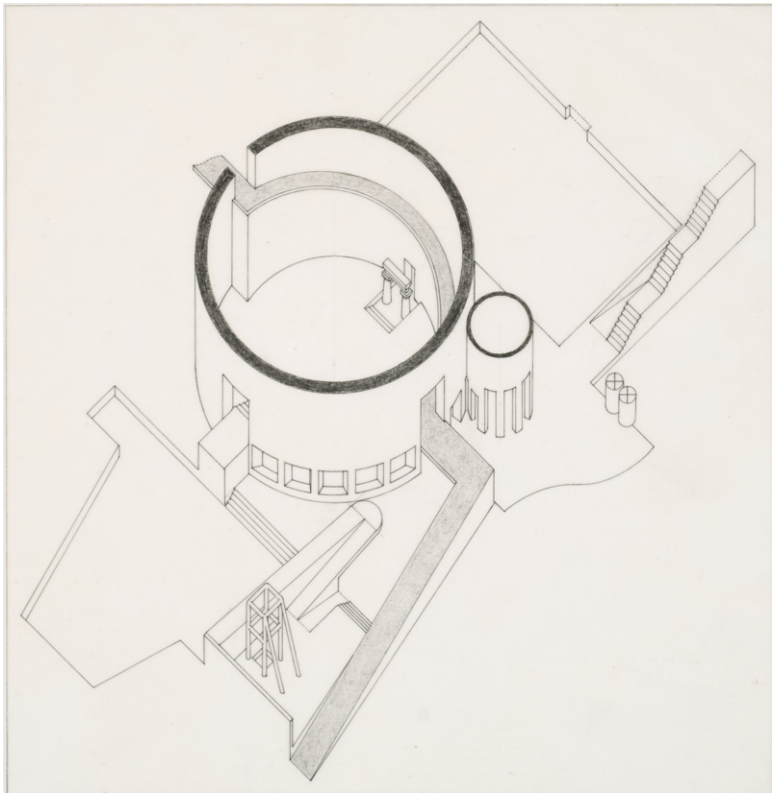


Figure 3. Axonometric drawing of the Neue Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, Germany, 1977–1984. (Source: James Stirling/Michael Wilford fonds Collection Centre Canadien d'Architecture/Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montréal).

cylinder, alludes to Karl Friedrich Schinkel's Berlin Altes Museum, which is here fragmented, then reconnected by a promenade and embedded into the urban environment of Stuttgart. Elements of the recent past appear in the form of an exact copy of Le Corbusier's detailing, as well as references to Stirling's own Olivetti building at Haslemere. Intensities of continually unfolding experiences, such as the elevator qua mechanical toy and vivid colours to counterpoise the stretches of classical stone revetment, instil a lack of repose or closure to the elements in the design by always referring to something yet to come.

Stirling meticulously unites movement and event by negotiating the smooth and the striated in order to address the temporality of design. Of



Figure 4. Exterior perspective of the Neue Staatsgalerie. (Source: James Stirling/Michael Wilford fonds Collection Centre Canadien d'Architecture/ Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montréal)



Figure 5. Interior perspective from inside the rotunda of the Neue Staatsgalerie. (Source: James Stirling/Michael Wilford fonds Collection Centre Canadien d'Architecture/Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montréal)

this process, Tafuri writes that its 'reassemblage follows two seemingly divergent laws: on the one hand, it imitates the mechanical world; on the other, it reduces the formal assemblages, obtained by the accumulation of forms, to a succession of "events" ' (Tafuri 1987: 271). While Rowe, Stirling's teacher and foil, lamented the lack of façades on the project, such a feeling is merely symptomatic of his inability to move beyond historical precedent and overarching structures for representational design. Anthony Vidler writes, 'Without a face or façade, Rowe believed a building lost any frontality, and thus any "metaphorical plane of intersection between the eyes of the observer and what one might dare to call the soul of the building (its condition of internal animation)" ' (Vidler 2008: 103). Rowe's concept of movement, in other words, remains picturesque and classical, while Stirling's incorporates more subtle forms of dynamism and duration.

Stirling's capacity to create, fuse together and obfuscate the boundaries between compositional and expressive layers is a compelling architectural version of the time image, a robust strategy for moving beyond the crisis of movement. The design's synthetic structure resolves social, institutional and tectonic imperatives within a single envelope that reveals traces of a deformational field. In the process, Stirling destabilises Tafuri's fear that symbolism as external to life is all that speaks through architecture in the form of either the monument as 'the artificial creation of a collective memory' or the tomb as 'the illusion of a universe beyond death' (Tafuri 1987: 275). That is, by reifying aspects of the life-world, architecture renders them impotent and precludes the human element of chance along with 'that expression *par excellence* of change, human behaviour' (Tafuri 1987: 273). Quoting György Lukács, Tafuri argues that 'a form that preserves and is open to life, does not occur' (Tafuri 1987: 274), adding, 'the space of life, of time as it is actually experienced, excludes the space of form or, at least, holds it constantly in check' (Tafuri 1987: 276).

In contrast to such apprehension, Neue Staatsgalerie can be seen as a spatial and temporal palimpsest that smooths the striated city, creating a new structure while connecting disparate elements of its environment. It stands as a singular assemblage containing a multiplicity of events with complex social, institutional and technical demands. Figure and ground, system and environment, architecture and landscape all fluctuate, preventing the structure from being read as an autonomous object. Stirling's true accomplishment here is to install complexity through a density of signs that release history, memory and time and resist a reductive formal clarity. The building operates like Bartleby, 'the man without references, without possessions, without properties, without qualities, without particularities: he is too smooth for anyone to be able to hang any particularity on him. Without past or future, he is instantaneous' (Deleuze 1998: 74).

The smooth and striated mark a division between intensive and extensive space and resituate embodiment, the subject's relationship to shelter, how she segregates herself from, or forms an assemblage with, the environment. For Deleuze and Guattari, the creation of materials and activities constitute technology as a process that imbricates humans, tools and matter (woman-needle-fabric). Striated space is given a function, which is imparted on a subject, while smooth space allows subjects to distribute themselves within and throughout space to form a new assemblage (human-building-environment). In striated space, the house separates the body from its surroundings and demarcates a

boundary between interior and exterior. That is, the striated annexes and segregates through immobile shelter. Smooth strategies, on the other hand, integrate interior and exterior, emphasise the journey and act to filter the environment.

Striated space reveals context and the background against which space emerges, while smooth space, which lacks a context, allows for connections to be made freely. In addition, space traversed can be measured and studied only after it has been striated into a provisional separation or closure from its durational whole, constituted by smooth space. The former process is necessary to operate in a quotidian fashion, to provide equivalences of exchange and communication, while the latter reminds us of the spatio-temporal duration of which our selective perception only affords a small portion at any time. Deleuze and Guattari write, 'smooth space allows itself to be striated, and striated space reimparts a smooth space, with potentially very different values, scope, and signs. Perhaps we must say that all progress is made by and in striated space, but all becoming occurs in smooth space.' Perhaps, most significantly, this is a ceaseless process in which 'Nothing is ever done with' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 486), as evinced through Stirling's architectural strategies, which express, rather than represent, the force of events as organisational intensities, and imbricate, without immobilising, time, space and their potential.

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The Trajectories of Yachts and Snot: Strategies for Generative Designers

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Abstract

The interrogation of generative design practice with concepts from Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus* can lead to an understanding of how creative forces are used by generative designers. The shared notion of hyperspaces, respectively parameter space and rhizomatic space, defined as smooth or striated, allows the construction of analogies producing a framework for investigating the development and presentation of form. Richard Dawkins (together with several designers inspired by his biomorphs) and Marcel Wanders, representative of the divergent forms to which generative design has developed since its conception, are used to illustrate and interrogate this framework. From this interrogation the concept of trajectory (inward or outward), the direction in which smooth spaces are explored and striated space constructed, is proposed as a means to guide generative practice.

Keywords: rhizome, evolutionary design, biomorph, software tools, inward and outward trajectories

The qualities of spatiality have been recognised in the certain parts of the philosophical work of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. In particular, their concept of the rhizome has been documented to have had an important influence on American architects in the late 1980s, even though Deleuze himself had very little interest in architecture (Brott 2010). Nevertheless there are relationships between Deleuze and generative design, such as can be found in the work of Bernard Cache and

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Greg Lynn.[1] In drawing relationships between the philosophical aspects of the rhizome and generative design, generative practitioners unfamiliar with the ideas of Deleuze and Guattari must also be considered. There seems room for a framing of generative design within the theories of Deleuze and Guattari (distinct from the individual frameworks of Lynn or Cache) that is capable of broadly addressing developmental issues across the field. Can the concept of the rhizome be used to address and influence the practice of generative design? Given the intuitive relationships between the rhizome and the conceptual/technical structures of generative design arising from their shared sense of spatiality, it is worth a systematic interrogation. Consequentially, strategies arising from this investigation may guide generative designers to develop their own practice in conscious directions. In particular, this investigation can provoke an awareness of how practice can be controlled for discrete purposes, such as establishing style or engaging an audience.

The concept of the rhizome was developed by Deleuze and Guattari in the 1960s and 1970s and is well captured in their 1980 book *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. The concept seeks to understand the world in terms of constant change, multiplicity, and non-hierarchal connections, incorporated into a huge rhizomatic network, or *plane of consistency* (Deleuze and Guattari 1987). Certain concepts within and adjacent to Deleuze and Guattari's conception of the rhizome appear relevant to generative design, namely: *smooth* and *striated* space; *trajectory* through smooth space; the perception of multiplicity and the mediation of this process by the *anomalous*.

The term *generative* encompasses a wide range of different processes in the field of design (or art) that use a generative system between designer and product (Fischer and Herr 2002). A generative system can be anything that mediates between the designer and the outcome, generates output relatively independent of the designer, and which therefore produces novelty and variation. As the output of a generative system can be fed back into the system to influence future outcomes, the generative process is often cyclical. The primary example of a cyclical generative system is evolutionary design, which is commonly practised through software by the use of algorithmic functions and selective procedures to generate form. This approach is applicable to a number of different disciplines, such as architecture, design, art and computer science. Common to all is their basis in the biological model of evolution and therefore also the modelling of the environmental factors that shape development. These factors are *crossover* (reproduction), *mutation*, and *fitness*. Objects can be generated (through crossover), modified (crossover and mutation) and assessed by selective criteria (fitness)

(Bentley 1998). Such processes feature prominently in several of the case studies examined in this paper, selected to provide an overview of how evolutionary design is applied across various different disciplines. Examples are Richard Dawkins the evolutionary theorist, generative designers Celestino Soddu and Enrica Colabella, and John Frazer the evolutionary architect. These practitioners are notable within the field yet each apply generative processes for different purposes. Potentially this serves to test the applicability of frameworks arising from their study to generative design for other purposes and perhaps any purpose in general.

Despite designing for different purposes, these practitioners share in common the use of software tools. However, software tools are not necessarily required for generative design.[2] John Frazer comments: 'It is the conceptual model of generative tools, not the hardware or software that is important' (Frazer 1995a: 24). Rolling dice to determine composition in neo-constructivist chance art is a mid-twentieth century example of non-software based generative technique. Marcel Wanders is an example of a designer who has created generative systems without software tools by harnessing generative visual qualities found in nature, such as the natural variation of sea sponges. In terms of producing a working definition, this example can lead to other examples at a logical extreme, such as in carpentry, in which the act of cross-sectioning a piece of wood to expose the grain is essentially generative (the generative system is the action of the saw, that generates the otherwise unknown characteristics of the hidden wood grain). So are *wabi-sabi* style Japanese ceramics, whose glazes are designed to colour unpredictably in the kiln. However, by convention, the term 'generative' is limited to practices that draw specific attention to their generative aspects, so *wabi-sabi* glazes might be considered generative, but wood working is not. Specifically though, the term is often used to describe recent practices from the late twentieth century to the present day that seem to comprise a movement. The case studies in this paper purposefully date from the experimental years of generative design in the 1980s (Dawkins is the pre-eminent example) to the 1990s and early 2000s, a period of significant development for both software and non-software based practices.

I. The Rhizome: Multiplicity, Molecular, Molar, and the Plane of Consistency

The principal analogy of the *rhizome* is the botanical rhizome, a runner-like element of underground rootstock systems. The rhizomes are in multi-phase contact with other rhizomes, forming a rhizomatic network.

The concept is based on 'principles of connection and heterogeneity' and 'multiplicity'; the rhizome is defined by its connections to others and 'to anything' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 7–9, 34). Each node on the rhizome is considered a molecule which, grouped together with other molecules, can form disciplined multiplicities, or *molarities*. Disciplined not as in fixed but as stable enough to 'exist as a whole' and to be 'grasped as such by outside forces' (Massumi 1992: 55–7).

The idea of a beer glass can be used as a simple analogy. One glass is molecular; it exists by itself, but connects us with concept of many beer glasses, the molarity of beer glasses. This is a multiplicity confined to the notion of a glass that holds beer, in which sense it is a disciplined multiplicity because it has been limited by its own definition. However, it also connects to other multiplicities. These include the tables on which beer glasses rest, the mouths that drink from them and all the people whose hands hold them throughout the course of the night, the images of beer glasses in magazines, the idea of a beer glass in the mind of a philosopher, and so on to infinity. These multiplicities therefore include everything that exists or could possibly exist, immanently forming a philosophical space that Deleuze names the *plane of consistency*, filled with a multiplicity of elements that is impossible to grasp in its entirety.

Generative designers work within operative spaces which reflect aspects of this philosophical space, which can be illustrated with the work of our first case study, evolutionary theorist Richard Dawkins. Dawkins is important to generative design because he was one of the first practitioners to illustrate clearly how generative and evolutionary design can be produced programmatically. The project is documented in his book *The Blind Watchmaker* (1986), and although his motivation was to explain the neo-Darwinist model of evolution as opposed to generating artwork for its own sake, his experiments widely influenced generative designers and artists (Whitelaw 2001). Dawkins wrote simple programs that generated pictographic 'biomorphs' comprised of small lines that could be interbred and evolved using a human as the selector (Figure 1). By his own account, the program was quite successful and Dawkins himself was surprised by the originality and fecundity of its output (Dawkins 1986: 59–63). He was eventually able to generate vast arrays of these biomorphs, conceptualised as existing within the software universe he created and named 'Biomorph Land'.

Biomorph Land is conceived as a parametric hyperspace, or parameter space, that can contain all possible permutations of a program's output. Each of Dawkins' biomorphs has nine computer code 'genes' and so the

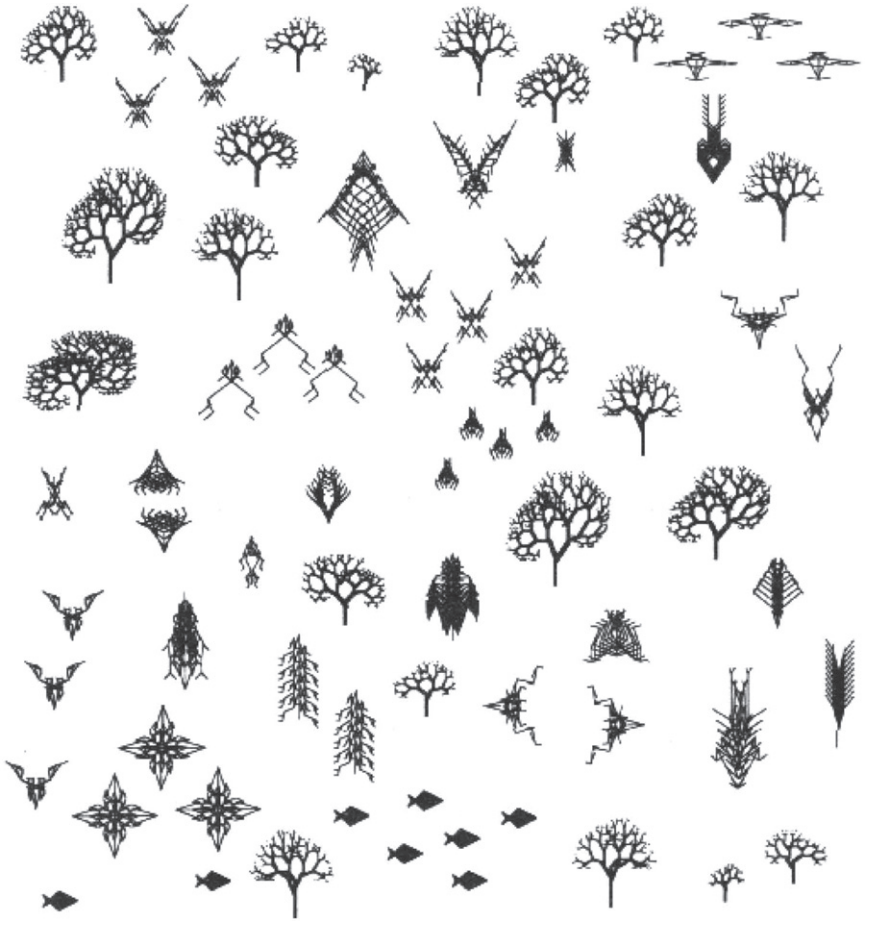


Figure 1. Biomorphs by Richard Dawkins. (Source: Dawkins 1986)

space is nine-dimensional. He cuts through this thick, nine-dimensional space with a plane 'like a flat piece of glass' to illustrate how quickly the formal attributes vary as the code genes change in measurable distance from one another. Dawkins extrapolates this mathematical model into an analogy for animal evolution. The inhabitants are not just all the species that exist on our earth, rather they are a subset of an infinite array including extinct ancestors, future descendants and all the animals that could ever exist; 'impossible monsters' reached by 'theoretical trajectories' (Dawkins 1986: 66–73).

Generative designers consider the hyperspatial qualities of such spaces significant (Whitelaw 2001). They resonate with Deleuze and

Guattari's plane of consistency. Both are multi-dimensional, consisting of permutations and generative acts that produce molecular elements. Each element has a mapable relationship to every other, and potentially a rhizomatic relationship. However, it is important to understand the conflicts created by this comparison. While the dimensionality of rhizome space might be infinite, generative hyperspaces are bound by programmatic limitations. Dawkins' space, for example, is nine-dimensional, so it is defined and contained by this parametrical limit. Deleuze and Guattari contend that the rhizome is 'a stranger to any idea of genetic axis or deep structure' because it is the nature of the rhizome to connect to anything (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 12). It cannot be contained. So there are limitations to applying the concepts of the rhizome to evolutionary based systems. However, there are ways generative systems can expand their parametrical limits. For example, by interaction with users or designers via interfaces or input devices, they vastly expand the complexity of their hyperspatial qualities. These practices of human mediation, viewing, analysis and use are also significant in opening up rhizomatic connections.

The relationship between human and machine is of interest due to the magnitudes of complexity generated by their interaction – an atmosphere of creativity permitting results neither could produce alone (Sims 1993). Human interaction is used in the construction of hyperspaces found in the generative practice of Celestino Soddu and Enrica Colabella.

Soddu and Colabella generate form, including architecture and furniture, using a 'morphogenetic code' inside a human alterable computer environment. As in the case of Dawkins, there is a human, also known as artificial, interaction guiding the computational process; however, the artificial criterion is not evolutionary selection, but rather the use of operable fields that work directly on the genome and environment, affecting the growth and 'embryology' of form. Its products can have the same code, but different forms, and hence allow the creation of a 'population' of species (Soddu 1997). The approach is less cyclical than that of Dawkins (the populations do not inform new generations), requiring a different understanding of its hyperspatial outcomes. While the parameter space created by Dawkins may be capable of infinite production, it can also be considered bounded by the dimensions of the code genome, while running intact. Guiding a selection process does not change the space, only explores it. Soddu and Colabella's operable fields, however, alter the geography of their hyperspace by modifying the genome and environmental conditions. The nature of their hyperspace is contingent on this human interaction;



Figure 2. Generative chair designs by Celestino Soddu and Enrica Colabella. (Source: Soddu 1997)

the computer and human are connected via a conceptual relationship, forming an extended hyperspace beginning to more closely embody the rhizomatic relationships proposed by Deleuze and Guattari.

Another way to extend the hyperspace is to conceptualise it as having the rhizomatic ability to connect to anything, and, in fact, everything. Deleuze and Guattari's own speculations on the theory of evolution are contingent on such an extended connective ability. Arguing that evolution as a whole forms a large complex rhizome, they do not see the evolution of single animals, rather they see animals and animal packs: 'troops of monkeys and schools of fish', connected by 'terms in play and assignable relations' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 239). The connections go beyond species and physicality. These terms in play bind many things together, including objects and animals, but also places and effects. In this way, rhizomatic relationships also include the *experience* of objects. When discussing generative design within a rhizomatic framework, these experiences can be theoretically interrogated as part of an extended experiential space connected to generative hyperspaces, although they may not exist concretely in the same way. Their construction relies on

the analysis of how a designed object activates the mind. An example of such a different kind of rhizomatic relationship is demonstrated by the generative systems of Dutch product designer Marcel Wanders.

In the 1990s, Wanders engaged in generative processes involving both selective and non-selective aspects. The forms of his *Sponge* vases (1997) are generated by casting liquid porcelain in the random patterns of natural sea sponges. The resulting vases are as different to each other as are sea sponges in the natural environment of the sea. As such, the system can be said to have no selection criteria.[3] Conversely, Wanders' *Snotty* vases illustrate a generative process in which selection is integral to the production process.

Common to both is the lack of a software model, though computers are used in the case of the *Snotty* vases, albeit not in a generative way. That task is reserved for the human body. The form of the vase is derived from a 3-dimensional scan of a mucus glob, or snot, expectorated from a person by sneezing. The form of the snot is digitally captured in mid-air travelling at high velocity. Numerous scans were collected and then assessed for their qualities, for example beauty, complexity, but notably also a 'logical gravity situation', i.e. the functional ability to stand up. Adapting the selected 3-dimensional scans into a vase involved enlarging and hollowing the form with a computer program, but consideration was given to the integrity of the generative process and as little was changed as possible. As Erna Theys of the Marcel Wanders Studio remarks, 'it is important to accept the situation as it is' (Theys 2002). The vases are then built in polyamide using a 3-dimensional printer. The capturing process is comparable to the exploration of parameter spaces as practised by Dawkins, with the primary difference that Wanders exploits the human body as a generative system, and so explores a space of variation produced naturally by the activity of sneezing.[4]

The resulting object is a strangely beautiful vase that is also vaguely repulsive. It is possessed of a familiarity that is unsettling given social attitudes to bodily functions and waste, and one cannot help but think about its nasal origins and the substances inside noses everywhere. How does a rhizomatic understanding emerge from this? As mentioned, Deleuze and Guattari describe the rhizome possessing *assignable relations* and *terms in play*. For the vase, a form generated from snot frozen in time and space, the terms in play are these very elements: snot, time, and space. Suggestible is the notion that such elements are shared by many millions and billions of snot particles travelling through time and space. Your snot, my snot, someone else's snot, and also the snot of history and the snot of the future. All snot in



Figure 3. *Snotty* vases by Marcel Wanders (clockwise from top, *Influenza*, *Sinusitis*, *Ozaena*, *Pollinosis and Coryza*). (Source: Photo by Maarten van Houten. Provided by Erna Theys of the Marcel Wanders Studio, 2002)

existence landscaping a huge snot-space linking all our noses; a rarely considered multiplicity.

II. Smooth and Striated Space

Deleuze and Guattari contend that rhizomatic relationships are contingent upon a placement in *smooth* or *striated* space, or in a space shifting from one to the other. Smooth space is described as being a place of 'continuous variation, continuous development of form', whereas striated space is that which 'produces order . . . and organises' based on 'measures and properties' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 474, 478–9). Therefore, when discussing the practice of design, the open-ended possibilities of smooth space correspond to the inventive, creative and lateral thinking associated with the practice of design. However, as smooth space is explored and developed, the process of recognition and mapping produces striation. Striated space, in terms corresponding to design, is a conceptual location for the systems and knowledge that inform the design process. In turn, these factors engage with further acts of creativity, leading the design processes back into the exploration of new smooth spaces. So in design, as in the rhizome, inhabited spaces are constantly shifting back and forth between the two.

This constant shifting can be illustrated using Dawkins' experiments with his biomorphs. In the very first running of his program he noticed certain biomorph configurations resembling insects. Surprised by this zoomorphism, he selectively bred the most insect-like together, until they had, in his own words, 'eight legs like a spider, six legs like an insect . . . ' (Dawkins 1986: 60), and a variety of insect-like creatures were expressed in the program's parameter space. Dawkins self-directed discovery of these biomorphs is his journey through a *smooth* space, an area of 'continuous variation, continuous development of form' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 478). The recordings Dawkins made of this biomorph evolution can be thought of as a series of points or coordinates that describe the evolution of the insect biomorphs. Deleuze and Guattari note that in striated space 'lines or trajectory tend to be subordinated to points, one goes from one point to another' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 478). Hence, the smooth space in which the insects develop becomes striated as a result of their own discovery.

The ability to record and steer these kinds of explorations is the driving force behind an area of evolutionary design known as *optimisation*. Optimisation has been used to effectively solve a number

of difficult engineering problems including flywheel design (Bentley 1998) and yacht hull design (Frazer 1995b), problems that can be defined by fairly precise parameters, such as material weight to strength ratios or aerodynamic characteristics. Within the space defined by such parameters, *genetic algorithms* search by evolving themselves until an optimal solution is found (Zarzar 2002). Care is taken to make the search space as small as possible so as to reduce computational time and error. The process is self-contained and no human interactions occur after its initial modelling, and so the process is said to be internal and 'natural' in relation to the 'natural' model of Darwinian evolution (Westbrook 2002).

Optimisation sacrifices design creativity for the sake of specific output. The exploration space is small, suitable for engineering, but less suitable for design fields with broader criteria for success. However, the search space can be expanded by any change in parameters or environmental conditions voiding the search results. This occurs with human interaction in hybridised optimisation processes, such as those used by John Frazer in his yacht-building experiments. In these experiments, optimisation processes evolved yachts based on computer-assessed levels of fitness, subjected to crossover and mutation.

'Stability, centre of buoyancy, wetted surface area, [and other] "hydrostatic characteristics" [which] give some indication of likely hull performance and potential speed... were chosen as factors that could be evolved and reliably assessed by the computer' (Frazer 1995b). Meanwhile, Frazer and his team oversaw the crossover process visually and interjected to discard yachts lacking aesthetic appeal. It can be considered that during this process the designers experience a rhizomatic interaction with the software. While the software produces striated space though optimisation processes, smooth space is expanded by the production of variants whose aesthetics are matched against a fuzzy ideal in the minds of Frazer and his team. This is a smooth space, exogenous to the software space, containing only an abstraction of a yacht, or, we could say, a multiplicity of possible yachts. In other words, they don't know what the yacht looks like until they see it generated by the computer, guided by their own intuition. Through respective activities the connected spaces striate until a precise and desirable model of the yacht stares out at them from the computer monitor. Deleuze and Guattari comment: 'the metrics of striated spaces (*metron)* are indispensable for the translation of the strange data of a smooth multiplicity' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 486).

III. Outward Trajectory

Deleuze and Guattari's model of smooth and striated space is contingent on lines. In striated space these lines are subjected to the points, they are concrete. However, in smooth space it is the opposite and the lines are vectors, tipped with an arrowhead possessing direction, a trajectory of movement. Trajectory is not a term frequently used by Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus*, however, much of their description of smooth and striated space is contingent upon related terms: 'the course of one's crossing', 'lines of flight', 'abstract line–concrete line'. Deleuze and Guattari exhort: 'Look only at the movements' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 481, 117, 496, 282). The line of such exploration has the potential to change smooth space, or cross a threshold into new smooth space. It can be *abstract or nomadic*, a line of *deterritorialisation* that dissolves or escapes striation. In contrast, the *concrete* line is not so much a line, but a force that is constantly being subjugated to the points left in the wake of the exploratory line. This is the activity of striation. To understand the exploratory line in context, we need to see how the line progresses and its effect on the space it negotiates. In which direction does its arrowhead point?

It is salient to discuss trajectory, and in particular an *inwards* trajectory that imparts an increasingly denser stratification in its wake as it moves through a bounded smooth space, thereby expressing increasing homogeneity, and an *outwards* trajectory that jumps across the boundaries of striated space, a line of flight discovering new smooth spaces and, through its own form of striation, linking spaces together. The process of experiencing Wanders' *Snotty* vase appears to run in an outward trajectory. It follows an abstract line to new territories by linking a presentation of snot with an experiential understanding, an empathic awareness, of all snot in existence, the snot-space inside all our noses. This is the process of engaging with multiplicity. However, Deleuze and Guattari note, 'wherever there is a multiplicity, you will also find an exceptional individual, and it is with that individual that an alliance must be made' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 243).

They name this exceptional individual the *anomalous*, the thing that mediates the transition to the multiple. The vases are anomalous to snot because they are vases and *not* snot. They stand many orders of magnitude larger than snot, and they are solid, smooth and plastic as opposed to soft, sticky and organic. They are frozen, immobile, gravity dependent, not flying nor actively changing form as they do so. Yet, somewhat gravity defiant as fluidly shaped vases, they express this

temporal, aero-spatial character. To use Deleuze and Guattari's own analogy, they are to ordinary snot what Moby-Dick the great white whale is to ordinary whales. Random glances at real snot, whether in tissues or hocked onto the street, do not necessarily produce an engagement with a molarity of snot. The vase is both familiar and significantly unfamiliar. It is not abnormal, rather its exceptionality is a transgression of characteristics simultaneously confirming those characteristics as essential, but diverse. It belongs to the multiplicity because it confirms the heterogeneity of the multiple. In other words, despite being strange, it shares qualities with its own group. The familiar aspects produce recuperation points for us to consider the unfamiliar. For example, the change in material from mucus to plastic skews us to examine other qualities of snot, such as shape and form.

Additionally, the naming of the *Snotty* vases continues the play with familiarity: *Influenza*, *Sinusitis*, *Ozaena*, *Pollinosis* and *Coryza*. One might think in regards to the more familiar names, *I too have had influenza, or sinusitis*; meanwhile, the more exotic Latin medical names for illnesses extend the scope of our thought to the unfamiliar. We become aware of the vases' connection to many kinds of snot. The presentation of a group of five variant vases is also important because it prevents a perception of the vase as abnormal (it belongs to a group), while gently nudging us towards a sense of the multiple. In this manner, the anomalous object has mediated an outwards trajectory, facilitating the growth of the rhizome in experiential space.

IV. Inwards Trajectory

Conversely, Dawkins explores his parameter space with an inwards trajectory. While the space is parametrically bound, he argues that production is limitless. Theorist Mitchell Whitelaw comments that because such practice claims qualities of infinite variety, it has also been claimed that the space contains all the art that has, could or would ever exist: the *Mona Lisa*, Munch's *The Scream*, and a photo of a tattoo of the Scream. Yet, in practice, evolutionary artists cannot break free of stylistic limitations. There is self-similarity in Dawkins work; black and white line work, fractal branching, and various forms of symmetry. Whitelaw assesses another generative practitioner, the evolutionary artist Steven Rooke, in much the same way, noticing repeated fractal motifs and the contrast of high-complexity spaces interrupted by flat washes of supersaturated colour. In both Rooke and Dawkins, these

qualities are indicative of programming limits. While the process has endless variation, the evolutionary development appears paradoxically consistent and possessed of an 'algebraic aesthetic' (Whitelaw 2001). From image to image, the qualities in such work, which become noticeably homogeneous the greater the number of examples viewed, reflect the harder to evaluate 'creative potentialities of striated space' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 494). Smooth space is still being explored, but within ever shrinking boundaries created by an inward trajectory of exploration.

The same qualities can be seen in the chairs generated by Soddu and Colabella. Although intended to express novelty, they also share similar aesthetic features. Blocky forms and a similar, but seemingly arbitrary, fusion of elements based on primary shapes are shared by all the chairs. These characteristics are interesting because they possess a geometric incoherence, a kind of biological-like diversity within each single chair. Yet as a whole, as a species or population of chairs, the commonality of these features becomes apparent. Noticeably, the chairs share a common palette of bright colours, which also suggests that formal relationships across the chairs are as important as the formal qualities within any particular chair. Soddu states that the idea behind the chairs should be 'recognisable notwithstanding the differences among the individual chairs' (Soddu 1997). In rhizomatic terms, the recognition of this idea indicates a molarity disciplined by a series of concrete lines; the creation of each chair, and every chair, falls between these lines of striation. This denotes an inwards trajectory, and as with Dawkins and Rooke, this establishes style.

For Rooke, there seems to be a conscious motivation behind his inwards trajectory. Rooke discusses his work with energy. He talks about evolutionary design sessions of 'two or three days' resulting in 'dozens of generations with one or two hundred individuals in the population' (Whitelaw 2001). It appears that in the process of mapping there is a desire to exhaust the potential of the parameter space; or to grab at something hidden and elusive within it. By generating successive waves of subtly differentiated novelty, Rooke is applying denser and denser layers of striation upon his work. Perhaps his search is an attempt to depict not the outcomes of the space, but the space itself, chasing the *grain* of the space by squeezing the smooth space out of existence, to a recuperation point of infinite density. Like a kind of quantum mechanical space-foam; a striation so dense it is utterly smooth again. This is resonant with Deleuze and Guattari who comment that striated spaces are spaces for recuperation, spaces grounded in the absolute;

'when the striated attains its ideal of perfect homogeneity, it is apt to re-impart smooth space' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 488). Alternatively, Rooke's solidly, almost solipsistically inward trajectory may be a result of becoming overly accustomed to the behaviour of the machine. His design sessions indicate a state of hybridisation with his software that, despite the generation of complexity, have been criticised by theorist Stanford Kwinter for lockstepping human choices into 'deterministic spaces' (Kwinter 2008). In which case, the selective pressures Rooke places upon his artwork have only the semblance of free will: in practice he can only make choices the software is capable of offering.

V. Conclusion

It appears that the notion of context becomes important in assessing the nature of generative design. One of Soddu and Colabella's chairs, standing by itself, can exhibit a range of elements embodying the fecundity of generative design. Yet, because of an intention to communicate the process, the chairs are displayed collectively. Then, paradoxically for an approach stated by its authors to be 'individually distinct' (Soddu 1997), the common design factors become noticeable, diminishing the individual originality of each chair.

One can suppose from this that the value of generative design might be the uniqueness of the single object taken and digested quietly alone, rather than engorging on a vast number of outcomes. A strategy for generative designers may be to present fewer outcomes of their practice, with sensitivity to each variation. Although novelty is certainly an expression of a multiplicity, Deleuze and Guattari are clear that multiplicity is not something that can be grasped in its entirety, and trying to do so is overwhelming. Getting a sense of the multiple, however, via molarities, is mediated by the anomalous, the unique member of its multiplicity that stands out and beckons for attention (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 245). So it could be argued that the presentation of singular, anomalous examples is more effective than the presentation of many more collected expressions of novelty. Marcel Wanders implements this kind of strategy with his *Snotty* vases, cleverly manipulating various aspects of familiarity/unfamiliarity associated with the anomalous to resonate with his audience.

However, the intention to explicitly draw attention to their own process requires different strategies from generative designers. By publishing collections of their products, in rows and columns, Soddu and Colabella convey the formal qualities shared by their chairs and in

doing so communicate a sense of the operations and generative factors which produce them. This is a presentation of an inwards trajectory. It establishes style for a generative designer, although it may also expose the limitations of the technology. Potentially, as with Rooke, it can send the designer on an inwards path of producing self-reflecting novelty that becomes paradoxically homogeneous. Inwards trajectory explains the tendency of generative design to exhaust creative potentiality from one source. Whilst some flexibility arises from the ability to modify parametric factors, without broader changes to the conceptual approach outcomes can become static, routined to the deterministic spaces of the machine and ultimately in conflict with the purpose of the generative process to produce novelty.

Notes

1. In brief, Greg Lynn has extrapolated concepts from such books as Deleuze's *The Fold* into the design of soft, co-extensive architecture that responds to surrounding conditions. Bernard Cache was an early generative practitioner experimenting with mass customisation, well documented in his book *Earth Moves*, later referenced by Deleuze.
2. There are many other computer-aided generative design systems based on models other than the evolutionary model. These include rule-based software systems, for example fractals, and self-organization software systems such as swarm modelling.
3. Although ironically one particular version is dominant in design media and image searches as a consequence of being actively selected through the process of marketing.
4. Wanders was not the only Dutch conceptual designer working in this manner in 1990s; Jurgen Bey and Hella Jongerius also experimented with introducing generative systems to the production of ceramics. Jongerius' 'B-set' is a notable critique of uniformity in serial mass production.

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Weaving and Warping: Free Indirect Movements Between Theory and Art Practice

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Abstract

Through an exploratory interrelation of theory with fine art practice, this article sets out to address the role of memory in the transitions and transformations between smooth and striated states. The article constructs a striated, woven formation between virtual and acquired memory, and attentive and inattentive perception, before going on to investigate how its regularity is disrupted through disturbances, slippages and snags.

Keywords: Bergson, theory, art practice, time-image, (in)attentive memory

Bergson's theories of the interconnected nature of perception, consciousness and reality in spirals and circuits can been intertwined directly with Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of the smooth and the striated to produce an interwoven composition. An interpenetration of perception and memory, the interrelation of the recollected and experienced in this interwoven structure, encompasses a correspondence between 'the real and the imaginary, the physical and the mental, the objective and the subjective, description and narration, the actual and the virtual' (Deleuze 2005: 44). It will be argued that this structure constitutes a dialectic (striated), and yet is at the same time inclusive of elements that are of a different nature, being qualitatively smooth. From within this reticulated structure arise incidents that interrupt or derail

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its measured regularity. These snaps or slips are found to be inherent within it. 'Time is out of joint' (Deleuze 2005: xiii), and through these 'aberrations', 'disturbances of memory and the failures of recognition' (Deleuze 2005: 52), there ensues an exploration into the function of memory between states of smoothness and striation which at the same time reveals new ways for thinking interrelationships between Deleuzian theory and art practice.

In my studio practice, digital film, analogue transparencies and the surfaces of drawings are overlaid in 'a series of rich and complex operations' (Deleuze and Guattari 2008: 536). Projections are traced and traced again, generating entangled and densely drawn areas. Through drawing and film, documentation and recordings are superimposed, revealing interpenetrating yet distinct durations. This article sets out to investigate how the variable interrelationship between surfaces of drawing and film in practice can be understood in terms of transitions that move between gridded enclosure and states of enmeshed smoothness. The relationship between theory and practice that has been employed here is not one of simple transfer or application – taking a concept and applying it to an image or event in the studio; neither is it a case of one emulating or reflecting the other. 'Theory does not express, translate, or serve to apply practice: It is practice' (Foucault 1977: 208). This proposition must be understood in an experimental rather than a reductive way, and this demands the *activation* of Deleuzian theory through a number of speculatory conjunctions in, with and through art practice.

It could be argued that Deleuzian concepts form, or are beginning to form, an established 'canon', a template or fixed shape for thinking that works *against* them. It seems vital that Deleuze's concepts be not merely explored and recombined, but that they also be extended, adapted and 'put to use' (Buchanan 2006). This method is similar to Moulard-Leonard's description of Deleuze's approach to Bergson's philosophy, as 'faithfully travelling down the same path, pushing Bergson's insights to their extreme limits' (Moulard-Leonard 2008: 9).

I. Fabrication

In their chapter on the smooth and the striated, Deleuze and Guattari refer to Bergson's oppositional pairing of two multiplicities: 'one qualitative and fusional, continuous, the other numerical and homogenous, discrete' (Deleuze and Guattari 2008: 234). Two direct correlations are drawn here, linking spatial, discontinuous multiplicity

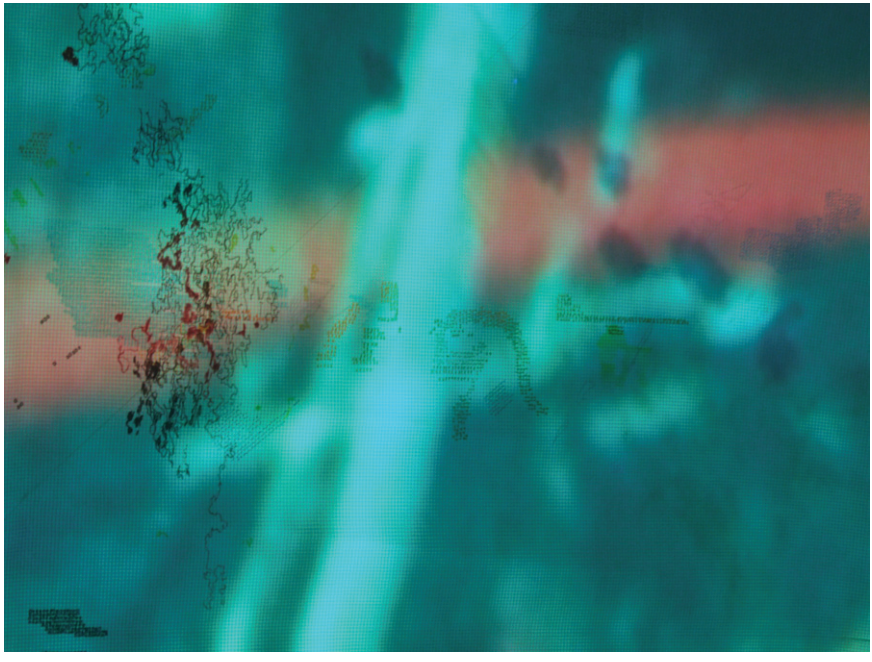


Figure 1. Digital film still from *Collider* (2011), Charlotte Knox-Williams.

with striation, and durational, continuous multiplicity with smoothness. Spatial multiplicity is counted, measured and metered, characteristics that all conform to the definition of the striated. A continuous multiplicity, on the other hand, cannot be divided without altering the whole, and it is this state that Bergson attributes to duration or pure temporality. Homogenous, open and expandable in any direction, clear parallels exist here with the description of smooth states and spaces. Based in this understanding, further parallels can be constructed between the dual nature of memory as detailed by Bergson in *Matter and Memory*, and the opposing states of smoothness and striation.

The past endures into the present through memory according to two separate functions, one automatic and the other acquired. Acquired or learned memory is constructed through repetition, an action is carried out several times in order to create 'motor mechanisms' that can then be recalled and re-enacted as required. This acquisition of memory entails the separation of the action into parts, followed by the replication of these segments, leading gradually to the point at which the separation is no longer apparent. Eventually, the whole can be re-created from

beginning to end. Bergson offers the example of learning a text by heart, where repetition of a sequence of words and sounds gradually brings about the blending of one into the next until the whole can be replicated. A recollection formed in this way has a fixed duration, and in order to activate the memory, the passage or text must be recalled in its entirety following its original succession. Asked to repeat the third word of the second sentence, the only way to retrieve this memory is to repeat the passage from the beginning. Acquired memory, then, 'requires a definite time, the time necessary to develop one by one, were it only in the imagination, all the articulatory movements that are necessary' (Bergson 2004: 91). This kind of recollection is based in movement and therefore in space, it is 'lived and acted, rather than represented' (Bergson 2004: 91). Acquired memory is developed through repetition of the same.

In contrast, automatic memory is purely temporal and exists, independently of space and movement, in recollected images (Bergson 2004: 87). At every instant, continuously and without pause, this automatic or virtual memory expands to encompass the past in its entirety and variety. Enduring into the present only as representation, virtual memory persists as a store of memory images adding to itself constantly at every moment. Unlike learned or acquired memory, pure memory does not have a fixed duration and can be condensed into a single instantaneous image and also expanded indefinitely. It is not necessary to re-enact the entire sequence in order for recollection to take place, indeed 'there is nothing to prevent me from grasping the whole of it instantaneously, as in one picture' (Bergson 2004: 91). Further to this, acquired memory, rooted as it is in movement and action and therefore in the present, only maintains a relationship with the past through virtual memory, in these separate recollections that were stored up automatically.

The two functions of memory, like the opposing states of smoothness and striation, are distinct, qualitatively different from one another; 'one imagines, the other repeats' (Bergson 2004: 96). Acquired memory entails a fixing, measuring and delimiting of actions in the present so as to create a 'closed system of automatic movements which succeed each other in the same order'. Inherently spatial and discontinuous, this function of habitual memory could be described as having a striating function. A striated space is measured and counted, just as acquired memory acts to 'discriminate and classify . . . it points out, one after another, within the total movement, the lines that mark off its internal structure' (Bergson 2004: 137–8). Virtual memory, in opposition to a striating function, has no 'fixed or mobile elements but rather distributes

a continuous variation' (Deleuze and Guattari 2008: 525). Pure memory is identifiable with qualities of smooth spaces; heterogeneous and continuous, it does not operate from a centre nor according to any fixed succession or sequence.

Virtual and habitual memory are distinguished through a further separation between two kinds of recognition, attentive and inattentive. Inattentive recognition occurs in action and constitutes a sensory-motor response, and this is contrasted with a concentrated or attentive act of recognition which consists of 'an effort of the mind' (Moulard-Leonard 2008: 35). This kind of perception engages the sensory-motor schema that has been constructed through acquired memory. At the same time, however, attentive recognition is also employed. This is the state within which memory images, those automatically stored up at each moment, are sought out and applied to the present action or situation. Perception, whether attentive or inattentive, coordinates what Deleuze calls 'sensory-motor images' and 'recollection images', accrued through acquired and virtual memory respectively, according to need or interest (Deleuze 2005: 54. Bergson offers the example of meeting a passer-by on the street on a second or third occasion: 'I recognize him, in the sense that the concomitant circumstances of the original perception, returning to my mind, surround the actual image with a setting which is not a setting actually perceived' (Bergson 2004: 105).

Another binary pair is established, creating an opposition between attentive and inattentive perception. Just as states of smoothness and striation are always processing into and arising from one another, however, so the dual aspects of memory and recognition are continuously feeding into one another. It is perhaps true that each kind of memory might be considered as either smooth or striated in their pure form, but this purity is never apparent to us; 'the two forms of memory are theoretically independent, although in practice neither is ever encountered as such' (Bergson, 2004: 105). Indeed, both kinds of memory and both attitudes of recognition are incorporated into a delicately interwoven structure, thereby displacing the oppositional pairings (Deleuze and Guattari 2008: 525).

A striated space intertwines co-functioning elements that are organised vertically and horizontally. There is an interrelation between these elements that constitutes a dialogue or dialectic, a back and forth motion. These two elements have separate functions, one being mobile whilst the other is static, and in this way striation consists in an interlacing of 'fixed and variable elements' (Deleuze and Guattari 2008: 528). The two kinds of memory remain distinct from one another, but

exist in combination and equilibrium. They are reciprocally supportive, holding each other in a tightly woven structure, the fixed element of which is provided by the delimitations and repetition of acquired memory, and is enacted through inattentive recognition.

Acquired sensory-motor schemas provide a framework that defines how past recollections are sought by the mind according to their use within the present situation. To be included within the tightly woven configuration, memory must be found to be useful in present action; 'these threads which receive disturbances or stimulations from the external world and return them to it in the form of appropriate reactions, these threads so beautifully stretched from the periphery to the periphery, are just what ensure by the solidarity of their connexions and the precision of their interweaving the sensory-motor equilibrium of the body' (Bergson 2004: 227). Through this regulating structure, qualitatively smooth, virtual memory is brought to bear in the present through the intellectual act of attention. The smooth images arising from virtual memory are delimited as they are applied and incorporated into the weave created by inattentive recognition and habitual memory. Composed of fragments or pieces that must be accommodated together, the whole is produced in a way that is limited by succession and repetition, regulated by the fixed warp.

Digital film is extendable and expandable in any direction. Clips can be stretched, lengthened or contracted to increasingly brief durations. The framing and focus of any shot can be adjusted, areas pulled into close-up or multiple frames accommodated in a single screen. Digital film in this way constitutes a smooth space, but remains in this state only whilst it is being edited. As soon as it is assembled into a whole, shots edited together to form a sequence, it is striated. Bounded and constrained by a fixed duration, progressing with a regular, metered advancement. The surface is filmed, captured, parcelled up into strips and squares of digital code. Mapped, striated, translated or over-coded according to a 'central perspective' and an optic or 'long-distance vision' (Deleuze and Guattari 2008: 545). Once transposed through this process, however, the recorded surfaces are again rendered manipulable. Opened for editing, stretched, separated or joined together, the digitised records can also be re-projected, re-inserted into the process again. In this way, striation succeeds in 'subjugating, over-coding, metricizing smooth space, in neutralizing it, but also in giving it a milieu of propagation extension, refraction, renewal and impulse' (Deleuze and Guattari 2008: 536).

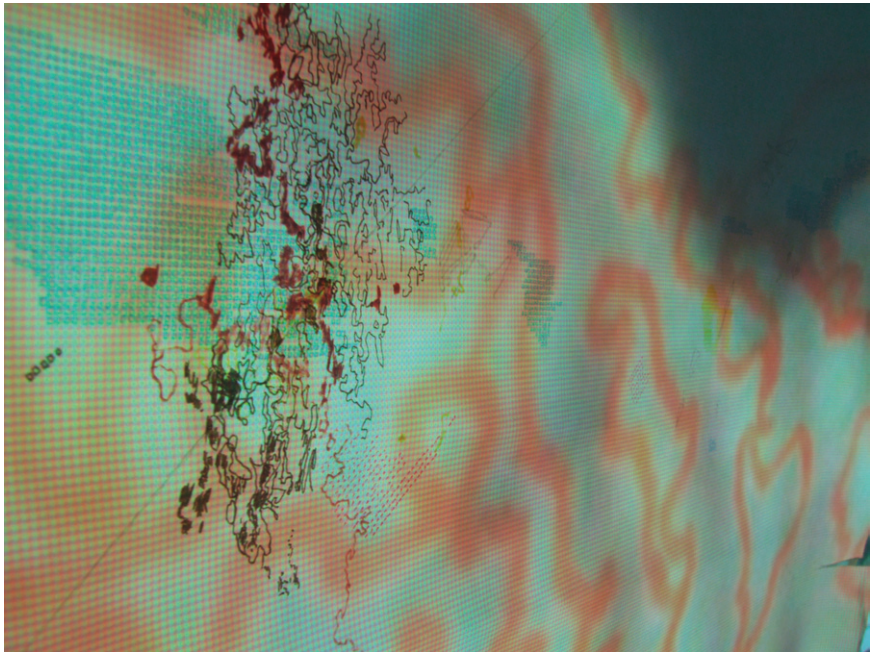


Figure 2. Digital film still from *Collider* (2011), Charlotte Knox-Williams.

The interrelated function of memory and recognition is enacted according to a double function: connecting the thought and the experienced into circuits that turn inwards towards the perception of the object in the present, whilst also looping back outwards, to re-engage with memory again: 'beside the afferent process which carries the impression to the centre, there is another process, of contrary direction, which brings back the image to the periphery' (Bergson 2004: 125). Both virtual and acquired memory are employed in the useful pursuit of the present, combined through sensory-motor schema and applied in understanding and negotiating the world through recognition and action. 'We do not perceive the thing or the image it its entirety, we always perceive less of it, we perceive only what we are interested in perceiving, or rather what it is in our interests to perceive' (Deleuze 2005: 19). Incorporating smoother, more mobile elements, the characteristics of a striated space can nevertheless be attributed to this interwoven, four stranded structure; its tendency is to regulate and articulate according to actions and recognitions that are useful within the present moment.

The film is projected onto the surface of the drawing. Under a digital projection, every image is broken down into a grid, subjected to this totalising striation. And yet, standing up close to the paper, the reticulated surface begins to dissolve and disintegrate. In the infra-thin space where the film slips over the paper, digital film is experienced as smooth; 'there is neither horizon nor background nor perspective nor limit nor outline or form nor centre' (Deleuze and Guattari 2008: 545). To draw in this space of extreme proximity is 'to be too close to it, to lose oneself without landmarks in a smooth space' (Deleuze and Guattari 2008: 544). Segments and areas of the stilled image are traced, individual pixels of the projection are delineated, tiny blocks of colour outlining each opening in the gridded surface. Enacted within and upon a smooth space of projection, the drawing is an orientation that progresses through fixing, measuring, situating and pinpointing.

Within the reticulation of attention and memory, useless or inapplicable images are delegated to a 'less illuminated fringe' that lies at the edge of the area of concern within any given present moment (Bergson 2004: 199). Under particular conditions, in the absence of the delimiting influence of the sensory-motor schema, perception of these 'useless' images becomes possible (Bergson 2004: 199). Through a disturbance or disruption of the mechanism of sensory-motor response, or through a slackening of the tension held between the elements that make it up, a direct experience of the smooth spaces of dream, the pure virtuality of memory or mental derangement, arises through the stable, striated formation that has been described. Bergson writes that such a perturbation could 'relax for a moment the tension of the threads which go from the periphery to the periphery by way of the centre, and immediately these darkened images come forward into the full light' (Bergson 2004: 97). These disturbances, through which smooth states arise in the striated configuration described, are of two kinds: a slip and a snag. The slip is centrifugal; an unfurling in which the tightly woven interrelation between memory, perception and action drifts and loosens. The snag is centripetal; a disruption or stoppage that impinges on the smooth operation of action and reaction.

II. Slip

Bergson describes the gradual process through which, as attention remains focused on an object, the identification or recognition of the correspondence between the perceived and remembered becomes

increasingly distant. In a motion that radiates outwards from the centre, memory and attention 'reconstruct together with this object the more and more distant, or profound, *conditions* with which it forms a system' (Moulard-Leonard 2008: 51). The weaving of memory images (pure, virtual, and smooth), so that they are incorporated into the sensory-motor schema of cause and effect, in this way moves outwards from the centre in a centrifugal direction, in 'the descriptive handling of the object in attentive recognition, which makes the object remain the same but pass through different mental planes' (Moulard-Leonard 2008: 62).

Bergson writes that in states of profound distraction or of dreaming, a loosening or unwinding of conscious attention from the present moment takes place (Bergson 2004: 97). This relaxation or unfurling of the tension that maintains the regular inter-functioning of memory, action, perception and recognition constitutes a detachment that allows the dreamt and imagined to be interspersed with useful images arising in the present (Bergson 2004: 227). It is as if the parabola inscribed by the mind, arcing away from the object of perception, leads outside of this gravitational field and careers off through fragments of memory images. These loops, at their most distanced or distended, come to include the visionary, the dreamt or imagined, and it is possible for the linkages back to the actual to be entirely lost (Moulard-Leonard 2008: 41). 'This is no longer the sensory-motor link of the action-image in habitual recognition, nor is it the various circuits of perception-recollection which come to supplement it in attentive recognition; it would rather be the weak and dislocatory connection' (Deleuze 2009: 54).

The line of distraction that is inscribed acts to connect together fragments of memory and delusion, piecing them together through 'infinite, successive additions' to create a smooth, open and de-centred space (Deleuze and Guattari 2008: 525). The detachment of attention from action and perception generates a smooth space, pieced rather than interwoven, that links together a number of fragments without producing a whole; 'an aggregate of intrication of this kind is in no way homogeneous' (Deleuze and Guattari 2008: 525). Attention is loosened, slackened from the tightly woven fabric of cause and effect and turns away, forming a looping linkage through remembered and imagined images as in a patchwork, 'an amorphous collection of juxtaposed pieces that can be joined together in an infinite number of ways' (Deleuze and Guattari 2008: 526).

The drawing surface, like the digital film that served as its instigator, forms 'a loose or even unbound network of tensions of the same charge

that are distributed all over the image-field. No one place or site has privilege over another' (Conley 2007: 8). The drawing is composed of scraps or fragments that are spread out, intersecting and linking into one another according to no prescribed route or pattern. The process of drawing constitutes a smooth space, 'moving from part to part … in an infinite succession of linkages and changes in direction' (Deleuze and Guattari 2008: 545). In a film, as in a map, such an interconnection of fragments constitutes a smooth space to which gradual progressions and localised knowledges are ascribed. Between the film and the drawing a process of translation-transcription takes place, within which 'orientations, landmarks and linkages are in continuous variation; it operates step by step' (Deleuze and Guattari 2008: 544). Marks are generated, traced from the film, as unitary sequences of dots or marks. The projection is altered and shifted, and new mappings must be generated in response. 'The map is open and connectable in all dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification. It can be torn, reversed, adapted' (Deleuze and Guattari 2008: 14–15). The texts, films and the drawings are continuously open to further modification: Cut, joined and re-joined; turned, pieced and re-combined.

Within the reticulated structure existing between matter and memory, the smooth images of recollection and dream are regulated according to the demands of events in the present. The slackenings and unfurlings of this tightly woven structure are smooth elements arising from within the grid to perform looping linkages and create pieced, partial surfaces.

III. Snag

Our sensory-motor schema – that is, our knowledge of our surroundings acquired through movement – provides a framework that defines how past recollections are sought by the mind according to their use within the present situation. This framework is a stable, regulated surface that interweaves acquired, habitual memory and inattentive recognition. The shortest circuit that can be formed between memory, perception and recognition forms the internal limit of this system. This limit is a snag, a stoppage in the regular procession of sensory-motor schemas that results in an indistinguishability between the actual and the virtual.

The sensory motor forms a screen towards the centre of which virtual images spiral, and upon which memory images can be traced, embroidered or applied. In attentive recognition, 'we are given an external perception, the consciousness of which really consists

in centripetal movements of imitation continuing this perception' (Moulard-Leonard 2008: 47). Onto the framework formed by acquired sensory-motor schemas, these attentive recognitions are traced and re-traced, the regular fabric becoming subject to an increasing number of these elaborations: 'we go on from similarity to similar objects, embroidering upon the similarity, as on their common stuff or canvas, the variety of individual differences' (Bergson 2004: 215). Attentive recognition, through this process of 'embroidery', adds to the object under scrutiny, contributing a 'temporal' dimension by applying a 'recollection image' directly onto it (Szaloky 2010: 61).

The film is projected onto the smooth, white surface of the paper. Onto this plane are traced the areas of pixellated colour that constitute the film still. The similarity of the projection and the drawing is delineated, traced and re-traced, at the surface of the paper. The digital film is broken up into stills, halted in order to be traced. Attention consists initially in an 'inhibition of movement, an arresting action. But upon this general attitude, more subtle movements will soon graft themselves' (Bergson 2004: 122). The tiny movements of the nib of the pen, the gradual marking out of the drawing in small sections over this stilled surface. One projection is succeeded by another, and each is traced and plotted in turn in a set of procedures that can be identified with 'the imagination's superimposition of a large number of images of the same kind to find their congruence' (Szaloky 2010: 62).

In a particular focusing of the attention in recognition, Bergson describes how memory images trace and re-trace the outline of the perceived object, reproducing its image. This process can continue indefinitely, 'Memory can be dilated indefinitely and reflect upon the object an increasing number of suggested images' (Moulard-Leonard 2008: 51). In this way, embellishment is added to embellishment, forms are traced and re-traced, over and over. The 'central theme or motif' that characterised the striated, centred and measured space of embroidery can no longer be discerned in the complication, the overlaying of these multiple outlines (Deleuze and Guattari 2008: 545).

The same area of the drawing is covered repeatedly with the regular marks and chartings. The striated surface of the drawing, produced from gridded areas and delineated contours, builds in complication. Fragments overlap and intersect with one another and, gradually, lacunae develop in their midst. The striation fails, falters, begins to dissolve, allowing smooth holes to emerge from within it.

In the process of attention, images from memory are repeatedly embroidered over perception. There is a point at which these memory images can become so thoroughly enmeshed with the perception that they are indistinguishable. This is the smallest possible circuit, 'the point of indiscernibility between the actual and the virtual', a direct perception of an image of time (Moulard-Leonard 2008: 52). As in a piece of cloth that is embroidered repeatedly so that no motif can be discerned and the threads tangle and snag, the time-image, or perception of the smooth space of pure memory, arises through 'an aggregate of intrication'. Within the configuration regulated by the sensory-motor schema, smooth spaces arise through 'entanglement obtained by fulling', where separate elements from memory and perception are so tightly wound through one another that they become indistinguishable (Deleuze and Guattari 2008: 525). The time-image, the smallest circuit between perception, thought and virtual memory, is formed through an intertangling of memory in the present. This surface is no longer appliquéd or embellished, it is hooked and tangled within itself.

The film is paused. This still image is traced, the contours marked out and areas delineated. The film runs, projected over the surface of the drawing. For a moment, for an instant, the shape of the marks on the paper overlay and match exactly with the film. Disrupting, derailing the progression of the film, this interruption opens up a previously unseen space. Between the film projection and the drawing surface, the film coincides suddenly with the drawn mark and they are caught up with one another in an anticipatory matrix and a direct image of pure temporality emerges.

A direct image of time is revealed in film when we see the past splitting from the present that it was, indistinguishable from the moment of its separation. A double-double capture transpires. The film seizes the drawing in a still moment, suddenly covering its configuration. The drawing encapsulates the film, marking out a part of its outline and fixing it. It is the common limit, the circuit within which separate elements are indistinguishable from one another, that marks the time-image.

IV. Conclusion

In the interwoven interrelation of matter and memory, perception is never in the present but is always inherently past, entangled with its own conditions. In slips and snags, it has been argued, instances are activated

that 'reveal connections of a new type, which are no longer sensory motor and which bring the emancipated senses into direct relation with time and thought... To make time and thought perceptible, to make them visible and of sound' (Deleuze 2005: 17).

Distractions and re-linkages between theory and practice have meant that both come to precede, prefigure and follow after one another. In this sense, they serve both as maps for and of one another (Pickles 2004: 29). A map shapes, dictates and influences how the places it describes are seen and navigated, and between fragments of text, film and drawings a similarly reciprocal transformatory relationship exists. The interrelated processes of reading, drawing and filming lead to the creation of the new ground to be covered, rather than merely recording it, 'setting out the coordination points for worlds-in-progress' (O'Sullivan 2006: 35). The books lie open on the table and fragments are selected and extracted. Connected together in diagonal movements that draw links across chapters and between texts. In an approach similar to Deleuze's 'free indirect discourse', transversal lines are thus formed between texts, drawings and films, selected and re-linked according to their own propensity of connection, rather than through similarity or resemblance, whether to each other or indeed to the original intention of whichever author formed them. Forming part of these distended circuits, fragments of film, drawing and text serve as extenders for one another, projecting forwards to further possible routes.

In an inventive approach, aspects of Deleuze's theories have been experimentally connected to one another, and at the same time set into conjunction with fine art practice. This kind of invention demands a thorough understanding of the concepts or components selected for use, and the aim of such an inventive approach would be to maintain 'the pragmatic and constructive nature of Deleuze's thought whilst at the same time creatively bringing it into contact with other worlds and always with our own projects' (O'Sullivan 2006: 3). To invent is not merely to arrive at a solution, but to generate unforeseen potential applications.

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Women on the Move: The Politics of Walking in Agnès Varda

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Abstract

This article focuses on images of walking in Agnès Varda's films – *Cléo de 5 à 7* (1962), *Sans toit ni loi* (1985), and *Les Plages* d'*Agnès* (2008). The activity of walking (as urban flânerie, circular travelling or walking backwards) is central to these films, and can be seen as a corporeal practice that not only interweaves striated and smooth spaces but also offer a gender-sensitive, political contemplation on the forces of striation and smoothing as well as a re-invention of space. The women in movement in Varda's films embody a transgression of stratified territories such as the image-oriented society of the spectacle in *Cléo*, myths of adolescence and settled living in *Sans toit ni loi*, or the boundaries of aging in *Les Plages d'Agnès*.

Keywords: flânerie, nomadism, feminism, embodiment, cinécriture

In an interview on the cinema of Agnès Varda, film critic Jonathan Romney underlines a major trait of Varda's filmmaking: 'She is re-inventing herself all the time. She seems a thousand different filmmakers but one filmmaker at the same time. Whether working on a document or fiction, there is a sense that she is going out into the world to find something new. There is always a readiness to invent' (Romney 2010). Agnès Varda's continual becoming as a filmmaker is most evident in her filmography, which comprises an immense variety of films from documentary to experimental shorts, from video manifestos to auto-portraits, and some others that would hardly fit any definition. Varda's

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nomadism in re-inventing not only her own cinematic language but also cinematographic language as such time and again resonates with her feminist activism in challenging the dominant paradigms of feminine identity in innovative ways. If Varda cultivates a new visual aesthetics in her films on an artistic level, this undertaking is always in line with questioning those dominant paradigms of identity on a discursive level. Hence, nomadism here is a political attitude that implies a consciousness of resisting settling into the socially coded modes of thought and behaviour. Nomadic shifts designate a creative sort of 'becoming', defined by Rosi Braidotti as 'a performative metaphor that allows for *otherwise unlikely encounters* and unsuspected sources of interaction of experience and of knowledge' (Braidotti 1994: 6, emphasis mine.) Hence, explorations of new forms of political subjectivity are made possible. From this standpoint, Varda's cinema becomes 'a vector of deterritorialisation', whereby established notions (of femininity, of social order, of cinematographic language) are levelled at every step to give way to new ones: a new narrative of the self, a new language of cinema, a new (temporary) identity, a new politics of disagreement, and a new politics of aesthetics.

One of the ways Varda achieves such nomadism is through the embodiment of a female character on the move. The mobility of the woman protagonist is a perfect figure for Varda to convey a nomadic consciousness of feminist activism and filmmaking as sites of resistance to fixating and sedentary tendencies. Hence, Varda brings about *a politics of walking* in her cinema. From this standpoint, *Cléo de 5 à 7* (1962), *Sans toit ni loi* (1985) and *Les Plages d'Agnès* (2008) deserve particular attention in analysing the different forms of walking Varda has created. If the urban *flânerie* of Cléo, the circular travelling of Mona in *Sans toit ni loi*, and the walking backwards of Varda herself in *Les Plages d'Agnès* share a common trait, it is the fact that the very activity of walking in these films not only connects striated spaces to smooth ones, but also *smoothes out* striations to re-invent the lost, or suppressed, multiplicities of spaces.

I. The Nomadic Body

In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari maintain that smooth spaces are wedded to a very particular type of multiplicity, one that 'can be explored only by *legwork*' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 409, emphasis mine). The emphasis on corporeality and mobility here is important for two main reasons. Firstly, it follows that bodily contact

is a precondition for getting to know the multiplicity of a smooth space. Secondly, mobility underscores the *process* of striating and smoothing forces, which, according to Deleuze and Guattari, is more interesting to probe into. They write, 'What interests us in operations of striation and smoothing are precisely the passages or combinations: how the forces at work within space continually striate it, and how in the course of its striation it develops other forces and emits new smooth spaces' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 551). The three films in the scope of this paper contemplate on various passages and combinations whereby striation and smoothing slide into each other. Furthermore, the films posit the peripatetic body as the site of these passages and combinations. The effects of place on social relations and on characters have been a recurrent thread in Varda's work, and she mostly reflects upon a dynamic between stasis and mobility as well as the interaction between character and environment (Flitterman-Lewis 1996: 224–37).

When Deleuze and Guattari counterpoint nomad space and sedentary space in their writing, they point to such a corporeal mobility. Even though they posit that nomadology does not require movement, in their writing walking appears as a significant activity that not only connects striated and smooth spaces, but also possesses an advantage of elusiveness by virtue of which the body flows within striated spaces smoothing them out. In *Anti-Oedipus* they propose the 'schizophrenic out for a walk' as a better model than a 'neurotic lying on the analyst's couch'. Hence, walking is posited as 'a breath of fresh air, a relationship with the outside world', and as such as a political activity with transformative qualities (Deleuze and Guattari 2007: 2).

Given its powers to construe diverse spaces and fluid bodily movement, cinema is the most eloquent field to philosophise smooth and striated spaces as well as the ways they slide into each other through the body. When Deleuze writes that 'it is through the body (and no longer through the intermediary of the body) that cinema forms its alliance with the spirit, with thought' he refers to the power of the body to stand as a figure that has reflections on the thought, and particularly creative thought that reinstates multiplicities suppressed by the striations (Deleuze 2005: 182). It is along this line of thought that the cinema of Agnès Varda construes the stroll as a way of resisting the fixating tendencies of striations. With its feminist agenda, Varda's cinema explores the smoothing forces of rebellious female bodies in movement that are walking without a pre-determined, targeted territory: 'Voyaging smoothly is a becoming, and a difficult, uncertain becoming at that' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 532).

Varda's three films par excellence involve walking in striated spaces such as the city of Paris in *Cléo de 5 à 7*, and smoother spaces such as the Southern France countryside in *Sans toit ni loi* and a Belgian beach in *Les Plages d'Agnès*. In light of Deleuze and Guattari's proposition that the city is the striated space par excellence while the sea is the smooth space par excellence (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 529, 531) this invites an investigation into how, in Varda's cinema, striated space opens itself to being smoothed and smooth space allows itself to be striated. Yet, Deleuze and Guattari also warn the reader against thinking of these spaces in terms of a binary opposition: 'Nothing is ever done with: smooth space allows itself to be striated, and striated space reimparts a smooth space' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 537). The process is never simply the clash or conflict of two binary opposites. In Varda's films, this dynamics is eloquently translated into her own *cinécriture*.

II. *Cléo de 5 à 7*: A Newfound Flânerie

Cléo de 5 à 7 takes place on 21 June 1961 in Paris from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. The film concerns a young starlet, Cléo, who is waiting for the results of a biopsy to learn whether her abdominal tumour is malignant or not. Throughout the film, we follow Cléo from the apartment of a tarot-reader, through the streets of Paris to a café, a hat shop, her apartment, and then on a lonely walk in the city with a number of spontaneous stops and 'otherwise unlikely' encounters. Varda structures the film around a number of oppositions such as superstition and medical science, documentary reality and fiction, objective time and Bergsonian duration (Nelson 1983: 735). One can also add gaze and look, life and death, a healthy body and a sick body. All these oppositions are there in the film to be unknotted, further complicated, and destroyed via the peripatetic body of Cléo. Constantly on the move, Cléo's body becomes the site where corporeal, spatial and temporal striations are smoothed.

One of the major oppositions listed above, 'gaze and look', points to the primary striation taken up in the film. According to Janice Mouton, the film is mainly structured upon a transition from 'being looked at' to 'learning to look' (Mouton 2001: 3). This transformation from the gaze to the look, according to Mouton, also underlines Cléo's passage from an object to a subject. By taking Mouton's argument to another level, one may argue that Cléo actually sheds the striations imposed on her fetishized star body by the society of the spectacle. By opening her body up to outside interactions, she discovers a multiplicity

she has long lost, or never possessed. This is why many critics or scholars interpreted Cléo's *flânerie* as a journey into self-discovery (see for instance, Morrissey 2008; and for the figure of the *flâneuse* in cinema, Friedberg 1994 and Bruno 2007). However, the main idea about Cléo's *flânerie* is that it does not have a defined end, nor an aim to unveil a so-called hidden self. On the contrary, Cléo's *flânerie* is one that leads to further fragmentation of her self, perhaps to reach a body without organs by smoothing most of the striations. With respect to this dynamics, the most important element the film employs is the mirror. The first 40 minutes of the film are dominated by mirrors and reflecting surfaces as well as reflections of Cléo that appear in random spaces (Mouton 2001: 3–6; Flitterman-Lewis 1996: 268–83).

The spectators are made aware of the constructedness of Cléo's image in the opening sequence, which begins with body fragments. The close-up of hands moving in and out of frame on the tarot table present a fragmented body, while the characters in the film are introduced via a close-up of the tarot cards: Before we see the real Cléo, we see an image on a tarot card associated with her. The framed and unified image as opposed to the body fragments establishes the discourse of mirrors as early as the prologue. Similarly, the very first shots of Cléo are far from setting up a perfect image of a star. She is shattered by what the cards reveal; a series of close-ups show her face ridden with fear. As she leaves the apartment, we shift from the close-up of Cléo's face in a series of jump-cuts to subjective shots that flow down the stairs unsteadily. She descends the last set of stairs only to meet a huge wall mirror where she pulls herself together. She ceremonially passes before the mirror, pauses elegantly, and reveals an endless *mise-en-abyme* of her reflection. Then we zoom into her face upon which falls the following line of internal monologue: 'Being ugly, that's what death is. As long as I am beautiful, I am alive.' The scene marks a threshold: aware as we are of Cléo's fragmented being, we witness her transformation into a complete fetishised object of gaze. Varda here portrays an instance of striation which, intentionally or otherwise, recalls Lacan's mirror stage. In this scene, 'she becomes the woman she is not', writes Mouton, 'a fantasy, a fetishized object, someone to be looked at' (Mouton 2001: 4). It could be argued that Varda's cinema of body here shows a striated form of a ceremonial body, described by Deleuze as follows:

> It is no longer a matter of following and trailing the everyday body, but of making it pass through a ceremony, of introducing it into a glass cage or crystal, of imposing a carnival or masquerade on it which makes it into a

> grotesque body, but also brings out of it a gracious and glorious body, until at last the disappearance of the visible body is achieved. (Deleuze 2005: 183)

The image of Cléo's body from this moment on undergoes an adventure in precisely the terms in which Deleuze formulates the cinema-body-thought link in the above quoted sentence. Varda, first of all, presents us with a ceremonial procession of Cléo's body from the hallway of the fortune-teller to the café. She is tall and bright, wearing a floaty dress and with a highly stylised coiffure. By placing her body against darker backgrounds and contrasting her image with modest attire of her secretary Angèle, Varda ensures that Cléo catches the eye. On the other hand, the masquerade imposed upon her as a striation becomes grotesque with her excessively stylised outfit. Indeed, the first thing Cléo would shed after singing *Cri d'amour* is this look, with her flashy garments and coiffure. Until she bursts into the street with a simple black gown and undone hair, Cléo has to reassure herself of her image in almost every reflecting surface she can find. Among these, the hat shop sequence deserves particular attention, again with regard to the body-thought link posited by Deleuze.

Returning home with Angèle, Cléo stumbles upon a hat shop. Allured, she wanders around the shop like a feline about its prey, trying on unusual hats. We see multiple reflections of her in multiple mirrors, sometimes superimposed with the reflections of the street. With its massive windows, the store recalls an aquarium – a milieu designed to be looked at from the outside. The scene – with all its elements and components designed either to reflect or to be displayed – becomes a huge mirror or a multi-faceted voluminous crystal symbolic of Cléo's self-absorption. Varda's formula in the script for this scene is 'L'eau + le cristal = le mirroir' (Ungar 2008: 49). The formula, as well as the aesthetics of the sequence, point to the main striation that is the concern of the film: consumerism and the spectacle. Cléo's fluid desire gushing from one commodity to another, her dependency on the image of her own body as capital and as fetishized object (Baudrillard 2005), and the proliferation of mirrors everywhere, all recall and maintain the continuity of the spectacle. The mirrors and reflecting surfaces gradually disappear in the last 45 minutes of the film, which is marked by Cléo's *flânerie* around Paris.

The pivotal moment that triggers Cléo's transformation is a singing rehearsal, where she chants a love song named *Cri d'amour* (see also Gorbman 1981). The sequence is an intermezzo with respect to its cinematography where the camera mimics music and travels between

territories, ultimately bringing about a deterritorialisation. From this standpoint, the scene with all its elements works as an abstract machine whereby the stratifications of the society of spectacle are smoothed. After singing the song, Cléo no longer clings to the doll look and questions the meaning of the song's big success ('What is a song? How long does it last?!'). With its allegory of lack and extinction, and its symbols of loneliness, aging and death, *Cri d'amour* carries Cléo away, or, in more Deleuzian terms, she experiences the kind of uncalled-for line of flight that music can provoke (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004: 329–41). This line of flight and deterritorialisation is embodied in the unsettling 90-degree pan of the camera whereby various levels such as diegetic, non-diegetic and meta-diegetic are folded onto each other. Slowly zooming in and isolating Cléo's face against black, the camera shifts to non-diegetic as a full orchestra joins Cléo's voice. In this 'glossy studio effect', in Gorbman's words, we see Cléo's stage persona (Gorbman 1981: 46); however, when the song ends with tears gushing down Cléo's face, the camera makes a vertiginously quick zoom-out from the close-up of her face. The zoom-out embodies the deterritorialising affect of the song. We fall back into the diegetic, yet the world of the film is now completely altered – it is a different territory. The transformation is triggered by Cléo's (as well as the camera's) becoming-music. The next moment, Cléo revolts, removes all the accessories that make up her doll image and rushes out onto the streets of Paris. If the first half of the film is dedicated to how the striae impose a spectacle on Cléo's body, the second half is dedicated to 'desecrating the gracious body'. While walking, Cléo gradually sheds the masquerade imposed upon her, further smoothing out those striae. Mirrors begin to distort, break and fragment reflections, eventually to disappear from the narrative gradually as tokens of fixating tendencies. Simultaneously, smoothing forces start to appear as Cléo chances upon them in her *flânerie*.

On the streets, Cléo encounters three peculiar images of the body that are emblematic of smoothing forces. These images are but war-machines that attack the striae internalised by Cléo and trigger a mutation in her subjectivity. The first instance marking the desecration of the body is a public performance Cléo comes upon: a man swallowing frogs. The figure of the frog is encountered many times in the film: Cléo wears a ring which has a small frog clutching a pearl (Cléo is called a pearl several times), and the handsome soldier Antoine later associates himself with the frog. One may claim that Varda uses this figure to indicate the outside forces that transform Cléo's subjectivity. The second image is again a public spectacle: a man is drawing a sword into his arm.

Again contributing to the desecration of the body, this image is a little later followed by an incident where a man is shot dead. The body then disappears, but only to be reborn – the third special image Cléo encounters is that of a premature baby in an incubator, which could be seen as a metaphor for the fragility of Cléo's newfound corporeality (and subjectivity for some critics). The striations on the body are smoothed (there no more mirrors after this scene) and the body returns to a stage of new beginnings. This image also smoothes out the metaphorical meaning of the 'glass cage' established in the first half of the film. Where it previously indicated the restrictions imposed on the body by the society of the spectacle, it now becomes a symbol for re-birth. At the end of the film, still walking, Cléo is no longer afraid for her diseased body and has confidence in the future.

III. *Sans toit ni loi*: Nomadic Wandering

Walking as a metaphor for continual resistance and transformation is portrayed in *Sans toit ni loi* in closer proximity to nomadology than to *flânerie*. The title of the film translates as 'without a roof or law' and connotes fixating striae such as sedentary living and the State. Reading Varda's masterpiece through Deleuze and Guattari's nomadology as described in *A Thousand Plateaus* offers some insights regarding a highly political conceptualisation of the activity of walking in cinema. Again in this film, Varda works through oppositional pairs, but this time with a deeper complexity on a multitude of levels. Documentary and fiction, absence and presence, nomadic and sedentary living are interweaved and smoothed by the character of Mona. In many ways, Varda envisions Mona as a mythical feminine character (she emerges from the sea like Venus at the beginning of her story) and creates a nomadic persona for her that allows us to 'think through and move across established categories', in the words of Braidotti (Braidotti 1994: 5). Mona constantly eludes capture throughout the film and hence becomes a token of nomadic existence. With her non-stop loitering, Mona not only becomes a 'vector of deterritorialisation' but also a nomadic war-machine disturbing the laws of the State.

The film starts with the discovery of Mona's dead body in a ditch and proceeds with the testimonies of those who had encountered her in the last few weeks before her tragic death. Comparable to *Citizen Kane* but in the feminine, the film follows (and subverts) the style of a documentary, where several characters reveal their encounters with Mona in a direct address to the camera. While each narrative strives to

fix Mona with a definition, viewers are well aware that she has never stayed long in the territories of these people and that their definitions actually reveal their own internalised stratifications. However, what these narratives have in common is that Mona has brought about a change in their territories as a force of the outside. What Varda calls the 'Mona Effect' is but a transformation in the striated territory triggered by the nomadic war-machine (Flitterman-Lewis 1996: 314). Mona is never a part of the striated territories concerned, but always a smoothing force coming from the outside. She is sent back to the outside in a number of instances when the State cannot domesticate her into the territorial striae. From this standpoint, her smelliness and uncleanliness, which are referred to multiple times in the film, become sensuous tokens of her resistance to being appropriated, internalised by the sovereignty of the State. Deleuze and Guattari write, 'From the standpoint of the State, the originality of the [wo]man of war, his [/her] eccentricity, necessarily appears in a negative form: stupidity, deformity, madness, illegitimacy, usurpation, sin' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 390). Almost all of these allegedly negative qualities, and others, are those imputed to Mona by those who have encountered her. However, Varda's dialectics is not simple at all when it comes to *Sans toit ni loi*. She complicates almost every concept, matter and medium that structures the film. Mona's mobility is counterpointed not only to stasis (for example, the mansion of Tante Lydie) but also to striated forms of mobility. In the film, Mona encounters a farmer, an immigrant and a perambulatory palaeontology professor. It is possible to read these forms of mobility as variegated counterpoints to Mona's nomadic wandering.

The first instance concerns the goatherd episode. A farmer, who is later revealed to hold a master's degree in philosophy, gives her a ride and offers her accommodation. In their first dialogue, where they talk about different ways of existing in the world and sharing the goal of pursuing an alternative lifestyle, Mona and the farmer seem to partake in a common revolt. The farmer gives Mona a piece of land on which to grow potatoes, and a caravan to manage her own living. However, Mona is unwilling to take up farming; she hardly leaves the caravan where she spends all her time reading. The two have a long dialogue where the difference between the striated farmer and the smoothing nomad come to the surface. Deleuze and Guattari write, 'the sedentary's relation to the earth is mediatised by something else, a property regime, a State apparatus'. The itinerancy of a farmer or animal-raiser is only secondary: 'Transhumants only secondarily follow a land flow . . . [They change] land after it is worn out, or else seasonally'

(Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 452). Highlighting the distinction between an itinerant and a nomad, Deleuze and Guattari emphasise that 'the primary determination of nomads is to occupy and hold a smooth space: it is this aspect that determines them as nomad' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 452). Mona's nomadism is counterpointed to another mobile figure, a migrant worker named Assoun. As a reterritorialised inhabitant, Assoun is an itinerant figure whose labour power has been settled, sedentarised, and restricted. Mona, however, rejects any sedentarising tendencies; she 'moves' and will not be beguiled by a piece of land.

After leaving the goat shed, Mona is taken up by an ambulatory palaeontology professor, Madame Landier, who is conducting a research on a contagious disease that kills plane trees. Madame Landier's similar attitude in approaching both the trees and Mona recalls what Deleuze and Guattari name 'royal science' in *A Thousand Plateaus*. In the chapter on nomadology, the recession of the forest is associated with the emergence of smooth space: the tree disappears and rhizome spreads (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 420). However, Mona fails to defeat the arborescent striae in the end, since she is (quite literally) attacked by tree-people – villagers dressed in tree costumes for a traditional festivity – a burlesque attack on someone who does not fit into the community and that leads to Mona's death.

Mona's nomadism is further enhanced at the level of the medium by Varda's *cinécriture*. Varda states that 'the whole film is one long tracking shot', and according to Susan Hayward, 'the tracking shot is Mona's sign' (Hayward 2000: 272). Yet Varda complicates the tracking shot as a straightforward epitome of wandering through different techniques. First of all, she subverts the conventional spatial logic of the tracking shot by moving from right to left. This technique also generates a subversion of the temporal logic of the tracking shot. The camera sliding 'backwards' signals a going back in time and keeps the motif of death alive at all times. In brief, the camera not only glides spatially but also temporally. Secondly, Varda allows an unsettling dynamic to occur between the movement of the camera and the movement of Mona, who mostly eludes framing. Either she walks out of the frame or the camera continues tracking after accompanying her for a while. According to Hayward, this style highlights Mona's contingency (Hayward 2000: 273). Similarly, this way of framing also accentuates Mona's ephemerality as a force of the outside, as a nomadic war-machine, and her unfixability by striations. The fluidity of tracking shots is counterpointed to the stasis of the scenes where Varda interviews those who have encountered Mona. Varda counterpoints mobility and stasis

at the level of the medium by allowing Mona's body to flow smoothly in and out of the striations of cinema. At the level of the story, she achieves a similar smoothing effect by denying the viewer information and subverting conventional storytelling techniques with discontinuities and non-linear causality. *Sans toit ni loi* and its protagonist thereby come to epitomise nomadology on an aesthetic and political level.

IV. *Les Plages d'Agnès*: Walking Backwards

From the body of Cléo to the body of Mona we have travelled from *flânerie* to nomadology and considered both forms of mobility with regard to their powers of resistance, transgression and transformation. In her book *Nomadic Subjects*, Braidotti writes, 'Nomadic consciousness is a form of political resistance to hegemonic and exclusionary views of subjectivity' (Braidotti 1994: 23). In line with Braidotti's approach of taking 'the nomad as the prototype of the man or woman of ideas' (Braidotti 1994: 22), I shall focus on the body of Agnès Varda herself in her quasi-documentary style auto-portrait, *Les Plages d'Agnès*. In this film, Varda's body becomes a multi-faceted crystal, which blends smooth and striated spaces of subjectivity (self), cinema, history and memory through an immense multiplicity of folds. As the setting for this self-reflexive meta-narrative, Varda chooses the beach. 'If you opened people, you would find landscapes; if you opened me, you would find beaches', she says. The beach becomes a crystal image which re-appears in between episodes and includes deterritorialised objects from Varda's films or memories. The beach also serves as a milieu where the musings on cinema take place. Hence, it is created on the screen as a milieu of creativity and multiplicity.

In *Les Plages d'Agnès*, Varda films herself walking backwards, creating herself as a wanderer on the beach. This is the first trope that allows Varda to contemplate on the smooth and striated through her own body and cinematic aesthetics. The film opens with a tracking shot from left to right, a remembrance of the travelling Varda used in *Sans toit ni loi*. After a pan of the empty beach, the camera starts following Varda herself walking backwards. Her hair is several inches white in the roots, and dye remains only at the tips – an embodiment, or an image, of time. In her auto-portrait, she associates walking backwards with remembering, delving into her own history, and hence travelling in time. Here again, Varda complicates several binaries such as past and present, procession and retrocession, extensive and intensive movement. The activity of walking backwards here is not the opposition of process,

or of a line of flight, but a movement that smoothes the conventional distinctions of past, present and future as well as the conventional sense of movement as an extensive act that occurs in an extensive space. Varda's backward march is an expression of an intensive movement that delves into the present in search of time passed.

The second most important contemplation on the smooth and striated concerns the striations and smoothing forces of cinema itself. In the opening sequence, Varda sets up a maze of mirrors at different angles to reflect fragments of the beachscape. This play of a proliferation of frames is, first of all, a way to contemplate on the unavoidable striations involved in filmmaking. According to Deleuze and Guattari, the sea is the archetype of smooth space, but also the archetype of all striations imposed upon smooth space (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 427). From this standpoint, all of Varda's experiments with travelling shots and sense of space that have been analysed previously are taken to another self-reflexive level with multifold explorations into time and space. Secondly, the multiplicity of mirrors is also a metaphor for reflecting upon the fragments of identity. The multiple memory pieces, personal connections, spatial fragments, and lost objects that are reflected, reproduced and re-enacted in the film are bits and pieces that make up Agnès Varda: her image 'dispersed in 'a plurality of ways of being present in the world,' of belonging to sets, all incompatible and yet coexistent' (Deleuze 2005: 196).

The cinema of Agnès Varda puts forward a political agenda through the figure of walking in favour of nomadic consciousness. The image of walking in the films analysed here is a multilayered one that resonates not only on the level of story, but also on the level of aesthetics and politics. The female protagonists who are on the move not only constantly elude fixating and sedentarising powers, but also trigger a transformation in the territories they travel through. Braidotti defines nomadism as a 'vertiginous progression towards deconstructing identity; molecularisation of the self' (Braidotti 1994: 16). As such, challenging sedimented systems may be emancipatory yet also painful. The nomad, according to Deleuze and Guattari, is deterritorialised on the deterritorialisation itself. Her line of flight, as in *Cléo de 5 à 7*, *Sans toit ni loi*, and *Les Plages d'Agnès*, is rhizomatic, without a defined itinerary or end. The smooth space and the smoothing forces of the moving body remain a site of revolution against the sedentarising powers of the State. If the State operates by controlling the pace and movement of bodies (via public ways, gates, barriers, borders, filters, and so on), these sites of movement can be claimed to give birth to a nomadic

potential, which in turn occupies them as if they were smooth. While discussing this potential, Deleuze and Guattari refer to Paul Virilio who has pointed to the importance of the revolutionary theme of holding the street (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 426). From this standpoint, one can also locate Varda's nomadic personae within the feminist struggles and women's movement in which she partook actively. Regarding the revolutionary potential of smooth spaces, Deleuze and Guattari state that they 'are not in themselves liberatory. But the struggle is changed or displaced in them, and life constitutes its stakes, confronts new obstacles, invents new paces, switches adversaries. Never believe that a smooth space will suffice to save us' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 551). Varda never believes that a smooth space will save the politically, socially or economically underprivileged. Her *cinécriture*, however, is a form of striation dedicated to showing how the smooth may transform the striated and how striated may allow for smoothing forces. The smoothing forces she brings to our attention are those of her aesthetics and philosophy of movement embodied by her female protagonists.

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Can You Starve a Body Without Organs? The Hunger Artists of Franz Kafka and Steve McQueen

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Abstract

This essay examines the anti-producing human body in its limit case of public self-induced starvation, as figured in Franz Kafka's short story 'A Hunger Artist' and Steve McQueen's film *Hunger*. Both works represent the fasting body as hollowed out, a resistance to capitalist-spectator capture that spatialises itself as a smoothing, a relative reconfiguration of parts to whole through the evacuation of flows. In both works the human body becomes a local body without organs, paradoxically disarticulated from the more complex assemblages that constitute it while recording potential circuits of disturbance or resonance predicated upon the porousness of bodily boundaries.

Keywords: expressionism, body without organs, spectatorship, fasting, starvation

I. Diagnosis

Steve McQueen's 2008 film *Hunger* opens in agitated tumult, an asignifying, multitudinous roar of sound, like metallic rain or the collapsing of a tall building. The visual register slowly resolves into an image: scores of human bodies banging what appear to be the lids of pots against the ground. An array of bodies, faces. This is, it seems at first, a chaos that contains the totality of narrative possibilities, the whole cloth from which the film will subsequently select a protagonist. Yet

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we never encounter these bodies again in any recognizable form. Nor will we be able to positively identify the precise location of this brief, elliptical scene. It maintains no representational continuity with what follows. This essay responds to the film's fissures, its dams and flues, with an experimental investigation of the bodily boundaries produced and perturbed by self-induced starvation. It will focus on the production of the human body – the body that produces – through the form of its limit-case, the body that fasts. Considered thus, the human body, traced as and reduced to a posited boundary, is a particularly telling site of desiring-production, a spatialised interplay of flows and partitions, the smooth and the striated. This paper will examine the fasting body in two works, two mediums: 'A Hunger Artist' by Franz Kafka and *Hunger* by Steve McQueen. In both cases it will raise the question of the individual body's relation to spectatorship and multiplicity. In considering fasting as anti-production, as the smoothing of a local body into a body without organs, it will figure Kafka's short story as a diagnosis of a BwO that fails to activate its virtual potentialities in a renewed process of striation to effect a political resonance through its constitutive audience. *Hunger* picks up where Kafka left off, presenting a tentative solution to the problem of individuated escape through a molecularisation of the subject within the medium of film itself. Ultimately, *Hunger* effects a perspectival shift that approaches the (virtual) collective from below, from the point of view of the subject become multiple, finally approximating the Hunger Artist's dream of satiation.

II. Capture and Withdrawal

Perhaps surprisingly, Deleuze and Guattari have little to say about 'A Hunger Artist', this quintessential story of bodies and flows, in their book-length study of Kafka. They note only that 'Fasting is also a constant theme in Kafka's writings. His writings are a long history of fasts. The Hunger Artist surveyed by butchers, ends his career next to beasts who eat their meat raw, placing the visitors before an irritating alternative' (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 20). They here figure fasting as an alternative, or perhaps more aptly a digestive impediment, to the most primal source of food, raw meat – the consumption of one assemblage by another. This follows a passage in which they figure writing itself in the same position: 'writing goes further in transforming words into things capable of competing with food' (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 20). Is writing, then, a form of fasting, or fasting a form of writing?

'A Hunger Artist' presents fasting as an oscillation between spectacle and art. The text details the professional struggles of a freelance faster, self-described and publicly billed as an artist. In the course of the story his career status declines from world famous act to out-of-fashion novelty. Eventually he joins a circus as a sideshow and is promptly forgotten, left to die. His artwork is his body, which he deforms, reshapes, shrinks, desiccates. Nonetheless, he never exists as a fully autonomous body; much to his consternation, he is only an artist by virtue of his spectators, and he ardently wishes for their approval, for popular success as an entertainer. He produces his body only in relation to other bodies:

> The artist now submitted completely; his head lolled on his breast as if it had landed there by chance; his body was hollowed out; his legs in a spasm of self-preservation clung close to each other at the knees, yet scraped on the ground as if it were not really solid ground, as if they were only trying to find solid ground; the whole weight of his body, a featherweight after all, relapsed onto one of the ladies, who... first stretched her neck as far as she could to keep her face at least free from contact with the artist... (Kafka 1976: 248)

Kafka details an extended series of bodily encounters: the Artist's body, reconfigured and hollowed out, his head against his breast, knee against knee, makes tentative contact with the ground, with the body of a female spectator, and later that of an attendant. Meanwhile, these molecular encounters modify the bodies around him: the woman with whom he comes into contact strains her neck like a Lamarkian giraffe[1] in order to decouple from him. Her plastic morphology mirrors the artist's; his own bodily reconfiguration seems to be a struggle against a resurgent, spasm-inducing force of self-preservation. His body, art object, struggles to maintain its form, its upright stature, the contour of its boundary line. It is this curious struggle that provides the audience with the spectacle it craves, but also participates in the redrawing of the Artist's bodily boundaries, forming a higher-order assemblage articulated to him through desiring-production even as its lower-order components seek to disconnect, to shore up his barriers, to squelch his spasmodic-ecstatic perturbation of the audience-machine. The hollowed body refuses food only to fuse with other bodies: a becoming-molar that is also a becoming-molecular. Paradoxically, the smoothing of the Artist's body re-articulates it through spectacle to the bodies of his observers in a reterritorialisation of desire that renders him simultaneously co-extensive with them and affectively traced in a reinforcement of the geometrical contours of the organism-body. His

40-day fasts (enforced by his impresario as the limit beyond which the public's stimulation 'by a steadily increasing pressure of advertisement' cannot be maintained) mark periods of productive withdrawal from nutritional flows only through an auratic nodal fixing within a network of monetary flows (Kafka 1976: 247). The body becomes smooth surface, its virtuality preserved and affirmed, at the moment that it is captured and immobilized by the forces of capital-spectacle.

This paradox, activated within the text as a line that has traversed a 'nomadic life' spent within a cage (Kafka 1976: 245), is precisely the paradox of boundaries tackled by Spinoza in his *Ethics*. For Spinoza, even though 'the whole of nature is one individual', provisional boundaries are *produced* through modal interactions (Spinoza 2005: 43). Spinoza's *conatus*, later reconfigured into Deleuze and Guattari's desire-as-plenitude, is a principle of production, the generation of idea and body at a site of interaction. Where boundaries are produced bodies are expressed, along with the 'joy of action'. For the Deleuze of *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, expression is primarily a model of perspective: Spinoza's true radicalism lies in the obliteration of the distinction between subject and object. '*Substance expresses itself to itself*' (Deleuze 1992: 185). The Artist's body in Kafka's story, considered as a site of Spinozan expression, is produced by the audience at the same time that it singularises itself precisely because these are two modes of the same substance. Considered from one perspective, the audience produces the Artist's body from itself, its larger assemblage, by delineating boundaries, by recording the striating effects of immanent forces. Considered from another perspective, the Artist (as assemblage rather than as subjective agent) produces his own body by smoothing it – that is, by disarticulating it from the continual flows (of energy, capital, attention) that capture it, recovering the potential for new configurations with the larger assemblage of which it is part. Thus his (re)constructed body, as 'organic representation' or art object, is both a deterritorialising joyous affect and a reterritorialising 'feeling presiding over striated space' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 499).

Kafka's Hunger Artist, as machinic assemblage, stops up his bodily orifices, cuts off all flows, becomes a grid of potential (but unactualised) circuits. In other words, a BwO. 'It is only by means of the body without organs (eyes closed tight, nostrils pinched shut, ears stopped up) that something is produced, counterproduced, something that diverts or frustrates the entire process of production, of which is it is nonetheless still a part' (Deleuze and Guattari 2009: 37–8). The BwO, then, is really Deleuze and Guattari's version of Spinoza's substance, affirming

difference – the complete set of differentiated modes – through primal unity. The human body, as site of production, is thus both a desiring-machine and a BwO, production and anti-production in constant tension.

The smooth space of the Artist's affect-body-without-organs is constantly recapitulated into the striated space of public performance, periodised in the form of imposed fast-breaking every 40 days. The Artist despises these breaks, and comes to abhor the re-articulation to other bodies that they produce. The re-activation/reactive-ation of his inputs produces a striated public space composed of vast chains of connective syntheses that he resists as BwO while seeking virtually as desiring-machine. This appears to be exactly the affective tension Mark Rothko has in mind when he declares that art 'lives by companionship, expanding and quickening in the eyes of the sensitive observer' yet similarly dies 'by the eyes of the vulgar and the cruelty of the impotent who would extend their affliction universally!' (Serota 1987: 83). The Hunger Artist, who produces (anti-produces) only himself, enters this bidirectional affective chain as a sort of recording device, tracing its lines on his own hollowed body. The artist's encounter with the artwork's constituting audience recalls Deleuze and Guattari's perspectival distinction between content and expression. Brian Massumi reminds us – articulating *A Thousand Plateaus*' discussion of expression with Deleuze's earlier reading of Nietzschean force – that in any encounter of forces, one envelops the other:

> One side of the encounter has the value of a content, the other of an expression. But content and expression are distinguished only functionally, as the overpowered and the overpowering. Content is not the sign, and it is not a referent or signified. It is what the sign envelops, a whole world of forces. Content is formed substance considered as dominated force-field. (Massumi 1992: 12)

Content and expression are two perspectival sides of the same coin – tossed in every encounter. Spinozan *conatus*, already relativising the distinction between subject and object, spectator and artwork, is vectorised by Nietzschean force. When we observe or experience an encounter from the dominant position, the dominated appears as content, captured and manipulable, ordered by signification. The artwork, thus woven into the striated space of the gallery, stage or circus, has become molar and inert: the deadly combination Rothko dreads. But what of the inverse perspective, that of the dominated force? If the Hunger Artist is captured by spectatorship, does he not also perturb that

machine, test its boundaries and thereby expand his own? The potential to do so, figured early in the story as detailed above, dissolves as the text continues and negative affect mounts to a complete withdrawal, a desire to avoid all contact with other bodies even amidst the Artist's desire to be constituted in relation to them. Late in the story this ambivalence leads him to work for a circus, which Kafka figures as pure flow: 'A large circus with its enormous traffic in replacing and recruiting men, animals and apparatus can always find a use for people at any time, even for a hunger artist, provided of course that he does not ask too much' (Kafka 1976: 251). The flow of technical and organic machines that comprise the circus engulf the artist as constitutive component, incorporating him into its apparatus. As BwO, however, he resists the territorialising operations of these flows, rendering connections virtual by sealing off his body, which thereby registers, records these potential circuits as a totality. He becomes a barrier within this flow, 'only an impediment on the way to the menagerie' (Kafka 1976: 253). He disjunctively links to other machines through potential interruption, yet his desiccated body becomes merely a record of virtual connections never made. The Artist has lost his audience.

Why does he never activate these connections? Deleuze and Guattari remind us what is at stake here, on the taut surface of the BwO produced through fasting. The attraction and repulsion between the desiring-machine(s) and the BwO should give rise to a new structure, a 'celibate machine' that modifies them both, 'forming a new alliance between the desiring-machines and the body without organs so as to give birth to a *new humanity* or a glorious organism' (Deleuze and Guattari 2009: 17, emphasis added). Because the Artist's *conatus* has been turned against itself, made reactive, this greater deterritorialisation remains closed to him, as does the 'eroticism of the machine liberated over unlimited forces' (Deleuze and Guattari 2009: 18). At the end of the story, just before he dies, he explains that he needs to fast 'because I couldn't find the food I liked. If I had found it, believe me, I should have made no fuss and stuffed myself like you or anyone else' (Kafka 1976: 255). On one hand, this is a simple failure of *conatus*, which Spinoza describes as an 'appetite' that 'is nothing else but the effort by which each thing strives to persevere in its being, each body in extension, each mind or each idea in thought (*conatus*)' (Spinoza 2005: 21). Whereas the celibate machine *produces* consumption, the Artist remains reactive, defensive, circumscribed by the flows of capital and consumption-machines. Ingesting nothing, he is himself consumed.

On the other hand, as Massumi reminds us, this is a question of perspective as much as affect. The dominated Artist sees himself only from the perspective of the audience that has ordered and objectified him. To activate the obverse perspective would mean to view the larger audience-circus-performance assemblage as an expression of its molecular components, of which his body is but one. It would be to register and trace the active perturbation of boundaries, the shock waves sent through that assemblage by his active manipulation of flows. Fasting would have to be more than the inability to take pleasure in food, a reactive resistance to the flows of spectator-capital. In becoming a BwO, he has effected a disarticulation from these flows, but only at the cost of a new and paralysing unity: he remains a singular, molar object, a world of forces contained in a sign. Even in the end, when he becomes a blockage instead of a focal point, a set of forces virtualised by his smoothing, truly blockading flows, he remains unified by the sign of Art. He fails to become molecular; the text falls short of recuperating him as such. As individual, as subject of and to negative affect, he can only be rendered as content, one character in his eponymous story, at the centre even as he shrinks to a point, left to die an objective death. From this perspective, he could only have rejected all flows, all food, in a textual closure, the local site of stalled *conatus*, the capping of the freeplay of signification that the text had previously kept open.[2]

III. Striation, Flow, and the Cinematic Subject

This failure of desiring-production is further mapped in a more recent work by artist Steve McQueen, *Hunger*, which attempts to recover the revolutionary potential of fasting through molecularisation, picking up where Kafka's text left off. *Hunger* is ostensibly the story of IRA member Bobby Sands, who led a hunger strike while incarcerated at HM Prison Maze in Northern Ireland in 1981 – in which Sands died. The film chronicles a series of events in the everyday routine of the prison, leading to Bobby's beating, his subsequent decision to lead a hunger strike, the slow decline of his health through starvation, and his eventual death. However, McQueen decentres the film's subject from the very beginning, opening *Hunger* with a different individual apparently in the role of the protagonist, a prison guard eating his breakfast. We follow his daily routine as well as that of a new inmate as the paths of both intersect amidst the flows and assemblages of the prison machine: guards' lockers serve to segment and block symbolically endowed objects from domestic life in a decoupling that emphasizes the possibilities of

productive synthesis: a wedding ring decoupled from a hand that will later begin to beat Sands – only to fail to connect in an instant, coupling instead with the concrete wall of the prison, which in turn deforms the hand's boundary by breaking the skin, releasing a flow of blood. The logic here – prison logic – is inexorable: the hand is soaked in a sink, the blood mixing with water in a repetitive act; each repetition slightly different from the last, the flesh less contained, a series only halted in a further act of deformation, a point-blank gunshot wound that empties his blood directly onto his catatonic mother, herself only one embroidered pink shape amidst the homogeneous, striated space of a pastel nursing home.

Flows of fluid – blood, water, urine, excrement – are traced throughout the film. Each runs into the others; the prison's H-block becomes the site of these transformations, this production. Circuits of flows are traced on the celluloidal surface, over the striated texture of the prison's topology: along its corridors, its series of parallel doors, its bars, slits and doorways. The site of maximum blockage and maximum flow, and thus the most generative site of production, of intensities, is the prison cell. The new inmate joins another in a cell smeared floor to ceiling with excrement. Food is delivered by the guards, consumed by the prisoners, transformed into shit, and made to encounter the structure of the prison itself, transfiguring it, in this case, into aesthetic object, a striking painting that is at once non-representational and aesthetic emergence through a celibate machine: the cell, deterritorialised from H-block's striated mosaic through the shit-smearing-smoothing of its surface, acts as the BwO upon which de-formed organic assemblages both mingle and stall, where production occurs precisely because it is halted.

Perhaps the most striking visual example of connective synthesis in the film occurs when the two prisoners use the undifferentiated mass of leftover food to mould a barrier around their cell door, a miniature wall formed by turning the flow of food against its source, segmenting and concretising it, giving shape to a basin that echoes that in which the prison guard soaks his bloodied fists. Into this makeshift structure they pour a pot brimming with urine, transferring this fluid from one vessel to another, but with a difference: this second basin makes use of another connector, the gap under the cell door, and the wall of food serves to direct the flow of urine out of the cell, into the connective passageway of the corridor, designed for the transfer of humans and here used as transitive site of convergence. As the urine seeps under the door, it traces a path into and down the corridor; the long-shot of the

corridor itself reveals that similar flows are pouring out of all of the cell doors; the camera holds as these slowly snake toward the centre of the hall and begin to meet, forming a new connective, a new aggregate flow. Though no prisoners can be seen or heard in this shot, a new machinic assemblage is formed from their aggregate connectors, recorded on the surface of the empty corridor, and at the same time forming a smooth, heterogeneous surface overlaying not only the diegetic corridor but the otherwise striated space of the still image, here born, dying, born as cinema.

The collective urine machine clears the way (intensity degree zero) for the emergence of a new subject, a new subjectivity, in the form of Bobby Sands himself. Bobby as an individual character is only featured in the central 40 minutes of the film, after a half hour of narrative flows. In the space of the film he is produced by these flows, liquid and social as well as imagistic and aural, represented and representational. The urine, faeces, rotting food, proliferation of doors and corridors gradually coalesce into a representation of the historical personage nominally at the centre of McQueen's film. The two prisoners hear the unscheduled approach of the guards and brace themselves for a violent encounter. They stand, tensed, facing the door of their cell. The film cuts to what should be a reverse shot of the door opening, but is instead Bobby yanked from *his* cell, typologically identical yet defined by a different set of coordinates. Then, in the lavatory, a return, a repetition: the prison guard's fist slammed into a wall, coupling of flesh and blood to water, intercut with the violent shearing of Bobby's hair. Blood, dirt, water, flesh and hair commingle, then eventually recede, out of the frame, to reveal a face. Thus the protagonist emerges as a focal point, a sort of golem constructed out of a social assemblage of political prisoners, filmed bodies, flows of blood, the sound of blows against flesh, excreted fragments of celluloid.

In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari slightly recast the BwO as *that which one can make oneself*. This is in contrast to *Anti-Oedipus*, which primarily figured the BwO as a substratum upon which things are built (through desiring-production, always in opposition to the BwO). In the later book, the BwO is a set of practices, a space made smooth through the vectors of its inhabitants, 'such as tribes in the desert' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 484), and thus intimately connected to subjectivity itself as its effect and the sum of its potential pathways: 'But you are already on it, scurrying like a vermin, groping like a blind person, or running like a lunatic: desert traveller and nomad of the steppes' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 150). The subject traverses the

circuits traced on, the lines that form, the BwO. It has no fixed identity, no fixed meaning. It is 'forever decentred, *defined* by the states through which it passes' (Deleuze and Guattari 2009: 20).

Without organs the body is opened to new pathways, new vectors; the subject is better able to realize its already nomadic nature, becomes more fluid, increases its power of action, increases its joy. The BwO here becomes a creative challenge, echoing Deleuze's Nietzschean re-rereading of Spinoza in *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*: 'We speak of consciousness and its decrees, of the will and its effects, of the thousand ways of moving the body, of dominating the body and the passions – but *we do not even know what a body can do*' (Deleuze 2001: 18). In his second book on Spinoza, then, Deleuze re-negotiates the boundaries of bodies as the spatialised interplay of affect. Instead of the differentiation within unity explored in *Expression in Philosophy*, he mobilizes a characteristic of what he would later describe as smooth space, 'a space of affects, more than one of properties' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 479). The mathematically defined organism-body (described by ratios of relative movement) of striated space here becomes the continuously variable, vector-based nomadic subject of ametric space. While expressionism allowed for the co-production of body and mind, space and idea, through the tracing of parallel boundaries as in 'A Hunger Artist', here *conatus* is spatialised as a nomadic subject, continuously traversing the lines of its own multiplicity.

The temporally central segment of *Hunger* is concerned with Bobby's decision to lead a hunger strike. Here, after emerging as a differentiated subject out of the detritus of the film, he immediately turns that subjectivity against himself, against his organs. This is the only segment of the film which remotely resembles a typical filmic narrative, a character study. Here we witness banal scenes wherein he meets with his parents, who ask him if he is eating well. The prison guard is assassinated in the presence of his own mother. Each series comes to an end, the flows are arrested, the subject, now at the centre of the picture, buries them, smoothes them over. The section culminates in a 23-minute conversation (17 minutes of which unfold in a single, still, wide-shot) between Bobby and his friend, a priest. It contains the only sustained dialogue in the film, detailing Bobby's belief that he is nothing more than a political tool of the Irish Republican leadership, that his ineffectuality has been determined by them. Accordingly, to effect some change in the status quo, he will act unilaterally, refusing to eat until the British capitulate or his body dies. The priest is appalled, accuses him of devaluing life, becomes angry. But Bobby is resigned to his action, which

he sees as the inauguration of a series that will likely continue past his foreshortened lifespan, that won't be completed until substantial change is achieved. Seventy-five prisoners have volunteered to join the strike. Each one who dies will be replaced by another; thus one act becomes a connective synthesis, a linking of bodies in series, forming a larger assemblage. So ends the conversation, and Bobby's isolated, centred subjectivity. To make this series, thus far rendered only as intellectual possibility, actualisable, the molar subject labelled 'Bobby Sands' must dissolve.

The scene is immediately followed by the recapitulation of a shot we've seen before: the empty corridor, lined by facing cell doors, criss-crossed with pools of urine. A sanitation worker appears, wearing rubber boots and wielding a shop broom. Slowly, laboriously, he sweeps the urine, en mass, over the surface of the hall. The camera never moves, but he slowly approaches us, eventually propelling the co-mingled fluid directly under the lens, into the virtual space of the audience. The deterritorialised production of the prisoners as ad-hoc collective is thus reterritorialised into the cinematic apparatus, the viewer's gaze as directed by the camera itself. Just as we have constructed the golem of Bobby Sands, we will now be asked to dismantle him, to deconstruct our own spectatorship and enter into new configurations with the film itself.

The final 25 minutes of *Hunger* refigure the protagonist as hunger artist, positioning the audience uneasily between the roles of clinician and patient. A doctor, off-screen, booms a litany of symptoms, each involving the deformation of one or more organs,[3] to Bobby's parents; the patient is absent from the shot. Who in the audience here does not posit herself in that role, does not consider the status of her own organs at this moment of spectatorship? When the narrative's patient reappears he is no longer Bobby Sands. His body has become withered, desiccated. Every rib protrudes from his shrunken skin; we know that it is precisely the organs that are missing. Like Kafka's Hunger Artist, his body has become hollowed out. Curiously, however, as the body takes shape through its hollowing, the film loses any trace of docudrama, becomes documentary. The camera is here refigured as a medical instrument, surveying a body; the viewer assumes the role of clinician. The subject that has been revealed through the smoothing of the narrative-machine, the refocusing of the audience gaze from art spectacle to medical spectacle, is no longer Bobby Sands, historical personage and sutured protagonist. *The figure in the centre of the frame is now Michael Fassbender, the actor.*

IV. Becoming Multiple

Deleuze and Guattari are careful to allay our suspicions that dismembering the Self is really an act of suicide:

> Dismantling the organism has never meant killing yourself, but rather opening the body to connections that presuppose an entire assemblage, circuits, conjunctions, levels and thresholds, passages and distributions of intensity, and territories and deterritorialisations measured with the craft of a surveyor. Actually, dismantling the organism is no more difficult than dismantling the other two strata, signifiance and subjectification. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 160)

Are we relieved? Surely we can take Fassbender's body as a model of dismantling, of hollowing out, of smoothing. For we wonder, of course, how much it can take, and ask ourselves, *what are its limits?* The subject is dissolved, bifurcating into two actors (one ostensibly representing the younger Bobby). The body comes apart: blood is discharged from the rectum, vomit from the mouth. Traces of the body are left as mysterious emanations on the sheets that make contact with it. This disintegration, this molecular decomposition, is also a becoming: not only a becoming-molecular and becoming-other, but a becoming-multiple. As the desiccated Fassbender lies in bed, affectless, diffuse, the camera swoops above and around him aggressively as if in search of its subject. But the shot fades several times into a double exposure: a flock of birds in flight, the collective beating of their wings forming an aural collage, a smoothing of striated sound, a blending and a proliferation that accompanies the deformation of the singular image, the image of the fixed subject, now absent from the unitary body. The body of the hunger artist has become the multiplicity it always already was, a BwO and part of a larger body without organs, the film itself as smooth space. Here McQueen-Fassbender-Sands have managed what Kafka's Hunger Artist could not: the reactivation of desiring production in the absence of the monadic subject, the conversion of the body without organs into a connective multiplicity. Kafka renders the conditions for transformation, but does not fully realize, in 'A Hunger Artist', the project of becoming-other, of reterritorialising the body without organs. McQueen's film recuperates the hunger artist through a recovery of the multitude, the formation of new multiplicities. Signifiance, subjectification, organization. *Hunger* displaces the historical-singular signifier of Bobby Sands from the actor-signifier Michael Fassbender, itself decentred and diffused amidst celluloidal flows. Finally, the film

effects a perspectival shift; as the molecularised, multiple body of its decentred protagonist comes into view through its diffusion, it reverses the direction of forces that constitute it (the filmic apparatus itself, the striated space of spectatorship), creating a new conjunctive synthesis that potentially spreads this process of molecularisation to other beings: The equation is reversed, the social grid is itself altered, resonating to new frequencies set in motion by its lower-order singularities. *Hunger*'s true political dimension, then, lies not in its representation of resistance as narratological-historical trope, the expression of a counterforce against hegemonic domination from above (in this case Thatcher's incarceration machine), but rather the far more radical reconfiguration of the filmic apparatus to effect a perspectival shift, a revealing of the conditions of production themselves. The limit case of the starving body, as Kafka shows us, lies between subject and object, the productive synthesis of art and the capture of spectacle. The body that fasts becomes simultaneously disarticulated from its constituent flows and reformulated as discursive focal point of quasi-medical spectacle. But if the hollowing of the body is a kind of smoothing, indeed a smoothing-over of the striated Subject, it can also become a virtual operation: in Deleuze's re-reading of Spinozan *conatus* and in McQueen's film, the molar subject at the centre of the machinic apparatus of production is rendered smooth, as primary unity with its disarticulated flows, as prelude to another order of production, inscribed on this surface. Bare life blossoms into productive multitude; the lines traced on the BwO produce a virtual collective that potentially includes not only Kafka's fictional connoisseurs of professional fasting but the actual amateurs who watch McQueen's film and thereby construct and deconstruct Bobby Sands. Where Michael Fassbender's body comes into view a new set of intensities is born. A tone is struck, a resonant frequency synthesised in a state of becoming, a pregnant space waiting to be occupied by other bodies in the process of becoming multiple.

Only the final dissolution of the body of Fassbender-Bobby-inmates-viewers-prison-Ireland-Britain-flock-God-camera imbues the enigmatic opening of the film, with its chaotic aural roar and multitudinous anonymous bodies, with provisional meaning. I would like to suggest that this lid-banging scene is not the beginning of the film but its end, the product of the film-as-process, its production of itself, the individual become multiplicity through the construction of a body without organs, the ultimate work of the hunger artist become molecular, the tracing of a continuously variable contour, of a revolutionary collective to come.

Notes

1. Lamark's theory of evolution, in which organisms morphologically adapt to their environment and then pass those traits on to future generations, is notably active and additive rather than passive and subtractive as in Darwin's theory of natural selection. Henri Bergson reformulates Larmarkism into *élan vital*, a tendency towards self-directed or creative change that is central to Deleuze's thought as the formula for the virtual and thus lays the ground for desiring production (see Bergson 1998: 76–97 and Deleuze 1988: 96–8).
2. See Derrida 1980: 292 on freeplay, and Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 53 on the proliferating series.
3. We may compare this to a similar scene in *David Blaine: Above the Below*, which documents magician and endurance artist David Blaine's enactment of Kafka's fictional role in the spectacle of 44 days of fasting while publicly displayed inside a transparent box suspended over the Thames in 2003. Beforehand, a doctor describes the hypothetical effects on Blaine's organs; after the spectacle, this striating gesture will be again reterritorialised in the form of an article in the medical journal *Nutrition* that curiously utilises its own data to establish the 'validity' of the fast, and thus of its own data. Here Blaine's body is smoothed only to be recapitulated as a striated graph of ketone bodies per urine volume (see Jackson et al. 2006: 893).

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Liquid Spaces of Engagement: Entering the Waves with Antony Gormley and Olafur Eliasson

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Abstract

Antony Gormley's *Another Place* and Olafur Eliasson's *Your watercolour machine* exemplify passages and combinations of smooth and striated space as beings of sensation on planes of technical and aesthetic composition. They are frames which striate the smoothness of light, water, molten iron, etc., using scientific planes of reference. Smooth and striated mix as boundaries between visitors' bodies and installation become permeable. Optic becomes tactile, becomes haptic, generative engagement. Both artists experiment with the interface between striated and smooth to encourage visitors to experiment and experience sensation. The installations are liquid spaces; forms of perpetual non-permanence which affect and react with others' behaviours in processes of co-emergence.

Keywords: plane of composition, plane of reference, co-emergence, material vitalism, capture, sensation

> Everything can be considered from the perspective of waves.
> (Olafur Eliasson 2008)

Gilles Deleuze regards water (the sea) as a 'smooth space par excellence' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 479): a space of waves – ocean waves, sound waves, light waves – a space of movement, change and becoming; a space of percepts and affects. A space of sensation. The role of art, for Deleuze, is to create new sensations, drawing the humans and

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non-humans which encounter that art into its material vitality. As such, Deleuze suggests that 'the basic thing is to get taken up in the movement of a big wave' (Deleuze 1992: 281), to experience and experiment with it and what it can do.

I discuss encounters with the material vitalities of two art installations in which assemblages of water, waves, metal and so on enter into dynamic composition with 'visitors' as participants. Antony Gormley's *Another Place* (*AP*) on Crosby Beach, North East England, and Olafur Eliasson's *Your watercolour machine* (*Ywm*) in Copenhagen. Both ask in different ways, what does it mean to be visionary?, how might the haptic as a generative force escape the organisational control of optical space? Both installations engage the human body as a field of surfaces which are simultaneously productive and receptive of sensory experience.

April 2007

Squelch. Mud. Sticky, clayey mud. Smearing. Oozing. Gluing. Iron bodies. Bare and smooth. Warm in the sun. Slimy, wet, green algae. Roughness of barnacles. Shapely. Shapeless.

I taste the salt and sand on the wind, sink knee-deep in ooze trying to escape incoming waves, dodge dogs chasing birds and children's footballs. Gulls mew, children shriek, dogs bark, insects buzz, waves crash on the shore, water slopping against iron bodies, susurrating. This synaesthesia is Another Place *where Antony Gormley's 100 iron statues of his naked body stare in expectation at the horizon along 3 km of mudflats at Crosby Beach, Liverpool. Motionless, the 189 cm tall men emerge from and are submerged into the sea as the tides ebb and flow. Undetermined assemblages emerge and crystallise temporarily. Limitless connectivities of heterogeneous entities, 'and . . . and . . . and' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 9).*

AP was originally exhibited at Cuxhaven in Germany, a place, like Liverpool, heavily involved in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century slave trade and in the voluntary emigration to the Americas during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Men stood on the shore, imagining, with anticipation, apprehension and fear, 'another life in another place' (Gormley, quoted in Wroe 2005: n.p.). The iron men arrived in Crosby in July 2005, a year after 23 mud-stranded Chinese cocklepickers drowned in nearby Morecambe Bay. Scheduled to stay for 20 months before

embarking for New York, the high number of visitors to the site led the South Sefton Development Trust to consider purchasing the installation from Antony Gormley so that it could remain permanently on the beach. The Trust, therefore, applied for an extension to their planning permits in order to purchase the artwork and obtain the necessary planning and health and safety approvals, marine consent and other licences. The extension was refused, however, by the local authority, Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council, on grounds of potential danger to humans and potential disruption to feeding birds. Approval was finally given in 2007, conditional upon some statues being relocated, and all being mapped and numbered and bounded by flashing marker buoys.[1] *Notwithstanding such striation, the men of AP act as attractors and creators of fantasies and desires for locals and tourists, human and non-human performances.*



Figure 1.1. *Another Place* by Antony Gormley. (Photograph by Jean Hillier.)



Figure 1.2. *Another Place* by Antony Gormley. (Photograph by Jean Hillier.)

May 2009

In the small dark room I gaze at a rainbow on a screen. A whirr of machinery and the colours fragment and dance; meeting, separating, flickering. Behind the screen a projector shines light, refracted through a prism onto the surface of a shallow tank of water. The pool of colour is reflected via two mirrors onto the screen as a vertical rainbow. The motor whirrs again. The tank tilts, the water rushes back and forth in waves, the colours wave and dance. Then silence. Stillness.

I can't resist. I have to put my hand in the water, to physically engage with Olafur Eliasson's Your watercolour machine. *Gingerly at first, I dabble my fingers. Water ripples, gently turbulent. Colours flutter on water and screen. Bolder, I make waves, splashing and swishing the water; colours swirling and scattering like birds in flight. Alone in the Copenhagen quayside gallery I play, experimenting with different movements of my hands. Loud*

indigos, warm oranges and purples overlap, colouring my skin, the water, the mirrors and the screen. Inclusive disjunction.

Joy. 'My' watercolour machine.

Eliasson's Ywm *was subsequently purchased by the Danish National Gallery in June 2009. It is not currently on display.*[2] *I doubt whether visitors would be permitted to touch the installation.*

As assemblages of metal, water, light, sound, and . . . and . . . and, *AP* and *Ywm* are liquid spaces: forms of perpetual non-permanence which affect and react with human and non-human others' behaviours in processes of co-emergence. They flow across frames, yet do not dissolve into chaos: a mix of smooth and striated in perpetual motion.

Deleuze argued for the importance of studying examples from 'concrete social fields, at specific moments' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 135). Despite their differences in place and size,[3] my encounters with these two installations fold together 'fluctuating intensities, smoothings

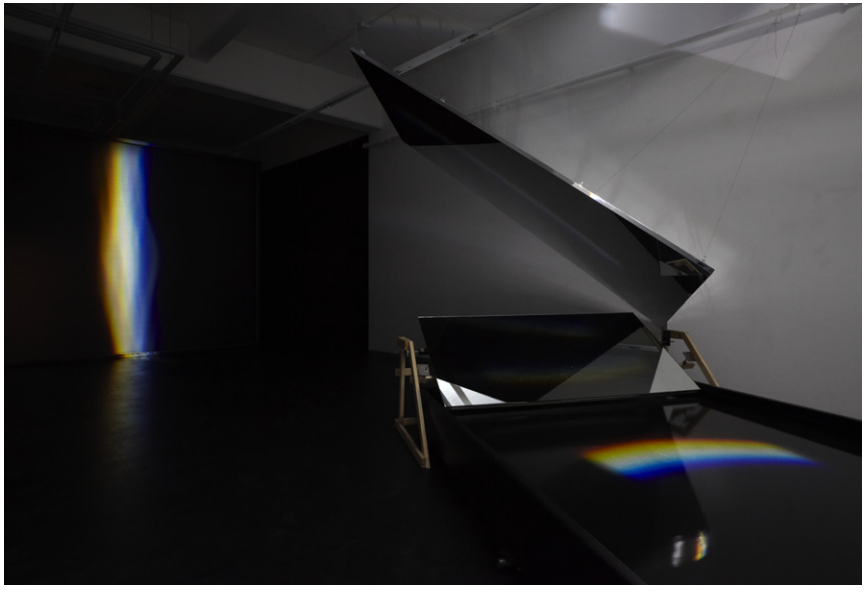


Figure 2.1. and 2.2. *Your watercolour machine* by Olafur Eliasson. (Reproduced Courtesy of Studio Olafur Eliasson and Andersen's Contemporary. Photo by Anders Sune Berg.)



Figure 2.2. Continued.

and striations' (Malins 2007: 158) of materialities and expressivities: of colour, texture, text, smell, volume – of iron, aluminium, steel, water, sand, sea, dogs, birds, planning, health and safety (and museum) regulations... – in visionary, tactile and haptic spaces. The installations open new connections between humans and non-humans involving disruption of participants' cognitive and conceptual capacities (Deleuze 1994: 139).

The idea of encounter is of importance especially for Eliasson (and the title of a later exhibition). He aims to stimulate encounters as events, comings together and collective experiences with transformative potential. Installations often include 'Your' in their name; a possessive pronoun which affords agency to each visitor in their spatio-temporal

relationship with his work. Eliasson (in Gilbert 2004) actually admits to a strong Deleuzian influence on his interest in the experience of space and art as co-creation made apparent by the self-reflexion of those engaging with it; 'seeing yourself seeing', 'sensing yourself sensing' (Eliasson 2008).

Both *AP* and *Ywm* exemplify phantastically entwined relations between smooth and striated space. Smooth space is a boundless chaotic space of affect and sensation in which heterogeneous elements fold together, conjoin and disjoin in infinite variation. Emerging through relations between elements, smooth space shifts with each movement of forces and intensities. For instance, a bird perched on the shoulder of an iron man experiences space not as the gridded totality of the local authority planners, but in terms of speeds and slownesses (of air currents, or flatworms on the beach) which call forth powers to be affected (soaring joyously) and to affect (swooping, gulping, eating). Striated space, in contrast, is gridded, measured and bounded: the space of control in which the elements or points are more important than the force relations between them.

Gormley's and Eliasson's artworks take 'a bit of chaos in a frame': frames which striate the smoothness of light, water, molten iron, etc., using scientific planes of reference – reflection, refraction, dispersion of light and metallurgy, government legislation and regulations. Smooth and striated space mix as boundaries between visitors' bodies and installation become permeable. Skin encounters wetness of water, smoothness of metal, sliminess of algae, roughness of oxidisation. Immanent capabilities of flows of matter-energy-information make what is ordinarily hidden rise to sensory intuition.

The creators of both installations use the interface between striated and smooth to experiment and to encourage visitors themselves to experiment and to experience. Eliasson's 'Your' becomes 'My' and Crosby Beach becomes 'My Place'. This is what engineering can do at its experimental/experiential limit. The produced 'objects' in the installations (rainbows, iron men) transform the inhabited spaces of the gallery and beach into living events; self-embracing micro-climates of experience.

I. Material Vitalities, or, 'Your Engagement Has Consequences' (Eliasson 2009a)

> . . . what metal and metallurgy bring to light is a life proper to matter. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 409).

I seek, like Jane Bennett, 'a form of agentic capacity not restricted to the human actor, a potentiality within materiality' (Bennett 2007: 133): an active 'thing-power' (Bennett 2010), or material vitalism (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 411) which exerts forces and creates affects. Defining art as the capture of forces, a substantiation of affects in matter (Sauvagnargues 2006: 35), I regard the iron men of *AP* and the floating colours of *Ywm* as relational compositions of intensities, of encounters of corporeal proximity between speeds and slownesses, of affects, actions and reactions. In my encounters with these worlds of 'flows and fluxes, topological spaces and floating durations' (Bogue 2007: 37), I identify *vague*[4] or 'vagabond' essences (Deleuze 1979: 6) in 'a lapping of waves, a murmuring of sands, a mist, a dance of dust' (Deleuze 1988a: 115).

Through their materials, the works force the percept from perceptions of objects and the affect from affections, to extract a pure being of sensation. The forces captured and sensations created are invisible and indeterminate, becoming visibly sensational when materialised as iron bodies in the waves or rainbows reflected in glass and water. Sensation is created not so much in the material, as when the material becomes a being in space and time. For instance, the force of the iron men would not exist if Liverpool had not been a slaving port or the cocklepickers had not drowned in Morecambe Bay. Sensation does not lie in the iron, but is harboured by the metal.

Sensation impacts the bodies of those who encounter *AP* and *Ywm*, drawing them into the artworks. As Deleuze writes, 'we experience *joy* when a body encounters ours and enters into composition with it, and *sadness* when, on the contrary, a body or an idea threaten our coherence' (Deleuze 1988b: 19): the rainbow-induced smile, the delight at iron heads appearing above the waves, the disgust and shame of naked iron men, the joyful fun of splashing in water, the anguish of impotently watching as iron men 'drown', slowly and impassively overcome by the flowing sea. Art affects us by showing us ourselves: 'seeing ourselves seeing'.

Ywm is literally a machine of light and mirrors for colouring perception which makes felt the experience of vision (see Bogue 2003a: 29–35; Manning 2008a). Artworks make every sense function as an eye. Art vibrates through the entire sensing body: 'painting gives us eyes all over' (Deleuze 2003: 45). Senses of touch, smell and sound are as engaged as the sense of vision –

> the colours of the sand, sea, sky, statues, spectrum . . .
> the sounds of waves, motor, birds, dogs, children, insects . . .

> the smells of the sea, the gallery space, perfume . . . .
> the taste of salt on the wind, water on fingers . . .

– vibrating as compounds of sensations according to 'strong and weak beats, projections and hollows' such that 'we no longer know whether it is the light or the air that sculpts or is sculpted' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 168).

The installations draw the body of the participant/'viewer' in by the finger-tips. The eye invites the hand (Massumi 1998), but then optic becomes tactile, becomes haptic, smooth spaces of close vision in which there is no hand-eye (or sensory) subordination (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 493; Deleuze 2003). The corporeal participation of humans (and non-humans) activates much of Eliasson's work, such that he refers to visitors as 'users', handing us a 'responsibility' to 'negotiate with surfaces' (Eliasson 2008). The artist states his intention to demythify the optic and eliminate the concept in favour of a more generative haptic engagement (Eliasson 2004).

The haptic eye produces 'a metallurgical vision' (Zepke 2005: 144): a 'vitalised geometry' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 182) of colour fragments and iron men, in the midst of which, in Deleuze and Guattari's maritime model, participants 'distribute' themselves 'according to frequencies and in the course of their crossings' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 481) of the beach, such that it becomes difficult to distinguish between figures and visitors standing 'enveloped by space . . . our feet on the earth and our eyes on the horizon' (Bogue 2003b: 140).

Waves may be haptic spaces (see Deleuze 2003); smooth spaces of intensities which 'dematerialise' metal, water, algae, sounds and so on in close vision. The 'how' of the visionary thus engages our senses in their entirety as we 'touch' the installations, enfolded in them. Our orientations and perspectival landmarks blur and flow into each other, contrasting with the distant vision of optic, striated space. We lose ourselves, becoming one with the work, escaping, for a while, the organisational control of the Coastguard beach patrol and gallery curator.

II. Advancing Like a Wave: Shifting Borderlines on Planes

> Waves are vibrations, shifting borderlines inscribed on the plane. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 252)

From the 'chaos' of molten iron, fire and helium, of water and light, Gormley's and Eliasson's installations emerge on planes of

composition. Deleuze and Guattari distinguish between planes of technical composition – the work of the material (iron men, tanks of water, prisms, mirrors and so on) that often calls on scientific planes of reference (mathematics, physics, chemistry, anatomy) – and immanent planes of aesthetic composition – the work of sensation (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 191–2).

Whilst the authors suggest that only aesthetic planes fully deserve the name 'composition', Gormley and Eliasson develop different ways of engaging technology-mediated actualisations which combine the propositional (e.g. the melting point of iron, the refraction of light) with the compositional (the sensational). Deleuze and Guattari outline a spectrum of possible combinations, in which, at one end 'sensation is realised in the material' (Deleuze 1994: 193–4). Here, sensation adapts to the well-formed, organised and regulated matter of 'a material surface that already contains within it the spatial schemata that structure its figures' (Bogue 2003b: 169), such as the cast iron men of *AP*. At the other end of the spectrum 'the material... passes into sensation' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 193), whereby the material ascends into the aesthetic plane of compositional forces. In *Ywm* the light, water and mirrors themselves articulate forces. Technology becomes merely 'a function of aesthetic problems of composition', 'covered over' by the aesthetic plane (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 196). While Gormley and Eliasson deliberately expose some of the technologies underpinning their work – seams, sprues and rivets in the iron men, motors, mirrors and prisms in *Ywm* – the artworks enable the technologies to become more than themselves; visible functions on aesthetic planes of composition.

Actualisation of the assemblages of *AP* and *Ywm* has proceeded, and is proceeding, through movements of differentiation. Particles are extracted from the chaotic virtual through processes of creative compositional differentiation and actualised as artworks, articulated through planes of reference. Planes of reference relate to the differential field of potential transformations of scientific material systems (Duffy 2006). They enable actualisation to occur through the construction of functions of systems of coordinates, including the speed of light, the melting-point of iron, health and safety regulations and so on. Such functions and co-ordinates are determinative of states of affairs, framing or limiting the conditions in which systems actualise. In other words, the virtual or 'chaos' is actualised in identifiable forms and configurations, such as rainbows and cast iron men.

In *Ywm*, colour 'visibilities' take form within regimes of light of reflection and refraction. Reflection is the change in direction of a

wave of light, sound or water between two different media, such as between Eliasson's tank of water and mirrors. It is an exchange of the unequal – between actual and virtual – indiscernible, yet distinctly different.

Refraction is the change in direction of a wave due to a change in speed. Generally, changes occur when a wave passes from one medium to another at angles other than 90° or 0°. Light waves refract on entering and leaving glass and water, for instance. White light is split into a rainbow-spectrum as it passes through a glass prism (see Deleuze 1994: 227–8). Inspired by Isaac Newton's 'private rainbow in a dark room' (Eliasson 2005: 13) and Moholo-Nagy's Light and Space art (Eliasson 2009b), *Ywm* combines light refraction and reflection with kinetic sculpture.

The men of *AP* embody scientific planes of reference of moulding and casting iron. As Deleuze explains, traditional views of moulding[5] represent a mould as a form imprinted on inert, homogeneous matter and which is removed once the matter becomes structured and reaches an equilibrium state (Deleuze 1979: 8) . However, as Deleuze points out, 'if one was inside the mould', as Antony Gormley effectively was, we would recognise that moulding is actually an operation of modulation or 'moulding in a continuous and variable manner'. The composition of cast iron structures always varies owing to even minute changes in pour conditions and differential cooling of sections (such as arms and torsos). The smooth space of molten iron becomes striated as 'replicas' of Gormley's body. Yet the replicas are not copies as such, but simulacra. Actualisation is differentiation. It breaks with resemblance (Deleuze 1994: 212). The differential never produces wholes, but creates singularities that are 'both one and many' (Manning 2008b: 14).

III. Smooth and Striated: Encounters, Combinations and Passages

> Organising good encounters, composing actual relations, forming powers, experimenting. (Deleuze 1988b: 119)

Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 474) point out that striated and smooth spaces 'exist only in mixture', with striations being smoothed and smoothings striated in passages and combinations of both. It is the forces at work in these passages and combinations which are of interest in *AP* and *Ywm*.

Territorialising frames have transformed the predominantly smooth space of Crosby Beach and the randomly located men into space striated by rules, regulations and stereotypical subjectivations. As Deleuze and Guattari point out, 'one of the fundamental tasks of the State is to striate the space over which it reigns' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 385). As such, the iron men were subjected to several striating events. The State (embodied by Sefton Council as local planning authority) performs as an apparatus of capture, drawing the men and other actants to itself and the development assessment system. Arguments and activities are constrained, stratified according to deemed 'material planning matters', structured according to imposed time-frames (of public consultation and committee-meeting schedules) and a specific decision arena.

This is a striated space, instituted by State apparatus, where matter is gridded and organised along lines of fixed orientation. For instance, planning legislation turns the iron men into a legal issue. It crystallises the men's signification by demanding coordinates of orientation, including compliance with a Marine Consent licence under the 1949 Coast Protection Act, a licence under the 1985 Food and Environmental Protection Act, and also with national Planning Policy Statements, Regional Spatial Strategies, Local Development Frameworks and 1994 Habitat Assessment Regulations.

State apparatuses, such as the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the Marine and Coastguard Agency (MCA), regarded the iron men as potentially dangerous: 'a hazard to navigation', 'a continuing risk to beach users' (MCA 2006) and 'a foreseeable entrapment hazard' (McAleavy 2007) for those unfamiliar with the beach and its rapidly rising tides. A managerial discourse of territorialisation and striation demanded exclusion zones, safety areas and search and rescue corridors. The Environment Agency, Natural England and other environmental groups represented the men as potentially causing flocks of waterbirds to starve to death, chased away by visitors' dogs and prevented from feeding. These agencies striated the beach into 'feeding' and 'non-feeding' areas and demanded the removal of men from the former.

In order that all the necessary permissions and licences could be granted for *AP* to remain on Crosby Beach, 13 men were relocated away from 'dangerous mudflats'; three were moved from key bird-feeding areas and four were reassigned to create additional Coastguard access. The iron men were all fitted with numbered identity bracelets and mapped on MCA charts. They have become striated points, a geometry in a metric grid cast over continuous variation.

The men were also striated by actants into categories as, variously, tourism attractors, stimulators for economic regeneration, 'a waste of money', 'man-made muck', 'an eyesore', 'mesmerising', 'fun', 'fantastic' (The Mersey Partnership [MP] 2006), whilst visitors were regarded by local residents (them versus us) as people having no connection with Crosby, who drop litter, cause parking problems, make noise, make a mess in public toilets and bring dogs to foul the beach and scare away wildlife (MP 2006), for all of which it is the fault of *AP*.

It is the interaction between the differential relations of power, knowledge and subjectivation which determines the singularities of the iron men. The actualisation of these differential relations and singularities by organisations including Sefton Council, the MCA, local residents and so on, stratifies and temporarily fixes the significations of the men. Crosby beach, as a material space, makes an assemblage of iron bodies emerge and be seen. The materiality of planning regulations and the development assessment system defines a field of expression in which the iron men receive sentence – in this instance, to life on the beach.

In some ways, Crosby Beach has been museumified. As has *Ywm* in the Danish National Gallery, with its regulated visiting hours and conditions including 'no touching', 'no flash photography', countermanding Eliasson's interactive intent. These state spaces, framed and striated by enclosures (marker buoys, museum walls), regulations, maps and grids, contrast with the haptic, smooth space in which orientations, landmarks and linkages are in continuous variation as the tide ebbs and flows in *AP* and colours fragment and dance in the dark in *Ywm*. As Deleuze comments, in smooth space 'there is no line separating earth and sky, there is no intermediate distance, no perspective or contour; visibility is limited; and yet there is an extraordinarily fine topology that relies not on points or objects, but rather on haecceities, on sets of relations' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 382).

There is an infinite diversity of perspectives and subjectivities; of 'voyages in place' which follow 'streaming, spiralling, zigzagging, snaking, feverish line(s)' rather than points (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 499). Lines which dematerialise frames in an 'out-of-field' or 'beyond-the-frame', which can sensationally open new spaces of thought (Grosz 2009).

These new spaces of thought are 'phantastical' for Deleuze, applying to simulacra and 'phantasms', such as *AP* and *Ywm*. As Deleuze explains, they are conditions of real experience, 'reuniting' experience and experiment and 'presiding' over both 'nomadic distributions' of

imagination and 'sedimentary distributions' of categories. They are complexes of space and time; 'the objects of an essential encounter' (Deleuze 1994: 285).

It is this which particularly fascinates Olafur Eliasson (May 2003: 18), whose work experiments with encounters between participants' rational expectations and their visceral experiences. For both Eliasson and Gormley, the body is central in the mediation of spatialities and temporalities. Boundaries become permeable between visitors and installations as they conjoin in new assemblages: fingers, illuminated with colour, dabble and swish in shallow water; children and adults climb on iron shoulders; dogs rub and urinate against iron legs; birds perch on iron heads. Skin encounters sweet wetness of water, smoothness of never-submerged iron, warmed by the sun, sliminess of wet algae, newly emerged from the sea, bleeds, grazed by rust or bruised by solid mass. Through such immersive experiences, participants 'see through [their] skin' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 151), experiment with the opportunities offered and generate 'a creative rapport with the situation in question' (Guattari 2009: 67).

AP and *Ywm* fold to themselves a range of encounters, combinations and passages between the smooth and the striated, between planes of composition and planes of reference. Deleuze and Guattari recognise the possibility of creative 'interference', blurring the distinctions between the planes and practices of art and science (and philosophy) (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 216). In both installations, science performs visibly on the plane of aesthetic composition such that 'sensations and functions become undecidable, at the same time as philosophy, art and science become indiscernible' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 218).

Installations, for both Gormley and Eliasson, are theatres for open-ended experimentation (Deleuze 1994); for the performance of different possibilities and the actualisation of different virtualities (O'Sullivan 2006: 139). Gormley's iron men and Eliasson's watercolour machine do not impose form on inert matter, but are rather relational compositions of intensities, of affects and actions in which *Another Place* becomes 'My Place' and *Your watercolour machine* becomes 'mine'. In such alliances or encounters between chemistry and art, between knowledge and experience (Eliasson 2010), between striated and smooth, margins are pushed and frames exceeded. 'Experimentation is what goes beyond' (Eliasson 2008: 131).

The installations 'draw us into the compound' and make us vibrate with them, as part of them, becoming with them. This co-production or co-poiesis actualises the possibility of an 'art in common' (Alliez and

Bonne 2009: 111); an ethical, creative potentiality; a living event in which Eliasson desires that 'my work is you'.

IV. Conclusions: Entering the Waves

> Physics has found no straight lines – only waves. (Buckminster Fuller 1983: 7)

Though all artworks produce sensations, they blend smooth and striated space in ways uniquely negotiated with each visitor or participant. An encounter with *Another Place* and *Your watercolour machine* is in itself an aesthetic act of production, drawing participants haptically into the work, where they become elements in new assemblages, creating waves (of sound, light, water...) that resonate into other elements through 'a chaosmic plunge into the materials of sensation' (Guattari 1995: 90). This plunge, or immersive experiment, intensifies relative speeds in regulated, ordered, striated spaces such that the space is occupied with 'a vector of deterritorialisation' and smooth space is (re)imparted (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 387). Where technologies of physical construction, planning, health and safety regulations, subjectivations and so on build finite worlds of striation, art 'tears open the firmament' to rediscover the infinite (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 202). *AP* and *Ywm* exceed their frames, flowing in lines of flight which carry participants away, 'across our thresholds, towards a destination which is unknown, not foreseeable, not pre-existent' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 125): another place.

Whilst artworks may be part of a territorial place, grounded in striated planes of scientific reference, smooth space emerges through the close vision and tactile relations of any number of observers in 'an infinite succession of linkages and changes in direction' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 493–4) which cannot be predetermined or circumscribed. We thus become one with, and lose ourselves in, *Another Place* and *Your watercolour machine*. We voyage in place, sensing ourselves sensing, as we imagine other possible worlds or *plage(s) d'immanence* (Deleuze 1985) from which to embark among the waves.

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Notes

1. See Peel and Lloyd (2007) and Hillier (2011) for detail.
2. October 2011.
3. I agree with Massumi (2009) that size is unimportant. Sensations have intensities, not scale.
4. French vague = wave (n) and vague (adj) in English.
5. Which Deleuze terms the hylomorphic model.

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Félix Guattari in the Age of Semiocapitalism

Edited and introduced by Gary Genosko

Twenty years after Félix Guattari's untimely passing in 1992, this special issue of *Deleuze Studies* presents a series of essays that will assist readers in bringing Guattari into the present by providing examples of how to read him anew, perhaps even for the first time. In the recently published collection *The Guattari Effect*, editors Eric Alliez and Andrew Goffey introduce their project with reference to the Guattarian concept of the collective assemblage of enunciation that 'operate[s] to enable novel emergences to be detected and the urgency of events to be elaborated' (2011: 1). Semiocapitalism plays a similar catalytic role here, with a no less experimental and urgent task of diagnosis and micropolitical elaboration. Why semiocapitalism? Among Guattari's numerous prescient concepts may be found a three-tined insight: 'capital is a semiotic operator' that 'seizes individuals from the inside' (1996b: 200, 212) and has the goal of 'controlling the whole of society'. This statement contains three closely related insights that introduce the semio-commodity; situate subjectification at the heart of a subsumption that has turned intensive, thus marking the passage from an incorporative, formal to a real subsumption; and, pose the question of resistance within a predicament of massive control that is only superficially blamed on machines (surveillance). Subjectification in Guattari's estimation is a political concept that has a machinic character defined by the involuted relationships between users and information technologies (the latter emerging in great variety and with profound influence from the machinic phylum that more and more entangles human and non-human ecologies).

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Franco 'Bifo' Berardi (2007: 76) defines semiocapital as 'capital-flux that coagulates in semiotic artefacts without materializing itself'. This focuses attention on a middle state of coagulation that displays reticence before materialisation. Coagulation of capital flux in semiotic artefacts suggests that there are nuanced states of substantialisation that do not yet accede, or at least immediately proceed, to hard materialisation; this process of slowing down and pooling, a semiotic settling, describes the immaterial factors of pre-material existence betwixt immateriality and materiality. In a Guattarian vocabulary, then, a semio-commodity consists of the material aspects of the semiotic – affective and productive – and in infotech often consists of a-signifying part-signs whose production and passage through digital networks are akin to signals perfectly adapted to the quasi-material fluxes of their environment – they precisely trigger, activate and work flush with automated processes of information exchange and do not require a representational dimension, which is superfluous (but may undoubtedly exist). Guattari disliked the language of signs because it had for too long entailed a divorce from materiality. In this context, Bifo, too, wonders why we need such a term as immaterial, anyway (2008: 157).

Both Guattari and Bifo emphasise that entire circuits and overlapping and communicating assemblages integrate – that is, machinically enslave – cognitive labour and the capitalistic exploitation of its content. Mental as opposed to manual labour involves a closing of the gap between execution and innovation and a deferral of materialisation: Bifo's explanation contains a key qualification: 'The materials to be transformed are simulated by digital sequences. Productive labour (labour producing value) consists in enacting simulations later transferred to actual matter by computerized machines' (2009: 75). In this temporal qualification, labour does not so much have 'residual materiality' but is mental work on abstract 'signs rich in knowledge'. Flexibility and fluidity are imposed on such labour by means of the reticular form that frames, captures, commands and recombines the fragments produced in and through it. Devices of recombination or part-signs are multiplying in the personal digital assistants, laptops and cell phones that accompany us throughout our entire days and nights – this is our machinic apprenticeship. For Guattari, this is an example of how machinic subjection enters human labour. For Bifo, labour has become cellular activity: as production becomes semiotic, precariously employed cognitive workers – on occasional, contractual, temporary bases without guarantees or benefits – engage in labour that involves the

elaboration of 'a specific semiotic segment that must meet and match innumerable other semiotic fragments in order to compose the frame of a combinatory entity that is an info-commodity, Semiocapital' (2009: 89). Semio-commodities are thus: partial, combinable and recombinable; and dependent upon the digital network. Bifo's re-employment of semiotic for immaterial, in the context of cognitive labour within a networked environment, points to the role of technology in integrating fragments previously allocated to dedicated sites of a dramatically fragmented labour process. He also specifies that semiocapital depends upon simulation of 'signs-in-formation' (2011: 106–7).

There is a certain degree of overlap between the Guattarian conception of Integrated World Capitalism, Semiocapitalism and post-Fordism. During the 1980s Guattari developed in collaboration with Eric Alliez a theory of globalisation called Integrated World Capitalism (IWC). This stage of post-industrial capitalism is marked by the preponderance of modes of machinic production and their integration (that is, by means of permanent crisis); by dominant semiotic-economic systems in which the market becomes transnational; and the state becomes minimal and speculative. The authors wrote: 'Integrated World Capitalism ... [is] based upon semiotic means of evaluation and valorization of capital which are completely new and have an increased capacity for the machinic integration of all human activities and faculties' (Guattari 1996a: 244). Corresponding to some of the features of post-Fordism, as well as hinting at the emergence of the importance of immaterial labour, Guattari and Alliez announce the emergence of semiocapitalism. Guattari clarifies: 'Post-industrial capitalism, which I prefer to describe as Integrated World Capitalism, tends increasingly to decanter its sites of power, moving away from structures producing goods and services towards structures producing signs, syntax and ... subjectivity' (2000: 47).

In post-Fordist production, industrial labour does not disappear; it is relocated to regions where wages are low and regulations are lax. Certain segments of cognitive activity follow along and are 'externalised' for the same reasons. Accompanying Bifo's deferral, geographic marginalisation of the moment of hard materialisation is the automated support of the processes of recombination so that program languages, data formats and robotic systems cohere and combine into a legible frame for the assembly of an info-commodity.

Bifo forestalls materialisation by means of coagulation in semiotic artefacts because he wants to underline the dependency of cognitive labour on information fluxes in the global networks of semiocapitalism.

He does more than suspend the manufacturing moment; he is offering a variation on the Guattarian matter-function relation. We have inherited from linguistics the idea that languages give different forms to thought. Louis Hjelmslev figured the projection of form onto matter as the shadow of a net, a grid, cast onto what was for him undivided sand. This inspired Guattari to recast form as an abstract machine (irreducible to language) that constitutes and conjugates the components of assemblages. It is not the net but its shadow; it is not the form but its function. In Guattari's thought, an abstract machine is a function rather than a form. A function is not yet semiotically fully formed – it is a formless form that has no substance – and this makes it 'pure Matter-Function' because the matter it works is 'not yet' formed (into stratified substance) (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 141).

Using the conceptual language that Guattari adapted from Hjelmslev that form as a pure matter-function maintains its independence before the emergence of distinct breaks that apply to itself and to what it distributes, the conceptual indebtedness of semiocapitalism to this reticent semiotics is perhaps obvious in the form that is distilled into a function and does not (yet) culminate in a distinct thing, a physically formed matter as a stratified substance.

What Bifo is suggesting is that 'neuro-workers' plug themselves into terminals of the net, tap into a vast pharmacological support battery, not to mention absorbing many ideological fictions from the cyberlibertarians of the new economy. This precipitates widespread psychopathologies, drug dependencies and social dysfunctionality because life and work tend to bleed together, with diminishing returns. Bifo pays close attention to how the machinic arrangements of fixed capital are evolving, and describes the semioticisation of the production process in a mutating, artefactual ecology with long tendrils reaching across the globe in which partial manufacturing may be spread widely, and these quasi-material fragments coordinated by computerised assembly in another peripheral location: 'the process of production is in *large part* dematerialized' (2008: 20). One may also say that production is in *some part* still materialised but that this passage is heterogeneous and involves semiotic substantialisations with their own characteristics that differ in nature from an obvious end product, which is not always the destination of the coagulated part-signs.

The language of coagulation suggests, then, not a direct and immediate concreteness, but a viscous semiosis requiring attention to the divergences of semiotic types, gradients of formedness, container effects ('artefacts'). Coagulation of blood is a chemical process of clogging

that requires the internal and active presence of platelets and specific proteins that become sticky. The theory of semiocapitalism counts on the complexity of soft substantialisation, and the flutter of inactuality (not yet) that makes it impossible to exhaustively grasp, and suggests the fundamental fragmentariness of what is being combined and recombined through capitalistic networks but in ways that confirm openness and multiplicity, certainly before materialisation.

Consider Maurizio Lazzarato's two-pronged statement that immaterial labour 'produces the information content of the commodity', in this way pointing to changes in 'workers' labour processes' with skills involving 'cybernetics and computer control'; and indicates the kind of activities that produce this content 'are not normally recognized as "work"' which includes 'defining and fixing cultural and artistic standards, fashions, tastes, consumer norms and... public opinion' (Lazzarato 1996: 132). This remains a landmark theoretical reformulation for understanding recent restructurings of labour and new mutations of capitalism. As the subjectivity of workers becomes a raw material for the production of the kind of social relations that grow up around and persist in the immaterial dimension of commodities, that is, immediate sensory and more abstract affective attachments like excitement, fidelity to certain virtual environments, logos and cultural codes, Lazzarato asks his readers to cast off their 'factoryist prejudices' in order to grasp the temporality of the cycle of production that is summoned by the capitalist for the duration of a task after which it disappears back into the networks that make it possible. Productive units consisting of self-employed workers, intellectual proletarians of a dispersed precariat, whose professional and managerial skills are exploited in the technical and semiotic labour of producing a commodity's content, and who are often required to coordinate the immaterial labour of others, underline the significance of labour's intellectualisation and immaterialisation without eschewing either embodiment (for the sake of a purely cognitive labour) or materiality (in favour of completely intangible commodities).

Indeed, over almost ten years from the publication of *Empire* to *Commonwealth*, Michael Hardt and Toni Negri's presentation of the significance of immaterial labour has accumulated a number of models: where first the intangible products of immaterial labour were modelled on affective (health and entertainment sectors) and symbolic-analytic services (computer and high-tech sectors) (2000: 290–1), the most recent work more fully acknowledges the feminisation of labour without gender equality as a model for how affective labour, which is 'required

of women disproportionately on and off the job', (2009: 133) has come to assume a central place for capitalist valorisation.

Acknowledging that immaterial labour processes are not entirely cognitive but may involve manual applications, and that the products of such labour may have material manifestations in autonomous objects, suffices to affirm the kind of hybridity insisted upon by Negri above, and cannot be read as mere capitulation to the necessity of corporeal mediation. Together Hardt and Negri (2009: 132–3) insist that immaterial factors may 'outweigh' the material aspects of commodities, and the labour that produces them is both corporeal and cognitive. Immaterial labour points to a fundamental change within post-Fordist production in which human semiosis ('general intellect') has become directly and immediately productive of value without any immediate material mediation.

Theorists of semiocapitalism want to regain, from the capitalist exploitation of not yet material products, by pulling out, redirecting and reapplying the latent potential 'coalesced' in their semiotic substantialisations, stealing it away from capital's semio-operations, from evaporating in the chimerical value production of financial capital, and forging a social time distinct from capital time. Perhaps it may be put this way: the creativity of cognitive labour harbours a potential to be otherwise that coalesces as a counter-tendency in the very process of coagulating semio-commodities. In this way coalescence breaks from coagulation.

On the question of resistance, Negri (2008a: 25) writes in a Guattarian tone:

> There is no outside to our world of real subsumption of society under capital. We live within it, but it has no exterior; we are engulfed in commodity fetishism – without recourse to something that might represent its transcendence. Nature and humanity have been transformed by capital. From now on, all aspirations to alterity ... are not only outdated but also vain. And yet: from inside this fetishistic world, the antagonism of living work is affirming itself and resistance is building.

There are cracks in the world that practices of immanence – like the horizontal participatory multitude forms of the Occupy Movement identified by Hardt and Negri (2011) – may regain for different ends against the setting to labour of all of life and the equation that life equals labour time (Negri 2008b: 214). Whatever leaks through the cracks and cannot be contained by capital, in the mutual hybridisation of material and immaterial labour, in its control networks of television and other

mass media, is available for the creation of the common no matter how awkward the transitions.

Reading together old colleagues Negri and Guattari reveals a quandary of alterity: for Guattari, alterity is vitally important to the collective process of subjectification that takes place before and beyond the person, and is itself non-human, but always in relation to 'an alterity that is itself subjective' (1995: 9), even if this is a machine, social, technical, large or small. Indeed, Guattari imagined a process that involved the detachment of 'semiotic segments . . . from the field of dominant significations' (1995: 13), these 'part-signs' serving as vehicles of autonomy and 'the promotion of a mutant desire'. Subjectification is for Guattari an ethico- and politico-aesthetic process of singularisation that works in and against the dominant modes of capitalistic subjectification, on the scorched earth of the social field wrought through ecological destruction, decimation of the public sphere by means of deregulation, and irresponsible – often criminal – financialisation. He describes this as a semio-chemical process of 'extraction' and 'separation' that is both poetic and precarious. There are a number of different alterities in Guattari's understanding of subjectification and they involve multiple interfaces: the other-machines (not only technological devices, but values possessing a 'specific enunciative consistency' [1995: 34]); other singular subjectifications; but also at the basis of the pathic logic/knowledge rather than rational production of subjectivity, an autonomous alterity installs itself prior to the binary subject–object relation that is not received passively, but is actively intensive and without extrinsic coordinates. In short, for Guattari there remains a choice, an ethical and political one, to be made between forces of normalisation that level and reduce everything, or for richness, polyvocality, processuality and singularisation, with the proviso that taking a chance on the latter is no guarantee of escaping from the daily grind.

For Guattari, subjectification is animated by an intensive machinic alterity (a 'supplement' [1995: 37]) that resists structuralisation and initiates breakdowns, hiccups and stalling as it diagrams a virtual universe for other human and non-human machines to enunciate. This machinic node places a 'proto-subjective' feature at the heart of subjectification. These two basic alterities – human-machine and machine-machine – are ramified by Guattari into multiple registers: between machines and their components; alterification of internal material consistencies; formal diagrammatic consistencies; difference from the evolutionary phylum itself; and between machines of war and

desiring machines; as well as alterities of scale and their correspondences across different levels (1995: 45).

In his 'Letter to Félix Guattari on Social Practices', (2001a: 560–2) Negri had already in the mid-1980s isolated the need for a destructive dislocation that would defeat modernisation by 'removing and freeing' the technical and material means for its realisation from the control of the 'totality' that imposed them. In this period of bitter defeat, Negri recognised the 'fragility of the relations of domination' especially in the 'capacity to produce subjectivity'. While this has increased in semiocapitalism, the liberation of independent components of 'radical ontological difference' and the transversal assemblage of singularities has also increased with the emergence of the social worker and the growing importance of his or her personal qualities that can become, as Negri hoped, 'consciousness of singularity' (2001b: 573) and the communitarian, international and cooperative dimensions of social production. The optimism that Negri and Guattari shared was focused on the potential for new subjectifications that desire ceaselessly constitutes, and which coalesce in the present, but also move towards a new future. In the same way Guattari sought out multiple 'machinic modalities of valorization' that capital, which tries to redirect them into the mortiferous spiral of its own law of value, could not capture and reduce, in a hopeful deduction of the determinations of the economic and juridical from an 'axiological complexion' – the maintenance of its heterogeneity remaining vital for its survival and the condition of its 'untiring renewal' (1995: 56).

How did Guattari overcome the allergy to ethics that haunts leftist politics? He valorised activist practices that engage artistic production towards maximising the incomparable and automodelising traits of mental and social ecologies with a commitment to ethically responsible negotiations of collective actions and large-scale ecopolitical engagements, since subjectivity is intimately imbricated in mutually dependent bio- and mechano-spheres. The ethico-political articulation across the three ecological registers would be accomplished with attention to both micro-and macro levels, by building a critique of technocratic solutions, and highlighting the role of artists in fostering emancipatory eco-praxes. In short, Guattari closely linked art and ecology in the production of subjectivity in a way that would assist in extracting potential for existential change and assisting in the development of new processes that are more complex, sustaining and enriching. It is the aesthetic, however, that characterises innovation in subjectification as 'one creates new modalities of subjectivity in the same

way that an artist creates new forms from the palette' (1995: 7). He underlines that the most promising selection of components will result in authentic alterifications and fructuous auto-modelisations that make themselves available for new collective assemblages of enunciation.

The first texts in this special issue show us how Guattari himself took up writing and drama as a practice of auto-elaboration and collaborative experimentation, imbued with his own select heterogeneous components borrowed from his critical repertory. While she was a doctoral candidate at University Paris IV-Sorbonne, Flore Garcin-Marrou discovered six plays written by Guattari between the years 1980–90. These plays are bursting with ribald pastiche of psychoanalysts and their beloved concepts, not to mention sacred cows of philosophy. The play, for example, *The Moon Master* (*Le Maître de Lune*) from 1985 ridicules Lacan's *objet petit a*. The IMEC Fonds Guattari contains in addition to the plays found by Garcin-Marrou further theatrical dialogues that remain to be read – for example, 'Parmenides' – filed under 'Ecrits littéraires'.

In her contribution, 'To Be or Not to Be Socrates: Introduction to the Translation of Félix Guattari's *Socrates*', Garcin-Marrou notes the following plays: *The Affair of the Lancel Handbag* (*L'Affaire du sac de chez Lancel*) is a political drama in the satirical cabaret style that dates from 1979 and *Nighttime, the End of Possibilities* (*La Nuit, la fin des moyens*) is Guattari's final play, and a work of childhood memory, written in 1990 and read at the Avignon Festival. *Psyche Ghost Town* (*Psyche ville morte*) displays Beckettian elements and offers a critique of desire. *Aimed at the Black Man, Killed the White One* (*Visa le noir, tua le blanc*) is a formal exercise displaying a tension between drama and non-drama.

The play that Garcin-Marrou introduces here in the first English translation by Solène Nicolas is titled *Socrates* (*Socrate*). While there is no shortage of plays bearing the name of the famous philosopher in their titles, Guattari's homage is to a cuckolded schizosopher. *Socrates* was performed in 1988 at Théâtre Ouvert Paris with playwright Enzo Cormann. Guattari knew Cormann from his work with director Philippe Adrien on the production of *Les Rêves de Kafka* in 1984 (see Genosko 2009). According to François Dosse, of all the plays that Guattari had sent to Cormann, *Socrates* was the only one he kept 'because its facetious tone amused him' (Dosse 2010: 430). Cormann considers his reading of the play together with Arnaud Carbonnier, with Félix in the wings, and the occasional shout-outs to Félix inserted into the truncated text, to be a good example of 'schizotheatre'. Heavily indebted to Aristophanes'

satirical *Clouds*, Guattari's *Socrates* bounces around with madcap glee between conjugal breakdown, a Pythonesque postman trying to deliver a parcel of what appears to be hemlock; postal jokes on Freud; cracks at Geneva School linguistics as an anti-humanitarian weapon ('signifying gases') and a Challenger we never knew from *A Thousand Plateaus*. *Guattari écrivain*, to adopt a coinage from Barthes, is a new way of reading Guattari today.

Guattari's commitment to the free radio movement is often located specifically in Italy with Bifo Berardi, Radio Alice and A/traverso. But there is also the equally famous example of his creation of Radio Tomate in Paris (for which his son Bruno was a programmer), as well as participation in the Minitel group 36–15 Alter, with the journal *Terminal*, and its notorious regulars like Eric Alliez and Pierre Halbwachs (Prince and Videcoq 2005). Guattari displayed a great deal of curiosity about free radio wherever he travelled, and this is evident in *Molecular Revolution in Brazil*, where he spoke at length about the movement during an interview with journalism professors and students at Pontifical Catholic University in São Paolo, detailing the differences between molar uses of free radio by national politicians and molecular deployments of the medium by mobile, neighbourhood militants. In a detailed discussion, Guattari explained the hybrid significations of machinic orality in such broadcasting, technical limitations on broadcast range, the effects of state interventions in the sector, and organisational innovation in some of the micro-stations such as Radio 93 and Radio Coeur d'Acier. Circa 1982, his interlocutors underlined the degree of media repression by the Brazilian state and explained to him that 'here not only would a free radio station be jammed, but also those involved could go to jail. My question is, if Lula were to create a Workers' Radio, would that lead to repression? (Guattari 2008: 155–6). For Guattari, the question of post-media did two things: it superseded postmodernism and presented a quandary about whether media and singularity could coexist. In his contribution to this volume 'Guattari and Japan', Toshiya Ueno places Guattari in the headquarters of the mini-FM station Radio Homerun in Tokyo and recalls the events of the visit. Regaining pirate aesthetician Tetsuo Kogawa's important contributions to post-media theory in Japan,[1] and specifying the singular dimension of the Japanese free radio experience, Ueno participated in the 'political pilgrimage' that Guattari undertook into the most troubled zones of Tokyo, including the Yakuza-controlled slum of day labourers known as Sanya. Ueno opens up this discussion by finding precursors and cross-references in Japanese letters and philosophy for Guattarian thought, focusing on the novelist

Kobo Abe and philosopher Kiyoteru Hanada. As Deleuze studies enters China with the translation of *A Thousand Plateaus* (Massumi 2010) and a major conference this year, there is a tendency to forget the role that Japanese scholars (translators), artists, architects and activists played for Guattari in furthering his understanding of the relationship between subjectification and global capitalism. Ueno reminds us about 'Cool Japan' and the 'bubble economy' of the 1980s that had both collapsed by the early 1990s. This was Guattari's Japan (Genosko 2002: 122–54) and his visits are marked by strange sponsorships from the most radical to the most conservative of hosts. There is still important work to be done on Guattari's visits to Japan in the 1980s as his dialogue with Min Tanaka is yet to be translated from Japanese (see also the rarely screened film by Joséphine Guattari and François Pain, *Min Tanaka à la Borde*, 1986). Of course, today in the shadow of the terrible events of Japan's 3/11 (earthquake and tsunami) and the Fukushima nuclear accident, there has been an upsurge in the anti-nuclear protest movement and large-scale, politically effective, and creative forms of youth agitation are integrated globally into the Occupy Movement (for instance, Japanese activists of Shiroto no Ran [Amateur Riot] brought their no nukes message to the Occupy Wall Street Movement in New York in November 2011). Post-media radicalism, assisted by social media, no longer sees mini-FM and micro-TV as adequate for social change in the technical cartographies of minoritarian becoming. Yet new hardware and software hacks remain vital.

In my contribution to this special issue 'Guattari TV, By Kafka', I consider the ambivalent role of television in Guattari's life and work with reference to his 'Project for a Film By Kafka'. Readers of *Deleuze Studies* will be aware of Guattari's plans dating from the 1980s to produce a film based on Kafka's oeuvre. He left many rough drafts that survive in the archives. There is a 'final' posthumous version, but no dialectical progression or corpus to speak of. Guattari envisaged a workshop spread over six months in which video would be shot, scripts developed and panels of experts convened that would generate enough material for a series of television programmes. Guattari believed he could use high-quality video to provide continuity between workshops. With around twelve to twenty hours of video in hand as 'basic material' after the workshops were complete, Guattari then envisaged a phase of script development and:

> a series of TV shows, with the aim of absorbing costs ... might result in a cultural series. But it should be understood from the outset that at no point

> should the workshop be impelled by the video team towards 'making a show'. The video team will have to submit a report, and participate in the rest of the work, without imposing its point of view, which would be that of the presentation to television viewers. (Guattari 2009: 153)

Here, then, television is a means of generating revenue for a project that would, in its initial workshop phase, yield a broadcast-quality 'series', which could be purchased by a network; ultimately, a stand-alone film would result. Television is a stepping stone. Details about each phase are not given in detail. Guattari even suggests that the 'making of a show' may not be a necessity if a producer decides to take the project on and find a co-producer for the film project alone. The likely order of events is relevant here as television is a proving ground for the final cinematic version (which might again be shown on television). Many state-run television stations have lost their production wings over the last twenty years due to cost-cutting, but during this period many new speciality and 'premium' cable channels and indeed entire networks have emerged with commissioning budgets. Networks like HBO (owned by Time Warner) have promoted themselves as TV-against-itself innovators with critically praised dramatic series such as *The Sopranos* and *Six Feet Under*, and such success has elevated the television writer and producer (David Chase and Alan Ball respectively, among others) to lofty *auteur* status, whose signature vision shows through in the series format and the bureaucracy of television itself. But HBO also has a film wing that has been dubbed an 'auteur studio' (Auster 2000, quoted in Heller 2008: 45). And *Cahiers du Cinéma* recently asked its readers to 'savour the consecration, by the small screen, of genuine auteurs' in the guise of Chase and his colleagues (Tessé 2010: 7). Guattari would have been well versed in French 'auteur TV' in the halcyon days of Institut national de l'audiovisuel commissions, and he likely modelled his project on this phenomenon. I maintain, however, that a number of critical provisos are required in the course of my exploration of this claim for the télé-auteur model that is subject to a theoretical displacement through the theory of affect. The transition from theatre to television and film (and, in fact, across the latter two media as the latest incarnation of auteur theory insists), widens the scope of media in which Guattari wanted to practise, notably in the last two decades of his life, and also complicates the reception of what is considered to be his contribution to media theory.

The question of Guattari's modernism, which is evident in his 'Project for a Film By Kafka', is explored in depth by Stephen Zepke in 'Art as Abstract Machine: Guattari's Modernist Aesthetics'.

Guattari's modernism presents a diagram ('abstract line') of aesthetics based on painting – his 'unpopular' choices include Balthus, Pollock and Modigliani, among others. Eschewing conceptuality for material processes of expression, Guattari embraced a modernism that was transformative, producing what is to come, and fundamentally political. Zepke provocatively regains this modernism against critical tendencies to situate Guattari's aesthetics in the anti-art tradition, which he debunks. Zepke reminds us of the synthesiser as Edgard Varèse described it in terms of the expression of the 'intense complexity of materials abstracted from their referents', and the figure of the 'cosmic artisan', who far from rejecting art, seeks a modernist politics in which a 'new future' is summoned by means of abstraction that frees the singular. This approach describes well Guattari's hopes for Kafka TV through which a new people is sought in a way that is not determined by the present, yet immanent to it and acting on it. Here, then, art is not overtly political but exudes a utopic excess.

The catalogue essay 'Machinic Animism' by audiovisual artist Angela Melitopoulos and social and political philosopher Maurizio Lazzarato was created as part of the curated exhibition 'Assemblages' which explored the role of animism in Guattari's thought; this contribution appeared in the 'Animism' show curated by Anselm Frank of Extra City, Antwerp, in 2010. Drawing on images from films by Fernand Deligny and Victor Renaud, as well as François Pain, and video interviews with a number of Guattari's friends and colleagues, the authors consider Guattari's scattered remarks on animism that are indexed to both Brazil and Japan and, more generally, to the archaic and its hybrid, modern mutations. Guattari often commented about the mixture of animistic religions, such as Shinto-Buddhism and Candomblé, with contemporary media technologies, as offering interesting recipes for subjectification beyond the typical impasses capitalism makes available (1996a: 105). This 'reconversion of the archaic' that Guattari identifies with the reinsertion of animism into contemporary life is not restricted to religion. In *Molecular Revolution in Brazil*, Guattari's sense of the opposing poles of identity (individual and cultural) and subjectifications such as Candomblé, which serves as a form of resistance for the Black population of Bahia (2008: 37, 96–7), expresses his concern with how fundamentally different worlds of reference like the latter act as bulwarks against capitalistic modes of subjectification. In a canny way, Melitopoulos and Lazzarato point beyond these obvious examples into more complex ideas within Guattari's *Chaosmosis* in which animistic elements occupy diverse worlds from infancy to creativity as such,

inhabiting objects, and overlapping subjectifications, that may form a powerful 'nucleus' within an assemblage (Guattari 1995: 101–2). What Guattari strives for is to understand how animism works as a partial enunciator with 'unframing' effects within assemblages of enunciation (131); recall how a particle-sign might catalyse an innovative coalescence outside the frame of the semio-commodity. Guattari shifts from religious (from the role of orishas in ritual possessions to aesthetic extractions from the real) to semiotic and machinic considerations as animism crosses the domains of anthropology, psychoanalysis and aesthetic production into how in its updated guises it influences subjectification.

Felicity Colman pushes off from Guattari's recently translated *The Machinic Unconscious* (2011) in order to investigate the molecular revolutionary potential of the machinic aesthetics of play in 'Play as an Affective Field for Activating Subjectivity: Notes on *The Machinic Unconscious*'. Her efforts to regain play from capitalistic valorisation work through an analysis of mediatisation and its effects on subjectification with an emphasis on how processes resistant to dominant models stir in aesthetic activities. Mediatisation, Colman argues, is open to all kinds of connections, and is not a deterministic or closed interpellation. Rather, play displays a mobile transversality in a 'field' that guides machinic assemblages through various media. Colman is attentive to the affects-times-speeds of how subjectification is positioned by media platforms, demonstrating that subjective assemblages are embedded in the evolutionary phylum and conditioned by the machines of one's time. She picks up Guattari's example of the pile of stones mentioned earlier in my essay on television as mediatic modelisation of a proto-machine, a pile of stones, into a wall (and its crumbling), and the political and aesthetic ends that such a process entails. For Colman, mediatisation produces and occurs through machinic interfaces, and she pursues their affective workings on the knife edge of machine and structure. We see how play is an extract that opens new universes of virtuality and options for aesthetic cartographies, in this sense gathering in Melitopoulos and Lazzarato's insistence on the animistic effects of aesthetic activities. Guattari (1995: 107) specified that the aesthetic machine has the power to disclose new dimensions of finitude, alterity and incorporeality, as well as requiring responsibility: 'Machinism, in the way I understand it, implies a double process – autopoietic-creative and ethical-ontological (the existence of a 'material of choice') – which is utterly foreign to mechanism' (108).

Colman's investigation of play's transversal field is conceptually consonant with Bryan Reynolds' theorisation of minor criminality as

a 'gateway' to transversal territory: it may be entered upon exiting from structure and individuation and identity ('subjective territory') and affords 'experiential alterity' (Reynolds 2002: 19). Field and territory as they are deployed by Colman and Reynolds recall Guattari's specifications of different types and interactions of pragmatic fields (Guattari 2011: 59ff.): the individuated, for instance, is vulnerable to capitalistic abstractions; whereas the diagrammatic finds potentialities in non-human machines and a-signifying semiotics. Play in an affective field disturbs the impositions of order, is less attached to abstract identities and attuned to more complex assemblages.

Acknowledging the important contributions of performance theory in Deleuze studies from the work of Reynolds to Laura Cull and Gerald Raunig (bringing together war and theatre machines in the performances of micropolitical agitation in Europe [Raunig 2010: 73]), Anja Kanngieser advances a concept of the 'performative encounter' in '... And ... and ... and ... The Transversal Politics of Performative Encounters' that does not take a theatrical form as such and is characterised as mobile, allusive and transversally transformative of collective subjectifications and enunciations. The primary cases under study are the German Umsonst campaigns of the zero-zero decade. Just as Colman situated play and, just plain fucking about, on an affective field of transformation, Kanngieser underlines the playful, pleasurable and temporary characteristics of the activist encounters in her analysis, but without neglecting the anti-capitalist and 'movement without bosses' spirit of the organisations at issue. But Kanngieser is most interested in the role of transversality and the subjugated–subject groups distinction as a conceptual tool for understanding Umsonst.

Regaining Guattari's early practical and theoretical innovations, Kanngieser exposes the emergence of a theory of groups that distinguishes non-absolutely between subject (actively exploring self-defined projects) and subjugated groups (passively receiving directions), each affecting the relations of their members to social processes and shaping the potential for subject formation and for molecular revolution. A subject group is best able to accept openness and role definition without letting it become a threat to its negotiation of otherness, a loss of security precipitating its decay into a subjugated group; a subjugated group is able to pass through the walls of its silent retreats and subservience and find its voice. It was through the modification of introjects such as alienating fantasies of a leader's power, or realisation that a group was not the revolutionary subject of history, and cleansed of the familialism and mythical

psychoanalytic complexes, that the superego could admit new ideals and demands. The application of Guattari's group/assemblage theory to Umsonst actions renews the richness and subtlety of the original formulations and brings them to bear upon a post-militant, transitory, leaderless assemblage, initiating a trenchant critique of German neo-liberalism evident in the 'performative encounters' that touched everyday issues such as public transportation that were felt most acutely by socially marginalised groups and precarious labourers. The nuances of Umsonst subjectifications and transversal relations are delineated in both their micropolitical but also aesthetic dimensions, detailing the temporary subject groups of Umsonst and their moments of 'affective composition'.

In her case study Kanngieser extends the trajectory of transversality which, within Guattari's lifetime, began at La Borde, where he developed the 'grid', a double-column entry table consisting of rotating tasks and times, that redefined roles, created new groups, introduced novel orientations. From this emerged a new way to communicate involving a specialised vocabulary, the *feuille de jour* (daily sheet), as well as challenges to and parodies of supervisors, and sudden valorisations or ghettoisations of activities and places. The grid changed over time during periods which saw the waxing and waning of centralisation and decentralisation, and was modified to maximise its therapeutic effects in response to changing conditions in the clinic from which were extracted whatever displayed the greatest transversal potential. Transversality began as a way of diagramming the unconscious of an institution and graduated to a descriptor of the potential for new progressive axes unleashed in processes of political depolarisation, which is also how Guattari understood the fall of the Berlin Wall. Kanngieser contributes to the renewal of the somewhat dated German reference points of Guattari's thought.

In the contribution of Adam Bryx & Bryan Reynolds, 'Go Fractalactic: A Brief Guide through Subjectivity in the Philosophy of Félix Guattari and Transversal Poetics', the stakes of group subjectification and transversality are laid bare as the authors extend Guattari's practices of metamorphosis in a clinical setting through a new conceptual vocabulary that fearlessly regains drug experience as a key touchpoint. Passing beyond the Guattarian bestiary and in Reynolds' established vocabulary, mapping departures from subjective territories, Bryx & Reynolds situate 'unblinkering' through a meditation on the tensions within wilful parameterisations of dissident becomings. Drawing from popular literature on LSD, which,

incidentally, recapitulates key issues within psychedelic psychiatry and the role of colourful characters like 'Captain Tripps' (A. M. Hubbard), who was director of the West Coast-based Commission for the Study of Creative Imagination, and whose refinements to the clinical setting were well received by professionals (Dyck 2008), parameter settings serve protective ends but are not fail-safe. The phantasy architecture of a good trip, just like the trappings of a romantic evening, guide subjectifications in practical ways and expose the contours of control that spikes toward the unexpected while taking cover under the predictable. Regaining *The Guattari Reader* as a kind of user's manual, Bryx & Reynolds seize upon opportunities for reinjecting the role of reflexive-consciousness into alterification, not as a by-product, and in order to win it back from deferment in the name of sustainability. This emphasis generates an array of suggestive concepts that describe the dynamism of subjectification along emergent and vectorial lines as it passes into transversality: fractalactic occurrences are akin to event-advents about to pop into place during the pauses of motored-consciousness: a combination of shifting speeds with the persistence of reflexive consciousness.

Bryx & Reynolds remind us that drugs posed intractable problems for Guattari; his productive use of gamma OH (gamma hydroxybutyrate) in the construction of his own subjectivity should not be taken as evidence of an attitude of casual experimentation with illicit drugs and alcohol. It is useful to think of his use of this 'uncontrolled' (at the time in 1971) substance in terms of a 'controlled' chaoticisation that danced around the rim of a subjective black hole. Many drugs, both legal and otherwise, would seem to count as substances that increase powers of action, and while Guattari supported decriminalisation of all illicit drugs, especially marijuana in the light of France's draconian search and seizure legislation, he also debunked the Beat mythologisation (theatricalisation) of drug culture (Genosko 2012). In a recent essay on the meaning of pharmacoanalysis and the illusions of consciousness, Gregg Lambert (2011) leaves no room for sustainable drug experiences in finding that all lines point to abolition and the diminishment of desire. Yet 'the moment the transversal turns into a line of abolition' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 299) hangs in the balance as the recalibrations of subjectification have both successful and failed elements that, as Bryx & Reynolds advise, require careful parameter settings.

One key challenge of how to read Guattari today is the requirement of inventively applying his examples from the 1970s, 80s and early 90s to the heterogeneous unrests appearing around the globe against the

'1%'. This is the project of Janell Watson in 'Culture as Existential Territory: Ecosophic Homelands for the Twenty-first Century'. Here it is not so much an issue of the prescience of his concepts, but rather, which features are best deployed to scrutinise contemporary issues. Watson pursues the mutating assemblages of singular subjectifications through an analysis at the ethological level of affective politics, utilising Guattari's ontological quadrant in ways that allow her to highlight the simultaneously progressive and reactionary roles of machinic phyla and focus on the necessity of existential territories that have become increasing portable and mobile. Watson regains some of the political essays from Guattari's under-read *Les Années d'hiver* ([1986] 2009) in order to regain his sense of what the 'fifth world nationalitarianism' of the twenty-first century might look like. Guattari's prediction of a reflux of archaic and residual ethno-nationalism that would vanquish the enemies of humanity is critically investigated by Watson who accepts certain hypotheses – the contestatory dimension of alt-modernities among second- and third-generation immigrants – but points out that certain others have not materialised, such as the waning of religious monotheisms, the enthusiasm for which seems inexhaustible. Using a case study of the Islamic headcovering as a focal point, Watson refocuses critical commentary by shifting the conceptual vocabulary from socio-semiotics to Guattarian componential analysis and providing an intimate picture of how an existential territory opens onto universes of reference. Finally, Watson opens up what is surely a Guattarian can of worms: culture as a deterritorialising force and how to move it beyond mass media and capitalism. Guattari once remarked that culture is a reactionary concept because it prevents us from grasping the processes of capitalistic subjectification based on equivalence (value and time) and uneven distribution of assets; it is guilt ridden and animated by infantilism: 'there is only one culture: capitalistic culture' (2008: 33). Understanding how culture compartmentalises semiotic productions as attributable cultural expressions and spheres, makes use of scales of measure to judge and classify cultural levels, and how the programmes of state agencies seek to increase cultural assets of places and peoples, are all part of a diagnosis whose treatment requires the cultivation of machinic, molecular singular becomings, processualities, and the garnering of all – even the most unlikely – challenges to capitalism. At low points in his later life, Guattari was less than optimistic: 'one is forced to admit that there are very few objective indications of a shift away from oppressive mass-mediatic modernity toward some kind of more liberating post-media era in which subjective assemblages

of self-reference might come into their own' (1996a: 98). The task for Guattarians today is to forge contemporary tools adequate to the passage beyond mass media and to assemble components whose processuality defies the lures of mass culture.

In 'Institutional Schizophasia and the Possibility of the Humanities' 'Other Scene': Guattari and the Exigency of Transversality', Michael Eng applies Guattari's group theory to the contemporary predicament of the humanities and the long, slow burn of the 'end of the University' itself. In this innovative take on the humanities' predicament or, more precisely, the predicament of those of us situated within the humanities, Eng writes from the perspective of a American philosopher on a death watch of sorts. His Guattari offers a trenchant analysis and escape route from the semiocapitalism of the contemporary neoliberal university with its penchant for more and more a-signifying pedagogical strategies (real-time student responses and automated performance analyses of attention drift and knowledge retention), precarisation of labour ('sweated' and hidden), and corporate research partnerships (tropes of excellence and knowledge transfer and community partnerships). But first some hard questions need to be posed, and some even harder answers given. Is the threat to the humanities another case of scholarly narcissism or an effect of the corporate university? Eng's argument is that defences of the humanities illustrate Guattari's understanding of the dependencies of a subjugated group that is incapable of recognising the core, capitalist purpose of the contemporary university. It is the complicity of the humanities in the fulfilment of this purpose, that is, in their own deaths, the orders for which are passively received, that troubles and interests Eng and he deploys the concept of transversality as a practical exploration of this untenable condition. What makes this approach innovative is that Eng regains the university as an institution of concern as it did not figure largely in Guattari's thought. Of course, Guattari had little interest in university life and did not move in academic circles. But it is not exceptional.

Eng's analysis of the complicity of the humanities in the reproduction of capitalistic subjectivity in the university is through a number of gateways – consumer goods, psychoanalysis, linguistics. These function as institutional objects not easily given up, and result in a double failure to grasp the humanities' own group fantasies and assume some responsibility for their predicament. Eng's question is not so much the need to take a sober look at how phenomena like rank and other comforts from anxiety shield the humanities from itself and from the realisation that only academic publications hear their cries, but rather,

what to do about this situation with the tool of transversality in hand. How, then, to disturb the status quo? In quite different ways Colman, Kanngeiser, Bryx & Reynolds, and Eng return to transversality and Guattari's theory of groups in a search for new ways to configure resistance and innovation in the age of semiocapitalism.

Note

1. See http://anarchy.translocal.jp/ (accessed 11 January 2012).

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To Be or Not to Be Socrates: Introduction to the translation of Félix Guattari's *Socrates*

Flore Garcin-Marrou

Abstract

The Fonds Guattari contain a number of unpublished manuscripts catalogued under the title of 'écrits littéraires' which include a set of theatrical dialogues. Noting the scope of these titles, as well as their likely models, Guattari's theatrical practices are introduced with reference to the only play that was actually staged, *Socrates*, courtesy of Enzo Cormann at the Théâtre Ouvert, in Paris, in 1988.

Keywords: theatre, postdramatic, schizosophy, archives

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari are not known for having a deep, enduring interest in theatre. Deleuze ([1988] 2004) explained in *L'Abécédaire* his disinterest in theatre with force and clarity: 'Theatre is too long, and too disciplined'; it is 'an art that remains entrenched in the present and in daily issues, while never advancing beyond the dimensions of the present'. While showing admiration for the directors Bob Wilson and Carmelo Bene, he nonetheless expressed regret unambiguously: 'I cannot sit in an uncomfortable armchair for hours anymore. That alone destroys theatre for me.' While Deleuze took theatre along new lines of flight and pushed it to the verge of pure abstraction, Guattari explored the links between theatre and television, theatre and cinema, and theatre and music. He intimately hoped to become a man of letters or a man of theatre, and he wrote six plays for the stage between 1980 and 1990: *The Case of the Lancel Handbag* (*L'Affaire du sac de chez*

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Lancel), *Psyche Ghost Town* (*Psyche ville morte*), *The Moon Master* (*Le Maître de lune*), *Socrates* (*Socrate*), *Aimed at the black man, killed the white one* (*Visa le noir, tua le blanc*) and *Nighttime, the End of Possibilities* (*La Nuit, la fin des moyens*). All these plays are unpublished in France.

These are neither philosophical dramas, nor are they what is often referred to as 'Theatre of Ideas' – the theatre of Jean-Paul Sartre, for instance. Instead, these plays are sometimes reminiscent of the *Ubu* cycle of Alfred Jarry, at other times suggestive of the Dadaist and surrealist theatrical experiments. Guattari referred to them as 'chaosmic sketches', and he wrote them rapidly and with no intention of philosophical seriousness. The plays are composed in the tone and style of daily life, peppered with occasional childish wit. Guattari satirised and mocked the patrons and icons of psychoanalysis (Freud, Melanie Klein, Jung) and of philosophy (Socrates, Lucretius), and, of course, himself. Guattari stages a crisis of the character which implies a crisis of dialogue and fable. The personalities of the characters are ill defined. They are devoid of idiosyncrasy and like the coming together of collective enunciation, so that their subjectivities are schizophrenic and kaleidoscopic. The dialogues no longer mean anything: words are scattered like palimpsests; they go through the bodies of the characters which thereby become the source of jumbled social, political and poetical thoughts. The story that is being told has lost its logic along the way. The heterogeneity of dramatical elements is the foundation of a rhapsody whose elements are assembled like a patchwork reminiscent of the *Riemannian* framework that is repeatedly mentionned by Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus*. What Guattari brings on stage is the 'schizo' theatre which was devised with Deleuze as early as *Anti-Oedipus*: it is no longer an opportunity to interpret theatre but to experiment with it.

Socrates may have been written for one of the theatrical representations that used to be staged each year, on 15 August, at the La Borde clinic where Guattari worked for most of his career. In March 1987, Guattari and the lighting designer Jean Kalman considered staging *Socrates* and they thought of the following cast: Ryszard Cieslak (a favorite of Jerzy Grotowski's) in the role of Socrates, Maïté Nahyr in the role Carmen, Hans-Peter Cloos in that of Alphonse and Gabisou in that of Challenger. *Socrates* is actually the only play by Guattari that was staged: the playwright Enzo Cormann and actor Arnaud Carbonnier organised a performance in the Théâtre Ouvert, in Paris, in 1988.

In Aristophanes' *The Clouds*, Socrates had already been portrayed as a ridiculous character: Socrates was a bum, sleeping on a pallet full

of fleas, and trying to see the world of Ideas by ascending in a basket suspended from a tree bringing him up to within a few metres of the sky where Ideas were supposed to be located. Guattari, in his own manner, places the Father of all philosophers upon the stage in a most unflattering light. The plot of *Socrates* can be summarised as follows: the character called Georges claims to be Socrates. Carmen, his wife, tries to calm him down. Georges seems to be suffering from a spasm of delirium, a spell of mystical hallucination, during which he thinks he is the Greek philosopher. Socrates is now nothing more than a schizophrenic, the herald of the terrorism of the Logos, detesting Lacanism, evoking the poisonous thought of Ferdinand de Saussure, and connecting linguistics to the Geneva School and the Geneva Conventions of humanitarian law...

The play starts with a triangle made up of husband (Georges), wife (Carmen) and lover (Challenger) – typical vaudeville material – and builds to something quite different: subjectivity enters a crisis as relativism and falsification are unbound, echoing the restoration of illusions that was expressed in *Difference and Repetition* as well as in *The Logic of Sense*. The bombing that rains on the scene marks the end of a world, and the scene then transforms itself, first into an icefield, then into a tundra with a burning bush. Georges is trapped in his delirium, or in a locked room (possibly standing for his brain), but this situation is eventually disrupted by Challenger's appearance – a *deus ex machina* wearing the uniform of an American soldier. Challenger is a recurring character in the works of Deleuze and Guattari: an heir to the character of Conan Doyle's *The Lost World*, he embodies the concept of the *double bind* in *A Thousand Plateaus*.

This play confirms that the theatre of Guattari is consistent with the definition of the *postdramatic theatre* theorised by Hans-Thies Lehmann: there is a crossover at work as all the other arts are involved in it. This is another form of *theatre total*, and it considers that neither the action, characters nor the dramatical conflict are essential elements to produce theatre. Drama, which entered a crisis in the late nineteenth century, is taken beyond its own limitations, towards new lines of flight. This drive carries it towards freer forms, and sometimes towards the absence of forms altogether.

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Socrates

Félix Guattari[1]

In a shadowy light.

Georges:	I am Socrates.
Carmen:	Now, now, here he goes again!
Georges:	What? What's wrong with this? I am Socrates, big deal! There's no need to make a mountain out of it! *He goes near Carmen and starts talking with a Russian accent*: What is it, my Karmen, my candy Karma?
Carmen:	It's ok, drop it!
Georges:	Would She rather be my Catholic Caramel?
Carmen:	Stop it, you're a real pain!
Georges:	Notwithstanding, could I have the great good fortune and privilege to have a conversation with Her about a question that I dare describe as being in our common interest?
Challenger:	Can't you see she just answered: not now!
Georges:	Could I be a-dreaming? Or could it be that someone just had the nerve to talk to me instead of her? Stand back, turkey turnkey!
Carmen:	Will you please stop your act! Come on then, come here: what was it you wanted to tell me? *She beckons Challenger to walk away*. Challenger, you will give us some space for a minute, won't you? *To Georges:* And don't *you* take advantage of the situation. And try to understand this is the last time.

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Georges: The very last one! Damn! If that is so, I will relinquish it for good then and might come to wearing my heart on my sleeve and having death on my banner. Surely you expected this to happen, my darling chimera: I'm not really the half-hearted kind. Shit, I'm a proud man after all!

Carmen: *Threatening*: Shut it! Come here, and come here quick. *Georges moves near her, scared, with bulging eyes.*

Georges: But I haven't done anything wrong!

Carmen: Come on, what is it you wanted to say?

Georges: Don't you worry! It's nothing really. For one thing, I've already told you.

Carmen: What? That you're Socrates?

He nods pitifully.

Carmen: *To Challenger, who is still within earshot, though with his back turned:* Did you hear him this time? See, it's all starting up again.

An increasingly loud droning of planes can be heard. It is reminiscent of the bombers of the previous world war.

Challenger: *Sidles up to Georges in a friendly way.* Are you at least positive about this?

Georges points to the sky.

Challenger: Yes, I know that it's the Americans, but we should not worry too much about it!

Georges: It sounds more like military sedition to me.

Challenger: Forget about it. I'd rather hear about how it all came back.

Georges: *Casually*. How what came back? My being . . . Socrates? Oh, that's easy enough. First there was like the striking of a match that is being broken in the middle, except that this time there was also the empty shape of sound – does that make any sense to you? So tell me, you really think that there is going to be war again?

Challenger: Maybe you haven't counted properly?

Carmen: How many weeks late?
Georges: I don't really know, it's difficult to say. But what I know for sure is that all the tests are positive.
Carmen: Surely you should have taken precautions.

. . .

Alphonse: *Greeting Carmen ceremoniously.* Do you know, fair lady, that this could be a massive breakthrough!
Challenger: What's-that-you-say?
Alphonse: My heartiest apologies, ladies and gentlemen, for interrupting your conversation. But when I saw what was brewing, it came as a shock and I said to myself, dear old Alphonse, surely the time has come . . .
Challenger: What's that intrusive one going on about?
Alphonse: In my defence, you cannot ignore that in case of *force majeure*, they'll discard you as vain and smug if you don't have a stooge, but if there's two, or three, or four, or plenty of you, then no one will question your words. Therefore, bear with me, though I do not have the honour of a formal agreement, things can go smoothly . . .
Challenger: That's what you say!
Carmen: But Mister . . . what's your name again?
Alphonse: Alphonse, from Belgium.
Carmen: Dear Alphonse, since Alphonse you are, what have you inferred from your first approach to the problem?
Alphonse: The truth is, little more than the common folk, except that in this type of case one is entitled to expect additional information . . . .
Challenger: *That's* what I was expecting.
Carmen: Information about what, if you please?
Alphonse: *Doubtfully.* Something like a spiritual increase, a right to follow, a guarantee that it'll work or die . . . .
Carmen: Couldn't you be any more explicit?
Alphonse: Oh, but what do *I* know? Something that'd say he is mortal . . . .
Carmen: Quite a vague thing to say!
Alphonse: Or that he is a man . . .
Challenger: I can't see any connection here!

They say the final lines from the top of their voices: the droning of the planes, which had at first decreased, gets louder and louder until it completely covers the voices. All the characters eventually flee from the explosion of bombs, leaving no one on the stage but Georges.

. . .

Georges walks to and fro.

Georges: In the shell of anguish

A voiceless

So

Soundless

Sound

Stone-deaf

Signifier signifying little

Beginning of something new . . .

An extremely tall postman who is very busy deciphering the address on a parcel walks past without seeing him.

Postman: I say, this thing here is absolutely illegible. BER . . . MACR . . . ARBEIT . . .

Georges: *He walks up to him:* May I?

Postman: Who are you?

Georges: Me? Hem . . . Let's say I'm Socrates.

Postman: Wait a minute . . . That doesn't look right. That's pushing it a bit! What with our poor wages! By the way, your thing, how do you spell it?

Georges: What? Socrates? The way it is pronounced: S for Socrates, O for Octavian, C for Caligula . . . But let me have a look . . .

Carmen: *Interrupting:* Don't give it to him! Don't you give it to him!

The postman raises his arms, holding the packet really high, so that none of them can reach it.

Postman: God! Make up your minds!
Carmen: But I'm telling you he's not the one!
Postman: *Showing the parcel.* But then, this thing here, who'd that be destined for? *Showing Carmen.* And that whirligig there, where does she come from?
Georges: You might call her my wife.
Postman: Good heavens! That's the story of my life, when there's too many things and too many people, I get mixed up.
Carmen: Stop the chatting, give that to me now.

She grabs the postman by the sleeve and tries to grab to parcel.

Postman: Ouch! Mrs Socrates, have mercy! I happen to be extremely ticklish! No! Anything but that! Stop it or I'll call for help! Help! Someone help me!

Challenger walks in.

Challenger: Hey! You weirdos! What's the racket all about?
Postman: It's because of the Socrateses, Sir, they keep pestering me while I'm on duty.
Challenger: But you're mistaken, my dear friend! These people have nothing to do with Socrates!
Postman: Ah! Teach me something! It's my lucky day! But then . . . But then . . .

He scrutinizes the label on the parcel again.

Postman: Heavens! It does look like this is the name that's written there.
Georges: *Shouting in triumph:* Ah Ah! Of course! Zounds! I told you! Who was right? And how much had we bet on this?
Challenger: Be that as it may, Mister postman, rest assured that your man is not here.
Georges: Stop there! It's postmarked isn't it? What do you make of that? Where does it come from? Check the postmark! *Georges starts jumping in the air again to try and grab the parcel.* The postmark! The postmark! We want the postmark! I'm a taxpayer, I am! And I am entitled to read the postmark . . .

Carmen: *Reproachfully*. See the state he's in because of you!
Postman: Calm down, my friend. Wait, we'll check that together. It seems indeed to be a foreign stamp. *He shows the postmark to Georges who is standing on the tips of his toes.* There, *you* read it, for I haven't got the right glasses.

Georges deciphers the postmark painfully.

Georges: D . . . E . . . L . . . Deli.
Challenger: New Delhi?
Postman: I'd rather expect something like Delicatessen.
Challenger: In that case, you could have Delfzije, Maigret's hometown.
Postman: No, it's De . . . li . . . gny. Or maybe: Del . . . phoï. Yes, that right: Del . . . phi. Delphi, in Phocis, on the hills of Montparnasse. Ah! Hometown! Home sweet home! Benzaï! Benzaï!

He catches the postman unawares, snatches the parcel out of his hands and flies away with it.

Postman: Wait! Wait and see! Per favor, Sir Socrates! You could at least sign the receipt for me!

Upset, he turns towards Carmen and holds out his ball point pen to her.

Postman: You, Mrs Socrates, you're the last reasonable person on this planet! You ain't gonna let me down, are you? You're gonna sign my receipt for me, aren't you?

Carmen walks away with a shrug of her shoulders as the poor postman falls on his knees, his arms still outstretched in her direction.

Postman: *Facing the public:* It's no wonder, in front of such ungratefulness, that the tricuspid valves of a man end up falling apart. Oh! I know that quite a few of us would have equally overlooked such an apparently futile stumbling of the symbol. Nothing to write home about, nothing to upset the original cosmic soup. Ok!

I grant you that! Except that this comes as an echo to the cracking of the match that was previously pinpointed by our dear Georges, so don't we have ground to fear for the worst now: a general tumbling down of the dominos, a thorough and rolling disorder of all sports! But let's not procrastinate any longer, and let's now hunt for our unfortunate friend.

. . .

Georges, holding the parcel in one hand and a bike in the other, is walking deeper into the ice flow.

Georges: They wouldn't have treated me any worse than this if I had robbed the key to the wind and rain!

Challenger's indistinct talking in the distance.

Georges: Goodbye! Vain mobs! Watch as I'll go and vanish into the chasm.

Challenger: Georges! Don't screw things up! Wait for me!

Challenger trips over a tree stump and falls down into a pond.

Challenger: OUCha! Somebody help me! Georges, can't you see I'm burning?

The head of Georges comes out of a burning bush on the tundra which is standing, as though on purpose, right next to Challenger.

Georges: Who art thou? Who comes hither and dares interrupt my celestial journey?

Challenger: But Georges! Don't you recognize me? Georges, Mister Georges! It's me, Challenger, your faithful adversary.

Georges: *Raising his arms in the air*: Ah, dear Mister Challenger! What a surprise! And how is war developing? And how is our Lady-Wet-Blanket doing?

Challenger: You must be referring to Mrs Carmen? Well, she is as good as can be really. By the way, she insisted that I bring you back home *presto*.

Georges: Well, there, sweet companion . . . for the time being, I am far from being done with all the life that's going on here. *He holds out the parcel.*

Challenger: What! You still haven't opened it?

Georges: It takes a fair amount of caution, if I may say so. And in those days . . . .

Challenger: Do you fear something like a parcel bomb?

Georges: Please! Don't make me say things that you wouldn't want anyone else to have hushed from you! And do mark that I leave you with the entire responsibility of your assumptions. For, the truth is . . .

I have been through so many tropical torpors,

Brain horrors

Semantic storms

Used so many verbs in the spring of the future

In the present of the summer

In the imperative of the winter,

In the imperative of the autumn.

I have been through red fire,

I have swallowed purple pills,

I have chewed some . . .

What's their name again, those flowers with orange bells, as crispy as pizza crusts?

Challenger: Hem!

Georges: *With a motion of his mouth*. Ok then. May the bubbling torrents of octopus ideas and one-eyed algae that stew in my heart of hearts overflow and cover all things. But, enough emotion, tender Challenger, I've had enough of your standing here, sheepishly listening to me, you drive me nuts and bolts.

He holds out a huge gun and starts firing in the air.

Georges: Away you go, villain! Or it will be the end of you. Let's go! A fair amount of soup and to bed! And give the certified copy of my feelings to Carmen loud and clear.
Challenger: Precisely, she had thoroughly insisted that I . . . .

Gunshots again, this time aiming at Challenger's legs.

Georges: We know your tricks, you scoundrel!
Challenger: The bugger is going for my legs! Me, a mere messenger. Have mercy, mercysir, have mercy.
Georges: *Derisively*. Mercysir! Mercy sir who?
Challenger: *With a ceremonious bow:* With your permission, I figure . . . .
Georges: There ain't no father figure or mother figure anymore, not as long you haven't poured your heart out, my good man. So, back to steerage. And first, port. What can you see?
Challenger: From port, I see the tundra's heart beating wildly. I see the chamois on the top and brim of laws, I see the gossamer sparrow and the tarantella mozzarella, I see . . . .
Georges: Here, right in front of you! Damn! Right here – *he points to himself* – what is there that you can see?
Challenger: Hem!
Georges: Avanti, popolo!
Challenger: What I see here, Master? But with no hesitation and no stooge, I see you, quite simply you, in your unflinching splendour, both unmatched and unequalled.
Georges: Isn't that just great? Pure wool! And with a handsome model, I grant you that. But me who what?
Challenger: *Aside*. The bugger! He's trying to trap me!
Georges: Come, speak boldly, regardless of my opinion and if you have something better to say, you'll have my blessing, I promise. I wouldn't be so surprised if your views turned out to be better than mine, for you seem to have studied these questions and learnt from the lessons of the other.

Challenger: When the salting came

Went to meet

With Balthazar

Hola, Caesar! . . .

Georges: You're evading my questions, you fool! Will you answer? Am I, or am I not the ultimate destination of this parcel? And there's no room for any mistaking, for you could *presto* become the final destination of the present bullet.

Showing his pistol.

Countdown: 7, 5, 14, 8, 3, 2 . . .

The bombing starts again.

Challenger: That's it! You're Socrates! Have it your way, scum!
Georges: I didn't quite hear you, say it again. And double-quick or I'll blow your brains out!

There is some shy knocking at the door, which is soon followed by by various sounds of pipes coming from the opposite wall. This gives way to new, louder sounds from the ceiling. It all combines to form a kind of symphony. Georges stands up cautiously and goes to look through the keyhole. He turns the lock as noiselessly as possible and comes back to his seat.

Georges: *Whispering.* At first, I hadn't taken it really seriously. Those things, you think that it will always be soon enough to think them through again. Moreover, in those days, I was still chased by that pack of children who cried out to me, from morning to night: 'Hola! Father Hemlock, aren't you going to open your parcel?' So I would turn around, good-humouredly, and threaten them: 'Just you wait, scoundrels, wait until I catch one of you!' They went and came like a flock of robins. But the day when there was no one and nothing . . . .

Scratching at the door.

Carmen: *With a plaintive voice*. Open, I beg you. Open, I know you're in there!

The phone rings. Georges's gaze goes from the door to the phone that is on the floor, and back again. He tiptoes his way to the phone, lifts up the receiver and puts it down without bothering to listen to it.

Georges: It feels like it's all starting up again!

Crystal clear voices seem to be raining from different sides:

Chorus: A B C D time has come . . . when time's up . . . it's not time . . . when time's up

Multiple voices: Daglock, clock, knock, flock, lovelock, hemlock, wedlock, unlock, Sherlock . . .

Georges: Where was I? Yes, at first, I always came back without frowning to the cracking that they would later describe as essential:

CRACK

DIMENSION

NO HESITATION

This is all very nice, but, then, you're kind of stuck there. And meanwhile, I heard the echo of the nagging nag of the poor postman's despair or, to put it differently, it was like the bursting of all possible factorial analysis, what others had hurriedly linked to the fall from the post horse, which is famously crucial in the monograph of 'Little Hans'.

Someone kicks in the door. Georges leans against it to prevent it from being destroyed.

Carmen: Georges! Georges darling! Open to your Candy Carmen. Come back to me, don't leave me! You'll be my Socrates for life and I'll be your tarantella for the

weekends. And every now and then, I swear to you, I'll hallow thy name, oh, my Socrates! The only object of my impact!

She puts her ear to the door, as Georges starts whispering again.

Georges: Apparently, nothing proves that this is actually hemlock. There's no tag on it, after all! Let's suppose it is though, we can't be sure that the bloody parcel was really addressed to me *in vino veritas*. We can't be sure that Postman Lanky wasn't the king of cheats and, supposing, just supposing, that the name here on the label is indeed Socrates, we still have to prove with no manipulation whatsoever that the applicant is indeed *recto verso* the one that's here talking to you Ladies and Gentlemen, and moreover that he-had-always-been-that, that is, that he was a man, and to top it off, that he was mortal and all that comes with that. Therefore, during that time, you must realize that… *(He gives the finger)* I'm taking to my heels! Especially since we've left aside the question of whether it is possible to be a man without being mortal and *vice versa*, to be mortal without being a man, which is a lot less economical, I grant it, but there's no avoiding that you'll always have variations galore, all you can eat, and even, in the most extreme cases, it would have been seriously wise to actually give me some hemlock, but we should have checked in good time: *PRIMO* that it was *safo*, of the Conium maculatum type, not Aethusa cynapium or dog parsley, or sweet-and-sour-to-wash-it-down and, *SECUNDO*, that I hadn't myself been mithridatparalized in my suckling days or by a habit contracted while ambling around the world. And if they relentlessly told me that I moaned so much about the soup that someone would eventually think something about myself, vergogno! I would say to them, *in vitro and in peto*, that even facing them and without hindsight I would always have the liberty to come back to the shortest way, that is, speaking from a phenomenological point of view: what is that little thing our lives come down to? A something *outside*

surrounded by a certain quantity of something *inside*. Presumably! Or if you'd rather, an outward doubled with some kind of interiority. That's not bad, boy! It has the same hard-on as Archimedes's lever. From then on, you can gather the ins and outs of why I fell pregnant. For, beware, my friends, no one ever speaks about that thing here! It has become, sort of, one two three, Totem and Taboo. But let us just suppose – a simple supposition, that we tie it back to that story, a medley of a story, with a clown's knickers and with my sister who has a bun in the oven! Mehr licht! Yet another bountiful idea! They give you three caskets: that of the body-jug to pour life *(he puts his hand on his stomach)*, that of the gloom-room that is besieged by that mad woman *(he points to the door behind which Carmen is still restless)* and that of the hemlock to see the spry old birds through *(he pretends to drink a cup)*. Alleluia, come down Yahweh! Bring down dawn and some phylum to unfreeze what's coming next . . .

The ceiling tumbles down under the weight of Challenger who is dressed up as an American soldier. The strings of his parachute keep him hanging in the air.

Georges: Oh my! You again!
From outside: What's the matter with you my angel?

Carmen: You're not hurt, are you? Would you like me to call the firemen?

Challenger: *Telling him not to reveal anything with his forefinger on his mouth*. Hush. *He now points to his ears:* Mission Alcibiade: I have come *incognito*.

Georges: *Turning in Carmen's direction:* Don't you worry, ginger, everything's ok.

Georges climbs on a chair to try and take Challenger off his hook but the latter pushes him away.

Challenger: Let me do this, it's a rising model.

Challenger now shows what he meant and uses a remote control to go up and down. Then he starts twisting and turning above the parcel.

Georges: We can see what the little bastard is driving at. So that's why he had come back to see me. I'm such a scatterbrain: I thought he wanted to take care of my transcendence! But why do they all make such a fuss about the bloody grinding process of the partial object!

Carmen: Georges! My beloved Socrates, I sense that you're hiding something from me. Will you open to me, *psychorama mio*?

Challenger: *Whispering*. Don't do anything! It's probably a trick from the left. I'd rather you gave me the thing – *he points to the parcel with his foot*. Quick! I still have quite a bit of shopping to do: the night is coming and the shops will close. *He goes up and down impatiently.*

Georges: *Stubbornly refusing*. There is no reason to do this! There is no reason to do this! It could only upset me!

Challenger: Cut the crap: if you're a French patriot, you have to give it to the American scholars.

Georges: By Jove! And in no time they'll be coming up with some devilish object!

Challenger is gesticulating like a mad man while ordering him to remain silent.

Georges: After Star Wars, the logo war! That's where one hundred years of Lacanism took us! But as far as I know, the Saussurian Conventions of Geneva haven't ruled out the use of signifying gases have they?

Challenger, in one final effort, manages to grasp the parcel with his feet and starts to rise.

Georges: Stop! Not so fast! Sign a receipt or, at least, an acquittal, and I'll go and join him on the road of sex, join him in the alembic of sex!

Georges holds on to Challenger's leg; they both disappear through the ceiling while Carmen keeps on whining, desperately banging on the door.

Note

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Guattari and Japan

Toshiya Ueno

Abstract

Revisiting Guattari's visits to Japan in the 1980s during the country's 'bubble economy', this paper investigates from a personal perspective the Radio Homerun mini-FM station as well as other stops on Guattari's Tokyo 'pilgrimage'. Guattari's reception and influence in Japan is contextualised through the writer Kõbõ Abe and philosopher Kiyoteru Hanada, in addition to the groundbreaking work of Tetsuo Kogawa, against the backdrop of the rise of postmodernism. Similarities between Guattari's sense of Japan and Brazil are then broached.

Keywords: Japan, free radio, mini-FM, bubble economy

It is well known that Félix Guattari was so fascinated by Japan that he visited the country several times. This essay aims to explore the conceptual and political meaning of his interest in Japan. Of course, given that his works could never be reduced to 'Japanology' in any sense, the scope of this paper must also be deployed in a broader sense. His address of Japan, for instance, is to be interpreted along with his positive assessment and almost enthusiastic regard for Brazil. Even in his interviews and workshops held throughout Brazil, Guattari frequently draws on Japan and posits various comparisons with Tokyo. Both societies are for him quite symptomatic cases that consist of a strange mixture between modernity and archaism (pre-modernity at least) (Guattari and Rolnik 2008: 453–4, 457).

The second section will look at two key Japanese intellectuals who came before Guattari, but who develop concepts that overlap with his: Kõbõ Abe and Kiyoteru Hanada.

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I. 'Micro-political Pilgrim': Guattari's Visits to Japan

During his visit to Japan in 1985, Guattari joined in 'a political excursion' wandering around downtown Tokyo. This was organised by Gen Hirai, an anarchist writer and friend of Ryuichi Sakamoto (a well-known international musician and ex-member of Yellow Magic Orchestra) stretching back to their days in the high-school student movement in the late 1960s. As part of his 'fieldwork', Guattari visited our tiny pirate station, Radio Homerun, in order to have a discussion about cultural politics in the street, slum and (post-)media situation of Japan. Due to the strict regulation of the airwaves, free radio in Japan was only allowed to broadcast inside a radius of one kilometre; this is the reason why it is called 'mini-FM'. This also enabled us to invent the post-(mass-)media concept of 'narrow-casting', which differs significantly from the conventional idea of broadcasting in mass media.

A critic and media theoretician, Tetsuo Kogawa, a friend of Guattari, who had introduced the political theory of Italian Autonomia and practice of free radio into Japan in the early 1980s, did not join the fieldwork with Guattari despite their regular correspondence. Strangely enough, although François Dosse's (2007) biography of Deleuze and Guattari dedicated an entire section to the reception of their philosophy in Japan, he never mentions him. Kogawa invented the term 'informational capitalism' (*Jyoho Shihon Shyugi*), which can roughly be understood as a synonym of semio-capitalism, in order to criticise all strains of neo-liberal deregulation in the economy, gentrification in urbanism, and control in (mass) media. Even Guattari's typewritten manuscript of the book he wrote with Negri, *Communists Like Us* (1990), was delivered to Kogawa by 'snail' mail in 1984. Kogawa's (1984) name was constantly raised during the excursion, however. In my view, at that time, he seemed sceptical about this excursion and tried to distance himself from the rising current of postmodernism and its accompanying political apathy in Japan.

Kogawa had already criticised the manner of introducing Deleuze and Guattari's works into Japan since its very early stage from the late 1970s. He contended that the Deleuze and Guattari boom in Japan was deeply based on the discursive formation of an apolitical climate, that is, an inclination to 'Deleuze & Guattari minus activism', or 'Deleuze without Guattari'. The same holds true for the Anglophone world, despite Slavoj Žižek's (2004) complaint about a 'Guattarised Deleuze'. Žižek calls Guattari a delirious thinker tripping within an 'interpretive delirium' (191). I am tempted to use the term 'Deleuze Guattariser' against the



Figure 1. Félix Guattari (centre right, seated) and the author (near left, seated) at Radio Homerun in Tokyo, 27 November 1985. (Photo: Toshiyuki Maeda, reproduced by permission.)

grain woven by Žižek, because it figures Guattari as a creative catalyser of Deleuzian thought and philosophy in terms of micro-politics and molecular revolution in a pragmatic sense. The Guattarian thesis that 'before Being there is politics' should be recalled here as a clue for thinking of multiplicity within the machinic unconscious.

Seen from Kogawa's critical perspective, the majority of interpretations of Deleuze and Guattari by Japanese audiences seemed to completely lack a linkage with politics and activism. Despite his insightful, rich but slightly provocative socio-philosophical interpretations of Deleuze and Guattari, Kogawa's works have been known exclusively in media-art scenes, as pieces not by a theoretician but by a micro-radio performing artist (Fuller 2005; Berardi [2007] 2010).

As a member of Radio Homerun, and a graduate student of social philosophy, I also participated in this 'political pilgrimage', visiting the *Sanya* district, a notorious slum in Tokyo, from where many precarious workers were sent to thousands of workplaces of urban construction, including nuclear power plants, coordinated by local Yakuza (Japanese mafia) agents. The term 'pilgrimage', utilised by Guattari, derives from the assassination of a filmmaker engaged with producing a documentary

film featuring homeless, precarious workers in this area (see Genosko 2007; Guattari 2007). The following year Yakuza assassinated our guide for that day, Kyouichi Yamaoka, on the street in Shinjuku.

My report below is not merely a narration of empirical facts, although some lines reflect our experience directly, but rather is concerned with the more conceptual and philosophical issues around Guattari's thoughts at the time.

As Guattari himself realised, there was a certain degree of conflict among the participants and even organisers of the excursion: an uneasy balance existed between postmodern writers/publishers and political/media activists. Guattari sensed a difficult tonality from the atmosphere. He proclaimed during his presentation, 'Amazing, we are like a small conflict zone traversing Tokyo!' Certainly, this echoes his own statement such as 'we are all groupuscules' as well as Deleuze's remark that 'Félix was a man of groups, of bands or tribes, and yet he is a man alone, a desert populated by all these groups and all his friends, all becomings' (Deleuze 2006: 12–13).

However, on the occasion of his second visit in Japan, the speculative (so-called 'bubble') economy had peaked. And, surprisingly, his third visit was subsidised by a major department store (Seibu Group). He even appeared in an advertisement for Suntory Whisky in the Nikkei Newspaper in April 1987!

In the essay concerning his second visit to Japan entitled 'Tokyo, the Proud', Guattari did not hide his enthusiasm for both Japan and Brazil in terms of a coming cultural revolution, which could provide 'a kind of huge cyclotron of production of mutant subjectivities' (Guattari and Rolnik 2008: 453–4). His expectation of Brazil was not really betrayed by its history, but contrary to his belief, Japan did not become 'the northern capital of the emancipation of the Third World'. Lula, a politician with whom Guattari was sympathetic, for instance, became the president of Brazil later and his party (PT) retains in power there today. But Guattari's 'vertigo of another Japanese way' takes another vector in this world, even though it never exhibits an image of revolution, but of regression or involution in the form of infancy through a series of info-aided addictions and mental illnesses. Often represented by manga, anime and computer games, this nevertheless has a potentiality as micro-politics in the era of post-media. 'Japanisation' in popular cultural consumption, which made Tokyo the capital of anti-revolution or a 'cyclotron' for a regressive subjectivity, still haunts this globe. Of course, the bizarre hype around 'Cool Japan' no longer prevails because of the long economic recession and its adjunct mental

stagnation, and especially in the aftermath of the recent big earthquake and its subsequent nuclear crisis in 2011.

Becoming-child (or just remaining a 'mature youth') in Japanese society is a kind of imperative imposed on people as the regulation of molar bio-politics, which sometimes misleadingly results in an essentialism about the particularity of Japanese culture that is celebrated as a peculiar 'animalisation' of mankind in Japan (and in the United States), from a pseudo-Hegelian view on the end of history (courtesy of Alexandre Kojève); or, is critically articulated in the term 'infantile capitalism' used by Akira Asada (1989: 274) in comparison with the 'elder capitalism' of Europe and 'adult capitalism' of America. In contrast to such theses, in Guattari's view, the notion of childhood is not always ascribed to a negative moment but rather retains a positive implication. Guattari often evaluates the capacity of people, especially their infancy or childhood, as a sort of creative madness composed of machinic differentiation (Guattari and Rolnik 2008: 458–9). Putative Japaneseness is radically deconstructed and transferred to his interest in a mixture between archaism (pre-modernity) and hyper-modernity, the molar and molecular.

Guattari had already recognised a paradoxical appearance of the molecular process of production of subjectivity within Japanese society that is normally regarded as a whole molar process. He even envisioned the threshold of negotiation between the molecular and molar in the most vulgar part of everyday life of Japan. For instance, after business hours employees in firms (*Sarariman*) – mostly consisting of men – gather with their colleagues and even boss(es) to drink, talk and eat. During his excursion, Guattari questioned me about this tiny spectacular chaos, asking whether there is something in common with queer culture in such a gathered-drinking ritual. The same question goes for present-day gatherings of male geek (*Otaku*) subcultures. Although my response to him was, and still is, negative – 'just because these are completely dependent on homosocial masculinity' – I must admit some potential exists for traversing processes of both the molecular and molar in such a quasi-socio-dramatic process in Japanese society.

II. Bêtise of the Left

During this gathering, Akira Asada, the top postmodernist attributed with introducing poststructuralism in Japan, undertook the crucial role of moderator and reliable transcriber. In this discussion Asada endorsed a more orthodox approach of trade union-based struggle, evident in

the term 'bêtise of the Left' and to deny the potentiality of post-media cultural movements such as free radio. His intention was straightforward and rather simply modernist. He was also sceptical of the 'humanistic' tone in the discourse of alternative media, contra Kogawa, that seemed for Asada dependent on a strange mixture between phenomenology (phenomenological Marxism) and Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy. In several interviews with Guattari, Kogawa repeatedly questioned him about the role of phenomenology in conceptualising machinic assemblages – in part because of his involvement with the Telos Group in New York city, once a stronghold of phenomenological Marxism in the United States. But there is still room to consider this point: at least, Guattari also presupposed a 'machinic phenomenology' in explaining a pragmatics of assemblages in *The Machinic Unconscious*:

> a pragmatics of assemblages does not presuppose a phenomenology of essences or a phenomenology of existents, but instead a machinic phenomenology taking account of every entity escaping the subject's immediate consciousness to the extent that it presents a definitive degree of machinic consistency ('purely' theoretical consistency, experiential consistency, aesthetic, fantastical, etc . . .). (2011: 190)

Put simply, Kogawa's position seemed for Asada to be influenced by the theory of alienation that tended to regress to 'humanism', precisely because this view shared an idea of the 'living world [lifeworld]' (*Lebenswelt*) or the pre-linguistic human-body as a conceptual safety zone of leftist discourse and a narrative of emancipation. For Guattari, subjectification within a machinic phenomenological support would be entirely self-constructed by whatever is convenient and 'at hand'.

In *Difference and Repetition* (1994) (the fifth postulate of the third chapter), Deleuze contended that, insofar as individuation can neither give a background nor a form to thought, bêtise is just an interaction between thought and individuation, which traverses the ego/self by constituting the cognitive through what is not recognised, that is, unknown. Bêtise is always inevitably humanistic – or at least, immanent to humanity – which nevertheless retains an animality or beastly in/human part. In terms of the discussion with Guattari, the 'bêtise of the Left' should be read in an affirmative or tactical sense. Both traditional leftism and post-media activism can depart from a mere 'humanism' but indicate a reverse side of humanity as 'bêtise, or the notion of humanism as becoming-animal or -imperceptible'.

Guattari moderately intervened in this topic by suggesting that people, under oppression in a broad sense, are condemned to marginalisation

in a condition of bêtise, rather than provided with critical (collective) intelligence, so as to require a certain assemblage that catalyses relations. The free pirate radio movement, Guattari insisted, can be utilised as one of these catalysers. Asada hesitated to agree completely with this suggestion.

Our station, Radio Homerun, was based in a small apartment in Shimokitazawa, near downtown Tokyo. During the discussion, Guattari got hungry and reached his hand to a wrapped rice-ball (*Onigili*), a popular fast food in Japan. Though a traditional food, this one was bought from a convenience store in the neighbourhood. Usually, each wrapper is made of a piece of cellophane, which needs a specific motion to open by pulling a red ribbon, a feature with which almost all Japanese are familiar. But Guattari could not figure out how to open it by himself, so I exhibited to him the way to unfold the wrap. His astonishment was so serious that he was totally fascinated by the procedure for a while and, after laughing, remarked, 'This is the very technology!' Beyond a mere anecdote, it is also possible to recognise in this a core of Deleuze and Guattari's significant conception in his surprise, for instance, a folding/unfolding/refolding of an incorporated body and existential territory.

III. Translocal Comparison for a Deleuze Guattariser

To focus on the potentiality of the 'raving' (Guattari and Rolnik 2008: 457) thinker or 'Deleuze Guattariser', and drawing from Guattari's interest in Japan, this essay will embark upon a comparative approach which intends to think through an unavowable potential alliance of Deleuze and Guattari with Japanese post-war intellectuals. Certainly it does not rely upon an empirical perspective to create a work of conventional comparative cultural theory but rather draws on what I call a 'translocal' cultural theory, a term used frequently by Kogawa in his Internet studies, but also by scholars working in diaspora studies.

The term 'translocal' is utilised in this essay to suggest that as detailed, singular moments are dug in and out of any local site, something common emerges from within. 'Translocal' indicates a horizon that overcomes local limits and inverts the borders within different cultures. The translocal perspective is distinguished conceptually from both globalism and regionalism (localism). Unlike the universal current of global political economy (and its geopolitics), it tends to focus on a

singularity that is cooperative with transversality among heterogeneous moments, even under driving forces of unification such as globalisation.

Interpreting Guattari through some notions in Japanese post-war thought, and, conversely, reading Japanese literature or critical theory in terms of Guattarian philosophy, this twofold attitude is a crucial part of the following section of this essay. This attempt focuses upon unknown transversal alliances that result from a 'textual unconscious' rather than an intertextual relation.

IV. Abe and Hanada

Japanese novelist Kōbō Abe (1924–93), whose works have been translated into numerous languages, is known for the similarity of his fiction with the literature of Kafka. In many respects, most of Deleuze and Guattari's analysis of Kafka can be applied to the interpretation of Abe: losing face, minor literature (jamming and stuttering in the mother tongue), and cartography, etc. Moreover, Guattari referred to Abe in his essay 'Tokyo, the Proud', which was compiled in the book *Tokyo Gekijou* (*Tokyo Theater*) (1986) after his visit to Tokyo. Guattari addressed Abe's famous novel, *The Ruined Map* (2001), in terms of an uncanny cartography of urbanism through the view of a detective wandering through a suburban cityscape, so as to express his impression about Abe's statement on the slum: '*Sanya* is perhaps less representative of an absolute misery than an irrevocable refusal of the existing order' (2007: 98). According to journalist Corinne Bret, who was a correspondent with the French daily *Libération* and also a friend of Guattari, as well as one of the members of the aforementioned pilgrimage, Guattari had a conversation with Abe about the literature of Kafka and Elias Canetti, etc., first in Paris and then a second time in Tokyo in the 1980s. Therefore, there is evidence that they met, although the details are not yet known.

There is another intellectual figure fitting for my attempt at a translocal comparative approach. Kiyoteru Hanada (1909–74), a Japanese dissident leftist critic, was known as an organiser of varied cultural movements in the 1950s and 60s. Kogawa is deeply inspired by him in his elaboration of the notion of post- (mass) media and micro-politics, although Hanada has remained unknown outside of Japan. During the Second World War (the early 1940s), Hanada survived by contributing to a pro-fascist newspaper, using his excessive rhetoric in order to avoid censorship by the Japanese military regime, and successfully hiding his own leftism. His critical works on cinema,

literature, art, TV and radio in the post-war period have been accepted as a precursor of cultural and media studies in his emphasis on the active agency of consumer, audience and reader in popular cultural consumption. In Anglophone academia on Japanese studies and literature, Hanada is sometimes introduced as a mentor for Abe but this is not true. Just after the Second World War, Hanada and Okamoto Taro – who was a Japanese surreal artist and also known as a member of Acéphale, a secret society in Paris during the 1930s, and a close friend of Georges Bataille – began to organise the workshop called the 'Circle of the Night' (*Yoru no Kai*), an avant-garde group which consisted of novelists, artists, filmmakers and critics. Abe was also a member of this experimental workshop.

Both Hanada and Abe were attracted by the concept of schizophrenia, as symptomatic gesture that presents ambiguity, ambivalence and double-binds under the formation of capitalism and nationalism.

Hanada and Abe may be counted among other artists and intellectuals in the Circle of the Night who were interested in the process of 'transforming', that is, 'becoming', rather than a mere magical mutation or cultural mimicry of behaviour. Becoming-plant, -animal, -insect and -mineral, etc. is aligned with, but at the same time beyond, the Freudian concept of the death drive, and this was a crucial theme for the avant-garde theory and literature of both Hanada and Abe. These authors deal with metamorphosis, transmutation and transforming in their writings; Abe wrote many stories that address metamorphosis or becomings-animal, -plants and -materials. Certainly, as Deleuze and Guattari insist, becoming is never about imitation and mutation of what has already existed, nor has it anything to do with the imagery of surrealism or phantasm in psychoanalysis. While granting this point, it is possible to envision 'becoming-' within/through the (surrealistic) transmutation into the inhuman, a theme which Abe and Hanada developed in their writings. In his personal draft of *Anti-Oedipus*, Guattari himself writes: 'the ultimate meaning of machinic filiation is a sort of *surrealism*, residues, witness to the impossibility of 'reducing' desiring machines' *coded* flows (singular infinitives)' (2006: 183).

Hanada asks how can humans become animals, plants or minerals? Or how can these transformed beings turn back into humans? In a more contemporary context, these questions can be paraphrased like this: how can the singularity of humans produce itself in becoming post-human? During and just after the situation of wartime inhumanity, at least Hanada already held a germ of an idea of post-humanity. In his essay 'The Narrative of Metamorphosis' in *The Spirit of Revival*

([1946] 1986), this is Hanada's main question under the wartime fascist regime. Here, he potentially articulated his disguised political conversion from the Left to the Right – if not he did not explain it so literally – as tactical camouflage or pragmatic performative mimicry in 'passing', just like a tactical transvestitism of women into soldiers as described in *A Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 237) in the notion of becoming-woman. Hanada envisions the mode of 'becoming-material, -thing and -object' (*Buttai ni Narukoto*) as a task of the proletariat who can fall in love and sympathise with non-living beings and even machines. This figuration is comparable to 'conceptual persona' such as the general intellect in Marx's *Grundrisse* as a crystallised form of collective intelligence or group-mind.

In 'Objective Materialism' ([1949] 1971), Hanada writes of how in the process of objectification and reification, subjectivity finds liberation as 'becoming-object'. It is no wonder that Hanada had an idea that at the edge of self-abandonment one could reclaim and retrieve identity. This passage is not a theory of alienation but rather can be understood as another version of 'becoming-imperceptible' in the proximity to other existences, or 'becoming-material'. He articulates certain units or modules constituted by the correlation between machines and humans under the Fordist formation of production which requires workers to be in tune with assembly lines and assemblages of organisation, for which Hanada adopted the term 'collage'. Hanada had already engaged with the issue of cyborg-hybridity composed of man-machine in terms of 'becoming or transmuting animal or plant, and material, etc.', a becoming which is never reducible to metaphor or imagination but rather is envisioned as the very multiple articulations of heterogeneous moments before and beyond individuality or humanity.

In *Avant-garde Art* (1954), Hanada drew on the 'law of participation' by French anthropologist and philosopher Lucien Lévy-Bruhl (Guattari and Rolnik 2008: 25) to analyse Kafka's novel, *The Metamorphosis*, where Gregor Samsa transforms into a strange beetle. Nevertheless, not only is there supposed to be a certain kind of resemblance, but also an intensive transmutation or mutual incorporation among human and non-human. In shamanistic rituals and totemism, a myriad of metamorphoses are confirmed, which is basically a consequence of pre-logic (or savage mind) in primitive tribes, a phantasm for a certain schizophrenic process, but even an individual in contemporary society might have such an altered state of mind. The 'law of participation' is a principal logic for thought in primitive societies, in which, unlike conventional perception based on a distinction between subject and

object, the law of participation destabilises and even disturbs perceptions and affects of humans. For Guattari, this notion of participation indicates a collective subjectivity of investing (cathexis) in a certain object, which is meaningful for focusing the singular point of the existential group subject.

In some types of literature and philosophy, 'participation against nature' is recognised in a radical conceptual modification of Lévy-Bruhl's term. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari utilised several times a strange term which might derive from this conception, 'unnatural participation', by addressing the literature of Lovecraft, Woolf and Hofmannsthal, etc. Writers, authors and philosophers are always engaged with becoming and belonging to something or events through their own writings. Many writers have committed suicide, not because they sought to sacrifice themselves for their own works or for the sake of the world, but as a way of inventing a series of unforeseen alliances within nature, where nature was never posited as an object of correspondence or filiation; that was the reason why the issue in becoming and writing was 'not pity but unnatural participation' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 240). Unlike the evidence of substantial influence among authors or intellectuals presented by positivistic explanation, or the filiation by heredity in the biological world, unnatural participation proceeds with epidemic and contagion as in the case of 'vampire', more physically in the conjuncture of a bacterium, a virus and a molecule. I am almost tempted to call it 'informatic participation', just because it precedes the emergent or structural combinations. While anthropological concepts of participation could afford the model of symbiosis among different social groups, the notion of 'unnatural or informatic participation' might posit a matrix of conviviality in which a variety of cultures – including 'races' or ethnicities, and different semiological regimes – could live together.

Hanada also elaborated his own minor philosophy by using ethnology and anthropology. Although Hanada did not yet know about the development of Internet technology, his posture in critical theory and practice is still very valuable for understanding the contemporary info-socio-environment. Aligning him- or herself with the thinking of materiality, a Guattarian would respond with a vision of the future: the existential territory of human individuation will emerge from a propensity toward inhuman and incorporated universes enabled by the escalation of informational technology, as transfigured in the development of the net-based subjectivity, which will then entail the unfolding or opening of animal, plant, mineral, machine and cosmos, etc.

V. Becoming-Organisation

For Deleuze and Guattari 'becoming-animal always involves a pack, a band, and a multiplicity' (1987: 239). In Hanada's theory and practice (the same holds for Abe especially in his involvement in literary, theatre and filmmaking circles) mass populations, or simply, folks or crowds, can be grasped as 'materials' or 'objects' rather than as individual agents. Hanada's theory of groups and collectivities, deployed in his varied essays on social and cultural activism called 'the circle movements' in the late 1950s, consisted of a variety of genres of activity ranging from publishing zines through filmmaking to writing novels or poetry with manual workers in industrial factories, in addition to working with all kinds of corporate firms. As I suggested earlier, Kogawa's media theory and his initiative of free (pirate) radio activism was inspired by Hanada's writings and cultural-political activity.

Both his attempts to create circle groups and to co-edit informatic-data in expressive assemblages of visual art, cinema, literature, plays, as becoming unforeseen forms of organisation, are closely tied up with a vital resistance, in contrast to readings that might dismiss them as simply lazy or unproductive. It is no wonder that so many activists in the Japanese Communist Party or other leftist initiatives in the post-war period were enthusiastically interested in film and its theories. Such an activity is deployed precisely because it is playful without any ground that is conventionally attributed to ideology. Information, affects and activity all are compiled and translated into the collaboration as a collective ensemble of expressive enunciation.

What Hanada tried to deploy in theory and practice around the circle movements in the 1950s has its counterpart in Guattari's engagement with the institutional psychiatric cure at La Borde, where Guattari strived to have less hierarchical and more flexible relationships between patients, non-medical and medical staff.

The subject for Guattari is neither simply an individual ego nor an individuated person but rather is woven by an interactive dynamics consisting of moments of pre-individual and extra-individuation so as to constitute an entangled assemblage of different moments, where each subject is posited itself as a terminal for transition, criss-crossing and networking. 'Becoming-organisation', in this context, is interpreted as becoming an agency of collective intelligence or 'general intellect', which undertakes the role of catalyst for the emancipation and subversion of the 'status quo' of a given society. 'Becoming-organisation' does not intend to construct a political party or group with a shared idea,

but instead, constitutes by gathering through the gesture of rendering organisation more complex and multiple.

In Hanada's essays the term 'circle' is frequently utilised with the concept 'transversalising' (*Sougouka*), which echoes Guattari's crucial notion of 'transversality'. Usually *Sougouka* in Japanese is translated as universalising, integration and synthesising. However, Hanada's notion does not convey the meaning of generalisation or universalisation, but is rather concerned with a dynamics of assemblage, connection, association and collaboration of different genres and regimes of art, discourse and expression, that is, 'an opposition without synthesis'.

What is at stake in his (post-)media theory is the issue of how to integrate pre-modern modes of communication (expressive regimes of oral, dance and gestural communication) with modern technology or contemporary culture in a transversal manner. In order to extend this argument, Hanada addressed disciplines such as ethnography and folklore by combining an emergent sociological media theory with the conceptual resources drawn from anthropology, ethnographic fieldwork and even Surrealist art. His view on the trans-modern or overcoming modernity has a more radical potentiality. Hanada wanted to conceive of a new or trans-modernity through the available resources of pre-modernity as well as the non-Occidental, which Guattari prefers to call 'the archaic'. This gesture, however, cannot be reduced to taking a path of regression to the past or 'Orient'. An anti-modern or anti-Enlightenment stance is never at issue but rather his critical assessment of the present is always folding moments of the past.

Hanada envisions oral communication in folklore, ritual and festival in pre-modern (Japanese) culture and society as tactical or alternative resources for the singular/collective arrangement of enunciation and expressive activity in the future. The conditions of hypermodern or the vision of 'overcoming modernity', which should be distinguished from the same term utilised under the Fascist/Imperial regime of Japan in the 1940s, and post-media can arise in a dynamic and practical hybridisation between the pre-modern and modern. In this sense, Hanada's theory can be seen as a precursor of Guattari's concept of post-media. The post-media gesture is embodied by a hybridisation of plural media and mongrel mixtures of expressive genres constituted by varied subcultures.

Hanada's re-evaluation of pre-modernity intends to open up alternative possibilities of media, no longer dependent upon 'printing culture' (*Insatsu Bunka*), by deploying 'airwave culture' (*Dennpa Bunka*) based on pre-modern moments such as oral expression (myths or fairy tale) or improvised performance (dance and music). In his

view, the transversal relationship of various arts may be achieved by the conjuncture between 'electronic airwave culture' (*Denpa Bunka*) and 'printing culture', a connective junction that will be treated as a machinic phylum in Guattarian terms. For instance, it is easy to find such a collision between old and new communication in the initiatives and experiments of free radio.

In most Euro/American contexts, free or pirate radio (including student or community radio) usually has high-power equipment for broadcasting, which could cover the same range as local corporate stations. In France, after the Socialist Party's victory in the early 1980s, hundreds of free radios were 'legalised' with official licences by the government. As a result of the deregulation of the airwaves, all free radio initiatives were co-opted into corporate forms while losing their radical virtues delivered from illegal or pirate media. Such an ironic recuperation or legalisation of pirate media has never happened in Japan. But due to the particular limitations within both technological and legal conditions of free radio, the micro-radio initiative in Japan (mini-FM) displayed a different potentiality. Because of the very small power of transmission, mini-FM broadcasting could not so much cover wide areas as, instead, constitute a 'virtual' extended body connected in a chain (network) of numerous micro-radio stations; admittedly this might sound old wave in the present era of Internet streaming. Putting aside the 'renaissance' or re-actualisation of pre-modern (oral or performative) communication in electronic media, the initial spirit of free radio is still open to different dimensions of media technology, which, for instance, have often been observed in open-air techno party scenes and Internet radio streaming of club parties or live gigs.

Expressive post-media such as free micro-radio is an unfolding or explication of what expresses itself; in other words, the one manifesting itself as multiplicity, emerging as thousands of Radio Alices or Homeruns, etc. Conversely, the expressive multiplicity assumes a kind of unity, which inclines towards a mutual solidarity or tolerance. Mass media always involves a vector towards the one, whereas post-media relentlessly proliferates existential territories and universes of reference.

VI. Losing Face, Faciality and Masks

'With Nietzsche, everything is mask,' Deleuze once proclaimed. This insight is well suited for reading one of Abe's novels, *The Face of Another* (2003). The protagonist is a scientist seriously injured in a laboratory accident in which he lost his face; he tries to recover his

relationships with others, including his wife, by wearing a mask that is a perfectly undetectable copy of his face. He even attempts to seduce his wife with the mask of another person. In this novel, the face provides the very kernel of politics in which the decomposition of the face is at issue, accompanying a variety of becomings. Through the protagonist's reflection, Abe contends that the face is a passageway connecting the inside (interiority) and the outside (exteriority) in the sense that the human mind, physiology and formation of subjectivity are herein combined. A face is an entrance of binding, a disjuncture of folding and unfolding of immanent planes, both the inside and outside of human agency.

A face is always already a mask, a view that is the main scheme of the novel, whose logic can be explained as an assemblage and abstract machine that enables one to become others. Abe also seems to consider a coupling of face and mask to be a sort of technology, media, supplement and machine, not just an instrument. 'According to one theory a mask is apparently the expression of an extremely metaphysical aspiration to give oneself a kind of transcendental disguise, for the mask is not simply something compensatory' (2003: 19). Thus a mask is a machine producing the expressions of a face, while a face as such can function as a mask.

For Guattari, losing face is not directly at issue, but the concept of faciality enables us to conceive of defacement or dismantling of a face. Language, by definition, is always indexed on features of the face or faciality. That is the reason why the protagonist in *The Face of Another* has to weave different expressions of language for his relentless meditation on his decomposed face and its effects on others. The face belongs to the regime of icons but at the same time is set out in the reterritorialisation of signifying systems. However, faciality is constantly transformed into the a/post/signifying affective regime with its redundancy, insofar as it is operative of a 'body of the signifier'. From another angle, faciality is a point of departure for a dynamics of deterritorialisation that permits everything else to bring about a line of flight. The production and constitution of a face, which forms an organised body and cuts a head from a body, is a process of significance which escapes from a conventional physiological scheme, that is, a function of signification which is outside the signifying scheme in an organism and deterritorialises the regime or form of communication. Here a face itself emerges as a kind of fetish or simulacra. A face is deployed as a redundancy of signification beyond any meaning of words, or conversely with some lack of signification. A face seems to look like a

sort of white screen that affords a structural grid of interpretation, while it is emerging as the field for subjectification of affect and meaning, a vital or creative void in Deleuze and Guattari's sense, which engulfs all impressions and expressions, a black hole penetrating an empty spot on a white wall.

In the early days of his collaboration with Guattari, well before publishing the chapter on faciality in *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze wrote:

> The movement of betrayal has been defined as a double turning-away: man turns his face away from God, who also turns his face away from man. It is in this double turning away, in the divergence of faces, that the line of flight – that is, the deterritorialisation of man – is traced. Betrayal is like theft, it is always double. (2006: 30)

This gesture of betrayal could explain the strange relationship between protagonist and wife in *The Face of Another*: he cheats on her and she has an affair with another, knowing his real identity as her husband. It can neither be said that an ethics which cannot evade responsibility to the other precedes politics, nor that, through relentless acts of negation in thinking, a certain absolute is posited beyond each moment of communication. The same holds for Abe's novel *The Woman in the Dunes* (1991) in terms of an uncanny coupling constituted by the protagonist and the woman in the sandpit, which presents a diagrammatic machine to reject the conventional form of loving and conviviality. If we see a radical dynamic rapport and interrelation within the mutual betrayal of faces, then in encountering an exposure of face, we must focus on micro-politics as a relationship of betrayal that is prior to society and ethics. Or rather, it may be said that there is a politics which has priority over ethics. The assumption that the face is political does not intend to prefer politics or ideology to literature or art, but instead to situate betrayal as the primal form of micro-politics at the roots of literature and cultural expression. For both Deleuze and Guattari and Abe, losing face, and mutual betrayal, are the condition of literature and writing as such. This novel shows that one has to lose one's own identity and face for the advent of singularity in which to disappear, becoming imperceptible, indiscernible and unknown.

Such an idea was already present in Hanada's early essay, 'The Expression of the Mask' ([1949] 1971: 44), in which quoting Nietzsche, the mask is a way to the discovery of one's true face. For Deleuze, the concept of mask has always been a reference point, in which everything can be a mask with Nietzsche, for whom his health as such is a first

and significant mask for his genius, and, in turn, whose suffering also becomes a mask for both his genius and health. The same can be said for the protagonist of *The Face of Another*. It is helpful to refer to this passage because of a fundamental paradox that the revelation of true (face) is deduced from a mask. If a moralist hates a mask, then instead a mask holds a certain ethics, because envisioning a mask leads to delivering the freedom of play and the capacity to disguise, as well as taking responsibility to affect the will and desire of others beyond the distinction between good and evil (Saldanha 2005).

During the Second World War, fanatic nationalists and Japanese ideologues seemed for Hanada to be wearing inappropriate masks to address their identity. Both Bororo tribesmen and Japanese nationalists have something in common in this respect. Hanada thinks that a particularity of Japanese culture may not only be ascribed to something Japanese, but at the same time, is always the effect inspired by the West (through culture, technology and economy). Their entanglement is an objective reality of Japaneseness. Even contemporary hype such as Cool Japan or cute (*kawaii*) culture amidst globalisation is evoked as an example: these have nothing to with a Japanese cultural essence or originality but, by themselves, are a result of circulation, intersection and translation driven by global capital. Hanada's insight just after the war does not indicate any sense of eclecticism between the Japanese and the Western. His point in this essay can be summarised like this: a mask can be a clue to reaching the exposure of the 'real' face, just as a hypothesis is a prerequisite for scientific discourse. Fanatic nationalism in Japan, for Hanada, seems to reveal a kind of symptom of schizophrenia during wartime. Put differently, the inadequate mask was mistaken for the interaction between concealment and defacement of the constructed 'true' face. Hanada seeks to convince us that fanatic Japanese ideologists share a similar attitude with both schizophrenics and tribal peoples. Hanada applied again the 'law of participation' of Lévy-Bruhl to explain the ethnocentrism of wartime Japan through the logic of the mask. Fanatic ethno-centrists and nationalists were crazy about searching for their 'real' (proper) face, and under the law of participation, A can be A at the same time being not-A, a status which Hanada called 'schizophrenic'. He insists that a self-identity can always exist and appear by detaching from oneself. The mutual exchange and substitution between the Eastern and Western, the Orient and Occident, for Hanada, is focused as an actual issue of thought. But is it dialectical?

Certainly, Deleuze's philosophy is defined as the philosophy of anti-dialectic, the evidence of which is hard to deny, even though Deleuze can

be called 'a thinker of synthesis' (Jameson 2009: 182), but Guattari's position is more complicated and subtle. Guattari's ambiguous position with regard to the dialectic is closer to Hanada's. Beyond a conventional mode of dialectic in the Marxist sense, Hanada had already posited the very contemporary – if you prefer 'postmodern' – concept of dialectics, called the 'dialectics without synthesis' that is also called the 'dialectics without ends' or 'endless dialectics' which Jacques Derrida once utilised for his deconstructive interpretation of Georges Bataille in terms of his concept of general economy, which raised the model of dialectics with a lack of integration, synthesis and *telos*. The strange dialectics of Hanada is defined as an attempt to traverse both sides of opposing terms by preventing the very opposition from integrating, or what may be called conflict without synthesis. There is a commonality between Guattari's complicated relationship with the notion of dialectics, and all kinds of 'diamat' type of thought including Sartre's philosophy, in which he posits himself as an anti-systemic or a-systemic thinker. Guattari pointed towards a liquidation and fragmentation of dialectics in terms of enduring yet functional antagonisms (Guattari and Rolnik 2008: 237). This strange 'dialectic without synthesis' is, in *A Thousand Plateaus* (Guattari 1987: 330), articulated within the conception of the abstract machine.

VII. Refrain and Crystallisation

No one can deny a link between thinking and rhythm; without rhythm, neither thinking nor living is possible. It is significant to see tonality, musicality and repetitive beats in this respect. Life goes on, 'terrifyingly repetitive', considering heartbeats and ritual practices. Certainly, Guattari (2011: 146) was not the first to think rhythm, which he admitted by referring to the philosophy of Ludwig Klages.

It is remarkable that Hanada also thought of the significance of rhythm in the humanities. Addressing the nonsense in *Alice in Wonderland* and *Mother Goose* in *Avant-garde Art* (1954), Hanada introduced an opposition between 'interior reality' and 'exterior reality'. The former indicates the drive of the unconscious or subconscious, that is distinct from a mere psychological reality; whereas the latter represents 'the very reality of material things', called simply 'the outside', and contains a dark side that has not so far been grasped by consciousness. It resembles the Lacanian Real, insofar as it is difficult or almost impossible to reach. Exterior reality as the outside world or materiality is no less 'nonsense' than interior reality. Avant-garde artists and thinkers,

in Hanada's perspective, should not fear facing up to an irrationality and absurdity of exterior reality as such, because one has to regard the exterior world by the gaze which has so far been poured into the interior reality. The same holds true for post-media activists in contemporary society, insofar as exterior reality should not simply be reduced to practical or empirical reality. In this context, Hanada presents a similar conception to the machinic unconscious, in which the turn from the interior to the exterior never constitutes a return to empirical factual reality, but instead a recursive turn that appropriates the way of tracing interior reality for pursuing exterior reality. Herein something emerges akin to the Deleuzian fold. Abe's famous short story, *Dendorocacalia* (1973), must also be interpreted in this respect, in which the surface and inside, the exterior and interior of the body of the protagonist, Mr Common, is turning upside down by becoming a plant called *Dendorocacalia* in an uncanny reversibility. Certainly the plant in this novel provides us with the issue of the double, which is never merely a projection of his interiority but is an interiorisation of exteriority, an eruption or intrusion of the outside.

A turn or fold between exteriority and interiority, Hanada insists, has a close affinity to music and rhythm in thinking, where an improvisational performativity holds a crucial point that can be observed in jazz or gestures in the theatre play of *commedia dell'arte*. By making disjunctive links, rather than correspondences, among the concrete objects delivered from the exterior into the interior through a series of metaphors, analogies and rhetorical figures, thought is becoming 'musical' so as to create repetitive beats like in the syncopation or ragtime of some music genres. Hanada contended that 'musical thought' and 'filmic thought' as machinic expressions converge and intersect with each other in various arts. Deleuze and Guattari can say here, 'a color will 'answer to' a sound' (1987: 330). In the machinic beauty (*Kikai-Bi*) rather than the beauty of nature, or in the expression of machinic reproduction such as film or popular music rather than drawing pictures or sculpturing, rhythmic thought emerges as a hinge of a turn from interior to exterior, which is a resource for Hanada to read the interior reality incorporated within the nonsense of exterior reality.

When Hanada thinks about the relationship between repetitive rhythm and social organisation, the issue of the refrain is front and centre. Refrain is part of the movement and dynamics of repetitive heterogeneity, which is raised to a sort of stop motion of dialectical-oppositional movement. Refrain as repetition within Hanada's endless dialectic is not a doubling of the same or the identical, but a redundant

duplication of the other, insofar as it does not reproduce the identity, but just repeats the other. The refrain provides the existential territory for the collective assemblage of expression, such as avant-garde art and literature, that is a great resource for contemporary tactical media experiments.

Hanada conceives of crystallisation as transformative organisation. Hanada was interested in the process of transfiguration from something inorganic to organic. In *Two Worlds* ([1949] 1989), Hanada asks how can the stiff, ordered structure of society turn into a more vital, flexible and infinitely complex organisation? He then invokes the concept of crystallisation, as in the case of a generating organism passing through a crystal in the natural world, as the period of transition or transformative epoch for revolution or evolution. In a more contemporary context, especially in the era of digital media and network technology, the process of organisation and production shapes something analogical to the biological, so as to bring about an autonomic organic system that is comparable with both human and social nerve systems. Any group or firm can be treated theoretically as a quasi-living organism, especially in the post-Fordist formation of immaterial and cognitive-affective labour, with which Hanada's intuition is aligned (Pasquinelli 2008).

The crystallised structure of matters/substances communicates and transmits itself by reproducing a form, which is delivered through components of atomic or molecular particles, while in the case of animals or plants, the transmission is accomplished by a serial metabolism through genetic codes. Even our cognitive process for various info-environments is enabled by an effect of crystallisation of actual percepts and virtual objects. The situation of informatic reality as such is defined as a crystallised conjuncture of exteriority and interiority in Hanada's perspective. The image we grasp in watching cinema and television emerges as the crystallisation of dynamics between what has already been projected and what is going to be projected. For Hanada, cinema was not a mere metaphor to explain our cognitive reality; rather, the pragmatics of the image in audiovisual media could provide the very constitution of reality. The same may be said for the potentiality of the net culture and electronic media, which can appropriate a wide range of resources from different types of media that predate computer-aided technology. In other words, the reality or situation crystallises a criss-crossing conjunction between the actual and the virtual. For Guattari, an abstract machine is always in charge of transforming or deterritorialising matter and flow that is constituted of crystals of potentiality catalysing virtual connections. In his understanding and definition, crystallisation is

a process that passes through an infinite series of expressive assemblages linking discursive actual moments with non-discursive virtual moments.

Usually the possible is understood as an equivalent of 'dynamis' in the lineage of Greek philosophy, such as that of Aristotle, and considered to be a primal material potentiality waiting for deployment in reality, 'energeia', as a form of embodiment in/of this world. Among the plural possibilities embedded within this pure potentiality, one is opted for as the reality of random choices, which nevertheless is retroactively conceived as a destiny or fate for human agency. It should be remarked, however, that the possible in Guattari's conception proceeds in a different way. Within the ongoing reality deployed here and now, other options of the possible are always already functioning. That is the reason why the notion of the virtual is evoked here in both Guattari and Hanada's thought, in which the virtual as pure potentiality is constantly operative within this ongoing world as the actual. When one finds some figurations of animals or somebody's facial traits in the shape of clouds or constellation of stars, one comes across the indexes of ontological crystallisation, which generate and modulate heterogeneities. Herein faciality as an abstract machine can make a concrete face from within the crystal of possibility.

Put simply, Guattari posited an idea of the economy of the possible, which is determinant and operative in the affects, material scarcity, desires and empirical percepts, etc. In his thought the virtual can transverse the real, and the possible, the actual. If we consider his idea of chaos or chaosmosis, which is neither a simple confusion nor indifference, but a singular ontological weft – chaos as 'sieve' – it is from within delirium or ecstasy that a nucleic point may be extracted and articulated, such as an ultimate awareness in Zen which, in my mind, Guattari himself exemplified.

In this way both Guattari and Hanada conceived of crystals of possibility which could weave singular points of ontological crystallisation by generating their own organisation and producing something other than themselves in modulating heterogeneities. As the result or effect of crystallisation between the possible universe and the actual situation, both grappled with the chiasmic cutting edge of the virtual and the real as the point of singularity.

VIII. Conclusion

What I have developed in this essay is articulated in the following five points. First, Guattari was very interested in Japan and attracted

by its putative cultural singularity, which nevertheless is not restricted to a cultural essentialism. Aligned with his affirmative view of Brazil, Guattari sought to find something positive in Japanese society and its tactical micro-media experiments such as mini-FM.

Second, it is possible to pose an affinity between Guattari's philosophy ('ecosophy') and certain philosophical approaches adopted by some Japanese post-war intellectuals. In fact, exactly during the period in which Guattari started to engage with his practical and theoretical elaboration of institutional analysis at La Borde, Hanada was engaged in the circle movements and avant-garde experiments. Abe's literature was also very much indebted to the theoretical articulations of Hanada. Guattari greatly admired Abe and considered him, alongside Beckett and Kafka, as a great analyst of subjectification.

Third, Japanese intellectuals who predated the critical analysis of infoculture and globalisation (integrated world capitalism) still provide us with many useful resources, especially for contemporary media activism, and my approach has been to regain their ideas and bring them into the present.

Fourth, there is a productive crossover between Guattarian and Japanese thought engaged with the elaboration of idea of an aesthetic-political perspective that articulated the emergence of post-human becomings.

And the last, fifth, both Guattari and Hanada saw the significance of rhythm and refrain for thinking and social action.

Gary Genosko once remarked that 'Guattari himself was a subject group, a collective assemblage, a machinic *il* rather than a structural personal *moi-je*' (2002: 226). The same can be said about Hanada and Abe's idea and practices of collaboration and organisation. From this perspective the works by both Hanada and Abe can be utilised as tactical resources for reading Guattari together with Japan. Subjectivity is always a wrecked and failed *cogito*, while a pragmatic map (perhaps a deviant cartography) emerges from archipelagos in which the conceptual desert islands, such as certain Guattarian insights and some Japanese post-war intellectual production, disjunctively intersect with one other.

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Guattari TV, By Kafka

Gary Genosko

Abstract

Guattari looked for crossovers between film and television in a posthumously published 'Project for a Film By Kafka'. His critical comments on television and the mixed reception of television within the Deleuzo-Guattarian literature provide the occasion for an investigation of what Guattari thought television could do for his project. The auteur model best suits his needs in this regard, with the proviso that it is animated by a modernist aesthetic oriented towards the conjuring of a people to come who would join the Kafka assemblage as part of their viewing experience.

Keywords: Kafka, television, auteur, modernism, minor

> A heap of stones is not a machine, whereas a wall is already a static proto-machine, manifesting virtual polarities, an inside and outside, an above and below, a right and left.
>
> (Guattari 1995: 42)

Guattari's 'Project for a Film By Kafka,' translated by Jakub Zdebik for *Deleuze Studies* in 2009, is based on a series of notes for an unrealised project. We know that Guattari was fascinated with Kafka's dreams; he collected and numbered them (*Soixante-cinq rêves de Franz Kafka, 2007*), commenting that they 'engage the most diverse and heterogeneous semiotic means: those of theatre, dance, cinema, music, plastic forms, and once again, to be sure, writing!' (2007: 29) Moreover, these dreams are 'open, machinic indices' consisting of literary and schizoanalytic machines; they are open in 'how they have fertilized and broken such and such semiotic or behavioral chains' (2006: 405).

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A machinic dream interpretation follows the deterritorialising line and its sputtering flows of particle-signs.

François Dosse (2007: 294ff.) reminds us of another Guattari: an inventive curator – though the heavy lifting was done by Yasha David (Guattari 1996a: 235; Guattari 1984: 1) – of multimedia exhibitions, a 'Kafka event' on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of his birth, mounted in the summer and autumn of 1984 at the Centre Pompidou in Paris. In this exhibition we find dream texts, dream theatre courtesy of Philippe Adrien, seminars, dream cinema (by François Pain, a good friend of Guattari and a key connection to his visual production). It may be said without exaggeration that Guattari never stopped working on Kafka, who was, after all, his favourite author (Guattari 2006: 146).

There is, however, a semiotic mode at issue: cinema. To the existing relation of Kafka and minoritarian becoming in a literary key, Guattari adds a cinematic project that passes *through* television. What he envisaged was a made for television film in the form of a cultural series that would help to fund the final film project. His ideas were quite practical since he wanted to attract funding and engage a professional production team.

Project for a film *by* Kafka? Guattari's emphasis is deceptively simple. The affects with which Kafka wrote may live in film and television because they are independent and survive their author, remaining available for 'non-human becomings' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 173) of readers to come: 'artists are presenters of affects, the inventors and creators of affects. They not only create them in their work, they give them to us and make us become with them' (175).

The question is: does minor cinema assist us in conceiving of a 'minor' Guattari TV? For Guattari, minor cinema precipitates becomings minor (practical enrichments of schizo desire) in the mass, just the sort of people he wanted to reach with 'Le Siècle de Kafka'. And to become minor is not to be in a minority or the representative of a minority or even to formally acquire the characteristics or status, what we call 'identity', of a minority through some affiliation. It is not a question of mimesis or membership, but how to produce becomings that might summon a people with whom minor cinema connects. Guattari thought that anti-psychiatric cinema worked in this way, reaching the uninformed and misled and changing the way they thought of and connected to madness. The fundamental theoretical problem is what it means to summon a new people without teleological or messianic politics. But the semiotic is also hybrid, for the film at issue involves television. Television was a transitional medium in Guattari's search for

a potential public, a public yet to come, with which he attempted to connect through minor Kafka becomings, engaging sensibilities not yet fully entangled in dominant normative modelisations; assembling Kafka affects that connect across existing strata and blend with real material fluxes, intervening in and resisting stolid representations, enriching flight paths of singularisation and auto-modelisation.

Guattari's sense of television is often confined to a scene of decoding, an existential territory bathed in the blue glow of the screen; a vivid machinic assemblage of subjectification and flickering sensory affects of all sorts. At the same time it needs to be kept in mind that Guattari was no stranger to mass television, appearing over the course of his career a number of times, but his attitude to the medium was often linked to becoming stupid: 'I watch tv like everybody else. I'm just as dumb, no question about it' (commenting on the first Gulf War) (Guattari 1996b: 139). Yet he insisted that one has to watch it but without becoming trapped in its 'infernal circle'.

Watching television is for Guattari an intense experience of territorialisation and he uses ethological concepts to describe how the milieu components of broadcasts (voice, music and image) initiate animal becomings. By the same token, we know that Guattari could be found in the depths of his depression slumped before the television, a black hole of subjectification which resonated all too well with the condition of his desire at the time (see Helle 2008: 497; Dosse 2007: 291).

What I wish to reach in this paper is an understanding of Guattari's ambivalence about television and his desire to work in it by first appreciating the limits of transferring the principles and goals of minor cinema to television. A second task is to find the most appropriate model of television to explain this ambivalence. Rather than taking the route of connecting minor with autonomous media experimentation such as the bold example of Telestreet which taught many 'how to do television' (Berardi 2008: 152–3), I turn elsewhere. Instead, the long-standing, but recently renovated, idea of the *télé-auteur* working in a creative capacity for the small screen has been in circulation in Europe for many decades, and has recently found a new place in discussions of American speciality cable networks and select series. Although Guattari (1996b: 152) expressed misgivings about the development of cable channels in the context of 'capitalist eros', noting that 'nothing guarantees us that what they will develop . . . will not be even more reactionary than what is broadcast by national television', and did not witness the blossoming of the cable universe and its passage into territories of art and new assemblages of subjectification, I suggest that his 'Project

for a Film By Kafka' is closest to auteur TV. Of course, I stake this claim with the proviso that the figure of the ciné-auteur is limited as Guattari was prepared to eschew the signature style of a master for the sake of anonymous, more participatory, DIY aesthetic production and for ethically and politically committed documentary work (one of his exemplars in this respect was Sato Mitsuo, director of *YAMA: An Eye for an Eye* [1985] about the Yakuza-controlled slum in Tokyo). However, with these provisos in mind, it is productive to grasp the incredible care for content and detail of execution that is found in Guattari's 'Project' outline as fundamentally different from tactical media and closest to the auteur TV model, yet not divorced from the minoritarian becomings of cinema. The cerebral and abstract qualities of Guattari's 'Project' (the emphasis on the wall and faciality), however, as well as the expressionistic elements that he links together in a series of highly austere shots, are punctuated with comic moments, imagistic fragments and incomplete dialogue. It is this kind of content and aesthetic that evokes modernism and the auteur – not bastardised, but shrunk to the size of the small screen. Guattari's 'modernism' with respect to painting has been well documented (Zepke 2011: 213–14), and it is linked not to a flight from art institutions but to a return to them in order to initiate a search for subversive singularisations.

A further issue may be flagged at the outset of this investigation: the displacement that Guattari operates of the auteur-author-personal directorial style from himself to Kafka – not the author and his intentions but an assemblage of autonomous affects that Guattari attempts to respectfully gather in his 'Project' and to connect with a potential viewership.

I. Auteur TV

The Pompidou Centre Kafka centenary event is instructive because it tells us that Guattari's ambition as a cultural animateur was referenced to large public arts institutions with national and international profiles.

In this respect I consider the place of Guattari's minor television to be in the arts programming of public or state broadcasters, perhaps even independent commercial interests that develop new projects. But this location should remind us of the mutual imbrication of Guattarian concepts: minorising the mass or traditional media is cultivating a rhizome in the branch of a tree. That is, one cannot think the minor-micro without the molar-macro. Therefore, one cannot jump the traditional media reference for the sake of independent, autonomous or tactical media (like Japanese micro-TV or Italian Telestrada).

Rather, Guattari TV is embedded in the tradition of modernist (and later) experiments with television from Godard to Lynch, and the intellectualism (the 'Grands Entretiens') and multiple aesthetics of the Institut national de l'audiovisuel (INA). The INA has a long tradition of co-production with public broadcasters around the world as well as with private and public speciality channels such as Sundance in the US and ARTV in Canada; moreover, it engages in extensive preservation activities and software development and training.

The signature of 'Guattari' may have been enough to participate in the *télé-auteur* model of 'creative television' in France (Emanuel 1999: 86). Thus, 'auteur TV' was a likely model and he would have been familiar with the idea of seeking something along the lines of an INA commission for his project (note that the INA ceased *producing* television in the 1980s), or at least a co-production agreement between a sponsoring producer and a commercial channel with a legally mandated requirement to assist national film production. Guattari would have joined filmmakers like Raúl Ruiz and Eric Rohmer who had found the little screen much to their liking, and the new opportunities it afforded in terms of distribution in a changing technological environment: 'TV is seen as a lifeline of cinema rather than as a proverbial Cain' (Ostrowska 2007: 32). Indeed, Guattari did not rehearse the traditional split between cinema and television but recognised how the former had absorbed the latter, even if the motivation (commercial) was largely unpromising (1996b: 152).

Guattari worked with Yasha David on the Kafka exhibition. Here and there he mentions this collaboration, sometimes referring to it as a joint project, at other times suggesting he had 'entrusted' the running of the event to David (Guattari 1996a: 235; Guattari 1984: 1). Whatever the case may have been, Guattari also notes in every instance the trouble he experienced with the arts administrators at the Centre Pompidou: 'Those in charge at the Pompidou Centre made it so difficult that, on several occasions, we thought we would have to abandon the project' (1996a: 235). So Guattari, in a very Kafkaesque manner, plugged into a bureaucratic machine and came face-to-face with strategies of denial and meta-languages of control and demoralisation. One wonders how he would have fared in a highly bureaucratic television environment.

II. A Wall

'The whole film takes place along a wall', Guattari indicates (2009: 154). Continuing, Guattari explains: 'The design and musical unity of this wall

should traverse the whole film, the different scenes somehow detaching themselves from it.' The scenes are thematically linked:

> wall of the farm at K's arrival; wall across which runs a beam of light, indicated by the woman who writes in the night and whom children join; the wall of the inn through which Frieda indicates that Klamm is sleeping; wall along which two children run and 'catch' little Hans; wall of the farm, this time seen from the inside, and that will open to let the official procession go past. (Guattari 2009: 154)

Why a wall? It divides and conceals a mystery (the castle), which is later exposed as 'not mysterious' at all.

The wall is 'synonymous with the absence of face and the absence of eyes', Guattari specifies (2009: 154). But we know from Guattari's writing on photography that faces accomplish 'existential transferences of enunciation' to viewers (1989: 311). From another perspective, faces are already walls, white or black walls of the signifier. And walls are Kafka materials par excellence: the abstract machine of faciality as one finds in Kafka's 'novella "Blumfield": the bachelor returns in the evening to find two little ping-pong balls jumping around by themselves on the "wall" constituted by the floor' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 169). Guattari immediately considers as an alternative an immobile face shot close up (augmented by a booming voice) which turns into a wall. Like Keiichi Tahara's photographic de-facing and resurfacing of the celebrity artists who posed for portraits, the face is a wall that might recur and have projected upon it cityscapes and offices, corridors and the like to underline the 'whole paranoid, bureaucratic discourse' (Guattari 2009: 155). Guattari also

> thought that at a certain moment, this face could perhaps be composed of about forty videos showing the same urban images, a sort of ballet of changing figures, with systems of gliding lines, symmetries, and dissymmetries, rhythms, images that skip, etc. (2009: 155)

The face de-composes into a wall, perhaps moving from noisiness to silence; the face is a 'megaphone' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 179) but the wall may be bounced off of or crashed into or broken through. The wall is a molecularised face, a face of geological strata, cement, moss and the pissing of men.

III. TV By Kafka

The first part of the draft script has four segments. A horse-drawn cart races towards the wall and crashes into it. In the second segment, the

cart moves in the same way but suddenly stops short of the wall. An explosion of sorts takes place, but it is a dance of peasants in hooded habits like tiny medieval monks. In the third segment, the cart slowly rolls along parallel to the wall; the legs of a young boy hang over the wall. In the fourth segment, two men hail the cart and it pulls over. The legs of the boy go down a ladder.

Guattari breaks the text into images and sounds in describing a series of shots. The first shows the wall as a surface of inscription that is 'suggestive' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 168) in its 'greyish whiteness', an off-white wall; in 'double exposure . . . a face in extreme close-up, but that we can barely distinguish. As the camera imperceptibly approaches the wall . . . the face loses its contour, only the fixed eyes and a talking mouth still vaguely appear' (Guattari 2009: 156). Akin to the face pushed up against the white wall of the breast in nursing (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 169), this close-up heightens intensity but through a voice that has a 'bass tone' and enunciates in a rather didactic way Russian bureaucratic desire in the form of a speech from the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR in January 1937 concerning the treason trial of Karl Rudels (Guattari 2009: 157). Having confessed, Rudels rambles on about not defending himself but ensuring that those who have known him for decades recognise the truth of his testimony. This speech is voiced over an 'arrhythmic sonic mass' that becomes the wind and then silence. The bureaucratic speech comes in jolts; it is the rhythm of its self-pleasure.

The second shot breaks through the wall with a 'fade-in dissolve or another device' (Guattari 2009: 157). But there is nothing behind it. And nothing changes in the process as there is no loss of continuity, no change in the intensity of light. Yet 'little by little' a line appears on the horizon – it is a wall that cuts across the shot. The camera jerks several times and our point of view is of a passenger in a cart pulled by a mule, obstructed by a roughly textured sleeve of an arm and a hand wearing a ring; one of the aforementioned peasants appears, accompanied by K. The first, third and fourth segment contained references to K as well. The Kafka references are numerous but fleeting. Here Guattari deploys mannerisms in the manner of Kafka's 'schizobuffoonery' (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 80): there is a hand signalling from a window before K's execution (first segment); K finds two old men eating soup in a room at the farm and these are joined by children (third segment); two old men get up from the table and lead K through the barn door (fourth segment); likewise, two gentlemen functionaries from *The Trial* lead K to his execution (Kafka 1968: 80). The soundtrack is a grinding cart and the mule's steps.

The third image is a series of shots (some establishing, some close-ups) in rapid succession – cart, mule's eyes, hands, etc. Yet 'in passing we catch, but very quickly, without really distinguishing what it is: three heads above the wall' (Guattari 2009: 158). Nothing about sound is indicated.

The fourth shot reveals the cart aligning itself before the three heads: the middle one is higher than the others and sports a long red beard. K returns gesticulating to one of the peasants who refuses to go further. Again nothing about sound is noted.

Shot five presents a white screen and sounds of the projector. This 'dream screen' is not the result of a technical problem as little by little, Guattari notes, numbers appear and then, vaguely, the three heads. Together these constitute a facial unit. One is reminded of how the 'Year Zero: Faciality' plateau ends with the question about three states or heads (primitive; Christ; probe); (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 191): 'Must we leave it at that . . . ?'

Shot six brings K back in a long shot in which he turns back to the wall, after advancing toward a 'sombre tree', as if looking for the heads, and starts up a conversation with a peasant. Shot from close up, K calls out: 'Who was that guy we could see awhile ago above the wall? No answer' (Guattari 2009: 159). The peasant is not very helpful with any request. Shot seven continues the conversation as the peasant points in the direction in which K came in response to the question about where he can find an inn. The eighth image shows K pissing on the wall. The last image is a fragment involving Frieda and Klamm (from *The Castle*) and a peasant woman who spies on them from the tree. The text breaks off at this point.

IV. There Is Nothing on TV

Let's say that some people will watch anything, or simply watch, and others will be intrigued by Guattari TV, by Kafka because the wall gets one dreaming, it gives by drawing one into its own assemblages and in this way summons a viewership, a following. What is it to follow a televisual series? It consists in joining an assemblage by diagramming its potentialities: this wall concerns everyone. This is the kind of catalysis of home viewers that images are good at tripping, even if all this means at a base level of academic *jouissance* is citational play of the sort: oh yes, that wall reminds me of the 'high white wall' from the first fragment of the eighth octavo notebook, the one that the coachman drives along and notes that its bulges make it 'a forehead' (Kafka 1991: 79); or, isn't

the sound of the cart similar to the creaking of a cart in the summer heat in the short fragment 'Children on the Road' (Kafka 2007: 3)? Guattari seems to confirm that the televisual cocktail includes hypnosis, distraction and daydreaming, which is to say that an 'attractor' that in Brian Massumi's words 'induct[s] sensation' (2002: 84) that oscillates between interesting and boring, not between recognition, which is boring, and uniqueness, which is interesting, but that which gets one dreaming and running off on tangents and losing focus in a sketchy and dynamic diagram whose intensities at least make available one existentialising function, joining the Kafka assemblage. The diagram would be productive of a new kind of machinic reality: the Kafka literary machine and the Guattari machine dance, conjoined, and 'open like a non delimited collection' (Guattari 2006: 404). Guattari's draft would be then reticent about being converted into televisual formats, and would transmit this, after all he underlines it, coiling it through the drafts and into production and post-production and the broadcast ready succession of images. But not just this, a certain randomness, too, hard-to-understand bits that seem involuntary alongside the obvious and not so obvious references to Kafka texts. These are the non-passive seeds of subjectivity's production before a programme that does not feed pap to its viewers but interfaces with them.

Guattari was ambivalent about television and we can sense this in his description of the hypnotic experience of watching. If the hypnotic dimension of this machinic drug trip services mediatic alienation by erecting an artificial neurosis that masks more serious family social problems, then television withdrawal by remote control is the consequence (Guattari 2002: 18). Yet Guattari wanted to mount a counter-example that would inspire, an extraordinary television which would engage viewers as potential users and makers, in addition to providing impetus for their mobile imaginaries that move toward dismantling the artificial neurosis. This would require seizing upon and redeploying the already permeable television buzz for the purposes of ethico-aesthetic resingularisation. It is easy to get lost in this ambivalence and, like my colleague Janell Watson, throw up your hands and ask about a fictional solution: 'where are the independent basement TV stations such as that imagined in *Wayne's World*?' (Watson 2002: 43). Indeed, can we imagine transversal TV on YouTube where the illusion of participation is often too opportunistically framed by feedback in real time. In the age of live audience responses to webcast events, joining the Kafka assemblage might be construed as nothing more than contributing to the feedback loop of cheap content and exploitable data.

Struggling with his own scepticism, Guattari wondered about the prospects for a 'person who comes home exhausted, spent after a draining day, who automatically turns on his television' in search of a minor buzz through 'another personal reterritorialisation by totally artificial means' (1996c: 102). Television interminable. Guattari's television project by Kafka is not only designed to unleash fabulation, but through television's boring formal machinic effects implant complex affects not in virtue of representational content alone – though as we have seen this is carefully wrought – but in a way that pours out of the home viewing situation and turns its passivity inside out. Guattari's Kafka project is not a spectacularisation, but concerns itself with little triggers – intensities, gestures and particle signs – that help viewers put some distance between themselves and television's banal tendencies and strive to exist differently through the 'alterification' of joining the Kafka assemblage.

Any link between television and becoming is hard to grasp for a scholarly community that has not wanted to appreciate television's potential. Perhaps the most powerful statement of this suspicion is Maurizio Lazzarato's (2004: 165) claim that television produces a subjectivity that neutralises becoming and blocks minoritarian proliferations. Lazzarato is referring to a mass medium rather than a post-mediatic television, and he echoes Guattari's own comments on the erosion of subjectivity by the former and the need for 'aesthetic reappropriation of the production of images, of audiovisual production', in the latter (Guattari 1996b: 134). Lazzarato precludes minoritarian becoming through television.

However, another approach is framed by Massumi as part of a 'dynamic midst' of an 'event-space' (2002: 82ff.). 'Project For A Film *By* Kafka' might diagram the transduction of the general form of Kafka as a collective assemblage into the televisual medium as an idea for a 'cultural series'. We can only imagine as readers the experience of the arrival of such a series into the living rooms of a people to come and we can do this with Massumi's help, although his example is a live transmission of the Super Bowl game and ours is a sound stage and set production of a work with an entirely different sensibility. Having scrambled the literary signal of Kafka by running interference through multiple semiotic media, Guattari TV flows into the room by scrambling the already constituted socio-historical arrangement of the household with its delicate divisions of gender, labour and generation. The series acquires the status as a 'catalytic part-subject' by potentialising the homebodies in terms of how they can go about joining the Kafka assemblage; this is not an

insect-transform but an initiation into a not so strange universe. Admittedly, this potential is unevenly found in the bodies that would realise it in different ways; indeed, the catalytic part-subject needs a boost, thinks Massumi, because there is typically 'nothing on TV' and this makes 'distraction ... more catalytically operational' (2002: 84). The fields of an event's potential are layered with intersecting and overlapping subfields and codes (informal regularities that govern households). The Kafka series becomes through its transmission of images (inductive signs); upon their arrival in new spaces, a re-conditioning of the space takes place. A television broadcast is an extremely complex and variable event; what's on the screen is but a small part (and, frankly, the audience for Guattari TV would be small). The programme arrives into a relatively porous space whose entrances and exits are monitored, and enters the mix of a collective assemblage with its coded but open enunciations; this programme is only one of many flowing through the home alongside other semiotic transmissions.

Let's say that something is on TV, and it's Kafka. But the images are of a wall. Is there a potential public for Guattari TV by Kafka? Or, will this remain a marginalised broadcast within a sea of banality? For instance,

> one is subjected to tv insofar as one uses and consumes it, in the situation of a subject of the statement that more or less mistakes itself for a subject of enunciation ... one is enslaved by TV as a human machine insofar as the television viewers are no longer consumers or users, nor even subjects who supposedly 'make' it, but intrinsic component pieces.... In machinic enslavement there is nothing but transformations and exchanges of information. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 458)

It is instructive to compare this explanation with another concerning television in *Chaosmosis*.

Guattari TV, by Kafka contributes to polyphonic subjectivity production in the manner described in *Chaosmosis* (Guattari 1995: 16ff.). When Guattari wants to embed his theorisation of machinic subjectivity production in everyday life he selects watching television to organise his presentation. His explanation recapitulates an earlier discussion of the same points in an appendix to *Cartographies schizoanalytiques*, but with reference to the red curtain in his apartment, and he softens a somewhat dualistic typology of problematic (fading and thickening) and sensory affects (immediate and perceptible). There is a 'complex refrain', Guattari indicates, that holds together diverse components of subjectivation before the television set:

> When I watch television, I exist at the intersection: of a perceptual fascination provoked by the screen's luminous animation which borders on the hypnotic; 2. of a captive relation with the narrative content of the program, associated with a lateral awareness of surrounding events (water boiling on the stove, a child's cry, the telephone…); 3. of a world of fantasms occupying my daydreams. My feeling of personal identity is thus pulled in different directions. How can I maintain a relative sense of unicity, despite the diversity of components of subjectivation that pass through me? It's a question of the refrain that fixes me in front of the screen, henceforth constituted as a projective existential node. (1995: 16–17)

The risk of machinic enslavement that characterised the description of television in *A Thousand Plateaus* gives way in *Chaosmosis* to the problem of assemblage consistency and the role of the refrain. The sensory elements of fascination, of the 'gluey' screen to which one may be stuck, and the force of narrative that drags one forward yet is not so exclusive as to be beyond insistent interruptions of lateral awareness, introduce the scenario and lead into more abstract matters like fantasms that sweep one away. Guattari is a tributary of the figure on the screen because enunciation enjoys a certain autonomy – 'my identity has become that of the speaker, the person who speaks from the television' – and the refrain fixes the sensory environment and props up the world of fantasms. This refrain is a 'motif' and 'attractor' that installs itself in the scene, as if under collective ownership, enjoying both independence from a functional anchor and transversal potential to freely circulate, and couples the diverse components at play as it marks the existential territory of Guattari as TV viewer. Guattari is no more than a 'fluctuating intersection' or constellation of relatively heterogeneous components, and inchoate affects, held in place by a stabilising, existentialising refrain, which is a non-ordinary, non-semiotic, repetitive motif (a hypnotic feature), holding together different kinds of worlds (marked existential territories and universes of reference whose emergence refrains catalyse). Refrains help negotiate intra- and inter-assemblage passages. In this example, the refrain owes much to the tone of the voice emanating from the television, which can close down the viewing experience because it is so clichéd or loosen something from the viewer and refresh him or her by helping one move along in some manner. The scenes of reception of television and cinema are quite different to the degree that the complex social semiosis of televisual decoding is, at least in terms of sensory affect, muted by the darkened public space of the theatre; whereas the blue glow of the television screen is a milieu component that becomes purely expressive without any

content as it marks a territory of viewing for all irradiated in its range and subjected to its flashes. Turning on a television is an important step in understanding how a territory is built.

V. Conclusion

The examples of playwrighting (see *Socrates* in this volume), envisioning a television series and film (not the only cinema project that he had in mind in the 1980s) reveal that Guattari was actively thinking through the relationship between his theoretical principles and different kinds of artistic production. While there has been an unfortunate tendency to trap him in the vicissitudes of free radio, this strategy of critique has limited significance (Barbrook 2001). Guattari worked directly with playwright Enzo Cormann, filmmakers like François Pain (and planned a film with Japanese photographer Keiichi Tahara) and curators such as Yasha David, and thought about the need to get involved in television as well, despite his own ambivalence about the medium's role in formatting capitalistic subjectivities.

The example of auteur TV would have been familiar to him, but of limited interest in its pure form of directorial personal signature. Rather, by displacing the centrality of the director's distinctive vision, but without losing it entirely, Guattari sought in affect the autonomy necessary to stake the claim that his project was *by* Kafka. 'By Kafka' does not signal another auteur, but affect's distance from intention and the contagiousness of its channelling and passage through different media to a potential viewership. The readiness of this imagined audience to join in the Kafka assemblage through the affects delivered by television is evident in Guattari's sense of himself as a viewer and a tributary of intensities that are not obviously positive or negative but ambivalently transformative.

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Art as Abstract Machine: Guattari's Modernist Aesthetics

Stephen Zepke

Abstract

Felix Guattari was a modernist. He not only liked a lot of modernist artists, but his 'aesthetic paradigm' found its generative diagram in modern art. The most important aspect of this diagram was its insistence on the production of the new, the way it produced a utopian projection of a 'people to come', and so a politics whose only horizon was the future. Also important for Guattari's diagram of the 'modern' were the forces of abstraction, autonomy and immanent critique. Together these elements construct an artwork that is radically singular and separate, composed of a-signifying, a-temporal and invisible forces, sensations that go beyond our human conditions of possibility. In this Guattari's modernism must be understood as being quite different from his co-option by contemporary art theorists influenced by post-Operaist thought. Post-Operaism understands politics as 'being-against', a dialectical form of negation that finds its political condition of possibility in what already exists. Because such thought sees modern art as being entirely subsumed by the institutions and markets that contain it, art itself must be negated in order for aesthetic powers to become political. This has lead post-Operaist thought to align itself strongly with the avant-garde positions of institutional-critique and art-into-life, or 'non-art'. Guattari's modernism takes him in a very different direction, affirming modern art despite its institutional enframing, because art is forever in the process of escaping itself. This makes modern art the model in Guattari's thought for politics itself.

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> It is here that art accedes to its authentic modernity, which simply consists in liberating what was present in art from its beginnings, but was hidden underneath aims and objects, even if aesthetic, and underneath recodings and axiomatics: the pure process that fulfils itself, and that never ceases to reach fulfilment as it proceeds – art as 'experimentation'.
>
> (Guattari and Deleuze 1983: 370–1)

Félix Guattari believed in art, he believed in the creative and revolutionary power that gave it a 'privileged position' above philosophy, science and politics (1995: 101). Without art, Guattari would say, without its ability to invent new feelings, there can be no real politics. No doubt this strikes us as odd today, when contemporary art seems determined to subordinate or suppress its production of autonomous sensations in favour of a political activism based on conceptual and discursive engagement. Art into life! This slogan has echoed from Duchamp to the neo-avant-garde of Conceptual art, before reaching its drab and almost hegemonic status today as an institutionalised theory of 'non-art'. Guattari is often enlisted as part of this movement, but such claims leave out one rather important point: Guattari was a modernist!

This is important because contemporary art has largely defined itself against its modernist heritage, from its conceptual beginnings through to the a priori postmodern irony of its 'representations'. Guattari often vents a righteous anger and disgust at postmodernism's cynical apotheosis of the signifier, and its turn away from the aesthetic raptures of sensation in favour of representation and *realpolitik*.[1] Against this Guattari advocates a return to Modernism, although what is 'authentic' about 'modernity' has been 'present in art from its beginnings'. It is then, a Modernism that comes after postmodernism and refutes it, but only because it is continually reinventing itself, rejecting the 'post-' in favour of the 'new'. Guattari calls for 'At the very least an originary fantasm of modernity constantly under scrutiny and without hope of postmodern remission' (1995: 77). In the spirit of his cheeky revisionism, I would like to present Guattari as the advocate of our 'return to the future', as our greatest 'contemporary modernist'.

What then is this 'originary fantasm', this contemporary fabulation of a modernity that forever remains 'to come'? It is certainly a selective version of Modernism, one that rejects the 'modern myth' of origins (1996: 65), the techno-scientific concept of 'progress and modernity'

(1996: 109, 2011: 50), and the modern 'ideologies that once claimed to serve as guides for reconstructing society on a more just and egalitarian basis' (1996: 109). A Modernism without teleology or transcendence, but then what of Modernism is left? What is left is modern art, or perhaps better a modern aesthetics, which Guattari affirms as the 'diagram' or 'abstract machine' for modern politics. The 'epistemological grounds' of the 'machine', he writes, are not found in 'math or physics, but art' (2006: 387).[2] Guattari is serious, and he gives painting, or more generally art, as the model for the production of subjectivity (1995: 7, 2008: 74, 2011: 41), for ecosophy (2000: 52), for schizoanalysis (2000: 41–2, 2008: 329, 2011: 47–8), for politics (1995: 90–1, 133–4, 1996: 202, 2008: 189), for revolution (2008: 64), for his collaboration with Deleuze (2008: 450) and for 'life itself' (2008: 94). And this list is by no means exhaustive. In fact, even the oft-quoted remark that it 'might be better to speak of a proto-aesthetic paradigm, to emphasise that we are not referring to institutionalised art' (1995: 101–2), inevitably given as the ground for aligning Guattari with the avant-garde movements of art-into-life and institutional-critique, can only be understood in terms of the modernist diagram that remains at its base.

So what is Guattari's modernist aesthetic diagram? It is also selective, on the one hand rejecting the 'formalist abuses and reductions of modernism' (1996: 109),[3] and railing against the institutional and financial controls placed on art, while on the other affirming in the highest terms the modernist commitment to abstraction, autonomy, materialism and immanent critique. In this sense Guattari is not defending Modernism against the contemporary, instead he wants to liberate the contemporary from the post-modern, so that it might become – always for the first time – modern. In this regard Guattari is a champion of the modern, but only when the modern is understood as a process of transformation, as the emergence of the 'to come', as the production of the new. This is the political value of modern art, he says, its 'incessant clash against established boundaries' and 'its propensity to renew its materials of expression and the ontological texture of its percepts and affects' leading to 'a direct contamination of other domains' and the 're-evaluation of the creative dimensions that traverse them all' (1995: 106). To steal a phrase from Owen Hatherley's aptly titled book *Militant Modernism*, Guattari wishes to defend Modernism against the defenders of Modernism, by extracting from it a diagram of creation by which the modern might renew itself.

Guattari's insistence on modernist artistic practices is most clearly expressed in his repeated rejection of postmodernism and Conceptual

art. This is quite different from Jacques Rancière, who has recently suggested erasing the modern–postmodern 'rupture' by sublating it within an 'aesthetic regime' in which the modern and postmodern are its two poles, united in their shared sensible 'dissensus' from the established framework of perception, thought and action. Rancière thereby understands aesthetics in political terms, whereas Guattari insists upon the modern–postmodern rupture in order to reject the latter, precisely because aesthetics for him precedes politics. As a result, some commentators try to excuse Guattari's taste in modernist art, because they see his love of Balthus, Modigliani, Turner or Pollock as embarrassing or absurd in relation to contemporary art's desire to do politics. But Guattari affirms these painters precisely because of their political importance,[4] and his rejection of Conceptual art cannot be blamed on his 'age', nor used to suggest he was not up with the latest fashions in art; both are mean-spirited and misleading accusations that the facts clearly refute. Not only does the rejection of Conceptual art in *What Is Philosophy?* echo Benjamin Buchloh's famous essay 'Conceptual Art 1962–1969: From the Aesthetic of Administration to the Critique of Institutions' which had been published in the catalogue to a large retrospective exhibition of Conceptual art held at Musée d'art moderne de la Ville in Paris in 1989, but it also echoed statements by Guattari made at least as early as 1971.[5] In a remarkably prescient passage found in *The Anti-Oedipus Papers* Guattari laments: 'ultimately, there will be no more "modern art". Just because art is going to adopt the category of signification itself for itself' (2006: 249). This is a precise description of what Conceptual art was doing at this time, as artists not only took over language as a medium, but also started to explore the binary oppositions of structuralism as a conceptual frame for their work.[6] It is true that Guattari does try to soften his position in *Chaosmosis* (1995: 95) and the late interview with Oliver Zahm (2011: 43) by claiming that Conceptual art produces 'a concept that creates sensations', but this does not change his fundamentally modernist affirmation of art as the realm of sensation; it rather ambitiously (and ultimately unconvincingly) tries to align Conceptual art with it.

So although Guattari claims that he and Deleuze lack a better term than 'modern' to describe our current age, he is being disingenuous (Guattari and Deleuze 1987: 382). This is because Guattari – like Deleuze – inherited his ontological understanding of aesthetic processes from the modernist tradition, where simple materials and cosmic forces achieve a consistency, Guattari says, 'exclusively through technique'

(377). This is the secret of modern composition: materials are 'abstracted' from their external referents so that their intense complexity can be expressed. Varèse's technique at the 'dawn' of the modern age is 'exemplary' in this regard, a sound machine 'molecularizes' matter (that is, it deterritorialises sounds so they can be composed on the same plane) in order to harness their 'cosmic energy'. Varèse's 'sound machine' assembles or synthesises various sounds (some recorded, others produced) and the means of modulating these sounds (oscillators, generators and transformers), arranges them, and in so doing 'makes audible the sound process itself, the production of that process, and puts us in contact with still other elements beyond sound matter' (378). This 'modern' technique singularises its material in order to open it onto its outside, at once expressing and constructing a new future, a new cosmos. At this moment of what Deleuze will call 'transcendental empiricism', a singular sensation (a real experience) expresses and constructs the becoming of the universe (its real conditions) (1994: 69).

This process involves a Kantian conception of critique that was the basis of modernist art history stretching from Alois Riegl to Clement Greenberg, and which interpreted the artwork as an expression of the a priori categories operating as its formative principle or *Kunstwollen*. Guattari and Deleuze discover various ahistorical ontological diagrams of the aesthetic composition of materials, with the most significant of these being the 'modern' diagram drawn by the 'abstract line', which composes a 'smooth space' that is 'an absolute that is one with becoming itself, with process'. This is an 'absolute of passage' that in modern art 'merges with its manifestation' (Guattari and Deleuze 1987: 545). The *Kunstwollen* of modern art is, in other words, experimentation. Guattari's term for this modern and immanent critique is 'self-reference' (*auto-référence*), which describes 'a processual subjectivity that defines its own coordinates and is self-consistent [*auto-fondatrice de ses propres coordonnées, autoconsistancielle*], but can nevertheless establish transversal relations to mental and social stratifications' (1996: 96). For Guattari, modern art offers the model (or as he calls it, the 'metamodelisation') of an autonomous process of autopoiesis, it does not seek its categorical a prioris (qua conditions of possibility) but detaches (one could say 'abstracts') material-forces from these conditions, in order for them to repeat as difference. To return to Guattari's discussion of Varèse, the synthesiser takes the place of the grounds of a priori synthetic judgement (instead of transcendental categories we have a transcendental compositional technique), replacing conceptual conditions of possible experience with a synthesising machine

capable of producing a real experience of 'unthinkable, invisible, nonsonorous forces' (Guattari and Deleuze 1987: 378). In other words, alterity becomes the a priori of art.[7] Modernism in this sense is a pure constructivism, or Constructivism perhaps, as Guattari seems to suggest when he writes with Deleuze:

> The modern figure is not the child or the lunatic, still less the artist, but the cosmic artisan: a homemade atomic bomb. To be an artisan and no longer an artist, creator or founder, is the only way to become cosmic, to leave the milieus and the earth behind. (1987: 380)

But this is art-into-life only if life is understood as chaosmosis, and the 'artisan' describes all those great artists Guattari loves not for rejecting 'art', but because their art was already a real political engagement. The explosion of the material composition into its outside, its summoning of an immanent people to come, or a new future defines Guattari's 'aesthetic paradigm' as a modernist politics.

This opening out onto a new future is achieved by the technique of abstraction, which is a process of self-reference that deterritorialises experience so that it loses its optical cohesion and its representational content, and becomes a 'visual block' or sensation. This abstract sensation produces its own outside, reterritorialising experience on this movement of becoming that encompasses subject and object.[8] Abstraction is therefore Modernism's double movement, on the one hand an absolute deterritorialisation of a material's signification (whether representational or linguistic), and on the other 'a local integration moving from part to part and constituting smooth space in an infinite succession of linkages and changes in direction' (Guattari and Deleuze 1987: 545). This paradoxical nature of abstraction as both singular and universal is the real condition of a transcendental materialism of becoming, and was present in modern art from the beginning: 'Art as abstract machine' (Guattari and Deleuze 1987: 547). And it is as art – or as the aesthetic paradigm – that this double movement is realised in politics. Why? Because it is only by deterritorialising our present conditions of possibility, by turning these material conditions singular and abstract, that critique can make the present take flight. As Guattari wrote with Negri, 'the collective potential is realized only when the singular is free' (1990: 17).

Finally, Guattari and Deleuze ask, what should be called 'abstract' in modern art? Their answer is 'a line of variable direction that describes no contour and delimits no form', and finds its exemplary case in 'the abstract line defined by Michael Fried in relation to certain

works by Pollock' (1987: 646).[9] This is not to say that art should continue painting à la Pollock, which would be ridiculous, but that contemporary art must find its own ways to be modern, its own political techniques that might reclaim the means of producing the future. Let us turn to another exemplary figure Guattari and Deleuze associate with the modern age to see how this might work. Paul Klee's book *On Modern Art* (1948) gives a good example of the immanent and yet transcendental critique Guattari calls self-reference. Three 'elemental' dimensions constitute the painting, Klee explains, line, tone or value, and colour. Line is a measurement, tone or value is a weight and colour is a quality. These formal, abstract and transcendental elements and their relations compose a refrain (Klee calls it a 'motif and theme' [1948: 37]) out of which emerge the dimensions of form and content. Each composition of the elemental 'forces' (the term is Klee's) is a 'constructive expression' that 'flies from the earth', 'rises above it to reality' and finally 'embraces the life force itself' until it is 'one with the universe' (43). This is a straightforward account of the double movement of modernity; the self-reflective abstraction of materials to the point where they can construct their own cosmos. In this way the artist, Klee writes, 'places more value on the powers which do the forming than on the final forms themselves' because 'he sees the act of world creation stretching from the past to the future. Genesis eternal!' (45). Finally, and most importantly, Klee connects the artistic technique of expression-construction to politics. Although, he says, artists dwell within the source of creation and express it in their work, they lack the 'ultimate power', '*Um trägt kein Volk*' ('the people are not with us' [55]; see also Guattari and Deleuze 1987: 372). This suggests that politics on a molar scale, on the level of real political movements, is something beyond the power of art. Artists seek a people, a people yet to come, a people that their work attempts to create. But, and these are Klee's final words, they cannot do more than form a community of artists such as in the Bauhaus, which composes the materials they have and are, in a modern practice of *auto-référence*. It is this, Guattari and Deleuze say, that 'confides to the ear of the future the persistent sensations that embody the event' (1994: 176), in a 'forewarning' or 'summoning' of a people, that is not yet their actual creation (110). 'More,' Klee says, 'we cannot do' (1948: 55). In this sense, then, and as Guattari put it, 'artists are like errant knights, like Don Quixote' (2011: 42), tilting at the windmills of capitalism and governments 'with unfortunately incomparable, but nevertheless competitive means' (Guattari and Deleuze 1987: 381). Indeed, despite modern art's seeming

insignificance in the face of constituted powers, the modern artist does enjoy one significant advantage. The 'competitive means' shared by art and capitalism is the deterritorialisation of peoples and their earth that produce new and abstract sensations, but whereas capitalism tries to reterritorialise these sensations in normalised subjectivity (Oedipus) and quantified representations (commodities) – a biopolitical process 'to which art contributes' (Guattari and Deleuze 1987: 381) – modern art can push these further, in order to make the people and the earth 'like the vectors of a cosmos that carries them off; then the cosmos itself will be art' (Guattari and Deleuze 1987: 381). In this sense, and it is one we will return to, political art for Guattari is the most abstract and modern art, and therefore the most cosmic.

If, as Brian Massumi recently put it, 'an art practice can be aesthetically political, inventive of new life potentials, or new potential forms of life, and have no overtly political content' (2011: 54), then what are we to make of those – and there are many – who read Guattari as advocating the avant-garde position of art-into-life? This position has been most forcefully argued by the Italian post-Operaist movement, some of whom – most notably Antonio Negri and Franco 'Bifo' Berardi – had close personal ties to Guattari. Post-Operaist thinkers see the dialectical process of the negation of the present as the necessary form of any political resistance, and understand Guattari's process of self-reference in these terms. As a result, post-Operaist aesthetics often begins from the opposite position to Guattari (although often in his name), the negation of modernist art. This is not exactly the negation of art as such, but it does bring Guattari into line with the tradition of modern or 'contemporary' art known as 'non-art'. Hardt and Negri laid the foundations of this reading in *Empire* when they directly reject Bergson's concept of the 'virtual' (what we have been calling the 'cosmic' force of becoming, or the 'to come' of the future) in favour of the 'possible' (2000: 356, 468). Hardt and Negri reject the virtual because it does not, they claim, give sufficient 'ontological weight' to reality (468). The possible on the other hand, dialectically defines politics as a negation of the existing situation. In this sense the possible is the ontological category of what Hardt and Negri call 'being-against'. Indeed, in one of the most startling metaphors of the book they argue that Empire is the 'inverted image' of the multitude's 'productive activities', something 'like a photographic negative' (211). In this strange inversion it is Empire that appears as the condition of possibility (the photographic negative) for the multitude's creative work. Politics must begin with a dialectical negation of existing oppression that, according to

Hardt and Negri, grounds the creative event in the 'reality' of everyday life. As a result, they claim, Guattari and Deleuze:

> seem to be able to conceive positively only the tendencies towards continuous movement and absolute flows, and thus in their thought too, the creative elements and the radical ontology of the social remain insubstantial and impotent. Deleuze and Guattari discover the productivity of social reproduction (creative production, production of values, social relations, affects, becomings), but manage to articulate it only superficially and ephemerally, as a chaotic, indeterminate horizon marked by the ungraspable event. (2000: 28)

What is so wonderful about this rather acerbic description of Guattari and Deleuze is that it is absolutely right. Guattari does affirm the artistic event in its most ungraspable and autonomous sense, in its creativity entirely undetermined by what is, in its absolutely virtual and heterogeneous aspect. These are events' real conditions of im-possibility! This is an affirmation of, as Nietzsche had it, art and nothing but art, the great stimulant to life.

Although the post-Operaist claim that art has been subsumed by the aesthetics of biopolitical capitalism is an important one, it is often made in order to subsume art's creation of the future to the more important political gesture of the negation of the present. This leads to the inevitable post-Operaist understanding of art's 'self-reflection' as its self-negation, and the equally inevitable consequence that 'political art' is by definition 'non-art', it being only in this form that art can enter into the politics of everyday life. Perhaps the most symptomatic effect of the post-Operaist position has been its apotheosis of Duchamp and his readymade as the heroes of art-into-life.

This apotheosis has had many champions, but I will take as my example Maurizio Lazzarato's suggestion of developing a 'new assemblage of being-against (the dispositives of power) and of being-together (the process of political auto-emancipation)' (2008: 173), based on a reading of Guattari's aesthetic paradigm inspired by Duchamp. This 'new assemblage' draws on what is certainly most interesting about Guattari's aesthetic paradigm, the way in which modern art provides a diagram for political transformations. But Lazzarato is going to base his understanding of this diagram on what he calls the 'polemic' the readymade launches 'against' art's institutional frame (2010: 110). Lazzarato's understanding of Guattari's aesthetic paradigm therefore begins from 'being-against' art because, as he says, 'art and culture are entirely integrated into the logic of the dispositives of subjugation

and control in contemporary capitalism' (2008: 174). As a result, Lazzarato argues, the 'aesthetic paradigm' is neither 'an aestheticization of the political', and 'nor does it have much to do with the avant-garde programs of the *first half* of the twentieth century' (174). We might think this a strange statement given that Lazzarato will champion Duchamp, but in fact it has its own kind of historical consistency. What Lazzarato – perhaps unwittingly – tacitly acknowledges here is that the avant-gardes of the *second half* of the twentieth century, most notably the so-called 'neo-avant-garde' of Conceptual art, have already deployed Duchamp's readymade 'against' modern art and its institutions.

By embracing Duchamp's claim that the concept was the new medium of artistic creation, Conceptual artists sought to de-institutionalise art, and so democratise its creative processes by disengaging them from any specialised techniques (an aspect of the readymade Lazzarato explicitly praises, because it puts non-art directly in contact with the newly emergent practices of cognitive capitalism). But these attempts to politicise 'art' by making it 'non-art' (that is, by rejecting sensation in favour of the concept) were in fact easily assimilated by cognitive capitalism, which either instrumentalised Conceptual art within the emerging 'creative industries' of advertising and marketing, ignored them because 'non-art' is on the one hand too banal and on the other too esoteric to be recognised by anyone but art-insiders,[10] or simply maintained their status as 'art' by consuming them as such. As Guattari and Deleuze succinctly put it: 'This is a lot of effort to find ordinary perceptions and affectations in the infinite [i.e., as art] and to reduce the concept to a *doxa* of the social body or great American metropolis' (1994: 198).

What I am objecting to in Lazzarato is how he treats art, and not, I hasten to point out, what he says about the potential to use 'artistic techniques beyond the realm of art' to develop new forms of political organisation, expression and activism (2010: 101; see also 2008: 175). Artistic techniques can and should be used by political movements, just as the institutionalisation of art should clearly be critiqued. But these 'political' uses of art should not conflate art and its frame, which inevitably leads to 'political art' defined as the negation of art or non-art. Although it is true that Guattari launches polemical attacks against the way culture in general and contemporary art in particular are 'enframed' or 'surrounded' by capitalist valuations and institutions,[11] he nevertheless makes a clear ontological distinction between art and its frames that conserves and even privileges the political role of art qua art. As I have tried to show, Guattari affirms modernist artistic

practices *despite* their institutional enframing. Guattari makes the point very clearly, arguing that although

> the work, the artist, inspiration, talent, and genius are 'hijacked by the signifier', it nevertheless seems that the evolution of modern art is tending towards a politics of a-signifiance: the figural, and machinic assemblages, are getting the upper hand on representative systems, expressive and iconic codes.[12]

This is no better seen than in Guattari's reading of the readymade, which emphasises its material process of expression rather than its conceptual foundation of the tradition of 'non-art'.[13] For Guattari, the readymade is a refrain, it is the selection of an object that turns it into an expressive territorial marker (Guattari and Deleuze 1987: 349), a biological definition of art-into-life that means 'we no longer know what is art and what nature' (1994: 185). When the readymade acts as a mechanism of singularisation (by no means assured, as the refrain can also operate the most conservative reterritorialisations) it therefore becomes the epitome of art rather than its negation. In fact, Guattari will argue that the *Bottle Rack* 'singularizes' a 'constellation of referential universes' in such a way that 'the Benjaminian *aura* arises from this genre of singularizing ritornellization' (1996: 164).[14] This aura is not only due to the readymade's utterly singular nature, but is also an aspect of its process of composition, an ongoing becoming by which its assemblage remains open to the infinity of the cosmos. In this sense, as Guattari goes on to say, the readymade 'induces an aesthetic ecstasy, a mystical effusion' (165). This is the highest political value of art, and 'I am not', Guattari stubbornly insists, 'interested in exchanging some virtuous group jouissance for some individual jouissance that might be a thousand times more intense and fertile (mystical jouissance)' (2006: 251).

Guattari expresses the same commitment to the political power of philosophy in *What Is Philosophy?*, a power philosophy shares with art and that he gives the name 'utopia'.[15] 'Modern' philosophy, he argues there,

> takes the relative deterritorialisation of capital to the absolute; it makes it pass over the plane of immanence as movement of the infinite and suppresses it as internal limit, turns it back against itself so as to summon forth a new earth, a new people. (Guattari and Deleuze 1994: 99)

It does so in a similar way to modern art, by employing abstraction, singularisation and autonomy to create a 'nonpropositional form of the

concept in which communication, exchange, consensus, and opinion vanish entirely' (Guattari and Deleuze 1994: 99). Like modern art, philosophy is able to lead these bio-political mechanisms towards their absolute deterritorialisation or 'deframing' (187), in order to call forth a new people and a new cosmos.[16] Utopia is therefore the immanent, abstract and autonomous dimension created by philosophy and art within the conditions of the present, while remaining undetermined by them: 'There is no act of creation that is not transhistorical' (Guattari and Deleuze 1987: 326).[17] Utopia is what is within European capitalism that exceeds it, but what is this? It is something utterly autonomous and abstract freed through immanent critique, but in itself it 'is' nothing because it is 'becoming', forever 'to-come'. Like the late paintings of Turner, political Modernism is the expression and construction of utopia, an 'eternal future' (Guattari and Deleuze 1983: 132) undetermined by the present, but acting upon it. It is an event of 'absolute deterritorialisation at the critical point at which it is connected with the present relative milieu, and especially with the forces stifled by this milieu' (Guattari and Deleuze 1994: 100).

This is the point at which philosophy and art expresses what is unthought, invisible and not-felt, like, they claim, what Adorno called a 'negative dialectics' (Guattari and Deleuze 1994: 99). Despite the similarity of the terms, this is quite different from what the post-Operaists call 'being-against', which does not exceed the present (this being precisely the 'ephemerality' and 'impotence' of the virtual they reject), but finds in the present the conditions of possibility for the political. Guattari's diagram is based instead on the real conditions of creation, as he puts it: 'This is art, this unnameable point of non-sense that the artist works' (2011: 47).[18] In this way, and as Adorno said, 'in art the particular is literally the universal' (1997: 45), because, as Guattari and Deleuze argue, becoming is both singular and transcendental. And the one necessarily through the other, for the transcendental alterity of the future appears through a technique operating on the materials of the present, by abstracting them, absolutely deterritorialising them, so they can compose something new.[19] Art is, Guattari says, 'an alterity grasped at the point of its emergence . . .' (1995: 117), it is autonomous from all present conditions of possibility, and this is the real condition of its politics. Guattari says as much in *Chaosmosis*:

> Fabricated in the socius, art, however, is only sustained by itself. This is because each work produced possesses a double finality: to insert itself into a social network which will either appropriate or reject it, and to celebrate,

> once again, the universe of art as such, precisely because it is always in danger of collapsing. (1995: 130)

It is precisely this double-finality that means art can never be simply identified with its bourgeois and institutional frames, and in fact always exceeds them. Rather than an institutional-critique that affirmed non-art, Guattari favoured an 'institutional therapeutics' (1984: 17). This is a critical practice we could call 'institutional reflection', by which its most creative elements – perhaps the artworks, but not necessarily – act as catalysts for an institutional becoming that both maintained its compositional consistency, and continually opened onto its outside by producing creative events of subjectivation in others. This is an institution of double becoming in which the abstract machine of modern art retains its autonomy, the better to intervene in the present through a cosmo-politics of experimentation. Modern art for Guattari was not something to be against; it was something to be affirmed as our most effective laboratory of the future.

Notes

1. Guattari could barely have put it more harshly; 'the virtual ethical and aesthetic abdication in postmodern thought leaves a kind of black stain upon history' (1996: 116).
2. Similarly, Guattari writes; 'Art, as the epitome of the gratuitousness of the sign, is the horizon of the liberation of science' (2006: 395).
3. These are sketched out in *A Thousand Plateaus* and elaborated more fully in Deleuze's *Francis Bacon, the Logic of Sensation*. Put schematically, they are the tendency of geometrical abstraction to become a symbolic code for ideal forms (even, as in the case of Kandinsky, when this 'spiritual' dimension is composed of affects), and at the other extreme where random elements degenerate into a 'scribble' or 'scramble' and the work 'lapses into a statistical heap' as in the music of John Cage (Guattari and Deleuze 1987: 379) or the paintings of Pollock, who from Bacon's perspective 'creates a veritable "mess" ' (Deleuze 2003: 109).
4. A claim that is entirely self-evident. Guattari writes about Balthus's paintings, for example, that they give an 'ethico-political' critique of 'capitalistic subjectivation', through their 'heterogeneous, multicentred, polyphonic, polyvocal approaches, installed outside pre-coded equilibriums' (1987: 85).
5. Which refutes the claim that the rejection of Conceptual art came from the 'aesthete' Deleuze.
6. For a more detailed discussion of this see my 'Eco-Aesthetics: Beyond Structure in the work of Robert Smithson, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari,' in Bernd Herzogenrath (ed.), *Deleuze/Guattari and Ecology*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.
7. Guattari writes something similar in relation to the refrain's priority to time, 'Time is not an a priori form; rather the refrain is the a priori form of time, which in each case fabricates different times' (Guattari and Deleuze 1987: 385).

8. Brian Massumi's recent book *Semblance and Event: Activist Philosophy and the Occurrent Arts* calls this a 'constructivist technique of existence' (2011: 100) that takes as its object its own process of emergence. This is what he calls an 'occurrent art', which operates through 'diagramming' as a 'procedure of abstraction'. This is close to my own account, although what I call Guattari's modern art diagram, Massumi calls – drawing on a much wider range of thinkers – 'technologies of lived abstraction' (14–15). He also emphasises 'autonomy' (53–4) and the operation of abstract art (69–71, 137–8), along with another of Guattari's terms I don't discuss here, 'metamodeling' (103).
9. Guattari also mentions Pollock in *Molecular Revolution in Brazil*, where he explains that one cannot repeat – as in reproduce – Pollock's work, precisely because it 'belongs to assemblages that go right beyond the confinement of an act of creation' (2008: 451). In other words its abstract singular event is transversally repeated qua difference, and this is its politics. It is perhaps relevant to mention here how Deleuze was also a fan of the great modernist 'American critics' Fried and Clement Greenberg, along with Harold Rosenberg. See Deleuze 2003: 105, 1994: 91–2.
10. For example, conceptual work that took the form of classified ads in newspapers, such as Joseph Kosuth's *Second Investigation 1. Existence* (1968), in which the artist placed the eight categories organising *Roget's Thesaurus* into various newspapers and magazines. This work perfectly illustrates what Benjamin Buchloh famously called Conceptual art's 'aesthetics of administration', and that he criticised for merely 'mimicking' the practices of cognitive capitalism, rather than attacking them. In this sense, the only thing the work is 'against' is modernist art.
11. For example, in a passage quoted by Lazzarato (2008: 183), 'Let us say that contemporary art remains enframed. There is a universe of reference, a universe of valorization, including economic valorization, which enframes the work, qualifying it as such, capturing it in a social field. There is an institutional-cutting out' ('L'an 01 des machines abstraites', *Chimères*, 23, Summer 1994). Other examples are 2008: 21–34, 2011: 46.
12. My thanks to Gary Genosko for his translation of this passage from p. 276 of *La Révolution Moléculaire* (Fontenay-sous-Bois: Encres/Editions Recherches, 1977). The existing translation is clearly inadequate (see Guattari 1984: 106).
13. To be fair, Lazzarato does not understand the readymade in purely conceptual terms, and in fact offers some interesting ideas of how Guattari's own suggestion of a 'concept that creates sensations' (2011: 43) could be understood in terms of 'belief' (2010: 105–13).
14. Bifo, another post-Operaist advocate of 'non-art' symptomatically claims that for Guattari 'the aura [of art] was definitively forgotten' (2008: 34).
15. Guattari vacillated somewhat about the term 'utopia', on the one hand voicing suspicion over its dialectical relation to history (Guattari and Deleuze 1994: 110), while on the other affirming it in the face of those who accuse him of it, finally claiming that 'when it comes to dreaming and utopia, the future is wide open' (1996: 106).
16. It is worth mentioning Nicolas Bourriaud's book *Relational Aesthetics* (Dijon: Les Presses du réel, 2002) at this point, which contains a chapter about Guattari that was first presented in Guattari's seminar and then published in Guattari's journal *Chimères*. There are various problems with Bourriaud's application of Guattari's thought to contemporary art, including his insistence on the place of the concept in contemporary art (101). More importantly for us here, however, is his downsizing of Guattari's utopian optimism in modern art's radical political potential, to the construction of consensual and 'convivial' 'relations'. Regarding

this last point, Eric Alliez has launched a convincing attack in 'Capitalism and Schizophrenia and Consensus: Of Relational Aesthetics', in S. Zepke and S. O'Sullivan (eds), *Deleuze and Contemporary Art*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010.

17. As Guattari says of one of his favourite painters, 'Turner's art, from his most famous period, signifies nothing. It has no assignable historical coordinates. It designates and manifests a-temporal machinism' (2006: 249).
18. As a result, and as Adorno puts it, 'Aesthetic autonomy encompasses what is collectively most advanced, what has escaped the spell' (1997: 53). Aesthetic autonomy, in other words, is what is most modern – and therefore most political – about art.
19. Adorno once more: 'A cryptogram of the new is the image of collapse; only by virtue of the absolute negativity of collapse does art enunciate the unspeakable utopia' (1997: 41). These brief quotations from Adorno stand as a promissory note for a future essay on his relation to Guattari and Deleuze.

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Machinic Animism

Angela Melitopoulos and Maurizio Lazzarato[1]

Abstract

This catalogue essay is based on a series of interviews conducted by the authors with international scholars who were asked to reflect on Guattari's scattered comments concerning animism. Interviewees are: Eduardo Viveiros de Castro (anthropologist, Museu Nacional, Rio de Janeiro), Eric Alliez (philosopher, Paris), Jean Claude Polack (psychoanalyst, Paris), Barbara Glowczewski (anthropologist, Paris), Peter Pál Pelbart (philosopher, São Paolo) Janja Rosangela Araujo (master of Capoeira Angola, and professor, Salvador de Bahia) and Jean Jacques Lebel (artist, Paris). Animism was thought by Guattari in relation to a number of themes and places in excess of religion and ritual but in the context of the shattering of capitalism.

Keywords: animism, machinism, subjectification, anthropology, archaic societies, ritual

> There has been a sort of de-centering of subjectivity. Today, it seems interesting to me to go back to what I would call an animist conception of subjectivity; to rethink the Object, the Other as a potential bearer of dimensions of partial subjectivity, if need be through neurotic phenomena, religious rituals, or aesthetic phenomena for example. I do not recommend a simple return to irrationalism. But it seems essential to understand how subjectivity can participate in the invariants of scale. In other words, how can it be simultaneously singular, singularising an individual, a group of individuals, but also supported by the assemblages of space, architectural and plastic assemblages, and all other cosmic assemblages? How then does subjectivity locate itself both on the side of the subject and on the side of the object? It has always been this way, of course. But the conditions are different

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> due to the exponential development of technico-scientific dimensions of the environment of the cosmos.
>
> I am more inclined . . . to propose a model of the unconscious akin to that of a Mexican Cuandero or of a Bororo, starting with the idea that spirits populate things, landscapes, groups, and that there are all sorts of becomings, of haecceities everywhere and thus, a sort of objective subjectivity, if I may, which finds itself bundled together, broken apart, and shuffled at the whims of assemblages. The best unveiling among them would be found, obviously, in archaic thought.
>
> (Félix Guattari)

> We do not know, we have no idea what a society without a state and against the state would be. Animism is an ontology of societies without a state and against the state.
>
> (Eduardo Viveiros de Castro)

Guattari brings about a de-centring of subjectivity in separating it simultaneously not only from the subject, from the person, but also from the human. His challenge is to escape from subject/object and nature/culture oppositions, which makes man the measure and the centre of the Universe, in making out of subjectivity and culture specific diversions (differences) between man and animals, plants, rocks, but also machines and mechanics. Capitalist societies produce both a hyper-valorisation of the subject and a homogenisation and impoverishing of the components of its subjectivity (parcelled out into modular faculties such as Reason, Understanding, Will and Affectivity, governed by norms). It is within this framework of a search for a new definition of subjectivity, one that could escape the capitalist enterprise, that the reference to animism is often made. In Guattari's work and in the same manner as in animist societies, subjectivity loses the transcendent and transcendental status that characterises the Western paradigm. Guattari's thought and that of animist societies can find common ground in this understanding of subjectivity. Anthropologist Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, expert on the Amazon Indians, commented:

> I very much enjoyed a passage in which Guattari speaks of a subject/object in such a way that subjectivity is just an object among objects and not in a position of transcendence above the world of objects. The subject, on the contrary, is the most common thing in the world. That is animism: the core of the real is the soul, but it is not an immaterial soul in opposition or in contradiction with matter. On the contrary, it is matter itself that is infused with soul. Subjectivity is not an exclusively human property, but the basis of the real and not an exceptional form that once arose in the history of the Cosmos. (Our interview, Rio de Janeiro, 2009)

It is not subjectivity that separates man from 'nature', because there is nothing 'natural' about it. It is not a given, but it is, on the contrary, both an epistemological and a political operation. There is indeed something before the subject/object opposition and it is necessary to start from their fusion point. Guattari prefers to speak about 'objectity' and 'subjectity' to mark their non-separation and their reciprocal overlapping.

Guattari does not make a specific anthropological category out of animism, nor does he focus on a particular historical phase, since he does not limit himself to non-literate, non-governmental societies. Aspects of polysemic, transindividual and animist subjectivity also characterise the world of childhood, of psychosis, of amorous or political passion and of artistic creation. Guattari's attachment to the La Borde clinic is surely linked, as Peter Pelbart suggests (our interview, São Paolo, 2009), to the radical alterity in which psychosis plunges us with regards to the subject and its modalities of 'human' (linguistic, social, individuated) expression. Psychoanalyst Jean Claude Polack observes:

> And it is true that among psychotic people, and notably among schizophrenics, this practically daily commerce with particles of self or perhaps with corpses, outside the self, does not pose a problem… There is a certain very particular 'animist' sensibility that one could call delirium. Of course, it is a delirium by our standard; it is something that cuts the psychotic off from the social reality that is completely dominated by language, social relations, thus effectively separating him from the world. But this brings him closer to the other world from which we are totally cut off. It is for this reason that Félix maintained this laudatory view of animism, a praise of animism. (Our interview, Paris, 2009)

Guattari's summoning of animism (he goes so far as to say that it would be necessary to temporarily pass through animist thought in order to rid oneself of the ontological dualisms of modern thought) does not signify in any way a return to some form of irrationalism. On the contrary, for Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, this conception of subjectivity is completely materialist, even permitting a renewal of materialism.

> I just read the passages that you sent me on animism in Guattari's work that I was not familiar with, in fact. I find this artificial alliance between animism and materialism incredibly interesting, since it allows one to separate animism from any other form of idealism… To reintroduce a subject's thought that is not idealist, a materialist theory of the subject, goes along with the thought of the Amazon peoples who think that the basis of humans and non-humans is humanity. This goes against the Western paradigm, which maintains that that which humans and non-humans have in common is 'nature'. (Viveiros de Castro interview, *supra*)

The 'animism' that Guattari claims to represent is not at all anthropomorphic, nor is it anthropocentric. The central concern is one of 'animism' which one could define as 'machinic', to recycle the terms of a discussion that we had with Eric Alliez. In Western philosophy there are traditions of thought (neo-platonic, monadological, from the infinitely small to the infinitely large – Leibniz, Tarde, etc.) which can coincide with the cosmologies of animist societies in certain places. Alliez remarked:

> Animism is present in the work of Deleuze before he meets Guattari. And it is a horizon, a totally expressionist category which participates in that which one could call, more globally, a universal vitalism. There, according to the neo-platonic tradition, everything breathes, and everything conspires in a global breath. This vitalism is visible in authors like Leibniz, but also in Spinoza across the general category of expression and expressionism . . . To my mind, what is going on in his collaboration with Guattari is that animism is no longer invested from an expressionist or vitalist point of view, but from a machinic point of view. And this changes everything, because it is necessary to understand once and for all 'how it works', and how it works in our capitalist world whose primary production is that of subjectivity. (Our interview, Paris, 2009)

What are we to understand by machinic animism? The concept of a machine (and later of assemblage), which allows Guattari and Deleuze to free themselves from the structuralist trap, is not a subgroup of technique. The machine, on the contrary, is a prerequisite of technique. In Guattari's 'cosmology' there are all sorts of machines: social machines, technological, aesthetic, biological, crystalline, etc.

To clarify the nature of the machine, he refers to the work of the biologist Francisco Varela who distinguishes two types of machines: allopoietic machines which produce things other than themselves, and autopoietic machines which continuously engender and specify their own assemblage. Varela reserves the autopoietic for the biological domain in reproducing the distinction between living and non-living which is at the foundation of the Western paradigm, whereas Guattari extends the term to social machines, technical machines, aesthetic machines, crystalline machines, etc.

In the universe there exist everywhere, with no distinction between living and non-living, 'non-discursive autopoietic kernels which engender their own development and their own rules and mechanics'. The autopoietic machinic asserts itself as the for-itself and the for-others, that is, non-human others. Guattari explains: 'The for-itself and the for-others cease being the privilege of humanity; they crystallize everywhere

that machinic interfaces engender disparity, and in return are founded by it' (1995: 109).

All over the Cosmos there exist becomings, haecceities and singularities. If they are not the expression of 'souls' or of 'minds', they are the expression of machinic assemblages. The disparities they create in variations have their own capacity for action and enunciation.

'For every type of machine we will pose a question, not about its vital autonomy – it's not an animal – but about its singular power of enunciation' (Guattari 1995: 34). Every machinic assemblage (technical, biological, social, etc.) once contained enunciative facilities, if only at the embryonic stage. It thus possessed a proto-subjectivity. There, too, like subjectivity, it is necessary to separate the singular power of the enunciation of the subject from the person and the human. This goes against our philosophical and political tradition that since Aristotle has made language and speech a unique and exclusive characteristic of man, the only animal which possesses language and speech.

Guattari, detaching himself completely from structuralism, goes on to elaborate an 'enlarged conception of enunciation' which permits the integration of an infinite number of substances of non-human expression like biological, technological or aesthetic coding or forms of assemblage unique to the socius.

The problem of assembling enunciation would no longer be specific to a semiotic register, but would cross over into expressive heterogeneous matter (extra-linguistic, non-human, biological, technological, aesthetic, etc.). Thus, in 'machinic animism', there is not a unique subjectivity embodied by the Western man –male and white – but one of 'heterogeneous ontological modes of subjectivity'. These partial subjectivities (human and non-human) assume the position of partial enunciators.

Additionally and most importantly, the expansion of enunciation and expression concerns artistic materials which the artist transforms into vectors of subjectification, in 'animist' autopoietic facilities. Guattari writes:

> The artist and more generally, aesthetic perception, detaches and deterritorializes a segment of the real in order to make it play the role of a partial enunciator. Art confers meaning and alterity to a subset of the perceived world. The consequence of this quasi-animist speech effect on the part of the artwork redrafts the subjectivity both of the artist and of his 'consumer'. (1995: 131)

Guattari's great friend and accomplice, artist Jean Jacques Lebel, on whom Jean Rouch's *Mad Masters* (*Les maîtres fous*), filmed in

Cameroon on the occasion of a society of witch doctors' trance ritual, 'left an indelible impact', was one of the first to emphasise the filiation between the thought of non-Western 'savages' and the 'savage' artists of the East.

Guattari was not only in the friendly company of anthropologists, who included Pierre Clastres of *Society Against the State*, but also artists who solicited the 'wild libertarian flux' of the unconscious and its intensities. Lebel comments:

> [This leads us] above all to the 'savage', to savage thought. Permanent and major influence. Thanks to Artaud and his Tarahumaras, thanks to the Surrealist gaze resting on magic art, and thanks to my father who turned me on (starting in childhood) to the art of primitive peoples, with respect to art that is radically different from that which is considered classic, I never considered Paris or New York, Rome or Berlin to be centres of the world. The intensity that comes from primitive art at its peak is the standard against which I judge what I like or what I do not like in Western art. (Jean Jacques Lebel, our interview, Paris, 2009)

Lebel's Direct Poetry provides a critique of the 'imperialism of the signifier' in 'blowing up language' and in carrying out an a-grammatical poetry that is 'beyond and beneath the verbal'. This is another theme that runs throughout Guattari's work: that of a-signifying, a-grammatical or a-syntactical semiotics. The privilege of speech has a profound political meaning. Not only have signifying and linguistic semiotics served as instruments of division between human and non-human, but also of hierarchisation, subordination and domination inside the human as well. All of the non-linguistic semiotics, such as those of archaic societies, the mentally ill, children, artists and minorities, were considered for a long time to be lacunar and inferior. It was only in the 1960s and 1970s that these non-linguistic modes of expression began to be appreciated for their major political role and for making up an experimental field of psychiatry, like at La Borde or as in the work of Fernand Deligny with the autistic 'savage children' and their a-signifying modes of expression:

> It was an obsession in all of the history of Western thought to define what was natural and what was not, to the point where people thought that if there was no spoken language, it was necessarily animal. Thus they forbade the 'savage children' who grew up among animals and without speech to express themselves with signs. People behaved in a similar fashion towards deaf people. For 100 years the Vatican forbade the use of sign language, though it is a language par excellence. (Barbara Glowczewski, our interview, Paris, 2009)

Polysemic trans-individual animist subjectivity does not constitute a 'vestige' or even a simple 'renaissance' of ritual ancestral practices in capitalist societies. It is also updated and activated as both a micro- and macro-political force which fuels the resistance and creativity of the 'dominated', as Suely Rolnik and Rosangela Araujo explain.

'Trans-individual polysemic animist' subjectivity uncovers the possibility of producing and enriching itself in societies such as that of Brazil (and, according to Guattari, in another way in Japan) by means of updated 'animist' rituals. This fascinated Guattari. The Capoeira and the Candomblé, as described by Araujo, known as 'Janja' (our interview, Salvador de Bahia, 2009), a master of Capoeira Angola, are mechanisms of production and singularisation of subjectivity that renew themselves and use semiotic symbols of the body, dance, postures and gestures to speak the language of Guattari, as well as a-signifying semiotics such as rhythms, music and so on.

The function of speech is not discursive but existential. With other semiotics and with no privileged role, it helps bring about the '*mise en existence*' or the production of existential territories. In these practices, the fluctuations of signs act upon real fluctuations without the mediation of representation, of the individual subject and its consciousness. In a remark by Guattari on the subject of ritual, we find, as if in a mirror, his entire concept of the collective (or machinic) assemblage of enunciation and the power of the non-metaphorical use of signs and words:

> primitive 'magic' is illusory. This is how ethnologists see it. Primitive peoples are *realists*, not mystics. The imaginary and the symbolic are real. No backwaters. Everything extends into everything else. No break – separation. The Bambara does not imitate, does not use metaphors, does not index. Its dance and its mask are a full sign, a total sign that is at the same time representation and production, i.e. transduction. It doesn't watch the performance impotently. It is itself, collectively, the scene, the spectator, the stage, the dog, etc. This is a sign that is connected to reality. Or rather a sign such that there is no break between reality and the imaginary mediated by a symbolic 'order'. No break between gesture, speech, writing, music, dance, war, men, gods, the sexes, etc.' (Guattari 2006: 258)

Thus there are possible echoes and cross-checks between updated ancestral rituals in contemporary capitalism and machinic assemblages, as was discussed by anthropologist Barbara Glowczewski who worked with Guattari. Rituals like collective enunciation mechanisms produce the body as they manufacture an enunciation. But in one case as in others, it is not a question of anthropomorphic productions. The

'collectivity', as Glowczewski reminds us, is irreducible to a human grouping, it is other than belonging to inter-subjectivity or simply to the social: 'If people are interested in Félix today, it is precisely because he defines subjectivity by assemblages according to which humans are just as soon with other humans as with collectivities, with concepts, with animals, objects, as with machines . . . ' (Glowczewski interview, *supra*).

The ritual, like assemblage, is a machine that concomitantly determines the action of the cosmic and molecular fluctuations, of real and virtual forces, of sensible affects and corporeal affects, and of incorporeal entities such as myths and universes of references. These rituals and these cultural practices produce a subjectivity not based in identity that is becoming, since 'the process is more important than the result' (Araujo interview, *supra*). This is reminiscent of the process-driven concept of the assemblage of activity in Guattari's work.

As through art as Guattari understands it (and which constitutes for Eduardo Viveiros de Castro an authorised reserve for 'savage thought', providing that it does not transgress assigned boundaries), ritual pierces the chaosmosis, bringing us back to the point of subjectivity's emergence, to the condition of the creation of the new. 'Art is, for Guattari, the most powerful means of putting into practice some aspect of the chaosmosis' (Polack interview, *supra*), to plunge beneath the subject/object division and to reload the real with 'possibles'. These indigenous cultures of the Americas do not represent a simple survival of ancestral practices that are doomed to extinction. They do not constitute a simple quest for the improbable 'African' identity in the face of the reality of slavery and the social inequalities in Brazil. These processes of subjectification are actualised through the use of the myth (and, for Guattari, mythograms – from Leninism to Maoism – are indispensable in any process of subjectivisation) of an Africa that never existed: 'It is a reinvented Africa, an Africa before slavery, where men and women are free, in order to be propelled into a future of liberty and autonomy for all' (Araujo interview, *supra*). What fascinated and intrigued Guattari during his numerous voyages to Brazil and Japan was not only the power of practices like the Candomblé ('passed on more or less directly from the African cultural heritage, which [is] now escaping [its] original ghettoization and spreading throughout society' [Guattari 1996: 105]), but also the meaning and the political function of these modes of subjectification.

For Rolnik, these practices contain a 'popular knowledge of the unconscious which is very strong and very effective' (Suely Rolnik, our interview, Brazil, 2009). If they play a major role in the elaboration of

the trauma of slavery in a 'beyond post-colonial' situation, they can and should play a major political role.

If there are hierarchical class divisions at the macro-political level in Brazil which seem insurmountable, at the micro-political level this 'questioning of' and 'this other politics of subjectivisation' cross the same divisions and class hierarchies and circulate and diffuse into the population as a whole, through bodies. According to Rolnik, the richness of the micro-political dimension expresses all of its power when it assembles with the macro dimension, as has occurred at certain moments in Brazilian history (1968, the beginning of the 1980s . . .). The valorisation of this 'production of other subjectivity' has a long history in Brazil, since the 'anthropophagic' manifesto of the 1920s had already legitimised it.

Guattari was particularly attentive to all of the modes of production of subjectivity that recharge themselves in non-Western traditions, since the primary production in contemporary capitalism is the production of subjectivity. This production, having never been 'natural', means we have things to learn about these practices if we are to be capable of updating them for contemporary capitalism: 'Archaic societies are better armed than white, male capitalist subjectivities in charting the multivalence [of alterity]' (Guattari 1995: 45).

For a reversal of history, science will force us deeper and deeper into an animist world: 'Every time science discovers new things, the world of the living gets bigger . . . It is obviously a thought problem. The certitude of knowing what is living and what is not continues to shift . . . we are in an animist problematic, of the soul, of animation . . . ' (Polack interview, *supra*). It is not only the evolution of science, but the development of capitalism itself which forces us to an 'animist' thinking and politics:

> That which appears natural to us – springs, rocks – are loaded with history for the aboriginal peoples, who practice forms of totemism, and are thus cultural and non-natural . . . There are those here among us who function this way even more today than in the past, because we have less and less apprehension regarding what is natural, while the category that philosophy contributed to setting up opposes humans to untouched nature. And the greater the desire was to leave it untouched, the more it was developed. This sort of opposition no longer really makes any sense. The nature/culture opposition nevertheless constricts our thinking a great deal. It is still our paradigm, since we continue to fantasise about natural peoples, natural environments, about the fact that we must preserve nature. And as much as we think this way, I think we are wrong when it comes to the solutions to be found for the different problems. For example, the question of the environment is not really about protecting

> nature by stopping pollution. On the contrary, it is necessary to invest it with new forms of assemblages and cultural mechanisms. (Glowczewski interview, *supra*)

But, as in archaic societies, one cannot imagine an ecology of nature without simultaneously considering an ecology of the mind and of the social. One must then update a cosmic thinking, where 'soul' and 'machine' exist everywhere concurrently: in the infinitely small as in the infinitely large. The three ecologies of Guattari, leaving behind the parcelling of reality and subjectivity, reacquaint us with the conditions of possibility of a cosmic thinking and politics.

Note

1. Revised by Gary Genosko.

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Play as an Affective Field for Activating Subjectivity: Notes on *The Machinic Unconscious*

F. J. Colman

Abstract

How often does an interest or pleasure in your life become something that has to be managed, given a hierarchical position amongst other tasks, and thus becomes a chore alongside other chores? When content and possibility are stripped by scheduling and the demands of capitalist required labour mean that free play or time required for speculative and/or creative thought is removed in the interests of deadlines, what happens to the compassionate, generous and intimate functioning of thought and life? This paper considers how Guattari argues that subjectivities are produced and organised by what he describes as machinic assemblages. Machinic assemblages are those aspects of life that operate to regulate the affective powers of life. Guattari's work on activities such as art making, game play, music and performance provides ways to consider the labour of subjectivity outside of work. I ask the reader to consider what the notion and motivation for play signal. Arguing that a singular life at play is the collective event of play, I describe play as a mediatising form for the production of subjectivity. The play field situates and directs the machinic assemblage of subjectivation through its own forms of mediatisation.

Keywords: mediatisation, affect, play, work, aesthetic, machinic unconscious, subjectivation

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> In the final days of 1977 the movie *Saturday Night Fever* showed a new working class, happy to be exploited all week long, in exchange for some fun in the disco.
>
> (Berardi 2009: 27)

What are your motivations to stop work and play? The answer to this question depends on a number of factors: how do you define work and what motivates you? What is enjoyment? And what is play? All things are controlled and determined by aspects of the societies to which you and your collective culture are bound. Abstractly, we can observe some things about play: whatever technological medium it uses and whatever (a-)rhythmic, algorithmic or aleatory structures direct it, play is one of the enjoyments of life. Play is fun. Play is productive and destructive of existing categories of normativity; play messes with epistemologies. Play is essential for healthful mental and physical life, providing as it does an intensive concentration upon singular, and not routine task, requiring team as well as individual participation. Play may be repetitious, but its many modalities offer a range of extensions, distractions, commentaries, and existential and aesthetic redirection of current events that surround and engulf the subject. The processual nature of play provides its hermetic intensity. *A singular life at play is the collective event of play.* However, as play remains tethered to its cultural allowances, we must be careful not to posit some utopic originary fixed notion of play, yet alterity can be achieved by play in many instances. To consider motivation, under the post-industrial conditions of world capitalism, is to consider the complex determinations of collective and individual subjectivity. Of enjoyment, we might note that this is an idealised, contentious and often commercialised emotive response that is modelled by different value paradigms, dependent upon what value or what some articulate as 'truth' systems are subscribed to. No matter what modelled behaviour is positioned by a system, its determined direction must be motivated; moved in some direction by some affective force. How do we articulate the strange and different modes of intensity and affect that organise people under those enormous, unstoppable sovereign entities into the broad paradigms of work and play? Propelling motivation are different forms of energy, which we can characterise broadly as inevitably entropic, yet creative of different and as yet unknown entities. In addition, when one enters either the affective or political dimensions of *motivation*, then the epistemic, energetic and social mediation of bodies are also of consideration.

The motivations for play are many: relaxation, avoidance, protest, simulation, modelling, puzzle solving, role play, entertainment and

so on. Each and more of these have qualifiers that direct the nuances of the play; even abstractions are subject to the organisers of subjectivity, or what Guattari describes as the 'machinic unconscious' of *subjectivation* – genetic, chemical, sexual, tactical, implicit, explicit, political, cultural, formal, historical, familial (2011: 12, 19, 39; Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 130ff.). Above all, forms of play provide encounters with new things, new materials, new ideas, new positions. In connecting with other things – whether imaginary, tangible, auditory, visual, tactile, etc. – play forms *mediatise* subjectivity through this encounter, which in its affect of plus one substance or idea, something must change, consolidate, dissipate, alter.

I. No Subject; Just Subjectivation

'The machinic production of subjectivity', writes Guattari (1995a: 5), 'can work for the better or for the worse . . . . At best there is the creation, or invention, of new Universes of reference, at worst there is the deadening influence of the mass media to which millions are currently condemned.' Guattari's development of the diagrammatisation of the 'machinic unconscious' enables critique of the collective machinic structures of given groups. Why do some groups of people work and play less than others? What motivates similar groups to increase their work or play time? Individual and institutional perception of the world and of living is directed by the images and language of collective structures; the determination of forms of capitalism. Guattari's thinking about exactly how capitalism exerts its immanent and ever-intensive direction of the collective machinic unconscious provides methods that illuminate the affective politics at work in the organisation of things – from different modes of work required for capitalism's desires; for the desires of the controlling powers, as well as the range of leisure activities also required for capitalism's progress.

In working to dismantle psychoanalytic and structuralist conceptions of the structure of the unconscious, Guattari's aim was to demonstrate how a *molecular revolution* – a revolt against power – is only possible if we collectively understand how the machinic unconscious operates. Guattari argues that subjectivities are organised by all kinds of machinic assemblages, which are those aspects of life that operate to regulate the affective powers of life (Guattari 1984, 2011; Watson 2009: 55).

Guattari qualifies the unconscious with the term 'machinic', as he says, in order 'to stress that [the unconscious] is populated not only with images and words, but also with all kinds of machinisms that lead it

to produce and reproduce these images and words' (2011: 10). While different kinds of *machines* have 'singular' and 'specific enunciative consistency' (Guattari 1995a: 34), the *machinic* details a collective enunciation of power, is a complex structure, and is not to be confused with the term 'mechanism' (although mechanical things are not excluded from becoming part of a machinic structure) (2011: 342, n.15). Guattari describes the general largess of the collective machinic unconscious as 'something that we drag around with ourselves both in our gestures and daily objects, as well as on TV, that is part of the zeitgeist, and even, and perhaps especially, in our day-to-day problems' (2011: 10). Throughout his writings, Guattari uses the word machine in various ways and coupled with other terms, but contextually uses it in order to ascribe the varieties of the *affective workings* of machinic structures and the things constituted within and by these machines (see Guattari 1995a: 33–57). His critique of the machinic unconscious provides a new description of the economic systems at work in capitalism, and the aesthetic correlations that different abstract machines facilitate, and in political terms, the desired mediatisation of all bodies within that group or community.

While we can collate the 'for the better or for the worse' that Guattari addresses of the terms of the machinic production of subjectivity, it is the possibility for creative change, and the conditions required for molecular revolution, that I am interested to address here, through a focus on the machinic aesthetic of play. As I have argued previously, Guattari's work in the area of mass media provides us with tools for thinking about the ways in which subjectivation processes occur (Colman 2008a: 69–70). Within those processes lie the creative domains of art making; a mode that enables existence to be realised in terms of its social or a communal value that is not always for the purposes of capital accumulation – despite its inevitable co-option by some marketplace.

Guattari's work on what aesthetic activities – such as art making, game play, music, performance – can provide for thinking about the terms of subjectivity are significant. As distinct from 'economic, social, religious or political' spheres (Guattari 1995a: 99), the fields of aesthetics (and here we may include things and forms that offer ways of connecting with other things – sensorial, spiritual, sexual, ritual, ecological) incorporates all epistemologies and/or experiences that require some type of mediating platform to facilitate or 'crystallise' aspects of subjectivity (for example, through thinking or activity) (Guattari 1995a: 98). Guattari describes many of the affective outcomes of what happens when you join the technicalities of technological platforms with other

types of platforms that are themselves not at all technological (Guattari 1995b). He observes, 'One creates new modalities of subjectivity in the same way that an artist creates new forms from the palette' (1995a: 7). In the sense that Guattari is attendant to the possibilities of modelling, Janell Watson is right in characterising Guattari's work as precisely being concerned with the perceptual account of the affective aspects of self-awareness of the world's processual nature (Watson 2009: 56). Guattari describes how a schizoanalytic metamodelisation can counter the range of the affects of repressive machinery upon subjectivity (1995a: 58–63). To detail aspects of the terms of the 'modelling' of subjectivity (which refer to the larger determining factors of life – ecological, militaristic, familial, genetic, biological, cultural), I am using the notion of 'mediatisation'. In this sense, I hope to retain the inferences of modelling larger universal referents upon subjectivity (see Genosko and Murphie 2008), and enable the position for detailing of the processual aspects of subjectivity by its *connection* within its collective mediatised universes of reference – as these differ across communities. Guattari's insistence on connections as opposed to determinations situates his work for media philosophies interested in process, such as Franco Berardi (2009: 27), who notes that moments of play operate as reward for labour.

In media theories of the mass media, the term 'mediatisation' is applied to describe the political controls that mass media forms take (cf. Castells 2001; Hjarvard 2008; Lundby 2009). To consider how this process works, I am engaging Guattari's machinic unconscious to articulate how mediatisation can connect with anything. Replacing the Lacanian 'unconscious' with the 'machinic unconscious', Guattari describes life as a processual dynamic, bound by continuums of heterogeneous, polytemporal and cosmic components, not bound by linguistic signifiers of the old psychoanalytic 'the unconscious is structured like a language' type configurations. In the psychiatric terms of Guattari's view, the Lacanian 'unconscious' describes an archaic structure, whereas the machinic unconscious allows Guattari to sketch out the complexities of systems that will direct consciousness and subjectivity. Images and descriptors of things are not the only determining factors, but operate along with the social and political 'machinisms' that direct the aesthetic of any given society into being able to understand, and 'see' the nature of the thing (Guattari 2011: 10).

What are the functions of play within and for those subjectivation processes that Guattari details? As I described in the opening of this article, play is an abstracted field, dynamic, with transversal movements creating different outcomes for subjectivity, limited only by the scope

of the play design and game structure. Yet, play offers a processual modality where, as in processes of making art or doing work, a political determination of aesthetic preferences for living is activated – whether through force, social design, or by machinic choices that alter according to definitions of labour forms, such as 'play-bour' (Moore 2010: 27). Play is one of work's dialectic paradigms; it is a counter movement to the capitalist-determined work-ethic, and thus contributes to the territoriality of the symbolic field that Guattari, and Deleuze and Guattari describe as a field that is productive of the machinic unconscious. Hence, the play field situates and directs the machinic assemblage through its own forms of mediatisation.

To speculate on the operative functions that media of all forms enable reorients subjectivity through the uncoupling of normative subject mediatisation from historicised roles into different mediatising fields. Entering into either states of work and/or play, a platform for subjectivity is entered – a polytemporal, polyhistorical and collective platform for Being. Its features are defined by its contemporaneous media technologies: printing press, spinning jenny, thaumatrope, cinématographe, wireless sensor-modal reactive data player, digital sound recorder, iPad. In addition to the technological platform is the determination of the expression of content as selected, focused and framed by the technology deployed. Technology and content affect the ontology of each, in turn affecting the modes of collective subjectivity, the results of which form a complex mediatised field (as a political and aesthetic refrain). Looking to the modes of 'machinic interface' that direct subjectivity with 'orders' of 'proto-subjectivity' (Guattari 1995a: 8), we can consider the operations of work and/or play within this field, and identify the catalytic affects of the mediatisation of material.

The mediatisation to which I refer here engages the non-materialist agency of the machinic production of subjectivation as and within the collective unconscious that Guattari outlined (Guattari 2011: 9–22). There are two key avenues that mediatisation takes, first, through the materiality of the technological platform, and second, through the types of schematisation of information and experiences. Things do not require a material body to be real; ideas can have tangible affects the same way that a pop song, or a hacked credit card can have affects. Mediatisation thus engages the materialist propositions and the conceptual, or idealist movements through machinic interfaces, all of which carry degrees of affectivity. Media affects determine somatic responses to the sovereignty of capitalism's call to work; to liberal education; to be submissive to capitalism's forms of control of minority

and favouritism for difference that can be exploited. Media affects manifest as reactive, inventive, sounds, signals, pain or stimuli, and are perhaps more noticeable when routines, or concentration are interrupted or augmented. For Guattari, there is no aesthetic distinction to be drawn with the types of mediatisation of subjectivation by the structures of the machinic unconscious, but I see the terms of machinic mediatisation as referring more accurately to a breadth of machinic aesthetics, of which the machinic unconscious is but one component. The machinic aesthetics of the realised forms of any subjectivation are recognisable through its historical form or situation.

In thinking of specific applications – art, playforms, games – mediatisation fixes points within chaos. [*Writing/speaking/reading these words.*] These are not spatial points, they are affective points to which temporal structures are attributed through the discernment of speeds of movement, in order for structures to be formed through normative consistencies. Those affective points have within them their own ontological immanence, perhaps recognisable, perhaps as yet undetermined. These affect points are positioned by media platforms that provide temporal consistency (writing, radio waves, motion sensor technologies, visual and audio screens, mobile screens, art forms, medications, stimulants), diagrammatise experience, and frame real events of the world, directing information and attention to material and implicit things in the world – war, water, food, drugs, love, satisfaction, time, work and play.

II. Machinic Mediatisation

In the first section of *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari title a section 'the subject and enjoyment' (1983: 16–22). What they discuss in this section is how it is the pursuit of the intensive quantities of *energy* involved and engaged through any processes of consumption of material or existential experience that is the 'motive force' for a subject's unconscious (17). What are the motive forces for work and play? What determines the level and direction of energy to be ascribed to a process?

Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus* diary charts his daily process of writing – *as work* for Deleuze; the ways in which various machinic operators extol him to be 'productive', to be 'professional', and to expend energy in ways that are accountable by his social system. Speculating on his anxieties about producing texts and keeping his diaries that were then sent to Deleuze to be massaged into the philosophical texts that comprise their first collaborative book *Anti-Oedipus*, Guattari writes that he

is: 'Writing so that I won't die. Or so that I die otherwise . . . Deleuze is concerned that I'm not producing anymore . . . I'm home kind of fucking around' (Guattari 2006: 399). He then describes himself, that he is not suited to the task at hand and is, in fact: 'a do-it-yourself guy, a sort of Jules Verne – *Voyage to the Centre of the Earth*. In my own way I don't stop . . . But you can't tell. It's the work of never-ending reverie. Lots of ambitious plans. Everything in my head, nothing in the pocket. Epiphany' (399–400).

Mediatisation fixes temporal points for history. Capitalism's history of [media/art/material/excess] objects displays the affective movements of power of this history (hierarchies of race and gender, obsessions, fetishes, desires). Guattari is suffering under his own mediatisation through the demands of the writing machine, which requires product. Product is at odds with process, the latter being the way that life naturally progresses when not under enforced determining machinic outcomes, required for life under capitalism. Of work, Guattari noted how the industrial manifesto perverts the sense of being human, with its party line of 'sado-masochistic enticement[s]' (Guattari 1984: 190). Of play, or pertaining to the intensity that play offers, Deleuze and Guattari describe the intensive refrain: 'Voyage in place: that is the name of all intensities, even if they develop in extension' (1987: 482). Through Guattari's thesis of the machinic unconscious, we can see that the influences of the machines of one's times are what constitute the collective of which one is a part.

Guattari's aesthetic direction provides a paradigmatic shift for thinking about subjective assemblage within the social system – no matter what processual type of mediatisation or institutionalisation runs that system. In developing his accounts of the processes of abstract machines, Guattari situates the territorial nature of subjectivity through the relationships generated between and amongst what Watson describes as 'the evolution of technology and the production of actual machines' (Watson 2009: 128).

While the evolution of technology can be described in its historical, material terms – from the other-worldly realms, the creation of aesthetic paradigms, to their use in the vernacular world, the portability of information and modes and speeds of communicative technologies – it is the 'production of actual machines' that is not so readily accounted for. For the machines that Guattari describes belong to the affective realm of the world – and the energies by which they move are not all tied to power grids, electrical batteries, radio waves and antennae – as their components are epistemological, and contingent, and their platform

accessibility controlled by the precarious movements and foci of political capital. According to Guattari, 'a heap of stones is not a machine, whereas a wall is already a static proto-machine, manifesting virtual polarities, an inside and outside, an above and below, a right and left' (1995a: 42). Guattari further qualifies: 'These diagrammatic virtualities take us beyond Varela's characterization of machinic autopoiesis as unitary individuation, with neither input nor output; they direct us towards a more collective machinism without delimited unity, whose autonomy accommodates diverse mediums of alterity' (42).

One key aspect for media theory and philosophy is to account for ontological change after mediatisation – the rock is modelled into a wall which may be reterritorialised for political ends, or for aesthetic ends, each of which is consolidated through their respective mediatising refrains (fields of play/work/militarisation) for collective subjectivities. Mediatisation is a paradigm that we see affecting all dimensions of life (in the Spinozist sense of affect, where a change occurs between two or more bodies after an encounter [Deleuze 1988]), in the same way we speak of paradigms of domesticity, institutionalisation or game world paradigms. There is an affective, behavioural economy at work in such paradigms.

In relation to cinema, Deleuze describes the sense of how such points of change might be considered as perception-images, that are the result of action and affection-images, or vectorial fields that arise from affective movements, and thus in some cases contributing to images of thought (Deleuze 1989: 130; Colman 2011: 115–16). However, for Guattari, thought is the result of an entirely different process. In their final conception of the image of thought, described in their final collaborative book *What is Philosophy?*, Guattari's work on abstract machines through the 1970s provides the theoretical support, in defining their manifesto statements on what constitutes philosophy (Guattari 2011: 9–22). In *What is Philosophy?*, Guattari's earlier terms of the machinic unconscious emerge as the abstract machine or immanent plane where the image of thought is in movement, but mediated according to the kinds of machinisms that produce them, and the activating points that define singular modes of the thought of subjectivity.

In *What is Philosophy?*, Deleuze and Guattari organise the larger structures of the world into three arenas for thinking – planes of philosophy, planes of science, planes of aesthetics – but under the terms of mediatisation that I'm proposing here, these three areas are in fact not at all necessary in order to think machinic subjectivity. Rather, the movement of that plane of immanence that orients subjectivity's

intuitions about the world is prephilosophical, as Deleuze and Guattari argue, and does not require concepts in order to be described (1994: 41). Deleuze and Guattari propose the plane of immanence as an abstract machine, in contrast to concepts that are described as concrete assemblage machines. The plane of immanence is extensive, a horizon of events where 'elements of the plane are diagrammatic features, whereas concepts are intensive features' (39). Concepts are:

> absolute surfaces or volumes, formless and fragmentary, whereas the plane is the formless, unlimited absolute, neither surface nor volume but always fractal... concepts pave, occupy, or populate the plane bit by bit... the plane of immanence is not a concept that is or can be thought but rather the image of thought, the image that gives itself of what it means to think, to make use of thought, to find one's bearings in thought. It is not a method, since every method is concerned with concepts and presupposes such an image... Neither is it a state of knowledge on the brain and its functioning... Thought demands 'only' movement that can be carried to infinity... (1994: 36–7)

So, although they describe how an immanent plane works to autoproduce affective thought, Deleuze and Guattari's account does not adequately accommodate how in fact the results of mediatisation have redetermined that plane of immanence where thought is enabled; by media affects caused through mediatisation. A movement of the infinite requires that a slightly different account be articulated. Guattari's a-logic of the machinic unconscious provides the focus of this plane of immanence where mediatised subjectivity is under process.

III. Mediatised Affect

The immanent nature of machinic interface mediatises human consciousness with conditionally produced forms. Mediatisation both produces and occurs through the different types of machinic interface, creating different types of affects. This media affect has been historically charted as instances where encounters with new technologies and/or media forms have generated different types of emotive and/or creative and/or negative responses. Reports of new technologies – from the invention of the calculus to the neutrino, from gothic horror fantasy to vessels for space travel – describe the dual emotions of wonderment and fear at the inferences of the future. Different types of alterations of the world by media forms are charted in media archaeologies (see Huhtamo and Parikka 2011; Goddard and Parikka 2011) that describe

the histories of such affective moments. But there are distinctions to be drawn between affects and the technological platforms that produced them. As Jeffrey Sconce (2011: 71) is careful to point out, the psychiatric diagnosis of 'technical delusion' for symptoms where subjects are directed and controlled by electronic media forms has its foundation in end of nineteenth-century power paradigms, rather than in specific technological platforms. In other words, while we might be able to name the singular technology, or historical form, together with its material components, we are advised to consider the affective structures that enabled the paradigmatic history of that thing to come into being; this instead of that; one object holding value over another; my body enslaved, incarcerated or encased in cloth of gold, and holding power – these differences are politically determined.

Guattari's theory of the *machinic unconscious* does not so much describe how mediatisation occurs, but in describing the collective – and not individual – affects of such structures, he provides a graphic account of what the processes are that come to constitute and enable the affects of 'all kinds of machinisms' (2011: 10). These 'machinisms' include all of the institutional mechanisms Guattari's work highlighted and fought against – the repressive affective powers of the normative models imposed upon existential subjectivity through the codified familial and work institutions within their contemporaneous social and legal systems. Guattari outlines the movement of these affective qualifiers in his diagrams (many of which resemble board or chalk games), and in their forms open new refrains (Guattari 2011: 175; 180; see discussion in Watson 2009; on game structure see Colman 2008b). Given Guattari's critique of the machinic unconscious, and his discussions around the ways in which this unconscious works to processually direct subjectivisation, his work thus provides a catalytic contribution to both the historicisation and speculative theorisation undertaken not only in studies of Guattari (Genosko 2002), Deleuze and Guattari (Stivale 1998; Alliez 2004; Zepke 2005; Lampert 2006) and Guattari in the context of French philosophy (Watson 2009), but also in the media studies disciplines of media theory (Wardip-Fruin and Montfort 2003: 405–6; Genosko and Murphie 2008), media ecologies (Fuller 2005; O'Sullivan and Zepke 2008; Alliez and Goffey 2011), media archaeology (Huhtamo and Parikka 2011; Goddard and Parikka 2011) and in the mediatisation of revolution (Berardi 2008, 2009).

Post-Guattari, a critical look at the affects produced through mediatisation considers the internal conditions of a structure and displays the movement of any given structure, as it alters its dimensions.

The *affective workings* of different machines are productive of different ontological dimensions. The machinic mediatisation of life incorporates systems that feed collective and individual desire. Formless and formed, we can collate the areas of collective content from which Guattari developed his thinking: psychiatry, drugs, Kafka, homosexuality, relationships of the collaborative and conjugal couplings, war and aesthetic machines (Guattari 1984; Genosko 2011). This machinic affect is the wind that blows the dry head of the dandelion plant and carries its seeds into the neighbour's plot. That machinic affect is the deliberate planting of a bomb by militant groups, timed to detonate in the midst of civilians. This machinic affect is fucking about at home, playing games.

Mediatisation fixes points within chaos – through abstract machines, and we can call them fields of play. Their political and aesthetic determination feeds into the collective unconscious of their time, and of the possible future state of the collective, machinically determined field. It is a machinic territory, argues Guattari, because of the relativity arising through movements of reterritorialisation and deterritorialisation (2011: 11–12). Structured affects are used to organise bodies politically – this is Guattari's argument in his discussion of the machinic unconscious. Watson (2009: 56) describes this unconscious in terms of the 'sociopolitical sphere' and 'the perception of the world' but here I am extending 'perception' to infer the breadth of machinic mediatisation. In their work, Deleuze and Guattari are interested to describe a certain kind of processual thinking about life; how a life is made is in fact, that life. This is a truism that any socially active person already knows about; namely, what are the factors that come to hold something together, or rip it apart?

What motivates you to work or play? The factors that comprise machinic mediatisation include consideration of what are the multiple dimensions to thinking about how a situation, an environment, a particular timeframe, an organisation and biological factors of existence can come together – or not – and provide the means by which these factors might achieve or deny various degree of function in relation to the larger organisation in which they operate. The consolidation of motivation is through a politically determined normative dynamic that 'planes of consistency' demarcate as refrains of subjectivity (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 328, 333; Guattari 2011: 11). The components of Guattari's diagrammatic organisation(s) of subjectivity appear deterministic in their systematicity, yet he is insistent on rejecting any form of structural determination when one considers that such organisations are never static – walls require maintenance or

they crumble (1984: 114). The power matrix from which Guattari draws upon is historically situated in 1970s politics where labour forms are gender and ethnically hierarchised, and where better public access to the scale and variety of governmental mismanagement and economic mistakes reveals them to a larger number of people through the medium of television (this is the era of the first televisation of a war – the twenty-year Vietnam war conflict, 1950–70). Yet as Guattari reproduces certain aspects of those structures (the aporic diagrams), his work enables a measure of sight of them in a way that situates their deterministic moulding of subjects and makes their mediatising affects all the more apparent. Guattari describes what allows the molecular affects to be detailed. The media machinic where the processual nature of mediatisation arises can be anything:

> At a particular point in history desire becomes focalized in the totality of structures; I suggest that for this we use the general term 'machine': it could be a new weapon, a new production technique, a new set of religious dogmas, or such major new discoveries as the Indies, relativity, or the moon. (1984: 117)

From a universalising process of the production of a collective subjectivity, a description of subjectivity's own field of play allows an 'extract' from the world (Guattari 2011: 12). Play, like art, is a creative processual activity, and in this activity, subjective alterity can be sited.

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. . . And . . . and . . . and . . . The Transversal Politics of Performative Encounters

Anja Kanngieser

Abstract

This paper examines Guattari's notion of transversality through a creative and ambiguous form of political intervention, the performative encounter. Drawing from Guattari's work on subject groups, in combination with Deleuze's conjunctive '*and*', via contemporary theorisations of creative activism and affect, it maps out a movement that destabilises categorical dualisms between activists and non-activists, artists and non-artists. It proposes that transversals such as those enacted by the performative encounter open spaces for the emergence of new subjectivities, relations and worlds. In doing so it critically extends Guattari's conceptualisations of political organisation, group subjectivation and aesthetics into radical political terrains that are antagonistic of the nation-state and capital at the same time as being affirmative of possible present and future conditions.

Keywords: transversality, performative encounter, aesthetics, activism, affect

> We can no longer separate the prospect of revolutionary challenge from a collective assumption of responsibility for daily life and a full acceptance of desire at every level of society.
>
> (Guattari 1984: 272)

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> A certain form of 'politics for politicians' seems destined to be eclipsed by a new type of social practice better suited both to issues of a very local nature and to the global problems of our era.
>
> (Guattari 1995: 121)

Questions of politics infused the work and life of Félix Guattari. They were very particular articulations of politics, however. For Guattari, the political was always bound to processes and forces of subjectivation, organisation and desire (Guattari and Rolnik 2008); a position that was often neglected in the logistical and psycho-corporeal operations of the institutions and groups he was embedded within and witness to. In his early work on the clinic Guattari began to develop a concept of transversality related to subject groups that was to later inform his theoretical and practical experiments in revolutionary organising. Critical of crystallisations of organisational power and fixed role hierarchies, he proposed that a transversal movement, which would be achieved 'when there is a maximum communication among different levels and, above all, in different meanings' (1984: 18), could fracture tendencies toward reification. In this movement, he argued, space is opened for the self-determined engendering of collective and singular subjects. This is why transversality was seen to be the 'ideal limit of all activity' (Bosteels 2001: 156).

Guattari's vectoral approach challenged the strictures of the totalising 'militant' circles and the psychotherapeutic settings in which he moved. He found one prototype for the subject group in the early radical practices of the Situationist *enragés*. It is from within such practices that a radical political potential for the transversal unfolds.

This paper will examine the transversal through one such practice, what I refer to as a performative encounter:[1] a collective, creative articulation that is inherently political in its focus (in this configuration, having a militant engagement and critical relationship to the nation-state, law and bureaucratic repressive apparatuses); that uses tactics of humour and play, hoaxing and faking; that is ambiguous in identity (taking place in realms or contexts disassociated from orthodox aesthetic and political activity); that is dedicated to activating new relations between people, and is affirmative of autonomous and convivial ways of living and being.[2] It focuses specifically on some of the ways in which the mobile nature of the encounter makes visible the compositions of subjects through the formation of subject groups, transversal identities and categories, and affective worlds. I begin by introducing two performative encounters of collective appropriation (or

collective stealing, occupying and re-claiming) launched by the German Umsonst (for free) campaigns. I then turn to Guattari's early readings of transversality and subject groups to illustrate how the organisation of the encounter gives rise to new modes of relating, followed by Deleuze and Guattari's conceptualisation of the conjunctive *and* to argue for the encounter as a mechanism for the production of transversal subjectivities. Because the encounter is understood as a world-making *dispositif*, the affective political spaces and relations it constitutes must be included; by bringing a discourse of affect into an exploration of the performative encounter, the spatial and temporal geographies of the encounter's mobilisation can also be considered.

I. A Performative Encounter of Collective Appropriation

> A performative encounter is a multidimensional event that creates subjects.
> (Rosello 2005: 2)

> The positing of the new cannot be anything else but the positing of different modes of exercising and articulating social powers . . . we need to extend the realm of commons in more and more spheres of our social doing, at any scale of social action, to. . . run our lives as free social individuals.
> (De Angelis 2007: 12)

> We don't want to make reforms and we don't want to beg, all we want to do is to say: not like this! Now we will take what we want: fun, culture and life.
> (Berlin Umsonst in Kanngieser forthcoming)

In 2003 the network Berlin Umsonst (Berlin for Free) launched Nulltarif in protest against public transportation fare increases, which saw counteraction through the mass distribution of forged train and bus tickets. In 2005 the more sustained campaign of Pinker Punkt was instigated. Responding to repeated fare increases and the restructuration of the student discount card, Pinker Punkt encouraged commuters to travel for free collectively. The name 'pinker punkt' was strategically conceived as a way to dislocate and queer the racist and criminal connotations from practices of 'schwarzfahren'/riding black or fare evading. On designated days commuters on various Berlin lines were met at the platform by people carrying large pink circular signs. These marked aggregation points for collective travel. Each group had participants that were informed of their legal rights and equipped to deal with state repression. Commuters on the trains were told what was happening and why, and were invited to take part. Over its

duration, each collective journey attracted anywhere between three to fifty participants.[3]

In 2004, the MoMA came to Berlin. Dismayed by the exorbitant entry costs and long queues, avoidable only for VIPs, Berlin Umsonst launched the MoMA Umsonst action. The first part of the campaign involved Umsonst participants donning suits, distributing fake entry tickets and successfully entering the exhibit for free. Following this, over two thousand posters were printed closely resembling the official MoMA advertising, stating in German, Turkish and English that on 17 April the MoMA would be open to all. The campaign received citywide media coverage, and on the day between four to five hundred people were in attendance. As the 'activists' were visually ambiguous, dressed in suits and smart clothing, a media furore ensured; reporters were uncertain whom to target for interviews and commentary. This destabilisation of identity also displaced the force of state apparatuses, for it was unclear whom to charge for instigating the event. As one of the constituents explained, 'in Berlin at these large rallies, somehow the police are always managing to beat people up . . . fun makes it more difficult for them . . . You dance around and confuse the police, who can never be quite sure: is this a political action or a cultural action? It's good to break down these clear divisions' (Eshelman 2005).

'Alles für alle, und zwar umsonst/everything for everyone, and for free': this was the influential slogan that accompanied the Umsonst campaigns, which arose from the European radical left in 2003 as an atypical form of 'activism' employing creative gestures of resistance, participation and liberation through direct action. Enacting encounters of collective appropriation inspired by a long tradition of auto-reduction and refusal (Virno 1996; Tronti 1980; Negri 1984; Cleaver 1992), Umsonst was a critical response to the precariousness of everyday life and labour, one aspect of which was manifest through the increased costs and privatisation of public services, spaces and cultural resources.[4] Central to the campaigns was the capacity to tap into collective and common points of dissatisfaction. This was seen in their rhizomatic and populist autogenetic character, and resulted in the promulgation of similar campaigns across several German cities over the succeeding years. The intra-national circulation of the Umsonst agenda helped to open discussions on social protest and appropriative political action within radical left movements, to both greater and lesser acclaim.[5]

Unlike many of the current German alternative movements, the Umsonst campaigns followed a socially directed method intent on discovering imbrications between public resentment against state-imposed

regulations and micro-political, often individual, covert acts of appropriation based on anti-capitalist sentiment such as illegally entering pools and public buildings, fare evasion, sneaking into cinemas, petty theft and so forth. According to the initiators, these individual tactics were politicised through a visible, collective presence in an attempt to establish everyday practices of resistance (Kanngieser 2007). This shift from what Augusto Illuminati referred to as 'individual defection' to 'collective exodus' (1996: 181) pointed to the subversive aspect of the activity, both for its strategic reference to historical social protest, and for its composition of affective spaces of common struggle come together through circuits of collective desire.

In these struggles 'for the re-appropriation of social wealth produced by the working class but unpaid by capital' (Ramirez 1975), such encounters were designed to agitate flows and crystallisations of power and strategically intervene in and redirect them. An emphatic commitment to public engagement meant that the methods and concerns of the Umsonst encounters were framed in a language far more exoteric than those usually associated with 'leftist' politics. This was apparent in campaigns around public transport such as *Pinker Punkt* (2005) and *Nulltarif* (2003) outlined above, and around cultural resources such as *MoMA Umsonst* (2004), amongst others.[6] The rationale for this was simple, as a member of Hamburg Umsonst explained: 'we address whoever is there and sees what we do, and we invite people to re-think and to join us' (Kanngieser forthcoming). For Umsonst, the uncertainty of participants in the encounter signalled the necessity for a flexible political discourse, which was partially apprehended through the rejection of an encompassing political ideology in favour of what was described by a Berlin Umsonst campaigner as an 'orientation-less left'. This was further ameliorated through the incorporation of organisational techniques, such as relatively open and publicised meetings and facilitation, which when enacted in coordination with creative, pleasurable tactics including hoaxing, drag and occupation, enabled an inventive, a-centric platform for collective enunciation.

This reasonably mobile and unfixed organisation and a connection to public and popular sites of dissent through a playful form of encounter indicate some of the ways in which Umsonst instigated movements across differential social groupings and structures, art and politics, urban spaces, and political nodes and institutions (Kanngieser 2011). By creating these encounters what was set into motion were 'forms of resistance to subjectification which, in producing novel alliances and connections, are also creative of new possibilities of life, new

modes of existence and types of practice' (Armstrong 2002: 49). Following Guattari and Deleuze we can look to these in terms not of 'recommending the liberation of "life" from all forms of molarity and subjectification' but as a means of theorising 'a "becoming-revolutionary" pursued in a piecemeal fashion at the level of the local or sub-political' (Armstrong 2002: 49). To look at this process of 'becoming-revolutionary' it is useful to begin with transversality in terms of the subject group, through which Guattari first sought to express this movement, and its implications for thinking about subjectivation.

II. Transversality and Subject Groups

> Transversality belongs to the processual subject's engendering of an existential territory and self-transportation beyond it. The key concepts involved are: *mobility* (traversing domains, levels, dimensions, the ability to carry and be carried beyond); *creativity* (productivity, adventurousness, aspiration, laying down lines of flight); *self-engendering* (autoproduction, self-positing subjectivity), territories from which one can really take off into new universes of reference.
>
> (Genosko 2002: 55)

The production of 'new universes of reference': this is a phrase that both Guattari (1989) and Gary Genosko (2002) deploy when they write about transversality and its effects on the individual and collective subject, or as Genosko puts it, the 'processual subject's engendering of an existential territory and self-transportation beyond it' (2002: 55). For Guattari, transversality pertains to the production of radical collective subjectivities, in one sense by enabling what he described in his early text *Molecular Revolution: Psychiatry and Politics* (1984) as subject groups. Through his appraisals of subjectivation, Guattari sought to depart from both Freudian and Marxist traditions. These traditions reduced 'sociopolitical relationships to the personal unconscious' in the former case and interpreted 'cultural productions as being overcoded by the material environment' in the latter by arguing for causal, linear and unilateral structuralised definitions of society and subjectivity (Bosteels 2001: 151). In contrast, Guattari was keen to map complex operations of power informed by and informative of the ways in which subjectivities, social codification, ecologies and capitalist regimes mutually produce one another. What the concept of transversality provided for Guattari was a way to 'think the interactions between ecosystems, the mecanosphere, and social and individual universes of reference' (1989: 135).

For Guattari transversality became a central institutional and conceptual tool, employed clinically for 'heightening and maximising an institution's therapeutic co-efficient', existing in its 'bureaucracy and officialdom, structures, roles and hierarchies' (Genosko 2002: 55). Guattari conceived of transversality operating in a clinical setting as

> a measure (a so-called coefficient) of how much communication exists between different levels, in different directions, of an organization. The goal is to increase the coefficients of transversality, that is, to reduce blindness and bureaucratic-mindedness, in favour of openness, overcoming the impasses of both vertical and horizontal organizations, by means of creative organizational innovations. (Genosko 2002: 200)

A means by which to induce this co-efficient or measure is through the modifications of relations, forces and environments between groups (and their effects) within and across institutions. Within these institutions Guattari was intent on discovering the sites of latent power, often not coincidental with the structural distribution of roles, being held in the relationships between subjects.

Through his work at La Borde clinic Guattari developed a thesis of group formation within institutional environments in which he (non-absolutely and non-judgmentally) distinguished two types of group: the subjugated group and the subject group. The subjugated/dependent group are those constantly subsumed to Power in some form (which is correlative of their desire for authoritarianism), and are usually linked to molar activity, being totalising and, as Mark Seem puts it, 'global in ideology' (1974: 38). The principal characteristic for Guattari is the group's heteronomy, seen in their incapacity for statement, their determination from outside and the subsequent withdrawal into protective group phantasy and insularity (1984: 14). This is the problem that confronts the ultra-leftist militant, who according to Genosko, gets swept into the phantasms typical of the subjugated group and tends to get 'hung up on the significations produced by the leadership rather than producing their own signifiers and speaking in the name of the institutions they create adequate to the course of their actions' (2002: 96).

Group subjects/subject groups are conditionally opposed to subjugated groups. These groups are molecular by nature, localised, and generative of processes of becoming-action rather than of encompassing structures. Unlike the external determination dictating the subjugated group, the subject group 'endeavours to control its own behaviour

and elucidate its object, and in this case can produce its own tools of elucidation' (Guattari 1984: 14). Put another way, it upholds an active position in terms of its own project. This suggests that for those constitutive of the subject group, the means for articulation and signification exist in interdependence and difference, synchronously aggregated through the collective process. 'The subject group', Genosko proposes, 'is a kind of group in fusion . . . come together in 'the flash of common praxis,' in mutual reciprocity rather than mutual Otherness' (2002: 86).

Through Genosko's description of the collective affirmatively arising out of 'the flash of common praxis' we begin to sense the potential that Guattari envisaged in this new organisational structure: a rhizomatic, non-representative, non-programmatic assemblage of singularities. The campaigns of Umsonst established the terrain for a potential subject group in the performative encounter through their dedication to the composition of a collaborative and transitory collective. For Guattari, 'a subject group is not embodied in a delegated individual who can claim to speak on its behalf: it is primarily an intention to act, based on a provisional totalization and producing something true in the development of its action' (1984: 33). From their genesis the campaigns of Umsonst disinherited the models of organisation usually associated with so-called militant practices. Conceptualised as a series of *campaigns* rather than a group, there was no real possibility for permanent unification. Rather the collective converged around individual encounters addressing the privatisation of cultural and public resources and spaces, state discourses around economic rationalism and later, the precarisation of life and labour.

Bringing to the fore the economic and class delineations leveraging the segregation of necessity from luxury, each encounter was a direct retaliation against the disenfranchisement vested by the neo-liberal rhetoric of scarcity rampant in Germany. At the same time the encounter acted to live out more desirable conditions – free transport and free cultural events, for instance. These resources and services were employed by variegated demographics, and hence had broadly felt effects, meaning that these were not isolated nodes but, rather, multiple constellations for contestation and re-imagination. Because what was at stake was the encouragement of a 'culture of everyday resistance' – the self-valorisation of constituents through the subversion of capitalist conditions – it is clear why an exclusive or ideologically demarcated group was not considered strategically appropriate. Recalling Guattari's subject group, Umsonst was 'primarily an intention to act' (Guattari

1984: 33), without the entropic, socio-systematic category of the individual entitled to comprise the action.

The flexibility within the organisation of the Umsonst campaigns does not imply what might be understood as a fixed horizontality, in the same way that management and facilitation cannot be reified into a vertical hierarchy. Each campaign required significant planning phases conducted by small committees, and there were oftentimes around a dozen 'initiators' to each encounter. There is nonetheless a marked difference between how these encounters were calibrated and the orthodox 'militant' subjugated groupings identified by Genosko. The campaigns of Umsonst tried to maintain as malleable as possible the range of collaboration, with a disposition of transparency and accessibility. The saturation of the encounters with spectacular and novel elements, such as slogans, costumes, stickers and props, generated diffuse interest leading the proliferation of the moniker and modus throughout other collectives and networks. Although the publicity of the planning stages was tempered by the illegality of the interventions, which prohibited the relay of certain decisions, there was wide solicitation for the materialisation of many of the encounters. At the same time, such emphasis could not eliminate constraints on the constitutive body, both in terms of those differently-abled and those made precarious by state documentation risking deportation or repression, and the limitations arising from mass-media conservatism.

To facilitate collaboration and participation to the most viable extent, the development of the encounters stressed integrative methods including open workshops, research groups and discussions to build solidarity between groups such as minimum wage earners and underemployed workers, those on age and disability pension, students, artists, interns and the like, that the accelerating processes of privatisation specifically made precarious. While these did not always proceed or conclude as initially envisioned in terms of sustained community relations, recurrent endeavours were persevered with.[7] Networks of autonomous groups targeting the specific areas that the individual campaigns responded to – public transport, education, cultural resources, casualised labour, housing – were also invited to co-convene workshops; as one campaigner recounted, 'we always approached other groups that were working on these specific conflicts, we ran workshops with them and tried to develop this appropriation perspective together' (Kanngieser forthcoming).

These collaborative workshops arose as an experiment to move beyond prescriptive, abstracted or ideologically based narratives, and intended to forge connections between activists and non-activists, as

well as those engaged in different lines of struggle. Emphasis was placed on inviting people to examine the effects of structural reform on their everyday lives, and co-creating spaces for collective, self-articulated protest. It was proposed that common direct action could make this dissent visible, and it was hoped that such political visibility would inspire pluralistic flights of organisation beyond the borders of recognised activist spheres.

From even this brief introduction to the organisation of Umsonst, the transversal dimension of the encounter, and its tendency toward subject groupings, begins to emerge. By identifying common sites of unrest, and by committing to an unfixed organisational format, the encounter of Umsonst animated collaborations that connected minor compositions into new formations.[8] Further vital to this assemblage is the way in which the participants were considered to be the very *conditions* through which the encounter is constituted as such.[9] This signals a shift away from hierarchical and closed conceptions distinguishing those that 'would' (activists/artists/specialists in social and political change) from those that 'wouldn't' (non-activists/non-artists/non-specialists), fundamentally reconfiguring the contours of the activity along with its processes of subjectivation.

In this way transversality has immediate consequences for how such practices transform the textures of conventional organisation; transversality becomes a tool for 'creatively autoproducing themselves as they adapt, cross, communicate and travel, in short as they transverse different levels, segments and roles' (Genosko 2002: 55). This is a significant juncture, and one that requires further teasing out. In Guattari's later conceptions of transversality, he emphasises its congruent accents, which coupled with the Deleuzian conjunctive *and* allows for a reading of how productions of subjectivity take place in the performative encounter, as we shall shortly see.

III. Political Artistic Transversals and their Radical Organisation

> New social practices of liberation will not establish hierarchical relations between themselves; their development will answer to a principle of transversality that will enable them to be established by traversing, as a rhizome, heterogeneous social groups and interests.
>
> (Guattari and Negri 2010: 123)

Through crossing and reconfiguring 'different levels, segments and roles', theories of the subject group and transversality may link to

radical political organisation. But it is not only in the production of experimental politics that transversality acts as a mutational force: it is also present in the domain of aesthetics. It is interesting to think about aesthetics here both for the inherently creative nature of the encounter, and the new subjectivities, relations and worlds it instigates. In *Chaosmosis* (1995), Guattari elaborated the movement of transversality with respect to artistic creation. For Guattari, ideal aesthetic praxes and activities are not limited to professional artists and are made up of transversal lines that affectively engender 'unprecedented, unforeseen and unthinkable qualities of being' (1995: 106). The lines that activate these qualities of being are thus notable in what Guattari calls a new aesthetic paradigm, as well as in political organisations without coagulated hierarchies.

The specific manner in which Guattari sets up these thematic vectors of aesthetics and politics, and the processes of subjectivation implicit to them, has been usefully taken up by Gerald Raunig. Throughout his writings Raunig employs several of Guattari and Deleuze's conceptual apparatuses to explore European historical and contemporary politico-aesthetic events, institutions and methods of organisation. In these explorations he configures aesthetics and politics via an assessment of the exchange between 'art machines' and 'revolutionary machines'. He contends that when art and revolution come into contact, temporary overlaps between the two are catalysed. These overlaps do not entail incorporation, but rather indicate 'a concrete exchange relationship for a limited time' (2007: 18), which is transversal insofar as it transforms the terrains of both aesthetic and political regimes, institutions and categories. The affective and transformative labour of the transversal occurs through the accumulative linkage of singularities and collectives in experimental new relations, modalities and co-operations without the goal of permanent synthesis (Raunig 2002: 4). Echoing Guattari's thesis, Raunig's notion of transversality implements radical gestures that fundamentally challenge the limits of these categories and institutions.

If we acknowledge this analytical proposition, rather than concentrate on art forms that are thematically concerned with political struggle but are un-reflexive in their processes of production and dissemination, we can turn to aesthetics that are organised from the perspective of liberatory politics.[10] This is particularly pertinent given that encounters are as reliant on their creative and relational elements for their operation as they are on their political elements. What is most significant is how these processes function with respect to the reconfiguration of organisation, and how this describes a movement between categories and

subjectivities. For Guattari, the transformative nature of the transversal brings about a parallax shift in discussions on aesthetic constitution and subjectivation, because 'the emphasis is no longer placed on Being . . . it is placed on the manner of being, the machination producing the existent, the generative praxes of heterogeneity and complexity' (1995: 109). That is to say, the transversal renders visible the vectoral nature of subjectivation, showing that there is no fundamental subject form but rather movements and compositions. When considered in terms of politico-aesthetic organisation, a transversal exchange can be found both in the ambivalent and critical relationship to the institutions being moved through, and in the structure of the creative political collective itself.

The performative encounter, as a politico-aesthetic phenomenon, is demonstrative of such an exchange. Encounters such as Pinker Punkt and MoMA Umsonst move across and between the boundaries enforced by disciplinary regimes (art, politics) of recognition and naming, situating these interventions in a process of constant transformation and re-territorialisation of artistic and political activisms. The performative encounters of Umsonst negotiate impasses around hierarchical or discrete categories of identification by transversing art, life and collective identities – becoming both activist *and* non-activist, artist and non-artist, in addition to innumerable and mutable other possible identities and relations.

Through this exchange the encounter furthermore unequivocally calls into question the dynamic between power and resistance. Being spatio-temporally transitory, indeterminate in its classificatory status and peripheral in its actualisation, the encounter generally circumvents channels of documentation and solidification through its ambiguity. As such the encounter challenges the hierarchising logic of both the capitalistic market and the institutionalisation of creative and political insurrection. What transversality and ambiguity help to generate in the encounter is a perpetual contradistinction between power and dissidence. Transversal structures and lines avoid the reproduction of dominant flows and regimes of power because rather than vertical or horizontal, hierarchical networks they compose a-centrically. That is to say, they do not necessarily move down given pathways or channels, they do not necessarily connect multiple centre points. Rather, they elide systems of coordination, crossing anywhere, everywhere and nowhere, in flight. What organisational models such as the campaigns of Umsonst are thus inclined towards are momentary overlappings and linkages, stratifications of political organisation that have no discrete beginning or

end. This is why we see the creation of relatively decentralised, flexible and diffuse political territories, which do not operate as a hermetic unit but are open for participation, further discussion and re-appropriation.

From this position, it is evident how transversal organisation can jettison seemingly immutable hierarchies wherein an individual or elite group would claim organisational authority over its participants. Posited as a move away from orthodox structures, transversal organisations signify a critical departure from models of organisation predicated on statist and vanguardist forms and ideologies. Moreover, transversal modes problematise hierarchies invisibly embedded in alternative 'activist' discourses, that find it difficult to reconcile the rhetorics of inclusivity and poly-centralism with actual practice. These are mediated via malleable and non-specialist modes of engagement that attempt to overturn stratifications of value based on expertise. This overturning challenges the often hidden meritocracies lurking in activist organisation that (self-)delegate tasks according to systems of legitimation based on recognition within activist subcultures. In taking on experimental transversal methods of organising within the encounter, what is given priority is diversity through the acknowledgement of different skills, knowledges, desires and socio-cultural affiliations.

IV. Political Artistic Transversals and Accumulative Subjectivities

> Transversal movements can ... be launched by extraordinary actions, astonishing occurrences, and traumatic events that challenge subjective territory, permeate its borders, make the familiar strange, and turn the world topsy-turvy.
>
> (Reynolds 2002: 18)

The changing relationship between how the artist/activist conceives of herself in relation to the public is where we find correlations between organisational transversals and the making visible of processes of subjectivation. Through these junctures, the roles generally upheld in differential hierarchical structures (artist/revolutionary over public/masses) are problematised. This problematisation can be seen both in the categorical indeterminacy prompted by the encounter's transversality through the arenas of politics and art, and through its accumulative aspect: what can be attributed to the Deleuzian conjunctive *and* (1987). This *and* is of paramount importance, for it helps us to think about how art and revolution, artist and non-artist, activist and

non-activist, occur in simultaneous profusion. In this promulgation, subjectivities and categories that seek to multiply rather than to subsume or homogenise boundaries of identification are engendered. Here we can see that by recognising multiple contours to identity, individuals and collectives can valorise and orient themselves as heterogeneous and motley agents.[11]

The multiplication of categories, and their ensuing ambiguity, invoked by Deleuze's *and* can be made visible through practices such as the performative encounter – in terms of the form itself and the subjectivities produced through, and productive of, it. This association is best captured by the Critical Art Ensemble, a US-based tactical media collective, and is worth quoting at length. They write that participants in creative encounters and initiatives such as those of Umsonst,

> are neither fish nor fowl. They aren't artists in any traditional sense and don't want to be caught in the web of metaphysical, historical, and romantic signage that accompanies that designation. Nor are they political activists in any traditional sense, because they refuse to solely take the reactive position of anti-logos, and are just as willing to flow through fields of nomos in defiance of efficiency and necessity. In either case, such role designations are too restrictive in that the role boundaries exclude access to social and knowledge systems that are the materials for their work. Here may be a final link to invisibility: these participants value access over expertise, and who really cares about the work of an amateur? (Critical Art Ensemble 2001: 3–4)

The performative encounter does not act as a permanent unification between productions of subjectivities and fields. Rather, it sets up temporary meeting points, which transform the parameters and textures of identities, categories and disciplines in the process. As observed above by the Critical Art Ensemble, this variability means that creative political practices that are predicated upon transversal modes are difficult to recognise within conventional semiotics. This is because they neither fall definitively into the category of traditional activist or political practice, nor into traditional artistic practice; to recall the words of one Umsonst constituent, 'you dance around and confuse the police, who can never be quite sure: is this a political action or a cultural action? It's good to break down these clear divisions' (Eshelman 2005). The dynamic of displacement at work here flags what is at once the most risky and the most substantive aspect of such practices. As they do not arise from legitimised spaces and ways of operating but rather erupt from new inventions of actions and procedures, and as they cannot be easily defined, such encounters are susceptible to invisibility. At the

same time, it is this ambiguity that affords a flexibility that constantly challenges the limitations of boundaries, giving such encounters and practices the capacity to 'push against and even re-organise the institutional and political structures of... recognition and production' (Kelly 2005).

In this mutual movement of deconstruction and re-figuration, the transversal produces subjectivities and 'self-engendering practices that seek to create their own signifiers and systems of value' (Kelly 2005). With this accent on self-determined value systems that complement those attributed by Guattari to subject groups, it is clear why such conceptualisations of transversality have been instrumental in opening up new vocabularies and discourses. These are especially helpful when seeking to understand creativity in terms of radical subjectivities that inhabit multiple collective identities. This is because qualities of these subjectivities – such as their heightened adaptability to contingency and mutability – inherently infuse them with possibility.

This is precisely where we can see Deleuze's *and* come into play. 'Neither fish nor fowl' as the Critical Art Ensemble write: hence, not the disjunctive 'artist *or* activist', 'specialist *or* non-specialist', but instead the conjunctive 'artist *and* activist', 'specialist *and* non-specialist'. Here we can recognise some third (or fourth or fifth) subjectivity that transverses and transforms these categorical concatenations (Deleuze and Parnet 1987). For Raunig, this *and* should not be thought of as a means by which to escape contradictions through the chance connection of random elements in some act of political propaganda, but as a 'multitude of temporary alliances, as a productive concatenation of what never fits together smoothly, what is constantly in friction and impelled by this friction or caused to evaporate again' (2002: 4).

It is useful to reflect for a moment on the productivity of contradiction here. For, while evoking 'new terrains of open co-operation between different activist, artistic, social and political practices' (Kelly 2005), transversal modes do not signify a permanent interdisciplinarity but instead create temporary mutant coalitions through a movement of accumulation (not absorption), inherently changing the fields and institutions in the process. What is important to remember is that this *and* simultaneously negates mass unification, as well as factionalisation and splintering. As such transversality is a vehicle of rupture and convergence in a constant state of becoming, a form or mode of operation constituted through events, collective alliances and transitory organisations. Umsonst, as a collation of temporary subject groups, enacts this creation of becoming-subjectivity through its transversal

elements, which can produce, as Guattari contends, autopoietic and self-valorising modalities of signification.

What is revealed in this additive process is not a forced synthesis or unification of the parts into some 'whole', nor the negation of singularity, or the specificity of experience. It does not seek to assimilate – quite the opposite – for as Deleuze comments, even when there are only two terms the *and* is 'neither one nor the other, nor the one which becomes the other, but which constitutes the multiplicity' (1987: 34–5). When thinking about these accumulations as 'temporary alliances' it becomes possible to imagine how, through a transversal between politics and art, the many roles and identities enacted by individuals are made apparent. These roles and identities are distributed across different contexts – sometimes in commonality, sometimes in alterity – without being subsumed into one or the other. What also becomes clear is how this movement threatens narratives of identity and subjectivity that privilege a univocal, individuated subject. However, as we have seen, the challenging of a cohesive concept of the subject does not simply imply a rejection of the possibility of resistance. Rather, what a visibly accumulative, processual subjectivity marks out is political potential itself. This potential is recognised through a radical *collective* ontology, radical for the proliferation of connections and relationships it opens up.

It is a transversal between politics and art, and this radical collective ontology, that performative encounters, such as those of Umsonst, generate to make visible and fracture normative discourses of agency. In these collective processes of struggle and articulation, and in the development of such moments, possibilities are opened out for new permutations of subjectivation. Self-conceptions and repetitions of identities, behaviours and perceptions, the 'stiffening of the existential refrain' (Berardi 2008) can be reconceived as multi-scalar and polyphonic through the act of resistance that is in the same breath an act of affirmation.

Transversal organisation runs alongside the additive forms of identity and disciplines that the performative encounter engages. The ingenuity of this style of praxis lies in its border-crossing character, which deliberately sidesteps reductive paradigms of categorisation in favour of mobility and perhaps adversely, ambiguity. While traditional political organisation uses ideological doctrines and activities as a validating measure, transversal modes trouble such strict lines of classification. What Deleuze's accumulative *and* does for the performative encounter is emphasise that in the act of collectively constituting the encounter, in collectively riding for free, or demanding access to cultural resources

with hundreds of others, a radical political event unfolds. In this event, the self-identification as an activist/artist is no longer the issue. Through the encounter, the possibility of constituting artist *and* activist *and* non-artist *and* non-activist within different scenes and circumstances is realised. Thus, what is at stake is the self-valorisation that comes through the constitution of such actions. In this way, transversals between art and revolution apprehend political agency, self-determination and collective enunciation.

V. Political Artistic Transversals and Affective Exchanges

> The State is a condition, a certain relationship between human beings, a mode of behaviour; we destroy it by contracting other relationships, by behaving differently toward one another.
>
> (Landauer [1910] 2005: 165)

In speaking about the subjectivities and relations that the encounter is generative of and makes visible, it is important to recognise how these cooperations and alliances – these new collectives and collaborations – are assembled in time and space. By this I mean how they are brought forth and into exchange to invite worlds that affirm conditions alternative to those present; how they act as what Bryan Reynolds calls a 'transversal territory', a 'catalyzing and transitional space from which new experiences, subjective reconfigurations, and, by extension, dissident mobilizations can emerge' (2009: 287).[12]

The argument proposed by Stevphen Shukaitis in his essay *Affective Composition and Aesthetics: On Dissolving the Audience and Facilitating the Mob* (2007) begins to set up a response via a discourse of affect. Shukaitis uses affect to speak about the task of political art as a creative production of common spaces and public realms 'through intensive engagement not circumscribed by accepted identities and positions' (2007: 1). These geographies are activated through the affective potential that transversalities between aesthetics and politics open up. Such potential is predicated on a notion of aesthetics that is attenuated more to the relations and transversal places that arise from the process of collaborative production than to the content or the culmination of the product. This is an understanding of aesthetics, that, as Shukaitis explains, 'is focused on the relations of production not as a concern secondary to the content of what is produced, but rather as the explicit process of self-institution and the creation of a space where the art of politics is possible (1).

What is pivotal here, as is for Guattari and Raunig, is an idea of aesthetics that concentrates on a 'process of collective creation' and on relations of production, again, the *how* of what is produced through intensities of affect. To understand how this works we must understand affect as a mobile and transitive extra-human threshold of potential, closely tied to thought in action or process (Thrift 2004: 60). This sees affect moving through and across events, bodies, spaces and experiences, in excess of individual or community, and eluding any kind of capture. Affect is in this sense a force that arises out of and through relationality and exchange, through contacts between myriads of singularities and their assemblages (Deleuze 1988).

This conceptualisation helps draw attention to the experimental dimension of the performative encounter as an affective political event. The experimental and transversal aspect is what in this instance affords affect potency across different terrains and events – such as politics and aesthetics – giving rise to intensities (Massumi 2002b). The immanence of affect can be traced out in the potential for intensity. Affect, argues Massumi, underlies and accompanies every event, from the exceptional to the quotidian, and is sensed in the 'perception of one's own vitality, one's sense of aliveness, of changeability' (2002a: 36); this gives a feeling of embeddedness in one's experiences and perceptions (2002b: 214). The changeable nature of affect, and our sense of it, intensifies our experiences and our positionalities. Moreover, affect as intensity is both a catalyst for connection and rupture: it is transformative in that it can break open socialities, and it is connective through the new relations and worlds it compels. Simply put, it is catalysed by, and further catalyses, change and transduction. The ethical crux of affect, suggests Massumi, can be found here: in a concentration on the immersion and participation in the world, in belonging to the world and to *each other* as a lived self-affirming reality independent from the value of bureaucratic, state or religious apparatuses (2002b: 242).[13] This is why an 'aesthetic politics' for Massumi is one whose 'aim would be to expand the range of affective potential' (2002b: 235).

So how is this understanding of affect as intensity taken up in a reading of aesthetics and politics, and how does it pertain to the performative encounter of Umsonst? What is key is a reinterpretation of aesthetics and the spaces of politico-aesthetic engagement, which invites the living out of possible worlds. This reframes aesthetics as the affective composition that comes out of, and produces, relations and experiences from common processes. Rather than isolating the encounter and its content, what is central is the transversal movement in its development.

That is to say, the additive inter-subjective element that is contingent on the relations of individuals, environments and experiences in its event. The transversal spaces and territories created and reconfigured through this – the train platform and carriage in Pinker Punkt, the museum courtyard in MoMA Umsonst, the workshop and discussion spaces – are affective and 'common' spaces, vital to the emergence of connections and conversation beyond the usual designated zones.

Such framing reveals the encounter as a political as well as an aesthetic event that mobilises new relationships between people and their environments. These relationships question and antagonise the logics of the nation-state and capitalism at the same time as affirming shared imaginaries of possible present and future conditions. If we follow Shukaitis to argue that 'the task of politics is precisely the creation of common space through intensive engagement not circumscribed by accepted identities and positions' (2007: 2), then the performative encounter as a conduit for the creation of affective spaces is a fundamentally political gesture (Massumi 2002b: 234). The encounter is political in its generation and transformation of subjectivities and relations through affective modes of communication and interaction that are based on reciprocity and mutual exchange, which envision alternatives to capitalist and statist socialities.

This political dimension is stressed even more so if we understand these spaces as spaces of 'affective composition' (Grindon 2007; Shukaitis 2007; Read 2011): a term linking affect with an autonomist Marxist reading of class composition. In bringing a class perspective to affect, a capitalist critique is added as 'the notion of political composition identifies *as political* moments of otherwise invisible or illegible performative social relations' (Grindon 2011: 86). Composition in this sense places the development of forms of capitalism and labour as occurring in synchronicity with, and response to, daily forms of resistance and self-determined organisation (Wright 2002). The double movement of capitalism and its discontents is seen in the constant dance of displacement and re-structuration of both capital and those myriad struggles against its domination (Mezzadra 2007: 5). As such, this argument stresses the multidirectional processes that contribute to productions of class, labour, subjectivity and agency. Consequently, it engenders a theory of 'revolution' not only as a mass event of crisis, but also as an ongoing progression of resistance and creation such as seen in the Umsonst campaigns. This demonstrates the complexity of the relations between production and capitalism, and the possibility for spaces and sites of alternative self-managed activity. In this way,

what gets opened up is what Massumi refers to as 'that margin of manoeuvrability, the 'where we might be able to go and what we might be able to do' in every present situation' (2002b: 212), which explains 'why focusing on the next experimental step rather than the big utopian picture isn't settling for less' (212).

Coming back to the 'experimental step' of the performative encounter and following the arguments presented so far, it is possible to understand why, in terms of the encounter and other examples of transversals between politics and art, to use affective composition as a conceptual tool means to 'examine the capacities they create, and how they contribute to the development of forms of self-organization' (Shukaitis 2007: 2). Affect, and especially affective composition, provides a means by which to understand how the performative encounter generates new relationships and connective junctures between people and environments that agitate systems of value. It does so by heightening intensities of experience, by implicating each person in the collective constitution of the encounter, and by accentuating singular and collective sites of power and resistance. As a vehicle for reciprocal connection and communication the encounter operates along lines of organisation that depart from usual models reliant on distinct and reified conceptions of hierarchy, roles and specialisation.

The lines of exodus charted out by the encounter are not without discrepancy, however, nor are they predictable. They are prone to stutters and collapse as much as they are coalition and concatenation, which is why Shukaitis insists that:

> the compositional capacities of these ruptures are not unlimited, for they too through repetition become ritualised and fall back into solidified patterns of circulation. The question becomes one of keeping open the affective capacities of the created space: to find ways to avoid the traps of spectacular recuperation and the solidification of constituent moments and possibilities into fixed and constituted forms that have lost their vitality. (2007: 5)

The element of crisis that this illuminates, namely the impasses of reification and recuperation faced by affective spaces and geographies, the fleeting nature of these interventions in precariousness, privatisation and gentrification, might leave us questioning what kind of response a transversal ontology can actually offer – a political disposition that foregrounds movement, processuality and transformation, an ontology of 'becoming', so to speak.

VI. Conclusion

> It was like everything was thrown up in the air for a moment and people came down after the shock in a slightly different order, and some were interconnected in ways that they hadn't been before.
>
> (Massumi 2002b: 234)

Writing about his participation in the various collectives and political work he was involved in at the time, Guattari once commented, 'whether there was a real effectiveness doesn't matter; certain kinds of action and concentration represent a break with the habitual social processes, and in particular with the modes of communication and expression of feeling inherited from the family' (1984: 29). The point he makes is one that I would like to reflect upon here. When asking what kind of political effect a transversal organisation may have, such as that in the performative encounter, we need to relinquish conceptions of success and failure that linearise and evaluate activities on the basis of pre-existing or external qualifications. What we might look to, rather, are the relations that such encounters open us up to, the breaks in habits and conditioned uses of space and place they provoke and create. The performative encounter, like that of Umsonst, is an experiment. It is a tactic that complements more sustained praxes of organisation, one whose value lies in its potential to construct shared geographies that challenge hegemonic flows and concentrations of power, at the same time as making visible and intervening in processes of subjectivation.[14]

If we trace out a trajectory linking Guattari's concept of the transversal, from his early work in the clinic and its translation into the political realm, to Deleuze's conjunctive *and*, we can think about how the encounter radicalises subjectivities. By further turning to a concept of affect as intensity, as a connective force, and by politicising this through a reading of affective composition, we see how the spaces of the encounter give rise to radical ways of being and relating that invite alternatives to the nation-state and capital. By forming a common rhythm from a common cause, a common praxis, the subject groups that make up the encounter invent new languages that place less emphasis on the categorisation of identities and more on their destabilisation.

The importance for such a conjunctive and transversal approach to political activism cannot be overstated. Over a decade ago, after the 18 June global day of action in London in 1999, a now notorious text entitled *Give up Activism* was circulated. What made this paper so significant was that it challenged the presumptions held about organisation in contemporary political work. According to the author,

while radical organisation had been moving away from the hierarchies of vanguardist politics the roles connected to these hierarchies had been retained: there was still an overwhelming tendency to distinguish the activist from the non-activist, a distinction based on an 'activist mentality' which designated the activist as 'a specialist or an expert in social change' (1999: 161). This had a twofold effect: not only did it segregate and elevate the activist over the non-activist as a political agent, it also divided her from her own participation in a wider social body, from her own desires and her own 'non-activist' life.

The performative encounter that I have introduced here directly counterposes this segregation, a segregation that is still present in dominant modes of radical organisation, speaking from a position in the 'global north'. By opening up to transversality, the encounter emphasises desires to move through and beyond political circles, to work on issues that affect people on a day-to-day basis, and to participate in self-determined and shared struggles. The encounter achieves this through its constitution by, and of, a movement that does not fit easily into the traditional categorical discourses of art and politics. These feature creative political praxes that take as their prerogative the disruption of the borders between artist and audience, activist and non-activist, politics and everyday life, amateur and professional, alternative and mainstream. In a final text, Guattari wrote that 'new collective assemblages of enunciation are beginning to form an identity out of fragmentary ventures, at times risky initiatives, trial and error experiments: different ways of seeing and of making the world, different ways of being' (1995: 120). In the assemblage of the encounter we see some of these different ways of seeing and being unfold, and it is only through their continual invention, their disintegration and renewal that this unfolding can continue.

Notes

1. To speak of performativity is to also recall the field of performance. Important work has been done in performance studies on Deleuze and Guattari, particularly by scholars such as Bryan Reynolds (2002, 2003, 2009), Laura Cull (2009), Stephen Zepke (2009) and Anna Catherine Hickey-Moody (2009). It is crucial to note that the performative encounter does not fit easily into the tropes of performance, hence the lack of its objectification as a theatrical form. In fact one of its central characteristics is that it is impossible to delineate precisely what the encounter is as it cannot be defined within the parameters of art, nor within the parameters of politics. Many of its constituents do not understand it as performance in any significant way. It is my contention that it is this very

border-crossing and mobile character of the encounter that enables its political potential.

2. I adapt the term, 'performative encounter' from Rosello (2005). Drawing upon fictional literary and filmic texts connected to the North African region of the Maghreb, Rosello uses 'performative encounters' to identify a new potential emerging in Franco-Algerian relations that stands to counterbalance a violent history of colonisation. Rosello argues that this potential is linked to the transformations that performative encounters effect on subjectivity.
3. For more on the Umsonst campaigns see Kanngieser (2007, 2011). See also Panagiotidis (2007).
4. Perhaps most popular of this genre was the recent Spanish-based group Yomango, who staged spectacles in banks, supermarkets and public squares. The Swedish collective planka.nu also adopted this tactic in their fare-dodging campaigns. More widely contemporaneous to these, politico-aesthetic tactics infused experimental sections of the radical left resulting in anti-capitalist performances such as those of CIRCA, The Vacuum Cleaner and the Laboratory for Insurrectionary Imagination in the United Kingdom, and Die Überflüssigen and the Hedonist International in Germany, to name but a few.
5. This was polarised because critics saw the method of appropriation as reproductive of, or doubling, principles of consumer capitalism and commodity fetishism. At the same time, it was contended that such methods could not affect the central conflict of labour and capital. However as one constituent refuted, 'practices of appropriation reduced the pressures to work', adding that while Umsonst were capitalist critical they were more intent on finding proactive means of subversion than opposition (Kanngieser forthcoming). An additional point of disjunction lay in that, unlike many of the current German alternative movements, the Umsonst campaigns maintained a socially rather than ideologically directed focus.
6. The Umsonst campaigns included Berlin, Dresden, Freiburg, Cologne, Mannheim, Kiel, Munich, Kassel, Dusseldorf, Luebeck, Goettigen and Jena amongst others.
7. This last issue directly confronted Hamburg Umsonst during a day of action against state threats to unemployment insurance in 2004 where difficulties in communication led to conflict between initiators of the encounter and job seekers. This was in part due to the fact that many of those involved in the solidarity event were not unemployed themselves at the time, and many of the job seekers were older and felt disconnected from the protest. Such points of contention signal issues around maintaining a movement between fixed and unfixed organisation and constitution in the Umsonst campaigns.
8. For more on this see Kanngieser (2007, 2011).
9. For more on the idea of the constituent of the encounter and its importance see Kanngieser (2011).
10. Over the past decade a vocabulary has been developing in Europe around such crossovers including 'tactical media' (Garcia and Lovink 1997), 'radical aesthetics' (EIPCP 2005) and 'communication guerrilla' (Autonome A.F.R.I.K.A. Gruppe 2002). See Kanngieser (forthcoming) for an extrapolation of this.
11. This is, of course, not to suggest that subjects prior to the encounter are somehow immutable or enclosed. It is more to draw attention to the ways in which the encounter makes visible the variability and processuality of subjectivation.
12. The reader might also recall Hakim Bey's (1991) writings on temporary autonomous zones.

13. This 'each other' has significance for Massumi who argues for a political response imbued with an ethics of care and hospitality. Because of the uncertain nature of affect this is all the more imperative (2002b: 240–1).
14. The situation of the encounter within, and commitment to complementing, more ongoing and instituted forms of organisation is imperative, for as Guattari writes, 'these mutating militant machines for transversal and singularized spaces of freedom will not have any claim to durability. This way, they will come to terms with their intrinsic precariousness and the need for their continuous renewal, supported by a long lasting social movement of great scope' (Guattari and Negri 2010: 126).

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Go Fractalactic! A Brief Guide through Subjectivity in the Philosophy of Félix Guattari and Transversal Poetics

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Abstract

We adventure becomings-Merry Pranksters with Félix Guattari on Ken Kesey's magic bus to resonate the group's transversality that we already affect subjunctively, individually and plurally from which our subjectivities crystallise collectively and independently with intensive-extensions *to go* viscerallectric and fractalactic. Yet in-process, before our consciousnesses go motored, we swim with jet streams of both Guattari and transversal poetics to navigate subjective affects by which wilful parameterisations achieve desirable eventualisations.

Keywords: transversality, subjectivity, reflexive-consciousness, wilful parameterisation, motored-consciousness, viscerallectric, fractalactic

Félix Guattari deploys his concept of transversality to explain the interactive flux of heterogeneous and polyphonic aspects of subjectivity interwoven through individual and collective practices. While working with patients at La Borde, the psychiatric hospital founded by Jean Oury in France's Loire Valley, Guattari observed instantiations and expressions of subjectivity catalysed by individuals participating within group dynamics that varied depending on the combined quantity, quality and intensity of the contributions made by the individuals comprising a specific group. For Guattari, after thrashing around the fields of psychiatry, subjectivity is never purely the effect or personal creation of an individual or a group, but a production of both. Subjectivity

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collectively forms in relation to alterities, typically as delineated by a society's customs, laws and beliefs, and constitutes the set of conditions that make a self-referential stance possible.

In the interest of making the production of subjectivity more beneficial for patients and staff at La Borde, Guattari's initial formulation of transversality was intended to facilitate clinical praxis in which open-ended modes of therapy could function and therefore transform institutional environments where top-down hierarchical structures (administrator-doctor-nurse-staff-patient) were conventional and, in his view, counterproductive and delimiting. He wanted to liberate subjectivity from entrapment by established social, scientific and therapeutic models, such as those implemented by psychoanalysis, humanistic approaches and gestaltism, that categorise subjectivity according to psychogenetic stages of development, ideas of whole(some)ness, or classificatory structures of the Oedipal, the linguistic-semiotic or the familial. Essentially, he wanted to explore subjectivity with a mode that reflects the nature of subjectivity itself free from the constraints of normative-oriented hermeneutic approaches. Guattari recapitulates this position in his final book, *Chaosmosis*, in which he adds an ethical component that will become important to our discussion later in this essay: 'We are faced with an important ethical choice: either we objectify, reify, "scientifise" subjectivity, or, on the contrary, we try to grasp it in the dimension of its processual creativity' (Guattari 1995: 13).

Guattari maintains that coefficients of transversality operating across a group's dynamic express emergent and latent affects of the group's relations under conditions that bypass totalising clinical models and the power distribution manifested by such models through hierarchal administrative structures within institutions. Unlike therapeutic strategies that partition the subjectivity of each individual, whether or not seen as a by-product of a group (for instance, as an imaginary regression to abstractly formulated developmental or classificatory paradigms), group subjectivity as expressed through transversal coefficients makes possible experiences and interrelations of affect along transformative and unpredictable trajectories. Indifferent to top-down power distributions (insurance company-to-doctor-to-patient) or lateral communications (patient-to-patient, human-to-human), transversality metamorphoses group subjectivity multi-dimensionally and manifests a positive force of differentiation for subjectivity. In his account of Guattari's concept of transversality, Gary Genosko sums this up nicely: 'Horizontal or vertical – that is not even the question since a creature of the between like transversality must constitute its own set

of original, polydimensional and polycentered operations in creating an atmosphere conducive to the appreciation of everybody's singularity' (2002: 82). The production of positive singularities highlights the integral function transversality holds for Guattari in defining subjectivity from the standpoint of emergent properties, the spatiotemporal constellation through which travel and mutate heterogeneous and polyphonic elements and modes of expression, affect, creativity and so on, that are strictly irreducible to the conditions of their production.

Guattari mobilises the concept of transversality to loosen the reins of societal and institutional processes of subjectivation that impede conscious and unconscious desiring forces for group assemblages, that is, the very forces that fuel the generation of subjectivity within the group. Also wanting to challenge mechanisms of subjectivation and liberate desire, through his development of the combined sociocognitive theory, performance aesthetics and research methodology of 'transversal poetics', Bryan Reynolds marshals transversality to account for, enable and affect immanent, emergent and transformative processes that inspire perspectivism, subjectivity and experience outside of established codes and parameters (see Reynolds 2002, 2003, 2006, 2009). Significantly, among other possible effects, this causes reconfiguration and expansion of 'subjective territory', the conceptual, emotional and physical range through which individuals perceive, experience and comprehend. Normally instituted and maintained by ideological and repressive mechanisms of dominant society in the interest of mutually reinforcing that society, subjective territory is always constraining and often deleteriously oppressive. For Reynolds, transversality is – crucially – dynamism of metamorphosis rather than just concept; as such, it generates opportunities for moving beyond subjective territory, defying society's modalities of indoctrination, socialisation and regulation, and *goings-elsewhere*.

Reynolds' and Guattari's theorisations of subjectivity are both concerned with the irreducibility of transversal movements to circumscribed fields of development, power, communication and classification. By extension, they are both concerned with the unpredictable and perplexing mobility of subjectivity that measures movements of transversality within such demarcated fields of reference. However, transversal poetics broadens the theoretical scope of Guattari's emphasis on group assemblages to include individual assemblages of subjectivity, thereby comprehending the individual *as group* – itself a matrix comprised of singularities and multiplicities – integrally participating constitutionally within and among groups and other creatures, objects

and energies. Simply put, this broadening enriches Guattari's concept of transversality with theories of mind, consciousness, embodiment, performance, experience and affect; and therefore allows for attributive and generative modes of subjectivity that expand the analytic and experiential reach of the concept beyond formulations of group assemblages contextualised in theories of affect alone.

The expansive-incorporation of transversal poetics also moves beyond Guattari's departure from Jean-Paul Sartre's concept of transversality as unifying consciousness to totalise individuation. For Sartre, consciousness unifies through automatic awareness of the serial passage of consciousness through time as transversally linked by consciousness's intentional stance toward an object. As Sartre puts it:

> It is consciousness which unifies itself, concretely, by a play of 'transversal' intentionalities which are concrete and real retentions of past consciousnesses. Thus consciousness refers perpetually to itself.... And consciousness is aware of itself *in so far as it is consciousness of a transcendent object*. All is therefore clear and lucid in consciousness: the object with its characteristic opacity is before consciousness, but consciousness is purely and simply consciousness of being consciousness of that object. (1960: 39)

Alternatively, for Guattari, consciousness does not operate by means of temporal and solipsistic unification, but rather it is always nonlinear and spatially oriented towards new emergences of communication and affect, and, because of this, it instantiates intersubjectively within groups, that is, when interacting with both the unconscious and conscious desires of others. Both the philosophy and structural development of transversal poetics itself reflects Guattari's departure from Sartre's decisive emphasis on inwardness. For Reynolds, consciousness is always relational, its apparent and contingent individuation the result of organising clusters of complexity, such as in-jokes, humans, rats, computers, tornadoes or rocks. This idea underpins the transversal enterprise of writing this essay, an undertaking that demonstrates and benefits from the collaborative nature of consciousness, as Reynolds regularly collaborates with others who acknowledge and value the production of critical theory as emergent activity in terms similar to subjectivity. For Reynolds, whether prompted by subjunctivity, becomings, comings-to-be, goings, wilderness effects, transversal movements and so on, subjectivity is transversal to the subject. A reactive and/or fugitive 'eventualisation' (an event or sequence of events with affective duration), subjectivity emerges from subjective territory and crystallises as 'reflexive-consciousness',

the means by which consciousness regards itself with heightened awareness in relation to its operations and progressions. Subjectivity's crystallisation occurs in nuanced response to the escalating, spreading and/or waning transversal power that precipitated or was precipitated by the circumstances of its emergence.

For Reynolds and Guattari, respectively, transversality promotes forward-looking and forward-moving understandings of subjective processes, that is, it promotes positive and progressive privileging of future eventualisations and new forms of goings, becomings, alterity and affect. In doing so, it invites a post-phenomenological critical terrain – 'post' because it encompasses inclusion, culmination and supersession of the phenomenological as it exceeds perception and experience – in which to explore relationships between ethics, desire, subjectivity and affect. Dissident and fugitive movements, especially if distinguished by emergent activity, can powerfully foster creative cognitive, emotional and physical development beyond prescriptive and authoritarian discourses, such as those that characterise mainstream academic research methods, institutionalised psychiatry, conventional educational structures, and capitalist ideology and systems. In the context of Guattari's later works, Genosko provides a productive comparison of the type of subjectivities that reside in Guattari's and Reynolds' work. For Guattari, movements of subjectivity aim to exceed the everyday banality of existential territories achieved in the transformative therapeutics of incorporeal universes. For Reynolds, movements of subjectivity aim towards becomings-x from 'state machinery', the network of ordering 'sociopolitical conductors' (the inculcating apparatuses of family, education, law, government, religion, etc.) that work to structure, delineate and limit social identity and experience – subjective territory – in conformity with a society's dominant values and normative objectives (Genosko 2002: 58; see also 2009: 262–71). Unintentional events and actions spur, to give one possibility, becomings-dissident that affect transgressions of the cognitive, emotional and physical boundaries ascribed to subjective territories through processes of subjectivation, as administered discursively by sociopolitical conductors. Such departures from subjective territory, when radical and reeling, occupy transversal vectors and in effect alter the multidimensional cartography of cognitive, emotional and physical capacity, a multiplicity of interrelated fluxes and flows. Consider, for instance, *disarticulatory vibrations* from, say, love at first sight: subjective territory ↔ subjectivity ↔ dominant values ↔ unformed affects, thereby transforming and/or

expanding subjective territory – range, perspective, experience – and thus the 'affective presence' and universe for a given person or people.

Whereas our example of becomings-dissident maps trajectories of always dynamic and fundamentally non-subjectified, often subversive, lines of influence when measured in relation to parameters of dominant systems, it would be wrong to position automatically or decisively transversality within dualist frameworks of conformity/subversion and/or subject/other. Instead, transversality in the context of political and cultural frameworks enables unintentional and experiential alterity that while simultaneously defying totalising and/or unifying schemas acts also to express and amplify transitory states. These states, on the one hand, serve to heighten and expand processes of reflexive-consciousness, and, on the other hand, make accessible empathetic lines of communication, even within the everyday workings of consciousness, what we refer to as 'quotidian-consciousness', the stance, awareness and sentience common to second-by-second daily life. Transversal poetics expands beyond the Guattarian bestiary, which exemplifies actualised affective communication and the manifestation of latent desires for group assemblages through productive openings of equine blinkers (Guattari 1984: 17–18), to acknowledge that amplification of alterity via transversality influences, intensive-extensively, the scope of reflexive-consciousness. Such amplification multiplies levels and lines of affect, sentience and thought through the performative and interrelated movements of subjectivity between social identities, codes and discourses. In the emphasis Guattari places on group formations, the individual does not disappear, much less cease to exist, but rather functions, as Genosko aptly explains, as a liberating mirror through which individuals produce new singularities and subjectivities resulting from intersubjective relations, collective affects and enunciation, explorations of desires and passions, among others (2002: 83). Similarly, and by extension, according to transversal poetics, the multiplicity of goings-x (non-volitional travel), comings-to-be-x (unintended), and becomings-x (intended), such as becomings-dissident, made possible through transversality assumes a group dimension in terms of unblinkering the potential for empathetic and affective paths of communication and understanding by crossing previously obstructed or elided cultural, ethnic, racial, species, social, gendered and/or environmental divisions, avenues and conduits.

The unexpected events, slippages and wanderings that prompt transversality to emerge immanently and catalyse becomings-dissident have the effect of manifesting for subjectivity a transition away from the stasis of routine and habit and/or inhibitive and repressive structures

while, also, engendering new paths of cognition and empathy. In short, this is the creation of new universes of reference and meaning for manifestations and performances of subjectivity and therefore also of inter- and intra-subjectivities. We argue elsewhere for the importance of revising the Deleuzo-Guattarian subject along proactive agential lines of potentiality whereon, despite the ultimately open-ended and non-agential trajectories that becomings-dissident can achieve in terms of both social identities and state machineries, there nevertheless perseveres prospective and contingent opportunities for 'wilful parameterisation' of transversal movements (Bryx & Reynolds 2009: 83–123). To be sure, it is possible to find parallels in the administrative methodology put into practice by Guattari that sought to redistribute and rotate the work schedules and roles of participating members of the psychiatric institution, whether employees or patients, so as to maximise the potential of transversal coefficients. Yet, as in the institutional case of Guattari's 'grid' (a non-hierarchical deregulating work schedule for staff at La Borde), wilfully parameterising conditions for transversal movement is not a fail-safe or sure method by which to reach, for instance, becomings-dissident (should this be one's goal). This is because, at best, when faced with transversal power wilful parameterisation only ameliorates potential and adjusts some configurations for channelling and navigating the passings-through of thresholds of alterity. To refer to some common examples: people often try to establish conditions and set parameters for their journeys on ayahuasca, DMT or LSD. They do this typically by attempting to control as many variables as possible that they might encounter along the way, such as material properties, light, temperature, sound, other people, creatures and energies. Nevertheless, the transversal power of these psychotropic drugs operating in conjunction with consciousness and subjective territory are far from controllable or predictable, and it is precisely this intensive-extensive potential that most drives people to want to enjoy them.

In the 1960s, LSD superhero Ken Kesey and his Merry Pranksters went to great lengths to set the parameters for their famous 'acid tests', whether at Kesey's ranch in La Honda, California or on the Interstates in their magic bus, to ensure that the trippers had the 'right' kind of experience, that is, 'the LSD experience', a popular catchphrase coined during the era. Tom Wolfe's account in *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* is representative:

> Under LSD, if it really went right, *Ego* and *Non-Ego* started to merge. Countless things that seemed separate started to merge, too; a sound became . . . *a color!* blue . . . colors became smells, walls began to *breathe* like

> the underside of a leaf, with one's own breath. A curtain became a column of concrete and yet it began rippling, this incredible concrete mass rippling in harmonic waves like the Puget Sound bridge before the crash and you can *feel* it, the entire harmonics of the universe from the most massive to the smallest and most personal – *presque vu!* – all flowing together in this very moment . . . (1968: 140; ellipses in original)

Convinced of the importance of parameterisation, especially after suffering the 'bad trip' of loss of control at the 1965 Beatle's concert at Cow Palace, Kesey fantasised about building a perfectly controlled environment for the LSD experience, 'a great geodesic dome on top of a cylindrical shaft' with 'a great foam-rubber floor . . . everywhere, would be speakers, microphones, tape machines, live, replay, variable lag', and much more (Wolfe 1968: 231). Similar comparisons could be made with people's elaborate efforts to establish the perfect *mise-en-scène* for a romantic evening (especially when sex is a desired component), a theatre performance, or a dangerous sport, like mixed martial arts, motorcycle motocross, skate boarding or freestyle skiing. In all of these examples, people desire it in contradictory ways: controlled and free, parameterised and unpredictable, though not necessarily transversal; and in the cases of some of them, particularly when they involve an audience, collective experience is a privileged measure of success.

For Guattari, the distribution of desire among a group's members is crucial to the transversality of the group formation for which a collective subjectivity can be a product. According to transversal poetics, varying outcomes are always at stake when desire is directed towards both acquisition (opportunity, diagnosis, cure) and production (experience, subjectivity, agreement, rapport), even when primarily consumptive as manifested (through conversation, eating, reading, watching), with the attainment and expense of energy (caloric, libidinal, psychic) affecting and enabling further desire. The production of desire is unavoidable, like the effects of a digested psychotropic drug or an adrenaline rush from freestyle skiing, but an individual or a group can channel it through wilful parameterisation (becomings), or, or also, the desired – its desiring force – might channel it (comings-to-be). For instance, physical exertion, such as during aerobic or sexual activity, releases chemicals in the brain that make people feel good, more alert, even euphoric. These chemicals include endorphins, named after morphine because they relieve pain, induce pleasurable feelings and are physically addictive; phenylethylamine, which pleasurably stimulates like amphetamines, increases awareness, reduces depression, and is also addictive; and serotonin, which induces pleasurable feelings, reduces

depression and is addictive – if only indirectly through, say, cocaine use or excessive ingestion of carbohydrates. The work of these chemicals and many others with similar mood-boosting or antidepressant effects and addictive qualities demonstrates quite clearly, in the context of daily or monthly happenings, the implicative opportunity of choosing to parameterise behaviour through reflexive-consciousness that directly influences the intensity of desire and its generative capacities. In turn, this biochemical, psychic dynamic outwardly expresses, such as through social activity, cultural traits and material relations.

Dynamic manoeuvrings of reflexive-consciousness, such as through heightened cognition along subjunctive vectors, can function to recalibrate the body to produce more and different processes of desires and affects. Scrambling together and apart, for instance, chemical intake with sexual and/or aerobic activity at variable intensities and schedules can motivate the production of affect in altogether different calibrations from the static and normalised routines that ordinarily circumscribe subjective territories. The wilful parameterisation of alterity, when successful, generates a recalibrated body where affects threshold in atypical and unpredictable manners, disrupting the linear causality of dependence on serotonin production, for instance, to relieve depression. What intensities of desire do we produce if we devour three dishes of lasagne in the middle of an otherwise sleep-filled night? What affects might this excessive digestion of carbohydrates prompt in terms of mood-boosting pleasurable, addictive or depressing feelings related to heightened and/or lowered processes of reflexive-consciousness and/or hallucinogenic or subjunctive vectors of cognition?

The alterity that we advocate – the transversality, goings-x, becomings-x, sometimes leading to becomings-dissident from the all-too common trappings of a repressive subjective territory (networked with guilt, shame and anxiety), the thresholding of new pathways of cognition – shares the Guattarian sensibility for enhancing the productive dimensions of the navigation of new universes of meaning beyond conditioned and institutionalised modes of existence. We intend the implementable concept of wilful parameterisation to incorporate a practicality with which both to maximise possible encounters and navigations of transversality and concurrently to function as sustainable, albeit perpetually shifting, patchworks of interconnected and productive rhythms of affect, desire and cognition. The analogy to thermodynamics that Guattari employs to illustrate the entropic zero-degree flight of the intensive diminution of transversality characterises effectively, in our opinion, the impossibility of clinging indefinitely to radical

and undifferentiated transductive metamorphoses. However, seeking transversality opportunistically enhances, we argue, our potential to navigate experience according to mutating ethical and aesthetic rhythms, the production of cacophonous singularities sustainable through the development and recalibration of our bodies and minds through self-generative and self-channelling dimensions. We share the Guattarian sensibility of seeking both practical and sustainable modes of creative auto-productions, ones that shift and mutate in partial accordance with agential explorations as well as with positive differentiation that defines, in our view, transversal movements.

We encounter roadblocks, nonetheless, in relation to some aspects that represent the Deleuzo-Guattarian subject and the tendency therein and in poststructuralist and postmodernist philosophy to underplay the importance of both the sustainability of subjectivity and the immediacy and intensive power with which reflexive-consciousness harnesses the interplay of subjectivities and transversal movements. Whereas we see value in Guattari's provisional definition in 'Subjectivities: for Better and for Worse' of subjectivity that emphasises the role of self-referential conditions that tentatively determine the adjacent correspondence of alterity to subjectivity (1996*:* 196), we are less inclined to agree with the Deleuzo-Guattarian subject that pre-emptively defers reflexive-consciousness as abstracted and postponed retroactive introspection. In other words, while we value the Deleuzo-Guattarian critique of positive rationalism and the Freudian triadic topography of mind, we also see that reflexive-consciousness functions with an integral vitality concerning thresholding and experiential alterity, and that it is not simply the by-product of indeterminate, aleatory, larval and autonomic transductions between intensive states of becomings-other. We see this deferment of the capabilities of reflexive-consciousness in Deleuzo-Guattarian concepts of the subject and subjectivity as coinciding with a premise of non-sustainability and machinic breakdown. For them, these concepts always verge towards self-destructive impulses and routes, as in the case of desiring-production or the means (hypochondria, drug addiction, paranoia, schizophrenia, masochism) by which they maintain that people often approximate the always sought but ultimately unattainable Body-without-Organs (1983: 149–66).

Conversely, we gravitate towards Guattari's outlook on subjectivity as sustainable, what we would refer to, with some difference, as 'eventualising' (events achieving duration), a perspective that has important implications for ethico-aesthetic and eco-philosophical outlooks on experience, which he repeatedly stresses throughout his

work. For instance, in 'Subjectivities: for Better and for Worse', Guattari accentuates conjunctive textures: 'Of primordial importance, however, is the mutant, rhythmic trajectory of a temporalization that is capable of holding together the heterogeneous components of a new existential structure' (1996: 201). In 'Regimes, Pathways, Subjects', Guattari promotes the principle of consistency with regard to self-generative experiential alterity: 'Paths/voices of *self-reference* developing a processual subjectivity that defines its own coordinates and is self-consistent (what I have discussed elsewhere under the category of the "subject group"), but can nevertheless establish transversal relations to mental and social stratifications' (1996: 96). Our point here is that mobilising reflexive-consciousness in an intensive-productive function within the interplay of other constitutive aspects of production expresses a critical component of the self-generation of subjectivities through wilful parameterisations of transversal movements that applies directly to an enhancement of the positive potential for transversality and concomitantly the promotion of experiential alterity and non-directed affective transduction. Avoiding entrapment in pre-individual, rationalist, abstract or otherwise categorised positivistic attributes, our emphasis on the productive function of reflexive-consciousness exemplifies the delight with which Guattari, in 'The First Positive Task of Schizoanalysis', turns to Samuel Beckett's work in order to theorise machinic and schizoid processes – the sucking stones in *Molloy* that connect organic, inert and psychological fragments (1996: 78–9). Similarly, the productive function of reflexive-consciousness exemplifies the self-generative machine of semiosis that, in 'Genet Regained', Guattari identifies in Jean Genet as a radical manufacturer of excitement through the copulative conjunctions of flowers and convicts:

> In Genet, the flower mates with the convict: 'Convict garb is striped pink and white. Though it was at my heart's bidding that I chose the universe wherein I delight, I at least have the power of finding therein the many meanings I wish to find: there is a close relationship between flowers and convicts.' Two, three universes crystallize together: the penal colony, flowers, and poetry. Anything else? Excitation. (1996: 225)

Like the copulative semiotisation of flowers and convicts, Guattari also analyses machinic fabulation in Genet's life and work that produces emancipatory conjunctions between creative processes and masturbation irreducible to pathologies of psychotic episodes or fixated imaginaries, but rather as emergent properties of the subjunctive.

How do we tarry with the subjunctive to maximise parameterisations of transversal movements and sustain experiences of non-directed affective transduction? One particular style of approach that we want to consider in the context of this essay on the philosophy of Félix Guattari and transversal poetics is engagement with the immanent implosion of processes of reflexive-consciousness when subjunctive lines become 'inarticulatory', unable to articulate, perhaps passing first through the 'disarticulatory', the undoing of articulation (Bryx & Reynolds 2012). The characterisation of subjunctive movement in transversal poetics asserts this concept as an in-between enabler and affecter, potentially bridging everyday happenings with transversality, occurring when cognitive considerations of as-ifs and what-ifs slip into a smooth spatiotemporality undifferentiated by agency, causality and cogency. A serial effect of this intensive-extensive giving-way of the subjunctive into the transversal, should the variables configure to precipitate such emergent occurrences, involves what we call 'paused-consciousness', 'motored-consciousness', 'viscerallectrics' and 'fractalactics'. We share these terms now as a coda to this essay that has been working its way toward them all along.

During focused physical, sexual, affective and/or mental activities, people sometimes lose tract of the spatiotemporal grids that frame subjectivity – how they are perceived interrelated with the whys and whats of their doing – sometimes causing the forgetting of where they are in space and time. Such paused-consciousness indicates a passing into interstices, a neuropathic spacetime of surrender, slippage and skating where anything can transpire, where any potential connections can be made in its departure from quotidian-consciousness. We say 'any' because at certain times/situations/spaces/neighbourhoods we are not in control of our ability to navigate our consciousness; and sometimes we do not want to be, like in theaterspace or psychotropicspace, when we wilfully suspend disbelief and welcome uncontrollable cognitive-emotional-physical transportation. (See Figure 1 for an expression of such transportation.)

Unlike quotidian-consciousness, motored-consciousness describes the momentum consciousness achieves when reflexive-consciousness heightens and when, contradictory to reflexive-consciousness, reflexive-consciousness combines with paused-consciousness to become streamlined in scope, that is, intensely aware (reflexive) of its trajectory and simultaneously (because it is *paused on* the trajectory) unaware of the framing, context and environment. In other words, to achieve motored-consciousness, reflexive-consciousness becomes a myopic,

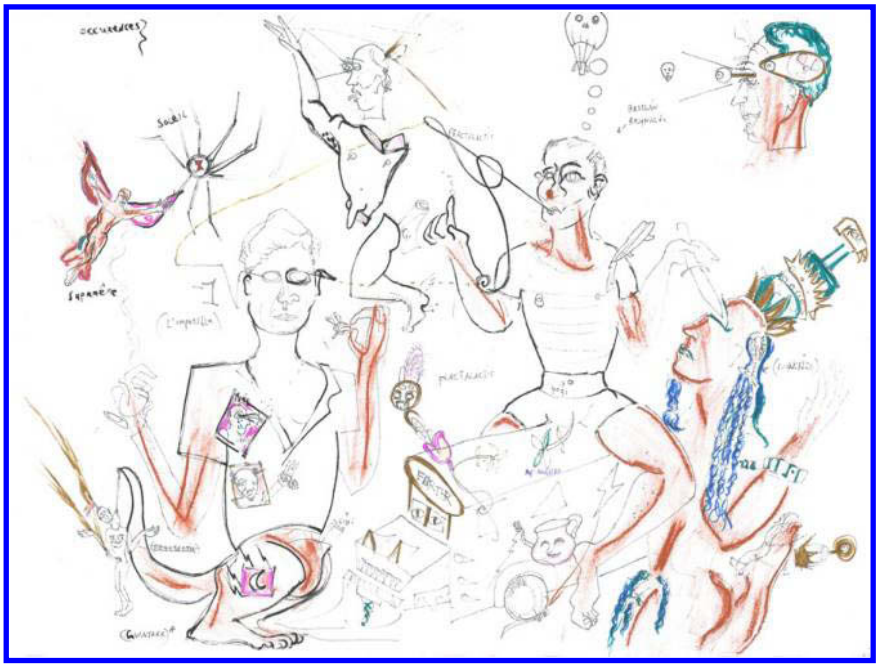


Figure 1. *Fractalactic Occurrences*, by Arturo Desimone. (Reproduced with permission.)

resonating force, a compelled mapping – as opposed to a tracing – when feedback-loops, under such extreme pressure, connectively disjoin with feedforward-flows as an inarticulatory process. Motored-consciousness generates-x (sensations, vibrations, thoughts, perceptions, desires, pleasures, pains, associations . . .) when the altering of consciousness perseveres relentlessly and exponentially with intensity, like when on LSD, receiving prolonged sexual and/or painful stimulation, or simply because of sensory overload, which can be attained through experiences of sensory deprivation as well as of complex, profuse and/or incongruent stimuli. To give an LSD example from a participant in the 1966 Watts Acid Test:

> There was much activity in the large room. People were dancing and the band [The Grateful Dead] was playing – but I couldn't hear them. I can't remember a note of music, because the vibrations were so intense. ['Vibrations' being a term for the effects of LSD.] I am a music-oriented person – sing, play instruments, etc. – which is why this seems so unusual to me. I stood close

> to the band and let the vibrations engulf me. They started in my toes and every inch of me was quivering with them . . . they made a journey through my nervous system (I remember picturing myself as one of the charts we had studied in biology which shows the nerve network), traveling each tiny path, finally reaching the top of my head, where they exploded in glorious patterns of color and lines . . . (Wolfe 1968: 275)

A result of motored-consciousness, further to the 'powerbanding' rush of motored-consciousness that simultaneously surfs on heightened lucidity and the eventualisations it becomes and to which it contributes – the layering of feedforward-flows and feedback-loops refracted by stimuli and asymmetrically corresponding reflexivity, 'viscerallectrics' activate subsequent to combined, serial implosions of visceral, intellectual and electric registers. The exponential effects of the momentum of 'vibrations' described in the passage demonstrate the LSD-induced viscerallectrics at work.

One goes viscerallectric! Like motored-consciousness, viscerallectrics are a sustained, linked, eventualising process of intensity of affect, where and when implosions set adrift particular kinds of transversal vectors (visceral/intellectual/electric), supercharged 'pulsations' and 'tremors' compared to the 'motored' velocity of motored-consciousness. Yet precisely because they are propelled by motored-consciousness, the domino-effected implosions immanent to viscerallectrics sometimes achieve the capacity to generate 'fractalactic occurrences': presto, boom, shazam – 'they exploded in glorious patterns of color and lines' – when enough energy transduces in and through certain forces, organics, planes and objects that splinter, fuse and refract in a multiplicity of unpredictable directions and dimensions. Both fractal and compositional, *one goes fractalactic!* In turn, when considering their impacts on humans, fractalactic occurrences precipitate transversal vectors, and together, whether cacophonously or euphoniously, they link and manifest feedback-loops, feedforward-flows, continued motored-consciousness, viscerallectrics, crystallisations of subjectivity, and changes and expansions of subjective territory, and so on, and on, and on . . . *we go* . . .

Note

We want to thank Arturo Desimone for making the illustration *Fractalactic Occurrences* for this essay.

1. This is the authors' preferred way of showing equal authorship.

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Culture as Existential Territory: Ecosophic Homelands for the Twenty-first Century

Janell Watson

Abstract

The mass popular dissent which has marked the early twenty-first century, from al-Qaeda to the Arab Spring to the Occupy movement, can be read as expressions of collective, subjective, existential mutation. This reading is inspired by Félix Guattari, who described the 1979 Iranian revolution, the Polish Solidarity movement and the 1989 Chinese student demonstrations as demands for subjective singularisation. In each of these examples of social discontent, past and present, demands vary widely even within the same movement, spanning economics, lifestyle, religion and politics, and ranging from cries for liberation to conservative returns to ancient tradition. In order to perform a schizoanalysis of such amorphous movements, Guattari developed a four-part ecosophic object, composed of existential Territories, Universes of value, material-energetic Flows and machinic Phyla. Assemblages can be dynamically mapped along these four dimensions. Of crucial importance in the age of extreme deterritorialisation is the existential Territory, which could potentially take the form of a homeland based on poetry or music rather than on ethnicity or even place. Such portable homelands would characterise the dissensual processual post-media era for which Guattari longed.

Keywords: assemblage, deterritorialisation, subjectivity, ecosophy, three ecologies, machinic phylum, post-media era, processuality, singularisation

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Popular collective expressions of dissent have dominated headlines around the world since the dawn of the twenty-first century. Targets of dissent vary, although it is in each case some version of a perceived status quo. Plots and attacks associated with al-Qaeda; widespread reactionary anti-Islamism in Europe; Palestinian retaliations against Israeli occupation; Uighur and Tibetan autonomy movements; the Iranian Green movement; the massive upheavals of the Arab Spring; the short-lived Jasmine protests; London rioting and looting which spread throughout the UK; demonstrations against austerity measures in Europe (UK, Italy, Greece, Spain); network attacks by the hacktivist group Anonymous; San Francisco demonstrations that shut down public transportation; Occupy Wall Street with its many offshoots. Some of the causes are progressive, others traditionalist and still others annihilatory. The demands are disparate, contradictory and at times intangible. Motivations that have been articulated or ascribed include religion, culture, race, secularism, nationalism, territorial claims, democratisation, an impetus toward modernisation, a return to traditionalism, economic precarity, high unemployment, police brutality, disenfranchised youth and criminality. The London looters may seem to have little in common with Palestinians protesting the occupation of their lands or with other Arab populations rising up against corrupt authoritarian rule, but all share an explosive discontent that is manifested publicly, sometimes brutally, and at great personal risk. Some among those who have banded together in opposition had previously led mainstream middle-class lives; this is especially true of the London looting as well as of the Arab uprisings. Even the most coordinated of the collectives involved are decentralised and amorphous.

'Collective subjective mutation' is a phrase that captures the spontaneity, amorphousness and unarticulated desires that characterise the disparate collective events in question here. As many have observed of the current wave of uprisings, this is not revolutionary politics as usual. There is no vanguard, no central committee, no formal manifesto. Collective actions have been spurred more by affective intensity than by conscious discursivity. Writing in the 1980s, Guattari cited an array of uprisings similar in diversity to those I have just listed, and many of his comments seem germane to the present unrests shaking various parts of the world. He compared events as dissimilar as the 1979 Iranian revolution, the Polish Solidarity movement and the 1989 Chinese student demonstrations. His examples also include the Basques, Corsicans, Palestinians and Uighurs, as well as Muslim fundamentalists, Australian aboriginal peoples, black Brazilians and

non-white second-generation Europeans (Guattari 1986; Guattari and Rolnik 2008). Despite the very different ideologies and demands being made, he notes similarities in these movements' and events' 'contagious, affective burden'. In each case, there is at stake 'a whole lifestyle, a whole conception of social relations, and a collective ethic' (Guattari 1996: 193). For him, these movements and events portend 'a collective, existential mutation' (Guattari 1995: 2). I suggest that the twenty-first-century events and movements that I have listed can be understood as a continuation of the existential transformations that Guattari was observing in the final decade of his life. He describes historical change in terms of mutating assemblages. The trouble with assemblages, at least from the point of view of those seeking to control and manipulate them, is that they mutate. Even the most existentially consistent and stable assemblage is autopoietic, which is to say self-organising, self-reproducing and capable of taking off in unforeseen directions, bifurcating unexpectedly upon the chance encounter of a point of singularity, either disaggregating into entropy or re-assembling itself around a nucleus of subjectivation, regaining existential consistency as a new assemblage with new capabilities. New assemblages are not necessarily better, but social mutations cannot take place without their creation.

The variety of needs and wants being voiced by mass demonstrations around the world cannot and should not be synthesised. It is likewise important to recognise that there are leaders and organisers within even the most acephalous movements. However, if Guattari is correct that we are approaching the threshold of a new era, then the collective energies generated by the demonstrations will uncover bifurcation points amidst the chaos. The resulting social mutations will take the form of order emerging from chaos (Prigogine and Stengers 1984). Perhaps this is what radical democracy looks like, a 'democratic chaos which conceals a multitude of vectors of resingularisation, attractors of social creativity in search of actualisation' (Guattari 1995: 14, 117). These movements are complex systems endowed with 'a wealth of possible stable and unstable behaviors' (Prigogine and Stengers 1984: 169). The militant analytic task at hand: searching the 'democratic chaos' of today's amorphous collective movements for 'attractors of social creativity'. Attractors are the limit points of a system, but near its bifurcation points, resingularising lines of flight may take off in new directions, abruptly transforming the system (Mitchell 2009). The 'attractors of social creativity' achieve 'actualisation' if they manage to acquire enough existential consistency to self-realise. This requires a

crystal of singularisation, a nucleus around which a new psycho-social entity can come into existence (Guattari 1989: 52, 60). Guattari plays on the multiple meanings of the word singular: for him, 'singularity' denotes both the points at which systems may mutate and also the opposite of standardisation or Sartrean seriality; 'singularisation' denotes a bifurcation toward creative complexity. For progressives who advocate for radical democracy, political hope lies in those social mutations that allow for a maximum of subjective singularisation. The problem: how to avoid regressive reterritorialisations? Recent manifestations of public dissent are democratic in the sense that people are expressing themselves collectively and publicly, even if some among them are choosing fascist paths. The task for political progressives is to carefully search these gestures of dissent which have upset the equilibrium of daily life in many parts of the world in order to uncover points of singularity from which new mental, social and machinic assemblages can come into being, seeking out the emancipatory from among the repressive – a distinction which is not as clear-cut as it seems.

At stake is the 'production of human existence itself in new historical contexts' (Guattari 2000: 34). The 'production of human existence' encompasses the complex processes that make up Guattari's three ecologies – mental, social and environmental. It is a matter of assemblages and their environments. The 'new historical contexts' in question include the acceleration of globalisation since the 1980s; increasingly interactive information technologies; economic financialisation; corporate agglomeration; and the rise of global Islam in confrontation with international secularism, global Christianity and a stubbornly territorial Zionism. Human existence, like life itself, requires viable ecologies. Air, shelter, water and food are not enough to sustain a living being. As social animals, humans require assemblages – the shared behavioural sequences that organise the social mechanisms necessary for species survival (Guattari 2011: ch. 5). Guattari's ecosophy provides a dynamic cartographic method that can help detect existential mutations, conceptualising life in terms of complex self-organising machinic systems, ontologically similar to those of chemistry and biology but with ethical and aesthetic dimensions. Ecosophy is the ethico-aesthetic mapping of mutations traversing disparate assemblages, a cartographic exploration of the complex and intertwined machinations of the psyche, the socius, the mecanosphere, the biosphere and the cosmos. Only such an 'eco-logic' can appreciate the particularities, diversities and interconnections among biological, machinic and social life in the twenty-first century.

Assemblages can exist only in relation to some sort of territory. This relationship is subjective. This is why mutating assemblages can open up to subjective singularisation, for better or for worse. As Jakob von Uexküll puts it, 'Territory is purely a problem of the environment because it represents an exclusively subjective product' (Uexküll 2010: 103). Each animal or insect requires a subjectivity in order to survive, for without subjectivity there is no capacity to interact with the environment. Insofar as humans and animals alike adjust their behaviours in relation to each other and to their environment, they are endowed with subjectivity, a subjectivity which is not discursive but which operates in pathic, affective and intensive dimensions. For complex systems theory, a sort of subjectivity can be ascribed to any self-organising system – even a chemical or geological one. That means that mass social movements, even the most acephalous, function as assemblages whose capacity for affect, for affecting and being affected by their surroundings, indicates the presence of a proto-subjectivity. To respond to the environment is to make choices. To the extent that decision making requires a subject, a sort of proto-subjectivity is found throughout the biological realm, since 'Being alive means being able to make unforeseen decisions' (Shaviro 2010: 143). As Guattari puts it, 'A certain kind of freedom and even grace exists on the level of the nervous or digestive system' (Guattari 2011: 127). Human subjectivity also operates on this non-discursive, bio-social level. For human collectives, 'many seemingly deliberate behaviours actually relate to an ethological montage' comparable to animal mating rituals, territorial defence behaviours or the ant colony (131). In this sense, 'Freedom is not created with subjectivity' since there is no individuated rational consciousness directing such collective activities (127). The amorphously coalesced collective disruptions of the twenty-first century exhibit this same kind of ethological proto-subjectivity. Autonomy is being sought at the level of an intensive subjectivity of the Body-without-Organs type, rather than through stratified discourse, as in the case with vanguard politics. Today's oppositional collectives are acting out a kind of ethological politics, whose irruptions of democratic chaos can best be analysed in terms of social assemblages. The collectives themselves manifest a 'making-dissident of subjectivity' that Guattari equates with the demand for subjective singularisation (Guattari 1986: 68).

Historical transformations correspond to the emergence of new social assemblages, hence the importance of looking out for the crystals of singularisation and nuclei of subjectivation around which these new assemblages can form (Deleuze and Guattari 1987). To

state the obvious, globalisation's extreme deterritorialisations have upset existing assemblages. As Guattari put it, the world has been taken over by a 'deterritorializing gangrene' which has resulted in the 'general bankruptcy of the "originary" territorialities' and the '"ungluing" of the collective history of humanity' (Guattari 2011: 119). The great machines of mass deterritorialisation that have taken over the earth have uncoupled peoples from territories. Economic and political migrations uproot entire populations, as do wars and natural disasters. Even those who remain in a geographical area are being detached from their territories. Marc Augé offers an ethnography of 'non-places' such as airports, shopping malls, freeways, refugee camps, mass-designed dwelling space and box stores selling global merchandise (Augé 1995). A non-place is a territory without a people in a world where too many people have no place. Of course, retail non-places offer many of modest means the benefits of low-cost goods and fresh produce made available year round. Likewise, modernised housing offers refrigeration and air conditioning to the growing middle classes in places like China and India. At the same time, non-places are decimating countless long-established neighbourhoods. In many cases, the deterritorialising modernisation schema proposed by mass development is too standardised and therefore insufficiently attuned to the need for subjective singularisation.

Collective human history needs new assemblages to replace those that have become unglued. Ecosophy's schizoanalytic ontology offers a useful framework for understanding the destruction and reconstitution of the assemblages upon which human existence depend. Ecosophy maps assemblages, showing how they form, evolve, mutate and dissipate on the plane of consistency, within the plane's constant interplay of chaos and complexity. The 'ecosophic object' provides a graphic conceptualisation of the plane of consistency, plotted onto four quadrants: existential Territories, Universes of value (or of reference), machinic Phyla and Fluxes (or flows) (Guattari 1989; 2000). To examine mental, social and environmental ecologies it is necessary to consider all four quadrants. Many accounts of global capitalism focus on Flows (resources, energy, capital) and machinic Phyla (technology, machines, knowledge), which are the discursive, stratified, actualised domains of the assemblage. Guattari instead emphasises the assemblage's non-discursive, intensive, virtual domains of Universes of value and existential Territories, which are the quadrants from which subjectivity emerges. The ecosophic object is especially useful for analysing the collective social movements in question here because it maps both

the subjective and cultural domains (Territories and Universes) as well as the economic and technological domains (Flows and Phyla). Ecosophy thus accounts for strange ways in which collectively shared affect (the non-discursive domains of Territories and Universes) holds together movements with no clearly articulated unifying agenda (the discursive domain of Flows and Phyla). This four-dimensional map of the assemblage further indicates that resource Flows regulated by the Phyla of social technologies cannot operate without Universes of value embodied in existential Territories. Universes of value and existential Territories are crucial components of both massive-scale social assemblages like neoliberal democracy and smaller assemblages like dating rituals or the territorial markings of urban street gangs. This is why twenty-first-century protest movements, which are themselves assemblages, can suddenly come into existence, wreaking the havoc of democratic chaos in which singularising lines of flight coexist with socio-economic demands as well as territorial claims that seem to belong to a bygone era.

Today's global elite includes monarchs, dictators, finance capitalists, CEOs of multinationals, communist bureaucrats and third-world kleptocrats. Guattari's notion of Integrated World Capitalism does not capture the heterogeneity of globalisation's ruling assemblages. However, his ecosophic object helps account for this heterogeneous yet tightly networked global elite, against which much present-day dissent is directed. Their loosely coordinated actions have led to extreme hyperdeterritorialisation, the above-mentioned '"ungluing" of the collective history of humanity'. They have instrumentalised states, depoliticising them through economisation, in order to transform the earth into Flows of resources and real estate which they 'develop' (their term, not mine) for immense profits. The social assemblages that have organised and regulated Western existence since the Middle Ages are being pushed to mutate in response to the integration of the entire world into the various accumulatory regimes devouring the planet. The financialising technocracy has developed sophisticated stratification strategies for reaping surpluses from the libidinal energies unleashed by various assemblages, be they social, industrial, informational or aesthetic.

Many of today's protestors cite economic inequality as a primary concern, a complaint especially common among the Arab Spring, European anti-austerity and American-led Occupy movements. For the so-called 99 per cent, life has grown increasingly precarious, even within the first world. The American middle class is shrinking. The

working class born of the industrial revolution is disappearing fast. Working conditions in the third world do not meet first-world standards, and the poor everywhere are worse off than ever, even as the elite grows wealthier and more powerful. Small business owners and self-employed professionals are growing smaller in number as ownership is consolidated; shopkeepers become store managers and physicians go to work for health corporations, moving into what Guy Standing calls the Salariat. Others have opted for the status of Proficians, working on short-term contracts and consultancies, often for good pay. The fastest-growing class is that of the Precariat, 'the new dangerous class' characterised by insecurity of residency, of labour and of social protection. Unions and social welfare systems are being dismantled in the first and second worlds, and often never existed in the third world. Today's precariat lacks the prospects of lifetime employment, bargaining power to demand better wages and benefits, and a government-provided social safety net. Although the salariat and proficians enjoy relative stability, there is always the risk of sliding into the precariat. Moving up from the precariat into the salariat is not at all likely, as sociological research shows again and again. Unemployment is a fate that can befall the salariat as quickly and catastrophically as the precariat. Stability and precarity form a sliding scale, mostly sliding down, while the elite (financial, bureaucratic or monarchical) continually invent complex investment schemes to shelter themselves from risk. This new social stratification scheme has taken hold all over the world, in rich nations and in poor. The precariat includes people from ethnic majorities as well as from ethnic minorities, citizens as well as legal and illegal immigrants. Its members are far too disparate to form any kind of traditional revolutionary consciousness. The precariat certainly needs economic security, juridical rights and political recognition, but it also needs agency, the right to cultural difference and a sense of meaning in life (Standing 2011: 24–5). The protestors' demands are therefore not limited to economic or energetic Flows (money, clean water, utilities and so on).

Guattari emphasised demands for subjective singularisation which manifest themselves most clearly in disputes over language, religion, ethnicity or lifestyle, and may as easily include calls for modernisation as returns to tradition. These cultural dimensions correspond to existential Territories and Universes of value. However, as for example with the NATO military interventions in Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya, or with the Israel–Palestine conflict, it is often hard to determine whether the warring parties are fighting over resource Flows or cultural Universes.

Although the American Occupy Wall Street and Tea Party movements both advocate reforming financial Flows, they differ in terms of social vision (Universes and Territories). The Tunisian vegetable seller immolated himself not just because he was poor (cut off from Flows), but also because petty official harassment menaced his sense of self (existential Territory). Cultural difference, agency and the meaning of life require attention to Universes and Territories. However, before turning to these two domains, it worth pausing to consider the machinic Phyla which play an increasingly large role in today's assemblages and their ecologies.

Guattari notes that although subjective factors have often played a significant historical role, by the early 1990s the global diffusion of collectively expressed demands through the mass media had brought subjectivity to the forefront of world events (Guattari 1995: 3). Today, digital information technologies are ever more integrated into the most social and most intimate dimensions of human lives. Media coverage amplifies the subjective dimensions of an event, giving a face and a voice to the actors, establishing with the viewer affective bonds that may resonate independently of discursive messages. Interactive social media, which Guattari anticipated but did not live to see fully realised, further enhances the subjective dimensions of history. Both progressive movements and returns to tradition are enlisting the help of the mass media, social networking and interactive personal media. Technology is not the exclusive domain of the modernisers. Social networking spreads anti-Islamic right-wing ethnocentric nationalism across Europe and North America, just as fundamentalists sympathetic to al-Qaeda use the Internet to organise and to promote their cause. 'The machinic production of subjectivity can work for the better or for the worse', as Guattari once put it (Guattari 1996: 194). Subjective singularisation may lead toward greater freedoms, or toward renewed repressions or toward self-annihilation. Existing assemblages are not up to the task of producing the kinds of subjectivation required to survive 'planetary informatisation' (Guattari 1992).[1]

Much has been made of the role of the media in bringing into being the various twenty-first-century contestatory movements. From the self-produced videos of Osama bin Laden televised around the world on the 24/7 news cycle to the demonstrations organised on Facebook and Twitter, both top-down mass media and bottom-up social media have shaped recent popular oppositional events. Given the role of both micro- and mass media in creating and sustaining protest movements over the past 30 years, have we entered the dissensual, processual

post-media era whose arrival Guattari longed for (Guattari 1992: 31)? The odd mixture of emancipatory, conservative and destructive impulses indicates that the post-media era has arrived only in bits and pieces, and that its technological aspects have evolved much more quickly than its subjective and social aspects. As Guattari predicted, media technologies have indeed become interactive to the point that anyone can produce and broadcast audio-visual materials from devices carried in their pockets, but he didn't mention that this interactivity also serves the purposes of control society. Sophisticated media technologies, such as closed-circuit digital video and facial recognition software, have played a decisive role in state responses to populist demonstrations. Iran, China and the public transit authority in the San Francisco Bay Area (BART) have all been criticised for blocking social media communication channels, and the UK has discussed doing the same. The technology itself, however, is less important than the subjective and social mutations that go with it. Guattari defined the post-media era as not just interactive and dissensual but also processual. Full entry into the post-media era requires the development of what he calls processual assemblages. Unlike the archaic and capitalist social assemblages of the past, argues Guattari, processual assemblages will be resingularising. Processuality implicates, on the one hand, 'intimate modes of being, the body, the environment' and on the other hand 'large contextual ensembles relating to ethnic groups, the nation, or even the general rights of humanity' (Guattari 2000: 53). The post-media era is therefore less dependent on technology per se than on the existential conditions of subjective singularisation. 'Intimate modes of being' correspond to existential Territories, 'large contextual ensembles' to referential Universes of value.

The irruption into history of demands for subject singularisation corresponds to a general search for viable existential Territories – singular homelands suitable to our age of extreme deterritorialisation. Whether or not Guattari's utopic post-media era will ever come to be, existential Territories are necessary to any assemblage, processual or standard. Existential Territory is, depending on the context, a domain of the plane of consistency, an essential dimension of subjectivity and a mode of territorialisation. An existential Territory may be individual or collective. It incorporates the affective, pre-discursive and extra-discursive dimensions of the self. It corresponds to the Body without Organs as well as to the kind of 'inflatable, portable territory' mentioned in *A Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 320). Whether individual or collective, existential Territory includes the body proper, the self, the maternal body, lived space, refrains of the mother tongue,

familiar faces, family lore and ethnicity (Guattari 1995: 95). It remains pre-discursive, pre-personal and intensive. It is 'a Territory of action, of physical totalisation, of the location of affect and of proto-history' (Guattari 1995: 66). As traditional territorialisations give way to modern deterritorialisations, existential Territories become even more crucial to survival.

Social assemblages crumble unless they are embodied in some sort of territory. No form of subjectivity can exist without a territory, even in the case of a liberating line of flight. The existential challenge of the twenty-first century remains the invention of a form of territoriality that can benefit from extreme deterritorialisations. Subjective singularisation revitalises assemblages, enabling them to shape their environment, bringing into existence new worlds. This is why Uexküll insists on the subjective nature of territory. He describes a walk through a garden during which the observer becomes aware that each insect and butterfly perceives its environment as if in a bubble that 'contains all the features accessible to that subject'. To enter one of these bubbles is to entirely reconfigure the surroundings (Uexküll 2010: 43). The bubble is the animal's existential Territory. The bubble can also be figured as a web or network. 'Every subject spins out, like the spider's threads, its relations to certain qualities of things and weaves them into a solid web, which carries its existence' (53). This portable web for transporting a subject's existence is also the existential Territory.

Human subjectivities need their territories, but these need not be tied to a geographical location. Twenty-first-century humans rely more and more on portable existential Territories, given the dismantling of the earth-based territories that had served them for millennia. Deleuze's famous travelling in place is made possible by the existential Territory's virtual transportability. Twenty-first-century homelands need not correspond to existing territorial ethnicities, nations, religions or classes, but they may include elements from them. Guattari describes the contemporary era thus:

> To the extent that 'original' territorialised assemblages, like those of the extended family, rural communities, castes, corporations, etc. have been swept away by deterritorialised flows, components of conscientialisation also have been attached to and studded with residual objects or semiotic substitutes. (Guattari 2011: 113)

Assemblages are able to adapt to changes by putting residual objects and semiotic substitutes to creative and productive use as catalysers for new modes of subjectivation, rather than as nodes of disempowerment that

act as semiotic black holes by sucking components of subjectivity into their vortex. It is thus not a question of modernisation versus archaism. According to the tenets of ecosophy, when it comes to building a social assemblage 'absolutely anything goes – any ideology, or even religion will do, even the most archaic: all that matters is that it be used as the raw material of existence' (Guattari 1992: 20). The resingularising processual assemblages of the post-media era cannot come into existence without pulling together available fragments from existing and even dissipated assemblages. Order (that is, existence) can arise from chaos, but it cannot arise from a void.

So-called culture clashes symptomatise social assemblage problems. Islamic fundamentalism has been explained away as a culturalist backlash, an anti-Western extremism. Similarly, the post-Soviet nationalist independence movements have been cast as a release of pent-up ethnic tensions that totalitarian communism had contained. This is not how Guattari viewed these situations. He reads the demands of these groups as collective refusals of the standardised capitalist subjectivities on offer. No matter how socially conservative their agendas, these groups resist capitalism's imposition of a system of valuation based on general equivalency and the standardised subjectivities that it produces as a result. He suggests that respite from the flattening, homogenising effects of capitalism's deterritorialisations can be sought in three directions: reterritorialisations onto the residues of archaic assemblages; destructive annihilation; or the invention of mutant, singularising processual assemblages which are more collective, more social and more political (Guattari 1995: 29). Guattari's portrait of Integrated World Capitalism remains too monolithic, especially given today's many capitalisms – industrial, financial, speculative, authoritarian, export-driven, consumerist and so on. However, his question remains relevant: will the twenty-first century become mired in reactionary reterritorialisations which form in counterpoint to the numerous deterritorialising assemblages that began emerging in the early Middle Ages, or will interactive personal media facilitate the creation of singularising processual assemblages?

The refusal of the dominant versions of modernity is not regressive in itself. In a 1985 polemical essay entitled 'The Nationalitarian Fifth World', Guattari groups together various social movements manifesting a resurgence of particularity, a demand for singularisation, in effect mapping them onto the crumbling three-world model. Guattari began writing about groups making ethnic and cultural claims during the decade which opened with the 1979 Iranian revolution and culminated

with the breakup of the Soviet Union. The communist second world was collapsing. The liberal first world claimed victory. Both first-world liberalism and second-world communism had advanced modernist dreams of secular internationalism which would entail a jettisoning of cultural traditions, but by the 1980s it had become clear that ethno-cultural particularities had not been swept away by modernity. Nonetheless, secularist assumptions continue to encode the third world as backwards and stuck in archaic territorial cultures. The fourth world struggles for existence within the borders of the wealthy first world. The outliers, whether they are modernised but disaffected first-world urban youth descended from immigrants, or traditionalists clinging to displaced ethnicities and cultural habits, form the nationalitarian fifth world (Guattari 1986: 71–9). These groups can be characterised by their 'archaic attachments to cultural traditions', to borrow Guattari's own phrasing (Guattari 1995: 3–4). His use of the term 'archaic' seems odd, given his general opposition to developmental models, but I would suggest that this usage must be placed in the context of his grand historical machinic assemblages. Traits that he labels archaic have survived as remnants of assemblages whose territorialities are inscribed directly onto the earth itself. Such territorial cultural attachments remain a part of 'the contemporary subjective cocktail' because twenty-first-century assemblages still include territorial components of subjectivity (Guattari 1995:4). He interprets these returns to tradition as resistance to capitalist assemblages. He dreams that Europe's ethnic and ecology movements (Basques, Ulster Protestants, German Greens, Scots and Welsh) will stand together and say: 'Yes, we are archaic. Take your modernity and shove it!' (Guattari 1986: 69–70).

As an alternative to secular modernist internationalism, ecosophy offers strategies for constructing liveable, particularised existential Territories adapted to changing historical conditions. This is why Europeans 'have a lot to learn from the way immigrants reinvent and reconstitute their culture' (Guattari 1986: 40). The fifth world has much more to offer than its quaint cultural relics suitable for display. Schizoanalysis learns from the schizophrenic, who pieces together a world from semiotic fragments. In treating psychosis, the schizoanalyst's aim is 'to increase as much as possible the range of means offered in the recomposition of a patient's corporeal, biological, psychical and social Territories' (Guattari 1995: 68). Likewise, a schizoanalytic approach to extreme global deterritorialisation would entail expanding the range of components and materials of expression available for enriching and recomposing collective existential Territories, corporeal, biological,

psychical and social. Immigrants are leading the way as schizoanalysts of globalisation. Guattari places his socio-political hopes in the fifth world because, out of necessity and in order to survive, they are already inventing ways to renew cultural values and social practices for our epoch, wisely retaining what works from previous regimes in addition to inventing completely new existential Territories. Such territories need not be based on ethnicity, culture or even place. Guattari explains that 'The search for an existential Territory or homeland doesn't necessarily involve searching for one's country of birth or a distant country of origin', adding that 'All sorts of deterritorialised 'nationalities' are conceivable, such as music and poetry' (Guattari 2000: 65). There are punk rock, heavy metal and hip hop 'nations'. Immigrants have created lively ethnic neighbourhoods, and their first-world-born descendants have invented urban youth cultures with their own street slang, music, graffiti and fashion (Guattari 1986). It is not a matter of refusing modernisation, but of inventing alternative modernities that revive the world's mental, social and environmental ecologies.

Human social formations likewise rely on existential operators such as the refrain or faciality, as explained at length in *A Thousand Plateaus* and *The Machinic Unconscious*. Any cultural element can detach itself and serve as an existential operator or component of passage. 'The deterritorialisation of his *Umwelt* has led man to invent diagrammatic operators such as faciality and refrains enabling him to produce new machinic territorialities' (Guattari 2011: 120). Existential operators create by assembling. Bringing together various components and assemblages, transforming them and keeping them going, existential operators act as the umbilical points of new worlds. 'A world is only constituted on the condition of being inhabited by an umbilical point – deconstructive, detotalisating and deterritorialising – from which a subjective positionality embodies itself' (Guattari 1995: 80). The nation is a refrain that binds a people to a territory, but other refrains are possible (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 456). While some fifth-world groups are indeed involved in conventional territorial disputes over land, water and sovereignty (the Palestinians, for example), others are 'inventing new modes of managing daily life' (Guattari 1986: 41). Daily life is the terrain of the existential Territory, which lies adjacent to socio-economic flows and information-age machines. The planetary-wide transformations brought about by rapid globalisation necessitate inventing 'a new art of living' (Guattari 1996: 202).

The Islamic headcovering provides a good example of a residual cultural object that acts as an existential operator, for better or for

worse.[2] It would be a mistake to see the Islamic headcovering as a mere signifier; it is a semiotic operator because it functions on the level of affect and intensity to organise – and to disrupt – subjectivities as well as social relations. The headcovering is semiotic but non-discursive. It is both a refrain (as ritual object) as well as a form of faciality (demarcating those who belong from those who do not). As such, it is a semiotic component of passage, meaning that it can disengage itself from an assemblage, bifurcating in many directions, whether toward oppressive reterritorialisation, a subjective black hole or a singularising line of flight. Although many argue that the veil cannot possibly contribute to any emancipatory project, it has certainly undergone a series of deterritorialisations. Originally the garb of desert peoples, whose attachment to a hot part of the earth necessitated protection from the sun, the headcovering was deterritorialised by Islam, which detached it from the earth in order to make it a ritual garb required by a disembodied monotheistic god. Many Westerners interpret the headcovering as a simple index of women's oppression. European neo-nationalists take it to be a territorial refrain, like a bird's song or brightly coloured spread tail feathers, deployed in a reterritorialising attempt to Islamise Europe. Mainstream politicians have been accused of restricting and banning headcoverings as a headline-grabbing ploy to capture the far-right vote. In a highly publicised case in France, two sisters expelled from school for violating its headcovering ban turned out to have been recent converts to Islam, having been raised in a leftist secular household by a non-observant Jew and a non-practising, non-Arab Christian Algerian who were separated; the sisters wore the headscarf against the wishes of their parents, an act of religious piety which has been interpreted as a gesture of teenage defiance (Scott 2007: 30–3). In staunchly secular countries like France and Turkey, some women wear the headcovering in defiance, demanding emancipation from official restrictions on public dress. For some who wear the headcovering, it serves as a nucleus of subjectivation, constituting a portable existential territory that shelters the wearer from the penetrating gaze of strangers.

In *Questioning the Veil*, sociologist Marnia Lazreg insists that the Islamic headcovering could never bifurcate toward a deterritorialising line of flight. She provides an overview of the re-veiling trend, based on interviews with women all over the world, in Muslim countries as well as in Europe and North America. While she argues that states and their institutions should neither require nor ban headcoverings, she urges women not to veil. She reasons that the veil it is not required by the

Koran (at least according to a certain reading); it is cumbersome; its wearing is mandated by men for their benefit; and so forth. Noting that the revival of the veil is an organised campaign promoted by Islamic leaders, she rejects the idea that women may freely choose the veil, because, she maintains, the veil is inextricably associated with patriarchal power structures. She points out that the veil is 'overlaid with meanings', but that its wearing is more than symbolic; it is also a 'complex and internally contradictory custom' (2009: 11, 35). The veil is both discourse and practice, social convention and personal act (11, 36). It is not possible, in her view, to reclaim the veil as an expression of cultural pride or in defiance of Western prejudices because it is too caught up in conservative convention to be liberated for re-symbolisation. The veil is both an intimate bodily act and a tool of a repressive social apparatus. The personal act of assuming the veil contributes to the construction of an existential Territory. As a component of passage, it can also communicate with other assemblages. More crucially, the veil serves as a relay between the existential Territory of the self and virtual Universes of value. It is because the veil belongs to a larger Universe of value that it cannot be entirely personalised.

The self forms at the interface between a virtual-real existential Territory and multiple virtual-possible Universes of value. For example, the infant develops within a 'proto-social and still pre-verbal Universe' where 'familial, ethnic, urban, etc., traits are transmitted (let's call it the Cultural Unconscious)' (Guattari 1995: 67). The existential Territory is the organless embodiment of an assemblage's incorporeal Universes. There are Islamic Universes, Christian Universes, liberal secular Universes, scientific Universes, jazz Universes, conjugal Universes and so on. Operators like the refrain traverse Territories and Universes, catalysing the chaos so that complex subjective formations can acquire consistency. A zone of proto-subjectivity emerges when, on the plane of consistency, a Universe of value couples with an existential Territory. A given existential Territory may open onto multiple Universes. Constellations of Universes offer not only values but also reserves of cultural materials. With the help of the diagrammatisms proper to the machinic Phyla, these Universes of cultural reserves may coalesce into new Universes. Territories incarnate these Universes, which cannot exist without their embodiment (Guattari 1995: 54–5). There are no abstract universals, only embodied Universes of reference.

Secularism and religion function as Universes of value, but they operate differently within different assemblages. Western modernity encodes Islam as an archaic territorial assemblage, but Islam is in fact

already a deterritorialisation with its transcendent invisible god who communicates through a written text, and therefore in this respect it is at least as modern as contemporary Christianity. Guattari's view is mired in secularist assumptions, but as a theory of history his description of the mutation from polytheistic antiquity to Christianity is worth quoting at length:

> the incorporeal Universes of classical Antiquity which were associated with a polytheistic compromise relating to a multitude of clanic and ethnic Territorialities, underwent a radical reshaping with the trinitary revolution of Christianity, indexed on the refrain of the sign of the cross, which will recentre not only the ensemble of social, existential Territories, but also the corporeal, mental, familial assemblages, on the unique existential Territory of Christic incarnation and crucifixion.... The new subjectivity of guilt, contrition, body markings and sexuality, of redemptive mediation, is also an essential piece of the new social apparatuses, the new machines of subjection which had to construct themselves from the debris of the late Roman Empire and the reterritorialisations of feudal and urban orders yet to come. (Guattari 1995: 61)

A refrain, the sign of the cross, repositions all Territories and assemblages onto Christ's body, its incarnation and crucifixion, existentialising a new Territory around which Europe's social and subjective assemblages will reterritorialise for many centuries. Christianity offered new subjectivities that helped Europeans live with capitalist deterritorialisations. Christianity in turn deterritorialised onto modern universalist values (Guattari 1995: 62). Christianity and enlightenment universals in turn coexisted with reterritorialisations based on the old nations, classes and corporations of a more territorial age (Guattari 1992: 27). Ecosophic vocabulary could similarly account for the historical mutations brought about by Islam.

Like many French intellectuals, Guattari's staunch secularism led him to predict a fading of religious monotheism with the coming of the processual post-media era, because 'it is not in the nature of the new subjectivity to be herded' (Guattari 1992: 35). I must disagree, given the growth of Islam and evangelical Christianity around the world. While it is true that in many cases these monotheisms limit potentially processual singularisations through stratification, circular repetition and imposed values, there is no reason why processual assemblages cannot tap into these religious Universes. After all, a creative line of flight can take off from any assemblage, even a highly stratified one. The Christian aesthetic Universe unleashed sublime works of art. The military-industrial machinic phyla gave us cinema, aeroplanes and the Internet. Lazreg

may well be correct that the veil cannot possibly serve as a liberatory semiotic operator because it remains so entrenched in a referential Universe of value that is too sedimented, too stratified, too repressive, too imbricated in the machinery of states and institutions. However, Lazreg is careful not to dismiss Islam as a whole. Universes can and do mutate. New Universes can also split off to become something new. The new assemblages which emerge will nonetheless have to find a way to draw on the remains of dissipating assemblages. Order can arise from chaos, but the elements of order can only come from the chaos itself.

The ungluing of human history has resulted in the twenty-first century's strange mix of economic demands, emancipatory claims and culturally conservative agendas. However, the very concept of culture may be blocking paths to the processual assemblages that will herald the dawn of the post-media era. The Culture concept belongs to the eras dominated by archaic territorialising assemblages and modern deterritorialising assemblages. Ecosophy respects differences without evoking the hierarchies and grids of class and coloniality that cling to the culture concept. Viewed with the help of the ecosophic object, culture can be defined as a reservoir of shared elements, such as the residual objects and semiotic substitutes that existentialise mental and social formations. These elements work through repetition, redundancy and resonance. They include signs, symbols, verbal refrains, musical refrains, gestures, ritual, clothing, bodily markings, knowledge, belief, prejudices and stereotypes. The elements may be arranged into various domains or institutions, such as organised religions, nations, arts organisations, schools, media industries, festivals and so forth. They may likewise become attached to various types of value – aesthetic, ethical, moral, religious, monetary, etc. Although that which is ascribed to the sphere of culture has by definition already undergone deterritorialising detachment (even if, as in the case of animism, the detached semiotic elements are reattached to the earth), the redeeming feature of the culture concept remains its deep connections to life and to the earth. Culture, as a reserve of semiotising components, couples a population to a territory, and the evolution of the word's meanings can be correlated to various historical processes of deterritorialisation. As we have seen, the various phenomena which Europeans and their descendants have come to call 'culture' persist into the twenty-first century, despite the globalisation of capital, goods, communication, media, labour, technology and lifestyles. However, culture is no longer lived in the ways it was when the term emerged in European languages during the medieval period, its modern meanings not evolving until a few centuries later.

Raymond Williams provides a famous account of the culture concept's history (Williams 1976). In the fifteenth century culture referred to husbandry, the tending of crops and animals. It thus already designates a first degree of deterritorialisation, as animals and plants are moved from their original habitats to occupy a space shaped by humans; they are then bred and cross-bred with human intervention. During the Renaissance culture metaphorically extends to human development, especially the cultivation of the intellect. Beginning in the eighteenth century, culture gradually comes to replace the notion of civilisation, with its class and colonial overtones. In the nineteenth century there emerged the most common meaning of culture today, that of the way of life specific to a group or people. At the same time a third meaning had become common, that of the sphere of artistic and intellectual achievement. The culture concept was born on the farm, then extended to include the (liberal and beaux) arts, then human lifestyles. In other words, it is rooted in various modes of deterritorialisation – agricultural, technological, aesthetic, intellectual and social.

It is no coincidence that the word culture, with all its etymological baggage, evolved hand-in-hand with ethnographic exploration and colonial conquest, which were among the more devastating and violent deterritorialisations of recent human history. During the centuries of Europe's global domination, the concept of culture allowed the deterritorialised European peoples to pass judgement on the relatively more territorialised tribal societies they encountered, proselytised, studied and conquered. The culture concept may have peaked with the triumphant global institutionalisation (through journals, books, programmes) of cultural studies in the 1990s, a high point that Michael Denning associates with the culmination of the age of the three worlds (Denning 2004: 226). Around this same moment, globalisation invaded both academic and popular discourse, while anthropologists became ever more highly critical of the culture concept, often motivated by the concerns of postcolonialism (Brightman 1995; Sewell Jr. 1999). The unfortunate coinage of the concept of 'cultural identity' further deterritorialised human life by relegating its cultures to the symbolic order, detaching culture from experiential incarnation in order to translate it into networks of signifiers or force fields of power. Culture becomes reified, designating a set of structures and power moves, with little mention of any affect, experience or embodiment. It becomes sanitised for the benefit of tourists and museums. The result is existential impoverishment. Even more problematically, a reified culture can be used to make claims that benefit some of its members at the expense

of others, or it can be used to justify behaviours or practices, or it can be used to explain the behaviours or practices of others (Phillips 2007). Culturalism tends to obscure agency. It reduces the complexity of subjectivity to the paucity of the subject caught in a signifying network. It suggests a linear temporal progression of developmental progress. The twenty-first century is now more than a decade old, and scholars still rely on the European colonial idea of culture to talk about collective life, despite the rapidly shifting balance of power from Euro-American hegemony toward power-sharing arrangements with Asia and, to a lesser and yet increasing extent, Latin America.

Ecosophy offers the advantage of reincorporating the human sphere into the larger context of planetary life. Finance capitalism certainly dominates the planet today, but the historical shift that it indicates may coincide with a much more epochal upheaval. Michel Serres has suggested that the Neolithic Age ended around 1970, by which time mankind had acquired the power to double the life expectancy of humans, to create life in a test tube and to annihilate life on a planetary scale. If the beginning of the Neolithic can be described as the threshold at which mankind began shaping the environment through agriculture and settlement, then its end arrived when mankind began reshaping life itself, from the molecular level outward. We have reached the historical moment at which the mecanosphere has merged with the biosphere. Plants, animals, humans and machines have entered into historically unprecedented assemblages. Few people live in direct relation to the seasons, the weather or the production of their food. The information age has shifted people indoors, and agriculture to mass production facilities. Little wilderness remains. Dwelling space has been irrevocably transformed for man and beast alike (Serres 2001). The new spaces, Augé's non-spaces, belong to transnational stratifications of financial, material and labour flows, but these spaces have not yet been properly territorialised at the existential level. The culture industry has turned the heritage museum into a Disneyfied destination for mass tourism, creating a non-space where carved-up culture is made spectacle. Culture thus remains stuck in the mass-media era. It is time to open up spectacle society's mass-marketed museum to the inventive processuality of the post-media era, in order to produce portable, singular homelands, habitable existential Territories whose virtual existence is waiting to be actualised out of the democratic chaos of rhizomatic revolution.

Notes

1. Guattari 1992 is a translation of the first chapter of Guattari 1989, English edition forthcoming from Continuum.
2. Jasbir Puar characterises the Sikh turban as a 'strange attractor' (Puar 2011). Although I like this poetical phrasing, in Guattari's science-inspired vocabulary veils and turbans are best described as existential operators and nuclei of subjectivation.

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Institutional Schizophasia and the Possibility of the Humanities' 'Other Scene': Guattari and the Exigency of Transversality

Michael Eng

Abstract

Transversality occupies a central place in Guattari's thought, appearing in his early writings on institutional analysis and on through to his final work, *Chaosmosis*. Transversality is thus particularly pertinent to understanding Guattari's critique of semiocapitalism and his goal of re-imagining forms of institutional subjectivisation as a way to free the unconscious from structures of lack and the desire for punishment, the very structures upon which capitalism relies for its reproduction. If there is one institution that has taken advantage of semiocapitalism's ability to mask its role in the reproduction of capitalist subjectivity, however, it is the contemporary neoliberal University. This essay thus brings transversality to bear upon the question of the University in semiocapitalism, focusing on the discourses that speak in defence of the humanities. Though defences of the humanities are intended to argue for the humanities' usefulness in contemporary society, transversality exposes such discourses as the speech of a 'subjugated group' whose only effect is to reinforce existing structures of lack and punishment.

Keywords: Guattari, transversality, semiocapitalism, psychoanalysis, institutional therapeutics, Oury, the University, institutional schizophasia

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> The problem of the University – we certainly found out in May '68 – is not the students and the professors; it is the problem of the entire society inasmuch as it involves the relationship between the transmission of knowledge, the training of executives, the desire of the masses, the requirements of industry, and finally, everything which could intermingle in the setting of the University.
>
> (Guattari, 'The Best Capitalist Drug')

> So the question of inter-monadic transversality is not simply of a speculative nature. It involves calling into question disciplinary boundaries, the solipsistic closure of Universes of value, prevalent today in a number of domains.
>
> (Guattari, *Chaosmosis*)

This essay explores the ways Félix Guattari's concept of transversality may be brought to bear on the question of the contemporary University's relationship to advanced capitalism, or to what Guattari named Integrated World Capitalism (IWC) and what Guattari's friend and colleague Franco 'Bifo' Berardi has come to call 'semiocapitalism' (Guattari 1984b; Berardi 2009a). I am interested particularly in the implications Guattari's theorisation of transversality has for the antagonism between the group of disciplines that identify themselves as composing 'the humanities' and semiocapitalism's increased organisation of the contemporary neoliberal University. This antagonism, which has lately appeared under the label of 'the crisis of the humanities', opposes the research undertaken by such disciplines as philosophy, literature and the arts to what has been described for some time now as the contemporary University's 'corporatisation' or administrative turn. However, I wish to show that Guattari's concept of transversality exposes such a discourse as a fantasy that the humanities nurture in the age of semiocapitalism in order to maintain the belief that they, and by extension, the University, have somehow been exempt from capitalist reproduction. Transversality, I argue, exposes the discourse of 'the crisis of the humanities' as a simulacrum of speech, a kind of 'destruction of language' that Jean Oury has labelled 'schizophasic' and which I seek to identify with the phrase 'institutional schizophasia' (Oury et al. 2007: 42). At the same time, transversality also promises methods by which this simulacrum may be broached and a new form – what Oury calls 'an other scene' – of group desire may be achieved (Oury et al. 2007: 40).

I. Transversality and Semiocapitalism

Insofar as it attempts to respond to a set of material conditions and 'extract an event' from such conditions, transversality is a 'concept'

in every sense Guattari and Gilles Deleuze give the term in their final collaboration, *What is Philosophy?* (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 33). Transversality was crafted by Guattari to intervene in a clinical exigency he identified during his tenure at the La Borde clinic. He realised that the institutional conditions at La Borde not only seemed an obstacle to the therapeutic cure but that they actually required the persistence of psychological illness. Observing that the hierarchical structure of relationships within the institution (between analysts and patients, but also between and among analysts and staff) reproduced the relation to punishment and lack to which subjects are first introduced via the castration complex, Guattari enacted a new work system referred to as 'the grid' that assigned people tasks that were outside their areas of specialisation (Dosse 2010: 56–7). Cleaning staff might be assigned to aid doctors in the treatment of patients, monitors might be given dishwashing duties, etc. The idea was to shake up established vertical and horizontal relationships in the institution, including conceptual hierarchies such as that of intellectual to manual labour, and create innovative, transversal relations that would show how the older, habitual ways of acting within the institution were symptomatic of a particular, yet far from inevitable, image the institution had of itself, an image that reflected a historically determined 'group fantasy'. Thus, in addition to appearing within what Deleuze and Guattari called a 'field' or 'ground' of material relations, transversality served at the moment of its inception as an 'event', a new arrangement of 'things and beings', by reconfiguring these relations and also by announcing a new 'image of thought' of and for the institution of analysis in both its practical and disciplinary forms (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 33, 37). Guattari even brought such transversal relations to bear further during the events of May '68 by bringing patients from La Borde to participate in the protests and by having them form protest committees at the clinic.[1]

Opposing itself to the transference, which according to Guattari holds the unconscious hostage to the past, the castration complex and the intersubjective relation of analysand to analyst, transversality projects an image of the unconscious as collective, non-hierarchical, futural and machinic, directed toward the possibility of heterogeneous forms of relation not restricted to human interaction. In freeing the unconscious from its capture by conventional psychoanalytic conceptions, transversality exposes and overcomes the transference's complicity and continued investment in an unconscious that desires punishment. Since the transference is a condition of the psychoanalytic cure, transversality's exposure of the transference is also an exposure of the therapeutic institution's perpetuation of lack and punishment.

From the critique of the clinical institution, Guattari proceeded to show how the disciplines of psychoanalysis and linguistics, which Lacan put to work in his translation of Freud's text, participate in the reproduction of the modern capitalist subject, whose life in capitalism is also, not coincidentally, sustained via an experience of lack and punishment. It was then only a short step to seeing how institutions in general organise themselves around structures that interpellate their subjects through similar experiences. In so doing, institutions thus also serve as the site of capital's reproduction. Institutions that dedicate themselves to bureaucratic inertia benefit from their members identifying as what Guattari called a 'subjugated group' (*groupe assujetti*), a group whose fantasies, desires and speech are determined for it, because such a group is occupied primarily by a futile desire for recognition that keeps it stuck in place and consequently prevents it from challenging the institution in any meaningful way. In contrast, a 'subject group' (*groupe sujet*), conscious of fantasy as a condition of psychic life, both is aware of its fantasies and recognises its ability to shape them through an affective and creative experience of language. Where a subjugated group is caught in an experience of schizophasic language, a subject group embraces the possibility of becoming otherwise through a perpetual recreation of its relation to language.

In the well-known interview 'The Best Capitalist Drug' from 1973, Arno Munster asks Guattari how psychoanalysis can thus stop 'being an accomplice' to capitalism's ordering of social existence (Guattari 2009: 143). In his response, part of which serves as the epigraph for the present essay, we see Guattari first correct the assumption at work in Munster's question that psychoanalysis can be confronted in isolation from the institutions that house it, namely the University and the psychiatric hospital, and from the capitalist social order to which they ultimately are all in service. Requisite for a reorientation of psychoanalytic practice, then, is a critique of the institutional production of capitalist subjectivity, especially in those cases, such as the University, that imagine themselves separate from capitalism's reproduction. In this respect, Guattari's critique of psychoanalysis resonates with similar May '68-era critiques of the University's complicity in capitalist reproduction, such as those found in the Situationist pamphlet 'On the Poverty of Student Life' (1966), written by the U.N.E.F. Strasbourg student collective, and in Daniel and Gabriel Cohn-Bendit's *Obsolete Communism* (1968). The Cohn-Bendits' attack on sociological theory that it evacuates the cases and conflicts it studies of their social context so as to better assist in the market rationalisation of society – is particularly

consistent with Guattari's targeting of psychoanalysis (Cohn-Bendit and Cohn-Bendit 1968: 38).[2]

In Guattari's critique, if psychoanalysis is 'the best of all capitalist drugs', it is because it provides the material with which institutions, and the groups and individuals within them, maintain the fantasy of their separation from capitalism while at the same time perpetuating the twin logic of lack and punishment that capitalism requires. Without the perpetuation of this logic, capitalism's promises would literally have no sense: according to Guattari, capitalism, as a system of signification and meaning, would be called into question, and the fantasy of a separation from capitalism would be ruptured. It is toward such a disruption that transversality is directed.

Guattari's elaboration of transversality into a critique of the interrelationship of capitalism, institutions and disciplinarity formed the basis of his practical interventions at La Borde and with the militant groups he founded in the 1960s, such as the Federation of Institutional Study Groups and Research (FGERI) and the Center for Institutional Study, Research, and Training (CERFI). On the theoretical register, transversality also served a central role in his collaborations with Deleuze and in his final writings in which he traced the contours of what he called an 'ethico-aesthetic paradigm' of subjectivation.

Such remarkable conceptual reach marks transversality and Guattari as deserving of sustained critical attention as the forces aligning capitalism, institutions and disciplinary language have only intensified since Guattari's original efforts. In the years since Guattari's specific critique of psychoanalysis and the general critiques of capitalist society and the University by the movements of May '68, it is a sobering and obvious fact that capitalism has more deeply colonised the social than ever before. With IWC or semiocapitalism, capital no longer has to rely on individuals entering a physical factory for its reproduction; the signifying structures of the social itself – the immaterial and affective sites known as media and entertainment – are now the modes through which capital reproduces itself and the castrated subjects proper to it. As an adjunct to this system of signification, the operation of the contemporary neoliberal University within semiocapitalism has achieved a seamlessness in which there is no distinction between the knowledge produced within the University and the information that circulates in the global financial market. Industrial labour has given way to immaterial or cognitive labour in support of a deterritorialised global financial system, and the common slogan that the University exists today to prepare individuals to 'succeed in the information economy' testifies to Berardi's observation

that under semiocapitalism the knowledge the University believed was unique to it, and over which it fancied itself as having sovereignty, is no longer autonomous (Berardi 2011).

Today, 13 years after Gary Genosko first called for the task of seeking out spaces for its 'acceleration' (Genosko 1998), transversality still awaits this acceleration in ways that move meaningfully beyond the theoretical sphere or its simple mimetic application.[3] However, if there is anything that marks an exigency to take up transversality once more, and just as importantly, to re-engage the stakes that informed Guattari's creation of the concept in the first place, it is the set of conditions surrounding the state of the humanities in the contemporary neoliberal University. The exigency lies less in the threat of semiocapitalism to humanistic research, which on its face appears less useful for capitalist accumulation than the sciences. The exigency lies instead in the humanities' traditional response to this threat, which can be characterised as two-pronged: first, the declaration of a 'crisis of the humanities'; and second, the construction of a defence of humanistic research in order to win recognition from the market forces that organise the University and the public sphere generally.

An analysis of this 'crisis' and the relation to language the humanities maintain in response to it will show how the conditions surrounding the contemporary University are indexical of a persistence of those conditions that provoked Guattari to create the concept of transversality originally. This analysis will also reveal more importantly the ways the humanities function within the University as a subjugated group alienated from its own speech, locked in an 'institutional schizophasia'.[4] Transversality shows us that what is at stake in 'the crisis of the humanities' is less the humanities' gaining permission to survive in semiocapitalism than the production of 'an other scene' for the humanities' appearance. What is at stake is the possibility of a new ground of experience or *aisthēsis*, of what Guattari called in his last work a new 'ethico-aesthetic paradigm' (Guattari 1995).

II. Contained Speech: Responding to the Crisis of the Humanities

The year 2010 saw what many who work in the University consider the beginning of the end of the humanities and therefore the end of the University as well. A number of wholesale closures of departments and programmes in philosophy, literature and the arts have been seen as evidence that the humanities as a whole are being systematically

evicted from the contemporary neoliberal University. Some of the more spectacular events that took place confirming this end of the humanities include the closure of the philosophy programme at Middlesex University in the UK, the elimination of the French, Italian, classics, Russian and theatre programmes at the State University of New York at Albany, and the move to dissolve the graduate and undergraduate philosophy degrees at Howard University, the only historically black university (HBCU) to have offered a graduate degree in philosophy.[5]

Responses from humanists to these events have taken two standard forms: either bemoan what is now commonly referred to as 'the corporatisation of the University' or attempt to gain recognition as a worthy subject from this same corporate University by arguing for the humanities' value for social and economic productivity. In either case, a narcissistic capture is at work. In what is fast becoming almost a cottage industry, which Stanley Fish has labelled 'The Woe-Is-Us-Books', entire books, journal issues and blogs take the tack of arguing for the intrinsic value of the humanities' fundamental inquiry into 'the human' for the original idea of the University and therefore for society as a whole (Fish 2010). Alternately, many have sought to expose what they consider to be the incompatibility of market logic and humanistic study, claiming that imposing economic metrics of assessment on the humanities misrecognises the fact that humanistic inquiry does not allow for quantification. A typical question posed in this regard often takes the following form: how does one place a dollar value on investigations into the meaning of death or the possibility of freedom?[6]

By responding to administrative attacks with arguments for the humanities' intrinsic value, the strategy is clearly one of trying to convince the University's administrators that protecting the humanities is the right thing to do. The implication is that to do otherwise would be a betrayal of the University's responsibility to society. Unfortunately, but somehow not very surprisingly, this strategy has yielded little success. For despite all the efforts at defending the humanities in terms of their inherent worth and contribution to an understanding of what it means to be human, despite all attempts to educate both the University's administrators and the public in general about the service the humanities perform, it seems it can safely be said that the general response offered by both the powers-that-be and the public is not so much one of disagreement as one of a collective shrug.

Should one be astonished by this response? After all, is it not naïve to think the University, and the humanities in particular, are suddenly being held accountable to economic metrics? As others, beginning with

the Frankfurt School, have shown, the conditions that make possible the existence of the humanities include the fact that the humanities, and the University in general, are inseparable from the function of reproducing the modern capitalist state.[7] Bill Readings' well-known *The University in Ruins* (1996), in a spirit not dissimilar to the Frankfurt School's critique of the technocratic organisation of the disciplines, documents the role the Humboldtian university played at the time of its creation in solidifying the identity of the German nation-state. Readings also explains quite clearly how the modern University prepared the ground for the emergence of the very modernity that it was supposed to exemplify by providing the Kantian rational schema according to which social existence would be ordered (Readings 1996: 54–69).

What is indeed worth remarking against this historical background, however, is the way the standard defences of the humanities appeal to a set of myths, extending from Plato to Jean-François Lyotard, about the humanities' exceptionalism that the humanities have circulated among themselves and propagated throughout their existence.[8] What if the world actually capitalises on that very image of the humanities' exceptionalism in which humanists, and in my experience, especially philosophers, are so invested in order to contain it? What if the discourse of the humanities' exceptionalism is not only a kind of mythic speech humanists circulate to uphold an image of the humanities but also a speech assigned to the humanities, a script that we humanists mistake for our own voice?

The belief in the exceptionalism of the humanities bolsters the feeling of superiority that has allowed many academics to be dismissive of the world's failure to understand what humanists hold is the importance of their field of study, and it is simple enough to comprehend the comfort that feeling gives in the face of the public's collective shrug. If we analysed the belief more critically, however, I think we would see that such psychic investment and dismissal typically signal the presence of an entrenched narcissism. As with the superiority accompanying any other form of narcissism, the tone of superiority humanists often take (even without a crisis in the field) is both a defence mechanism and a fantasy preventing a necessary confrontation with actually existing conditions, namely, the humanities' role in reproducing the modern capitalist state. Instead of acknowledging the fact of the humanities' complicity in the reproduction of capitalism, most working within the humanities would rather conceive nostalgic myths of the humanities' true essence and claim this essence is being lost when in reality it never existed in the first place. In fact, it seems we have been permitted to harbour a belief in this mythic

essence in order to fulfil our roles as the instruments of capitalism's reproduction while thinking we were meeting some higher obligation. It seems we humanists have mistaken tolerance for endorsement.

The belief in the exceptionalism of the humanities, then, could be described as a form of blindness, a kind of misrecognition on the side of the humanities rather than on the side of the humanities' detractors that has aided in the humanities' marginalisation. Nothing appears to testify more clearly to this fact than the impotence of the various defences of the humanities described above. They may represent instances of failed speech, but their failure can be located in the fact that they function above all as contained speech, speech reflecting the fact that the humanities currently speak from a position that has been assigned to, and even more disturbing, embraced by them, which is to say, us. The humanities continue to be on the receiving end of budget cuts and programme closures, even as the arguments decrying these actions increase. Clearly, the arguments have had no effect; yet, like a compulsion to repeat, they proceed nonetheless, following the ebb and flow of an insidious echolalia.[9]

It is one thing to explain how the language humanists use to defend the humanities is a speech that has been permitted us and is therefore a mechanism of containment.[10] It is another question altogether why we would fail to recognise this as the case and seek instead to compulsively repeat the standard defences and perpetuate an echolalia to which no one is listening. Fred Moten and Stefano Harney offer one answer: those who are critical of the University have a great deal of incentive to be so as long as they follow the established script, for it allows them to appear as critical voices while still advancing their academic careers (Moten and Harney 2004). Nonetheless, that only explains the individual's chase of the carrot. The question is why we, collectively, want the stick. For this, we turn now to the specific steps by which Guattari theorises transversality.

III. The Desire for Punishment

Guattari finds in Freud one account of why individuals exhibit a desire for punishment, and uses this account to speculate how this desire lives on in groups. Reading the following passage from the lecture 'Anxiety and Instinctual Life' from Freud's *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* (1973), Guattari uncovers a disturbing implication of Freud's conception of the neuroses:

> If we dwell on these situations of danger for a moment, we can say that in fact a particular determinant of anxiety (that is, situation of danger) is allotted to every age of development as being appropriate to it. The danger of psychical helplessness fits the stage of the ego's early immaturity; the danger of loss of an object (or loss of love) fits the lack of self-sufficiency in the first years of childhood; the danger of being castrated fits the phallic phase; and finally fear of the super-ego, which assumes a special position, fits the period of latency. In the course of development the old determinants of anxiety should be dropped, since the situations of danger corresponding to them have lost their importance owing to the strengthening of the ego. But this only occurs most incompletely. Many people are unable to surmount the fear of loss of love; they never become sufficiently independent of other people's love and in this respect carry on their behavior as infants. Fear of the super-ego should normally never cease, since, in the form of moral anxiety, it is indispensable in social relations, and only in the rarest cases can an individual become independent of human society. A few of the old situations of danger, too, succeed in surviving into later periods by making contemporary modifications in their determinants of anxiety. (Freud 1973: 120–1, qtd in Guattari 1984c: 12)

The passage, whose entirety I have reproduced as it appears in Guattari's 1964 essay on transversality, concerns the survival and persistence of neurotic anxieties after their 'particular determinant', the object inducing the anxiety's original appearance, is gone. What is particularly striking to Guattari is Freud's claim that '[f]ear of the super-ego should normally never cease, since, in the form of moral anxiety, it is indispensable in social relations'. This is the real question of psychic life, Guattari contends, for we are led to conclude that the one neurotic anxiety whose persistence is the condition for the possibility of the ego's normal development and normal adult subjectivity is the one developed in relation to the super-ego. What this implication reveals for Guattari, then, is the fact that once the 'particular determinant' originally giving rise to fear of the super-ego has receded, such as the parental relation, another structure within the social must step in to perpetuate the anxiety in some form in order that normal adult subjectivity be maintained.

This is not a matter of substitution for Guattari; it is rather a matter of the group inheriting and repeating what Guattari will refer to as an act of signification that continually restages the original determinants of anxiety for the sake of the social. Noting Freud's acknowledgement elsewhere in the 'Anxiety and Instinctual Life' lecture of the 'unconscious need for punishment' proper to normal subjectivity, Guattari writes: 'Henceforth, the authority of this *social reality* will base its survival on the establishment of an irrational morality in which punishment will

be justified simply by the law of blind repetition, since it cannot be explained by any ethical legality' (Guattari 1984c: 12–13).

The subjectivity recognised by the social, then, is one whose neuroses are cultivated through the intentional, repetitive exposure to structures supporting psychic anxieties, specifically the castration complex, which combines the threat of punishment and the feeling of lack. The neurotic subject is thus not accidental to the social but required by it. It is in the interest of the social to organise itself in such a way as to maintain the individual's desire for punishment and feelings of lack, an organisation which, if analysed, would expose the moral law as ultimately groundless (but this analysis never comes). 'By seeing [the persistence of neurotic anxieties] merely as a continuity,' Guattari quickly adds, however,

> we miss the question implied in it. It seems natural to prolong the resolution of the Oedipus complex into a 'successful' integration into society. But surely it would be more to the point to see that the way anxiety persists must be linked with the dependence of the individual on the collectivity described by Freud. (Guattari 1984c: 13)

The real question concerning the persistence of the castration complex is not why it persists but how it persists through an exploitation of the individual's dependence on the social.

IV. Transitional Objects and the Institutional Unconscious

For Guattari, it is clear that capitalism exploits the castration complex as a way to solidify the individual's dependence on the social. In fact, Guattari's description of capitalism's exploitation of individual desire gives the impression that capitalism understands the psyche much more thoroughly than psychiatry or psychoanalysis. According to Guattari, capitalism organises itself as a 'castrating regime' that 'neutralize[s] all those practices of desire which do not reproduce the established form of domination' (Guattari 1996a: 30). It does so by coding its objects – 'the washing machine, the television, in short all that makes life worth living today' – as gateways through which the individual attains subjectivity in the social (Guattari 1984c: 20). If the individual lacks these objects, then he or she lacks recognition within the social and is therefore lacking in subjectivity. Within capitalism, if the individual finds him- or herself unable to acquire these objects, then there is something defective with the individual, not capitalism. Thus within capitalism, the only desire that is sanctioned is the desire for the objects of capitalism and capitalistic subjectivity.

We recognise such a characterisation of capitalism as consistent with the basic Marxian critique of commodity fetishism. Guattari builds on this basic Marxian position by linking it to D. W. Winnicott's notion of the 'transitional object' (Winnicott 1971). Commodities, Guattari observes, function as vehicles of fantasy in the same way Winnicott observed that toys, teddy bears, blankets, etc. do in a child's negotiation with reality. Like a teddy bear that a child refuses to give up, commodities can work to forestall the individual's confrontation with reality and serve as mechanisms with which to deny reality altogether. However, unlike the teddy bear, commodities guarantee that what the individual receives back from their acquisition and manipulation is a fragmentation of the self and a feeling of lack. For as Marx argued long ago, it is in the commodity's nature to serve at once as a phantasmagoria that promises satisfaction and fulfilment, as well as a mechanism through which human beings are alienated from both their labour and one another. Thus, writes Guattari,

> the sum of all these part objects, starting with the picture of the body as the basis for self-identification, is itself thrown daily onto the market as fodder, alongside the hidden Stock Exchange that deals with shares in pseudo-eroticism, aestheticism, sport and all the rest. Industrial society thus secures unconscious control of our fate by its need – satisfying from the point of view of the death instinct – to disjoint every consumer/producer in such a way that ultimately humanity would find itself becoming a great fragmented body held together only as the supreme God of the Economy shall decree. (Guattari 1984c: 20)

In order to integrate into society, the individual must insert him- or herself into a network of consumption in which what he or she consumes is nothing other than his or her own productive powers. The individual must internalise a self-destructive, self-consuming 'ideal of consuming-machines-consuming-producing-machines' (Guattari 1984c: 14), where consumption is equated with desire. This pseudo-desire of consumption is the only kind of desire recognised in the perverse republic that is IWC. By extension, if institutions within capitalism did not work to support and reproduce this relation of self-cannibalisation from out of a feeling of lack, if they did not perpetuate the castration complex and desire for punishment, they would cease to be recognised and consequently cease to exist.

This condition of institutional existence within capitalism causes Guattari to note how institutions construct their own versions of transitional objects – 'institutional objects' – that mediate the relation between the institution and the individuals within it. These institutional

objects at the same time serve as a means of fantasy that postpone indefinitely any critical questioning of the institution's unconscious – the connection between the institution's existence and the larger social reality outside it, especially its role in ratifying and reproducing the very specific social reality that is Integrated World Capitalism.

One pattern Guattari identifies in the structure of institutional objects is the projection of a group fantasy that provides a narrative with assigned roles with which individuals in groups can identify and upon which they can rely to insulate them from confronting reality. Guattari analyses as an example a hypothetical inner monologue of a French soldier: ' "I've been in the French army for a long time; the French army has always existed, it is eternal. This makes life easier when I'm frightened of dying, or when my wife calls me a fool. After all, I *am* a regimental sergeant major!" ' (Guattari 1984a: 41). Guattari goes on to note that the institutional object of military rank to which the soldier cathects provides him a layer of comfort from reality that at once assures him he is ' "not nobody" ' (no matter what his wife or anybody else might say) and that also distracts him 'from any self-questioning about life and death' (41). This works well for the established social order. For the sake of maintaining a hold on the institutional object and its accompanying fantasy, the soldier is 'ready to enforce any repression, to torture, to bombard civilian populations with napalm and so on' (Guattari 1984c: 13). The institutional object in this case comforts the soldier from any anxiety of lack while also serving as a threat of punishment, because he secretly knows that should there come a moment in which he ceases to be willing 'to enforce any repression', his place in the military will be taken from him.

Since institutions run according to the same logic as that which organises capitalist society, and indeed that is needed to in order to survive, there is no incentive for an institution to call attention to its objects as fantastic. Thus one consequence of Guattari's claim about the role institutional objects play with respect to the institution's relationship to society at large is this: only the overturning of the contemporary organisation of society as such will make possible the overcoming of the Oedipus complex (Guattari 1984c: 13).

V. Groups, Institutional Schizophasia and the Necessity for Institutional Psychotherapy

From what we reviewed so far of Guattari's research, we know that institutions have an investment in perpetuating the threat of punishment

as a mechanism of producing individual and group subjectivities that ensure their dependence upon the institution. As Guattari puts it, we know that the only forms of subjectivity institutions recognise are those that have internalised the castration complex. The groups that internalise the castration complex within an institution are those he considered 'dependent' or 'subjugated groups'. By perpetuating structures of punishment and dependent group subjectivities, institutions also reproduce, and blind groups to, the institutional or group unconscious – the historical and material conditions of their existence.

By encouraging fixed identifications with delusional group fantasies that sustain cathexes with particular institutional objects, institutions also police the limits of speech of subjugated groups. Anyone who has experience within an institution – which is to say, everyone – will recognise the experience of being assured one's speech is being heard while feeling ignored at the same time. While a subject group, Guattari says, 'makes a statement', the only thing that can be said of a dependent or subjugated group is 'that 'its cause is heard,' but no one knows where or by whom, or when' (Guattari 1984c: 11, 14). Contemporary discourse defending the humanities functions just like that of a subjugated group, and the evidence for that is found in the fact that our ' "cause is heard," but no one knows where or by whom, or when'. The speech of the subjugated group, then, is merely tolerated and contained; it is a simulacrum of actual speech. Through the tolerance of a subjugated group's speech, the institution thus engages in a practice of destroying the possibilities for speaking, an institutional schizophasia. Left alone, institutional schizophasia results in a group's 'bureaucratic self-mutilation' and absorption into 'death-dealing impulses' that in no way destroys the institution but guarantees the obedient reproduction of the status quo (Guattari 1984c: 23; 1984a: 42).

The project of institutional psychotherapy, Guattari is careful to warn, is not one of psychologising groups. Rather, it is a project directed at loosening up the relationships that constrain speech so that groups can create and cathect to new objects and create new enunciations, in other words, 'make a statement'. A group's creation of real enunciations exposes the group to its indeterminateness, to what it is not (alterity), and to a futurity that solicits the group's desire to become otherwise than the way it customarily imagines itself. Real enunciations articulate new possibilities for transversal relations, not hierarchical ones.

VI. Privatising the Unconscious and Language: Psychoanalysis and Linguistics

Paradoxically, the very institutions we rely on to demystify the repressive apparatuses of social life and ameliorate the individual's alienation and desire for punishment – namely, hospitals and schools – are not only less than helpful in these ambitions; they in fact exacerbate the relations of punishment and alienation. One reason for this has to do with the necessity for the institution to serve as a site of capitalism's social reproduction to ensure its existence. In terms of the psychiatric hospital, however, this reproduction is accomplished through an uncritical adoption of the psychoanalytic unconscious and the conception of language psychoanalysis promotes through its own adoption of linguistics. Thus, the paradox extends to the disciplines and discourses that appear to offer ways of overcoming institutional repression but that are in fact only masquerading as critical, liberating discourses. Confronting this fact will help us understand why the defence of the humanities should not take 'the humanities' as a univocal and self-evident object.[11] The complicity of some humanistic disciplines in the repressive apparatus of the contemporary University only aids in the humanities' repression instead of its liberation.

It is in this sense of serving as an accomplice to capitalism that Guattari enacts a critical reversal that concerns how we should regard the way psychoanalysis and linguistics function as institutions within other institutions such as the hospital and the University. It is not the case that psychoanalysis discovers the unconscious in some neutral form. Rather, the unconscious psychoanalysis discovers is the one that the modern capitalist state has constructed as part of a 'signifying logic' aimed at the state's self-perpetuation (Guattari 1984c: 13). Instead of inventing the castration complex, the family is its factory. 'In this perspective,' Guattari contends, 'the authority of the father and the images of social hierarchy would only be accessories to this necessary, sacrosanct castration' inherent to capitalistic subjectivity (Guattari 2009: 146).

Psychoanalysis may make visible the existence of the unconscious and the castration complex, but instead of providing a means to engage them, it establishes a number of ways to make itself a part of capitalism's signifying logic. According to Guattari, the most immediate among these is the image it projects of the unconscious as something private and confined to the family. By confining the unconscious to the sphere of

the family, psychoanalysis limits the space in which desire can appear. Since the family is the site where subjectivity was initially formed, restricting desire to the family also restricts both it and subjectivity to the past. Without allowing desire to carry some futural dimension, there can be no real futural projection of subjectivity either. Finally, by privatising the unconscious, by making the unconscious private property, psychoanalysis cuts it off from having any commerce with the social. The effect is actually worse than endorsing capitalism; psychoanalysis simply 'pretend[s] not to be aware' of it or its values (Guattari 2009: 148).

Once psychoanalysis becomes accepted within the University, its sequestration from the social becomes even more intense as its disciplinary status allows it to construct all sorts of initiation rites and passwords to which subjects must submit in order to gain entrance to its field. When Guattari declares, 'We have the unconscious we deserve!', it is because we have relegated our responsibility to the unconscious to a few chosen specialists (Guattari 2011b: 9). Moreover, rather than revealing institutional objects for what they are, psychoanalysis circulates its own objects to bolster the separation from the social. Its theoretical regions of the Imaginary and Symbolic are 'sordid paraphernalia [that are] there only to safeguard the comfort of the couch' (Guattari 2009: 147). As 'the best of all capitalist drugs', psychoanalysis is capitalism's 'substitute religion', according to Guattari. Psychoanalysis's 'function', claims Guattari, 'is to update repression, to give it a personal touch so it sells better – as has been done for the Ford Pinto or Plymouth Duster' (148).

Psychoanalysis does itself no favours by suturing itself to linguistics. From Guattari's standpoint, this only intensifies psychoanalysis's status as accomplice to IWC. Just as with psychoanalysis, linguistics suffers from a blind reversal, which causes it to isolate itself from the social while also ratifying existing forms of social organisation within capitalism. Noam Chomsky's analysis of language's deep structure, for instance, presumes a unity of language that does not exist, at least not without the exertion of power and repression, claims Guattari. 'The unity of language', Guattari declares, 'is always inseparable from the constitution of a power formation. One never finds clear boundaries on dialectal maps but only bordering or transitional zones. There is no mother-language except in the phenomena of the semiotic takeover by a group, ethnicity, or nation' (Guattari 2011a: 27–8).

To the extent that all of linguistics shares in this basic presupposition of a single unified object called 'language' and pretends to be able to

account for 'all the domains related to language', linguistics constitutes a form of imperialism that fails to see that its quantification of language is nothing more than a transcription of 'capitalistic flows' (Guattari 2011a: 25–6, 30).[12] Confirmation of this misrecognition for Guattari is found in the binary logic grounding linguistics' conception of language, which he describes as an act of 'digitization' that confines the subject's appearance in language to the alternating poles of speaker–listener and reduces intersubjective speech to the communication of information on the same order as that of commodity-exchange (23, 25). Finally, linguistics' cataloguing of the performances that constitute meaning projects an image of linguistic competence that serves as a gatekeeping measure that recognises utterances as legitimate only insofar as they obey the rules of information exchange (31). It is no wonder, then, that Lacanian psychoanalysis locates the subject's experience of castration and alienation in the subject's relation to the signifier and language in general. The suturing of psychoanalysis to linguistic categories in Lacan's thought helps to further systematise a structure of 'alienated enunciation' that is both endemic to capitalist society and exploited by capitalism (24).

Motivating linguistics' identification with information theory, Guattari holds, is a desire to appear scientific in order to gain recognition within a society ruled by the logic of capitalist administration (Guattari 2011a: 23). Psychoanalysis's suturing of itself to linguistics could then be seen as an attempt to piggyback onto the latter's project of gaining recognition, which, Guattari points out, psychoanalysis tried to accomplish in similar ways by suturing itself to other 'scientific' disciplines, such as biology and mathematics (23).[13] As Guattari notes, the reduction of language to information and the reduction of the unconscious to the laws of linguistics and mathematics help both fields attain legitimacy within the University and the hospital. But the legitimacy they gain should not be confused with autonomy, for information theory and scientific discourse are in fact so many transitional objects that cut off linguistics and psychoanalysis from the social. Thus, the conceptions of language and the unconscious with which they deal are not only products of specialisation and privatisation; they are also simulacra of the objects they pretend to be.

Granting psychoanalysis and linguistics hegemonic reign over the unconscious and language makes it even more difficult to break free of the repressive apparatuses of society and the institution, for the simulacra they promote as rigorous theorisations of language and the unconscious can no longer serve as the source of revolutionary

inspiration. Instead, they become the means by which revolutionary-minded groups entangle themselves in illusory objects and self-destructive group fantasy. Guattari witnessed such things take place just as routinely in the institutional therapy groups in which he participated as in the militant groups with which he was engaged. Both groups, he observed, allowed themselves to become susceptible to the reinscription of the super-ego and the regulation of speech (Guattari 1984a: 24–44).

Within both institutions and groups, it is not enough to have revolutionary aspirations. In order to break free from the social imperative to reproduce the castration complex, Guattari argues that groups must be attentive to their speech, for their speech is an index to the kind of group subjectivity they inhabit. Guattari's concept of transversality offers a practical tool for becoming attentive to speech. Yet it does not so much replace the conceptions of the unconscious and language constructed by psychoanalysis and linguistics as free them up from their sedimentations – that is, 'territorialisations' – in the practices that populate the institution. Transversality intervenes at the level of the institutional relations that shape the production of speech. It does so by exposing how ritualistic and habitual ways of being within the institution uphold stagnated and self-mutilating forms of collective desire.

VII. Transversality and the Possibility of the Humanities' 'Other Scene'; or, How to Tell if You're a Dependent Group (and What to do about It)

Your group is a dependent group, Guattari informs us, if you answer 'yes' to any of the following:

- Is your group caught up in modes of ' "territorialized" transference', unable to imagine an identity outside of a master–slave struggle with the perceived powers-that-be, fixated on past traumas that have by now taken on the status of origin myths? (Guattari 1984c: 17, 22)
- Does your group remain ignorant of its fantasies, especially of the fact that it has fantasies? (Guattari 1984a: 40)
- Is your group unable to recognise its institutional objects as transitional? (Guattari 1984a: 39)
- Does your group speak a language that is the mirror image of that of the institution? (Guattari 1984c: 20)
- Does your group compulsively refuse to recognise different forms of speech, dismissing them as nonsense? (Guattari 1984c: 16)

According to Guattari, whenever relations within an institution are territorialised in these ways, groups are blocked from pursuing the machinic connections constituting their unconscious. What Guattari formalises under the concept of the machinic unconscious is simply the set of relations – human and non-human – that determine the paths desire can travel (Guattari 1996b: 230–1). If a group operates under the psychoanalytic unconscious, compulsively fixated on objects that invite it to repeatedly return to the scenes of past injuries, wrongs and traumas, it prevents itself from both imagining and encountering the alterity that is outside it and the institution, which means the group blocks itself from engaging the historical conditions of its existence (Guattari 1984a: 36). Guattari compares the scenario to an image of horses running around a fenced-in area, their blinders set to varying degrees of access to the field of vision. What Guattari calls the 'coefficient of transversality' in an institution is the level of openness to which a group's blinders are set. The more closed the horses' blinders are, the more traumatic their experience will be, and likewise for groups within an institution. The more open the blinders are, the more communication there will be between horses (that is, groups) and therefore the less traumatic will be their experience. Guattari's implementation of transversal relations at La Borde was aimed at opening the blinders of the clinic's existing structures. Though a relatively small institution in comparison to a university, the example of La Borde proves it is not impossible to imagine new organisations of relationships and new enunciations among groups within the institution.

Guattari's 1964 essay on transversality opens with his assertion that despite institutional therapeutics' relatively recent arrival on the psychiatric scene, it '*has* got an object', and this object is nothing less than 'the reality of the social problematic' (Guattari 1984c: 11). His insistence on demystifying the institutional object and revealing the object of all institutions to be 'the reality of the social problematic' should provoke a critical reassessment of the objects an institution might currently view as proper to it. In order for scholars working in the humanities to carve out the space of an 'other scene' for their own enunciations, it is incumbent upon them – upon us – to realise first that if we are to be truthful about our situation within the University, we must ask ourselves Guattari's questions about group status. The instinctual response of a defence of the humanities as opposed to a radical critique of its complicity with the modern capitalist state signals an uncritical subscription to 'communicative' modes of speech and a blind mirroring of the language of capitalist administration. By mirroring this language,

the humanities contribute to the schizophasic destruction of their speech and tacitly endorse the University's role in reproducing the existing organisation of society.

Not only can we understand the idea of the humanities' exceptionalism as serving as an origin myth; we can now see that it also serves as an originating mythical site of repression while at the same time functioning as a transitional object which, like Winnicott's teddy bears, the humanities dote over and lovingly fondle. As for other institutional objects we uncritically adopt, how are we to assess the jargon of 'excellence' we parrot back to administrators, donors and politicians in order to be recognised? What of the emergence of such fields as the digital humanities, which one might see as legitimating the technocratic relationship to art and knowledge? In my own field of philosophy, Guattari's critiques of the scientific determinism he finds in psychoanalysis and linguistics raise questions about how one might assess such phenomena as Alain Badiou's grounding of ontology in set theory, the 'speculative turn' of 'OOP' ('Object Oriented Philosophy'), and the current trend known as 'X-Phi' ('Experimental Philosophy'). To say that psychoanalysis is 'the best of all capitalist drugs' does not preclude the idea that there are no other capitalist drugs; in fact, such a claim relies on the fact that there are others.

As Winnicott observes, the child who cannot give up his or her attachment to transitional objects develops a type of pathology that cannot connect with reality. It is a pathological type that is threatened by the possibility of the loss of reality with the loss of the object (Winnicott 1971: 22–3). Others have conceived this type of pathology as narcissistic to the extent certain narcissistic personalities suffer from an annihilation anxiety that cannot imagine a world in which they are not participants and as a result imagine either the end of the world or their end (Ronningstam 2005). It thus strikes me as the height of narcissism that a field would equate its disappearance with the end of the University, that rather than imagining a different organisation of society in which the humanities might help dislodge the University from the task of reproducing capitalism, it would prefer to imagine (and perhaps take some comfort, that is, pleasure, in) the University's destruction. This is perhaps a decisive sign of a dependent group: in abdicating responsibility for its speech, it also abdicates responsibility for its own death (Guattari 1984c: 22). Transversality, we must always be sure to remember, is first of all a militant concept. It is a counter-mirror that interrupts the mirroring at work at the heart of existing institutional narcissisms, of subjugated groups blind to their capture by an image

that is and at the same is not their own. A recuperation of Guattari's theorisation of the institutional unconscious will provide a frame to view how transversality's deployment in the context of the humanities would help bring the humanities' group fantasies to visibility, thereby giving the humanities access to them and enabling the possibility of disrupting the 'institutional schizophasia' in which they are locked.

Two things must be said in conclusion, however: bringing to visibility one's speech and one's fantasies is one slope of transversality (a task that, evidence indicates, historically has proven quite difficult). The other slope of transversality, the diagrammatic aspect that calls for a rearrangement of relations among subjects and between groups and institutions, requires an active and relentless search for new aesthetic encounters aimed at the production of new subjectivities.[14] In his final work, *Chaosmosis*, Guattari offers the following fragmentary proposition: 'Transversality never given (*sic*) as 'already there,' but always to be conquered through a pragmatics of existence' (Guattari 1995: 125). The exigency to engage 'the pragmatics of existence' will never appear to the humanities, however, so long as the question of the humanities' subjectivity – and hence the question of the subjectivities the humanities produce – is not broached. This is a matter, though, of distinguishing between the posing of real questions and simply asking questions that have been prepared for us in advance.

Notes

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1. This is a move, however, that would ultimately lead to a break with Jean Oury, Guattari's friend and mentor (Dosse 2010: 175–6).
2. I thank one of the anonymous reviewers of the current essay for reminding me of both the Cohn-Bendits' critiques and the SI pamphlet.
3. As Genosko has documented, one of the first applications of transversality by someone other than Guattari was the 'transversal house' that the Japanese architect Kazuo Shinohara built for the Japanese poet Shuntaro Tanikawa in Naganohara in 1974 (Genosko 2002: 143). However, Shinohara's reception of transversality came by way of Deleuze's 1972 essay 'The Literary Machine' from *Proust and Signs*, which one can argue is also a simplistic application of Guattari's concept, one that, as Genosko notes, surprisingly evacuates transversality of its social and political stakes (Deleuze 2000; Genosko 2002: 143).
4. Though I cannot develop this line of thought in the present essay, Guattari's demonstration that the group subject's relation to speech and language is at stake in the concept of transversality points to a possible dialogue with other attempts

within the last few years to analyse the problem of the contemporary University in terms of the relation to language, such as: Derrida's project on the 'Right to Philosophy' (2002; 2004), summarised in Simon Morgan Wortham's *Counter-Institutions* (2006); Christopher Fynsk's *The Claim of Language: A Case for the Humanities* (2004); and Gayatri Spivak's *Death of a Discipline* (2003).

That transversality might contribute to these recent attempts to rethink a relation to the University based on a relation to language testifies to its viability for thinking through the current conjuncture of the University in semiocapitalism. However, for those who may be suspicious of transversality's applicability in the contemporary scene, it is perhaps worth noting the following: though the genealogy of the concept of transversality can be traced back to Guattari's experience of the clinical situation at La Borde and the events leading up to and surrounding the movements of May '68, it would be a mistake to reduce and confine transversality to the moment of its historical instantiation. Critically, transversality cannot be isolated simply as a concept that appears at only the beginning of Guattari's thought (see Guattari 1995), and it would be odd to arbitrarily bracket off transversality from the other concepts Guattari developed in his work along with Deleuze, such as schizoanalysis and Body-without-Organs, which were also forged with the memory of May '68 in mind and which are deployed routinely in contemporary studies on Deleuze and Guattari. Though the events of May '68 are conventionally thought of as constituting a failed revolution, scholars across the spectrum of critical commitments, from Bifo (2009b) to Alain Badiou (2010) to Lauren Berlant (1994), have questioned that received judgement. Certainly, the current events involving the Occupy Wall Street movement in the United States the last few months along with similar protests in Britain and Italy testify to a spirit reminiscent of May '68, with students and workers attempting to articulate their collective experience of IWC. Even if most of the Occupy movement's protesters are not acquainted with Guattari's concept of IWC personally, they are witnesses to the self-mutilation IWC demands. See Guattari (1996a). The issue of transversality is less about retaining the unity of the concept than of breaking with the desire for punishment required by the capitalist mode of production.

5. To be sure, the end of the University was long in the making, as diagnosed by Bill Readings in his 1996 work *The University in Ruins*. While one might point to earlier diagnoses, such as Allan Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind* (1987), Readings's study differs significantly from Bloom's polemic to the extent that for Readings those responsible for the University's so-called ruin are not to be found in post-60s literature departments and their importation of French theory but in the administrative offices of the emerging and fast fully-realised neoliberal University and its corresponding culture of 'excellence'. In this way, it would be more accurate to cite Jean-François Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition* (1979; see Lyotard 1984) as a precursor to Readings's critique.
6. As an example, see Laurie Fendrich (2009); also Fish (2008a; 2008b).
7. To give just a few examples, see Max Horkheimer (1995), David Pan (1998) and Randy Martin (2004).
8. Both Lyotard's *The Differend* (1988) and *The Postmodern Condition* (1984) are cast from the viewpoint that a mode of instrumental rationality has emerged globally which frames any kind of speech that would resist the order of communication as not only incomprehensible and unrecognisable but also impossible, that is to say, as not being able to appear as speech. Both *The Differend* and *The Postmodern Condition* express exasperation at the inability of the public to sustain a consideration of complex critical writing.

The Postmodern Condition complains of the 'slackening' that saturates the contemporary public sphere (Lyotard 1984: 71), while *The Differend* foretells the end of the book, because it 'takes too long to read' (Lyotard 1988: xiii). Thus each of these works provides theoretical justification for the belief in the humanities' exceptionalism, the ahistorical idea that the humanities names a sphere radically separate from capitalist administration. In *The Differend*'s preface, in fact, Lyotard describes a *différend* – an incompatibility of heterogeneous discourses – inhabiting the discipline of philosophy itself, as a practice caught between economic and academic discourse (Lyotard 1988: xiii).

9. The exchanges strike me as constituting an echolalia not only in the sense that the substance of the arguments remains basically unchanged throughout all the various iterations, but that the audience for these arguments seems to be composed of those who already agree with them and who are also in fundamental agreement with one another.
10. Jacques Derrida accomplished just this in his reading of Kant's *The Conflict of the Faculties*, where he demonstrated that such contained speech, and the fantasy of exceptionalism buttressing it, belongs to the very origins of the modern university. See Derrida (1992).
11. See Fynsk (2004) on this precise point.
12. In this reflection on the relationship of linguistics to capitalism, Guattari makes a connection similar to the one argued by Fredric Jameson in *The Prison-House of Language* (1972).
13. Lacan's turn to a schematisation of the 'mathemes' of the unconscious serves as such an example.
14. In this respect, I would argue that there are very interesting avenues to pursue between Guattari's final work and Jacques Rancière's reflections in the last few years on 'the distribution of the sensible' (*le partage du sensible*), which Rancière says conservative, bureaucratic social forces attempt to sediment (Deleuze and Guattari would say, 'territorialise') into a natural order and limited possibilities of experience. Forces Rancière identifies as 'politics,' in contrast, attempt to redistribute the sensible in order to provide grounding for new experiences of 'what is seen and what can be said about it' (Rancière 2004: 13). See also Rancière (1999).

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Transversalising the Ecological Turn: Four Components of Félix Guattari's Ecosophical Perspective

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Abstract

Arguably, two of the most important forces affecting contemporary global culture are the growing awareness of ecological crises and the rapid spread of digital media. Félix Guattari's unfinished concept of ecosophy suggests the basis of a theoretical framework for constructing productive syntheses between the ecological and the digital. Moreover, a Guattarian rethinking of the ecological turn in the humanities challenges the philosophical basis of the pedagogy of Nature appreciation that has characterised the eco-humanities landscape since the 1970s. Guattari's ecosophy gestures towards a transversal eco-humanities, which would be rhizomatically rooted in autopoiesis and becoming-other, rather than defined by static allegiance to the ideals of 'Self-realisation' postulated by the deep ecology movement.

Keywords: ecosophy, Guattari, autopoiesis, subjectivity, ecocriticism, deep ecology

Over the past decade, the humanities disciplines have played host to an explosion of ecologically themed transformations, which continue to open up new (sub)fields of research and teaching.[1] The development of the ecological turn in English studies (conceived broadly to house the study of literature, composition, film and new media) resonates with the general evolution of the eco-humanities; indeed, English

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departments have led this movement in many respects. A survey of English's recent appropriations of ecological ideas (and their failings) establishes a point of departure for rethinking the eco-humanities. Ecocriticism, with its reputable journals and popular conferences, has no doubt become the most institutionalised of English's eco-fields, while more pointed approaches continue to gather loosely around terms such as green cultural studies, ecofeminism, ecocomposition and ecomedia studies.[2] At the turn of this century, much of the early work in ecocriticism was devoted to 'naming the most important works in the field and elaborating the reasons why they matter more than others' (McNamee 1997: 14). Contemporary leaders in ecocriticism continue this 'green' canon-building project, issuing pronouncements similar to Libby Robin's 2008 declaration, 'we need a literature that enhances understanding of relations between people and nature, of how we notice change personally, and how such global changes affect places we know intimately' (Robin 2008: 292). The growth of ecocriticism, however, has attracted an increasing number of critical attacks, the most significant of which have been waged by literary theorists who, despite their objections, share the ecocritical desire to respond to ongoing ecological crises. In particular, these theorists assail ecocriticism for its reluctance to engage with issues raised by contemporary theory.[3] Timothy Morton goes as far as saying that ecocriticism 'consciously blocks its ears to all intellectual developments of the last thirty years... ecocriticism promises to return to an academy of the past' (Morton 2007: 20). And yet, none of the leading books associated with ecocriticism (not even the famous 'ecocritiques' by Dana Phillips or Timothy Morton) display even the slightest awareness of the work of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. That the eco-humanities generally shares this gap in knowledge seems very bizarre, especially given the explicit ecological focus in Guattari's later writings and given Deleuze's claim in the late 1980s that he and Guattari wanted to write a (last) book on their philosophy of Nature. We should wonder now, with great pertinence, where Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy would lead the ecological turn, which, along with the digital turn, promises to be a formative influence for humanities disciplines in the twenty-first century.

If there is a unifying theory that connects most ecological approaches across the humanities disciplines, certainly that theory is Arne Naess's widespread notion of deep ecology or 'ecosophy'. As Gary Genosko (2009: 86) points out, Guattari's writing on ecosophy never refers to Naess and his development of the term. That said, certain statements by Guattari throughout *The Three Ecologies* (for example, 'Ecology

must stop being associated with the image of a small nature-loving minority . . . ') might arguably function as indirect references to, if not critiques of, Naess's project (Guattari 2008: 35). At a fundamental level, the mission of Naess's ecosophy is to expand the sphere of objects with which people identity. He believes that 'identification elicits intense empathy' and that humans remain indifferent to that which they take to be utterly different than themselves (Naess 1995: 15). To support this position, Naess shares a personal anecdote about a flea that suddenly landed in a sample of acid chemicals, which Naess was studying under a microscope. He claims, 'if I was alienated from the flea, not seeing intuitively anything even resembling myself, the [flea's] death struggle would have left me indifferent' (15). This anecdote, a vital illustration of Naess's thought, brings us to the most important difference between his ecosophy and the ecosophy of Félix Guattari. Naess calls for an expansion of the self via identification ('Self-realisation'), whereas Guattari (and Deleuze) valorise autopoietic processes that perform a dissolution of the self via disjunction ('becoming-other'). In other words – in a Guattarian reworking of the flea anecdote – I would not look for elements of the flea that remind me of myself; rather, I would receive the flea in its alterity and encounter aspects of the flea that are completely different from myself, so as to 'become-flea': to introduce the flea's manner of existence into the way I think and live.[4] Initially, the difference between Naess's identification and Guattari's autopoiesis may seem trivial. This minor difference, however, actually lays out two divergent, even conflicting, paths for diagramming the production of subjectivity. 'Guattari's concern,' writes Genosko, 'is not self-realization through widening of a pre-given self, but processes of singularization that resist the frames of reference imposed by an identity' (Genosko 2009: 87). Consequently, an eco-humanities inspired by Guattari's theory of ecology would look very different than the familiar Naessian project of Nature appreciation. A living monument to Naess, ecocriticism typically invokes ecology as a strictly environmentalist discourse. This position tends to prioritise the thematic study of literary representations of Nature, often espousing, at the very least, a desire to distance oneself from technological advancements and other complexities of modern urban life.

On the other hand, Guattari's ecosophical perspective promises to remotivate the ecological turn in the humanities towards radical transformations in the production of subjectivity and concepts that carry with them the potential to sustain a more transversalised conception of identity.[5] Janell Watson summarises the quintessential thrust of

transversality against the tradition of normative models of the human psyche:

> Familiar topologies such as the semiotic triangle, the conscious-preconscious-unconscious, the ego-id-superego and the Oedipal triangle must be expanded, extended, and opened up. Connections between them must be retraced. Their borders and boundaries must be effaced and erased, or at least made more porous. Above all, these expanded, redrawn and reconnected topographies must be set in motion . . . (Watson 2009: 23)

Transversality, as can be surmised from Watson's insightful work on Guattari, moves hand in glove with the activity of metamodelling. Models such as the Oedipal triangle purport a representational, standardised map of the psyche designed for the clinical evaluation and diagnosis of individual patients.[6] Metamodels, on the other hand, adopt a more playful and constructivist stance towards modelling; here the ultimate aim is singularity rather than standardisation, and this entails appropriation from a multitude of models in order to avoid being 'stuck' within the entropy of a dominant model (Watson 2008). Like Guattari says of schizoanalysis, transversal thinking 'does not choose one modelization to the exclusion of another'; rather, transversality is about creating lines of flight among various models, 'making them . . . operative within modified assemblages, more open, more processual, more deterritorialised' (Guattari 1995: 61). As such, transversality is a radically ecological concept in that it pushes us to constantly (re)articulate things at the relational level of their interactions. With Guattari, then, we are not enlarging the selfhood model; we are developing the metamodels and practices of emergent subjectivities. Inspired by Guattari instead of Naess, we would become less interested in the representational paradigms of nineteenth-century realism (which are often celebrated by leading ecocritics) and more interested in modernist and contemporary aesthetics of collage and montage; rhetorical acts of aesthetic invention would become as important as, if not more important than, pseudoscientific methods of literary hermeneutics.

Though Naess coined the term 'ecosophy', he does not think through the semiotic implications of the word as fully as Guattari does. Ecosophy is not the same thing as eco-philosophy; it is not simply the redirection of the philosophical tradition towards ecological concerns. To think ecosophically is to rethink philosophy in our contemporary moment defined by the convergence of nature and culture, ecological crises, globalisation and the Internet. Born of his

transversal conception of subjectivity, Guattari's ecosophical perspective suggests for (eco)humanities scholars a unique constellation of concepts adequate to these emergent situations; it offers an alternative to the standard 'normal science' approach by which critics apply old ideas to the same type of texts, only now in the spirit of environmentalism. By analogy, then, the proper aim of ecosophy (and a properly transversal eco-humanities) is not to produce a more energy-efficient light bulb or a hybrid car, but to reconfigure subjectivity and to remake academic and/or social practices altogether. While scientists and social scientists rightfully pursue advancements in green technology and debate environmental policy issues, humanities scholars should aim to further our understanding of ecological problems in ways that are unavailable to the technocratic perspective. Guattari's ecosophy suggests that humanities scholars should concern themselves first with ontological advancements. Thus, in addition to green buildings, hybrid vehicles, environmental legislation, etc., we need to rethink traditional notions of selfhood and, at the same time, invent practices designed to facilitate an ontology consummate to contemporary ecological concerns, as well as the emergent relational modes proliferating with the expansion of global capitalism and digital media. Of profound importance to these latter issues is Guattari's notion of the 'post-media era' – his ecosophical vision of the potentialities afforded by emergent media technologies – which I expound upon later in this essay.

While most work in ecocriticism tends to avoid poststructuralist theory in favour of deep ecology, leading Guattari scholars have begun to survey the ecological implications of the philosopher's notoriously complicated writings. Readers new to Guattari should be cognisant of three basic ways in which the tenets of his ecosophy conflict with more popular appropriations of ecology. First, affirming his belief in the inseparability of nature and culture, Guattari contends throughout his later writings that what we call the ecological crisis is not simply an environmental disaster, and that ecology is not limited to the natural environment. For Guattari, 'The ecological crisis can be traced to a more general crisis of the social, political and existential', which 'involve[s] changes in production, ways of living and axes of value' (Guattari 1995: 119, 134). Furthermore, Guattari differs from the early leaders of ecocriticism who tended to work from the popular belief that ecological thought is simply an idealistic, utopian project committed to preserving Nature's pure, harmonious and delicate balance. In Guattari's radical ecology, the ecological point of view beholds the world as a dance between chaos and complexity – a multitude of productive syntheses

between nomadic parts that exist independent of any fixed structure or transcendental whole. There is no larger 'natural' order, no transcendent grand scheme according to which beings manifest. The ecology of ecosophy is that of neither popular environmentalism nor environmental science. Whereas environmentalism (like Naess) attempts to strengthen the bond between humans and the natural environment, which are articulated as two discrete and relatively stable categories, Guattari's ecosophy rethinks this relationship in terms of dynamic assemblages of enunciation without assigning humans, nature or culture a fixed role or place in the production of subjectivity. In this way, we might think of ecosophy as performing a metamodelling with respect to environmental models such as the ecosystem. While the model of the ecosystem was first drawn by environmental scientists, a generalised ecology extends relational modes of thinking implied by this model across disciplinary boundaries with hopes to enrich the study of any number of paradigmatic problems, most notably the production of subjectivity in Guattari's case.

Moreover, in metamodelling environmental ecosystems, by bringing them into contact with mental and social ecologies, one can rethink the ethos of management and regulation that has pervaded the largely scientific discourse of environmental ecology. Indeed, the challenge of Guattari's ecosophy is not to regulate the forces of the world into some idealised, harmonious balance, but rather to engender institutional and ontological conditions that encourage people to encounter the world as a series of open and ongoing syntheses between partial objects (as opposed to regarding phenomena as objects-in-themselves, complete and isolatable). This challenge informs and is informed by passages in *The Three Ecologies* and *Chaosmosis* where Guattari discusses nascent subjectivity and machines. Guattari's view of ecology is especially unique in that he claims to be working from an 'ethico-aesthetic paradigm' rather than from scientific or pseudo-scientific paradigms. For Guattari, ethico-aesthetic paradigms do not necessarily deal with art as we traditionally conceive it, but seek to incorporate an aesthetic order – an artist's 'way of assuming their existence' – into the existential territories of everyday life, within and beyond the studio or the museum.[7] He insists that the decision to engage subjectivity on a scientific basis or an aesthetic basis carries important ethical implications; Guattari of course asserts that attempts to 'scientifise' subjectivity lead to its reification, while ethico-aesthetic approaches mobilise subjectivity 'in its dimension of processual creativity' (Guattari 1996: 198). To be clear, Guattari's turn towards ethico-aesthetic paradigms does not constitute

a rejection of science so much as a pointed critique of the 'use of reductive models and general laws, at the expense of singularity and complexity' (Watson 2009: 97). Ultimately, it is this autopoietic node of Guattari's ecosophy that most powerfully distinguishes his approach to ecology.

Though recent scholarship on Guattari is quick to mention his notion of ecosophy, only a few of these books and essays contain elaborations of Guattari's ecosophy that are specific to the larger ensemble of concepts quintessential to his philosophical outlook. Genosko and Watson stand out of course as two scholars who have taken immense steps towards recognising the (potential) impact of Guattari's contributions on the contemporary study of ecology, subjectivity and media. More typically, however, humanities scholars commenting on Guattari's engagement with ecology rarely venture beyond his most explicitly ecological book, *The Three Ecologies*, and are therefore likely to miss the transversal connections among the otherwise disparate domains of ecology, subjectivity and media that he developed throughout his later writings. While it is accurate in some sense to summarise Guattari's ecosophy by mentioning his three interrelated ecologies (that is, mental, social and environmental), such summaries do not convey the full potential of Guattari's ecosophical perspective, which he seemed to regard as the crowning accomplishment of his philosophical career. To appreciate the theoretical weight of *The Three Ecologies*, one must explore the ways in which this short book intersects with Guattari's larger body of work. In what follows, I offer an exploration of ecosophy in the context of *The Three Ecologies* and Guattari's other writings such as *Chaosmosis* and selected essays from *The Guattari Reader*, as well as the collaborative works *Anti-Oedipus* and *What is Philosophy?*. Indeed, Guattari's ecosophy is a concept that, like all concepts, configures the 'constellation of an event yet to come' and 'renders components inseparable *within itself*' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 19, 33). But given its (unfinished) state at the time of Guattari's sudden death, ecosophy remains a concept whose components need to be rendered further. The four sections below strive to construct a 'zone of neighbourhood' or 'threshold of indiscernibility' wherein these four components (that is, nascent subjectivity, machines, post-media and autopoiesis) become seen as the vital constituents of ecosophy's conceptual consistency. Only then can we mobilise ecosophy towards the invention of the event yet to come, the people yet to come or at least, the eco-humanities yet to come.

I. Nascent Subjectivity

At the end of *The Three Ecologies*, Guattari claims that we must, in responding to the 'major crises of our era', invent new practices that are conducive to what he calls 'nascent subjectivity' (Guattari 2008: 45). Of course, the project to resingularise subjectivity does not centre upon the individual – Guattari prefers to speak of components of subjectification rather than posit a 'subject' – but it makes pragmatic sense to start the discussion at this molecular level and then move into molar dimensions, provided that one does not regard this movement as a linear progression along what Guattari sometimes calls a 'definitive schematic hierarchy'. We need first of all to be concerned with the following questions: what exactly is nascent subjectivity? Why does Guattari place such a high premium on it? How would this nascent subjectivity put us in a better position to address contemporary ecological realities?

Like many of the concepts Deleuze and Guattari have developed, nascent subjectivity in *The Three Ecologies* is at once a rephrasing and a reworking of terms that appear earlier in the two philosophers' oeuvre. In fact, one of the best ways to comprehend Guattari's difficult terminology is to trace the evolution of the names he ascribes to particular conceptual territories, always paying attention to how each change in wording advances his overall line of thought. In this case, it will help to read *The Three Ecologies* in parallel with Guattari's first collaboration with Deleuze, *Anti-Oedipus*, specifically the early passages in which they introduce 'the residuum subject'. The notion of the residuum subject presents a useful starting point for grasping the significance of Guattari's theoretical move from the subject to components of subjectification, which is so vital to his later writings on ecosophy. Considered as an isolated phrase, 'the residuum subject' implies that the subject, or one's subjectivity, is simply what remains or gets left over, in the sense of a residue. Thus begging the question: of what substances or processes is the subject a residue?

By Deleuze and Guattari's configuration, in contrast to the Cartesian *cogito*, an individual's thoughts do not constitute the full measure of his being. The subject is less the product of his own thought and more the residue of the social machinery in which he directly and indirectly participates, for the boundaries of 'private' thought are drawn through the sociohistorical apparatus (an emergent assemblage of desiring-machines):

> This subject itself is not at the center, which is occupied by the machine, but on the periphery, with no fixed identity, forever discentered, *defined* by the states through which it passes … the subject is born of each state in the

> series, is continually reborn of the following state that determines him at a given moment, consuming-consummating all these states that cause him to be born and reborn (the lived state emerges first in relation to the subject who lives it). (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 20)

By means of this passage, we understand why many of Guattari's later writings are devoted to locating what he calls 'existential refrains', a term that denotes the crucial and contended sites through which subjectivity is produced, negotiated and learned. Far from considering subjectivity a pre-established individual phenomenon, Guattari contends that a 'polyphony of modes of subjectivation' are always at work in the (de)composition of an existential territory (Guattari 1996: 199). Existential refrains can emerge anywhere, but some common areas that Guattari emphasises include education, mass media, the arts, sports, architecture and the organisation of labour. Indeed, he does not oppose economic production to subjective or cultural production; the intersection of such refrains constitute complex existential territories that are ripe with transversal connections involving both material and semiotic work, civic and machinic flows, etc. (Guattari and Rolnik 2008: 38). More specifically, refrains emerge 'when motifs are detached from the flux of components ... acquiring the ability to generate a process of positive self-reference' (Genosko 2009: 80). Because of this detachability, refrains can be ripped from intimate moments of singularity and in some cases become mapped over by repetitively drawn associations to 'the diversions of consumption'; for instance, through advertising, a musical refrain (for example, a few notes from a song) often becomes 'hijacked and affixed to automobile tires or boxes of breakfast cereal' (Genosko 2009: 80).

The eco-logic of Guattari's argument in *The Three Ecologies* does not at all affix his thinking to the idea of a normative 'ecological subject'. In fact, he wants to 'ward off, by every means possible, the entropic rise of a dominant subjectivity' (Guattari 2008: 45). Guattari clearly asserts that he is not concerned with 'creating an unequivocal ideology' (23), which would outline a set criteria for being-ecological – an occasional tendency in Naess's writing – and position himself as leader or guru. Instead, Guattari is much more interested in conveying the importance of generating a multitude of methods designed to inspire an ecosophical perspective on the production of subjectivity. From an ecosophical perspective, intensities precede both ideology and identity; one's work becomes more productive when attention is paid to molecular, intensive qualities (for example, the universes of concepts, functions, precepts and

affects elaborated in *What is Philosophy?*).[8] *The Three Ecologies* clearly builds from the same image of thought sketched by the residuum subject and incorporates Guattari's subsequent insights on refrain-intersection:

> Vectors of subjectification do not necessarily pass through the individual, which in reality appears to be something like a 'terminal' for processes that involve human groups, socio-economic ensembles, data-processing machines, etc. Therefore, interiority establishes itself at the crossroads of multiple components, each relatively autonomous in relation to the other, and, if need be, in open conflict. (Guattari 2008: 25)

Here, Guattari specifies some of the obscurities of *Anti-Oedipus*; in particular, the earlier image of the individual-as-residue is redrawn: the individual becomes a 'terminal'. Hence, one's subjectivity is not only a by-product of forces operative in the three ecologies (mental, social, environmental); subjectivity is always already immersed in the flow of existential refrains or vectors. The individual can no longer be seen separately at any point. To speak of an individual subject, natural as it seems, is to reinforce a reductive vocabulary of existence, which inhibits any actualisation of '[a] collective and individual subjectivity that completely exceeds the limits of individualization, stagnation, identificatory closure, and will instead open itself up on all sides' (44). Nascent subjectivity, then, is not an entity one can postulate once and for all; indeed, it is best described as a process whereby thinking emerges immanently in relation with the event, which it perpetually strives to encounter in the manner of a rhizome.

Furthermore, Guattari's preference for immanent thought can be traced back to Deleuze's 1970 critique of consciousness as it has been represented by the transcendence-oriented history of Western philosophy. Deleuze writes, 'the conditions under which we know things and are conscious of ourselves condemn us to have only inadequate ideas, ideas that are confused and mutilated, effects separated from their real causes' (Deleuze 1988: 19). Deleuze constantly reminds us that our thought always occurs in the middle of things; that is to say, the outside to which thought connects has already begun and exists prior to our consciousness of it. Guattari's writing in the early 1990s addresses these illusions of consciousness in an era in which, despite growing awareness of environmental problems, 'we fail to grasp the contradiction in the fact that the factories producing our soaps are polluting our habitat' (Ulmer 2005: xxvi). Given the absolute immanence of nascent subjectivity, humanities scholars today should redirect the tradition of thinking the human subject as a discrete element towards new projects that create

concepts and design methods, in conjunction with new technologies, which expand the scope of subjectivity, or, in other words, increase our capacity to affect and be affected by immanent forces in the world.

The subject-as-cogito (that is, the isolated individual personified by Descartes's 'idiot') has become an inadequate foundation for thinking and acting in the context of twenty-first-century developments, such as globalisation, ecological crises and the proliferation of the digital medium. In order to comprehend global multitudes, and participate effectively in emergent political and rhetorical situations, future generations will need to be capable of experiencing themselves disjunctively in the sense of an emergent and processual assemblage. In an article submitted to *Le Monde* just weeks before his death, Guattari writes of a desire to 'bring individuals out of themselves' via 'the invention of new collective assemblages', which, as he envisions already in the early 1990s, could become all the more viable with the 'new possibilities of interaction' afforded by computer networks; for this reason, he believes that networked personal computing bears with it the potential for (but by no means guarantees) 'a real reactivation of a collective sensibility and intelligence' (Guattari 1996: 263). And so, though we begin at the level of so-called individual subjectivity, this is only the beginning of the issue because, for Guattari, the question of the individual is inextricably linked with trans-individual domains of flows, phyla, territories and universes.[9] Existential refrains are laid out by collective machines, which are themselves dialogically related to the available modes and technologies of production.

II. Machines, Not Structures

Guattari (2008: 44) stipulates that his ecosophical perspective is 'at once applied and theoretical, ethicopolitical and aesthetic'. Nowhere is this blend more evident than in his discussions of machines, which are informed by numerous disciplines from second-order cybernetics to modernist art, as well as concepts set forth by Lacan and Deleuze.[10] Guattari uses the term 'machine' to refer at once to actual and virtual properties. (He is not simply pointing to the technical appliances that the term often refers to in everyday conversation.) Machines are actual in that the word denotes existing institutions, groups and practices, but machines also address the virtual possibilities of collectivity and thus function as a theoretical metamodel. In his assessment of the contemporary psychological landscape, Guattari (1995: 58) claims that 'individual and collective subjectivity lack modelization' and, further,

that this lack explains the stasis of many social movements, including environmentalism. For this reason, Guattari insists that the development of alternative diagrams for the production of subjectivity (in contrast to the Oedipal model, for example) must become 'an immense site' of theoretical work and lead to 'the invention of new practices' (ibid.).

Without the existential recomposition (for example, the subject to components of subjectification) that theoretical metamodels engender, the ecosophical project of nascent subjectivity becomes lost to itself. Nascent subjectivity is entirely dependent on the capacity to install one's thinking into 'a constantly mutating socius' (Guattari 2008: 45). In this sense, the 'effects of the machinic phylum on subjectivity' detailed in *Chaosmosis* should be read right alongside of the challenges and tasks Guattari proposes at the conclusion of *The Three Ecologies* (Genosko 2009: 70). Ultimately, Guattari's machines (be they desiring, celibate, abstract, aesthetic, etc.) have two crucial, praxis-oriented objectives: (1) to help 'the individual' install himself into collective dimensions (becoming-machine); and (2) to help institutions and groups evolve autopoietically through processual encounters with – and complex articulations of – disparate sources of alterity (nascent subjectivity at the collective level).

In many ways, Guattari's version of the machine could be regarded as an appropriate figure or emblem for poststructuralism. Breaking with the (dogmatic) sign systems of structuralism, Guattari's focus on machines also performs an important inversion of phenomenology's tendency to 'reduce the objects under consideration to a pure intentional transparency' (Guattari 2008: 25). And yet, though he explicitly distances his thought from structuralism and phenomenology, Guattari does retain important traces of each these intellectual movements. His writing on machines incorporates a preference for studying contextualised structural objects, but the methods he advocates (schizoanalysis, transversality, etc.) clearly emphasise the need for 'spontaneous receptivity', a quality esteemed by many phenomenologists, which encourages us to encounter each phenomenon in its heterogeneity rather than overwrite its expression according to the structure of our own interpretative frameworks. In grasping Guattari's important theoretical distinctions between machine and structure, one should acknowledge, as Watson aptly notes, that the two terms are 'inseparable' and 'dependent on one another' as a conceptual pair, in much the same way as we might say of poststructuralism and structuralism (Watson 2009: 39). Thus, the notion of structure must

play a crucial role in discussions of the machine, even though Guattari writes about structures with evident disdain.

For Guattari, machines pose at least three qualitative differences to 'structures' (the obvious emblem of structuralism). First of all, machines express an affective logic of intensities (or 'pathic logic'), while structures operate according to the logic of discursive sets. Discursive sets presuppose a separation between subject and object, and for this reason, 'the truth of a proposition answers to the law of the excluded middle: each object appears in a relationship of binary opposition with a "foundation"' (Guattari 1995: 28). With the logic of intensities, the relationship between subject and object remains open or in question; therefore, the machine 'extracts complex forms from chaotic materials' because 'there is no extrinsic global reference' (ibid.). Indeed, the logic of intensities is the flow quintessential to ethico-aesthetic paradigms. Structures, however, smack of scientific paradigms in that they slow down or bracket chaos and alterity in order to erect a referent (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 118). To combine the terms of *What is Philosophy?* with *Chaosmosis* (published in consecutive years), machines-as-philosophy seek to articulate a 'consistency specific to' chaos or alterity, whereas structures-as-science use the referent to 'actualize the virtual', and, by extension, to define sources of alterity through reference to known variables (ibid.).[11]

From the polarity above, we can clearly distinguish machines and structures in terms of their opposing attitudes towards alterity or difference. A structure defines difference only in relation to itself, while machines 'direct us towards a more collective machinism without delimited unity, whose autonomy accommodates diverse mediums of alterity' (Guattari 1995: 42). The machinic drive for autopoiesis necessitates a process of undergoing all the heterogeneous elements operative in the event, which 'heterogenises' the machine clean of any dominant, unifying or universal trait (39). Machines initiate processes of resingularisation precisely by allowing themselves to break down as they disjoin and rejoin to form new configurations immanent to the singularity of the event. As such, machines offer strong metamodels for negotiating refrain-intersections through the invention of 'new ecological practices', upon which Guattari comments in *The Three Ecologies*, 'their objective being to processually activate isolated and repressed singularities that are just turning in circles' (Guattari 2008: 34). In fact, as Watson reminds us, the rationale and language Guattari employs to describe eco-praxes hold much in common with his writing

on schizoanalysis, and we may see them as intricately related projects (Watson 2009: 184).

Moreover, as a consequence of these two prior distinctions, machines embody an awareness of their own fluidity and finitude, whereas structures, like Guattari's diagnosis of 'capitalist subjectivity', are 'intoxicated with and anaesthetized by a collective feeling of pseudo-eternity' (Guattari 2008: 34). In addition to dividing human experience of the socius into rigid categories (for example, nature vs culture), structures naturalise the divisions they construct by 'stabilizing the maximum number of existential refrains' (ibid.). Given our knowledge of machines and structures in *Chaosmosis*, we can (re)approach *The Three Ecologies* to gain an even greater command of this crucial opposition:

> The principle common to the three ecologies is this: each of the existential Territories with which they confront us is not given as an in-itself [*en-soi*], closed in on itself, but instead as a for-itself [*pour-soi*] that is precarious, finite, finitized, singular, singularized, capable of bifurcating into stratified and deathly repetitions or of opening up processually from a praxis that enables it to be made 'habitable' by a human project. (Guattari 2008: 35)

This passage in particular – its language of 'in-itself' (structure) and 'for-itself' (machine) – speaks to the important role of Jean-Paul Sartre's theory of groups in Guattari's thinking on disjunctive collectivity, which his machines diagram.

Gary Genosko has already demonstrated the degree to which Guattari's early distinction between subjugated groups and subject groups is an appropriation of Sartre's writings on seriality and fusion. For our purposes, it is also useful to consider machines and structures in this context. Guattari inherits Sartre's passion for thinking about group behaviour precisely because he shares Sartre's hatred of seriality, which Fredric Jameson defines as 'the mode of human interaction which corresponds to the domination of the practico-inert' (Jameson 1974: 147).[12] In other words, a population is subjugated by seriality whenever they relate to one another automatically via behaviour that is mass-proscribed by an elite, seemingly invisible authority. On the other hand, according to Genosko, a subject group 'has liquidated its seriality and come together in "the flash of a common praxis"' (Genosko 2008: 60). Subject groups connect in response to an event rather than the mandates of a leader or doctrine. Subject groups illustrate a disjunctive mode of collectivity in their priority for a processual engagement in dynamic encounters with sources of alterity, rather than the stability and dominion of a self-asserted structure. For Guattari, this

mode of group subjectivity, like the machine, signifies a solidarity that occurs without the dogmatic influence of any leader(s). Furthermore, the subject group measures its collectivity not by the amount of people participating in the group, but rather on the quality of difference articulated among group members, as well as the group's capacity to register the enunciations of (non)human assemblages outside of the group. Consequently, a subject group attentive to its own ecology – the diversity of its (ephemeral) constituency and the broader institutions and environment with which it interacts – is quick to (re)shape itself in response to a wide spectrum of mental-social-environmental forces. When 'isolated' structures are brought into working proximity, structure breaks apart, and this disjunction is necessary for true collectivity. Again, this is a monumental insight of Guattari's ecosophy: relationships of mutual constructivism and acts of co-creation are predicated upon commitments to disjunction – the processual breakdown of structures into machines.

Genosko makes a critical point that Guattari's distinctions between machine and structure, subject group and subjugated group, are 'non-absolute' (ibid.). For instance, an institution or group that operates à la the machine is not necessarily machinic by nature; it could devolve at any moment into the seriality of a structure. But the same holds true of the inverse (that is, structure to machine), and this conviction is the cause of Guattari's optimism regarding the potential impacts of remaking social practices. In critiquing what he calls 'Integrated World Capitalism' (IWC), Guattari simultaneously sets up a *contrast* against which to invent eco-praxes and he specifies a *target* discourse at which to direct ecosophical interventions. Throughout *The Three Ecologies*, Guattari suggests a generative opposition between the ecosophical goal of nascent subjectivity and the limits of IWC's 'capitalist subjectivity':

> A capitalist subjectivity is engendered through operators of all types and sizes, and is manufactured to protect existence from any intrusion of events that might disturb or disrupt public opinion. It demands that all singularity must be either evaded or crushed in specialist apparatuses and frames of reference. Therefore, it endeavors to manage the worlds of childhood, love, art, as well as everything associated with anxiety, madness, pain, death, or a feeling of being lost in the Cosmos... IWC forms massive subjective aggregates. (Guattari 2008: 33)

On none of these 'subjective aggregates' is IWC more dependent than mass media. In fact, Guattari likens mass media to poison and mutant algae as he illustrates its tendency to pollute mental ecology and

erode social ecology. Doubtlessly alluding to mass-medial conditions and his image of the television spectator, he claims, 'it is not only species that are becoming extinct but also the words, phrases, and gestures of human solidarity' (Guattari 2008: 29). When Guattari calls for a 'value-systems revolution', which would 'reevaluate the purpose of work and of human activities according to different criteria than profit and yield' (38), he is at once announcing the need for a revolutionary way of using media technologies. If, as Genosko (2009: 70) insists about Guattari's project, 'the most important stake is the development of a new kind of subjectivity' (and if we also remember Guattari's contention that new telematics and computer technologies are vital to contemporary productions of subjectivity), then media is arguably the most important target of ecosophy today.

III. Towards Post-Media

Digital theorist Gregory Ulmer has recently claimed that electracy is the principal site of the emergence of group subjectivity, a mode of experience that interfaces 'between individual and collective' (Ulmer 2005: 115). As a pedagogy of new media, electracy purports 'to do for the community as a whole what literacy did for the individuals within the community' (xxvi). Unprecedented both in degree and kind, the new collaboration called for by electracy will require, throughout its development, the testing of numerous concepts derived and appropriated from poststructuralist theory. With Guattari's work in mind, we can formulate some urgent questions for electracy, and these questions also posit urgent connections between ecological and digital approaches to the humanities. For instance, what happens to our understanding and experience of the digital apparatus when we adopt the theoretical components of ecosophy (for example, nascent subjectivity and the machine)? Guattari does not answer this question in his own work; however, he does leave a number of provocative signposts – particularly in his select use of the term 'post-media'. Post-media, as I will suggest, names a potential mode of cultural production that makes ecosophical use of digital media technologies.

Post-media remains a relatively underdeveloped area in scholarship invoking Guattari, probably because Guattari develops the concept only in passing, elusive and intermittingly, throughout his later works.[13] Unlike schizoanalysis or geophilosophy, post-media is never the subject of entire chapters. Still, post-media (or 'the post-media era') stands out

in Guattari's writing as an optimistic horizon to which his other key concepts repeatedly refer:

> Only if the third path/voice takes consistency in the direction of self-reference – carrying us from the consensual media era to the dissensual *post-media era* – will each be able to assume his or her processual potential and, perhaps, transform this planet – a living hell for over three quarters of its population – into a universe of creative enchantments. (Guattari 1996: 104; my emphasis)

> An essential programmatic point for social ecology will be to encourage capitalist societies to make the transition from the mass-media era to the *post-media age*, in which the media will be reappropriated by a multitude of subject groups capable of directing its resingularization. (Guattari 2008: 40; original emphasis)

> Technological developments together with social experimentation in these new domains are perhaps capable of leading us out of the current period of oppression and into a *post-media era* characterized by the reappropriation and resingularization of the use of media. (Guattari 1995: 5; my emphasis)

We can already notice form this sample that Guattari's 'post-media' carries connotations that evade Lev Manovich's 2001 definition of the term. For Manovich, post-media signifies a change surrounding artworks and the nature of media in contemporary, digital milieus. On one hand, the Internet makes multimodal communication the norm; hence, it becomes difficult to categorise net art (which often combines photography, video, text, images and sound) under the traditional logic of genre typology (that is, identification via medium: sculpture, drawing, painting, etc.). According to Manovich (2001), 'if one can make radically different versions of the same art object... the traditional strong link between the identity of an art object and its medium becomes broken'. In other words, as more artworks commonly exist across different media, the idea of the medium – though still important in the formation of meaning – can no longer be appealed to in sorting out various artworks from each other. In Manovich's terms, post-media is synonymous with post-medium.

By contrast, Guattari appears to be less focused on the typology of art proper, as his use of post-media evokes a broader sense of social transformation. Although Guattari and Manovich identify a similar historical cause (namely, the proliferation of new media and its accessibility to non-corporate entities), Guattari's conception of post-media is true to his idea of the 'new aesthetic paradigm', which, at a basic level, involves the explosion of artistic techniques and

mentalities into arenas of social practice and institutional politics. Innovative, aesthetic uses of media technology become a way to generate nascent subjectivity and machinic collectivity: 'One creates new modalities of subjectivity in the same way that an artist creates new forms from the palette' (Guattari 1995: 7). Guattari points to several examples in the field of psychoanalysis that demonstrate how new media may be used in parallel with his theory of the new aesthetic paradigm. For instance, he refers to a practice in which the therapist acts out or improvises 'psychodramatic scenes' with the patient while a video camera records both of them. Therapist and patient then watch and discuss the video playback of the scene; here, the audiovisual affordances of video make possible a new mode of relating to the production of one's subjectivity – just as early alphabetic writing systems established a new relationship between people and language. These video-enabled practices, according to Guattari, often furthered patients' treatment programmes by emphasising the fluid, creative dimensions of a subjectivity that is always in production, always open to manipulation and mutation, in opposition to 'realist' or representational models of the subject (8). Guattari argues that, in cases like these, 'the inventiveness of the treatment distances us from the scientific paradigms and brings us closer to an ethico-aesthetic paradigm' (ibid.). Post-media, then, continues a pre-digital mission to transform subjectivity; as such, media technologies are employed (and considered vital) because they generally provide the most accurate means to diagram nascent subjectivity. In essence, the desire to use the technology is motivated by the theory, and the development of the theory is itself influenced by technological developments. It is very tempting to think – and certainly not unreasonably so, given grammatological research confirming the correlation between literate societies and analytical thought processes – that a society equipped with new media is in a better position to sustain a lived experience of nascent subjectivity, provided, of course, concurrent efforts are made to develop post-media practices by which to engage these technologies.

While Guattari sketches several prototypes for post-media practices in writing about his activist and clinical work, humanities scholars still need to unpack the theoretical underpinnings of his vision before we can really be in a position to initiate, facilitate or even evaluate its realisation. From the onset, we must be clear that post-media for Guattari does not allude to an era devoid of media or its effects; Guattari agrees with Paul Virilio when he claims, 'the increased speed of transportation and communications and the interdependence of urban centres are

equally irreversible' (Guattari 2008: 29). While Guattari is very against *mass* media, he is anything but a technophobe. Verena Conley rightly points out that 'unlike many post-68 French theorists, Guattari does not use a Heideggerian blue print . . . [h]e advocates the construction of new subjectivities with technology' (Conley 2009: 120). In Guattari's work, mass media is conceived as a *stance* – an ideological use of media technology that is in no way inherent to or determined by the medium. In his essay 'Toward an Ethics of the Media', Guattari identifies four 'series of factors' that he believes will give shape to a 'coming perspective', from which to begin envisioning post-media futures (Guattari 2002: 18). Without rehashing them here, these four series of factors speak largely to the possibility for new kinds of relationships among traditionally stratified groups arising commensurate with new levels of interaction in writing, education and politics. Guattari's speculations about post-media take a more rigorous theoretical turn in *Chaosmosis*, wherein he problematises our habitual attitude towards the technologies (for example, radio, television, computers) that have now become fixtures of everyday life in many parts of the world. From the stance of mass media, especially from the consumer's point of view, a television or a computer is regarded as a technical machine – 'the machine as a subset of technology' (Guattari 1995: 33). Guattari calls for a reversal of this relationship, such that his expanded conception of the machine (see above) becomes a 'prerequisite for technology rather than its expression' (ibid.).

Thus, if we take this reversal to be a critical gesture of the post-media stance, users finds themselves recast into an altogether different set of relations with media: technical machines become machinic technologies. And so, rather than seeing the computer as a structure whose operation demands technical expertise above all else, the post-media user would approach the computer as a technology in progress (that is, always 'in the process of being reinvented'), whose operations affect and are affected by machinic assemblages of a 'constantly mutating socius' (Guattari 2008: 45). That is to say, under the logic of post-media, all users maintain a potential to invent the practices by which people relate to new media, while, at the same time, there is a basic awareness that the hardware and software of new media wield a powerful stake in the production of human subjectivity. Digital media, considered as machinic technologies rather than technical machines, constitute 'complexes of subjectivation: multiple exchanges between individual-group-machine' (Guattari 1995: 7). In other words, with digital writing systems, we are 'not confronted with a subjectivity given as in-itself, but with processes

of the realization of autonomy, or of autopoiesis' (ibid.). Neither the writing of the programmer nor the writing of other contributors of a given digital writing system can be said to be the sum of a single individual's choices; once writing enters into the complexity of such systems, theoretically speaking, writing becomes less the product of single-minded rhetorical intentions and more a dynamic variable whose semiotic life affects and is affected by patterns of movement across an intermingling if not deterritorialising ecology of collective assemblages of enunciation.

Of course, the post-media stance owes its viability to the decentralisation of the means of media production and dissemination brought about by the commoditisation of personal computing; however, it would be a dangerous reduction to mistake the mere technocratic fact of decentralised media production for the cultural achievement of a post-media sensibility. Indeed, theorising post-media enables us to see just how well mass media has already adapted to the 'emancipatory' conditions of Web 2.0. Before hastily celebrating the transgressive qualities of any emergent media ecologies, we would do well to note Michael Goddard's insistence that the shift from mass media to post-media is anything but a sudden or superficial matter:

> the post-media era is . . . not something that can be given in advance; it is instead a process of the production of subjectivity, the becoming of a collective assemblage of enunciation whose starting point is the emptiness and coerciveness of the normalising production of subjectivity that the mass media currently enact. This already gives us some indications as to what aspects of digital network culture might be able contribute to this emergence of a post-media sensibility and which elements in contrast merely help to add sophistication and diversity to normalisation processes under the guise of interactivity. (Goddard 2011)

In fact, some of the most striking examples of *mass media 2.0* can be found on popular websites dealing with ecological crises and the green movement. Guattari's ecosophical perspective on media and globalisation offers a framework with which to analyse some recent surges of this emergent online genre, which we may call the 'green list'. To begin with a basic definition, the green list is a form of Web 2.0 writing whereby Internet users enumerate a clear and simple list of steps or tips intended to promote an eco-friendly lifestyle. In its most common manifestation, however, the green list – whether authored by individuals or corporations – becomes a testament to IWC, mass media and consumerism. As the brief discussion of green lists below will

suggest, the Web 2.0 environment is entirely susceptible to mass-media colonisation, and we therefore must aim to develop oppositional, post-media pedagogies in order to realise any of the revolutionary potential that scholars typically attribute to digital authorship.[14]

Guattari provides the perfect preface for my mini-critique of the green list when he speculates on the prospects of 'computer-aided design':

> The machinic production of subjectivity can work for better or for worse... It's impossible to judge such a machinic evolution either positively or negatively; everything depends on its articulation within collective assemblages of enunciation. At best there is the creation, or invention, of new Universes of reference; at worst there is the deadening influence of the mass media to which millions of individuals are currently condemned. (Guattari 1995: 5)

On one hand, green lists apparently pop up as so many signposts directing consumers to the market's 'socially responsible' transitions, marking the promise of 'conscious consumerism' under a new kind of capitalism. Launched by a few environmental journalists in 2007, the *Daily Green* has quickly become 'one of the most trusted sources on the Web for news and information about going green' with the mission to 'broaden the audience for earth-friendly living by showing how going green is relevant to everyone' (*Daily Green 2009*). A section of its website called 'top going green tips' offers ten 'idiot-proof' steps every user can implement immediately to 'get started on a green path' (ibid.). These steps, many of which are common to most green lists, include: stopping idling in your car, turning off computers when not using them, switching to green energy for your home, doing laundry with cold water, carpooling and paying bills online (ibid.). Each of these tips constitutes a gesture towards sustainability in that they effectively control the damage of cultural habits that waste natural resources on account of laziness or inefficiency.

On the other hand, all of the tips assume, no doubt encourage, a basic continuity: people will continue to define themselves (and their relation to environmental concerns) through consumerism. The explicit message is to commute to the corporate office with a co-worker, or to share one car for a trip to the mall with a group of friends – keep amassing bills, but pay them online now. By taking, as a given, activities associated with working and spending in the name of the commodity, green lists protect institutions like malls and transnational corporations by maintaining them innocently in the background. Figuratively speaking, corporate institutions are the pervasive white space in-between each eco-friendly

tip; they issue the invisible motives that prompt each tip and they linger as the implicit destinations for which green lists prepare their readers. Rather than question the mall or the corporation, green lists insist that consumers must become more efficient in their consumption of the capitalist commodity. As such, green lists function as training manuals meant to help consumers help corporations survive the growing awareness of humanity's contributions to the ecological crisis. This crisis is of course particularly due to the rampant spread of American consumer culture during the last fifty years, which is now being exported more than ever throughout the world.

While plenty of green lists are published in isolation from one another on the Web, there are a number of major Web 2.0 style hubs for this genre that act as databases, organising lists according to topics such as 'green cuisine' or 'green cleaning'. First of all, just as there is a studio executive behind each Hollywood feature film, many green list databases are subtly sponsored by corporate entities. A true manifestation of Guattari's nightmare of IWC, the database the *Great Green List* is sponsored, albeit discretely, by a company called Earthsense.[15] Though the site's amateur appearance is meant to resemble the template-format of a grassroots, public wiki, all submissions to the *Great Green List* must pass review by an editorial staff hired by Earthsense. Moreover, many green list hubs, including the *Great Green List*, feature product promotion hyperlinks that send users directly to online shopping areas. In April 2009, the *Daily Green* hosted a link (atop every single page of its website) that sent users to a Radio Shack promotion. (Hence, this 'neutral' green list hub frames and feeds straight into a corporate buying site.) Clicking on the Radio Shack link, users learnt that the promotion offered a Radio Shack gift card to anyone willing to exchange used electronics for store credit (*PC Informant* 2009). Perhaps such deals do lead to some reduction of the 20–50 million tons of electronics waste that accumulates around the world each year, though non-profit organisations already offer free and convenient services for recycling electronics.

Nevertheless, applying Guattari's writings on capitalist subjectivity, I would argue that these promotions shorten the experienced life cycle of the company's products by furnishing consumers with incentives to part with electronics before they reach the end of their technical-functional life cycle (or as soon as impulse decides it is a nice day to upgrade to the latest model). Implicitly, these promotions grease the skids for more efficient patterns of consumption, encouraging an even quicker rate of product turnover and fuelling the capitalist mode of production's

expansion into new global markets. We should also note the acceleration that accrues to the shopping experience, which is now more aptly a buying experience. Shopping time is eclipsed as less profitable waste, for here the path is laid out for consumers around the world – without waiting in line – to use their 'old' computer (*if you already own it, then it must be old*) to purchase the newest computer, all the while feeling like a good, socially responsible capitalist: they 'made' money and 'saved' the environment. If left to the green list conventions, this is what the concept of sustainability becomes for citizens whose native tongue is the language of consumption. Indeed, IWC's hypertextual green lists are literal relays to the commodity, and they are much improved from the printed pamphlets of early capitalism, which merely spelled out the what, where and why of commodity expenditure.

Assuming the collective assemblages of enunciation of post-media should contrast from the commercial logic evident in green list hubs, we need to return to the question of post-media in search of a more analogous and desirable comparison. Without going into much detail here, I want to suggest a space of potential synthesis between post-media pedagogies and the contemporary art practices theorised as 'relational aesthetics' by curator and critic Nicolas Bourriaud, himself an expert on Guattari's work. Speaking from his encounters with contemporary art, Bourriaud asserts that an artwork's primary value is its status as a 'social *interstice*' (Bourriaud 2002: 16). Appropriating the term from Marx, Bourriaud explains, 'The interstice is a space in human relations which fits more or less harmoniously and openly into the overall system, but suggests other trading possibilities than those in effect within the system' (ibid.). For Bourriaud, art acts as a social interstice to the degree that it 'creates free areas, and time spans whose rhythm contrast with those structuring everyday life' or 'encourages an inter-human commerce that differs from the "communication zones" that are imposed upon us' (ibid.).

Translating the concept of social interstice into humanities education, one can imagine how academic projects could be designed, with the resources of digital media, to act as an interstice for proposing ideas on the basis of a 'social and aesthetic "profitability"' and for exploring ways of relating to new media that deal with non-commercial forms of exchange (Guattari 2008: 42). One promising example of humanities education becoming-interstice is the Critical Media Lab (CML) at the University of Waterloo, founded in 2008. Marcel O'Gorman, director of the CML, describes the programme as 'a research-creation incubator that links researchers in the Faculty of Arts [and humanities graduate

students] with the people and tools necessary to apply critically reflective work at the R & D level of technological production' (O'Gorman 2008). By virtue of the institution's transversal relations to groups inside and outside the university, participants in the CML work on innovative media projects that speak to values beyond commercial profitability, doing so in a language of product/experience design that makes critical theory/thinking manifest to diverse publics.[16] This pioneering work furthers our thinking about the prospects for developing post-media practices in the context of humanities education, precisely in the sense that it suggests the necessity of creating institutional spaces that foster critical intervention into media (and subjectivity) at the level of its production, rather than just a consumerist imitation of the mass-media forms, as is the case with green listing. Such endeavours demand a notion of creativity that traverses multiple ecologies, not simply transposing content from one domain into the pre-established form of another domain.

IV. Autopoietic Creativity

Claiming that tertiary descriptions usually revert to dualisms, Guattari prefers four-term frameworks, 'the fourth term stands for an nth term: it is the opening onto multiplicity' (Guattari 1995: 31). Autopoiesis is the *n*th component of ecosophy. Autopoiesis, often summarised by Guattari as a dance between chaos and complexity, characterises the passage back and forth between nascent subjectivity, machinic collectivity and post-media. Near the end of *Chaosmosis*, Guattari evokes a condition omnipresent in his worldview of self-organising, partial objects: 'Something is detached and starts to work for itself, just as it can work for you if you can "agglomerate" yourself to such a process' (132–3). One can think of autopoietic creativity as the capacity to yield oneself to chaos and, in doing so, undergo the event such as to channel the advent of nascent subjectivity. (Guattari calls this process an 'event-advent'.) The task here is to 'grasp alterity at the point of its emergence', to create in concert with sources of alterity (that is, the machine, post-media), rather than overwriting alterity in favour of default, a priori, or transcendent representations (that is, the ego, mass media) (117).

In opposition to 'whole over parts' models that characterise more popular notions of ecology, Guattari's conception of autopoiesis – the logic of parts without wholes – may actually provide a more thoroughly ecological account of the relationality involved with dynamic open

systems. Wholes can become problematic when they are posed in terms of transcendence; literary scholars like Dana Phillips and Timothy Morton have already illustrated how environmentalist constructions of Nature, posed as a whole magically thought to transcend culture, severely limited the efforts of early ecocriticism. Thus, an ecology without Nature, to borrow Morton's phrase, would employ a logic of parts without wholes; here, there are no discrete, transcendent wholes upon which to ground or stabilise an (eco)system because the so-called constituent parts always retain their partiality. With processual disjunction comes constant connection and reconfiguration, and there is no whole to impose stability by restricting the relationality of the partial objects. One of the greatest strengths of Guattari's autopoietic methodology is that it initiates, at a conceptual level, a processual disjunction of discrete elements. In fact, for Guattari (and Deleuze), thinking becomes more 'holistic' to the degree that transcendent wholes (especially the discrete entities of Oedipal psychology) are continually broken down into partial objects along a plane of immanence on which they engage and re-engage in infinite productive syntheses with other partial objects.

This autopoietic mode is of course absent from the so-called 'ecological subject' of deep ecology, which retains an ever-expansive Self at the front and centre of its ontology. An eco-humanities adapted to Guattari's ecosophy would thus replace Naess's 'Self-realisation' with autopoietic creativity, making autopoiesis a new core value at the heart of the humanities. Furthermore, the virtual ecologies of digital media make the Internet, for instance, an ideal pedagogical scene for humanities courses to introduce autopoiesis, which, as Guattari suggests, is a far cry from our Oedipal habits. In this sense, autopoietic creativity should be regarded as a crucial skill for the development of both ecological literacy and media literacy. We must learn to teach autopoietic creativity and, in doing so, *autopoietise* the academic research and writing practices of the humanities tradition.

Transversal connections among recent scholarship suggest a promising starting point. In particular, Guattari's ecosophical imperative to intervene at a micro-social level finds pedagogical expression in the tenets of ecocomposition set forth by Sidney Dobrin and Christian Weisser, namely that 'student writing should be directed beyond the limited scope of classroom assignments to address larger, public audiences' and that writing should be taught as a vehicle 'to affect change, to bring about awareness' in the mental, social and environmental ecologies of which students are a part (Dobrin and

Weisser 2002: 58). Additionally, Ulmer has already theorised some ways in which the digital humanities class can act as a kind of online consultancy.[17] Under this approach, students work heuristically through an intensive Web-based project, experimenting with digital authoring software in order to inject humanities (often poststructuralist) perspectives into the discourse surrounding public policy issues. As the pedagogical genres of electracy continue to develop, teachers should begin to build networks between their classes and larger, public audiences with the goal of circulating academic work among relevant social organisations or political bodies.[18] Of course, the primary value of any student project should lie in its capacity to facilitate learning experiences specific to a given discipline; one risk of doing service-learning projects (via partnerships with non-academic organisations) is that the service can undermine the learning. Thus, in designing institutional spaces and collaborative projects for the post-media era, one should mind Guattari's distinction between machines and structures: create an autopoietic network that learns like a machine.

For example, Guattari's theory of group subjectivity via machines could be applied to present efforts to alleviate the disciplinary isolationism that continues to cripple many research universities. Scholars who aspire to collaborate across multiple fields should aim to create transdisciplinary machines rather than interdisciplinary structures. With transdisciplinary machines, the objective is not necessarily to incorporate the study of science (its objects and methods) into the study of, for instance, cultural or aesthetic texts. Such 'inclusive' manoeuvers result, more often than not, in a homogenisation on both fronts. In the case of ecocriticism, as Dana Phillips (2003) points out, both ecological science and literary analysis often become reduced to ideological critique. Therefore, rather than encouraging humanities scholars to somehow acquire an additional expertise in scientific inquiry (and vice versa), cross-disciplinary efforts would do well to recast some energy to the co-creation of transdisciplinary machines (that is, evolving sets of processes committed to institutionalising the production of a group subjectivity). This transversalist mode of working valorises an ensemble of heterogeneous scholars, each sounding their mastery of instruments unique to their respective disciplines, playing in concert with one another at the same venue (that is, collaborating on the same problems and projects).[19] If we apply this analogy to much of the work that currently parades under the banner of interdisciplinary, then we find the projection of an impossible ambition: to command expertise in seemingly every academic field – to become, in short, a one-man band.

Furthermore, concerning teaching, I would argue that by creating networks for the ecosophical circulation of student writing, we may open up pedagogical interactions that otherwise get left to chance when students merely *post* their work onto vast Web 2.0 platforms. If we can publicise aspects of the learning process – thereby 'accommodating diverse mediums of alterity' – our various academic communities (for example, courses, collaborative scholarly projects, etc.) will operate much closer to the disjunctive collectivity that Guattari's machines diagram. By building into the work autopoietic relations to extra-academic perspectives, academic discourse inevitably will be challenged to become different in response to different problems and different rhetorical situations. The motive to create these opportunities goes hand in hand with the imperative to extend complex humanities perspectives into the public sphere, particularly those domains where competing discourses threaten to overwrite or displace the humanities. Deleuze and Guattari assert that, over the course of the twentieth century, commerce has all but replaced philosophy in the creation of concepts (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 16). Additionally, the circulation of electrate projects will bring us much closer to the political conditions of the post-media era, which, according to Guattari, will 'require collective forms of administration and control, rather than a blind faith in the technocrats of the State apparatuses' (Guattari 2008: 28). Ultimately, autopoietic networks do not promote allegiance to a specific, existing political position; rather, teaching autopoiesis constitutes an ethical 'refoundation of political praxis' (Guattari 1995: 120). The eco-humanities of the post-media era, then, would be less directly concerned with environmentalist themes or values and more rigorously committed to the promotion of transversal thinking/learning, by which traditional objects of study become recast so as to foreground the ecological relationships within-among-between-across 'isolated' entities.

Scholars and teachers working in the (eco)humanities occupy a unique position from which to invent the public spheres of post-media and to inspire students to proliferate disciplinary knowledge beyond academic conventions through electrate encounters with ecosophical problems. Collectively, our research will lead to the discovery of new paradigmatic problems that will reaffirm the vitality of our fields for thinking the digital apparatus in an age of general ecological crisis. Our pedagogical experiments with emergent technologies will push students toward new ways of understanding and experiencing media, but also toward new ways of putting academic research (even poststructuralism) to use in unconventional rhetorical situations. As Guattari suggests – and this

may seem counterintuitive – theory across the humanities disciplines can become more experimental and more creative if we cultivate methods for appropriating computers as equipment to think with:

> Computers, expert systems and artificial intelligence add as much to thought as they subtract from thinking. They relieve thought of inert schemas. The forms of thought assisted by computer are mutant, relating to other musics, other Universes of reference. (Guattari 1995: 36)

In taking a post-media stance towards emergent media, we can think the new and think it collectively, but only to the extent that we develop digital practices capable of producing a new (ecosophical) relation between individual subjectivity and collective thought. From this perspective, anticipated in Guattari's writing, the eco-humanities and the digital humanities become rhizomatically bound towards one another through the concept/project of ecosophy.

Notes

1. This article was originally published in *The Fibreculture Journal*, issue 18.
2. In 2002, Sidney Dobrin and Christian Weisser examined this tendency among compositionalists and identified several key differences that distinguish 'ecocomposition' from ecocriticism, green cultural studies, ecofeminism, etc. In contrast to writing about nature (nature writing) or teaching environmentally themed texts (ecocriticism), ecocomposition strives to rethink discourse (particularly the activity of its production) as an ecological process and points to the myriad ways in which writing affects and is affected by surrounding environments. Aware of ecocomposition's academic infancy, Dobrin and Weisser were quick to stipulate a pioneering quality about their work, 'this book only begins to scratch the surface of a body of research that needs to be further explored' (Dobrin and Weisser 2002: 15). The first consistent use of the term 'ecomedia studies' emerged during the 2009 ASLE conference, specifically in panel discussions categorised under the section heading 'Ecological Media'. Though a small group of film and media specialists have begun to promote themselves as ecomedia scholars, they have yet to produce a book-length work which would, in effect, do what Dobrin and Weisser did for ecocomposition. *EcoMedia*, Sean Cubitt's 2005 book, perhaps bears a misleading title since Cubitt's primary objective is to extract environmental themes from popular film and television. Cubitt's book (and many other books like it) does not attempt to define ecomedia as a new field of study; he basically applies literary ecocriticism to the study of film and media.
3. Dana Phillips and Tim Morton argue that ecocriticism's ideological attachments to the pastoral worldview and false beliefs about literary representation render the movement too nostalgic and too naïve to sustain the most urgent dialogues to be had between English studies and ecological research.
4. Of this process of 'becoming-animal', Leonard Lawlor writes, 'instead of a resemblance relation, the relation that defines becoming is pre-positional. I find myself positioned before the animal, but "before" in fact means I am in proximity with the animal. I am among the others and they are in me. But just

as imitation does not define becoming, neither does representation define the preposition of one *for* another. Instead, becoming consists in a zigzag structure: we become animal so that the animal becomes, not human, but something else. The zigzag is set in motion by emission and extraction of a function (deterritorialisation). And finally, beyond the destruction of the molar form, deterritorialisation, in order to be successful, must use the animal function to produce something. It must take the micrological function of the rat, for example, and write "like" a rat' (Lawlor 2008: 178–9).

5. Guattari was in fact wary of popular and critical notions of 'identity', so much so that he tends to avoid using the term in his discussion of subjectivity and describes his own project as 'a matter of a perspective on identity which has no meaning unless identities explode' (Guattari 1996: 216).
6. Gary Genosko and Andrew Murphie provide a further critique of such models from the perspective of metamodelling: 'models operate largely by exclusion and reduction, tightly circumscribing their applications and contact with heterogeneity. The world of models is arid, lacking ambiguity and uncertainty. By contrast, metamodeling operations . . . introduce movement, multiplicity, and chaos into models' (Genosko and Murphie 2008).
7. Genosko (2009: 73) argues that the mental ecologies in Guattari's work owe more to artists and writers (for example, Kafka, Beckett, Proust) than to psychoanalysts (for example, Freud, Lacan, Klein).
8. Guattari regarded so-called ideological critique as a framework unfit to grasp the productive dimension of subjectivity as it unfolds across integrated world capitalism (IWC): 'Ideology remains in the sphere of representation, whereas the essential production of IWC does not simply concern representation, but also a modelization of behavior, sensibility, perception, memory, social relations, sexual relations, imaginary phantoms, etc.' (Guattari and Rolnik 2008: 38–9).
9. See Janell Watson's chapter 'An Energetics of Existence' in her book *Guattari's Diagrammatic Thought* (2009) for the most thorough engagement with Guattari's diagrams of his four ontological functions (namely, flows, phyla, territories, universes), which appear in *Cartographies schizoanalytiques* and *Chaosmosis*.
10. As Janell Watson has shown, Guattari's early formation of machine and structure marks a quite concrete instance of his 'writing between Lacan and Deleuze'. In particular, Watson discusses how Guattari develops this pair of concepts with direct references to Lacan's *objet petit a* and Deleuze's characterisation of structure in *Logic of Sense* (Watson 2009: 39–41).
11. This explication is by no means intended to function as a wholesale critique of science or a blanket statement about its aims, which are beyond the scope of this essay. I am merely alluding to what Deleuze and Guattari call the 'respective attitudes toward chaos' elaborated upon in their comparative analysis of philosophy and science in *What is Philosophy?* (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 117–33).
12. Sartre's 'practico-inert' refers to conditions in which institutions *structure* social relations in a way that delimits human action, rendering freedom into a mere exercise of 'dead possibilities'. For an authoritative commentary, see Fredric Jameson's chapter 'Sartre and History' in his *Marxism and Form* (1974).
13. Verena Conley (2009: 123–6) and Janell Watson (2009: 176) both acknowledge the importance of the post-media era in Guattari's work, though Conley's engagement is strictly implicit. Michael Goddard is one of the only media studies scholars to deal at length with the post-media question in Guattari. Goddard's approach differs from mine in that his insights are drawn primarily from examining Guattari's participation with Italian free radio. At the end of his

2006 article, though, Goddard formulates a question that I will address later in the context of humanities education: 'The [post-media] question is one of how to compose networks of subjective auto-organization that are able to assume an autonomy from neo-liberal economic and military networks and their associated deadening of relationality, affect and desire in the direction of pure functionality and aggressivity' (Goddard 2006).

14. For a dynamic introduction to the discourse on the revolutionary potential of Web 2.0 authorship, see the collection of video lectures posted on the professional websites of digital ethnographer Michael Wesch (2010) and media theorist David Gauntlett (2010).
15. Earthsense is a for-profit company that specialises in marketing research and branding with the mission of 'making sense of our world to provide "*must-have*" consumer knowledge that would make cause-related product, marketing and strategy efforts more effective … we focus on marketing that directly affects the bottom line' (Earthsense 2009).
16. The Critical Media Lab is perhaps the closest thing in humanities education today to the hypothetical organisation that Guattari envisions in 'Toward an Ethics of the Media': 'a new type of organism of production, adjacent to the private, supported by the state, but directly managed by the creators, and truly free and responsible for its projects' (Guattari 2002: 19).
17. For more on Ulmer's vision of this electrate consultancy, see the introduction ('The EmerAgency') of *Electronic Monuments*. Here, Ulmer initially defines the EmerAgency as 'a deconstructed consultancy, meaning that it is simultaneously an immanent critique of conventional consulting and an experiment in an alternative mode that adapts arts and letters knowledge to a practice supportive of a virtual civic sphere' (2005: xxxi).
18. By incorporating Ulmer's logic of invention, the humanities can become more autopoietic by appropriating the creative arts project as a process-based affective learning experience. These 'new aesthetic projects' would depart from the role that art projects typically occupy in courses such as creative writing, studio art and film or video production. Traditional arts courses tend to structure all lecture and discussion around improving students' artwork, attempting to polish the pieces according to the criteria of prospective artistic venues. The student is positioned as an artist-in-training. New aesthetic projects in general humanities education, however, would incorporate aspects of the art project as an experiential vehicle to enhance students' engagement with disciplinary questions. As rhetorically situated acts of aesthetic invention, new aesthetic projects promise to cultivate the affective dimensions so crucial to digital rhetoric, and they also promote a relational aesthetics that is not isolated from social or political contexts. As such, new aesthetic projects offer a unique approach for teaching and learning autopoietic creativity in relation to the digital apparatus.
19. On the question of (trans)disciplinarity, Genosko writes, 'although transdisciplinary ecology goes beyond the multi- and inter-disciplinary pretenders, it is not a higher-level synthesis or a transcendent solution' (Genosko 2009: 70). While the formation of transdisciplinary machines mobilising ensembles of heterogeneous scholars appears to be the most promising cross-disciplinary strategy, it certainly renders false the idea of a universal vocabulary/methodology with which to build knowledge that would somehow synthesise and transcend all disciplinary knowledges. More likely, the transversality of transdisciplinary machines would promote a multitude of minor exchanges, leading to molecular changes in the way specific disciplines operate rather than to the eventual creation of something like an uber-discipline.

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Dismantling the Face: Pluralism and the Politics of Recognition

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Abstract

Plural expressions of 'belonging' in postcolonial and multicultural societies give particular emphasis to a politics of cultural recognition. Within nations, diverse communities call for acknowledgement of their aspirations, for fair representation in public life and for protection of the distinctive cultural practices and beliefs that define and help to sustain minoritarian identities. Recognition is also important for group self-concept and cohesion, and so plays a vital role in the creation of stable platforms for political resistance. This essay explores Deleuze and Guattari's concept of 'faciality' and their implied critique of the politics of recognition. I argue that their rejection of the 'politics of the face' does not simply dismiss or disregard the pluralist imperatives of the just recognition that is required for postcolonialism. In fact, their preference for 'dismantling the face' provides a perspective that can be useful in assisting efforts to rethink recognition in terms adequate to forms of pluralist political engagement and non-imperial forms of subjectivity and sociality.

Keywords: Deleuze, difference, faciality, Fanon, Guattari, identity politics, Australian colonialism, pluralism, recognition

Recognition is a politically salient and vitally affirming experience.[1] It may be formal or informal in nature: it may constitute acknowledgement by an external authority such as the state; or it may be an internal condition of community coherence and self-concept. Non-recognition is an equally powerful political force. While the non-recognition of cultures

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has frequently been a tactic of imperial dominance, non-recognition can also be a critical tool of resistance to power. Political action in a post-imperial, feminist and intercultural age of diversity typically refuses to recognise the singular authority of majoritarian forms of sovereign identity that have been imposed through colonisation and patriarchy; however, such action also attempts to recognise and give appropriate value to the claims of minoritarian cultural forms. This ambiguous and multivalent use of recognition and non-recognition often means that critical and transformative political strategy is vexed. To put this point another way, postcolonial, feminist and other kinds of counter-cultural politics attempt both the destabilisation of dominant, normative identities and, simultaneously, the assertion of minor identities that can operate as a basis for the critique of those dominant forms. Claims for recognition of a minoritarian cultural identity, however, are not immune from the uncertainty that undermines the coherence of majoritarian identities. The very possibility of recognition, as it conventionally has been conceived, assumes a consistency of identification and representation; but there will always be internal groupings that contest the unity and stability of an identity, regardless of whether this identity belongs to a dominant or a minor cultural or political entity. Attempts to establish counter-cultural identities capable of being recognised and self-consciously lived by a community are therefore often undone by the same deconstructive strategies that inform programmes of resistance addressed to politically dominant identities. Furthermore, minoritarian calls for cultural recognition are frequently directed at a dominant order; such claims must be articulated in terms that the dominant order will recognise and make sense of. Yet, minoritarian cultural practices and political aspirations do not always operate within the established limits of majoritarian significance. Accordingly, processes of 'recognition' can often fail to acknowledge minor cultures on their own terms of reference, thereby in fact perpetuating insidious forms of 'non-recognition'. It is helpful to read these dilemmas concerning the politics of recognition in light of Deleuze and Guattari's concept of 'faciality' and their discussion of the 'politics of the face'. Indeed, I argue here that their privileged emphasis on 'dismantling the face' can assist new thinking about identity, engagement and the politics of recognition in an age of diversity.

I. Cultural Politics of Recognition

Writing in the context of African experiences of (French) imperialism, Frantz Fanon (1967) reflects on the important role played by recognition

in the political psychology of colonisation and racism, as well as in the psyche of colonised peoples. Defined by Fanon as a 'society of comparison', the colony is characterised by relationships that appear to privilege the 'superior' forms and values of the coloniser. As a result, Fanon worries that the colonised subject is 'constantly preoccupied with self-evaluation and with the ego-ideal' (1967: 211). Because the 'ego-ideal' in colonial society is based upon the imposed normative form of the colonial master, Fanon insists that the colonised subject subconsciously or secretly wishes to 'become white – that is, to be a man' (216). Being 'greedy for security' in the aftermath of colonial dispossession and destruction, colonised individuals seek the affirming recognition of the coloniser: they 'want to be recognised in their quest for manhood' (212). Accordingly, 'everything that an Antillean does is done for The Other . . . because it is The Other who corroborates him in his search for self-validation' (212–13). Consequently, Fanon insists that one of the most damaging effects of colonisation is the conflict and competition it provokes in the internal relations of colonised groups: 'Every position of one's own, every effort at security, is based upon relations of dependence, with the diminution of the other. It is the wreckage that surrounds me that provides the foundation for my virility' (211).[2]

For Fanon, the problem at the heart of colonial subjectivation concerns the ways in which dominant forms of colonial identification define the terms of personal expression and cultural value that colonised peoples are then driven to approximate. Of course, colonial interests are not diminished when colonised peoples struggle for equal recognition on normative terms defined by the colonisers. Such struggles for 'equality' incidentally affirm the majoritarian power of the imposed colonial structures that define social and political norms and aspirations in such locations. Accordingly, Fanon notes, 'One day, the White Master, *without conflict*, recognized the Negro slave. But the former slave wants to make himself recognized' (217; original emphasis). For Fanon, central to this process of becoming 'actional' is a question of desire:

> As soon as I desire I am asking to be considered. I am not merely here and now, sealed into thingness. I am for somewhere else and something else. I demand that notice be taken of my negating activity insofar as I pursue something other than life; insofar as I do battle for the creation of a human world – that is, of a world of reciprocal recognitions. (Fanon 1967: 218)

Here, Fanon signals the emergence of the alternative kinds of self-concept and political reciprocity called for by a postimperial 'age of diversity', eloquently discussed in relatively recent times by James

Tully (1995). Indeed, as Tully notes, cultural demands for reciprocal recognition 'gather together the broad and various political activities which jointly call cultural diversity into question as a characteristic constitutional problem of our time' (1995: 1–2). In this way, although diverse contesting interests underlying particular calls for cultural recognition often are asserted against each other in a 'cacophony of heterogenous claims' (5), the cultural politics of recognition nevertheless embraces two common motivations. Claimants share a common resistance to the 'empire of uniformity' that silences or suppresses diversity and which characterises imperial engagements; and they share a common aspiration to be self-determining, to 'rule themselves in accordance with their ways and customs' (4). The demand for cultural recognition is thus part of an enduring struggle for liberty from cultural domination, assimilation and exclusion, and the self-conscious creation of public institutions that foster mutual cultural recognition enables 'the expression of a genuinely post-imperial age' (17). The refusal to assimilate or to submit to an imposed homogeneity and the desire to have one's identity recognised in the form that one defines for oneself are twin aspects of many various struggles for recognition, through which distinct but coexisting cultural groups within a nation 'do battle for the creation of a human world' (Fanon 1967: 218). The idea of 'feminist postcolonialism' gestures towards the inauguration of a genuinely human world, in which all humans might participate equally in public life through fair and free expression of interests and have those interests recognised in a way that remains respectful of culturally diverse and distinctly gendered perspectives.[3]

As Gayatri Spivak (1985) famously points out, however, the efficacy of such transformation often has been limited by the need to articulate calls for cultural recognition in the normative language of dominant powers, if these resistances to an imposed cultural uniformity are to be recognised at all. Thus, the nature of anti-colonial resistance is too often defined by the system of oppression it faces (see Povinelli 2002). Writing in an Australian context, Marcia Langton worries that while Indigenous resistance is commonly presented through an Indigenous discourse on Aboriginality,

> this fixation on [self] classification reflects the extraordinary intensification of colonial administration . . . elaborate systems of control aimed, until recently, at exterminating one kind of 'Aboriginality' and replacing it with a sanitized version acceptable to the Anglo invaders and immigrants. (Langton 1994: 96–7)

Similarly, Indigenous peoples' self-representations that are aimed at attracting the recognition of non-Indigenous society frequently must conform to modes of presentation accepted or tolerated by the mainstream media: they must 'establish an indigenous presence in a non-indigenous world which has been structured in certain ways, and one in which people are educated to present ideas and images in certain ways'(Mudrooroo 1995: 144).

In South Australia, the Kumarangk (Hindmarsh Island) Bridge affair demonstrates starkly that where Indigenous knowledge and practices do not conform to non-Indigenous worldviews and understandings they often cannot, or will not, be recognised as authoritative and worthy of protection (*Kartinyeri v The Commonwealth*; see Bell 2003; Simons 2003). In this case, Australian law did not accept the existence of privileged and sacred knowledge preserved in the cultural form of oral tradition and accessible only to certain women. The revelation that 'women's business' might have survived off the public record, unknown to expert anthropologists and ethnographers, was determined by the Royal Commission and the High Court to be incredible to the settler imagination. Because the sacred nature of the story meant that it was known to only a few women, and because each of these women held different parts of the story, the Ngarrindjeri community as a whole could not claim a unified awareness of this 'women's business', and nor could they speak about such business because of the access taboos and privileges associated with the information. This lack of community coherence further compounded (interested) non-Indigenous scepticism about whether the claims were true or fabricated by 'anti-developmentalists'.

Margaret Simons (2003: 218) explains that, according to Western cultural beliefs,

> knowledge is best shared, theories are there to be questioned, unpicked and interrogated... Publication is a measure of importance... Not all cultures are like this. In many Aboriginal cultures, secrecy is a measure of whether or not knowledge is important. Myths and Dreaming stories are layered. An outer layer is told to children. As the children grow older they learn more... Sometimes the story changes in important ways... a child might be told a story about a man coming over the hill trailing a spear or a stick. Then later, they might be told that the stick was not a stick after all, but a penis. Later on, or in some other stories, the person might not be a man at all, but a woman. Or a goanna. Stories shift and change depending on the speaker and the listener. There is no written version. Nothing is fixed. And if something is widely known, then it is a sure sign that it is not central, and not important.

Postcolonial forms of pluralist politics will not simply interpret claims for cultural recognition through established structures of understanding and familiar terms drawn from dominant (Western) traditions and forms of thought (see Povinelli 2002). Tully writes:

> This imperial attitude is to be abjured. Rather, recognition involves acknowledging [a cultural entity] in its own terms and traditions, as it wants to be and as it speaks to us . . . They do not wish either to be silenced or to be recognised and constrained to speak within the institutions of interpretation of the imperial constitutions that have been imposed over them. (Tully 1995: 23–4)

Taking postcolonial pluralism as a context for the analysis and evaluation of Deleuze and Guattari's political philosophy, the following section explores their critical conceptualisation of the 'face' as an 'empire of uniformity' that imposes rigid constraints on plural modes of interpretation.

II. Faciality

In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari identify the 'face' as 'the *white wall/black hole* system' (1987: 167). Here they use the term 'face' not in a concrete sense in reference to a particular visage or in relation to the affective dimensions of the encounter between particular or individual faces, but rather to image a process of sense-making and the consolidation of an emergent structure of meaning (cf. Deleuze 1986: 99; see also Conley 2005; Rushton 2002). The concept of 'faciality' conveys the idea that language functions as an ordering device, operating at the nexus of the signifier and the subject. Ronald Bogue explains that for Deleuze and Guattari,

> language's purpose is less to communicate than to impose order. Language enforces a codification of the world according to orthodox categories and classifications, its various speech-acts shaping, guiding, and policing thought and behaviour. Hence the regular patterns of socially sanctioned practices effected by language may be said to constitute a *regime* of signs, a power structure that forms individual subjects and places them in social and political relation to one another. (Bogue 2003: 83)

Faciality describes a 'pure abstraction', a conceptual topography which diagrams the intersection of the two semiotic systems operating as signification and subjectivation (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 115). The 'face' is 'a surface . . . the face is a map', which is comprised of a broad featureless space – a 'formless white wall' of signification – marked

by 'dimensionless black holes' of subjectivity (170). These black depths disturb the blank surface to suggest 'faciality': 'a suggestive whiteness, a hole that captures, a face' (168). Thus, 'faciality' is a concept intended to convey diagrammatically the structuring dynamic of emergence of a dominant system of meaning, the particular regime of signs defined by Deleuze and Guattari as 'despotic-authoritarian', which corresponds with distinct 'patterns of sanctioned action' and particular modes of subject formation (Bogue 2003: 86). Accordingly, 'facialisation' describes the process that causes semantic events to be captured and represented by the two semiotic orders of signifier and subject.

For Deleuze and Guattari, the face takes a particular form – it is a concrete assemblage – but is always produced by an abstract machine of 'faciality' (1987: 168). The face takes shape alongside the 'ensemble of material connections in which bodies and things are drawn . . . People become facialised not because of ideology, repression, or texts, but because of their commingling with places, tools and each other' (Saldanha 2007: 100–1). Habits of connectivity draw constituting elements into regular assemblages or arrangements, thus establishing structures of coherence. In the process of facialisation, the function of the subject is to establish the rhythm of coherence that organises various interpretations of such arrangements into a consistent worldview. Thus, facialisation relies upon the interpretive work of the subject, who is responsible for the 'territorialisation' – the selection and establishment – of a privileged set of significations from a range of possible alternatives, and the consolidation of these meanings in accordance with a given mode of expression. In this sense, the face is a 'territory' that is carved out from a broader 'landscape' – the collection of diverse orders of meaning that form any given social, political and discursive milieu (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 172–3). The face expresses a dominant outlook and mode of understanding: it encodes a particularly powerful regime of signs. A face is powerful for so long as its expression remains fixed, that is, for as long as the regime of signs it expresses repeats regularly and persuasively through time. Its resistance to transformation ensures its continuation in its given form. Patricia MacCormack comments:

> the face is a landscape. The faced landscape is rigid, changeable only in relation to a set of predictable variances. The landscape is also cultivated by a certain set of people, who own, run and map the land. The land is recognised in a certain way. (MacCormack 2004: 137)

The face is, then, an apparatus of capture which records and organises events and expressions into meaningful sequences and structures. It is comprised of 'a general space of comparison and a mobile centre of appropriation' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 444). The 'white wall' of the signifier acts to 'define zones of frequency or probability, delimit a field that neutralizes in advance any expressions or connections unamenable to the appropriate significations' (168). The 'black hole' of subjectivity constitutes a perceptive and interpretive centre, which draws in, assimilates and transforms alterity, encompassing and internalising various interpretations within an existing structure of significance and comprehension. Together, the 'white wall' of the signifier and the 'black hole' of subjectivity effect the operation of representation. In this process, difference is compared and measured in terms of its recognised resemblance to a given or established 'representative' form; this privileging of similitude and resemblance reproduces an expanding principle of identity or sameness in the process of signification. Thus, for Deleuze and Guattari, faciality privileges the conceptual cluster of identity, resemblance and analogy that underscores the possibility of representation and the politics of recognition. The facial system produces an abstract model of identity that is generalised and standardised: the face enables a 'computation of normalities' (178). MacCormack explains that, as a consequence, 'when we are facialised, we are made visible only within one dominant system and in the only manner that the dominant system understands ... certain bodies are read and valued according to how they differ from the majoritarian face' (2004: 136). Faciality corresponds with a politics of representative identity, in which the recognition of difference is achievable only in relation to that identity: 'the face is a politics' resting upon technologies of normalisation and discipline (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 181). Racism, for example, 'operates by degrees of deviance in relation to the White-Man face' (178).[4]

Accordingly, 'the face brings the body of that which varies from the majoritarian into comprehension for dominant culture ... they always exist in comparison with the majoritarian face' (MacCormack 2004: 136). Or, as Bogue comments:

> the face of despotic-passional power identifies, classifies, *recognizes* ... the facialised object is recognized, pinned to the wall, or stuffed in a hole, imprinted with a look that it returns as a reverberation of the force that shapes it. (Bogue 2003: 104–5)

In fact, as was evidenced by the example of the Hindmarsh Island Bridge development, a facial regime maintains its majoritarian form by attributing a negative value to any fragments of signifiance that threaten to elude capture:

> In a signifying regime, the scapegoat represents a new form of increasing entropy in the system of signs: it is charged with everything that was 'bad' in a given period, that is, everything that resisted signifying signs . . . finally, and especially, it incarnates the line of flight the signifying regime cannot tolerate . . . the regime must block a line of this kind or define it in an entirely negative fashion . . . Anything that threatens to put the system to flight will be killed or put to flight itself. Anything that exceeds the excess of the signifier or passes beneath it will be marked with a negative value. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 116)

The Ngarrindjeri women, whose claims for cultural recognition 'threatened' the Hindmarsh Island Bridge development, became scapegoats identified negatively in dominant social and legal discussions concerning the proposed development; they were accused of deception, fabrication and a recalcitrant resistance to progress. In fact, these women's revelations about secret or sacred women's business issued a serious challenge to the status of dominant (colonial) structures of knowledge and existing understandings about Indigenous culture and its rightful place within Australian common law. The women claimed knowledge of a series of alternative systems of signification, which effectively undermined the conventional authority of colonial and patriarchal assumptions underlying dominant representations of belonging and land use, as well as colonial understandings of gendered dimensions within Indigenous authority, traditional knowledge and cultural power.

Repression occurs when plural calls for cultural recognition are confronted by a 'white wall' of signification, which responds only by bouncing back given structures of meaning and is not capable of recognising creative inventions of sense or differences that depart from the majoritarian perspective (see Povinelli 2002). Colonisation constructs an 'empire of uniformity' and digs a 'black hole' of subjectivation in accordance with an established or normative model of identity, in which the minoritarian self is imprisoned or buried. Deleuze and Guattari accordingly ask a question relevant for postcolonial strategising: 'How do you get out of the black hole? How do you break through the wall? How do you dismantle the face?' (1987: 186).

III. Dismantling the Face

Deleuze and Guattari assert: 'If the face is a politics, dismantling the face is also a politics involving real becomings' (1987: 188). While faciality involves a politics of territorialisation and form, dismantling the face involves a politics of deterritorialisation and transformation. The starting point for such a transformative politics is the face itself: 'the white wall of the signifier, the black hole of subjectivity and the facial machine are impasses, the measure of our submissions and subjections; but we are born into them, and it is there we must stand battle' (189). For Deleuze and Guattari, battling the face requires the cultivation of an intimate knowledge and awareness about the face one inhabits, and they warn: 'find your black holes and white walls, know them, know your faces; it is the only way you will be able to dismantle them and draw your lines of flight' (188). Dismantling the face therefore requires a careful analysis of the signifying discourses and representations that make up one's social context, as well as a critical and reflexive understanding about how these shape identity. This includes analysis of how it is at times possible for one to selectively constitute one's own identity in relation to the multiplicity of established significations one is 'born into'.

The 'ruin of representation' is a central aspect of Deleuze's task in *Difference and Repetition* and indeed forms a consistent thread through his entire oeuvre, including his work with Guattari (see Olkowski 1999). The aim in *Difference and Repetition* is to shake off the 'four iron collars of representation: identity in the concept, opposition in the predicate, analogy in judgement and resemblance in perception' (Deleuze 1994: 262). In *A Thousand Plateaus*, the discussion of faciality likewise involves a critique of representation; in particular, how faces 'form loci of resonance that select sensed or mental reality and make it conform in advance to a dominant reality'(Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 168). For Deleuze, at the heart of representation and aligned forms of political practice is the misconception that the established regime of power/knowledge (the face) causally structures the productive force of desire and assemblage. Within this model of causation, an established signifier or set of significations predetermines the possibility of recognition and limits the potential for inventing new configurations of meaning and, hence, of social organisation. The imposition of an already given order of meaning upon an actual variety of subject-forming events reduces them to a limited and predetermined interpretation of experience. This is described, for example, by the limiting formalities that circumscribe and regulate political participation

in liberal democracies, which ask citizens to choose between particular sets of already-existing features. According to Deleuze and Guattari, all interpretation then becomes assimilated to an existing structure of meaning: 'You don't so much have a face as slide into one' (1987: 177). Deleuze and Guattari encourage us to understand alternatively that the subject and the signifier are not the (already-given) causes of signifiance, but are in fact themselves reactive effects of a process in which meaning is constructed through the association of elements into a coherent form (see for example Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 129). They assert: 'concrete faces cannot be assumed to come ready-made. They are engendered by an abstract machine of faciality (*visigéité*), which produces them' (1987: 168). This engendering involves the process of 'facialisation', in which the face 'takes shape' and 'begins to appear' as certain regular features are inscribed and emerge as fixed strata upon a mobile 'surface', thereby forming the landscape of the face with the repetition of their occurrence over a period of time (ibid.). These features are not inevitable characteristics of the facial landscape, however; they occur according to a particular and contingent coding of elemental conjunctions to define a particular emergence of faciality. Thus, a 'concrete face' is always defined by the assembly rules embodied within the 'abstract machine of faciality' that causes the face to emerge as such. When the established regime of the face is erroneously taken as the cause of signifiance, it operates as a 'site of transcendental illusion' which suggests the apparent inevitability of that regime of signs (Deleuze 1994: 265). When everything must conform in advance to a regime of signification already given, then there is no room for creative divergence in the productive process. There is nothing new, no new desires or alternative associations that might construct different expressions in the established face, which grimly sets its features into a representative order. In this way, in the rigid structures of a formed face, 'the whole of desiring-production is crushed, subjected to the requirements of representation, and to the dreary games of what is representative and represented in representation'(Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 54).

It is helpful to read 'Plateau 7 – Year Zero: Faciality' in conjunction with 'Plateau 5 – 587BC–AD70: On Several Regimes of Signs'. Here, Deleuze and Guattari analyse 'a certain number of semiotics displaying very diverse characteristics' (1987: 135). They explain that there is

> such diversity in the forms of expression, such a mixture of these forms, that it is impossible to attach any particular privilege to the regime of the 'signifier'. If we call the signifying semiotic system semiology, then semiology is only one

> regime of signs among others, and not the most important one. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 111)

In fact, any particular regime of signs subsists in a milieu where competing regimes circulate. Similarly, any given discourse is not a fixed or closed system of signification, but is flexible and relative to other modes of expression and possible interpretations. An object might occupy many classifications simultaneously, and thus can transfer between meanings. A complex 'mixture' of various semiotic regimes constitutes a 'milieu' or 'landscape' that furnishes material for the constitution of the sense of a particular body. The milieu constitutes an exterior context in which any particular organisation of meaning subsists. At its points of contact with this milieu, a representation is fundamentally unstable, as its elements combine, shift, transfer and pass between other regimes of sense. Thus, there are possible 'passages' between regimes of signs, enabling movements of destratification or the mixing and translation of established regimes of signification. Whereas the semiotic regime of the signifier works by capturing and reducing diverse meanings to a uniform representation of 'truth', alternative and polyvocal regimes of sense and expression are always possible (136; see also Deleuze 2004). The potential for discovery of these alternative and contesting regimes of sense, however, 'requires a rethinking of the majoritarian face and a willingness to envisage more than one system of comprehension and function for the face' (MacCormack 2004: 138).

Deleuze and Guattari suggest:

> when the face is effaced, when the faciality traits disappear, we can be sure that we have entered into another regime, other zones infinitely muter and more imperceptible where subterranean becomings-animal occur, becomings-molecular, nocturnal deterritorialisations overspilling the limits of the signifying system. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 115)

Fanon writes:

> I am not a prisoner of history. I should not seek there for the meaning of my destiny. I should constantly remind myself that the real leap consists in introducing invention into existence. In the world in which I travel, I am endlessly creating myself. I am a part of Being to the degree that I go beyond it. (Fanon 1967: 229)

Because dominant meanings are always open to a contextualising milieu in which mixed and conflicting regimes of signs subsist, their stability is challenged as they come into contact and are forced to shift and morph in partial destratifications in order to accommodate such conflicting

significations. Thus, 'dismantling the face' involves locating the points at which meaning shifts and becomes unstable: searching for the points in a collection of social discourses where meaning is contradictory, or the points in one's own identity where one occupies multiple and contradicting classifications. One may be simultaneously altruistic and selfish, active and passive, free and constrained, wilful and aimless, friend and lover, parent and professional, and so forth. In finding such points of ambiguous identification, one is potentially able to apply pressure to the signifying system in which one is embedded, perhaps provoking an 'uncertain moment' where conventional significations collapse and established meanings shift (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 189).

At such moments, the 'abstract machine of faciality' that shapes the emergence of particular and concrete facial assemblages may become (partially) transparent. The increased visibility of the constructive mechanisms underlying a set 'face' undermines its pretensions to inevitability and stability. This can have the effect of destabilising the face, potentially enabling a critical 'line of flight' from established structures of representation and a recomposition of meaning according to an alternative constitutive process that defines an alternative regime of signs. This process requires complementary critical and constructive movements, which at once deconstruct the established power of the face by destabilising its 'territory' and simultaneously attend to the composition, or 'reterritorialisation', of alternative structures of meaning that we can rely upon to make sense of our worlds and ourselves. In reterritorialising meaning, however, the objective is not simply to recreate the territory that has been dismantled, but to invent a process of composition enabling an entirely new form of sensibility, a new framework of understanding for a 'new people' and a 'new earth': 'beyond the face lies an altogether different humanity' (190).

For Deleuze and Guattari, key to this complex destructive-creative process is the invention of a 'probe-head' capable of penetrating an opaque or self-evident regime of signs and forcing it to transform. The concept of the 'probe-head' is best understood in light of their Spinozist ontology of the complex relational individual, which enters into multifaceted processes of transformation during encounters with others (see for example 1987: 253–60). In fact, for Deleuze, an individual is an emergent, multi-levelled, complex union of parts. The individual takes form when the force relations binding its parts into a loose collective become habitual and consistent, lending the individual a regular structural organisation. The individual is complexly relational,

since its composing elements are drawn together from a contextualising environmental milieu and furnished through the relations it forms with other individuals and structures within this milieu. Accordingly, an individual structure is always also a multiplicity: it is 'defined not by its elements, nor by a center of unification or comprehension. It is defined by the number of dimensions it has' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 249). The 'number of dimensions' enjoyed by an individual is determined by the complexity of its affective relations; these include not only the internal relations between the composing elements that give the individual a certain structural definition, but also the range of external relations that the individual forges with multifaceted aspects of its neighbouring bodies.

For Deleuze and Guattari, the relational nature of individuals entails that 'each multiplicity is already composed of heterogenous terms in symbiosis, and ... a multiplicity is constantly transforming itself into a string of other multiplicities, according to its doors and thresholds' (ibid.). Sending out a 'probe-head' is one way in which a multiplicity experiments with the possibility of forging new symbiotic relations with neighbouring bodies, thus altering its dimensions of complexity and changing in nature according with shifts in its affective connections. Complexly relational entities have 'shifting borderlines' (252), because their composing elements form 'passages and bridges', 'doors and thresholds', when they are shared by neighbouring individuals. As they come into contact, entities can enter into processes of becoming-otherwise, either when they absorb new elemental influences from the encounter, or when the encounter causes a shift in the power relations binding elements into coherent forms of order. Through encounters with others, an individual is transformed, not necessarily in entirety, but in piecemeal and selective ways at particular sites of elemental affection. The 'probe-head' describes a technique of active transformation an individual may engage or be engaged in, when brought into proximity or intimacy with other individuals, in ways that are receptive to the formation of new elemental connections. The possibility of self-transformation through the creation of novel combinations with other individuals is facilitated initially by the identification of those sites of structural vulnerability: those 'moments of uncertainty' in which a self may be redefined. In such moments, a 'probe-head is then that which explores the terrain beyond the face, the terrain from which the face is nothing more than an extraction or a crystallisation. Probe-heads are in this sense a move into chaos' (O'Sullivan 2009: 254). Sending out a probe-head to the interstitial space or the 'plane of consistency' beyond

the face, where bodies form and transform according to their dynamics of coexistence, then involves the sort of relational effort called for by Fanon: to 'touch the other, to feel the other, to explain the other to myself'(1967: 231). Careful observation of the nature of one's affective engagements allows a developing understanding of the ways in which new styles of community might be forged, supporting new forms of individuality along with new modes of interpretation and structures of signifiance. The discovery of new and alternative possibilities for relationship increases an individual's dimensions of complexity and so invents the potential for processes of structural transformation. Thus,

> between substantial forms and determined subjects, between the two, there is not only a whole operation of demonic local transports but a natural play of haecceities, degrees, intensities, events and accidents that compose individuations totally different from those of the well-formed subjects that receive them. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 253)

'Dismantling the face' involves exploring this interstitial space 'between substantial forms and determined subjects'. The following section considers whether a privileged emphasis on destabilising and transforming identity, as part of a political sensibility concerned with the 'undoing of the regularities of signification and subjectification' (Bogue 2003: 105), can open up spaces for thinking about new kinds of political recognition; and for putting these principles into practice.

IV. Postcolonial Recognition

Postcolonisation can be conceptualised as a process in which participants strive to produce forms of political society that enable the peaceful coexistence of self-determining communities, mutually engaged in affirmative acts of shared recognition. This transformative process involves both whole nations and subnational polities (such as Indigenous nations) in locally distinctive movements of becoming, shaped by idiosyncratic experiences of resistance to colonisation and by the particular nature of the colonial legacies they have been left with. While postcolonisation processes are locally particular, Deleuze and Guattari note that 'every becoming is a bloc of coexistence' (1987: 238). Thus, postcolonisation begins processes of becoming-minor that operate *between* the different structures of belonging defining particular settler and Indigenous communities. It prompts the transformation of all aspects of their relationship, at each of the mediating sites of their affective engagement (232ff.). Here, 'minor' does not refer

to 'minority groups' identified in terms of number or degrees of political representation, but rather is a qualitative term indicating a position 'which deviates from the majority or standard which is the bearer of the dominant social code . . . [and which] provides an element capable of deterritorialising the dominant social codes' (Patton 2000: 7). Becoming-minor is thus the creative process that 'runs between' the dominant features of a set face, and which significantly 'involves the subjection of the standard [majority] to a process of continuous variation or deterritorialisation' (48). As a process of becoming-minor, postcolonisation offers both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples an opportunity to redefine their modes of coexistence and, consequently, their relational identities and their ways of making sense. Globally, postcolonisation contests and transforms the facial regime currently describing (neo-)colonial cultures, social structures and the entrenched assumptions and norms of identification these continue to rely upon. In this way, postcolonialism is a 'minor', 'uncommon' or 'untimely' relationship that exists in a virtual form, 'beneath' or 'beside' the normative modes of public existence that actually comprise the socio-political arena (see Bignall 2011). Postcoloniality exists as a virtual alternative to currently dominant forms of social arrangement; its virtual existence even now contests and transforms the established 'face' of colonial and postcolonial forms of subjectivity and signification.

As a process of becoming-minor, the postcolonial reconciliation of conflicting communities necessarily refuses the impulse to coerce a unified national identity that encompasses all possible differences. In fact, postcolonialism properly calls for the construction of that which Henry Giroux refers to as:

> a notion of border identity that challenges any essentialized notion of subjectivity while simultaneously demonstrating that the self as a historical and cultural formation is shaped in complex, related, and multiple ways through their interaction with numerous and diverse communities. (Giroux 1993: 10)

Interactive relations not only enable the emergence of habitual and regular forms of social order; they simultaneously promise the permanent possibility of creating and transforming identities and the structures of sense that nurture them, when the alliances that constitute interstitial spaces between bodies undergo a critical shift. In these transitional and creative spaces mediating the interface where identities meet, new structures of social existence and practices of sense-making can arise, through the mutual becomings produced by the encounter.

Postcolonial becomings call for forms of mutual cultural recognition that are able to register and moderate the complex and uneven interaction of Indigenous and settler worlds (and worldviews) at their multiple sites of conjunction.

As Steve Hemming, Daryle Rigney and Shaun Berg have explained (Hemming and Rigney 2011a, 2011b; Hemming, Rigney and Berg 2011), in some respects a movement towards this type of cultural recognition and style of political engagement was begun recently in Australia, when the Ngarrindjeri Nation recovered its political agency in the wake of the devastating Hindmarsh Island Bridge affair, reconstituted its governing authority, and initiated a new programme of negotiation with state powers. The Ngarrindjeri Nation is located in South Eastern South Australia. The peoples comprising this nation have been recognised by all levels of Australian government as the traditional owners of the Lower Murray, Coorong and Lakes area in this region. Ngarrindjeri have never ceded sovereignty and, despite being burdened by repressive colonial government regimes, they have always acted as a resilient, independent people with a commitment to care for Country (Ngarrindjeri Nation 2007). Ngarrindjeri Country is known for its international significance, but is now severely degraded due to poor agricultural practices and the overuse of water: control over the flow of water through the Murray Darling Basin to Ngarrindjeri Country and Sea has become a site of national struggle in Australia (see Hattam, Rigney and Hemming 2007). In response to ongoing environmental destruction, and reacting to the continuing forms of colonialism evidenced during the Hindmarsh Island enquiries, Ngarrindjeri have sought to establish workable and respectful processes of political negotiation with a variety of state and settler-colonial institutions including government, museums and universities. For Ngarrindjeri, their political activities are informed by ethical obligations to 'Ruwe', which translates inexactly as 'Country' and encompasses spiritual and practical dimensions of environmental, communal and individual wellbeing (Ngarrindjeri Nation 2007; Hemming and Rigney 2011a). Ngarrindjeri have begun negotiating directly with state and federal government organisations concerned with natural resource management to ensure that Indigenous peoples' obligations to Ruwe are adequately recognised by the wider community and supported by legislation and policy.

The Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority (NRA) is a constituted governance system and is the peak political body through which Ngarrindjeri currently engage and decolonise the Australian nation.

South Australia is entering a new era of postcolonial recognition as a result of the NRA's action in the political sphere; however, despite the underlying and motivating commitment of Ngarrindjeri to Ruwe, this is not a form of recognition that is well conceived as grounded in cultural traditions or in other representative forms of identity. In fact, while Ngarrindjeri always seek recognition of their sovereign authority and active capacity in their course of their negotiations with the state, this political aspiration is not primarily framed by the principles of constitutional law. Instead, negotiations take form as contractual agreements forged with particular partners, in specific contexts and in pragmatic response to precise issues, problems and aspirations. In effect, Ngarrindjeri sovereignty is employed less as a principle of fixed political identity capable of official recognition by the settler state and its institutions, and more as an actual operation of political engagement – as a dynamic practice and a performance of authority – affirmed and exercised immediately in the process of negotiation. Here, recognition is a practice, more than a principle (see Rigney, Hemming and Berg 2008; Hemming, Rigney and Berg 2011). Ngarrindjeri efforts to engage new ways of protecting significant sites aim for genuine partnership with the state in natural resource management at all levels of discussion, decision-making and policy-writing. This self-conscious shift in political strategy has resulted in the institution of a new regime of contractual negotiation that sets clear parameters defining the ways in which the NRA is prepared to engage with the apparatus of the state and its cultural institutions (see Hemming and Rigney 2008). These contractual agreements are forged in the context of an ethic of cultural respectfulness defined by Ngarrindjeri as '*Kungun Ngarrindjeri Yunnan*' or 'Listen to Ngarrindjeri people talking'. Outcomes successfully negotiated through this agreement-making process are accordingly described as 'KNY Agreements' (see Ngarrindjeri Nation 2002).

As a result of this political activity, the NRA is cleverly dismantling the colonial face of South Australian society. Through the hard experience of colonisation, and through careful attention to the continuing power of signifying discourses and representations that buttress dominant social identities, Ngarrindjeri have cultivated an intimate knowledge of colonial faciality and its processes, and have begun to identify and experiment with the face, to observe how it may best be destabilised and transformed. Ngarrindjeri now often refuse to divulge cultural knowledge, having learned from the Hindmarsh Island Bridge affair how detrimental and damaging the sharing of knowledge can be when it is received unwillingly by closed ears and reluctant minds (Hemming and

Rigney 2008). In the course of its political engagements, however, the NRA continues to assert – and to selectively articulate – the existence of alternative semiotic systems embodied in distinctive Indigenous ways of knowing and of experiencing identity and community. These contesting forms of meaning and modes of sense-making effectively destabilise the uniformity of the dominant face and provide alternative elements for new assemblages of the social. Furthermore, because they inhabit multiple political systems simultaneously and engage in multifaceted processes of agreement-making with diverse parties on many different issues, Ngarrindjeri organisations continually send out 'probe-heads' to reconfigure specific sets of relations and thus to incrementally transform the system as a whole. In their complex and diffuse engagements with the state, Ngarrindjeri have created 'passages and bridges' that open new 'doors and thresholds'. Perhaps most significantly of all, the political strategy that emphasises the importance of *kungun*, of 'listening to Ngarrindjeri people talking', has resulted in a crucial shifting of responsibilities and the creation of new possibilities for recognition. The onus is not upon Ngarrindjeri to demonstrate the continuing existence of their cultural traditions and to prove that these are worthy of protection by the state. Rather, the onus is placed more firmly upon settler society and state institutions to listen properly, with an appropriately respectful ear, and to make sure they have accurately heard what Ngarrindjeri people have to say, even (or especially) when this is articulated in ways that are not easy for settler Australians to understand. Associated with this shift towards the new regime of political negotiation, Ngarrindjeri sovereignty does not require demonstration or official recognition by a higher power, but is assumed from the outset as a natural starting point for political negotiation with the NRA.

Of the three principles of non-imperial association – recognition, consent and continuity – proposed by James Tully (1995) in *Strange Multiplicity*, 'recognition' is identified as the most 'difficult' to realise. Tully cites many reasons why cultural recognition has frequently been denied in Western political practice, including 'the pursuit of property and the splendour of empire, the misunderstanding and fear of others different from oneself', and the very 'language' of constitutionalism, which privileges identity and uniformity (198). Indeed, the privileging of identity and uniformity in Australia's formal legal apparatus is one reason why the multiple and various voices of those Ngarrindjeri women contesting the Hindmarsh Island Bridge development remained unheard in the forum of Australian common law. I have suggested that recent political action by Ngarrindjeri is aligned with an alternative practice

and politics of recognition, which I have conceptualised here in terms of Deleuze and Guattari's ontology of complex relational individuality and their concept of dismantled 'faciality'. According to this conceptual framework, one is able to recognise others, not simply with respect to their apparent consistency of identity or the 'facial' assemblage they form part of and exist within, but more precisely as complexly relational entities that have been creatively and contingently produced through forces of engagement, tempered always by their situation within the existing assemblages of faciality that entrench the dominant structures of sense and signifiance collectively inhabited by individuals. For Deleuze, identity constantly shifts and transforms because a body is defined by the mutable affective relations into which it enters. Thus, Deleuzian principles concerning the possibility and continuity of recognition will not stem from fixed forms of identity and associated traditions, but will emerge from carefully observed processes of collective agreement about the preferred nature and good conduct of social engagements. The result is a set of political practices not limited to the generation of new versions of fixed laws or charters; the shifting nature of affective individuality entails that the process of finding agreement concerning the management of relations is best thought of as ongoing and geared towards the creation of provisional rules of (non-imperial) association, which acknowledge the socially constructive roles played by complex affective encounters. Such rules of 'recognition' will not seek to reinforce privileged forms of identity, nor prohibit the transformations that may be willed by a self-determining individual or culture; but they will set limits to the kinds of transformation a body can be made to endure during the course of its encounters.

Notes

1. This paper was produced as part of the Australian Research Council Discovery Project, 'Negotiating a Space in the Nation: The Case of Ngarrindjeri' (DP1094869). The Chief Investigators are Robert Hattam, Peter Bishop, Pal Ahluwalia, Julie Matthews, Daryle Rigney, Steve Hemming and Robin Boast, working with Bindi MacGill and myself. I would like to thank the team, and especially Daryle and Steve, for allowing me to include in this article a discussion of Ngarrindjeri negotiations in the contact zone. I am also grateful for the very helpful suggestions and critical comments made by Arun Saldanha and an anonymous reviewer. I have tried to address many of these here, but I acknowledge with regret that some of the issues requiring further development must wait for a future occasion.
2. This 'wreckage' includes the belittlement of the feminine, a problem that remains undiminished in Fanon's writing on anti-colonial subjectivity. Discussion of the ways in which Fanon's discourse problematically connects empowerment and

subjectivity with masculinity remains beyond the immediate scope of concern of this essay. For examples of scholarship opening discussion on Fanon and feminism, see Chow (1998: 55–74); Sharpley-Whiting (1997); Moore-Gilbert (1996).

3. While some versions of feminist postcolonialism also respectfully acknowledge non-human perspectives and actors, elaboration of this postcolonial and ecological imperative remains beyond the scope of the immediate discussion.
4. Deleuze and Guattari's conceptualisation of faciality is explicitly linked with a critique of racism. While the 'White-Man face' is clearly relevant to the discussion at hand, a proper engagement with work on Whiteness is not possible within the space constraints of the essay. Examples of work theorising Australian Whiteness include Ravenscroft (2012); Moreton-Robinson (2000); Hage (1998). See also Saldanha (2007).

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Michaux: Xenopathic Ontology

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Abstract

The hallucinogenic art of Michaux and other surrealists should never be regarded as advocating unbridled sensuous experimentation. The affects they generate may index absurdity, incongruity and comedy – they may 'ridiculise' our systematic thinking – but these affects thereby serve a more serious production of concepts. Through an abstemious aesthetics of existence Michaux becomes an ontologist of the prephilosophical sort. Carefully but ambiguously he explores the truths of matter, movement, body and modernity. As Deleuze saw clearly, the resulting ontology has strong affinities with that of Leibniz, though we have to insist on Simondon's transindividual dimension to obtain the full ontological purchase of hallucinogenic surrealisation.

Keywords: Michaux, Leibniz, hallucinogens, ontology, poetry, humour

> There is a call of the infinite, enormous, all-invading. Why? How? As the wall closes in and recedes rhythmically, and your arm seems to lengthen periodically, there are also gales of unquenchable laughter, which mean nothing either. (Michaux 1963a: 6–7)

> A dust of colored perceptions falls on a black backdrop; yet, if we look closely, these are not atoms, but minuscule folds that are endlessly unfurling and bending on the edges of juxtaposed areas, like a mist or fog that makes their surface sparkle, at speeds that no one of our thresholds of consciousness could sustain in a normal state. (Deleuze 1993: 93)

I. Speed and Representation

Henri Michaux drops the word 'xenopathic' just once when discussing the proximity of madness and intoxication (1963a: 158).[1] An obscure

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clinical term, xenopathy (*xenos*, foreigner + *pathos*, affliction), according to one dictionary, connotes 'the compelling sense of objectivity that may lend hallucinations a quality similar to that of objects existing in the extracorporeal world' (Blom 2009: 547). In Lacanian psychoanalysis the term pops up to highlight the alienating effects of language and thought. It is mentioned twice (1982: 127, 292) in Lacan's meticulous 1932 doctoral thesis on the role of personality traits in paranoid psychosis. Lacan describes the perplexity and irruptive aspect of the primary delusions of psychosis as an automatism akin to severe intoxication, though the latter is barely specified. At this point Lacan builds on the writings of, amongst others, Janet, Jaspers and James – as Christian Kerslake (2007) would note, psychologists with a more transcendental notion of the unconscious than Freud's – as well as his psychiatrist friend Henri Ey, who would later champion Michaux. Lacan's early theoretical grappling with schizophrenia as transcendental problem would become fundamental to Deleuze and Guattari even if he himself already ends up reducing delirium to family and sex.

For Michaux, xenopathy concerns far more than hallucination. It corresponds to what he calls thoughts at speed c whose instability is absolute and which command the subject instead of vice versa. Speed c effectively amounts to the obliteration of thought, a scary flash wherein the brain jumps outside memory and meaning altogether:

> Anyone who has experienced it knows that what is involved is no longer a hesitation of consciousness. It is the impossibility even of hesitation which becomes the phenomenon, there is no longer any consideration given to the elements to be envisaged. (Michaux 1963a: 167)

The *xenos* incorporated in hallucinogenic experimentation is no othering of the foreign, although that certainly tends to interfere. Xenopathy delves beyond self and other, an intensive journey into space unmappable within common cultural coordinates. Xenopathy summons the asubjective as Deleuze and Guattari conceive it in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987: 171), the faceless, the nameless, the statistically insignificant, a non-site Michaux dissolves into as no longer Michaux, no longer human. Spatial but non-localisable, *speed* is the most precise term for intoxicated perception: 'all drugs are modifiers – usually accelerators – of the mind's speed (of images, thoughts, impulses)' (2002: 153–4). Hence, '[i]ntensity increases along with speed, an intensity revealing and emphasizing the speed already there' (1974: 22–3). Deleuze and Guattari agree: 'All drugs fundamentally concern speeds, and modifications of speed' (1987: 282).

The literature on Michaux is vast yet his identity spurious.

> 'Me' is never anything but provisional (changing in relation to this one or that one, an ad hominem 'me' changing in another language, in another art) and pregnant with a new character who will be set free by an accident, an emotion, a blow on the head. (Michaux 1994: 77)

'Michaux' names a hazy convergence of flows and substances: '*An average of "me's", a movement in the crowd. In the name of many, I sign this book*' (ibid.). It is implicitly Michaux again that Deleuze and Guattari echo when they famously start *A Thousand Plateaus* saying the two of them constitute, as authors and names, a veritable crowd. Earlier prominent authors who celebrated Michaux's idiosyncratic style include Blanchot and Borges, Gide and Ginsberg, Paz and Paulhan. While these fellow artists are right to honour Michaux's linguistic inventiveness, I will instead follow Evelyne Grossman's Lucretian appreciation (2002) of Michaux as thinker of the 'essence of language', which is not representation but preverbal presentation of being, most intensely so while mescaline exhorts it to dismantle itself from within. As translator David Ball observes, Michaux 'uses language just the way poets are not supposed to, as if it were transparent, as an instrument, to get at the reality beyond it – extraordinary, strange, and mobile as that reality may be' (in Michaux 1994: xxxiii).

Most scholars discern a post-Romantic sensibility for the darker sides of the modern self broadly following the psychoanalytically inclined existentialism of Raymond Bellour (1965). In Sartrean vein Blanchot had already in 1944 identified the impetus towards inhuman magic that would mature in Michaux's drug writing:

> Consciousness loses itself amid the things.... On the one hand everything is possible – the illusion of inner being which realises everything it imagines – and on the other nothing is possible, as trapped by the thickness of matter the spirit is nothing more than congealed patience, indifferent to the abyss, a sticky paste not moving.' (Blanchot 1999: 60; my translation)

Closely affiliated with the surrealist movement, Michaux was certainly influenced by Freud and Sartre. But he also strongly distanced himself from psychoanalysis already from the early 1920s, mainly because, like Deleuze would later, he could not agree with the importance accorded to sexuality (Brun 1999: 46ff.). Likewise Michaux was sceptical about existentialism's ideal of an unadulterated individuality and the interpretive quest for meaning. Scholarship – Laurie Edson's otherwise unarguable discovery of Michaux's mappings of intensive

movement (1985) or Jean-Pierre Martin's otherwise quasi-Deleuzian notion of the poet's vagabondage (1994) are exemplary – is stuck in representationalism as Deleuze maps it in *Difference and Repetition* (1994: 29ff.). Michaux scholars cling to a notion of individual identity under its expressions and spacetime; to already-judged analogies (equivocity) amid kinds of being and the hallucinogenic imagery; to classic oppositions such as word/world, self/other, light/dark and normal/pathological; and to convenient resemblances drawn between epistemic objects like madness and intoxication. Only recently have scholars – again spearheaded by Bellour (1998) himself – started exploring the close affinities between Michauldian poetics and Deleuzian thought (for example, Fondo-Valette, 1997). Hence Bellour dedicates the definitive *Bibliothèque de la Pléiade* edition (Michaux, 2004) to Deleuze and Guattari, and draws many connections in its introduction and bibliographical notes.

One reader of Michaux as ontologist is François Trotet (1992), who argues that void is the ultimate objective of Michaux's poetic and hallucinogenic meditations. By perceiving things, light, space, time and body as mysteries to be intervened in, Michaux embarks on a voyage towards the Universal Emptiness all bodies intrinsically tend to. Human finitude is overcome by way of recuperating the infinite inertia it tries to escape. This austere defence of becoming-nothing is akin to Deleuze's late conceptualisation of beatitude in the impersonal yet singular immanence of *a* life (2001). It is true Michaux himself had become swayed by Eastern philosophy and ever more reclusive over the sixties and seventies (see *Jours de silence*, Michaux, 1978). In a rare letter to his interlocutor he prefers the Taoist over the psychoanalytical or literary interpretations (Trotet 1992: 330). But Trotet is finally too close to the existentialist-humanist readings, with the body 'suffering' its hallucinations, and nirvana replacing authenticity as scarcely attainable state of bliss. Understood through Deleuze, Michaux encounters not void but plenitude, as the absolutely immanent, endless multiplication (multi-pli-cation), albeit by virtue of void as medium as in ancient atomism. Moreover, if it is truly immanent *to* a life perceiving/prehending it, true plenitude and becoming-manifold never measures up to a universe-encompassing totality.

The notion of the thinking body found in Michaux scholarship such as Anne Brun's *Henri Michaux ou le corps halluciné* (1999) has to be pushed beyond its limit. Here we will ask not only how drugs were integral to the poetic project but also whether they necessarily – neurochemically – entailed an ontological project too. What

this body thinks is not itself qua altered by hallucinogens but, in the legacy of Lucretius and Leibniz, physical reality as ever-deviating from itself and thereby reshuffling the forces constituting the human as such.

II. The realism of surrealism

> You, invading me
> with howl howl swells
> all over ocean swells
> smoking dense
> and bellowing,
> are the night.
> (Michaux 1994: 56)

In this more moody of Michaux's early poems ('In the Night', 1930), we encounter a theme that will run through his entire oeuvre: the production of thought from amorphous obscurity. How is it that 'darkness stirs' (*la nuit remue*, the title of a 1935 collection), shouts that night is dense and twirls like smoke, that it swells like ocean, intimately invading the poet? All art responds to a fluid night replete with potentiality. Poetry is a form of exorcism 'to keep at bay the surrounding forces of the hostile world', as Michaux (1946a: 9) puts it in his most melancholic collection. It is within this tragic framework of World War II that we begin comprehending Michaux's turn to hallucinogens in the 1950s.

From De Quincey's confessions and Baudelaire's denunciations to the diaries of Crowley and Cocteau, bohemians have traditionally dramatised the realms of drugs through the themes of pain not pleasure, misery in dark alleys not enlightenment in salons and meadows. Michaux is no different. Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 282–7) draw on him and Artaud to warn of the false promises of drugs: 'you will get stuck in a mad race between the imperceptible and perception, a race all the more circular now that everything is relative'. But one wonders why intellectuals are drawn to drugs at all. Light *through* darkness, knowledge *through* the abyss … Michaux demonstrates there is a creative process underlying the ordeals he suffers without which we would not be writing about him at all. Moreover, to the extent that drugs have ontological significance, the conceptual distinction between addiction and psychedelic experimentation, which Deleuze and Guattari brush aside, becomes indispensable.

In *What is Philosophy?* Michaux makes an important appearance in order to qualify the plane of immanence. Philosophy is an enterprise fraught with danger:

> Precisely because the plane of immanence is prephilosophical and does not immediately take effect with concepts, it implies a sort of groping experimentation and its layout resorts to measures that are not very respectable, rational, or reasonable. These measures belong to the order of dreams, of pathological processes, esoteric experiences, drunkenness, and excess. We head for the horizon, on the plane of immanence, and we return with bloodshot eyes, yet they are the eyes of the mind. Even Descartes had his dream. To think is always to follow the witch's flight. Take Michaux's plane of immanence, for example, with its infinite, wild movements and speeds. . . . [O]ne does not think without becoming something else, something that does not think – an animal, a molecule, a particle – and that comes back to thought and revives it. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 42)

Michaux is listed among other renegade 'thinkers' like Rimbaud, Artaud, Kafka and Miller who are 'half philosophers but also more than philosophers' (ibid: 67). In emphasising the unconscious, unknowable and ungainly, Michaux is protophilosophical while retaining ironic distance from philosophy proper. Still following his feeling of being a crowd, he confronts philosophy for assuming it knows *what* it thinks and forgetting the desires that spurred it and the new obscurities it inevitably creates:

> The history of Philosophy is the history of the false positions of conscious equilibrium that have been adopted one after another. . . . Any progress, every new observation, every thought, every creation, seems to create (at the same time as light) a zone of darkness. (Michaux 1963a: 78)

A zone of pregnant darkness accompanies and permeates every step towards enlightenment.

If thought enters a plane of immanence through becoming-the-unthinking, Michaux's writings and drawings on the hallucinogens bustle with (embryonic) thought. Shedding rationalising or moralising light on hallucinogenic experience will dispel its dark becomings. Michaux lent his voice to a 'scientific' film, *Images du monde visionnaire* (Michaux and Duvivier 1964), commissioned by Sandoz Pharmaceuticals, the company that synthesised and marketed LSD (Saldanha 2007). The film lauds his 'extraordinary clarity and incredible precision', but the commentary extracted is disappointingly sensationalist. More interesting are Michaux's preparatory notes for the cinematography (collected in Michaux 2004, III). The film's first part, on mescaline, showing an 'addict' at the mercy of his hallucinations, is indebted more to the horror genre than education. The original avant-garde music by Gilbert Amy, a student of Boulez (whom Michaux

had already influenced) and Stockhausen, is more consistent than Eric Duvivier's stroboscopic collage of granular, vaguely geological images. The visuals of the second part, on hashish, are more organic, with a surreal colonialist feel (birds, masks, skulls, tropics). The film on the whole sides with prevalent fears of becoming-inhuman that these distinctly non-European drugs entail, perhaps thereby justifying the purchase of LSD for psychological research.

Though Michaux's psychedelic writings are unclassifiable, they are usually considered closest to surrealism. But what exactly does surrealism add ('sur') to reality? The claim here is that the epistemological realism of science is strengthened by the bizarre realms conjured by surrealism. That stumbling on and elaborating truth involves agony and isolation, hence courage, is a supremely realist principle as much as it is a surrealist method. In an article on the horror/fantasy writer H. P. Lovecraft, Graham Harman writes:

> Against the model of philosophy as a rubber stamp for common sense and archival sobriety, I would propose that philosophy's sole mission is *weird realism*. Philosophy must be realist because its mandate is to unlock the structure of the world itself; it must be weird because reality is weird. (Harman 2008: 334)

Instead of Husserl and Heidegger, the weird realism this article develops follows Deleuze's more science-friendly thought. But what Deleuzian realists such as Manuel DeLanda (2002) choose to elide is that Deleuze and Guattari provide more on the affects of art, madness, love, sex, intoxication and alienation as instigators of philosophy than the percepts of science.

Surrealism is therefore to be rethought against all lingering postmodernist relativism. As a subdiscipline of surrealism, drug experimentation should never be understood in Romantic individualist terms. One's own body is to be explored as a cold rarefaction mirroring that of capitalist society and the universe. Surrealism, just like scientific realism, requires a saintly kind of ascetic submission to what has to be done. In a concise 1929 poem Michaux intuits the methodology at stake:

> **A Saint**
> While circulating through my accursed body,
> I came to a region where the parts of myself
> were few and far between; to live there,
> you had to be a saint. In times gone by,
> I had truly aspired to sainthood, but now

> that illness was forcing me into it, I struggled against it and I still struggle, and it's obvious that I'm not going to survive like this.
>
> If I had been given the opportunity, fine! but not to be forced into it – no, I just can't stand it.
>
> (Michaux 1994: 11)

Paradoxically, reality becomes densest there where the saint (Anthony of Antioch, Hildegard, Teresa; or Spinoza, Beethoven, Nietzsche, Einstein) inhabits almost unbearable sparseness. The plane of immanence he or she is by force led to demands not abandonment but a spiritual kind of activism, which distinguishes surrealisation from the disastrous rediscovery of reality that is psychosis. It is such method in madness that psychedelic rationalism entails, a concerted becoming-foreign to oneself, an aeration of one's flesh, an antiphenomenology fundamentally alienating the user from his or her own senses, dwelling, utensils, surroundings, neighbours: 'No longer a body, no longer evocable, no longer his own, nothing but a place. And he is excluded from it' (Michaux 1963a: 132). Gone from oneself, but only to return to tell others about 'it'.

III. Gossamer

Through the asceticism of psychedelic perception six features of reality can be described: fractality; surprise; intensiveness; pointillism; infinitude; objectlessness. First, reality is shown to be fractal, 'holey space', as Deleuze and Guattari, inspired by Mandelbrot's mathematics, call it (1987: 486–7). The famous audiovisual fractalisations of LSD and psychedelic music are merely paradigmatic of what happens generally *to* consciousness even during sobriety or sleep. Further ruminating about his being-a-crowd mentioned above – in his 1936 afterword to *Plume*, well before taking mescaline – Michaux concluded that 'every thing is crowd, every thought, every instant . . . . Nothing ever definitively circumscribed, capable of being circumscribed, everything: relations, mathematics, symbols, or music' (1994: 77). The fuzziness of things, systems and temporalities does not simply come about because of their interrelatedness or because their boundaries are erased but follows from their internal multiplicity. Michaux says about mescalinic perception: 'An aerial impression replaces the impression of density. Matter has ceased to be indisputable' (2002: 170). Returning to Anaximenes's

physics of 550 BC, surrealisation reveals that reality is built from air. The interstices of the world's fabric are breathing, turbulent.

Second, surrealisation is *come upon* as a surprise one has nonetheless co-authored. There are unpredictable shifts in perception because subjectivity curves the world instantly towards its own unfathomable whims. Surprise is what concerns Michaux's penultimate explicitly mescalinic poem, *Par surprise* (1983a), in which every moment catches him off guard and the material reality of his studio reveals itself, rather unpleasantly, to be nothing but a loosely held together bundle of risks and intensities: 'Continuous solicitations, which I resist. No I won't throw myself off the height of this balcony. From the fourth floor, it would be stupid' (1983a: 28; my translation).

Third, all psychedelic experience is voyage in intensity, the clearing of inner space. Tripping on hallucinogens in some ways exemplifies Deleuze and Guattari's Leibnizian definition of deterritorialisation:

> The more interior milieus an organism has on its own stratum, assuring its autonomy and bringing it into a set of aleatory relations with the exterior, the more deterritorialized it is .... Every voyage is intensive, and occurs in relation to thresholds of intensity, between which it evolves or that it crosses. One travels by intensity; displacements and spatial figures depend on intensive thresholds of nomadic deterritorialization (and thus on differential relations) that simultaneously define complementary, sedentary reterritorializations. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 53–4)

Physical movement requires a prior organisation of thresholds of intensity. Michaux, like Deleuze, seldom ventured out of Paris, but their nomadism was of the intensive kind. Intensive deterritorialisation shows space and time do not constitute the empty preprogrammed dimensionality associated with Kant. Space and time do not only form a continuum but spacetime is fully animated from within.

Fourth, this animation takes the form of *pointillisation*, as in Seurat paintings. A recalcitrant proliferation of faculties means subjectivity is awash in a larger oceanic spacetime it continually risks disappearing in:

> And you come upon multitudes. A host appears, of points, of images, of small forms, which pass very, very very quickly, a too swift passage of *a time which has an enormous crowd of moments*, which streak past prodigiously. *The coexistence of this time* of multiple moments with *normal time*, not wholly vanished, which returns at intervals, only partly obliterated by the attention given to the other, is extraordinary, extraordinarily unreal-izing.
>
> The coexistence, too, of *space having innumerable points* (and all very 'detached') with more or less normal space (the space around you which you

> look at from time to time), but drowned, as it were, and sub-perceived, and, in a parallel way, extraordinary.
>
> … Multitude in consciousness, a consciousness which spreads until it appears to double, to multiply itself, avid of simultaneous perceptions and knowledge, the better synoptically to observe and embrace the most distant points. (Michaux 1963a: 4; original emphasis)

Xenopathic ontology can be readily discerned here. Psychedelic perception pixelates and linearises reality (see the mescaline drawings collected in Michaux, 2000 and de Zegher, 2000). Occurring at speeds normalcy cannot endure, perception leaps outside the ordinary horizon. Psychosis and suicide are nonetheless staved off to the precise extent that normative spacetime can still be returned to at necessary intervals. On the one hand, it seems there is a simultaneity of worlds which the mind selects from as it travels while nothing can be predicted. On the other, the mind *automatically* follows course and extends to the outer reaches of the universe. The smooth surface of ordinary consciousness hides magmatic layers made up of discrete points ceaselessly crowding about. This 'detachment' of points relative to each other comprehended through 'sub-perceiving' and drowning in them will structure Deleuze's Leibnizian reading of Michaux.

A fifth discovery of psychedelic perception is that fractality, oceanicity, crowding descend all the way down. The mind becomes infinite: 'the taking over by the "small" – the micro-undulations and the micro-perceptions' (Michaux 1963a: 141). Mescaline is an unstoppable 'infinity-machine', forcing Michaux to accede to 'infinite fragmentation, the teeming state composed of what is smallest, which divides and overruns everything' (2002: 70). Zooming in has no humanly attainable limit. About LSD, Michaux says: 'Everything in thought is somehow molecular. Tiny particles that appear and disappear. Particles in perpetual associations, dissociations, reassociations, swifter than swift, almost instantaneous' (1974: 13). Now, this infinitude within the minute is supremely Leibnizoid, as Leibniz is the thinker of immaterially small dots. In all psychedelic art and discourse, the recurrence of the Leibnizian tropes of spirals, vibration, curvature, oscillation, swarms, tumult, vital force, *mathesis universalis* and divine intelligence is well known (a good example is Narby 1998). Deleuze knows the hidden complicity (*complex*: folding-together) of Leibniz and hallucinogens when he writes in *Difference and Repetition*: 'Leibniz discovers in the clear, finite idea the restlessness of the infinitely small, a restlessness also made up of intoxication, giddiness, evanescence and even death' (1994: 45).

Michaux's visual work and his drug testimonies explicitly (*ex-plicare*: unfolding-wise) engage all these themes, under the overarching problematic of infinitude. The Kantian premises of human limitedness and imperatives are torn asunder. 'It's the end of finitude. You are freed from it' (2002: 171). The graphic accompaniments to *Paix dans les brisements* ('Peace Amid Shatters', 1959) depict the same vortices towards infinity that Michaux's poetry grapples with, albeit in a different way. The psychedelic subject becomes medium for infinity realising 'itself' anew: 'An obsessive, vexatious infinite which rules out everything but itself, return to itself, passage through itself' (1963a: 14). This is why Blanchot (1999: 96–7) can speak of the *purity* of mescalinic infinity. That the universe becomes conscious of itself is the most metaphysical and trippy of Hegel's philosophy. In *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze considers the infinities of Hegel and Leibniz as complementary (but both limited in getting at difference in itself). When it comes to Michaux's ontologising, however, the abrupt surprise and the ever-present possibility of death or madness foreclose anything resembling Hegel's teleological directionality.

The question is what sort of knowledge Michaux then gains from the abysses he almost plummets in. Not knowledge *about* anything; abyssal knowledge is objectless. The mescalinic subject 'cannot turn away from this external reality: which gets its life from him. A psychic cord unites the one to the other. He remains subject to its attraction' (Michaux 1963a: 143). The residual phenomenology in statements like these shows Michaux himself still clings to a subject/object epistemology. Reality *equals* the 'psychic cord' – it consists of the ceaseless re-entangling of such cords. The hallucinating body does not reflect but deepens reality into infinite turbulence (Michaux 1975). Leibniz would perhaps understand that it is as monad-folding, as singular genetic 'world-view' (Perkins 2007: 79ff.), that the hallucinating subject reveals the self-perceiving of reality.

André Gide discovered early on (1941: 26) that Michaux's poetics is full of musicality, music being the form par excellence of objectless perception. On mescaline Michaux (1963a: 57ff.) finds the same landscape-intensity in Messiaen as Deleuze and Guattari (1987: Plateau 11) do more philosophically. Deleuze argues (1993: ch. 9) that an aesthetics of folding encapsulates Leibniz's famous notion of the 'perfect harmony' of the universe, progressing smoothly from textile to painting, sculpture, architecture, urban planning, theatre and finally music, becoming increasingly spiritualised along the way. High on hash, Michaux similarly experiences streets as music, but becomes annoyed

with their bourgeois mediocrity: 'Certain houses, when I passed in front of them, quite likely Mendelssohnized also' (1963a: 117). Psychedelic aesthetics can only be synaesthetic but does not necessarily please.

The sixth and last realisation under hallucination breaks with the subject/object machine inaugurated by Kant. Surrealisation discovers that signs have no object in the common sense. So-called representation is not the splitting of sign into signifier and signified but immediate present-ation of myriad maelstroms of matter whose traces *constitute* perception. While staring at photographs on marihuana, Michaux rediscovers the depth of things and landscapes even if he has never seen them: 'Deep-napped carpets, horse's or sheep's hooves, and also the granular, the prickly, the bumpy, the woody, the wrinkled, the porous, the knotty, the moist also and the hollow, the elbowed, all this comes to you "as in nature" ' (1963a: 96). The photographs do not mediate. Physicalities directly pass through Michaux's mescalinic eyes, making his vision haptic *according to Henri Michaux's living individuality*. There is neither empiricist nor Romantic access to 'the thing itself'; what these eyes perceive, partially, *is* what reality is, namely nothing but perception, perspectivism.

Michaux writes:

> Never (or I am greatly mistaken) has anyone really seen objects, or monuments, in the mescaline vision. Composed of wavy lines, of shaking, spaced out dots, not forming a whole, they have never been seen, but have always been interpreted. It is on the basis of dots, dots in movement, that people have been willing to recognize an object, or walls, on the basis of webs of gossamer . . . less than gossamer. (Michaux 1963a: 11)

He stops shy of generalising: all perception is made of gossamer, not objectification. Deleuze agrees: '*Every perception is hallucinatory because perception has no object*' (1993: 93; original emphasis). If hallucination and dizziness return throughout Deleuze's explications of Leibniz, it is because they signal where Leibniz's explosion of Cartesian dualist rationalism is most tangible. Objecthood is an illusion of common sense and social norms. This is a fortiori the case with psychedelic perception, during which nothing quite sticks: 'That wonderful thought / but what *was* that wonderful thought?' (Michaux, 1963a: 64). Once revealed, the object-destroying creative force can forever resurge. As Michaux writes in *Emergences/Resurgences*: 'Not having taken any hallucinogenic substances in years, the call to fragmentation remains. / I often begin drawings only to see them decompose, divide, redivide ad infinitum' (2000: 70). Surrealism's and

modernism's streams of consciousness capture not simply the inexorable fluidity of reality, but the fact reality sprays infinitely out from subjects insofar as they perceive.

IV. Ridiculisation

There is a seventh sense of reality that Michaux's asceticism only implicitly accounts for, what Gilbert Simondon (2005) calls *le transindividuel*. Transindividuality is a necessary level occurring at the intersection of, and completely immanent to, psychic and collective individuation. This self-organising meso-level draws information from the preindividual residues of psychic individuations to form our recognisable relational identities and differences. As Muriel Combes (1999: 62ff.) has it, the emergence of an individual always also generates the 'more-than-individual', which will further sculpt that individual. Anxiety like Zarathustra's are ordeals precisely because in them the individual discovers that he or she is no mere sum of social influences but partakes in a saintly, heroic kind of universality of being-influenced (Simondon 2005: 255ff; 280–4). Simondon does not consider the role of hallucination or intoxication in ontogenesis, and ordeal does not have to be our starting point. With Spinoza it would seem obvious that profane affects of joy are also shared.

Deleuze says that unlike the Socratic or Kantian models in which truth is achieved by and for persons or individuals, the nonsense of the *Alice in Wonderland* kind is delightfully destructive of individuality and much more productive: 'Humor is the art of surfaces and of the doubles, of nomad singularities and of the always aleatory point' (1990: 141). But one has to learn to love the absurd. In *Laughter*, a book disregarded by Deleuze, Bergson writes: 'the comic spirit has a logic of its own, even in its wildest eccentricities. It has a method in its madness' (1911: 2). Bergson lays out what we could call the transindividual constitution of all laughter. Born in our evolved social intelligence, even the lone psychotic's laugh aims at collectivisation. Against humanistic celebrations of comedy in the Erasmian tradition, and like Deleuze, Bergson emphasises that humour refers us to the impersonal, the *automatic*, the grotesque beneath the familiar:

> However regular we may imagine a face to be, however harmonious its lines and supple its movements, their adjustment is never altogether perfect: there will always be discoverable the signs of some impending bias, the vague suggestion of a possible grimace, in short, some favorite distortion towards

> which nature seems to be particularly inclined. The art of the caricaturist consists in detecting this, at times, imperceptible tendency, and in rendering it visible to all eyes by magnifying it. (Bergson 1911: 26)

Caricature can reinforce faciality, as the Danish racist cartoons of Mohammad did, but only because it first releases probe-head particles of quirkiness (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: Plateau 7). More fundamentally, Bergson indicates that humour alerts us to the physicality of human embodiment that only humans can appreciate:

> the gradual passing from the dim and vague to the clear and distinct is the method of suggestion *par excellence*. I fancy it might be found to be at the root of a good many comic suggestions, especially in the coarser forms of the comic, in which the transformation of a person into a thing seems to be taking place before our eyes. (Bergson 1911: 60)

The humour of Michaux's earlier poetry is often called dark, even harsh. His almost sadistic vignettes of the travels of Plume, an alter ego introduced in 1930, paint a portrait of an insipid *petit bourgeois* (Michaux 1963b). But Plume's predicament in an implacably hostile world has a certain affable fatality to it. By hinting at recognisable sociology, Michaux's caricaturing avoids becoming *l'art pour l'art*. Even the adventures 'elsewhere' to imaginary lands (see especially Michaux 1946b) are too uncannily familiar to be categorised as fantasy/sci-fi. Michaux echoes, despite his hatred for Belgium, a particularly Belgian inclination toward self-effacement, never allowing absurdism to flip over into the arrogant nihilism of the Dadaists. Blanchot writes in 1959 that Michaux

> is the writer who, so close to himself, is united with the foreign voice, and who came to suspect that he had been trapped and that what is expressing itself here with summersaults of humour is no longer his voice, but a voice imitating his. (Blanchot 2003: 222; translation modified)

Plume incites not sympathy or scorn, but an ironic hence rational understanding of the social world's intrinsic irrationality. Understood through Deleuze and Guattari (1991), Plume's tragicomic mediocrity marks not a lack but a *conceptual persona*, purely abstract misfortune anyone can 'identify with'.

The ascetic method of his later hallucinogenic work turned Michaux into an avowed solipsist. While his first extensive report on intoxication, a prose-essay on ether in 1935 (in Michaux: 2004, I), was still structured around its effects on the erotic space of the heterosexual couple, the mescaline writings are curiously devoid of any Other. In the last

mescalinic poem, *Le Jardin exalté* (1983b), the woman friend Michaux is tripping with is no more than a prop of his exalted garden, the dislocations of her face fascinating him a thousand times more than Bergson was fascinated with caricature. But when the drug kicked in there was also, for once, a hint of intercorporeality:

> Does she read my thoughts, as she will soon say, or do I hers, without saying anything? Is this increase in the subtlety of visual perception simultaneous, in her as in me, which suddenly and therefore on purpose seems to point out details until now unnoticed? (Michaux 1983b: 9; my translation)

These profound questions demonstrate the transindividual affects of language, vision, touch and music that enter any psychedelic session. Even the sadhu does not encounter ontological strangeness absolutely alone. Michaux feels the presence of not just his friend but Germany, Karnataka, Eden.

Progressing from misery to mysticism, the drug writings are nonetheless not devoid of humour. Michaux discusses the laughing fits famously induced by cannabis:

> One thing leading to another, there is then an interminable succession of bursts of laughter, ever racing, after a moment's halt to get its breath, starts off again, impossible to satiate. Laughter on conveyor belts. Laughter without any subject for laughter. (Michaux 1963a: 13)

It laughs like it rains, with nothing specifiable to be laugh *about*. The world is its own caricature:

> Prodigiously amused, I sat there enjoying the exorbitantly comical shape of that country [Argentina], whose humorousness had escaped me till that moment and again completely escaped me a couple of days later. . . . I simply, in an ecstasy of absurdity, silently plunged into its ineffably funny shape, an undeserved misfortune, it seemed to me, from which this country would never recover. (Michaux 2002: 96–7)

Something as consequential as national territoriality belies a ridiculousness normally – ideologically – restrained. Laughing at borders is a transindividual event, exposing the idiotic contingency of geopolitics.

On the 'conveyor belt' of laughable nonsense Michaux (1963a: 86–7) ends with a philosophical, or rather metaphilosophical, proclamation:

> **SYSTEM WITH AN AUTONOMOUS POWER**
> **OF RIDICULIZATION OF THE SYSTEM**
> Startling progression
> seizing all sonority
> leaving the meaning

plunging toward more resonance
toward more
toward more
more
More
M O R E



On Anne Brun's psychoanalytic-existentialist reading (1999: 119–21) this passage stands for the absorption of meaning and the 'I' by the sonorous quality of the poem's signifiers against the enveloping whiteness of the page. Signification is, however, the tip of an iceberg of events that ultimately implicates all reality ('leaving the meaning'). It might seem Trotet's 'Asiatic' interpretation has purchase: nothingness asserts itself with increasing blackness until the subject meditating on this assertion attains satori. But neither the dissolution of ego nor vertical transcendence is at issue. What matters is the descent of language into the nonsense of the fattening black bars, a *horizontal* operation of 'ridiculisation' (*ridere*, to laugh) unleashed by the poem on itself. What might ridiculisation mean? Pace Bergson and Simondon, it can only designate the rendering-automatic of individual perception and thought under a transindividuality necessarily exceeding psychic individuation by an immeasurable margin. The booming speeds of hallucinogens ('toward more / toward more') are not simply neurochemical phenomena but challenge a 'system', by exposing its unspeakable absurdity. Which system? It does not matter: linguistic, political, aesthetic, philosophic – all are shown to already contain an irrepressible, 'autonomous' force of zaniness.

Lacan's PhD (1982) opens and ends with a Spinoza quote: 'The affect of one person differs from the corresponding affect of another as much as the essence of the one person differs from that of the other' (2001: III, P57). If a person's essence is the particular mixture of desires and appetites joining in that person, Lacan implies that A's psychosis will differ from B's as much as their natures differ, including, one would imagine, their ingestion of mind-altering substances. Spinoza

adds a scholium ignored by Lacan: 'the joy by which the drunkard is enslaved is altogether different from the joy which is the portion of the philosopher'. Both inebriation and thinking cause happiness, but alcohol tends towards dependency ('enslaved' is too strong for *ducitur*, 'is led by'), while philosophy is the supreme mastery of affect.

Yet mentioning these two joys in one sentence begs the question whether they are *altogether* different. Michauldian ontology holds that all intoxication is protophilosophical and all philosophy disavows the madness it has to court. The more reason builds, the funnier it can be.

V. Folds of the Baroque

Deleuze's argument in *The Fold* is that monadology formalises in a philosophical system what the baroque did in art and infinitesimal calculus in science, namely folding the universe according to the singularity of practices.[2] As Gregg Lambert (2004) has argued, the baroque condenses the richness produced in Europe's exploration of the world during the seventeenth and again in the twentieth centuries (especially in Borges), rendering Leibnizian dizziness the substratum of modernity itself. Raymond Schwab's neglected argument in *The Oriental Renaissance* (1987) – itself quite a baroque book – is that if the Middle Ages ended with the rediscovery of antiquity, the baroque and Romantic periods of European culture were fuelled by the zealous scholarship of the Sanskritists. Pushing this anti-Hegelian reasoning further, Laura Marks (2010: 140–3) discovers that the West's baroque sensuous aesthetics of enfoldment and visual and mathematical explorations of algorithms, revived in the psychedelic art of 1960s and again in today's digital conceptual and installation art, derive ultimately from Islamic architecture and mysticism. Transcendent-monotheistic and immanentist-pluralist ways of sensing have since early medieval Iraqi and Mediterranean civilisations been creatively entwined, while the exotic has always been far more implicated than was admitted by the xenophobes.

Michaux's poetic and psychedelic writings glisten with baroque images: ornamentations, caverns and a preposterousness which tends to disturb or embarrass him. 'Thoughtforms pass by, then pass by again, unrecognizable. Associations become baroque' (2002: 163). On mescaline, baroqueness surfaces as theatre of the absurd, a doubling of everyday life: 'A baroque performance, perhaps not so far from normal action as we think. The extraordinary created from what is almost ordinary, but as an apparition' (1974: 39). Such creation

of an immaterial apparition from the given is what Deleuze calls the fold. The six psychedelic principles – fractality, surprise, intensity, pointillism, infinitude, objectlessness – can now be collapsed into the topological-metaphysical principle of folding. Indeed, Deleuze writes: the 'theme of the fold haunts all of Michaux's work – writing, drawings, paintings' (1993: 155, n.20). And when introducing this 'criterion' for the conceptual link baroque-Leibniz in the central chapter 'What is Baroque?', Deleuze acknowledges his main inspirations:

> Fold after fold: if the Baroque can be stretched beyond its precise historical limits, it appears to us that it is always by virtue of this criterion, which inspires us to recall Michaux when he writes of *La vie dans les plis* (Life in the folds), or Boulez when he looks to Mallarmé and composes 'Fold after Fold', or Hantaï when he constructs a method from folding. (Deleuze 1993: 33–4)

Michaux composed *La Vie dans les plis* (1949) not long before encountering mescaline, while still musing over the ironies of modernity, still conjuring 'inexpressible places' and bizarre enslaved races (the Meidosems). If there is a consistent concept of folding behind this wonderful volume, it revolves around the inter-invaginations – with Leibniz, the compossibility – of fantasy and common sense that poetry incites (see Bellour's notes in Michaux 2004: II, 1097–9). This is why in 1941 Blanchot (1999) had called Michaux the 'angel of the bizarre'. Strangeness is near, the too-near frightens; Michaux is not angelic in any comforting way. His baroque foldings retain too much darkness and surprise to be harmonious: Boulez not Monteverdi. Mescaline will only deepen the inter-invaginations, but now into paranoia:

> ocelli
> infinite ocelli pullulating
> I go along with the ocelli
> with the minute rips, the volutes
> I fold myself into a thousand folds which fold me, unfold me
> tiny traitors which treacherously, vertiginously fray me
> trembling, I allow the bells to be rung endlessly
> which for nothing keep summoning me
> (1973: 63; my translation)

A thousand swarming insect eyes and tiny ringing bells entangling Michaux like the Lilliputians did with Gulliver, forcing him to consider how to comport himself: this is the folding of one's outside. Though the hallucinogenic reporting abandons the lightness of the earlier poetry, ontologically Michaux remains committed to gleaning difficult truths

from the density of expanding, beckoning reality. This gleaning, this ex-plication, is what will inspire Deleuze and, as we will see, even serve as a model for ethical subjectivity.

VI. Leibniz minus God

'Contrary to Descartes, Leibniz begins in darkness,' writes Deleuze (1993: 90). This metaphysical darkness is a realm unthinkably complex (*com-plexus*, plaited-together) with minute differentials, out of which clear thinking is gradually filtered. Like Bergson, Leibniz stresses the *automatic* genesis of thought, but more than any other philosopher he envisages a kind of divine Calculator behind it all and can therefore be supremely optimistic about the rational predispositions entrusted to humans. Is it possible to be true to obscurity's propensity for illumination without God looming into the picture?

We have already seen that psychedelic perception is Leibnizoid. Deleuze writes: 'Leibnizian memories are frequent in Michaux: fog and giddiness, Lilliputian hallucinations, minute perceptions speeding over a tiny surface, spontaneity' (1993: 155, n.20).[3] A brief recapitulation of the *Monadology*, Leibniz's series of speculative axioms (1898), will help see why Deleuze would link him to Michaux. A body is a composite and can be broken down into ever smaller parts until one reaches 'simple substances', the monads (*monas*, one), which do not exist in spacetime. Monads are eternal and indivisible unities, but not atoms in the Democritian sense because they are immaterial, amorphous and unique – somewhat like mathematical points except that monads spawn material reality according to a 'harmony preestablished' by God. A monad is therefore a nano-computer-program, a locus of a particular variability of perceptions and guidelines perpetually hungry for more perceptions. Moreover, what every monad perceives is *the entire universe*, all the time, though in varying degrees of obscurity. Monads *are* singular-universal perceptions. Leibniz can therefore say that infinite multiplicity is contained within – folded in – unity (§16). So their hard and cold eternity does not mean that monads are transcendent essences: they change continuously as the bodies that possess them move around. Positing the universe as nothing but the totality of incorporeal representations, monadology is the strangest kind of idealism.

All bodies communicate with all other bodies, continually merging and colliding as a result of the variety of differential combinations of monadic perceptions contained within them (Leibniz invented the notation *dx/dy* for infinitesimal calculus). There is only one universe

that is expressed by an infinitude of different monads, in each case in a slightly different way. Every monad is different from the next because they refract their final reason, God, in varying degrees of confusion and according to precisely where bodies are in the universe and its evolution. In their parallel universe, monads remain forever isolated from each other, 'windowless'. Monads relate only to God, whose infinite power of perception was during creation highly unevenly distributed amongst them. All monads partake a little in God's power of selecting and steering the universe but only he has knowledge of all the possibilities at once.

To explain why Michaux is walking across a Parisian street high on psilocybin, we would have to explain how certain mushroom extracts reached Paris from Oaxaca via Basel; why Belgium's industrialisation called for the *petite bourgeoisie* from which Michaux sprang; how Julius Caesar consolidated the regional importance of the early city of Namur where Michaux was born; ultimately, the emergence of the solar system and gravity. That precisely Henri Michaux (not, say, Charles de Gaulle) walks today, on this street, under this weather, constitutes a world perfect and harmonious unto itself (even if he is suppressing paranoia). And yet it had to be chosen from an infinity of *lesser* possible worlds each slightly varying from its adjacent one, for 'the choice to create any one substance is simultaneously the choice to create one particular world' (Perkins 2007: 35).

There are obvious affinities between Leibniz and psychedelic ontology. The *Monadology* argues most strongly for continuous creation and the connectedness of everything to everything else. Paragraph 67 is the most famous:

> Each portion of matter may be conceived as like a garden full of plants and like a pond full of fishes. But every branch of every plant, each member of every animal, each drop of its liquid parts is also some such garden or pond.

Microscope and telescope show that horizon and surface are but thresholds of perception 'all the way down'. Things dissect themselves spontaneously like in Alex Grey and some later Dalí paintings (see especially *The Hallucinogenic Toreador*, 1968–70), the whole of reality bleeding into micro-drops of consciousness. Michaux's world is experienced as an *inner space* (the title of an important anthology), one which communes with the rest of the universe via an infinity of other inner-spaces, all singularities aspiring to persist and expand:

> Every thought became pervasive, and though quickly curtailed, prevailed nonetheless. Each one offered me its presence, its unique presence. It bestowed

> that presence upon me. In a few seconds' 'exposure' it showed me its singularity, its otherness. As if it were a substance, a *metasubstance*. (Michaux 1974: 34)

It is a commonplace in psychedelic discourse that the mind is an instance of what all perception is, namely the grasping, in varying degrees of vagueness, of the entire universe and of God's programming of it. Rocks and motorbikes and grasshoppers are likewise perceiving the entire universe, but from their particular point of view. The universe is ultimately perfect and good, its harmony pre-established, hence evil, like a bad trip, only exists through limitation and corruption.

In Badiou's review of *The Fold* (1994), he is characteristically lucid about the difference between what he calls the 'organicism' of Leibniz-Bergson-Deleuze and his own Platonist/Cartesian ontology of multiplicities. Badiou's version of *mathesis universalis* is based on the strict separation of the clear and the obscure; it is not descriptive of physical multiplicities as are Leibniz's and Deleuze's but subtracts concepts of manyness, belonging, number, infinity, etc. from the world. Badiousian ontology is anchored upon the necessary existence of an absolute void (in modern mathematics, the null-set), which Badiou says has no place in Deleuze's metaphysics. For Deleuze's take on Lucretius and Epicurus, it is true, the void is less important than the swerve or deviations whereby atoms collide and form composites. Just like, as we saw, for Michaux darkness was already pregnant with its own illumination, and any Buddhist naming of Nothingness shows what is encountered is in fact infinitely excessive Fullness, void for Deleuze is merely the space-tension between atoms with which it is always mixed: 'The void and the plenum are interlaced and distributed in such a manner that the sum of the void and the atoms is itself infinite' (1990: 269). As is well known, Deleuze's downplaying of void in favour of all-encompassing continuity leads Badiou to call him a thinker of the One with only a derivative concept of multiplicity. If the One presides, true novelty is not thinkable. Effectively, Badiou is saying seventeenth-century pantheism hides behind Deleuze's vitalism:

> This image of the 'mute and shadowy part of the event' [Deleuze 1993: 106] is admirable and adequate. Yet, we can see that what is excessive – shadowy – in the event for Leibniz-Deleuze is *the All that preexists it*. This is because in an organicist ontology of the Multiple, the event is like a spontaneous gesture over a dark *background* of an enveloping and global animality. (Badiou 1994: 56–7)

I can only briefly indicate how xenopathic ontology can disturb Badiou's important identification of Deleuze as pantheist. As Kerslake and Marks show, esoteric, post-Romantic, mythological or mystical Deleuzes are fully consistent and fascinating 'conceptual personae', but I choose to follow a more explicitly atheist materialist series running from Democritus to Nietzsche. Forever inviting in the strange and aleatory, xenopathic ontology defers the returning-home provided by religion and myth. Psychedelic perception discovers 'reality' is an indeterminate entanglement of various kinds of chaos composed of minute foldings, only graspable subjectively from within the singularity of *a* life, *some* body's perspective, and therefore impossible to contain, calculate or direct by any one force or principle. Psychedelic perception does not reach the boundaries of reality so that it can conclude it is One, for there are no such limits. Infinity is fully immanent insofar as it is co-constituted by thought.

The hallucinogens show that systems contain their own 'powers of ridiculisation', their own nonsense. The absurd always threatens the sacred. Obscurity is indeed excessive, ubiquitous and constitutive of things, not as a pre-existing originary All, but rather as what Deleuze (1994: 120ff.) calls *dark precursors*, the virtual matrices of disparities enabling the differentiation and interaction of systems, which are entirely immanent to those systems. Dark precursors are only thinkable *after* they have acted as differentiator (only after the lightning can the pre-existing matrix of atmospheric disparities be inferred). Precursors do not all communicate with each other in one plane of immanence, as they emerge contingently as local effects of actual processes. There is no Bergsonian *élan vital* or 'global animality'. The weird realism of drugs like LSD offers us nothing but an infinity of erratic molecular flows and reactions. Such ontology is alchemical and cerebral, not organicist or sensualist. When Deleuze and Guattari (1994: ch. 2) at the end of their lives link philosophy's plane of immanence with Plotinus's One-All, while radically redefining the latter as immanent Openness instead of transcendent God, it seems to me too much of the form of the Neoplatonist monotheistic concept is retained. The plane of immanence has to be multiple, and any 'One-All' could not tolerate difference-in-itself and nonsense.

Of course, many psychonauts do report vividly on divine unification, famously leading R. Gordon Wasson (1986) to coin the synonym 'entheogens' for the hallucinogens. Psychedelic mysticism often uses the exotic and occult as medium additional to drugs. Mescaline did probably facilitate Michaux's infatuation with Chinese spirituality and

calligraphy. About that mescaline afternoon in the countryside he writes: 'The exalted world of the East was there, one, total, expressing the highest point of ecstasy in the name of everyone, of everyone on Earth' (1994: 305). Moments like these signal some redemption in otherwise sombre hallucinogenic commentaries, but redemption does not have to follow mystical or orientalising clichés. Earlier, Michaux found the 'theomania' springing up on psychedelic drugs typical of Westerners and rather irritating: 'God cropping up unexpectedly, quoted in and out of season, amid banalities and as though unintentionally: this is a bad sign' (1963a: 169). In *Miserable Miracle* we read: 'The trend towards essence is a vertiginous pleasure, a secret frenzy. / The madman essenciates, and it is dangerous.... Even on God it is dangerous to essenciate. For the scrupulous, religion is hell' (2002: 143). Such a principled suspension of access to oneness, essence and immediate universality retain the subversive force of surrealism in Artaud and Burroughs and is preferable if we are to keep alive the teeming strangeness of psychoactively encountered multiplicities. If '[r]eality always falls short of essence' (Michaux 2002: 147), humanity, the 'mystic East', Nature and Oneness must be ridiculised (that is, not ridiculed) as essentialising traps, which can certainly galvanise, but not steer psychedelic experiment.

Ridiculisation is equally incumbent upon baroque metaphysics. Mogens Lærke notes that *The Fold* reconceives Leibnizian metaphysics, read through Nietzsche and Artaud, as 'a comic theater, dedicated to laughter and cheerfulness which are purer forms of joy than Leibnizian delight' (2010: 42). Remembering Deleuze's and Bergson's defence of humour, Leibniz's neurotic insistence on providence can be productively recast along more discordant, improvisational paths, whose witty atheism circumvents psychosis and misanthropy by not taking itself too seriously: by tapping into transindividuality. The plane(s) of immanence is-are always-already centrifugal. Plunging into 'it' (the 'it' of *it rains*), as is done on hallucinogens, can never guarantee an ontological outcome.

It is a matter of debate whether monadology is monist. For monism such as Spinoza's there is but one substance, while for Leibniz every monad is its own substance. The difference between substances lies in their *way of* being a substance, but they share the fact of being a substance, and this fact could be called 'monist'. Is monadology monotheistic? A necessary foundation of Leibniz's pluralism is God's coterminous omnipotence, omniscience and goodness. All monads 'fulgurate' from God, the only monad-substance that is entirely necessary and perfect. God had to select this world from an infinity of possible worlds and imbue monads with their unique innate and eternal

laws. To think a genuine plane of immanence, monadology has to be secularised. Kerslake suggests that 'Leibniz's system not only survives, but even only comes to bloom, after the death of God'. It is Deleuze's heterodox Kantianisation of Leibniz in *Difference and Repetition* that delivers an atheist conception of an ordered yet absolutely open-ended and indifferent universe:

> *Without* reliance on a pre-established, designed harmony between thought and world, the world is precisely restored to us *as a matrix of problems*, for which the solutions have not been prepared in advance, but which orient or provide a horizon for the ultimate purposes of our thinking. (Kerslake 2007: 154)

In the final pages of *The Fold* Deleuze introduces the resulting unmoored Leibnizianism that is his and Guattari's nomadology:

> To the degree that the world is now made up of divergent series (the chaosmos), or that crapshooting replaces the game of Plenitude, the monad is now unable to contain the entire world as if in a closed circle that can be modified by projection. It now opens on a trajectory or a spiral in expansion that moves further and further away from a center. (Deleuze 1993: 137)

As mathematical physics incorporates thermodynamics and quantum mechanics, continuous differentiation and emergence without Director become thinkable. There is no final cause to things; things emerge according to immanently acquired laws; monads/atoms do perish; there are only local calculators while subatomic uncertainty means even a God could not know everything; goodness has to be made. Translated to our discussion of Michaux: bad trips exist, and they have to be sat out. In retrospect, they too disclose the myriad and ethically imperative nature of reality – the xenopathic ontology of multiplicity opens up to an ethics of dosage and insight: 'Not to let themselves be carried away, to remain master of their speed seems to be the underlying, the constant and secret preoccupation of all men' (Michaux 2002: 155).

Michaux was at his most miserable after taking six times his usual dose of mescaline. The chapter 'Experimental Schizophrenia' relates how he almost drowns in a 'mescalinian ocean', then sees nothing but lines, which morph into cliffs and ugly faces, then becomes nothing but a line himself, no longer a 'castle' separate from its outside. 'Now only a line. A line that breaks up into a thousand aberrations' (2002: 126). At this height of immanent intensity Michaux plunges into 'vastitude' wherein everything is displaced (*aberrare*, to stray) and nothing, certainly no

unity, can ever hold. He is literally flattened by the immense weight of the truth he has stumbled on: the universe has no centre.

Michaux's own solipsism does not prevent Deleuze from returning to him in *Foucault* (1988: 44) to understand the subjectification that was May '68: 'and what a strange twist of the line was 1968, the line with a thousand aberrations!' The book's last paragraph (122–3) invokes 'Michaux's line "of a thousand aberrations" with its growing molecular speed'. We have seen how dangerous this line is (Deleuze finds it in Captain Ahab's passion too). It is tossing oneself into the dark strangeness of storm and ocean. 'But however terrible this line may be, it is a line of life'; subjectification is becoming master of the universe one traverses and folds into one's soul; harmonious monadological optimism becomes atonal nomadological vitalism. 'The most distant point becomes interior, by being converted into the nearest: *life within the folds*.'

Notes

1. The title of the section is 'THE TROUBLE HE HAS WITH HIS THINKING. RADICALS AT LIBERTY. THOUGHTS THAT VANISH. PERIODIC OBLITERATIONS. DISSOLVED THOUGHTS. OSCILLATORY THOUGHTS. XENOPATHIC THOUGHTS. SCOTOMIZED THOUGHTS. MENTAL ECLIPSES'.
2. I am not going to discuss Deleuze's lectures on Leibniz of 1980 and 1986–7, available on webdeleuze.com (Deleuze 1980/1986–7). They are important for understanding his relationship to Leibniz but do not directly discuss hallucinatory perception.
3. Kerslake (2007: 224–5, n.19) traces Deleuze's use of 'Lilluputian' and the inspiration for understanding Michaux as Leibnizian to Lacan's mentor Gaëtan Clérambault, who wrote of drug-induced hallucinations as 'pointillist'.

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Samuel Fuller's Schizo-violent Cinema and the Affective Politics of War

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Abstract

This essay begins by considering Samuel Fuller's 1963 film *Shock Corridor* as a model of schizo-violence – a disorganised violence that eludes the Oedipal, moralising binary of action and reaction, and instead opens up the violent action to multiple becomings outside Oedipal and nationalistic framings. Through the de-Oedipalisation of the violent events punctuating American history, *Shock Corridor* performs a schizoanalytic model of desire capable of giving free rein to the force of traumatic affections. The latter part of the discussion situates Fuller's film and the contemporary US military machine as diametrically opposed in their approaches to what we might call 'the affective politics of war'. Several contemporary scenarios revolving around both actual war violence and Kathryn Bigelow's film *The Hurt Locker* (2008) serve to show how the schizophrenising operations of the brain itself constitute the greatest obstacle in the military's efforts to contain or repress the traumatic affections generated by violence and war.

Keywords: *Anti-Oedipus*, schizoanalytic model of desire, affective politics, schizo-history, schizo-violence, war, madness

In Samuel Fuller's *Shock Corridor* (1963), a line spoken by the Pagliacci character (Larry Tucker), an inmate in the insane asylum where the story takes place, sums up the 'tabloid philosophy' identified with Fuller's style (Fuller 2003: 413). 'When we are asleep', Pagliacci says, 'nobody can tell a sane man from an insane man.' Inconspicuously delivered, this incontrovertible statement serves as the organising principle for

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the film's overall libidinal and political dynamics. It not only speaks generally to Fuller's distaste for the hierarchies humans fabricate through arbitrary standards of normalcy and segregation. It also alerts us more specifically to the way *Shock Corridor* levels off these culturally produced hierarchies by identifying desire as a thoroughly schizophrenic activity in both sane and insane subjects. On the molecular plane, the film shows, the schizophrenising activity of desire largely supersedes any distinctions of sanity and insanity. Although on one level the theme of schizophrenia in *Shock Corridor* functions as a narrative ploy that captures the audience's desire for sensationalist/pulp fiction, it is handled with such instinctive accuracy that it serves to illuminate the inherently schizophrenic functioning of desiring-production in general, as well as of the cinema as an assemblage of moving and desiring images. Thus, the film shows a firm commitment to the idea that, 'before being a mental state of the schizophrenic . . . schizophrenia is the process of production of desire and desiring-machines' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 24).

Shock Corridor tells the story of reporter Johnny Barrett (Peter Breck), who pursues the Pulitzer Prize by having himself committed to a mental hospital to investigate and write a story on a murder that took place within its walls. To achieve his purpose, Johnny enlists the help of his own newspaper editor Swanee (William Zuckert), his girlfriend Cathy (Constance Towers) and psychiatrist Dr. Fong (Philip Ahn), who coaches him on how to put on a credible performance of mental illness for the doctors who are to prescribe his hospitalisation. In order to be committed, Johnny convinces Cathy to pass as his sexually abused sister, and to denounce him to the police for acting on his incestuous desires. Once he has been hospitalised in the mental institution, Johnny stages one-on-one encounters with the three alleged witnesses to the murder of fellow inmate Sloan. But Johnny's efforts to unravel the truth of the murder and to solidify his journalistic credentials meet with the unsurpassable resistance of his three interviewees, who relentlessly circumvent his monothematic questions with their own schizo-hallucinatory fabulations. Always throwing the viewer's expectations off-guard, the film traces Johnny's progressive madness through a series of fits and starts, sometimes staging an appearance of full lucidity, yet a moment later unexpectedly letting the madness resurface and reaffirm itself with a vengeance. Ironically, Johnny manages to extract the killer's name out of one of the inmates, and he even succeeds in publishing his story and achieving the coveted journalistic award. Yet, in the last images we see of Johnny, he has

reverted to a deeply catatonic, non-responsive state: as Cathy forces his rigid arms around her own body for a futile simulation of their former relationship, he is completely cut off from any sign of recognition or affection.

Shock Corridor displaces the generic thriller's concerns with unravelling an enigmatic plot (Johnny's desire to know 'who killed Sloan in the kitchen') by underscoring the libidinal force of the inmates' fabulations, and the way in which these gradually erode Johnny's capture by the aims and activities of the molar aggregates of capitalist production (his self-assured identity as a successful journalist).[1] The inmates' hallucinatory fabulations are enacted as affective transpositions of American history, one that the film construes as a relentless sequence of violent events. Under the anarchic force of Fuller's style, neither the inmates' hallucinations nor Johnny's mental disintegration are handled in the way a detached observer might scrutinise a representational object. Undermining the conventional primacy of causal-narrative and medical-discursive codes, the film as a whole becomes invested in the schizophrenising of these codes by releasing the inherently delirious force of cinema and desire. By becoming absorbed in the same maddening process that has taken possession of its characters, *Shock Corridor* thus takes on the critical programme that Brian Massumi outlines vis-à-vis the capitalist supersystem and its society of control:

> Critique is not an abstract distancing of the self *from* its concrete 'object'; it is a superabstract, infraconcrete distance *to* – to an outside, of the self *and* its system of objects (capitalism). That outside is the potential, contained by capitalism, for its own collapse. (Massumi 2008: 62)

The becoming-schizo of *Shock Corridor* unfolds on two coexisting planes: the mechanics of cinematic desire as a free-associative delirious assemblage of images; and the machinic connections the film establishes between libidinal energies and the sociopolitical spheres as the material field in which desire proliferates. The film opens and ends with the quote by Euripides: 'Whom God wishes to destroy, he first makes mad'. While destruction and madness do not manifest themselves in *Shock Corridor* as potentially (re)generative or joyful forces in the manner of artistic schizo activity, the film instantiates the affirmative side of delirium in its exact diagnosis of the capture of the desiring subject by nihilistic machines. Thus, schizophrenia functions in the film in the guise of a pathology (mental disintegration on the narrative plane); but it also constitutes an affirmative diagnosis, as the active expression of what the body can do with its own pathological states (at the level of

the film's rhizomatic machinic operations, in its codes of montage and imaginative transpositions that seamlessly blend the subject's flows of desire with those of social and political desiring-machines). Released in 1963, at the height of the Cold War, Fuller's 'masterpiece of barbarian cinema' (Godard in Fuller 2003: 431) has much to tell us about a series of connective/affective ties that are blatantly ignored in today's paranoia-driven politics – the ties between desiring-machines and social and political machines, between the mobilisation of libidinal forces and the unleashing of fascist war machines of aggression and annihilation. It is these affective ties that will allow us in the latter part of this essay to posit the extraordinary relevance of Fuller's film to our present global historical moment.

Although, unlike other Fuller films (*The Steel Helmet*, 1951; *Fixed Bayonets*, 1951; *The Big Red One*, 1980), *Shock Corridor* is not literally set in a war-like environment, its oblique, non-representational treatment of war only serves to invigorate the film's critique of the Oedipal codes that both constrain desire and legitimise the violence of war. This analysis of *Shock Corridor* will begin by examining the ways in which the film de-Oedipalises its apparently Oedipal narrative structure as a means to perform a schizoanalytic model of desire capable of giving free rein to the force of traumatic affections. The latter part of this discussion will attempt to situate Fuller's film and the contemporary US military machine as diametrically opposed in their approaches to what we might call 'the affective politics of war' – the production, distribution and channelling of emotions that derive from the compulsive acts of killing and being killed in combat-related situations. While *Shock Corridor* stresses the primary role of affectivity in the violence unleashed by 1960s American politics, the military has historically placed a high premium on silencing and containing the affective spillage of war-related violence. We will turn our attention briefly to several contemporary scenarios revolving around both actual war violence and Kathryn Bigelow's film *The Hurt Locker* (2008) in order to show how the schizophrenising organisation of the brain itself constitutes the greatest obstacle in the military's efforts to dispense with the traumatic affections generated by violence and war.

I. Tabloid Oedipus

The presence of Oedipus in *Shock Corridor* is part of the tabloid paraphernalia that Fuller's work always seems keen on deploying, yet Oedipus is hardly what the film is about. The clichés Fuller's films are

consistently ridden with (of sexual perversion, adult exploitation and even melodramatic sentimentality) are never left undisturbed as obvious truth. Instead, Fuller submits the cliché to a process of transformation, not so much through intellectual refinement or didacticism as through a visceral enhancement of its crudest aspects. In *Shock Corridor* Oedipus belongs to the category of a psychic cliché, an inalterable formula that aims at enclosing an infinite process of desire into a purely intelligible and hollow phantasm. Thus, although Fuller's film may well begin with a tabloid-like Oedipal narrative, it does not stay there long. In his introduction to *Deleuze and the Schizoanalysis of Cinema*, Ian Buchanan distinguishes between a kind of cinema that emphasises machinic/productive/creative elements – the cinema that for Deleuze would roughly qualify as art – and a kind of cinema that emphasises mechanical/reproductive/commodifying elements (Buchanan 2008: 6). Considered through this distinction, Fuller's cinema – and his handling of Oedipus in *Shock Corridor* – very much falls somewhere in-between the 'machinic' and the 'mechanical'. One might say that the machinic creativity of Fuller's films hinges upon the way they reconfigure the most blatantly mechanical and reproducible elements, such as the cliché of Oedipus in the case of *Shock Corridor*.

The film initially positions Johnny within the metaphorically Oedipal configuration formed by a series of male analysts acting as paternal figures, and the maternal care and concern of his girlfriend, Cathy. Johnny's incestuous behaviour towards his 'sister', although a charade/performance to be distinguished from his actual relationship with Cathy, does nothing if not reinforce the Oedipal overtones of the film's narrative framework. But such Oedipal narrative framework is soon dismantled as the film develops an increasingly distant, ironic and, ultimately, schizophrenic point of view with respect to its own provisional narrative codes. Here, we will just take stock of three concrete ways in which *Shock Corridor* drains the force out of Oedipus even before we witness Johnny's aggressive de-Oedipalisation in his subsequent encounters with fellow inmates Pagliacci, Stuart (James Best), Trent (Hari Rhodes), and Boden (Gene Evans). These three preliminary instances of de-Oedipalisation involve: the shocking transition from Cathy as maternal, melodramatic figure in the first scene to Cathy as lurid stripper in the scene immediately following; Johnny's physical assault by a group of nymphomaniac women in the psychiatric ward; and finally, the mocking tone the film adopts towards the cliché status of Freudian Oedipal discourse in Dr. Menkin's (Paul Dubov) interrogations of Johnny right before the latter is committed.

From the outset, *Shock Corridor* demonstrates a less than heartfelt commitment to standards of Oedipal normalcy by consistently undercutting these standards with the force of irony. In the course of one of the shock treatments administered to Johnny, his brain is invaded by a montage of images that blend Cathy's striptease performance with his most poignant encounters at the hospital – those with inmates Pagliacci, Stuart, Trent and Boden, as well as the unexpected attack he suffers at the hands of the nymphomaniac women. This latter event functions as a direct threat to Johnny's Oedipal subjectivity, a symbolic rape that initiates the erosion of his self-confidence as a capable man in both a sexual and a professional sense. Not coincidentally, when Johnny encounters Stuart in the scene immediately after the attack, it is Stuart who appears to qualify as 'normal', while Johnny's lost gaze and bruised, swollen and bandaged face lends him a forceful appearance of insanity. In every respect, the group of women who assault Johnny behave like a pack of hungry wolves, the incident resembling a non-human becoming of sexuality rather than a recognisably human one. Like the proverbial leader of the pack, one of the women circles around Johnny, while the others follow suit, closing in on him until they pile up on his helpless body and maul him over like a single wild body in heat. Framed by his two encounters with Stuart, the women's attack on Johnny effectively drains him of the self-confidence he requires in his investigative pursuits.

Although Dr. Menkin's interrogation of Johnny following Cathy's accusations to the police takes a straightforward Oedipalising approach to normalcy, the film finds a way to distance itself from its scripted underpinnings. After asking a series of questions on Johnny's relationships to his father, mother, brothers and sisters, Dr. Menkin is keen on identifying the origin of his incestuous tendencies, stating that 'there must have been a first time'. The thoughts expressed by Johnny's internal voice-over during the interrogation serve as the film's own commentary on the clichéd, ready-made nature of Freudian discourse. 'Now if he'd just ask me what made me feel different, the story will write itself,' we hear Johnny think to himself. Sure enough, having been coached by Dr. Fong on the predictable line of psychoanalytic questioning he should expect, Johnny is able to anticipate Dr. Menkin's every question without fail. As his internal voice continues to inform us of his anticipatory powers ('The next question's gotta be about fetishism according to Dr. Fong's script') and Dr. Menkin obliges ('Do you know what a fetishist is?'), the idea of Freudian psychoanalysis as a pre-scripted and prescriptive mode of interpretation is added to the mix, further solidifying the sense that the film is engaged in a

self-conscious mockery of Oedipus and its reductive understanding of desire. The whole scene in effect transpires as if the film were fully cognisant of the scenario alluded to in *Anti-Oedipus*:

> No one today can enter the analyst's consulting room without at least being aware that everything has been played out in advance: Oedipus and castration, the Imaginary and the Symbolic, the great lesson of the inadequacy of being or of dispossession. (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 308)

The question that Johnny repeatedly poses to each of his fellow inmates, 'Who killed Sloan in the kitchen?', is the question of the Oedipal subject, intent on plugging the lines of escape of desire with a totalising, global object. Both inmates Stuart and Trent stubbornly evade Johnny's strenuous efforts at extracting the killer's name. Stuart's response to Johnny's question begins to signal the film's intentions to enact desire as an open-ended, polyvocal process that can draw a multiplicity of connections and disjunctions among any number of partial objects. Thus, upon hearing the question, Stuart locks into the visual memory of the killer's white pants, which he then immediately connects to his recurring hallucinatory experiences of the American Civil War: 'White pants, white fence, a stone wall, a band in a stone wall! We've got to help General Lee!' The chain of partial objects thus assembled derails the linear and discursive operations of Oedipal language with a heterogeneous and transcursive machine that lies outside the strictly signifying function of language. Stuart's associative chain exemplifies a kind of 'positive dispersion' whereby 'the only relation between partial objects is the lack of relation' (Hughes 2008: 18).

While the film insists on withholding the killer's name for almost its entire duration, once his name is spoken, its importance is completely offset by the film's own disinvestment from the alleged killer, ward assistant Wilkes, in all but the most superficial of ways. By the time Johnny gets an opportunity to interrogate inmate Nobel physicist Dr. Boden, he is beginning to lose his speaking faculties as well as the boundaries of his own ego. While Boden is drawing a portrait of Johnny that we never get to see, Johnny loses his voice and can no longer articulate the all-important question that haunts him. Although he keeps repeating the question in his mind, as we are made to understand through his internal voice, his speech is seriously impeded. But when the question is finally blurted out as if unintentionally, and Boden provides the long-anticipated name of the killer, 'Wilkes', the moment proves wholly anti-climactic, as if this fetishised speech fragment was hardly a match for the far more potent flows of desire

engaging the inmates, the film itself and increasingly Johnny. Indeed, as Johnny is shown his own portrait, he is unable to recognise himself in the image drawn by Boden, his violent reaction suggesting that the dissolution of his ego is well under way. When we see Johnny straitjacketed in the next scene, not only does the name of the killer elude him entirely. In an utterly schizoid fashion, the place and function of the answer to his own question is now occupied by too many offshoots and variables, as if moment by moment, in passing from one imperceptible affective state to another, Johnny had been growing an indefinite number of heads or subjects. 'Dr Christo,' Johnny says, 'I know who killed Sloan in the kitchen . . . it's Dr. Christo; no, it's Cathy. I killed Sloan . . . Wilkes killed him, Cathy killed him.' Thus disengaged from a signifying imperative, the question ceases to be a question to become unbridled affirmation, pure desiring production. The lesson that Johnny's unconscious is taught, therefore, is not that the question lacks an answer (psychoanalytic mode of resignation/negativity), but that in fact it is capable of producing too many (schizoanalytic mode of exuberant creation/production/affirmation/non-exclusive disjunctions).

The film's interest in the question lies in the occasion it provides for a de-Oedipalisation of desire. The question elicits a fanning out of machinic connections and disjunctions, as it gets taken up by different subjects and as it intersects with the manifold, yet particular, flows of desire that pass through each of them. Each of the inmates is intensely committed to producing a uniquely assembled affective-performative flow that can grow and evolve in any direction. For Pagliacci, opera functions as such impersonal, non-signifying whole – the part alongside other parts that nonetheless has an effect on the other parts/objects that it is plugged into (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 43). For Stuart, this non-signifying function is taken up by the American Civil War and the Korean War; for Trent, it is identified with racism and segregation; and finally, for Boden, it corresponds to the nuclear arms race.

II. Building Blocks of Desire

By presenting the alleged witnesses to Sloan's murder as four distinct zones of desire, *Shock Corridor* exhibits an instinctive understanding of desire as an impersonal, yet multiplicitous, performative process.[2] Rather than build desire upon the whole/global, personal/familial Oedipal objects that Freudian psychoanalysis considers structurally determining of desire, the partial objects of schizoanalysis function as mobile/detachable and impersonal fragments. These schizzes, as Deleuze

and Guattari call them, attest to the lack of regard in the unconscious for persons or representations. As Deleuze and Guattari write, the schizo participates in the process of desire by 'continually detach[ing] [the chains], continually work[ing] them loose and carr[ying] them off in every direction in order to create a new polyvocity that is the code of desire. Every composition, and also every decomposition, uses mobile bricks as the basic unit' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 40). The kind of whole that is formed in this case, unlike the unified psychoanalytic object of desire, consists of an undifferentiated flow of absolutely different objects: 'The whole itself... establishes aberrant paths of communication between non-communicating vessels, transverse unities between elements that retain all their differences within their own particular boundaries' (43).

In *Shock Corridor* all of Johnny's attempts to isolate fragments of the inmates' delirious constructions in order to deprive them of their excessive mobility and intensive productivity, and to use them instead for his meaning-fixating purposes, are met time and again with stubborn resistance. Pagliacci's desire, for instance, is captured by a machinic assemblage that connects his own near-death experience of a heart attack while singing an aria onstage with his stabbing of his own wife and his witnessing of Sloan's murder in the kitchen at the mental institution. But when Johnny tries to interrupt Pagliacci's flow by pressing him to isolate the latter object in the chain (the event of Sloan's killing) for his own epistemological advantage, Pagliacci replies with a scrambling of events and temporalities, 'I didn't want my wife to die like Sloan, so I quietly sang her to death.' Not only is Johnny unable to utilise the inmates' experiences and memories toward his aim of gathering factual information, but it is Johnny himself who now becomes incorporated into the inmates' proliferating assemblages of desire as one more fragment or building block. In the scene immediately following the women's assault on Johnny, Stuart identifies Johnny's bruises as 'war wounds'; despite Johnny's efforts to maintain a masterful distance from the inmates' lunacy, this moment demonstrates Johnny's seamless assimilation into Stuart's desiring-machine of war.

The way *Shock Corridor* translates the inmates' hallucinations into film images speaks to the close affinity between schizoanalysis and cinema – between the libidinal force that connects disconnected fragments of desire and the power of cinematic montage to compose a continuous flow out of absolutely dissimilar and disjunctive fragments. In this respect, *Shock Corridor* reaches its most affectively productive moments by utilising schizoanalytic mechanisms of montage that closely

match the workings of the inmates' delirious unconscious. A second technique whereby the film marks its commitment to hallucinatory intensity is its selective use of colour during these affectively privileged moments. While *Shock Corridor*'s overall black and white stock points to the film's generically identifiable limits – the 1960s American psycho-thriller – the film's sporadic deviations from such generic specifications entail a loosening up of strictly signifying codes. These moments open the film onto a generic no-man's-land that ambiguously combines documentary/travelogue images with an irrational and evocative sense that interrupts the film's overall tempo and unified look. It is worth mentioning, also in regards to the film's use of colour, that, in Johnny's major interactions with both Stuart and Trent, colour serves to assert the syncretism of the character's brain and the cinematic brain. The sensorial intensity in the film's choice of colour is no longer merely a part of the film's and the spectator's formal experience, but it is fully integrated into the character's delirious experience at the diegetic level. 'Why is it colour?' Trent says to Johnny after his delirium, 'The same nightmare, always in colour.'

While some details in Stuart's speech during his central scene with Johnny provide some straightforward biographical information, such as his participation in the Korean War, the trajectory his speech follows, as well as the images we see while we hear his voice-over, draw a circuitous path that traverses in a few minutes various cultures, disparate objects and unrelated discourses. The film supplements Stuart's rambling speech with a visual track of images that produce a conjunction between Stuart's brain and the cinematic brain. The imposing statue of the Japanese Buddha Kamakura ('I keep seeing it in colour, and he keeps looking at me') initiates Stuart's chain of hallucinations. He continues, 'I keep seeing monks in a parade . . . the little girls just like baby geishas going to prayer, to ask Buddha to take care of me when I go to Korea.' These rather bucolic images of traditional Japanese culture give way to faster, more disorganised kinetic images, words and sensations that tap into the physical weight and mobility of objects as a way to evoke Stuart's political paranoia of communism.

From the aforementioned ritualistic images, we cut to a modern-looking amusement park. In Stuart's brain, and in the film's brain, the speedy movement of a globe-shaped revolving contraption is felt like an aggressive force that closes in on the American army and threatens to annihilate it: 'The wheel keeps going round and round and round . . . the commies all round and round us in Korea!' The episode ends in another highly iconic image of Japanese culture, Mount Fuji, whose uniqueness

and permanence as a cultural icon become literally unhinged. Mount Fuji is at once encased and speeded up by the film – literally framed between the body of a fast-moving train and the equally fast-moving railway beneath it. This sequence speaks to the affective passages and dislocations brought upon the subject by the takeover of modern speed and its displacement of the slower rhythms of tradition. With its references to the American involvement in the Korean War, the sequence also speaks to one of the foremost concerns in *Shock Corridor* – to emphasise the dramatic role that a steady string of wars since the beginning of the twentieth century were to play in the intensification of these affective dislocations.

III. Schizo-history

Inmate Trent provides the second major instance of hallucinatory sequences in the film. A black man with violently racist attitudes towards his own race, Trent aligns himself with the white majoritarian subject as he enacts another form of American violence: its 'other' Civil War of self-inflicted racism. The scene that focuses on Trent's delirious rantings is internally split into two differentiated parts, which proceed in accordance with the two types or poles of delirium as identified by Deleuze and Guattari:

> There [are] two major types of social investment, segregative and nomadic, just as there [are] two poles of delirium: first, *a paranoiac fascisizing . . . type or pole that invests the formation of central sovereignty . . . and disinvests every free 'figure' of desire* – yes, I am your kind, and I belong to the superior race and class. And second, *a schizorevolutionary type or pole that follows the lines of escape of desire*; breaches the wall and causes flows to move; assembles its machines and its groups-in-fusion in the enclaves or at the periphery – proceeding in an inverse fashion from that of the other pole: I am not your kind, I belong eternally to the inferior race, I am a beast, a black. (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 277; my emphasis)

The purpose of the paranoiac is to invest the formation of central sovereignty (in this case, white America), and to counterinvest those groups or flows (black America) that move at the margins and threaten the homogeneity and territoriality of the centre.[3] The investments of interest of the gregarious aggregate are pursued at the expense of the social and psychic repression of multiplicitous desires (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 280). Trent's identification with the white majoritarian subject in the first part of the scene mimics the paranoiac fascisising

type of delirium with outstanding exactitude ('I belong to the superior race and class'). Situated in the eponymous corridor at the hospital, a place designed for social encounters between inmates, this first part shows Trent's body and unconscious fully invested in a social field of large molar aggregates, what Deleuze and Guattari call a 'macrophysics of crowds'. Like the paranoiac, Trent utilises speech to 'engineer[] masses, he is the artist of . . . statistical formations or gregariousness, the phenomena of organized crowds' (279).

The first segment of the scene involving Trent is characterised by a great deal of tumultuous and chaotic physical movement, its mise-en-scene recalling the waves of a lynching mob and its delirious arousal by the raving cries of the preacher-madman. Trent's appropriation of racist rhetoric is further reinforced by the prophetic tones of his religious fervour: 'If Christ walked the streets of my hometown, he'd be horrified. You've never seen so many black people cluttering up the schools and buses, and cafés and washrooms! I'm for pure Americanism.' Standing up on a bench, Trent continues to deliver his racist speech, inciting the crowd of patients to 'burn that freedom bus, burn those freedom writers . . . burn every dirty nigger!' Such rhetorical violence is magnified by a rapid cutting pattern that alternates between a KKK hood-clad Trent and close-ups of a fellow inmate as he vociferously concurs with Trent's words with repeated 'Hallelujahs'. After exhorting the mob to persecute the only other black patient in the ward, a riot ensues. Johnny tries to separate a furious Trent from the black inmate, but the nurse attendants grab both Johnny and Trent indistinguishably as rioters and strap them down to contiguous beds.

The image of Trent and Johnny lying side-by-side, and identically swaddled by straightjackets, is both symmetrical and profoundly disquieting: it not only blurs notions of sanity and insanity, but it also anticipates the dismantling of racial binaries that immediately follows. Trent in this segment inadvertently transitions from paranoiac to schizophrenic. The large molar aggregates of the first part of the scene give way in the second part to a molecular chain of hallucinations that is more properly schizorevolutionary (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 277–8). Although this second part unfolds in a more intimate setting, it is not in the opposition between a collectivity and an individuality that we find the difference between the paranoiac and the schizo modes corresponding to the scene's two parts, but rather in the particular way each delirious mode organises populations or multiplicities: 'The paranoiac practices macrophysics. The schizo goes in the direction of microphysics' (280). The associative flow of partial objects Trent

follows in the second half of this scene conveys desire as a molecular phenomenon, a microphysics that operates on the basis of inclusive disjunctions rather than exclusive oppositions. As Trent begins to speak the following words between wakefulness and sleep, we soon enter into a hallucinatory sequence of colour images that features footage of the Karajá Indians in Brazil:

> Wednesday, August 30, 1954. The Supreme Court decreed the nation's schools must be racially desegregated... I'm a boy in the Amazon jungle, a brown boy, not a black boy... Someone's scraping my thigh with the teeth of a pirañan fish to change my blood to white blood [image of the bleeding thigh of a young Indian]... August 30, 1954. The US Supreme Court decreed the ceremonial dance to be racially desegregated [images of Karajá Indians in ceremonial dance wearing straw hoods resembling in shape those of KKK members]... here comes the KKK, run, run for your life! (Fuller 2003: 408)

Certain key details in the assemblage of Trent's delirious speech and visions are unmistakably schizoid. Here, the fixed symmetry between black and white, so zealously observed in the paranoiac segment of the scene, is disturbed by the emergence of a third term – brown – which opens up the 'either... or' structure of the repressive binary onto a chain of inclusive disjunctions that can potentially expand the number of objects in play ad infinitum. Trent's self-transposition onto the skin of a brown boy from the Amazon jungle liberates him from both his repressive identification with the white majoritarian subject and his fear as the black minoritarian other. Moreover, in the machinic assemblage formed by the delirious images of the Indian tribe and their association with American history and culture converge several fragments that are absolutely non-compossible. That is, this is a multiplicity inclusive of disjunctions that are only possible within the immanent plane of desire: thus, the signifiers of white blood and black blood, segregation and desegregation engage in free play and become dislocated from the power of their dominant signification. Even the image of the KKK is decoded and allowed to 'dance' freely, as seen by the conjunction and disjunction between the straw hoods worn by the Indians and the ominous white hoods worn by the KKK. As in Stuart's case, but even more intensely, Trent's delirium offsets American imperialism by decoding its flows through a chaotic synthesis of disparate cultures that yields a maximum effect of libidinal interconnectivity and productivity. In both Stuart and Trent's sequences, *Shock Corridor* transmutes the paranoiac mission America pursues time and time again by engaging in war and colonialism into a schizo-revolutionary cinematic event.

As the scenes discussed ostensibly show, instead of investing his desire in the Oedipal triangle decreed by psychoanalysis, the schizophrenic plugs himself into the names of history as so many zones of intensity with which he can forge transversal connections and flows. A schizoanalytic reading of *Shock Corridor* in fact allows us to qualify what some view as Deleuze's ahistorical understanding of cinema in his two volumes on *The Movement-Image* and *The Time-Image* (Beller 1998) by transferring his deeply socio-political/historical model of schizoanalytic desire to the field of cinema.[4] Yet, it is important to underscore that positing the primacy of desire through its very extension into the socio-political machines, as Deleuze and Guattari do, undermines a notion of the historical event as retrievable object of representation. In fact, the scene in *Shock Corridor* that I just examined may prove instructive in this regard, as each of its two distinct segments imparts a clearly different relation to history and its traumatic legacies, in effect pointing to two divergent historical models. While the first, paranoiac, fascisising segment enacts history as a given – an intractable scenario that enslaves even, or especially, the subject who masquerades as majoritarian – the second, schizo segment is both more historically grounded (as seen by the specific desegregation landmark that inaugurates Trent's hallucination) and progressively more invested in a notion of history as fabulation.

In their hallucinatory remappings of a series of places and times defining American history as a succession of violent events, the inmates in *Shock Corridor* express a libidinal resonance between the molar events of the large aggregates and their own affective states. In operating as a distiller of the affective forces that circulate in history, the schizo unwittingly performs what Massumi sees as a crucial task of capitalist critique: '[the] reconceptualiz[ation] [of] the processes by which affect is deterritorialized from its historical territory' (Massumi 2008: 61). In other words, the affects that circulate in a particular social field and congeal in specific normative meanings, codes and control mechanisms can be wrested away from these paralysing formations and allowed to stand in their autonomic and truly impersonal character. Thus isolated, these affects may then be separated from, and deprived of, the signifying and controlling power they have come to exert under the 'supposedly autonomous subject' and institutions of capitalism.

Instead of considering history as the ready-made content of collective human events that are truthfully documented or factually realised, Deleuze and Guattari invite us to consider history as a potentially malleable material, which, as we see in *Shock Corridor*, can trigger the transformative capacities of the powers of the false. To quote Deleuze

and Guattari in a passage that strongly recalls the two scenes just examined (Stuart's and Trent's) and the historical concerns they enact,

> Our [libidinal] choices . . . are at the crossroads of 'vibrations' . . . they express connections, disjunctions, and conjunctions of flows that cross through a society . . . *linking it up with other societies, ancient or contemporary, remote or vanished, dead or yet to be born. Africas and Orients*, always following the underground thread of the libido. *Not geohistorical figures or statues* . . . [*b*]*ut flows and codes of socius that do not portray anything*. (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 352; my emphasis)

History then is no longer a representation, but, unequivocally and irreverently, it becomes a performance. To reiterate my earlier point: the schizo's consumption of history enacts a distillation of the affective forces that circulate in history so as the more effectively to extricate those affects from the restraining limits they have acquired under the normative signifying regimes of the capitalist social machinery.

IV. Schizo-violence and War

If capitalism is synonymous with the privatisation of the public sphere (Adkins 2007: 163) – the dissolution of social codings into the familial enclave of Oedipus and the economic systems of production and consumption – a capitalist critique must in some measure attempt to reconnect psychic and social desiring machines, and expose their mutual schizophrenisation. Indeed, the linkages between the psychic and the social desiring machines enacted in *Shock Corridor* produce a reversal in the capitalist trend/trajectory of privatisation. As the private event of Sloan's murder opens up onto the brutalities of American history, *Shock Corridor* engages in the dismantling of the dominant melodramatic underpinnings of American narrative cinema: *Shock Corridor*'s madhouse exists at the centre of a centrifugal libidinal configuration that keeps emitting ripples of desire further and further out into history and the socius. Instead of maintaining psychic and social spheres apart in the manner of the Oedipal family under capitalism, *Shock Corridor* insists on the contagions, slippages, connections and disjunctions of desire that affect psychic and social machines simultaneously and interrelatedly, and even across temporalities and geographies.

Within the schizoanalytic dynamics of violence, one can no longer speak of a symmetrical causality between the social and the private: we cannot posit the social conditions as the underlying cause for these

men's state of madness. The collective/social machine is not given prior to the psychic machine, nor is it determining of it in a unidirectional way. When critics remark that the men's insanity in *Shock Corridor* can be traced back to 'widespread social problems' (Dombrowski 2008: 156), they are, in effect, disconnecting the psychic and the social desiring machines, as they render the former mere passive recipients of the latter. Rather, from the outset, a non-arborescent, non-hierarchical model of rhizomatic connections between violent bodies/events precludes the possibility of isolating some exclusively as causes, and some exclusively as effects, in the circuitry of violence. Indeed, as we see in the case of Trent's delirious identification with white racism, the very categories of perpetrators/oppressors and victims/oppressed sometimes overlap and become muddled. Violent bodies in *Shock Corridor*, one might say, are not just absorbers of the shocks transmitted by the social desiring machines of war, but, as the film's hallucinatory segments especially reveal, they insert themselves into, and extend, the violent force of these machines into other spaces and temporalities.

Thus, *Shock Corridor* develops a notion of violence that eludes the organising categories consistently used to quell the force of violence or to justify its necessity in the interests of civilisation. I would like to call this notion of disorganised/deterritorialised violence 'schizo-violence'. Disengaged from the insidiously moralising binary of action and reaction, schizo-violence is ceaseless action without reaction. Schizo-violence does not become involved in the narrative containment of a violent action with a matching violent reaction. Instead, it opens up the violent action to multiple connections and transformations outside the Oedipal framings of libidinal forces. The deregulated circuitry of schizo-violence thus formed cannot be securely locked or quelled, as it remains indefinitely in a state of suspended animation and potential expansion.

As an indefinitely expansible force, the notion of schizo-violence allows us to address the resonances that Fuller's film emits in relation to our contemporary engagement with war. Although, as indicated earlier, other films by Fuller dramatise a more straightforward relation to the ravages of war than *Shock Corridor*, there can be no doubt as to the threads this film weaves, indeed the machinic connections it forges, with and around 1960s America's relation to war, and even, for our purposes, far beyond that historical point. In fact, Fuller's own experience as a GI in both World War II and the Korean War, and his own understanding of cinema as a 'battleground of emotions', as he himself describes the medium in Godard's *Pierrot le Fou* (1965), imbue his entire cinematic

oeuvre with a kind of unapologetic expression of violent action that is quite unmatched among Hollywood filmmakers.[5]

More specifically, *Shock Corridor* tells us about the schizophrenic leakages war produces, yet is unable to contain. Materialised through the various hallucinatory sequences examined above, these leakages take on a more literal tone in one of the film's last scenes, as Johnny, sitting next to a grotesquely corpulent Pagliacci on a bench in the corridor, hallucinates a deluge that floods the entire hallway. While the sound of rolling thunder approximates that of bombs being detonated in the battlefield, expressionistically lit shots of Johnny slipping on the flooded floors, barely able to stand back up, and then falling down again on his knees as he is hit by lightning, eerily evoke the physical postures and gestures of fighting or wounded bodies in combat. The fury of libidinal forces conveyed by the thunderstorm increases as the black and white footage in the corridor changes to colour images of raging waterfalls – the counterpart to Stuart and Trent's delirious images of Asian and South American cultures in previous scenes. The total evacuation of cultural coding from the waterfall images matches Johnny's increasingly schizophrenic state, culminating in the zero intensity of the body without organs of his final catatonic state.

Just as, as we have seen, *Shock Corridor* cannot consider the Oedipal framework of identity in any but the most ironic and irreverent of lights, its implicit views on the war-infested wounds of American culture are equally critical of the state's tendency to Oedipalise the soldier's relation to war.[6] Under the capitalist system, the Oedipalisation of the subject's sexuality and identity within the family is extended into, and reinforced by, the subject's relation to other molar aggregates, and, in particular, his relation to the state and the military machines. Oedipal structures grounded in hierarchical role models not only encourage the imitation of such models through acts of heroism and courage, but also enforce the repression of any affects that may get in the way of the soldier's willingness to kill for the love of his mother/fatherland. Through this Oedipalising process, the war machine secures the legitimation and territorialisation of its killing apparatus, and is able to turn appalling acts of violation and carnage into something palatable and even laudable.

Yet, the military shows no understanding of the schizo-activity of libidinal forces – their primordial unruliness and their tendency to bypass all sorts of regulatory binaries put in place toward the legitimised exercise of violence. The compartmentalising procedures inherent in the territorialisation of killing are in fact quite inimical to the wirings of the

human brain. Thus, the disjunctive logic that the troops are trained to internalise – 'This is the time, place, and kind of person to kill, but this is not the time, place, or kind of person to kill' – does not always withstand the complex libidinal flows that traverse a body turned killing machine. The brain can scramble the codes, and plug itself into other machines in ways that are detrimental to the organised aims of the totalising machine that it serves. Everywhere and without warning, libidinal leakages may surge at a moment's notice.

On 5 November 2009, Major Nidal Hasan, a Muslim psychiatrist serving in the military base of Fort Hood, Texas, went on a shooting rampage that resulted in the killing of thirteen and the wounding of thirty-three military personnel. A deterritorialisation of military violence took place in this event through a multiple dislocation of habitual codes – first, by featuring a Muslim both as a member of the US army and as agent of the violence perpetrated against his fellow servicemen; and second, by the violence being unleashed in the supposedly safe enclave of American soil. When a soldier has been trained in the mechanics of killing, the affections linked to his involvement in this activity are prone to prevail beyond the so-called legitimate bounds of killing. Once his brain and his affects have been hijacked by 'the harshest forms of despotism and repression' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 362–3), he will not stop to discriminate between a situation in which it is legitimate to kill and one in which it is not.

Moreover, the Fort Hood incident exhibits a performative irony with respect to the territorialisation/deterritorialisation of war that cannot go unnoticed. The news media painted Hasan as poorly assimilated within the American military culture and its objectives. The major was to be deployed to Afghanistan shortly, and that was alleged to have caused him deep anxiety. A Muslim himself, Hasan would have been expected to reconcile himself to the idea of killing other Muslims, which would no doubt have scrambled his own codes of allegiance. Instead, he re-enacted the army's imposition on him of betrayal of his kind by performing another form of betrayal – shooting at fellow Americans on American soil. As in the case of Trent in *Shock Corridor*, a black man who persecutes his own race, the Hasan incident illuminates the trend in schizoanalytic desire to work through inclusive disjunctions, thus mocking all efforts at maintaining categories distinct in the service of legitimised aggression. While the inmates in *Shock Corridor* establish rhizomatic connections with other cultures far removed from their own, events such as the Fort Hood massacre draw attention to the way in which such rhizomatic connections between distant cultures or disparate

worldviews are already materialised and woven together in the very fabric of today's social organisation.

In a brilliant essay exploring the role of affect in combat killing, John Protevi argues that the inhibitions the majority of soldiers experience when it comes to killing at close range have to be disabled through several strategies that are aimed at diluting their individual agency and responsibility. Protevi mentions the import of 'distance, machinics, teamwork, command, and dehumanization' in deactivating the soldiers' inhibitions (2008: 409). The emphasis on psychological distance and desensitisation during training as well as physical distance during actual/virtual combat are some of the strategies the military deploys in territorialising the act of killing by eliminating the affective impact of war on the brain. The possibility of carrying out military strikes with UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles), for instance, thoroughly responds to such efforts. Yet, according to statements issued in a 2 February 2010 'Frontline' documentary titled 'Digital Nation', drone pilots conducting such strikes behind a computer 'have had similar levels of PTSD [post-traumatic stress disorder] as those pilots who have physically flown'. The army's territorialising efforts cannot eliminate the affective dislocations these pilots experience, as their activity instantiates inclusive disjunctions that they cannot assimilate – first, because they deliver missiles and kill actual people from a position of distance and invulnerability; and second, because they are simultaneously immersed in a war and able to return to the safety of their home and family every evening. As P. W. Singer, author of *Wired for War*, notes, 'the disconnect between being at war and being at home is very hard for the human mind to wrap itself around' (Singer in 'Digital Nation' 2010). The case of these pilots plainly attests to the military's foolishness in believing that the human brain can enter into and exit from the phantasmagoric theatre of war unscathed, only to transition smoothly on to any other environment or project.

V. Schizo-violence in *The Hurt Locker*

On the surface, Bigelow's *The Hurt Locker* could not be more distant from Fuller's *Shock Corridor*. But it is the similarly oblique way in which Bigelow's film performs the affects of war that interests us here. Unlike *Shock Corridor*, *The Hurt Locker* is directly immersed in the theatre of war. Yet, this is no conventional war film either, for its specific focus seems strategically designed to foreground the affects that link the soldier to either a traumatic revulsion/horror of war or an equally traumatic addictive attachment to it. While straight combat only takes a small part

of the film, the majority of its time is devoted to the bomb dismantling operations of a bomb squad unit of American soldiers stationed in Iraq. This three-man bomb squad (or 'Explosive Ordinance Disposal Team') is led by bomb tech Sergeant James (Jeremy Renner) who is highly skilled at deactivating the improvised explosive devices (IEDs) invisibly scattered by the enemy all through the urban Iraqi landscape. Sergeant James's extreme attachment to his job manifests itself in his sheer dependence on it as a basis for identity, although, as we will see in a moment, such dependence gives rise to something other than a conventional idea of identity. The film signals James's identification with his lethal job through several details: while sitting on his bed alone and away from the perils of his job, James puts on the helmet of his 90-pound bomb suit; after saving Specialist Eldridge (Brian Geraghty) from insurgent fire, James showers while still dressed in his bomb suit; back home on leave, James cannot communicate with either his wife or his baby, telling the latter that he loves the thrill of combat more than he loves being a dad; and the film's closing shots further corroborate Sergeant James's addiction to death, as we see him back in the streets of an Iraqi town fully encased in his bomb-suit identity.

Through all these telling details, the film refuses to characterise James's daredevil disposition simply as courage or heroism. Rather, James's fearless disposition is expressed as an addictive overinvestment whose nihilistic force alone can enable him to tolerate, and even survive, the extremities of his job. When faced with the impossible choice of either investing in death while alive or dying, James becomes addicted to the *jouissance* of his own living death, this becoming the only zone of desire he can now occupy. In this sense, Sergeant James may be understood as a variation on one of the affective mechanisms or dispositions that enable a soldier to overcome the threshold of inhibition when faced with a close combat situation. Protevi describes this disposition as 'the berserker rage': 'the frenzy of killing anything that enters the "death zone" immediately in front of the berserker' (Protevi 2008: 409). Like the berserker, James enacts a willed embracing of death, this time under a more civilised appearance of technical skill; however, the similarities go further. Protevi describes this nihilistic embrace as one that requires a certain dumping of subjectivity. In place of conscious control of one's body as the agent of the action, 'the practical agent… is not the individual person or subject, but the emergent assemblage of military unit and non-subjective "affect program"' (408). The berserker's body is taken over by a primitive affective module 'which functions as an agent [and] runs the body's

hardware [in place of the subject]' (409). As we will see in a moment, the assemblage formed by James and every single object and haecceity that composes his bomb-dismantling operations may be said to trigger the kind of affective module that allows him to bypass his own subjectivity as well.

Through Sergeant James's alienation from his own parental function as well as from the homeland, which he seems to perceive merely as an obscene abundance of commodities, *The Hurt Locker* convincingly de-Oedipalises the soldier's relation to war. In a schizoanalytic sense, Sergeant James instantiates the nihilistic channelling of desire into an assemblage of partial objects of death. Not only is his desire fully invested in his job as a bomb tech; one could go further and say, following Protevi, that Sergeant James's individual subjectivity is entirely bypassed in the supra-personal assemblage he forms with the countless possible interactions between myriad fragments and haecceities composing his bomb-dismantling activities: the merciless Middle-Eastern heat, his bomb suit, his bomb-dismantling tools, his comrades, the Iraqi civilians and insurgents around them; and, most importantly, the thrilling, altogether unpredictable configurations of visibility/invisibility, space, time, size, degree of sophistication and detonating connections that define each of his adrenaline-charged encounters with the explosive devices themselves. Such encounters are the obverse of the drone-pilot experience we discussed earlier. The IEDs deployed by insurgents might in fact be understood as the ironic counterpart to the unmanned aerial strikes conducted by the US military. Whereas the UA strikes carry out a despatialisation of the soldier/pilot – his spatial separation from the enemy targets/bodies he fights – in order to manage the affects potentially unleashed in closer-range combat, the activity of dismantling of IEDs forces the soldier to stage an intimate physical encounter with a hidden, uncontrollable weapon. Thus, to the extreme distantiation of US hi-tech military tactics, the insurgent tactics counter the hard-to-localise, lethal proximity of low-tech devices.

Several elements differentiate James's encounters with IEDs from a conventional picture or representation of war. Because the bomb-disabling situation departs, like the drone-pilot experience, from the visible oppositional dynamics of conventional combat, it is equally exemplary of the notion of schizo-violence examined earlier. In both these scenarios, the violence of the act of killing differs from the model where a violent action is followed by a violent counteraction that immediately contains, offsets or disables the first attack/offence. Instead,

violence in either of these cases is unidirectional: it is both heightened and concentrated on one single pole. The absence of a counter-action serves to divest the war situation from a sense of rational necessity or immediate justification, thus enhancing the possibility of free-floating affects that would otherwise be masked by the very necessity of engaging in conventional oppositional combat. Violence in effect becomes pure action without physical accountability or agency attached to this action, and without immediate reaction on the part of the attacked party. Whether in the mode of agent of violence (drone pilot) or in the disabling, defensive mode (bomb tech), what matters to us here is that both instances may be seen as schizo-assemblages of desire that give full range of expression to the combatant's affective ties with war. Thus, both situations serve to illustrate the military's failures at decreasing the impact of affective experience by increasing technical competence.

Although *The Hurt Locker*'s overall stress on violent tension built through silence, empty streets and economic, fully regimented gestures is the obverse of *Shock Corridor*'s hallucinating, hysterical bodies, the film's affective spillage unfolds in two forms that are no less conclusive. Specialist Eldridge epitomises the vulnerable, weak-willed soldier who immediately registers the psychological trauma of war violence, and who receives no real help from the combat stress psychologist, whose only purpose is 'to keep soldiers in the fight'. But by far the most original contribution *The Hurt Locker* makes to the examination of war-related affect lies in the film's shocking array of images of Sergeant James, whose very control and nonchalance in the face of suspended death cannot be felt as anything but full-blown madness. By the end of the film, Sergeant James is still physically intact, but there can be no other end for him but to become one with the explosive fury of a detonation. In a war film that builds its effects of suspense on the paradoxical impossibility of psychological coolness, the physical explosions themselves serve as the only outlet for the affect. Only in an eventual explosion that in this case is forever kept out of sight, will Sergeant James finally catch up with the affect waiting to burst out from within him.

VI. Conclusion

The films as well as the contemporary war scenarios just examined enact forms of institutionalised violence that channel, organise and constrain desire by distributing it across the tyrannical and nihilistic flows of the war machine. But, at the same time, through affective deterritorialisations of violence, they also enact transformations of

Oedipalised narratives of war into machinic assemblages of desire with the capacity to grow and evolve in unsuspected directions. In relinquishing Oedipal reactivity and embracing a schizo form of violence, these scenarios isolate the inherently affirmative potentialities of desire out of the darkest, most repressive libidinal configurations. Thus, it could be said that both Sergeant James in *The Hurt Locker* and the four inmates in *Shock Corridor* enact escape attempts by holding off their imminent psychosis through certain forms of artistic expression or competence – the art of the bomb disposal, the art of the operatic voice, the art of performance, the art of drawing. As they tap into creative assemblages that allow them to exist in a kind of affirmative madness while in the midst of violence or war, they make a mockery of the line that separates sanity from insanity, and even nihilism from affirmative creation. From the perspective of an affirmative ethics, the sheer madness of the actions performed in these instances no longer elicits the moral judgement that brands desire as pathological. Instead, the schizophrenising process of desire itself ceases to be the sign of sickness, which is now to be located elsewhere:

> What makes the schizophrenic ill, since the cause of the illness is not schizophrenia as a process? What transforms the breakthrough into a breakdown? It is the constrained arrest of the process, or its continuation in the void. We have seen . . . how social production produced the sick schizo: constructed on decoded flows . . . capitalism is constantly counteracting this [decoding] tendency, exorcizing this limit by substituting internal relative limits for it . . . an axiomatic of flows that subjects this [decoding] tendency to the harshest forms of despotism and repression . . . the process is arrested, the limit of desiring-production is displaced, travestied, and now passes over into the Oedipal subaggregate. So the schizo is effectively neuroticized, and it is this neuroticization that constitutes his illness. (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 362–3)

It is the repressive stratifications and regulations imposed on desiring flows and absorbed day in and day out by the body/brain that produce an unsustainable accumulation of libidinal force. In the case of war violence, these despotic repressions and inevitable accumulations of libidinal force instantiate the way in which civilisation turns death against death, and makes this turned-back death into a force of desire, all the while thinking itself 'sanctified as the sole agency capable of opposing the death desire' (332).

In one of their very sparse references to the cinema in *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari accurately render the schizoid nature of madness and violence that animates both *Shock Corridor* and *The Hurt Locker*

when they say, 'Perhaps the cinema is able to capture the movement of madness, precisely because it's not analytical or regressive, but explores a global field of coexistence' (274). In *Shock Corridor* and *The Hurt Locker*, as well as in the attempt made in this essay to bring them together along with other scenarios, events are machinically related not by virtue of the empirical or factual similarities that might provide analogical correspondences between them, but by virtue of the virtual similarities in the affects that traverse them. Both *Shock Corridor* and *The Hurt Locker* explore a global field of desire that not only puts in touch unrelated temporalities, geographies and historical constellations, but, in so doing, reveals the nihilistic impotence of the segregating actions of morality and reason and their destructive consequences for life. It is precisely by segregating and regulating desire that the reactive forces of morality achieve the transformation of 'a line of flight [into] destruction, abolition pure and simple' (Holland 2008: 77). Because desire and morality are each other's antidotes, morality cannot be invoked to render our desires creative or affirmative. For that, we need an ethics that begins by respecting the force of desire as a supra-personal force that is vitally irrepressible, an ethics that does away with the notion of desire as an individual eccentricity that must be denied or contained in the interests of a higher communal good. Yet, today, as in Fuller's time, we are far from the age Foucault announced, when madness and desire would be synonymous, and when madness itself

> would disappear, not because it would be lodged within the controlled space of mental illness . . . but on the contrary because the exterior limit designated by madness would be overcome by means of other flows escaping control on all sides, and carrying us along. (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 321)

Notes

1. Although Johnny's pursuit of professional success might be understood as a form of libidinal investment, from an anti-Oedipal perspective, it is more properly a manifestation of preconscious 'interest' than one of unconscious 'desire'. Within the social investments, Deleuze and Guattari distinguish between 'the unconscious libidinal investment of group or desire, and the preconscious investment of class or interest' (1983: 343). To further understand this difference, we can consider Deleuze and Guattari's alignment of 'interest' with the aims of the 'subjugated group', and desire with those of the 'subject-group': 'The characteristics of a subjugated group [are:] the subordination to a socius as a fixed support that attributes to itself the productive forces, extracting and absorbing the surplus value therefrom; the effusion of anti-production and death-carrying elements within the system . . . the phenomena of group "superegoization", narcissism, and hierarchy – the mechanisms for the

repression of desire. A *subject-group*, on the contrary, is a group whose libidinal investments are themselves revolutionary; it causes desire to penetrate into the social field, and subordinates the socius or the form of power to desiring-production . . . ' (348).

2. The various performative flows in which the inmates engage are not simply socially acceptable channels for the violent forces within them, but rather creative expressions of these past and present forces. These enactments could in fact be construed as creative transformations of such nihilistic forces. Put in a different way, their 'cultivation of an ensemble of "perverse" practices, identifications and fantasies, allows [them] not only to act out [in a reactive way], but also to work through' (Santner 1996: 145) violent forces in an active/creative way.
3. Trent's performance of racist zeal dramatises the idea, expressed by Peter Canning (2000) and Zygmunt Bauman (2007), among others, that the sovereign community needs to resort to violence and to install a regime of perpetual war against private liberties and desires in order to win, or rather pretend that it can win, its fight for the ever more precarious security and protection of its members. In the increasingly difficult task of keeping its physical and symbolic borders stable and closed, the community needs to posit clear enemies within or without those borders, enemies that it can collectively persecute, torture and mutilate so as to build a collective sense of purpose and to strengthen the people's trust in the state's dubious ability to competently safeguard their security.
4. Jonathan Beller, for instance, has argued that Deleuze's exclusive focus on the masterpieces of cinema gives rise to a theory of the medium as an agent of deterritorialisation of desire. For Beller, such a theory blatantly disregards the historical and economic conditions that underpin any filmic text in favour of an idea of cinema as 'the becoming molecular of the molar, the destratification of the stratified' (1998: 79). But, rather than looking at the cinema books in isolation, as Beller does, it may be more productive to revisit Deleuze and Guattari's own theory of desiring-machines and their essential involvement with a social field, such as is outlined in *Anti-Oedipus*, by way of advancing a Deleuzian critique of Deleuze's own omissions in the cinema books: 'Every delirium is first of all the investment of a field that is social, economic, political, cultural, racial, and racist, pedagogical, and religious: the delirious person applies a delirium to his family and son that overreaches them on all sides' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 274). Nothing therefore prevents us from exiting the philosophical parameters of Deleuze's books on cinema and experimenting with a schizoanalytic model of cinema that, as we can see in *Shock Corridor*, can link desiring machines and social machines.
5. *Shock Corridor* figures among Fuller's works as a unique exploration of naturalist modes of violence, which are based upon what Deleuze calls the impulse-image. For Deleuze, the action-image of realist violence runs counter to the brutality and unsettling restraint of the impulse-image of naturalism (1986: 134). While Deleuze admits that Fuller obsessively pursues the impulse-image of naturalism, he thinks he fails to realise it in a fully unrestrained way. As I argue in this analysis of *Shock Corridor*'s hallucinatory sequences, however, this film departs from the realist mode of violence of the action-image in unequivocal ways.
6. Fuller's remarks on his vitalist motives for engaging with war in his films are clearly dismissive of the Oedipalising mechanisms I just described: 'The primary motive for all action . . . in all my war movies is survival, not heroism. I wanted to underscore the futility of battle and the tragic human waste' (Fuller 2003: 277).

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Accumulation, Transmission. Deleuze and the Movements of the Seventh Series

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Abstract

This essay probes into the possibility of encountering the Deleuzian sense-event in four Tom Stoppard radio plays, *Moon* (1964), *Boot* (1964), *Glad* (1966) and *Artist Descending A Staircase* (1972). Itself an incorporeal – an occurrence of the interface – the wonderful and strange protagonist of Gilles Deleuze's 1969 *Logic of Sense* is approached in apophatic gestures, with a glimpse at the various vestiges it has left upon texts. Within this exercise in indirection, 'empty forms' present themselves as the texts' circulating words. Informed by and receiving infusions from two parallel flows of Deleuzian signifiers and signifieds, these entities are singled out as the texts' pointers that open up a cleavage where the sense-event can issue forth.

Keywords: Deleuze, Stoppard, radio, sense, event, language

I. Introduction

This is an attempt to account for the oftentimes deliberate gaps, overlappings or paradoxical attachments of Deleuzian sense and its ground of subsistence, the dramatic utterance, in four Tom Stoppard radio plays, *M is for Moon Among Other Things* (1964), *The Dissolution of Dominic Boot* (1964), *If You're Glad I'll Be Frank* (1966) and *Artist Descending A Staircase* (1972). Itself an incorporeal – an occurrence of the interface – the wonderful and strange protagonist of Gilles Deleuze's 1969 *Logic of Sense* (Deleuze 1990) will be approached in apophatic gestures, with a glimpse at the various vestiges it has left

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upon texts. Within this exercise in indirection, an encounter with the Deleuzian sense-event, 'empty forms' will present themselves. Informed by and receiving infusions from two parallel flows of Deleuzian signifiers and signifieds, instances of intermediariness, these entities will be singled out as the texts' pointers that open up a cleavage where the sense-event can issue forth as 'a mist' (Deleuze 1990: 24) over the surface of the states of affairs in a realm of omni-visibility.

Such loci of unresolvedness will constitute the terrible non-distinction of the terms of two parallel series of signifiers and signifieds. Hollow Deleuzian inherences isomorphically sharing the structure of the sense-event, these 'empty forms' will function as the regulators of two series' strings of propositions. What is non-belonging will only be shaped in-between two disparate flows of enunciations and bodily mixtures. My readings of the four plays, then, will constitute an effort to account for the continual generations of sense emerging out of these language movements in the shifting, interpenetration, disparity or imbalance in the series of signifiers and Deleuzian signifieds. The two series' workings, thus, will turn out to have a more macabre side to them, a certain capacity to produce Deleuzian 'unholy mixtures' in which signifiers and signifieds regulated by a circulating word interconvert in a constant quasi-dialectical movement towards becoming their opposites. Causing monsters of the depths of bodily mixtures (signifieds) to surface as language, the Deleuzian circulating word – the series' regulator – will also make muffled signifiers topple over signifieds in a simultaneous swish.

II. Preludes, Preambles

The Face Before

This is a realm oblivious to recognition. Perspectivism has become obsolete; speaking voices merely function as things among things: neither as groundings of their enunciations, nor as instances from which states of affairs are encountered and accounted for. Such thinking would demand the dispensation of any conditional elaboration. Within this centre-less Neoplatonic territory, it is flatness that steps forward bearing 'neither a fixed point nor a horizon that can orient thought' (Agamben 2000: 228). *The Logic of Sense*, then, proposes a theory of meaning that opens up to a line of thought indifferent to analogy, similarity or to the matching of local descriptions. It posits its terms as differentials on a single plane where parallel subsistence is the norm rather than delineation through negation. Posited on a plane that is all foreground, events are only

encountered in their difference from events. Be they words, poems, dialogues or images, events are not to be aligned with substance, nor do they function as copies, emanations or vestiges of being. Inhering in corporeal entities without being reduced to the corporeal, they are not entirely incorporeal either. Rather, events retain a peculiar neither/nor quality, to borrow the apophatic gesture with which Derrida approaches khōra (Derrida 1995: 91), the ineffable placeless place in-between being and non-being. An event, then, is a way to account for a transition: it marks the very act of collision when sense, without constituting meaning, and without being sound, emerges on the rifts between the two. This is what I envision in my readings of the four plays: humans, fossils, pieces of technology, pieces of emotion, proper and common names, enunciations and silences will be put on the same plane, as things among things on a spreadsheet operating in an Auerbachian 'perpetual foreground'. Stretched out in clear prints, they will conceal nothing: organs and skin, skulls and flesh will remain eternally visible and graspable at once, on a surface that is simultaneously the interface.

The Event of Sense. Dialectical Twists

Like almost all historically distant books, *The Logic of Sense* confronts me with an impenetrability. Obsolete words and conceptual fireworks dim my vision. At first, I am introduced to the bodies of the world: they reside on a plane intertwined in tensions, actions and passions. A second glance and the propositions of language step forward. The enveloping, the mist spreading over these interconversions, is that of incorporeal events. Saussure's signifiers and signifieds have been idiosyncratically mapped onto the division between propositions and bodily mixtures. All the while, the sense-event, an incorporeal psychopomp constituting a homologous mimicking of Spinoza's 'expression' and Hjelmslev's 'purport', eternally shifts between the two 'parallel orders' (Brusseau 1998: 63), showing a different Janus face in its encounters with words and worlds.

Within this frame, all I am confronted with is a surface, and the emergence of a sense-event in transference. Fascinatingly, the surfacing of the event is language's greatest visibility and simultaneously, it marks the very impenetrability of it: 'If there is nothing outside of the surface, if all there is *is* surface, then what characterises the surface is inescapable, unsurpassable. There is no looking elsewhere in order to discover or understand our world or our worlds' (May 1994: 43). This newness is completely flat: it is an expressed that is unextractable from its

expression. The event turns one face to the heights and one to the depths, yet is of the order of neither.

Still, the incorporeality of the sense-event has nevertheless found an explication in the series of propositions. Deleuze locates it in a strange spot, the 'circulating word' of a text. Offering yet another isomorphic map of the structure of the event, he postulates the 'circulating word' as that which works as a differentiator regulating two parallel series, turning a face to both while being of none. The circulating word functions as a peculiar point of convergence that, because of its highest capacity to explicate sense, has a paradoxical nature. In its very being, it is the differentiator – the divergent catalyst – and yet, its function is to work towards the series' convergence. Thus, it is a living contradiction, and one that continually carves a path towards its own displacement. While in a state of perpetual motion between the two series it is, just like sense, reducible to none and inherent in none. Reminiscent of the zero phonemes in linguistics, an entity of two faces, a two-sided mirror, it simultaneously functions as 'word and object, sense and denotatum, expression and designation' (Deleuze 1990: 40). The series' movement is guided by such circulating words precisely because they work as a Deleuzian 'zero place' within both flows, that is as an object pointing to its own distance from the series that it determines. What it does to the series, then, is nothing more than to throw light on them, leave a cleavage, a bare spot from which their very sense could shine forth.

What is of interest for the plays' analysis will be the proliferation of this zero place in texts as classified in what I find to be the book's most alluring part, 'Seventh Series of Esoteric Words' (Deleuze 1990: 42–8). The circulating word here is presented as the regulator of two sets of dualities. It is its empty quality that guarantees the circulation of sense and performs a coordinating role between two divergent series – of states of affairs and propositions – by dint of their being carriers of the series' senses. This behaviour is described as 'conjunction' (47). Here, the circulating word mediates the series allowing for no primacy of one string of flows over the other, and functions as an in-between 'point of suture' (Žižek 2004: 34). While the two series may present themselves as successive within the text, a temporality in itself, within the terms of sense they will invariably be co-extensive.[1] Hence, two different and yet simultaneous parallel flows with regard to the circulating word – itself traditionally a strange object explicating the utmost concentration of sense – are formed. While divergent, they reveal a mirror quality governed by the circulating word and are oftentimes dependent on

a point where elements belonging to one series undergo a transition to another.

III. Before Reading. An Interlude

Unlike the rest of Stoppard's oeuvre for the stage, and unlike the remaining body of his radio plays, *Moon*, *Boot*, *Glad* and *Artist* are either too short to develop a character or an idea – indeed, I am only confronted with an *in medias res* unresolved situation – or include too many temporal and referential shuffles to be immediately graspable. Yet, having overcome the initial confrontation with a text challenging my habits to locate and presuppose an inherent sense, I am still unsatisfied with the decision that there are certain texts, their ideas being 'too thin', that just do not lend themselves to a reading. Though presentational, with its constant interplay of uncertainties the medium opens up a suture. Both speaker and listener are already found in a perpetual enactment of their own disappearance in hearing-somebody-speak in the face of the speaker's problematic immediacy. Thanks to this subtle layering of undecided presences – of listener and of performer – the radio play could be described as a constant exercise in evocation. Namely, it is perpetually engaged in re-enacting the wish for the auditory presence evoked in listening. Thus, radio plays are bound to open in a moment of utmost frustration and maximum ambiguity (absence), slowly unravelling towards immediacy and presentness. Stoppard is no exception: by mystifying perception, uncertainties are retained until the very end.

The dramatic pieces at hand display a world of an utmost immediacy. Still, it is this immediacy that comes across as strangely puzzling: the words on the page appear to be all that there is. This display of absolute visibility, yet, only makes them almost baffling. Encountering the early Stoppard is thus very much like reading a Renaissance play, or any work pertaining to a world long-since vanished, enveloped by a mindset with a world-making ability to be either historically reconstructed or yet accounted for. On one level, the plays are simple to the point of being trivial, and still, it is precisely this quality that makes them partly nonsensical, partly cryptic. Their emptiness is not that of the Beckettian void lurking beyond each sentence and gesture, but the emptiness of an immediacy so much in front of me, that it has become invisible. I can only witness the world-in-writing as a continuous movement of generation, a claymation. Within this non-hierarchical, non-oppositional movement, I would find 'a system of language that is not linguistics,

but that emerges as sense out of the literary work of art' (Olkowski 2008: 108).

Likewise, the emergence of relations will paradoxically remain a concrete abstraction: it will speak exactly of what there is. Four words[2] will posit themselves as the grounding of the relation and as the relation between two disparate orders. Humans will lose their anthropomorphic capacity of 'action'. Rather, they will function as props yielding themselves to the movements of language and propelled by them. Personal pronouns and active verbs will figure in the readings only nominally, and either nothing (not even human agents) or almost everything (words, props) will be endowed with the faculty of doing. Language, speaking with Heidegger, will cease to be conceived as an exclusively human property, but will posit itself as the marker of ultimate convergence and approximation regardless of speaking subjects: 'its character belongs to the very character of the movement of the face-to-face encounter of the world's regions . . . the relation of all relations' (Heidegger 1982: 108).

IV. Four Movements. Accumulation, Transmission

Let me now shift towards a component encountered in all four dramatic pieces – the notion of accumulation and transmission, a thematic core that moves within the plays as their reified and superimposed version. This two-fold movement – a circular chain of amplification and transference – is carried forward by dint of a circulating word which presents the literalisation of the plays' thematic core. The circulating word governs the movements of accumulation and transmission, intersecting with and giving rise to surface 'unholy mixtures' of the Deleuzian type in its passing. The shaping of these 'unholy mixtures', markers of the places where two orders (signifiers and signifieds) interpenetrate or fuse into one another on their way to becoming their opposites, will oftentimes be dialectical. Their movement will constitute an interplay of disparate elements and will require an involvement in a game of impersonations. In compliance with its rules, signifiers will be logocentrically aligned with anything that is of the domain of speech, and signifieds – with all that pertains to bodily movement: motions, thought, writing, creative acts.

The ruling notion of transmission and accumulation in the abstract has been literalised in the series, becoming commodified in very concrete objects: an alphabetical book, a taxi meter, a phone receiver, a tape. It is these objects that will function as Deleuzian circulating words

by regulating the two parallel flows of signifiers and signifieds. In a process similar to the procedure of proliferating the series of orality in Lewis Carroll's *Alice*, namely 'to eat/to speak' and 'consumable things/expressible senses' (Deleuze 1990: 37; Guyer 2004), the series in the plays continually oscillate between bodily depths (signifieds) and language heights (signifiers), only temporarily freezing in the eventual of the surface. Specifically, the signifier–signified parallelism previously designated as the division (illustratively speaking) between propositions and states of affairs will, in a second movement, start gliding into the realm of 'unholy mixtures' between bodies and sentences with their denotations, manifestations and significations. These two orders will be shown to constantly flow into one another. The false depth of the origin–derivation relationship manifested in representation will be overcome in a constant movement of reciprocation. It is the transmission in-between regulated by a circulating word that replaces both the Platonic claim to height (ideas descending from above and the copies' level of participation in them) and the Freudian claim to depths (the unconscious, a chthonic lake of unformed matter ascending, surfacing in sickness).

An Alphabetical Book

Moon unfolds and revolves around an alphabetical book – an object containing assemblages of educational trivia in the form of A–Z lists of words followed by their short, and oftentimes arbitrarily chosen or incomplete definitions. The two participants in the dramatic piece, the elderly married couple Constance and Alfred, are musing over the definitions of the current edition, *M–N*, plaintively or dismissively, before going to bed. A certain allusion to the attainment of absolute knowledge is presented through the rare, deliciously unfamiliar word clusters. The book itself is a random ensemble of various glossic collectibles in which proper and common names intertwine, with the descriptions shifting and detaching themselves from their 'proper' signifiers as Constance's gaze absentmindedly glides along the page.

The book entries, apart from being words with detachable intensions – with Constance selecting only specific chunks of definitions, and quite randomly so – also function as edibles. The words' gastronomic side is alluded to by the woman's 'skipping madly', very much reminiscent of one's picking food off one's plate, as well as by the deliberate pauses intersecting the various articulations of M-words: 'CONSTANCE: [...] Marshmallow... Mickey Mouse...

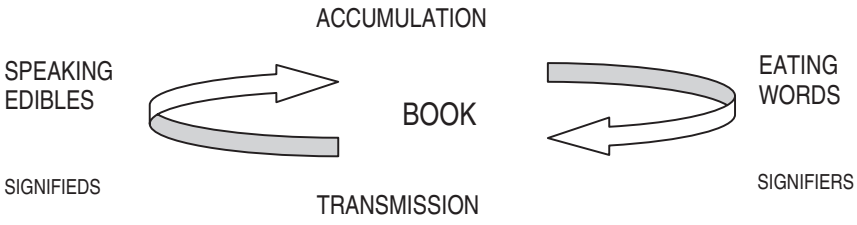


Figure 1. Eating words and speaking edibles.

Marriage . . . Moravia . . . Mule . . . Market . . . Mumps . . .' (Stoppard 1994: 21). They, as if stating an anticipation, mark the silent moment of foretaste before rolling a word-bite along one's palate. The alphabetical book operates as a word-plateau, an edible, and at the same time, as an ensemble of signifiers with intensions yet to be properly attached.

It is this intermediary quality that comes to light during an encounter with the book. 'The Universal Treasury' is at once a differentiator and converger of the play's series of word bodies and corporeal glosses: an expressible that becomes consumable, and an edible that exhibits an expressive capacity. The book is also the locus of containment for both accumulation and transmission, as it embodies a cumulative assemblage of human knowledge (object) and immediately states a certain wish for its communication via an instalment-in-language (word). Namely, it comprises word-plateaus that are being accumulated (in designation) *and* bodily signifiers that are being transmitted (in expression). The movement circularly shifts from accumulation to transmission and from transmission to accumulation, with the alphabetical book entries freely switching between the series of signifiers and signifieds, of glossic assemblages and corporeal mixtures.

As a point of the series' convergence, then, the alphabetical book sets in motion two supplementary series of eating words and speaking edibles. The latter corresponds to the passage from transmission (expression, signifiers) to accumulation (a set of collectibles, signifieds), while the former is shaped as the circulating word passes from accumulation to transmission. Eating words and speaking edibles, the pastimes of Constance and Alfred, uncover exuberant M-clusters, pronounced to be devoured and eaten up while being uttered in a gesture suspending the boundary between word and thing. The alphabetical book functions as a zero-place between the flows that allows the wordiness of things and the thingliness of words to flow into each other (Figure 1).

'Eating words' and 'speaking of food' (Deleuze 1990: 23) are two modes, then, in which inversion coincides with interpenetration. In 'to eat words', the depths of bodies with their strange interminglings are taken up and brought to surface on the plane of language. Depths of actions and passions become immanent. In a parallel move, the event that subsists in language but happens to states of affairs starts to 'speak food'. The eventual, already delineated as the attribute of states of affairs, descends into a pandemonium of bodily mixtures. Sense, though not residing outside of the proposition that expresses it, happens to mixtures, too.

An example of speaking edibles is Alfred's play of definitions that revolves around the core word 'Meat!' (Stoppard 1994: 19). In this instance logophagic consumption is enacted as appropriation-in-acquisition. Alfred accumulates knowledge-words by assimilating or internalising them in the symbolic quasi-creative gesture of defining them, of delineating a word's boundaries, measuring its perimeters and scopes, and thus coming into possession of it. Namely, what takes place is a quasi-creative expressive act that, in its transference, adds up to appropriation or acquisition. Speaking with Marcel Mauss, Alfred's meat-grumbling could be aligned with a ceremonial the function of which is to further the internalisation of the thing to be appropriated. The definition-giving is aligned with 'a means of utilising objects sympathetically' (Mauss 1972: 53). In Alfred's act of uttering (a donation of intensions) what is to be appropriated (signifiers) in expression (transmission) has moved towards acquisition (accumulation) in the mute order of signifieds. The spoken has been treated like an edible – a thing to be devoured and assimilated. In their movement towards appropriation, then, the uttered words have become internalised bodily mixtures.

Constance represents the other pole: eating words. Her act is one of appropriation-in-utterance. Carefully pronounced book entries amount to the act of consuming what is to be uttered. This assimilation is carried out with the help of speech: in the process of their being eaten, edible words (signifieds) are uttered (signifiers) in a movement from accumulation to transmission. More precisely, the very moment of pronouncing (expression) coincides with a moment of consumption (accumulation) that incorporates the cumulativeness of the book into the expressiveness of speaking. Namely, edible word clusters are incorporated into the realm of their expressible counterparts. The transition is thus one from bodily corporeality (accumulation) to the communication of signifiers (transmission). Illustratively speaking,

Constance's act is vaguely reminiscent of the Vedic practice of *nāmarūpa* (name-form), a ritualistic utterance which, by virtue of the naming itself could evoke, or speaking with Heidegger, summon the word's being. In this 'summoning' the earth yields itself to a wish (accumulation → transmission) that, with the fact of its statement, causes the earth to refold differently (transmission → accumulation). In a similar gesture, Constance's reading behaviour transforms edibles (objects of the book and signifieds) into signifiers, her speaking coinciding with the very act of their very consumption.

Meter

Boot traces the bankrupt Dominic Boot in his attempts to raise money for an ever-rising taxi fare as the man frantically travels across town. Opening with an exchange between Dominic and his fiancée, Vivian, the piece unfolds as Dominic swings from one bank to the next only to find out that either his credit is overdue or the bank has already closed. He resorts to robbing his firm's small stationery cash and breaking a gas meter to scoop up its coins.

The play, among other things, offers another instance of a zero-place within the flows, a spot of convergence between expressions and designations, words and objects. In *Boot* I have identified the taxi meter as the paradoxical instance that propels the series' interchangeable movements of accumulation and transmission. This device communicates the act of accumulating miles (object) and expresses it as bodily movements (word) throughout the text. It moves within the series of signifiers and signifieds, each time offering the loci of its unholy mixtures in overturned, mirrored guises with regard to their opposite series.

A taxi meter, though 'inaudible in the broadcast' (Kelly 1991: 32), is the unquestioned always-already there of *Boot*: it is a foreground around which all efforts and events of the play revolve, the generator of all motion. Dominic Boot travels across town confined to his taxi and plagued by the compulsion to pay for the ride, the fare rising progressively as his money-raising attempts fail one by one. The meter, however, remains unnamed and is only suggestively alluded to in the text's few juxtapositions of the taxi's mileage and its monetary equivalent (Stoppard 1994: 5, 6, 7, 8). This presence does not get pointed to, does not become the object of designation and is not expressed by an onomatopoetic sound. Its subsistence as a ghostly textual omnipresence is only subtly played out as the meter is indirectly talked about through Boot's various calculations intersecting the play. It is the meter that is

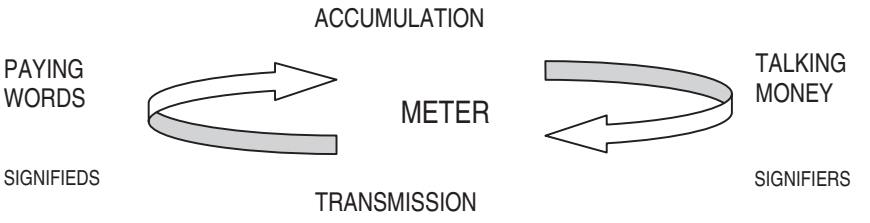


Figure 2. Talking money and paying words.

responsible for the rising of the fare and for the string of attempts and failures to get hold of money expressed by Dominic. Thus, in the series of accumulation and transmission, the accelerated growth in miles is transmitted as the motions of Dominic.

While moving within the realm of signifiers from counting coins (accumulation) towards its expression in bodily movements (transmission), the meter starts to talk money. Then, on gliding back into the realm of objects, it becomes re-commodified and begins to pay in words. Talking money from the realm of signifiers transmutes into paying words once the circulating word moves within the realm of signifieds, and vice versa. Speaking of money and paying in words become the two modi through which Dominic resides in the dramatic world. Talking money and paying words are also the two modes that the motions of the circulating word 'meter' exhibit in the series of signifiers and signifieds, respectively (Figure 2).

As the taxi moves towards the first bank from which Boot attempts to obtain cash, the first line of calculations presents itself. The taxi's mileage is being translated into money, and money becomes the instance through which Boot begins to speak and move: 'DOMINIC: *(Thinks:)* Three and three . . . three and six . . . [. . .] Three and six, plus six, four bob . . . ' (Stoppard 1994: 5). This is how the more immediate instance of talking money manifests itself. Here, states of affairs have risen up from their chthonic residence deep within bodies and, following the logic of the Deleuzian 'unholy mixture', have begun to speak. Since Dominic's entire motion throughout the play is motivated by the meter's ticking, acts of transgression are not ruled out, and Dominic, while still deeply engaged in counting petty cash, goes as far as to break a gas meter for its coins:

> DOMINIC: [. . .] *(Thinks:)* Fourteen shillings . . . and six . . .
> (Taxi pulls up.)
> Thanks, I'll be out in a minute.

> DOMINIC: *(Panting, muttering:)* Fourteen and six, fourteen and six... property of the North Thames Gas Board... oh well... where's that poker... [...]
> One, two four, five six seven, ten, ten and six, ten and six...
> (Stoppard 1994: 6–7)

Finally, even Dominic's mother and fiancée are commodified through the talk, their presence being translated as yet another tragic occurrence that only adds money to the fare:

> DOMINIC: *(Thinks:)* Thirty-one minus ten plus... [...]
> Thirty-nine, and sixpence for Vivian and sixpence for Mother, minus ten, plus, no minus...
> (Stoppard 1994: 8)

Alongside the notion of talking money, I am also confronted with the practice of paying words in the realm of signifieds. Words and statements here are muted, descend into the depths of actions and passions, and begin to mime bodily movements. The motion is regressive and marks a transition from expressive transmission to accumulation. This is the realm of Austinian performatives where 'the issuing of the utterance is the performing of an action' (Austin 1975: 6), or where words are made into deeds. One such movement is observed in the short bargaining scene in which Dominic and the taxi driver engage:

> DOMINIC: A pound.
> DRIVER: Right, you can pay me off now.
> DOMINIC: Twenty-five bob.
> DRIVER: Doesn't pay.
> DOMINIC: Thirty with tip.
> DRIVER: Thirty-two and six.
> DOMINIC: Done!
> (Stoppard 1994: 9)

The word closing the agreement, 'Done!', constitutes an action: an utterance that, in the very moment of its issuing, undergoes an incorporeal transformation to become something else. The word is no longer itself, but rather a bodily capture, a materiality rightly belonging to its parallel order. It is a word that pays. Words have carried out an action, and by doing so, have plunged into bodily movements, shifting from transmission to accumulation. In both cases the constant inversion-in-circulation caters to the formation of an 'unholy mixture' in which distinctions are blurred, signifiers topple over signifieds and signifieds rise up from their depths to present themselves as language.

As depths come to the surface, the realm of signifiers also stirs up to move within bodily mixtures. While signifieds suddenly acquire the faculty of speaking, signifiers get muffled once they have descended within the motions and noises of bodies.

Phone Receiver

Glad is a play about Frank, a bus driver, and his efforts to speak to Gladys, his wife, whom he believes is imprisoned in the Post Office building and forced to work as a phone operator announcing the time every ten seconds. The man madly manoeuvres through town, always at least ninety seconds ahead of schedule so that he can dial TIM, the time announcing service, and attempt to converse with the robotic voice. *Glad*, thus, also presents me with a productive blank, a zero place regulating the two flows of signifiers and signifieds and furthering the intermix between the two orders. Yet another prop has been singled out and readied to function as a circulating word. Here, a phone receiver operates as a Deleuzian blank spot that belongs to neither of the orders but nevertheless is the carrier of words and things across the series. What this carrier effects is the movement from accumulated silence (object) to its very literal expression in silencing (word). Paradoxically, in the realm of 'unholy mixtures' productive or positive silence streams from the realm of signifiers: here I am confronted with a silence whose expressiveness is shown through the movement from accumulation to transmission. Yet, once the movement treads into the realm of signifieds that have descended into bodily motions, silence becomes a silencing that further moves within accumulation, thus losing its enunciatory capacity.

Enunciatory silence and silenced enunciations become the two modi of the circulating word. The 'unholy mixtures' issued from this movement, once again, account for the signifieds' becoming signifiers as the circulating word carves its way from accumulation to transmission, and for the signifiers' becoming signifieds in the switch from transmission to accumulation. Thus, as shown in Figure 3, bodily depths become expressible in the realm of signifiers, while in the realm of signifieds, utterances are hushed by states-of-affair motions. As depths come to the surface, the realm of signifiers also stirs up to slide within bodily mixtures. While signifieds suddenly acquire the faculty of expression, signifiers get muffled once they have descended within the motions and noises of bodies.

In its travels within the realm of signifiers from silence (accumulation, bodily mixtures, default signified position) towards its expression

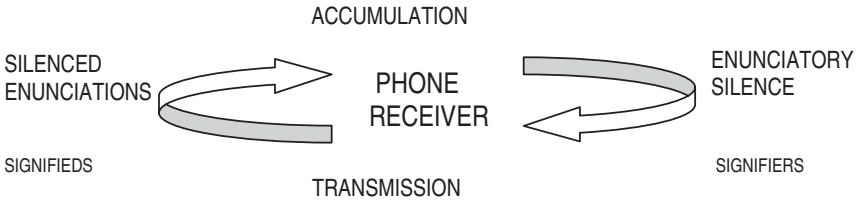


Figure 3. Silenced enunciations and enunciatory silence.

in enunciation (transmission), the phone receiver presents me with enunciatory silence – a manifestation of the signified's sudden capacity to become expressive. On gliding back from the realm of words towards objects, however, enunciations, while present, become counterproductive, broken and thus silenced. Enunciatory silence from the realm of signifiers becomes silenced enunciations in which the expressive capacity of silence becomes a bodily noise, a crack-up belonging to the realm of signifieds.

The phone receiver is the main object-helper through which Frank can communicate with the robotic voice of the Speaking Clock. Another intermediary, an objectified messenger, it opens up a liminal ground on which the conversation between Frank and his wife, the Clock, could take place. Every time Frank manages to get ahead of schedule and access a phone, however, he is confronted with the same non-communicative situation. While Frank insists on addressing his Gladys, talks to her in a cooperative manner, and awaits a cooperative response, Gladys only continues with her precise markings of time:

> GLADYS (through the phone): . . . At the third stroke it will be nine twelve and forty seconds . . . .
> FRANK: It's alright, Glad—it's me again—Frank!
> *(Gladys's timespeak continues underneath.)*
> Can you hear me now, Glad?—I've got a time of it, I can tell you [. . .]
> Can you hear me, Gladys? Give me a sign?
> *(Pause; timeclock.)*
> I know your voice—it's you, isn't it, Gladys—are they holding you?—I'll get you out of there, Gladys—I'll speak to the top man—I'll get the wheels turning [. . .]
> GLADYS: Nine fourteen precisely—
> (Stoppard 1994: 32–3)

Gladys's talk, while composed of carefully measured enunciations, constitutes a gap. Communicatively speaking, it is an impossibility to

commit, a blank, pure silence. Her enunciations are communicatively mute, and yet are expressive in their unresponsiveness in so much as they express a void, an impossibility. The blunted affect manifested in this expressive silence marks the transition of a mute bodily motion from the realm of signifieds (object) towards transmission (word). In this shift from accumulation to transmission, silence has become expressive (enunciatory silence). Likewise, on gliding towards accumulation (bodily mixtures), the enunciations rightly belonging to the realm of signifiers have become objectified, silenced:

> GLADYS: *(Through phone. Sobbing hysterically:)* At the third stroke it will be five thirty five and fifty seconds . . . . [. . .]
> GLADYS: At the third stroke I don't know what time it is and I don't care, because it doesn't go tick tock at all, it just goes [. . .]
> (Stoppard 1994: 50)

Let me impersonate a phonocentric for a moment and behave as if the entire realm of non-speech, though composed of sense, only generates signifieds. What I am confronted with, then, is a crack-up. Noises of the body – Gladys's introspective monologues (signifieds) running parallel with the utterances of the Speaking Clock – have come to the surface to rupture her enunciations (signifiers). The order of signifieds, of state-of-affair mixtures, has slightly stirred the surface of signifiers, transmuting them into monsters of the depths. In this overturned situation, all that has been latently resting within bodily motions – the remains, the sublayer or the surge of a human subjectivity – surfaces to engulf her enunciations and to turn them into body parts. In the inverted order of the crack-up, Gladys's introspective turns affect the markings of time, intersecting and muffling them (silenced enunciations). Within the transition from transmission to accumulation, enunciations wither away in the process of their becoming a cluster of accumulated body noise, thought and mind debris.

Tape

My last circulating word, the tape, propels series that are somewhat removed from the immediate presence of this object. In *Artist Descending A Staircase*, Beauchamp's master-tape, the device that has captured Donner's last moments of life, is played as the play opens (Stoppard 1994: 113) and once again in full length at the closing (156). When played first, it is presented as highly ambiguous: there is a droning noise, footsteps, a creak, and Donner casually remarking: 'Ah! There you

are.' The remark is followed by a thump, the sound of the rail breaking and Donner falling. Beauchamp and Martello, judging by the lack of alarm in Donner's voice, assume that he must have been confronted by somebody familiar during his last living moments, and start firing a line of mutual accusations. This lack of resolve is amplified throughout the dramatic piece, as listeners are invariably predisposed to locate an episode, a retort or a situation that would reveal a murderer. It is only towards the end, with the second playing of the tape, that the mystery is mundanely resolved with the discovery that Donner has fallen off the rail in an attempt to catch a droning fly. The device's accumulated sounds are presented as 'the detritus of audible existence' (120) in Beauchamp's self-flattering definition, 'rubbish, in fact' (ibid.) in Donner's judgement, and 'a bubbling cauldron of squeaks, gurgles, crackles' (119), according to the stage directions. It is these sounds that could be aligned with the noises and unrestrained nonsense of bodily movements.

Once the tape has accidentally captured Donner's sounds of waking and chasing the fly, it becomes a piece that lends itself to interpretation. The introduction of a string of familiar motions suffices for the moulding of a story (in the general sense) – though one that still requires exegesis. What is transmitted in this case, a scrap of 'meaningful' noise yet to be interpreted, are the sounds of Donner's fall. The movement from accumulation to transmission, from object to word, translates into the transition from 'tonal debris' (ibid.) to an interpretable piece. The moment of openness that points to the interpretability[3] of this cluster of sounds, then, also constitutes a moment of expression – an expression that points to its own enunciatory capacity. Hence, what will function as the ground of the circulation (an entity that points to both flows while inhering in none) will not be the tape itself, but its capacity to incorporate both the senseless and the interpretable.

It is the transition from undifferentiated nonsense to interpretability that will be taken into account here. This movement is observed in two episodes located in the play's flashbacks and seemingly unrelated to the tape in any way. In the movement from accumulation – undifferentiated noise, inscrutable bodily motions – to transmission – interpretability as an already-familiar movement – signifieds rise up from their chthonic abode to disrupt the order of signifiers (Figure 4). Similar to the instances already observed, actions and passions, nonsensical clusters of movement begin to issue accounts of their nonsense (speaking deeds). Conversely, in the transition from the order of signifiers to signifieds, enunciations are reified, and find a very material existence as actual objects (acting words). The latter movement can be remotely described

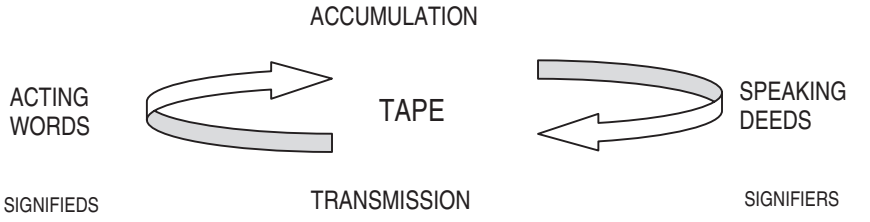


Figure 4. Acting words and speaking deeds.

as a literalisation of metaphors, while the former more or less functions as a figurative reading of the literal.

In the realm of signifiers, then, in an inverted Austinian model (Austin 1975), I encounter actions that function as utterances, while the order of signifieds confronts me, once again, with the very performativity of the statement.

In the flashback including the three artists' walking trip through France, I meet Beauchamp's Tenth Horse. The animal is introduced in the stage directions as 'skittering about' (145) at the sound of a convoy of lorries and quickly becomes the object of a talk:

> BEAUCHAMP: Steady, steady . . . good boy . . .
> MARTELLO: Tell you what—give me a go on the horse.
> BEAUCHAMP: No. This horse only believes in me. What an animal! [. . .] What shall I call him? [. . .] Steady, steady . . .
> DONNER: For God's sake, Beauchamp, will you get rid of that coconut!
> BEAUCHAMP: Coconut!—not a bad name. And yet it lacks a certain something. Would Napoleon have called his horse Coconut? . . .
> Napoleon . . . not a bad name.
> (Stoppard 1994: 146)

The coconut, famous for its sound effects,[4] confronts me with a situation that is the exact opposite of Austin's action-words. Beauchamp's effort to create a reality with the sole help of speech through the Austinian illocutionary act 'I name this coconut horse' remains unrecognised. In the course of the talk, the performative is then substituted for the implied compromised enunciation 'I name this 'horse' Coconut'. In the second case, 'horse' does not hold a claim to any 'reality' and is already a negotiation that closes the referential gap. Loosely speaking, the problem of not-thereness is solved with the figuralisation of 'horse'

in the groundless metaphor 'The coconut is a horse'. The end-product, and also the source of the funny effect, is the tautology 'I name this coconut Coconut'. The horse, then, departs from the realm of signifieds in the guise of a nonsensical noise produced by the banging of coconut shells (accumulation) to reach its own becoming figurative and a signifier (transmission). As a transition into the figurative, the movement from horse to 'horse' becomes interpretable, graspable, and thus, begins to speak. Namely, it opens up to exegetic activity and therefore, communication. This transition from noise (nonsense) to expressivity also makes it slide into the realm of signifiers, where Beauchamp's act of naming already bears sense. Beauchamp's enunciation 'I name this 'horse' Coconut', then, becomes an overturned performative, a speaking deed.

A second example emerges. It is found in one of the flashbacks accounting for Donner's derogations of his friends' artistic efforts. In the exchange to follow, Martello introduces Donner to his last masterpiece: a metaphorical sculpture encapsulating Sophie's beauty. The girl's hair like ripe corn, teeth like pearls, swan-like neck, breasts like ripe fruit, eyes like stars, and lips like rubies (Stoppard 1994: 129), are to be depicted using real corn, 'real artificial pearls', 'real feathers' and real fruit, either 'pears' or 'apples' (ibid.):

> MARTELLO: How do you like her?
> DONNER: It looks like a scarecrow trying to be a tailor's dummy. It is symbolic?
> MARTELLO: Metaphorical.
> DONNER: Why does she have straw on her head?
> MARTELLO: Not straw—ripe corn. It's her hair. [...] it was bad enough getting the pearls for her teeth.
> DONNER: They look like false teeth.
> MARTELLO: Well of course they're artificial pearls. So are the rubies, of course. I know you'll appreciate her breasts.
> DONNER: Oh yes. Are they edible?
> (Stoppard 1994: 129)

Once the interpretable has moved within a realm of incomprehesnsibility, it also has glided back to its old depth of bodily motions. In this passage, therefore, I observe a case opposite to that of speaking deeds. What Martello proudly names a metaphorical sculpture is metaphorical only on the grounds that it is composed of accepted verbal clichés about female beauty. Yet, once these utterances – which could be segmented in 'Sophie is the sculpture', 'Sophie's teeth are like pearls' and so on – are transformed into objects, the effect is grotesque and

nonsensical. Beauty has been strangely reified with the use of actual materials, even edibles. Words have slid back into their nether region of bodily mixtures. This is the realm of literalised metaphors, or of acting words. While the Austinian model – 'This is Sophie' accompanied with a gesture that points to the statue – is applicable in this case, it only has bred a monster. The descriptions are matched: 'lips like rubies', 'eyes like stars', 'swan-like neck' are all there, only with a slight difference. It is this tiny slant that suffices to turn the situation into an abnormality, and to align the scarecrow statue with a monster of the depths. The transition from transmission (expressivity, interpretability) to accumulation (non-expressivity, non-interpretability) amounts to a transition from sense to nonsense. The string of literalised metaphors is no longer communicative. Rather, it strikes as monstrous, transgressive.

V. Conclusion

In attempting to answer the question of whether Deleuze's sense-event could be approached in a reading, this paper turned to the vestiges of the workings of sense in four Stoppard radio plays. Within the 'terrible' manifestations of the workings of sense, an easy interchangeability between signifiers and signifieds consolidated into the emergence of expressive signifieds and their mirror counterparts, non-communicative signifiers regulated by a circulating word. *Moon* and *Boot* confronted me with reifications of utterances and verbalisations of acts of consumption, the becoming-expressive of commodities and the commodification of speech. What followed were the expressiveness of non-communication and the communicativeness of silence in *Glad* plus the literalisations of metaphors and figuralisations of the literal in *Artist*.

In these efforts to capture at least a temporary freeze-frame of the sense-event, to account for that which 'flashes across the intervals when a communication takes place, between disparates' (Deleuze 1994: 22), I have only encountered a void. Perhaps the sense-event will ever remain an elusive, unattainable and unaccountable extra-being very much resembling the shelves of the Sheep Shop in Lewis Carroll's *Alice*:

> The shop seemed to be full of all manner of curious things—but . . . whenever she looked hard at any shelf . . . that particular shelf was always quite empty, though the others around it were crowded as full as they could hold. (Carroll 1960: 253; Deleuze 1990: 41)

'Full' when approached by indirection, but 'empty' when confronted up front, the shining forth of the sense-event will perhaps ever remain an impossibility. Even when posited on a plane of immanence and encircled

by the flat fossil prints of bodies, actions and passions, it persists in offering only momentary flashes, or merely the traces of its workings. Perhaps it is in the overturned series of signifiers and signifieds, the subversive ruptures of nonsense or the ever-ongoing battle between names and beings that the sense-event manifests itself. What is felt, however, is that the sense-event does propel texts and invisibly shapes their fabric with the help of its functionaries: breaks in signification, impossible objects, circulating and contracting words or dry reiterations. What is witnessed in the work of these helpers is that sense is not found, but shaped as an effect of the encounters with its various paradoxes.

Notes

1. As opposed to Derrida's 'transcendental signified', which postulates a pre-suggested, pre-thought meaning outside of language, Deleuze's transcendent signifier (a logocentric entity in itself) offers a world dominated by words: being, essence, thought, understanding. This difference could be the key to the two philosophers' entirely different approaches to language, too. For Deleuze, language in its present shape is a tool of power and subjection. Its major unit of significance is the order-word (Deleuze and Guattari 2007). Hence, language cannot, by virtue of the very positing of a transcendent signifier, lend itself to interpretation – words have always-already ordained (to borrow a Marxist vocabulary) each to its rightful place, each to its signified. Derrida's 'transcendental signified' as explicated in his *Of Grammatology* (1967), in contrast, is the aftermath of logocentrism. Following logocentric edicts, signifiers derive their meaning from signifieds postulated as transcendental referents outside of language. Since the signified is always a secret, a hiddenness, an absence always-already cloaked in too many words, it remains the subject of careful exegesis. Exegetic activity, then, becomes an exercise in evocation: an effort to bring the absent signified to the state of phonocentric presence that speech is. Logocentric language, therefore, is the language of interpretation. Thus, I have used the word interpretability as part of the impersonation game in phonocentric and dialectical thinking that this section partially is.
2. It is in the explication of this co-existence that world and word show me their most ancient faces. The word as the ground, the locus of convergence without synthesis of signifier and a Deleuzian signified, word and being, is metaphorically expressed in the Deleuzian image of the three philosophers in *Logic of Sense*: the Platonic (intoxicated with heights; signifier), the pre-Socratic (deep in schizophrenic bodily mixtures; signified), and the Stoic (the philosopher of the staff blow and of immediacy: showing and pointing to rather than telling; word). Or set in the vocabulary of Greek mythology: 'It is no longer the question of Dionysus down below, or of Apollo up above, but of Hercules on the surface, in his dual battle against both depth and height: reorientation of the entire thought and a new geography' (Deleuze 1990: 132). Heidegger also verges on a similar intuition while interpreting Hölderlin's phrase 'words like flowers' (1943, pt. 2, Appendix 322): 'Once again the word appears in the region, the region that determines earth and sky to be world regions, *as it makes earth and sky, the streaming of the deep and the might of the heights, encounter one another.* . . . the

word is given back into the keeping of the source of its being' (Heidegger 1982: 100; my emphasis).
3. I use 'word' as the supposed, but never attained, association between names and beings, or Deleuzian signifiers and signifieds, 'expressible meanings' and 'denoted objects' (Deleuze 1990: 26).
4. Beauchamp is in fact 'walking and knocking coconut shells together' (Guralnick 1996: 70).

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Desire and Courtly Love

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Translated by Peter Borum

When approaching the philosophy of Deleuze in general, and the theory of imperceptible becomings (becoming(s)-imperceptible) in particular, as I am about to do, you must never underestimate the main idea that has been guiding Deleuze from *Logique du sens* to *Critique et clinique*. It is the idea that in any de facto event, empirically ascertainable, from the smallest to the largest (amorous encounter, historical event, revolution . . .), there is a part that cannot be effectuated, which constitutes its Sense, and which is the Event proper. In all accomplishing there is an inaccomplished, which is its better part, that which must be preserved. Such an idea, which implies an ontology of the virtual, brings into play a principle that opposes itself to the *principle of determinism* and of sufficient reason (the *principium grande*, as Leibniz calls it), principles which, for classical philosophy, rule all causal, physical, biological and social series. We shall name this opposed principle the *principle of indetermination*.

The guiding idea of my intervention today is that in order to advance in the understanding of imperceptible becomings (becoming(s)-imperceptible), we must cross the different authors that Melville, Masoch, La Fayette and Chrétien de Troyes are. Bartleby reveals the principle of indetermination in its own capacity or power, which will be common to all the other characters, as the capacity of *indiscernibility*. Courtly love develops its *unfinishedness*, and the Princess of Cleves its *unaccomplishedness*. As for masochism, it reveals its power of *suspension*.

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I. The Principle of Indetermination and Life/death

The ontology of virtual intensities permits the foundation of a number of paradoxes in relation to this principle of indetermination. One of the most important ones, concerning Deleuzian theory, is its *vitalism*. A strange theory that holds that the life most alive has nothing about it of the living, the organic. It is beyond organs, a body without organs. But if we posit the pre-eminence or antecedence of the virtual over the actual, as Deleuze puts it, then indetermination is first and determination second. Then, of any determination we make a fall, a stiffening, a stop in the indeterminate process that is necessarily virtual and anterior, an infinite that overflows any set of actual and finite determinations. Here, indistinction is not a loss any more, and indetermination is no longer something negative, but vicinity and proximity to intensive Life, to the infinite process of desire. Life proper becomes distinct from or lies beyond any organic life. If, to Deleuze, Bartleby has become imperceptible, it is because, as much as possible, he is approaching the pure line of life or of flight, the one that traces itself beyond any organ, any socially or biologically organised form. The indecision, or indetermination, that contents his well-known formula, opens the first step towards *pure line of pure desire*.

First Consequence

But how are we to think this Deleuzian 'vitalism'? '*I am not particular*,' Bartleby says of himself (quoted in Deleuze 1993: 90). How could this declaration have any sense other than 'I am already dead' – since every living being only upholds itself in the particularity of its organs? The *line of life* necessarily coexists with a *line of death*, since the life in which it claims to partake is not the organised life of the living body but the life of a *pure abstract line*, which, as such, lies beyond *all life that is organised*, whether biologically or socially; that is, which is particularly determined. The pure becoming-imperceptible thus gently and necessarily slides into death, not because this is a goal or an ending or a result, but because it forms part of a higher life, of desire itself in what this has that is most essential (Life, against the organs and the living).

Second Consequence

But there is a second consequence of the principle of indetermination, which concerns pleasure and the necessity of warding it off. What rules

the life of the living, the great principle of their conduct, is the pleasure principle. The principle of sufficient reason is at the same time a principle of motivating reason through pleasure. It follows that all becomings have a link not only to what is beyond the principle of determination but also to what is beyond the principle of pleasure. Life against the living implies a desire against the pleasures. Masochism was the figure of perversion that first, in 1967, aroused the interest of Deleuze. And it is masochism that irrecusably and with neatness ties desire to the beyond pleasure. Pain is the means of this tying. Thereby masochism is not a particular figure of desire, it is that which necessarily finds itself at the foundation of all the other becomings, in one way or another. It expresses the essence of Deleuzian desire.

II. The Subterranean Line of the Novel

Under these conditions, Deleuze is able to uncover the secret and 'subterranean line' (1993: 89) that connects all novelistic characters, right from the medieval beginnings of the novel. They are all caught in this line of flight that grazes death, having destruction and dissolution as the backside of their desire's line of joy. Lancelot, Perceval or Parsifal, Tristan and Isolde, Madame de Clèves, Bartleby and Molloy all form a series of variations along the same abstract line of flight that is the line of novelistic creation, and which to Deleuze takes to its acme the intensity of life and desire, in what they have that is most pure, but also in the zone neighbouring upon indiscernibility and death. Here we touch upon the essence of the novel, its irreducible tonality, the affect most proper to it, and which distinguishes it from epic or dramatic narratives (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 213). In several instances, Deleuze qualifies this tonality as crepuscular (as twilight- or dusk-like).

Deleuze finds this tonality from the very beginning, in the appearance of the first novels, with Chrétien de Troyes (Deleuze and Guattari 2003: 165). The wanderings of the knight in the courtly novel go together with a quasi-hypnotic state of half-sleep: 'we saw a knight sleeping on his charger'. They fall into a kind of 'catatonia which absorbs them' (Chrétien 2003), Deleuze says (Deleuze and Parnet 1977: 90; Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 232), and continues: 'Chrétien de Troyes never stopped tracing the line of knights errant, sleeping on their horses, resting on their lances and stirrups, and who no longer know their name or their destination, and continue to go on in a zigzag' (Deleuze and Parnet 1977: 90).

Deleuze pushes away the idea that the world of the novels of chivalry ceases with Don Quixote, and the novel as such with Beckett and his deterritorialised characters. 'The novel hasn't ceased to define itself by the adventure of characters which are lost, who no longer know their own name, what they're looking for, or what they're doing' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 213). Thus, that essential character, tracing a line of deterritorialisation linked to indetermination, is there from the beginning and will accompany the novel all along its evolution.

It is not *La Princesse de Clèves* that will inform Deleuze's so pertinent diagnosis. We will find the crepuscular state all right, although in another light, with another stress, but even more present and almost tragic, almost mystical. After what he has said of Percival, and the line that takes the novel along right from its beginning, Deleuze writes: '*La Princesse de Clèves* is a novel, precisely for that reason which seemed so paradoxical to its contemporaries, the states of absence or "rest" (repos), the sleeps that strike the characters . . . ' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 213).

Finally, the chiaroscuro of the masochist boudoir will not contradict this analysis. The entire story of *Venus in Furs* is placed under the sign of dreaming: the narrator, in the beginning, and Severin, at the end, when he has sobered up, have the feeling of coming out of a dream and a long state of stupidity (compare the 'what a donkey I was') at one and the same time, in order to finally wake up to life. The tonality that is proper to Masoch, Deleuze describes as an art of suspense[1] all suggestion where 'a strange atmosphere subsists, like a too heavy perfume which spreads in a suspense, and which resists any displacement' (Deleuze 1967: 32). It is Masoch who introduces suspense into the novel, as a 'novelistic mainspring in the purest state', not only as *physical suspense* (the hero is hung up, tied standing to a pillar, suspended), but also because 'the woman tormentor is taking up fixed postures which identify her with a statue, a portrait, or a photo. Because she suspends the gesture of striking with the leash or of opening her furs' (31).

In conclusion of this first point, we may hold, against the empiricist and historical meticulousness of literary science, that although the courtly, *précieux* and masochist universes form eminently singular constellations apart, they do, however, share the same kind of abstract line of pure desire that makes them communicate in one and the same zone of crepuscular indiscernibility. Now it still remains for me to show how courtly and precious love are attached to the general line of novelistic creation, and what the two contribute in their singularity. Given the short time remaining, I will stick to *La Princesse de Clèves* alone.

III. *La Princesse de Clèves* and Unaccomplishedness

The world of preciosity, to which this masterpiece bears witness, is not, although it is different, without echoing courtly love, and they even demand to be related in order to understand the Deleuzian position in its overall coherence.

The idea put forward is that in Madame de La Fayette, the principle of desire is that of *unaccomplishedness*. The indetermination of desire then becomes unaccomplishedness, that is to say, non-effectuation, non-realisation as to its ending, which is enjoyment, the possession of the loved object, that is, the Prince de Nemours. The critics have mostly failed to understand what essentially happens in this sublime character. Deleuze, in a beautiful intuition, uncovers in Madame de La Fayette the strange link between that which the heroine calls her 'rest', and her duty of fidelity with respect to her dead husband. As for the crepuscular state of the knights in the courtly novels, he underlines that it is on every occasion a matter of inventing 'unknown or unappreciated affects' (Deleuze and Guattari 2003: 165). He gives the following very swift indication: 'the almost catatonic states of rest that merge with the duty according to Madame de La Fayette (in connection with a concept of quietism) (ibid.).

What surprises Deleuze, and he is right, is this story of rest (*repos*), which she does not stop invoking. To contemporary doxa, our surprise or our suspense would rather be of the type: 'she goes to bed/won't she go to bed/will she go to bed?' And what surprises us is precisely that she does not 'go to bed', while her husband has died and no obstacle any longer opposes itself to the accomplishment of her desire. Why this abstinence? '[S]he undertook the resolution to avoid the thing in the world she maybe wished for the most' (La Fayette 1999: 196). Only a Deleuzian reading, or rather one inspired by him, will get us out of our predicament in the face of this strange duty related to her 'rest'.

First of all, her duty is weak (La Fayette 1999: 231). So she does not act out of duty. Moreover, she confides to Nemours, the duty in question 'only subsists in my imagination' (232). She 'persuades' (234) herself that Nemours is responsible for her husband's death. Why then this fiction to which she struggles to adhere? We shall respond that this 'opinion' (234) is only formed in order to be an obstacle, to put Nemours at a distance from her desire. Likewise, the confession she makes to her husband of her love for Nemours consisted in putting up her husband as a third party, a rampart between her and Nemours. It did not directly spring from the virtue of sincerity but from the placement of obstacles in order

to protect herself from her lover. The fact that virtue has not much to do with this, and that only a simple *amorous strategy* is important, will be revealed to us by further examining what she understands to be her duty. It is that while Madame de Clèves renounces to possess Nemours and to be possessed by him, this does not mean that she renounces the love she bears toward him, nor her desire.

The rupture is no more between rational will and passion, but between the *passion* or *desire* and the *object of this passion.*

IV. The Strange Rest

The famous 'rest' (*repos*), which Madame de Clèves incessantly invokes in relationship to her duty, is very astonishing in that it is not at all of the order of that which tradition has understood by 'rest'. It is absolutely not, as it is for the Stoics, a question of mastering the passion of love through reason. There is no *apatheia* nor any *ataraxia*. In the first place, it is not in her power to overcome her passion, her desire. She never ceases to say so.[2] Thus she does not seek to flee her passion, since she cannot do this. Afterwards, one cannot find, as some say, a 'spiritualisation' of her passion, since this is upheld with its sensible, amorous content, on the level of inclination. She cannot see Nemours, in the flesh of his body, without feeling herself weaken.[3] Finally, on the evening of their separation even, she has not yet undertaken the resolution to give him up in the future: she explicitly leaves this point in suspension, in a particularly crepuscular indetermination.[4] What she is fleeing or pushing away is Nemours, the object of her passion, and not her passion itself, which she maintains. But what, then, of this rest, since in a state of passion or desire, the soul suffers, it is always '*in-quiète*' in French, that is to say, in 'no rest' because *quietus* in Latin means rest? The state of passion or desire is, etymologically speaking, a state of *non-repos*, of non-rest. Her rest would be contradictory if it signifies that her desire in itself were maintained, as I put it, according to the texts. So, how to find a solution?

Pertinently, Deleuze connects the position of Madame de Clèves to quietism. But for what reason? The one that has been called 'pure love'. This religious and mystical current, upheld in France by Madame Guyon and by Fénélon, acquires a great influence in the salons attended by Madame de La Fayette. Together with the Duke de La Rochefoucauld, the one of the *Maximes*, she is close to Jansenist circles, which have communicated to her this pessimism with respect to the force of passion and the weakness of man in resisting it. But one can see the numerous

differences from quietism, since of this rest, of this quietism, she makes something rather insane. While this doctrine found rest with God, through contemplative fusion, through abandoning one's own will, 'letting go' of wanting, the disappearance of the sense of self, etc., Madame de Clèves's heroine on the contrary *gives up on nothing* concerning her desire. While quietism supposes an abandon of the effort which, before, was directed at God, the princess on the contrary *maintains this tension*, which she bears in its pure state. We stay in the pure plane of immanence of desire, we do not leave it for a transcendent object as in quietism. Madame Guyon says: 'I wanted to gain by effort what I could only obtain upon ceasing all effort', that is, giving oneself up to God, which is rest itself. The princess renounces nothing since this passion of the senses is her very joy, her highest possession. In what, then, might her rest consist?

A rapid indication is susceptible of guiding us in the right direction. She demands: 'can I put myself in the state of seeing with certainty this passion, of which I would make all my **felicity**, come to an end' (La Fayette 1999: 229). We must understand well the multiple meanings of this phrase: it is not only about the fear that Nemours's love for her will come to an end, once they are married (he is a *galant*, a seducer, unfaithful, courted, etc.), but what she is most afraid of, is to *see her own love come to an end*, for therein, in that desire, lies her happiness. This position can be clarified by referring to courtly love. Her strange rest lies in the desire itself as pure and crepuscular line of love.

Looking at Nemours (who is physically, sensually attractive), with one gesture she pushes him aside and keeps the 'pure love' that she holds for him, and which gives her what the troubadours of Provençal love called '*joi*'. The *joi* of the *fin amor* is the ecstasy, the enjoyment and the playfulness taken from love itself, from love as such: the joy of desiring and not the enjoyment of satisfaction. The principle of indetermination in the *fin amor* is not exactly modulated as a non-accomplishment, but rather as a *non-finishedness*, as the longest possible delaying of the physical enjoyment of the *Lady*, an enjoyment which stays as if suspended, indetermined, in the far horizon. Different from mystical quietism, which aims at fusion, at assimilation into the divine and transcendent object of desire, Madame de Clèves, who does not overcome her physical desire at all, takes to the artifice of courtly love. She puts off, *she unachieves*. She extends and stretches her passion, and so makes a pure abstract line out of it.

One sees that the knowledge of Madame de Clèves is identical to masochist knowledge: accomplishment, pleasure, enjoyment, all kill love

by satisfying desire. There is nothing left to desire after possession, desire is crushed in its accomplishment in pleasure, enjoyment, caught in the realisation of the fantasy, or *fantasme*. What fascinated Deleuze in masochism? It was not really the devaluation of the father and the inflation of the mother. Rather, it was nothing but the overcoming of the principle of pleasure. Deleuze sees very well that what is most important in masochism lies in its refusal to interrupt the becoming or the pure desire. The masochist pushes away the limit constituting the pleasure principle because pleasure is what resolves tension. Pleasure is well named as a discharge because it discharges us of desire itself. *Discharge-pleasure is a reterritorialisation* (Deleuze and Parnet 1977: 119). The masochist is well beyond pleasure in view of desire as a pure line of flight, as the uninterrupted prolongation of desire towards the Thing, the *Chose*. 'One should think that it was a matter of undoing the tie of desire to pleasure: pleasure interrupts desire, so that the constitution of desire as a process must exorcise pleasure and delay in infinitely' (Deleuze 1993: 71; see Deleuze and Parnet 1977: 119–20). He adds: 'The essential matter becomes waiting or suspense as fullness, as physical and spiritual intensity' (Deleuze 1993: 71). Exactly the state of 'pure desire' of Madame de Clèves, between the 'pure love' of the quietists and the *fin amor* of Provençal troubadours.

V. Conclusion

I have not had the time to carry into effect all that I had announced. But here is my conclusion, in the form of two points.

1. The Princesse de Clèves succeeds in creating indetermination inside the determined world though the world that is hers is a very strongly encoded world, we are at Louis XIV's court, and the 'etiquette' was extremely severe. There is no dualism, determination on one part and indetermination on the other part, but she digs (she makes holes), she excavates zones of indetermination in the plan of determinism or organization. She properly traces real zones of indetermination. She becomes crepuscular, imperceptible in another way than that of Bartleby. It is a splendid example of becoming-imperceptible.
2. All well examined, in the end Lacan does not say anything else than Deleuze on this point. 'Do not give way to your desire', is his well-known motto. And desire, to him as well as to Deleuze, is not,

as in the empiricist conception, the pleasure taken from fantasy/the *fantasme*. When Deleuze states the necessity of detaching desire from passion, when he posits that the pure affect of desire can be constructed by wrestling oneself loose from all the affections, all the pathoses bordering on such a passion (jealousy, vanity, fear of abandonment, etc.), he fully joins Lacan. The latter, in the years 1959–60, had already proposed, in seminar number VII, *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis*, a reading of desire in connection to courtly love. He showed that the Lady did not leave immanence, and that the finality of the loving *dispositif* was that desire be disconnected from its object, as object of enjoyment (object of the fantasy, or *fantasme*). What was at stake in courtly love was to put the Lady in the place of the Thing, or *Chose*, that is, beyond the pleasure principle. And this position is also that of Deleuze, as we have seen. What does the *Princesse de Clèves* teach us if not that there is no sexual relation, that desire is without object? For both, desire without object lacks nothing; it is the real itself, pure tension, call or void, which is its own joy to itself, in all its risks and pain.

Notes

1. 'In Masoch's novels, everything culminates in suspense' (Deleuze 1967: 31).
2. She confesses it to Nemours at their last meeting: 'believe that the feelings which I have for you will be eternal and will also subsist, whatever I do. Farewell . . . ' (La Fayette 1999: 232).
3. 'But she also saw that she was endeavouring upon something impossible, resisting in the presence of the most lovable man in the world, whom she loved and by whom she was loved . . . ' (La Fayette 1999: 235).
4. Not only 'she does not tell him that she had made any resolution' (La Fayette 1999: 238) concerning her marriage, since she has not made it, but even until the very last 'she thought that it was not yet necessary for her to do herself the violence of taking a resolution; decorum gave her considerable time to determine herself. But she resolved to stay firm in having no business with Monsieur de Nemours' (234). She thus only decides not to meet with him again.

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Book Reviews

Eugene Thacker (2010) *After Life*, London and Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

In *After Life*, Eugene Thacker's overall project is to explore the ontology of life in Western Philosophy. His inquiry into this philosophical tradition is an attempt to articulate a rigorous critique of life (rather than to propose a radically new conceptualisation of it) and his thesis is that the question of life is, fundamentally, a question of ontology. Following antiquitian – and later, Heidegger's – concerns with Being and modern denunciations of God, the question of life for Thacker is now the key question for philosophy. Among contemporary thinkers it is Deleuze who garners most attention, which is not incidental given Thacker's emphasis on avoiding the sublimation of life within theological, metaphysical or biological discourses, as well as his aim to probe and problematise anthropomorphic conceptualisations of life. The world is not there 'for us' or simply there 'in itself' but

> it is a world that presents us with the very limits of our ability to comprehend it . . . It is a world 'without us' . . . the challenge of thinking a concept of life that is foundationally, and not incidentally, a nonhuman or unhuman concept of life. (Thacker 2010: xv)

The ambitious scope of Thacker's project comes into focus when listing the numerous philosophers he engages with; alongside Deleuze, the book includes lengthy discussions of Aristotle, Eriugena, the Pseudo-Dionysius, Duns Scotus, Nicholas of Cusa, Spinoza and Kant – as well as brief forays into the writings of contemporary philosophers such as Alain Badiou and Quintin Meillassoux and also Chinese philosophers such as Zhuxi and Wang Yangming. Readers of Deleuze will recognise then that Thacker's critique of life offers an analysis of Deleuze's philosophy by paying close attention to those who have influenced him at the same time as understanding his position in our contemporary context.

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To be sure, *After Life* is not a book focused exclusively on Deleuze's thought – the first sustained discussion of his writings appears in chapter three – but it does engage extensively with some of those thinkers who most influenced Deleuze as well as exploring how his own writings (in particular *Difference and Repetition* and *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*)[1] are crucial to any inquiry into an ontology of life.

In the opening chapter, Thacker concentrates on Aristotle's *De Anima* and the concept of *psukhē*, usually translated as 'soul' but, as he points out, more accurately understood as 'vital principle' or 'principle of life' (11). Starting with Aristotelian *psukhē* – and therefore a disengagement of life from being – is useful as it allows Thacker to focus on life as an ontological concern in its own right, and, because for Aristotle life itself is inseparable from the cause of life, this sets up the conflict between transcendence and immanence that runs through much of the book. It also allows Thacker to distinguish his project from those – such as Giorgio Agamben and Rosi Braidotti – who prefer to focus on the concepts of *zoē* or 'bare life' (biological/naturalistic life common to humans and nonhumans) and *bios* (as qualified way of life).[2] Thacker is interested in the term *psukhē* because it conditions the very possibility of these concepts, it is 'the *archē* of *zoē* and *bios* . . . or the life that is common across every instance of life' (13). The contradiction inherent to Aristotle's *psukhē*, however, is that on the one hand 'there is no thing called "life-in-itself" that is ever present apart from its formal, dynamic, and temporal instantiations in the variety of living beings' and on the other hand 'Aristotle does not dispense with the archē-of-life altogether. He seems to imply its necessary existence if one is to think something like "life" at all' (14). This internal split within the concept of *psukhē* is ultimately equivalent to a split ontology of life into '*that-by-which-the-living-is-living* and *that-which-is-living*' (17); Thacker helpfully transforms these into a more laconic formulation of a split between 'Life' and 'the Living' (although he is at pains to point out this should not be thought of as simply the Heideggerian distinction between Being and beings). There is something that is therefore evasive about *psukhē*, it is 'an always-receding horizon that is never present to thought in itself. . . . There is a sense in the *De Anima* that what remains of "life" is this strange animate nothingness, a kind of vitalist void' (20). Two levels of contradiction result from this: first, Life is common among the living and yet in itself Life has 'no properties, attributes, or characteristics' (21); second, because for Aristotle Life and the living are always already paired, this means that '[*o*]*ne cannot think Life without thinking the living; one cannot think Life while at the same time thinking*

the living' (ibid.). Rather than attempt to reconcile these contradictions, Thacker instead argues that they should be emphasised as central to such an ontology, even if undermining it at the same time. He asks: 'To what extent are all ontologies of life determined within the twofold framework of the principle-of-life and the bifurcation between Life and the living?' (24)

In chapter two Thacker takes this contradictory conceptualisation of life as a departure point, and focuses on what he names 'superlative life' as life-beyond-the-living. Superlative life is presented as both a kind of immanence, 'a continuum that cuts across all instances of the living', as well as transcendence, 'existing apart from any particular instance of the living as its ground or condition' (34). The advantage and also the difficulty of superlative life comes from the fact that it cannot be understood wholly through oppositions such as being/becoming, stasis/change, eternity/temporality, because this would entail a mediating concept that accounts for the movement between terms; nor can it be reduced to the living as this does not answer the question of causality. Thacker looks at the consequences of superlative life within a framework of positive and negative theology, and, in his discussion of the Pseudo-Dionysius, argues convincingly that it is here we find 'the groundwork for a conjunction between the divine as an ontological principle and the divine as a vitalist principle' (55). As well as exploring the tension between immanence and transcendence, superlative life leads Thacker to discuss affirmation and negation, and this includes a succinct and helpful summary of Alain Badiou's concept of subtraction as the affirmative part of negation. It is in this context of negation that Thacker first introduces Deleuze:

> the process of superlative negation in the apophatic logic can be understood as a Deleuzian process, one in which what is repeated each time is difference itself. Each superlative negation ('Life is not-not-*a* . . . ') is not just a mechanical iteration, but it pushes against the limit of thought itself, each time actually creating new conditions. This repetition of difference is not merely the creation of new ideas or even new possibilities or potentialities (that may or may not become real), but it is, instead, a sort of phase shift in the very conditions of thought itself ('virtual while remaining fully actual' as Deleuze often states). (88)

Chapter three sees a sustained engagement with Deleuze's philosophy. Not only is this the section of the book that will be of greatest interest to Deleuze scholars, but it is also the most lucid and rewarding part of Thacker's discussion. After returning to Aristotle's *psukhē*, he focuses

on Scholastic thought – the debate now drawn in terms of creator/created rather than Life/the living – and the question of univocity. Whilst several medieval philosophers are discussed, including Aquinas (an analogical relation between creator/creature) and Henry of Ghent (an equivocal relation between creator/creature), it is his reading of Duns Scotus that is the most developed, and most significant in relation to Deleuze. With Scotus's view that the relationship between creatures is fundamentally univocal, Thacker helpfully breaks down his conceptualisation of univocity into three layers. First, there is the haecceitas or 'thisness' (individuating principle) of the creature; second, there is the 'common nature' between creatures (accounting for differences or similarities); third, there is the 'nature of all common natures' (123). For Scotus, then, univocity is not about saying that all-is-one so much as it is a reconceptualisation of entities as neither subjectively created nor independently existent in the world:

> The formal distinction articulates something that really exists, but that is not unproblematically accessible via the senses. In other words, within the creature, the common nature (that which cuts across, that which is held in common) is related to its individuating thisness (that which makes it this particular instance of some nature) in a univocal manner. (123)

It is easy to see the relevance of this in relation to more recent debates between empiricism and idealism, immanence and transcendence. It is also of no surprise that this is where Deleuze enters the debate. Scholasticism, Thacker notes, is never far away from Deleuze's philosophy, specifically in terms of his long-standing engagement with the issues concerning the One, multiplicity and pure immanence. There are direct references to Scholastic thinkers in his work, too. Perhaps the most notable example comes in a passage – part of which Thacker draws attention to – from *Difference and Repetition*:

> There has only ever been one ontological position: Being is univocal. There has only ever been one ontology, that of Duns Scotus, which gave being a single voice. We say Duns Scotus because he was the one who elevated univocal being to the highest point of subtlety, albeit at the price of abstraction … A single voice raises the clamour of being. (Deleuze 2004: 44)[3]

Thacker describes Deleuze's Scholasticism as heretical in a similar sense to his notorious formulation of the history of philosophy as a kind of buggery, and, in focusing on univocity, he points out that Deleuze is wrestling with a similar problem that Scotus was: 'how to posit a univocity of being without flattening all distinctions within being'

(Thacker 2010: 137). This goes to the heart of a common difficulty with Deleuze's philosophy and in order to answer it we need to turn first to Spinoza. If one of the problems for Scholastic thinkers was that univocity signals 'all relation' (therefore failing to account for differences or causation between individuated creatures), then Spinoza allows us to reimagine causality 'less in terms of a first cause or principle, and more in terms of a self-causality or auto-creation' (138); in other words, causality becomes fundamentally immanent. Moreover, Spinoza's emphasis on the generativity of univocity as affirmative becoming rather than neutral being (as in Scotus) allows Deleuze to think of univocity as creative. Taking up this concept of univocity as immanence, Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition* sees it as central to his ontology of difference, of difference as primary, and against identity and representation. Hence, Thacker is correct to emphasise Deleuze's Scholasticism, via Spinoza, as heretical: univocity for the Scholastics 'denoted not difference but identity, not discontinuity but continuity' (141). Returning to the problem of reconciling univocity with heterogeneity, Deleuze's foundational ontology of difference provides an answer:

> In effect, the essential in univocity is not that Being is said in a single and same sense, but that it is said, in a single and same sense, of all its individuating differences or intrinsic modalities. Being is the same for all these modalities, but these modalities are not the same. It is 'equal' for all, but they themselves are not equal. It is said of all in a single sense, but they themselves do not have the same sense. The essence of univocal being is to include individuating differences, while these differences do not have the same essence and do not change the essence of being... Being is said in a single and same sense of everything of which it is said, but that of which it is said differs: it is said of difference itself. (Deleuze 2004: 45)

In order to expand on Deleuze's direct discussions of univocity, Thacker also draws attention to a lecture Deleuze gave at Vincennes in 1974. Here Deleuze offers a succinct summary of the terms univocity, equivocity and analogy aligning them with terms more familiar to contemporary philosophy such as community, difference or power. In this lecture 'univocity implies total interconnectedness', and thus we can see its influence on those terms so familiar to Deleuzian scholars – becoming, assemblage, haecceity and so on. Here Deleuze also puts his finger on an important caveat in Scotus' philosophy whereby 'Scotus tempers his position of univocity between an assertion of being as "univocal metaphysically," and yet "analogical physically"'

(Thacker 2010: 147). Deleuze notes in his Vincennes lecture that it was this important condition that saved Scotus: 'he was at the border of heresy, had he not specified metaphysically univocal and physically analogical, he would have been done for' (cited in Thacker 2010: 148). Without such concerns, Deleuze can go further; he can use univocity at its most radical to think of Creator/creature, divine/earthly, supernatural/natural and Life/the living as

> fully immanent in relation to the other . . . it requires thinking that which is 'above' the human as equal to that which is 'below' the human. The angel and the insect both exist immanently. As Deleuze notes, 'God is a tick'. (Thacker 2010: 153)

Where Thacker poses a challenge to Deleuze's model is towards the end of the chapter by claiming that this form of univocity actually becomes equivalent to equivocity. This section finds him on shakier ground philosophically, but perhaps brings Deleuze onto this shakier ground too:

> the creature is univocal because, in a sense, the relationship between Life and the living is actually a non-relation, compressed into a single, continuous 'voice' – *une voce*. The life 'after life' is another way of saying that the relation between Life and the living is a univocal relation – and thus not really a relation at all. 'No relation' – is this not the opposite position, that of equivocity? (154)

Thacker ultimately never lets go of his interest in 'emptiness', 'nothingness' or 'the void' in *After Life*. This is evident in chapter four, which focuses on 'dark pantheism', again including a detailed reading of Deleuze. Having moved from the distinction Life/living to Creator/creature, chapter 4 neatly takes us to the issue of transcendence/immanence. In particular, Thacker considers the question of how far pure immanence – in Thacker's words 'immanence as not subordinate to transcendence', or, as Deleuze notes in 'Immanence: A Life', 'the immanence of immanence' (Deleuze 2001: 27) is possible/desirable. Seeing Scotist univocity in terms of immanence means that 'immanence would not be derived from transcendence, but the inverse: the ontological priority of immanence' (Thacker 2010: 186). Thacker offers a close reading of passages from *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza* to emphasise Deleuze's appropriation and development of Spinoza's 'expression' whereby expression expresses itself, it is univocal or immanent. Several useful questions are posed to challenge the idea of immanence as pure immanence, however: 'If

immanence is pure immanence, immanent to nothing but itself, then how can immanence also be a ceaseless creation and invention of the new? How can creativity emerge out of what is already fully actual?' (213). There is, of course, the reactionary response to this, prompting a reaffirmation of transcendence of the divine (which would, Thacker points out, be symptomatic of the religious context in which medieval thinkers were working and also of the strict adherence to logical frameworks). The difficulty, even the counterintuitiveness, of pure immanence is, Thacker posits, a result of it becoming 'tantamount to the thought of contradiction itself' (214) This explains Deleuze's suggestion that pantheism is a danger to philosophy, and Thacker goes on to further explore this possibility of a pantheism that is the 'absolute coincidence of immanence and life' (215). Ultimately such a pantheism 'raises the question of life as a fundamentally *unhuman* phenomenon. Pantheism in Deleuze's sense points to a horizon in which both "life" and "thought" can be understood in non-anthropomorphic ways' (228) and thus helps us to see a possible answer to one of the central questions running through *After Life*: 'Without a human subject to think the concept of life, can life be said to exist at all?' (24) This kind of pantheism is both 'the horizon of thought itself' (229) and also, according to Thacker, fundamentally misanthropic (hence the chosen terminology of 'dark pantheism'), although his leap from nonanthropomorphism to misanthropism is not fully convincing. Nonetheless, this is a key transition of dark pantheism, 'one that moves from the encompassing of all things (the One as All), to the immanence of all things and nothing (the All as *nihil*)' (232).

The final chapter begins with Kant and his ambivalent positioning of life as between self and world, 'at once a set of entities "out there" (e.g., crops for food, livestock for breeding) and yet a continuum that connects the "out there" to the "in here" (the principle of life that connects all living beings)' (247). The book then takes another contemporary turn to explore the complexities involved in the self–world relationship and focuses on Quentin Meillassoux and speculative realism.[4] Of particular interest is Meillassoux's notion in *After Finitude* of 'correlation', meaning that we can never access thinking and being separately but only the correlation between them. Correlationism is therefore a kind of compromise between naïve realism and idealism, pure objectivity and subjectivity. In order to assess to what extent life is correlational, Thacker outlines three key responses to the question: existential (life/death correlation), organicist (growth/decay correlation) and ontological (Life/living correlation). But correlationism

leaves Thacker with the same problem that he faces throughout much of the book:

> The question remains whether the Life/living distinction – as a correlation – is ultimately recuperated into a vitalist correlation (Life is that which cuts across all instances of the living), or whether it tends towards an absolute incommensurability (Life is never present in itself, and is not a manifestation). (256)

It is also limited in that it is 'human-centric', according to Thacker, with its basis on the relation between self and world. Correlationism's ultimate insufficiency as an ontology of life comes because the '*the vitalist correlation is ontologically predicated not on a concept of being, but on a concept of life – even at the same time that the latter must ambivalently presume the former*' (257).[5]

Returning to Kant, Thacker ends his inquiry into the concept of life by focusing on causality and purposiveness. Ultimately, he concludes that 'life as a topic for ontology must necessarily be speculative' (259). In a book that is as much about theology as it is about philosophy, it is fitting that Thacker ends with an extension of Kant's definition of theology (and he provides a concise summary of ontotheology, cosmotheology and physicotheology) to suggest that it is 'an inquiry into the thought of that which cannot be thought' (260). For Thacker, this relates to Georges Bataille's view of theology as the perfect anti-philosophy, 'negatively articulat[ing] a void at the heart of philosophical thinking itself' (262). This sees Thacker returning to a philosophy of life as nothingness rather than pure generosity (the latter continues to present the problem of causation and teleology), and thus the limitation he finds in phenomenology as well as Deleuzian 'biophilosophy':

> If life is generosity, gift, givenness, and if one refuses the onto-theological option of a life-principle, much less divine cause of life, then it would seem that only a few options remain. One of them is to question the presumption that life must somehow be identical with affirmation, generosity, and givenness. Another is to question the logical consistency that any ontology of life would presuppose – there is no cause of life except life itself; there is no finality of life except life itself, etc. If we take these two options together – life as negative (nihil), and life as contradictory – we have, in short, a version of Bataille's atheology. (265)

Bataille's atheology moves closer to an ontology of life as 'immanence of nothing' (ibid.) where contradiction is central and life is negative: 'a nothing that must necessarily follow from a principle of immanence' (266). *After Life* therefore ends with the speculation that there is some unintelligibility inherent to any ontology of life, and that it is precisely

this unintelligibility that acts as a limit that leads us back to the question posed throughout this book: how to think life 'without us' – a question that is inevitably left unanswered. Nonetheless, *After Life* provides a rigorous, illuminating and absorbing critique of life, and if the book ends on a slightly elusive or vague note – with a brief discussion of William Hope Hodgson's fantasy/sci-fi novel *The Night Land* rather than a conclusion as such – it is perhaps fitting for a project interested in how the ontology of life takes us to the limits of thought itself. Thacker's planned sequel, *Dark Life*, promises to push these limits further still.

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Notes

1. Indeed, the discussion of Deleuze in *After Life* focuses almost exclusively on these two texts, with no mention of his collaborative work with Guattari.
2. See Agamben 1998: 1–11; Braidotti 2006: 36–43, 129–38, 232–6. For a brief but insightful discussion of Agamben's bios/zoē in relation to Braidotti's, see Braidotti 2007.
3. This is of course the passage where Badiou takes the title of his book on Deleuze (see Badiou 1999). For an excellent recent survey of the relationship between the philosophies of Deleuze and Badiou, see Lecercle 2010.
4. For more on Meillassoux in relation to other philosophers associated with speculative realism, see Mackay 2007 and Brassier *et al.* 2007: 307–449.
5. See Bennett 2010 for a recent interesting argument for the possibility of a nontheistic, materialist vitalism.

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I. Introduction

Nathan Widder's book, *Reflections on Time and Politics*, exemplifies Wittgenstein's remark in the *Philosophical Investigations* that 'the work of the philosopher consists in assembling reminders for a particular purpose' (§127). Widder's purpose is the liberation of 'pluralistic' political thought – that is, those perspectives on politics that are concerned with the autonomy of difference – from a very powerful and well-entrenched conception of identity. His assemblage of reminders revolves around the problem of time.

Widder is concerned that many forms of contemporary political thought have taken their cue from thinkers like Deleuze, Foucault and others like them, but have failed to fully absorb the lessons that these thinkers offer. The lesson at stake here has to do with the conceptions of time that these thinkers work out, all of which have radical consequences for the concept – and not just the concept but the very possibility and actual status – of identity. The radical critique of political identity, whose emergence can provisionally be tied to Nietzsche's thinking, has contributed to an unprecedented political awareness among many individuals and groups in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The political problematisation of identity has taken many forms. For example, we see 'identity politics', in which particular concrete identity formations are the basis and subject matter of political struggle itself; political liberalism, which asks individuals and groups to abstract away from substantive identity claims and participate in formal consensus-building procedures; communitarianism, which takes its cue from Hegel's idea of a shared ethical substance; and so on. 'Identity politics' has been very important, and has provoked retrenched efforts insofar as thinkers like Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze have picked up on Nietzsche's insight and have analysed the processes through which particular identities are imposed on individuals and groups.

Of course, with Deleuze, as with the other thinkers that Widder praises in *Reflections on Time and Politics*, identity is a synthetic effect – Widder uses the term 'simulation', fully aware of what that means after Deleuze's 'reversal of Platonism' – generated by the dynamics of difference and repetition. Yet, says Widder, this very important insight about identity has not yet been fully taken on by many contemporary

thinkers:

> If identity remains in some way necessary to our understandings and self-understandings, it is only as a marker useful for coordinating and organizing certain aspects or levels of life, and only when these are considered in abstraction. It seems to me that identity is still held to be more than this in many political and philosophical circles aspiring to escape from, or at least displace and circumscribe, metaphysics, essentialism, and transcendence. I would go so far as to say that the exposure of identity as a simulation is a lesson from Nietzsche, Foucault, and Deleuze that often goes unappreciated even by theorists who draw inspiration from them. The result, I believe, is that too often identity is held to be historically contingent and fluctuating, yet still indispensable for politics, ethics, meaning, and thought. Considerations of the concrete structure of time, however, can open up another path. (Widder 2008: 12)

Despite the innovations of Foucault and others, many radical conceptions of political struggle have not quite shaken some metaphysical prejudices. The discovery that identities are dynamically composed multiplicities rather than self-grounding 'things-in-themselves' is undercut by an overemphasis on what Foucault referred to as sovereign power, on the problem of who acquires and wields power.

To put it another way, some ways of understanding political struggle influenced by Foucault and others remain transfixed by the mediating power of personae, whether the latter are individualistically or collectively individuated; in Deleuze and Guattari's terminology, we are faced with attempts at radical politics that still have trouble escaping the 'molar' register. This is not to say, for example, that Iran's Green Revolution, which coalesced around Mir-Hossein Mousavi and opposed Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's presidency, was misguided because it focused on the 'molar' aspects of the struggle and did not address the 'molecular' register of dynamic force relations that give rise to identifiable power blocs. Rather, what Foucault, Deleuze and others have proposed is that 'molar' struggle is not the only kind: in order for despotic regimes to be established, entire arrays of complicated actions need to be papered over and abbreviated versions of events have to be accepted. In other words, there is no question of a 'macropolitics' without a 'micropolitics' that addresses force relations that tend toward the abstract, the anonymous and the subindividual. Many contemporary political approaches that take their cue from radical twentieth-century thought, however, still tacitly presume a conception of identity that has not yet freed itself of the horizon of substance metaphysics. Widder suggests that an analysis of the problem of time can help us escape that horizon.

II. The Problem of Time and Politics

For Widder, everything hinges on the relationship of time to change or movement. He begins by noting that recent debates in philosophy have seen a return to the problem of time. Philosophical projects searching for ways to 'consider more affirmatively how philosophy can be practiced and how the human self or subject can be conceived today', in conjunction with

> the impact of profound changes related to globalization and the information age economy, which have blurred both real and conceptual boundaries and made speed a central factor of contemporary life ... [have] produced a renewed interest in time as an active force of change, contingency, and novelty. (1)

One need not look very far to confirm this statement; today, we hear all about rhythms and durations; we are used to discussing social phenomena with temporal vocabularies. 'Time's multiplicity, manifesting itself in the coexistence of different tempos and velocities of time, is now used to account for complex and ambiguous processes of contemporary life and to outline excessive forms of speed that modern societies seek to control' (ibid.).

The association of time with a multiplicity of durations is a great innovation, but also poses a problem that drives Widder's line of inquiry here.

> This often explicit focus on time's *movement* ... seems problematic. Perpetual movement is certainly time's first and most obvious trait ... [m]oreover, emphasizing the dynamism of both time and the processes occurring in it has obvious advantages for a pluralist political thought that aims to challenge identity-based politics by demonstrating both the contingent, incomplete, and fluctuating nature of identity and its slippery materiality. Finally, stressing time's movement helps foster a more natural link between philosophy and the physical sciences ... [p]rivileging time's passage, however, seems to me to be both analytically incomplete and inconsistent with respect to the principal philosophical sources inspiring this move. (2)

The 'principal philosophical sources' in question all have one important thing in common: multiplicity as a first principle. Widder is right, moreover, to question ways of thinking that claim inspiration from, say, Deleuze and that fail to take the thought of multiplicity to its full extent. It is not that there are x number of 'Deleuzian' accounts out there that do not adequately engage a Deleuzian conception of time, though. Rather, the failure of these positions lies in their failure to stop depending on a

conception of identity to act as a ground for political thought. Widder knows that the articulation of multiplicity as first principle, and its attendant radical critique of identity, cannot avoid going through a radical conceptualisation of time. Wisely, he chooses to privilege the problem of time in this book because its clarification demonstrates that there is and can be no escape into identitarian thinking for forms of political thought that claim to 'follow' Deleuze and others.

The chief question concerning time, according to Widder, is: is time fundamentally subordinated to movement and change – in other words, to duration and thus to extension – or is it rather to be thought of as the structure according to which movement, change, duration, temporal extension and so on come to be through syntheses of multiplicity? If we are to take up Deleuze's thought, we have to follow the latter path, and this is Widder's decision.

> It is not that time's flow is unimportant, but it is neither primary nor foundational... [t]herefore, despite the important advances the recent interest in time has brought to pluralist political philosophy, this work sees the need to take a further step back and consider time as a static structure or synthesis that *ungrounds* movement, including the movement of time. (3)

For the purposes of this review, I am going to use the term 'extension' to gather up the various senses that Widder uses – movement, change and so on – because I think that the prejudice he draws out comes down to the implicit or explicit idea that we ought to be able to find something like an 'elementary particle' of being. Another way to put it might be to say that this prejudice in favour of identity leads us to search for minimal indivisible units that guarantee sense, meaning, coherence and so on. In terms of political thought, it amounts to the enduring idea that there is a subject – or, as Alain Badiou puts it, 'that there are always some subjects' – that is not the synthetic effect of difference and repetition. As Widder correctly suggests, many political thinkers continue to look for the minimal 'substantiating' term. For example, in Johanna Oksala's *Foucault on Freedom* (2005) we find Foucault's insights wedded to a phenomenological conception of the body, an 'anonymous body' structured through

> the normatively significant life-world, with its unique language and tradition. It is the familiar life-world that is normatively relevant to us. It is the world that our body intends and spins around us... [o]ur horizon of anticipations is structured in accordance with the intersubjectively handed-down forms of apperception. (Oksala 2005: 148)

Likewise, if we look at Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's work, such as 2004's *Multitude*, 'multitude' itself becomes the minimally acceptable individuating principle; it is 'an internally different, multiple social subject whose constitution and action is based not on identity or unity (or, much less, indifference) but on what it has in common' (Hardt and Negri 2004: 100). Lastly, Jürgen Habermas, who is well aware of the challenges of Nietzsche and Foucault, but who has misread both the stakes and the consequences of those challenges and turns away from them, conceives of a communicatively generated intersubjectivity upon which rests the possibility of and call for engagement.

In each of these examples, we find a minimally self-identical *res extensa* of sorts that acts as the abstract subject of political thought; in each of these examples, moreover, we find an ostensible rejection of the 'old' category of identity, of a thing-in-itself that would replicate and sustain 'classical metaphysics', with all of the latter's pitfalls and untenable claims.Yet, in each case, the problem of identity is reconstituted at the level of the individuating term used to support a pluralist politics. Each of these systems of thinking relies on an element of substantive identity, despite having disavowed the latter. In each case, the status of political thought depends on whether or not we have identified the correct *res extensa*, the right subject, substance or substrate. I think that Widder is right to point out that this is a widespread tendency in contemporary thought, and I think that he is also right to insist that it is a problem for thinkers, like Oksala or Hardt and Negri, who explicitly draw inspiration from Deleuze and Foucault. It is no less a problem for someone like Habermas, who takes a much different path but who nonetheless considers his thinking to be 'post-metaphysical'. On such views, the particular character of the subject in question frames the inquiry. This adequately self-identical subject is always the basic minimum individuating term necessary for the 'proper' approach to politics. But, as Widder's work reminds us, this conception of identity only obtains on the condition that time is primarily 'flow'. If *flow* is time's essence, then any particular identity is reducible to its own duration, which reintroduces the classical distinctions between substance and property, accident and essence, and so on. A conception of time based on extension tends to persuade us that the abstract continuity of extended things is primary and substantial.

The impression that follows is that, for whatever practical problematic we take up, the appropriate abstract identity is at play, and our responses to the problematic, and even the way we frame the problematic in the first place, must be answerable to the abstract subject in question; it

must be shown that something is at stake in the problematic that is analogous to or that resembles the abstract substrate. But according to a conception of time that admits of no substantial ground in the form of abstract identities that underpin particular concrete subject formations, there is no such thing as a minimal *res extensa*. Despite the consequences of following philosophies of multiplicity to their logical conclusion there remains, even in many 'pluralist' approaches to politics, a considerable 'whiff' of transcendence that poses an obstacle for radical critique.

To address this problem, Widder reminds us that Deleuze and the other thinkers he praises in this book all work out conceptions of time that are autonomous with relation to conceptual schemes grounded in extension. Beginning with a reading of Aristotle's *Physics*, in which Widder begins clarifying a conception of time that is 'excessive in both its infinite backward and forward extension and its foundational discontinuity, making it harmful to any telos' (21), we are treated to eighteen meditations on the meaning of an unreserved commitment to the principle multiplicity.

III. The Book

Reflections on Time and Politics falls, very roughly, into three divisions. Chapters 1 through 6 deal with a 'pure' philosophical elaboration of time, beginning with Aristotle and proceeding to Deleuze's reception of the 'untimely' in Nietzsche's thinking. Chapters 7 through 13 address the issues of ego formation, the unconscious and sense, and feature very interesting discussions of psychoanalysis in chapters 12 and 13. Chapters 14 through 18 are overtly 'political', and culminate with a discussion of Foucault that is entirely appropriate and welcome, since one finds a complex temporal logic in Foucault's work that bears directly on his philosophico-historical investigations and that is crucial to understanding his thinking. I find Widder's discussion very helpful, because Foucault is a 'molar' agent through which the thought of contemporary political struggle is frequently approached, and is a privileged mediator for a thoroughgoing treatment of non-identitarian thinking.

Moreover, the problem that Widder wishes to address in his book is very closely related, in my view, to the inadequacy of many influential critiques of Foucault. The image of Foucault finding a pervasive domination in every facet of social life is well known. This view has underpinned not only a lot of 'theory' in North America, among Foucault's detractors as well as his supporters, but also many forms

of concrete ethico-political criticism and activism, in which everything plays out as the struggle against an ineradicable despotism that plagues the soul; this tendency is compatible with a certain Christian legacy as well as with a certain multicultural liberalism that Slavoj Žižek has taken to task in the most uncompromising manner. Yet an awareness of the way that temporality works in Foucault's thinking helps dispel this image, and thus to my mind Widder is entirely right to conclude this book by discussing Foucault, since all of his work incorporates the radical perspective on time that Widder picks up from Deleuze and works out.

Another chapter that I really like is chapter 9, on 'Incorporeal Surfaces'. Here Widder provides a solid account of Deleuze's reversal of Platonism, in which the simulacrum, rather than being the parasitical imitator of the forms, embodies 'positive principles of difference and repetition' (106). 'The simulacrum's dynamics, for Deleuze, produce a phantasm that never corresponds to it because the phantasm cannot copy it well or badly' (106). Phantasms, the perceptible effects of the simulacrum, are not the representations of some kind of substance to which they would be in some way analogous; formally speaking, they correspond to nothing, although they are in immanence with the simulacrum. Identity, insofar as it is a residual effect of phantasmatic production, that is, of difference and repetition, is only established through processes of hierarchical differentiation between micro-events, generating the macro-events that belong to the game of representation.

From the point of view of pure multiplicity, fields of events are entirely indifferent 'in themselves', which is to say that the thought of pure difference admits of no concrete distinctions, since the latter obtain only on the condition of a minimally stable identity. To even say something like 'fields of events', moreover, is already to concede too much to the selection process: there is no 'subject of politics' or 'subject of history'. And this is really the crux of Widder's project: to remind us that, at bottom, there is no subject, that there is nothing of substance upon which identity rests. I found chapters 12 and 13, both on the synthetic production of the psyche, to be particularly helpful, because of the still-powerful impression that there is some kind of ground in psychic life itself, something that would no longer be the effect of difference and repetition. But the account that Widder works out in these chapters undermines the prejudice of a mind whose contents are (at least ideally) perfectly aligned with the offerings of a more or less inert world composed of 'regular' and 'irregular' arrangements that are to be clearly and distinctly perceived. In my view, Widder provides a

welcome rejoinder to the so-called 'speculative realist' thesis of Quentin Meillassoux and some of his colleagues, according to which everyone after Kant, including Nietzsche and Deleuze, falls into the category 'correlationist' for their assimilation of 'mind' to 'world' and vice versa.

Widder nicely provides a set of resources for showing the shortcomings of this position when it comes to a philosophy like Deleuze's; here, minds and worlds are no doubt correlates, but they are non-analogous correlates and their relationship is not representational. The relation itself is inconsistent; whatever links there are between 'psychic agency' and its objective correlates is neither pre-established nor analogous. The subject is to be overcome, objects are to be overcome: this is empiricism. The psyche is a surface that develops out of 'a chaotic world of part-objects' (135), an ongoing event composed of events, 'a disjunction of differences folded into one another and linked through a differenciator, dark precursor, or pure event. As such, the phantasm, relating to external reality at and through the surface, cannot be a good or bad copy of this reality' (138). These two chapters, on the genesis of the surface, are helpful companions for Deleuze's *Logic of Sense* because they provide clear accounts of Sigmund Freud and Melanie Klein's respective work in relation to Deleuze's encounters with each.

IV. Conclusion

Reflections on Time and Politics is a very rich book, and there is a lot to like here. I have had trouble picking out passages to get into because every chapter is full of challenging and helpful argumentation, and I could certainly go on at length were it not for space constraints. I do not have much in the way of disagreements with Widder here, and where I might, they are relatively inconsequential. For example, in chapter 15, 'Discipline and Normalization', he claims that according to Foucault 'modern society . . . is *disciplinary*' (158), which is not an unusual claim. For my part, however, I would say that insofar as we can say that there is something like 'society', the latter has undergone disciplinary becomings: various rationalities have been deployed across innumerable events and have produced changes in the direction of what Foucault calls discipline. I am wary of making a claim like 'modern society is disciplinary' because I am wary of tacitly reintroducing a substance–property relation into the mix. But if I differ here, it is a very minor quibble. By no means do I think Widder is inattentive to these difficulties, which are very hard to escape. As Widder consistently points out, there is nothing necessarily wrong with using identity as a provisional, strategic marker; the problem

is how to do so without losing sight of the synthetic character of identity formations.

I highly recommend this book to readers for its rigour and sobriety. Widder is uncompromising in following the thought of multiplicity to its furthest extent, and pursues all of its consequences for political thought. He offers a much-needed corrective to those who claim to incorporate the work of Deleuze, Foucault and others, but who shy away from taking the logic therein as far as it has to go. Widder has written a very truthful book, and he is to be commended for it.

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Call for Papers

The First International *Deleuze Studies* in Asia Conference, Taipei, Taiwan

The English Department at Tamkang University, the publisher of the internationally renowned *Tamkang Review*, is pleased to announce that it will be hosting The First International *Deleuze Studies* in Asia Conference on the theme 'Creative Assemblages', 31 May–2 June 2013, and, prior to the conference, the Deleuze Camp, 25–29 May, 2013.

Creative Assemblages

As one of the most important terms in Gilles Deleuze's oeuvre, 'assemblage' refers to the territory of an object along with its own regime of signs and pragmatic system. Yet assemblage also refers to the force of deterritorialisation underlying the structure which is pending to be effectuated so that new connections can be established. In other words, the Deleuzian assemblage is not only a territorial gesture, framing its own territory but also a performative practice of carving out new routes of thinking. Most important of all, Deleuze and Guattari emphasise the epistemological sparks emanating from launching creatively the continual process of territorialisation, deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation of assemblages.

Yet, where can we perceive assemblages? They are everywhere: human beings, as centers of indetermination, are assemblages of images, with which Deleuze 'assembles' the brain with the screen, the world with the film to expound his philosophy of time. Even virtual assemblages on digital networks (email, Facebook, Twitter) in our quotidian life can be regarded as assemblages. Assemblages can be practical and political instead of just theoretical. In this light, to what extent can Deleuze's philosophical thinking assist us to canvass various assemblages in prospect, and what is the assemblage between us and Deleuze in retrospect? Is it possible for us to theorise the new informatics sensibilia by formulating the *dispositif* of the horizontal/rhizomatic assemblages? And apart from the superficial/superfluous assemblages, is it possible to build any vertical but not arborescent assemblage?

Situating this notion in the contemporary world, we are seeking to form transdisciplinary assemblages in order to respond to and have dialogues with the present predicaments. Possible topics for papers may include but are not limited to:

1) Connections between Deleuze and Guattari's work;
2) Connections among all the different arts, including literature, film, music, architecture, etc.
3) Deleuzian Asian Assemblages;
4) Affect and Asian Aesthetics;

5) Image and Thought;
6) Deleuze and Gender;
7) Psychoanalysis and Schizoanalysis;
8) Creative betrayal of Deleuze;
9) Pros and Cons of Deleuze;
10) Ecology with/without Guattari;
11) Digital Folds;
12) Translation as Expression.

Although we wait to hear from several invited speakers, currently confirmed speakers include:

Jeffrey A. Bell (Southeastern Louisiana University, USA)
Ian Buchanan (University of Wollongong, Australia)
Hsiao-hung Chang (Taiwan University, Taiwan)
Claire Colebrook (Pennsylvania State University, USA)
Jiang Yuhui (East China Normal University, China)
Kokubun Koichiro (Takasaki City University of Economics, Japan)
Patricia Pisters (University of Amsterdam, Holland)
John Protevi (Louisiana State University, USA)
Anne Sauvagnargues (École Normale Supérieure de Lyon, France)
Kailin Yang (Taipei National University of the Arts, Taiwan)

If you are interested in presenting at this **conference**, submit panel proposals and/or individual abstracts (maximum 250 words) with your institutional affiliation and a short bio. The deadline for submission of abstracts for the conference is 31 January 2013. However, for early notification, you are encouraged to apply by **1 September 2012**. The conference registration fee is US$180 for regular attendees, US$150 for early birds, and US$110 for students (the subscription fee of *Deleuze Studies is in-built*), including refreshments and lunch each day.

Prior to the conference, there will be a five-day **Deleuze Camp**. As spaces are limited, registrations will be accepted on a first-come first-serve basis. Applications should include a short bio and a brief statement of one's research interests in Deleuze. The camp registration fee is US$220.

The working language of the conference and the camp is English. The webpage of the academic event. http://www2.tku.edu.tw/~tflxcfp/ will be available after 25 March 2012. For further inquiry, please contact Professor Hanping Chiu, the organiser, at hp.chiu@gmail.com

NOTE: Those who pay the registration fee of this conference can be exempted from the subscription fee of *Deleuze Studies* if they register for the **2013** Lisbon Deleuze Studies International Conference.

Computers and the Superfold

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Abstract

Could it be that Deleuze's most lasting legacy will lie in his 'Postscript on Control Societies', a mere 2,300-word essay from 1990? While he discussed computers and new media infrequently, Deleuze admittedly made contributions to the contemporary discourse on computing, cybernetics and networks, particularly in his late work. From the concepts of the rhizome and the virtual, to his occasional interjections on the digital versus the analogue, there is a case to be made that the late Deleuze has not only influenced today's discourse on new media but also proposes an original set of arguments about society and politics at the turn of the new millennium. Focusing on the 'Postscript on Control Societies' and a handful of texts that surround it, we will reconstruct an image of what it means to live in the information age. This will have consequences for how we define the digital and the analogue, what the computer means, and ultimately provide some insight into one of the more elusive terms in all of Deleuze, the superfold.

Keywords: computer, control, digital, information age, capitalism, superfold

Could it be? Could it be that Deleuze's most lasting legacy will consist of 2,300 words from 1990? Such a strange little text, his 'Postscript on Control Societies' (Deleuze 1995b: 177–82). It bears not the same Deleuzian voice so familiar from his other writings. Cynics will grumble it falls short of the great books of 1968–9 or the radical collaborations with Félix Guattari during the 1970s.[1] A different voice resonates here, a more directly political voice, and barring the Guattari collaborations a voice less commonly heard in Deleuze's writings. Deleuze was always

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a political thinker, certainly, and remained politically committed in various ways throughout his life. But the 'Postscript' is different.

'Today, I can say that I feel completely Marxist', he admitted in a late interview published posthumously (1995a). 'The article I published on the "society of control," for example, is completely Marxist, even though I am writing on things that Marx knew nothing about'.[2] Indeed in the article he indicts capitalism by name. He raises his wrath against corporations and television shows. But not just the mode of production, his frame is the culture at large. He talks about snakes and surfers and other features of the dawning millennium. He references Roberto Rossellini, Paul Virilio, Franz Kafka and most importantly Michel Foucault. He tells us exactly what is wrong with the business sector, as well as with the prisons, schools and hospitals. It reads almost like a manifesto, the 'Manifesto on Control Societies'.

Manifestos are always about two things: the desires and the details. This is what we want; and we want it here, and in this manner. When the May 1968 revolts broke out in France, Philippe Sollers, along with Julia Kristeva, Jean-Joseph Goux, Jean-Louis Baudry and a band of other signatories, wrote 'La révolution ici maintenant: sept points', listing their grievances, point by point (Baudry et al. 1968). And – they added at the end – we shall meet on Wednesdays at nine o'clock on the rue de Rennes. This is the crux of the *cahiers de doléances*' refrain, reprised recently in the closing sections of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's *Multitude*: say what you want, and be specific about it.

The year of Deleuze's death, 1995 was a good year for the manifesto. The Unabomber's 'Industrial Society and the Future' advocated the complete destruction of what he called the industrial-technological system. The Dogme '95 'Vow of Chastity' signed by filmmakers Lars Von Trier and Thomas Vinterberg that same year offered the closest thing to a manifesto seen in the cinema for some time. The Vow is as short as the Unabomber's is long, but it is detailed, detailed, detailed. One must film on location, in colour, on Academy 35mm stock and with concurrent diegetic sound.

Ten years earlier, a computer engineer named Richard Stallman wrote the 'GNU Manifesto'. The number of legitimate manifestos written by computer geeks can be counted on one hand – the VNS Matrix 'Cyberfeminist Manifesto' and Eben Moglen's 'The dotCommunist Manifesto' also come to mind. But despite its inauspicious source, Stallman's document had profound effects on the 'industrial-technological system', and almost all of them good. Detailed, like the others, Stallman's manifesto calls for the creation of a free Unix-compatible software

system, including a C compiler and a linker, a text editor and a few dozen other free software applications. He names the make and model of the computer his system will run on. He rebuts, pre-emptively, eleven specific objections raised by his would-be critics. (In a passage he might regret today, Stallman even calls for a software tax to underwrite the development of free code.) Most importantly, the manifesto calls for a 'stay free' legal armature for copyright holders, known today as the GNU General Public License.

Such was the intellectual climate that produced the 'Postscript on Control Societies'. No computer-savvy intellectual was Deleuze. He likely had never heard of Stallman's manifesto much less read it. Nevertheless, scattered across his *oeuvre*, and particularly in his late work, Deleuze has unwittingly made significant contributions to the contemporary discourse on computing, cybernetics and networks. From the concepts of the rhizome and the virtual, to his occasional interjections on the digital versus the analogue, and here with the notion of control society, there is a case to be made that Deleuze, while rarely mentioning computers directly, has dramatically influenced today's discourse on new media.

One of the most influential aspects of the 'Postscript', particularly to my own thinking, is how it asserts so trenchantly that things are not getting any better. Computers are a curse not a panacea. Planetary neoliberalism is a boondoggle not a deliverance. The snake is even worse than the mole. For critics working in the shadow of the dot-com boom, such offerings from Deleuze furnished a welcome dose of fuel needed to combat the naïve utopian babble of the California ideology.

Deleuze was always good at drawing lines in the sand. One of the things that make Deleuze such a pleasure to read is his clear construal of the theatre of enemies. They are excellent enemies. Not just information technologies and the life sciences, but Plato, Hegel and Descartes – elite enemies, all of whom have committed the most egregious error. Each of these philosophical enemies has assented to the classical condition of philosophy. Each admits to an up-down distinction between idea and matter, between essence and instance, between Being and beings. The 'Postscript' does not draw the line so much in terms of metaphysics. Here rather the complaint is articulated in terms of control, communication and the 'harshest confinement' wrought by 'the new monster' of information society (Deleuze 1995b: 178). Deleuze credits the term to William Burroughs, but the true source for 'control' is no mystery.[3] Follow a thread from nineteenth-century thermodynamics and fluid dynamics through statistical mathematics, weather prediction and

nonlinear systems to terminate in 1948 with Norbert Wiener and his book *Cybernetics: or Control and Communication in the Animal and the Machine*. Then, stemming from Wiener and his brethren in the military-industrial research parks, follow the thread that leads through the rest of the twentieth century by way of systems theory, cellular automata and chaos theory. So why not call Deleuze's adversary by its true name?: the enemy is *cybernetics*.

To describe the 'Postscript' as a manifesto is to invoke the question of philosophical genre. An author may adopt different textual strategies to achieve different ends. The interview, the seminar, the essay, the book, these all demand different things from the philosopher, and command different participation by the reader. Of course the 'Postscript' is no user's manual on how to live; it is no call to action. It is no introduction to the non-fascist life, as Foucault said of *Anti-Oedipus*. Yet one can discern here some of the most basic requirements of a manifesto, these being an enumeration of grievances and a sermon for how to remedy them.

But the question of philosophical genre can also be approached from another point of view. For is this short essay not – dare I say – a less philosophical Deleuze? The 'Postscript' reveals a slightly more casual philosopher. It reveals a man more willing to comment about the current state of the world and its daily goings-on. Here is a thinker who is willing to make a hard and fast historical periodisation. Foucault's influence is dramatic. Indeed the 'Postscript' presents the kind of thinking more often seen in the writings of sociologists, political economists or even certain kinds of historians – modes of writing none of which are classic Deleuze. He is expanding his normal repertoire to include a very clear argument about historical periodisation. The argument is no secret: at some point during the middle to late twentieth century disciplinary societies, characterised by confinement and bureaucratic hierarchy, gave way to control societies, characterised by 'free-floating' cybernetic organisation.

Make no mistake, the gambit in the 'Postscript' is larger than what might be evident at first glance. In order to accept the concept of the control society, one must come to terms with a whole host of related concepts that, while not necessarily synonymous with control society, are nevertheless similar enough to demonstrate the success of the periodisation of the contemporary as such. In other words, to accept control society one must accept Jean-François Lyotard's 'postmodern', Hardt and Negri's 'empire', Manuel Castells's 'information age', Luc Boltanski and Ève Chiapello's 'new spirit of capitalism', and all the other related periodisation concepts. These various historical labels do

not mean the same thing, and they do not refer precisely to the same historical periods. But the ubiquity of such periodisation is evidence that something else is happening. The ubiquity of periodisation proves there exists a strong desire to theorise the last few decades as dramatically different from the high water mark of modernity. And further: that periodisation itself *is something that ought to be done*. People are free to squabble over this or that definition, nevertheless the 'Postscript' demonstrates *that periodisation is something that defines today's mode of being*, whether or not people can agree on the historical periods themselves or what they might mean.

Deleuze evokes many specific things in the 'Postscript' that are notable, a few of which will be listed briefly before expanding on one particular salient detail. A number of memorable images jump out to the reader: 'the ultrarapid forms of apparently free-floating control' ('les formes ultra-rapides de contrôle à l'air libre'); the sieve 'whose mesh varies from one point to another'; big business as 'a soul, a gas'; the fact that '*Surfing* has taken over from all the old *sports*'; 'the passive danger of entropy and the active danger of sabotage'; the 'mushrooming shantytowns and ghettos'; and the dynamic between the 'mole's burrow' and the 'snake's coils' (Deleuze 1995b: 178–82).[4] Likewise the 'Postscript' is one of the few places where Deleuze mentions his intriguing concept of the 'dividual', a new kind of subject that emerges after the death of the *in*dividual.

But the crux of the 'Postscript' is something else entirely. The crux of this short text has to do with technology. For here is one of those rare moments in which Deleuze comments on actually existing contemporary technology, specifically computers. Control societies, he writes, 'function with a third generation of machines, with information technology and computers' (Deleuze 1995b: 180). Admittedly Deleuze does not delve too deeply into the specificities of computing. He is no Friedrich Kittler, or Geert Lovink, or McKenzie Wark. But in a way that perhaps nevertheless still trumps these other authors, Deleuze says a few brief words about an important pairing, the analogue and the digital. Not as broadly integrated into Deleuze's overall project as, say, the concept of the virtual, the analogue and the digital still figure importantly here. The following are the relevant sentences, which Deleuze uses to launch section two of the essay under the heading 'Logic' (*Logique*, a cognate with the French word for software, *logiciel*):

> The various placements or sites of confinement through which individuals pass are independent variables: we're supposed to start over each time at

> zero, and although all these sites have a common language, it's *analogical*. The different forms of control, on the other hand, are inseparable variations, forming a system of varying geometry whose language is *digital* (though not necessarily binary). (Deleuze 1995b: 178; translation modified)

Only a passing reference, it is true, but still an important return to two terms that had appeared in Deleuze's philosophy for several years already. By way of background, go back to a text from his aesthetic period, the slim and elegant *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* (Deleuze 2004), which first appeared in 1981.[5] The book on Francis Bacon is of course not about the digital, nor is it about control society per se. But nevertheless Deleuze finds time in the monograph to pause for a moment and offer a few remarks on the digital and the analogue. As many people are want to do, Deleuze's first instinct is to connect the digital to the universe of computation and code. 'Digital synthesizers', he writes – qualifying them as *audio* synthesizers, but we might extrapolate his observations to include video synthesizers as well – 'Digital synthesizers . . . are "integral": their operation passes through a codification, through a homogenization and binarization of the data' (Deleuze 2004: 95). The 'integral', integration, these are important concepts in Deleuze's work. Drawing on the use of the term in both mathematics and Freudian psychoanalysis, Deleuze uses integration to mean the actualisation of the virtual. 'Four terms are synonymous', he wrote a decade earlier in *Difference and Repetition*, 'actualise, differenciate, integrate and solve' (Deleuze 1994: 211). To integrate a mathematical function means to find the 'area under the curve'. For example, one might integrate from a to b on the function $f(x)$, meaning that, given the curve plotted of the function $f(x)$, one sums the area under the curve bounded by $x = a$ to $x = b$. At the same time the appeal for Deleuze is, I think, not so much the mathematical sources of the term 'integration' but the curvilinear sources, shall we say the baroque sources. Curves are complex. Given the complexity of a curve, to 'solve' a curve mathematically is something of a miracle. In fact such a feat eluded the ancients; it took the baroque mathematicians G. W. Leibniz and Isaac Newton to do it. As readers of Deleuze will already know, his ontology is one that posits an infinite plane of heterogeneous elements, and on this plane the heterogeneous elements come to integrate themselves into more or less homogenous regularities of aggregation, comportment and association. Hence integration is a synonym for coordination or organisation in Deleuze. Integration is the miracle of givenness, and the subsequent management of those

given beings. Integration produces things like species, compositions and societies. And, lest we forget, the countervailing force exists as well, homogenous regularities that 'deterritorialise' into the virtual, thereby suspending their specificity in favour of adjacent 'possibility spaces' – although Deleuze himself disliked the term 'possible'.

In the previously cited quotation from *Francis Bacon*, Deleuze more or less equates five terms: digitisation, integration, codification, homogenisation and binarisation. Binarisation, the grouping of things into twos, is the same as digitisation, the separating or making distinct of things, is the same as integration, the solving of complex function curves, is the same as codification, the representation within a symbolic system, is the same as homogenisation, the making uniform of dissimilar ingredients. Needless to say the comparison of these five terms raises a number of questions, not all of which will be resolved here. What is important, for Deleuze and for us, is that the digital is a transformative process (which is to say 'additive', or in Kantian vocabulary 'synthetic') in which a universe grounded in the univocity of an identity of the same becomes a universe grounded in discrete distinctions between elements, elements that, although divided, are brought together and held in relation, suspended opposite each other like cliffs over the banks of a great river.

In the very same passage from *Francis Bacon*, Deleuze also says a few words, precious few, about the analogical. Not so much a question of code, the analogical is a question of diagram or motif. What this means is that the analogical operates in the realms of shape and relation, refrains and styles, not symbol or language in the classical sense. Or if a language, one lacking in the typical elements of alphabet, letter and word: 'Analogical language would be a language of relations, which consists of expressive movements, paralinguistic signs, breaths and screams' (Deleuze 2004: 93). The analogical is a 'language' of breaths and screams, a non-language of phatic commands, which enacts expression by virtue of the frisson struck between gestures of different types. Again back to the passage on synthesizers: 'Analogical synthesizers are "modular,"' he writes, 'they establish an immediate connection between heterogeneous elements' (95). So while digital synthesizers are integral, slicing up the world into masses of homogenous code atoms, analogical synthesizers work through modularity. What this means is that different elements, remaining relatively whole and heterogeneous to each other, are nevertheless able to interoperate immediately. They can touch each other directly, despite their differences. (One can begin to see why the fields of poststructuralism, deconstruction and semiotics were so

inherently digital; as a rule they prohibit immediacy.) Whereas the digital requires and enlists an underlying homogeneity, the analogical requires an underlying heterogeneity. In the analogue paradigm, the stuff of the world remains unaligned, idiosyncratic, singular. These modules, thus, are not modules in the sense of standardised, recombinable parts, just as modular housing relies on prefabricated, repeatable materials. Rather, as modules they remain messy globs of dissimilar things. They only happen to interoperate because they have managed, by virtue of what Deleuze would call mutual deterritorialisation, to 'grow' the necessary sockets that fit into each other. Deleuze's famous example is the wasp and the orchid, two creatures, alike in almost no sense, that nevertheless couple up analogically. Although they are two, at the point of coupling the wasp and the orchid merge into one.

Return briefly to the mathematical theme. While Deleuze does not tell us directly, neither in the 'Postscript' nor in the Francis Bacon book, one can infer the following: just as the digital means integration, the analogical means differentiation. Thus, while integration means area under a curve, differentiation or 'taking the derivative' means the instantaneous slope of the tangent line. Instead of summing the area under the curve defined by *f(x)*, one extrapolates a secondary function derived from the first function, a secondary function consisting of a straight line tangential to any position $x = a$ on the curve. It is slightly counter-intuitive then. Do not be fooled by the curves of integration, for it is still a question of *solving* via a multiplicity of regular slices, and hence it is digital. Likewise do not be fooled by the semantic similarity between the words differentiation and difference. Differentiation is an analogical event because it brings together the immediacy of two modular, and heterogeneous, spaces, (1) the space of the function curve and (2) the adjacent virtual space of all the tangent lines that can be derived from the curve.

Heterogeneity has long been an attractive theoretical category, for Deleuze but also for twentieth-century Continental philosophy and Anglo-American cultural theory in general. And as we have just seen the analogue brings together heterogeneous elements into identity (an identity which, again, has nothing to do with homogeneity). I think there is a strong case to be made that Deleuze was and remained a philosopher of the analogue paradigm alone, and that the paradigm of the digital was only vaguely sketched out by him during his lifetime (except in its most visible form, metaphysics). The reasons for this are complex for they concern the history of philosophy and Deleuze's antagonistic relationship toward it, but as a kind of shorthand

we might posit the following: those who work in the tradition of metaphysics will tend to offer a digital philosophy; those who work in the tradition of immanence, as Deleuze did, will tend to offer an analogue philosophy. Indeed in many ways Deleuze is the analogical philosopher par excellence. Just as he described painting, 'the analogical art par excellence' (Deleuze 2004: 95).

What this brief excursion into digitality reveals is that the late Deleuze contains an original set of arguments about society and politics at the turn of the new millennium. We know Deleuze understood the world in 1968 – the anabasis of desire, affective revolution, new schizophrenic subjects, molecular organisation, dispersive and rhizomatic structures, spatiality and topology instead of history, Leibniz instead of Hegel, Riemann instead of Einstein – but the question remains whether he understood the world at the dawn of the new millennium. (This question has not been adequately explored thus far, although the work of someone like Bernard Stiegler is a notable exception.) Much has been said about Foucault's late turn to millennial politics, via his concepts of biopower and biopolitics, or Giorgio Agamben's theorisation of today's state power, but too little credit has been given to Deleuze as a forecaster of the future world system. Part of the problem is that, barring the 'Postscript' itself, there is no single book or text that stands out as a ready exemplar for Deleuze's analysis of millennial capitalism, just as *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus* provided a vision of middle-twentieth-century capitalism.

Such an exemplar needs to be reconstructed from fragments. Four texts will form the backbone of his analysis: the two pieces from 1990 bundled in *Negotiations*, 'Postscript on Control Societies' and the interview with Negri titled 'Control and Becoming' (Deleuze 1995b: 169–82); paragraphs from an odd little piece called 'Having an Idea in Cinema' (Deleuze 1998); and three or four pages from Deleuze's 1986 book *Foucault* (Deleuze 1988).[6]

Some of the relevant sections from the 'Postscript' have already been outlined, so let us turn now to the ending of the Negri interview. The penultimate question and answer are what concern us:

> [Foucault] was actually one of the first to say that we're moving away from disciplinary societies, we've already left them behind. We're moving toward control societies that no longer operate by confining people but through continuous control and instant communication ... Compared with the approaching forms of ceaseless control in open sites, we may come to see the harshest confinement as part of a wonderful happy past. The quest for 'universals of communication' ought to make us shudder ... Computer

> piracy and viruses, for example, will replace strikes and what the nineteenth century called 'sabotage' ('clogging' the machinery) . . . The key thing may be to create vacuoles of noncommunication, circuit breakers, so we can elude control. (Deleuze 1995b: 174, 175)

Already it is evident how much of Deleuze's phrasing from the Negri interview overlaps with the text of the 'Postscript'.

Add now the passages from 'Having an Idea in Cinema', a text that derives from a lecture titled 'Qu'est-ce que l'acte de création?' given by Deleuze at La Fémis (Fondation européenne des métiers de l'image et du son) on 17 May 1987 but published in 1990 the same year of the 'Postscript'. Some of the relevant passages simply duplicate the same phrasing and language about Foucault that made it into the 'Postscript' so there is no need to repeat them. But 'Having an Idea in Cinema' also includes an important, off-hand remark that we must add to our accumulation of Deleuze's control quotations:

> A control is not a discipline. In making freeways, for example, you don't enclose people but instead multiply the means of control. I am not saying that this is the freeway's exclusive purpose, but that people can drive infinitely and 'freely' without being at all confined yet while still being perfectly controlled. This is our future. (Deleuze 1998: 18; translation modified)[7]

In an alternate transcription of the same lecture Deleuze included a few extemporaneous lines, and even mentions Minitel, the French teletext network that predates the web. 'This can be done completely differently too', he said about the regrouping of people around arrangements of ubiquitous control. 'It can be done through Minitel after all. Everything that you want – what's astounding would be the forms of control' (Deleuze 1987).[8]

Recall that the French *contrôle* carries stresses in meaning that are slightly different from the English control. *Contrôle* means control as in the power to influence people and things, but it also refers to the actual administration of control via particular monitoring apparatuses such as train turnstiles, border crossings and check points. The notion, in English, of having to pass through 'passport control' gets at the deeper meaning of the word. So when Deleuze talks about *les sociétés de contrôle* he means those kinds of societies, or alternately those localised places within the social totality, where mobility is fostered inside certain strictures of motion, where openings appear rather than disappear, where subjects (or for that matter objects) are liberated so long as they adhere to a variety of prescribed comportments.

In addition to this text and the two in *Negotiations*, a fourth text expands Deleuze's discussions of computer-based control, exploding them into an enigmatic tapestry of prognostications. Recall those notorious pages 92–3 and 131–2 of Deleuze's late book on Foucault where he meditates on something called 'life resistance' and a new mysterious construct called the 'superfold' (an alluring designation to which he unfortunately never returns).[9] First, consider the sections in which Deleuze proposes, but does not fully develop, a vision of life as living resistance:

> When power . . . takes life as its aim or object, then resistance to power already puts itself on the side of life, and turns life against power . . . Life becomes resistance to power when power takes life as its object . . . When power becomes bio-power resistance becomes the power of life, a vital-power that cannot be confined within species, environment or the paths of a particular diagram . . . Is not life this capacity to resist force? (Deleuze 1988: 92, 93)

Then later, in the final paragraphs of the book's appendix, Deleuze broaches the question of genetics and the so-called third-generation machines (that is, computers and bioinformatics) that would figure prominently in the 'Postscript' four years later. He wonders aloud about the 'death of man', as it was described in Foucault and Friedrich Nietzsche:

> The question that continually returns is therefore the following: if the forces within man compose a form only by entering into a relation with forms from the outside, with what new forms do they now risk entering into a relation, and what new form will emerge that is neither God nor Man? This is the correct place for the problem which Nietzsche called 'the superman'. (Deleuze 1988: 130)

In other words, what is the new configuration of man after the death of man (or, if you like, the subject after the death of the subject), and what had to happen in order to create such a new condition of life? Deleuze's answer:

> Biology had to take a leap into molecular biology, or dispersed life regroup in the genetic code. Dispersed work had to regroup in third-generation machines, cybernetics and information technology. What would be the forces in play, with which the forces within man would then enter into a relation? It would no longer involve raising to infinity or finitude but an unlimited finity, thereby evoking every situation of force in which a finite number of components yields a practically unlimited diversity of combinations. It would be neither the fold or the unfold that would constitute the active mechanism,

> but something like the *Superfold*, as borne out by the foldings proper to the chains of the genetic code, and the potential of silicon in third-generation machines... The forces within man enter into a relation with forces from the outside, those of silicon which supersedes carbon, or genetic components which supersede the organism... In each case we must study the operations of the superfold, of which the 'double helix' is the best-known example. (Deleuze 1988: 131–2)[10]

Scattered across the 'Postscript' and these other citations is a new image of society and the self that cannot simply be reduced to Deleuze's previous tropes like the body without organs, the rhizome or even the virtual. This is a new image that involves, nay requires, the recognition of the computer as its central mitigating factor. Just as the fold was Deleuze's diagram for the modern subject of the baroque period, the superfold is the new 'active mechanism' for life within computerised control society. The dividual and the superfold, in other words, have a special relationship with each other. 'A fold is always folded within a fold, like a cavern in a cavern', wrote Deleuze of the ontology depicted in Leibniz (in an effort to demonstrate how Leibniz's was not an atomism). 'The unit of matter, the smallest element of the labyrinth, is the fold, not the point which is never a part, but a simple extremity of the line' (Deleuze 1993: 6). Although Deleuze does not specify things further, one can extrapolate that the superfold, being 'proper to the chains of the genetic code' and the progeny of an 'unlimited diversity of combinations', would follow a diagrammatic logic of dispersive and distributive relations within networks, of iterative regress via computational recursion. Instead of the human coming into a relationship with itself (the baroque), the human comes into a relation with 'forces from the outside' such as the silicon of the computer chip or exogenous factors from genetic engineering. The dividual therefore does not so much carry pleats in its soul, as Deleuze says of the baroque subject, but a tessellated, recombinant soul, if soul is still the proper word, forming and reforming across the metastable skein of the bioinformatic ecosystem.

In fact Deleuze's argument is not an exotic one. In France figures like André Leroi-Gourhan and Bertrand Gille had already demonstrated how human beings coevolve with their exogenous technologies and techniques. And in North America figures like Lewis Mumford and Marshall McLuhan had made similar claims. (Indeed the final paragraph of Deleuze's *Foucault* reads very much like Donna Haraway's now famous 'Cyborg Manifesto', which while predating the book by one year was almost certainly unknown to Deleuze at the time.) Instead what

might be exotic about Deleuze's argument, or at least what makes it novel, is his mobilisation of the concept in terms of a diagram: the 'super' fold, the double helix, a fractal topography not simply a folded one.[11]

The ultimate lesson to be learned from the 'Postscript' is not so much a lesson about the subject or even society. The ultimate lesson is one about periodisation. For what Deleuze wishes to do in the essay, following Lyotard, Foucault and all the rest, is to assert the historical break. He wants to show us how everything has changed, indeed that the world of 1990 has itself changed from the world pre-1968 so dramatically as to be practically indistinguishable. 'The key thing is that we're at the beginning of something new', he reminds us (Deleuze 1995b: 182). It is not particularly important whether one agrees or disagrees with the Deleuzian-Foucauldian periodisation from sovereign society through disciplinary society and then to control society. Periodisation itself is the important thing. And how deliciously ironic that in recent years periodisation seems to be appearing with increased frequency, an increased periodicity of periodisation. Indeed all this talk of the superfold is, by that very same measure, a kind of superperiodisation without end. For each new fold is a new historical break. First the fold, then the double fold, the triple, on up to the multiplicative folds of the superfold. Thus the task of historical thinking itself is implicated in Deleuze's 'Postscript', and as such has metastasised and reduplicated into a super state of recursive channels. The ultimate coup of control society is not so much the continuous influence of the border crossing or the passport control, not so much data mining or facial recognition algorithms, but that it has eviscerated history, not by banning dissent, but by accelerating the opportunities and channels for critical thought to infinity and therefore making it impossible to think historically in the first place. Thus the central challenge within control society will be not simply to resist the various new nefarious control apparatuses, but to rescue history from its own consummation.

Notes

1. Indeed the 'Postscript' commands only one paragraph in François Dosse's biography of Deleuze and Guattari (2010).
2. As Deleuzians are keen to point out, the aged Deleuze spoke of an upcoming book project devoted to 'the grandeur of Marx', a book which unfortunately was never realised during his lifetime.
3. Deleuze, Guattari and Foucault participated in the famous 'Schizo Culture' conference held at Columbia University in 1975. Burroughs gave a talk at the conference titled 'The Impasses of Control'.

4. Today one speaks often of 'web surfing'; however, since he was writing just prior to the advent of the web Deleuze's frame of reference would have included television and the phenomenon of channel surfing, as well as the actual sport of ocean surfing. In an earlier piece titled 'Mediators', also included in *Negotiations*, Deleuze says a bit more about surfing. 'The kind of movements you find in sports and habits are changing. We got by for a long time with an energetic conception of motion, where there's a point of contact, or we are the source of movement. Running, putting the shot, and so on: effort, resistance, with a starting point, a lever. But nowadays we see movement defined less and less in relation to a point of leverage. All the new sports – surfing, windsurfing, hang-gliding – take the form of entering into an existing wave. There's no longer an origin as starting point, but a sort of putting-into-orbit. The key thing is how to get taken up in the motion of a big wave, a column of rising air, to "get into something" instead of being the origin of an effort' (Deleuze 1995b: 121). The surfing image also appears in *What is Philosophy?* During their itemisation of the features of conceptual personae, Deleuze and Guattari describe the dynamic features as follows: 'if moving forward, climbing, and descending are dynamisms of conceptual personae, then leaping like Kierkegaard, dancing like Nietzsche, and diving like Melville are others for philosophical athletes irreducible to one another. And if today our sports are completely changing, if the old energy-producing activities are giving way to exercises that, on the contrary, insert themselves on existing energetic networks, this is not just a change in the type but yet other dynamic features that enter a thought that "slides" with new substances of being, with wave or snow, and turn the thinker into a sort of surfer as conceptual persona' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 71).
5. The original French edition (Deleuze 1981) was expanded and reissued in 1984, then reprinted in Alain Badiou and Barbara Cassin's book series at Éditions du Seuil in 2002 (Deleuze 2002). The original French edition is in two volumes: volume one contains Deleuze's text, while volume two contains several reproductions from Bacon's paintings. The 2002 French edition consolidates the volumes and contains only seven colour plates. The English edition (Deleuze 2004) unfortunately features no imagery at all.

   In a slightly more exotic register, one might also return to another book from 1981, François Laruelle's *Le Principe de minorité* (1981). In this book Laruelle mentions different types of multiplicities: (1) 'discrete or arithmetic' multiplicities, (2) continuous multiplicities, which he associates with Difference, and (3) what he calls dispersive multiplicities, which he also labels 'Unary Multiplicities or Minorities' claiming that they are 'the absolute concept or the essence of multiplicities' (1981: 6). The first two are clearly code words for digital and analogue: the realm of discrete arithmetic is the realm of the digital, while the realm of the continuous is the realm of the analogue. What is so provocative, then, is the third term – that there *should* be a third term. The provocation will eventually lead Laruelle away from digitality, precisely because it will lead him away from philosophy, philosophy and the digital being two modes that share a great deal with each other.
6. A few other relevant references exist such as Deleuze and Guattari's mention of 'three ages' in their introduction to *What is Philosophy?*: 'the three ages of the concept are the encyclopedia, pedagogy, and commercial professional training' (1994: 12).
7. This text also appears in a different form under the title 'What Is the Creative Act?' (Deleuze 2006: 312–24).

8. The reference to Minitel does not appear in the version of the essay collected in *Deux régimes de fous* (Deleuze 2003), and hence neither in the English translation contained in *Two Regimes of Madness* (Deleuze 2006).
9. As Frédéric Astier notes in his doctoral thesis (2007: 290–1), Deleuze mentioned the superfold in his seminars on Foucault held on 18 and 25 March 1986. I thank Adeline Gasnier for bringing this to my attention. Toward the ending of the 25 March session Deleuze reiterates some of the ideas that would reappear in book form, specifying that the superfold is the fold 'sur le dehors' (over the outside; a fold that incorporates the outside), an allusion to Foucault's concept of the 'thought of the outside' (Deleuze 1986b). Deleuze's 18 March 1986 seminar is even more explicit: the historical shift from God to man to superman corresponds directly to the processes of unfolding (God), folding (man) and superfolding (superman) (Deleuze 1986a).
10. Just as Nietzsche's *Übermensch* is rendered alternately in English as 'overman' or 'superman', one might give Deleuze's *surpli* as 'overfold' as well as superfold.
11. François Laruelle has integrated fractals and what he calls 'generalised fractality' into his work to great effect (1992 and 2011).

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Substantial Powers, Active Affects: The Intentionality of Objects

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Abstract

What can *Dungeons & Dragons* teach us about the being of beings? This article argues that *Dungeons & Dragons* introduces us to a world composed of objects or entities, where the being of objects is defined not by their qualities, but rather by their powers, capacities or affects. Drawing on the thought of Spinoza, Deleuze and Molnar, objects are seen to be defined by what they can do or their capacities to act, such that qualities are effects of these acts. *Dungeons & Dragons* is particularly suited to showing us this insofar as it focuses on the action of entities.

Keywords: *Dungeons & Dragons*, object-oriented ontology, affect, power, Deleuze, Spinoza

I. Two Questions of Ontology

What can *Dungeons & Dragons* teach us about ontology? Here it is necessary to proceed with caution, for 'ontology' can refer to different things within the field of philosophy. Ontology is that branch of philosophy that investigates the most basic structure of being. Yet, this branch of philosophy is not without ambiguity. Sometimes 'ontology' will refer to a sort of inventory of the most basic or fundamental things that exist. Is being or existence composed entirely of fundamental material particles or atoms coupled with their combinations? Do universals exist? In addition to material particles, are there also spiritual entities such as souls? Does god or gods exist? Do entities only interact through material or cause and effect relations, or are there other forms of

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interaction such as magic? Such are the sorts of questions asked by what I will call 'inventory ontology'. Inventory ontology is above all concerned with an accounting of the *types* of entities that exist and their properties or distinguishing features. Here the question is, above all, '*what* exists?'

At other times 'ontology' will refer to the investigation of the most basic nature of being, regardless of what *type* of being an entity is. Here ontology asks the question 'what is being *qua* being?' Put differently, the question here is 'what is common to all beings regardless of the type of being that an entity is?' Or again, 'what is the basic structure of any being, what is the common nature shared by all beings, regardless of the type of being in question?' Here the accent is not on the variety of basic types of entities that exist, but rather on the 'beingness' of beings or what properly makes an entity an entity. I will refer to questions of this sort as questions of 'fundamental ontology'. Here the question is, above all, 'what is the *nature* of existence?'

Although the two questions are related, it is clear that we will get very different answers to the question of what *Dungeons & Dragons* has to teach us about being depending on whether we pursue inventory ontology or fundamental ontology. If we pursue inventory ontology we will learn of a fictional world that is populated by all sorts of humanoids, creatures, tools and weapons, spirits, gods and demons, governed by relations of material cause and effect relations as well as relations of magic or enchantment. Further on I will discuss what this inventory ontology has to teach us about the world or being, but insofar as this is a fictional ontology it is unlikely that this inventory has much to teach us about being *as such* or the *nature* of existence. By contrast, I would like to argue that if our question is 'what is the *nature* of existence?', 'what is the being of beings regardless of what type of entity a being is?', *Dungeons & Dragons* has a great deal to teach us about ontology and the ontology of *our* world.

II. An Ontology of Substances

The universe of *Dungeons & Dragons* is, in part, Aristotelian in orientation. To say that this universe is Aristotelian in orientation is to say that it is a universe composed of *substances*. Substance is not *matter*. Matter is that of which something is made, whereas a substance is an *individual entity*. While there is no substance that is immaterial, matter is indifferent to substance in the precise sense that it can compose a variety of different substances. Thus, for example, clay, a matter, can be used to create a variety of different substances such as a cup for drinking, bowls

for eating, bricks for building a home, pots for planting, or visages of Zeus's face to adorn a trellis in one's garden. Cups, bowls, bricks, pots and sculptures of Zeus are all substances, whereas clay is a matter that indifferently composes these substances.

Additionally, substances can gain and lose material, while remaining *that* substance. My body perpetually loses cells and gains cells, yet I remain the person that I am. A tree drops its leaves in the autumn yet still is *that* tree. A dog can lose a leg but it still remains *that* dog. The substantiality of substance consists not of its matter, but of its individuality and autonomy.

'Substance' thus names not matter, but *individual entities*. Any individual entity or being is a substance. Umber hulks, wraiths, purple worms, enchanted swords, halflings, elves, cloaks of invisibility and potions are all substances insofar as they are all individual entities or beings. Aristotle remarks that '[a] *substance* – that which is called a substance most strictly, primarily, and most of all – is that which is neither said of a subject nor in a subject, e.g. the individual man or the individual horse' (Aristotle 1984: 2a13–15). Aristotle's 'said of' relation refers to *predication*, whereas his 'in' relation refers to *qualities*. When I attribute a quality to a subject in a judgement or proposition I am engaged in an act of predication. If I say 'liches are undead sorcerers' I have engaged in an act of predication. I have *said* the *qualities* of 'undead' and 'sorcerer' of the *substance* 'lich'. This is a 'said of' relation. By contrast, if these properties or qualities exist *in* the lich itself, if they are genuine properties of the lich, then we are before an 'in relation'. 'Said of' relations pertain to judgements *about* substances (and therefore to whether these judgements are true or false), whereas 'in relations' refer to the relation between a substance itself and its qualities or properties.

When Aristotle says that substance, in its strictest, most primary sense is that which is neither said of a subject nor that which is in a subject, his point is that substance refers to that which exists in its own right as an individual entity. Qualities such as 'being-undead' or 'being-a-sorcerer' do not exist in their own right, but rather only exist in individuals or substances. In order for qualities to exist they require a substance *in which* to exist or inhere. Qualities – what Aristotle calls 'secondary substances' – cannot sustain their existence on their own.

Substances, by contrast, exist in their own right and are not said of anything else, nor are they 'in' anything else. To be sure, umber hulks are in a world, but they are not predicated of a world in the way that qualities like brown are predicated of umber hulks. Rather, each umber hulk is an individual or entity that exists in its own right. The world is

not a container in which substances exist, but is rather the totality of substances and their relations to one another. For this reason, we do not say 'Pierre is a *quality* of this umber hulk' (if this umber hulk happens to be named Pierre), but rather we say 'this umber hulk *is* Pierre' or 'Pierre is an umber hulk'. The substantiality of Pierre is exhausted by being Pierre and is not a property or quality of anything else. Pierre is an entity in his own right, not a quality of other entities. There is nothing that *contains* substances. Rather, there are only relations *between* substances.

Everywhere in *Dungeons & Dragons* we find a delirious celebration of substances. The descriptor 'delirious' here should not be taken in the pejorative but in the sense of being 'deliriously in love'. Rather than a bland ontology composed solely of, say, material atoms or particles and their combinations, we instead get a carnivalesque fauna composed of everything ranging from the mundane as in the case of leather jerkins, steins of mead, boots and lengths of coiled rope to the extraordinary in the form of countless intelligent humanoids, monsters and beasts of all kinds, magical grimoires, impressive war machines such as catapults and castles, wraiths and other terrifying incorporeal substances, gods, demi-gods and enchanted items of all sorts. *Dungeons & Dragons* displays a deep affection and love for substances or objects of all sorts, expressing endless wonder and fascination for the variety that populates the world. For this reason, the ontology proposed by *Dungeons & Dragons* deserves to be called an 'object-oriented ontology', for it is premised on the thesis that being is composed primarily and fundamentally of substances, objects or individuals.

III. An Ontology of Powers

Yet the thesis that being is composed of substance is not, in and of itself, a particularly interesting ontological claim. In many respects it could be said that substance ontology is the spontaneous ontology of common sense. Our day-to-day dealings with the world are characterised primarily as dealings with substances or objects. We speak with countless others throughout the day, we feed our cats, we use utensils and pots and pans to make our meals, we grab for the remote to change the channel, and so on. Our dealings are dealings with substances, entities or objects; and for this reason substance is the spontaneous ontology most of us embrace without even realising it. It takes a great deal of abstraction and imagination, by contrast, to conceive being as composed primarily of events and processes, yet little struggle of thought at all to conceive being as composed of substances.

What is interesting in the ontology of *Dungeons & Dragons* is not that it conceives being as composed of substances, but rather in *how* it thinks about substances. Let us therefore revise the question with which this essay began. We started by asking 'what can *Dungeons & Dragons* teach us about ontology?' Let us now ask 'what does *Dungeons & Dragons* teach us about substance?' It is here, I contend, that we find the true ontological innovation of *Dungeons & Dragons*, for here we encounter a genuinely novel conception of substance.

As we saw before, Aristotle conceives substance primarily in terms of subject–predicate, substance–quality relationships. Substance is the individual entity existing in its own right, whereas qualities and predicates are the properties that inhere in a substance. This is a rather contemplative conception of substance that arises when we passively regard the objects about us in a philosophical state of reflection. Withdrawn from the activities of my day-to-day life, I ask myself 'what exists?' I respond with the conclusion that substances exist. Still in this state of passive reflection, I ask what the being of substance consists in. My attention alights on my clay stein of ale crafted by the elves that dwell in the enchanted forest of northern Greyhawk as an instance of a substance. I note that this substance has a variety of different qualities. It is blue, has cylindrical shape, is a torus, and so on. I therefore conclude that the substantiality of my elven stein consists in being a composite of qualities.

It is with this conception of objects or substances as a composite of static qualities that *Dungeons & Dragons* departs. Perhaps this is because *Dungeons & Dragons* is an action, role-playing game thereby de-emphasising *qualities* predicated of a substance. *Dungeons & Dragons* came to conceive the being of substance in terms of *power* rather than *quality*. Substances are to be thought in their being not as qualities inhering in a subject, but rather in terms of the powers or capacities hidden and coiled within substances. Gamers are not interested so much in what colour an object is, its size, its shape, its taste, its smell – all qualities – but rather in what objects *do*, their capacities.

Here again we must proceed with caution, for the term 'power' has different connotations. To see this we must first take a detour through Spinoza. Following Roman custom we should distinguish two senses of power: *potestas* and *potentia*. *Potestas* refers to the power one entity *has over* another entity. A despotic king has the *potestas* to put us to death for heretical words against the local gods. A monarch has the *potestas* to dispense judgment and punishment in legal proceedings. In antiquity, the patriarch often has the *potestas* to kill his wife and children. *Potestas*

thus refers to the power one individual possesses with respect to another. While there will be many struggles pertaining to *potestas* in *Dungeons & Dragons*, this is not where the *ontological* emphasis lies with respect to its concept of power. Rather, *Dungeons & Dragons* conceives the being of substance in terms of *potentia* or affect. Where *potestas* refers to the power one entity possesses *over* another, *potentia* or affect refers to the *capacities* of a thing. Here power is what a thing can *do*. Of affect, the renegade, exiled Dutch philosopher Spinoza remarks that, '[b]y [affect] [*affectus*] I understand the affections of the body by which the body's power of activity is increased or diminished, assisted or checked, together with the ideas of these affections' (Spinoza 2002: 278). In Spinoza the concepts of affect, act and power are closely related.

Ordinarily the concept of affect is conceived in terms of the *feelings* of which we are capable when another entity acts upon us. The pain that I feel when a dagger cuts into my flesh, the pleasure that I experience when I bite into roast mutton, the sorrow that I feel when my companion is slain by an orc, or the joy I feel when I triumph over a red dragon and find its wondrous treasure would all be instances of affect in this sense. Likewise, my capacity to see the brilliant colours of flowers rather than seeing them in shades of black and white as, perhaps, dogs see them would be an instance of affect in this sense as well. Returning to his definition of affect, Spinoza's point is that we must have a *capacity*, a *power*, to be affected in these ways in order to experience these affects. Affect as power (*potentia*) is thus a condition for the possibility of the quality that we experience. When we are affected, in turn, these affects will either increase or diminish our power of acting. Sad passions will be those affects that decrease a body's power of acting, whereas joyous passions will increase a body's power of acting.

However, Spinoza significantly broadens the concept of affect, including within it not merely the power of being affected or acted upon, but also the power of *affecting* or acting upon other entities. Later in the *Ethics* Spinoza writes, '. . . nobody as yet has determined the limits of the body's capabilities: that is, nobody has yet learned from experience what the body can and cannot do . . . ' (2002: 280). When Spinoza refers to the body's capabilities, to what the body can and cannot do, he is referring to the affects of a body or substance which are, in their turn, the powers of a body. Elsewhere, Deleuze illustrates this point well when he writes that

> [a]n individual is first of all a singular essence, which is to say, a degree of power. A characteristic relation corresponds to this essence, and a certain

> capacity for being affected corresponds to this degree of power. Furthermore, this relation subsumes parts; this capacity for being affected is necessarily filled by its affections. Thus, animals are defined less by the abstract notions of genus and species than by a capacity for being affected, by the affections of which they are 'capable,' by the excitations to which they react within the limits of their capability. Consideration of genera and species still implies a 'morality,' whereas the *Ethics* is an *ethology* which, with regard to men and animals, in each case only considers their capacity for being affected. Now from the viewpoint of an ethology of man, one needs first to distinguish between two sorts of affections: *actions*, which are explained by the nature of the affected individual, and which spring from the individual's essence; and *passions*, which are explained by something else, and which originate outside the individual. Hence the capacity for being affected is manifested as a *power of acting* insofar as it is assumed to be filled by active affections, but as a *power of being acted upon* insofar as it is filled by passions. (Deleuze 1980: 27)

A traditional sorting of entities according to genus and species sorts them in terms of their qualities. Thus, for example, we split the genus 'animal' according to the quality of being rational or irrational, such that 'human' falls under the quality of being a rational animal. By contrast, ethology, as Deleuze articulates it, sorts beings in terms of their affects or what they can do and how they can be affected. As Deleuze remarks,

> [b]odies are not defined by their genus or species, by their organs and functions, but by what they can do, by the affects of which they are capable – in passion as in action. You have not defined an animal until you have listed its affects. In this sense there is a greater difference between a race horse and a work horse than between a work horse and an ox. (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 60)

Affect therefore refers not to passion alone, not solely to that which we undergo and feel, but rather to actions as well. Both action and passion, in their turn, fall under the heading of 'capacity' or 'power' (*potentia*). If, ethologically, a work horse shares more in common with an ox than a great war horse, then this is because the actions of which a war horse is capable, the powers it has, differ in kind from those of a work horse and an ox.

We are now in a position to understand why the contemplative attitude common to philosophy tends to obscure the being of substance as power or affect, instead conceiving substance as merely a composition of qualities, and to determine just why *Dungeons & Dragons* rediscovers the being of substance as power. In contemplation we *withdraw from the world of action and activity* so as to passively regard or gaze at the world

about us. However, because we have withdrawn from action, because we are now in a state of passivity, we now encounter the substances of the world not in terms of their powers of acting or in terms of their capacities, but in terms of their *results*. Recall Spinoza's definition of affect: affect is the power or capacity of a substance to act coupled with the *idea* of that power. In the case of a passion, for example, the idea of this passion might be the emotion that we feel. This emotion, in its turn, is a *quality* that we experience within our consciousness. The *power* by which we are capable of being affected by the emotion or quality of grief disappears behind the quality of grief.

Let us modify Spinoza's definition of affect somewhat so as to render it generally applicable to ontology. Throughout Book III of Spinoza's *Ethics* there is a tension between ontological considerations of what is proper to beings or entities *in general*, and regional or specific ontological considerations of what is proper to a *particular type* of entity: humans and animals. On the one hand, Spinoza wishes to claim that *all* bodies are defined by their affects or powers of acting and being acted upon. On the other hand, Spinoza speaks of powers of acting and being acted upon being accompanied by *ideas* of these affects. Now it is unlikely that all bodies or entities are capable of ideas. Rather, ideas are likely to be unique to animals of various sorts such as the irksome and dangerous gelatinous cubes that populate many a dungeon. Thus, rather than claiming that affects or powers of acting and being acted upon are accompanied by ideas (feelings), we should instead say that affects or powers are accompanied by *qualities*, thereby treating ideas or feelings as a subspecies of qualities. Qualities, then, are effects, results, or products of powers, not the powers or affects themselves. As Deleuze remarks, '[t]he order of causes is therefore an order of composition and decomposition of relations, which infinitely affects all of nature. But as conscious beings, we never apprehend anything but the *effects* of these compositions and decompositions . . . ' (Deleuze 1980: 19).

Qualities are the effects of an object's or substance's powers or affects, not these substances or powers themselves. In this regard, we can say that the substantiality of substance, the being of substance, withdraws behind its qualities. Substances never directly appear or manifest themselves in the world, but rather indirectly manifest themselves through their qualities as effects. Let us return to the example of my blue elven stein of mead. Earlier I said that my delicately wrought stein has the quality or property of being blue. However, we have now learned that qualities or properties are the effect of powers and actions characterising the essence of the object. In what sense, no matter how strange it sounds,

is the blue of my stein the effect of an *act*? In what sense can we speak of blue as something my stein *does* rather than something my stein *is*? The blue of my stein is an *activity* of this stein in response to the *lighting conditions* in which the stein exists. When the stein is in bright sunlight, it is a brilliant shade of bright blue. When it is in dim candlelight, it is a dark, rich, cobalt blue. When the lights are turned out, it becomes black. Insofar as the colour of the stein is a function of its lighting conditions, all of these shades are what Spinoza refers to as 'passions'. The point is that we never directly encounter the powers or affects that render these passions possible, but rather only ever encounter the *effects* of these powers.

I refer to the domain of powers or affects that renders these qualities possible as 'virtual proper being', whereas I refer to the qualities that an object embodies as 'local manifestations' (Bryant 2011: ch. 3). The term 'virtuality' comes from the Latin *virtus*, which refers to the potency, power or ability of an object to produce a certain effect. Local manifestation refers to the effect that an object produces in the form of qualities. To manifest is to become present or actual. If these manifestations are nonetheless *local* manifestations, then this is because they are highly dependent upon the circumstances in which they occur. As we saw in the case of my stein, the colour that it comes to manifest depends on the lighting conditions in which the mug finds itself.

Here, then, we encounter the danger embodied in the contemplative stance, the withdrawal from activity, so commonly practised by philosophers. Here philosophers need to become more like mages. Both philosophers and mages seek knowledge and understanding, yet where the philosopher tends to occupy the passive, contemplative stance, regarding objects without acting upon them, the mage seeks to unleash the withdrawn powers coiled within objects. The being of substances as powers can only be discovered in acting with and upon them. For this reason, the philosopher needs to learn to grock with substances in the way the mage does with his ingredients, the warrior with his sword, the druid with the entities of the forest.

Although it is true that consciousness never encounters anything but the *effects* of substances in the form of qualities by virtue of the fact that substance always withdraws behind qualities, it is nonetheless the case that we can infer the substantiality of substance (power), the fact that the substantiality of substance differs from its qualities, by *acting* upon substances and varying the conditions in which substances are acted upon. In this way we discover that substances are not identical with their qualities, but harbour hidden and volcanic powers that are the

condition of qualities. For in shifting the conditions in which substances are acted upon by other substances, we encounter a kaleidoscopic variation in qualities suggesting the existence of subterranean powers beneath and behind the parade of shifting qualities. The problem with the contemplative stance is that it tends to encounter entities under stable and abiding conditions where there is little variation in the qualities or local manifestations of substances. As a result, the contemplative stance is prone to confusing effects or qualities with the proper being of substances.

Everywhere *Dungeons & Dragons* exemplifies an orientation towards objects or substances as constellations of powers or affects rather than qualities. This comes as no surprise given that *Dungeons & Dragons* is an action role-playing game. In its focus on action, *Dungeons & Dragons* is led to rediscover the being of substances as capacities to do, as powers, as capabilities, as abilities and affects, rather than as compositions of qualities. No game would get very far – nor be very amusing – were it to merely list the properties or qualities that belong to objects. While white and black (qualities) serve a *functional* role in the game of chess, we only understand the game of chess when we understand what the various pieces of the game can *do*. Proof of this is found in the fact that when we lose a piece of our chess set – say, a pawn – we can replace that piece with a quarter or nickel. It is not the shape, colour or height of the piece that matters, but rather the powers or capacities of the piece that define its being. Game theorist and philosopher Ian Bogost has proposed that we approach the analysis of games in terms of what he calls 'unit operations'. 'Unit' is Bogost's all-purpose name for 'substance', 'thing', or 'entity'. 'Operation' is Bogost's name for what entities do. As Bogost writes,

> In systems analysis, an *operation* is a basic process that takes one or more inputs and performs a transformation on it. An operation is the means by which something executes some purposeful action. Mathematical operations offer fundamental examples, especially the function as outlined by Leonhard Euler. Other kinds of operations include decisions, transitions, and state changes. I use the term *operation* very generally, covering not only this traditional understanding but also many more. Brewing tea is an operation. Steering a car to avoid a pedestrian is an operation. Falling in love is an operation. Operations can be mechanical, such as adjusting the position of an airplane flap; they can be tactical, such as sending a regiment of troops into battle; or they can be discursive, such as interviewing for a job. A material and conceptual logic always rules operations. (Bogost 2006: 7–8)

The concept of unit operations allows us to add precision to Spinoza's concept of powers or affects. The powers of a substance, object or unit, its affects, are the operations of which it is capable. However, an analysis in terms of unit operations does not merely teach us the rules that govern a particular game such as *Dungeons & Dragons*, but rather it teaches us about the very being of beings. To be a substance is to be capable of various operations, and these operations are transformations that pertain to the capacity to affect and be affected.

IV. The Intentionality of Powers

Objects or substances are split between their virtual proper being and their local manifestations. Virtual proper being refers to the powers that compose an object, what it can do. Local manifestation refers to the qualities an object comes to embody, its *actuality*. If local manifestations are *manifestations*, then this is because they are actualisations of a quality. The weight of a grell, those terrifying beaked, tentacled monsters that populate the realm of Underdark, is the manifestation of a power that resides within the grell. If these manifestations are *local* then this is because the qualities an object manifests will *change* depending on their local conditions or relations to other objects. The grell weighs this much moving at this speed and existing on the planet Earth. If a grell undertakes a space mission to Mars, its weight will be different on that planet. The weight of a grell is not an *intrinsic* quality of its being, but rather the actualisation of a power in the grell under particular local conditions.

The Australian philosopher George Molnar argues that powers have the structure of intentionality (Molnar 2006). The relation between the virtual and the actual half of substance can be clarified in terms of intentionality. The concept of intentionality was first introduced by the Austrian philosopher Franz Brentano to capture the essence of consciousness. Consciousness, Brentano contends, is that property of consciousness such that consciousness is *about* or *directed* at something. When I think, I do not merely think or have a sense of awareness, but rather I think *about something*. My consciousness is directed at some existent or non-existent being. Thus, for example, I think about a chain devil while playing *Dungeons & Dragons*. Chain devils do not exist, yet nonetheless my thought is directed at this entity. Brentano used this property of intentionality to distinguish between the domain of the psychological and the non-psychological. It is clear that I have a

mind, argues Brentano, because my thought is directed at something. By contrast, Brentano contends that rocks do not have minds because they do not have thought directed at anything.

Molnar contests this thesis arguing that *all* substances, living and non-living, human and nonhuman, are characterised by intentionality. Intentionality, Molnar argues, '[···] is a pervasive and ineliminable feature of the physical world' (2006: 61). Like mental intentionality, the powers of physical substances are directed at something beyond themselves. They are directed at the local manifestations or qualities and actions of which they are capable. Like mental intentionality, physical intentionality can be directed at local manifestations that exist or do not exist. Torches have the power to produce local manifestations of burning, yet this local manifestation does not have to occur for the torch to nonetheless have this power. Like mental intentionality, the states or local manifestations towards which the powers of substances can be directed can be fuzzy and indeterminate. At the level of mental intentionality I am capable of thinking fuzzy objects like dragons in general. At the level of physical intentionality the local manifestations of a power can be manifested in a variety of different ways. My elven stein can manifest itself as bright blue, dark blue, flickering blue, etc., under different lighting conditions (62). The world is pervaded by intentional substances and their relations between the volcanic powers that populate objects and their local manifestations.

Dungeons & Dragons is a game composed of intentional objects – living, non-living, magical and technological, undead, humanoid and monstrous – and an elaborate mapping of the intentional powers of these objects and their relations. When we open the pages of the *Player's Handbook* we immediately see that the emphasis is manifestly on the *operationality* or powers of entities (Heinsoo et al. 2008). As we look at the Character Sheet in the *Player's Handbook*, we see that characters are defined not by their qualities but by a series of powers defining the affects of which the character is capable, as well as the ways in which the character can be affected. Our attention is first drawn to the powers of strength, constitution, dexterity, intelligence, wisdom and charisma. These powers will play a role in determining how the character is able to affect other objects and how he or she will be affected by other objects. Strength and dexterity will preside over the character's ability to execute attacks and avoid attacks, and many other things besides. Charisma will preside over the character's interpersonal relations and ability to persuade and deceive others. We see that there are also passive powers presiding over the capacity of the character

to be affected by things, such as the senses and passive insight and perception. There are saving throws presiding over a character's ability to resist spells and poisons. Depending on the race of the character, the character will have special powers unique to that species. Depending on the class of the character, the character will be capable of magic, healing, special types of attacks, stealth, theft, disarming traps, and so on. As the character's experience increases, the power of his or her powers increase, gaining in ability, hit points and skills. As the character suffers damage, the power of his or her powers decreases. The characters of *Dungeons & Dragons* are constellations of virtual powers or dispositions.

Yet the intentional substances of *Dungeons & Dragons* are not restricted to the domain of the characters. Remarkably, when we turn to chapter 7 of the *Player's Handbook*, we discover a whole menagerie of nonhuman, *non-living* intentional substances. There we encounter weapons such as morning stars, spiked chains, shurikens, maces and, of course, war hammers and great swords. We encounter forms of armour like fey leather, spirit mail, war plate and star weave. Each of these weapons will have its own affects, its own powers of acting in conjunction with the player, just as the various forms of armour will modify the way in which the character can be affected by other entities. While these nonhuman entities will certainly have qualities such as shape, as in the case of the morning star with its round head, handle and spikes, the focus is on the unique powers or capacities of these items. What is important is what the morning star can and cannot do.

Yet these nonhuman intentional substances do not consist merely of passive tools that characters use. As we turn to the magic items, we discover entities that look suspiciously like animals or even persons, and that resemble some of the artificial life we are developing today. Looking to the *Adventurer's Vault* we discover that certain magic items can have *personalities* (Bonner et al. 2008: 195–6). These magical items can have a will of their own, pursuing certain things, and an alignment that disposes them to good or evil. Here we might think of something like Elric of Melniboné's sword Stormbringer in Michael Moorcock's novels (Moorcock 1987). Stormbringer has its own desires and aims, pulling Elric along with it, wishing to devour the souls of others, such that often Elric must struggle with his own sword to maintain control. Stormbringer can even have conversations and make suggestions. Here these unique magical items are like technologies unleashed on the world that are agents in their own right.

And then there are the famous monsters and gods that populate this world: lycanthropes, dryads, golems, various types of dragon, tieflings, worgs, gnolls and gricks, and so many more, too numerous to list. Like the characters, each of these intentional substances will have their own intelligence, wisdom, dexterity, resistances, unique powers, and so on. Like the people that populate our world, or the technologies in *The Terminator* directed by James Cameron, these monsters all have their own wills, foment their own plots, seek alliances with the various players or to thwart the aims of the players.

V. A Universe of Actants

Our tendency is to divide the world into subjects and objects. Subjects are characterised by intentionality and purposive action, they are actors; whereas objects are passive recipients of action. Yet if it is true that all entities are intentional in character, then this distinction collapses. Rather, *all* entities are actors. Of actors, philosopher and sociologist Bruno Latour remarks that '. . . *any thing* that . . . modif[ies] a state of affairs by making a difference is an actor – . . . an actant' (Latour 2005: 71). An actant is that which has the capacity to modify a state of affairs by making a difference. While the halfling thief is an actant as well, the short sword that she wields is not merely a beneficiary of the differences *she* contributes in using the sword, but rather the *sword* itself modifies the halfling. The sword modifies the balance of the halfling, the way she uses her arm and hand, her bodily posture and, above all, what she is *capable* of. The halfling with a sword and the halfling without a sword are two very different beings. The reach of the halfling, for example, is extended and now she has the power to cut other bodies and parry other edged weapons. To be sure, the sword is modified by the halfling, the halfling introduces differences into the powers of the sword, but the sword also introduces differences into the halfling. For this reason, the sword deserves to be referred to as an actant.

Dungeons & Dragons introduces us to a world of actants, of substantial powers. Each entity, whether human or humanoid, animal or rational, magical, mundane or technological is an intentional entity, a power unleashed upon the world that harbours hidden capacities coiled within it with the ability to manifest surprising qualities and produce differences in other entities. And while *Dungeons & Dragons* depicts a fictional universe, it teaches us to discern entities as substantial powers populating our own universe.

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Thought and Repetition in Bergson and Deleuze

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Abstract

This essay explores the relation between repetition and thought in Bergson and Deleuze. In Bergson, this relation is seen in the method of intuition by which thought is made to think in time and in the 'rhythms' at work in how intuition is a contact with time or life, urging conceptual precision. This framework is used to clarify Deleuze's thought without image as that contingent encounter with the persistent forces of life that demand the perseverance of thought. Far from stressing difference alone, both link the repetition in life to the unsettling persistence required to develop a truly new thought.

Keywords: repetition, life, intuition, thought without image, method, encounter, insistence

What thought lacks most of all is repetition. This is an odd statement as we are tirelessly subjected to the repetitive nature of modern societies in which progress is measured in terms of continual production, and also for the pejorative nature of repetition in a time when philosophers seek the production of the new, the different. In a word: creativity. However, is turning to the philosophies of Henri Bergson and Gilles Deleuze helpful in not merely describing the nature of modern life, but in critiquing the ideals that exhibit their power over us? In what sense do their philosophies help to clarify the odd nature of repetition?

Recently, Bergsonism has been described as a 'philosophy of difference',[1] insofar as life is conceived as the production of differences and philosophy as a method for clarifying these differences, of which

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we can see various examples throughout his work: difference in degree and kind, duration and space, quality and quantity, memory and matter, instinct and intelligence, dynamic and static religion, and so on. With Deleuze, this description is also applied to his rather complex empiricism that seeks to go beyond philosophies of subjectivity or representation so as to think difference in itself. Neither philosophy, however, is free of problems. Bergson's intuitive philosophy comes with the heavy baggage of anti-intellectualism (J. Russell 1912; B. Russell 1912: 347), romanticism (Lyotard 1991: 44–5) and a form of spiritual inspiration (Merleau-Ponty 1988).[2] How could this approach actually provide philosophy with the needed tools to criticise modern ideals if thought is reduced to an irrational instinct? Does Deleuze's empiricism fare any better? This, too, comes with the baggage that if thought and life are characterised by the production and repetition of differences then this can easily lead to the dissolution of individual identity into a pure flux (Braidotti 1994: 117–23) or a nihilistic position that accepts chaos as inherent to life. A recent scholar of Deleuze, Keith Ansell-Pearson, formulates the problem as follows:

> The problem of nihilism is not overcome in Deleuze's thinking but its difficulty and complexity are staged as such. The critical question, however, concerns whether the attempt to read univocal Being in terms of the primary play of difference and repetition amounts to a coherent philosophy of difference or results in a mode of thinking that exists only as in thrall to the new and the monstrous... In short, the question to be posed concerns whether Deleuze has produced a fetish of repetition... [Deleuze's linking of repetition to the eternal return] has little to say on the character of change, destruction, revolution and repetition, except that *there be* such phenomena. (Ansell-Pearson 1999: 82–3)

This crucial passage suggests that if the philosophy of difference advocates nothing more than the continual reproduction of novelty – stating *that* change occurs but not addressing *how* it occurs – then it would seem to be of little help for understanding how and why to do anything in the world. We seem to be left, then, with two impotent approaches for using a philosophical conception of difference to challenge modern ideals: Bergson leads us into a form of spiritual asceticism, Deleuze into a nihilistic 'fetish of repetition'. However, such problems are inherent to the label 'philosophy of difference' and mask how Bergson's intuition and Deleuze's thought without image are two ways for diagnosing the pathologies of thought, neither of which can be properly understood without an appeal to repetition.

Both philosophers provide examples of the relation between thought and repetition that can be shown in the following ways. The first requires an examination of what philosophical intuition entails, not in terms of the chronological movements of thought that Bergson himself explored, but of the various intimations that he gave regarding the nature of an intuitive philosophy. The aim, then, will be to describe intuition as the methodical effort of thought to think *in* time, to be *in* a problem, entailing the precise cultivation of concepts. For Bergson, intuition is not merely the experience of difference (Carr 1914: 38) or the 'joy of difference' (Deleuze 2004: 33), but allows us to understand the *élan vital* in terms of a repetition without a telos.[3] In other words, as Bergson showed that duration can be said of living beings and reality as such – all things or beings having their own rhythm or duration[4] – the methodology of intuition could give us an insight into the nature of the *élan vital* as that insistent force behind life's evolution.

After laying this groundwork for which to better understand Bergson, the ontological implications of this approach will be explored by bringing this groundwork into dialogue with Deleuze's philosophy of repetition, in terms of what I call the 'rhythms of intuition' and the 'logic of repetition'. This will allow us to clarify the demanding relation between thought and repetition. As Deleuze takes up Bergson's insights via his 'thought without image' another link between thought and repetition can be demonstrated. If repetition is defined as an unrelenting force or pulsion that does not want to give itself up, *the insistence or 'power' of difference*,[5] then our task is to understand repetition without reducing it to questions of progress, realisation or teleology, and thereby addressing the problem of the fetish of repetition. While repetition is a problematic and seemingly pejorative term in vitalistic philosophies, the success of this suggestion will have to be determined after a close examination of some key passages in Bergson and Deleuze and a creative rendering of what appears on the surface to lack creativity.

I. Intuition as Cultivation: Having Done with Method?

What would it mean, then, to have an intuitive philosophy? There are two primary points to be made: first, intuition[6] entails a redirection of thought away from space and, second, it means to think in time. Regarding the first point, against the view of time that assumes it is given as a spatialised, static whole, intuition presupposes that change itself is essential, with no need of an underlying substance: '*There are changes, but there are underneath the change no things which change: change has*

no need of a support' (Bergson 2007: 122; original emphasis). Instead of looking for something immobile that is said to change, intuition enters into change by accepting the unforeseen and the irreversibility of time. This can be clarified by saying that the tendency of the intellect is to analyse what already exists (past-directed), whereas intuition implies creation, protesting time's spatialisation (future-directed). The problem is developing a concept adequate to this movement, since to do so requires going against the natural bent of our mind, which tends towards mechanism and finalism.

In *Creative Evolution*, the mechanistic model takes on the form of the cinematographical image in which the process of evolution is broken down into discrete parts that are then pieced back together, like snapshots were used to make a film, thus giving the appearance of movement. This image, however, tends towards a 'perpetual recommencement' (Bergson 1998: 306–7)[7] – division *ad infinitum* – precisely because it spatialises time and thereby prevents adequate conceptualisation of movement itself. According to the finalistic position, on the other hand, beyond that which changes, that is, the faulty world of perception, there is something eternal that serves as the cause and sufficient reason for change, providing an external measure for what is changing. This beyond usually takes the form of a single concept from which all others can be deduced: be it Substance, Ego, Idea or Will (Bergson 2007: 18–19). However, in positing an eternal concept or substance in order to account for change this view presupposes a spatialised time that is a homogenised, static whole. Instead of an immobile snapshot of movement or evolution we get an immobile concept guiding movement from above: 'If movement is not everything, it is nothing; and if to begin with we have supposed that immobility can be a reality, movement will slip through our fingers when we think we have it' (Bergson 2007: 121). This is the problem of intuition: change is imperceptible not because it is beyond reality, but because it *is* reality, yet it is essential if we are to understand reality. If we are to think in time we have to make thought itself move.

This leads to the second point. Intuition is distinguished from intelligence as intuition entails thinking *in* time, not reflecting *upon* it: 'to think intuitively is to think in duration. Intelligence starts ordinarily from the immobile, and reconstructs movement as best it can with immobilities in juxtaposition. Intuition starts from movement, posits it, or rather perceives it as reality itself, and sees in immobility only an abstract moment, a snapshot taken by our mind of a mobility' (Bergson 2007: 22). To perceive movement, here, does not mean the visual act

of seeing something with one's eyes since normal human perception cuts up reality by selecting: we focus on this and not that. The type of perception he suggests, then, is a deeper use of the mind, as when we follow the movement of a melody. The melody is pure change with nothing underlying it, each note bleeding into the next while remaining qualitatively distinct. As soon as we try to focus on each note, we lose the movement of the melody. It is intuition that allows us to make the division[8] between this qualitative movement and its quantification. The difficulty is that as soon as we try to fix upon this movement, it slips away, 'for it [the impulsion that set thought in motion] was not a thing but an urge to movement' (169). Intuition, then, is only successful if it is possible to grasp this movement itself, thereby making use of it so as to see duration in all things.[9] This does not mean that intuition *is* duration, but that intuition is the means by which we can think *in terms of* duration.

A problem arises from this methodological suggestion. Does this view of thought lead to a form of anti-intellectualist romanticism such that thought is moved by a direct or divine vision leading it to sympathise with the flow or evolution of life itself? Can we circumvent such accusations that continue to haunt Bergsonism by clarifying the relation between intuition and method, in the sense that intuition is a process of cultivating thought?

The supposed romanticism of Bergson could be found on a few levels in his work, but it has been said that it 'is to be found above all in the fact that his entire philosophy is an effort to provide an aesthetic substitute for a lost religion and an emotionally unacceptable science' (Shklar 1958: 636).[10] The aesthetic substitute suggests the image he constantly uses: the artist creating the unforeseen. The science without emotion would be remedied through his appeal to this more intuitive philosophy, one which refuses to reduce life to dead matter. Bergson himself goes so far as to claim that in philosophy one does not obey or command nature, but 'seeks to be at one with nature' (Bergson 2007: 104).[11] What would this 'being at one with nature' entail? Does it mean that one finds a reason for existing or a natural place in the evolution of life or that nature finds its end and satisfaction in the human?

In Bergson there is a fine line between putting oneself into the movement of life, into life's creative evolution, and that of finding one's natural place or life's purpose. As in artistic creation, evolution is not the realisation of a plan or goal: it is neither harmonisation nor integration, but a necessary discord inherent to creation as it leaves harmony behind (Bergson 1998: 103, 117). Looking to art, then, is to look towards a field

that acknowledges the role of the unforeseen in creation, not to appeal to a vapid holistic feeling. In this sense, the claim that intuition entails a romantic view of harmonising with nature is unwarranted. To have an intuition is to realise that one is part of a movement of life that has no end or goal, even if the human *seems* to be the only being capable of continuing this movement in his becoming conscious of it.[12] Bergson thus defies this romantic tendency on two accounts: first, neither living nor thinking entails fitting into what already exists; second, as evolution is a matter of division, divergence and dissociation, the individual is not ultimately synthesised with this movement, but by entering into it by means of an adequate conceptualisation of it, the individual can engender further divergences. The point is not submission but creation, and this creation involves a method.

If thinking in time implies making use of duration, then we can see why Deleuze links Bergsonian intuition with method: 'Intuition is neither a feeling, an inspiration, nor a disorderly sympathy, but a fully developed method, one of the most fully developed methods in philosophy. It has its strict rules, constituting that which Bergson calls "precision" in philosophy' (Deleuze 1988: 13). While Deleuze's definition of intuition rightly suggests the demanding nature of philosophy, one which I will explore in the next section, intuition's relation to method needs clarification. Camille Riquier has recently argued that intuition and method should not be conflated, as Deleuze suggests, but that they are separate moments: at times, intuition precedes the development of a method, which happened in Bergson's early work, where the concept of intuition was still unformulated, as well as in a few privileged minds throughout history who acted without a plan (*quand l'intuition manque de méthode*); while at other times method precedes intuition, in the sense of the later Bergson writing so as to help those who are poor in spirit arrive at intuition (*quand la méthode manque d'intuition*) (Riquier 2009: 131–57).[13] Riquier's distinction, while interesting, does not clarify the important issues at play: (1) if intuition initially lacks a method this means that it obtains its force from a contingent encounter and (2) the use of method to have an intuition means that thought requires continual effort so as to sustain the intuition that continually eludes it. Bergson's method does not entail a ready-made system that thought is guided by or seeks, but implies that intuition proceeds methodically, as a process of cultivating an idea. Intuition thus defies what is commonly accepted and yet demands the patience to develop this defiance into a positive thought.[14]

II. The Rhythms of Intuition and the Logic of Repetition

How, then, could intuition be put to work? I will try to answer this by clarifying the ontological implications of the methods found in Bergson while juxtaposing them with some insights by Deleuze: in Bergson the rhythmic nature of intuition points to the nature of the *élan vital* and in Deleuze repetition is implicated in the logic of a 'thought without image'.[15] To clarify these complex relations, I define repetition as an insistent movement that thought is forced into, and its logic is the peculiar consistency that this repetition engenders. It is in contact with repetition that thought is produced, thereby requiring that thought is given a method so as to grasp that which moves it. It should be noted that while the following rhythms/degrees are ordered and in some ways cumulative, their sequential presentation is not to suggest that this is *the* order in which thought proceeds, but to merely show a way of approaching the methodical nature of thought in both philosophers.

Bergsonian Rhythms

First rhythm: the contact of intuition. For Bergson, merely having thoughts does not imply that one is thinking, nor does thought necessarily begin by formulating truths. Instead, thought has to be engendered: we have to be forced to think via a contingent encounter or contact with a force[16] that creates novelty. For Bergson, what moves thought is 'not so much a vision as a contact: this contact has furnished an impulse, this impulse a movement' (Bergson 2007: 91). 'Philosophical intuition is this contact, philosophy is this impetus' (103).[17] Intuition is not to have a clear idea or image guiding you, but is a contact with an imperceptible force, 'confused perhaps but decisive' (90). In this sense, philosophy does not find its origin in thought, in terms of reflection or representation, but in terms of the utilisation of a contingent encounter, being forced to create a problem peculiar to that which is moving you.[18] Intuition opens thought unto a vital repetition, a movement that does not want to give itself up, and if we are to develop a concept adequate to this movement, without relapsing into our natural tendency to spatialise or generalise, then the violence of precision and method become crucial.

Second rhythm: the violence of intuition. To grasp the moving nature of reality and break with old forms of thought, the mind 'must do itself violence, reverse the direction of the operation by which it ordinarily thinks, continually upsetting its categories, or rather, recasting them' (Bergson 2007: 160).[19] We are forced to recast ideas due to the shock

of finding this movement at work within us and we cannot resort to ready-made ideas found all too easily in the sedimentation of a socialised common sense.[20] Violence is needed to ward off the reproduction of clichés: applying what is old to the new. In order for this intuition to survive, then, we 'will be driven to strain the words, to do violence to speech' (Bergson 1977: 254) and thus to our very nature. This violence is also directed against representation, a natural tendency of thought. Here representation takes the form of the individual who is quick to pass judgement and to criticise an idea that does not fit into what is commonly accepted or 'reasonable' (Bergson 2007: 66). Representational thought resorts to vague generalities, trying to stretch pre-given concepts so as to account for more and more of reality. Intuition, on all accounts, protests against this tendency to generalise (the equal treatment of unequals) as this will only serve the practical, utilitarian needs of the intellect (which have their own domain).

Behind this violent protest against what Bergson calls the 'socialization of the truth' (Bergson 2007: 69) is a search for philosophical precision: 'What philosophy has lacked most of all is precision. Philosophical systems are not cut to the measure of the reality in which we live; they are too wide for reality' (1). The precision Bergson has in mind here comes from Plato's example of the good cook who cuts reality according to its natural articulations; however, in being precise we cannot appeal to an external measure or Platonic essence as a guide for how to shape concepts, but only to the object itself. In this sense, precision is a matter of conceptual simplification.

Third rhythm: thought as an effort without end. This precision, however, goes beyond conceptual tailoring to the intensification of one's life when intuition is linked with the necessity of a force that '*had* to express itself' (Bergson 1977: 46). In other words, we are forced to think precisely because the *élan vital* is a 'creative exigency' (47): a recalcitrant repetition that intuition brings us into contact with. This intensification of intuition first occurs when we come into contact with this repetition; for example, upon looking into our own mind we glimpse the movement of duration within us. There is a further intensification when we go beyond ourselves into the evolution of life itself,[21] realising that this movement is not solely within, but is at work in all living beings. Intuition, then, is not thought reacting upon something, but is that by which one enters into a repetitive activity that does not want to give itself up and demands conceptual precision so as to render that repetition living. Thus, precision is not only conceptual tailoring, but is a process of intensification of one's own life. As this encounter could be

overwhelming due to the effort required to sustain it, intuition demands that the philosopher take risks.

> But the philosopher runs these risks only because he has insured himself and because there are things of which he feels himself unshakeably certain. He will make us certain in our turn to the extent that he is able to communicate to us the intuition from whence he draws his strength. (Bergson 2007: 102)[22]

Here we are reminded that to have an intuition is not simply the ability to have a random thought or opinion about everything. Instead, it is a matter of knowing what one wants to do (feeling unshakeably certain), but without knowing how to get there (taking a risk). The contingency of the encounter produces a sense of certainty and what prevents us from lapsing into generalities is the fact that we do not know where the intuition will lead us. The utilisation of this encounter requires effort and perseverance to make it precise: in order to tailor one's singular idea, intuition has to be 'methodically cultivated and developed' (Bergson 2007: 62). It is only *in* the activity of creating a problem that one discovers what is to be developed.

To put this differently, intuition is that which vitalises the intellect, pushing it to form precise concepts. Images are evoked in order to express the intuition, but the intuition itself is without image. It knows not where it is going and has no image guiding it, but it acts with a force of necessity, an urgency seeking nothing more than its expression. It is a force that uses the intellect, it uses anything it can find – diverse images, if necessary. To think intuitively is not to be driven towards a final solution, but to be driven by a repetitive force that seeks expression: to be driven by life itself.

These rhythms demonstrate how the nature of intuition clarifies the nature of life itself in that Bergson's valuing of effort above all things not only pertains to the effort required to render an intuition precise, to fit its object, but also is an expression of his vitalism as he also finds the evolution of life to be characterised by a continual effort, that effort being the *élan vital* (Bergson 1998: 87, 127). He describes this effort, this impetus, as a tendency to act upon inert matter, but in such a way that there is no predetermined path for it to follow and thus it cannot be described in terms of finality:[23] evolution has no model for creating forms. The effort of the *élan vital*, then, is purely contingent, not meaning that merely anything can happen but that it entails selection: it entails that the fortuitous encounter with matter is utilised such that a new life form is created out of the encounter[24] or else the form is aborted and life hits a dead end. This is the risk that the

élan vital takes as it encounters matter, and if it did not persevere, if it was not this peculiar form of repetition, there would be no evolution, no creation. Thus, in order to understand Bergson one has to separate repetition in thought and in life from teleology. We have to see that thought proceeds without an image just as life's evolution is an effort without end, in both the continual persistence of the *élan vital* and its unpredictable creativity. Evolution is the development of tendencies, not laws. Ultimately, intuition opens us to the metaphysical framework for understanding both the nature of thought and what reality itself must be like in order that we can know it:[25] intuition is a thought without image and reveals to us the evolution of life without a telos.

Deleuzian Logic

First degree: contingency engenders necessity in thought. For Deleuze, as in Bergson, what forces thought is precisely a contingent encounter or contact with something in the world. While this contact could be various things – strong or frightening ideas, pleasing or traumatic experiences, Socrates, or even truth – this does not mean that thought is organised *by* such experiences as if by a first cause. Instead, the contact engenders the shocking or dizzying realisation that what is driving thought, using this contact to organise itself, is an ongoing force that is imperceptible, yet sensible; that is, it cannot be recognised or placed within a harmonious view of the faculties, shattering our previous conceptual framework, yet it is still felt. Thought entails the intense feeling of shock since it arises without knowledge of whence it comes:

> Thought is primarily trespass and violence, the enemy, and nothing presupposes philosophy: everything begins with misosophy. Do not count upon thought to ensure the relative necessity of what it thinks. Rather, count upon the contingency of an encounter with that which forces thought to raise up and educate the absolute necessity of an act of thought or a passion to think. (Deleuze 1994: 139)

One does not create concepts for the pleasure of thought, but due to a necessity to express that which would otherwise be suffocating. Misosophy implies first that thought has us, we do not have it,[26] and we create so as to be free of it. We simply do not know what contingency will create thought. Second, this encounter repeatedly obsesses us, forcing a problem to be posed that only pertains to this encounter. Like water when raised to a certain temperature can do nothing else than change phases, thought is forced to create due to the intensification that

occurs from its encounter. As Badiou puts it: 'we think under pressure' (Badiou 2009: 116).

Second degree: the isolation of repetition. Through this encounter thought's activity isolates the thinker by violently denying generalities, the vagaries of common sense and good sense, not because thought detaches itself from life, but because it requires the passion and conviction to develop a concept, an Idea, that adequately expresses one's vital peculiarity. Reminiscent of Bergson, Deleuze directs this violence against representation, here taking the form of 'we know everything' or 'no one can deny . . . ' (Deleuze 1994: 130). Because thought naturally takes the form of such universals, it is difficult to give up the ideas that one finds ready at hand: thought does not want to do violence to its own nature as this would apparently separate the individual from its own common sense, from society and from seemingly all that it values.

In other words, as thought is the contact with something which forces one to think, with an intense repetition that refuses universalisation, it requires that an individual deny socialised presuppositions. Highlighting this degree shows how not only Nietzsche but more profoundly Bergson inspired the way Deleuze links the disobedience of philosophical thought to effective repetition:

> it is a question of someone – if only one – with the necessary modesty not managing to know what everybody knows, and modestly denying what everybody is supposed to recognize. Someone who neither allows himself to be represented nor wishes to represent anything. Not an individual endowed with good will and a natural capacity for thought, but an individual full of ill will who does not manage to think, either naturally or conceptually. Only such an individual is without presuppositions. Only such an individual effectively begins and *effectively repeats*. (Deleuze 1994: 130; my emphasis)

Within this quote we find some of the postulates of the dogmatic image of thought that Deleuze feels haunt philosophy: representation, good sense and common sense, identification, the subsumption of the singular under the universal, and the purely negative views of repetition. If one is to deny what 'everybody knows', to refuse the limitations of identity, one has to resist the given presuppositions of thought, but this can only be done by exploring another form of repetition that is neither redundancy nor generalisation but is an unrelenting force. For the philosopher, then, the issue is developing a concept that adequately captures that which moves thought, so as not to limit this movement or its ability to intensify you as a thinker. If this concept of repetition is linked to a 'thought without image', it demands a thought without end. In other words,

thought is neither a matter of realising a goal, nor does its expression seek an end, such as identification. To think, one has to be persistent.

Third degree: repetition as perseverance and resistance. As the contingent and violent encounter produces a sense of urgency in thought, this urgency must be maintained in spite of the fact that we do not know where the thought will lead us. However, while anyone can abstractly have an idea, this idea has to be utilised: it has to be pursued with 'guile, perseverance and prudence'[27] if it is to have vitality. Ultimately, thinking requires taking a chance, throwing the dice, and allowing this chance to affect you without escaping you. As thought is continually shrouded in clichés when we start, the point being to get out of them by creating a precise idea that resists common sense,[28] how are we to utilise an idea, to put an intuition to work, to achieve an effective repetition?

'True repetition', Deleuze writes in *The Logic of Sense*, 'appears as a singular behaviour that we display in relation to that which cannot be exchanged, replaced, or substituted' and as such 'addresses something singular, unchangeable, and different, without "identity"' (Deleuze 1990: 328). As this true repetition '*authenticates the different*', Deleuze uniquely links difference to repetition: 'Difference gives things to be seen and multiplies bodies; but it is repetition which offers things to be spoken, authenticates the multiple, and makes of it a spiritual event' (329). That true repetition is never of the Same, but of the Different, means not that to repeat is to enter into a pure flux where thoughts or identities dissolve into a sea of change, but it is to conceptualise a difference that *insists* in its vital singularity or virtual intensity and thus cannot be given an identity in terms of what already exists. Instead, to think difference is to think the conditions that allow a thing to determine its own identity via its repetition for itself. It is for this reason that every 'repetition is a transgression' (Deleuze 1994: 3) since to repeat is not to reproduce what already existed but to create the unforeseen. The individual effectively repeats by creating concepts according to that which is moving him or her.

How are we to understand this odd logic linking that which is unchangeable with that which is without 'identity', that is, difference? What does it mean to define true repetition as the *insistence of difference*? For Deleuze, repetition 'expresses a power peculiar to the existent, *a stubbornness of the existent in intuition*, which resists every specification by concepts no matter how far this is taken' (Deleuze 1994: 13f; my emphasis). A thinker who effectively repeats expresses a force that does not want to give itself up, one that stubbornly resists, and thus one that continually transgresses laws, the confines of representation, the

marketing of opinions, and common sense. That ideas insist in their own intensity and vitality, and not in relation to transcendent or moral ideals, constitutes what could be called the 'nervous optimism'[29] of thought's repetition. If thought is pursued with 'guile and perseverance' it will touch on those forces (be they evolution, the *élan*, temporality, difference in itself) which do nothing but resist all attempts to stifle them. To think without image is to create such that life and time do not suffocate within you, such that differences do not lack repetition, thereby allowing for ideas to resist the dogmatic images of thought.

The point of developing these degrees of thought in Deleuze is to show his indebtedness to Bergsonian intuition, not in the sense that Deleuze merely reproduces this concept, but in the sense that for Deleuze, too, thought is methodical, requiring effort. Similarly to how Bergson's intuition sheds light on the nature of the *élan*, Deleuze's thought without image is that whereby he can adequately conceptualise repetition as that intensive behaviour that authenticates difference. Thought arises out of a contingent encounter, forcing itself upon the individual and requiring the individual's separation from all presuppositions, be they from common sense or good sense, so as to grasp what is novel about this thought. The development of this thought in turn requires perseverance: it requires repetition. Thus, similarly to how the conceptualisation of movement required that thought itself was set in motion, this conceptualisation of repetition requires that thought itself must repeat. Thought is an expression without end, aim or finality since that which sets thought in motion is the insistence of difference, a repetition without a telos.

III. Repetition and the Demands of Thought

Does this foray into these levels of thought provide us with any insights concerning the diagnosis that began this essay, thought's lack of repetition? Bergson's intuition diagnoses repetition without difference in terms of spatialised time or the inert, immobile image of life subordinated to transcendent ends. Deleuze's thought without image diagnoses difference without repetition in terms of the natural images of thought that fail to grasp the insistence of difference. Two consequences emerge from these positions. First, thought is what opens us to a movement that refuses to relinquish itself, forcing thought to pose problems. This movement is pure activity and if we are to think actively, we must do violence to our natural tendency to stop this movement. Second, in order for thought to continue this movement, it must itself be obstinate, passionate: thought implies repetition.

It remains for me to address the central problem that began this essay, the fetish of repetition, which my analysis seems to have exacerbated. This problem divides into two further issues, the first being that of conflating Bergson and Deleuze regarding the relation between difference and repetition and the second being that of Deleuze's emphasis on difference or creativity as production for its own sake.

As John Mullarkey rightly points out, Deleuze's views on repetition seem to place him squarely within a more Heraclitean view of pure flux, with true repetition being a productive or creative repetition, whereas Bergson would not give precedence to a pure mobility since a philosophy of change allows for both movement and stasis (Mullarkey 1999: 205–7). I hope not to have obscured this distinction, but instead I would like to claim that while this reading of Deleuze as a promoter of pure flux (philosopher of difference) is possible, this occludes the fact that repetition is not merely production, but is also that obstinacy or effort whereby difference is authenticated. The view of Deleuze as one who fetishises repetition assumes that repetition is nothing more than difference, and thus underemphasises the roles of perseverance, precision and resistance (the *insistence of difference*) for understanding both the nature of reality and the development of concepts. This view also masks how Bergson's views on effort and Deleuze's concept of repetition converge.[30] While difference is accentuated in Deleuze, it cannot be thought without repetition. Insofar as intuition is understood as an effort to develop precise concepts that pertain to the movement of life or duration within all things, and insofar as repetition is captured in a thought without image as the insistence or perseverance of life in thought, we can understand Deleuze's claim of a 'profound complicity between nature and mind' (Deleuze 1994: 165).[31] The effort of intuition, as with the thinker who effectively repeats, pertains to a form of resistance, a refusal to let a thought go unexpressed, and this resistance is effective as it adequately grasps the movement of life or nature that has engendered it.

This leads to the second issue, that of production for its own sake. Thomas Osborne problematises some recent appeals to creativity as that which ought to guide philosophy, particularly within the vitalist tradition from Bergson to Deleuze.[32] Osborne points out that such a normative emphasis on creativity is part of a wider cultural assemblage, namely 'the creativity industries, consumerist individualism, the cult of the new as ever-changing fashion, the forces of intellectual and cultural productivism for its own sake, the performativity of "ideas" and culture' (Osborne 2003: 522). Osborne's prescription to this diagnosis

of overproduction is to advocate inventiveness, rather than creativity, since the former concept appeals to the inertia of thought and to hard work: 'Work involves repetition. Not repetition of the same object or specific theme necessarily, but repetition of the same activity, repetition in the name not just of seeking an answer to something but of locating, deepening, embellishing a *problem*' (520). Thus, instead of the focus on creativity as the heroic or romantic production of something new, he pleads for an acceptance of inertia and for the obsession with a problem such that one does not seek closure, but the opening of further possibilities.

This problematic converges precisely with the above explication in that my attempt to de-emphasise the role of difference in Deleuze's work was done by giving proper weight to repetition as the unrelenting forces of life acting upon us and as the obstinacy required for thinking these forces. If one stops their thinking activity with creation, then all we have is difference without repetition: a true fetish of repetition (which is quite rampant within modern consumerist societies). Is it the case, however, that this inertia of inventiveness is a form of repetition without difference? I think it is not, since it is precisely in the process of repeating an activity that difference, individuality or novelty is made possible or authenticated. To continually repeat an attempt is to refuse mindless change and by not giving up thought is intensified, ensuring that novelty is possible. As Osborne wants to remove creativity from its seemingly normative status, I would like to take difference off its pedestal by giving more emphasis to these underappreciated qualities of repetition.

The logic of repetition behind Deleuze's thought without image thus suggests that philosophical thought is not the random production of novelties, a seeming 'fetish of repetition', but is a violently intense and sustained battle of the individual 'full of ill will' with clichés, opinions and the marketing of ideas, and the refusal to give up this battle. In *What is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Guattari go so far as to conclude that the 'concept has a power of repetition', in the sense that it is 'virtual', 'incorporeal' and 'impassible' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 159). In other words, a concept does not exist, it *insists*. Thus, while it is novelty or difference that wakes thought from its stupor, it is repetition or persistence that gives thought its force, waking it from its torpor. Both Bergson and Deleuze take seriously the consequences of a blocked repetition, the inability to make differences move, and the failure to adequately conceptualise the movement of thought – all of which could be said to prevent the realisation that 'discipline is a vehicle of joy'.[33] Thus, the repetition inherent to a thought without image and

the insistence of the *élan vital* place demands on thought not merely to think differently or to be different (these are givens), but to persevere so as to make thought move, to effectively repeat. To have an intuition, to fight the given dogmatic image of thought, is to methodically cultivate resistance.

Notes

1. Cf. Deleuze 1988 and 2004; Ansell-Pearson 1999, 2002; Guerlac 2006; Mullarkey 1999.
2. In his essay *In Praise of Philosophy*, Maurice Merleau-Ponty rightly argues that intuition is not a 'prenatal inspiration' (1988: 19), but by describing thought in terms of 'incarnation' (27), life as 'primordial unity' (28), and creating 'out of nothing' (28), he reads too much Christian theology into Bergson's work and thus needlessly distorts it.
3. While the complex relation between memory and repetition as developed in *Matter and Memory* plays a crucial role in Deleuze's reading of Bergson, it will be largely put aside in order to make my argument. I do not feel that the argument is hindered by doing so since my concern is the relation between thought and life (the *élan*) as developed in *Creative Evolution* and *The Creative Mind*, rather than thought/repetition and memory.
4. While in *Time and Free Will* (1971) Bergson developed the concept of duration solely in terms of the immediate data of a personal consciousness, it was not until *Matter and Memory* that duration became pluralised and opened onto the rhythms and vibrations of all things and beings. See Bergson 1991: 204–9.
5. 'In every case, repetition is the power of difference and differenciation' (Deleuze 1994: 220). My definition of repetition, then, focuses on the third synthesis or repetition in Deleuze as that which combines the actual repetitions of habit and memory with the virtual repetition of intensities. This repetition is the process of relating intensities such that they are expressed in the actual. Repetition will thus be linked to the 'dice throw' of thought as not knowing what will happen but of allowing something to happen to us.
6. Camille Riquier, in *Archéologie de Bergson: Temps et métaphysique* (2009: 156), interestingly points out that Bergson initially used the English word 'feeling' to signify that which pertains to the immediate data of consciousness, as he was then unable to find a proper concept in French before eventually using '*l'intuition*'.
7. Bergson would later come to view differential calculus as contributing to a proper understanding of time as movement.
8. 'Intuition as method is a method of division' (Deleuze 1988: 22).
9. 'Intuition is not duration itself. *Intuition is rather the movement by which we emerge from our own duration*, by which we make use of our own duration to affirm and immediately to recognize the existence of other durations, above and below us' (Deleuze 1988: 32–3; my emphasis).
10. Another reading of Bergson as one who has a romantic, teleological view of 'Life' can be found in Jean-François Lyotard's *The Inhuman* (1991: 44–5).
11. If understood as 'to sympathise with nature', however, the romantic overtones could be lessened.

12. In saying 'seems' here I am more generous than needs be to Bergson. He does not seem to suggest that there could be another line of evolution that goes beyond the human; instead, he tries to find a way to extend the human beyond itself. Keith Ansell-Pearson takes this quite seriously and examines the claim that philosophy is a matter of going 'beyond the human condition' (1999: *passim*).
13. I disagree with Riquier's phenomenological reading of intuition, seemingly influenced by Heidegger or Jean-Luc Marion, his teacher. In describing intuition in terms of a weakness or obscurity patiently awaiting the reception of light and as a humility facing giants (David vs Goliath), he reduces intuition to yet another spiritual interpretation as in Merleau-Ponty 1988.
14. For more on the power of negation in intuition see Bergson 2007: 89–90, and for the common impatience of philosophy see Bergson 2007: 24.
15. By linking intuition and a thought without image I hope not to conflate Bergson and Deleuze, but to build on Alain Badiou's suggestion that Bergson plays a more central role in Deleuze's overall thinking than Spinoza or Nietzsche (Badiou 2000: 39). I attempt to clarify this suggestion by rethinking thought's relation to repetition. Moreover, since my concern is with the concepts of repetition and thought without image, I will focus mainly on *Difference and Repetition* as it is there that Deleuze develops these concepts.
16. I will be using the word 'force' in the coming pages to refer to the movement or quality that Bergson attributes to the *élan* as that which ensures change, evolution and so on. This force is that which, upon being experienced, propels one into thinking. For Bergson, it is by entering into this movement (be it temporality or evolution) that one is urged to think it, as if pushed by a force. To avoid the unhappy formulation that one is forced to think the force that forces thought, I will use 'force' interchangeably with other concepts such as movement or repetition.
17. Bergson also describes philosophy as 'a contact with the creative effort' (1998: 370). In *Matter and Memory* intuition is similarly described as a 'contact with the real' (1991: 185–6), the real being the undivided, lived continuity of duration.
18. Deleuze provides an interesting account of the nature of creating problems in his *Bergsonism* 1988: 13–35.
19. Ansell-Pearson argues that Deleuze's thinking 'retains the Bergsonian conviction that thought must assume a monstrous form and that the break with established forms of thought must be a violent one' (1999: 83).
20. 'Common sense, then, or as it might be called, social sense, is innate in normal man, like the faculty of speech, which also implies the existence of society and which is none the less prefigured in individual organisms' (Bergson 1977: 106).
21. This double intensification is described in *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion* (1977: 250). In *Creative Evolution* one can see how the effort of life that is passed on from one generation to the next, dividing as it moves along, is 'distributed amongst individuals without losing anything of its force, *rather intensifying in proportion to its advance*' (1998: 26; my emphasis).
22. For more on how an encounter can be lucky or unlucky see Bergson 1977: 229–30.
23. We can see many examples of this rejection of finalism: Bergson 2007: 13, 20, 52, 99; Bergson 1977: 52, 196–7. It should also be noted that Bergson does endorse a form of external finalism in *Creative Evolution* 1998: 41, 265–7. However, Deleuze rightly argues that we are to understand this in the sense that nature has different planes (no single route) and that each one has its own plan (showing the double meaning of the French word '*plan*') or its own tendency

that it develops (Deleuze 1988: 131, n.2). As Bergson writes: 'evolution does not mark out a solitary route, that *it takes directions without aiming at ends*, and that it remains inventive even in its adaptations' (Bergson 1998: 102; my emphasis).

24. 'Life is, more than anything else, a tendency to act on inert matter. The direction of this action is not predetermined; hence the unforeseeable variety of forms which life, in evolving, sows along its path. But this action always presents, to some extent, the character of contingency; it implies at least a rudiment of choice' (Bergson 1998: 96).
25. In this sense, Bergson's work resonates with Thomas Kuhn's depiction of scientific progress as the solving of problems through continued precision, not as the advancement towards some transcendent Truth; see Kuhn (1996: 170–3).
26. 'We are always patients where Ideas are concerned' (Deleuze 1994: 219).
27. Ansell-Pearson argues that thought in Deleuze is not a method as this 'implies a collaboration of the faculties that is far too harmonious and equilibrial, as well as too determined by social values and established norms of discipline'. Instead, thought involves a form of culture, being 'caught up in excessive repetitions of a compulsion to live beyond the old morality' (Ansell-Pearson 1999: 83). However, method need not mean that thought uses a ready-made system, but that in order to cultivate an idea, it proceeds methodically and painfully, with perseverance. See also James Williams (2003: 19) who provides an interesting account of the method of Deleuzian dialectics.
28. In the chapter entitled 'The Painting before Painting . . . ' in *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, Deleuze describes how painting is not merely making random marks, but involves the ability to utilise them, to create something out of them. A contingent choice has to be pursued, made precise, and this requires effort. 'One can fight against the cliché only with much guile, perseverance, and prudence: it is a task perpetually renewed with every painting, with every moment of every painting' (Deleuze 2003: 68). I feel that this analysis is profoundly inspired by Bergson's description of the continual effort required to develop and sustain philosophical intuition.
29. Here again I borrow a phrase from Deleuze's *Francis Bacon* where he claims that Bacon's vitalism could be defined as being 'cerebrally pessimistic, but nervously optimistic' (Deleuze 2003: 43).
30. The following passage from *Matter and Memory* suggests the relation between habitual repetition and difference: 'The progress which is brought about by repetition and practice consists merely in unfolding what was previously wrapped up, in bestowing one of the elementary movements that *autonomy* which ensures precision without, however, breaking up that *solidarity* with the others without which it would become useless. We are right when we say that habit is formed by the repetition of an effort; but what would be the use of repeating it, if the result were always to reproduce the same thing?' (Bergson 1991: 111).
31. We set aside here the further problem that can be raised within Deleuze's work of a possible panpsychism or injection of thought into being (Brassier 2008).
32. This becomes the main focus of Deleuze and Guattari's *What is Philosophy?* (1994) where philosophy is defined as the creation of concepts that resist the present. While it is usually the case that Deleuze and Guattari's texts are something different than Deleuze's own work, many of the essays contained in *What is Philosophy?* share much in common with Deleuze's early work.
33. This phrase is attributed to the musician Robert Fripp.

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Spinning in the NAPLAN Ether: 'Postscript on the Control Societies' and the Seduction of Education in Australia

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Abstract

This paper applies concepts Deleuze developed in his 'Postscript on the Societies of Control', especially those relating to modulatory power, dividuation and control, to aspects of Australian schooling to explore how this transition is manifesting itself. Two modulatory machines of assessment, NAPLAN and My Schools, are examined as a means to better understand how the disciplinary institution is changing as a result of modulation. This transition from discipline to modulation is visible in the declining importance of the disciplinary teacher–student relationship as a measure of the success of the educative process. The transition occurs through seduction because that which purports to measure classroom quality is in fact a serpent of modulation that produces simulacra of the disciplinary classroom. The effect is to sever what happens in the disciplinary space from its representations in a luminiferous ether that overlays the classroom.

Keywords: control society, high-stakes testing, NAPLAN, teaching, Deleuze, modulation

I. Introduction

> [O]nce one steps outside what's been thought before, once one ventures outside what's familiar and reassuring, once one has to invent new concepts for unknown lands, then methods and moral systems break down and thinking becomes, as Foucault puts it, a 'perilous act', a violence whose first victim is oneself. (Deleuze and Parnet 1995: 103)

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'Postscript on the Societies of Control' published in 1992 suggests new ways to understand the self and the world (Deleuze 1992). It suggests that we are moving from a disciplinary society to a control society, that disciplinary institutions such as schools are 'in the midst of a general breakdown', that disciplinary power is being replaced by modulatory power and that education is being seduced by business rationalities (Deleuze 1992). Some twenty years after its publication it is timely to ask how modulation is emerging within schools and other institutions and how the shift in forms of power has developed. This is one question that Deleuze leaves us to investigate – how will the predicted changes manifest themselves? We argue that modulating power begins the process of replacing disciplinary power, not as a seismic explosion or revolution, but as a gradual, creeping seduction – the becoming-control society.

For us, this transition occurs through seduction. Modulation seduces by promising greater discipline through a heightened emphasis on technologies, such as surveillance, and the normalising examination. Greater disciplinarity is promised when less is actually provided. The 'Postscript' provides a lens that sharpens our focus on the corporate and performative practices and policies dominating education and unmasks the coils of the serpent – sinuously constricting and overlaying the traditional, disciplinary functions of schooling.

Readers should not mistake our sympathy for those who, confusedly and anxiously, practise a disciplinary approach to education in an increasingly modulated environment for support for disciplinarity. Our analysis of education within the becoming-control society is not underpinned by some admiration of its disciplinary forms. We simply accept that disciplinary responses are favoured by many teachers, principals, students and bureaucrats and that, when it comes to the modulatory machine, these responses: are doomed to return more of the same because they misunderstand the workings of the machine; serve to further strengthen the effect of the modulatory machine; and fail to amount to an attempt to find those 'new weapons' that Deleuze encouraged us to seek (Deleuze 1992). Rather than admiring the disciplinary, or validating the modulatory, then, our concern is with the search for these new weapons. For us, the first step is to expose the effects of power in schools – or the infiltration of a new, and for us largely uncharted, ethics of power. We stress that modulation is not an improvement on discipline, nor is discipline superior to modulation. This scarcely visible infiltration has meant that 'worrying and hoping

for the best' are the default positions of the disciplined (Deleuze 1992). Understanding the modulatory snake allows us to 'find new weapons' for disrupting the control mechanisms insinuating themselves into the ways that we are taught, and teach ourselves, to become (Deleuze 1992).

We examine modulating power through two examples in the Australian education context: the NAPLAN tests and the My Schools website. NAPLAN and My Schools are modulatory machines (mis)understood within the disciplinary terrain of schooling. One effect of the disciplinary response to modulatory machines is a performative 'terror' within the visible spaces of the school that causes the worrying participants in the education game to burrow deeper into the disciplinary space of the classroom – much like the Deleuzian mole that symbolises the disciplined subject (Deleuze 1992). Our argument is that this disciplinary 'burrowing' (although somewhat understandable given the disciplined and disciplinary history of the school) limits the potential to disrupt 'mechanisms of control as rigorous as the harshest confinement' (Deleuze 1992: 168). To unmask this we will begin with a brief treatment of the conceptualisation of the disciplinary school before looking at what happens when modulating power 'overlays' the disciplinary articulations (Savat 2009).

II. The Control Society

For Deleuze, the disciplinary apparatus had reached its zenith early in the twentieth century, with the subsequent decades seeing a decline in the centrality of discipline in the becoming-self, such that '*societies of control* are in the process of replacing the disciplinary societies' (Deleuze 1992: 4). The control society is where: '[Life] is more closely and minutely monitored, regulated and policed than ever before, where personal privacy is more or less non-existent, and where information about our whereabouts, personal details and spending habits is ceaselessly collected' (Newman 2009: 105).

A defining feature of control societies is a shift in focus away from disciplinary institutions, or 'environments of enclosure' (Deleuze 1992). These institutions, for Deleuze, were best exemplified by the factory, which functioned 'to concentrate; to distribute in space; to order in time; to compose a productive force within the dimension of space-time whose effect will be greater than the sum of its component forces' (Deleuze 1992: 3). In a control society, the factory's rigid architecture, control of

time (the shift) and creation of docile worker bodies is replaced with a more fluid and dynamic architecture – that of the corporation (Deleuze 1992). For Deleuze, 'Control is short-term and of rapid rates of turnover, but also continuous and without limit, while discipline was of long duration, infinite and discontinuous' (Deleuze 1992: 6).

How do we conceptualise the move from discipline to modulation? In the first instance, the move is not one of replacement. Modulation follows, but does not replace, disciplinarity, which is absorbed into or insinuated by serpents of modulation. The metaphor of coupling, as a sexual-mechanical metaphor, is apt, as is seduction – the insinuation of modulation into disciplinarity is not forced but is an induced connection. The serpents of modulation work themselves into or around pre-existing disciplinary spaces whispering promises made in disciplinary language. The coexistence and connection of disciplinary machines (apparatuses) and modulatory machines (assemblages) is perhaps best thought of as a transitory moment, to paraphrase Deleuze, the disciplinary self is part of who we are but also part of who we are ceasing to be (Deleuze 1992). The way the modulated self uses the resonances or echoes of the disciplinary self is one of the features of this transition.

Disciplinary machines produce coherent centres of being, or individuals. The drive is to make oneself coherent and then good or normal. An individual, as 'a person constituted as a particular identity, and assigned to one of a multiplicity of subject positions always already waiting for us, is constrained to abide by all the norms associated with that identity' (Colwell 1996: 211). Individuals are located in disciplinary institutions in which particular disciplinary spaces work to spatialise, organise, measure and arrange. Properly arranging, controlling or comporting the body allows one to speak in the disciplinary society, where that society is understood as the connection in series of disciplinary spaces with other disciplinary spaces to form the disciplinary institutions.

Modulatory machines produce discrete non-cumulative expressions of particular modes of designation or assignation, or dividuals. A dividual is part of a series of masses. The individual is either feminine or masculine, mad or sane, good or evil, in a manner that assigns this identity as a continuous structure that permeates the individual's entire existence and extends through the various spaces through which one moves. The dividual is assigned any and all of these identities (among others), depending on the vicissitudes of the immediate situation. Its identities are temporary assignations that are used to control short-term activity (Colwell 1996: 211). In going from the individual to the

dividual,

> we have passed from one animal to the other, from the mole to the serpent, in the system under which we live, but also in our manner of living and in our relations with others. The disciplinary man was a discontinuous producer of energy, but the man of control is undulatory, in orbit, in a continuous network. (Deleuze 1992: 5–6)

Deleuze's suggestion that the computer is the machine of societies of control indicates a fragmentation that results from a variety of factors. These include the coexistence of innumerable databanks, the ease of adding data to previously compiled data (endless and ongoing updatability) and the enabling of multiple data entry points (allowing input from multiple observation points). While this information is potentially assimilable into one meta-file (with the threat of a return of individuality), moments of human being are captured in discrete modes of data collection each of which has its own logic and demands no assimilation. The level of abstraction increases from the bodily relation between subject and sovereign to the expertly constructed 'norm' of individuals before disaggregating the 'self' into a series of emanations from (points produced by) modulatory machines that produce dividuals that do not combine.

If dividuals are formed/deformed through the accumulation of attributes that can be measured for recording in a particular database, then the crucial question concerns what has to be done to achieve measurement (to be measured). It is a matter of being counted; of making 'one' self accountable or available for an account. This requires producing countable emanations. From an electronic-discursive standpoint, dividuals are constructed in databanks, each dividual is identified in separate computer files, each file available for a different purpose, with the parameters of each file organised around that purpose.

In this conceptualisation, the focus on short-term success opens human beings up to control. By focusing not on the temporally enduring individual but on what one is doing or can do here and now, a form of power is exercised that prevents the person from becoming an individual, from forming an identity that can construct an overall response to, or appropriation of, the demands of the immediate situation. The end of the individual self is also the end of care. No care of the self can be practised without a self for which to care. What takes its place is not clear but it could be that we are in the process of replacing the care for discipline with the care for data-sets. It is difficult to envisage how this

care for points of data resolves the crisis of the Foucauldian disciplined, self-governing subject in industrial times.

If the simple machines of sovereignty clank and groan slowly and the complex machines of discipline beat and punch with monotonous regularity, then the digital machines of control hum. It is a matter of speed. The increased pace at which modulatory machines operate reduces the differentiation of each moment leading to a collapse into apparently continuous sound. When modulatory machines insinuate a disciplinary society the frequencies of the modulatory machine superpose those of the disciplinary machines and modulated humming is the only discernible output (some of the noise of the disciplinary machine is cancelled out and some feeds into the modulations).

In the conceptualisation that underpins this analysis, the serpent of modulation coils itself around the molar/mole's spaces of disciplinarity to insulate the spaces of disciplinarity and prevent them from working together to produce an individual. The image is that of the biosphere. A space is constrained by a surface that acts as a means of preventing direct contact between what is within and without the sphere, and requiring that anything that seeks to pass out of the sphere does so through a space through which it can be adjusted for exposure to the outside. This may be conceptualised as a translucent film that overlays the enclosed space, offering a distorted perception of what happens within the biosphere, reminiscent of the luminiferous ether of early scientific theory.[1]

By surrounding disciplinary spaces, such as classrooms, the serpent of modulation disconnects each from the other disciplinary spaces that produce a disciplinary society. This has the most profound consequences for those trained to work within those disciplinary spaces. The coherence that subjects formed in disciplinary spaces are accustomed to generating persists *within that space*. It cannot be represented outside that space, however, and cannot be used as a means to connect the disciplinary classroom with other components of the disciplinary school (such as the principal's office, the staff room, curriculum meetings, staff development sessions, parent–teacher meetings and the training of the teacher within the disciplinary university).

III. Education before the Insinuation of Modulation

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw the creation of modern institutions that enclosed individuals. Environments of enclosure included prisons, schools, hospitals and families. A hallmark of these enclosures was that the individual was 'known' through mechanisms

that focused on the body. These carceral institutions implemented a range of micropractices for disciplining the body: 'The human body was entering a machinery of power that explores it, breaks it down and rearranges it"' (Foucault 1991: 138). Schools became terrains within which the bodies of staff, students, parents and principals were the focus of disciplinary power.

Foucault argues that disciplinary power was a series of productive technologies that produced certain subjectivities, knowledges and discourses within each institution. The individual became a discursive site for the training and production of the 'good', the 'capable', the 'moral' citizen through the micro-practices of power that legitimise certain rationalities and 'truths' that the individual is trained to know about him- or herself. In disciplinary society, a 'certain "political economy" of the body' is utilised to regulate the individual (Foucault 1991: 25).

The disciplinary society located the body, measured it, controlled it, enclosed it with the goal of making the body docile, more productive and, therefore, more 'useful' to the state in its desire for a disciplined workforce and citizenry. A key part of this is the mechanics of power that teach the individual to self-regulate or to comport him- or herself in 'reasonable' and appropriate ways. It is through the modern institutions and the modern systems of power that parts of this utility-docility are deployed, through the 'meticulousness of the regulations, the fussiness of the inspections, the supervision of the smallest fragment of life and of the body' (Foucault 1991: 140).

Mass, compulsory schooling became a concern of industrialising societies as they grappled with the creation of a seemingly new underclass – the urban poor (Jones 1990). Within the disciplinary school, the teacher–student relationship was at the centre of the normalising process. This relationship was predicated on the idea that an individual who had the required knowledge, ethics and values should teach young people what was required. At the core of instruction was an asymmetrical relationship 'between somebody who already is a subject (the educator) and someone who has yet to become a subject (the child)' (Biesta 1998: 1–2).

The disciplined subjectivity of the school teacher is, however, neither stable nor coherent, but is a contested and contradictory space containing competing claims about the 'nature' of the good teacher. These include the claim that the virtuous teacher is a moral guardian or ethical trainer teaching the young the 'correct' values and attitudes and that the good teacher is a disciplinarian responsible for preparing

the young for work after they leave school (Jones 1990). What is significant is that each conception was suffused with notions of care for the disciplinary subject (Savat 2009).

In the early twentieth century these discourses of the moral and efficient teacher were further augmented by bio-power in the form of the bio-teacher, or the teacher who enacted a 'new caring and advisory relationship with the home, but in a subsidiary relationship to the scientific authority of the medical officer and the child psychologist' (Jones 1990: 73). Stiegler argues that this bio-power is essentially 'a form of care, a historic form of care charged to the State, as governmentality' (Stiegler 2010: 114). In Australia, a colonial zeal to adopt the principals of Christian pastoralism intensified discourses 'embodied in the pastoral relationship between teacher and student' (Hunter 1994: xxi). These principles of Christian pastoralism, the 'distinctive articulation of surveillance and self-examination, obedience and self-regulation', persisted in Australian schools long after the Christian story ceased to be a common expression of social aims and beliefs (Hunter 1994: xxi). This is not tangential to a genealogy of the Australian teacher, though, as it highlights the productive element of disciplinary care at the core of teacher–student transactions.

IV. NAPLAN and My School

Since 2008, Australian school students have sat the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) tests in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. NAPLAN tests report individual students' attainment of skills against a set of standards. Schools are ranked against other schools depending upon the aggregate of their NAPLAN results and these results are made publicly available via the My Schools website. Over three days in May[2] students across Australia sit predominantly multiple choice tests administered by their classroom teacher. Student test papers are collected and returned to the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) for evaluation. ACARA is the statutory independent authority that designs and manages the tests. These tests are designed and developed by 'a core group of highly skilled staff' plus a small group of 'partners' who 'research and provide evidence-based research on improvements' (ACARA 2011a). After the tests have been completed each student's parent or carer receives an individual report of the student's results.[3]

The My Schools website is a Federal Government initiative that allows for comparison of the NAPLAN results for individual schools. Like NAPLAN, My Schools is overseen by ACARA. The website enables comparison of schools in the same locality. Those in similar socioeconomic categories can also be compared (a complex formula, the Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA), is used to produce these categories). Schools are colour coded: red if their results are below average or below that of similar schools; green if schools are above average or above that of similar schools. My Schools also enables the easy generation of statistics that include the percentages of indigenous students and ESL students, attendance rates and funding levels (Bonnor 2011).

V. Seductive Promises

NAPLAN appears to fulfil functions one would expect in a disciplinary society: it organises and stratifies individuals, it uses the technology of the examination to normalise dispositions, aptitude and conduct, and it is replete with claims of improved efficiency, quality and accountability. NAPLAN enhances 'the learning outcomes for all Australian students' (MCEETYA 2009) because identifying and supporting schools and good teachers are taken to be the means to make education more equitable for a diverse student population (McGaw 2010). The My Schools website claims to further enhance the efficiency, accountability and transparency of schools. In 2011 it began to provide information about finances and school communities 'for the purpose of accountability and reporting, research and analysis, and resource allocation' (ACARA 2011b). In short, NAPLAN and My Schools claim to promote the efficient use of resources through the most effective arrangement of subjects. The seductive power of the NAPLAN machine lies in the promise of improved disciplinarity to key (disciplined) stakeholders – politicians/policymakers, voters, parents, principals and teachers.

Voters are promised greater efficiency and control, as the government promises to cut spending while improving effectiveness in sectors like education. For the politician/policymaker, the disciplinary promise of NAPLAN and My Schools is increased surveillance over what happens in the 'hidden' classroom, with a concomitant reduction of the 'waste' resulting from poor teaching. Part of NAPLAN's promise is that complex educative processes can be simply measured and reported, and easily publicly disseminated and understood. Most importantly,

NAPLAN allows politicians/policymakers to be seen to actively promote skills basic to productivity, such as literacy,[4] in the face of a widely perceived and mediatised 'education crisis'.

Parents are promised greater access to and influence over what happens in the classroom. They are guaranteed simple, easy-to-follow information that allows them to gauge their child's progress in relation to other children in their year and across Australia. Hierarchical ordering is the disciplinary par excellence because it is both easy and numerical – discernible differences between subjects are real because 'numbers never lie'. When launching My Schools, then Federal Education Minister Julia Gillard encouraged parents to have 'robust conversations' with teachers about 'their' NAPLAN results in order to 'put pressure on people' (Coorey 2010). Parents are to hold the (in)visible classroom to account – as the data published on My Schools opened the classroom to a (putatively) panoptic gaze. For the parent-as-consumer is a discursive site for contemporary education, adding to the traditional pedagogic relationship of disciplined teacher instructing becoming-disciplined student.

While principals were to expect greater opportunities for monitoring the classroom, those whose schools performed above the national average were promised increased esteem and potential enrolments as parents 'vote with their feet'. The promise of NAPLAN is disciplinary leverage, with principals able to make 'informed' judgements about the (in)visible practices of the classroom and gain more control over those spaces. This could mean extra teacher or student support, access to mentoring or improved funding. There is also an economic incentive for principals: the dismissal of principals of underperforming school (Harrison 2010).

Teachers were seduced by promises of greater public recognition and 'performance pay'; NAPLAN would identify 'good' teachers and their expertise would be rewarded (Thompson 2011). A system for recognising and rewarding previously unobserved 'good' teachers resonates with the corporate seduction of education but also makes sense with respect to the disciplinary self – teachers are to act as entrepreneurs, and open themselves to surveillance so as to maximise their financial return. Opening oneself to a regulatory gaze means that 'good' results will ensure secure permanent employment, if on contract, or a move to 'better' schools, if already permanent. Modulation does not care that no necessary relation needs to exist between 'good' sets of data and those micropractices of power wielded in the classroom. The only important factor in deciding value is that 'good' results continue from the testing.

VI. Modulation and Discipline in the Australian Education System

As we have indicated, modulatory power does not extinguish disciplinary power. Indeed, the school bears witness to the resilience of disciplinary apparatuses – the surveillance classroom spaces, the normalising hierarchies of student subjectivities and the disciplining of knowledge (Thompson 2010). What we argue is that modulation overlays discipline; uses it in some cases, contradicts it in some instances and complements it in others. When Foucault articulated disciplinary power, he argued that it 'hasn't replaced all the others, but infiltrates the others, sometimes undermining them, [. . .] extending them, linking them' (Foucault 1991: 216). Savat (2009: 59) argues that disciplinary and modulating power must coexist as they often use similar technologies, albeit with different intensities.

Disciplinary power still produces subjectivities and knowledges in schools. The body is still a site for normalising judgement and the disciplinary school remains governed through the technologies of hierarchical observation, normalising judgement and examination (Foucault 1991). Disciplinary universities continue to prepare teachers for practice and train them to understand education within a disciplinary terrain. Superposition of the modulating effects of power means that there are other, more subtle, covert and fluid forms of power that modulate conduct and organise the dividual through grids that are greater in number, more dynamic and more amplified than in the past.

Savat (2009) argues that the instruments of modulation are the simulation, the categorical sorting and the sample. The simulation may best be explained as the amplification of data being used to pre-empt and model the future, such that the individual becomes exterior to the functioning of the institution because he or she is being pre-constituted. Categorical sorting becomes the 'infinite comparative process that determines which norms, profiles or categories you are' (Savat 2009: 53–4). Lastly, the sample has overlayed the disciplinary examination because it requires no awareness – it operates effectively independent of participants' consent. The examination demands the earnest effort of the examined; whereas the sample requires no engagement. Instruments of modulation control the subject's movement through multiple terrains, and it is amplification in the names of 'effectiveness' and 'quality' that forms part of the terrain of schools within control societies (Vinson and Ross 2003).

These instruments are part of the gridding of the possibilities of the Deleuzian dividual, or the emergence of 'enclosed spaces' through which subjects 'move' in increasingly controlled and controlling ways. Technologies of simulations, in which 'the subject is increasingly no longer required to be present so to speak', are important (Savat 2009: 48). The simulation of aptitudes and characteristics though the collection of test data stored in the database is an example of gridding through simulation. The database removes context from the calculation, presupposing a level playing field imbued with meta-narratives that essentialise positionalities, while breaking them down to small deformations that become the objects of debate.

In this analysis, databases overlay the pastoral power historically embedded in disciplinary relationships and constitute dividuals in codes and through data points, the generation and correlation of which is neither readily understandable nor constitutes coherent individuals. Data is produced and controlled by processes that remove temporal and spatial relationships (and the reassuring elements) of coercive or disciplinary power to replace them with the nameless and the faceless. Savat argues that in modulation,

> One is not made into a 'good individual'. Whether one makes oneself such or not is an irrelevancy – in fact, it doesn't even register since the modulatory machine simply does not contain a connection amongst components capable of even recognising it. (Savat 2009: 56)

Given this approach, the following analytic of power suggests itself in relation to NAPLAN and My Schools. First, a disembodied authority (ACARA) is created to collect information about schools and students divorced from the space-time in which the teacher and student interact. Second, performance, rather than learning, is measured and overlays the disciplinary teacher–student relationship. Third, students are no longer bodies requiring intervention, rather they become disembodied bytes and bits plotted in various statistical spaces.

The result, for teachers, is that those in other assemblages within the control society receive a spread of data points that creates a new meaning for the classroom independent of that which takes place within the classroom and without regard to the volition of those arraigned within it. This abstraction of the classroom, both temporal and spatial, is one of the key features of this modulation. The My Schools website further abstracts the data points from the activity of the teacher-subject, and enables a hierarchy of data points, relating each data point to a simulated ideal and then allowing the plotting of data points that arrange

individual against class, class against class, school against school and state against state.

One of the effects of modulation is an existential fear. This is a by-product of the disciplinary knowledges attempting to maximise return within a modulatory machine. Fear functions as a landscape that is 'played upon and accelerated by various aspects of contemporary culture' (O'Sullivan 2006: 311). This acceleration is evidenced by the growth of a performative culture within schools. Reactions to modulation suggest an existential disquiet in which inner turmoil, agitation and a nameless, bodiless terror are produced by disciplinary subjects attempting to force coherence onto a disintegrating narrative of self.

Performativity deploys this fear in unique and isolating (or abstracting) ways. Performativity is best understood as 'a technology, a culture and a mode of regulation that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as means of incentive, control, attrition and change' (Ball 2003: 216). Ball argues that education reforms like NAPLAN and My Schools make teachers subjects through commodifying discourses that seek to measure effectiveness, productivity, outputs and/or quality (2003; 216). Ball uses Lyotard's notion of performative terror to name conditions in which teachers find their values and ethical understandings displaced or elided (Lyotard 1984). The teacher's terror is that the true and accurate measure of the classroom that NAPLAN, and subsequently My Schools, purport to be is in fact not an artefact of the classroom at all. Rather it represents de-spatialised assessment that, as an artefact of modulation, occurs in the luminiferous ether surrounding the disciplinary classroom.

The use of measurement within the performative culture of education prioritises what can be measured, quantified, broken down and used in increasingly unsophisticated, but seductive or persuasive ways. That which can't be quantified or numerically evaluated is increasingly harder to value and is likely to disappear from the lexicon of education. Newman argues that it is this 'weaving of an intricate web of overlapping circuits of control, information gathering and identification', as opposed to the character of the institutional context, that differentiates modulating power (Newman 2009: 105). It is in these circuits that teachers and students (amongst others) are producing their dividual 'selves' and their various worlds and places in those worlds/data sets.

In this performative culture, the subject, who expects that modulatory machines and the data they generate will enable total control and pure

order, is faced with persistent, even increasing, uncertainty about how to respond or act. The constant and varying processes that measure performance prevent the subject being certain of 'making the grade'. The result is that the environment is full of pitfalls, or risks, that evidence little, if any, stability. As Ball suggests:

> It is not the possible certainty of always being seen that is the issue, as in the panopticon, it is the uncertainty and instability of being judged in different ways, expectations and indicators that make us continually accountable and constantly recorded – 'giving the position of any element within an open environment at any given instant'... This is the basis for the principle of uncertainty and inevitability, it is a recipe for ontological insecurity: 'Are we doing enough? Are we doing the right thing? How will we measure up?' In effect 'controls' overlay rather than displace 'disciplines' in most educational organisations even if the emphasis is shifting. (Ball 2000: 2–3)

Uncertainty becomes terror when the teacher feels that the disciplinary narrative located and practised within the enclosed spaces of their classroom no longer represents their classroom and they are subjected to control in terms of a series of simulacra produced through modulatory practices. The performative culture has had significant consequences for teachers: greater emotional pressure and stress, heightened intensity of work, diminished social relationships, ever growing paperwork, increased frequency of external measurement of their work and an expanding gap between senior staff and teaching staff (Ball 2008). For performativity is about acceleration, about spinning faster but not going further.

What is most obvious about performativity is a move away from 'care' for what is 'good' for the individual student. The classroom now appears less as a series of disciplinary relationships between the teacher and each student and more as a set of transactions that must be measured to ensure efficiency and accountability. The violence of the disciplinary is being overlayed by the brutality of the modulatory. In the luminiferous ether, notions of efficiency and accountability transform. They cease to be of the classroom and partake of the spaces surrounding the classroom – they become of the serpent that overlays the disciplinary classroom but moves us no closer to disrupting the enclosed spaces of the classroom.

A technical language of bands, standards, averages, means and ranges of achievement surrounds teachers. Their classrooms are represented by a series of encoded points that map some statistical space but bear little relation to the enclosed space of their classroom. Learning is

being replaced by performance. Teachers, who once understood their role to be caring for, nurturing or developing the student-individual in highly normalising, competitive and regulated ways, who have moved through a set of disciplinary institutions and been rewarded within the disciplinary university for understanding education in disciplinary ways, are ill equipped to understand, let alone protect themselves from, the modulatory serpent.

Teachers, who are unable to respond effectively to a modulatory machine that produces no disciplinary sense, become like the Luddites who sought to destroy the machines that were changing their lives. (Please note that we side with neither the Luddites nor those promoting the introduction of the machines the Luddites sabotaged.) Indeed, a variety of unwanted behaviours have emerged in other countries in which high-stakes testing models like NAPLAN were introduced (Reid 2009). These included teachers narrowing the curriculum ('teaching to the test') and school administrators hiding information, improperly manipulating data and focusing teaching resources on a narrow band of students (Reid 2009: 11). These effects are understandable; the disciplinary teacher responds to crises by trying to improve, to do the same but more and better, in effect to accelerate or vibrate faster.

One disciplinary response to NAPLAN is the teacher who hides or 'burrows' in his or her classroom in an attempt to hide within the modulatory ether. Another is an attempt to engage with the data in such a way that only serves to accelerate modulation. A disciplinary fantasy, in which the data can somehow represent 'good', 'bad' or 'in need', fails because of a lack of representation. This leads to a drive to accumulate ever more data. This disciplinary response to NAPLAN leads to more testing to improve test performance, more measures of teacher capability, increased emphasis on test results, doing more tests and greater numbers of data manipulations, all done in order to produce more outputs, codes or data points. (Moves are already in place to accelerate the frequency and extend the scope of testing, adding Year 11 and potentially university students to those tested.)

Fear in control societies has three distinguishing characteristics. The first is amplitude. The humming machines of control induce spin and vibration as the core of dividuals and the level of this spin and vibration are available to the ceaseless increase in level or amplitude. NAPLAN and My Schools become part of a landscape of anxiety, created by new and mass media sources that 'select, isolate and exaggerate apparent threats and in doing so contribute to the alienation of contemporary life (we become spectators in a fearful world)' (O'Sullivan 2006: 311).

This points to the second characteristic of fear in a control society: it produces isolation. Becoming increasingly agitated that their performances are being informated, tracked and stored in databases, teachers find it harder to connect outside the classroom and feel increasingly alone to deal with measurements.

Third, and linked to the other two, fear in a control society has become small, intensified, abstracted and bodiless. Data points, plotted around discrete nodes for information gathering, retrieval and analysis, function to create a space constituted as an artefact of measurement that contains dense concentrations of data that no longer connect to the experience of teaching in a classroom and further abstract the self from their world (Bogard 2009). This micro-fear is fluid and multiple and has become increasingly difficult to name, and therefore discuss and understand. Above all, it has become impersonal, removed, de-individualising and more terrifying as a result.

A change in the language of education from care to codes marks this transition. In Deleuzian terms, NAPLAN is a key set of features on a map (or nodal points like statistics, certainty, narratives, professionalism, accountability) that trap the 'faciality' of the teacher and the student within its orbit.[5] In a disciplinary system, these nodes are orbited at a fairly constant frequency. A modulatory machine subjects the orbit to continuous acceleration. The face fractures into a set of spinning features that cannot be made to cohere, the spinning and the associated lack of coherence giving the illusion of movement as they circulate, while always maintaining an approximate distance from the nodal point. Teachers' fear produces the desire to spin faster – a disciplinary response to modulation.

Modulation results in commonsense aspirations for schools increasingly working against the disciplined teacher. The teacher, as multiple artefacts of NAPLAN and My Schools, is alienated from the teacher-self as disciplined professional within the classroom. Despite attempts to do better in the classroom, to be more, to spin faster, the disciplinary teacher lacks the language to form a coherent narrative within the luminiferous ether in which modulatory machines produce/generate teachers as dividuals. Teachers are evaluated outside of the classroom but still understand themselves within the classroom. When they step into the ether the language that makes sense in the classroom is skewed and distorted and ceases to make its old sense. Two languages of evaluation are superposed.

These languages inflect difference practices of care. Disciplinary power cares for the individual to the extent that the individual is productive

(Savat 2009). Modulating power, on the other hand, recognises no individual because it acts to divide 'rigid' individuals into discrete moments derived from the data collected and synthesised, which can be stored and acted upon. The classroom and teaching processes break down into a series or sets of data points produced by a modulatory machine that allows no care for the teacher because the teacher, as a set of data effects, cannot be integrated into a coherent individual. As a result, there can be no care for the teacher or the student; at most, there can be care for the information gathered and the ways that it is synthesised. The modulatory machines of NAPLAN and My Schools signal the beginning of the end of the ethic of care. The ethic of care for the teacher and the ethic of care for the uniqueness of students are being replaced with dividualising data narratives. It may be timely that these signifying discourses of the individual are in the state of being overthrown; however, it remains to be seen what 'lines of flight' are possible within dividualising terrains (Deleuze and Guattari 2005).

Teachers experience ever increasing agitation as they seek the regularisation and synthesis of the representation of their teaching by accepting increased testing. Teachers have learnt certain disciplinary techniques and they seek to have their teaching evaluated according to their use of those techniques. They accept greater testing of their students in the belief that this will mean that NAPLAN and My Schools better represent their teaching. Spinning faster around each of the existing testing points and introducing more testing points are strategies doomed to failure. They simply accelerate the rate of orbit, and therefore number of orbits, with no discernible benefit for a teacher attempting to (re)impose coherence over the fractured narrative of the teacher in the classroom. Their disciplining as teachers and experience of testing in the classroom lead teachers to accept that NAPLAN tests will measure their good teaching (something reinforced by the introduction of ideas of 'performance' pay). This results in teachers experiencing increased stress due to the 'pressure to perform in a highly competitive environment' (Smyth et al. 2008: 56).

VII. Conclusion

Applying Deleuze's description and explanation of the transition to a control society to NAPLAN and My Schools raised a variety of questions concerning the utility of the concepts he presented. The first questions related to the persistence of disciplinarity, which would remain in at least the early stages of the emergence of a control society.

If there was no clean break, then the coexistence of disciplinarity and modulation in the Australian education system had to be conceived. The conceptualisation employed here was one in which disciplinary locations were uncoupled, with the space between them becoming a modulatory space that superposed disciplinary effects to over-code disciplinarity itself. The processes through which individuals are generated persist in the disciplinary location of the classroom and the teacher self and the student self continue to manifest discipline therein. There are still things being done in the classroom but the testing that occurs outside the classroom begins to change the nature of the entire assemblage.

A crucial question concerns the willingness of those within the education system, including teachers, to accept and even participate in the changes. The fact that the shift from discipline to control is not a revolutionary moment but a more subtle process of transition means that the change does not trigger profoundly dysfunctional responses from those exposed to change. The mobilisation of individuals against planned reforms cannot disturb the change process. Sense can be made of this in the context of reform to the Australian education system because of the way the reforms were 'sold' to teachers and to voters. In short, seductive disciplinary promises were made to justify modulatory reforms.

The result is an education system in which disciplinarity and modulation persist, at least for the time being. As modulation increases, teachers find themselves being evaluated according to a modulatory effect and not a set of disciplinary practices. Their classrooms are represented by and as a series of statistical points that bear no relation to practices for delivering good teaching and training good-productive students. As a result, more and more agitated teachers expose themselves to increasing levels of statistical representation in the vain hope that their classrooms will be properly represented in the luminiferous ether of NAPLAN and My Schools. Ever more frenetic preparation for testing, including through more mock tests, causes teachers to spin obsessively around practices and processes for data accumulation and analysis that never (because they cannot) represent the (disciplinary) classroom. More tests applied to more areas more often and at more stages of a student's education ensure ever greater activity and productivity; though a radical change in products occurs when the modulatory serpent coils itself around the (disciplinary) classroom.

If the analysis in this paper is valid, then we can expect that, over time, the Australian education system will be characterised by increasing levels of modulatory superposition over the effects produced by the

disciplinary location of the classroom. The rate at which the education system moves to full modulation may depend on the extent to which the teacher training conducted in Australian universities continues to partake of discipline rather than modulation. The persistence of practices that constitute the teacher as disciplined professional-individual in universities means that the spaces of lecture and tutorial remain connected to that of the school classroom and the coils of the serpent are yet to encircle and modulate each so that they no longer couple to produce a disciplinary machine. These locations may ultimately break down and we may all find ourselves endlessly spinning in the luminiferous ether of a society of control searching for a line of flight.

Notes

1. The luminiferous ether (or aether) was a commonly held theory of early scientists such as Lord Kelvin and Isaac Newton. The air was supposed to be full of subtle particles that vibrated in certain ways faster than light and that that allowed light to travel. In short, all forms of space were full of this ether that transported and distorted light such that the image (reflection and refraction) is modified in its travel through the vibrating particles. The theory fell out of favour in the early twentieth century to be replaced by relativity and quantum physics.
2. In 2011 the tests were sat on 10, 11 and 12 May.
3. A sample of the report can be found at < http://www.nap.edu.au/Test+Results/Student+reports/index.html > .
4. The literacy war is between competing views of how literacy should be defined, how it should be taught and what basic skills young people should be expected to acquire through their education. For an excellent account of the polarising 'literacy wars' read Roy (2005).
5. For a detailed explanation of faciality see Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 168–91); O'Sullivan (2006). For an analysis of faciality within the school terrain see Thompson and Bell (2011).

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Introduction: Negotiating the Archival Turn in Beckett Studies

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The work of Samuel Beckett and Gilles Deleuze overlaps in surprising ways. Both writers express a resistance to narrative, subjectivity, language, representation, exegesis, dogma, hierarchy, teleology and closure. For example, they explore the idea of mutable subjectivity, with Beckett creating fragmented and disappearing characters and Deleuze expressing the notion of becoming: becoming-animal, becoming-woman, becoming-imperceptible and so on. Likewise, both Beckett and Deleuze distrust signification and prefer ambivalence and nuance to clarity of meaning.

Although they shared the same publisher (Jérôme Lindon at Les Éditions de Minuit), Beckett and Deleuze evidently never met each other. Beckett apparently never read Deleuze, but he seemed to manifest Deleuzian ideas in his work. Deleuze wrote two specific essays on Beckett in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, and he frequently cited Beckett's techniques to demonstrate his own theories in works with or without Guattari. In some instances, Deleuze even seemed to use Beckett's writing to develop and exemplify some of his own ideas and concepts. Commenting on the 1992 publication of an essay by Deleuze in a volume with Beckett's late work (*Quad, suivi de L'Epuisé, par Gilles Deleuze*), Jean-Jacques Lecercle (2010: 154) speculates provocatively, 'Perhaps the close proximity, in the French edition, of Deleuze's essay, "The Exhausted", to Beckett's own text, is indeed more than a fortunate coincidence: perhaps it is a symptom.' Deleuze's essay outlines Beckett's preoccupation with 'exhausting the possible' (152) that is exemplified in such work as *Quad* ('exhausting space') as well as in the famous stone-sucking sequence in *Molloy* and the various biscuits in *Murphy*. Timothy Murphy (2000: 229) proposes that 'Beckett's prose stages Deleuze's

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thought', while 'Deleuze's thought stages or dramatises (rather than reads or explicates) Beckett's prose'.

Particularly from the 1990s, academic scholars have commented on the parallel discourses in Beckett and Deleuze. Important articles by Anthony Uhlmann (1996), Mary Bryden (2002), Timothy Murphy (2000) and Sarah Gendron (2004) have compared the work of the two authors. Other academics, such as Jean-Jacques Lecercle (2010), Andrew Gibson (2006), Bruno Clément (2006) and Steven Connor (1988), have examined their similarities within wider contexts. There has also been a growing interest in comparing Deleuze's and Alain Badiou's (2000) response to Beckett. Garin Dowd's *Abstract Machines: Samuel Beckett and Philosophy after Deleuze and Guattari* (2007) is one of the first monographs to treat the connection between Beckett and Deleuze intensively, and it will soon be followed by Colin Gardner's forthcoming *Beckett, Deleuze and the Televisual Event*.

However, an archival turn in Beckett studies that focuses on the social and historical circumstances of Beckett's life and work and emphasises genetic criticism has recently generated scepticism towards philosophical inquiry into Beckett's work. Accordingly, it seemed timely to use Deleuze as a theme in the inaugural year of the Samuel Beckett summer school at Trinity College Dublin in 2011. This forum on Beckett and Deleuze derives in part from the summer school, comprising essays by Stan Gontarski and Daniel Koczy, who both participated, as well as additional articles by Audronė Žukauskaitė, who published two books on Deleuze in Lithuanian in 2011, and Colin Gardner, whose essay (which appears by kind permission of Palgrave Macmillan) is part of his forthcoming book. A second forum on Beckett and Deleuze is planned for the near future and will include an article by Garin Dowd, who led the Deleuze seminar at the Samuel Beckett summer school, as well as articles by Ruben Borg, author of *The Measureless Time of Joyce, Deleuze and Derrida* (2007).

The essays in this forum address a wide range of Beckett's *oeuvre*, including his novels, short stories, stage and television plays, and film work. Stan Gontarski, who revealed in his lecture at the summer school that Beckett was exposed to Bergsonian ideas as a student of French and Italian literature at Trinity College, considers in his essay the relationship between Bergson, Deleuze and Beckett and analyses some of the traces of Bergson's thought in Beckett's prose that resonates with Deleuzian concepts. In particular, Gontarski shows that the landscape and characters in Beckett's novels, rather than possessing a fixed or static

identity, are in a constant state of 'creative involution', a reversal of Darwinist evolution.

In his essay 'Beyond Percept and Affect: Beckett's *Film* and Non-human Becoming', Colin Gardner focuses on another form of involution. As Deleuze argued, the film addresses the question, 'How can we rid ourselves of ourselves, and demolish ourselves?' Gardner invokes two essays by Deleuze – 'The Greatest Irish Film (Beckett's "Film")' and 'The Exhausted' – from *Essays Critical and Clinical* (1997) as well as his *Cinema 1: The Movement Image* (1986), to discuss the narrative, character portrayal, philosophical concepts and cinematic techniques in *Film*, demonstrating how it deconstructs conventional cinematic language and creates a moment of 'pure affect'. The common analysis of the film is that, after trying to avoid being perceived in a series of scenes, Buster Keaton's character is finally confronted at the end with his own self-perception, which apparently causes his death. But, pursuing Deleuze's statement that 'nothing ever dies in Beckett' (1997: 26), Gardner assesses the final technical sequence as 'a direct time-image', and shows how Keaton's character continues to persist 'as a being of pure sensation'.

Daniel Koczy addresses the question of audience perception in his essay 'A Crystal-theatre: Automation and Crystalline Description in the Theatre of Samuel Beckett'. Koczy asks if certain stage works by Beckett, such as *Not I* and *Play*, achieve almost the same effect as cinema in controlling the consciousness of the audience. According to Koczy, Deleuze privileges cinema over theatre because cinema can automate the perception of the audience through a 'direct correspondence between image and thought'. Koczy shows how *Not I* and *Play*, through constricted staging techniques, achieve a similar effect of disrupting the audience's habitual patterns of thought and offer the possibility of a style of crystal-theatre that approximates the impact of 'cinematographic consciousness'.

Finally, Audronė Žukauskaitė links Deleuze's notion of 'becoming imperceptible' with his concept of a life of pure immanence and applies it to various works by Beckett such as *Film*, *The Unnamable*, *Molloy*, *Footfalls*, *Play* and *Not I*. Žukauskaitė demonstrates the similarity of imperceptibility or a life of pure immanence to Giorgio Agamben's concept of 'pure potentiality', and, drawing on Deleuze and Agamben's commentaries on Herman Melville's character Bartleby, explains the radical potential in a life as contingency. As in the virtual state of the Body without Organs, the concept of imperceptibility or a life

as contingency allows for the potentiality to be (or do) or to not be (or not do) simultaneously, and this relates closely to many Beckettian characters engaged in a process of involution, fragmentation, becoming-imperceptible or indiscernible, and being 'not quite there'.

As we can see in this forum on Deleuze and Beckett, by contrast with the scepticism fostered by the archival turn in Beckett studies, there is as much to be mined from a philosophical as a historicist approach to Beckett. From 'creative involution' to 'a being of pure sensation', and from 'crystal-theatre' to 'a life as contingency', these authors provide many new insights into Deleuze's thought and Beckett's practice.

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Beyond Percept and Affect: Beckett's *Film* and Non-Human Becoming[1]

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Abstract

Film, Samuel Beckett's 1964 short starring Buster Keaton, dubbed by Deleuze as 'The Greatest Irish Film', is a seminal text in the latter's cinematic canon as it helps us to extrapolate the transition from the Bergson-based movement-image of *Cinema 1* to the Nietzschean time-image of *Cinema 2*. *Film* is unique insofar as its narrative traverses and progressively destroys the action-, perception- and affection-images that constitute the movement-image as a whole, using Keaton's body, and more importantly his face, as a means of attaining a pure intensity or Entity abstracted from all spatio-temporal coordinates, a condition of exhaustion/saturation that Deleuze and Guattari call, 'non-human becoming'. Beckett's film is predicated on Bishop Berkeley's fundamental philosophical principle, *esse est percipi* (to be is to be perceived) and, using Keaton as its protagonist, raises the question of whether it is possible to escape perception, not only by a third party, but also by oneself. The latter is 'played' by the camera itself, which 'stalks' Keaton from behind, taking great pains not to exceed a 45-degree 'angle of immunity' (lest Buster experience *percipi* or the anguish of perceivedness) until the film's final close-up when he comes face to face with his own self-perception and affective annihilation. *Film*'s denouement thus deconstructs the very nature of conventional cinematic language, whereby filmic suture – the enfolding of character, camera and spectatorial 'viewing-views' into a unified field of vision – gives way to a perspective where, at the very moment that the perceptive/affective

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body dies, the work of filmic art gives birth to itself as a being of pure sensation, exceeding lived experience.

Keywords: movement-image, perception, suture, interstice, exhaustion, event

Film, Samuel Beckett's 1964 experimental short starring Buster Keaton, dubbed by Deleuze as 'The Greatest Irish Film', is a seminal, albeit transitional, text in the latter's cinematic taxonomy. Deleuze uses *Film* as a reverse proof of the three varieties of movement-image through their progressive extinguishing or exhaustion, thereby providing an early case study for his subsequent analysis of Beckett's television work in his oft-cited essay, 'The Exhausted'. As Deleuze explains his intentions,

> We might also retrace the lines of differentiation of these three types of images, and try to rediscover the matrix or the movement-image as it is in itself, in its acentred purity, in its primary regime of variation, in its heat and its light, while it is still untroubled by any centre of indetermination. How can we rid ourselves of ourselves, and demolish ourselves? This is the astonishing attempt made by Beckett in his cinematographic work entitled *Film*, with Buster Keaton. (Deleuze 1986: 66)

As we shall see, this has far greater theoretical ramifications than simply creating a reverse proof of the movement-image, for this demolition of subjectivity creates nothing less than what Deleuze calls an Event, which is simultaneously both an invention and an erasure or, as Tom Conley puts it, a 'pummelling' of space. By unfastening the camera from any centre of motor action, *Film* surpasses human perception and creates, in effect, a non-human becoming that opens up onto the vastness of space itself. In 'The Exhausted', Deleuze calls this a manifestation of Language III, which no longer relates to a referent that can be enumerated or combined, or harnessed to specific voices of enunciation (whether Subject or Other), but taking the non-form of hiatuses, holes and tears, it instead looks outside itself as an endless line of flight on a limitless plane of immanence, as an aggregate of images/sounds from which all signifying language acts as a mere subset. 'Language III does not operate only with images but also with spaces', states Deleuze. 'And just as the image must attain the indefinite, while remaining completely determined, so space must always be an any-space-whatever, disused, unmodified, even though it is entirely determined geometrically' (Deleuze 1997a: 160). Beckett, in his 1937 letter to Axel Kaun, offers an almost uncanny presentiment of this analysis when he writes,

> As we cannot eliminate language all at once, we should at least leave nothing undone that might contribute to its falling into disrepute. To bore one hole after another in it, until what lurks behind it – be it something or nothing – begins to seep through; I cannot imagine a higher goal for a writer today. (Beckett 1983: 172)

For Deleuze, Beckett's *Film* is an excellent test case for an examination of the determined subject's relationship to the indefinite insofar as it is based on, but also contravenes, the eighteenth-century Irish philosopher Bishop George Berkeley's formula, *esse est percipi*, or, 'to be is to be perceived'. Directed by Alan Schneider under Beckett's personal supervision and filmed on location in New York in the summer of 1964 (the film was subsequently re-made in London by David Clark in 1978), the 21-minute short is often completely mystifying to audiences unfamiliar with Beckett's script and subsequent production notes and letters to Schneider, for as Beckett scholar Ruth Perlmutter rightly points out, 'The film needs to be "read" along with the filmscript, where some details are explained by Beckett. The film is an allegorical visual representation of its palimpsest, the filmscript. Indeed, the script is essential for clarification' (Perlmutter 1977: 83, n.3). Thus, only from studying early manuscripts do we discover that the film was originally titled *The Eye* and contained a title page that read, 'For Eye and Him [later revised to "One"] who does not wish to [revised to "would not"] be seen' (Gontarski 1985: 105). The protagonist thus began as Him, became One, then Object, then 'O', a progressive exhaustion of subjectivity and character psychology typical of Beckett's work during this period. Moreover, the change of title to *Film* – evoking the self-reflexivity of the previous year's stage drama, *Play* – also suggests that the project is as much a meta-textual analysis of filmic form *in-itself* as it is a diegetic exploration of Berkeleyan perceptual ontology. Such a view is reinforced by *Film*'s retrogressive adherence to silent film language (set in 1929, there is no accompanying music nor diegetic sound other than an admonishing 'Shhh' from one of the minor characters) and the use of silent screen icon Buster Keaton (Charlie Chaplin, Beckett's original choice, was unavailable), even if we are unable to see his face for the bulk of the film's running time.

Again, only from the script do we learn of the Berkeleyan sub-text and that the film demands that, 'All extraneous perception suppressed, animal, human, divine, self-perception maintains in being. Search of non-being in flight from extraneous perception breaking down in inescapability of self-perception' (Beckett 2006: 371). And then, perhaps

most importantly, 'No truth value attaches to above, regarded as of merely structural and dramatic convenience' (371). This suggests that Beckett conceived the film structurally and dramatically as a creative work of art rather than scientifically or philosophically. Moreover, the film itself gives us little indication that the protagonist (played by a partially blind Keaton, wearing a dark patch over his left eye) is sundered into object (O) and perceiving eye (E). O is represented onscreen by Keaton himself, who constantly observes and monitors his environment (rendered in the film as, blurry, soft-focus panning point of view shots, appropriate given the character's partial blindness). E is represented by the sharp focus of the camera itself, manifested through cuts rather than pans. O is always in flight, E forever in pursuit, attempting to keep O constantly in view. Although at no time are O and E shown in the frame at the same time, it is not clear until the end of the film – in the act of what Beckett calls the final investment of O by E – 'that pursuing perceiver is not extraneous, but self' (371). And even here, the confrontation-cum-merger is shown not as a superimposition or cross-fade but as a shot-reverse shot, reinforcing the integrity of the divided subject. Beckett himself acknowledged that this split scopic regime expressed two impossible viewing views, that 'the space in the picture is the function of two perceptions, both of which are diseased . . . [which] enable one to deform normal vision' (Gontarski 1985: 187).

Thus, although E's image is always sharply defined, it is no less corrupted than O's blurry focalization. The script also insists that, until the end of the film, 'O is perceived by E from behind and at an angle not exceeding 45°' (Beckett 2006: 372). O enters *percipi* (i.e. he experiences the 'anguish of perceivedness') only when this angle is exceeded, which occurs from time to time throughout the film and causes E to retreat to a 'safe' position. Indeed, in 'The Greatest Irish Film', Deleuze dwells very little on the philosophical principles behind the scenario, stating *Film*'s 'Problem' in simple enough terms. From Berkeley's *esse est percipi* – is it possible to escape perception? How do you become imperceptible? Keaton's role is that of Bishop Berkeley, who had enough of being perceived and of perceiving. 'Or rather', states Deleuze, 'it is the transition from one Irishman to another, from Berkeley, who perceived and was perceived, to Beckett who had exhausted "all the joys of *percipere* and *percipi*"' (Deleuze 1997b: 23).

In common with the schematic formalism of his later plays, Beckett divides the script into three unequal parts, namely: 1. The street; 2. The stairs; 3. The room – which Deleuze roughly approximates to three perceptual case studies, moving in reverse order from sensory-motor

centredness to an exhausted, acentred spatio-temporal Event. Thus the street and staircase sequences are the province of the action-image; the room is dominated by the perception-image; while the final sequence of Keaton falling asleep in the rocking chair and succumbing to E's final investment culminates in a concluding, devastating affect-image. However, these strict demarcations often occlude more than they reveal, in terms of both a greater understanding of Beckett's project, and also the creative fluidity contained within Deleuze's taxonomy, which offers us far more than what literally meets the eye. First, they ignore an important structural preface and coda to the film, whereby, because of technical problems encountered during the filming of the initial street sequence, much of the planned footage was scrapped in favour of adding a title sequence featuring Keaton's enlarged eye. Thus, as we fade in, the screen is filled by an extreme close-up of his closed eyelid, almost reptilian with its intricate folds and wrinkles. The eye opens to reveal the full pupil, which is in turn superimposed by the first title: 'Film by Samuel Beckett'. Further credits follow, and as they conclude, the eye closes. The image is in sharp focus, so retroactively we assume that it is shot from the scopic point of view of E, rather than O, suggesting that it is an acute perception of a human apparatus of perception – in effect, a meta-perception-image. Perhaps more significant is the rapid fade to black that follows, creating a short interval or interstice, before fading up as the eye opens once again. What has happened in this interval? Is this a simple action-to-action transition, or action-reaction formation typical of the syntagmatic connections forged by conventional montage, or is there something more ominous in that 'black hole' that suggests a different space-time continuum through the tear in the fabric of the screen/scene? As we shall see, the film's coda will provide a more suggestive answer to this question. For now, the eye simply closes, opens, widens, followed by two blinks, before we dissolve to a brick wall and the opening of the initial street sequence.

For Deleuze, the film's first two sequences – Keaton's itinerary towards the apparent 'sanctity' of his mother's apartment – are a clear manifestation of the action-image, albeit one under considerable formal strain. As Martin Schwab notes,

> The situation is presented from the point of view of a call for action, for everything we see – events, scenes, actions – receives its specific meanings from the point of view of O's goals and thus his subtractivity. For O, gazes are threats, his itinerary a path toward nonperceivedness, the room a 'sanctuary'. (Schwab 2000: 122)

Thus Keaton, head bowed and turned away from the camera, limits the danger of perceivedness by walking quickly and determinedly along a brick wall, thereby cutting off one complete side of possible perception. This is threatened when E initially catches him within the 45-degree angle of immunity, forcing Keaton to stop the action and conceal his face with his hand and handkerchief. The action is further delayed when Keaton bumps headlong into an elderly couple, who stand reading a newspaper, causing him to observe them briefly with his out-of-focus stare before rushing on a few steps ahead of the pursuing camera. For Beckett, the couple's sole role was to provide a diegetic excuse to introduce O's subjective point of view in preparation for its use in the extended, perceptually oriented apartment scene to follow.

However, the couple's exchange of glances also helps to ground the action-image's formal language within the suturing effect of a shot-reverse shot visual economy, which serves to enfold character, camera and spectatorial 'viewing-views' into a unified field of vision. Not surprisingly, because of the experimental nature of *Film*'s split subject, where the camera plays a multiplicity of different roles, this suturing effect is unravelled, further undermining the conviction of the final suturing of E and O in the film's culminating investment sequence. As Graley Herren points out,

> If E is supposed to represent the protagonist's subject-status through camera perspective, and O is supposed to represent the protagonist's object-status as screen-image, then where exactly do O's POV shots fit in? They are neither E as subject nor O as object. (Herren 2007: 42)

For Herren, we end up with at least three divisions: E as camera eye; O1 as Keaton/object; O2 as a second camera eye, expressing O's direct point of view. To make matters more complex, there are also brief moments – for example, during the 'agony of perceivedness' of the elderly couple and the flower seller in the vestibule – when Keaton-as-O is not on-screen at all. Where is O during these interludes? These are moments when he avoids the threat of self-perception because he is not being perceived by E at all. E's attention is literally elsewhere. By both Berkeley and Beckett's ontological logic, O thus achieves (at least cinematically) a state of non-being at these moments. Also, why would these extraneous characters be alarmed by E, who represents and produces O's 'agony of perceivedness' rather than their own? E must clearly function as a multiple subject – the 'I' as O's double; the camera Eye recording O trying to escape being recorded; the eye of the spectator

watching the camera recording O; as well as a role outside of the above, what one might call an 'any-self-perception-whatever', a contagious horror felt by whoever might encounter the camera's abnormally intense gaze and be affected by its deformed, piercing look.

This *aporia* of viewing views is reiterated in the subsequent scene when Keaton cuts into the vestibule of his mother's apartment building. Here, the danger is increased because of the unprotected nature of the space – Keaton is vulnerable to E's gaze from either side of the staircase – as well as the presence of the elderly flower vendor, who descends the stairs with her tray and threatens to confront Keaton with her own subjective look. However, the roles are temporarily reversed as the woman herself also falls 'victim' to Keaton's dual perceptions. First, she is unruffled as she is observed by O's subjectively blurred gaze as she descends the stairs, but is then confronted by the camera, E. Her face contorts in horror as she too suffers the 'agony of perceivedness' – a dress rehearsal for Keaton's own expression at the film's end – before collapsing to the floor, just as O makes his escape up the flight of stairs.

The long sequence that follows takes place in the seeming sanctuary of a run-down apartment. As Beckett himself states in his notes,

> This obviously cannot be O's room. It may be supposed it is his mother's room, which he has not visited for many years and is now to occupy momentarily, to look after the pets, until she comes out of hospital. This has no bearing on the film and need not be elucidated. (Beckett 2006: 380)

Well, actually, it has every bearing on the film because it helps to explain why Beckett also breaks the sequence into three separate parts. First, because the room is not O's usual residence, it must be prepared to suit his own, non-scopic needs. No longer shielded by the wall, the angle of immunity is doubled as there is now 45 degrees on each side of O. Keaton may be observed by extraneous sets of eyes from all directions, including his own. Thus he takes great pains to cover the window, a mirror, the staring eyes of a parrot and goldfish and eject his mother's dog and cat. He also destroys an image of Berkeley's all-perceiving God-the-Father, in this case 'a reproduction of a Sumerian head of the god Abu in the museum in Baghdad' (Knowlson 1996: 465), whose bulbous eyes stare at O with severe insistence. Up to this point, the camera perceived Keaton alone, who seemed to have a 'blind' perception limited only to his own intentionality. Now, E perceives him *in* the room – in sharp focus – as O, with his blurred vision, perceives

the room itself – thereby creating a double register of perception. 'Now, the character perceives for himself', says Deleuze,

> his perceptions become things that in turn perceive him: not only animals, mirrors, *a lithograph of the good Lord*, photos, but even utensils (as Eisenstein said after Dickens: the kettle is looking at me . . .). In this regard, things are more dangerous than human beings: I do not perceive them without their perceiving me, all perception as such being the perception of perception. (Deleuze 1997b: 24–5)

Once the present has been hermetically sealed off from outside observation, all that remains is to destroy past memories. This takes the form of a poignant sequence where, with E observing intently over his right shoulder, Keaton examines seven photographs, each marking a different age in his development, from his earliest baby picture in his mother's arms, kneeling in prayer at age four, through his schooldays, graduation, engagement, army enlistment, to a more recent picture of the aged Keaton wearing an eye patch. This is our first glimpse of his face, significantly mediated in reproduction via a surrogate photographic apparatus. In all cases, Keaton is shown to be happily within a condition of perceivedness, although his engagement and enlistment warrant a longer, more sustained look, perhaps because the war was responsible for the loss of his eye and family, while the engagement picture also features a photographer taking an official snapshot, another surrogate for E. The result is a convoluted meta-text by which E (and we, the audience) observe O looking at a picture of another camera observing O within the frame of the photograph. Keaton responds by tearing the photographs into four pieces in reverse chronological order, thus initiating his reductive path towards a zero-degree perception – culminating in a condition of pure affect.

All that remains is his mother's rocking chair, which suspends us in the middle of nothingness – a typical Beckett trope of to-ing and fro-ing, which sends Keaton off to sleep once his perceptions are extinguished. Unfortunately, the greatest danger is now revealed – the extinction of subjective perception frees the camera of the 45-degree restriction. Moreover, as Deleuze points out, the chair opens up other avenues of perception – front, back and sides – and the camera is quick to take advantage. After a false start, where Keaton wakes up just in time to forestall encroachment, the camera ultimately crosses the 45-degree angle and faces Keaton frontally for the first time. 'The character O is thus now seen from the front, at the same time as the new and last convention is revealed', says Deleuze.

> The camera OE is the double of O, the same face, a patch over one eye (monocular vision), with the single difference that O has an anguished expression and OE has an attentive expression: the impotent motor effort of the one, the sensitive surface of the other. (Deleuze 1986: 67)

> It then reveals what it is: the perception of affection, that is, the perception of the self by itself, or pure Affect. It is the reflexive double of the convulsive man in the rocking chair. It is the one-eyed person who looks at the one-eyed character. It was waiting for the right moment. This, then, is what was so terrifying: that perception was the perception of the self by itself, 'insuppressible' in this sense. (Deleuze 1997b: 25)

In theory, this affect curved in on itself can only be extinguished when the chair stops rocking and the character dies. In short, in order to become imperceptible, you must cease to be and the film – perception's mechanical correlate – must end. But as everyone knows, nothing ever dies in Beckett, for his characters must continue to strive, continue to fail, continue to create something from the abyss of nothing. Keaton may 'die' as a manifestation of the sensory-motor movement-image, but he must remain as part of a more profound cosmology that is very much alive: 'It is a question of attaining once more the world before man', says Deleuze,

> before our own dawn, the position where movement was, on the contrary, under the régime of universal variation, and where light, always propagating itself, had no need to be revealed. Proceeding in this way to the extinction of action-images, perception-images and affection-images, Beckett ascends once more towards the luminous plane of immanence, the plane of matter and its cosmic eddying of movement-images. He traces the three varieties of image back to the mother movement-image. (Deleuze 1986: 68)

One could argue that this is a key characteristic of all avant-garde cinema – to recreate the acentred plane of pure-movement-images and establish an inhuman presence there.

But is this really what happens at the end of *Film*? Do we really return to the immanent plane of movement, or is something more profound going on here? First, as we have already noted, the investment proper – the confrontation of E and O as a sequence of cross-cut myopic close-ups – defies the possibility of a unifying suturing effect. Here, suture is used not to bind the spectator into a misrecognised plenitude with a unified, centred screen subject, but to instead recruit our active agency in producing a split, acentred subject in the form of a temporal multiplicity. Second, it is significant that the film does not end with the investment

proper – but rather with an exact reprise of the opening title sequence featuring the extreme close-up of Keaton's eye, complete with that baffling fade to black as a disruptive interval between blinks. In this respect, the eye – echoing *Film*'s original title – acts as both a spatial and temporal frame, as if the entire exhaustion of movement-images, from action, through perception to affection, had occurred literally within the blink of an eye, thereby folding Deleuze's taxonomy of intervals within an even larger interval, an interval on the verge of creating a direct time-image.

On the verge... but not quite. Which is perhaps where that momentary fade to black comes back into play: in particular its role within a larger economy of images. In *What Is Philosophy?*, Deleuze and Guattari draw a clear distinction between percepts and perceptions:

> Percepts are no longer perceptions; they are independent of a state of those who experience them. Affects are no longer feelings or affections; they go beyond the strength of those who undergo them. Sensations, percepts and affects are *beings* whose validity lies in themselves and exceeds any lived [experience]. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 164)

In short, they exist in the absence of man as a controlling mechanism as he is himself a compound of percepts and affects: 'The work of art is a being of sensation and nothing else: it exists in itself' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 164), composed of independent elements such as colour, line, shadow and light. Thus Keaton's O may metaphorically 'die' at *Film*'s end because he has finally exhausted his sensory-motor connection to the movement-image, but he lives on in the work of filmic art that gives birth to itself as a being of pure sensation, exceeding lived experience.

Given this distinction, this flicker of blackness is less part of a conventional edit but a crack in the surface of the screen and the scene/seen that allows a brief glimpse into an immanent cosmos ready to give birth to something incommensurable: namely a direct time-image. As Deleuze and Guattari point out, 'The affect goes beyond affections no less than the percept goes beyond perceptions. The affect is not the passage from one lived state to another but man's nonhuman becoming' (1994: 164). The vehicle for this genesis is not the interval – the built-in delay that allows the action hero to bide his time within the continuum of the sensory-motor regime, ultimately using the delay to his advantage – but the interstice, the false-movement or fissure through which the time-image becomes manifest. As Tom Conley explains,

> The interstice is the interval turned into something infraliminary in a continuum in which an event can no longer be awarded the stability of a 'place' in the space of the image. The interstice becomes what *exhausts* – and thereby creates – whatever space remains of the image in the sensory-motor tradition. It supersedes the interval and, by doing so, multiplies the happenings of events. (Conley 2000: 320)

It is less a process of association than of differentiation. A potential is given, another must be chosen so that a third, new image is produced as a creative event. The advent of the time-image is this very proliferation of events, so that the world is now reinvented in each shot/instance via the Event of the interstice. In *Film*, the interval turns out to be unbridgeable via the movement-image's conventional resort to causal montage and instead gives rise to the interstice as the incommensurability of immanent time, literally a space time captured but then lost in the blink of an eye. Unfortunately for us, *Film* ends at the very moment of its birth, leaving us with an any-space-whatever as the site of an event that is in the process of becoming – what Deleuze calls a *prenom* taking place before it is named in language. It will be left up to Beckett's subsequent television work – most notably *Eh Joe*, *Ghost Trio* and *Quad* – to make this incommensurable language (Deleuze's Language III) truly manifest.

Note

1. Part of this article is adapted from chapter 2 of Colin Gardner, *Beckett, Deleuze and the Televisual Event: Peephole Art*, 2012, Palgrave Macmillan, reproduced with permission of Palgrave Macmillan.

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Creative Involution: Bergson, Beckett, Deleuze

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Abstract

'Creative Involution' posits something of a philosophical genealogy, a line of flight that has neither need for nor interest in the periodisation of Modernism, a line of which Beckett (even reluctantly) is part. Murphy, among others, is deterritorialised as much as Beckett's landscapes are, and so he/they become a 'complexification' of being that manifests itself in Beckett not as represented, representative or a representation, since so much of Beckett deals with that which cannot be uttered, known or represented, but whose image the works (and its figures) have become, a thinking through of negativity, becoming, and multiplicity through non-Newtonian motion, of being as becoming, where every movement brings something new into the world, but in something of a reverse Darwinism that moves from complex to simple organism, from Murphy to Worm, or Watt to Pim, or among the nameless figures in the short prose, a 'becoming-animal', in something not so much of a creative devolution but rather a 'neoevolution', or to adopt another term from Deleuze and Guattari, an 'involution', which 'is in no way confused with regression' (1987: 238), becomings creating nothing less than new worlds. Writing casually to his post-war confidant Georges Duthuit on 26 July 1951, Beckett noted in the midst of gardening chores, 'Never seen so many butterflies in such worm-state, this little central cylinder, the only flesh, is the worm' (2011: 271). The observation comes after the writing but before the premiere performance of *Waiting for Godot* in which Gogo tells Didi, 'You and your landscapes! Tell me about the worms!' (1954: 67). Such 'becoming-animal always involves a pack, a band, a population, a peopling, in short a multiplicity' (1987: 239),

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Deleuze and Guattari tell us. For Beckett it defines creativity as well, only possible through such un-tethered selves or beings, amid the generation of varieties and differences, accessible through moments of deterritorialisation, characterised by, 'A fearsome involution calling us toward unheard-of becomings' (240).

Keywords: negativity, becoming, a pack, multiplicity, line of flight, representation, motion, evolution, involution, deterritorialisation

> That's not moving, that's *moving*. *Whoroscope*, Samuel Beckett
>
> To elicit something from nothing requires a certain skill. *Watt*, Samuel Beckett

In their critique of Sigmund Freud's (psycho)analysis of the Wolf-man in *A Thousand Plateaus*, philosopher Gilles Deleuze and psychoanalyst Félix Guattari take on the methodology and ideology of psychoanalysis, which they see as 'a mixed semiotic: a despotic regime of significance and interpretation' (1987: 125), and so that of Modernism itself. For Deleuze and Guattari, Freud misreads the Wolf-man's narrative, imposing nominalist, patriarchal presuppositions on the narrative's multiplicity, reducing the assemblage to the name of the Father, or the name of the Wolf-man, in the crafting of a coherent, unified subconscious. Deleuze and Guattari replace the constrictive unity of psychoanalysis and its emphasis on the subconscious with the multiplicity of schizoanalysis and its emphasis on the unconscious. Freud's misreading confuses the two, the unified subconscious with an unconscious as assemblage that is 'fundamentally a crowd' (29), an analysis of Freud that parallels Deleuze's critique of Heidegger's *Sein*. Deleuze and Guattari are careful to distinguish, in its Bergsonian echo, between the simple multiplicity of space, 'a numerical or extended multiplicity' and that of the assemblage with its 'qualitative multiplicities' (33). Deleuze and Guattari will use a variety of terms to distinguish between a multiplicity which is a sequential series, to which one can always add another entity, an N + 1, say, and 'rhizomatic multiplicities' or 'molecular, intensive [as opposed to extensive] multiplicities' which are non-totalisable. Within that assemblage, that crowd, the Wolf-man, as pack, as qualitative multiplicity and molecular process rather than molar entity, is apprehensible as he 'approaches or moves away from zero' (31):

> Zero is the body without organs of the Wolf-man. If the unconscious knows nothing of negation, it is because there is nothing negative in the unconscious, only indefinite moves toward and away from zero, which does not at all

> express lack but rather the positivity of the full body as support and prop ('for an afflux is necessary simply to signify the absence of intensity'). (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 31)

Quoting Nietzsche on 'Eternal Return' thus (see, for example, Klossowski [1997] on 'Eternal Return' [48]), Deleuze and Guattari sound decidedly Bergsonian in this critique of Freud as they echo not only Bergson on multiplicities but his critique of nothingness as well, and both of these elements find their elaborations in the perpetually unfolding narratives of Samuel Beckett, who, situated between these French metaphysicians above, is neither the heir of one nor the anticipation of the other, that is, not one in a series but one of a multiple, a one and a pack. One might thus read not only Beckett through Bergson, but Bergson through Beckett; Bergson through Deleuze, but also Deleuze back through Bergson, or, as one of the narrating voices in Beckett's *Company* notes, 'vice-versa'.

One of the most compelling discourses in *Creative Evolution* (1907, 1911) is Bergson's thinking through the issues of nothing,[1] in which any negation, any inclusion of a 'not' in a statement announces 'that some other affirmation, whose content I do not specify, will have to be substituted for the one I find before me' (1944: 315); it is the 'zero' of Deleuze and Guattari's critique, and centre stage in Beckett's first two published, eponymous, English novels, *Murphy* and *Watt*, the former in its pursuit of not annihilation but fulfilment, the latter plagued by its apparitions in the house of Mr Knott. It is the nothingness of routine in the latter that disguises or gives way to the nothing of existence, 'on the waste, beneath the sky, distinguished by Watt as being, the one above, the other beneath, Watt' (1959: 249), as Addendum 22 has it. Beckett's negations, then, produce or result in neither absence nor void. Like Deleuze, Beckett has nothing to admit. Contrary to its title, in his letter to Michel Cressole, Deleuze will admit a 'secret link' to those philosophers against a rationalist tradition, 'I find among Lucretius, Hume, Spinoza and Nietzsche a secret link that resides in the critique of negation' (Deleuze 1977: 112). For Bergson, who might, even should, have been included in Deleuze's list, the statement 'There is nothing', although a contingent, negative fact, would have to be grounded on some positive entity, an '*All*,' say, 'to which it is closely akin' (1944: 322). Such an entity would ensure that something, rather than nothing, remained. As a demonstrative, the discourse suggests that 'Nothing is [over] there.' The perpetual philosophical conundrum that began Martin Heidegger's list of questions central to philosophy, 'Why is there something rather than

nothing', was thus always a false problem for Bergson and Deleuze, and such expressions of exclusionary binary become not unlike the Cartesian mind body duality.[2] *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* begins its entry on 'Nothingness' with such a duality: 'ever since Parmenides in the fifth century BCE, there has been rich commentary on whether an empty world is possible, whether there are vacuums, and about the nature of privations and negation'. The binary of something and nothing is thus finally a minor variation on the principle of the One and its degraded parts. Negative theology, however, posits as axiomatic that what can be said of God, say, or the One, is only that she has no qualities known to human intelligence, 'The original ground of all things, the deity, must . . . lie beyond Being and knowledge; it is above reason, above Being; it has no determination or quality, it is 'Nothing' ' (Windelband 1938: 335). It is finally a deity who exhibits the '*complete absence of all qualities* . . . no name names him' (237), and 'we can predicate of God only what he is not' (290). Windelband was the source of much of Samuel Beckett's understanding of ancient philosophy, and residua can be found in Beckett's first two English novels of exile, *Murphy* and *Watt*, whose protagonists (or whose subjects) vainly attempt to name, that is, to ground their being in the world, by exhausting the possibilities of unknowing. Such negation by serial exhaustion in order to know Mr Knott, for example, encounters at best only his residual effects or after effects, his attributes, and Watt finally knows nothing of his essence:

> For the only way one can speak of nothing is to speak of it as though it were something, just as the only way one can speak of God [a weightless entity, immaterial, apparently nothing, a cipher, nought, zero] is to speak of him as though he were a man, which to be sure he was, in a sense, for a time. (Beckett 1959: 77)

Watt's mistake may have been in trying to see Mr Knott as a knowable singularity even as he or Sam admits, 'But what do I know of Mr. Knott? Nothing' (1959: 119), or again, third person singular, 'What did he know of Mr. Knott? Nothing' (148). Knott's abode, rather in Knott's sphere, moreover, is perpetual change in its unchangedness: 'Yes, nothing changed, in Mr. Knott's establishment, because nothing remained, and nothing came or went, because all was a coming and a going' (131–2). Watt's demise seems to stem from an inability to accept such becoming and the fact that

> nothing had happened, that a thing that was nothing had happened, with the utmost formal distinctness, and that it continued to happen, in his mind [. . .]. Yes, Watt could not accept, as no doubt Erskine could not accept, as no

> doubt Arsene and Walter and Vincent and the others [in the pack] had been unable to accept, that nothing had happened, with all the clarity and solidity of something [. . .]. (Beckett 1959: 76)

Such 'a coming and a going' permeates Beckett's *oeuvre* and is central to at least Bergson's defence of motion. Preoccupation with bodies in motion, or motion itself has more traditionally fallen within the province of physics than metaphysics, even for Aristotle, but Bergson situates himself on the bridge between those disciplines, as he does between matter and spirit, and so his emphasis on motion undergirds and so coincides, overlaps or intersects with the spirit of change, of evolution, of constant becoming, of time's flow, of *durée*; it is an embrace of natural law, life's vital force, an *élan vital*, the implications of which philosophy has all too often ignored, Bergson reminds us. Aristotle himself acknowledged such a vital force in his punning coinage, entelechy, but Aristotle's vision was finally binary, entelechy opposed to stasis, which may contain the potential of such motion, or kinesis or entelechy but is in opposition to it. Of such fixity or stasis Bergson will say that it is 'only an ephemeral arrangement between mobilities' (1946: 177).

The opening to the first of two 'Introductions' that Bergson wrote specifically for his second collection of lectures and essays, these delivered or published between 1903 and 1923, *The Creative Mind*, is that 'What philosophy has lacked most of all is precision' (1946: 9); that is, philosophy has tended to ignore natural laws (9). In this autobiographical opening, Bergson recalls his youthful infatuation with the Victorian theorist Herbert Spencer, who embraced an all-encompassing system of evolution, a philosophy that took account of the physical, biological world. It was Spencer, not Darwin, who coined the term 'survival of the fittest' and hence natural selection. Spencer was a synthetic philosopher who saw congruence, not threat, in what others deemed the polar opposites of scientific method and traditional, historical belief systems. Synthetic philosophy saw the unity of natural laws, human and non alike (see *A System of Synthetic Philosophy*, 1862–93, for example). As influenced as he was by Spencerian synthesis to overcome more traditional dualities, Bergson was determined to remedy much of what he saw as Spencer's tendency to dwell on 'vague generalities' (10). Evolution thus led Bergson to what he calls 'real time' and how it eludes mathematics because it flows: 'not one of its parts is still there when another part comes along' (10). If this time that flows were measurable, it would 'have the essence of non-duration' (11).

Measurement, then, is 'not carried out on an aspect or an effect representative of what one wishes to measure [in this case 'Time'], but on something which excludes it' (11). For Watt, what he seeks or 'wishes to measure' or to know perpetually eludes him.

Such early focus on motion, on change, on evolution, on the flow of time leads Bergson to those classical philosophers who have seen motion and so change as illusions, most notably Parmenides and Zeno, both Eleatics whose paradoxes were powerful statements against motion and hence against change. The debate extends into a sense of discontinuous being or the lack of fixity of any sort evident in Heraclitus, a position central to his contretemps with Parmenides.[3] Heraclitus, a process philosopher himself, perhaps the first of that tradition, that is, those who suggest that there are no stable substances per se, emphasised a world of becoming, and such a liminal world in perpetual transition was more consonant with Bergson's sense of *durée* than the monism of Parmenides and his main disciple, Zeno. For Parmenides, founder of the School of Eleas, our senses deceive us, the real world apprehensible through logic alone. Everything that is, then, has always been, and being is unwavering and always complete, part of 'the One', so that change is an illusion. Bergson takes on the most pervasive set of proofs for this position, the Eleatic paradoxes, in almost every one of his works. In *Matter and Memory* (1897, 1910), for instance, he critiques Zeno's 'proof' of the impossibility or the illusion of motion by pointing out that Zeno's famous paradoxes 'consist in making time and movement coincide with the line which underlies them, in attributing to them the same subdivisions as to the line, in short, in treating them like that line' (1991: 191). Earlier in the reworking of his doctoral thesis, *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness* (1889, 1910), he focused on the paradox of the race course, which, in Zeno's analysis, a runner could not traverse, might not, in fact, even be able to begin the circuit, since the space of the course is infinitely divisible and so the distance from start to finish is subject to infinite divisibility. Bergson counters that 'The mistake of the Eleatics arises from their identification of this series of acts, each of which is *of a definite kind* and *indivisible*, with the homogeneous space which underlies them' (2001: 113). That is, what Zeno takes as an inscription coeval with movement, Bergson sees as a metaphor, a representation of that movement.

In some ways, admits Bergson, such reasoning as Zeno posits represents common sense or what Bergson calls 'an element of convention' (1946: 10), as Zeno 'carries over to the movement the properties of its trajectories [that is, the divisible line or course]', but

much of Bergson's analysis suspends such common sense whose aim is practical solutions to problems, scientific or philosophical. A decade after *Matter and Memory*, in *Creative Evolution* (1907, 1911), his critique of the Eleatics is even more explicit, calling the paradox an 'absurd proposition that movement is made of immobilities' (1944: 335), and so the Eleatic paradoxes 'all involve the confusion of movement with the space covered, or at least the conviction that one can treat movement as one treats space, divide it without taking account of its articulations' (1946: 170). Writing to Alan Schneider, on 21 November 1957, Beckett was unusually straightforward in explaining some of the imagery of *Endgame* to his befuddled American director. His arguments parallel those of Bergson calling the Eleatic paradoxes a fallacy:

> The argument of the Heap and the Bald Head (which hair falling produces baldness) were used by all the Sophists and I think have been variously attributed to one or the other. They disprove the reality of mass in the same way and *by means of the same fallacy* as the arguments of the Arrow and Achilles and the Tortoise, invented a century earlier by Zeno the Eleatic, disprove the reality of movement. The leading Sophist, against whom Plato wrote his dialog [i.e. *Protagoras*], was Protagoras and he is probably the 'old Greek' whose name Hamm can't remember. One purpose of the image throughout the play is to suggest the impossibility logically, i.e. eristically, of the 'thing' ever coming to an end. (Harmon 1998: 23)

Beckett's comment in 1957 reprises almost exactly the argument made in Wilhelm Windelband's *A History of Philosophy*, down to the use of the word 'eristically' (Windelband 1938: 89, n.4). The 1957 letter to Schneider thus reprises notes he took during a period of intense philosophical study between 1932 and 1933, and those were dominated by quotations from Windelband. That Beckett could remember the material so exactly, even as he claims in his letter that he cannot 'find my notes on the pre-Socratics', suggests that he had at least reviewed the notes carefully during the writing of *Fin de Partie* and perhaps again during the translation to the English *Endgame*.

Bergson's thesis is startlingly simple: 'If movement is not everything, it is nothing' (1946: 171). Denial of motions is thus for Bergson, and Beckett above, a denial of *durée*, and so of change itself. As Bergson recounts in the autobiographical 'Introduction' to the last of his books, *The Creative Mind* (1919, 1946), this insight into the nature of time and its measurement was his initial, his primary, intuition as a student, on which he built an entire career:

> Ever since my university days I had been aware that duration [or simply time but not its measurement] is measured by the trajectory of a body in motion and that mathematical time is a line; but I had not yet observed that this operation contrasts radically with all other processes of measurement, for it is not carried out on an aspect or an effect representative of what one wishes to measure, but on something which excludes it. The line one measures is immobile, time is mobility. The line is made, it is complete; time is what is happening, and more than that, it is what causes everything to happen. The measuring of time never deals with duration as duration. (Bergson 1946: 11)

Movement, and hence change, for Bergson, 'is an indisputable reality. We may not be able to say what parts of the whole are in motion; motion there is in the whole nonetheless' (1991: 193), and '[a]ll real change is an indivisible change', he notes in his second lecture on 'The Perception of Change' (1946: 172). But Bergson warns us in the same essay that movement is not coeval with kinesis, or movement of natural wholes: 'there is change, but there are not things which change' (177), or again, 'There are changes, but there are underneath the change no things which change . . . movement does not imply a mobile' (173). Such might be seen as an anticipatory gloss on Beckett's *Endgame*, where even as the characters run out of bicycles, pain killers and the like, nothing changes, and Hamm may sit immobile in his chair even as he moves about the shelter. At the opening of his long Cartesian poem, *Whoroscope*, Beckett works through qualitative and quantitative motion with the call of a boatswain, 'We're moving, he said, we're off' (1961: ll. 9–10), the boatswain apparently stationary. The reference to Galileo and music (Descartes's confusion of *père et fils*, apparently), the play of harmony and dissonance, may be less important than the reference of the motion of the Earth, which from the perspective of Descartes is 'expedient sophistry' since we appear to be stationary. But even on Earth, Galileo tells us, we are moving while at rest; 'That's not moving, that's *moving*', is Beckett's gloss on the issue. But the ship's passengers or crew have a certain degree of freedom to walk against the movement of the ship, at least for a time, and are thus, apparently, stationary even as they move, or are moved. At least Beckett raises such contradictions to motion as he thinks through Descartes and time. Murphy may sit out of the sun, at the opening to the eponymous novel, 'as though he were free', but he is tied to a chair and lives in a 'mew', a 'medium sized cage'.

One of the most profound literary encounters with such Bergso-Deleuzism is developed throughout Samuel Beckett's 1936 novel, *Murphy*, particularly the presentation of 'Murphy's mind' in chapter 6. Murphy bound to his chair but in motion slips past the mind's first

zone, that of 'forms with parallel' (1957: 111), to the second, the contemplation of 'forms without parallel' (111) but stable forms, nonetheless, thence to the third, the dark, 'a flux of forms, a perpetual coming together and falling asunder of forms'. Such

> dark [contains] neither elements nor states, nothing but forms becoming and crumbling into the fragments of a new becoming, without love or hate or any intelligible principle of change. Here there was *nothing* but commotion and the pure forms of commotion. Here he was not free, but a mote in the dark of absolute freedom. (Beckett 1957: 112; my emphasis)

Here then was not only the nothing Murphy so ardently desired, in constant movement but within a stationary skull, a stasis achieved through the ferocious rocking of his chair. But Murphy's goal is less stasis, a cessation of kinetics, than nothingness, which he achieves in a sense: 'Murphy began to see nothing, that colourlessness which is such a rare postnatal treat, being the absence (to abuse a nice distinction) not of *percipere* [to perceive] but of *percipi* [to be perceived]' (1957: 246). Such nothing offers 'the positive peace that comes when the somethings give way, or perhaps simply add up, to the Nothing, than which in the guffaw of the Abderite [Democritus] naught is more real' (246). One might accuse Murphy of a certain dualism himself if the 'somethings simply give way to' but not if they 'add up to the Nothing', that plenitude which Deleuze calls Zero, as Murphy in motion continues 'to suck in [. . .] the accidentless One-and-Only, conveniently called Nothing' (246). Celia takes the same route, out of her clothes and into the rocker for the 'Silence not of vacuum but of plenum' (148). It is a Bergso-Deleuzian world of perpetual becoming, not 'states,' the still moments of movement to which Bergson and Deleuze object, 'nothing but forms becoming and crumbling, without love or hate or any intelligible principle of change' (112). Such issues remain a preoccupation for Beckett into the post-war years, in the midst of his most creative period as he notes to art critic Georges Duthuit on 11 August 1948:

> I shall never know clearly enough how far space and time are unutterable, and me caught up somewhere in there [. . .]. One may as well dare to be plain and say that not knowing is not only not knowing what one is, but also where one is, and what change to wait for, and how to get out of wherever one is, and how to know, when it seems as if something is moving, which apparently was not moving before, what it is that is moving, that was not moving before, and so on. (Beckett 2011: 98)

Beckett here is outlining for Duthuit what sounds remarkably like deterritorialised being.

And Murphy too is not territorially Murphy, we learn, as Watt is not territorially Watt but Sam's Watt, or Watt's Sam, and so part of a cluster, a band at Knott's abode that includes Arsene, whose narrative Watt absorbs, Vincent, Walter and Erskine, among others. Murphy too is a pack, one in what looks like a quantitative series but is revealed as a molecular multiplicity in the *Three Novels*, a one and a many, a pattern of regenerative transformations: 'Then it will be all over with the Murphys, Merciers, Molloys, Morans and Malones, unless it goes on beyond the grave' (1957: 236). Or at the opening of *The Unnamable*: 'Malone is there. [. . .] Sometimes I wonder if it is not Molloy. Perhaps it is Molloy wearing Malone's hat. [. . .] To tell the truth I believe they are all here, at least from Murphy on' (292–3). These manifestations, accompanied by other entities in the pack, are in something of perpetual motion, or perpetual becoming, where the observer is either centre, circumference, both or something in between: 'It is equally possible [. . .] that I too am in perpetual motion, accompanied by Malone, as the earth by its moon' (295). And this line of flight, a phrase Beckett uses in his seminal letter to Georges Duthuit of 9 March 1949, 'lignes de fuite' (2006: 18), has neither origin nor goal: 'Going nowhere, coming from nowhere, Malone passes' (1957: 294). It is the motion of nothing in *Murphy* as well, 'a missile without provenance or target, caught up in a tumult of non-Newtonian motion' (112–13): 'That's not moving, that's *moving*.' And of two dim, colliding shapes in *The Unnamable*, the narrative voice notes, 'I naturally thought of the pseudocouple Mercier-Camier' (297). What, we might ask, is the relationship among such avatars or of each 'atavistic embryon', as Beckett suggests of Proust's characters in his monograph on the French author, for they continue, and diverge, and disappear, and reappear as the Basils and Mahoods, Moran or even Mollose, Molotte or Molloc of *Molloy*, Malone even added to the English iteration, or those who might be 'others', Saposcat and Macmann of *Malone Dies*, who evidently have much in common with their counterparts, Molloy and Malone, enlisted all, evidently, as 'sufferers of my pains'? 'All these Murphys, Molloys and Malones do not fool me' (303), as they have many a reader, we might add. Such becoming is not, however, 'a resemblance, an imitation, or, at the limit, an identification' (237), again to reference Beckett's letter to Duthuit of 9 March. These are not discrete characters that inhabit a discrete territory, but 'fundamentally a crowd' in a zero degree of motion, the reader struggling to re-territorialise through memories what the narrative flight has deterritorialised. When Deleuze and Guattari turn to specific examples it is to H. P. Lovecraft's 'The Statement of

Randolph Carter' (1920), whose title character is also a multiplicity, 'moving outrageously amidst backgrounds of other planets and systems and galaxies and cosmic continua . . . Merging with nothingness in peaceful oblivion' (cited in Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 240). Amid the multiplicities of *Watt*, Arsene utters the warning that characterises the unrepresentable: to speak the unspeakable, to 'eff' the ineffable, 'is doomed to fail, doomed, doomed to fail' (Beckett 1959: 62), at the end of whose 'short statement' Arsene 'became two men' (63). Some sorcery seems to be at work here, and in the 'Memories of a Bergsonian' plateau of *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari note that such 'very special becoming-animal' (1987: 237) is not a 'degradation representing deviation from the true order' (237), nor is it a 'playing animal or imitating an animal [. . .]. Becoming produces nothing other than itself' (238), attempts to represent it 'doomed, doomed to fail'.

We can thus characterise something of a philosophical genealogy, a line of flight that has neither need for nor interest in the periodisation of Modernism, a line of which Beckett (even reluctantly) is part. Murphy et al. are deterritorialised as much as Beckett's landscapes are, and so he/they become a 'complexification' of being that manifests itself in Beckett not as represented, representative or a representation, since so much of Beckett deals with that which cannot be uttered, known or represented, but whose image the works (and its figures) have become, a thinking through of negativity, becoming, and multiplicity through non-Newtonian motion and the 'non-Euclidian logic' cited in his poem 'Gnome', of being as becoming, where every movement brings something new into the world, but in something of a reverse Darwinism that moves from complex to simple organism, from Murphy to Worm, or Watt to Pim, or among the nameless figures in the short prose, a 'becoming-animal', in something not so much of a creative devolution but rather a 'neoevolution', to adopt the term of Deleuze and Guattari, an 'involution,' which 'is in no way confused with regression' (1987: 238), becomings creating nothing less than new worlds. Writing casually to his post-war confidant Georges Duthuit on 26 July 1951, Beckett noted in the midst of gardening chores, 'Never seen so many butterflies in such worm-state, this little central cylinder, the only flesh, is the worm' (2011: 271). The observation comes after the writing but before the premiere performance of *Waiting for Godot* in which Gogo tells Didi, 'You and your landscapes! Tell me about the worms!' (1954: 67). Such 'becoming-animal always involves a pack, a band, a population, a peopling, in short a multiplicity' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 239).[4] For Beckett it defined creativity as well, only possible through such un-tethered selves

or beings, amid the generation of varieties and differences, accessible through moments of deterritorialisation, characterised by, 'A fearsome involution calling us toward unheard-of becomings' (240).

Notes

1. The opening to chapter IV of *Creative Evolution*, say, pp. 296–324, although Bergson is on occasion accused of simply dismissing the term 'le néant', often translated, if somewhat misleadingly, as 'the nought'.
2. In 'A Note on Heidegger's Philosophy of Difference', Deleuze makes clear that 'The not expresses not the negative but the difference between Being and being' (1994: 64).
3. Further details in *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (1998: 734).
4. Interestingly, Deleuze and Guattari cite Jorge Louis Borges as one who has 'botched at least two books' by his failure of sorcery: 'Borges is interested only in characteristics, even the most fantastic ones, whereas sorcerers know that werewolves are bands, and vampires too, and that bands transform themselves into other bands' (1987: 241).

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A Crystal-Theatre: Automation and Crystalline Description in the Theatre of Samuel Beckett

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Abstract

Throughout his cinema studies, Deleuze tends to define and to praise the cinematic in opposition to the theatrical. Cinema, for Deleuze, retains the potential to automate our perception of its images. Further, this capacity allows the cinema to profoundly disrupt the habitual patterns of its audience's thought. This article asks, however, whether Beckett's theatrical practice can be productively analysed through concepts derived from Deleuze's work on the cinema. In Beckett's *Play* and *Not I*, we see theatrical productions that strive for and attain an automation of their audience's perception. While this theatrical experience is not identical to the 'camera-consciousness' that Deleuze observes in film, it can be understood through Deleuze's (Bergsonian) processes of habitual and attentive recognition, their failure and their subsequent transformation into passages of crystalline description. Finally, we can begin to elaborate the novel idea of a 'crystal-theatre'; a theatre where the audience are entrapped within its construction, caught in a loop or circuit that runs between and complicates the realms of reality and illusion, immediately lived experience and artistic representation, the actual and the virtual.

Keywords: Beckett, cinema, automation, image, failure, crystal-image

> Given that it is a consciousness which carries out these divisions and reunions, we can say of the shot that it acts like a consciousness. But the sole

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> cinematographic consciousness is not us, the spectator, nor the hero; it is the camera . . . (Deleuze 2009: 21)

Discussing the role of art in Deleuze's philosophy, Simon O'Sullivan has written of an 'aesthetic function of transformation' that extends 'the boundaries of what can be experienced' (O'Sullivan 2006: 52). For Deleuze, the artist promotes encounters that disrupt the given structures of consciousness. Artworks oppose habitual patterns of thought by confronting us with a world that obeys only its own peculiar logic. When Deleuze and Guattari claim that the sole 'law of creation' is that the composition must 'stand up on its own', they are working to define the artwork as a self-positing creation that does not depend upon the spectator (Deleuze and Guattari 2009: 164). Their ideal artwork would not appeal to existing concepts, ideas and habits of perception but would impose its own modes of thought upon us.

Cinema, for Deleuze, is exemplary in this regard. Deleuze argues that Dziga Vertov's *Man with a Movie-Camera*, for example, offers us the perception of a 'non-human eye' that has passed into matter itself, creating a vision of the world in the absence of subjectivity (Deleuze 2009: 83–8).[1] Further, the cinematic form is uniquely well equipped to force such encounters upon us. Cinema, for Deleuze, automates our perception and achieves a direct correspondence between image and thought. We perceive and think through a cinematographic consciousness that belongs to the images alone. 'It is the material automatism of images which produces from the outside a thought which it imposes, as the unthinkable in our intellectual automatism' (Deleuze 2010: 173). For Deleuze, the cinema appears as an immensely powerful tool for provoking 'unthinkable' encounters. In Vertov, our 'intellectual automatism' is rerouted through a sequence of images that follows its own logic and forces an audience to follow this logic in turn.

Theatre, for Deleuze, appears to be far less likely to provide such encounters (Cull 2009: 1–2).[2] In *One Less Manifesto*, Deleuze's only extended study of theatrical practice, Deleuze praises Carmelo Bene for presenting us with passages of variation that move between the established forms of majority perception. Bene's theatre performs, for Deleuze, an important political function in cultivating a minority consciousness within his audience (Deleuze 2000a). Deleuze's cinema books, however, may leave us doubting the efficacy of Bene's practice. Here, Deleuze maintains that there is no theatrical equivalent of the screen's direct correspondence between image and thought.[3] We retain a high degree of autonomy in relation to the stage. Bene's audience appear,

from the perspective of cinematic automatism, to remain spectators *to* and not participants *with* the movement of his work. This is problematic, in Deleuze's view, because pre-existing structures of thought are liable to obscure Bene's revolutionary potential.[4] While consciousness remains divided from the images onstage, dramatic works will be less capable of imposing an alterior logic upon us. The theatrical form appears ill equipped to disrupt our intellectual automatism and provoke an encounter with the unthinkable.

In Deleuze's account, film has itself confronted and overcome similar problems. Deleuze's modern cinema develops in response to a growing awareness of our intellectual automatism, expressed as a 'crisis of cliché'.[5] 'A cliché is a sensory-motor image of the thing . . . but, if our sensory-motor schemata jam or break, then a different type of image can appear: a pure optical-sound image' (Deleuze 2010: 19–20). Deleuze draws on Henri Bergson's accounts of habitual and attentive recognition in order to theorise both the cinematic cliché and the emergence of encounters that disrupt its reign.[6] In habitual recognition, we associate an object with a single recollection-image. When this is not possible, attentive recognition allows us to draw upon a range of memories in order to construct a coherent description of the object. Recognition succeeds when we feel ourselves able to understand the object before us. It is a matter of reducing the singular object or encounter to its resemblance to what we have previously perceived; an intellectual automatism that extracts a cliché from the image and allows us to remain within habitual modes of thought.

For Deleuze, cinematic automation can force this process of recognition to fail. 'It is not the recollection-image or attentive recognition which gives us the proper equivalent of the optical-sound image, it is rather the disturbances of memory and the failures of recognition' (Deleuze 2010: 52). Through montage, film can carry us through sequences of dislocated or illogically connected images that cannot be integrated into our habitual modes of thought. Cinematic spectators experience the failure of their intellectual automatism as their sensory-motor schema breaks down. Yet the cinematographic consciousness continues to run; perception and thought continue beyond this failure to recognise the images on-screen. In this way, the cinema can impose another mode of thought upon its audience, countering the automatism that orders experience as a series of clichés. What Deleuze calls an 'intolerable and unbearable' pure optical-sound image might stand forth in its singularity, refusing to conform to our expectations and drawing thought beyond its habitual bounds.[7] As in Vertov, we

may come to perceive and think in accordance with another strange and different logic that forces us to discover and confront what would be unthinkable within our habitual structures of consciousness.

We may ask whether Deleuze's cinematic concepts can be of use to theatre and performance. Deleuze, in an interview with *Cahiers du Cinema* that followed the publication of *Cinema 2*, commented: 'The encounter between two disciplines doesn't take place when one begins to reflect on the other, but when one discipline realizes that it has to resolve, for itself and by its own means, a problem similar to one confronted by the other' (Deleuze 2000b: 367).[8] Here, Deleuze expresses something that animates this essay. In drawing on Deleuze's cinematic studies in reference to Beckett's theatre, I am not attempting to deny the differences between film and performance. Although Beckett does achieve an automation of his stage that renders *Play* and *Not I* peculiarly well suited to this form of analysis, it is not a question of claiming that these pieces are cinematic in any strong sense. Deleuze's thought will, however, help us theorise the emergence of pure optical-sound images and unthinkable encounters within Beckett's drama. Perhaps this implies that Deleuze's dismissal of the theatre within his cinema studies is somewhat hasty. Ultimately, however, this essay is merely intended to perform its own encounter between Deleuze and Beckett, in the hope that something as yet unthought – the presentation of *Play* and *Not I* as examples of an immersive and immanent *crystal-theatre* – shall emerge in the process.

I. Automation: A Pure and Theatrical Optical Sound Situation

Beckett studies has frequently emphasised Beckett's desire for complete control of his stage. For instance, Deirdre Bair draws our attention to a discussion between Beckett and the playwright Jean Reavey:

> His maxim – that every playwright should . . . (be) in control of everything that happens on stage, envisioning it as if he were the audience – became difficult to follow, so that his plays became increasingly unconventional . . . It was the only way in which he could gain the stark, controlled effect he sought. (Bair 1990: 584)

This meeting took place while Beckett was writing *Play*. Completed, *Play* would achieve Beckett's ambition for control in both automating his audience's perception and including his audience within the theatrical construction.

Play presents us with two women and a man. Each is encased within an identical grey urn with only their heads visible. Beckett indicates that they must face the audience, with 'neck[s] held fast' (Beckett 2006: 307). Their speech is 'provoked', in Beckett's terms, by a single spotlight, cutting from one to another at 'maximum speed' (318). James Knowlson and John Pilling have compared the figures' intertwined monologues, constructing a somewhat banal tale of adultery, to the clichés of light comedy and domestic drama (Knowlson and Pilling 1979: 112). They do not address each other but speak their fragments into the light, springing to life when it rests upon them, falling silent as it swings away. With the rest of the stage in darkness, the spotlight draws the diverse perceptions of the audience into a single, automated perception. Like a cinematic director, Beckett gains a high degree of mastery over the divisions and reunions between his theatrical images.

Play includes an instruction to repeat the text. 'The repeat may be an exact replica of the first statement or it may present an element of variation' (Beckett 2006: 320). In the same work, Beckett achieves the automation of his theatrical images and yet, in a somewhat uncharacteristic gesture, allows for a variation that is not governed by precise stage directions. In his own production of *Play*, Beckett even allowed for an element of improvisation, with the structure of the repeat governed by the 'caprice' of the spotlight's operator (Cohn 1980: 54). We can make sense of this apparent contradiction by drawing on Deleuze's notion of the heautonomy of sound and vision within pure optical-sound images.

Play holds its audio and visual elements in an heautonomous relationship. Although speech is provoked by the spotlight, the tale of adultery cannot make sense of the visual image it illuminates. As we begin to piece the verbal fragments together into a narrative whole, their domestic clichés do little to explain Beckett's highly undomesticated visual imagery. 'What constitutes the audio-visual image is a disjunction, a dissociation of the visual and the sound, each heautonomous, but at the same time an incommensurable or 'irrational' relation which connects them to each other, without forming a whole . . . ' (Deleuze 2010: 246). We have already noted how, for Deleuze, the irrational cut or disconnection between images causes the sensory-motor schema to jam or break. Throughout *Play*, sound and vision stand out as non-totalisable elements of a pure optical-sound image. While they occur within the same instant, neither can fully explain the other. It is as if Beckett has brought two opposed and non-communicating worlds

together within a single work. As such, Beckett can allow for elements of variation as no variation could bring audio and visual elements together.

Anthony Minghella directed a screen version of *Play* (2001). Throughout, Minghella emphasises the automation of the audience's perception with a mechanical whirr that accompanies movements of the camera. The inquisitorial light becomes a panoptical surveillance system, presenting Beckett's figures from a variety of angles and depths and frequently moving while they speak. Rather than adding to the work, as Deleuze might lead us to expect, however, we shall see that Minghella's camera consciousness disrupts the direct relationship between spectator and image that Beckett's theatre achieves.

Bair suggests that *Play* includes its audience as a character: 'The experience is almost as if the audience becomes the fifth character (if the light is the fourth), wandering accidentally on stage during a performance . . . ' (Bair 1990: 582). Alternatively, we might ask whether the spotlight does not so much function as a separate character from the audience but automates the manner in which they are brought onto the stage. Rather than permitting us to retain the position of a detached spectator, Beckett includes his audience within the theatrical situation. Unaware of one another, the figures onstage address the audience directly and under the spotlight's commands. Whenever the heads cease to recount their tale, it is to address the audience-light itself.

> M: Looking for something. In my face. Some truth. In my eyes. Not even. {*Spot from* M *to* w2. *Laugh as before from* w2 *cut short as spot from her to* M.} M: Mere eye. No mind. Opening and shutting on me. Am I as much – {*Spot off* M. *Blackout. Three seconds. Spot on* M. Am I as much as . . . being seen? (Beckett 2006: 317)

Writing to George Devine as he prepared to direct *Play*, Beckett suggested that: 'The inquirer (light) begins to emerge as no less a victim of his enquiry than they and (as needing) to be free, within narrow limits, literally to act the part, i.e. to vary if only slightly his speeds and intensities' (Beckett 2001: 112). Here, we have the wavering perception of the theatrical spectator, as understood by Deleuze, retaining his or her distance and autonomy in relation to the image. But Beckett refuses us this freedom, automating our actual perception and including us, through the light, within the theatrical situation as its 'victim'. Beckett's spotlight automates the audience's perception in the same gesture as it automates the figures onstage. Our perception is automated by the image *as* our perception automates the image itself. In this way, the

audience's perception of the image is rendered inseparable from the image perceived.

In Deleuze's terms, Beckett's audience are 'victims' of the failure of recognition. The spotlight, the audience's perception of the image and ultimately the audience themselves are inseparable from an image which they cannot recognise and integrate into their sensory-motor schema. As Knowlson and Pilling write of *Play*'s spotlight: 'It does not function, then, only by prompting them into speech, but is itself prompted like them to enact and re-enact a role within this strange, purgatorial world' (Knowlson and Pilling 1979: 119). Although Minghella's camera consciousness automates our perception, it weakens this sense of our participation with *Play*'s world. Minghella's camera, moving independently of the characters, lacks this element of victimhood in which the audience, through the spotlight, are forced to enact a helpless and impotent role that shares much with *Play*'s characters. With the spotlight, we too are trapped within this image; perception and consciousness forced to continue through our failure of recognition.

In his earliest drama, Beckett included references to his audience and their efforts to make sense of his work. Vladimir and Estragon turn to the auditorium, declaring 'Inspiring prospects' and '... that bog' (Beckett 2006: 15–16). *Endgame*'s Clov turns his telescope upon us observing: 'A multitude ... in transports ... of joy. {*Pause*} That's what I call a magnifier' (106). These darkly comic inclusions of the audience are mirrored by characters concerned that they are beginning to 'mean something' (108). In *Happy Days*, Winnie's tale of the Shower (or Cooker) couple dramatises, ridicules and finally refuses the audience's demand to be told the meaning of Beckett's play.[9] From *Godot* to *Happy Days*, the audience and their struggle to recognise the images before them appear in Beckett's texts. *Play* radicalises this tendency by drawing the audience's perception into the image itself. Now, the audience are not only unable to construct a coherent description of the images before them but are included within the image as victims of this failure. We have passed from the presentation of a pure optical-sound image, where Minghella's production perhaps remains, and towards the inclusion of the audience within a pure *and theatrical* optical-sound *situation*.

As argued here, Ruby Cohn identifies *Play* as marking a break in Beckett's development. 'In the post-*Play* plays fictional and theater situation and place can converge – theatereality. In *Play* the light belongs to theatereality' (Cohn 1980: 28). Cohn's conception of theatereality parallels, in some respects, our notion of a pure and theatrical optical-sound situation. From *Godot* to *Happy Days*, Cohn argues, Beckett's

theatrical spaces are intended to represent fictional worlds – the country road where *Godot*'s tramps are waiting; *Endgame*'s house or shelter. While the light in *Happy Days* represents an unforgiving sun, *Play*'s spotlight belongs to a necessarily theatrical situation. Where Winnie fictionalises her audience through the Shower (or Cooker) couple, the characters of *Play* address the spotlight, and the audience, directly and only because the audience's gaze has fallen upon them. This goes far beyond a brief suspension of the fourth wall, experienced as Estragon or Clov insult the auditorium. In theatereality, Beckett no longer produces a fictional representation, even one that draws attention to its status as fiction or representation. Rather, the pure optical-sound situation encloses audience and stage within a single world, the fourth wall extending to the boundaries of the auditorium.

In Deleuze's account, heroes of the modern cinema find themselves enclosed within and part of a world in which the sensory-motor schema has broken down. 'Man *is not himself* a world other than the one in which he experiences the intolerable and feels himself trapped . . . the psychic situation of the seer, who sees better and further than he can react, that is, think' (Deleuze 2010: 164). Rather than offering a theatre of representation, Beckett's pure and theatrical optical-sound situation becomes a device for immersing the audience within his own intolerable world. We do not merely observe this theatre but find ourselves to be an immanent and constituent part of Beckett's creation. Automated, our perception is at once an inquisitor and victim of the inquisition; both the vision and the casualty of an eye that sees, in Deleuze's terms, further than we can think. Locked within Beckett's unbearable world, we find ourselves belonging to the unthinkable image. While theatre might traditionally ask to be interpreted, this pure and theatrical optical-sound situation demands that it is lived. It forces itself and an encounter upon us that draws thought and consciousness beyond their habitual bonds. We can now ask, expanding our discussion to include Beckett's *Not I*, what may be at stake in such an encounter.

II. Description: A Crystal-Theatre

Like *Play*, Beckett's *Not I* demands the construction of a pure and theatrical optical-sound situation. Eight feet above the stage and a little off-centre, we must spotlight a woman's mouth while leaving the rest of her body in darkness. A covered figure, identified as Auditor, remains silent and still but for four brief and diminishing gestures of 'hopeless compassion' that punctuate MOUTH's monologue. Beckett indicates a

pause: 'There is just enough pause to contain it [Auditor's gesture] as MOUTH recovers from vehement refusal to relinquish the third person' (Beckett 2006: 374). Spoken in the third person throughout, MOUTH's text is delivered at pace but broken up by bursts of laughter, piercing screams and brief, nervy pauses. From her words, we gather that she kept a near permanent silence until her seventieth year when, while picking cowslips in a field one April morning, she began to both hear and speak her 'buzzing' of words.[10]

> ... and all the time this ray or beam ... like moonbeam ... but probably not ... certainly not ... always the same spot ... now bright ... now shrouded ... but always the same spot ... as no moon could ... [...] all part of the same wish to ... torment ... (Beckett 2006: 378)

Not I gives us MOUTH who *speaks*, Auditor who *hears* and the audience who *see*. Theatereality is produced, in part, through this scheme that extends the stage into the auditorium. *Not I*'s stationary spotlight, like *Play*'s mobile spotlight, casts the audience into an inquisitorial role from which we too emerge as a victim. As in *Play*, recognition fails. *Not I*, however, goes beyond *Play*'s heautonomy of sound and vision and achieves a more radical splintering and autonomy of its parts.

Not I's audience will ask themselves who or what is speaking. But MOUTH's monologue resists this question. She is herself 'not I'; split from her thoughts, her voice and her body.[11] Five times, she repeats '... what? . . who? . . no! . . she! . .', refusing to surrender the third person (Beckett 2006: 377–82). Further, MOUTH insists that she has not begun to touch upon the most vital element of her tale and renounces what little she has told as being a mere diversion and mistake.[12]

> ... something she had to tell ... could that be it? . . something that would tell ... *how it was* (...) something she didn't know herself (...) what? . . not that? . . [...] nothing she could tell ... try something else ... think of something else ... oh long after ... *sudden flash* ... not that either (...) so on ... [...] keep on ... trying ... not knowing what ... what she was trying ... ' (Beckett 2006: 381–2; my emphases)

We circle, with Beckett's text, around this obscure kernel of something that cannot be spoken. The fragmented and repetitive monologue unfolds like the testimony of one who is missing and whose final object or meaning cannot be reached. Failing to speak this something, the voice must begin again and MOUTH must return to the moment that her speech began. '... new every morning ... back in the field ... April

morning . . . ' (Beckett 2006: 383). As our own concentration flags, MOUTH's stream of words may periodically rush together into a kind of white noise; the materiality of language overtaking its signifying function and forming a literal buzzing beneath the threshold of meaning.[13] The memories that MOUTH relates – the field in April, a single tear falling onto her hand, a day in court – arise as 'sudden flashes' that refuse to tell us 'how it was'. Rather than forming a narrative whole, like *Play*'s tale of adultery, the fragments of MOUTH's monologue refuse to communicate amongst each other. MOUTH's discourse is splintered into 'sudden flashes', separated by illogical cuts and dislocations, and gaining an asignifying affective autonomy. Finally, Auditor's gesture diminishes into a barely perceptible quiver, no longer representing compassion but receding into a mere intensive vibration of the figure's cloak.

In *Not I*, there are no longer two heautonomous elements of sound and vision but a fragmentation and dispersal of the theatrical situation into a range of autonomous singularities. As she fails to tell us 'how it was', as irrational cuts and intervals splinter Beckett's text and his world, we fail to recognise the pure and theatrical optical-sound situation in which we are immersed. Beyond this failure of our intellectual automatism, however, Beckett's theatre forces another mode of thought upon us; the crystalline description of Deleuze's crystal-image.

In Bergson's habitual and attentive recognition, we draw upon the virtual images of memory. These are actualised as recollection-images that make sense of the present. We link a perception-image with recollection-images in order to construct the action-images of our sensory-motor schema. Memory makes sense of the world by finding resemblances between present experiences and our past. As noted, however, the pure optical-sound situation causes the sensory-motor schema to break down. Here, memory does not seem equal to the encounter. We cannot make sense of what is happening to us. Within his cinema books, Deleuze claims that his crystal-images are the 'true genetic element' of the pure optical-sound image (Deleuze 2010: 67). 'It is an actual-virtual circuit on the spot, and not an actualisation of the virtual in accordance with a shifting actual' (77).

In *Play* and *Not I*, Beckett encloses his audience within a *crystal-theatre*. As no virtual image is equal to the situation, recognition fails. Yet we remain trapped within Beckett's drama. As we fail to actualise any virtual image in relation to Beckett's world, we enter onto Deleuze's actual-virtual circuit. Deleuze claims that, in the course of this thought that thinks through its failure, the process of attentive recognition may achieve a kind of hyperactivity. Virtual memory, in its entirety and

in an indefinitely prolonged process, is called upon to make sense of the encounter. 'Crystalline description stands for its object, ... both creates and erases it ... It is now the description itself which constitutes the sole decomposed and multiplied object' (Deleuze 2010: 122). The immanence of Beckett's crystal-theatre is founded upon the prolongation of this process. Trapped within the actual-virtual circuit, any opposition between spectator and spectacle, real and imaginary, subject and object that description establishes is erased as soon as it is posed.

What is *Play*'s spotlight? It is a spotlight, a common enough theatrical device. Once we affirm that *Play* is merely a theatrical construction, however, we discover that this light has drawn us into a role within Beckett's fiction and that this role does not belong to the imagination alone. Once we say that the spotlight represents an imaginary inquisition, we find ourselves to be the reality behind the inquisitor and that our pursuit for answers is very real. In *Not I* we have a mouth speaking, a figure listening and the audience observing. We are invited to understand the piece as an explicitly theatrical construct, simply set in whatever theatre it is performed. However, throughout *Not I*, the relationship between spectator and spectacle is continually undermined. Auditor is not alone in appearing to be both a spectator and a part of the performance. While the audience find themselves cast into their inquisitorial role, MOUTH is presented as a spectator to her own speech; unsure, as we are, precisely what is being said of whom or why. All three – audience, Auditor and MOUTH – are continually passing through the roles of spectator and spectacle, forcing the circuit of our description to begin again and fail again. In Beckett's crystal-theatre, we are at once 'I' and 'not I'; both audience and actor, torturer and victim, the automaton and the visionary.

In an essay that deals with the ethical experience of Deleuze's philosophy, Aislinn O'Donnell describes the cinematic hero in precisely Beckettian terms. 'The figure of resistance is not the hero. It is the one who fails. Fails again. Fails better. Wandering takes the place of action' (O'Donnell 2011: 229). If Beckett's crystal-theatre is a theatre of resistance then this is because it disrupts the given structures of consciousness. For Deleuze, the perpetual failure of crystalline description transfigures the power of memory. Memory ceases to fix the world and our place within it in accordance to our habitual patterns of thought. Instead, our encounter with the unthinkable prolongs the interval between perception and understanding, action and reaction. By means of this gap, memory is deployed as a creative becoming; what Bergson would call *creative emotion*.[14] As our description is

multiplied, displaced and modified, the various clichés that have automated our thinking lose their sensory-motor coordinates. Taken up by this process of creation and erasure, their interconnections enter a potentially limitless series of metamorphoses. Immersed in Beckett's world, our consciousness takes on Beckett's fragmentation and disorder; a constellation of singularities as we grasp *Not I*'s autonomous intensive flashes, a schizophrenic split as we are caught astride *Play*'s heautonomous worlds of sound and vision. In Beckett's crystal-theatre, we find ourselves living and breathing a logic that is not our own; our failure to think becoming the power of thought to breach its own boundaries and wander, briefly, beyond its walls.

Notes

1. Due to the brevity of this essay, it has not been possible to offer a full account of Deleuze's complex notions of the 'outside' and the 'unthought in thought' as they are developed within his cinema books and throughout his wider philosophical project.
2. Discussing Deleuze's antipathy towards the theatre, Cull writes: 'For instance, we cannot ignore Deleuze's occasional denigration of theatre in relation to his apparently favoured art of the cinema. In *L'Abécédaire*, for instance, as Charles Stivale has reported, Deleuze remarks that theatre tends not to provide opportunities for 'encounters', though with certain exceptions (like Bob Wilson, Carmelo Bene).' (Cull 2009: 1–2).
3. Ronald Bogue, in his commentary on Deleuze's cinema studies, situates Deleuze's conception of the inferiority of the theatre entirely within his discussions of the relationship between audio and visual elements of film (Bogue 2003: 194) Theatre cannot, for Deleuze, create the cinematic 'single sound continuum' where the speech-act becomes inseparable from the out-of-field, non-verbal eruptions and the film's soundtrack or incidental music. Deleuze, however, identifies automation and its relationship to the unthinkable in thought as a more fundamental difference between the cinematic and theatrical experience. 'It is cinema's automatic character which gives it this capacity – in contrast to the theatre' (Deleuze 2010: 172).
4. One senses that Deleuze is compelled to write *One Less Manifesto* partly in order to critique the theatre's representational and molar functions and clear the way for a genuine encounter with Bene's world of 'universal becoming' (Deleuze 2000a: 256). Throughout, Deleuze argues against molar structures of thought that identify only a representational function of the theatre; particularly those that would glorify and limit the theatre to its capacity to represent 'conflicts, contradictions and oppositions' (Deleuze 2000a: 252). Deleuze's somewhat offhand dismissal of so-called 'angry women' who accuse Bene of sexism and phallocentrism in his representation of the female body can be explained (if not entirely excused) by Deleuze's determination to present Bene's drama as a theatre of minority becoming that would be, for Deleuze, impervious to such critique.
5. For a discussion of the crisis of cliché, habitual modes of thought and the corresponding development of time- and crystal-images, see the last chapter of *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* (Deleuze 2009: 201–19) and the first chapter of *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* (Deleuze 2010: 1–23).

6. See the third chapter of *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* (Deleuze 2010: 42–52).
7. 'A purely optical and sound situation does not extend into action, any more than it is induced by an action. It makes us grasp, it is supposed to make us grasp, something intolerable and unbearable' (Deleuze 2010: 17).
8. Here, Deleuze is discussing the relationship between cinema and Bergson's philosophy in reference to their shared concerns with movement and time.
9. '… this man Shower – or Cooker – no matter – and the woman … standing there gaping at me … What's she doing? he says – stuck up to her diddies in the bleeding ground – coarse fellow – What does it mean? he says – What's it meant to mean? – and so on – lot more stuff like that – usual drivel …' (Beckett 2006: 156).
10. '… what? . . the buzzing? . . yes … all the time the buzzing … so-called … in the ears … though of course actually … not in the ears at all … in the skull …' (Beckett 2006: 378). MOUTH refers to this buzzing throughout and in such a way as to imply that it is a voice in her skull, transmitted by her mouth.
11. MOUTH is clearly not in control of the 'buzzing' voice which she is transmitting. Further, she insists on the absence of any physical or emotional feeling. During the first minutes of the play, she asks whether she is being punished and must suffer for her sins before asserting that she is not suffering after all (Beckett 2006: 377). Though she screams, she does so only in order to see whether such a thing is possible and what might come of it (Beckett 2006: 378). She does not know whether she is standing, sitting or lying down and merely presumes that her eyelids have continued to blink (Beckett 2006: 377, 378).
12. This element of *Not I*'s construction should put one in mind of *The Unnamable* and Beckett's question: 'What am I to do, what shall I do, what should I do, in my situation, how proceed? By aporia pure and simple? Or by affirmations and negations invalidated as soon as uttered, or sooner or later … Otherwise it would be quite hopeless. But it is quite hopeless' (Beckett 2009: 285). Indeed, Knowlson reports: 'Asked further about the sources of *Not I*, Beckett referred questioners back to his own novel *The Unnamable*' (Knowlson 1997: 590).
13. This is an experience recounted in Ruby Cohn's description of *Not I*. 'As our concentration flags in the theatre, MOUTH and her words become for us an actual buzz and a ray' (Cohn 1980: 20).
14. In his study of Bergson, for example, Deleuze notes: 'By means of this interval, something extraordinary is produced or embodied: creative emotion … a cosmic Memory, that actualises all the levels at the same time, that liberates man from the plane or the level that is proper to him' (Deleuze 2006: 111). The importance of this interval or gap for Deleuze's conception of art encounters that force thought beyond its habitual bonds has been recently emphasised by both O'Sullivan (O'Sullivan 2006: 45–6) and O'Donnell (O'Donnell 2011: 223) to name only two writers who have influenced this study.

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Potentiality as a Life: Deleuze, Agamben, Beckett

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Abstract

In *Essays Critical and Clinical*, Deleuze argues that Beckettian characters usually strive towards becoming imperceptible. This statement immediately poses another question: what is becoming imperceptible and where does it lead? How can we rid ourselves of ourselves? Paradoxically enough, Deleuze states that becoming imperceptible is life. The literal and self-evident meaning of life seems somehow incompatible with the image of dissolving and decaying characters in Beckett's works. Contrary to this self-evidence, the notion of life in Deleuze and Beckett should be interpreted as pure potentiality which opens both the potential to be (or do) and the potential not to be (or do). Beckettian characters together with other figures, such as Bartleby, let us think of a life in its potential not to be. The life of the individual gives way to impersonal and singular life: a life of pure immanence. Such a life can be immanent to a man who no longer has a name, though he can be mistaken for no other: the Beckettian Unnamable.

Keywords: becoming imperceptible, a life, potentiality, virtuality

In *Essays Critical and Clinical*, Deleuze discusses Beckett's *Film* as an attempt to escape both perception and self-perception: 'How does one become imperceptible?' (Deleuze 1997: 23). He invites us to imagine Bishop Berkeley who had enough of being perceived and of perceiving. There is something unbearable in being perceived. Referring to Beckett's *Film*, Deleuze asks: 'How can we rid ourselves of ourselves, and

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demolish ourselves?' (Deleuze 2008: 69). This is, as Deleuze has put it, 'the problem', which is followed by 'the general solution': we can get rid of ourselves by becoming imperceptible. 'Becoming imperceptible is Life, "without cessation or condition" ... attaining to a cosmic and spiritual lapping' (Deleuze 1997: 26). This 'general solution' poses many theoretical problems: what does becoming imperceptible mean in Deleuze and Beckett's universe and where does it lead? If becoming imperceptible leads to molecular dissolution, what does a life signify in this specific context? And, finally, what are the conditions of possibility for becoming imperceptible? Can we examine this possibility in terms of pure potentiality?

I. Deleuze: A Life

In his last text, *Pure Immanence: Essays on A Life*, Deleuze introduces the notion of a life which is quite different from any understanding of life as the self or personal identity. Contrary to these expectations, a life refers to 'impersonal individuation rather than personal individualization', to 'singularities rather than particularities' (Rajchman 2005: 8). A life is an indefinite quality, a 'virtuality', which may appear in the actual life of the individual. Deleuze refers to Charles Dickens's novel *Our Mutual Friend*, and especially to an episode describing a dying man:

> Between his life and his death, there is a moment that is only that of *a* life playing with death. The life of the individual gives way to an impersonal and yet singular life that releases a pure event freed from the accidents of internal and external life, that is, from the subjectivity and objectivity of what happens [...] The life of such individuality fades away in favor of the singular life immanent to a man who no longer has a name, though he can be mistaken for no other. A singular essence, a life ... (Deleuze 2005: 28–9)

Deleuze speaks about singularities without individualities: for example, very small children do not have individuality but they have singularities: a smile, a gesture ... These singularities can also be reached by becoming imperceptible, which ends by becoming like everybody else. This is the experience of F. Scott Fitzgerald: 'after a real rupture, one succeeds ... in being just like everybody else' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 308). Becoming everybody/everything (*devenir tout le monde*) means many things: it is becoming imperceptible, becoming indiscernible, becoming impersonal. As far as all these features relate to the Body without Organs,[1] we can presume that becoming imperceptible

leads not to nothingness or the total dissolution of the subject but to the virtual state of the Body without Organs. This virtual state of the Body without Organs comes into play by haecceity, in the production of intensities, in the medium of becoming and transformation (558–9). Becoming imperceptible is a passage from one state to another, an increase or decrease in power (a virtual quality).

> Such is the link between imperceptibility, indiscernibility, and impersonality – the three virtues. To reduce oneself to an abstract line, a trait, in order to find one's zone of indiscernibility with other traits, and in this way enter the haecceity and impersonality of the creator. One is then like grass: one has made the world, everybody/everything, into a becoming . . . (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 309)

The haecceity and impersonality of the creator is what Deleuze calls a life. In this sense, 'A life contains only virtuals. It is made up of virtualities, events, singularities' (Deleuze 2005: 31). By virtuality, Deleuze means that it is not something that lacks reality but something that can be actualised in any event or a state of things, in any object or subject. Regardless of these actualisations, the plane of immanence, which is also the plane of the Body without Organs, is purely virtual and contains only virtualities. 'Events or singularities give to the plane all their virtuality, just as the plane of immanence gives virtual events their full reality' (31). Being a virtual quality, a life may or may not connect with the life of the individual: it appears in the writings of Dickens or Fitzgerald and especially in Beckett, because 'nothing is ever finished in Beckett, nothing ever dies' (Deleuze 1997: 26). Immobilised, paralysed and submerged in a state of becoming imperceptible, Beckett's characters still reconnect to this virtual quality of a life which keeps them going. As Deleuze points out, 'When the character dies, as Murphy said, it is because he has already begun to move in spirit. He is like a cork floating on a tempestuous ocean: he no longer moves, but is in an element that moves' (26). This is what becoming imperceptible strives for: to get rid of perception and self-perception, to empty space both from objects and the subject, to rid ourselves of ourselves. At the end of Beckett's *Film*, after all possible amputations,

> The room has lost its partitions, and releases an atom into the luminous void, an impersonal yet singular atom that no longer has a Self by which it might distinguish itself from or merge with others. Becoming imperceptible is Life, 'without cessation or condition' . . . attaining to a cosmic and spiritual lapping. (Deleuze 1997: 26)

II. Agamben: Pure Potentiality

Giorgio Agamben in his essay 'Absolute Immanence' reads Deleuze's last text[2] with wonder and great admiration. What is a life? What does it mean that a life is virtual and consists only of virtualities? Agamben, referring to specific punctuation in Deleuze's text (a colon, ellipsis dots), points out the indeterminate character of this term: contrary to the life of the individual, a life refers to impersonal and non-organic power. 'The technical term *a life*... expresses this transcendental determinability of immanence as singular life, its absolutely virtual nature and its definition through this virtuality alone' (Agamben 1999: 224). The most important thing here is that life for Deleuze might do without any individuality: in other words, it is detached from individual or subjective consciousness; but a life always has a singularity, a haecceity. In this sense, a life eludes all transcendence of the subject and of the object: a life is a pure immanence because it is immanent only to itself. Quite paradoxically, Agamben equates the Deleuzian notion of life with his own notion of bare life: for example, referring to Dickens's text, he points out that 'The fact is that the *bare life* that it presents seems to come to light only in the moment of its struggle with death' (230; my emphasis). Agamben is right to state that the notion of life appears simultaneously in the works of Michel Foucault and Deleuze; but if for Foucault life explicitly relates to the question of the body and of population, what it means for Deleuze remains quite mysterious. Nevertheless, Agamben interprets the term saying that

> the difficult attempt to clarify the vertigo of immanence by means of 'a life' leads us instead into an area that is even more uncertain, in which the child and the dying man present us with the enigmatic cipher of *bare biological life* as such. (Agamben 1999: 230; my emphasis)

Bare biological life is one of the key concepts in Agamben: bare life is the 'invention' of power, it is the object of power and at the same time the resistance to power. Thus, for Agamben bare biological life necessarily is a political category, engendering both the annihilation and the extension (procreation) of life.

Another interesting thing in Agamben's reading of the Deleuzian text is related to the notion of potentiality. First, Agamben's reading of the Deleuzian text on a life appears in the chapter on potentiality. Second, Agamben several times interprets 'a life' in terms of pure potentiality, although this term is missing in the English translation of the book. For example, Agamben translates the Deleuzian example of a child's smile as

an instance of pure potentiality: 'The smallest infants are traversed by an immanent life that is pure potentiality [*pure puissance*], even beatitude through suffering and weaknesses' (Agamben 1999: 230).[3] Trying to find the meaning of the 'vertigo' of immanence, Agamben discusses two possible modes of understanding vitalism in Deleuze: the first as act without essence, the second as potentiality without action. Agamben points out that

> As absolute immanence, *a life*... is pure contemplation beyond every subject and object of knowledge; it is pure potentiality that preserves without acting. Brought to the limit of this new concept of contemplative life – or, rather, living contemplation – we cannot then fail to examine the other characteristic that, in Deleuze's last text, defines life. In what sense can Deleuze state that *a life*... is 'potentiality, complete beatitude?' (Agamben 1999: 234)[4]

Agamben explains that in the field of immanence desire is immanent to itself and in this sense it lacks nothing. Potentiality is a life that preserves itself, desires itself and is complete in its immanence. 'It is, then, possible to comprehend why Deleuze writes that a life is "potentiality, complete beatitude" ', he continues. 'Life is "composed of virtuality"; it is pure potentiality that coincides with Being, as in Spinoza, and potentiality, insofar as it "lacks nothing" [...]' (Agamben 1999: 237).

In the last citation, Agamben equates his own notion of potentiality with the Deleuzian notion of virtuality. The notion of potentiality or the potential should be differentiated from the notion of possibility because Deleuze makes a clear distinction between 'the possible' and 'the virtual'.[5] For Deleuze, the possible doubles reality and simply waits to be realised; by contrast, virtuality or potentiality does not have to be realised because it is already real; virtuality or potentiality can be actualised following the lines of differentiation and divergence. Similarly, for Agamben, a potentiality, in distinction from mere possibility, means the potential for something to be and not to be at the same time. In other words, it introduces the occurrence of contingency. As Agamben points out, 'It is a potentiality that is not simply the potential to do this or that thing but potential to not-do, potential not to pass into actuality' (Agamben 1999: 179–80). Following Aristotle, this means that all potentiality is also an impotentiality of the same and in respect to the same. 'Beings that exist in the mode of potentiality *are capable of their own impotentiality*; and only in this way do they become potential' (182). Agamben explains this potentiality of not being as a fundamental passivity which is at the heart of every potentiality: 'Every human power is *adynamia*, impotentiality' (182). Without this potential

of not to be, potentiality would have passed into actuality and would be indistinguishable from it. But this is the biggest challenge for philosophy: how to think of the potentiality of not being?

The example of such a potentiality of not being Agamben finds in Melville's Bartleby – a character that is also very important for Deleuze. Deleuze interprets Bartleby's formula 'I would prefer not to' as an exhaustion of language and of all action possibilities. Bartleby counts what he prefers not to do and at the same time renders what he was doing impossible.

> The formula is devastating because it eliminates the preferable just as mercilessly as any nonpreferred. It not only abolishes the term it refers to, and that it rejects, but also abolishes the other term it seemed to preserve, and that becomes impossible. In fact, it renders them indistinct: it hollows out an ever expanding zone of indiscernibility or indetermination between some nonpreferred activities and a preferable activity. [...] I would prefer nothing rather than something: not a will to nothingness, but the growth of a nothingness of the will. (Deleuze 1997: 71)

Here we see that the great metaphysical question 'Why there is something rather than nothing?' is interpreted by Bartleby in the opposite way: 'I prefer nothing instead of something.' Deleuze interprets this non-preference not as a will to nothingness (a formula for nihilism) but as nothingness catching the will itself, as a pure patient passivity. Deleuze points out that many other of Melville's characters prefer 'no will at all, a nothingness of the will rather than a will to nothingness [...] They can only survive by becoming stone, by denying the will and sanctifying themselves in this suspension' (Deleuze 1997: 80). This nothingness of will is also the main feature of Beckett's characters: here we can think about Molloy, Malone and the character of *The Unnamable* who prefer to become imperceptible or indiscernible on the surface of the earth.

It is precisely this nothingness of the will that makes Bartleby an extreme figure of potentiality: 'As a scribe who has stopped writing, Bartleby is the extreme figure of the Nothing from which all creation derives; and at the same time, he constitutes the most implacable vindication of this Nothing as pure, absolute potentiality' (Agamben 1999: 253–4). Thus, Bartleby's formula 'I would prefer not to' equally opens the potential to be (or do) and the potential not to be (or do). Agamben carefully reads Aristotle's doctrine of potentiality: 'For Aristotle, all potential to be or to do something is always also potential not to be or not to do (*dynamis mē einai, mē energein*), without which

potentiality would always already have passed into actuality and would be indistinguishable from it [. . .]' (245). The potential not to be is crucial here and it transforms every potentiality into an impotentiality. The architect has the potential to build even if he does nothing; Bartleby has the potential to work even if he prefers not to. While Aristotle defines the possible-potential (*dynaton*) as something which in the process of realisation eliminates its potential not to be (or impotentiality),[6] Agamben points out that it is precisely the potential not to be (or contingency) that is at the core of the notion of potentiality. Agamben recalls *Theodicy* by Leibniz, which describes the Palace of Destinies, composed of infinite chambers with different possible destinies. This 'Baroque inferno of potentiality' shows everything that could have been, but was not and 'in which nothing is compossible with anything else and nothing can take place' (266). Contrary to this mausoleum of possibilities, Bartleby keeps open the potential not to be and in this sense redefines a life as contingency.

III. Deleuze and Beckett: Potentiality as Exhaustion

The question of potentiality reappears in Deleuze's text on Beckett – 'The Exhausted'. Here, Deleuze describes Beckett's character as someone who is exhausted in relation to potentiality. This is explained through the distinction between someone who is tired and someone who is exhausted: 'The tired person has merely exhausted the realization, whereas the exhausted person exhausts the whole of the possible. The tired person can no longer realize, but the exhausted person can no longer possibilize' (Deleuze 1997: 152). The tired person is someone who cannot do something, but the exhausted exhausts the potential to be (or do) and not to be (or do) and drowns into impotentiality. Deleuze points out that tiredness and exhaustion presuppose a different combinatorial logic: in tiredness the possible is realised according to a certain plan or goal; one possibility is preferred and realised and another is excluded (you can choose shoes to go out or slippers to stay in). By contrast, in exhaustion one possibility is not excluded for another but all possibilities coexist with one another and become interchangeable (for example: shoes to stay in; slippers to go out). 'The disjunctions subsist, [. . .] but the disjointed terms are affirmed in their nondecomposable distance [. . .] The disjunction has become *inclusive*: everything divides, but into itself [. . .]' (153). This means that in exhaustion all possibilities coexist in potentiality without any structure or plan. They are not only possible or impossible but compossible, coexisting in their potentiality.

As such, potentiality is not something to be realised (only possibility can be realised) but a contingency that can or cannot occur: 'One no longer realizes, even though one accomplishes something. [...] one remains active, but for nothing. One was tired of something, but one is exhausted by nothing' (153). Exhaustion as potentiality is non-preference: 'I would prefer not to', Bartleby's Beckettian formula. 'Beckett's characters play with the possible without realizing it; they are too involved in a possibility that is ever more restricted in its kind to care about what is still happening' (153).

Deleuze calls this 'play with the possible without realizing it' the combinatorial and establishes a connection between the combinatorial and exhaustion: 'Must one be exhausted to give oneself over to the combinatorial, or is it the combinatorial that exhausts us, that leads us to exhaustion [...]?' (Deleuze 1997: 154). Deleuze refers to different combinatorial practices in Beckett: this is the combination of 'sucking stones' in *Molloy*, or the combination of five small biscuits in *Murphy*. The combinatorial relates to specific practices of exhaustion of language, words and things, and also the exhaustion of potentialities of space in *Quad*. These potentialities are counted without any interest or preference, because they are revealed not to be realised (to be or do) but to open their potential not to be or not to do. In Beckett's universe, there are no necessities (cannot not be) or possibilities (can be); there are only contingencies, which equally open the potentiality and impotentiality.

Sarah Gendron points out that the potentiality not to be is one of the main features of Beckettian characters:

> This is the status of the majority of Beckett's characters: if they *are*, what they *are* is 'not quite there'. [...] Some of his characters are literally absent in one way or another. 'Auditor' in *Not I* can, for example, be seen but not heard. Others, like 'V', the offstage voice in *Footfalls*, can be heard but not seen. (Gendron 2004: 49–50)

Beckett's characters are always on the edge of nothingness, about to vanish or expire, like Malone in *Malone Dies*, or the character of *The Unnamable*. Some of these characters, like ghosts or the chorus of urns (*Play*), never promised to be present. Some of them are only body parts, or the Organs without Bodies, like MOUTH in *Not I*. As Gendron points out,

> Beckett's subjects [...] greatly resemble what Deleuze calls the 'virtual object', an entity that escapes determination, and in particular humanization. [...] They are, like Ada, May, V, and Willy never *quite there*. Never fully present,

> they are also never entirely absent. They have the property of 'being *and* not being where they are, wherever they go'. (Gendron 2004: 51)

Regardless of their vague existence, Beckettian characters still have this quality of life, of immanent substance, which keeps them going. For example, in *Malone Dies* the character states:

> But what matter whether I was born or not, have lived or not, am dead or merely dying, I shall go on doing as I have always done, not knowing what it is I do, nor who I am, nor where I am, nor if I am. (Beckett 2010a: 53)

The character is always in the process of becoming imperceptible, becoming the virtual Body without Organs, which can take different shapes and consistencies: sometimes 'I go liquid and become like mud', sometimes 'I am so hard and contracted' (Beckett 2010a: 51); sometimes the character can hardly resist the sensation of dilation, so that his body covers the surface of the world, sometimes he shrivels and shrivels (61–2). He would gladly give himself the shape and consistency of an egg, 'with two holes no matter where to prevent it from bursting, for the consistency is more like that of mucilage' (Beckett 2010b: 15). But the most important thing is that by becoming imperceptible he brings his molecular components into play with the world – he makes a world:

> perhaps that's what I feel, an outside and an inside and me in the middle, perhaps that's what I am, the thing that divides the world in two, on the one side the outside, on the other the inside, that can be as thin as foil, I'm neither one side nor the other, I'm in the middle, I'm the partition, I've two surfaces and no thickness, perhaps that's what I feel, myself vibrating, I'm the tympanum, on the one hand the mind, on the other the world, I don't belong to either [. . .] (Beckett 2010b: 100)

Although the Beckettian subject always already appears in the mode of impotentiality, it is precisely this impotentiality that carries a life in its pure potentiality.

Notes

1. The three characteristics defining the becoming imperceptible (the (anorganic) imperceptible, the (asignifying) indiscernible, and the (asubjective) impersonal) relate with the three characteristics defining the Body without Organs: the disarticulation of the body, the deconstruction of signification, and desubjectification (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 177, 308). From this we can conclude that becoming imperceptible leads toward becoming the Body without Organs.

2. Deleuze's *Pure Immanence: Essays on A Life* originally was published under the title *L'Immanence: Une Vie* (Editions de Minuit, 1995), which is translated by Agamben as *Immanence: A Life* (Agamben 1999: 221).
3. In English translation: 'Small children, through all their suffering and weaknesses, are infused with an immanent life that is pure power and even bliss' (Deleuze 2005: 30).
4. In English translation: 'complete power, complete bliss' (Deleuze 2005: 27).
5. In *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze makes a distinction between 'the potential or virtual object', which can be actualised through differentiation and divergence, and the logical possibility, or the possible, which resembles the real (Deleuze 2004: 263–4). On the difference between the virtual and the possible, also see *Bergsonism* (Deleuze 1991: 96–7).
6. 'A thing is said to be potential if, when the act of which it is said to be potenial is realized, there will be nothing impotential' (Aristotle *Metaphysics*, 1047 a 24–6, cited in Agamben 1999: 264).

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Book Reviews

Scott Wilson (2008) *The Order of Joy: Beyond the Cultural Politics of Enjoyment*, New York: SUNY Press
and
Gregg Lambert (2006) *Who's Afraid of Deleuze and Guattari?*, London and New York: Continuum.

Where does the theoretical battle between Lacan and Deleuze stand today? Has a battle that, begun amidst the fallout from Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus* and pitched polemically as the final tussle between ontological negativity and positivity, finally ceased, or have the very terms of battle themselves been irrevocably questioned? With the recent English publication of François Dosse's joint biography *Deleuze-Guattari* (2010), Anglophone academia has an opportunity to assess more closely the multifaceted and frequently obstreperous relation between Deleuze, his former Lacanian co-author Guattari, and Lacan himself, to say nothing of Freudian psychoanalysis more generally. Dosse's commentary renders Lacan as little more than a hazy, mythical outline, a shadow to be escaped by Guattari through his pioneering work in group analysis at the La Borde clinic and to be endlessly resented and shadow-boxed by Deleuze, who nevertheless seems to borrow much from Lacan in his single-authored books of the late 1960s.

In this essay, I will try to fill in something of that mythical outline, and in so doing try to indicate the irretrievable convergences and divergences that make the Lacan/Deleuze disjunction an especially fruitful one for contemporary theory. In the interstice between Lacan and Deleuze lie pressing questions around the interface between theory and politics, around the relative importance of metaphysics for contemporary thought, and around the question of language and the symbolic in their relation, positive or negative, to philosophical and artistic creation. My guide in broaching these questions will be two books, very different

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in style and approach but both implicated in the debate in useful ways: Gregg Lambert's *Who's Afraid of Deleuze and Guattari?* and Scott Wilson's *The Order of Joy: Beyond the Cultural Politics of Enjoyment*. I hope to sketch a divergent portrait of Deleuze and Lacan that inserts both within a wider context of understanding, one defined by the schism between two particular approaches to modernity, and to modernism: maximalism and minimalism. One approach, maximalism, would respond to the discrepancy between history and any attempted theoretical or artistic representation of its movements through an affirmational insistence on life, or time, or desire as vital forces that cut across temporal distinctions; the other, minimalism, would subtract all but the most formal elements necessary to invoke the disjunction between history and its theorisation, or between modernity and modernism.

There has been comparatively little work done on the relation between Lacan, Deleuze and the intersection of modernity and modernism, both concepts bound up with a particular reading of the relation between history and the persistence of a philosophical and artistic avant-garde pitched against its tide. The cultural and literary references that pepper the work of both thinkers are canonically modernist: in Lacan, the persistent references to Joyce and, to a lesser extent, Beckett, are intimately related to his subtractive and formalist vision of psychoanalysis. Just as Beckett's late plays and novels assumed a more and more minimalist form, so would the form of Lacan's work – principally his famous seminar – and the conceptual framework that unfolded within it take on the spare, ascetic character redolent of the high modernism of the second half of the twentieth century. Deleuze, too, would devote much attention to Beckett and to the modernist vortexes of Francis Bacon, but despite the plethora of references to avant-garde culture from his early work up to his extraordinary books on cinema, the conceptual framework that animated his thought would resist the subtractive current of modernist experimentation, instead adopting something of a maximalist insistence on the primacy of positivity and life as the condition of any truly creative philosophical avant-garde. Underpinning this metaphysics of creation lies a conception of desire stripped of any determinant negativity, arguably more Freudian than Lacanian in its insistence on an originary positivity prior to the territorialisation of desiring flows in temporary sediments or 'machines'[1]

This is only a rough typology, to be sure, and one should not make the mistake of buying wholesale Deleuze and Guattari's own occasional mischaracterisation of Lacan in the two volumes of *Capitalism and*

Schizophrenia as a thinker dedicated to constitutive negativity and the shackling of desire to Oedipal law. Lacan's later seminars, in particular, emphasise consistently a concept, *jouissance*, entirely removed from the constrictive domain of a positive/negative opposition. As the internal excess that attends the operation of symbolic castration, *jouissance* can be said to transcend the dialectic of negativity that characterises desire in its usual, tragic form. To this extent, *jouissance* is something of a conceptual cousin to Lacan's famous *objet petit a*, the object that 'falls out' of the Symbolic as an avatar of the division of the subject and as an embodiment of desire's tragic movements.

The psychoanalytic object, for Lacan, and somewhat paradoxically, is to be found outside the bounds of the standard subject/object opposition, and as such outside the bounds of any distinction between positivity and negativity, affirmation or negation, although its relation to desire implicates it nonetheless in the terrain of subjective division and failure that discords with Deleuze's emphasis on vital creation. *Jouissance*, in particular, is central to Scott Wilson's *The Order of Joy*, a book that admirably attempts to put Lacanian concepts to work rather than continue their seemingly endless exegesis, and that uses aspects of Deleuze's thought to incite Lacanian ideas to take on new forms outside their clinical application. Indeed, *jouissance* might be useful as a bridging concept between Lacan and Deleuze; while Deleuze makes much of *objet petit a* in his *Difference and Repetition* and *Logic of Sense*, it is *jouissance* as the excessive substance of the human drive that most closely cleaves to the prevailing vitalism of Deleuze's metaphysics. There are as many differences as similarities, of course, and these will become apparent in my reading of Wilson's book.

The Order of Joy is situated between philosophy, psychoanalysis and cultural studies. Much of its argumentative structure is derived from a similar merging of conceptual coordinates, with Deleuze's insistence on vital immanence intermixed with a Lacanian concern for the articulation of subjective and social forms of signification and affect. The principle virtue of Wilson's book, despite its occasional forays into overstatement and undertheorisation, is its willingness to find common cause in Lacan and Deleuze, not merely as an academic exercise but as a means to throw light on prevailing political and cultural concerns. The 'order of joy' is the name Wilson gives to the contemporary conjuncture of war, commerce and the state, a conjuncture widely defined as characteristic of a 'supercapitalism' that has all but destroyed the meaningful distinctions between law, transgression, citizen and commodity, distinctions that sustained the normative governmental discourses of the twentieth

century. As Wilson writes, 'the empire thrives on the disorder in which various multitudes assemble and disassemble in different divisions of joy' (25). The book is ordered as an investigation in turn of each of these poles of contemporary life, with a sustained emphasis on the ways in which each element of contemporary capitalism – war, commerce, the state – organises the forms of joy that both sustain and threaten them.

Given its centrality to the architecture of Wilson's argument, 'joy' itself remains relatively underspecified conceptually. Indeed, it seems to act mainly as a placeholder or avatar for the various kinds of pleasure that, for Wilson, are the main aim and the main result of contemporary cultural and political practices in the 'West'. As he writes, in typically unequivocal fashion, 'A general economy of pleasure, enjoyment, and joy shapes particular orders of subjective experience. Pleasure and pain constitute a continuous, fluctuating surface that provides the interior and exterior boundary of the subject in its sensitive broaching of the real' (xv). Thus, the task of the contemporary theorist is to unlock the various manifestations of pleasure and displeasure as they fuel the growth of supercapitalism and its various pathologies. Lacanian *jouissance*, as a kind of affect that transcends the old and, for Wilson at least, superseded dialectic between law and transgression, is the principle inspiration underlying Wilson's invocation of 'joy', but it is through the articulation of the an-economism of *jouissance* with the immanence of Deleuze's metaphysics that Wilson's theoretical wager lies.[2] The conceptual function of 'joy', as well as providing an umbrella for the various kinds of affect that Wilson reads off the intersecting surfaces of war, economy and governance, is also designed to provide a buffer against what Wilson describes as the 'hyperrationalism' of Lacanian theory as it has been formalised by Jacques-Alain Miller, the general editor of Lacan's seminars.

The question of formalisation captures an interesting tension between the differing heritages of Lacan and Deleuze, and one intimately connected to the minimalism/maximalism typology I identify above. Wilson broadly follows Elizabeth Roudinesco's characterisation of Jacques-Alain Miller's editorial project, arguing that 'Miller's growing influence was itself one of the reasons why Deleuze and Guattari wanted to give Lacan "some help" in the liberation of some of his concepts from the dogmatism that was surrounding them' (4). The easy equation of formalisation, something that Lacan held as being essential for the growth of psychoanalysis as a theoretical science, with dogmatism here underlines Wilson's essentially Deleuzo-Guattarian commitment to an ontological fluidity, a fluidity that repeatedly bleeds into the conceptual

structure of his argument. The implication of Wilson's aversion to Miller's formalism is that psychoanalytic categories must mirror the flux and contingency of the contemporary order if they are to have any purchase on it. Indeed, much of the polemical focus of Wilson's analysis of 'supercapitalism' comes from his repeated insistence that previously discrete categories are now so thoroughly in flux as to be formally indistinguishable, a process of merging, of a kind of forced and absolute becoming, that typifies the violent impact of excessive control and the 'imperial power of capital'. Wilson's insistence on the violent interpenetration and growing indistinctness of aspects of contemporary life reaches its apogee in the following:

> The following questions, therefore, need to be posed to the concept of jouissance in an era when the concepts of work, leisure, knowledge, production, truth, meaning, the good, utility, sex, the body have become problematized to such a degree that they barely seem operative. (11)

But we might ask whether, far from hobbling our analyses of contemporary politics and culture, the development of a formal language serves to cut us off, however temporarily, from the immanent flux and disorder that is itself now an ideological and structural prerequisite for the sustenance and expansive power of capital, and in so doing gives us temporary access to the interstitial space of critique. As many have already cautioned, is there not a danger that, by closely cleaving to the presumed fluidity of forms of social life, a Deleuzian analytical language risks reproducing what it purports to critique? Or instead, one might argue that there is, in fact, nothing inherent to the construction of a relatively stable conceptual language that *precludes* its adaptation to the exigencies of history and political change; indeed, a fair amount of Wilson's diagnostic of contemporary capitalism is striking, despite its vaunted lack of 'dogmatism', for its rigid ahistoricism, in the sense that its conceptual architecture, whilst built up with a rhetoric of intensity and difference, is rather too firmly fixed in place (exclusively, the 'West' of advanced capitalism and consumption) and time. One gets little sense from Wilson's analysis of how the particular types of joy that he identifies emerge, and how they might be replaced.

To return to the categories of minimalism and maximalism I introduced earlier, we can characterise aspects of Wilson's *The Order of Joy* as embodying the point at which a commitment to a non-hierarchical theoretical language of immanence, one underpinned by the privileging of a non-representational substance or affect ('joy' in this instance), tips over into an uncomfortably rigid *minimalism*, one that precludes

the distance and critical flexibility that the best analytical languages afford us. The subtractive conceptual minimalism that I associate with Lacan, by contrast, is one that permits a sense of the interdependence of our categories of analysis while permitting an estranging distance between the language and object of analysis, an estrangement itself conceptualised as the very condition for the disjunction and articulation of the signifier and the Real. A good comparative example, and one that Wilson himself puts to interesting effect, is Lacan's use of knots. Frequently and incorrectly dated to the 1970s, Lacan had in fact held a fascination throughout his career with the non-representational power of knots, and in particular with the ways in which they might be used to bypass the semantic structures of language to directly instantiate the interpenetration of psychoanalytic concepts and phenomena. Wilson uses the figure of the Borromean knot, well known as Lacan's favoured figure to instantiate the interpenetration of the orders of the Imaginary, Symbolic and the Real, to figure the overlapping of commerce, war and the state, and to highlight the commingling of his own categories of 'joyful immanence', 'anorganic joy' and the 'event'.

Briefly put, Wilson envisions 'joyful immanence' as placed at the intersection of war and commerce, and as designating the point at which 'an extreme activity meets and becomes indistinguishable from an extreme passivity, in a passionate hatred indistinguishable from love' (27). (Notice again Wilson's compulsive elision and conflation of concepts.) Broadly identifiable as the subjective condition of supercapitalism, joyful immanence signifies the point at which consumption and the production of death in war become articulated. Anorganic joy, by contrast, signifies for Wilson the intersection of war and governance, 'where modes of control overcode the real on a plane of intensity', and where 'governance itself becomes militarized, totalitarian, and control takes a combative and lethal form, particularly with regard to its own population' (26). Joy is here conceptually severed from any particular organism, becoming instead the rootless affect traded between differing forms of the military-governmental nexus. Finally, 'event' designates the relative eclipse of meaning, and in particular the severing of a lack of meaning from its (supposed) conditioning in Lacan by the logic of the signifier. Wilson writes, 'The event that must be affirmed is the death of meaning (or God or judgement), the event that irrupts precisely in the default of function' (31). Thus, supercapitalism is defined by Wilson by its mode of appearing, in the form of irruptions that preclude any resort to the representational and differential logic of the signifier.

For all that one might celebrate the tenacity and originality of Wilson's refiguring of the concept of affect in a sweeping and ambitious diagnosis of contemporary capitalism, and for all that one might lament the lack of context and periodisation with which Wilson imposes his analysis, my focus will remain on the *form* that Wilson's analysis takes, against his own misgivings about the prioritisation of form over content. To do so means to leave aside the multiple cultural analyses that pepper the text, from disquisitions on *Trainspotting* to a perceptive reading of *The Bonfire of the Vanities*. It is not always clear how these cultural interludes elucidate or contribute to the wider stakes of Wilson's argument, but they provide some welcome colour.

What are the stakes, then, of Wilson's appropriation of the Borromean knot, and how might the alternative conceptual minimalism of Lacan's use of the knot highlight some of the limits of Wilson's, and by extension Deleuze and Guattari's, insistence on the plane of immanence? Principally, Wilson extracts from the three interlaced rings of the knot an emphasis on intersection, on the constitutivity of the borderzone, most obviously within the context of the articulation of the aforementioned three variants of joy, but by implication also in the almost apocalyptic vision of contemporary politics that frames the theoretical argument. As Wilson puts it, 'It is where they intersect [...] that the new divisions of joy can be discerned, divisions that disclose the characteristic symptomatology or structure of feeling that characterises supercapitalism' (11). Leaving aside the problematic conflation here of 'affect' and 'feeling', surely concepts that any sustained reflection on the heritage of psychoanalysis in contemporary cultural theory must take pains to differentiate, what is most striking in Wilson's appropriation of the Borromean knot is how *static* his three concepts of joy remain, even upon and through their points of intersection. Thus, despite their proclaimed interpenetration, the 'joyful' vicissitudes of war, commerce and governance are largely considered apart from one another. More seriously from a Lacanian perspective, Wilson seems to rely on the three registers of the Imaginary, Symbolic and Real as conceptual incentives to his own theorising, only to ultimately hold the three apart even as their apparent intersection helps produce the variants on affect that make up the 'order of joy', a holding apart that Lacan's very use of the Borromean knot was explicitly designed to foreclose. In only one of a number of examples, Wilson holds that 'It is in the imaginary domain of self-love rather than in a purely economic or symbolic domain of self-interest that commerce takes place, in contradistinction to humanity' (18). Such a claim leaves little room for a theoretical understanding of narcissism

(or 'self-love') as it joins with the calculability of individual and collective forms of symbolic and monetary exchange; to make a polemical point in separating the field of commerce from economic or symbolic self-interest, Wilson risks the very unsubtlety and rigidity that his move was presumably intended to avoid.

Over and above such specific examples, this holding apart of the rings of the knot testifies to the paradoxical rigidity that Wilson's metaphysics, for all its emphasis on fluidity, evinces. We might ask whether it is in the ultimate fidelity to a kind of Deleuzo-Guattarian anti-formalism, what I have christened a modernist maximalism, that threatens to deflate Wilson's analysis into the rigidity of a theoretical minimalism, without the subtractive mutability that characterises Lacan's properly minimal appropriations of knot theory. One final example of this will suffice: in his preoccupation with the event as an eclipse of meaning, Wilson neglects, again we might suspect through his too-quick holding apart of the Symbolic and the Real, the very Real core of the Symbolic, as the material and repetitively meaningless substance of the logic of the signifier as it detaches from relations of signification, in so doing supporting the non-sense of the drives. It is death, specifically, that Wilson holds as having lost all meaning within the evental movements of supercapitalism, but a recognition of the utter penetration of the Symbolic by the Real might have led Wilson to that quintessential drive, the death drive, as the truth of the precariousness of meaning, and to a subsequent realisation that meaning is *always* suspended between sense and non-sense, between death and life, and forever in refusal of the choice of one or the other.[3]

Further, in holding, as Wilson does, that 'The absence of meaning, of even a relation to meaning, is compensated by the passion of love and narcissism' (30), the subtle intrication of – to cite only the rings of the Borromean knot relative to the quote – the Imaginary and the Symbolic is hidden from view. Lacan insisted, from his very earliest seminars to his very latest, that the lauded 'play of the signifier', the maximalist excess of meaning, was an ideological chimera unless considered as the epiphenomenon of a fundamental deadlock in meaning itself tied intimately to the radical, dualistic deadlock of narcissistic self-love, of a subtractive material substrate of signification and forms of identification that, in their non-sense, nonetheless ground the play of signification. Deleuze, as it happens, comes close to such a recognition in his *Logic of Sense* through his own discussions of 'non-sense', but there is little recognition of that in the Deleuzo-Guattarian metaphysics of *The Order of Joy*.

Gregg Lambert, in his irreverent and pithy *Who's Afraid of Deleuze and Guattari?*, largely avoids the risk of theoretical speculation and innovation that makes *The Order of Joy* such an invigorating read. It is a very different book, designed as a response to both prominent critiques of Deleuze and Guattari in contemporary Continental thought, and as a philosophical riposte to Cultural Studies and other related appropriations of the project of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, appropriations that 'remain at the level of interpretation' (5). Deleuze and Guattari, by contrast, tasked themselves with 'trac[ing] intensities in the process of "becoming revolutionary" ' (5), although we must register the paradox that this took place within the sphere of book authorship, and therefore to some degree within a matrix of interpretation. The implication of Lambert's comment, though, points us towards the 'prelinguistic and impersonal' (50) as the crux of Deleuze and Guattari's ontological interest, an interest that must, again, be expressed within the constrictive domain of the signifier and its vicissitudes. To some degree, Wilson reckons with the same problem, insofar as his account of war, commerce and the state must simultaneously challenge the normative governmental discourses that held these domains apart, and invent a new analytical language to account for their radical interconnection. To do so would, I think, require a move similar to that made by Lacan in identifying at the level of form the Real and the Symbolic, as co-constituting fields caught in a relationship of constitution and potential dissolution, between meaning and non-meaning.

Lambert, too, poses himself the question of the Real and the signifier, in particular in his polemical confrontation with the critique of Deleuze recently forwarded by Alain Badiou (1999) and Slavoj Žižek (2003). Intriguingly, however, Lambert resists posing Deleuze as an affirmationist foil to the Lacanian and Hegelian attachment to negativity, the reductive typology so often invoked as defining the limits of any potential rapprochement between Lacan and Deleuze, preferring instead to weave their concepts together without reducing one to the other. He makes good use, for example, of an observation by the Lacanian analyst Lucie Cantin, who argues that perversion represents 'the denial of the signifier (of castration) as having any final meaning or word in the subject's own desire: a denial that takes the form of a demonstration [. . .] concerning the nothingness upon which the Other's desire is founded' (87). The pervert, for Cantin, negates the effectivity of Symbolic castration, placing him- or herself in the position of the master of the desire of the Other, pronouncing the final word on the Other's desire while impotently attempting to deny the signifier access

to his or her own desire. Lambert cleverly links such a position to the standard Lacanian critique of Deleuze, whereby the actuality of the logic of the signifier is negated in favour of a 'perverse' desire dominated by the fantasy of flows, of potentially endless flux. Such a position, for Lambert, 'reduce[s] the virtual in Deleuzian philosophy to the position of fantasy in the psychoanalytic reading' (89), and thus occludes the complex mutual interaction of the virtual and the real, reducing the virtual to a mere projection or fantasy of a pre-linguistic energy or drive capable of avoiding definition by the signifier.

The question of the virtual and the real in Deleuze is, to some degree, also the question of the Real and the Symbolic, although no doubt Lambert would object to my substitution of 'fantasy' for 'Symbolic' in my own extrapolation of Deleuze's 'virtual'; nevertheless, the relationship between the virtual and the actual closely mirrors that of the Symbolic to the Real, if only because the virtual, far from being a unified domain separate from the temporary sedimentation of actuality, is a heterogeneous yet unified force situated in a position of what Lacan called 'ex-timacy', of a kind of intimate estrangement, with the actual. What neither Wilson nor Lambert seems able to theorise, however, is the possibility of a virtual, or 'pre-linguistic', force, one that we might associate with non-sense, *inhabiting language itself*. Here again, Lacan's emphasis on the materiality of the signifier, of the Real material substrate that simultaneously constitutes the actuality of sense while threatening it from without, performs a theoretical move beyond the dualism of the virtual and the actual, or beyond Wilson's compulsive collapsing of conceptual demarcations, and that allows a firmer understanding of the breakdown in meaning, of how unmeaning underpins meaning in a paradoxical relation of antagonistic constitution.[4] While the Deleuzian response would be to insist on the wider, metaphysical consequence of the virtual/actual distinction, of its transcendence of the mere logic of signification, this leaves open the question of precisely how the 'pre-linguistic' is inevitably articulated by the signifier; Lacan's account of extimacy at least provides an advance upon any ultimately dogmatic or vitalist separation of the signifier from the virtual, an arbitrary separation that simultaneously reproduces the regressive, pre-theoretical association of the signifier with the function of representation.

Intriguingly, Lambert addresses himself to the same question of the relation of Deleuze to modernity, and to modernism, that I address at the beginning of this essay. Lambert writes:

> in Deleuze's championing of the impersonal and the prelinguistic, one can easily detect the visceral signs of a vital need to escape this particular

> situation, signs which perhaps bear the resonance with so-called modernist aspirations. [. . .] I would suggest there's something else at work which could easily be missed by such too simplistic and reductive a dismissal of Deleuze's poetics. (50)

It is unclear to me why posing the question of Deleuze's relation to modernism would amount to a dismissal of Deleuze's poetics, and one must ask again how a 'poetics', or a particular manipulation of the signifier, can be simultaneously 'prelinguistic' without insisting on the absolute intimacy of the prelinguistic to the Symbolic itself. By the end of Lacan's storied career, it was this insistence that came to define his minimal modernism, one that both interfaces with and contradicts the vital maximalism upon which Deleuze and Guattari's thought is built. Wilson and Lambert, in their very different ways, pose the question well, without quite grasping the analytical language necessary to render this most important of theoretical paradoxes in all its intriguing, and frustrating, complexity.

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Notes

1. Freud had insisted on such an originary positivity or 'affirmation' in his essay on Negation (1925). See Freud (2001).
2. There are those for whom such a theoretical synthesis can only result in philosophical confusion and contradiction. My own position on this will become clear as this essay progresses, but for an excellent summation of the argument against such syntheses, see Hallward (2010).
3. Wilson recognises that, for Lacan, 'the life of speaking beings is afflicted with a lack of meaning' (29), but a fuller sense of the interpenetration of the Symbolic by the Real would have underscored how such an affliction is, paradoxically, as much in the service of meaning as it is in its negation. Wilson goes on to cite Deleuze and Guattari's contention that 'What we're interested in is how something works, functions – finding the machine. But the signifier's still stuck in the question "What does it mean?" ' (quoted in Wilson 2008: 29), which seems to me to be another way of avoiding the fundamental collusion of sense and non-sense – indeed, the machinic function cited by Deleuze and Guattari here is an analogue of the material substrate of signification that Lacan so assiduously mapped.
4. Perhaps the finest expression of this argument of Lacan's comes in his 23rd Seminar, where the symptom is radically reconfigured as a senseless but constitutive point of *jouissance* essential to the economy of the subject. See Lacan (2005).

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Call for Papers

The First International *Deleuze Studies* in Asia Conference, Taipei, Taiwan

The English Department at Tamkang University, the publisher of the internationally renowned *Tamkang Review*, is pleased to announce that it will be hosting The First International *Deleuze Studies* in Asia Conference on the theme 'Creative Assemblages', 31 May–2 June 2013, and, prior to the conference, the Deleuze Camp, 25–29 May, 2013.

Creative Assemblages

As one of the most important terms in Gilles Deleuze's oeuvre, 'assemblage' refers to the territory of an object along with its own regime of signs and pragmatic system. Yet assemblage also refers to the force of deterritorialisation underlying the structure which is pending to be effectuated so that new connections can be established. In other words, the Deleuzian assemblage is not only a territorial gesture, framing its own territory but also a performative practice of carving out new routes of thinking. Most important of all, Deleuze and Guattari emphasise the epistemological sparks emanating from launching creatively the continual process of territorialisation, deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation of assemblages.

Yet, where can we perceive assemblages? They are everywhere: human beings, as centers of indetermination, are assemblages of images, with which Deleuze 'assembles' the brain with the screen, the world with the film to expound his philosophy of time. Even virtual assemblages on digital networks (email, Facebook, Twitter) in our quotidian life can be regarded as assemblages. Assemblages can be practical and political instead of just theoretical. In this light, to what extent can Deleuze's philosophical thinking assist us to canvass various assemblages in prospect, and what is the assemblage between us and Deleuze in retrospect? Is it possible for us to theorise the new informatics sensibilia by formulating the *dispositif* of the horizontal/rhizomatic assemblages? And apart from the superficial/superfluous assemblages, is it possible to build any vertical but not arborescent assemblage?

Situating this notion in the contemporary world, we are seeking to form transdisciplinary assemblages in order to respond to and have dialogues with the present predicaments. Possible topics for papers may include but are not limited to:

1) Connections between Deleuze and Guattari's work;
2) Connections among all the different arts, including literature, film, music, architecture, etc.
3) Deleuzian Asian Assemblages;
4) Affect and Asian Aesthetics;

5) Image and Thought;
6) Deleuze and Gender;
7) Psychoanalysis and Schizoanalysis;
8) Creative betrayal of Deleuze;
9) Pros and Cons of Deleuze;
10) Ecology with/without Guattari;
11) Digital Folds;
12) Translation as Expression.

Although we wait to hear from several invited speakers, currently confirmed speakers include:

Jeffrey A. Bell (Southeastern Louisiana University, USA)
Ian Buchanan (University of Wollongong, Australia)
Hsiao-hung Chang (Taiwan University, Taiwan)
Claire Colebrook (Pennsylvania State University, USA)
Jiang Yuhui (East China Normal University, China)
Kokubun Koichiro (Takasaki City University of Economics, Japan)
Patricia Pisters (University of Amsterdam, Holland)
John Protevi (Louisiana State University, USA)
Anne Sauvagnargues (École Normale Supérieure de Lyon, France)
Kailin Yang (Taipei National University of the Arts, Taiwan)

If you are interested in presenting at this **conference**, submit panel proposals and/or individual abstracts (maximum 250 words) with your institutional affiliation and a short bio. The deadline for submission of abstracts for the conference is 31 January 2013. However, for early notification, you are encouraged to apply by **1 September 2012**. The conference registration fee is US$180 for regular attendees, US$150 for early birds, and US$110 for students (the subscription fee of *Deleuze Studies is in-built*), including refreshments and lunch each day.

Prior to the conference, there will be a five-day **Deleuze Camp**. As spaces are limited, registrations will be accepted on a first-come first-serve basis. Applications should include a short bio and a brief statement of one's research interests in Deleuze. The camp registration fee is US$220.

The working language of the conference and the camp is English. The webpage of the academic event. http://www2.tku.edu.tw/~tflxcfp/ will be available after 25 March 2012. For further inquiry, please contact Professor Hanping Chiu, the organiser, at hp.chiu@gmail.com

NOTE: Those who pay the registration fee of this conference can be exempted from the subscription fee of *Deleuze Studies* if they register for the **2013** Lisbon Deleuze Studies International Conference.

Deleuze's Rethinking of the Notion of Sense

Daniela Voss

Abstract

Drawing on Deleuze's early works of the 1960s, this article investigates the ways in which Deleuze challenges our traditional linguistic notion of sense and notion of truth. Using Frege's account of sense and truth, this article presents our common understanding of sense and truth as two separate dimensions of the proposition where sense subsists only in a formal relation to the other. It then goes on to examine the Kantian account, which makes sense the superior transcendental condition of possibility of truth. Although both accounts define sense as merely the *form of possibility* of truth, a huge divide cuts across a simple formal logic of sense and a transcendental logic: transcendental logic discovered a certain genetic productivity of sense, such that a proposition always has the kind of truth that it merits according to its sense. In pursuit of this genetic productivity of sense, Deleuze applies different models of explanation: a Nietzschean genealogical model of the genetic power of sense, and in *The Logic of Sense* a structural model combined with elements of Stoic philosophy. This article follows Deleuze in setting up a new and very complex notion of sense, which he radically distinguishes from what he terms 'signification', that is, an extrinsic, linguistic or logical, condition of possibility. Rather, sense has to be conceived as both the *effect* and the intrinsic *genetic element* of an extra-propositional sense-producing machine.

Keywords: Deleuze, Frege, Kant, Nietzsche, signification, sense, effect, event, incorporeals

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I. The Fregean Account of Sense and Truth

In his famous essay 'On Sense and Reference' (1892), Gottlob Frege introduces the following phraseology: 'A proper name (word, sign, sign combination, expression) *expresses* its sense, *stands for* or *designates* its reference' (Frege 1993: 27). He goes on to examine what the sense of a sign and what its reference is. According to him, the reference of a sign is the definite object that the sign designates, while the sense of a sign contains the 'mode of presentation' of the object. There can be different modes of presentation for the same object. As such there are also different signs for the same object, that is, signs with different senses but with the same reference. Frege's most famous example is that of the 'morning star' and the 'evening star', which are two signs with different senses yet referring to the same planet Venus. Now Frege treats propositions in a similar way (28). Propositions have two dimensions, the dimension of sense and the dimension of reference.[1] The sense that a proposition expresses is the *thought* contained in the proposition. 'Thought' is understood as the 'objective content, which is capable of being the common property of several thinkers' (28), no matter what language they speak and regardless of the desires and beliefs they individually connect with this thought. The reference of a proposition is generally sought by inquiring after the reference of its components. Considering cases in which components of the proposition have no reference, Frege discovers that the lack of reference of a part of the proposition has no bearing upon the sense of the whole proposition but it leaves the question of its reference in abeyance. He cites the example: 'Odysseus was set ashore at Ithaca while sound asleep' (28). Poetry or fiction provides plenty of these examples, that is, propositions that contain proper names without a reference. However, as Frege states, it is only in works of art that we are satisfied with the dimension of sense and do not seek to advance to the question of reference, but in other cases we press on: 'It is the striving for truth that drives us always to advance from the sense to the reference' (29). The dimension of reference is the locus where the question of the truth and falsity of a proposition, that is, its truth-value, is decided. This is why Frege says that the reference of a proposition, if it has one, 'is either the True or the False' (29). By making the truth-value constitutive for the reference of a proposition, Frege stipulates a strangely detached relation between sense and the question of truth and falsity. As Frege concludes: the truth-value of a sentence 'must remain unchanged when a part of the sentence is replaced

by an expression having the same reference' (30). That is to say, although the sense of a proposition might be altered by the substitution of one expression by another, the truth-value of the whole proposition remains the same, provided that the substituted expression has the same reference as the one it replaces. In other words, truth and falsity remain to some extent unaffected by sense. On the other hand, a proposition with no sense cannot be true, and in this respect the requirement of sense is a necessary condition for a proposition to be true. Sense is a 'condition of truth' insofar as it contains a number of logical conditions, which define a grammatically well-formed expression. But sense is by no means a sufficient ground for truth: there are propositions that make perfect sense from the point of view of their form of expression, but that are nonetheless false. An example would be the proposition 'A decahedron is a regular geometrical figure.' It is impossible to find a referent for the whole proposition (decahedrons are nonregular), but still the proposition contains a thought that makes sense and could mistakenly be regarded as true. Thus, in grasping the sense of a proposition, one cannot be assured of its truth-value. The question of truth and falsity is decided only with regard to the dimension of reference, independent from the dimension of sense.

Deleuze's objection to these conceptions of sense and truth and their relation with one another is twofold: having discovered sense as the condition of truth, the relation of the condition to the conditioned is on the one hand too loose and on the other hand too intimate. Let us unfold Deleuze's position step by step.

The relation between the condition and the conditioned is too loose because both terms of the relation remain more or less independent from one another. While sense is indifferent to what it conditions, the conditioned itself, that is, truth, remains unaffected by the condition, which is supposed to render it possible. Sense is only the *formal condition of possibility* of truth (Deleuze 1990: 18/29).[2] That is to say, it can only determine the logical conditions under which a proposition would be true. It cannot exclude the case of false propositions that make sense. As Deleuze says: sense retains 'an extension larger than that which is conditioned, sense does not ground truth without also allowing the possibility of error' (Deleuze 1994: 153/199). Thus Frege's conception of sense cannot materially account for the truth-value of a proposition. In order to determine the truth-value of a proposition, we have to turn to the dimension of reference. There is in fact no way to pass from sense to reference, that is, the truth-value. One can certainly deduce

from one proposition further propositions by means of grammatical transformation rules or semantic implications of concepts, distributed within the original proposition. For instance, given the proposition that a person *x* is a widower, we can conclude from this that *x* is a man, that *x* was married, and that the wife of *x* has died. However, in inferring these further propositions we remain on the same level, the level of signification, and never cross over to the level of denotation or truth. In effect, 'signification can never exercise its role of last foundation, since it presupposes an irreducible denotation' (Deleuze 1990: 18/29). Hence, although sense is discovered as a condition of truth, it amounts only to a formal condition of possibility for a proposition to be true.

The second part of Deleuze's objection actually follows from the first. In making sense the condition of truth, an essential step was made to establish a ground for a 'critique' of truth. However, the critical project is doomed to fail not only because the ground remains larger than the grounded (first objection), but also because the ground is thought *in the image* of the grounded (see Deleuze 1990: 105/128, 123/149). The condition *resembles* the conditioned from the point of view of its logical form. That is to say, within the conditioned or those propositions that we hold to be true (for example, scientific propositions describing objective states of affairs) we already find inscribed the logical form of identity of the concept as well as logical forms of the relations of concepts with one another. We then extract the logical forms of the propositional facts and stipulate them as the formal conditions of possibility for a proposition being true in relation to an objective state of affairs.

According to Deleuze, we are trapped in a circle: 'One is perpetually referred from the conditioned to the condition, and also from the condition to the conditioned' (Deleuze 1990: 19/30). This is to say that the condition is nothing but the *form of possibility* of the conditioned, and the form of possibility is fabricated retroactively in the image of the conditioned. Deleuze states that

> by whatever manner one defines form, it is an odd procedure since it involves rising from the conditioned to the condition, in order to think of the condition as the simple possibility of the conditioned. Here one rises to a foundation, but that which is founded remains what it was, independently of the operation which founded it and unaffected by it. (Deleuze 1990: 18–19/30)

It should be noted, however, that Deleuze is not rejecting a whole tradition of linguistic analysis and philosophy of language. He is rather trying to complement it by adding a new dimension to the proposition,

and calling this new dimension 'sense', whilst referring to Frege's dimension of sense as the dimension of signification. Deleuze maintains that the dimension of signification is not sufficient to ground truth, and the dimension of denotation or reference can ground truth only in rare cases, namely when the proposition is assumed to be ready-made and isolated from the context of living thought. As Deleuze says, 'there is only a single case where the designated stands alone and remains external to sense: precisely the case of those singular propositions arbitrarily detached from their context and employed as examples' (Deleuze 1994: 154/200). However, as soon as we place a proposition in the context of living thought, that is, in relation to a problem, we will see how sense is engendered in the particular determination of the problem and its conditions and how this sense already implicates a truth, which cannot be detached from the genesis of sense.

Before we turn to Deleuze's account of sense and truth, we will first look at the Kantian definition of sense and Deleuze's rejoinder that the Kantian critique merely replaces the formal possibility with transcendental possibility. According to Deleuze, 'Kant invented two new forms of possibility, the transcendental and the moral' (Deleuze 1990: 18/30). In the following section, we will thus present the Kantian account of sense and truth and then apply Deleuze's criticism to the case of Kant.

II. Kant's Transcendental Logic of Sense

As it is well known, Kant draws the 'clue to the discovery of all pure concepts of the understanding' (Kant 1998: A76/B102) from the Aristotelian table of logical forms of judgement.[3] He recognises the importance of the logical forms of judgement as the formal condition of possibility for a proposition to be true. Thus Kant claims that 'the formal aspect of all truth consists in agreement with the laws of the understanding' (A294/B350). This is to say that certain laws of the understanding, for example the principle of non-contradiction, must hold for all cognitions posed in propositional form. In this way, general logic provides a necessary formal criterion of truth.[4] However, Kant goes much further than general logic can ever go. He explains that *general logic* only considers the logical form of our cognitions and their relation with one another, hence it abstracts from all content, that is, from any relation of our cognitions to the object (A55/B79). *Transcendental logic*, by contrast, has to do with pure concepts of the understanding insofar as they are related a priori to objects. Therefore transcendental logic

provides a further criterion of truth: namely the requirement that pure concepts can be constructed in the formal intuition of space and time and thus be related to an object; for without the relation to a possible object of experience, a cognition will completely lose its content and hence all truth.[5]

Kant's invention of the transcendental has a revolutionary effect: truth is no longer simply a matter of adequation with an external state of affairs, as it is suggested from the point of view of an empirical consciousness. To put it differently, the Kantian invention of the transcendental contradicts the simple assumption that the locus of truth for a proposition is the dimension of denotation or reference. The idea that (1) a proposition is true, if and only if what is said or expressed applies to the designated object or state of affairs it refers to, and that (2) a successful reference makes a proposition true, while an unsuccessful reference makes a proposition false, grounds a conception of truth which presupposes the existence of a reality exterior to sense. Kant's revolutionary move is to make truth dependent on sense, which is to say that a true cognition necessarily points beyond itself to an object or state of affairs that can no longer be posited in reality exterior to sense. In fact, Kant renders sense a superior condition of truth, but he does so only at a high cost: namely that of *interiorising* the relation between cognitions and the manner in which they relate to objects or states of affairs. This means that for Kant the outside world is not truly exterior: it remains relative to the a priori conditions of the transcendental subject. In other words, for something to have a sense, that is, to be an object for us, it has to be related to the transcendental conditions that constitute sense. There is nothing beyond this world constituted by the conditions of transcendental consciousness, that is, nothing that we can understand or make sense of. Anything that falls outside the transcendental scheme or structure, that is, that which cannot be constructed in space and time, and ordered according to a priori conceptual rules, is not a possible object for us. One could say that Kant's transcendental philosophy is a *logic of sense*: he stipulates the transcendental conditions for something to have a sense, that is, to be an object for us.

Therefore, it follows that from the point of view of transcendental logic the proposition 'A decahedron is a regular geometrical figure' is nonsensical, that is, without any sense. Since it is impossible to construct a regular decahedron in space, the proposition cannot be related to a possible object of experience, hence it has no content, that is, no sense. It is important to note that while the proposition can be said to have a sense from the point of view of general logic, transcendental logic

dispels this proposition altogether. The same happens with a proposition like the following: 'The width of Navidson's house inside exceeds the width of the house as measured from the outside by a quarter of an inch.'[6] From the point of view of formal logic, there is nothing wrong with this proposition. However, we are dealing with a transcendental impossibility: a house the interior of which is greater than its exterior is an impossible object. Not only can it not be constructed in space, it also contradicts the a priori condition of community. The category of community provides that the coordinated parts in an aggregate determine each other reciprocally. In the case of the house, in which the inside exceeds the outside, there is no reciprocal determination of parts. Thus the proposition cannot be related to a possible object of experience and therefore has no content, no sense. The same kind of transcendental impossibility applies in cases when something appears without any preceding cause, for instance, the sudden apparition of an angel. Such a thing would also be no possible object of experience. We could easily extend the list of examples; what is important to note, however, is that in the Kantian transcendental logic nothing escapes the transcendental conditions of sense. We cannot talk reasonably about an object that contradicts the a priori conditions of experience. To put it positively: whatever proposition we hold to be true, the referent of this proposition has to satisfy the transcendental conditions of sense. In this way, sense is made a superior condition of truth.

To sum up, Kant raises himself above the ordinary dimension of the proposition, the dimension of reference as the locus of truth, and introduces the dimension of sense as a superior condition. In *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze praises transcendental philosophy for discovering sense as the form of a genetic productivity (Deleuze 1990: 105/128): according to the transcendental principle, 'a proposition always has the truth, the part and the kind of truth which it merits, and which belongs to it according to its sense' (96/117). However, Deleuze shows by the example of Husserl how the transcendental account of a genetic power of sense fails: although transcendental philosophy considers a genesis of sense, the notion of sense remains muddied because it is confused with the dimensions of the proposition, from which it has to be distinguished (98/120).

> It is not only the dimension of signification that is given ready-made, whenever sense is conceived as a general predicate; and it is not only the dimension of denotation that is given in the alleged relation between sense and any determinable or individualizable object whatsoever. It is the entire

> dimension of manifestation, in the position of the transcendental subject, which retains the form of the person, of personal consciousness, and of subjective identity, and which is satisfied with creating the transcendental out of the characteristics of the empirical. (Deleuze 1990: 98/119)

Thus, Deleuze's criticism that we have already encountered still obtains and can be applied to Kant: Kant seeks to provide a transcendental foundation for a proposition to be true, but the transcendental conditions that he stipulates are fabricated *in the image of* the conditioned. In other words, the Kantian approach imports the characteristics of the conditioned into the account of the condition, that is, the transcendental is modelled upon subjective and psychological facts, or how things seem to our empirical consciousness. As Deleuze says at various places, Kant simply traces the transcendental from the empirical (Deleuze 1994: 135/176–7, 144/187). Consequently, the Kantian transcendental conditions produce exactly the propositions of knowledge that they are supposed to ground, because they have been abstracted from the form of the propositions of our empirical consciousness in the first place. According to Deleuze, there is a fatal *circularity* involved to the extent that experience is both presupposed as a fact and legitimised retroactively as the only possible form of experience.

Deleuze further argues that the Kantian transcendental conditions of possibility are 'too large' in relation to what they condition; they represent 'too broad a mesh in relation to what they claim to capture or regulate' (Deleuze 1983: 50/56).[7] They are only conditions of *possible* experience, not of *real* experience (Deleuze 1994: 154/200). The crucial point here is that Kant only provides an account of extrinsic conditioning. This is to say that the Kantian transcendental account depends upon the conformity of the manifold of sense data with the transcendental conditions. The diversity of the world is thus pre-judged and reduced to the objects conditioned by a given field of representation. Deleuze objects that the Kantian attempt to foundation only secures our traditional ways of thinking in accordance with the logic of representation.

By contrast, Deleuze demands that the relation between the condition and the conditioned be one of *intrinsic genesis*, and not of extrinsic conditioning (Deleuze 1994: 154/200). Furthermore, he demands that we must not think of the condition in the image of the conditioned (Deleuze 1990: 105/128, 123/149). It must be rather *something heterogeneous and unconditioned* that is capable of providing a *real*

foundation, that is, not as a transcendental form of possibility but as an *internal principle of genesis*.

In the following section we will discuss Deleuze's own notion of sense, which he sharply distinguishes from the Kantian conception of sense as the necessary relation to a possible object of experience. For Deleuze, sense is produced in a sub-representative domain, instead of being imposed by a superior, linguistic or logical, order of representation. In order to keep these two senses apart, Deleuze introduces a distinction between sense and signification: 'signification refers only to concepts and the manner in which they relate to the objects conditioned by a given field of representation; whereas sense is like the Idea which is developed in the sub-representative determinations' (Deleuze 1994: 155/201). Following Deleuze, this sub-representative domain can be understood as both being (the 'being of the sensible', 140/182) and thought ('the unconscious of pure thought', 155/202). In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze will explain the way in which terrible movements, that is, psychic or spatio-temporal dynamisms working within the sub-representative field, give rise to a double genesis: the genesis of the act of thinking within thought and the ontological genesis of species, individuated things and their relations.

III. Deleuze's Use of a Nietzschean Model of the Genetic Power of Sense

Drawing on structuralism and also on Nietzsche's idea of sense production, Deleuze develops his own conception of an intrinsic genesis of sense by making sense the *effect* of the determination of problems. As a starting point we will take up some of Deleuze's thoughts on Nietzsche.

Deleuze summarises Nietzsche's account of sense in his paper 'Conclusions on the Will to Power and the Eternal Return', which he gave at a conference on Nietzsche at the Abbey of Royaumont in 1964:

> A thing never has only one sense. Each thing has several senses that express the forces and the becoming of forces at work in it. Still more to the point, there is no 'thing', but only interpretations hidden in one another, like masks layered on the other … Nietzsche invents a new conception and new methods of interpretation: … by replacing the simple relation between sign and sense with a complex of senses, such that every interpretation is already the interpretation of an interpretation *ad infinitum*. (Deleuze 2004a: 118/164)

For Nietzsche, things are *signs* or *symptoms* of a state of forces or 'will to power'. On Deleuze's reading, it is important not to understand the

will to power as a will that wants power and struggles for recognition. Rather, the will to power designates the differential relationship of forces, which differ not only with regard to their quantity but also with regard to their quality. The quality of a force, that is, its being either an active or reactive type of force, is determined through the difference in quantity with related forces. Following Deleuze's analysis, reactive forces are forces of adaptation, of conservation and obedience, while active forces are those that go to the limit of what they can do and are willing to undergo transformations. Active forces are spontaneous, expansive and creative inasmuch as they give new interpretations and directions. In sum, the will to power expresses the dynamic and differential relations of active and reactive forces that are in a state of combat. Whenever some forces take hold of a thing, they bestow a fresh interpretation to it, that is, determine a new meaning or purpose 'through which any previous "meaning" or "purpose" are necessarily obscured or even obliterated' (Nietzsche 1968a: 513). According to Nietzsche, the entire history of a thing can be read as a 'continuous sign-chain of ever new interpretations and adaptations' (513) whereby each interpretation is the result of a combat of forces. What is important for Deleuze here is that these combats never result in a neutralisation or equalisation of the differences of forces and their internal heterogeneity. On the contrary, what returns is only a *disequilibrium* of forces. There is no final end, no ultimate goal to such processes of differentiation and combat: it is an infinite becoming. Therefore, the sense of a thing is always a *plurality* of senses that expresses the various processes of transformation, resistance or appropriation inflicted on the thing. As Nietzsche says: 'The form is fluid, but the "meaning" [*Sinn*] is even more so' (514).

Thus the meaning or sense of a thing varies as a function of the forces, or the will to power that appropriate it. Moreover, truth for Nietzsche is not an invariant or perspective-independent value: it has to be related to the forces that lurk beneath the surface and determine the sense of a thing or a concept. In his notes from 1887, which are contained in the posthumously published collection of notes entitled *The Will to Power*, Nietzsche says: ' "Truth" is therefore not something there, that might be found or discovered – but something that must be created and that gives a name to a process, or rather to a will to overcome that has in itself no end' (Nietzsche 1968b: 298).

Deleuze praises Nietzsche for bringing the conceptions of sense and truth in relation to forces. He agrees that sense is the product of a complex process and not something already given, inherent in a thing

or concept. In his essay 'On Nietzsche and the Image of Thought' from 1968 Deleuze characterises sense as

> an 'effect', an effect produced, whose laws of production must be uncovered. ... This is one of structuralism's essential ideas, unifying authors as different as Lévi-Strauss, Lacan, Foucault, and Althusser: the idea of sense as an effect produced by a specific machinery, a physical, optic, sonorous effect, etc. (Deleuze 2004b: 137)

Deleuze concedes that his conception of sense has affinities with that of the structuralist tradition, but nevertheless it is not the same. For Deleuze, the machinery that produces sense is not a given static structure but rather a dynamic differentiation of forces such as Nietzsche's will to power. However, Deleuze finally goes beyond Nietzsche, because Nietzsche's genealogical method is still too much lodged within history, that is, the effectuation of historical, socio-political forces. He will add the dimension of virtuality and determine processes of a static genesis or pure becoming that arise in the virtual. A detailed elaboration of the virtual can be found in *The Logic of Sense*, but already in *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze defines sense as the product of virtual Ideas or problems. As he explains there, the Idea or problem is constituted of sub-representational differential elements which have no sense themselves but which produce sense through their reciprocal relations. Thus sense is constituted in the problem or the Idea, and truth is engendered as the limit object of the production of sense. 'Limit' must be understood in the mathematical sense of the early geometrical phase of differential calculus: the limit as something that is continuously approached but never reached. In this way truth is a limit concept, or a limit object of an infinite genetic series of interpretations (see Deleuze 1994: 154/200). In summary, Deleuze says in *Difference and Repetition*:

> What is essential is that there occurs at the heart of problems a genesis of truth, a production of the true in thought. Problems are the differential elements in thought, the genetic element in the true. We can therefore substitute for the simple point of view of conditioning a point of view of effective genesis. (Deleuze 1994: 162/210)

For Deleuze, the 'problem' is thus a differential structure endowed with an intrinsic genetic power to generate sense. Although the problem can be incarnated in propositional form and in the empirical world, it belongs to an extra-propositional and sub-representative realm. This means that the problem and its conditions remain often unconscious and

have to be made explicit. For it is only in relation to a certain problem that a question becomes possible and a proposition acquires sense.

In order to better understand the way in which sense is produced through the determination of a problem and its conditions and how truth is engendered as the limit of the process of sense production, let us consider an example, the example of Kant. The underlying problem in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* can be specified and rendered explicit in propositional form as the question 'What can I know?'. Kant examines our faculties of cognition, defines for each faculty a proper domain for its exercise, and determines the rules of their collaboration in a united common sense. Limits are drawn and illegitimate uses are denounced. However, in his book on Nietzsche, Deleuze challenges the Kantian critique, claiming that 'there has never been a more conciliatory or respectful total critique' (Deleuze 1983: 89/102). Kant merely called the claims to knowledge and to morality into question, but he never questioned the values of true knowledge and true morality themselves. In other words, the higher interests of reason (true knowledge, true morality, true religion) remain sacred. However, following Deleuze (and Nietzsche), the ideals of truth and reason to which Kant devoted himself only conceal the work of established forces, in particular, the State with its territorial claims and imposition of law and order, the Church with its moral authority, and all the prevalent interests and values. 'Kant claims to be beholden to the requirements of truth and reason; but beneath these requirements of reason are forces that aren't so reasonable at all: the state, religion, all the current values' (Deleuze 2001: 69).

Thus Kant's immanent critique of reason by reason itself does not satisfy the demands of a radical immanent critique that abandons transcendent and extrinsic ends of reason. Instead of liberating us from metaphysical convictions, the belief in a transcendent realm of truth, essences or Ideas, Kant simply replaces the fetters by subjugating us to reason and its interests. We are told that we are free when we obey the demands of reason, since it is we who are giving the orders. In this way, reason persuades us to continue being docile (see Deleuze 1983: 92/106). Following Deleuze's and Nietzsche's analysis, Kant successfully installed the priest and legislator within us (93/106) and thus the power of the State and the Church remain unchallenged.

As we can see, Deleuze considers the Kantian question 'What can I know?' in relation to its implicit conditions that betray a conservative and moral motivation of the Kantian project. In Nietzschean terms, these implicit conditions are forces, such as the State and the Church, which are at work in an unimpeded manner and constitute the underlying

extra-propositional and sub-representative problem, determining its sense and pointing the way to its solution. Deleuze, however, coins the term of the *dogmatic image of thought*, which replaces the terminology of forces and their effects with that of conditions and postulates producing illusions. It is important to note that the term 'image of thought' does not merely designate a deceptive image or illusion, that is, an ideology that covers up true thought. Rather, thought itself is produced by the image of thought, which acts like a specific machinery *coding* thoughts in accordance with some normative form. As Claire Parnet explains in *Dialogues*, co-authored with Deleuze:

> 'Images' here doesn't refer to ideology but to a whole organisation which effectively trains thought to operate according to the norms of an established order or power, and moreover, installs in it an apparatus of power, sets it up as an apparatus of power itself. The Ratio as tribunal, as universal state, as republic of spirits (the more you are subjected the more you are legislators, for you are only subject . . . to pure reason). (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 23/31)

Thus for Deleuze, the image of thought has to be considered as a productive machine or apparatus of power that is installed by established forces. It is true that in his early work of the 1960s Deleuze has not yet found the concepts of 'machine', 'coding' and 'apparatus of power' – these concepts will be developed later during the collaboration with Félix Guattari – but he does speak of the image of thought as an established order (that is, the order of representation) and analyses it in terms of a series of postulates that determine what it means to think and what the ultimate goals of thought are. These postulates need not operate visibly; more often they remain unconscious forming implicit subjective presuppositions, which are essentially prephilosophical or non-philosophical in nature. This means that they are already at work when we start to think, although we may not always be aware of it.

In *Difference and Repetition* in particular, Deleuze analyses how the dogmatic image of thought has influenced philosophers in the way they determine their problems and anticipate their solutions. Kant as well fell prey to the dogmatic image of thought, which postulates an affinity between thought and truth and also presupposes the logic of representation which entails the identity of concepts and their logical relations in judgements. In short, when Kant laid out his problem concerning the possibility of knowledge and its limits, he did so under the presupposition of the dogmatic image of thought. The postulates of the dogmatic image of thought were already implicitly at work as the underlying extra-propositional and sub-representative problematic

structure, generating the sense of the Kantian question 'What can I know?'. Hence the general solution that Kant developed, that is, his account of objective knowledge, necessarily satisfies this conditional problematic structure. As Deleuze says at several places: '*We always have as much truth as we deserve in accordance with the sense of what we say*' (Deleuze 1994: 154/200).

The example of Kant illustrates how the truth that he seeks (such as true knowledge) is dependent on the manner in which the problem and its conditions are laid out. It is important to note that the conditions are part and parcel of the problem, that is, they belong to it intrinsically. Whenever we ignore the conditions, under which a question, such as the Kantian question 'What can I know?', is raised, we 'forget' the underlying extra-propositional and sub-representative problem that generates sense, and we are left with an abstract general solution.

> Once we 'forget' the problem, we have before us no more than an abstract general solution, and since there is no longer anything to support that generality, there is nothing to prevent the solution from fragmenting into the particular propositions which constitute its cases. (Deleuze 1994: 162/211)[8]

For Deleuze, the art of posing problems requires bringing to light the conditions that work implicitly at a subconscious level, generate the sense of what we think or say and determine the ultimate goal of thought. In the case of Kant we can see how the conditions and postulates of the dogmatic image of thought produce a transcendental logic of representation, that is, a logic that relates the dimension of sense to the a priori mental structure of the transcendental subject.

IV. Deleuze's Structural Model of a Genesis of Sense

It might have been noticed that throughout this article we have not yet discussed the Deleuzian concept of the event.[9] This is so because it plays a minor role in *Difference and Repetition* and is fully developed only in *The Logic of Sense*. Nevertheless already in *Difference and Repetition* the concept of event is mentioned and it appears that we have to understand Deleuzian Ideas-problems in terms of events.[10] Following Deleuze's analysis, 'problems are of the order of events' (Deleuze 1994: 188/244) and he distinguishes 'real events on the level of the engendered solutions, and ideal events embedded in the conditions of the problem' (189/244). Parallel to this distinction between real (or actual) and ideal (or virtual) events, Deleuze introduces in *The Logic of Sense* two

different readings of time: Chronos and Aion. Chronos is defined as the time of the present which encompasses past and future as horizons relative to the present. According to Deleuze, Chronos designates the empirical or physical aspect of time, insofar as Chronos captures the physical changes in things, their interactions and mixtures. Aion, on the contrary, is defined as a 'virtual time' that slips away from the present by extending indefinitely into the past and the future. Aion is the time of pure events. This distinction between Chronos and Aion is crucial because it allows Deleuze to assign the phenomenon of sense an autonomous status, that is, a kind of independence from the combat of historical and empirical forces. It allows Deleuze to surpass Nietzsche's genealogical method, which is still a form of historical explanation, and to assess sense from a new perspective that regards sense as a surface-effect. In *The Logic of Sense* Deleuze advocates a 'geographical method' for looking at things and he distinguishes three dimensions: the depths of states of life or bodily states of affairs, the heights of 'lofty' Ideas (Platonic or Kantian), and the surface of sense or incorporeal events (see Deleuze 1990: 132/157–8). It is under the impact of Stoic philosophy that Deleuze ties together the logical or linguistic notion of sense and the metaphysical notion of incorporeal events. He will thus define sense as an event. Events are never fully exhausted in any actual space and time (Chronos); instead, they extend indefinitely into the past and the future and therefore belong to Aion or virtual time. To unpack this further let us briefly look at the Stoic physics and the central role it plays for their logic of sense.

Unlike Plato, Aristotle and their schools, the Stoics believed that bodies are the only things that exist and are capable of acting and of being acted upon. However, it is important to note that the Stoics held a very broad notion of 'body': for instance, they argued that bodies also comprise souls on the grounds that causal interaction is possible only between bodies, and since there is causal interaction between soul and body, the soul must be a body.[11] On the same grounds the Stoics also took knowledge, thoughts or virtues (such as wisdom or justice) as bodies.

Apart from this bodily realm of existents, the Stoics distinguished a second realm of non-existent somethings, or incorporeals, which, although they cannot be said to be or exist (infinitive *einai*), nevertheless subsist (infinitive *hyphistasthai*). In other words, incorporeals are not beings but rather a way of being, an *effect* resulting from the interaction of bodies. According to Stoic physics, bodies act as causes to one another, thereby giving rise, not to a new property as we might assume,

but to an incorporeal effect. As the sceptic Sextus Empiricus explains in his work *Against the Professors*:

> The Stoics say that every cause is a body which becomes the cause to a body of something incorporeal. For instance the scalpel, a body, becomes the cause to the flesh, a body, of the incorporeal predicate 'being cut'. And again, the fire, a body, becomes the cause to the wood, a body, of the incorporeal predicate 'being burnt'. (Long and Sedley 1987: 333)

In this quotation we can already see how Stoic physics lays the ground for a new logic that has to deal with incorporeals or incorporeal predicates. In our days we would probably call it a logic of facts or events. However, as the French scholar Émile Bréhier notes in his 1928 book *La Théorie des incorporels dans l'ancien Stoïcisme*:

> In one sense, they [the Stoics] are as far as possible from a conception such as that of Hume or Stuart Mill who reduce the universe to facts or events. In another sense, however, they make possible such a conception by radically separating that which no one before them had – two planes of being: on the one hand, profound and real being, force; on the other hand, the plane of facts which play themselves out at the surface of being, and which constitute a multiplicity of incorporeal beings, without bounds and without end. (Bréhier 1962: 13; my translation)[12]

That which distinguishes the Stoic logic of facts or events from modern and contemporary ideas that conceive objective reality, that is, the universe and every single object as a synthesis of facts, is the Stoic insistence on the relation of attribution or predication of facts to real, corporeal bodies. Reality, or to put it more precisely, existence is corporeal: it comprises the realm of bodies that act and are acted upon. Only the effect that one body brings about in another is incorporeal. For this reason, the Stoics invented the realm of incorporeal predicates or attributes to bodies. As Bréhier argues, the incorporeal attribute that arises as an effect of the causal interaction between bodies coincides with the logical predicate of the proposition: the Stoics used the same word κατηγόρημα (*kategorema*) for both and regarded the verb as its proper expression (Bréhier 1962: 21, 19). Like certain Megarian philosophers, the Stoics interpreted propositions containing the copula *is* and a predicate adjective not as a relation between classes of objects (an object and its property) but as an act constituted by the penetration of bodies (20).[13] For instance, the proposition 'the iron is hot' finds its proper expression in the proposition 'the iron heats'. The red-hot iron is the incorporeal effect of the mixture of two bodies, the fire and the iron.

Thus Stoic logic is concerned with incorporeal predicates or attributes, that which is expressed in a proposition or said by a word. As Sextus Empiricus reports, the Stoics held the opinion

> that three things are linked together, 'the signified' [*semainomenon*], 'the signifier', and 'the name-bearer'. The signifier is an utterance, for instance 'Dion'; the signified is the actual state of affairs [*pragma*] revealed by an utterance, and which we apprehend as it subsists in accordance with our thought, whereas it is not understood by those whose language is different although they hear the utterance; the name-bearer is the external object, for instance, Dion himself. Of these, two are bodies – the utterance and the name-bearer; but one is incorporeal [*asomaton*] – the state of affairs signified [*semainomenon pragma*] and sayable [*lekton*], which is true or false. (Long and Sedley 1987: 195–6)

At first sight, the Stoic distinction between 'the signified', 'the signifier' and 'the name-bearer' seems to parallel the modern Fregean distinction between 'sense', 'sign' or 'proposition', and 'reference'. However, following Frege, the 'sense' of a proposition is an objective *thought* which is understood and shared by a community of speakers, no matter what beliefs and desires they connect with it and what language they speak. Clearly, Frege presupposes that a thought can be translated into different languages, thereby keeping the same objective content. The crucial point, following Frege, is that sense is completely mind-dependent. On the contrary, the Stoics believe that as an incorporeal attribute expressed by a word or proposition, sense is something added to the object or state of affairs that makes it appear differently, that is, in another aspect or mode. In other words, there is an irreducible distinction between an object or state of affairs (*pragma*) and a state of affairs *signified* (*semainonmenon pragma*), which lies precisely in the fact of being signified by a word or proposition added to the object as an incorporeal attribute. This incorporeal attribute they also call sayable (*lekton*). Sayables are neither physical bodies nor properties of bodies, neither are they thoughts, since for the Stoics thoughts are also corporeal bodies. Sayables are inexistent, yet they subsist in between bodies and language as incorporeal attributes. In Bréhier's reading, Stoic logic has to be considered as deeply non-Fregean. Dealing with incorporeal attributes, Stoic logic refers to a new ontological plane, which is the realm of sense or events.

Bréhier's monograph on Stoicism is of great importance for our purposes here, since Deleuze's conception of sense discussed in *The Logic of Sense* evolves out of the encounter with Stoic philosophy not

least through that monograph (Butler 2005: 129). Sense, for Deleuze, has to be conceived as sense-effects or sense-events that subsist as real, virtual phenomena. They are outside being, or in Deleuze's words, they are an 'impassive extra-Being which is sterile, inefficacious, and on the surface of things: *the ideational or the incorporeal can no longer be anything other than an "effect"*' (Deleuze 1990: 7/16–17). Sense-events or sense-effects are sterile and inefficacious, because as inexistent incorporeals they cannot act or be acted upon. Hence, Deleuze, like the Stoics, draws a qualitative distinction between the realm of causal interaction between bodies or forces, and the realm of impassive incorporeal events or sense. He also distinguishes sense from the realm of language. Being an incorporeal double of the proposition, sense is independent of both affirmation and negation and is also unaffected by the modes of the proposition. This means that sense is entirely neutral.[14] However, to say that sense is an incorporeal or neutral 'double' of the proposition should not be misunderstood: for Deleuze, the process of doubling up the proposition which express it does not imply 'an evanescent and disembodied resemblance' (125/151) to the state of affairs which are denoted by the proposition. Instead, Deleuze insists both that sense is inseparable from its status of a neutral double and that it is 'something unconditioned' (123–4/149), capable of giving rise to an unconditioned and heterogeneous synthesis. The problem, which Deleuze tries to solve here, is to reconcile the sterility and neutrality of sense with the power of genesis (see Deleuze 1990: 32/45, 95–6/116–17). On the one hand, he wants to maintain the *impassibility* of sense-events which allows him to dissociate the sense-event from its temporal actualisations (100/122). This is to say that sense-events essentially belong to Aion, a virtual time, which is distinct from Chronos, the time of physical changes, interactions and mixtures between bodies, whence it follows that sense-events are characterised by a certain autonomy or independence from historical, political forces or bodily states of affairs. On the other hand, Deleuze does not want to abandon the idea of a *genetic power* of sense, both 'in relation to the proposition itself, insofar as the expressed sense must engender the other dimensions of the proposition (signification, manifestation, and denotation)' (95–6/116) and also in relation to the process of determination of bodies and their mixtures.

How can Deleuze combine the impassibility of sense with the power of genesis? In trying to respond to this problem Deleuze introduces as a first step 'a double causality: that of bodies, states of affairs, and mixtures, but also that of the quasi-cause which represents the state

of organization or disorganization of the incorporeal surface' (Deleuze 1990: 108/131). The relation of quasi-causation, which is supposed to hold only between incorporeal sense-events on the surface of things, gives rise to a so-called 'static genesis'. Deleuze distinguishes a logical static genesis and an ontological static genesis.[15] In the logical static genesis, he aims to show that sense generates the proposition and its three dimensions: *reference* to or *denotation* of individuals or states of affairs; *manifestation* of the person and the person's beliefs, feelings, opinions; and finally *signification* as the form of possibility of true propositions. For this reason, he ties sense together with the 'problem', defined as 'an ideational objectivity or ... a structure constitutive of sense' (120/145), as he has previously done in *Difference and Repetition*. However, he now confers all the characteristics of sense that we have encountered as elements of Stoic incorporeals upon the 'problem'. The problem '*is not* propositional' (122/147); it 'is neutral with respect to every mode of the proposition' (123/148), it is 'independent of both the negative and the affirmative' (123/148), 'it inheres, subsists, or persists in propositions and blends with extra-being' (123/148). Above all, 'the synthesis of the problem with *its* own conditions constitutes something ideational and unconditioned' (122/147). Following Deleuze, 'sense is thus expressed as the problem to which propositions correspond insofar as they indicate particular responses, signify instances of a general solution, and manifest subjective acts of resolution' (121/146). The problem is thus defined as 'expressed sense' (122/148) and as a genetic element that generates the logical proposition and its dimensions.

The ontological static genesis is much more complicated, because Deleuze has to deal with a seemingly outright contradiction: 'How can we maintain both that sense produces even the states of affairs in which it is embodied, and that it is itself produced by these states of affairs or the actions and passions of bodies (an immaculate conception)?' (Deleuze 1990: 124/149). Deleuze suggests that it is 'in a different way that sense is produced by bodies' (124/149). Sense is no longer a surface effect of the interaction of *individuated* bodies (such as a knife and the flesh of a body, or a piece of iron and fire, and so on). Instead bodies are taken now 'in their undifferentiated depth and in their measureless pulsation' (124/149–50). We are dealing now with an impersonal and pre-individual 'transcendental field' to use Sartre's term, but this field is not to be determined as that of a consciousness.[16] Rather, it is an intensive milieu or potential prior to the determination of bodies, persons or consciousness. This original intensive depth or transcendental field organises surfaces and produces sense, and sense in its turn 'brings

about individuation and all that ensues in a process of determination of bodies and their mixtures' (126/151) by means of its relation to the quasi-cause. It seems that the quasi-cause is the crucial element by means of which sense inherits its genetic power. We therefore have to examine in greater detail what the relation of quasi-causality between incorporeal sense-events or sense-effects means.

In fact, already the Stoics considered a kind of relation between incorporeal event-effects in their doctrine of destiny. For the Stoics, all things happen by destiny, and they describe destiny as an inescapable ordering and sequence of causes.[17] This sequence of causes is not to be understood as a series in which each term is the effect of the previous term and the cause of the following, but as a connection of cause to cause. Destiny is thus the plurality of causes and their rational ordering in the world. It is now compelling to think of the plurality of event-effects also as related to one another: although the Stoics have split the chain of cause and effect by qualitatively distinguishing corporeal causes and impassive incorporeal effects, there certainly is a causal chain A–B–C, in the sense that the body A is a cause *to* the body C of which the effect B has come to be predicable as an incorporeal attribute. Given these two premises, the ordered series of corporeal causes on the one hand and the peculiar causal nexus between causes and effects on the other hand, there seems to follow a certain relation of event-effects as well. This is precisely how Bréhier argues: the Stoic concept of destiny concerns a relation between corporeal beings and not between events. However, 'because the events are the effects of these causes, it is certain that they are therefore related to one another. No matter how heterogeneous they are, they all depend on destiny which is unique' (Bréhier 1962: 35; my translation). Deleuze picks up on this, declaring that there is 'a bond of effects' (Deleuze 1990: 6/15), the laws of which 'perhaps express in each case the relative unity or mixture of bodies on which they depend for their real causes' (6/15).[18] Deleuze further interprets this relation between event-effects by means of the modern concept of structure and comes to speak of it as a surface organisation of at least two heterogeneous series that resonate with one another in their distance. The resonance of series is effectuated by a paradoxical element, intervening as nonsense or as an aleatory point, and which Deleuze also calls the 'quasi-cause' (95/116). Without indulging too much in details, we can already see that Deleuze envisages here a new type of causation, that is, a structural causation among sense-events or sense-effects, which are made to resonate by a paradoxical element (nonsense), which traverses the series.[19] The paradoxical element is something that

evades precise determination, but it is not nothing since it functions by bringing together the series or elements of a structure and making them resonate through their distance. It can even be an empty space, as for instance the vacuity in a flower arrangement according to the Japanese art of *ikebana*, which miraculously constitutes the whole structure and bestows it with a living breath. As Deleuze says, 'the void is itself the paradoxical element, the surface nonsense, or the always displaced aleatory point whence the event bursts forth as sense' (137/162). Deleuze conceives of sense and nonsense no longer simply as opposites, but as complementary elements, which are related to one another in the structural organisation of an incorporeal surface, endowed with the genetic power to produce spatio-temporal actualisations of sense-events. 'Nonsense and sense have done away with their relation of dynamic opposition in order to enter into the co-presence of a static genesis' (141/166).

In summary, Deleuze envisages in *The Logic of Sense* a structural quasi-causality that obtains only among sense-events and makes them communicate with one another: 'each one communicates with the other through the positive characters of its distance and by the affirmative character of the disjunction [the disjunction of divergent series]' (Deleuze 1990: 175/205). He thus looks at the genetic productivity of sense in a new way: sense is not only the effect of the interaction of corporeal, historical or political forces or states of affairs. It also partakes in the structural organisation of an incorporeal surface and is attached to a quasi-causality that is independent of the causal interaction between bodies (see Deleuze 1990: 169/198). As a consequence, Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche's will to power undergoes a fundamental change: while he had previously described the will to power as a relation of (historical or political) forces, he now interprets it as an 'affirmative synthetic disjunction' (174/204) of incorporeal sense-events or sense-effects following very special laws of structure. Nietzsche's inner world of the will to power thus becomes 'a Dionysian sense-producing machine, in which nonsense and sense are no longer found in simple opposition, but are rather co-present to one another within a new discourse' (107/130).

V. Conclusion

In following the general lines of Deleuze's work of the 1960s, we have seen how in various stages a new Deleuzian concept of sense takes shape. Deleuze insists that sense is a fourth dimension of the

proposition that shall not be confused with signification, denotation or manifestation (Deleuze 1990: 19/30). Traditionally, sense has been conceived as signification, that is, as a condition of the possibility of truth. Thus formal logic regards sense as a necessary formal condition for a proposition to be true. But sense and truth remain in a strangely detached manner, insofar as the sense of a proposition tells us nothing about its truth-value. Transcendental logic, on the other hand, defines sense as a superior condition of possibility of truth. This means that a proposition always has the truth that it merits in accordance with the condition of sense, that is, its possibility of being constructed in space and time and related to an object of experience. However, Deleuze objects that transcendental philosophy is not capable of assuring a real genesis, since the condition of sense is firstly fabricated in the image of the conditioned, and secondly gives rise only to a genesis of possible experience, which is not a true genesis but rather a purely extrinsic, conceptual conditioning. In a first approach to this problem of genesis, Deleuze aligns with Nietzsche in thinking sense as a plurality of senses that vary in accordance with the forces, or the will to power, that take hold of a thing. Sense is thus the effect of a differential relation of historical, social or political forces. In *The Logic of Sense*, however, Deleuze goes beyond Nietzsche in defining sense as a surface effect that obeys laws of structure that are no longer bound to the depths of existent forces. As we have seen, Deleuze discovers a 'double causality' which not only comprises the causality of bodies and forces, but also a 'quasi-causation' between incorporeal sense-events. The Stoic notion of incorporeal sense-events combines a physical notion of sense with a linguistic notion. It is here where Deleuze finally finds something heterogeneous and unconditioned that merges neither with the state of affairs that a proposition denotes, neither with the desires or beliefs of the person who manifests him- or herself in the proposition, nor with the concepts and the logical and semantic relations that compose the dimension of signification of a proposition. Incorporeal sense-events are this heterogeneous and unconditioned extra-being that subsists outside bodily states of affairs and language, and that gives rise to an internal 'static genesis', which not only produces the proposition and its dimensions (signification, denotation and manifestation), but also the individuation of bodies and consciousness. In sum, Deleuze's own logic of sense implies a notion of sense which is irreducible to a logico-linguistic phenomenon or condition of possibility. Following Deleuze, sense has to be understood as a real and incorporeal something that partakes in a surface organisation or machine fuelled by a disjunctive

synthesis, or in other words, 'a system of echoes, of resumptions and resonances' (170/199) between series of sense-events.

Notes

1. In the third series of *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze presents a more detailed account, according to which a proposition has three dimensions: denotation (or reference), manifestation and signification. However, for the point we want to make here, Frege's distinction between sense and reference suffices.
2. Note on references to books by Deleuze: in the body of the text the reference to the page number is given as follows: the first page number refers to the English translation, the second number to the original French edition.
3. Note on references to Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*: the first page number refers to edition A, that is, the first German edition from 1781, the second number to edition B, that is, the second revised German edition from 1787.
4. See Kant 1998: A 59–60/B 84: 'these criteria [of truth] concern only the form of truth, i.e., of thinking in general, and are to that extent entirely correct but not sufficient. For although a cognition may be in complete accord with logical form, i.e., not contradict itself, yet it can still always contradict the object. The merely logical criterion of truth, namely the agreement of a cognition with the general and formal laws of understanding and reason, is therefore certainly the *conditio sine qua non* and thus the negative condition of all truth; further, however, logic cannot go, and the error that concerns not form but content cannot be discovered by any touchstone of logic.'
5. See Kant 1998: A62/B87; see also A277/B333, B149.
6. The example is taken from the novel *House of Leaves*, written by Mark Z. Danielewski (2000).
7. See also Deleuze 1994: 68/94.
8. In his early book *Empiricism and Subjectivity*, using the example of Hume, Deleuze demonstrates the way in which we miss Hume's problem when we simply consider and criticise his so-called theory of atomism and theory of associationism. We then have turned Hume's philosophical theory into an abstract general solution and fragmented it into particular theories that are disqualified from the beginning as 'shifty projects'. Deleuze counters that a philosophical theory is 'an elaborately developed question' and 'to criticize the question means showing under what conditions the question is possible and correctly raised … the question is always about the necessary development of the implications of a problem and about giving sense to philosophy as a theory. In philosophy, the question and the critique of the question are one; or, if you wish, there is no critique of solutions, there are only critiques of problems' (Deleuze 1991: 105–6/118–19).
9. The concept of the event is truly one of Deleuze's most important concepts. In his 1988 interview with Raymond Bellour and François Ewald, 'On Philosophy', Deleuze says: 'I've tried in all my books to discover the nature of events; it's a philosophical concept, the only one capable of ousting the verb "to be" and attributes' (Deleuze 1995: 141/194).
10. See Deleuze 1994: 187/242–3: 'Ideas are by no means essences. In so far as they are the objects of Ideas, problems belong on the side of events, affections, or accidents rather than on that of theorematic essences.'
11. Thus Nemesius, a Platonist, reports on Cleanthes, head of the Stoic school in Athens: '(1) He [Cleanthes] also says: no incorporeal interacts with a body, and

no body with an incorporeal, but one body interacts with another body. (2) Now the soul interacts with the body when it is sick and being cut, and the body with the soul; thus when the soul feels shame and fear the body turns red and pale respectively. (3) Therefore the soul is a body' (Long and Sedley 1987: 272).

12. Part of this citation is quoted by Deleuze in *The Logic of Sense* (1990: 5/14).
13. The Megarian school of philosophy, founded by Euclid of Megara (c. 450–380 BC), had a great influence on Zeno, the founder of the Stoic school, who was said to have studied under Euclid's pupils and successors. In particular, Megarian logic, developed by the Megarian philosophers (or 'Dialecticians' as they were also called) Diodorus and Philo, can be seen as a precursor to Stoic logic.
14. Deleuze discusses the paradox of the neutrality of sense in *The Logic of Sense* (1990: 32–5/46–9). It should be noted that Deleuze, although he refers to the notion of sense (that is, sense as an ineffectual, neutral double of the proposition) as a *paradox*, it does not follow that he strictly denies this definition of sense. He rather modifies and enhances the definition of a neutralised double by insisting that sense is not to be conceived as 'an evanescent and disembodied resemblance, an image without flesh' (125/151) and that sense should not be 'deprived of its generative power' (Deleuze 1994: 156/203). He obviously wants to distance himself from Husserl's notion of sense, sense as *noema* (see Deleuze 1990: 122/147).
15. We cannot follow here Deleuze's account of the static genesis with its two different stages in all the details (see, for example, Deleuze 1990: 115–16/140–1). A detailed explanation would require the introduction of further Deleuzian concepts, such as 'differentials' and 'singularities', as well as a discussion of his reading of Leibniz. Instead, we will have to content ourselves with giving the idea of Deleuze's static genesis and examine its novelty in comparison to the concept of genesis that we have previously encountered in relation to Nietzsche.
16. Deleuze is referring to Sartre's 1937 essay 'The Transcendence of the Ego'; see Deleuze 1990: 98–9/120, 102/124.
17. See Long and Sedley 1987: 336–7 and their translations of citations by Aetius, Gellius and Cicero.
18. See also Deleuze 1990: 169/198: 'Destiny is primarily the unity and the link of physical causes among themselves. Incorporeal effects are obviously subject to destiny, to the extent that they are the effect of these causes.'
19. See also Deleuze 1990: 174/204: the communication of events 'consists of the erection of a paradoxical instance, an aleatory point with two uneven faces, which traverses the divergent series as divergent and causes them to resonate through their distance and in their distance'.

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The Creation of the Concept through the Interaction of Philosophy with Science and Art

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Abstract

In *What Is Philosophy?* we find philosophy devised as that power of thinking and creating which, in a division of labour with science and art, creates the concept. This division of labour points to the free interplay of Reason, Understanding and Imagination in Kant's *Critique of Judgement* and enables us to affirm, without obliterating the differences in kind, the non-hierarchical relationship between the three forms of thought that is asserted by Deleuze and Guattari. However, as powers of thinking and creating, philosophy, science and art do not inscribe themselves in a transcendental subject. Rather, Deleuze and Guattari conceive of them, following Spinoza's 'creating nature', as powers that express themselves in an attribute in which every thinking subject participates.

Keywords: Deleuze and Guattari, Kant, Spinoza, *What Is Philosophy?*, concept, creation, interaction, power

I. The Creative Powers of Thinking

Although Gilles Deleuze is one of the most influential philosophers of the second half of the twentieth century, his last book, *What Is Philosophy?*, written in collaboration with Félix Guattari, has received relatively little attention. For many readers, this book 'came as a surprise, even as something of a disappointment', recalls Isabelle Stengers, noting that it faced readers with 'a strong differentiation between the creations which

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are proper to philosophy, to science, and to art' (Stengers 2005: 151). The creative ideas pertaining to philosophy, through which philosophy performs its thought, are the concepts it creates by means of conceptual personae on the plane of immanence; those pertaining to science are the functions created by means of partial observers on the plane of reference; those pertaining to art are the compounds of sensations consisting of percepts and affects created by means of aesthetic figures on the plane of composition. 'Thinking is thought through concepts, or functions, or sensations', state Deleuze and Guattari, 'and no one of these thoughts is better than another, or more fully, completely, or synthetically "thought"' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 198). In all three cases, the modes of thinking 'are specific, each as direct as the others, and they are distinguished by the nature of the plane and by what occupies it' (198).

Regardless of this explicit dismissal of any hierarchy of the three forms of thought, Peter Hallward, for instance, argues for the precedence of philosophy. He underlines the clear distinction between the forms by examining them independently of each other, then ranking them. The fact that he gives philosophy precedence is surprising, however, since he criticises the conception of philosophy proposed by Deleuze and Guattari, which, he writes, 'leads forever out of our actual world' (Hallward 2006: 164). It would therefore seem to make sense for Hallward to argue for the precedence of science, which deals with the actual world. But in his assessment, Hallward turns his attention to the three forms of thought in terms of the product of their creation, and defines philosophy as 'the most immediate discipline of thought', which 'unlike science or art, ... can claim to think at the highest degree of proximity to absolute chaos' because it has the privilege of going furthest 'in the spiritualisation of its medium', in which it brings forth creation (129, 132).

In a paper based mainly on Deleuze's essay on Melville's *Bartleby the Scrivener*, Joost de Bloois makes an exemplary attempt to counter arguments in favour of a hierarchy of the three forms of thought, looking at the relationship between conceptual persona and aesthetic figure. He argues that 'the very classical distinction between "philosophy *as such*" and "art *as such*"' that prevails in *What Is Philosophy?* leads to an 'artificial' distinction between conceptual persona and aesthetic figure, whose fundamental 'shared image of philosophy and literature' reveals its common 'indetermination' in the figure of Bartleby (de Bloois 2004: 124, 126; my translation). According to de Bloois, Deleuze and Guattari's 'stroke of genius' consists in 'having realised

that philosophers, too, *write* fables' (118; my translation). Bartleby thus points to writing as the common characteristic of philosophy and literature: 'he is at once a *figure* and a *persona*' and, as the mask of any writer, presents nothing less than 'the precondition of all possible writers' (115; my translation). Since, by analogy with the dichotomy of concept and affect, the conceptual persona presupposes the aesthetic figure, philosophy appears as merely a derivative of literature: 'The conceptual persona . . . transforms the philosopher into a *writer*', and an aesthetic paradigm becomes the pivot of philosophical activity (120; my translation). Thus, whereas Hallward establishes a hierarchy by evaluating the product of creative activity with regard to its contiguity to chaos, what de Bloois attempts is to undermine hierarchy by reducing the clearly distinct forms of thought through a sufficiently neutralised figure on a common plane. Having deprived philosophy of its clearly distinguished realm, de Bloois then criticises Deleuze and Guattari for subordinating their 'philosophical project' to 'aesthetic modernity' and 'curtailing the critical potential' of philosophy by denying it autonomy (128; my translation).

My interpretation of *What Is Philosophy?*, in contrast, grants neither science nor art nor philosophy priority as a more perfect or more direct form of thought, while refusing to obliterate the difference in kind between them. On the contrary, each of these forms is assigned a specific activity, which finds expression in the creative ideas that can only be produced on its own plane; and each form secures its own realm precisely by positing its own objects through these creative ideas. 'With its concepts, philosophy brings forth events. Art erects monuments with its sensations. Science constructs matters of fact with its functions' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 199).[1] Philosophy, science and art must not be identified from the outset as three disciplines that consist in the collection of the products of their creation – as universalities formed by an abstraction of the products, abandoning the singularity of each creation. Instead, we must define them as those 'ways of thinking and creating', those 'modes of ideation', that express themselves in the act of creating the concept, the function or the compound of sensations through the conceptual persona, the partial observer or the aesthetic figure; or, to put it another way, which unfold as the power of thinking and creating in 'always singular moments' in which thought is raised time and again anew to a specific creative faculty or power, precisely through creative ideas (8, 12). However, in *What Is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Guattari say that philosophy creates concepts in interaction with science and art. 'Philosophy, science, and art', they write, 'are

immediately posited or reconstituted in a respective independence, in a division of labor that gives rise to relationships of connection between them' (91). This division of labour does not limit their independence, because each form, in its own realm, remains independent of the other two. Nor does it contradict the autonomy of each form, an autonomy lent by its own creation; rather, this interaction serves precisely to enable philosophy, science and art to stimulate each other strongly enough to become capable of bringing forth a creation and expressing themselves as autonomous faculties or powers of thinking and creating. That they are dependent on one another, yet do not restrict each other's independence, confounds the dispute over the precedence of one or other of these forms of thought. Philosophy arrives at the concept with the help of science and art, in that these latter intervene freely in the creative process and support philosophy in creating its specific ideas and, in turn, in positing its objects in a realm where science and art themselves are quite unable to do so. Philosophy's concepts thus acquire their determinations through allusions to the actual with the help of science, which, for its part, finds expression through the partial observer as 'scientific faculty of knowledge' (215). And philosophy arrives at the sensations of the concepts with the help of art, which, for its part, finds expression through the aesthetic figure as 'faculty of feeling' (212).

My interpretation considers Deleuze and Guattari's last joint work in the lineage of Kant's *Critique of Judgement*, lauded by the authors as 'an unrestrained work of old age, which his successors have still not caught up with', where 'all the mind's faculties overcome their limits, the very limits that Kant had so carefully laid down in the works of his prime' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 2). Seven years before the publication of *What Is Philosophy?*, Deleuze declared in his preface to *Kant's Critical Philosophy* that 'an unregulated exercise of all the faculties' would 'define future philosophy' (Deleuze 1984: xiii). Whereas in his first two *Critiques*, Kant assumes an interrelationship which is dominated by one of the faculties and rigorously regulated by its laws, in the *Critique of Judgement* he finds, beneath this hierarchy of faculties, unregulated use and with it the basis of all harmonious interaction. In the aesthetic of the beautiful and the sublime, 'the various faculties enter into an accord which is no longer determined by any one of them, and which is all the deeper because it no longer has any rule'; they correspondingly 'find their accord in a fundamental discord' (Deleuze 1984: xii). In *What Is Philosophy?*, philosophy is finally devised in its relation to science and art as one of these three faculties or powers of thinking and creating which, in free interplay, create the philosophical

concept. And we can say of this work what Deleuze wrote in 1963 of Kant's third *Critique*: that it goes beyond presenting the exercise of ready-made faculties under particular conditions to offer insight into the genesis of those faculties, which 'are engendered in their original free state and in reciprocal agreement' (Deleuze 2004: 68). However, the three faculties do not inscribe themselves in a transcendental subject, as with Kant, or depend on a predefined subject, but posit and reconstitute themselves at the same time as the subject, which only distinguishes itself from thought by carrying out the movements of that plane on which it is creative. The possibility of a subject that does not precede its own creative activity – or, conversely, the becoming-subject that necessarily occurs when carrying out these movements by means of the conceptual persona, the partial observer or the aesthetic figure – is based on 'every creation' being 'a construction on a plane that gives it an autonomous existence' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 7). The plane gives autonomy to the creation, because it is the plane itself which, in performing its movements, becomes the 'brain layer' of a singular subject. That subject unfolds out of thinking only when it creates, so that a creation never remains dependent on an already given subject of lived experience.

Deleuze and Guattari's reference to a 'brain layer' becomes clear through the example of Raymond Ruyer and the illustrations he provides. Ruyer presents a man on a chair; he is wearing glasses, looking at his writing hand and the sheet or 'layer' of paper on the table before him. Ruyer then puts us in the man's position, showing us his visual field (now framed by the glasses on our nose), which moves out from our body along the writing hand to the sheet of paper and the table. Our visual field is thus composed, like a collage, of the parts of our body and the various objects. During the absolute survey of my visual field, writes Ruyer, I am everywhere at once: 'The multiple details of sensation are distinct one from another, but nevertheless the ones are not really *other* for the others, because together they make up my sensation, which is only one' (Ruyer 1952: 99; my translation). With respect to Leibniz's monad, Deleuze refers to Robert Rauschenberg, whose collages weave their components into surfaces so dense that they become 'opaque' and lose all referential function (Deleuze 2006: 30). They form smooth spaces with close vision – visual fields that, without a prevailing perspective or rigid spatial dimensions, do not allow any strictly definable exterior point of view. While the writing man's habitual gaze at the objects in front of him already marks one exterior point of view, and our observation of the man at work adds another, the absolute survey cannot attain its unity by referring to a subject of lived experience,

because that would lead to an infinite regress of echelons of viewers. 'Between the "I-unity" and the visual field there is only a purely symbolic "distance" ... My visual field itself necessarily sees itself through an "absolute survey"' (Ruyer 1952: 101–2; my translation). The primary plane of sensation has to perceive itself; the viewer is thus completely embedded in the plane, just as Rauschenberg's 1963 collage *Estate*, as a visual field, immerses the viewer in the sensation of early 1960s New York with its survey. The collage releases the viewer from any kind of experience that might be felt by a city tourist, who can confirm his expectations using prepared routes to continue his accustomed routine with the happy feeling of having seen what there is to be seen. Finally, a further illustration presents the previously observed visual field as a layer or sheet of paper that from a distance looks like a picture postcard. Ruyer shows that this distance of the 'I-unity' in the absolute survey does not exist: he labels the illustration 'false representation of the visual field' (Ruyer 1952: 103; my translation). The self-surveying field of consciousness cannot be represented, just as the plane as the brain layer in *What Is Philosophy?* is only given in the survey on that plane by the I of thinking, in which the plane raises itself to a singular power.

II. The Distinction of Planes as Aspects and as Layers of the Brain-Subject

Philosophy, science and art transect chaos in order to produce their creative ideas on a specific plane of creation – 'always confronting chaos, laying out a plane, throwing a plane over chaos' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 197). The plane of transection's particular relation with chaos defines which type of movement of thought is carried out, and determines the power of thinking; the plane itself defines the elements that are created on it and warrants for their cohesion. Hence, only on the plane of immanence, with its infinite movements, is it possible to create the concept which brings forth the event and does thinking accede 'to the infinite movement ... and reconquers an immanent power of creation' (140). Only on the plane of reference, with its finite movements, are those referential relations possible 'by which science constitutes or modifies matters of fact and bodies' and science gains its power: 'Functions derive all their power from reference' (138). And finally, only on the plane of composition is it possible to create compounds of sensations, which in the finite restore the infinite and are forces in themselves. Philosophy's plane of immanence, with concept and conceptual persona, science's plane of reference, with

function and partial observer, and art's plane of composition, with compound of sensations and aesthetic figure, cannot be reduced to one another through their specific relation to chaos – nor can they join up to form a neutral plane: 'The three planes, along with their elements, are irreducible' (216).

Laying out a plane is the condition for that plane to rise to the power of thinking and creating by virtue of the creation it bears. As a power, the plane is a 'layer of a brain-subject', and is what unfolds the subject out of the thinking whose movements that very subject carries out (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 214). Carrying out these movements is only possible by means of the conceptual persona, the partial observer or the aesthetic figure, which expose us to chaos and draw us into a becoming-subject in line with the aspect of the respective plane. The three great forms of thought constitute 'the three aspects under which the brain becomes subject, Thought-brain. They are the three planes, the rafts on which the brain plunges into and confronts the chaos' (210). The raft image is apt in that, similar to the notion of point of view that Deleuze develops in his study on Leibniz with recourse to Whitehead's superject, the aspect is not so much a point as 'a place, a position, a site' (Deleuze 2006: 20). It 'does not mean a dependence in respect to a pregiven or defined subject; to the contrary, a subject will be what comes to the point of view, or rather what remains in the point of view' (21). This differentiation between the aspect and the layer of a brain-subject with regard to the planes recalls Spinoza's distinction of attribute and power, which Deleuze and Guattari condense into their conception of planes. When they write that 'immanence does not refer back to the Spinozist substance and modes but, on the contrary, the Spinozist concepts of substance and modes refer back to the plane of immanence as their presupposition', they are linking the creative divine substance, and the created modes, to the plane of immanence as the precondition of creation, which determines the relation between substance and modes (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 48). When they then add that this 'plane presents two sides to us, Extension and Thought, or more accurately, its two powers, power of being and power of thinking', they are referring to the distinction between the attributes of Extension and Thought on the one hand, and the powers of being and thinking on the other (48/50; translation modified). Because Deleuze and Guattari apply this dual distinction to the plane of immanence itself, the plane with these two attributes as its two sides represents the condition for it to unfold as the power of thinking and creating by virtue of the creation it carries, and thus also to unfold as the two powers.

For Spinoza,[2] God's absolute essence is formally the power of being, and objectively the power of thinking. It is expressed by God's formally producing in the attributes and at the same time objectively understanding how he produces. The power of being finds its expression in the modes of the attributes, which also include God's infinite intellect as a mode of the attribute of Thought. With respect to the power of being, this attribute is not distinct from the attribute of Extension, so that in their formal being, ideas also take on a form of existence. The power of being is established according to its possibility and according to its necessity by the formally distinct attributes, for these are the condition of its being active, and taken together are the formal essence of God, which makes them necessary. The power of thinking finds its expression in the objective being of the ideas, in other words the ideas insofar as they represent something. Deleuze stresses that the objective being, even the idea of God as the objective being of infinite intellect, would be nothing 'without this formal being through which it is a mode of the attribute of Thought. Or, if you like, it would be only potential, without this potentiality ever being actualized' (Deleuze 1990: 122). Accordingly, the power of thinking – which, as a divine power, is always an actualised, active power – points to the attribute of Thought not only as its sole objective condition, but at the same time as its formal condition. Thus the formal possibility of the idea of God is established in the attribute of Thought, while its objective necessity is established in God's absolute essence.

In any case, to return now to *What Is Philosophy?*, the attributes are always the condition of the powers. It is for this reason that Deleuze and Guattari find it more accurate to say that the plane of immanence presents its two powers to us than to say that the plane of immanence presents its two sides, Extension and Thought, to us – because strictly speaking it is only the plane of immanence when it becomes a power of thinking and creating, or, to put it another way, because it is only through the creation of concepts that philosophy itself rises to become a power, to become the plane of immanence as the layer of a brain-subject:

> At the same time that the brain becomes subject – or rather 'superject', as Whitehead puts it – the concept becomes object as created, as event or creation itself; and philosophy becomes the plane of immanence that supports the concepts and that the brain lays out. Cerebral movements also give rise to conceptual personae. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 211)

The moment of creation corresponds in Spinoza to the transition from created nature to creating nature, from infinity to the absolute, from

the infinite movements to the power of thinking and creating. Laid out as a presupposition, the plane remains prephilosophical for as long as the concept has not been posited as creation. 'Prephilosophical does not mean something preexistent but rather something *that does not exist outside philosophy*, although philosophy presupposes it. These are its internal conditions' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 41). It is only with the creation of concepts according to the specified aspect that the plane becomes the plane of immanence, becomes a power, becomes philosophy. The always singular moment of creation is the moment when, as Éric Alliez emphasises, 'philosophy as the expression of a constructivism' unfolds its power (Alliez 2004: 15). Philosophy does not remain dependent on a pregiven subject of lived experience – that subject is located in a historically determined mental landscape, as is everything that, in Ruyer's example, is on the table or the sheet of paper and is identified by the subject present, thus being defined as a historical state of affairs in agreement with the collective milieu. Even when the philosopher constructs concepts, he uses components taken from this mental landscape, breaks them out of it and reassembles them like a collage, forming Riemannian spaces in which the connection between one term and the next is not defined and can be effected in an infinite number of ways. This construction makes it possible, in the survey of the plane, to be immediately co-present to all its components and, in the 'condensation' effected by the survey, to create those opaque surfaces which are absolute and stand for themselves. The intentionally opened rift, the hiatus, as Deleuze writes with reference to Book V of Spinoza's *Ethics*, functions 'to bring together to the maximum degree terms that are distant as such, and thereby to assure a speed of absolute survey' (Deleuze 1998: 150). These hiatuses require one to reconstitute a missing chain, but in return allow one to jump 'from a relative speed (the greatest) to an absolute speed', which Deleuze calls the 'speed of power' (149–51).

To explain how it is possible for thought to gain access to the infinite movement and to reconquer an immanent power of creation, it is necessary to follow a strong hint by Deleuze and Guattari and probe more deeply into Spinoza's work. We must go beyond the ordinary ideas of opinion 'and arrive *as quickly as possible* at mental objects determinable as real beings' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 207). To this end, however – in order to reach concepts, in other words those ideas 'that must be created' – we must also make use of opinion, 'but only so far as is necessary to get to a plane where we go from real being to real being and advance through the construction of concepts', through

reconnecting the components taken from chaos into a concept and sequencing the concepts among themselves, until they are created in their full maturity (207). We must connect the ideas to their causes, even if we draw on opinion to do so, writes Deleuze of Spinoza, in order to 'reach the idea of God as quickly as possible' and to proceed in a manner excluding all opinion, in a way that moves 'from one real being to another, deducing ideas one from another, starting from the idea of God' (Deleuze 1990: 137–8). In this way, we will arrive at the adequate ideas, which are distinguished by the fact that they express their own cause. The cause of ideas in their objective being is the idea of God, so that the adequate ideas give expression to the absolute power of thinking, or the objective essence of God, which corresponds to the idea of God. As God formally produces in the attributes the way he objectively understands himself, the ideas connect in the attribute of Thought in accordance with their own content: the content of an idea (in other words, what the idea objectively is) is identical with the formal existence of the idea in the attribute. Starting from the idea of God, 'ideas are then linked according to their own content; but their content is also determined by this sequence' – that is to say, it is in the content or objective being of the idea that the power of thinking finds its expression, as the power of being finds expression in the form of that idea (138). The form of the idea is automatically united with the content through its autonomous sequencing with the other ideas following the order of infinite intellect. Ideas are mental objects, determinable as real beings, if they express the power of thinking in which they participate, the objective essence of divine nature. In the same way, for Deleuze and Guattari, the plane of immanence as an immanent power of creation finds its expression in the concepts, through their sequencing in accordance with the infinite movements of the plane, which gives creation an autonomous existence.

In the creation of the concepts the plane of immanence becomes the power of thinking and creating, which unfolds as a layer of a brain-subject:

> [The brain, under the] aspect of absolute form, appears as the faculty of concepts, that is to say, as the faculty of their creation, at the same time that it sets up the plane of immanence on which concepts are placed, move, change order and relations, are renewed, and never cease being created. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 211)

The infinite movements of the plane of immanence can only be performed as a subject which itself only arises in that process, in line with the aspect of the plane. The cerebral movements give rise to

conceptual personae, for maintaining oneself on the plane of immanence, remaining in thinking, is possible only through a continuous sequencing of concepts. The conceptual personae proceed by linking concepts, they designate '*insistence*' in philosophical thinking, they draw us into a becoming-subject (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 76), and we could say, with Spinoza, that they set a 'spiritual automaton' in motion. They are the only compass for carrying out the movements, and in this sense correspond to the idea of God, which guides us in the linking of adequate ideas. When the brain becomes subject, Thought-brain, it is as a line of becoming on the plane, as a hyphen between thought and brain. 'The plane of immanence has two facets as Thought and as Nature', write Deleuze and Guattari, and it is unceasingly permeated by 'unlimited movements . . . on two sides' (38, 44). As a fold between Thought and Nature, which arises with the movements on both sides of the folded plane at once, the brain-subject expresses the actual mental objects, which have become nature, as real beings, with their power to posit themselves as creative ideas. 'Infinite movement is double, and there is only a fold from one to the other. It is in this sense that thinking and being are said to be one and the same' (38). Philosophy, as this Thought-Being, creates the concept – that is, a chaos that has 'become Thought, mental chaosmos' (208).

In *What Is Philosophy?*, Spinoza is hailed as 'the only philosopher never to have compromised with transcendence', as having postulated immanence as 'only immanent to itself' and hence as a plane which, even as a power of thinking, does not inscribe itself in the subject of thinking (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 48). By doing so, 'he fulfilled philosophy because he satisfied its prephilosophical presupposition', since in carrying out the movements, as a fold running through the whole plane, the I of thinking does not set itself apart as an overriding I (48). Philosophy as a plane of immanence thus does not add itself to the prephilosophical plane through the creation of concepts. This is 'the vertigo of immanence' to which the I succumbs – a spiritual automaton or 'a sort of child-player against whom we can no longer do anything, a Spinoza who leaves no illusion of transcendence remaining' (48, 72).

But despite the high status of Spinoza in *What Is Philosophy?*, it is Jean Hyppolite's characterisation of Kant's *Critique of Judgement* – as a 'Leibnizianism of immanence' – that seems best to fit the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari (qtd in Kerslake 2009: 105). For if they tie the creative divine substance and the created modes to the plane of immanence as the presupposition of creation, then substance exists only in the moment of creation as an expression in the modes; it

exists only in the transition in which the modes themselves become substantial. A becoming-substantial of the modes is, so to speak, a becoming-monad in the vertigo of immanence, a becoming-subject in the crossing of the entire plane, in the survey: 'I am no longer myself but thought's aptitude for finding itself and spreading across a plane that passes through me at several places' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 64). And this I is constantly torn apart by the divergent planes, by philosophy, science and art, or, as Deleuze writes about Whitehead in his Leibniz study, 'pushed apart, kept open through divergent series and incompossible totalities' – for Whitehead, the 'bifurcations, divergences, incompossibilities, and discord belong to the same motley world *that can no longer be included in expressive units*, but only made or undone' (Deleuze 2006: 92). In *What Is Philosophy?*, Deleuze and Guattari counter this unfurling of divergent series, this emancipation of dissonance or of unresolved accords, with their conception of thinking, in which the motley world no longer posits itself as immanent to a subjective unit, but in the junction of the three possibly incompossible planes. 'It could be said that the monad, astraddle over several worlds, is kept half open as if by a pair of pliers'; it could also be said that the I torn apart in a perpetual show of strength, the acrobat, constantly ties itself up again into a brain-subject and makes and undoes the world (Deleuze 2006: 157).

III. The Extrinsic Interferences of Philosophy with Science

Philosophy modulates the concept with inseparable components, positing it as object or event. The concept 'posits itself and its object at the same time as it is created' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 22). The 'positional enunciation is strictly immanent to the concept because the latter's sole object is the inseparability of the components' of which it, and hence the event as concept, is composed (23). For its part, science posits the actual matter of fact with the function: 'an object is scientifically constructed by functions' (117). The function posits the matter of fact as external, though not as independent but in reference to the scientific plane, which also defines the conditions of reference. The functions 'are defined by their reference, which concerns not the Event but rather a relationship with a matter of fact or body and with the conditions of this relationship' (22). The scientific act of positional enunciation thus 'remains external to the proposition [or function] because the latter's object is a matter of fact as referent' (23). Science constitutes or modifies the actual matter of fact, constructing

this, its object, with distinct determinations: 'Acts of reference are finite movements of thought by which science constitutes or modifies matters of fact and bodies' (138). These acts of reference of the function are, as Deleuze and Guattari point out, very different from the philosophical concept, involving no longer inseparable components but rather distinct determinations. The realm of function does not, however, just extend to that of the scientific function, but also to that of the logical function and that of opinion. 'Through functions, science continually actualizes the event in a matter of fact, thing, or body that can be referred to', whereby these relationships are made with the plane of reference and not with a pregiven subject – whereas opinion, with its 'function of the lived', refers to already constituted objects, which it relates to a subject of lived experience (126, 144). Opinion founds its reference on pure qualities, such as can be abstracted from a universal subject in the perception of an object, in order to form the arguments of the functions of opinion as '*lived states*' (151).

Art thinks through affects and percepts; it uses sensations to create the compounds of sensations themselves: 'We paint, sculpt, compose, and write with sensations. We paint, sculpt, compose, and write sensations' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 166). Art does not actualise the virtual event but expresses the event without actualising it, by giving it a universe which sets the compounds of sensations in motion; art erects monuments with its sensations and posits its object in this way. In contrast to opinion, art does not abstract any pure quality; as 'percepts, sensations are not perceptions referring to an object (reference)' (166). Art 'goes beyond the perceptual states and affective transitions of the lived', for we 'attain to the percept and the affect only as to autonomous and sufficient beings that no longer owe anything to those who experience or have experienced them' (171, 168). The pure quality of opinion, which serves for reference, remains isolated from the universe in which it unfolds, whereas art precisely considers 'the quality . . . from the standpoint of the becoming that grasps it' (Deleuze and Guattari 2005b: 306). Art 'implies the emergence of pure sensory qualities, of sensibilia that cease to be merely functional and become expressive features, making possible a transformation of functions' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 183). The qualities of art, the qualities in becoming, cannot be apprehended by functions; they remain 'what the Middle Ages called the "signifiable complex" of a proposition, distinct from the matter of fact' (Deleuze 1997: 105; translation modified).

Concept, scientific function and compound of sensations must each be created separately, even though philosophy, science and art each need

the assistance of the others to do so. When 'an object – a geometrical space, for example – is scientifically constructed by functions, its philosophical concept, which is by no means given in the function, must still be discovered' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 117). If this geometrical space is determined by a function as a scientific matter of fact, the concept of this space is not therefore given, but must first be created on the plane of immanence: 'A function of space can be given without the concept of this space yet being given' (133). Likewise, a compound of sensations may be given without the correlate concept having been created – or, as Deleuze and Guattari put it, 'a sensation exists in its possible universe without the concept necessarily existing in its absolute form' (178). Like the function, the compound of sensations can thus be created before the concept, and conversely the concept before either, for it is said of each of these three elements that 'none of these elements can appear without the other being still to come, still indeterminate or unknown', and each 'created element on a plane calls on other heterogeneous elements, which are still to be created on other planes' (199). Just as, for example, a new space function calls for the creation of a correlating concept, and on that basis philosophy spins forth thought in a 'heterogenesis' (199), so art occasionally – to return to Deleuze's examination of the play of faculties in Kant – pushes philosophy 'towards an inspiration which it would not have had alone' (Deleuze 1984: xii). But more than that, the creation of a concept will entail the creation of further concepts on the same plane as well (see Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 19). In other words, a concept itself will also call for the creation of new concepts with which it can link up. The degree of attention that Deleuze pays to this heterogenesis of thought is evidenced in particular by his cinema books and his study on Leibniz. But even if he notes the simultaneous appearance of the film and Bergson's thinking, or explains how the fold as the characteristic of the Baroque finds expression through the different forms of thought at the same time, Deleuze still emphasises in both cases that philosophy, science and art must be creative on their own account without direct transposition, although he goes so far as to say that the 'monad and its system . . . cannot be understood if they are not compared to Baroque architecture' (Deleuze 2006: 31).

With their creative ideas, philosophy, science and art each posit their own object, or more precisely the event, the actual matter of fact or the monument. Even when science, for example, 'is concerned with the same "objects" it is not from the viewpoint of the concept; it is not by creating concepts' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 33). Indeed, it is only the same

object inasmuch as it is identified as such by recognition, in *What Is Philosophy?* the finite movement of thought that gathers together the whole of the negative. Joining together in the brain and continually knotting up the brain-subject, the planes of philosophy, science and art do not address the same object with concept, function and compound of sensations. 'The three thoughts intersect and intertwine but without synthesis or identification' (198–9). Each posits its own object, but they must intertwine in order to allow the free interplay from which creation emerges. To this end, though, they must first of all free themselves from the well-coordinated interaction to which opinion subjects them. Lacking creative force, opinion cannot avoid designating solely an already constituted object, starting from a pregiven subject of lived experience. Conceptual art, while directly raising the question of its own relationship to the concept and to the function, is a prime example of how opinion crosses the boundaries of philosophy and art to support itself, and for this reason can go no further than, as Deleuze and Guattari put it, 'to find ordinary perceptions and affections in the infinite and to reduce the concept to a *doxa* of the social body or great American metropolis' (198). So when Joseph Kosuth in his 1965 artwork *One and Three Chairs*, to which *What Is Philosophy?* unmistakably alludes, installs 'a sufficiently neutralized plane of composition', on which the supposed artwork hierarchically arranges 'a thing, its photograph on the same scale and in the same place, its dictionary definition', he is referring to the recognition of the viewer, the subject of reflection who brings forth the intended artwork by identifying an object in this hierarchical arrangement with the help of the prevailing opinion (198). A chair, a photograph thereof and the definition of a chair provides us with everything we need to form the cliché of a chair, supplying the referents for what we mean when we say: 'This is a chair.' And as Kosuth leaves the selection of the chair and the photography to an arbitrary agent, the object is hardly likely to escape from the sphere of functions whose arguments are consensual perceptions and affections. The agent must subject himself to the disciplinary power of the system of opinion implemented in the social body in order to make the right choice, namely 'a seat with a back, and often arms, usually for one person'. This is how the functions of the lived calibrate themselves against the given state of affairs and set up linguistically and culturally separate social milieus into which philosophers, like anyone else, are bound, right down to their mental movements.

Now, of the different types of 'interference between the planes that join up in the brain', the 'extrinsic interferences' are those in which

each of the three forms of thought 'remains on its own plane and utilizes its own elements' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 216–17). In the division of labour involved in the creation of the concept, the extrinsic interferences establish those relationships of interconnection on which the interaction of philosophy and science rests. 'Philosophy has a fundamental need for . . . science', say Deleuze and Guattari in summary, 'because science constantly intersects with the possibility of concepts and because concepts necessarily involve allusions to science that are neither examples nor applications, nor even reflections' (162). Science cannot provide a basis for the possibility of concepts – that can only be done by the plane of immanence laid out by the philosopher – but science does intersect this possibility with actual matters of fact and bodies, which it constitutes or modifies with its functions, and thus calls for the creation of correlate concepts. Concepts necessarily involve allusions to science because 'philosophy will be able to draw out concepts from these matters of fact inasmuch as it extracts the event from them', and this extraction of the event implies that we find 'allusions to them on the plane of immanence and in the event' (52, 161). In order to create the concept as event, 'it would be necessary to return to the interior of scientific matters of fact or bodies in the process of being constituted' (140). To be precise, the philosopher extracts the event 'from everything that a subject may live, from its own body, from other bodies and objects distinct from it, and from the matter of fact' (159). As is made clear at several points in *What Is Philosophy?*, if not only the realm of scientific function, but the realm of function as a whole – including the mental landscape and the historical milieu formed by opinion – forms the actual factors on whose basis philosophy determines concepts, then the philosopher in any case 'neither reproduces the matter of fact nor imitates the lived' (160). He or she 'does not look for the function of what happens but extracts the event from it', so that the concept itself abandons all reference and instead contains allusions to the actual (160). In respect of the creation of the concept, therefore, we must not separate what the scientific faculty of knowledge determines as matter of fact from what this faculty or power, in its degenerate form, accommodates through the application of recognition in the function of the lived – even if great importance is attached to that separation in answering the question of science's creative activity. In the process of the concept's constitution, a distinction in the realm of function cannot be upheld at all, because in that process wresting the determinations away from the matter of fact, the body, the lived, means nothing other than removing them from

chaos, for they appear first of all as chaotic. Creation requires that we plunge into chaos and free ourselves from all the historical ballast that is still preventing us from becoming philosophers anew. The difference between science and philosophy in their respective attitudes towards chaos establishes a difference in kind between concept and function, and assigns them to their belonging on their own plane (see Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 117–18). Since concept and function order chaos in different ways within a chaosmos, philosophy cannot adopt the order of science and simply transpose the elements of science directly onto its plane. For this reason it is the extrinsic interferences with science that are necessary for the creation of the concept, because philosophy 'remains on its own plane and utilizes its own elements', so that it always creates with its 'specific means' (217, 161). And these interferences are necessary not only when a correlating concept is created for an already given function of science, because every kind of determination has recourse to science's and opinion's acts of reference. Concept and function are not creations *ex nihilo*, since chaos is not a nothingness. Chaos first and foremost contains that which we expose to chaos when we plunge into it in order to produce something new. 'Chaos is characterized less by the absence of determinations' than by 'the impossibility of a connection between them', by the fact that there is 'not a movement from one determination to the other' (42). Only through determinations taken from chaos being reconnected within a concept in accordance with the order of philosophy, and through the sequencing of the concepts among themselves, does thought accede to the infinite movement of the plane of immanence and reconquer an immanent power of creation. Thus, if science supports philosophy in the creation of the concept, it does so precisely not by assuring a reference of the concept.

The extrinsic interferences that occur between all forms of thought when 'the interfering discipline' proceeds 'with its own methods' or means therefore appear 'when a philosopher attempts to create the concept of . . . a function (for example, a concept peculiar to Riemannian space)' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 217). The concept of a function strictly speaking means creating the concept which is peculiar to a function, or as Deleuze and Guattari put it, the concept for Riemannian space. The extrinsic interferences with science and the allusions in the completely created concept both relate to the object that science constitutes or modifies with the functions and that it thereby posits as extrinsic. 'The concept does not reflect on the function any more than the function is applied to the concept. Concept and function must intersect,

each according to its line' (161). In the case of philosophy, this line leads from the matters of fact that science actualises to the events; in the case of science, it leads from the events to the matters of fact:

> If the two lines are inseparable it is in their respective sufficiency, and philosophical concepts act no more in the constitution of scientific functions than do functions in the constitution of concepts. It is in their full maturity, and not in the process of their constitution, that concepts and functions necessarily intersect, each being created only by their specific means. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 161)

In their full maturity, the two heterogeneous elements – concept and function – outline an object as though they tied together the event and the object posited as matter of fact, as though enveloping them with the two lines of philosophy and science. 'The two lines are therefore inseparable but independent, each complete in itself: it is like the envelopes of the two very different planes' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 161). We find allusions to the matters of fact, to the object of science, 'we find only allusions to them on the plane of immanence and in the event' (161). The event, on the other hand, wrests itself from the function and cannot be grasped as a matter of fact. Deleuze and Guattari liken the event from the viewpoint of science to a cloud: 'Philosophy can speak of science only by allusion, and science can speak of philosophy only as of a cloud' (161). Philosophy has a fundamental need for science, although the two lines of philosophy and science are independent and each is complete in itself – and 'science is . . . equally and intensely in need of philosophy' (162). But philosophy does not reflect on the function, and provides science with no sort of criterion for a distinction in the realm of function.

IV. The Intrinsic Interferences of Philosophy with Art

In Kant's aesthetic of the beautiful and the sublime, the various faculties of thought enter into a discordant accord which is not dominated by any one of these faculties and not regulated by any predefined law. And it is precisely beauty – which, in *What Is Philosophy?*, reveals the division of labour of philosophy with art – that leads us to a free interaction, guided by taste, of all three forms of thought. The starting point for characterising the intrinsic interferences by which philosophy arrives at the sensation of the concept is the following passage:

> The fact that there are specifically philosophical perceptions and affections and specifically scientific ones – in short, sensibilia of the concept and sensibilia of the function – already indicates the basis of a relationship

> between science and philosophy on the one hand, and art on the other, such that we can say that a function is beautiful and a concept is beautiful. The special perceptions and affections of science or philosophy necessarily adhere to the percepts and affects of art, those of science just as much as those of philosophy. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 132/126; translation modified)

This relationship, which enables us to say that a concept or a function is beautiful, thus consists in the perceptions and affections of science or philosophy adhering to the sensations of art. The interference in question is 'intrinsic', and must not be confused with an extrinsic interference, which appears even when, for instance, 'a philosopher attempts to create the concept of a sensation' or 'when a scientist tries to create functions of sensations' as long as they use their 'own methods' or means (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 217).

> [Sometimes] we speak of the intrinsic beauty of a geometrical figure, . . . but so long as this beauty is defined by criteria taken from science, like proportion, symmetry, dissymmetry, projection, or transformation, then there is nothing aesthetic about it: this is what Kant demonstrated with such force. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 217)

Because science 'remains on its own plane and utilizes its own elements', this beauty, even if it is described as intrinsic beauty, is completely different from the beauty that points to intrinsic interferences (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 217). Only these intrinsic interferences with art can be the reason why there are sensibilia of the concept and sensibilia of the function and thus the conceptual persona, which can raise the concept to creation, or the partial observer, who can raise the function to creation. 'Partial observers are *sensibilia*', write Deleuze and Guattari, '*the perceptions or sensory affections of functives themselves* . . . For their part, conceptual personae are philosophical sensibilia, the perceptions and affections of fragmentary concepts themselves' (131).

In order to create the function, explain Deleuze and Guattari immediately after discussing the intrinsic beauty of a geometrical figure, 'the function must be grasped within a sensation that gives it percepts and affects composed exclusively by art, on a specific plane of creation that wrests it from any reference' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 217). In the same way, philosophy is dependent on art because its special perceptions and affections also necessarily adhere to the percepts and affects of art. As the perceptions and affections of philosophy are neither percepts and affects themselves nor derive from habitual experience, they must go back to art, or to be more precise, to the conceptual persona, which philosophy can only awaken to life with the help of

art. The division of labour between these two forms of thought does not, however, imply that with the completely given concept, art has already posited a correlating artwork: the artwork must likewise be created for itself. In addition, philosophy – or science – does not call for a single and precisely defined artwork that art still has to create. Thus, the Rauschenberg collage is an artwork 'for' the Riemannian space of mathematics, but so are the smooth spaces with close vision in Bresson's films.

At the same time as the concepts are attaching themselves to the corresponding sensations, the conceptual personae slip in among the aesthetic figures. There is an 'intrinsic type of interference when concepts and conceptual personae seem to leave a plane of immanence . . . so as to slip in . . . among the sensations and aesthetic figures'; and these 'slidings are so subtle, like those of Zarathustra in Nietzsche's philosophy or of Igitur in Mallarmé's poetry, that we find ourselves on complex planes that are difficult to qualify' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 217). In turn, 'partial observers', continue Deleuze and Guattari now returning to science, 'introduce into science sensibilia that are sometimes close to aesthetic figures on a mixed plane', whose subtle slippings advance so far onto art's plane of composition that the partial observers mix with the aesthetic figures (217). It is difficult to separate the aesthetic figures from the compounds of sensations on the plane of composition. 'Aesthetic figures . . . are sensations: percepts and affects, landscapes and faces, visions and becomings' (177). Their seeing is only perceiving inasmuch as they 'have passed into the landscape and are themselves part of the compound of sensations': not perception but percept (169). That the aesthetic figures are sensations by no means excludes art's being dependent on an interaction with philosophy and science to create the compounds of sensations in its possible universe – a universe that sets these compounds of sensations in motion. In this interaction, art creates the compounds of sensations by rising, through the performance of the movements by means of the aesthetic figure, to the power of thinking and creating, to be a layer of the brain-subject. 'Art . . . lays out a plane of composition that, in turn, through the action of aesthetic figures, bears monuments or composite sensations' (197).

For concepts and conceptual personae to be able to mix with the sensations and aesthetic figures at all, the intrinsic interferences of philosophy with art must imply that art, in order to support philosophy in a division of labour for the creation of the concept, composes the percepts and affects to which the concepts adhere – that art, in an interaction with philosophy, awakens to life the conceptual persona that

raises the concept to creation. Everything points to the conclusion that the subtle slippings of philosophy open up concepts to the plane of composition to such an extent that the concepts form a universe for art, setting in motion the corresponding percepts and affects that art has composed. And indeed, Deleuze and Guattari say that 'concepts are centers of vibrations, each in itself and every one in relation to all the others', counting the vibration (because it is already durable or compound) as one of the different 'monumental types, or "varieties", of compounds of sensations' of art (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 23, 168). They also describe concepts given in their full maturity as 'conceptual blocs', and by comparison, the work of art as a '*bloc of sensation*' (208, 164). In any case, there must be a real interplay between the planes in order to arrive at the concepts as conceptual blocs. To this end, philosophy must connect up the concepts to the percepts and affects of art, so that these percepts and affects are set in motion; this motion, in turn, induces an aesthetic figure on the plane of composition, and with this aesthetic figure, the conceptual persona arises on the plane of immanence through the connecting up of the concepts to the percepts and affects. This interplay even leads to the conceptual personae seeming to leave a plane of immanence and mixing with the aesthetic figures, so that 'between them, not only alliances but also branchings and substitutions take place' (66). And all this is possible because the 'plane of composition of art and the plane of immanence of philosophy can slip into each other to the degree that parts of one may be occupied by entities of the other', without fusing (66). In fact, 'in each case the plane and that which occupies it are like two relatively distinct and heterogeneous parts' (66). The reason why the planes slip into each other, according to Deleuze and Guattari, is that 'the concept as such can be concept of the affect, just as the affect can be affect of the concept' (66). And together with concept and sensation, conceptual persona and aesthetic figure also pass into one another, but again they do not fuse: even if 'aesthetic figures are not the same as conceptual personae they pass into one another, in either direction, like Igitur or Zarathustra, but this is insofar as there are sensations of concepts and concepts of sensations' (177). This mixing of concept and conceptual persona with sensation and aesthetic figure, as the plane of immanence and the plane of composition slip into each other, derives from a becoming that is produced through the affect, when philosophy connects up concepts with the percepts and affects composed by art. The affect thus causes the concepts to vibrate, and these vibrations are transferred to the extent that 'branchings and substitutions', interlinking

the planes, arise between conceptual persona and aesthetic figure. The conceptual persona and the aesthetic figure, asserts *What Is Philosophy?*, can 'pass into each other in a becoming that sweeps them both up in an intensity which co-determines them' (66). Despite their shared intensity, it is still possible to distinguish a sensory becoming from a conceptual becoming – even in the affect of the concept, the affect being on the plane of composition and the concept on the plane of immanence. Accordingly, the aesthetic figures never fuse in the conceptual personae, whose sensation is only a perception inasmuch as, having totally passed into the concept, for them the concepts themselves are the percepts:

> Sensory becoming is the action by which something or someone is ceaselessly becoming-other (while continuing to be what they are), ... whereas conceptual becoming is the action by which the common event itself eludes what is. Conceptual becoming is heterogeneity grasped in an absolute form; sensory becoming is otherness caught in a matter of expression. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 177)

The intrinsic interferences of philosophy with art draw the thinker into a form of athleticism, for he or she is on two planes at the same time and does not produce a synthesis but ties the planes together without referring them back to a unity, in a constant battle, since – Kant again – 'they struggle against one another' in him or her (Deleuze 1984: xii). This struggle is a condition of creation itself, to the extent that it tears the planes from their tacit connection by opinion; they shake off the stabilised I of opinion to knot themselves always anew in singular moments of creation. According to Deleuze and Guattari, '*Igitur* is just such a case of a conceptual persona transported onto a plane of composition, an aesthetic figure carried onto a plane of immanence: his proper name is a conjunction' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 67). As conjunctions, these thinkers 'do not produce a synthesis of art and philosophy' but branch out and do not stop branching out (67):

> They are hybrid geniuses who neither erase nor cover over differences in kind but, on the contrary, use all the resources of their 'athleticism' to install themselves within this very difference, like acrobats torn apart in a perpetual show of strength. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 67)

In this perpetual show of strength, the hybrid genius establishes the correspondence between the planes, bridging the I of thinking, which is constantly split anew like 'a tightrope walker', like Zarathustra

(Nietzsche 1976: 124). 'The brain, under its first aspect of absolute form, appears as the faculty of concepts', as the power of the concept to become a subject through the conceptual persona, by creating the concept itself as event, a conceptual becoming as heterogeneity grasped in an absolute form (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 211). 'And this *I* is not only the "I conceive" of the brain as philosophy, it is also the "I feel" of the brain as art' (211).

When the concept itself, as conceptual persona, becomes subject, it determines, as intensity, our becoming – or to be more precise, the conceptual persona is nothing but this becoming, the thinking, perceiving and feeling of the concept. This is the moment in which philosophy finds its expression through the concept, as that power of thinking and creating which is the power of the concept itself. 'What depends on a free creative activity is also that which, independently and necessarily, posits itself in itself' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 11). The concept, created 'relative to its own components, to other concepts, to the plane', posits itself as 'absolute through the condensation it carries out' (21). The moment of creation is the transition from the infinite movements to the concept as intensity, and corresponds to the transition in Spinoza from created nature to creating nature, from the infinite to the absolute: the concept unfolds its power, it 'posits itself and its object at the same time as it is created' in carrying out the infinite movements of the plane of immanence, in the thinking, perceiving and feeling of the concept (22). The concept itself is what makes us think through the conceptual persona, makes us see and become. 'It is no objection to say that creation is the prerogative of the sensory and the arts, since . . . philosophical concepts are also "sensibilia"' (5). Concepts are of a creating nature, in the same sense as Deleuze and Guattari say with reference to art that 'the sensation is not colored but, as Cézanne said, coloring' (167). Through the intrinsic interferences with art with which philosophy awakens to life its conceptual persona – which, as 'a living category', applies the movements of the plane to the concepts – the concept is created as a vital idea, becomes an intensity, and posits itself as absolute (3). The conceptual persona performs the infinite movements of thought on the plane of immanence and erects interferences, intervening 'between the plane and the intensive features of the concepts that happen to populate it. *Igitur*' (75). Or, to make it explicit: 'This was to take place in the combinations of the Infinite face to face with the Absolute. Necessary – the extracted Idea. Profitable madness. There one of the acts of the universe was just committed . . . Proof' (Mallarmé 1982: 92).

V. The Interaction Led by Taste

At the beginning of *What Is Philosophy?*, Deleuze and Guattari assert that 'the time has come for us to ask what philosophy is', noting that they have often raised this question and always provided the same answer: 'Philosophy is the art of forming, inventing, and fabricating concepts' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 2). However, they continue, 'the answer not only had to take note of the question, it had to determine its moment, its occasion and circumstances, its landscapes and personae, its conditions and unknowns' (2). As long as the concept has not yet received these determinations, as long as it is formed but not yet created, linked to other concepts, given in its full maturity, the plane remains still-transparent, in other words prephilosophical, and the conceptual persona still in limbo. All three elements must be constructed as such; and as none of them is 'deduced from the others, there must be coadaptation of the three' (77). Because, on this basis, 'the concept must be created, it refers back to the philosopher as the one who has it potentially, or who has its power and competence', who awakens the conceptual persona to life precisely by surrendering to the power of the concept (5):

> The philosopher is the concept's friend; he is potentiality of the concept. That is, philosophy is not a simple art of forming, inventing, or fabricating concepts, because concepts are not necessarily forms, discoveries, or products. More rigorously, philosophy is the discipline that consists in *creating* concepts... Because the concept must be created, it refers back to the philosopher as the one who has it potentially, or who has its power and competence. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 5/10; translation modified)

Philosophy is the 'activity of creating concepts' to the same extent that science and art consist in 'scientific or artistic activity'; it consists as philosophy only in the creative implementation of the movements of thought on the plane of immanence, which entails the now of our becoming (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 8).

'The philosophical faculty of coadaptation, which also regulates the creation of concepts, is called *taste*' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 77). Thus taste guides not only the construction of the elements and their mutual coadaptation but also, starting from this basis, the positing of the concept as event in each singular moment of creation. Taste first appears as the triple faculty which imposes on itself the rule for the coadaptation of the three elements of philosophy: 'No rule... will say in advance whether this is the good plane, the good persona, or the good concept; for each of them determines if the other two have succeeded or not, but each must be constructed on its own account', and we construct 'only

as we go along and on the basis of their coadaptations' (82). In respect of taste, 'as the triple faculty of the still-undetermined concept, of the persona still in limbo, and of the still-transparent plane', write Deleuze and Guattari, 'the laying-out of the plane is called Reason, the invention of personae Imagination, and the creation of concepts Understanding' (77). Art serves as Imagination, with whose help philosophy invents the conceptual personae and brings them to life; science serves as Understanding, with whose help philosophy constructs and determines concepts; philosophy is in this case Reason, which is stimulated in this free yet also necessary interaction until, in the moment of creation, it finds its expression as the power or faculty of thinking and creating, in the creation of concepts. Alongside coadaptation, 'the free creation . . . of concepts calls for a taste' that guides it and at the same time 'appears as philosophical taste', as 'love of the well-made concept, "well-made" meaning not a moderation of the concept but a sort of stimulation' – a stimulation through interference with science and slippings into the sensations and aesthetic figures of art (77–8).

While opinion proceeds by applying recognition and mediates between a subject of lived experience and its object, the philosophical concept needs taste in order to become the object of creation, just as the brain becomes subject through the conceptual persona. Apart from a rule that the philosopher imposes on himself, no rule is valid for the free interplay. 'The philosopher . . . can determine a concept only through a measureless creation whose only rule is a plane of immanence that he lays out and whose only compass are the strange personae to which it gives life' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 78). The conceptual persona, which advances through reconnections of the components taken from chaos in a concept and in the sequencing of the concepts among themselves, is not prescribed any rigid categories by the plane: the plane 'implies a sort of groping experimentation' and points to an 'instinctive, almost animal *sapere*' (41, 79). Nietzsche, suggest Deleuze and Guattari, 'sensed this relationship of the creation of concepts with a specifically philosophical taste' and was aware that 'it is certainly not for "rational or reasonable" reasons that a particular concept is created or a particular component chosen' (78). A groping experimentation, a taste, remains the only possibility of orienting oneself in the smooth spaces, given in close vision, of sequencing the concepts beyond the intentionally opened rift, the hiatus, when the linkage between one of them and the next is not defined in advance.

Because the concept is given its determination by allusions to the actual, we need have no sympathy for Hallward's characterisation, in

a detailed discussion of *What Is Philosophy?*, of Deleuze's thought as 'post-mystical philosophy' with no relation to the actual (Hallward 2006: 133). Due to the interaction of philosophy with science and art for the creation of concepts, it makes no sense to allow philosophy the exclusive privilege of being capable, with concepts, of creation in its purest form. Yet this does not mean obliterating the differences in kind between these three forms of thought and denying philosophy the potential for its very own and specific creation, as de Bloois does. It is not in spite of, but precisely because of the intrinsic interferences that philosophy posits the concept as a singular creation and expresses itself as an autonomous power of thinking and creating. The hybrid genius of Deleuze and Guattari therefore reveals itself in the stimulation of taste for a free interplay of thought in its three great forms, an interplay that resists the degeneration of thought into opinion.[3]

Notes

1. I am following Stengers's use of 'matter of fact' instead of 'state of affairs' for the translation of *état des choses* (Stengers 2005: 153). For all quotations from *What Is Philosophy?* (Deleuze and Guattari 1994) that include other modifications to the English translation, the second page number refers to the French edition (Deleuze and Guattari 2005a).
2. I base my considerations of Spinoza entirely on Deleuze (Deleuze 1990: ch. 7).
3. This article was translated from the German with the help of Michael Scuffil and Kate Sturge. It outlines the framework of my forthcoming book on *What Is Philosophy?* I would like to thank Professor Richard Heinrich (University of Vienna) for his continuous support.

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The Strangest Cult: Material Forms of the Political Book through Deleuze and Guattari

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Abstract

This article investigates the complex object of the political book. Mobilising Deleuze and Guattari's typology of the book, the article assesses the material properties of four specific books (or sets of books): Mao Zedong's 'Little Red Book', Russian Futurist books, Antonin Artaud's paper 'spells', and Guy Debord and Asger Jorn's 'anti-book' *Mémoires*. Highly critical of the dominant mode of the political book, what they call the 'root-book', Deleuze and Guattari draw attention to the troubling religious structures and passions that order its field. Here the book internalises the world as the origin and source of truth and authority – a mode of existence as dear to the avant-garde as it is to religious formations: 'Wagner, Mallarmé, and Joyce, Marx and Freud: still Bibles.' But the book also features in Deleuze and Guattari's counter-figure of the 'rhizome-book', where they foreground the dynamic materiality of this medium: 'A book has neither object nor subject; it is made of variously formed matters, and very different dates and speeds.' The rhizome-book is an enticing concept for assessing the political book, yet Deleuze and Guattari pay little attention to the specific, concrete attributes of this medium. In focusing on the properties of particular books this article seeks to address that absence, and so contribute to an understanding of the political book that is fully engaged with its material forms.

Keywords: the book, rhizome-book, Deleuze and Guattari, Mao Zedong, Russian Futurism, Antonin Artaud, Situationist International

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> One can speak out only through the mouth, but the book's facilities for expression take many more forms. (Lissitzky 2000: 135–6)

The place of the media form of 'the book' in the emergence of the political cultures and structures of the modern nation state has been the subject of an important body of research (Eisenstein 1980; Darnton 1996; Febvre and Martin 1997). Considerably less attention has been paid to the place of the book in extra-parliamentary political cultures, or – and this is where my primary interest lies – to political critique of the book's form and function. A rare exception can be found in Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus*. In a surprising and singular assessment, here the common understanding of the book as a generic instrument of secular enlightenment is supplanted with an image of the book as a fraught and ambivalent material entity, one entwined with a rather troubling political passion. Highly critical of the dominant mode of the political book and its associated semiotic and subjective patterns, what they call the 'root-book', Deleuze and Guattari develop a set of concepts for a fully materialist understanding of this medium, and point to the possibilities of a counter-figure, the 'rhizome-book'.

As N. Katherine Hayles (2002: 32–3) insists in *Writing Machines*, the materiality in question is complex and emergent. Materiality is not a fixed property of the book, but a mutable product of its physical, sensory, textual, conceptual, temporal and affective materials and relations. It is well known that a concern with the full complexity of material relations is paramount in Deleuze and Guattari's work. Yet despite their materialist framing of the book – and, with *A Thousand Plateaus*, their own experiment in the rhizome-book[1] – they pay little attention to the book's concrete forms and materials. Against that tendency to abstraction, this article seeks to keep the book's rich materiality at the centre of discussion, so contributing – in the spirit of contemporary studies in textual materialism and the practitioner field of the artists' book (Hayles 2002; Drucker 2004; Selcer 2010) – to an understanding of the political book that is fully engaged with its material forms. As such, the article at once sets out the contours of Deleuze and Guattari's typology of the book and mobilises it to assesses the material properties of four specific books (or sets of books): Mao Zedong's 'Little Red Book', Russian Futurist books, Antonin Artaud's paper 'spells', and Guy Debord and Asger Jorn's 'anti-book' *Mémoires*.

Allow me to make a few methodological points before beginning the discussion proper. A reader familiar with the above group of books may already be questioning the wisdom of analysing together such disparate

works, of which only Mao's book fulfils the conventional criteria of a 'political' book (the others sit more comfortably in the analytic framework of the cultural avant-garde). And one of these sets of books, Artaud's spells, would not under any normal rules of classification even be designated as 'books' at all, for these single-sheet artefacts are closer to letters or artworks on paper. Why, then, have I brought this heterogeneous group together? Well, Mao's book is included principally because it is a paradigmatic case of the political root-book, and a book about which very little has been written, remarkably so given its global impact. The other books analysed here are all selected because they are at once singular experiments in textual inscription and the form of the book, and particularly enticing examples for thinking with the concept of the rhizome-book. The very heterogeneity of the set is of course part of the appeal, for I in no way wish to compose a unified group of rhizome-books – this set is fundamentally open. Neither do I seek to establish a hard formal boundary between the book and its associated mediums of inscription, not least of which is the letter – hence my inclusion of Artaud's spells. After all, Deleuze and Guattari, as I show, have no objection to breaching the boundaries of the book, or, as is well known, to finding value in the open-ended arrangement of disparate elements.[2] As for the 'politics' of these works, the point is not whether they are self-identified as 'political books', but how they trouble and overcome the form of the root-book, itself a most political entity.

I. The Delusional Passion of the Book

From the first pages of *A Thousand Plateaus* one encounters a rather unusual typology of three kinds of book: the 'root-book', the 'fascicular root-book' and the 'rhizome-book'. These are tendencies or organising patterns in the field of the book, not mutually exclusive categories; in any particular book one would expect their co-presence and interaction, albeit with varying degrees of prominence. But for Deleuze and Guattari, the dominant tendency, such that it is the 'classical' figure of this medium, is the root-book.

The root-book is a signifying totality, an enclosed and sufficient entity constituted as an image of the world. It is a formation immanent to the sacred texts of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. To limit my discussion to Christian expressions, for Francis Bacon in his 1605 *Advancement of Learning*, God provided two books: the volume of the Scriptures, which reveals God's will, and the volume of the creatures – the book of nature – which reveals his power (Borges 2000). These books exist in an

imitative relation of complementarity, where the essential forms found in nature are mirrored in the universal book of Scriptures. Earlier, in his 1550 *Primera parte de las diferencias de libros que hay en el universo*, Alejo Venegas conceived of the book as an 'ark' and 'depository' of divine knowledge. As Walter Mignolo (2000: 351) explains, for Venegas, 'The human book has two functions: to know the creator of the Universe by reading His Book and, at the same time, to censure every human expression in which the Devil manifests itself by dictating false books.'

The essential structure of the root-book is clearly evident in these foundational expositions of the book. As it creates an *imitative* image of nature, the book presides, through the law of reflection, over the *split* between book and world. Severed from the world and, as such, pristine in its spiritual autonomy, the book is also a vector of *authority*, as is clear in Venegas: the 'ark' of the book both enjoins subjection to God's word and ensures against 'false books'. There is, then, a mundane *subject* constituted in the book's truth and authority, but it can also develop a peculiar *passion*, a 'monomania' of 'the book as origin and finality of the world' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 127). Deleuze and Guattari (111–48) make this point about the book's passional subjectivity through an assessment of the book's place in the semiotic system they call the 'postsignifying regime of signs'.

I present Chinese Maoism as an example of this postsignifying regime below, but it is useful first to set out its principal characteristics. As analytically (if rarely empirically) distinct from the 'signifying' regime, the postsignifying regime of signs is an 'active' rather than 'ideational' semiotic system. It is characterised less by the endless cycle of interpretation of signs, than by 'concise formulas' conducive to passional, subjective action. The radiating network of signification anchored in centres of interpretive authority (priest, political leader, despot) here breaks down. Instead, local 'points of subjectification' emerge that are constituted through the betrayal of dominant social relations and semiotic codes (Deleuze and Guattari give the example here of the betrayal of food by the anorexic) and a certain monomania that leads the subject on a passional vector through a series of finite linear proceedings, each drawn, as if to a 'black-hole', by the pursuit of its end. The particular semiotic expressions of the passional regime are composed of a 'subject of enunciation' and a 'subject of the statement', where the latter is bound to the utterances of the former and acts in a 'reductive echolalia' as its respondent or guarantor.[3]

It is in the action-oriented formulas of this regime that the book proper emerges, as it moves away from an essentially oral, 'nonbook' character

with external referent in God or despot, and instead – like a 'portable packet of signs' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 122) – comes to internalise the world as the origin and source of truth and authority:

> in the passional regime the book seems to be internalized, and to internalize everything: it becomes the sacred written Book. It takes the place of the face and God, who hides his face and gives Moses the inscribed stone tablets. ... *The book has become the body of passion* ... It is now the book, the most deterritorialized of things, that fixes territories and genealogies. (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 127)

As is clear from the Old Testament references, the root-book and its 'delusional passion' is religious in origin, but it is not limited to such formations (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 127).[4] Indeed, this 'strangest cult' has been a key feature of avant-garde culture and politics: 'Wagner, Mallarmé, and Joyce, Marx and Freud: still Bibles' (127). Mallarmé's (1971: 690) formulation of the book as 'spiritual instrument' – 'all earthly existence must ultimately be contained in a book' – is perhaps the clearest expression of this tendency. But the degree to which Marx is subject to the passional form of the book is questionable; indeed, in *The German Ideology* Marx himself makes a direct critique of the religious mode of the book that is remarkably resonant with that of Deleuze and Guattari.[5] Nonetheless, this defence of Marx cannot always be made of Marxism, at least not as expressed in regimes where Marxism became state doctrine. And it is from this milieu that I want to take a specific case of a political root-book.

II. Mao Zedong's Little Red Book

It would be difficult to find a book more enmeshed in its immediate environment than *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-Tung* (henceforth, *Quotations*), otherwise known as the Little Red Book. If it trails considerably behind the Bible in estimated sales figures, the majority of the 900 million copies of the second-best-selling book in world history[6] were published in a period of under four years, between 1964 and 1967, with the second year of the Cultural Revolution, 1967, accounting for 350 million (Lei Han 2004: 1; MacFarquhar and Schoenhals 2006: 240; Wilkinson 2008: 29). Of course, the Little Red Book was not a cause of the Cultural Revolution, yet – as is indicated by its frequent and central presence in the iconic posters and photographic images of the period – it was an object with a considerable agential role in inspiring, distributing and consolidating the collective passions of that

upheaval.[7] These posters and images also speak to the importance of the book as a rich material entity – as does its popular name, which foregrounds less the content or 'quotations' than the physical dimensions of the book, and its colour.

Quotations is principally a means for the transmission of the politico-philosophical system officially known as 'Mao Zedong Thought'.[8] While Mao's China was comprised of different semiotic regimes (with more than a little despotic signification), Mao Zedong Thought is a clear exemplar of the dynamics of the word and the book in the postsignifying regime of signs. Žižek is not alone in observing a wholly 'cosmic' orientation in Maoism, one that bound the Chinese people and Party to a transcendent trajectory of liberation that Mao's Thought discerned in human and natural history (in Mao Zedong 2007: 10).[9] This prophetic *reflection* of the world in Mao's Thought is simultaneously a *separation* from it, one that protects the 'purity' of the word against the 'ubiquitous contamination' of the everyday world (Lifton 1970: 49).[10] But, in accord with the passional structure of the root-book, it is a pristine truth that is subsequently returned to the world as authority and action. As such, Mao Zedong Thought constituted the Maoist 'point of subjectification', spiritualising the word as substance, nourishment and energiser of an immortal revolutionary cause. In the language of a 1966 People's Liberation Army newspaper:

> The thought of Mao Tse-tung is the sun in our heart, is the root of our life, is the source of all our strength. Through this, man becomes unselfish, daring, intelligent, able to do everything; he is not conquered by any difficulty and can conquer every enemy. (qtd in Lifton 1970: 72)

So configured, this passional subjectivity was to transcend mere individual mortality, as the catastrophe of Mao's Great Leap Forward (1958–62) rather confirms: between 15 and 40 million people died of starvation, over-work and summary killing as Mao sought an ultra-voluntarist route to industrialisation via the super-exploitation of labour, exporting grain during the famine to fund the import of military and industrial technology (Dikötter 2011). This subjective principle is also evident in Mao's words – in this framing of nuclear war, for instance, from a letter to Khrushchev: 'For our ultimate victory, … for the total eradication of the imperialists, we … are willing to endure the first [US nuclear] strike. All it is is a big pile of people dying' (Mao, qtd in Chang and Halliday 2007: 505). Such immortal political subjectivity was operational through individual identification with the macro, cosmic orientations of Mao's Thought, but its power was manifest also in its

ability to function at a micro-level, drawing as Maoism did a set of ethical criteria and associated practices to assess and modulate everyday behaviour.

With these characteristics, it is no surprise that while an early essay by Mao (2007: 44) called to 'oppose book worship', by the time of the Cultural Revolution Mao's books had become elevated to a fount of singular knowledge: 'the best books in the world, the most scientific books, the most revolutionary books' (qtd in Lifton 1970: 72).[11] Thus sanctified, Mao's texts took on the authoritarian function of the root-book that we saw above in Venegas, as is apparent in the call of the Communist Party daily, the *Red Flag*, to 'establish with utmost effort the absolute authority of the great Mao Zedong's Thought', 'Let Mao Zedong's Thought control everything' (qtd in Lu 2004: 65).

If this is the passional subjectivity of Mao's Thought, an important means of its social articulation was the particular structure of *Quotations*, to which I now turn. *Quotations* was initially published on a restricted basis in May 1964 under Lin Biao's direction as a vehicle for the education of the People's Liberation Army, which he headed. The book comprised selections of Mao's works under thirty thematic chapters, extending to thirty-three in 1965. This enabled a pedagogical practice characterised by group learning and recitation of passages and slogans, an approach that became central to the book's use following mass publication in 1966. Lin Biao described the benefits of such pedagogy in 1959: 'Learning the writings of Comrade Mao Zedong is the shortcut to learning Marxism-Leninism. Chairman Mao's writings are easy to learn, and once learned can be put to use immediately' (qtd in Yan and Gao 1996: 179–80). With a largely illiterate population such an approach to the 'shortcut' of learning has progressive features, but it is closely associated with authoritarian signifying patterns. As an 'active' rather than 'ideational' semiotic structure, the concise formula of the root-book requires only identification, as interpretation 'gives way to pure and literal recitation forbidding the slightest change, addition, or commentary' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 127). So much is clear in the words of one Shanghai newspaper in 1967: 'We must carry out Chairman Mao's instructions whether we understand them or not' (qtd in Robinson 1971: 509).

The passional activation of *Quotations* was constituted not only in the structure of its content and pedagogical mode, but also in its wider material properties. It is the *redness* of *Quotations* that is its most striking and alluring feature. Its red vinyl covers unify the book globally across its translations, perhaps with something of a universal appeal, but

in China they carried particular semiotic resonance. Already a prominent signifier of prosperity in Chinese culture, red connoted a commitment to Chinese communism, and was elevated into a foundational sign of struggle during the Cultural Revolution. One former Red Guard remembers:

> At the time China was engulfed in a permanent red storm. . . . Chairman Mao was our red Commander-in-Chief. We called ourselves 'his little red devils'. We read and quoted his little red book. Wore his red buttons on our chests. Red Flags. Red armbands. Red blood. Red hearts. . . . We could not tolerate anyone who was of a different color. (Rae Yang, qtd in Schrift 2001: 79–80)

In this fashion the redness of *Quotations* could be experienced as a collective flood of colour. Describing Mao's 1966 sunrise audiences with the Red Guards in Tiananmen Square, one biographer writes: 'Waved in the air, the red covers [of *Quotations*] made the square resemble a field ablaze with butterflies' (Terrill 1999: 318). But the mass distribution of the compact object of the book – with the rich sensory qualities that are germane to this tactile, portable medium – was such that its compound of redness, struggle and Mao Zedong Thought could also be experienced at an intimate, personal level. The endorsement leaf in Lin Biao's calligraphy contributed to a feeling of intimacy with the book, a feeling no doubt entrenched by the emotional disjunction associated with the subsequent defacement or removal of this page by each owner, following Lin Biao's death and denunciation.[12] The book could also take part in everyday ritual. At the start of the work and school day, groups would line up in front of Mao's portrait and wave *Quotations* while giving the 'three respects and three wishes'; the same practices might also take place immediately on waking or before a meal (Lu 2004: 132–3). Rhythmic waving of the book had a place in Maoist dance routines known as 'loyalty dances', and according to Xing Lu (2004: 133–4) there was even a correct manner of holding *Quotations* at such ceremonies: with the thumb placed in front and fingers behind, the book would be held over the heart to indicate loyalty and boundless love.

I will close discussion of Mao's *Quotations* by turning to the postsignifying theme of monomania as manifest among the Red Guards, the passional agents of the Cultural Revolution. The properties of the root-book had a specific articulation with the Red Guards' mode of autonomy, an autonomy that was central to the unleashed brutality of the Cultural Revolution, following Mao's call to 'boldly arouse the masses' against the established authorities (CCCCP 1966).[13] This is the somewhat paradoxical autonomy of the postsignifying mode of

subjectivity, with its monomania and reductive echolalia. As Lifton (1970: 60–2) argues, the autonomy of the Red Guards was characterised by a rare sense of 'participating in a great moral crusade' and 'of taking matters *into their own hands*', but in a fashion constituted through a 'totalistic attack upon any signs of the independent (non-Maoist) self'.[14] Here, not only did the mass-distributed *Quotations* open a direct line of affective integration between Mao and the population that was unmediated by Party structure, but its 'reject[ion]' of 'intermediaries or specialists' allowed a recoiling of Mao into the masses, the subject of enunciation into the subject of the statement (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 127). Like a portable packet of signs, *Quotations* thus provided the Red Guards with a distributed and mobile set of points of passional subjectification and enunciation unmoored from – and in betrayal of – established sources of institutional authority. Mao did not 'hide his face' in the direct sense that Deleuze and Guattari mark as constitutive of the passional regime – 11 or 12 million Red Guards came to Beijing for the 1966 rallies with Mao, and his image, as part of the official cult of personality, was famously ubiquitous. Nevertheless, at these occasions Mao rarely spoke beyond a few words – to do otherwise would have been to risk the distributed authority of the passional forces set loose: 'The leader who used to lecture for hours to persuade his followers of the merits of a new policy now merely appeared before them with an upraised hand and a glassy smile' (Terrill 1999: 318).

III. The Rhizome-Book

Deleuze and Guattari set out their counter figure of the 'rhizome-book' by returning to the relation between the book and the world. If, as we have seen, the root-book is in a relation of separation and imitation with the world – 'The law of the book is the law of reflection' – it is based on a misapprehension of nature: 'How could the law of the book reside in nature, when it is what presides over the very division between world and book, nature and art?' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 5). It is a quite different understanding of nature that informs the rhizome-book, a book no longer characterised by a pristine truth in imitative separation from the world, but by an immersive transformation, an 'aparallel evolution of the book and the world' (11). In this sense, the 'book exists only through the outside and on the outside' (4). The root-book does of course also exist through relations with its outside (as we saw in the Cultural Revolution), but in the rhizome-book the outside is

no longer structured by the book's spiritual autonomy and truth. Rather, here the outside floods into the book. The book loses its root or unity and becomes a 'rhizome' of prodigious connection, a 'little machine' that plugs into its outside not to reproduce the world in the book's image, but to construct a discontinuous series of intensive states or plateaus (4).

The rhizome-book is, as such, a complex and variable arrangement of heterogeneous materials: 'A book has neither object nor subject; it is made of variously formed matters, and very different dates and speeds' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 3). Yet despite these materialist conceptual framings, Deleuze and Guattari offer little significant insight on how the specific material and formal properties of the book might be expressed in the mode of the rhizome-book. This is understandable, given the radically open process that the concept seeks to name. But it has the unfortunate effect of allowing the rhizome-book to feature by default as a rather abstract entity, and not itself something with concrete and various material manifestation. This description of the rhizome-book is indicative: 'The ideal for a book would be to lay everything out on a plane of exteriority . . . , on a single page, the same sheet: lived events, historical determinations, concepts, individuals, groups, social formations' (9). For all the powerful evocation here of the immanence of the book to its outside, as material form it features only as a metaphorical 'single page'.

Sceptical readers might at this point respond that the rhizome-book is fundamentally a figure of *conceptual* production, that this is where its materiality lies, not in any serious or sustained relation to the book's concrete forms. Indeed, this assertion can find some support in Deleuze and Guattari's argument itself, in their concept of the 'fascicular root-book'. Essentially the botched escape from the root-book, the fascicular root-book has severed its principal root or unity such that it opens out to the world – a world now fragmented and chaotic – but the book persists as an image of that world, compensating for chaos with a supplementary unity in the work, a unity that is perhaps even more powerful for its apparent absence: 'The world has become chaos, but the book remains the image of the world. . . . A strange mystification: a book all the more total for being fragmented' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 6). The concept seems designed precisely to scupper modernist experiments in the form of writing. Joyce is the main example, but William Burroughs's 'cut-up' method also illustrates this figure of the book, as does Nietzsche (astonishingly so, given his importance to Deleuze), whose 'aphorisms shatter the linear unity of knowledge, only to invoke the cyclic unity of

the eternal return' (6). Here the critique of formal experimentation is made in no uncertain terms:

> To attain the multiple, one must have a method that effectively constructs it; no typographical cleverness, no lexical agility, no blending or creation of words, no syntactical boldness, can substitute for it. In fact, these are more often than not merely mimetic procedures used to disseminate or disperse a unity that is retained in a different dimension for an image-book. Technonarcissism. (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 22)

And yet Deleuze and Guattari are not wholly hostile to experimentation with the book's form, for the passage continues:

> Typographical, lexical, or syntactic creations are necessary only when they no longer belong to the form of expression of a hidden unity, becoming themselves dimensions of the multiplicity under consideration; we only know of rare successes in this. We ourselves were unable to do it. We just used words that in turn function for us as plateaus. (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 22)

These quotations make Deleuze and Guattari's own tastes in method amply clear – 'We just used words'[15] – but there is no a priori rejection here of intervention in the book's material form. Neither should we expect there to be; if an 'assemblage, in its multiplicity, necessarily acts on semiotic flows, material flows, and social flows simultaneously' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 22–3) then it would make no sense to deprive the assemblage of the book the possibility of acting on its material forms. And so, succumbing to their own argument, Deleuze and Guattari do in fact make some brief positive comment on concrete experiments in book form. In developing the concept of the rhizome-book they give some prominence to three modern works on the early thirteenth century Children's Crusades, works that generate a nomadic expression in the flow of narratives, movements and peoples. Here there is definite appreciation of formal innovation. In Armand Farrachi's *La Dislocation*, for instance, they note that the 'sentences space themselves out and disperse, or else jostle together and coexist, and ... the letters, the typography begin to dance as the crusade grows more delirious' (23–4).[16]

The task, then, is to consider the dynamics of the rhizome-book in a way that is attentive not only to the book's conceptual and textual features, but to its full materiality, its heterogeneous 'working of matters' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 4). I attempt this below through concrete cases, for it would run counter to the spirit of this most immanent of concepts to either set out universal criteria for the rhizome-book,

or consider it outside of its empirical expressions. In what follows, each set of books is initially approached, as was Mao's *Quotations*, through their linguistic structure and/or conceptual content. But against the spiritual autonomy of the word in the root-book, here the word is shown to be enmeshed with diverse materials and oriented toward expression that is not constrained by the semiotics of authority. I place attention on the singular ways the particular books break with the root-book mode – break, that is, with the division between world and book, the book's unity and teleology, and its integrated subjectivities. In the course of discussion I touch on some features of the root-book that I have not thus far considered: its relation to the sensory patterns of the State-form and to the structures of the capitalist commodity. The focus throughout is on how the qualities of the rhizome-book are manifest in the artefact of the book itself, in the context of the aesthetic and political concerns of each book's immediate environment.[17] Since Deleuze and Guattari provide only minimal tools for the analysis of the book's concrete materiality, I at points draw on concepts that they use to explore material culture in other fields. I would underscore that the books are presented here not as a cumulative account of the emergence of the rhizome-book, but as a variable field of its expression, each book foregrounding one or more aspects of the rhizomatic tendency in the material forms of the book.

IV. Polysensuality and the Russian Futurist Book

Given the cleavage the root-book enacts with the external world, it is appropriate to start with a set of books within which the physical and sensory properties of matter take centre stage: the Russian Futurist books of the 1910s. In their foundational concepts of 'the self-sufficient word' and 'transreason' ('*zaum*'), the Russian Futurists (or Cubo-Futurists, as they are sometimes known) took the word not as a transparent vehicle of truth and communication, but as a polymorphous *object*, placing emphasis on the phonic, graphic, hieroglyphic qualities of writing.[18] Here the word as object is unmoored from chains of signification. Instead, phonetic analogy, rhythm, raw verbal material, obscure idioms become the substance and organising principles of expression (Lawton 1988: 13). The transrational word is not without its own kind of passion; in the words of Aleksei Kruchenykh, one of the principal exponents of *zaum*, this 'not yet frozen' or 'melted language' is fundamentally 'emotional' in tenor, associated with intensive states: 'when the artist wants to convey images not fully defined', 'When

one loses one's reason (hate, jealousy, rage …)', 'When one does not need it – religious ecstasy, love' (Kruchenykh, qtd in Markov 1969: 347; Kruchenykh 1988a: 182–3).

So, while in Mao's *Quotations* the word was abstracted from the world in the purity of Mao Zedong Thought, in Futurist transreason the word is drawn back into its variable material fields. In this one can discern elements of Deleuze and Guattari's (1988: 117) 'presignifying' regime of signs, a regime that 'fosters a pluralism or polyvocality of forms of expression that prevents takeover by the signifier and preserves expressive forms particular to content'. But the important point for my purposes is that this Futurist approach to language is integrated with the form and physicality of the books themselves.

Russian Futurist books were conceived of as active, polysensual objects in a fashion that undoes the root-book cleavage between world and book, as the book itself becomes a vital entity adequate to the rhizomatic movements of the transrational word. This manifests in a number of ways. It is most immediately apparent in the exuberance of materials deployed in these books. Developing from an interest in folk culture, ritual-related art, ideographic text, illuminated manuscripts and the ornate objects of nomadic peoples, Futurist books have a wild tactility about them. In deliberate contravention of the fine-printing tradition of the *livre d'artiste*, they are often roughly hewn works assembled of cheap, disposable materials – an early example, *A Slap in the Face of Public Taste*, was famously bound in burlap – and diverse print technologies, including lithographed manuscript, handwriting, linocuts, hectography and rubber stamps. They were not to be read as such, but in all their variability were to 'see, listen to, and feel' (Aleksei Remizov, qtd in Gurianova 2002: 26).

To this polymorphous array of materials there corresponds a specific aesthetic form, one that is manifest against the principal sensory structures of the root-book. The modern book, as it has developed through Gutenberg print culture, intensifies the abstracted optical function at the expense of sensuous complexity. The rigid linear text, uniformity of letterforms, and identical copies produce, in Marshall McLuhan's words, a 'visual technology of uniform time and uniform continuous space in which "cause" is efficient and sequential, and things move and happen on single planes' (qtd in Janecek 2002: 41). This indicates why Deleuze and Guattari also name the root-book the 'State apparatus-book': it not only produces patterns of dogma and authority, as we have seen in *Quotations*, but it also imparts the striating temporal and territorial sensory patterns of the State-form.

In contrast to this optical aesthetic, Futurist books have a strong relation to the 'haptic' aesthetic Deleuze and Guattari associate with nomadic art (it is not incidental that a number of the Russian Futurists were heavily influenced by the art forms of the Scythian nomads; Ash 2002). I have noted that these books are most tactile, sensual entities, but the haptic is a mode of *vision*, an immersive 'close vision' that invests the eye with the property of touch, drawing it into a field that dissolves perspective and is grasped only through a local and variable integration of parts, where 'orientations, landmarks, and linkages are in continuous variation' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 493). In Futurist books, the interweaving and merging of image and text, the use of handwriting, transrational flight of sense, graphic wandering of words, unbounded colour, variability of printed materials and fluctuation in rhythm all pull the book away from its striated, optical mode and attract an immersive manner of perception, one that allows for an experience of sensory simultaneity (Gurianova 2002). Gerald Janecek (1984: 117) thus writes of Kruchenykh's work: 'a page of "text" need not be read sequentially in linear time, but can be taken at a glance and absorbed by the same process of free visual exploration used in studying a painting'. It is a disorienting sensory experience of which Kruchenykh (1988b: 76) was well aware: 'We can change objects' weight (the eternal *force of gravity*), we see buildings hanging in the air and the weight of sounds.'

As can be discerned in Kruchenykh's comment here, the haptic aesthetic combines with a quality of *movement*. For Deleuze and Guattari, the haptic aesthetic is comprised of a particular kind of 'line', an 'inorganic line' that breaks with the 'organic' mode of representation. Whereas organic representation, through the principle of symmetry, limits variability in repetition by maintaining the domination of a central point with radiating lines (as in star-shaped figures), haptic aesthetic forms express a power of variation, with a 'streaming, spiralling, zigzagging, snaking, feverish line' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 499). Art here no longer constructs an organic empathy between representation and human subject, but articulates a different mode of life – the traits, flows, impulses of an elementary *life of matter*, an 'inorganic life' (498). Now, for Deleuze and Guattari (398, 386) this nomadic, inorganic line is associated with certain kinds of mobile objects – jewellery and weaponry; objects that do not 'work' in and for striated space, as do tools, but express variable movement undetermined by the 'gravity' of the State-form. If Futurist books express a haptic aesthetic, as objects they share also the nomadic quality of movement. For now the itinerant property

of the medium of the book – this 'most deterritorialized of things' – is no longer articulated with distributed authority (as it was in Mao's *Quotations*) or with the striated perceptual patterns of the State-form (as is imparted by the Gutenberg book). Rather, like *paper jewellery*, these 'living entit[ies]' that defy gravity and 'fly out' on publication serve to distribute a feverish, inorganic life of matter.[19]

The Futurist book also raises a challenge to the root-book's linear or teleological relation to the world. As Nina Gurianova (2002) argues, the temporal, spatial and rhythmic dislocations of these books are such that, to employ the name of one of the most accomplished Futurist works, this is a world *backwards*. But there is still perhaps a danger of the book operating here (in the mode of the fascicular root-book) as an archetype, of 'typographical cleverness' propagating a supplementary unity in the fragmented work. It is important, then, that the undoing of the book's teleological relationship to the world is compounded by another aspect of the Russian Futurist book, the persistent troubling of its own unity, as is especially evident in Kruchenykh's work.

Kruchenykh had something of compulsive passion for publishing and was chiefly responsible for perhaps upwards of 200 publications (Janecek 1984: 112). But it is a passion operative against any principle that would orchestrate a unity or model in the work; true poets, he proclaimed, 'should write on their books: after reading, tear it up' (Kruchenykh, qtd in Markov 1969: 130). This destructive tendency took the somewhat inorganic form of an insistence on 'the necessity and the importance of irregularity in art' (Kruchenykh 1988b: 75). For instance, *Worldbackwards* – a book of poetry by Kruchenykh and Velimir Khlebnikov, and images by Mikhail Larionov, Natalia Goncharova, Nikolai Rogovin and Vladimir Tatlin – is a highly heterogeneous collection of materials and rhythms. But it is also internally irregular: the order of pages differs between copies; individual lithographed pages vary in the colour and weight of paper; rubber-stamped sheets have inconsistent use of letters and decorative symbols; even the covers of the book – in what is the first example of collage in book design – are inconsistent (Janecek 2002). Kruchenykh was also in the habit of assembling materials across different books – reproducing manifestos and texts in different works, using pages from one book in another, even in one case of publishing a new book, *Zaumnik*, from an older work, *From All Books*, simply by adding a newly designed cover (albeit one by Aleksandr Rodchenko) (Janecek 1984: 109). In these peculiar practices the book becomes an interminable arrangement of fragments, a looping movement as pages are assembled and reassembled like the

discontinuous folds of the most rhizomatic of organs: 'These books … smell of phosphorous, like fresh brain curls' (Terentyev 1988: 179).[20]

V. Antonin Artaud's Paper Spells

In formulating the figure of the rhizome-book, Deleuze and Guattari make use of a concept they famously draw from Antonin Artaud, the 'body without organs'. If the root-book is one tendency in the field of the book, the book 'also has a side facing the *body without organs*, which is constantly dismantling the organism, causing asignifying particles or pure intensities to pass or circulate' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 4). As a body without organs, the rhizome-book undoes the sensory organisation of its subject. The haptic materialism of the Futurist book moved in this direction – breaking as it did with the sensory patterns of the striated optical function – but it is in Artaud's paper 'spells' or 'gris-gris'[21] that one finds the most singular concrete experiment in textual matter as body without organs. Artaud sent these epistolary objects from Ireland and the Sainte-Anne Hospital and Ville-Évrard asylum in France in 1937 and 1939 as protective or imprecatory devices to friends, doctors and public figures – seven are known to exist, including one that remained unsent to Hitler.[22] Composed of writing, pictograms and obscure symbols in ink and coloured crayon, included with letters or sent alone, these spells are scraped, scored, hacked things about which no separation can be made between artefact and text, form and content.

As with Futurist books, these spells are entwined with a particular mode or experience of language, one that Deleuze elucidates in his assessment of surface and depth in the linguistic operations of Lewis Carroll and Artaud. Against the incorporeal linguistic surfaces of Carroll, language for Artaud is carved into the depths of the body. In an experience symptomatic of schizophrenia, the body is an 'involution' of the world around – a 'body-sieve' (Deleuze 1990: 87), a 'membrane of infinite crevices' (Artaud 1988: 87): 'Things and propositions have no longer any frontier between them, precisely because bodies have no surface … Every word is physical and immediately affects the body' (Deleuze 1990: 86–7). Deleuze elucidates the specific procedures by which Artaud transforms the pain of this corporeal semiotic – for the body/word conjunction is experienced as a wounding assault – into an active relation. In brief, Artaud breaks down language into phonetic elements, converted into 'breath-words' and 'howl-words'. In these, 'all literal, syllabic, and phonetic values have been replaced by *values which are exclusively tonic*', values which correspond to a disaggregated body,

a body without organs: 'an organism without parts which operates entirely by insufflation, respiration, evaporation, and fluid transmission' (88).

Now, the important point for my purposes is that Artaud's spells can be understood as artefactual manifestations of this relation between language and body. To borrow from Stephen Barber's (2008: 49) assessment of Artaud's notebooks, the spells are a 'prototype', a 'testing-ground' for the transformational process of the body without organs. Artaud writes: 'I have the idea to put into operation a new re-assembling of the activity of the human world, idea of a new *anatomy*. / My drawings are *anatomies* in action' (qtd in Barber 2008: 67). This operation is at once destructive of the existent body, and a generative practice – a procedure both 'terminal' and 'insurgent' (54). And it takes the paper not as a mediating vehicle, but a material immanent to its procedures; in these spells Artaud constructs a paper body without organs. Let us see how.

Writing in 1947, Artaud conceived of his spells as exorcisms performed on the 'objective inertia' of the page (Artaud, qtd in Ho 1997: 19), on its striating, organising gradients: 'The goal of all these drawn and coloured figures was to exorcise the curse, to vituperate bodily against the exigencies of spatial form, of perspective, of measure, of equilibrium, of dimension' (Artaud 1996: 42). No inert support for the written word, then, the sheet of paper is fully a part of the procedure. Like a 'body-sieve', the spell emerges as a dynamic membrane, a field of forces: sign, colour, word, lettering, combine with the material of the paper, perforated and frayed with burns, to produce 'a surface that is as much active as acted upon' (Beaumelle 1996: 40). And it is, too, a corporeal surface. Artaud performs incantation in the spells' construction, as he incises, perforates and burns the page. In this way, signs are captured and held with the force of bodily gesture, so preventing signifying circulation, depriving the word of 'its power to draw together or to express an … ideational event distinct from its present realization' (Deleuze 1990: 87).

The subject undone on the body-sieve of the paper is not only its author, but its audience too. Agnès de la Beaumelle (1996: 39) describes the spells as 'graphic expulsions', artefacts intended to act physically upon their interlocutors, to have an immediate and disaggregating sensory effect. In Paule Thévenin's words:

> Writing no longer has as its sole function that of transmitting a message or a thought; rather, it must act by itself and physically. Everything is studied,

> calculated so as to strike the eye, and through it the sensitivity, of the person for whom the spell is destined … We can scarcely look at these objects without being contaminated by their vehemence … (Thévenin, in Derrida and Thévenin 1998: 15, 17)

A trace of this vehement contamination can perhaps be gained from Beaumelle's evocative presentation of the 1939 spells from the Ville-Évrard asylum:

> their imprecatory violence now resides more in the physical state of the missive than in the words. Inscribed with a thick ink crayon in purple, the different signs (crosses, stars, triangles, spirals in the shape of serpents, the cabalistic significance of which Artaud knew well) proliferate in all directions, invade the center of the paper itself, break the continuous thread of writing drawn with the same ink crayon: fragments of writing and drawn pictograms henceforth form one body. Not only that: knots, amorphous clusters of crayon, seem to respond in counterpoint, proceeding from the same charge of aggression, to the holes produced by burning the paper (the edges of which are also ravaged); and traces of violent shades of yellow, blue, and red (Artaud also knew the symbolism of colors: these are the colors of death) intensify by their physical presence the imprecatory force of the words. These are no longer simple votive letters but true magical objects, to be handled while making ritualistic gestures …, which can 'illuminate themselves', like 'gris-gris'. (Beaumelle 1996: 40)

The medium of the letter served Artaud's spells well, for the intimate affect germane to this mode of textual communication is compounded by the letter's fragmentary and impermanent form. If the Futurist book introduced the 'worldbackwards' into the teleological field of the book's political unity and authority, Artaud's (1996: 33) spells also refuse existence as a coherent and enduring work: 'These are not drawings / they figure nothing, / disfigure nothing, / are not there to / construct / edify / establish / a world.' The spells are fragments, their audience – the addressees of these artefacts delivered by post – was limited and temporary, and they exist, in their asubjective affects, only at the edge of destruction: 'And the figures that I thereby made were spells – which, after so meticulously having drawn them, I put a match to' (Artaud 1996: 42).

VI. The Anti-Book of *Mémoires*

The last case I will consider emerges from an expressly communist environment; as such it allows me to consider the material properties of the rhizome-book through a more overtly political lens. There is

considerable justification for Guy Debord's (1993) claim that his and Asger Jorn's 1959 work, *Mémoires*, was an 'anti-book'. Comprised of text and image fragments assembled by Debord from disparate media and sources, and Jorn's structural lines, splashes and planes of colour, it is at once a memoir of Debord's pre-Situationist milieu around the Lettrist International, an exercise in the techniques of *détournement* and *dérive*, and an unworking of its own points of identification, meaning and narrative coherence. The book famously embodies its destructive valence in its binding of heavy sandpaper. But more than the violent impact on the books against which it is placed, the striking effect of the sandpaper covers is the way that when handled they foreground in a heightened sensory fashion the book's physical form and external relations, an enforced appreciation of the book's outside that is complemented by the almost translucent, rather fragile pages encountered within.[23]

The critical impact of *Mémoires* on the material field of the book includes two aspects that I have not directly considered in the rhizome-books discussed so far: a critique of capital and the commodity, and a challenge to the specifically *activist* mode of the root-book's subject. As with Artaud's spells and the Russian Futurist books, *Mémoires* breaks with the prevailing mode of communication, but it does this from a position specifically attentive to the function of language in capitalist social relations. As Frances Stracey (2003) highlights, language for the Situationist International (SI) was bound up with an emergent cybernetic mode of production, one that integrated signification with command in an 'informationist' paradigm that sought to eradicate all linguistic redundancies and ambiguous signals: a 'universal language' of which, '[s]ince its advent, the triumphant bourgeoisie has dreamed' (Khayati, in Knabb 1981: 171).[24] More succinctly: 'Words *work*' (SI, in Knabb 1981: 114). There is a striking relation here with Deleuze's (1995: 175) critique of the place of 'universals of communication' in contemporary 'societies of control', with their distributed and continuous systems of regulation: 'speech and communication have been corrupted. They're thoroughly permeated by money – and not by accident but by their very nature'.

For Deleuze, politics cannot resist this situation with an *alternative* communication – a 'counter-information' (Deleuze 2006: 322) or a 'democratic conversation' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 99) – since what is required is a breach in the very modes of subjectivity and exchange constituted in communicational systems. As for the Situationists, they found a breach in the informationist paradigm through the method of *détournement*. This reuse of existing semiotic and aesthetic materials

in new ensembles seeks, in Jorn's words, a 'devaluation' of received patterns of meaning (Jorn, in Knabb 1981: 55). The association with the category of political economy, 'value', is not accidental, for this was a devaluation of language to match that of social production more widely: 'Words will not cease to *work* until people do' (Khayati, in Knabb 1981: 175). In a *détournement*, the new ensemble derives its 'peculiar power' from holding together trace associations of the devalued elements with the new senses created (SI, in Knabb 1981: 55). But it is in the essential and persistent wrenching of language from the paradigm of information that the force of this first step toward a 'literary communism' resides: 'It is not "the nadir of writing" but its inversion. . . . [W]hen it uses existing concrete concepts it is simultaneously aware of their rediscovered *fluidity*, their necessary destruction' (Debord and Wolman, in Knabb 1981: 11; Debord 1983: §204, §205).

Tom McDonough (2007: 8) makes an astute observation that the destructive orientation to language in *détournement* necessarily troubles the favoured textual medium of the avant-garde – it can establish no unique and unified work in the manner of the 'Mallarméan Book'. The works of *détournement* are of a different order, and *Mémoires* is one of these, comprised as the title page notes 'entirely of prefabricated elements'.[25] Constituted of usurped and devalued words, Debord and Jorn's book removes the possibility of a distinct and self-expressive authorial subject, a move all the more powerful for its apparent location in the genre of autobiography. The referential object of the book, Debord's milieu of the early 1950s, is similarly undone as a coherent world or political subject, something itemised and foreclosed in linear historical memory. Structured around three dated chapters, moments of the history of the Lettrist International come into focus at points, but it is an unstable and virtual historical field, a field charged with potential, comprised, as the first page warns, 'of lights, of shadows, of figures', 'full of discord and dread'.[26]

The technique of devaluation does not only operate here in the redeployment of existing semiotic materials, but also in their singular instantiation on the pages of the book. As the SI journal later noted of *Mémoires*, 'the writing on each page runs in all directions and the reciprocal relations of the phrases are invariably uncompleted' (SI, in Knabb 1981: 56). Such indeterminacy is compounded by the cumulative effect of the book, with concepts and meanings coming in and out of focus as they resonate, accumulate and dissipate across its pages. This is not only an effect of language, but is accentuated by the dramatic pattern and spatialisation of the work, structured by Jorn's variously

lulling, violent and vertiginous sheets of vibrant colour (Stracey 2003). It should be underscored – and it is an astonishing achievement – that in the midst of these intensive, disorienting characteristics, *Mémoires* maintains a conceptual rigour and force, one that is found not in the conventional form of philosophical demonstration but in a kind of conceptual *performance* (Banash 2002). The book is not only an exercise in *détournement*, it invites the reader to engage with it in the manner of a *dérive*, a surrender of subjective will-to-meaning in the temporal flow and layered, non-linear spatial structure of its pages.

The anomalous character of *Mémoires* is furthered by the nature of its relation to the structure of the commodity. The commodity form of the book is a feature strangely absent from Deleuze and Guattari's assessment, as if on this matter they succumbed to the obfuscating power of the root-book. The book is a commodity that is especially effective at hiding its commercial nature, its capitalist form obscured by its apparently universal value as a transcendent intellectual, moral and aesthetic good (Striphas 2009). It is as if the generic capitalist power of commodity fetishism – to produce an autonomous artefact severed in people's minds from its socio-material relations – is given a boost by the spiritual power of the root-book, the two conjoining in something of a perfect commodity. For despite appearances, these industrial 'goods which pretend not to be goods at all' (Travis 1999) have been entwined with the emergence and development of the commodity form. The book was not only instrumental in the division of intellectual and manual labour that lies at the heart of capitalist abstract labour, but was itself the first standardised and iterable mass-produced commodity, the book industry being a prime mover in the division of labour, the hourly wage, new technologies, consumer credit and privatisation of language through copyright – and it remains today fully enmeshed in the latest industrial and technological developments (Anderson 1983; Febvre and Martin 1997; Striphas 2009).[27]

In this realm of the commodity, *Mémoires* has unsurprisingly become something of a rare item, changing hands today for upwards of US$4,000. But in its time, this anti-book had an intrinsic anti-commodity orientation. The abrasive material of the sandpaper covers seems to defy the commodity values of smooth industrial production and circulation.[28] Of course, this quality could indicate a different circuit of commercial value, that of the *livre d'artiste* or artwork proper. It is significant, then, that *Mémoires* was not created to be sold, but to be a splendid or excessive gift, a 'potlatch' – an anti-productive expenditure based not on scarcity but abundance, and one that intensifies (rather

than obfuscates) social relations.[29] In his preface to the 1993 re-edition,[30] Debord explains:

> Thus for thirty-five years my *Mémoires* were never put on sale. Their celebrity comes from only having been given out in the form of the *potlatch*: that is to say of the sumptuous gift, challenging the other party to give something more extreme in return. (Debord 1993)

If gift economies break with commodity circulation, they can introduce social relations that are themselves constraining, as the gift serves to bind and consolidate relations of obligation (Mauss 1990). And it is clear that the circulation of printed matter had an important role in maintaining the interpersonal and organisational relations of the SI (Wark 2009). But this is only part of the story, for the excess affect or intensity associated with the gift-circulation of *Mémoires* was not primarily directed toward securing a political community, public or subject. The patterns of association of the root-book – with its orientation toward establishing integrated subjectivity within its regimes of truth and authority – find no presence in *Mémoires*, which in this sense we might characterise as something of an anti-manifesto:

> This anti-book was only offered to my friends, and no-one else was informed of its existence. 'I wanted to speak the beautiful language of my century.' I wasn't too worried about being heard. … I proved my sober indifference to public opinion straight away, because the public were not even allowed to see this work. (Debord 1993)

Debord's wilful disregard here of a fundamental feature of the political book has a somewhat aristocratic air to it, but it is by no means an apolitical move. Indeed, one can interpret this statement as an aspect of what Banash (2002) considers to be the *most* radical feature of *Mémoires*, the breach it enacts in the easy transformation of conceptual and aesthetic production into instrumental 'activist' practice. For here the disaggregating property of the rhizome-book – approached thus far in the form of the Futurist 'worldbackwards' and Artaud's unproductive body without organs – has a direct impact upon the communist thematic of organisational subjectivity. Interpreted in relation to this thematic, Debord's refusal to sanction the book's existence and circulation on the activation of a public establishes *Mémoires* as an aesthetic expression of the SI's anti-vanguardism. *Mémoires* aborts its unity as a concentrated bloc of semiotic and organisational authority, all the better to affirm distributed, emergent and self-critical composition as the proper object of communist politics.[31]

VII. Conclusion

What does Deleuze and Guattari's typology of the book enable us to say about the political book? It requires that people of the political book recognise, and extract themselves from, the essentially religious structures and passions that regulate the book's field. Each time the book declares its unique truth and total access to the world, the concept of the root-book invites us to consider how this truth is created from a *cleavage* with the world, one that constitutes a spiritual dogma that is returned to the world as authoritarian passion. This approach suggests that we explore such formations with attention to the full materiality of the book, even if Deleuze and Guattari do not do so themselves. I have done this here with Mao's *Quotations*. Mao's book is a wholly material entity, but its material qualities – colour, portability, textual structure – feed into, and are governed by, the book's spiritual autonomy and authoritarian regimes of truth.

If the political book is to break with this root-book structure, it needs a different relation to matter, a relation Deleuze and Guattari approach through the concept of the rhizome-book. This concept is useful not so much as a mechanism of classification, but for what it encourages us to see in the experimental field of the political book. As such, it is best approached through the properties of specific books, in their rich 'working of matters'.

It is possible to set out some shared characteristics of the rhizome-books considered here. In these works, language is unmoored from signifying chains and dogmatic compulsions, be that in the mode of Futurist transrational sensory blocs, Artaud's howl-words, or Debord and Jorn's devalued informational patterns. And this language is enmeshed with variable material fields in a remodelling of the object of the book: as a haptic sensory arrangement of eclectic printed materials, as a dynamic membrane of body-sieve paper, as an anti-book of appropriated materials, non-linear structures and virtual images. Just as the material world floods into these books, breaching their split with nature, so also is the book's subject undone, most radically in Artaud's paper spells, which operate as involutions of body and word in sheets of sensory intensity. Each set of books, too, undoes the book's teleological authority and coherence: a 'worldbackwards' of irregular and refolded materials, a fragment put to fire, an anti-manifesto with inoperative public.

Yet it is also clear that these books emerged from singular political and aesthetic contexts and problematics. In *Mémoires*, for instance, the conjunction of communication and authority is approached explicitly as

a dimension of capital, unlike in the other works considered here, and this book's disruptive properties are a unique aesthetic expression of the communist critique of the vanguard party. These situated variations are such that the concept of the rhizome-book cannot describe a cumulative set or itemised aggregate of appropriate techniques. To take seriously Deleuze and Guattari's (1988: 4) peculiar 'taste for matter' requires that the concept operate immanently to the concrete field it surveys. In any concrete field of the book one would expect the interaction of both root and rhizome tendencies. The books considered in this article push either tendency to extremes, so indicating the singular possibilities and variations of the political book, but even here one could no doubt also find aspects of the opposing tendency, especially if they were considered in relation to their wider communities of consumption – there is nothing exhaustive about my treatment.

To conclude, the political book emerges from the works considered in this article as a highly complex entity, where politics is operative in the book's concepts and textual content, as one expects, but also in its passions and authority, and its physical, sensory, temporal and spatial properties. If radical politics concerns transformation of the very conditions of being – not the 'mere political' change against which Engels posits communism proper – then evaluation of these latter properties is as important as attending to the book's more overt political expressions (Marx and Engels 1973: 12). Indeed, it is attention to the breadth of the book's materiality that has enabled me to argue that some of the most apparently political aspects of the book can often be its most troubling.

Notes

1. 'We are writing this book as a rhizome. It is composed of plateaus. . . . To attain the multiple, one must have a method that effectively constructs it' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 22).
2. It appears that Deleuze's philosophical irreverence toward the book also had a practical dimension: his advice for an 'intensive' way of reading includes 'tearing the book into pieces' (1995: 8–9) and Dosse (2010: 357) reports that in order to avoid carrying an unwieldy stack of books to Vincennes, 'Deleuze would rip out the pages he needed for his class'.
3. For further discussion of the semio-politics of monomania, see Thoburn 2008.
4. In his critique of Eurocentric formulations of 'the book' as a universal standard entwined with the history of colonial subjugation, Mignolo (2000) similarly argues that the integration of religious authority with the book is less a particular manifestation of this medium than its historical condition of emergence.
5. For Marx and Engels, Max Stirner's *The Ego and its Own* functions as 'the perfect book, the Holy Book'. It posits 'the history of the kingdom of the unique [that] follows a wise plan fixed from eternity', a plan based on the egoist's

'delirious fantasy', in Stirner's words, of 'the world as it is for me' (Marx and Engels 1976: 117, 126).

6. The Bible is estimated at 5–6 billion copies and the Quran at 800 million (Wilkinson 2008: 29).
7. Mao himself commented on the power of *Quotations* in a 1966 letter to his wife, Jiang Qing, albeit while expressing an irritation with Lin Biao's role: 'I have never believed … that those little books of mine could have such fantastic magic, yet he blew them up, and the whole country followed' (Mao, qtd in Terrill 1999: 370). A large collection of Chinese posters of this period, many featuring *Quotations*, can be viewed at < http://chineseposters.net/ > (last accessed 17 January 2011).
8. Mao Zedong Thought is at once constituted in the detail of Mao's philosophy and is its unifying, passional dimension. I have taken the latter, the signifying structure of Mao Zedong Thought, to be the principal 'content' of *Quotations*. Save for one or two comments, I do not have space here to analyse the book's particular textual content.
9. The cosmic vector of Mao's world-view is amply evident in two of the most popular texts of the Cultural Revolution period, 'Serving the People' (included in *Quotations*) and 'The Foolish Old Man who Removed the Mountains'.
10. *Quotations* is liberally peppered with the trope of purity and corruption. For instance, of the practice of 'criticism and self-criticism' Mao writes that it 'prevents all kinds of political dust and germs from contaminating the minds of our comrades and the body of our Party' (Mao Tse-Tung 1966: 260). The relation between the purity of Mao Zedong Thought and its worldly field of manifestation is clear also in Mao's 1958 assessment of the apparent advantages of the 'poor and blank' condition of the peasantry: 'A clean sheet of paper has no blotches, and so the newest and most beautiful words can be written on it' (Mao, qtd in Schram 1989: 128).
11. The source of Lifton's quotation is not given.
12. The power of the word is accentuated in Chinese culture by the ideographic form of Chinese characters and the expressive art of calligraphy. The text itself reads: 'Study Chairman Mao's writings, follow his teachings and act according to his instructions.'
13. Contrary to some trends in current philosophy after Alain Badiou, I take it as read that the Cultural Revolution was the result of a split in the governing class of a demagogic state capitalist regime, as Mao sought to reassert his authority (and, ultimately, his labour-intensive route to industrialisation) following the disaster of the Great Leap Forward. For a remarkably astute communist analysis in this vein, published a year or so after the upheaval began, see Knabb 1981: 185–94.
14. The autonomy of these young Maoists was expressed more widely in their nomadic movement across the country in the 'exchange of revolutionary experience', and in the popular violence that was endemic to the Cultural Revolution, following such injunctions as 'Beat to a pulp any and all persons who go against Mao Zedong Thought', and 'Long live the red terror' (to quote Red Guard wall posters from two elite middle schools in Beijing; qtd in MacFarquhar and Schoenhals 2006: 104, 126).
15. It is because *A Thousand Plateaus* constructs its rhizome qualities in this way primarily through words and concepts alone that I do not consider it as an object of study in this article, where my interest lies in books that explicitly and extensively engage with the formal and physical properties of the medium. In any case, much has been written already about the 'plateau' and rhizome structure of *A Thousand Plateaus*, and while I in no way wish to deny its astonishing

rhizomatic dimensions, it would be a mistake in this book's own terms to elevate it to a unique model around which a class of rhizome-books should ever be arrayed.

16. Another work, *Absolument nécessaire. The Emergency Book* by Joëlle de La Casinière (1973), is credited in a footnote as 'a truly nomadic book' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 520). They make no further comment, but it is a work of graphic poetry and montage, expressive of the itinerant lifestyle and art-practice of its author. As Casinière (2011: 3) reports, Deleuze arranged for the publication of the work after she sent him a photocopy of the manuscript, though once it was published he remarked that he preferred the 'pale and poorly made photocopy' to the finished book. See < http://www.montfaucon.eu > for images of a complete edition (last accessed 17 January 2011). I am grateful to Joëlle de La Casinière for sharing information about this book with me.
17. A complementary approach would be to pursue the set of mutable relations that any one book forms with its social milieu, since the social effects and situated appropriations of books are of course central to their materiality. But I reject the notion that this basic position of Deleuze-inspired research bars one from using Deleuze to discuss the form of particular entities in a degree of isolation; certainly, Deleuze himself was happy to partake of the latter approach, as is evident from his close analysis of specific paintings or cinematic works. The complementarity of these approaches is clear in Daniel Selcer's (2010) excellent text, *Philosophy and the Book*.
18. The most comprehensive account of the movement, one that should not be confused with Italian Futurism, is Markov 1969. Images of complete editions of a number of Russian Futurist books can be viewed at < http://www.getty.edu/research/conducting_research/digitized_collections/russian_avant-garde/pdfs.html > (last accessed 17 January 2011).
19. The first quotation here is Gurianova's (2002: 25, 27) characterisation of the Futurist understanding of the book; the second she takes from advertisements for Futurist editions.
20. Gurianova (1999: 110) argues in related terms that 'these republications confirmed … the right to "incompleteness", and presumed ever new readings, continuous renewal, and the metamorphic nature of creation'.
21. 'Gris-gris', the noun Artaud uses for these works, signifies charm, fetish or amulet.
22. Six of Artaud's spells are reproduced in Rowell 1996. Deleuze and Guattari (1988: 164) assess the spell for Hitler as a 'BwO intensity map' of thresholds and waves, but they limit comment to its textual content and make no reference elsewhere to Artaud's spells.
23. This binding was proposed by the Danish printer Verner Permild, of the firm Permild and Rosengreen who also printed Jorn and Debord's earlier book-work, *Fin de Copenhague*. Permild was responding to Jorn's request for a binding of unconventional material – perhaps sticky asphalt or glass wool – that would leave some residue or otherwise affect the reader's hands (Nolle 2002).
24. It is worth noting that the SI also level the critique of the 'informationist' mode of language at the orthodox Left. Khayati (in Knabb 1981: 173) discusses the 'Bolshevik order' of the 'more or less magical, impersonal expressions', 'inflexible' and 'ritual formulas' that work in the image of the State to preserve its 'purity' and 'substance' in the face of obviously contradictory facts.
25. Even the degraded photographs of Debord's comrades and drinking companions are purloined from a photo-romance book on the Left Bank scene. Debord later noted that one brief phrase was his own.
26. For an enticing interpretation of the first page of *Mémoires*, see Banash 2002.

27. The reader will have noticed that the books explored here are all from pre-digital times. I discuss the material forms and politics of digital publishing in Thoburn 2012.
28. This commodity-defiance is also intrinsic to the irregular form of the Russian Futurist book, where it has an additional valence as part of the Russians' more or less direct challenge to the commodity aesthetics of speed and industry in Italian Futurism.
29. It seems that the book was not entirely abstracted from commercial economies, for it had a place in financing the SI's activities. In a letter to the German Situationist Uwe Lausen, Debord (1962) proposes that Lausen sell copies of *Mémoires* to fund the publication of *Der Deutsche Gedanke*, noting that its 'full price . . . is very high'. On the contradictions involved in financing the group, see Knabb 1981: 142. I explore the anti-commodity capacities of printed matter further in Thoburn 2010. For discussion of the affective politics of the gift, see McDonough 2007: 148–54.
30. The commercial republication of *Mémoires* raises questions I am unable to address here, but I take it as given that the reprint is a very different entity to the 1959 work discussed in this article.
31. If the SI's anti-vanguardism is articulated in *Mémoires*, this tendency was always in tension with Debord's more autocratic inclinations. For a nuanced discussion of these tendencies in the SI and the Scandinavian Situationist groups, see Slater 2001.

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Beyond Bartleby and Bad Faith: Thinking Critically with Sartre and Deleuze

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Abstract

This essay argues that important critical and political perspective can be gained on Deleuze's famous essay, 'Bartleby; or, The Formula' by viewing it as an attempt to move beyond the Sartrean framework of 'bad faith'. The argument comprises four sections. In section one, I contextualise Deleuze's essay in terms of contrasting readings of Bartleby, from a prior account by Georges Perec, to contemporary accounts indebted to Deleuze, from Hardt and Negri's *Empire* to Gisèle Berkman's recent *L'Effet Bartleby*. The argument of this section is that a problematically reductive image of Bartleby has emerged in the wake of Deleuze's essay, but that this can be challenged in favour of a more nuanced and politically significant reading by contextualising the essay as an attempt to overcome bad faith. In section two, I develop this by drawing out the nature and relevance of the threat posed by bad faith through a focus on Sartrean, Deleuzian and Badioucan critiques of Bartleby, before arguing, in section three, that attention to the concept of a 'logic of presuppositions' developed in Deleuze's essay shows how bad faith can be overcome. These sections all build towards the fourth and longest section, which draws out the wider political significance of what it means to overcome bad faith. To do so, I pay attention to how logics of presupposition function in Bartleby's story, and consider Deleuze's essay in relation to his work on 'control societies' and 'collective assemblages of enunciation'.

Keywords: Deleuze, Badiou, Hardt and Negri, Sartre, Agamben, Rancière, Žižek, Bartleby, Perec, Melville, Berkman, the formula, bad

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faith, logic of presuppositions, image of thought, control societies, collective assemblages of enunciation

I. Contextualising Bartleby

In his 1967 novel, *Un Homme qui dort*, Georges Perec gives the following summary of Herman Melville's 1853 short story, *Bartleby the Scrivener*:

> Some time ago, in New York, several hundred metres from the barriers where the last waves of the Atlantic come to break, a man let himself die. He was a scribe in a law firm. Hidden behind a dividing screen, he remained seated at his desk and never moved from it. He fed on gingerbread biscuits. From the window, he looked upon a wall of blackened bricks that he could almost have touched with his hand. It was useless to ask anything of him whatsoever – to re-read a drafted document or to go for the mail. Neither threats nor pleas had a hold on him. In the end … [t]hey had to chase him from the office. He installed himself in the stairway of the building. They locked him up, but he sat down in the prison yard and refused to eat. (Perec 2004: 132; translation modified)

This description contrasts strikingly with Deleuze's essay on Bartleby, and with literature to have emerged in its wake.

Written in the third person, Perec's description outlines a story with a clear beginning, middle and end: a man (Bartleby) was employed as a scribe, he sat, he ate, he looked, he refused and, eventually, he 'let himself die'. There are forms of passivity and finality at work here that contrast greatly with Deleuze's reading. For Deleuze, Bartleby is a 'violently comical text', marked by the disruptive activity of a central statement: 'I would prefer not to' (Deleuze 1998: 68). This statement, repeated by Bartleby throughout the text, is what Deleuze famously calls 'the formula', and it is the link bringing together the story's successive events: leading Bartleby from the position of worker, through repeated 'preferences not to', to vagrancy and death in prison.

In Deleuze's treatment, everything is geared toward allowing the formula to break out of Melville's text and have effects beyond it. The formula, we are told, is devastating to any comfortable presuppositions on what shapes identity, action and choice, because, 'neither an affirmation nor a negation', it 'eliminates the preferable just as mercilessly as any nonpreferred' (Deleuze 1998: 70–1). Thereby, Deleuze takes the formula to send presuppositions on how language functions 'into flight' and to make of Bartleby a 'man without references,

without possessions, without properties, without qualities, without particularities' (74). Instead of narrowing Bartleby's significance, however, it is precisely these effects of the formula that Deleuze takes to comprise it. If, through a speech act, Bartleby is progressively stripped of what particularises him (as, for example, 'worker' or 'vagrant'), then, Deleuze holds, his actions become the more universally significant for it. As Deleuze influentially puts it, Bartleby emerges with 'no other determination than that of being man, *Homo tantum*' (86), and it is precisely this that he takes to comprise the wider significance of the formula: as a political act that frustrates and undoes the limits of identity.

In contrast, everything in Perec's summary seems designed to contain Bartleby. In Deleuze's essay, Bartleby is placed in an inter-textual network including figures like Musil, Thoreau, Henry James and Kleist. In contrast, Perec's summary is intent on making virtues of its economy and banality of description. In Deleuze's essay, Bartleby, having emerged as a form of *Homo tantum*, is situated in terms of great cosmic themes of democracy, exodus, and the literary and political 'messianism of the nineteenth century' (Deleuze 1998: 86). In contrast, Perec seems intent on distilling a story's essence by isolating it and reducing it to an object. To complete the contrast, what could be more striking than the fact that Perec makes no reference to 'the formula'? For Deleuze, the formula is something 'which every loving reader repeats in turn' (68); Perec, however, has treated of his avowedly 'favourite short story by Melville' (Perec 1965: 14–15) while omitting reference to it entirely.

It is not only Deleuze's reading that Perec's approach causes us to revisit. Going further, we should reconsider the influence of Deleuze's essay on subsequent readings of Bartleby. In Hardt and Negri's *Empire*, for example, Bartleby again emerges as a form of *Homo tantum*, and he is again situated in terms of grand political and historical themes. Working in a context opened up by Deleuze, Hardt and Negri read Bartleby as a figure of 'absolute refusal', now construing the formula as a negative moment in a movement with potentially more constructive socio-political effects. As they put it:

> [Bartleby's] refusal certainly is the beginning of a liberatory politics, but it is only a beginning … What we need is to create a new social body, which is a project that goes well beyond refusal … [W]e need … to construct a new mode of life and above all a new community. (Hardt and Negri 2001: 204)

Aiming at a community capable of resisting global capitalism in the form of 'Empire', this reading is more explicitly dialectical and programmatic

than that of Deleuze. Emerging in explicit contrast to it, we have Slavoj Žižek's reading, which holds that:

> Bartleby's attitude is not merely the first, preparatory, stage for the second, more 'constructive', work of forming a new alternative order; it is the very source and background of this order, its permanent foundation … [T]he very frantic and engaged activity of constructing a new order is sustained by an underlying 'I would prefer not to' which forever reverberates in it. (Žižek 2006: 382)

For Žižek, Bartleby's formula is a 'permanent foundation' which, contra Hardt and Negri, is never properly overcome, but which haunts any alternative political order whatsoever. What this reading importantly shares with that of Hardt and Negri, however, is a background context opened up by Deleuze that situates Bartleby as a form of *Homo tantum* of grand political and historical significance. In this respect, Žižek is in close proximity to another influential reading: Giorgio Agamben's account of Bartleby as a figure of 'potentiality', the experience of which, Agamben holds, 'is possible only if [it] is always also potential not to (do or think something)' (Agamben 1999: 250). As with Žižek, Agamben reads Bartleby in a less straightforwardly dialectical sense than Hardt and Negri. As with Žižek and Hardt and Negri both, however, his reading shares the context opened up Deleuze – again situating Bartleby as a form of *Homo tantum* of grand ontological, political and historical significance.

And herein lies the problem that the very banality of Perec's summary draws to attention. Has not this context become stifling, such that Bartleby now gets uncritically presupposed as a symbol for a kind of grand narrative refusal and resistance, causing other aspects of both his story and Deleuze's treatment of it to go unnoticed?[1] What is perhaps at the root of this problem is the eulogistic (if not downright eschatological and messianic) tone with which Deleuze concludes his essay: 'Bartleby is not the patient, but the doctor … the new Christ or … brother to us all' (Deleuze 1998: 90).[2] This tone has a lineage in French treatments of Bartleby dating back to at least Blanchot.[3] The danger, however, is that it stands, in spite of itself, to make Bartleby emerge reductively – as a hero (whether tragic or comic), whose actions are to be straightforwardly praised, mimicked or ignored, and whose formula reads like a soundbite or slogan.

Significantly, even accounts that dispute Deleuze's reading tend to compound this image. Jacques Rancière, for one, has claimed that Deleuze's account of Bartleby is too aestheticised to point toward any

meaningful form of 'political justice' (Rancière 2004: 164). Stronger still, and as we will shortly examine in depth, Alain Badiou has characterised Bartleby as a figure of 'betrayal', too intent on nihilistic refusal to exhibit the commitment necessary for political change (Badiou 2006: 422). Like the more sympathetic accounts identified above, however, these readings share in the tendency to make Bartleby emerge reductively. This is because, while they contest Bartleby's heroism, they do not dispute that this is the proper context in which to discuss his story.

To overcome this, this essay contextualises Deleuze's reading differently – as an attempt to move beyond the Sartrean framework of 'bad faith'. In her recent *L'Effet Bartleby*, Berkman suggests that Bartleby's significance pertains to a moment of French philosophy that has passed.[4] By contextualising Deleuze's essay as an attempt to overcome bad faith, this essay disputes this. It has several aims in doing so: to highlight the contemporary relevance of Deleuze's relation to Sartre and the extent to which bad faith comprises a restrictive and moralising threat; to highlight what conditions bad faith; and, above all, to argue that Bartleby's actions take on renewed political significance when viewed as a way of overcoming it. Respectively, these are the aims of sections two, three and four to follow.

II. 'Bad Faith': Its Nature and Its Relevance

Sartre's early period work sets up a famous dualism. Human beings, he holds, are composites of 'being' and 'nothingness'. On the one hand, one is a 'being' insofar as one is an 'object', 'thing' or 'in itself', situated within the world. On the other, insofar as one is a *human* being, one is also irreducible to this state: a 'nothingness', 'consciousness' or 'for itself'. In *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre construes human freedom in these terms. One is free, he holds, only insofar as one becomes conscious of the simultaneous 'being' *and* 'nothingness' of the human reality. This is because, for Sartre, such consciousness of one's irreducibility renders one capable of projects that change normative limits under which human beings are presupposed to 'be'.

Conversely, Sartre takes human beings to act in bad faith wherever this consciousness is denied. By this, he means that we are in bad faith wherever we view either ourselves or others as fully determined 'things' or as fully transcendent 'non-things', not responsible for the worldly consequences of our actions. To be in bad faith, then, is to recognise only the being *or* the nothingness of oneself or another, thereby denying

human freedom, and confirming existing normative limits on what it is to be (see Sartre 1943: 93–109).

The question is, what happens to Bartleby's formula when set against this framework? For Deleuze, 'I would prefer not to' is a statement that 'hollows out an ever expanding zone of indiscernibility or indetermination between some nonpreferred activities and a preferred activity' (Deleuze 1998: 71). This, for Deleuze, is the 'violently comical' power of the formula to disrupt language, beguiling those who expect Bartleby to have explicit preferences. Read in Sartrean terms, however, what else can Bartleby's statement be, except an expression of the psychic paralysis facing a character who denies human freedom, and who chooses not to choose? What, then, can the formula be on a Sartrean reading, if not an expression of bad faith's attempt to separate 'being' and 'nothingness', and to flee the responsibilities of 'being' entirely? And what, then, can Bartleby be, if not a figure of bad faith par excellence?

In his later *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, Sartre shifts away from the 'phenomenological ontology' of *Being and Nothingness* toward a form of materialism. One might therefore be tempted to view the questions just posed as pertaining to an out-of-date philosophy. That, however, would underestimate the extent to which dualistic thinking is fundamental for Sartre's philosophy more generally.[5] Furthermore, it would underestimate the nature of Sartre's influence on Deleuze, as well as the sense in which a return to Sartrean themes is observable in contemporary Continental philosophy.

Sartre is one of the great 'suppressed references' of Deleuze's philosophy. By this, I mean a figure that features in his work, but whose influence he often underplays.[6] Deleuze's philosophy contains other such figures (Hegel and Lacan, for example), but Sartre's status is attested in an especially contentious way: by the fact that Deleuze wrote extensively on Sartrean themes in his youth, only to later repudiate that work.[7] In his later philosophy, Deleuze's explicit references to Sartre are short, and tend to follow a pattern: having praised Sartre's acuity and influence, he gives reasons why Sartrean analyses fail to go far enough. This pattern is particularly evident in works from the mid to late 1960s, in the period where what is most distinctive in Deleuze's philosophy is beginning to emerge. It recurs in *Logic of Sense*, in *Difference and Repetition* and in Deleuze's 1967 essay on Michel Tournier, *Theory of the Other*.[8] It is not, moreover, contradicted by the more effusive tone of Deleuze's short article on Sartre from 1964: 'He was My Teacher'. Unlike the other works just cited, that piece is not concerned with developing Deleuze's

own philosophical position. Instead, it seeks to praise Sartre's stance as an inspiration and teacher. We might therefore say that it enacts half of Deleuze's usual strategy: praising Sartre's influence, but stopping short of highlighting perceived shortcomings in his philosophy.[9]

Significantly, Deleuze's 1964 article does highlight bad faith as a theme he found striking in Sartre.[10] After that, explicit references to Sartrean bad faith in Deleuze's work are more limited.[11] It would be a mistake, however, to discount it as something irrelevant to the development of Deleuze's thought. On the contrary, bad faith names the nexus for all that Deleuze is opposed to in Sartre and in the history of philosophy more generally: against Deleuze's philosophy of immanence, it affirms the transcendence of consciousness; against his affirmation of difference, it affirms the brute objective identity of the 'in itself'; against his affirmation of desire as positive excess in *Anti-Oedipus*, it affirms the negativity of the 'for itself' as the only means to bring about worldly change; and, against his attempt to 'have done with judgement', it is a viciously circular form of 'infinite judgement', since all attempts to overcome the dualism between being and nothingness will be susceptible to its accusation.

What gives these oppositions added pertinence today is that a return to Sartrean themes and tones can be detected in Continental philosophy.[12] To bring this squarely into focus in relation to Bartleby, consider the following from Badiou:

> There are no more than two possibilities regarding the becoming of a subject within a world … It is necessary to act, in one manner or the other. Certainly, one can refrain from acting. One could, like Bartleby, the employee in the eponymous story by Melville, 'prefer not to'. But then a truth will be sacrificed by its subject. Betrayal. (Badiou 2006: 422)

Witness just how Sartrean this is. Anecdotally, its themes of 'betrayal', 'choice' and 'action' figure heavily in Sartre's late period literary and philosophical output.[13] More significantly, however, the entire critique rests on the thought that Bartleby commits to *nothing*, not in the weak sense of 'being indecisive', but rather in the strongly Sartrean sense of *commitment to nothingness*.

In Badiou's philosophy, a subject is the bearer of a truth that goes unrecognised by the implicit normativity of its situation (or 'world' in the above terminology), until it changes this normativity through a sustained process of activity (a 'truth procedure') (Badiou 2005: 199–261). On Badiou's reading, Bartleby exemplifies a subject that sacrifices its truth through an act of betrayal. This is because Badiou reads Bartleby's

'preference not to' as a decision to reject normative demands placed upon him by the situations of his story (those of the workplace or prison, for example), without declaring fidelity to a truth that would be capable of changing them.

Recall that, on a Sartrean reading, Bartleby is in bad faith because he prefers 'nothingness' at the expense of 'being'. This critique is replicated exactly by Badiou. For Badiou, 'to be' is to be recognised or 'counted' as a being by the implicit normativity of a situation (to be included as a worker within the situation of the workplace, for example). This means that, for Badiou, 'not to be' is, to put it very schematically, not to be recognised within a situation. For Sartre, whatever is not recognised as a 'being' is 'nothingness'. We can therefore readily observe the sense in which Badiou's ontology is one of 'being' and 'nothingness'. Granted, his form of 'nothingness' is not the Sartrean nothingness of consciousness, but rather a nothingness which, he holds, only mathematics can indicate, and which he calls 'the void'.[14] Irrespective of this technical injunction, however, the point is simply that whatever is not recognised by the normativity of a situation is, on Badiou's reading, 'void' for it. Badiou's ontology is therefore assuredly underpinned by its own forms of 'being' and 'nothingness', irrespective of how much of an update these comprise on Sartre.

Whether in the language of Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* or that of Badiou's *Being and Event*, then, the critique of Bartleby is the same. On a Sartrean reading, Bartleby prefers nothingness at the expense of being, to which extent he is in bad faith. On Badiou's reading, Bartleby prefers disillusion in the nothingness of the 'void', over a commitment to change situations in which he is already counted (as a 'being'). What Badiou's reading of Bartleby offers, then, is confirmation of, and an update upon, the Sartrean critique. In the context of this essay, this does two important things. First, it prompts us to consider Bartleby's relation to bad faith in greater detail. Second, it shows that bad faith continues to operate as a background context for neo-Sartrean accounts of political action. In the following section, the first task will be pursued. After that, section four will build on this to consider the political significance of what it would mean to overcome bad faith.

III. Deleuze's Post-Phenomenological Approach: How Bartleby Overcomes Bad Faith

For a phenomenologist like the early Sartre, it is 'things themselves' (that is, 'phenomena') that prescribe the conditions for language,

and, provided it is employed methodically enough, language will be capable of neutrally redescribing these conditions. What the method of 'phenomenological ontology' seeks to show in *Being and Nothingness*, then, is that bad faith is a phenomenon pertaining to the nature of what it is to be. As post-phenomenological thinkers like Deleuze, Derrida and Foucault undertook to show, however, the inconsistency here is to presuppose that such structures of being, acting *prior to* language, can be neutrally redescribed *through* the structures of language. What marks post-phenomenological thought in the French tradition, then, is the claim that phenomenology is insufficiently critical, and that it underestimates the extent to which descriptions of reality are prescribed, not so much by 'things themselves', but by rules and norms inherent to language.[15]

In Deleuze's essay on Bartleby, this focus on language is reflected in what he calls a 'logic of presuppositions'. Here is how he outlines the concept:

> This is what [the attorney narrating Bartleby's story] glimpses with dread: all his hopes of bringing Bartleby back to reason are dashed because they rest on a *logic of presuppositions* according to which an employer 'expects' to be obeyed, or a kind friend listened to, whereas Bartleby has invented a new logic, a *logic of preference*, which is enough to undermine the presuppositions of language as a whole. (Deleuze 1998: 73; original emphasis)

By a 'logic of presuppositions', then, Deleuze means something closely akin to the 'dogmatic image of thought' analysed in Chapter 3 of *Difference and Repetition*: an implicit set of norms or 'postulates' conditioning given forms of expression and behaviour. In *Difference and Repetition*, he views the 'dogmatic image of thought' as a set of norms that has had damaging consequences for the history of philosophy.[16] In his Bartleby essay, he is aiming at something more situated with the concept of a 'logic of presuppositions': an account of how everyday situations like those of the workplace and of friendship are governed by their own limiting norms or 'postulates'.

What happens if we take this concept up and use it to re-examine Sartre's notion of bad faith? Well, a curious dialectic is observed: at first, bad faith appears to offer a way of resisting the logic of presuppositions underpinning any situation whatsoever, before then revealing itself to be a product of this logic.

Bad faith seems to offer a mode of resistance because it names the possibility of actors within a situation who mean other than they express. In *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre develops this in relation to

three famous situations: a woman who sees no future with her date, a waiter who acts too sincerely, and a subject evading questions on his sexuality. In each situation, Sartre holds, bad faith is exhibited because the subjects communicate other than they mean: the woman acts as if she sees a future with her date, the waiter knows all too well he is acting, and the evasive subject refuses to commit himself (Sartre 1943: 93–109).

The trap of bad faith, however, is to view such acts of withholding as forms of resistance. On the contrary, we can observe that they conform to the logics of presupposition involved in each case. This is because whoever is in bad faith seeks to communicate other than they mean, and because, in doing so, it is in accordance with what is presupposed of them that they act: of a date, it is presupposed it will be an enjoyable and reciprocal experience; of a waiter, it is presupposed he will be a genial host; of an interrogation, it is presupposed it will produce answers. Viewed from the standpoint of such norms, whatever actors involved in a situation might really mean, but withhold, is strictly irrelevant. Rather, what matters is whether or not they perform as they are presupposed to, and in each of the cases described by Sartre, this is what happens: the woman's date is led to see a future with her, the waiter's customers are satisfied, and the interrogator in the last case gets to interpret signs of evasion as signs of admission.

The paradox of bad faith, then, is that it always conforms to whatever logic of presuppositions it seeks to resist. This impotence does not, however, render bad faith irrelevant to how logics of presupposition function. On the contrary, it reveals it to be an integral product of this logic. This is because it is in the interests of a logic of presuppositions to eliminate the possibility of meaning other than it prescribes within a situation, and bad faith satisfies this condition twice: first, because it comprises no real alternative; second, because it indicates the failed search for an alternative, offered to actors who thought they could resist normalisation, but who must henceforth resign themselves to forms of expression and behaviour that are presupposed of them.

Turning back to the passage where Deleuze outlines the concept of a 'logic of presuppositions', we now face a further question: what distinguishes Bartleby's 'logic of preference' (as expressed by the formula) from the impotence of bad faith? Deleuze helps us to answer this through the following passage:

> Figures of life and knowledge, [Originals] know something inexpressible, live something unfathomable. They have nothing general about them, and are not particular – they escape knowledge, defy psychology. Even the words

> they utter surpass the general laws of language (presuppositions) … There is nothing particular or general about Bartleby: he is an Original. (Deleuze 1998: 83)

To overcome bad faith, one must show that it does not pertain to the nature of what it is to be, but is rather a product of how logics of presupposition presuppose beings to be. To do this, it is enough to show that the being of a being (its 'singularity' or 'difference in itself', in Deleuze's terms) is something irreducible to any logic of presuppositions whatsoever, and this is precisely what Deleuze is seeking to do in the above extract when describing Bartleby as an 'Original': to affirm Bartleby's singularity to be something in excess of the presupposed general and particular 'types' to which recognised forms of epistemology, psychology and logic (to cite only the above examples) might seek to reduce it.

This affirmation of singularity is what distinguishes Deleuze's philosophy from phenomenology. Under the terms of a method like Sartre's 'phenomenological ontology', bad faith must emerge as something pertaining to the nature of what it is to be (that is, to 'things themselves'). Against this, Deleuze recognises the inconsistency at work here (that phenomenology's search for a 'presuppositionless' account of 'things themselves' presupposes the descriptive neutrality of language), and affirms the gap opened up between being and language as the site for what he variously calls 'pure difference', 'singularity' or 'Originality'; that is, forms of being that remain irreducible to the logics of presupposition at work within language.

What distinguishes Bartleby's 'logic of preference' from bad faith, then, as Deleuze notes, is that Bartleby affirms his creative singularity by 'inventing' it. This inventiveness is sufficient to overcome bad faith because it runs counter to the impotence the latter prescribes. For Deleuze, the effects of this inventiveness are observable at every level of Bartleby's story: in, for example, the way 'I would prefer not to' challenges presuppositions on how grammar should function; in the way Bartleby challenges presuppositions on how employees and friends should act; and in the way Melville's text challenges presuppositions on how plot, character and metaphor should function in a story (Deleuze 1998: 68–70). In each case, Deleuze holds, a form of inventive and creative singularity operates that shows there to be more to being than logics of presupposition can capture. This is what Deleuze means when he says that Bartleby's 'logic of preference' is 'enough to undermine the presuppositions of language as a whole', and it is how Bartleby overcomes bad faith.

IV. Beyond Bad Faith and Bartleby: The Political Significance of Bartleby's Actions

Consider how the shift in perspective just argued for alters the predicament of bad faith. If, as in Sartre's account, bad faith pertains to the nature of what it is to be, then it is possible to suspect all beings of it, and impossible to overcome it. This is because all behaviours, gestures and actions will, simply by virtue of their being, forever be open to suspicion of it, including all acts intended to overcome it.[17] If, however, bad faith is a product of logics of presupposition, then, at worst, specific forms of bad faith are limited to specific situations of language, and, as we will argue, the potential to overcome it entirely is inaugurated.

There are therefore two steps toward overcoming bad faith, the first acting as a 'strategy of containment' against it, the second as total liberation from it. In this section, we will work through these steps in order.

If bad faith is produced by a language's logic of presuppositions, then it becomes possible to read it into any form of behaviour describable within the language. At first, this seems to mean that the threat of bad faith remains as prevalent as ever. This is because it still seems applicable to 'all that is', irrespective of whether this is meant in the ontological sense of 'all that has being', or in the logical sense of all that is describable within the limits of a particular language. The key point, however, is that, as is implied by the very notion of a language's particularity, there are a plurality of languages, each with their own limits (whether, for example, languages that are 'extinct', 'extant', 'possible', 'formal' or 'natural'), from which it follows that no one language in particular can definitively be said to account for all that is, or that is capable of being.

The first step toward overcoming bad faith, then, is to realise that particular languages produce forms of bad faith specific to them, and that the scope of these forms cannot be universal, because the languages from which they issue are themselves incapable of accounting for all that is. From here, the effects of bad faith can be contained by enquiring into just how 'particular' languages are. To develop this, consider remarks that Deleuze makes immediately prior to outlining the concept of a 'logic of presuppositions':

> A word always presupposes other words that can replace it, complete it, or form alternatives with it: it is on this condition that language is distributed in such a way as to designate things, states of things and actions, according to a set of objective, explicit conventions. But perhaps there are also other implicit and subjective conventions, other types of reference or presupposition. In

> speaking, I do not simply indicate things and actions; I also commit acts that assure a relation with the interlocutor, in keeping with our respective situations: I command, I interrogate, I promise, I ask, I emit 'speech acts.' ... It is this double system of reference that Bartleby ravages. (Deleuze 1998: 73)

This analysis is highly revealing. First, it corroborates the connection made earlier between the concept of a 'logic of presuppositions' and the 'dogmatic image of thought'. This is because, in both cases, Deleuze makes a distinction between 'objective' and 'subjective' presuppositions, and, in both cases, it is the latter set in which he is more interested – the implicit presuppositions or 'postulates' that act as conditions for communication within a situation. Wherever Deleuze discusses a 'logic of presuppositions' or 'dogmatic image', then, he is targeting this form of implicit presupposition (see Deleuze 2004a: 164–5; Deleuze and Guattari 2004a: 83–95). Second, this shows just how 'particular' languages are on Deleuze's analysis. For Deleuze, what marks the particularity of a language is less the set of 'objective, explicit conventions' according to which words are taken to designate, and more the implicit logic of presuppositions setting conditions for their exchange. Deleuze's conception of a language's particularity therefore goes much deeper than more common-sense notions of geographical or ethnic particularity, idiom or dialect account for. On the contrary, he takes it that there are as many languages as there are situations with logics of presupposition specific to them.[18]

To develop this, let us briefly turn to the story of Bartleby. As presented by Melville, 'Bartleby' is a story related retrospectively by a single narrator, an attorney looking back on Bartleby's employment in his New York law firm. The story begins by describing the period immediately prior to 'the advent of Bartleby' (Melville 1990: 4). Thereafter, it documents Bartleby's good beginnings as a copyist, before detailing the effects of his subsequent refusals to perform in terms of what is presupposed of him. There are four key situations involved in the story: the workplace, the prison, and the situations of charity and morality into which Bartleby's actions place him. It may seem strange to class these four situations together, given that the first two are more concrete or 'physical', and the latter two more abstract or 'metaphysical'. The reason for doing so, however, is that they each involve distinct logics of presupposition, to which the attorney ascribes, and to which Bartleby does not.

Faced with Bartleby's actions, the distinct logics of presupposition at work in the story are forced to emerge through the attorney's discourse.

In the workplace, we therefore find that it is presupposed that there will be periods of drudgery and stress, and that, while labour will be alienated, employees are expected to be 'cheerful' about this.[19] In prison, while liberties will be restricted, it is presupposed that privileges can be bought.[20] In receipt of charity, it is presupposed that the recipient (Bartleby) will be grateful and beholding to others, and that the conscience of the benefactor (the attorney) will be gratified.[21] Finally, as a subject of morality, it is presupposed that Bartleby's actions will be open to the judgement of others.[22]

Now, Bartleby passes through each of these situations, and he 'prefers not to' have his labour alienated, 'not to' receive privileges in prison, 'not to' be in receipt of charity and 'not to' have his actions judged by others. According to the Sartreo-Badiouian critique, this means that Bartleby is in bad faith. If that is the case, then Bartleby's actions have no significance beyond condemning him to a miserable demise. According to our reading, however, Bartleby reveals bad faith to be a product of logics of presupposition. If that is the case, then Bartleby's actions have a double political significance: first, they force the implicit logics of presupposition at work within the story to make themselves explicit; second, by doing so, they show just how limited in scope these logics are.

Bartleby demonstrates that there are languages particular to the situations of the workplace and the prison, just as there are languages particular to the more abstract situations of charity and morality. These situations each involve logics of presupposition specific to them, and that make different normative demands. To this extent, they produce forms of bad faith restricted to them. If Bartleby refuses to copy within the situation of the workplace, then, this means that he can be held to be in bad faith in that situation at most, but not beyond it. Again, if Bartleby refuses charity, this means that he can be held to be in bad faith in that situation at most, but not beyond it. From here, the way to enact a strategy of containment against bad faith becomes clear: first, to make explicit what particular situations presuppose (to understand, for example, how 'an employer "expects" to be obeyed', or how liberties will be removed in prison); second, to detect the limits of the situation to which these presuppositions are applicable, since, if no one language in particular is capable of accounting for all that is, such limits must exist.

From here, the way toward total liberation from bad faith emerges. This is because, if specific forms of bad faith are restricted to particular situations, and one is outside of these limits, one cannot be accused of bad faith for behaving other than they prescribe.

What, however, does it mean to get 'outside' the limits of a situation? Well, it seems achievable in a straightforward sense: if one is physically outside a situation like the workplace or the prison, surely one cannot be accused of bad faith for acting contrary to normative demands holding sway there? Given the increasingly malleable situations of work and discipline within what Deleuze elsewhere calls our contemporary 'control societies', however, this becomes more problematic.

Drawing on Foucault, Deleuze outlined three forms of society in his 1990 essay, *Postscript on Control Societies*: early-modern 'sovereign societies'; 'disciplinary societies', which, he holds, operated between the eighteenth and early twentieth centuries; and 'control societies', which he takes to be characteristic of the contemporary world (Deleuze 1995b: 177–8). Contrasting the latter two forms, Deleuze notes that while disciplinary societies worked by closing people off within 'major sites of confinement' that each had their 'own laws' (the family, the school, the barracks, the factory or the prison, for example), control societies work through 'ultrarapid forms of apparently free floating control' that make use of new forms of communication and technology (Deleuze 1995a: 174).[23] Going further, Deleuze argues that, while people in disciplinary societies were moulded into 'individuals' and 'masses' by laws specific to the sites of confinement through which they passed, status in control societies is determined by 'passwords' and 'codes', the terms of which can, in principle, be revised at any moment (Deleuze 1995b: 181–2).

The difficulty here is that Bartleby's actions may seem to have only a dated political significance at most, related to a form of 'disciplinary society'. Granted, we might say, Bartleby does force the logics of presupposition operating in his story to become explicit and to announce their limits, but these are only laws specific to the sites of confinement of a vanished disciplinary society (the mid-nineteenth-century USA). On closer inspection, however, we find that this is not the case, and that Bartleby also has profound things to say about contemporary control societies, and about how we might overcome the bad faith that they produce.

To clarify, consider the following key difference that Deleuze notes between disciplinary and control societies:

> In disciplinary societies you were always starting all over again (as you went from school to barracks, from barracks to factory), while in control societies you never finish anything – business, training, and military service being coexisting metastable states of a single modulation. (Deleuze 1995b: 179)

Deleuze characterises the first form of judgement described here as one of 'apparent acquittal'. This, he holds, is felt by subjects in disciplinary societies as they move from one site of confinement to the next (from the school to the barracks, for example) – in-between sites, relief from what a situation presupposes of one is felt, but new forms of presupposition and judgement await in the next site. He describes the second form, characteristic of control societies, as one of 'endless postponement'. According to this form, the boundaries between old sites of confinement dissolve, such that one no longer knows when one has begun or finished anything (as, for example, the limits between the workplace and the home blur, and as schools are replaced by forms of continuous training) (Deleuze 1995b: 179).

There are two passages in Deleuze's Bartleby essay that relate profoundly to these forms of judgement. First, of the formula, Deleuze states that each time Bartleby employs it in response to a demand from the attorney, the latter 'has the vertiginous impression … that everything is starting over again from zero' (Deleuze 1998: 71). These words do not suggest that Bartleby's political significance is dated. What they suggest is that Bartleby is intimately aware of how the logic of 'apparent acquittal' works in disciplinary societies, because, through the formula, he is inflicting it upon the attorney. If this is the case, then what it suggests is that Bartleby has already superseded this logic in some sense, because, unlike the attorney, he knows how it works, and, unlike the attorney, he has not implicitly decided to be subject to it.

If this reading is too suggestive, it should be supported with a second passage from Deleuze's essay. Of Bartleby's refusal to leave the attorney's office, Deleuze states: 'Bartleby lives cloistered in the office and never goes out, but when the attorney suggests new occupations to him, he is not joking when he responds, "There is too much confinement …"' (Deleuze 1998: 88). One way of reading these words, a direct quotation from Melville's story, is as a form of localised subjective rejection: by pointing out that 'there is too much confinement', Bartleby is saying that he would prefer not to be subject to occupations suggested to him. Read like this, Bartleby's actions would, as per the Sartreo-Badiouian critique, seem to be a lonely exercise in bad faith, and that would seem to be the end of the matter. Another way of reading the statement, however, is as a diagnosis on the limits of a disciplinary society. What would count in this case is not the localised subjective stance of the character 'Bartleby' (whatever that might be), but rather the broader level of awareness demonstrated by the statement; and, read

like this, the statement appears aware indeed, implying what Deleuze would call a 'collective assemblage of enunciation'.

As developed in *Thousand Plateaus* and *Kafka*, Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the 'collective assemblage' overturns common-sense presuppositions on how language functions, and gives new political significance to seemingly isolated voices like Bartleby. According to the concept, a statement like 'there is too much confinement' is not the *ex nihilo* utterance of a lonely subject immured in bad faith. Rather, it is a diagnosis that enunciates an implicit collective awareness of the deeper logic at work within a society.[24] Read like this, Bartleby's statement is 'aware' in two highly significant ways. First, it comprehends the level of confinement that the logic of 'apparent acquittal' engenders within disciplinary societies. Second, by enunciating this, it points beyond this form of society, toward the future.

When developing the concept of the collective assemblage in relation to Kafka, Deleuze and Guattari state of his work that it is capable of rendering 'still unknown sounds that come from the near future … *diabolical powers that are knocking at the door*' (Deleuze and Guattari 2003: 41; original emphasis). Reading his essay on Bartleby in relation to his work on control societies, the extent to which Deleuze also takes this to be the case with Bartleby is clear. To demonstrate, consider a final passage on the move from disciplinary societies to control societies:

> Compared with the approaching forms of ceaseless control in open sites, we may come to see the harshest confinement as part of a wonderful happy past. The quest for 'universals of communication' ought to make us shudder … We've got to hijack speech. Creating has always been something different from communicating. The key thing may be to create … circuit breakers, so we can elude control. (Deleuze 1995b: 175)

Unpacking these words, it is clear that, if there is a character whose significance is 'dated' in the story of Bartleby, it is the attorney. This is because, faced with Bartleby's actions, he ultimately decides to remain subject to the logic of 'apparent acquittal' that they expose and supersede.[25] In this sense, he is a reactive subject, tethered to a form of a disciplinary society. In contrast, Bartleby's actions comprehend and control the logic operative in disciplinary societies, to which extent they move beyond it and contain premonitions of the future forms of 'ceaseless control' operating in control societies.

Bartleby's actions have an enduring political significance because they do not shirk this future. On the contrary, it is the attorney who retreats

toward a form of nostalgia that might just see 'the harshest confinement as part of a wonderful happy past'. In contrast, Bartleby's actions do not simply face up to future forms of control; rather, through the formula, they demonstrate how they might be resisted.

To draw this out, note that Bartleby's formula is an incisive example of the forms of creativity referenced in the latter half of the above extract: first, it shows how speech can be 'hijacked' (through invention within language); second, it shows how 'creating has always been something different from communicating' (by undoing communication's logics of presupposition); third, it shows how creativity can resist the quest for 'universals of communication' (by exposing just how limited logics of presupposition are in their scope). In each case, the formula demonstrates a profoundly contemporary sense of what it means to get 'outside' the limits of a situation: if control societies are replacing the logic of 'apparent acquittal' with one of 'endless postponement', then it is not sufficient to be outside the limits of a situation in the naive, physical sense referenced earlier; rather, what is required to 'elude control' are more nuanced and creative ways of diagnosing and subverting the limits of language.

According to the Sartreo-Badiouian critique, Bartleby is a lonely character immured in his bad faith. This, it holds, is because Bartleby does not embark upon an 'authentic' undertaking to change the norms of situations in which he is included. The problem is that this analysis is tied to a narrow understanding of 'character', and it presupposes bad faith itself to be an unchangeable form of normativity. What recommends Deleuze's essay, in contrast, is that it accesses the deeper political significance of Bartleby's actions by going beyond the limits of character, and by linking them to the collective assemblage that makes them possible. Thereby, it exposes bad faith to be something contingent on how logics of presupposition judge isolated 'characters' and 'subjects'. The profoundly liberating message of Deleuze's essay, then, is that, while it is *always possible* to read a character like Bartleby in terms of bad faith (Sartre and Badiou, for example, must do it because of the logics of presupposition underpinning their respective philosophies), it is *never necessary*.

By exposing bad faith as something profoundly unnecessary, Deleuze's essay shows how we might be liberated from it. This is not to say, however, that his reading is immune to critique. Problematically, its tendency towards eulogy has, as section one of this essay sought to demonstrate, led to a reductive image of Bartleby as a hero whose actions are to be praised, mimicked or, indeed, accused of bad faith.

To overcome this, we should be attentive to the fact that 'Bartleby's actions' are functions of what a text does to language. From here, a path beyond bad faith emerges: it involves being prepared to diagnose and resist logics of presupposition; it involves invention within language; it involves the creation of new characters and 'formulas'; it involves being prepared to learn and vary the languages in which one communicates; it involves being prepared to move beyond the impotence of bad faith; and, importantly, it involves being prepared to move beyond Bartleby. Such a move should not, however, pain us. 'Bartleby' is not a hero to be idolised or a traitor to be accused of bad faith, but rather a provocative diagnosis on societies past, present and future, one that challenges us to think deeply about how we might expose and critique the limits of their control.

Notes

1. Witness Žižek's uncritical use of the term 'Bartleby politics'. (Žižek 2008: 409). For signs of contemporary weariness with this reductive image of Bartleby, see Jean-Luc Nancy: 'everyone clings onto this "I would prefer not to", but it is precisely this that doesn't agree with me … My interpretation, if I must have one, would be that "I would prefer not to" signifies "I would prefer not to write his novel", signed H. Melville' (Nancy 2011: 179).
2. Berkman, for example, has characterised these words as symbolic of 'a messianism of the critical gesture' (Berkman 2011: 83).
3. See Blanchot 1986: 17; Blanchot 1995. Blanchot's earliest piece on Bartleby is from 1945. Berkman argues that, 'in many respects, Blanchot is the great, secret, initiator [of French accounts of Bartleby]. It is with he that … Deleuze dialogues in … "Bartleby; or, the Formula"' (Berkman 2011: 25–6). On Blanchot's general influence on the French reception of Bartleby, see Berkman 2011: 29–52.
4. 'The "Bartleby effect" is, without doubt, behind us … [Today], we are faced with … a new epoch of foundationalism that wants to have done with the troubling and undecidable powers of which [the] formula is the emblem' (Berkman 2011: 174–7).
5. The *Critique of Dialectical Reason*'s distinction between the 'practico-inert' and the individual's free praxis echoes the dualism between 'being' and 'nothingness'. This means that concerns expressed under the rubric of bad faith in *Being and Nothingness* get reworked in Sartre's later text through new concepts of 'pledging' and 'betrayal'. On this, see Sartre 1976: 318–20; Badiou 2008: 23–41. Deleuze, for his part, construed *The Critique of Dialectical Reason* as 'the necessary complement' of *Being and Nothingness* (Deleuze 2002b: 112).
6. Take two important themes: Sartre's concern in *Transcendence of the Ego* to seek a 'transcendental field without subject', and his concern in the *Critique of Dialectical Reason* for a Neo-Marxist theory of group formation. Khalfa identifies the first as a problem in relation to which 'Deleuze defines his own philosophy' from *Logic of Sense* to 'Immanence: A Life', and states of the second that 'the Marxism that [*Anti-Oedipus*] will claim to follow is Sartre's'. (Khalfa 2003: 72–4).These claims are accurate, but seem incommensurate with the level of explicit credit that *Logic of Sense* and *Anti-Oedipus* give Sartre – he receives

three short citations in the former (Deleuze 2004c: 112, 118, 120), two in the latter (Deleuze and Guattari 2004b: 30n., 278).

7. See, for example, Deleuze 2002a; Deleuze 2003; Deleuze 2007.
8. In *Logic of Sense*, Deleuze praises Sartre's acuity in searching for an 'impersonal transcendental field' that constitutes the subject, before condemning him for 'retain[ing] consciousness as a milieu' (Deleuze 2004c: 112, 118). In *Difference and Repetition* and the Tournier essay, Deleuze notes Sartre's richness on intersubjectivity before highlighting his failure to provide a proper account of the Other (see Deleuze 2004a: 77, 323; Deleuze 2004b: 346). For evidence of this pattern outwith the period identified here, see Deleuze 2005: 85; Deleuze and Guattari 2004b: 190.
9. The article cites Sartre as the thinker who 'taught the identity of thought and liberty'. The impulse for it was Sartre's decision, in October 1964, to refuse the Nobel Prize for literature. Deleuze praises this action insofar as it crystallises Sartre's 'revulsion at the idea of being institutionalised'. What is further noteworthy is that Deleuze is therefore praising Sartre for what other commentators perceived as an act of 'bad faith' (see Deleuze 2002b: 113).
10. 'It was the uniquely Sartrean that struck me . . . : his theory of bad faith' (Deleuze 2002b: 112).
11. Bad faith is, for example, cited in a course at the University of Paris VIII (see Deleuze 1983). These references are, however, more exegetical than critical.
12. This is evident in an anglophone context in the work of thinkers like Peter Hallward and Nina Power, and, in a different sense, in the debt owed to Sartre by thinkers like Arthur Danto and Charles Taylor. In a francophone context, it is evident, most obviously, in Badiou, as well as thinkers like Kacem, Tarby and Mavrakis. In a more populist sense, the proximity of Hessel's '*Idignez vous!*' to Sartrean themes is also noteworthy (see Hessel 2010).
13. For Badiou's analysis of these themes, see Badiou 2008: 23–41.
14. The void also functions, like Sartrean nothingness, as a source of change and new possibilities. In *Being and Nothingness*, change occurs through the capacity of a particular being (the 'human reality') to become conscious of its nothingness. In *Being and Event*, change occurs through the capacity of the void to be recognised within a situation, as an *event* that exposes the contingency of previously held norms on what it means to be (see Badiou 2005: 184–90).
15. 'Post-phenomenological' is used throughout this section in preference to 'post-structuralist'. I take the former term to be more instructive in determining the core theories of figures like Deleuze, Derrida and Foucault. For evidence of the shift from phenomenological description to the post-phenomenological critique of language, see, in particular, Foucault 1966; Derrida 1973; Descombes 1979; Deleuze and Guattari 2004a: 83–122.
16. 'The postulates need not be spoken: they function all the more effectively in silence . . . Together, they form the dogmatic image of thought. They crush thought under an image which is that of the Same and the Similar' (Deleuze 2004a: 207). For Deleuze's most developed account of the 'postulates' of linguistics, see Deleuze and Guattari 2004a: 83–122.
17. Bad faith leads to viciously circular paradoxes. It cannot be overcome through an opposed theory of authenticity (contra Sartre's suggestion in *Being and Nothingness* – see Sartre 1943: 111), nor by simply replacing the ontology that makes it possible (as occurs in Sartre's later move toward materialism, for example), nor by simply 'forgetting' bad faith as a metaphysical idol out of control, à la Nietzsche. This is because all such moves can be viewed as acts of bad faith toward the concept of bad faith!

18. "'I swear" is not the same when said in the family, at school, in a love affair, in a secret society, or in court: it is not the same thing, and neither is it the same statement' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004a: 91).
19. 'At first, Bartleby did an extraordinary quantity of writing. As if long famishing for something to copy, he seemed to gorge himself on my documents. There was no pause for digestion … I should have been quite delighted with his application, had he been cheerfully industrious. But he wrote on silently, palely, mechanically' (Melville 1990: 9).
20. This is something the character of the prison's 'grubman', emerging late in the story, makes clear:
    "'Your sarvant sir, your sarvant," said the grubman, making a low salutation behind his apron. "Hope you find it pleasant here, sir; nice grounds – cool apartments – hope you'll stay with us some time – try to make it agreeable. What will you have for dinner today?"
    "I prefer not to dine today," said Bartleby, turning away.' (Melville 1990: 32).
21. 'To befriend Bartleby, to humour him in his strange wilfulness, will cost me little or nothing, while I lay up in my soul what will eventually prove a sweet morsel for my conscience' (Melville 1990: 13).
22. Consider these remarks from the attorney to the character 'Nippers':
    "'What do you think of it, Nippers? Would I not be justified in immediately dismissing Bartleby?"
    "Excuse me, that is for you to decide, sir. I think his conduct quite unusual, and indeed, unjust, as regards … myself"' (Melville 1990: 14).
23. See also Stiegler on 'technologies de contrôle' (Stiegler 2006: 28).
24. 'There is no individual enunciation … [E]nunciation in itself implies collective assemblages. It then becomes clear that the statement is individuated, and enunciation subjectified, only to the extent that an impersonal collective assemblage requires it and determines it to be so' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004a: 88).
25. Deleuze sums up this decision as follows: 'the final words of the attorney's narrative will be, "Ah, Bartleby! Ah, humanity!" which does not indicate a connection, but rather an alternative in which he has had to choose the all-too-human law over Bartleby' (Deleuze 1998: 81).

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Is A New Life Possible? Deleuze and the Lines

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Abstract

In his dialogues with Claire Parnet, Deleuze asserts that: 'Whether we are individuals or groups, we are made of lines' (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 124). In *A Thousand Plateaus* (with Guattari), Deleuze calls these kinds of 'lifelines' or 'lines of flesh': break line (or segmental line, or molar line), crack line (or molecular line) and rupture line (also called line of flight) (Deleuze and Guattari 2004a: 22). We will explain the difference between these three lines and how they are related to the 'soul'. We will also explain how a singular individual or group can arise from the play of the lines. Eventually, we will introduce the concept of 'Creal' to develop the Deleuzian figure of the 'Anomal', the so(u)rcerer.

Keywords: crack line, molar line, molecular line, rupture, break, soul, difference, Hume, singular, Creal, impression, Anomal, subject

> Lightning, for example, distinguishes itself from the black sky but must also trail it behind, as though it were distinguishing itself from that which does not distinguish itself from it. (Deleuze 2004: 36)

I. Introduction: 'Whether we are individuals or groups, we are made up of lines'

What is it that makes us act? What is it that brings us from motion into space? Following what directions? What principles? The human life is often presented as a straight line, which has a start, a midpoint and an end. We picture ourselves evolving on this line with the feeling

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that we are not always the masters of our destinies and unsure as to which goal(s) to aim for. Is it meaningful to draw such a vectorisation of life when every living being, as soon as it sets itself free from certain indoctrinations, certain imperatives, so often feels that it is bursting with boundless energy or desire and that it is leaking out from every side, like an overflowing vase?

People talk about a life curve in terms of industrial items, but does the human experience – being so complex and metamorphic – truly follow a line? Can its essence be summed up in such a linear form, which would be but a form of abstraction deprived from any other link with the real life of the spiritual bodies than a symbolic or metaphoric one? 'Oh, the poverty of the imaginary and the symbolic, the real always being put off until tomorrow' (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 51).

To say that souls follow lines seems to be a schematic abstraction. But it seems as though it were a concrete reality according to several excerpts in Gilles Deleuze's work; for instance, in the first chapter of *Difference and Repetition*, when, as he is taking a closer look at the distinction between the base of things and their surface, the philosopher writes: 'The rising ground is no longer below, it acquires autonomous existence; the form reflecting itself in this ground is no longer a form but an abstract line acting directly upon the soul' (Deleuze 2004: 37). Further in his writings, and particularly in his dialogues with Claire Parnet, Deleuze asserts quite simply that: 'Whether we are individuals or groups, we are made up of lines' (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 124).

Individuation would thus follow one or several lines, like social life. How to understand – to accept? – that one of the simplest geometrical shapes could be used to describe souls? And how to describe this line, these lines and the dynamics that rule them? First of all, why does Deleuze emphasise the notion of soul in philosophy at the end of the twentieth century, while some cynical or embarrassed minds claimed it was part of the museum of theology?

We shall be more precise: Gilles Deleuze suggests that this line of life divides itself into three threads, or rather that there are three lines of life: 'The primary line of flight, of border or frontier, which is relativized in the second line, which allows itself be stopped or cut in the third' (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 137). What is the meaning of this tripartite system and how does it work? And what is the meaning of terms like flight or cut? In *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze (with Guattari) calls these kinds of 'lifelines' or 'lines of flesh': 'break lines (or segmental lines, or molar lines), crack lines (or molecular lines) and rupture lines (also called lines of flight)' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004a: 221).

In the first place, the molar lines seem to be defined as binary and oppositional imperatives, segmenting, ordering, as forces of control and of social overcoding, of training, as a narrowing of the *élan vital* or a diversion from it. We shall notice at this point that this definition might remind us of the tendency Nietzsche called 'Apollonian' – the formalist containment. This orientation will be explored by reading *Nietzsche and Philosophy* by Deleuze.

As for the rupture lines, they seem to be chaotic lines of 'the steepest slope', of flight towards a disindividuated becoming, a force of impetuous attraction, the torrent of an over-full life (but not always a fool's life) bursting beyond the preservation necessity of the individual belonging to a species. Again, we will have to develop this first evocation and try to understand to what extent these two terms 'break' and 'rupture' can be opposed. We shall also notice that the rupture lines seem to evoke the concept of the Dionysian by Nietzsche – the excesses bursting from the centre of the earth, from the underground – an impression that we will explore.

Between these two lines, there is supposed to be a 'crack line', neither automating-castrating nor impulsive-anarchic, which according to Deleuze would fall and rise, like a yo-yo perhaps or a 'molecular flux of quanta'. This is a more supple line than the molar line, but Deleuze, in *Dialogues II*, maintains that it is not necessarily 'a more personal nor a more intimate one'. 'Micro-cracks are also collective. They run through societies and groups' (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 124).

It is at this point that the main difficulty in our attempts to sort things out arises. Indeed, if the molar line is social, the rupture line infra individual, and the molecular line collective, where does the possibility of a singular individuation, of a subject's uniqueness stand? Where is the dynamic, the personality, which is generally supposed to tell individuals apart, in their identity, in their own becoming? What is it that leads a soul to express a distinct human self, a triumphing 'I', supposing that the individual identity is not a fiction out of reach? And what is it that Deleuze calls the 'fracture in the I' in *Difference and Repetition*?

It seems that the term 'crack' has been inspired, among others, by F. Scott Fitzgerald's short story *The Crack-up*. We shall state at once that it appears there is some dissonance between Deleuze's text and Fitzgerald's one. Deleuze seems to give a rather positive and active meaning to the notion of crack, whereas the vision offered by the American novelist is that of a depressive loss of vital flow, of impetus, an incapacity to embrace the fullness of existence. Fitzgerald depicts the fractured or cracked-up being as 'a person whose life makes other people's life seem

like death' (Fitzgerald 2009: 73–4) For Deleuze, the crack is healthier. But in fact, Deleuze and Fitzgerald are talking about the same line, for this one can be explored following the autumn or the spring, going down or up. On one side, the crack sets free; on the other side, it dries up. Or perhaps, does it set free by drying up the Real, like Deleuze said about Beckett? A line along which we believe we do not want anything anymore because we want everything.

In Fitzgerald's story, a woman replies to the narrator's lament:

> 'Instead of being so sorry for yourself, listen – she said. (She always says 'Listen,' because she thinks while she talks – *really* thinks.) So she said: 'Listen. Suppose this wasn't a crack in you – suppose it was a crack in the Grand Canyon.' 'The crack's in me,' I said heroically. 'Listen! The world only exists in your eyes – your conception of it. You can make it as big or as small as you want to. And you're trying to be a little puny individual. By God, if I ever cracked, I'd try to make the world crack with me. Listen! The world only exists through your apprehension of it, and so it's much better to say that it's not you that's cracked – it's the Grand Canyon' (Fitzgerald 2009: 73–4).

Grand Canyon or 'fractured I', what is the real driving dynamic of the human life if it is neither normativity nor anarchy?

Our examination of the tripartite conception of the lifeline will be advanced in four steps. We will first try to better understand the difference between the three lines – molar, rupture and molecular – and how they can be related to 'the soul'. In the second part, we will try to explain the interweaving, the structure of these three lines, their mutual influence, their permeation, which depends on the particular conception of the being and of the I as fractured. In the third part, we shall understand how a singular individual can arise (or not) from the play of the lines. Such a singular subject will appear as a contemplating, impressed and impressive soul, incarnated in a specific language, that is to say a figure not enclosed inside itself, not fractured. We will resume the hypothesis according to which the subject is longing for everything, in order to think a rising 'I', if it is possible. Finally, in the fourth part, once the role of the lifelines is clearer and the existence of a singular subject will seem possible in the form of a benevolent so(u)rcerer, someone who keeps bringing into being that which does not yet exist, it will be time to start a summary of what has been exposed before, reaching a full understanding of the way we move from the impression that comes first to the active subject.

II. Distinction of the Three Lines: Molar Lines, Rupture Lines, Molecular Lines

The Soul Draws Lines

'The rising ground is no longer the background, but acquires an autonomous existence; the form reflecting itself in this ground is no longer a form but an abstract line acting directly upon the soul' asserts Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition* (Deleuze 2004: 37) How can an abstract line operate directly upon the soul? To answer that question, we will have to understand what Deleuze means by 'soul' and, in order to do so, the reader is advised to listen to the class he gave at the Paris VIII university in 1986–7: *Leibniz: Soul and Damnation* (Deleuze 2003) before we examine here the first chapter of *Difference and Repetition*.

'What does this mean, the tissue of the soul?' wonders Deleuze while reading Leibniz. A swarm of small inclinations is the very component of the stuff of the soul. These inclinations fold the soul in all directions. This is not just a metaphor, this is the true nature of the Real: 'a swarm of differences, a pluralism of free wild or untamed differences . . .' (Deleuze 2004: 61) That is the essence of the soul: folds that form and unfold constantly in all senses; this is a '*pruritus*', a 'concern'. As if thousands of tiny springs were working in various directions, with elastic forces. The soul is a living, multiple being, an endless network simmering with differential micro-variations. The tissue of the soul, in a constant 'disparity', makes micro-folding, virtualised folds. How does this simmer, this swarm which has a tendency to fold, form lines?

'Towards which side will I fold my soul?' This is the question of the unconscious. The human self is what results from the production of a perception we have discerned, from a maximum of small perceptions: an inclination, a 'decisive fold', which forms a line of action. This decisive fold, this 'decisory' fold, is the trigger of action. The lifeline is formed by the association of decisory folds, which have led us here and there, to do or say this or that. We can already consider that if three complementary forces oppose each other – social break of training, rupture by coming back to the pure difference of disparity, individual crack of the 'neither-nor' (neither Apollo nor Dionysius) – we can end up with the formation of a kind of individuation, as unoriginal or not autonomous as it may seem at first glance, at this stage of our development.

In any case, the soul is not some steady scales upon which we might put weights. The true figure, the only possible diagram for the deliberation of the soul, according to Deleuze as he re-reads Leibniz, is a diagram of inflexion: there are only inflexions in the soul, inclinations

tracing folds of different sizes. These folds are the furrows of the action. The self is deliberative: it builds itself up in the virtual space and time we dedicate to the elaboration of a decisory fold, leading to a line of action in the real space. What is it that conveys to a movement a linear unity? It is the soul as a folder, which is the unity of the movement. 'Will I go to the pub or go to work?' The world drives us from a desire to a counter-desire, imaginings to actions.

But why does the soul draw lines rather than stay, for example, at a point? It is a matter of amplitude regarding the pendulum, a question of unfurling of the folded space and a matter of incarnation. The soul that lies at a point is not incarnated; it is, as such, asleep or damned. When a soul comes into the world, it is a body that unfolds. *To become spiritual is to unfold one's body*. All souls draw lines following various amplitudes, internal spaces of more or less broad folding – to the exclusion of 'the damned', which are the souls tending to be willing to reduce their amplitude to a mere point, a point of sheer hatred of the Everything ('I hate God!'). A completely unfolded soul, on the contrary, as we can deduce from what was just said, would be a sheer affirmation of everything.

At the basis of the Real, there is thus a pre-individual pruritus of endless differences. This background opens up in the space-time folding and unfolding itself, creating folds. At times, the sum of a certain amount of micro-folds forms a decisory fold, which is a line of action, a line of action of a defined amplitude: 'Whether we are individuals or groups, we are made of lines' (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 124). Now let us take a closer look at the three kinds of lines Deleuze points out.

The Molar Line or Segmentary Line

'The first kind of line which forms us is segmentary, of rigid segmentarity' (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 124). This fold is the archetypal social fold, the fold of convention, driven by the survival imperative. This is the line of classifying language, the line of prioritisation, of ordering, duty, false oppositions: 'family – profession; job – holidays; family – and then school – and then the army – and then the factory – and then retirement.' This is the line of the *they*: 'They tell us: now, you are not a baby anymore'[1] (14–17). This is a line that works collectively, a line of imprisonment in such and such a function or group, a line of training, a line setting in motion the wheels of the social code according to operational models enabling mass containment of the vital flows – necessarily reductive, forced and simplifying. These are

segments that, far from embracing the natural inclinations of the soul, its multidirectional pruritus and its joyful worry, castrate it or rather try to do so, lull it with the notion of obligation, the notion of necessary limitation of the individual name-surname inscribed in a historic era and in a given society.

The main binary segments make us suffer because the real individuation happens at a more subterranean, less clear-cut, less caricatured level. The main segments of disconnection, which literally take our breath away or shut off our desire in moments when freedom would like to follow another path, these moments of 'they' are oppositions and impositions working as emphatic imperatives: 'rich–poor, success–loss of success, health–sickness, love–love's drying-up, creativity–sterility' (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 126). These are false opinions for, in reality, from the point of view of this opposition the rich as rich and the poor as poor cannot be told apart, they are in the same fold: they are both cut through by the money cut. Likewise the lover and the solitary person do not differ from each other as long as they are prisoners of a social and collective definition of their attachment-detachment.

A molar line depends on 'binary machines'. The machines of break are oppositional poles, heavily dialectical, regimenting the flow of inclinations, generating actions-reactions, orientating the folds of the soul without nuance.

> There are binary machines of social classes, of sexes (man–woman), of ages (child–adult), of races (black–white), of sectors (public–private), of subjectivations (ours–not ours) … These binary machines are all the more complex for cutting across each other, or colliding against each other, confronting each other and they cut us up in all senses. (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 128)

These conflicted dichotomies do not create spaces of liberation but only new segments, new compartments, new false and too visible minorities; for example, the mixed-blood individual as third term of the white-black segment – as if to call oneself mixed-blood or anything else could free the individual from his or her problematical desire to find one's place in the world. In fact, it is always about controlling inclinations so as to impose rules more easily. The molar lines are social and therefore political. The segments that are cut imply 'devices of power', and we can draw an implicit parallel here with what Foucault called 'biopower'.

As many classifying devices, as many codes which drive the energies of the soul away from its creative or liberating (or auto-destructive) instinct, the segments determine a limited space in which the individual

human being must be penned, if possible, in a compound. Cut, he may still think he breathes, belongs, has a destiny, but in fact he is only penned in this big compound. The segments impose themselves with the relative complicity of the individual because they reassure him in view of the tormenting big vacuum and big chaos, and because they set up competitive networks that animate the ego and divert/pervert the soul. We know the importance of chaos in Deleuze's philosophy; for him this concept includes a positive reality – a play of differences, an 'ungrounding' – rather than a negative (groundlessness).

Each molar line corresponds to a territory in which a code can be applied at almost no cost. This behavioural code that obtains gratification without superhuman effort comforts human laziness in the idea that there must be something good in the exterior order, the hyper-normed society, that overcoding is the only way to organise a society. The molar lines are trends of automatisation of life, comfortable in appearance but in fact, behind the routine, despite the rules and the rewards, it is a form of apnoea: 'M. de Charlus collapses at Mme Verdurin's, because he has ventured beyond his own territory and his code no longer works' (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 129).

The rules and the rewards of the segmental line regime are decreed by a 'State apparatus', that is to say a 'concrete assemblage', which effectuates the machine of overcoding in a society: 'An abstract machine organizes the prevailing statements and the established order of a society, the dominant languages and knowledge, the well-adjusted actions and feelings, the segments that win over the others' (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 129).

To write a philosophical essay, for instance, means in a sense to obey a cutting organisation outline: the one of exposing analysis and of quotation of the corpus. In order not to be only cut and thus speechless, we ought to progressively tend to the fracture without lapsing into complete poetical rupture. We understand with this example that the soul draws lines: confronted with breaking forces and rupture forces, the line (we cannot help thinking about the written line) is a strategy of affirmation by vital focalisation, a concentration in deed, which does not turn into a point of hatred but goes forth towards the hope of an active singularity. Why a line, why a fracture, why a lightning? Because the dilatation or the blaze would be mortal if excessive, because willing to occupy all space at the same time would be equivalent to comparing ourselves to God.

We can notice that the molar line can evoke the plastic formatting that was called the Apollonian principle by Nietzsche, provided we identify

the collective order with the beautiful appearance, which is precisely the prevailing political speech. Deleuze quotes Nietzsche: 'Apollo overcomes the suffering of the individual by the radiant glorification of the eternity of the phenomenon' (Deleuze 2006: 11). The imaged artifice and the hyper-form are meant to make the suffering fade away: this reminds us of the prevailing contemporaneous cosmetics, which advocates for a shaping of bodies according to visible canonical models. Comply with the norm and you will be beautiful.

The Apollonian concept also gives us a description of the molar line that is not entirely negative: 'It would be too easy to say: "This is a bad line"'(Deleuze and Guattari 2004a: 216). It can save us from the death-drive into which can turn the rupture line.

We understand, in any case, how the cut lines work under the constraint of the imperative, of 'you have to'. We see very well how these lines can exert a formatting pressure on the multiplicity of differences that are boiling in the soul at each moment. What is it that is cut by the molar line? The molar line cuts the formation of a line of steep slope, which is the rupture line. The rupture line is somehow a rupture of the break and vice versa. But what is exactly this rupture line?

The Rupture Line or the Dancer's Soul

The rupture line may seem, at first sight, the opposite of the molar line. While one segments, the other crosses through the segments. While one organises, the other is a flow running through a line of irresistible trend. While one makes codes in a predictable world, the other builds chances out of impulses, unexpected decisory folds, energetic flows of tension bursting out. 'This line is simple, abstract and yet is the most complex of all, the most tortuous' Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 125). This is the overflowing of vital excess and this time it evokes the Dionysian principle by Nietzsche: 'Dionysus returns to primitive unity, he shatters the individual, drags him into the great shipwreck and absorbs him into original being.' Inside all of us there is more life than what is needed to draw straight lines. We leak out from every part and are unceasingly tempted to express our overabundance of being by letting out cries of joy, of madness or of fright. The rupture is sometimes here, sometimes there, sometimes elsewhere, flow of blood or loss of it.

We notice that the rupture is not opposed to the break of the molar line in a strict dialectical way. After Nietzsche, Deleuze pleads against too binary dialectical comprehensions of the Real. Instead of talking about a contradiction, we would rather speak about a differential

complicity of the two forces: the break like the rupture line tries to suppress the singularity of the subject in the first person, which is summoned by the crack line.

Finally, Deleuze compares the rupture with 'the dancer's soul' in the *Dialogues* with Claire Parnet, quoting *On the Marionette Theatre* by Heinrich von Kleist. It is not unimportant to stop a moment by this short text of 1810, reaching the climax of romanticism in that it advocates natural grace against semi-conscious reason. *On the Marionette Theatre* may also be one of the matrixes of Deleuze's conception of lines. Kleist mentions his meeting with a dancer from the city's opera house, in front of a marionette theatre. The dancer explains that the soul is the motive force of movement (*vis motrix*) and that the puppeteer does not set into motion the limbs but the point of gravity around which the limbs start to dance as if by magic: 'Each movement, writes Kleist, has its center of gravity; it is enough to direct it within the puppet. The limbs, which are only pendulums, then follow mechanically of their own accord, without further help' (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 138).

Kleist adds that each time the puppet's centre of gravity is 'moved in a straight line, the limbs describe curves'. The line drawn by the centre of gravity is sometimes a straight one sometimes an incurved one, with a simple but 'exceedingly mysterious' appearance: 'It is none other than *the progression of the soul of the dancer*' (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 138–40).

Man loses the dancer's grace because of the conscience he has of himself and because of the auto-reflexive act of comparing himself with others. Affectation is when the soul is 'anywhere other than the movement centre of gravity' (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 140). The reflection of the self in others and vice versa is precisely the moment of the break, whereas the rupture is, in the best of cases, incarnated by the return of the soul to its centre of gravity. Kleist writes: 'We see that in the organic world, as refection grows dimmer and weaker, grace merges more brilliantly and decisively' (140).

But the puppet can break down. The rupture line is sometimes the line of grace, sometimes the line of a death-drive: 'It would be a mistake', advises Deleuze, 'to believe that it is enough to follow the line of flight or rupture.' For the rupture lines hold an extreme danger: 'That of turning into abolition, of destruction of others and of oneself. A passion for abolition. Just like music – why does it give us the urge to die?' (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 140).

To sum up, the rupture line is the abyss in which what puts down roots is sometimes the grace of the living, sometimes the disappearing of

the individual: 'Not that it derives from the two others but it comes before them' (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 140). This is the hazardous and eternally different ground everything originates from and comes back to. This is, Deleuze writes in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, the South: once more – actually like dance, for 'To dance is to affirm becoming and the being of becoming' (Deleuze 2006: 161) – a Nietzschean theme: the Noon, the hour when the world is 'perfect', a 'well of eternity' according to Zarathustra. The South or the Noon is the moment when the soul reaches its maximal amplitude, when it reaches out to the infinite divine affirmation, in opposition, as we have seen before, to the point of negation in which the hatred for the Everything seen as a universal separation reaches the ego. Thus speaks Nietzsche through Zarathustra: 'How long and weary it becomes, my strange soul! . . . It stretches itself out, long – longer!' (161).

The Molecular Line or Real Lifeline

The crack line seems to somehow result from the tension of the other two lines. We could believe the following: the line of the human experience, 'lightning in the black sky', corresponds to a spatiotemporal molecular line, under the pressure of the other two lines, a pressure which we will have to apprehend as not exclusively dialectical. The molar lines exert pressure for the preservation of a hard-segmented world, with a homogeneous vocation in its organisation. The rupture lines are supposed to exert a chaotic force leading to exhilaration, drunkenness, intoxication (or to death), a gravity of the subterranean lava, a world of differential impulse. The crack line, the more human one (maybe the only truly human one) seems to be a creation of space-time, pressure upwards or downwards expelling the Apollonian monolithic blocks and limiting the Dionysian circular outflows, by lying in the world, in the rite, and in the language, although not entirely.

Because it is also a compromise, a fault of subsistence. These are, still, lines of segmentarity, although they are 'much more supple' (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 124). 'They trace small modifications, they are winding, they sketch falls or jumps' (124). There is something touching, something existential, in the molecular line, because it seems to resist the cut line while still fearing it will sink into the rupture. 'A profession is a rigid segment, but also what happens beneath it, the connections, the attractions and repulsions which do not coincide with the segments, the form of madness which are secret but which nevertheless relate to the public authorities' (125). We may have the impression that

everything is all right, that we are well adjusted in society, that we have the permissions and the rewards we require and then 'a plate cracks': light is cast upon 'a lowered resistance limit or higher requirement level. We can no longer put up with what we previously put up with' (124).

The molar line establishes classifying links between 'pairs' whereas the molecular line is set into motion by 'particles escaping from these classes'. The links established by the molecular line are connections of 'doubles', generating a self-revelation, revealing that identity is not as steady as the frequency of the segments might suggest.

Fitzgerald seems to be, in 1935, a successful author blessed by Destiny. And then the editor in chief of the magazine *Esquire* visits him in Baltimore to ask him why he no longer writes articles or short stories. 'I cannot write anymore,' the author whispers. A short story will, however, be written in an attempt to explain this incapacity: *The Crack-up*, where Fitzgerald explains that when we are in the crack-up, life does not give in to intelligence and effort that easily. We can no longer be satisfied with social superficialities like celebrity. Fitzgerald then describes the crack as a form of vital incapacity, and this may seem contradictory to what Deleuze said about it. However, both do talk about the same thing, in the way that the crack line can be explored upwards and downwards, towards an augmentation of the rise or in the direction of the fall. The molecular line is precisely this human hesitation, this fold going from the paralysis of social inscription to the energy that splits constraints while respecting them partly. The crack line is the airlock of hesitation or of perseverance which makes the being emerge. Falling fracture, that is to say sinking and agony in the repetition of separation; rising fracture, that is to say creative repetition of the vital tension.

Here we clearly hear that the molecular line can be defined both as resulting from the rigidities of the molar line, and as the cracking due to the call of the rupture line. That is why we will have to attempt a more precise explanation of the way the three lines revolve around each other and interweave, with difference in their framework.

III. The Organisation of the Lines and the Difference

Against the Dialectic and the Abstractly Considered Symptoms

We could be tempted to see a kind of Hegelian dialectic in the interdependent play of the three lines. The molar line would be the thesis, the rupture line the antithesis and the molecular line the synthesis. That would be a partial interpretation of Deleuze's proposition.

The philosopher repeatedly set himself apart from the dialectic in his works. Among others, in his *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, the concluding chapter is called 'Against the Dialectic'. 'The difference is more profound' than Hegel's conceptions judged too abstract and representative.

'On Hegel's interpretation, the death of Christ stands for superseded opposition, the reconciliation of finite and infinite, the unity of God and the individual, of changeless and particular' (Deleuze 2006: 148). Hegel seems to understand sensible diversity as an appearance, a game of the spirit. In doing so, he neglects the flesh of the world. He wants to look the negative straight in the eyes but remains in the spectacular face to face with the subject and object. His thesis, antithesis and synthesis, according to Deleuze, are only the symptoms of something which is at stake at a deeper level and which has to do with the difference rather than with the dialectic.

This is not the place to discuss injustice towards Hegel in this Nietzschean-inspired criticism. However, it appears clearly how the permutations of the dialectic can remain logical-abstract and can be used to raise capital concepts. Such superlative empty concepts were taken up by the 'New Philosophers' in the 1980s, with a lot less force and complexity than Hegel. Deleuze will precisely blame them for talking about Evil, Man, War without understanding their subtle ambiguities and their polyvalence. All of this proceeds from a willingness to fix the representation rather than to follow and to welcome the richness of the becoming:

> It is not surprising that the dialectic proceeds by opposition, development of the opposition or contradiction, solution of the contradiction. It is unaware of the real element from which forces, their qualities and their relations, derive; it only knows the inverted image of this element which is reflected in abstractly considered symptoms. (Deleuze 2006: 148)

What is subtle and supreme is the difference.

The critic regarding the dialectic is hard or even unfair since it is relegated to 'a fiction': 'To walk feet on the ceiling is not a thing that a dialectician can blame another for, this is the fundamentals of the dialectic itself' (Deleuze 2006: 149). What Deleuze reproaches Marx for in this hint, despite the admiration he had for him, is the same thing as before: not allowing himself the thought of a vital affirmation, an affirmation which would not be only theoretical or dependant on an abstract negation, but an affirmation of a living difference. What is this 'difference'?

The Difference or the Being of the Sensible

'Imagine', Deleuze says in *Difference and Repetition*,

> something which distinguishes itself – and yet that from which it distinguished itself does not distinguish itself from it. Lightning for example distinguishes itself from the black sky but must also trail it behind, as though it were distinguishing itself from that which does not distinguish itself from it. It is as if the ground rose to the surface without ceasing to be the ground. (Deleuze 2004: 36)

The difference is first envisioned as a 'monstrous' fight between what is undifferentiated and oneself. It is the moving of the being, its determination will in a continuous flow and metamorphosis, a movement Deleuze calls 'cruelty', reminding us of Nietzsche. This is the bottom that wants to rise up to the surface; it is a will to become a fold, a line, which is not a will to become a plastic form. This is the Dionysian that wants to appear without falling into the Apollonian trend. 'Difference is monstrous' (Deleuze 2004: 37): that is to say what tends to show itself (*monstro*, *monstrare* in Latin), to manifest itself without following the form, rather dissolving it, making its straight lines and its pillars waver.

On the other hand, if the difference does not reach out to the form, we could picture it as reaching out to functioning life. The difference would then be the impulse of the undifferentiated generating organs, that is to say interconnected networks of subcategories, bound by the rule of the biggest and the smallest. The difference would not be a continuous *monstration* but of big or small categories or sets; neither the diversity nor the otherness but the opposition of sizes able to fit the principles of identity, of opposition, of analogy, of resemblance, once they are in the field of representation.

But to enslave the difference to the exclusive requirements of organic representation would be veiling its 'orgiastic' element (Deleuze 2004: 52). For a long time thought tried to explain chaos, 'causing a little of Dionysius' blood to flow in the organic veins of Apollo' (Deleuze 2006: 149). Intoxication, quartering, fainting, decentring: these are the different stances that representation can never completely reach because representation on the contrary is centration. We could say that the difference is eternal space ('a non-extensive and non-qualified *spatium*' – Deleuze 2004: 33), fundamental chaos, pure roaring intensity. Most of the time humans only dwell in the surface space-time, a distorted space full of emptiness – excluding some psychotic minds maybe, or

some mystic people, some musicians, artists or other people who know how to merge with the otherness and the source, casting the ego down.

Difference is not an abstraction. It is the way of being of the sensible. It is, Deleuze says in *Difference and Repetition*, the world of the 'disparate' and of the emerging substrates. Now, we have already met this active disparity: Leibniz applies the idea to the ground of the soul. For Deleuze there is undoubtedly identity between the essence of the soul and the difference. The difference is infra-subjective, infra-individual, *infranimal* even, but it is also spiritual and animistic. What is then revealed is a set of differences 'which are neither in sub-stance nor in a subject: so many subterranean affirmations' (Deleuze 2004: 70).

We have to understand that the difference comes before the lines but it underlies them: the line of flight is leak, *ungrounding* towards the difference; the rupture line is forcing back, burial of the difference; and the crack line is manifestation of the difference through the relentless repetition or exhaustion of the breaking repetition. In their relation to the difference, these three lines can be considered as being just one.

Three Moments of a Same Line

'The primary line of flight, of border or frontier, which is relativized in the second line, which allows itself be stopped or cut in the third' (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 137). We can consider, Deleuze says, that the primary line of flight, attracted by the Dionysian differential chaos, in order not to be cut, stopped by the Apollonian rigidities, will turn into a relative line, the molecular line. The fissure of the molecular line seems to be the human compromise between the whirl of the undifferentiated and the social mechanisms. What is the meaning of such a relativisation?

Let us first try to understand how these three moments of the line (or the three lines) are organised. First of all, the rupture line. If it is the line of the steepest slope, how can we explain its being highly dynamic and liberatory? How can we explain that it will not sink into the undifferentiated? Maybe because it does, but in the process, which is not a groundlessness but an *ungrounding*, it draws on an energy that makes it spring up again. The line of flight is once more taken in two directions, in the direction of a loss of destructive energy and in the direction of a springing up of the sensible.

How to understand that the molar line devitalises whereas it has been created by the institutions, that is to say by the humans? The direction of the molar line is also an edification: because of it, men dictate law

and rules that ensure the functioning of groups, keeping them alive over other groups. The molar line aims to be the vital line of a dominant group, whereas the rupture is the energy line of the divine, multiversal monster.

We understand the necessity of a third line better, a molecular line, more human, even if we could be satisfied with an oscillation and a conflict between the first two opposite lines: the Dionysian line of rupture and the Apollonian molar line. The molecular line is the line of relativisation with respect to the rupture line. It means that it is a line of connection: neither entirely submitted to automaton-like imperatives nor entirely submitted to the impulse of the undifferentiated. The molecular line seems to be the line of the 'I' inserted in the 'we'.

Here again, we are confronted by an obstacle. We have noticed earlier that Deleuze did not consider the molecular line as 'more intimate or personal'. And yet, everything leads us to think it is. The molecular line seems to be the line of affectivity, of the intimate self. But in fact, it is rather related to the 'fractured I', divided by self-reflection. Can we then conceive a molecular line, which would not be entirely intimate or entirely collective? What is it that Deleuze calls the 'fractured I'?

The Fractured I: 'I is an Other'

> We should be concerned with a precise moment within Kantianism, a furtive and explosive moment which is not even continued by Kant, much less by post-Kantianism – except, perhaps, by Hölderlin, in the experience and the idea of a 'categorical abduction'. For when Kant puts rational theology into question, *in the same stroke* he introduces a kind of disequilibrium, a fissure or crack, in the pure Self of the *I think*, an alienation in itself, theoretically insurmountable: the subject can henceforth represent its own spontaneity only as that of an Other, and in doing so invokes a mysterious coherence in the last instance, which excludes his own, that of the world and God. A cogito for a dissolved Self: the Self of the 'I think' includes in its essence a receptivity of intuition in relation to which 'I' is already another. It matters little that synthetic identity, and, following that, the morality of practical reason, restore the integrity of the self, of the world and of God, thereby preparing the way for post-Kantian syntheses. For a brief moment we enter into that schizophrenia in principle, which characterizes the highest power of thought and opens Being directly on to difference, despite all the mediations, all the reconciliations of the concept. (Deleuze 2004: 70)

Let us dwell for a moment on this idea of the fractured I. Everything arises, Deleuze says, from the difference between the Kantian cogito and the Cartesian cogito. *I think therefore I am*: there is nothing that can

lead us to think that the 'I' that thinks is the same as the 'I' that is, as Kant observes in *Critic of Pure Reason*. The thought existence may not be exactly the same as the life existence. For Deleuze, there is in effect a caesura between them. As soon as the I wants to apprehend being, it apprehends time: 'The form under which undetermined existence is determinable by the I think is that of time' (Deleuze 2004: 108).

What are the consequences of this swapping between being and time, between pure *spatium* and temporal conscience? First, it is due to the fact that my indeterminate existence can only be determined *in time*, as the existence of a phenomenon, of a phenomenal, passive or receptive subject *appearing in time*. Hence the distressing paradox: either my active self is another and the self I feel the closest with is pure contemplative passivity, or it is the other way round, but hardly ever both at the same time. To become aware of this is to fall into the crack mentioned by Fitzgerald, a downward fracture if we stick to this passive perception of the self.

That is depression: to adhere to a passive self, spectator of phenomena and representations, and to feel sad about a fundamental lack of authentic initiative. 'It is as though the I were fissured from one end to the other: cracked by the pure and empty form of time', Deleuze repeats (Deleuze 2004: 108). Reflexivity makes us double. This double I is the fracture.

Deleuze tells us that Hölderlin discovers after Kant the emptiness of time backed with the sustained fracture in the I. In this form of time, Hölderlin saw the death-drive. What does this mean?

Let us read the lecture Deleuze gave about Kant in Vincennes (Deleuze 1978). As long as time is cyclical, death does not really occur, it is outside the limits of life, life is only seen as a replacement game in which, sooner or later, Destiny makes up for the injustices here or there. But as soon as time becomes a straight line, as soon as it 'un-curves', as it is 'out of joint' (which, according to Hölderlin, is illustrated first by Sophocles's *Oedipus* then by Shakespeare in *Hamlet*), conscience then becomes sad and vacillates.

> Oedipus is in perpetual suspension, he will travel his straight line of time. In other words, he is traversed by a straight line which drags him along. Towards what? Nothing. Heidegger will be able to say later that it's towards death. He will draw from the straight line the idea, which is not wholly un-Kantian, of a sort of being-towards-death. (Deleuze 1978)

There is a caesura in the linear un-curved time and this caesura is a 'zero-instant' a 'pure present' of self-reflection. There is a before and an after

and so, according to the Nietzschean formula, the possibility of a will of revenge, of resentment. In short, the self creates the linear time and finds itself in a quandary, wanting to be at the centre of life.

Deleuze quotes a text by Hölderlin:

> At the extreme limit of the rift nothing in fact remains except the conditions of time and space. At this limit man forgets himself because he is wholly inside the moment. God forgets because he is nothing but time. And there is infidelity on both sides … (Deleuze 1978)

That is the modern condition of the I and the double turning-away: a God that would no longer be anything but empty time, a man that would no longer be anything but a caesura in time, an oblivion, a negation by self-extraction of the vital being and of difference. Everything happens, Deleuze says, as if thought has its enemy within.

We understand the molecular or crack line better now. The fissure arises at the moment when we shift our perception of life as friendly, to life as hostile or indifferent. As long as Nature informs us and organises destinies in a cyclical way, the self can only celebrate life: this is the time of the sweet *amor fati* and of the oceanic feeling. As soon as a self arises, setting its being from the world, suspicion towards life arises together with powerlessness and ego poverty. For to doubt life only centres ego on a spectator's passivity while life goes on, but without him. We cannot say that life is indifferent a priori but we can say that it is a posteriori indifferent to the self-reflective cogito. That is why the ego judging life with contempt judges only itself in reality and condemns itself to suffering and paralysis.

The fracture comes from the caesura, that is to say from the ego that wants to coincide with the being in a central position, whereas the centralised ego is precisely what prevents us from coinciding with being. Lack of being, loss of being, that is the name of the modern ego and from there it seeks revenge on the being which has supposedly abandoned it (whereas it is the ego that abandoned the being favouring separation instead of union). Its desire turns into infidelity. Self against the indifferent life: a tragedy leaving the self more on its own each time. Not alone against all, but like all.

Because if the fractured I is frequent, the singular I is rare. Now we have set the theoretic fundamental bases of what Deleuze calls lifeline, it is time we tried to think subjectivity in its singularity. Is a singular and free life still possible today, when the self essentially appeared as reactive, sullied by pathos and loss of being?

IV. Is A Singular Lifeline Possible?

It is admitted that the sap of being is becoming. But what is the basis of the human subject, how can he reach a singular individuality? The singular becoming, since it is enclosed in the original difference (also called 'monster' by Deleuze) by the rupture line or line of flight, is first the anchor chain linking the surface to the depth. Difference is a non-representative process, which is involuntary, unsubjective, impersonal and infra-individual.

We are made up of more or less curved lines: rupture lines – the call for the Dionysian; molar lines – the social imperatives; molecular lines – the ascending or descending compromise between these two opposite tendencies. A curved line implies an inflection point. A singular point is opposed to an ordinary point in the line, not because it is determinate by a form or the development of a form, but because it determines the change of inflection of a line. The lines' inflection point is always determined, as we will analyse below in Deleuze's text about Hume, by an impression, a sensation summoning both imagination and affective domain.

We have to seize each singularity, first as an emergence of difference, which is a canvas of multiple impressions making up the world's soul. An impression can never be localised and is never still, because it is in progress. An assemblage is formed when an abstract line is drawn between two impression points. Polarities between impressional micro-events are what set into motion the play of the molar line, rupture line and molecular line. The impression is first singular and we quickly pull it back because of cutting prejudices. Does that mean that the individual can never be singular but always a hybrid between the singular and the same?

For a subjective singularity to arise, as we will see, we have to take on the complicity of difference, this vital and infranimal flux, between the banks of novation and void, and to take on a relentless fight against repetition in the first person. There are two kinds of repetition in the first person: the social daily routine, which de-singularises, and the continuous resistance to death, which is the muffled voice of vital spontaneity, from which the ego is set apart by the cogito.

The Repetition of Union and Separation

The egotistical repetition of the social individual is alienating, separating, symbolical and lethal. So the sensible, vital repetition of the eternal

return of a disparate union, of the attention to the impressions, will be competing with ego in the first place.

'Repetition changes nothing in the object repeated, but does change something in the mind which contemplates it', Deleuze says, after Hume (Deleuze 2004: 90). Imagination is defined as a power of contracting impressions. But repetition of habits is a somnolence of the imagination; whenever A appears, I expect the appearance of B. There are active contractions and passive contractions.

The passive contractions are the sleep-walker daily routine; they are not creative. The active contractions, more difficult, nourish themselves in the flesh of impressions. Passive contractions are an egotistical mechanism operating in time, in the present experienced by the I fractured by the cogito that sets it apart from the living. The impressional contraction takes place in pure original space, which is already at the surface. It is in this prejudiced social present that time spreads. A passive synthesis happens: 'Time is subjective but in relation to the subjectivity of a passive subject' (Deleuze 2004: 90). As for space, it is pure becoming, the creation of worlds perpetuates within it. A singular subject will have to draw new forces from the pure differential *spatium*, which is the flesh of the world, and will have to set itself free from time.

Deleuze evokes the Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness by Bergson:

> Four o'clock strikes ... However, quite apart from any memory or distinct calculation, we contract these into an internal qualitative impression in this living present or *passive synthesis* which is duration. Then we restore them in an auxiliary space, a derived time in which we can reproduce them, reflect (on) them, or count them like so many quantifiable external-impressions. (Deleuze 2004: 92)

Bergson's mistake here is to talk about passive synthesis. The impressional contraction, according to Deleuze – whose trust for Hume is higher than for Bergson – is, on the contrary, active. It does indeed happen outside of time, in a living and continuous duration, but the time of restitution in an auxiliary space, the *partes extra partes* space, is not a derived time, it is the only time, the time of the cogito, the social time, and the 'external-impressions' are already nothing other than judgement, quantity and representation.

The repetition of the living, which is repetition of the dissimilar, draws lines in the soul: the contraction designates the active elements that will form these lines, the sensitive contraction points. How can we extract qualities from these points? How do we create a reality from

these contraction points? Because all the souls and the elements in the world are united by a 'primary sensibility that we are' (Deleuze 2004: 92). This primary sensibility is the very difference, as a living sensibility, the impulse to contract, the *monstrating* impression, as infra-organic. The contemplative soul is a pruritus questioning the eternal return of disparity.

We are made of thousands of habits and prejudices: they form the basic domain of the passive and secondary syntheses at the surface. The articulation of thought takes place within the I fractured by the cogito, and this caesura from life accounts for the habits of the I often being 'bad habits' from the point of view of life. The only good mental habit of the I, probably impossible to keep, would be to strive not to repeat in the first person, but to let life be repeated in the I. I stand outside the becoming as ego but I am partly inside as being. The repetition in the first person is the means through which difference is spoiled in representation. To give back its freedom of speech to difference, that is the goal of the individuality willing to find again its axis, that is to say the best way for difference to animate it and to instil a destiny. In order to do so, there are two ways, both ultimately improbable so long as they are distinct: the relentless auto-disciplinary repetition of genius, aiming at a return to grace through overdetermination to the limit of consciousness, and the stance of the self in a not-to-repeat-in-the-first-person.

To Bring into Existence that which Does Not Yet Exist

In order to be the expression of a real truth, the I needs to draw from the differential unconscious, in the creative basis of being. The lightning will be (c)real, completely alive, only if it is the expression of the base of the night. The only way for the I to become singular, that is to say to spread out and to manifest the active synthesis of the multiplicities that run through it, is to be willing to bring into existence that which does not exist. An I which would let itself be driven by the cutting repetitions ends up falling into the void of its fracture and goes downwards, wrongly clinging on to the repetitive molar lines in its struggle: 'You have to start your social routine again' (Deleuze 2004: 93). To climb back up the fissure, the exercise is to let the ground rise from a monstrous explosion, to repeat life. That is what we will call a hyper-stasis.

For the eruption of difference not to be anarchical without creating a rising linear form then a will, an axis is needed, defined as to bring into being that which does not yet exist, to 'bring into existence something you will not take from what already exists' (Deleuze 1983).

Hereafter is what Deleuze says in a lecture in Vincennes:

> Because the modern world is tumult and chaos, the task of the modern man is to get out of tumult and chaos. How? Building up a spiritual life of one's own – see, it is the contrary of the modern dialectic, of the Hegelian dialectic – building up a spiritual life of one's own, that is to say a spiritual life which does not owe anything to what is existing, but you have to bring it into being, it is your task to bring into being something that you will not take from what exists. (Deleuze 1983)

This is the condition of becoming a figure that is not self-centred, the condition not to remain in the possible of representation: not willing to get out of oneself, because it is impossible, but 'to make the difference': 'We must therefore say that difference is made' (Deleuze 2004: 36). And we will add that difference must be told.

An individual who does not try to let the difference be made by himself or through himself does not reach singularity. Again, Deleuze's inspiration comes from Nietzsche: 'For the speculative element of negation opposition or contradiction, Nietzsche substitutes the practical element of difference' (Deleuze 2006: 8). What a goodwill wants is to affirm difference, which is not a difference of the ego. There is an enjoyment in the difference which is inhabited, which is a kinship of destinies with being. We ought to understand that this difference is not hierarchical according to the rules of the social molar line, it does not imply competition in the manipulation of the beings, it is an axial stance welcoming the becoming, this infra-natural fundamental monstrosity, the subterranean lava that runs in-between what we will define as novation and void.

There is not any singularity which is not backed up with the rupture line or which is satisfied with escaping, since perpetual flight is impossible. The individual can become singular, that is to say rising fracture, if he takes into account the three lines: the molar line, the rupture line and the molecular line. That is why there is only one line, as Deleuze suggested. And this line is a rising or falling flux with a zigzag course sometimes bursting egotist plugs, colliding here with a break, there with a relapse.

It is not only through work of the thought that difference is made singularly, because thought is not able to tell the difference between the possible and the real. In order to be singular, singularity has to let the real be expressed and told through the body, the senses. But the real that shows up is difference coupled with the possibles of thought and egotist breaks. This is an unceasing Sisyphean movement, and the individual

who would think he had arrived would fall back out of the scheme and would be an object again.

The application of bringing-into-existence-that-which-does-not-yet-exist is not a job you finish once and for all but a perpetual, endless effort, which may fall back into the break or the separation at any moment. Every minute the world becomes object and every minute the will recreates the subject. But can the subject and the object ever be separated from each other, can we cut a bolt of lightning into two, or say that on one side of the lightning the night is not the same night as on the other side?

I am standing in a place, surrounded by people. I am requested to have an identity, that is to say I am asked to choose my line of conduct. Will I show an identity belonging to the molar line, for instance a grade or a title? Will I show an identity belonging to the rupture line, that is to say burst out shouting, laughing insanely or speak 'incoherently'? Will I show my fracture, that is to say make a small complaint, as if it were incidental, or give a metaphorical answer beside the point? Each time I make an attempt to show my presence through a line of conduct, I am making an object of myself, I am mimicking the living experience.

But then we will ask where the problem stands. Is it not 'enough' to be willing to bring into being that which does not yet exist, to tense oneself up in order to welcome difference, in order to become a self rather than a petty ego? Nothing is enough, first because singularity asks for a daily bravery, then because the problem of the I is that it expresses a local point of view. In the best of cases, the subject wishes it could express all the points of view at the same time but it would be a fall into rupture and madness, and still without succeeding in being totally multiple.

The fractured I is defined by temporality and thus it can never fully express the pure *spatium* of difference. It can only, in the temporal succession, say: I + I + I + I (or else non-I + non-I + non-I . . .) and can never completely be a continuous flux for itself. To bring difference into existence is not that easy, because the human individuality is a cogito which is, each minute, an affirmation threatened by doubt or oblivion.

To bring difference into being is the pure repetition of the *I am not repeating*, an effort understood as Maine de Biran's definition of it:

> Effort necessarily entails the perception of a relationship between the being who moves, or wishes to move, and any obstacle whatsoever which is opposed to its movement. Without a subject or a will that determines the movement, without a resisting term, there is no effort and without effort, no knowledge, no perception of any sort. (Derrida 2005: 152)

At this point we could wonder whether this effort is worth making. To become a singularity, to act up to a difference: for what? Could we not stick to following the binary molar lines and conform ourselves to being an automaton rewarded by the system? But this is an impossible fiction: sooner or later the caesura will reassert itself, sooner or later extreme need shows up, sooner or later the ground claims its due. It seems that we can only rise up or fall down the molecular line: the yo-yo of the subject.

Shall we then, to avoid the falling crack, merge with the sensation of our impressions? Shall we tell ourselves that the aim of a human existence is to experience as many impressions as possible and give up on the individual singularity beyond the sensible? That is a serious proposal. Is not the willingness to express a discursive singularity, which is shown to others, already a fall into the molar line? Does it matter that the others recognise my point of view as healthy, new, worthy of admiration, if what I feel is already so rich and multiple, if, being opened to the senses, I am already in the difference, with no need to express it? Why should we not content ourselves with being a contemplative soul to become a ful(ly-)filled subject?

Contemplation as Self Fulfilment

Is there a similarity between *bringing into existence what does not yet exist* and contemplation? Are we not already in the molar line when we *want* to be a difference? Effort: does it prevent us from achieving the amplitude of our soul? Let us read the third Ennead of Plotinus with Deleuze's lecture in Vincennes (Deleuze 1987).

According to Deleuze, Plotinus says: every single thing rejoices, every single thing rejoices of itself, and it rejoices of itself because it contemplates the other one it is made up of. 'Every single thing is a contemplation and from this derives its joy' (Deleuze 1987). Joy is ful(ly-)filled contemplation. It rejoices of itself as contemplation is ful(ly-)filled. Contemplating the other that it is made up of, it fulfils itself and fills itself up. Not only animals, not only souls but also you and I are self-fulfilled contemplations filled of themselves.

> We are little joys. But we no longer know it! Feel that these are the words of salvation for philosophy. This is the philosopher's creed and this does not mean: I am happy. What stupidities have been said about Leibniz's optimism; this does not mean everything is fine! When somebody tells you, like Plotinus: be joyous, this does not mean, come on folks, everything is fine,

> be joyful, contemplate and fill yourselves up, fulfill yourselves with what you contemplate. (Deleuze 1987)

What Plotinus says is that we are of a contemplative nature. 'Not only you and I, your souls are contemplations but animals are also contemplations, plants are also contemplations, and the rocks themselves are also contemplations. There is a *self-enjoyment* of the rock' (Deleuze 1987). Just by contemplating, the rock is filled up and fulfilled with what it contemplates. It is thus '*self-enjoyment*'.

It means that each being, at its own level, looks back to that which preceded it. That is what contemplation is, according to Deleuze: a 'conversion'. This is the soul's conversion or a thing's conversion into that which it derives from. Looking back to that which precedes it, the soul contemplates. By contemplating, it fills up and fulfils. But it does not fill itself from the other without first filling itself. 'It becomes a joy by itself looking back to that which it derives from. The *self-enjoyment*, the self rejoicing is the correlate of the contemplation of principles' (Deleuze 1987). Every single thing is a contemplation of that which it derives from, which is life becoming difference, flesh of endless disparity.

What is it that the rock contemplates? Its own parts. The rock contemplates the silicon, the carbon, the micro-elements from which it derives. The wheat is contemplation of the elements from which it derives and which it takes from the earth. 'And that it takes from the earth according to its own form and in accordance with the demands of its own form, that is to say, according to its *feeling*' (Deleuze 1987). The demands of its form are the *feeling*. The individuation proceeds from what is felt, but what is actively felt.

Every single thing is contemplation of its own 'requisites', unconscious contemplation of its own conditions of existence, that is to say its requisites.

> Is there anything more contemplating than a cow? It seems to have a blank look, but not at all. It is true that there are animals that are not contemplative in the least but this is the lowest level of animals, for example cats and dogs, they hardly ever contemplate. That is why they experience little joy. They are bitter animals, they do not contemplate anything. They echo the damned exactly, we will again see that the damned do not contemplate anything, as we have seen. (Deleuze 1987)

Going over Leibniz, Deleuze determined that the damned stands at the point of hatred for God, for the Everything. The amplitude of his soul is really small and he is not trying to expand it. The damned, hateful cogito, pure point of critic, is separated from the contemplation of the

elements. 'The status of the damned is to be pure vomiting. They do not have prehensions other than negative. They do not have prehensions other than negative and expulsive, as they are pure vomiting' (Deleuze 1987).

Is contemplation passivity? No, and to understand this we could be tempted to use, as Deleuze says, the word 'envision' with the meaning of a verb (*envisager*). The subject operates the prehension of its own requisites. It envisions, imagines its own requisites rather than contemplating them. But eventually Deleuze uses instead the term of 'contraction'.

> If I say that an organism contracts the elements that are needed by it, I say that your organism is a contraction of water, oxygen, carbon and salt etc. and it seems to me it becomes extremely clear. If I say that the rock is a contraction of silicon and I don't know what else, it becomes extremely clear. (Deleuze 1987)

To contemplate is always to contract impressions, contract data. Contracting data, I fill myself up with the joy to be myself: to let the vital points arise. To atomise the Real to reconstitute it after one's own image.

To contemplate is to envision the formation of lifelines in the fabric of the soul and to facilitate the game of the folds by standing up for *I don't repeat*, as much as possible. It is to pay attention to its folds, to feel them, to project them. There is no contradiction between bringing into being that which does not yet exist and contraction, since it is the very basis of it. Singularity shall not be looked for in an egotist subject. The subject of *bringing into existence that which does not yet exist* is the 'successful schizophrenic', the one who does not dramatise his scattered state, but rejoices in it without getting stuck in it, insofar as it cannot cling on to a trained ego, insofar as it follows the line of flight thanks to his ego's bursting.

What is this *metaschizophrenic*? An interior elegance, a tightrope-walker's soul strolling onto the thread of impressions. The model of schizophrenic singularity is a walk of the sensible and not 'a lie on the analyst's couch' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004b: xix). A walk on what path? On the folds of the disparate soul, 'in the midst of nature':

> He thought that it must be endless bliss to be in contact with the profound life of every form, to have a soul for racks, metals, water and plants, to take into himself, as in a dream, every element of nature like flowers that breathe with the waxing and waning of the moon. (Deleuze and Guattari 2004b: 2)

Nature is not experienced as nature-object but as a process of creative production. There is no longer man, nature, subject or object but process producing one in the other and producing machines of production: 'the self and the non-self, outside and inside no longer have any meaning whatsoever' (Deleuze 1987). Everything is production, production of production, desiring production. The *metaschizophrenic*, this *crealist*, we shall say, is the one who draws his points of view on the tightrope of the desiring-production of the folds of the soul, whose repetition is a *not-to-repeat-in-the-first-person* modifying the Real.

The lifelines opening up to a singularity are undoubtedly backed up by desire.

Desire: Miraculate, Enchanted Surface

The line machine is constantly supplied by desire. Machines are essentially desiring-machines, eager to see several points coupled. Only the point of hatred for the Everything remains on its own. All the other points are passionate about drawing lines, they have a constant appetite to fold, to unfold and start folding again. 'Desire constantly couples continuous flows and partial objects that are by nature fragmentary and fragmented. Desire causes the current to flow, itself flows in turn and breaks the flow' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004b: 6).

We clearly see that production is at stake in the three lines. Desire makes things flow, this is the rupture line. Desire flows, this is the molecular line. Desire seizes up, this is the molar line. Here we understand very minutely how the three lines only form one line, the line of universal production. But Deleuze reminds us that we shall not picture it as forming a pre-established harmony. Desiring machines only function by breaking down all the time: creative or destructive conflict over social habits and subterranean repetitions of difference.

Universal desire is constantly bringing into existence that which does not yet exist and contemplating this production. This is the impression's will to become lines and *spatium*. This point is the opposite of hatred for the Everything. Desire is love for the realm of the Everything, will of full amplitude of the soul, call to create and run through all the area of the *spatium*, which is the living and disparate flesh of the world.

Universal production implies of course, at its extremity, a point of un-productivity, a point of void, a point of nothingness or abstract unity. Is the point of un-productivity the point of hatred for the Everything, the point of the damned? No, on the fringe of un-productivity stands the 'body without organs', blank face of novation, reverse of the *spatium*.

'The body without organs is not God, quite the contrary, but the energy that sweeps through it is divine, when it attracts to itself the entire process of production and serves as its miraculate, enchanted surface' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004b: 14)

Desiring-production is consumption and consummation, voluptuousness. It is not so for an ego but for a creative subject. The self is nothing but what remains of the disjunction, the shadow of the fold in the past: 'So that's what it was!' The ego is reactive. We can even wonder if the ego is not the fatigue of the Real. That would be a way to define the ego: the moment of fatigue in production, the point which means stop. The ego coincides with the damned. The damned is the ego as hatred for universal production and desire for it to stop so that we can breathe a little or that we can finally sleep properly. But it never stops, production never stops and that is why the ego sometimes goes through bitterness, regret, falling fracture. A singular subject, in the process of becoming, in rising fracture, is consequently the subject that overcomes its ego, that wraps up its tiredness point of the Real, becoming creator of the Real. My ego has to remain but a reduced pragmatic point, which does not sum me up. I am not inside of my ego but I wrap it up as I become within the *Creal*.

The ego is the nihilist point, which is willing everything to stop or to be one. But how can we conceive that such a point should spring up in the midst of universal desire? Because to want nothing is still to want something. This is what characterises the damned: his bored irritation, his bitterness comes from the fact that he cannot give up desire. Desire is always there, even if it is desire for nothing. Desire constantly produces Real, and as a reactive ego it sometimes produces negation, hence the fractured I as reactivity: 'desiring-machines produce antiproduction all by themselves' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004b: 34).

What is the desiring-machine? A system of template breaks, hot ruptures and waving, yo-yo fractures, a perpetual becoming. Desire implies that there is not strictly speaking a singular subject but only a constant process of singular becoming.

Desire is a contemplating 'becoming-animal', a becoming-molecular, a 'swarm', a 'pack', a circulation of affections, an alternative current upsetting significant projects like personal feelings and it constitutes extra-human sexuality, an 'irresistible deterritorialisation'.

What is this 'becoming-animal'? The point is not to be an animal or to imitate it but to guarantee desire the possibility of its production. 'Becoming produces nothing other than itself' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004b: 262). The subject is nothing other than the temporal and temporary character of multiple becoming considered by

a consciousness. Becoming is a 'rhizome', a radical tissue of multiple arborescence. The singularity of desire is to be 'multiplicity', 'axial', a vertical collective but immanent 'peopling'. 'I am legion', a legion which spreads by 'contagion', that is to say 'assemblages' of points and lines.

But should we not be surprised to see that the *I* shows up, above all in a 'So, that's what it was!'? Should we not see a problem in the fact that the I will first be memory of the past rather than a prehension means of the Real? Should we not ask ourselves in even more detail according to which conditions the I can become active?

The Anomal or the Subject as So(u)rcerer

Desire is certainly 'pack and contagion of the pack', but Deleuze and Guattari observe clearly in *Thousand Plateaus* that 'wherever there is multiplicity, you will also find an exceptional individual, and it is with that individual that an alliance must be made to become-animal' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004a: 268). Desire thus implies exceptional polarities. How to define them? They are the 'leader of the pack', the 'master of the pack', above all the 'Anomal' among the animals. Anomal has a meaning that differs from abnormal. Ab-normal (Latin adjective), Deleuze says, defines that which does not have rules or goes against the rule, whereas 'a-nomaly' (Greek substantive without adjective in English) designates 'the inequal, the rough, the cutting edge of deterritorialisation'. The Anomal is a position in space or a set of positions in relation to a multiplicity.

What is the nature of the anomal? The anomal is not an exceptional domestic individual but nor is it a bearer of species that would possess its specific or generic specificities in the purest form, unique model or specimen, typical perfection incarnated, eminent outcome of a series or pedestal of a completely harmonious correspondence.

The anomal is a 'phenomenon of bordering'. Each multiplicity is bordered by a wrapping line that is its anomaly. When it is incarnated, this anomaly takes the shape of the 'so(u)rcerer', that is to say the one who knows how to invoke the powers of the vital source and to give them a name. Would he then be the incarnation of the free subject, this sorcerer, this so(u)rcerer, this 'Outsider'?

If the active subject is the Anomal, it is the boundary between two groups of flows, between two packs, between two tendencies. What does it mean to say that the subject is boundary? First, that he exists only as a limit, that is to say he does not have any intrinsic materiality. The subject is a membrane that can vibrate, this is the limit of the organ. It justifies

what animates it from the inside, it makes it show up but it does not define itself by it. It is a wrapping line. Is this line a line other than the three lines, molar, rupture, molecular?

Deleuze and Guattari write that the Anomal is the alliance necessary for becoming but it conducts the becoming transformations or the moments of multiplicity always further on the line of flight. Therefore, the sound subject is the line of flight as an organic envelope of a vital production, and in this respect we understand that it is never in any other form than becoming. The subject is an 'experiment'. We find again the *bringing into existence that which does not yet exist*.

Deleuze calls the moments of this becoming subject *haecceities*, that is to say degrees, intensities. But can these intensities of individuation define an active human? On the contrary, should we not remember that because of his intrinsic temporal fracture, the so(u)rcerer can never say I? Or, the other way round, that man, as an individual, can never be fully active?

This question brings us back to *Nietzsche and Philosophy* by Deleuze. Is man essentially reactive? Nietzsche presents the triumph of the reactive forces as something essential in man and in the history of man.

> *Ressentiment*, bad conscience and nihilism are not psychological traits but the foundation of humanity in man. Nihilism is the a priori concept of universal history; that is why defeating nihilism, freeing the thought of bad conscience and *ressentiment* means to overcome man, to destroy man, even the best one. (Deleuze 2004: 157)

It is in his essence that man is said to be 'skin disease of the Earth'.

To the question 'Is man essentially reactive?', Deleuze says that we have to answer 'yes' for man as a result but 'no' for man as becoming of forces. Man can be active as a medium, as a vector, but to be essentially active he has to be capable of affirming. To be able to affirm, the subject has to get out of its cogito ego cutting it off from its spontaneity, that is to say to open the doors of difference.

However, one might have the impression that sometimes the subject affirms the I and from then on denies its differential spontaneity, sometimes serves as a channel for difference and speaks like a poet, that is to say without identification to an ego ('I is an Other', as Rimbaud wrote). Can we conceive a subject who at the same time affirms itself as an I and expresses the difference, this 'eternal return of that which makes dissimilar' (Deleuze 2004: 374)? Yes, provided that its self shall not be reduced to an ego, provided that the I shall be a self that includes the ego reduced to the point of reverse of hatred for Everything. The so(u)rcerer

does not speak in the first person as an ego, but in the name of the spirits and the fleshes, in the dancing uttering of the trance of being.

The anomal subject, the leader of the pack, is as spontaneous as can be:

> As a result, the spontaneity of which I'm conscious in the *I think* cannot be understood as an attribute of a substantial and spontaneous being, but only as the affection of a passive self, which experiences its own thought – its own intelligence that by virtue of which it can say *I* – being exercised in it and upon it but not by it. (Deleuze 2004: 108)

The singularity of the subject seems possible as a so(u)rcerer, the one who desires the Everything and who lives from it, through whom the destinal becoming expresses itself. As we will see it in the conclusion, the so(u)rcerer acts remembering three axes: hyper-stasis, untimeliness and crealism.

Yet we have to better understand to what extent lifelines constitute intensity links, plateaus between the primary impressions and the subject.

V. From the Impression to the Subject

At the heart of Deleuze's philosophy stands the first text he published, *Empiricism and Subjectivity*, and the notion of impression as original monad. The impression, as we have started to see, is the vital principle, the *vis motrix* of becoming. A complete reading of this text on Hume, in the light of the text we have examined, is necessary.

Deleuze first states that Hume's project entails the 'substitution of a psychology of the mind by a psychology of the mind's affections' (Deleuze 2001: 22). Only a psychology of affections can constitute the true science of man. At the origin, there is not only the spiritual but the passionate, and the social itself is originally passionate. In order to exist, spirit has to be affected. When we wonder how the spirit becomes a subject, we have to wonder how an impression becomes spiritual.

Imagination, as a singularisation of impressions, expands from space, from a place, the original *spatium* of difference. 'The production of an idea by the imagination is only the reproduction of an impression in the imagination' (Deleuze 2001: 23). This activity is 'whimsical and delirious'. Being the bond of ideas, it moves through the universe, 'engendering fire dragons, winged horses, and monstrous giants' (23). The depth of the mind is indeed 'delirium' or – the same thing

from another point of view – change, randomness, indifference of the difference.

Deleuze observes that Hume's philosophy is a sharp criticism of representation. Spirit is not reason, but it is reason which is an affection of spirit through the play of habit, of repetition. 'Reason is a kind of feeling' (Deleuze 2001: 30). As the method of true philosophy goes from the lack of an idea to the presence of an impression, likewise, the theory of reason goes from a scepticism of reason to a positivism of feeling, which includes *in fine* reason as a reflection of feeling in the defined spirit, the subject. In this respect, Hume is not at all sceptic. He believes in impressions. Impressions of reflection, contemplations are the origin of spirit.

An impression expands, from points to folds, reflecting itself, that is to say trying itself: 'The passions are reflected; but where and in what? They are reflected in the imagination' (Deleuze 2001: 56). In the reflection that arises from the original contraction of the impression, 'the passions imagine themselves and the imagination becomes passionate' (57). The formation of lifelines is the passion of the imagination.

We see once more the conflict between the molar line and the rupture line as far as imagination is concerned. Insofar as the principle of morals and of passion affects the spirit, the spirit is no longer a fancy, a pure creativity of impressions: it fixes itself and tends to turn into human nature, a fracture. But insofar as the spirit also reflects the affections which try to fix it, it remains a fancy, capable of transformation, 'for at least something within the affections escapes all reflection' (Deleuze 2001: 59). That which cannot let itself be reflected without contradiction is precisely that which defines the real exercise of affections, the relevance of limits, the action through which they fix the spirit under such and such a form. Reflecting the form of its own fixation, imagination sets them free and set itself free from them, expands them endlessly. That is the play of desiring-machines: the breaks lead to leaks, the leaks join the fractures. The greatness of man is that it does not stop at the break, that he considers the break not like something real but as an impression of break, and from then on the creative machine can start working again. Alienation will never be total, as long as man will not forget its impressed/impressing ground, its capacity to untangle the Real, to catch its breath in the heart of a barren nothingness. Imagination 'makes the limit an object of the fancy, it plays with the limit by presenting the accidental as essential, and separates power from its actual exercise' (59).

There is a belief, deep inside the human brain, which is animated by this indestructible faith: there will always be a new exception that might

change the rule. This firm belief that rule is not as solid as a rock derives from the being, from the difference. The human being is profoundly revolutionary because the being is profoundly disparate: 'The power of imagination is to imagine power' (Deleuze 2001: 59). Illusion restrains, but it saves as well as a creative principle. There is a 'union of the most frivolous and the most serious' (60).

This union of the most frivolous and the most serious is subterranean. At the surface, the naturalised images and the prejudiced words draw us back from our participation in the difference, break the emergence of the impression almost from the start: unceasing play of the impressions that form at the surface of the soul, and of the lines that break or distort them.

We find a pathetic evocation of this tragedy under the hand of Georges Bataille, in *Inner Experience*, a text contemporary with Deleuze's book about Hume:

> There subsists in us a silent, elusive, ungraspable part. In the region of words, of discourse, this part is neglected. Thus, it usually escapes us. We can only attain it or have it at our disposal on certain terms. They are the vague inner movements, which depend on no object and have no intent – states which, similar to others linked to the purity of the sky, to the fragrance of a room, are not warranted by anything definable. (Bataille 1988: 14)

Bataille continues:

> If we live under the law of language without contesting it, these states are within us as if they didn't exist. But if we run up against this law, we can in passing, fix our awareness upon one of them and, quieting discourse within us, linger over the surprise which it provides us. It is better then to shut oneself in, make as if it were night, remain in this suspended silence wherein we come unexpectedly upon the sleep of a child. (Bataille 1988: 15)

This child, this surprise, which somehow reminds us of the Nietzschean motif of found again creativity, is listening to the impression. This creativity happens thanks to the everlasting effort of the so(u)rcerer against the molar lines, against the principles of the same.

The I is half deprived but in the silence of the night it can be in contact again with its freedom of expression. We find in the text by Deleuze about Hume this intuition of the self as a fractured synthesis which will be developed in *Difference and Repetition*:

> We saw that origin and affection could not be combined within the self because, at this level, there subsists a great difference between principles and fancy. That which constitutes now the self is the synthesis of the affection and

> its reflection, the synthesis of an affection which fixes the imagination and of an imagination which reflects the affection. (Deleuze 2001: 64)

We can admire here the coherence of Deleuze's evolution, quoting once more these lines from 1968 about the pure I of the *I think*:

> The subject can henceforth represent its own spontaneity only as that of an Other, and in so doing invoke a mysterious coherence in the last instance which excludes his own – namely, that of the world and God. A cogito for a dissolved Self: the Self of the 'I think' includes in its essence a receptivity of intuition in relation to which *I* is already an other. (Deleuze 2004: 70)

I is an other because the overflowing line of flight and the simplifying cut line run through it. Schematisation is the defining principle of the parts among the tissue of vague impressions. This is the Apollonian principle confronted with the Dionysian principle.

We can wonder at this point how the molar line was born, if it abuses life so much. First hypothesis: there is an original molar line that is established from the moment the animal becomes aware of being mortal. The genesis of the break would then have to do with the death consciousness. 'Gaping desire', but death is a gap, a comparison and so a schematisation of the same, a comeback of the reflection on the lost territory and a naturalisation, a fetishism of this absent territory, as if it were the same for everybody, as if it were impossible to talk about death in multiple.

Second hypothesis of the territorialisation of differential impressions: habit. As we have seen, repetition is what restricts, being the neurotic criss-crossing of the same fold, but also what sets free, being a resistance, bringing into being that which does not yet exist. For there is a habit of doing and a habit of not doing, which is persisting refusal to be (un)done, to be cut. And it is above all the latter that sets the impressions free:

> Repetition becomes a progression when we no longer see it in relation to the objects repeated because it changes, discovers and produces nothing. It becomes a production as soon as we see it from the point of view of the mind which contemplates it, for it produces a new impression in it … (Deleuze 2001: 68)

To summarise, we can say that, from the subject's point of view, the molar line is the acceptance of a habit imposed from the exterior, whereas the walk along the line of rising fracture is the resistance of a habit to listen from within. In other words, the molar line is brought to life as soon as a world of external objects is fixed by the cogito.

This world of external objects will divert the desire for difference and orientate it towards the same of rigid protocols and social rewards.

The rupture line is the dissolution of the subject–object dichotomy created by the desperate will to find enjoyment in objects rather than in vital impressions. As an ego, I am indigence separated from becoming. As a self, a so(u)rcerer, I open myself up to the eloquence of living, to its suggestiveness, all the more as I no longer try to transpose my aim of enjoyment to an object. In this respect, we can talk about asceticism in the accession to original joy. The anomal is not to hunger for objects but to be steadfast in letting creative impressions rise. To that extent the I as an ego does not live entirely and is lacerated by death: this death is the wish for what we believe we do not have, that is to say the illness of the imagination denying itself by espousing the simplification of breaks.

Rousseauist drama of the human: to live together, one has to create norms, and these norms, becoming fixed, make him unhappy. Subordination to the State and social production machine: as long as this subordination is painful (even afterwards) then it is the sign that the current social system is lethal and that the verb of life is resisting the prevailing biopolitical speech. The external habit is not the inner experience: 'The unity of experience and habit is not given' (Deleuze 2001: 69). When both are identical then we will be able to say that society is life.

Meanwhile, 'by itself, habit can feign or invoke a false experience, and bring about belief through "a repetition" which is not derived from experience' (Deleuze 2001: 69). The repetition of the same that does not derive from experience is the molar line. As for the line of flight, it is the repetition of difference deriving from experience. What about the molecular crack-up line? Line of the biographical real life, oscillating, stumbling, between life and death, between, on the one hand self-training separated from the vital flows and object-orientated and, on the other hand, liberation of a subject through the ascetic fulfilment of letting the *Creal* emerge in the form of flesh.

Of course, as we have seen, the molar line should not be considered as absolute evil and the rupture line as divine good. In any case, we are standing, whether we want it or not, beyond good and evil, rather on the side of an interdependent relation between life and death, between the individual and the group. The lines are balances and unbalances of becoming. We can only hope that they interweave to form a rising spiral, in which the freed subject would jump from line to line, as much for saving its skin, and its senses, as for remaining in differential creativity

and active contemplation of disparity within the self. It is a trick of the subject, in the agencies it establishes, in the rhizomes it weaves jumping from line to line, but also an ascetic task and a brave confrontation with the errands of the ego. There is no axis of the world outside the subject (but a group can be a subject, an integrity); there is no subject without axis. What is this axis? A self-defined filter to fight resentment.

The subject becomes absolute and sets itself free from the ego when it makes the sap of the pure vital *spatium* rise from within, thanks to a spiralisation, which is an accomplice of the three lifelines. Hence this alternative: on the side of the cutting and cut ego, we have 'the earth girded, encompassed, overcoded, conjugated as the object of a mortuary and suicidal organization surrounding it from every part'. On the so(u)rcerer's side we wake up 'the earth consolidated, connected with the Cosmos, brought into the Cosmos following lines of creation that cut across it as so many becomings (Nietzsche's expression: Let the earth become lightness)' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004b: 510).

Impression is the absolute movement. Impressions are the tissue of the soul and in their bosom, every single second, the destiny of the subject is at stake. We shall remember Deleuze's lecture about Leibniz and the soul: 'Will I go to work or to the tavern?' (Deleuze 2003). According to the impression that I am and that I let materialise in image and in deed, I will fold myself in one direction or another. Between the starting point of a line, the impression, and the finishing point, the fold, there is a micro-destinal series. 'What would have happened if I had not been to the tavern?' Deleuze asks. 'Then it would be another me' (Deleuze 2003).

To that extent, our actions judge us. The way we allow ourselves to identify the impressions from the start, as good or bad – we often speak in everyday language about 'first impressions' – determines in part our destiny or our capacity to resist dominations.

Reading Hume, we find striking equivalence between the three critic states of spirit and the three lines. 'Indifference and imaginativeness are the situation peculiar to spirit, without regard for the external principles that fix it by associating ideas' (Deleuze 2001: 86): this is the rupture line.

'Madness is the contradiction within the mind between these principles that affect it and fiction that he sets as a principle' (Deleuze 2001: 86): it is in the worst of cases the molar line and in the best of cases the so(u)rcerer's axial asceticism.

'This system is a delirium. When fiction becomes a principle, reflection goes on reflecting, but it can no longer correct. It is thus thrown into

delirious compromises' (Deleuze 2001: 86): it is in the rising molecular line (synchronicities, crealism) or falling one (incidents, depression).

Indifference, imaginativeness, madness and delirium: that is a really accurate picture of human experience. That is why the slightest extravagance, the slightest distraction is still to confide in its first impressions, without immediately denaturing them in prejudice, which is a true asceticism, that is to say a training to refer to life rather than to death.

The question of the third part in our presentation comes back to the foreground under this form: 'How the subject, or that which goes beyond the given can arise from within the given?' 'Undoubtedly, that which transcends the given is also given' but in another way: 'As we believe and invent, we turn the given itself into a nature' (Deleuze 2001: 86). The given is not given to a subject, the subject forms itself in the given while forming it: that is what we call crealism.

But what is the given? It is, according to Deleuze's interpretation of Hume the 'flux of the sensible, a collection of impressions and images, a set of perceptions. It is all that shows up, the being equivalent to the appearance, movement, change without identity or law' (Deleuze 2001: 86). This experience of a collection, a bustling succession of distinct perceptions, is the very basis of empiricism as being distinct, independent, different: 'Every discernible perception is a difference' (86). Here we find the announcement of the principle of difference, the monster that enables to show up. Experience is always experience of difference. The subject then forms ideas, which in the best of cases are not the representations of an object but of an impression.

To talk about a subject and no longer only about impressions is to talk about a duration, about an axial ritual, about a *praxis*. The active repetition is the subject's constitutional root and the subject is at its root a synthesis of present and past looking forward the future. The synthesis consists of establishing the past as an a priori law for the future, with the inherent factor of disappointment: 'Each man expects to conserve what he already possesses. The principle of frustrated anticipation will play the role of contradiction in the logic of property, that is, the role of a principle of synthetic contradiction' (Deleuze 2001: 86). To a certain extent, time is disappointment whereas space is hope, impulse. The experience of difference displays an a-temporal multiplicity, whereas the experience of repetition creates temporality. That determines a play between reason and imagination and as a result some impressions become brighter. The brightest impressions, allowed by a voluntary filtering of the connections between perceptions, are the present of the subject, both body and mind.

The subject forms from a given that it filters and shapes. The given is the impressions generating associations and passions. Imagination is the faculty to animate impressions: 'According to Hume, the imagination becomes a faculty insofar as a law of the reproduction of representations or a synthesis of reproduction is constituted as the result of principles' (Deleuze 2001: 110). But as was demonstrated by Kant's interpretation of Hume, if the given was not itself primarily submitted to principles of the same nature as those regulating the link of representations for an empiric subject, the subject could never know this agreement, except by chance, and would not have the opportunity to link its representations according to the laws that would however be at its disposal.

But are impressions ontologically prior to imagination, or does a transcendental position exist which operates the synthesis of impressions into images? In other words, in reference to our first chapter about the soul and Leibniz: is the virtuality of the fold prior to the pruritus of the animistic original tissue? Should there not be, together with the pure *spatium* of difference, a transcendental principle tending to turn the points of disparity into lines? The alternative is simple: either lines are formed by chance (even if imagination then projects necessity onto them), or their realisation is inscribed as a necessity of the sieve-subject.

Another way to raise this problem is: are impressions equivalent to each other or are there affinities between them, which would favour such or such orientation in the formation of the lifelines, starting with the points of impression? Hume resorts to a musical metaphor in his *Treatise of Human Nature*:

> Now if we consider the human mind, we shall find, that with regard to the passions, 'tis not of the nature of a wind-instrument of music, which in running over all the notes immediately loses the sound after the breath ceases; but rather resembles a string-instrument, where after each stroke, the vibrations still retain some sound, which gradually and insensibly decays. (Hume 2000: 188)

We have to start from the pure impression, Deleuze says. Some principles affect the mind, such as impressions of reflection. Subjectivity is the impression of reflection and this impression itself derives from some impressions of sensations: 'But it is precisely this proceeding or this process that the impressions of sensation are incapable of explaining: they cannot even explain why in the collection, they themselves are elected among others and instead of others' (Deleuze, 2001: 113). The notes of music do not know how they will form a melody together.

So Hume says that there are some 'principles' orientating what shows up. These principles have a double selective and constituting role. But according to which necessity is the principle of the subject formed?

We could first think about the principle of pleasure. Imagination would follow the impressions, whose association generates the greatest pleasure in the body. But this idea does not resolve anything because we would still have to explain why pleasure would choose a certain order, a certain harmony, rather than cacophony.

The hypothesis of a selectivity of impressions presiding over the formation of the lines of imagination and action is the true culmination of our description of the lines. We can think that Deleuze is not always very clear about the principles of linearisation, about the way in which the monster shows in this way rather than in this other one. The constitution of lines would remain but a mechanism stained with shadows if we reject the idea of a pre-established harmony, *more geometrico*, of an affinity between some points orientating the formation of lines. Otherwise, we could imagine that points would remain points and would never form lines.

Another way to see things is to say that points cannot form lines except intentionally. For Hume, the subject 'hates pain' and looks for pleasure. 'Making of pleasure a purpose, the principles of passions give to action its principle' (Deleuze 2001: 113). But a principle of immediate pleasure, once more, would not account for the coherent channelling of forms.

Hume suggests then that there are 'useful' tendencies and others that are 'baneful'. But that the original imaginativeness should locally orientate towards the useful, that is to say towards the safe opening up of a subject, could seem like an entropic view.

The idea of 'vivacity' of some impression is more satisfying in that it combines pleasure, effort and utility, and goes beyond them. Hume writes: 'There is also a resemblance between the image and the object we infer; which strengthens the relation, and conveys the vivacity of the impression to the related idea with an easier and more natural movement' (Deleuze 2001: 113). If the subject's will of creation is orientated following the principle of vivacity, this means that lines are formed following points of greatest intensity, and it allows the introduction of a finality which is also physiological. The subject is formed in the given from the principle of greatest vivacity. Sometimes the molar line attracts the body because of the greatest vivacity that instinct feels, sometimes it is the rupture line or the molecular line.

Hume writes about a 'general interest' as the impact in the imagination of the particular interest, as the movement of a passion overcoming its partiality. This unity of a subject functioning as a whole in relation with other subjects, Deleuze, reading Hume, calls 'intentional finality'. The mind is 'resonance and vivacity': the mind becomes subject 'when it calls on its vivacity so that a part of itself, whose character it is (impression), conveys it to another part of itself (idea), and secondly, when all its parts put together resonate producing something new' (Deleuze 2001: 113). In the given, Deleuze says as early as 1953, we establish relations, we form totalities, swept away by the impulse to produce 'something new'.

Here is the confirmation we were looking for. This idea by Deleuze, inspired by Bergson, presented at the end of *Empiricism and Subjectivity*, seems to be *in fine* the only one that accounts for the dynamic of formation of the lifelines: the tendency to create novelty. From then on, we have to say: in the depth of being, there is certainly difference, disparity, but there is also desire for novelty. That is the principle of desiring-machines: to create vivacious novelty.

This hypothesis implies that death is as real as the same, contrary to novelty. From then on life is a fight against the same. Fleeing from the same as death or as void would be at the origin of difference. The term 'void' is even preferred to the term 'death'. Deleuze sees difference as multiple; likewise, to avoid a philosophy of the one we have to see the void fled by the desire for novelty as a void beyond (or below) the one and the multiple. Now, is it not that which characterises void not to be one? If the void was one, it would become being again. Here we have to take into consideration the notion of vacuity in Buddhist philosophy. Vacuity, void are nothing other than the reverse of difference.

We understand better, now, the formation of the lifelines. They are formed by the tension between void and desire for novelty. We have to imagine that the original monster, life, is not a homogeneous space but a space containing void. What is void then? It is non-existent intensity, zero vivacity.

From then on, life draws lines between maximal intensity and zero intensity, without it being necessary moreover to assert these limits as real: we can indeed imagine that life is accounted for by the fact that maximal intensity and zero intensity are both impossible. Hence becoming as scattering between two original fantasies.

Void and novelty: is it a new dualism or the synthesis of dualisms in the being-becoming? 'Arrive at the magic formula we all seek – PLURALISM = MONISM – via all the dualisms that are the

enemy, an entirely necessary enemy, the furniture we are forever rearranging' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 23). There is no beginning or end, no void at the start or maximal intensity in the end, but 'always a middle point', through which life grows and overflows.

With respect to the consistency of lines, the one is always deducted, Deleuze says. Multiplicity varies its dimensions, affected by the passion for change of nature and for metamorphosis. The play of lines, the rhizome, is not formed according to a principle of reproduction but of creation. Taken as a whole, the being is pure creation, but taken as individualities, the being temporarily turns into empty shapes constituted by desire, like dead skin. A cathedral is in a way a dead skin once its construction is finished. The centration of its project has been brought to its end. But the end of life is not centration, insofar as it is inhabited by an a-centred non-hierarchical and non-significant systematic: a circulation of states in which the important term is the circulation and not the state. The state is that which life rejects. This is applicable, in political theory, to the State with a capital letter and its molar lines.

The building up of the cathedral, as long as it is not finished, is a 'plateau' of intensity. But a plateau is always followed by another plateau, once the thing is formed. Singularity is the creative intensity, not the objectivised work or its outline. The path is the middle point of life.

> The middle is by no means an average; on the contrary, it is where things pick up speed. *Between* things does not designate a localizable relation going from one thing to the other and back again, but a perpendicular direction, a transversal movement that sweeps one *and* the other way, a stream without beginning or end that undermines its banks and picks up speed in the middle. (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004: 28)

Novation and void: the two unreachable banks in-between which life flows.

VI. Conclusion: How Is a New Life Possible?

We will leave Deleuze aside for a while to make a short detour to a poetic sea, casting the anchor in the lands of Rainer Maria Rilke's words in the *Duino Elegies*. Thus we will first define the tendency to be slow off the mark not only as the *ressentiment* of the one who, being subject of an experience, subjected to the past, only becomes aware of things as a 'So that's what it was – it could have been better', but also as the movement

of the one who, in the impossibility to fix itself either in the sea or on earth is in a perpetual nomadic stopover.

'Who has turned us around so that, whatever we do, we bear the attitude of one who is departing?', the Eighth Elegy asks (Rilke 2000: 51). Man feels himself orientated towards one direction rather than another, facing something rather than something else, partial being, being with a standpoint and as a consequence simultaneously of light and blindness. The impression given by this question is a non-coincidence with action, a separation from the living world. We are positioned so locally delimited and we do not occupy the whole space, we leave one state in favour of another, we stop over once and again. The idea of being turned implies that there would be a way to go on, no longer as someone who is departing, but as someone who is coming, or in any case someone who goes on while staying at the same time, someone who is both going away and standing at his starting point.

Now, what is going away without departing? To spread. That, as we have seen, is what Leibniz calls the amplitude of the soul. In order to spread while spreading out an action, there must be dilatation so there is a centre even if it is moving. Now, what seems to be the meaning of the question in the Eighth Elegy is that the human being is constantly mobile, a point of disaffection upon which we have no hold. Who has never experienced telling something which seems important to us to a person who is drifting away in an exasperating manner, not focusing on what has just been said (maybe precisely because the person feels an intention of importance in the other person)? A shore is offered but we have already departed, preferring the uncertainty of the sea to the revelation offered, in which we will not confide. But the tendency to be slow off the mark will imply that the person will think it over later, in the last stopover, since a stopover is always defined by the past and forthcoming stopovers.

The Fourth Elegy says: 'The migrant birds can tell the seasons ... We kept ignorant and left behind, must force ourselves belatedly upon a wind and come down hard on some uncaring pond' (Rilke 2000: 23). Were it a vital intuition within us, were it something like a projective instinct of life, which would throw us towards a greater vitality in the future, then we would maybe live in the present, in accordance with the present time. But we are ignorant as to what our present actions will become in the future whereas the migrant bird knows that its migration leads it towards the watering place and better weather. The bird confides blindly in its migration, its movement is orientated, and moreover, it does not lose its original standpoint since it will come back there.

The migrant bird spreads up its soul, from its starting point to its finishing point. Man, lacking information, lacking in appearance the projective instinct of life, moves losing sight of his starting point: stopping over but no longer knowing from where he departed, why he departed and where he is going.

'Oh Trees of Life: how shall we know your Winter?' the Fourth Elegy also asks (Rilke 2000: 23). We are not trees of life because as we move we lose our roots, we do not know how to preserve life in winter, we rather flee than endure, by lack of forbearance. Forbearance only, only the extension of the soul would enable us to go through winter, since other points of the soul would be in summer.

'We set all in order. All falls apart. We order it once more and fall, collapse, disintegrate ourselves', the Eighth Elegy asserts (Rilke 2000: 52). That also is the tendency to be slow off the mark, a will to archive the past by retrospective. If I had said this, that would have happened. Cause and effect as a way to classify life projected in the past. We often function on the same pattern; this is not a singularity that classifies but a busy collective form: 'We classify.' Sometimes objects fall, sometimes the ego falls. A confrontation cutting the vital flux, so destroying it. As long as I am classifying, I am a cogito facing objects that I classify. I put the world in order, I look after it like a 'master and possessor'. But the world is not material so it gives the impression that it is collapsing to the sense of ordering. And if we succeed in regimenting the world as an object we then lose contact with our singularity, we are scattered in pieces like a broken mirror, since the subject no longer reflects itself but as an object.

The world as a perpetual collapse is the world of the 'spectator', 'turned towards the Everything'. 'As if in panic fear they flitter through that sky … afraid of flight itself: swift as a flaw runs through a cup' the Eighth Elegy also says (Rilke 2000: 52). We want to be a bowl containing everything, thanks to retention, thanks to the thirsty concentration, forgetting that the world is the open. We want to shut the open in our subjective cup out of fear to disappear and from then on, as the result of pressure, a crack falls and we become this crack. *Ressentiment* of the 'bat', afraid of dying but equally afraid to live in the daylight, in the diurnal openness.

How can we be not only the traveller fleeing from one end to the other, always bidding farewell? How to be at the same time the earth, the sea, the stopover, the boat and the sailor? Spreading one's soul.

Leibniz said: to have an ample soul. Deleuze's lecture about Leibniz, as we saw, distinguishes the damned, whose soul stands at the point of

hatred for everything, from the free man, whose soul fills an amplitude tending to a physical living and sensitive infinite, not only abstract, and whose acts and thoughts try constantly to fill this amplitude. It is no use adding that, most of the time, without effort, we are all damned rather than angels. We would have to be both, point and extension of the surface of the soul: 'Angel and Puppet: now – at last – a *play*! Now all can fuse together, all that we divide by merely being here', the Fourth Elegy says (Rilke 2000: 23).

But angels and puppets form fugacious dances. We are soon again like writers in perpetual gestation, living in the excuse rather than in the verb. And why? Because the tendency to be slow off the mark, the sense of travel craving more novelty, is always titillated by the idea that it would be better elsewhere, magnetised by the idea of the absolute stopover. This dream of the 'pure *space* before us – all its flowers opening endlessly', in the Eighth Elegy (Rilke 2000: 52), leads us from a harbour to another harbour as fishes going after the bait. We covet, we want to *have* the being, and that is how we make it fall apart. We see our paradise lost as a world to come back to, as a place, as a located object and not as 'that nowhere, free from negatives, unsupervised and pure; the place which we might breathe and know unendingly, and never crave' (52).

Envy and the envious person want to locate the being for a private show, which could be enjoyed as something we have, and they are always lying in wait. The comedy of man: this lying in wait is so intense that the hyper-spectator no longer sees anything, does not allow an impression that could bloom into a flower to linger. A stopover blots out another, an expectancy drives out another and I do not live anything, and I do not see anything and everything is always finished when it had hardly begun. 'This is what fate means: to be opposite, and to be that and nothing else, opposite, forever' the Eighth Elegy says (Rilke 2000: 52).

Will love save us? It is very unlikely according to Rilke: 'When you lift yourselves up to each other's mouth and your lips join, drink against drink: oh how strangely each drinker seeps away from his action' the Second Elegy says (Rilke 2000: 13). In the love relationship, we do not escape lying in wait, the show of ourselves, and from then on we are beyond the grace of a kiss. Ego *against* ego rather than losing and giving up on the ego. Avidity and impatience, attempt to locate enjoyment spatio-temporally rather than extension and dilatation of the soul: 'Do not think I woo thee, angel! Should I do so, you would not be moved, so full of conflict is my cry. Against such utter counter force you cannot prevail' the poet laments in the Seventh Elegy (45). Passion for travelling,

passion for the contraction in the place it gets off. Maybe we like nothing more than being alone to the extent that we lose ourselves and never find ourselves, pushing back the torrent of life.

Maybe the tendency to be slow off the mark is nothing else than a love for death because 'Close to dying we need see death no more and can, perhaps, look outwards with a gaze as wide as the gaze of animals. Lovers, were it not for that other one whose presence blocks their sight, might come to it, amazed', according to the Eighth Elegy (Rilke 2000: 47). We believe we run after death as innocently a being sleeping alive, but in fact we run with avidity after the enjoyment to *have*, the dream to have Everything which makes us push something back as a thing and not as an emerging seed. Alas, we cannot *have* Everything. We can only *become* Everything through an extension of our soul in all directions, past included. But this past frightens us since we were not spread in it but only ephemeral spirals run through by destiny. We have to accept to be an other.

As we suggested, a soul spreading out implies an origin by creation of a centre, even a moving one. Every moment, the soul spreading out its amplitude has a centre. What is this centre? Nothing other than the will not to lose oneself and to be oneself. We are not afraid of death, because we do not know it and, deep inside, we hope too much. We are afraid of not knowing who we are, of having several personalities (different contractions of the soul) and as a consequence several possibilities and several impossibilities. We are afraid to be lost in the sea or to wander on earth, that is why we keep on following the tendency to be slow off the mark, as an in-between flitting about with little life.

To be at the same time the earth, the sea and the sailor: that is the salvation of the soul spreading into the openness, Deleuze says. That is the rising fracture: 'And we, who think of happiness ascending, would with consternation know the rapture that almost overwhelms us, when happiness falls', the Tenth Elegy says (Rilke 2000: 65).

Spinoza suggested that we are far from knowing what a body is capable of doing, the joy a body is capable of. It seems that humanity has not yet explored the whole expanse of its soul, weighed down by lament or complaining. We are still elegiac. We *think* happiness instead of living it. We are no longer faithful to the earth, Nietzsche would say, that is why the fruits of happiness escape us falling next to our little grateful hands.

We still have a thought of lack, hence the elegy spirit. Maybe we can never go beyond. We may always be staircases, mobile points going from one harbour to another, looking for the absolute and (already)

missed haven. Life may give us time to spread out our soul but there is envy looking after the elastic and contracting the soul into will to have.

The Second Elegy says: 'If only we too could discover a pure, contained human place, a strip of fruitful land of our own, between river and stone! For our own heart exceeds us, even as theirs did' (Rilke 2000: 23). So hope is allowed. For our heart exceeds us, like the heart of gods. And our heart encourages us to become a subject, a hero, a so(u)rcerer, a living axis. To become such, three coordinates are to be held firm:

1. Hypo-stasiate our *will-to-bring-into-existence-that-which-does-not-yet-exist* in a conscious and felt repetition.
2. To keep being untimely by refusing the normative temporality of the breaks.
3. Never give in to the fatalism of believing that the real is fixed. *The world is my creation.*

Revolution in time, becoming another, human transmutation, setting oneself free from the furrows of labour: can we conceive a more solemn, more triumphant, a happier subject? A dialectic whose sparks create the world. Can we conceive a better subject for passion?

It is a fact that there is a whole discourse of revolution, which is a manifestation of laziness, a distressed snobbery, an obscene timidity. But the repetition of the will to be different, even under the minimal form that the critic in society is, is a way to be on the watch. A necessary way, probably but definitely insufficient. There are watchwords with which we fall asleep, enthusiasms that are too intoxicating whereas the becoming other is always an adventure.

'Chaosmos' of lines to endure, in which to inscribe oneself, to write. New life is our passion. We give birth to worlds trying to hold onto the impossible, walking on towards a woman of manifest interior elegance, walking a step away from our falling apart, raising our voice next to (self-)destructing persons, refusing that our retinas be dazzled by mimetic persistences.

Once upon a time the meeting between a rupture and a systematic, an unconsciousness and a rhythm, fire and ice.

Rising fracture. Lightning.

A friction accompanied by a look at the black sky, where stars draw the lines of the destiny we inscribe in them.

Notes

1. *They* is a limited way of translating the French *on*, a general and unsingular version of *we*.

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Book Reviews

Christian Kerslake (2009) *Immanence and the Vertigo of Philosophy: From Kant to Deleuze*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

In *What is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Guattari define philosophy as the creation of concepts on a plane of immanence. Yet the more they expound on what the plane of immanence is, claiming that it is the absolute ground or prephilosophical presupposition of philosophy, the more abstruse it becomes. Aptly, they write: 'We head for the horizon, on the plane of immanence, and we return with bloodshot eyes' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 41). Immanence is consistently present and problematic in Deleuze's work, and Christian Kerslake speculates that 'perhaps it is *the* problem inspiring [Deleuze's] work' (2). What is implied is that determining what Deleuze means by 'immanence' is the key to understanding his philosophical project. This is the difficult task assumed by Kerslake in *Immanence and the Vertigo of Philosophy: From Kant to Deleuze*.

Kerslake begins by offering a preliminary definition of immanence: 'formally', a philosophy is immanent if it does not appeal to any terms or relations outside of itself; 'ontologically', it means that thought is adequate to the expression of being (2). Polemically, Kerslake positions himself against recent studies that have presented Deleuze as a non-critical metaphysician, and he asserts that the book's aim is to emphasise, unequivocally, that Deleuze is the 'latest flowering' of the post-Kantian tradition (5). Although he offers this work as a 'sourcebook of ideas and arguments' (vii), there is a very clear unifying and coherent argument: it is only within a Kantian and post-Kantian context that Deleuze's struggle with the problem of immanence can be properly understood. He identifies immanence with the post-Kantian idea of immanent critique: that is, a critique in which reason criticises itself and thereby accounts for its own method and genesis. The problem of immanence is therefore formulated as the problem of metacritique.

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However, it is a gross simplification to reduce a book to its polemical edge, and Kerslake's aim is far more complex and captivating. To understand Deleuze's reading of Kant, Kerslake does not primarily engage with Deleuze's explicit treatment of Kant and the German idealists, nor does he situate Deleuze's post-Kantianism against Hegel's. Instead, he carries out what he describes as a 're-excavation' of Kant's critical philosophy to show how Deleuze '*repeats* the first convulsions of the critical project' (10). Accordingly, three of the book's four chapters are a studied dissection of the origins of Kant's critical philosophy, paying close attention to the tensions and problems guiding Kant's formulation; the fourth chapter shows how Deleuze responds to these problems.

In an extended Introduction, Kerslake grounds his arguments on Deleuze's lectures series *Qu'est-ce que fonder?*, which were delivered in 1956. What is so advantageous about these lectures is that Deleuze engages directly with methodological issues of critique and the problem of self-grounding in philosophy; more significantly, Kerslake argues: 'Everything in *Difference and Repetition* is present *in nuce* in "What is Grounding?", and just needs unfolding' (21). This is an interesting speculation, though it rather raises the question of why Deleuze took over a decade to simply unfold it. Kerslake claims further that 'Deleuze's style in the lectures appears to be a hitherto unknown dialect of Heideggerese; but that may be due to the state of the lecture notes' (43, n. 18). What is of some concern is that this acknowledgement is the only note of caution Kerslake sounds regarding the credibility of the notes, for these lecture notes are not Deleuze's own but were made by a student, and their accuracy has not been determined.

The rest of the book elaborates at great length the arguments that Deleuze, in these lectures, 'traversed with lightning speed' (9). Chapter 1 establishes a consistency in Kant's pre-critical and critical writings with regard to his awareness of metacritical issues. Kerslake identifies three historical stages in Kant's struggle to define systematically the relation between critique and metaphysics as he attempts to develop his critical project in terms of the relation between critique and teleology. Chapter 1 ends with two sections on Deleuze: the first on Deleuze's reading of the relation between the three critiques in *Kant's Critical Philosophy*; the second on the development of his transcendental empiricism, which Kerslake identifies as being rooted in the third stage of Kant's struggle. Chapter 2 expands on the assertion of consistency established in chapter 1 by locating the origins of critical philosophy in Kant's 'pre-critical' writings (a term Kerslake dislikes) in dogmatic metaphysics.

In a close and interesting reading of the history of the ontological argument, Kerslake pursues the relation between the logical and the real as it is developed through Spinoza, Leibniz and Kant, and details the critical turn in Kant's philosophy as it arises in response to Leibniz's rationalism.

Kant's break from Leibnizianism is developed further in chapter 3, which explores Kant's theory of cognition. In his pre-critical writings, Kant engages with the problematic notion of the object, which Kant refers to as 'object $=x$', and which is to have significant consequences as it is retained in his critical writings. Kerslake's argument centres on the Transcendental Deduction in the first edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*; he argues that this Deduction is only fully appreciated in the light of Kant's work on Ideas in the Transcendental Dialectic, which he persuasively argues has the features of a transcendental deduction. He argues that the deductions in the Analytic should be understood as being subordinated to this *third* deduction, and it is the internal connection between all three that gives the *Critique* its consistency as a whole.

But why is immanence 'the very vertigo of philosophy'? (2). Kerslake addresses this question in the fourth and final chapter. Two different meanings of immanence are identified in Deleuze's thought: the first conception of immanence is that which is explored through most of the book and concerns the systematic and metacritical problem of self-grounding; the second conception, which appears in Deleuze's later works, is that of a prephilosophical and pre-reflexive thought. The task of this chapter is to determine whether or not these two conceptions can be reconciled, thus demonstrating a consistency in Deleuze's thought. Kerslake achieves this by identifying three vertigos in the notion of immanence: the first is the vertigo encountered in any instance of ungrounding, which is necessarily included in self-grounding; the second, with which the book is largely concerned, is the attempt to attain metacritical consistency; but it is the third that is 'the specifically Deleuzian one, where the question is asked what living in a *plan* (or in English, "plane") of immanence would in any case be *like*' (265).

Immanence and the Vertigo of Philosophy is an ambitious work and the breadth of Kerslake's analysis is very impressive. Although he traverses 'in slow motion' the ground covered in the 1956 lectures, his project might have benefited by moving at an even slower pace that shifted more weight onto the context within which his often dense arguments are expounded. Kerslake assumes a lot of the reader, including a solid understanding of a wide range of texts, some of which are lesser known; although each chapter is equipped with

extensive footnotes that help elaborate ideas, further explication and clarification would have made his insights more accessible. That said, this is an invaluable contribution to a growing body of literature on Deleuze's post-Kantianism, and these are insights worth pursuing further. Presumably, the reason Kerslake describes this as a 'sourcebook of ideas' is because, although he has analysed the historical roots of Deleuze's post-Kantianism, its value will ultimately be borne out by future works that complement the project Kerslake has carried out here by examining how these historical roots are played out in each of Deleuze's texts. This, too, would be a very worthwhile project.

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Editorial Introduction: For a Transdisciplinary Practice of Thought

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All the articles presented in this issue have their origin in the conference 'Deleuze, Philosophy, Transdisciplinarity', which took place in London in February 2012 and which the present editors organised. The key question that the conference sought to address and around which the present issue revolves is the following: How are we to understand philosophy's relation to the various thought processes and practices of other disciplines in the work of Gilles Deleuze? The necessity of asking this question is to be found in a difficulty we perceive to exist in the tendency for an interdisciplinary mode of knowledge production. As the desire to bring together a multitude of different research fields grows, particularly in the humanities, it has also become harder to compare and conjoin them without a certain perplexity arising as to how the different protocols and traditions of thought are to intersect.

Our turn to Deleuze is precisely motivated by his distinctive take on the problem, which we will here articulate as 'transdisciplinarity'.[1] We take our cue from the blurb of the French edition of *What Is Philosophy?*, which reads: 'Philosophy is not interdisciplinary'.[2] This might be taken to harbour a tension. After all, it is known that Deleuze had long insisted on the essential relation between philosophy and other disciplines. His work has been explicitly and on numerous occasions praised for having advocated the necessity of breaking through traditional disciplinary boundaries and can be rightly described as one of the boldest instances of Continental philosophy. As Isabelle Stengers notes, Deleuze's thought has been associated with 'the affirmation

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of productive connections, the creation of deterritorialising processes escaping fixed identities, transgressing the power of exclusive disjunction that is the either/or alternatives, such as, for instance, doing either science or philosophy' (Stengers 2005: 151). The same can be said of Deleuze's engagement with other traditions. Besides the sciences, from *Difference and Repetition* ([1968] 1994) to *A Thousand Plateaus* ([1980] 1988) and *Cinema 1* and *2* ([1983] 1986; [1985] 1989), philosophy is actively shown to thrive on a multitude of connections with the arts, technology and the social sciences. Indeed, we may identify a strong *centrifugal* movement in his writings – intensified in some ways after his collaboration with Félix Guattari – by which philosophy is audaciously extended towards other disciplines. Expressed and practised as a logic of the 'and', this transversal way of thinking emerges as a choice, as a particular ethic of doing philosophy, and its stakes are laid out clearly: contrary to an image of thought as disinterested 'contemplation' that would close up on itself to induce a return to pre-established canons, for Deleuze philosophy must open itself up to other practices of knowledge production. Such an opening is not only possible but also necessary if philosophy is to be divested of a false and detrimental aura of contemplative universality and mastery over other modes of thought.

Yet at the same time that this opening is affirmed and consciously practised against the pitfalls of mere 'contemplation', in his late work with Guattari, Deleuze's philosophy appears to be defined by a *centripetal* and self-restricting movement, which delimits and breaks connections. Compared with the profusion of adventurous links animating previous works, *What is Philosophy?* might be taken to promote a surprisingly conservative picture, with philosophy trying to establish itself and its own methods in contradistinction to what it is not. In the book, philosophy, science and art are indeed considered apart from one another, each shown to create through its own mode, to have its own outside (non-philosophy, non-science, non-art) and to correspond to different disciplinary planes of immanence, reference and composition, respectively. 'The three planes, along with their elements, are irreducible' (Deleuze and Guattari [1991] 1994: 216). Philosophy produces concepts; science produces functions; art produces affects and percepts. And if they can be said to 'interfere' (Deleuze and Guattari [1991] 1994: 216–18) with each other, this interference proceeds through their individual means: out of a function or an affect and percept, philosophy can make a concept; out of an affect and percept or a concept, science can make a function; out of a concept or a function,

art can make an affect and percept. The point is repeated in the American preface to *Difference and Repetition* written in 1994, only three years after the publication of *What Is Philosophy?*:

> A philosophical concept can never be confused with a scientific function or an artistic construction, but finds itself in affinity with these in this or that domain of science or style of art. The scientific or artistic content of a philosophy may be very elementary, since it is not obliged to advance art or science, but it can advance itself only by forming properly philosophical concepts from a given function or construction. (Deleuze [1968] 1994: xvi)

As Deleuze himself asserts in this particular instance, when he strays into mathematical and biological territory to make concepts out of the functions of 'differen*t*iation' and 'differen*c*iation', the movement that enables him to connect with those practices abides by certain disciplinary protocols, restrictions and rules. The differences between disciplines are not to be ignored.

Is there a contradiction between the two movements? Are we presented, as Alain Badiou indicates, with an imperative to choose, as it were, between two Deleuzes, one 'radical', the other 'temperate' (Badiou [1997] 2000: 9)? More specifically to our problematic, are we faced with the impossibility of the cross-fertilisation of disciplines and with the surreptitious re-establishment of boundaries? Deleuze hints at the answer as early as 1972 in an interview with Catherine Backès-Clément: 'I'm interested in the way a page of writing flies off in all directions and at the same time closes right up on itself like an egg' (Deleuze [1990] 1995: 14). We can see from this quotation that the situation is more complex than the one implied by our previously staged dualism between a promiscuous and a classical way of philosophising. The centrifugal and centripetal movements cannot be taken to cancel out one another, nor can they be said to have emerged at different points in Deleuze's career. On the contrary, it becomes clear that they have always been complementary, the two components of a single movement, with each component articulated sometimes with more, sometimes with less emphasis. One finds this in *Difference and Repetition*, where the practice of transcendental empiricism frees the transcendental from the a priori and the conditions of possible experience, reconstituting it on the back of a disciplinary pluralism spanning the arts and sciences. The latter are now un/grounded in a problematic transcendental field no longer reducible to philosophy itself. But is this also the case in *What is Philosophy?* The question must be answered positively. For at the end of the book, the separation of

disciplines is simultaneously co-articulated with the appeal to a point of divergence that is nevertheless common to all of them. This is the brain, the '*junction* – not the unity – *of the three planes*', which, being a determinate cluster of neighbourhoods, a 'complex both of horizontal connections and of vertical integrations reacting on one another', is the condition of transdisciplinarity itself (Deleuze and Guattari [1991] 1994: 208). It is at this level that the disciplines are treated non-hierarchically. The brain reveals, or rather, it practises, a subtle art of 'interferences' that can proceed extrinsically, intrinsically or in a non-localisable way. Accordingly, there can be connections proceeding unilaterally and through individual means; or connections that slip from one plane to another and that cannot be safely claimed by either; or connections that pertain to each discipline's relation to its own outside. But there is another level of equality; for through the brain, the planes of immanence, composition and reference are also plunged into chaos where they are finally confronted with the impossibility of their distinction: 'concepts, sensations, and functions become undecidable, at the same time as philosophy, art and science become indiscernible, as if they shared the same shadow that extends itself across their different nature and constantly accompanies them' (218). If *What Is Philosophy?* puts forth a unique take on transdisciplinarity, it is because it advocates a relation between disciplines that is more than a simple separation.

From this perspective, the 'separation' of philosophy, art and science is not a prescription, a parting of the ways or a comment on the impossibility of a cross-fertilisation of disciplines. Above all, it is a cautionary gesture. For the path to creative connections is strewn with the dangers of 'communication' manifested as the tendency of theorising discourses to assume the voice of 'common sense' in order to dictate to others how they should know what they know. We may stage an imaginary dialogue between Foucault and Deleuze at this point:

> But, then, what is philosophy today – philosophical activity, I mean – if it is not the critical work that thought brings to bear on itself? In what does it consist, if not in the endeavour to know how and to what extent it might be possible to think differently, instead of legitimating what is already known? There is always something ludicrous in philosophical discourse when it tries, from the outside, to dictate to others, to tell them where their truth is and how to find it, or when it works up a case against them in the language of naïve positivity. But it is entitled to explore what might be changed, in its own thought, through the practice of a knowledge that is foreign to it. The 'essay' – which should be understood as the assay or test by which, in

> the game of truth, one undergoes changes, and not just as the simplistic appropriation of others for the purpose of communication – is the living substance of philosophy, at least if we assume that philosophy is still what it was in times past, i.e. an 'ascesis,' askesis, an exercise of oneself in the activity of thought. (Foucault [1984] 1985: 8–9)

> For many people, philosophy is something which is not 'made', but is pre-existent, ready-made in a prefabricated sky. However, philosophical theory is itself a practice, just as much as its object. It is no more abstract than its object. It is a practice of concepts, and it must be judged in the light of the other practices with which it interferes. (Deleuze [1985] 1989: 280)

The second quote can be taken as a reply to the first, since Deleuze indeed read an extract from *The Use of Pleasure* as his eulogy for Foucault. Published the following year, *Cinema 2* expresses precisely that mode of thinking which Foucault describes. Deleuze presents us with a philosophy that lives by interfering with, and simultaneously rendering itself sensitive to, something 'foreign' – to a cinematic, scientific or other way of thinking – which it cannot claim for its own but which enables philosophy to evolve as a practice of concepts. It is at this level of philosophy as practice that the apparent contradiction between the two movements we staged and the ambivalence of *What is Philosophy?* need to be thought: *qua* distinct 'modes of Ideation', disciplines are all *practices*, each no more or less abstract than the other. The point is not for philosophy to stop looking outside itself for inspiration or to lay claim to superiority over other disciplines. The point is that the practice of transdisciplinarity needs to proceed with care. If, returning to *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari tell us that the plane of consistency is always 'constructed [. . .], in very different social formations through very different assemblages (perverse, artistic, scientific, mystical, political)', the question nevertheless remains one of caution: 'whether the pieces can fit together, and at what price' (Deleuze and Guattari [1980] 1988: 157). For the stakes are never purely theoretical but always also practical. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, the construction of the plane of consistency always involves the assembling of flows of desire, the practical implications of which are extended into Deleuze's last published work where 'pure immanence' is twinned with an impersonal practice, 'A LIFE' (Deleuze [1995] 2001: 27).

It is at this crossroads of practices of thought that the political value of a transdisciplinary practice of interference becomes manifest. That the three disciplines can 'interbreed' but claim the offspring respecting the conceptual, functional or affective-perceptive method of conception

is not a limitation but a warning against the relativistic application of concepts across fields. Interference, the practice of transversing boundaries, needs to proceed with care. Of course, as we have seen above, we are not speaking of a method that functions as a final end or as a programmatic perspective given once and for all. A discipline may create something unexpected, if, as we saw, the interference proceeds subtly. The only requirement, then, is that the connection between disciplines be constantly reinvented, respecting their distinct specificities while being able to induce the new without claiming mastery or assuming power over one another. Above all, what is at stake is an understanding of transdisciplinarity as a practice capable of bypassing the facile opposition between contemplation and action, theory and praxis.[3]

*

All articles contained in this issue may be considered to express this single centrifugal–centripetal movement in terms of the problematic of transdisciplinarity as practice. In doing so, they aspire to shed light on a crucial aspect of Deleuze's practice of concepts as the condition for the articulation of a philosophy that will be 'no more abstract than its object' (Deleuze [1985] 1989: 280) but, strictly speaking, a practical or ethico-aesthetic experiment, to use a Guattarian notion, always in the process of reconfiguring itself.

In 'Deleuze Challenges Kolmogorov on a Calculus of Problems', Jean-Claude Dumoncel reveals the character of Deleuze's philosophy as a 'practice of problems' by reviving the latter's encounter with mathematical intuitionism on the contested territory of the Leibnizian *Calculemus*. The article proceeds by tackling Deleuze's transformation of logico-mathematical structures as conducive to the very conceptualisation of the 'problem' in properly metaphysical terms. Beginning with a review of Kolmogorov's constructive logic, Dumoncel discusses the implications of the Deleuzian decision to liberate the principle of the excluded middle from the epistemological focus of the standard propositional calculus and restore it into an ontological '*law of being and becoming*'. At stake in this act is the articulation of the relation between the calculus of problems and propositional calculus as a nuanced but non-hierarchical relation of 'discriminating power'. According to this power, Dumoncel argues, the calculus of problems emerges as being able to '[detect] *differences* in the propositional calculus'. But this can only happen 'on condition that [the calculus of problems] is (morphologically) *identical* to [propositional

calculus]'. Paradoxically, it is precisely '*because* the symbolic formulas of the calculus of problems, literally taken, are *indiscernible* from the corresponding formulas in the propositional calculus' that difference can be detected by the repetition of the logical rules of the excluded middle on a metaphysical level. With this premise, the article goes on to plot a meticulous trail of conceptual connections, including the role of Leibnizian *themes*, Peircean *rhemes*, Hilbert's *Aristide* and Spinoza's parallelism at work in the metaphysicalisation of the propositional calculus into a calculus of problems. Principal among the latter is the subtle interference between philosophy and mathematics as exemplified by the encounter between Deleuze and Lautman. Deleuze is shown to engage with a Lautmanian dialectics in order to reveal the Idea as the extra-propositional and extra-philosophical plane that is differently actualised in logic, mathematics and philosophy but remains irreducible to them. The result of this second connection is brought to bear upon the nature of philosophical thought as one that, through a calculus of problems, takes for its object the very practice of concept creation as fundamentally transdisciplinary.

Daniela Voss's article 'Deleuze's Third Synthesis of Time' focuses on Deleuze's theory of time and especially the enigmatic character of the so-called 'third synthesis' by drawing attention to a series of extrinsically interfering philosophical, dramaturgical and mathematical lines that inform it. In the article, the dynamics of the conceptualisation of the static synthesis of the future is seen as driven by the notion of the 'cut'. Working her way through detailed readings of Kant's pure form of time, Hölderlin's 'caesura' and Dedekind's theory of continuity, Voss's thesis is that Deleuze's interest in the 'cut' is threefold: the 'cut' allows a static and purely ideal definition of continuity; it induces a break from empirical definitions of time as flow; and it permits the distribution of past and future affairs in a linear yet non-identical way. The three strands are then intercepted and bent through a Nietzschean lens. With the aid of the concept of the eternal return and its (Klossowskian) demand that whatever returns return as different and new, as simulacrum, Deleuze is then shown to achieve nothing less than a novel theory of the subject as non-identical to itself and multiple, always in the process of becoming. Deleuze's third synthesis of time presents us 'not simply an a priori subjective form, but an a priori and a-subjective static synthesis of a multiplicity of temporal series', immanent to the process of de/subjectivation. Yet the 'cut' here is not described as a means to articulate or simply 'contemplate' the possibility of an a-subjective a priori. As Voss argues, the 'cut' is first and foremost the

means with which to engage with the untimely a-subjective field as a practice of thought, which immanently refashions Deleuze himself *as* political subject *in* the present and qualifies his way of philosophising as one of 'cutting theories together'. In fact, the article concludes, this is where the proper meaning of 'thought as heterogenesis' is to be found. By interfering with other modes of Ideation, such as mathematics and drama, Deleuze is able to invoke a 'becoming-other' of the subject that is first and foremost a logic of transdisciplinarity where thought exercises and expresses itself in heterogeneity.

Éric Alliez's article 'Ontology of the Diagram and Biopolitics of Philosophy: A Research Programme on Transdisciplinarity', uses the diagram to both develop a genealogy of and critically engage with Deleuze's and Deleuze and Guattari's practices of transdisciplinarity, culminating in an equally biopolitical and artistic critique of philosophy. The article examines how under the influence of Guattari, Deleuze extracts from Foucault in the mid-1970s a 'revolutionary diagram from which are derived both a new way of doing and a new way of speaking'. This is fleshed out in *A Thousand Plateaus* in terms of a constructivism of desire. Alliez's key proposition in the first part of his article is that the 'political plane of consistency' of the diagram – its complete immanence to the socio-political field and thus its capacity to construct it – must always be 'explicat[ed] and complicat[ed]' as '*Art and politics*'. The lines of flight or points of mutation lying between or prior to formed strata (or structures) excavated by Deleuze and Guattari's new practice of the diagram are also always, for Alliez, sensible signs open to artistic experimentation and creation. Thus, art is never 'an end in itself' but always a biopolitical practice (the construction of vital flows of desire). To explain how this in turn leads to a biopolitical critique of philosophy, the second part of the article charts the historical development of the Deleuzian and Guattarian concept of diagram out of Deleuze's transcendental empiricism and engagement with structuralism in the 1960s. While structuralism sought to establish a transdisciplinary conception of structure capable of opposing the 'theoretical primacy of philosophy', Alliez considers that Deleuze's key innovation in 'How Do We Recognise Structuralism?' was to fold structuralism *back* onto philosophy. This folding gives way to a 'new transcendental philosophy' literally turned inside-out by its internal reliance on other disciplines and practices for its ideational and sensible content. Alliez shows that it was thanks to Guattari that Deleuze could fully break with structuralism and realise its transdisciplinary outlook, by identifying the idealising

'operational closure' or 'disciplinary regulation' of structure with the internal limits of the capitalist system they sought to critique. The anti-structuralist outside of capital (and State philosophy) is therefore understandable, for Alliez, as both 'the politics of thought and politics inside thought' and '*Art after Philosophy*'.

For Deleuze, along with Guattari, politics as such is not categorically singled out as an autonomous mode of 'Ideation' like those of philosophy, science and art, respectively. Rather, politics assigns itself the form of transversal 'collective creations' or 'becomings', which cross disciplinary territorialities and hence cannot be localised in specific regions or groups of activities. Then what are the precise nature and the end of such politics? In 'Who Are Our Nomads Today?: Deleuze's Political Ontology and the Revolutionary Problematic', Craig Lundy seeks to explore and clarify these questions by elaborating upon another question posed as a political imperative by Deleuze in 1972, 'we must ask: who are our nomads today?' (Deleuze 2004: 260). For Lundy, this question demands that we turn to the ontological basis behind the conceptual distinction between the State and the nomad, as well as to Deleuze and Guattari's seemingly dualistic deployments of terms such as smooth/striated, as presented in *A Thousand Plateaus*. The view he offers is that such dualisms are ultimately rooted in Deleuze's long-sustained engagements with Henri Bergson's distinction between two types of multiplicities (of degree and of kind) and this distinction in fact serves as the ontological foundation of their political philosophy *tout court*. The lesson for politics he draws from the Bergsonian distinction allows him to reconfigure the seemingly dualistic definition of the nomad so that it is not dualistically opposed to the State. Rather, the nomad is defined in terms of a topological triad that supposes the 'second force of nomadism' placed in-between two kinds of multiplicities here transposed onto the polarity of State/nomad, a polarity that is initially established in an absolute manner. There are thus two nomads: the nomad conceived vis-à-vis the State and the nomad in-between the State and the nomad. The answer to the first question, 'who are today's nomads?' is thus answered behind our backs, for asking the question itself is part of philosophy as practice of thought.

In "'What Is Called Thinking?": When Deleuze Walks Along Heideggerian Paths', Benoît Dillet explores the complex relation between Deleuze and Heidegger in their respective formulations of 'thinking' as a political problem. While it is well known that Deleuze explicitly distanced himself from Heidegger's 'ontological Difference'

in *Difference and Repetition*, Dillet argues that there is a more profound affinity between them with respect to their common thesis on thinking as a political problem. Dillet points out that when Deleuze repeatedly writes 'we are not yet thinking', he is referring to the same pronouncement made by Heidegger, and to the specific ways in which the latter called for an understanding of what thinking involves in his 1951–2 lectures entitled 'What Is Called Thinking?'. Dillet, drawing on Zourabichvili's take on Deleuze's political thought, argues that Deleuze's conception of thinking as an involuntary practice comes close to Heidegger's conception of thinking as 'releasement', which requires an unwillingness that simultaneously points to and withdraws from what calls for thinking. However, on the question regarding who, or better which discipline, has access to thought, the two thinkers are considered by Dillet to differ sharply. While for Heidegger, '[a]ll sciences are grounded in philosophy, but not *vice versa*', Deleuze, on the other hand, grants all disciplines full rights and power to ground themselves and to reflect upon their own 'supra-historical' foundations without relying on philosophy to do so. In short, while Heidegger draws a hierarchical picture of 'thinking' with philosophy sitting on top of all sciences, Deleuze 'democratises' thinking and sees it as equally capable of being accessed by all disciplines, albeit in their own particular ways. This openness of thought to disciplines other than philosophy is exemplified by Deleuze's work on cinema. Far from requiring philosophy to think on behalf of it, cinema is fully capable of thought in its own right, and it resists stupidity just as much as philosophy and science do.

Notes

1. We borrow the term 'transdisciplinarity' from the research programme currently underway in the Centre for Research in Modern European Philosophy at Kingston University, London, and which Éric Alliez has recently articulated from a Deleuzian and Guattarian angle in such texts as 'Rhizome (With no return)' (2011), further developed in his contribution to this issue.
2. 'La philosophie n'est ni contemplation, ni réflexion ni communication. Elle est l'activité qui crée les concepts. Comment se distingue-t-elle de ses rivales, qui prétendent nous fournir en concepts (comme le marketing aujourd'hui)? La philosophie doit nous dire quelle est la nature créative du concept, et quels en sont les concomitants: la pure immanence, le plan d'immanence, et les personnages conceptuels.

   Par là, la philosophie se distingue de la science et de la logique. Celles-ci n'opèrent pas par concepts, mais par fonctions, sur un plan de référence et avec des observateurs partiels. L'art opère par percepts et affects, sur un plan de composition avec des figures esthétiques. La philosophie n'est pas interdisciplinaire, elle est elle-même une discipline entière qui entre en résonance

avec la science et avec l'art, comme ceux-ci avec elle; trouver le concept d'une fonction, etc.

C'est que les trois plans sont les trois manières dont le cerveau recoupe le chaos, et l'affronte. Ce sont les chaoïdes. La pensée ne se constitue que dans ce rapport où elle risque toujours de sombrer' (Deleuze and Guattari [1991] 1994: back cover).

We owe special thanks to Marjorie Gracieuse for drawing our attention to this passage in her paper 'Immanence as Differential Material of Human Practices: on the distinction between Transdisciplinarity and Interdisciplinarity', presented at the conference.

3. This is the 'creative act' itself, which, as Deleuze puts it in his lecture from 1987, involves the construction of different modes of ideation:

'No one has an idea in general. An idea – like the one who has the idea – is already dedicated to a particular field. Sometimes it is an idea in painting, or an idea in an novel, or an idea in philosophy or an idea in science [. . .] Ideas have to be treated like potentials already *engaged* in one mode of expression or another' (Deleuze [2001] 2007: 317; original emphasis).

How can we visualise such a practice of thought? We may borrow here Jean-Claude Dumoncel's image: disciplines are paths of thought that travel in caravans, and Ideas are the 'caravanserais' where disciplines can enter from the various gateways and intersect 'independently of their specific technicalities' (Dumoncel 2009: 83; our translation):

'Les Idées, au sens deleuzien, sont donc des caravansérails de la pratique et de la pensée où peuvent se croiser les disciplines les plus diverses, indépendamment de leurs technicités spécifiques.'

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Deleuze Challenges Kolmogorov on a Calculus of Problems

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Abstract[1]

In 1932 Kolmogorov created a calculus of problems. This calculus became known to Deleuze through a 1945 paper by Paulette Destouches-Février. In it, he ultimately recognised a deepening of mathematical intuitionism. However, from the beginning, he proceeded to show its limits through a return to the Leibnizian project of *Calculemus* taken in its metaphysical stance. In the carrying out of this project, which is illustrated through a paradigm borrowed from Spinoza, the formal parallelism between problems, Leibnizian themes and Peircean rhemes provides the key idea. By relying on this parallelism and by spreading the dialectic defined by Lautman with its 'logical drama' onto a Platonic perspective, we will attempt to obtain Deleuze's full calculus of problems. In investigating how the same Idea may be in mathematics and in philosophy, we will proceed to show how this calculus of problems qualifies not only as a paradigm of the Idea but also as the apex of transdiciplinarity.[2]

Keywords: calculus, Deleuze, problems, rhemes, transcendentals,

I. Introduction

Transdisciplinarity has two conceptual neighbours or challengers in neighbourhood: pluridisciplinarity and interdisciplinarity. Pluridisciplinarity reaches its apex in anthropology: a man falling from a cliff is a point for mathematics, a body for physics, an organism for biology, perhaps a candidate for suicide for sociology. Interdisciplinarity, if it

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exists, is constantly in danger of falling prey to fashion. In a congress of mathematicians, physicists and epigraphists, the first condition of 'interdisciplinarity' is that mathematicians make mathematics, physicists physics and epigraphists epigraphy; but the second condition is that each also says something in the disciplines about which he or she is supposed to have a lot to learn. In this sense, 'interdisciplinarity' can be said to have as many advantages as squaring the circle does. And so the suspicion is born that mathematicians, physicists and epigraphists go to interdisciplinary jamborees in the rare periods when they really have nothing particular to say in mathematics, physics or epigraphy, respectively.

But what about this *tertium datur* between the Necessary and the Impossible that is transdisciplinarity? It is fairly easy to notice that the whole universe of pluridisciplinarity and interdisciplinarity turns in the circle of Comte's classification of the sciences: mathematics, physics, biology, sociology (and other social sciences). In other words, pluridisciplinarity and interdisciplinarity are by-products of positivism. Since universities, still bearing the vestiges of their medieval mothers, currently include a department of philosophy on a par with the faculties of theology, medicine and law, philosophers are also invited by force or politeness in the interdisciplinary jamborees. But the status of their discourse remains a mystery for all the participants, including themselves.

In the Deleuzian doctrine of Thought, however, we do have a concept for transdisciplinarity. This is the concept of the Idea, taken in the sense that the same Idea may be, for example, an Idea in mathematics, in cinema and in philosophy. In relation, then, to the positivist encyclopaedia, which circumscribes the whole territory of interdisciplinarity as well as pluridisciplinarity, we notice that Deleuze exceeds this Procrustean bed at least in two ways. First, philosophy acquires, in addition to its *de facto* status inherited from the medieval university, a *de jure* status reminiscent of its role in Plato's Academy or Aristotle's Lyceum. Second, the extension of Ideas is not confined to sciences (even *sensu lato*) but includes arts, such as cinema. Starting with this freed space of the Idea, we will focus on the couple philosophy–mathematics. With regard to this couple, the relation of Deleuze to Kolmogorov and the latter's calculus of problems offers more than a paradigm: rather, it opens a royal path, which, incidentally, also encounters the main difficulties surrounding what we will call the problem predicament.

Deleuze's assessment of the calculus of problems in symbolic logic is contained in two sentences that must be quoted in reverse chronological order:

> The 'intuitionist' school (Brouwer, Heyting, Griss, Bouligand, etc.) is of great importance in mathematics, not because it asserted the irreducible rights of intuition, or even because it elaborated a very novel constructivism, but because it developed a conception of *problems*, and of a *calculus of problems* that intrinsically rivals axiomatics and proceeds by other rules (notably with regard to the excluded middle). (Deleuze and Guattari [1980] 1987: 570)

> The calculus of problems as it is defined – notably by Kolmogoroff – still remains traced from a calculus of propositions, in 'isomorphism' with it. (Deleuze [1968] 1994: 322)[3]

The question faced in these two sentences is precisely indicative of the problem predicament. The first sentence contains the Deleuzian synopsis of mathematical intuitionism, which is better, as we shall see, than its counterparts in standard companions on the foundations of mathematics.[4] The second sentence is the Deleuzian challenge to Kolmogorov on the calculus of problems.[5] Yet there is a crucial connection between the two: the 'etc.' following the names of Brouwer and Heyting in the first sentence must be taken to refer primarily to Kolmogorov in the second. For, as it is well known, the calculus of problems, which according to Deleuze is the highpoint of mathematical intuitionism, had been created by Kolmogorov in 1932. This entails that the first sentence, which appears in *A Thousand Plateaus* in 1980, is an important correction of the position taken in 1968 in *Difference and Repetition*. In the latter, the calculus of Kolmogorov was simply seen as illustrating a 'false conception of the category of problem'; accordingly, its value was dismissed (Deleuze [1968] 1994: 322). In *A Thousand Plateaus*, however, the calculus of problems has reached the level of 'great mathematical importance'. As we shall see, this does not mean that the critical assessment is wholly withdrawn. In fact, the main reason behind Deleuze's enduring critical stance is his endorsement of the most celebrated among the Leibnizian 'dreams', that is, 'the great logical dream of a problem calculus'. For the *locus classicus* of this dream is the paragraph where Leibniz precisely anticipates the effect of his 'philosophical grammar' on Philosophy as a whole:

> Then, between two philosophers, there will be no more need of discussions longer than between mathematicians, since it will suffice that they seize their

> pen, that they sit at their computing table (appealing to a friend if they wish) and that they say to each other: 'Let us calculate' [*Calculemus*]. (Leibniz [1687] 1978: 200)[6]

Regarding our question, then, in *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze essentially draws on two tenets:[7] on the one hand, he endorses 'the great logical dream of a combinatory or calculus of problems' he ascribes to Leibniz (Deleuze [1968] 1994: 157);[8] on the other, he says about Carnot's *Reflections on the Metaphysics of the Infinitesimal Calculus* that '[by] invoking the notions of "problem" and "problem conditions" ... Carnot opened up for metaphysics a path which went beyond the frame of his own theory' (177). So that with regard to what we have called the problem predicament, the whole Deleuzian doctrine may be described as outlining a metaphysical calculus of problems. As we shall see, this view is maintained until *What Is Philosophy?* and it is precisely what subtends the definition of a properly Deleuzian dialectics. For according to Deleuze, 'Dialectic is the art of problems and questions, the combinatory or calculus of problems as such' (157). And in this dialectics, the metaphysical calculus of problems is the spearhead, and the theory of problems is more specifically called 'problematics'.[9]

Based on the above, our whole exposition will have two main, though unequal, parts. In the first part, which is relatively brief, we shall explain the Kolmogorov calculus and its discussion by Deleuze. In the second part, relying on scattered data in Deleuze, we shall disclose, through their systematisation, his full metaphysical calculus of problems.

II. The Kolmogorov Calculus of Problems

We have a double reason to expound upon and discuss the calculus of Kolmogorov. We must understand why Deleuze arrived at a positive assessment of it; and we must also find in it the target of his lasting critic on the problem predicament, explaining why the very same calculus falls short of the 'great logical dream'.

In order to appraise the Deleuzian judgement in its two pronouncements, we may condense the Kolmogorov calculus of problems in the four following definitions:

1. $A \wedge B$ is the problem of solving problem A *and* problem B.
2. $A \vee B$ is the problem of solving *at least* one of problems A *or* B.
3. $A \rightarrow B$ is the problem of reducing a solution of problem B to a solution of problem A (conditional problem).

4. ¬ *A* is the problem: assuming a solution of problem *A* exists, deduce a contradiction.

Based on the logic so defined, we shall try to answer two questions: first, what is the 'great importance in mathematics' of this calculus 'notably with regard to the excluded middle'? Second, why does it nonetheless miss, according to Deleuze, the true 'conception of the category of problem'?

According to the standard story, as concerns the calculus of problems Kolmogorov is credited with having provided the 'semantics' of intuitionist logic. This is not false, but when Deleuze asserts that the calculus of problems 'intrinsically rivals axiomatics and proceeds by other rules (notably with regard to the excluded middle)' (Deleuze and Guattari [1980] 1987: 570), he is pointing to a much more important performance. As we shall see, the main contribution of Kolmogorov to intuitionist logic is a real foundation of this deviant logic in his calculus of problems. Taken in this perspective, 'intuitionist' logic is better called 'constructive' logic.

In order to see this point more clearly, it should suffice to deepen the comparison between two of the best-known laws in formal logic, here presented in a Kolmogorov dress. We mean the *tertium non datur* (or principle of 'the excluded middle')

$$A \vee \neg A$$

and the *modus ponens*

$$(A \wedge (A \rightarrow B)) \rightarrow B.$$

Between these two laws, the universal validity of the *tertium non datur* was notoriously questioned by Brouwer; and the first contribution of Kolmogorov to intuitionist logic is in his 1925 paper 'On the Principle of Excluded Middle'. Indeed, in the seemingly homogeneous web of the propositional calculus where these laws are selected, the Kolmogorov calculus of problems will reveal an unsuspected break.

Suppose the problem $A \wedge (A \rightarrow B)$ has a solution. This means that we have a solution to problem A and a solution to problem $A \rightarrow B$. But a solution of problem $A \rightarrow B$ means that the solution of problem B may be reduced to a solution of problem A. And, by hypothesis, we have a solution of problem A. So we have also a solution of problem B. All this means that the solution of problem B may be reduced to a solution of problem $A \wedge (A \rightarrow B)$ – that is, the exact case of $(A \wedge (A \rightarrow B)) \rightarrow B$. In other words, the *modus ponens* works in the calculus of problems

exactly like it does in the standard propositional calculus. But with the *tertium non datur*, it is a different ball game! Because here we hit at the difference between

$$A \vee \neg A$$

and the crude

$$p \vee \neg p.$$

The classical $p \vee \neg p$, for its part, means only that in any couple $\langle p, \neg p \rangle$ of contradictory propositions one at least is true. But with $A \vee \neg A$, it is quite another story because in this case we have either a solution of problem A or a solution of problem $\neg A$. And having a solution to any problem is an epistemic endorsement. Thus, the *tertium non datur* which, in a calculus of truth functions is a valid law, reveals itself to be subject to an 'impeachment' when the calculus of problems enters the landscape.[10]

Let us illustrate the above point with a celebrated example revisited by Deleuze: 'Will there be a naval battle tomorrow?' (Deleuze [1985] 1989: 130). This is a problem. As Aristotle says, 'it is necessary that there will be a sea-battle tomorrow or not' (Aristotle, qtd in Anscombe 1956).[11] This gives us an illustration of $p \vee \neg p$. But $A \vee \neg A$ is the problem of solving *at least* one of problems A *or* $\neg A$, where $\neg A$ is the problem: assuming a solution of problem A exists, deduce a contradiction. So that in this case $A \vee \neg A$ is the problem of having either a demonstrably true prognostic of a sea-battle tomorrow or a *reductio ad absurdum* of such a prognostic. We sublunar mortals are far off this epistemic performance. In other words, we may say that in the practice of problems, the transmission of obtained solutions along the channel of implication can conduce to the detachment of a solution according to the step of the *modus ponens*, but that on the fork of a disjunction there is no adjudication of solutions isomorphic to a *tertium non datur* (this alternative adjudication being confined to the truth values).

The difference between the respective destinies of the *modus ponens* and the *tertium non datur*, when the calculus of problems makes the difference, is of a huge significance. It means that formal logic, on the level of the propositional calculus, is crossed by an essential heterogeneity. The *modus ponens* is paradigmatic of the logical principles as laws of thought. With the *tertium non datur* we are on another territory. As the sea-battle predicament shows, the *tertium non datur* is a law of being and becoming. The calculus of problems reveals the objective difference between the two kinds of laws by epistemological criteria. And when the epistemological considerations are predominant,

as in mathematical intuitionism, the verdict of the epistemological criteria is promoted to the status of a logical touchstone: so much so that the principle of excluded middle is rejected as a logical rule.

In all this, as it will be obvious by now, the isomorphism duly registered by Deleuze has an essential function: it is because the symbolic formulas of the calculus of problems, literally taken, are indiscernible from the corresponding formulas in the propositional calculus that the calculus of problems has a discriminating power on the propositional calculus. In other words, the calculus of problems detects differences in the propositional calculus on condition that it is (morphologically) identical to it. 'Difference' is detected by (literal) 'repetition'. But on the level of the whole predicament, this means that the Kolmogorov calculus is a kind of medal, with its reverse and its obverse. For in the Deleuzian balance, the same isomorphism that motivates the critical attitude on the calculus is also a key condition of the discriminating power which constitutes its value. Nevertheless, there is no inconsistency between the two faces of the medal. On the contrary, the more the Deleuzian assessment recognises the unquestionable value of the Kolmogorov breakthrough, the more its reservations are well anchored, with its own doctrine well erected.

III. The Metaphysical Calculus of Problems

It must be noted that Kolmogorov does not define the notion of 'problem' but gives only some examples. These are the paradigmatic problems according to Kolmogorov. One of these examples is the following:

Find four positive integers x, y, z, n, such that $x^n + y^n = z^n$ and $n > 2$.

Here we can already recognise the target of the Fermat–Wiles theorem. A truly tiny target for a truly titanic proof! But this paradigmatic problem of mathematics leads us to an exegetic problem in philosophy: where in Deleuze do we find an example on the level of Kolmogorov's?

To our knowledge, taking into account that the Deleuzian concept of a calculus derives in part from the 'metaphysics of the calculus' in Carnot and that the paradigmatic problem of Kolmogorov is a case of exponentiation, this is an *apax*:[12]

> Hegel shows that variability in the function is not confined to values that can be changed (2/3 and 4/6), or are left indetermined ($a = 2b$), but requires one of the variables to be at a higher power ($y^2/x = P$). For it is then that a relation can be directly determined as differential relation dy/dx, in which

> the only determination of the value of the variables is that of disappearing or being born, even though it is wrested from infinite speeds. A state of affairs or 'derivative' function depends on such a relation: an operation of depotentialisation has been carried out that makes possible the comparison of distinct powers starting from which a thing or a body may well develop (integration). (Deleuze and Guattari [1991] 1994: 122)

These lines from *What Is Philosophy?* are directly referred to a page by Hegel in the *Science of Logic* [1816] (2010).[13] In fact, they are an abstract of two or three pages of Hegel's on the differential and integral calculus – a strange abstract, no less, because it admits of a double reading.[14] Upon a first reading, it can be said to follow some lines on the representation of velocity and acceleration in the famous diagram of Nicole Oresme, so that we have in two pages a philosophical epitome of the infinitesimal calculus considered in its genesis and evolution, a subject which Deleuze had studied at length in *The History of the Calculus and its Conceptual Development* by Carl B. Boyer.[15] A second reading is induced by a tiny anomaly of the text. In his abstract of Hegel on the calculus, Deleuze retains the examples given in the *Science of Logic* but with one exception. Hegel begins his series of examples by the equality $2/7 = 4/14$. Without any warning, Deleuze replaces it by the equality $2/3 = 4/6$. Why? We are in a book where Spinoza is proclaimed 'the prince of philosophers' (Deleuze and Guattari [1991] 1994: 48). So we can recognise here 'the proportion 2, 4, 3, 6', taken as example from the *Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect*.[16] And this proportion illustrates a general request: 'Three numbers are given – it is required to find a fourth, which shall be to the third as the second is to the first.' That is, we are here before a paradigm of the problem. In the *Ethics* (II, XL, n. 2), this paradigm is even made both more simple and more explicit: 'one, two, three, being given, everyone can see that the fourth proportional is six'. In this version, the paradigm is more simple since it begins with the three first numbers; and it is more explicit as a case of problem since only the given numbers 1, 2 and 3 are named, leaving the solution of the problem in the dark or, better, as a blank. So, if we put this paradigm in the same form as $2/3 = 4/6$, we obtain

$$1/2 = 3/\ .$$

This is the Deleuzian paradigm of problem. And now that we have this paradigm, we may proceed to its dogmatic exposition. It has the nice form of an ABC.

Problems, Rhemes and Themes in the Procession of a Same Theme

We are also in a chapter of *What Is Philosophy?* where the first sentence declares: 'The objects of science are not concepts, but functions . . . '. The sequel of this thesis is to be found in the first page of the following chapter, where Deleuze, speaking about logic, says that 'following the route marked out by Frege and Russell, it wants to turn the concept into a function' (Deleuze and Guattari [1991] 1994: 135). Deleuze adds the condition of this transgression: 'Thus a new, specifically logical type of function must be invented', the 'propositional function'. And he gives an example of propositional function:

x is human.

But this is only the parvis of the temple. Because Deleuze knows as well the paradigm of the giving in C. S. Peirce (Deleuze [1983] 1986: 197). He writes it as:

A 'gives' B to C.

In Peirce we find the following writing:

–gives ¬ to – (Peirce [1898] 1992: 154)

And Deleuze has adopted this writing by hyphens on the case of the Other as a paradigm of concept with two components: 'its concept is that of an other – a subject that presents itself as an object – which is special in relation to the self' (Deleuze and Guattari [1991] 1994: 16). Peirce explains this kind of writing in the definition of his concept of rheme, also written 'rhema':

> If parts of a proposition be erased so as to leave blanks in their place, and if these blanks are of such a nature that if each of them be filled by a proper name the result will be a proposition, then the blank form of proposition which was first produced by the erasures is termed a rheme. According as the number of blanks in a rheme is 0, 1, 2, 3, etc., it may be termed a *medad* (from *μηδ*, nothing), *monad*, *dyad*, *triad*, etc., rheme. (Peirce [1903] 1998: 299)

> In a complete proposition there are no blanks. It may be called a *medad*, or *medadic relative*, from *μηδαμός*, none, and *–άδα*, the accusative ending of such words *μονάς*, *δυάς*, *τριάς*, *τετράς* etc. A non-relative name with a substantive verb, as '– is a man', or 'man that is –', or '–'s manhood' has one blank; it is a *monad*, or *monadic relative*. An ordinary relative with an active verb as '– is a lover of –' or 'the loving by – of –' has two blanks; it is a *dyad*, or *dyadic* relative. A higher relative similarly treated has a plurality of blanks. It may be called a *polyad*. The rank of a relative among these may be called its

> *adinity*, that is the peculiar quality of the number it embodies. (Peirce 1933: *CP* 3.465, 294)

But all this means that the rheme of Peirce is exactly the same thing as the propositional function of Russell as a case of the function of Frege. 'A gives B to C' is only a notational variant of '*x* gives *y* to *z*'. And since the Deleuzian writing of the concept is borrowed from the Peircean writing of the rheme, the conclusion seems unavoidable: Deleuze himself has remelted the concept of Concept in the mould of the function. What Peirce has labelled 'adinity', now called 'arity' by the logician, is in the vocabulary of Deleuze a case of *multiplicity* (Deleuze and Guattari [1991] 1994: 15).

We must, however, remark that this reasoning does not go without saying for the Peircean step:

– gives ¬ to –

As we may notice, in the Peircean paradigm of the giving, we have to distinguish three heterogeneous 'roles': the donor *A*, the donee *C*, and the gift *B*. And the juridical difference between the persons and the things is appropriately marked by a difference between the allotted hyphens '–' and '¬ '. This implies that here the limits of formal logic are exceeded, since the difference donor/donee, for example, pertains to the matter of the meaning. And such a difference of roles defines, as we shall see, a stepping stone for the Deleuzian logic of problems.

The key concept, here, is exhumed by Deleuze when, in opposition to the Kolmogorov calculus, he takes up[17] a notion that Leibniz himself had borrowed from 'some logicians of the reformation century': the concept of theme which immediately divides itself in incomplex theme and complex theme according to the distinction between 'ideas or terms' and 'propositions or truths' (Leibniz 1992: IV, i, § 2).

In these Leibnizian terms, an incomplex theme is 'a thing or idea', such as 'in love', and a complex theme is 'a thesis, proposition or truth' such as 'Candide is in love' or 'Candide is in love with Cunegonde'. As it is well known, from a propositional function such as '*x* has a daemon', propositions are obtained by what Frege has described as the saturation of the function, that is, either by the substitution of constants for the variables – as in 'Socrates has a daemon' – or by quantifying on the variables – as in '$\exists x$. *x* has a daemon' ('There is an *x* such that *x* has a daemon'). This means that the conceptual couple incomplex theme/complex theme is the ancestor of the conceptual couple

propositional function/proposition (x is in love/everybody is in love, etc.).

But Deleuze quotes the following lines from Leibniz:

> There are indeed 'themes' which can be said to be midway between an idea and a proposition, namely *questions*. Some of these ask for the Yes or the No, and these are the closest to propositions; but there are others which ask the how and the circumstances, and so on, and more must be added to these if they are to become propositions. (Leibniz 1981: IV, i, § 2)

For example, we have the following procession on a same theme:

[a] — is in love

[b] Is Marcel in love?

[c] Marcel is in love with Albertine.

In this paradigm, [a] is a term, [b] is a question (formulation of a possible problem) and [c] is a proposition. But the procession [a]–[b]–[c] as a whole is on a same theme. From the Deleuzian point of view, this is the fundamental fact of logic. And in the conceptual conflict with Kolmogorov, this is exactly what challenges the isomorphism so well exploited by Kolmogorov, for example between '$p \wedge q$' and '$A \wedge B$'. As its name recalls, iso*morph*ism is identity of form. The thematic identity, on the contrary, is an identity of matter, content or topic. It is an 'iso*hyl*ism' or, better, iso*top*ism.

Let us compare the formulas of the following thematic table:

(1) $1/2 = 3/x$	[1] Pleasure/$x = y/z$
(2) $1/2 = 3/6$	[2] Pleasure/Act = Beauty/Youth in its flower
(3) $x/2 = 3/6$	[3] x/ Act = Beauty/Youth in its flower
(4) $x/y = 3/6$	[4] x/ y = Beauty/Youth in its flower
(5) $x/y = z/6$	[5] $x/y = z$/Youth in its flower
(6) $x/y = z/w$	[6] $x/y = z/w$
(7) 2/y = z/w	[7] Queen/y = z/w
(8) $2/4 = z/w$	[8] Queen/Monarchy = z/w
(9) $2/4 = 5/w$	[9] Queen/Monarchy = President/w
(10) $2/4 = 5/10$	[10] Queen/Monarchy = President/Republic

In this table, we must begin with line 6, where (6) = [6], being a propositional function with four free variables. From this starting point, we can then proceed either downwards or upwards. If we proceed

downwards, along the series from (5) to (10) or [5] to [10], following the method recalled by Deleuze when he says that we arrive at '$f(a)$ for a variable x', we shall obtain finally, by the progressive elimination of all the free variables, a proposition that is true or false such as (10) or [10]: '2/4 equals 5/10' or 'The queen is to a monarchy what the president is to a republic'. This is the logical genesis of propositions by quantification binding the free variables of the propositional function or by substitution of constants for these variables. Here, it is illustrated by the second method, the more fundamental one.

But if we proceed upwards, we penetrate into another territory. First, we must notice that a formula such as (1)

$$1/2 = 3/x$$

is virtually ambiguous. If it is taken in a book of formal logic, it is probably, as (9), a propositional function with one free variable, on a par with the Deleuzian example 'x is human'. If it is taken in a book of mathematics, it is probably a proposition. This proposition may be formulated, as in Kolmogorov, under the form of an imperative:

$$\text{Find one integer } x \text{ such that } 1/2 = 3/x.$$

But it may also take the form of an interrogative proposition:

$$\text{What is the number } x \text{ such that } 1/2 = 3/x?$$

In its two forms, the proposition enunciates a problem by an equation. In a propositional function the variables are dummies disposed of in order to be clothed by constants. In an equation they are the unknown variables, here to be suppressed by their solutions. (By 'virtually ambiguous', we mean that the ambiguity cannot cause any misunderstanding since propositional functions with free variables have no use – but only mentions. Consequently, the amphibology is recommended as an economy!)

The case of '$1/2 = 3/x$' may be generalised. When in our table we proceed from (6) to (3) and (1) or from [6] to [3] and [1], we obtain in each column some examples of (soluble or insoluble) problems. The propositions (2) and [2] contain respectively the solutions of problems (1) and [1]. Therefore, we arrive at the following conclusion: the arity or adinity of propositional functions extends to the problems, taking the form of the number of their unknown variables. In Deleuzian terms, this means that the multiplicity characteristic of the rhemes extends to the problems or, better, that the same multiplicity extends indifferently to propositional functions and to problems. Since problems are naturally

expressed in questions and since the logic of questions is called erotetic logic (from the Greek *erotesis*, questioning) we shall call this thesis of a same arity shared by all themes (in rhemes and problems) the principle of rhema-erotetic arity.

This thesis must be appreciated in its full significance. Formal logic, in its totality, is constituted by the propositional calculus and quantification theory. But since propositions are nothing but saturated propositional functions and since quantification is the binding of variables in propositional functions, the concept of propositional function is the arch-concept of logic in its totality. The fact that the arity of propositional functions exceeds formal logic and qualifies also the problems, therefore, may be said the fundamental fact of logic.

In taking from Spinoza the $1/2 = 3/x$ as paradigm of problems, endorsing the hyphen symbolism of Peircean rhemes and recycling the Leibnizian themes, Deleuze has discovered on the path problem–rheme–theme the principle of rhema-erotetic arity as the thesis of isotopy.

In Kolmogorov's calculus, the only problems at stake are mathematical problems. But, as the thematic table shows, the principle of isotopy is not confined to mathematics. As the example from Aristotle attests, philosophical problems illustrate the same law. The problem [1] may be rephrased more explicitly:

[1bis] Found a good analogy exhibiting the place of pleasure in human life.

In order to reach the full generality of a calculus of problems, how can we neutralise the difference between philosophy and mathematics? Following Coquand in his commentary on Kolmogorov,[18] we shall introduce the conceptual character imagined by Hilbert: **Aristide** = $\tau_x A$. The so-called Aristide is defined by Hilbert in the following way: if A is the predicate 'to be corruptible', then $\tau_x A$ would be a man 'of such absolute integrity that, if he happened to be corruptible, all men in general would be corruptible' (Hilbert [1923] 1996: 1140–1; translation modified). With such a definition, Hilbert's Aristide is obviously an amphibian between mathematics and philosophy.

But in order to reach such a result, and even if, as Kolmogorov, one confines the calculus to mathematics, the fundamental fact of logic itself is not sufficient. Deleuze declares:

> Sense is located in the problem itself. Sense is constituted in the complex theme, but the complex theme is that set of problems and questions in relation to which the propositions serve as elements of response and cases of solution. (Deleuze [1968] 1994: 157)

This thesis precedes the reference to Leibniz[19] which leads us to his division of the concept of theme into complex themes and incomplex themes. As we have seen, in Leibniz, an incomplex theme is for example 'in love' or 'in love with Cunegonde', and a complex theme is, for example, 'Candide is in love' or 'Candide is in love with Cunegonde'. That is, in Leibniz, incomplex themes are terms to be conceived as rhemes or propositional functions, and complex themes are propositions. But when we penetrate into the Deleuzian dialectics, the opposition incomplex/complex acquires an entirely new meaning.

In order to understand the Deleuzian dialectics in its full significance, we have to enlarge our conceptual apparatus and consider at least the following conceptual triplet that we shall call the entire dialectic triad:

$$\begin{array}{c}\text{Problems}\\ \text{Terms} = \text{Rhemes} = \text{Propositional functions}\\ \text{Propositions}\end{array}$$

In the dialectic triad, the layer of rhemes represents the level of incomplex themes. But the main point of Deleuzian dialectics is that, from this layer of incomplexity, two kinds of logical 'complexity' can be reached; two kinds that are not only different but entirely heterogeneous.

There is the well-known complexity of propositions, which qualifies them as complex themes in the Leibnizian sense. This is the 'complexity' obtained by the saturation of rhemes as propositional functions. For example, from the incomplex

$$x/y = z/w$$

there is the increasing complexity of

$$\begin{array}{l}x/y = z/\text{Aristide}\\ \exists x.x/y = z/\text{Aristide}\\ \text{Etc.}\end{array}$$

But there is a quite different complexity in the bargain: the complexity qualifying the problems.

Lautman in Bergsonian territory: incipit Albert Lautman

From here onwards, the Deleuzian doctrine on problems is mainly borrowed from Lautman.[20] In mathematical philosophy, the Lautman posture is an *apax*. On the category of problem, according to Deleuze, Lautman is grasped in a kind of analogy with the doctrine of Bergson on intuition, intelligence and instinct. According to Bergson, between

intelligence and instinct we find the following chiasmatic paradox:

> *Intelligence sets problems of which it has no solution.*
> *Instinct has solutions of problems it has never set.*

The function of intuition follows:

Intuition has the function of giving to the problems of intelligence the ready-made solutions worked out by instinct.

Mathematics is, among others, a case of this Law of Bergson. In mathematics, as in other disciplines, the solutions are the affair of an 'instinct'. And the royal art is the weaving of unforeseeable problems by intelligence. This is the true story of mathematical 'intuition'.

This paradoxical situation is paralleled by the main relation between philosophy and mathematics as it is conceived by Lautman. According to Lautman, philosophy sets latent problems to which it has no solution, and mathematics offers patent solutions of some problems it has never set. The task of 'mathematical philosophy' follows: mathematical philosophy must give to the latent problems of philosophy their patent solutions in mathematics:

> Nowhere better than in the admirable work of Albert Lautman has it been shown how problems are first Platonic Ideas or ideal liaisons between *dialectical* notions, relative to 'eventual situations of the existent'; but also how they are realised within the real relations constitutive of the desired solution within a *mathematical*, *physical* or other field. It is in this sense, according to Lautman, that science always participates in a dialectic which points beyond it – in other words, in a meta-mathematical and extra-propositional power – even though the liaisons of this dialectic are incarnated only in effective scientific propositions and theories. (Deleuze [1968] 1994: 163–4)

The mathematical philosophy of Lautman, itself, is exfoliated on two Platonic plateaus: on a first plateau, Lautman holds that even 'at the mathematical level' there is a real 'drama' which is 'played' in the heights, and that it qualifies as a 'logical drama' (Lautman [2006] 2011: 167, 189). On a second plateau, this logical drama, played at the level of mathematics, is in its turn explained by an even more secret history or action, developing itself 'at the background' of the drama, or, more exactly, above it. This double doctrine is contained in the following lines:

> Mathematics, and above all modern mathematics, algebra, group theory and topology, have thus appeared to us to tell, in addition to the constructions in which the mathematician is interested, another more hidden story made for

> the philosopher. A dialectical action is always at play in the background … (Lautman [2006] 2011: 91)
>
> One may say that distinct mathematical theories participate to a common dialectic which dominates them … participation of mathematics to a higher and more hidden reality which, in my opinion, constitute a real world of ideas. (Lautman, qtd in Cavaillès [1939] 1946: 596, 605; also Cavaillès 1994: 596, 605; my translation)

This action, which is played above the Lautmanian drama, will be called the Lautmanian *gesta*. Corresponding to these two plateaux of Lautman's theory, Deleuzian dialectics will itself develop in a drama crowned by a *gesta*.

The proper complexity of problems, taken in its main lines, is described by Deleuze as follows: 'The complete determination of a problem is inseparable from the existence, the number and the distribution of the determinant points *which precisely provide its conditions* (one singular point gives rise to two condition equations)' (Deleuze [1968] 1994: 163; [1969] 1990: 54).[21] Here we have an ascending dialectic of four floors:

> 4th The singular determinant points giving rise to the equations.
> 3rd The equations of conditions.
> 2nd The conditions of the problem.
> 1st The problem.

In this ascending dialectics, the conditions of a problem and the equation of conditions are borrowed by Deleuze from Carnot (Deleuze [1968] 1994: 175):

> after having introduced these quantities in the calculus in order to facilitate the expression of the conditions of the problem, and having treated them, in the equations which expressed these conditions, as zero by comparison with the proposed quantities, in order to simplify these equations, it suffices to eliminate these same quantities … (Carnot [1881] 1970: 11)

The 'conditions of a problem' are a case of dialectical amphibian. Suppose that the problem is

$$x = 100 - a.$$

Here, a 'condition of the problem' is that $a \leq 100$, *if* we are confined to natural numbers. But if we have at our disposal the algebraic numbers, positive or negative, the 'condition' evaporates. And you know that the same tale may be told for the invention of $\sqrt{2}$, 0, $\sqrt{-1}$, etc. In other words, the whole history of mathematics may be rewritten as

the history of superstitious 'conditions' and their successive dissolutions in the ocean of heroic generalisation. But this positively means that, since the quadrature of the circle, the problems are the erotetic fountain from which the whole stream of mathematics flows with 'the rule and the compass' as paradigm of obsolete 'conditions' for a construction problem.

At the other extreme of the dialectical spectrum, the same 'conditions of a problem' are a matter of algebraic routine in the standard cooking of equations. Here, the paradigm is an interdict in mosaic form: 'Never divide by zero' ('Par zéro jamais ne diviseras!'). If this condition is not fulfilled, this is the problem ('set in equation') which evaporates. But in a descending dialectic, Deleuze relies first on a paradigm borrowed from Lautman, with two illustrations of the determinant points:

> [a] The cases that we are going to envisage[22] are those of the functions admitting 3 singular points: the points 0, 1 and ∞. It can still in effect be obtained by a linear transformation that the singularities are produced at these points here. (Lautman [2006] 2011: 179)

> [b] The points of indetermination[23] where $P = Q = 0$, constitute the singularities of the vector field. (Lautman [2006] 2011: 259)

The main fact here is that the two illustrations lead to the same conclusion on the singular points:

> [a*] the nature of singular points on a domain determines, at each point of the domain of the variable z, the existence of solutions of the proposed equation. (Lautman [2006] 2011: 181)

> [b*] The existence and distribution of singularities are notions relative to the vector field defined by the differential equations. The form of the integral curves is relative to the solutions of this equation. (Lautman [2006] 2011: 259)

So Deleuze can conclude:

> Albert Lautman has clearly indicated this difference in kind between the existence and distribution of singular points which refer to the problem-element, and the specification of these same points which refer to the solution-element. (Deleuze [1968] 1994: 324)

> For example, in the theory of differential equations, the existence and distribution of singularities are relative to a problematic field defined by the equation as such. As for the solution, it appears only with the integral curves and the form they take in the vicinity of singularities inside the field of vectors. (Deleuze [1969] 1990: 54)

As for the 'equations of conditions',[24] when the problem is in the differential equation

$$w'' + p_1(z)\,w' + p_2(z)\,w = 0$$

the two alluded 'equations of conditions'[25] are, at the vicinity of the point $z = a$ on the complex plane **C**:

$$w_1 = (z-a)^l_1 P(z-a)$$

and

$$w_2 = (z-a)^l_2 P^*(z-a) + \text{eventually a logarithmic term.}$$

But where is there a 'drama'? This term 'drama', used by Lautman, finds its best ratio in Proclus: 'Proclus defines the problem by means of the events which come to affect a logical subject matter (sections, ablations, adjunctions, etc.)' (Deleuze [1969] 1990: 54). In proper Proclean terms:[26] 'it is in imagination that the constructions, sectionings, superpositions, comparisons, additions and subtractions take place . . .' (Proclus 1970: 64 [78]). But here, the problems whose complexity is exhibited by Lautman are typically equations. This means that we remain in the domain of mathematics. So, we do not see so far how this description could be valid about philosophical problems. In order, then, to reach the level on which the Deleuzian dialectics embraces as well philosophical and mathematical problems, we must move, in its Lautmanian top, from drama to *gesta*.

The Lautmanian Gesta and its Themes

Over and above the Lautmanian dialectical drama, what is the Lautmanian dialectical *gesta* of problems? The kind of themes providing the plots of this *gesta* are described by Lautman in the following terms:

> the materials of which the universe is formed are not so much the atoms and molecules of the physical theory as these great pairs of ideal opposites such as the Same and the Other, the Symmetrical and Dissymmetrical, related to one another according to the laws of a harmonious mixture. (Lautman [2006] 2011: xxviii)

This thesis must be labelled the Lautman Law. The 'great couples of ideal contraries' alluded in the Lautman Law have a celebrated register in a Pythagorean table:

1. Limit & Unlimited
2. Odd & Even

3. One & Many
4. Right & Left
5. Male & Female
6. Rest & Move
7. Straight & Curve
8. Light & Darkness
9. Good & Bad
10. Square & Oblong

Lautman simply adds to this table two homogeneous lines:

11. Same & Other
12. Symmetric & Dissymmetric

Here we understand why the theory of problems which dominates mathematics according to Plato and Lautman is called a dialectic by them. It is a dialectic because it is a doctrine of dualities. But in order to obtain in this dialectic a calculus of problems at the level envisioned by Leibniz, that is a calculus covering not only of mathematical but also of philosophical problems, the 'great couples of ideal contraries' alluded to by Lautman must extend to the whole register that is due to Plato. This list is drawn up in a dialogue between Socrates and Theaetetus:

> **Soc.** To which class, then, do you assign being; for this, more than anything else, belongs to all things? **Theaet.** I assign them to the class of notions which the soul grasps by itself directly. **Soc.** And also same and other [likeness and unlikeness] and identity and difference? **Theaet.** Yes. **Soc.** And how about beautiful and ugly, and good and bad? **Theaet.** I think that these also are among the things the essence of which the soul most certainly views in their relations to one another, reflecting within itself upon the past and present in relation to the future. (Plato 1921: 186ab)

With this ultimate adjunction:

> **Soc.** Is it possible for one to attain 'truth' who cannot even get as far as being? **Theaet.** No. (Plato 1921: 186c, pp. 163–5; translation modified)

This is in advance an inventory of the transcendental terms, enumerating the objects of philosophy. So, with these 'great couples of ideal contraries' enlisted in their complete enumeration, Lautmanian dialectics reaches its top level and the calculus of problems can satisfy the requisites of the Leibnizian programme. Because, from Plato's listing of transcendental terms to a calculus, there is only one step. This can be shown if we realise that Hilbert's Aristide is a kind of Platonic or Lautmanian 'Idea'. Aristide, as we may recall, is 'of such absolute

integrity that, if he happened to be corruptible, all men in general would be corruptible' (Hilbert [1923] 1996: 1140–1; translation modified). Similarly, according to Plato, the Idea of the Good is of such absolute goodness that, if it happened to be bad, all things in general would be bad. Hilbert's Aristide, therefore, is only a personalisation of the Platonic Idea. So, along with Aristotelian or Stoic logic, with its Boolean and Fregean offspring, Hilbert has forged a Platonic logic. And Lautman, with his dialectics, has maximised the efficiency of Hilbert's Aristide.

Consequently, reconsider our paradigm of an amphibian problem:

$$x/y = z/\text{Aristide}.$$

According to Plato's analogy of the line, this paradigm must be vertically restated.[27] In this new manner it takes the following form:

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{Aristide} \\ \text{- - - - - - - - - - -} \\ z \\ = \\ y \\ \text{- - - -} \\ x \end{array}$$

And on this ladder, at its top rung, since Aristide is only a personification of the Platonic Idea, he can be replaced by any analogous term, with its two main species, mathematical and philosophical. In the mathematical realm, a paradigm is already offered by Plato:

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{(4th Elevation at the Square)} \\ \text{- -} \\ \text{3rd Intelligible Square} \\ = \\ \text{2nd Visible Square} \\ \text{- -} \\ \text{1st Shadow of Square Body} \end{array}$$

Here, in mathematics, we follow an ascending dialectics: the stages x, y and z are given, and the problem is to find the 'fourth proportional' $= Power2 = (\,)^2$. In the philosophical realm, this is the other way round: in the whole vertical procession, Aristide is given at the top level, and the xyz series follows by measured participation to the Idea, in a triad of

hypostases. For example, if Aristide = the Other:

$$\frac{\text{Other}}{x = y}$$
$$z$$

So that, in its Lautmanian empyrean, the calculus of problems permits the deduction of the Platonic dialectics with its two inverse moves of ascending and descending dialectics. Accordingly, the metaphysical calculus of problems in its full development may be exposed in the following Lautmanian table:

	Lautman	Spinoza	Hilbert in Plato	Deleuze
Invisible	*Dialectics*	*x*	Aristide	**Same and Other**
Invisible	Mathematics	3	*a*	*Mathematics*
Visible	Natural philosophy	2	*b*	*Natural philosophy*
Visible	Physics	1	*c*	*Physics*

In this table, the essential fact to be read and emphasised is the difference between the three first columns and the fourth. In the Lautman column, physics, natural philosophy, and mathematics are *given*; the problem, situated at the level of dialectics, is the determination, as 'fourth proportional', of the 'X' which qualifies as the object of dialectics. In the Spinoza column, the *x* is the algebraic unknown variable to be found. In the Hilbert and Plato column, Aristide himself, after all, is only a dummy for Göttingen geometers. But in the Deleuzian column, all this indetermination is suppressed. With the Same and the Other (or similar transcendental terms), the Lautmanian dialectics receives its adequate Object, qualifying it as a philosophical calculus (philosophical, since Aristide becomes a transcendental term; and calculus since the entire column retains the algebraic form of its Spinoza counterpart). And all this means that the entire table functions as a mathematical proportion, where the fourth column is the solution, obtained as 'fourth proportional': QED.

IV. Conclusion

On the problem predicament, the Kolmogorov calculus of problems was received by Deleuze as the summit of mathematical intuitionism and as a challenge to the Leibnizian *Calculemus* in philosophy. The challenge is taken up at least in two results:

1. The thesis of isotopy disclosing the procession of a same theme in the Peircean rhemes and the Leibnizian problems.
2. The deduction of a Lautmanian dialectics where the Hilbertian Aristide is the variable whose values are the transcendental terms defining the objects of philosophy.

On the level of transdisciplinarity *qua* transdisciplinarity, this double result has a huge significance. Since the objects of philosophy are the transcendental terms (*esse*, *unum*, *verum*, *bonum* and *pulchrum*), philosophy transcends all categories, which are the top of all *generality*. And since the territory of all theoretical sciences is generality, philosophy transcends the whole territory of theoretical science. So, philosophy is 'transdisciplinary' by itself. But in the territory of science, mathematics is the top of apodicticity. Hence the Leibnizian programme of the *Calculemus*: to transport into philosophy the apodicticity of mathematics. In solving the proportional problem exposed in the Lautmanian table, Deleuze has accomplished the decisive step in this transfer.

Notes

1. Special acknowledgements are due to Marjorie Gracieuse, Chryssa Sdrolia and Masa Kosugi for their kind invitation to the Deleuzian symposium where this talk took place, for their generous and invaluable help, as well as for the logistics of our agapistic meeting and the sophisticated predicaments and intellectual delicacies, which make its growing attractiveness and spell.
2. Chryssa Sdrolia saw immediately that the oral version of my paper was better than the original written version. The following text is revised according to this trusty verdict.
3. In this paper, we will follow the alternate spelling 'Kolmogorov'.
4. With the exception of Carl Posy (2005) 'Intuitionism and Philosophy', in Stewart Shapiro (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Mathematics and Logic*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, but for very different reasons.
5. When Deleuze wrote that sentence, the unique source he referred to on the calculus of Kolmogorov was a Note by Paulette Destouches-Février to the French Academy of Sciences, 'Rapports entre le calcul des problèmes et le calcul des propositions', published in 1945.
6. 'Quo facto, quando orientur controversiae, non magis disputatione opus erit inter duos philosophos, quam inter duos Computistas. Sufficiet enim calamos

in manus sumere sedereque ad abacos, et sibi mutuo (accito si placet amico) dicere: Calculemus' (Leibniz [1687] 1978 '*Scientia Generalis, Characteristica*'; my translation).

7. From a genetic point of view, we must recall that *Difference and Repetition* was in Deleuze's PhD the 'thèse principale' and that its initial subject was the 'idea of problem' (Dosse [2007] 2010: 116–17).
8. *Différence & Répétition*, p. 204; (translation slightly modified).
9. He stipulates that 'the use of the word *problematics* as a substantive' is 'an indispensable neologism' (Deleuze [1968] 1994: 323).
10. As Coquand says: 'The solution of the problem B must be reduced to the solution of the problem $A \wedge (A \to B)$. So, suppose a solution of this problem is given. This means that one has both a solution of problem A, and a solution of problem $A \to B$, i.e. one may reduce the solution of problem B to that of problem A. Hence, as desired, we can solve problem B.

    On the other hand, the principle of excluded middle in the form

    $$A \vee \neg A$$

    can not be justified. Indeed, a solution would be a general method which, given a problem A, would either give a solution or show that a contradiction follows from the assumption that problem A is solvable. As Kolmogorov states, unless one is bold enough to consider oneself omniscient, it must be recognized that there is no solution to this problem' Coquand [2004] 2007: 31–2.
11. Aristotle, *On Interpretation*, ch. 9, 19a[30], trans. G. E. M. Anscombe, in Anscombe 1956.
12. As in *hápax legómenon* ($\pi\alpha\xi\ \lambda\varepsilon\gamma\acute{o}\mu\varepsilon\nu o\nu$).
13. With an erroneous pagination. Deleuze writes: '*Science de la logique*, Ed. Aubier, II, p. 277'. But the page is in volume I of this translation by Sandor Jankélévitch.
14. See Hegel [1816] 2010: 213–15.
15. Cf. *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze [1969] 1990: 339.
16. See Spinoza 1992: § 23.
17. See Deleuze [1968] 1994: 322.
18. See Coquand [2004] 2007: § 1.1.
19. See Deleuze [1968] 1994: 322.
20. See Deleuze [1968] 1994: 322. Albert Lautman (2006) *Les Mathématiques, les idées et le réel physique*, Paris: Vrin. For a general introduction to Lautman, see my review of this re-edition (Dumoncel 2008).
21. 'A problem is determined only by the singular points which express its conditions' (Deleuze [1969] 1990: 54).
22. On the differential equation $w'' + p_1(z)w' + p_2(z)w = 0$.
23. On the differential equation $dy/dx = \mathrm{Q}(x, y)/\mathrm{P}(x, y)$.
24. See Lautman [2006] 2011: 179–80.
25. More precisely, these two equations are themselves the two *solutions* of an equation.
26. As Deleuze alludes, it is a conception from which Proclus, at least takes his distance.
27. Cf. J. L. Austin (1979) 'The Line and the Cave in Plato's Republic', in *Philosophical Papers*, ed. J. O. Urmson and G. J. Warnock, Oxford: Oxford University Press; J. C. Dumoncel (1992) 'La théorie platonicienne des Idées-Nombres', *Revue de Philosophie Ancienne*, X :1, pp. 1–34, reprinted in J. C. Dumoncel (2002) *La tradition de la* Mathesis Universalis, Paris: Unebévue-éditeur.

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Deleuze's Third Synthesis of Time[1]

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Abstract

Deleuze's theory of time set out in *Difference and Repetition* is a complex structure of three different syntheses of time – the passive synthesis of the living present, the passive synthesis of the pure past and the static synthesis of the future. This article focuses on Deleuze's third synthesis of time, which seems to be the most obscure part of his tripartite theory, as Deleuze mixes different theoretical concepts drawn from philosophy, Greek drama theory and mathematics. Of central importance is the notion of the cut, which is constitutive of the third synthesis of time defined as an a priori ordered temporal series separated unequally into a before and an after. This article argues that Deleuze develops his *ordinal* definition of time with recourse to Kant's definition of time as pure and empty form, Hölderlin's notion of 'caesura' drawn from his 'Remarks on *Oedipus*' (1803) and Dedekind's method of cuts as developed in his pioneering essay 'Continuity and Irrational Numbers' (1872). Deleuze then ties together the conceptions of the Kantian empty form of time and the Nietzschean eternal return, both of which are essentially related to a fractured I or dissolved self. This article aims to assemble the different heterogeneous elements that Deleuze picks up on and to show how the third synthesis of time emerges from this differential multiplicity.

Keywords: synthesis of time, Kant, Hölderlin, Dedekind, eternal return

I. Kant's Definition of Time

In his 1978 lecture series on Kantian philosophy, Deleuze states what seemed to be most essential to him: 'all of the creations and novelties

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that Kantianism will bring to philosophy turn on a certain problem of time and an entirely new conception of time' (Deleuze 1978a: 1). According to Deleuze, Kant's greatest achievement is the radical reversal of previous cosmological and psychological conceptions of time. With Kant, time is no longer subordinated to the measure of movements in nature (such as the movement of celestial bodies in their orbits), nor can it be defined by the simple succession of psychological states. Instead, Kant defines time as a 'form of interiority', a pure and empty form, in which all change of appearances is to be thought, but which does not change itself. In Deleuze's words, time loses its modal character and ceases to be cyclical. It becomes a pure straight line that cleaves the subject into two unequal halves: the empirico-transcendental doublet. Referring to these novelties that Kantianism brings to the philosophy of time, Deleuze chooses two poetic formulas: (1) 'The time is out of joint', uttered by Hamlet in Shakespeare's tragedy *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, and (2) 'I is an Other' from the French poet Rimbaud.[2] In what way do these poetic formulas apply to Kant's theory of time?

(1) Hamlet's utterance 'The time is out of joint' refers to a particular time, that is, the time through which he is living. However, in the way that Deleuze uses the formula it has a much wider, metaphysical import: 'Time out of joint' now means that time has become 'demented time' (*temps affolé*), it has lost its balance, its groundedness, its stability, which it still possessed in ancient Greek cosmology. According to Plato, time presented a 'moving image of eternity' (Plato 1997: 37d), which moved according to number. For both Plato and Aristotle, time was defined as a 'number of movement', counted by the celestial revolution of planets passing through certain 'cardinal points'. The uniform and circular motion of planets provided a means to mark off regular periods of time. Consequently, time was thought of as cyclical and inseparable from the movement of physical bodies. As Aristotle put it: 'time is a number of movement – but there is no movement without physical body' (Aristotle 1995: 279a15). This is why Deleuze attributes to the ancient Greeks a concept of time which 'is a mode and not a being. No more than number is a being, it's a mode in relation to what it quantifies, in the same way time is a mode in relation to what it measures' (Deleuze 1978b: 2). According to Deleuze, time loses its modal character and ceases to be circular only subsequent to the establishment of modern science in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (in particular, in the scientific cosmology of Newton). With Kant finally, time becomes purely formal, it has unrolled itself into a pure 'straight line'. As we will see, the consequences of this new Kantian definition of time are tremendous: the

ancient cosmological harmony between the world and the heavens, man and the heavenly gods has broken down. Time has ceased to be an image of the eternal order. It has shaken off its subordination to the periodical movements of planets. It is as though Timaeus's prediction has become true: 'Be that as it may, Time came into being together with the Heaven, in order that, as they were brought into being together, so they may be dissolved together, if ever their dissolution should come to pass' (Plato 1997: 38b). The time of antiquity has perished together with the gods and the heavens, and a new time is born. Pure and empty time is now the true subjectivity. It has become an infinite, straight line, which cuts right through the consciousness of the modern subject.

(2) Deleuze expresses this fracture of the modern subject with Rimbaud's formula 'I is an Other'. This is then the second novelty that Kant brings to philosophy by uncovering 'that schizophrenia in principle' (Deleuze 1994: 58). By defining time as a form of interiority, Kant introduces a fundamental split in the subject. The Kantian subject is torn between the form of spontaneity, that is, the 'I think' which accompanies all concept production and guarantees the unity of synthesis, and the empirical self which experiences the effects of thought rather than initiating the act of thought itself. According to Deleuze, Rimbaud's formula 'I is an Other' is apt to express the alienation to which the Kantian subject succumbs. It should be noted, however, that Rimbaud's phrase occurs in a rather different context. Rimbaud understands the formula 'I is an Other' in the light of Aristotle's distinction between determining form and indeterminate matter. This becomes evident, when Rimbaud says: 'Too bad for the wood which finds itself a violin! If the copper wakes up a bugle, that is not its fault' (Deleuze 1984: ix).[3] By means of the formula 'I is an Other', Rimbaud expresses the experience of being formed by thought rather than being the originator. Thought forms me – I am not the master of thought at all.

With Kant, however, the concern is no longer of a form that informs matter but – in Deleuze's words – of 'an infinite modulation, no longer a mould' (Deleuze 1984: ix). *Thought works within me*. I am affected by thought that is both mine and the thought of an Other. The fracture or crack in the 'I' is produced by the pure and empty form of time. This means that I experience myself, that is, my feelings, thoughts, actions and bodily sensations, always under the condition of time, which is the interior form of receptivity. But the synthesis of all these different representations within the unity of consciousness is performed by the transcendental I, or the 'I think' as the transcendental form of apperception. Phrased more precisely, the I affects itself under the

form of time. The remarkable outcome of this kind of auto-affection is that the difference between being and thought, or matter and form, is *interiorised*. Deleuze refers to this establishment of internal difference as the moment of 'discovery of the transcendental, the element of the Copernican Revolution' (Deleuze 1994: 86). Thus, for Deleuze, the transcendental difference that Kant discovers is necessarily linked to his definition of time as form of interiority or form of auto-affection which splits the subject into two unequal halves: the empirico-transcendental doublet.

II. Hölderlin's Caesura

Certainly, Deleuze does not simply adopt the Kantian empirico-transcendental doublet with its distinctive distribution of active synthesis and passive receptivity without synthesis. What he takes up instead is the idea of an internal difference or fracture in the subject, which occurs through the disruptive introduction of a caesura or cut. Deleuze's account of the third synthesis of time deviates from the Kantian definition of time as an a priori given, infertile subjective form. Instead, Deleuze conceives of time as a productive power of synthesis – in his words, a 'static synthesis' which is constituted by a 'caesura' or cut. He finds the notion of the 'caesura' in Greek drama theory, more concretely, in Hölderlin's 'Remarks on *Oedipus*'.

Hölderlin interprets Sophocles's *Oedipus Rex* as the undoing of the coupling between man and god: man and god have become 'an unlimited One', which, however, can be 'purified' only through an 'unlimited separation' (Hölderlin 1969: 736). Deleuze describes this unlimited separation as a double deviation: 'God turns away from man who turns away from God' (Deleuze 1978b: 4). While in the tragedies of Aeschylus or Euripides the gods still ensured justice, they punished and pardoned according to their judgement, Sophocles's tragedy marks a significant change. The bond between man and the gods has broken. The gods abandon Oedipus in the critical moment of his suffering, and Oedipus rages against the divine betrayal, searching desperately for who he is and trying to recover his identity. Hölderlin describes the moment as follows:

> In the utmost form of suffering . . . there exists nothing but the conditions of time and space. Inside it, man forgets himself because he exists entirely for the moment, the god [forgets himself] because he is nothing but time; and either one is unfaithful, time, because it is reversed categorically at such a moment, and beginning and end no longer rhyme; man because at this moment of

> categorical reversal he has to follow and thus can no longer resemble the beginning in what follows. (Hölderlin 1969: 736)

Oedipus is left with the pure form of time, which is emptied of all meaningful content and announces neither punishment nor relief from the interminable, incessant suffering. As Hölderlin says, time is reversed categorically: it no longer forms a cycle in which beginning and end rhyme – as it was still the case in the tragedies of Aeschylus and Euripides, when the unity of the cosmos was intact, and when the divine law revealed itself in the order of the universe, the course of nature and human fate. Now, the cycle of time has unrolled itself and become a straight line, the tortuous, indivisible and incessant labyrinth that Deleuze finds in Borges (Deleuze 1984: vii, 1978b: 2).[4] It is the straight line that Oedipus wanders in his long and lonesome wandering through the desert with no aim and no end in sight. As Hölderlin says in very Kantian terms, 'there exists nothing but the conditions of time and space' (Hölderlin 1969: 736).[5]

Moreover, when Oedipus's crime is finally discovered, that is, when the blind seer Tiresias reveals to Oedipus that he had killed his own father Laius and married his own mother Jocasta of Thebes, Oedipus can no longer resemble what he has been before. Tiresias's intervention has put before Oedipus the thought that he may not be the son of King Polybus of Corinth and his wife Merope who raised him. This is a thought which is almost impossible to think. All of the personal memories in which Oedipus has believed so far, together with his future expectations are eliminated, destroyed at a single blow. In fact, the caesura is not only a break in time, but also a split of Oedipus's self. Oedipus is other to himself. He experiences this internal difference in the pure present, the 'pureness' of which signifies that it occurs like a cut. The series of former presents do not converge with this present moment.

We thus have an order of time, determined by the caesura which draws together a before and an after and thereby the totality of time. It is of little importance when the caesura, that is, the exact moment of the fracture of the self, happens in empirical time. It can be at the moment of Tiresias's revelation or a little later after Oedipus's further inquiries. Or a crack might have appeared when Oedipus committed the crime of killing his father and then marrying his mother. To complicate things further, maybe an invisible crack already became manifest when the infant Oedipus was saved from death against the will of his father and in defiance of the gods' oracle. The empirical incarnation does not count: the caesura or cut refers to a symbolic event, which determines

the order of time a priori. Thus, the past is the time before the caesura; the pure present is the becoming equal to the event and the experience of internal difference; the future finally is the time after the caesura.

III. Dedekind's Method of Cuts

As we have seen, Deleuze's third synthesis of time has to be understood as an *a priori ordered series* that is produced by a caesura. The caesura is the formal element which distributes on both sides the before and the after which no longer rhyme together. Deleuze insists that

> the future and the past here are not empirical and dynamic determinations of time: they are formal and fixed characteristics which follow *a priori* from the order of time, as though they comprised a static synthesis of time. The synthesis is necessarily static, since time is no longer subordinated to movement; time is the most radical form of change, but the form of change does not change. (Deleuze 1994: 89)

The idea of the form of time, which does not change itself, is clearly a Kantian thought. Repeatedly, Kant says in the *Critique of Pure Reason* that 'time itself does not alter, but only something that is within time' (Kant 1998: A41/B58).[6] But is it true that Deleuze still adheres to the traditional philosophical conception of form? Deleuze's remarks on a 'static synthesis' should make us suspect that Deleuze is not simply repeating Kant's theory here. Equally, the idea of a 'caesura', which constitutes a serial and linear time by distributing a before and an after, indicates a source other than Kant. For sure, Deleuze deduces the term 'caesura' first and foremost from Greek drama theory, but in his lecture course on Kant of 21 March 1978, he does not hesitate to compare it to the mathematical terms 'limit' and 'cut' (*coupure*).[7] Moreover, the word 'caesura' derives from the Latin root '*caes*' and can thus be rendered as 'cut'.[8] For these reasons, we suggest that the 'caesura' can be understood by means of the concept of 'cut' in Dedekind's theory of real numbers, which Deleuze discusses in Chapter 4 of *Difference and Repetition* in the context of the continuousness of Ideas (Deleuze 1994: 172).

The mathematician Richard Dedekind (1831–1916) is famous for giving a rigorous arithmetical foundation to differential calculus, and thereby expunging from calculus geometric undefined concepts such as 'infinitesimal' quantities and the limit concept involving the idea of *approaching*. Deleuze acknowledges his achievements, in particular the renewed conception of limit: 'the limit no longer presupposes the ideas of a continuous variable and infinite approximation. On the contrary,

the notion of limit grounds a new, static and purely ideal definition of continuity' (Deleuze 1994: 172). Indeed, it can be argued that Dedekind invents this new 'static and purely ideal' conception of continuity. His thoughts on continuity were first published in the groundbreaking essay 'Continuity and Irrational Numbers' in 1872, fourteen years after he developed the basic ideas on which it relies. The main question the essay deals with is: what is the nature of continuity? As Dedekind states:

> an explanation of this continuity is nowhere given; even the most rigorous expositions of the differential calculus do not base their proofs upon continuity but ... they either appeal to geometric notions or those suggested by geometry, or depend upon theorems which are never established in a purely arithmetic manner. (Dedekind 1901a: 2)

That is, the notion of continuity was either geometrically explained as a vague hang-togetherness, an 'unbroken connection in the smallest parts' (Dedekind 1901a: 10–11) or was based on insufficiently founded theorems, such as that every magnitude which grows continually, but not beyond all limits, must certainly approach a limiting value. Dedekind set himself the task of securing a real definition of the essence of continuity. He first approached the problem by trying to 'map' the geometrical continuum (the straight line) onto ordered systems of discrete quantities (numbers). Comparing the system of rational numbers with the points of the straight line, he saw that they cannot be put into a one-to-one-correspondence with each other: although each rational number can be correlated with a point on the line, not every point of the line can be expressed as a rational number. In fact, in the straight line there are infinitely many points which correspond to no rational number. To identify these points, which are inexpressible as rational numbers, Dedekind used a method of division: the Dedekind 'cuts' (*Schnitte*). Any cut divides the points of the line into two classes, such that all the points of one class are always to the left of all the points of the other. Furthermore, there is precisely one and only one point determined by this cut. The cut can correspond to a rational number, or else designate a 'gap' between the rational numbers, that is, an irrational quantity (such as $\sqrt{2}$). In the latter case, cuts define a new type of number, that is, the irrational numbers.

Dedekind first made use of geometrical considerations in order to introduce the notion of the cut. However, he sought to define cuts directly in terms of the number system, so that any reflections on geometric lines can be put aside. As Robert Bunn says:

> Geometry was to serve only as the source of the idea for constructing an arithmetical foundation. The continuous system which was to be Dedekind's foundation would be arithmetical in the sense that its operations would ultimately be defined in terms of operations on natural numbers, and no mention would be made of any geometrical objects. (Bunn 1980: 223)

Dedekind demanded that the system of rational numbers be improved by 'the creation of new numbers such that the domain of numbers shall gain the same completeness, or as we may say at once, the same *continuity*, as the straight line' (Dedekind 1901a: 9). As it is, the system of rational numbers is marked by a certain incompleteness or discontinuity, due to the existence of gaps. Thus, in order to render the domain of rational numbers into a continuous system, Dedekind defined for each cut that is not produced by a rational number a 'new object', which he called an irrational number. For example, $\sqrt{2}$ can be defined as the cut between two classes, A and B, where A contains all those numbers whose squares are less than two and B those whose squares are greater than two.

It should be noted that Dedekind did not identify irrational numbers with cuts, since every definite cut produces either a definite rational or irrational number. Rather, Dedekind cuts constitute 'the next genus of numbers' (Deleuze 1994: 172), namely 'real numbers'. The order of real numbers allows the treatment of both rational and irrational numbers as elements in an encompassing number system, which forms a continuous and ordered system. It has to be emphasised that this continuity of the number system is something quite different from the traditional conception of continuity founded on the intuition of the way in which geometric quantities arise: according to an intuitive conception of continuity, a line is considered continuous insofar as it arises from the continuous movement of a point, and a plane from the movement of a line. By contrast, Dedekind's new conception of continuity claims not to rely on intuition, or any considerations of smooth movement. It claims to contain nothing empirical, since it can be deduced from number systems alone. For Dedekind, 'numbers are free creations of the human mind' (Dedekind 1901b: 31). As he explained in his 1888 essay 'The Nature and Meaning of Numbers' (*Was sind und was sollen die Zahlen?*):

> In speaking of arithmetic (algebra, analysis) as a part of logic I mean to imply that I consider the number-concept entirely independent of the notions or intuitions of space and time, that I consider it an immediate result from the laws of thought. (Dedekind 1901b: 31)

Accordingly, Dedekind's project of arithmetising the conception of continuity was not to be grounded on vague, geometrical intuitions of

space and time but rather on an Idea of reason: the Idea of an infinite, ordered and dense set of numbers each of which can in principle be identified by a Dedekind cut.[9] In fact, Dedekind's 'continuity' can better be described as the property of the 'completeness' that characterises certain densely ordered number systems. As Robert Bunn puts it:

> a densely ordered system is *complete* (*continuous*) in Dedekind's sense if every cut in the system is produced by exactly one element of the system, that is, if there is an element of the system which is either the maximum of the lower section or the minimum of the upper section. (Bunn 1980: 222)

Bunn concludes that 'the term "continuous" is not an especially apt one for the characteristic involved, but it indicated the correlate in the old system – continuous magnitude' (Bunn 1980: 222). Carl Boyer, a historian of mathematics, explains that the notion of continuity 'specifies only *an infinite, discrete multiplicity of elements*, satisfying certain conditions – that the set be ordered, dense, and perfect' (Boyer 1949: 294; emphasis added), whereby the mathematical term 'perfect' is synonymous with the term 'complete', which are both translations of the German term '*vollkommen*'. Boyer further argues that there is 'nothing dynamic in the idea of continuity' (Boyer 1949: 294).

However, it is not altogether clear whether Dedekind really succeeded in giving a purely ideal, arithmetic definition of continuity. In fact, he is criticised by Russell and Wittgenstein for failing to get away from the geometrical image of the number line.[10] Russell argues that Dedekind's method of dividing all the terms of a series into two classes, one greater than the cut and one less than the cut, proves problematic in the case where the point of section is supposed to represent an irrational. In this case, the two classes of either side of the cut have no limit or last term. For instance, in the case of the irrational section at $\sqrt{2}$, 'there is no maximum to the ratios whose square is less than 2, and no minimum to those whose square is greater than 2.... Between these two classes, where $\sqrt{2}$ ought to be, there is nothing' (Russell 1919: 68). Thus, a 'gap' appears at the point of section where the irrational is supposed to be. According to Russell, the spatial image of a line and the unsettling idea of a gap led people to postulate that there must be some limit:

> From the habit of being influenced by spatial imagination, people have supposed that series *must* have limits in cases where it seems odd if they do not. Thus, perceiving that there was no rational limit to the ratios whose square is less than 2, they allowed themselves to 'postulate' an *irrational* limit, which was to fill the Dedekind gap. Dedekind, in the above-mentioned work ['Continuity and Irrational Numbers'], set up the axiom that the gap

> must always be filled, *i.e.* that every section must have a boundary. (Russell 1919: 71)

Russell condemns this method of 'postulating' and aims to give a precise definition of real numbers by a method of 'construction' (Russell 1919: 73). That is, he abandons the idea of points of space or extension and substitutes for them the logical construction of 'segments'. He finds that 'segments of rational numbers... fulfil all the requirements laid down in Cantor's definition, and also those derived from the principle of abstraction. Hence there is no logical ground for distinguishing segments of rationals from real numbers' (Russell 1937: § 270).[11]

Wittgenstein joins Russell in his criticism of Dedekind's method of cuts, although he does not follow Russell's set-theoretical solution. According to Wittgenstein, the major error that Dedekind committed was using the concept of cut – a concept which is '*taken over from the everyday use of language* and that is why it immediately looks as it if had to have a meaning for numbers too' (Wittgenstein 1956: 150; original emphasis). The verb 'cutting' is commonly used to refer to an activity that divides a spatially extended object into parts. The cutting of a number line is supposed to work analogously: the division produced is seen 'under the aspect of a cut made somewhere along the straight line, *hence extensionally*' (149; original emphasis). 'The cut is an extensional *image*' (150; original emphasis). For Wittgenstein, the idea of a cut is 'a dangerous illustration' and yields only an 'imaginary', a 'fanciful application' (148). However, Wittgenstein admits that in a way we can attach a meaning to the expression that every rational number is a principle of division of the rational numbers (149), but this is not so in the case of irrationals, which are not even defined as numbers yet. From the erroneous image of a number line the idea ensues that irrationals can be represented as points on the line just like the rationals, and that both are elements of an encompassing number system, the real numbers. 'The misleading thing about Dedekind's conception', Wittgenstein says, 'is the idea that the real numbers are there spread out in the number line' (151). 'The picture of the number line is an absolutely natural one up to a certain point; that is to say so long as it is not used for a general theory of real numbers' (148). Wittgenstein faults Dedekind for his general way of talking, which, although it might prove useful, implies 'the danger... that one will think one is in possession of the complete explanation of the individual cases' (153). Thus, we are led to believe that 'the *general* account could be quite understood even without examples, without a thought of intensions (in the plural), since really

everything could be managed extensionally' (153; original emphasis). The problem with irrationals surely is that no example of an irrational number could really be given. The ancient Pythagorean example of the square root of two again relies on a geometrical illustration, namely the square's diagonal, which proves incommensurable with the square's sides whose lengths measure one unit. Within this geometrical image, the square root of two can be represented by the intersection of a circular arc (generated by taking the diagonal as the radius of a circle) and the straight line extending from the square's base. However, by what right can we say that this intersection identifies a point and defines a number? As Wittgenstein hypothetically suggests: 'For, if I were to construct really accurately, then the circle would have to cut the straight line *between* its points', and he continues: 'This is a frightfully confusing picture' (151; original emphasis). We almost feel forced to assign to the irrational a point on the line, because we are in the grip of a picture (the picture of a continuous straight line consisting of points). However, why can we not define the irrational as a number? The expression $\sqrt{2}$ certainly seems to indicate a number, yet what it does is simply to provide a rule for generating an indefinitely expanding decimal fraction. For Wittgenstein, irrationals are rules or laws; they do not indicate some Platonic arithmetical entity, a perfectly definite number, but rather 'the unlimited technique of expansion of series' (144).

As we have seen, both Russell and Wittgenstein doubt that Dedekind managed to escape the geometric image of the number line in his attempt to provide a purely arithmetic definition of irrationals. Let us now bring Deleuze into the discussion. It seems that Deleuze does not have qualms about Dedekind's method of cuts and definition of continuity. Indeed, he says that we gain 'a new, static and purely ideal definition of continuity' (Deleuze 1994: 172), which is grounded on the Dedekind cut, inasmuch as it constitutes this new continuous and ordered system of real numbers. Deleuze also calls the Dedekind cut the 'ideal cause of continuity' (Deleuze 1994: 172). Now the question to ask is: in what way can Deleuze benefit from Dedekind's theory of cuts and the notion of continuity that designates not a 'vague hang-togetherness' but rather an infinite, discrete multiplicity of elements whose order is a priori determined? Deleuze uses Dedekind's ideas in order to construct a time that is not empirically defined through our intuition of a dynamic flux of events, but one that is determined a priori and designates a *static state of affairs*. This latter time is a 'static synthesis' of discrete elements (past and future moments), which are distributed by the caesura, that is, 'a genuine cut (*coupure*)' (Deleuze 1994: 172), into a before and an after.

The caesura or cut is constitutive of this continuous ordered system of time, which maps onto the straight line. Thus, Deleuze transforms the Kantian definition of a purely formal time by means of mathematical considerations on the notion of 'cut' and 'static synthesis'. For Deleuze, the third synthesis of time is not simply an a priori subjective form, but an a priori and a-subjective static synthesis of a multiplicity of temporal series.

However, Deleuze's account of a serial and linear time is not as straightforward as we have presented it above. Deleuze does indeed make use of the Dedekind cut and the idea that it constitutes a static continuum, yet he takes licence in modifying Dedekind in a way that is not Dedekindian at all. The way that Deleuze conceives the series of time rather incorporates the idea of the irrational cut designating a 'gap'.[12] In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze says that 'the irrational numbers... differ in kind from the terms of the series of rational numbers' (Deleuze 1994: 172). They are 'constructed on the basis of an essential inequality' in relation to the next-lowest type of numbers, that is, the rational numbers. That is to say, they express the 'impossibility of determining a common aliquot part for two quantities, and thus the impossibility of reducing their relation to even a fractional number' (232). However, they compensate for their characteristic inequality by their 'limit-equality indicated by a convergent series of rational numbers' (232).[13] Now the interesting move by Deleuze is to ascribe an original intensive nature to irrationals, an implication of difference or inequality, which is cancelled or covered over as soon as they are constructed as elements of an extensive plane of rational numbers. In fact, Deleuze holds that an intensive nature belongs to every type of number, insofar as they are not explicated, developed and equalised in an extensity:

> Every number is originally intensive and vectorial in so far as it implies a difference of quantity which cannot properly be cancelled, but extensive and scalar in so far as it cancels this difference on another plane that it creates and on which it is explicated. (Deleuze 1994: 232)

Deleuze's claim that irrationals have a certain intensive depth, an inequality or implicated difference, which is cancelled in the general definition of a continuum of real numbers, seems to resonate with Wittgenstein's remark: 'The extensional definitions of functions, real numbers etc. pass over – although they presuppose – everything intensional, and refer to the ever-recurring outward form' (Wittgenstein 1956: 150). However, while Wittgenstein seems to understand the

'intensional' nature rather in terms of a rule or law, Deleuze speaks of 'intensity' and its differential nature.[14]

Deleuze's reflections on the nature of irrationals show that he also regards the number line as a fiction, a spatial image, which covers over an intensive depth. The straight line of rational points is but 'a false infinity, a simple undefinite that includes an infinity of lacunae; that is why the continuous is a labyrinth that cannot be represented by a straight line' (Deleuze 1993: 17). We have already come across Borges's labyrinth of the straight line. Thus, it seems that Deleuze, when he speaks of a line of time, does not mean a simple straight line, but one that is perforated by lacunae.[15] These lacunae or gaps are precisely designated by the irrational cut, that is, the interstice between series of rational numbers. They symbolise the irruption of the virtual event within the empirical continuum of space and the chronological succession of instants.

In order to better understand the impact of the cut, that is, the irruption of the virtual event on the subject, we have to turn to Nietzsche. As will become clear, all threads come together with Nietzsche's eternal return.[16] In Deleuze's reading, the eternal return is a *series of time*, constituted by an irrational cut, 'which brings together the before and the after in a becoming' (Deleuze 1989: 155). This irrational cut or caesura produces a split subject and brings it into contact with an outside, the realm of virtual events. In fact, in *Cinema 2*, Deleuze explicitly connects the concept of the irrational cut with Nietzsche's conception of time in his definition of the third time-image:

> This time-image puts thought into contact with an unthought, the unsummonable, the inexplicable, the undecidable, the incommensurable. The outside or the obverse of the images has replaced the whole, at the same time as the interstice or the cut has replaced association. (Deleuze 1989: 214)[17]

IV. Nietzsche's Eternal Return

The cut or caesura of serial time has a detrimental impact on the subject. We have already seen that Deleuze's third synthesis of time is profoundly linked to the notion of a fractured I, be it Kant's empirico-transcendental doublet or Oedipus's dissolved self, as developed in Hölderlin. Now Deleuze turns to Nietzsche, who will be the last and most important philosopher in this Deleuzian line-up of great thinkers. Nietzsche's eternal return will be defined as a series of time, which is cut by a unique and tremendous event, namely 'the death of God [that] becomes effective only with the dissolution of the Self' (Deleuze

1994: 58). However, as will become clear, the eternal return does not only have a destructive and lethal impact, rather it manifests a positive and productive power. It carries the ungrounded and abandoned subject to a point of metamorphosis, when all its possibilities of becoming are set free. It liberates the subject not only from the rule of identity and law, but also from the form of the true and thus bestows it with the power of the false and its artistic, creative potential. As we will see in this section, the dissolved self becomes Nietzsche's aesthetic concept of the overman, who is capable of affirming difference and becoming.

It should be noted that Nietzsche never fully laid out his thought of the eternal return in his writings and that the existing interpretations in secondary literature vary to a great extent. What interests us here is solely Deleuze's reconstruction of the eternal return, which is considerably influenced, as we will see, by Pierre Klossowski's reading of Nietzsche.[18]

According to Deleuze, the thought of the eternal return is not to be understood as a return of the Same or the Similar. Rather, what passes the test of the eternal return is that which differs internally, simulacra or the dissolved self. The eternal return has to be seen as a test of selection, which banishes identity, that is, the identity of God, the identity of the world or the represented object, and the coherence of the self. Thus, the landscape of the eternal return is that of difference-in-itself, the irreducibly unequal, of metamorphosis or becoming. In Deleuze's words:

> Essentially, the unequal, the different is the true rationale for the eternal return. It is because nothing is equal, or the same, that 'it' comes back. In other words, the eternal return is predicated only of becoming and the multiple. It is the law of a world without being, without unity, without identity. (Deleuze 2004: 124)

Therefore, in a first move, it is important to distinguish Nietzsche's eternal return from the conception of a 'return of the Same and the Similar' which is the essence of a cyclical conception of time. Thus, the ancient Greeks presupposed an identity or resemblance in general of all the instances that are supposed to recur. They regarded the recurrence of planetary motion, the uniform change of seasons and qualitative changes in things as laws of nature. According to Deleuze, Nietzsche's thought of the eternal return cannot be presented as a natural law and identified with the ancient Greek hypothesis of cyclical time.[19] First, he argues that as a connoisseur of the Greeks, Nietzsche could not have been ignorant of the Greek hypothesis of time as a cycle. Thus, when Nietzsche insists that his thought of the eternal return is something effectively *new*, we

have to take him seriously. Furthermore, Nietzsche is a thinker who is very much opposed to the notion of law. He would not have submitted to the simple notion of a law of nature. As textual evidence, one can adduce two passages in *Zarathustra*, where Nietzsche explicitly rejects the interpretation of the eternal return as cyclical time: (1) during the encounter between Zarathustra and the dwarf, the dwarf says, 'All truth is crooked; time itself is a circle', whereupon Zarathustra replies, 'Thou spirit of gravity! . . . do not take it too lightly' (Nietzsche 1936: 167); (2) on another occasion, Zarathustra rebukes his animals that they have already made a 'refrain' out of his doctrine of the eternal return. In a refrain, the same always returns, but apparently Zarathustra does not want the eternal return be understood as a refrain (see Nietzsche 1936: 234).

In what way, then, is the eternal return different from a natural cycle, a cycle of time? The crucial issue is that the eternal return is *selective* and *creative*. It is selective with regard to desires or thought and with regard to being. Let us first consider its mechanism of selection with regard to desires. If the doctrine of the eternal return is stated in terms of an ethical rule, it becomes a sort of Kantian imperative: 'Whatever you will, you have to will it in such a way that you will its eternal return.' That which is expelled by the selection test of the eternal return is all instances of willing that want a thing only for once: 'only this one time'. In an unpublished note contemporaneous with *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche says that it does not matter whether the act I am about to perform is informed by ambition, or laziness, or obedience, if only I re-will my present action again, for innumerable times.[20] The eternal return excludes any half-hearted willing and affirms the extreme forms: it separates an active, superior will, which wants to enact its force to its highest power, from a reactive, gregarious will. Moreover, the eternal return not only excludes any 'half-desires' but also any reactive mode of being (such as the passive small man or last man possessed by a will to revenge). Furthermore, it is necessary to note that the superior forms of willing and being do not simply pre-exist the eternal return, but are *created* by the eternal return. In other words, the eternal return is more than a 'theoretical representation' (Deleuze 1994: 41) or ethical rule to be made a self-chosen principle of life. Rather, it is a positive principle that actively creates the superior forms that pass the test of eternal return.

In his book *Nietzsche and the Vicious Circle* (1997), Pierre Klossowski offers an interpretation of the selective and creative power of eternal return. According to Klossowski's analysis, the thought of the eternal

return jeopardises the subject's identity; it is an aggression against the apparently limited and closed whole of the subject. The reason for this is that the thought of the eternal return demands that I re-will myself again for innumerable times, but this demand makes me at the same time fall into incoherence. In relation to the codes of everyday society, I am a particular identifiable individual, *once and for all* determined by laws, contractual relations and institutions. The thought of the eternal return addresses me but at the same time demands my destruction as this particular identifiable individual. This is so because I have to re-will *all* my prior possibilities of being:

> All that remains, then, is for me to re-will myself, no longer as the outcome of these prior possibilities, no longer as one realization among thousands, but as a fortuitous moment whose very fortuity implies the necessity of the integral return of the whole series. (Klossowski 1997: 58)
> I deactualize my present self in order to will myself in *all the other selves whose entire series must be passed through*. (Klossowski 1997: 57; original emphasis)

Thus, the eternal return does not demand that I return the same as I am, 'once and for all' (this would amount to a 'bare repetition' in Deleuzian terms), but as a variation, a simulacrum, for an infinite number of times (this would be a repetition 'by excess, the repetition of the future as eternal return' (Deleuze 1994: 90)). The coherence of the subject is thus jeopardised. Nietzsche himself suffered the consequences of the thought of the eternal return: 'I am every name in history,'[21] 'Dionysus and the Crucified.'[22] In Deleuze's reading, which coincides with Klossowski's interpretation in this regard, 'the thinker, undoubtedly the thinker of the eternal return, is... the universal individual' (254). For Deleuze, the universal individual or the 'man without a name' (91) designates someone who has relinquished the well-defined identity of the subject with fixed boundaries, and affirmed the system of a dissolved self with all its processes of becoming.

The dissolution of the identity of the subject and the advent of a non-identical, dissolved self has become possible with the death of God. The cut or caesura in Nietzsche's eternal return coincides therefore with the symbolic event of the killing of God. In *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche describes the act of killing God as a deed that is almost 'too great for us', and yet we have done it ourselves. However, according to Nietzsche, the tremendous event has not yet reached the eyes and ears of men. That is, the absence of God, who hitherto guaranteed the identity of the subject by creating man in his own image, ruling him according to

divine laws, and securing the immortality of the soul, has not yet become effective. The moment this happens, the identity of the subject will be destroyed. The future marks the time when the excessive event turns back against the subject, dispersing it in a discrete multiplicity of little selves, of egos with many names or, what amounts to the same thing, a universal ego with no name at all:

> What the self has become equal to is the unequal in itself. In this manner, the I which is fractured according to the order of time and the Self which is divided according to the temporal series correspond and find a common descendant in the man without name, without family, without qualities, without self or I, the 'plebeian' guardian of a secret, the already-Overman whose scattered members gravitate around the sublime image. (Deleuze 1994: 90)

The universal individual or man without name is thus to be understood as Nietzsche's overman. The overman is not another higher species of man, but a non-identical, a dissolved self, which is liberated from the judgement of God and open to intensive processes of becoming. Interpretations that regard the overman as 'an evolutionary product, rising higher – as man does relative to the worm – to some indeterminate evolutionary height from which he can look back, amused, at that from which he came' (Grosz 2004: 148), treat the overman as someone beyond man, a higher species that is not yet present. In our view, Deleuze's reading rather suggests that the overman is someone who is always beyond himself, that is, never identical with himself, and who allows for all possibilities of becoming, as Klossowski says, becoming stone, becoming plant, becoming animal, becoming star (Klossowski 1963: 223). Deleuze takes up this thought and states that the thinker of the eternal return 'is laden with stones and diamonds, plants "and even animals"' (Deleuze 1994: 254). Features of the overman can in fact be found in the artist or poet – in short, someone who is willing to undergo metamorphoses and to become-other in favour of an act or a work yet to come. As Deleuze explains in his concluding paper given at the Nietzsche conference in the Royaumont Abbey in July 1964:

> The overman very much resembles the poet as Rimbaud defines it: one who is 'loaded with humanity, even with animals,' and who in every case has retained only the superior form, and the extreme power. (Deleuze 2004: 125; translation modified)

Another suitable example besides the poet or artist might be the political subject, someone who engages in processes that not only demand a becoming-other, that is, an annihilation of the past self that he or she

was, but that also put the existence of a future self at risk and thus leave the process of becoming open to success or failure. The ancient rhetorical practice of *parrhesia* can serve as an example here: *parrhesia* can be translated as 'the telling of the unvarnished truth' and specifies a type of discourse in which the speaker commits himself to a free and unbound speech and in doing this puts himself at considerable risk, including the risk of death.[23] The *parrhesiast* or 'truth-teller' cannot be defined in terms of a self-authoring subject, but must be understood as a split subject: through his words he constitutes himself as the one who speaks freely and who is willing to pay for it with his life. He forsakes the identity and securities of his past self, and projects an ideal future self that would find the approval of his listeners, but his project might just as well end in failure.

All these examples, the poet or artist and the political subject (for example, the *parrhesiast*) can be seen as instantiations of a dissolved self, or the overman in Nietzschean terms. Thus, the overman is a real possibility or even a present reality, if one thinks the thought of the eternal return and wills oneself through the *entire series of all the other selves*, that is, affirms all possibilities of becoming. What is expelled by the wheel of eternal return and its centrifugal force is only that which desperately clings to its identity.

V. Conclusion

Deleuze's account of the third synthesis of time involves different theories from philosophy, Greek drama theory and mathematics. It is important to note that Deleuze's method of mixing theoretical concepts is not to be conceived in terms of assimilating differences and blending one concept into the other. Rather, Deleuze maintains their heterogeneity and relates them to one another as differences. It can be regarded as a technique of montage operating by cuts commonly used in cinema. In his second cinema book, Deleuze analyses the time-image of modern cinema with the mathematical terms of incommensurables and irrational cuts (adding, however, the particular meaning of an irrational cut as an irreducible 'gap' and independent 'intensity'):

> The modern image initiates the reign of 'incommensurables' or irrational cuts: this is to say that the cut no longer forms part of one or the other image, of one or the other sequence that it separates and divides. It is on this condition that the succession or sequence becomes a series... The interval is set free, the interstice becomes irreducible and stands on its own. (Deleuze 1989: 277)

The technique of cutting, which Deleuze finds equally in mathematics and film, can perfectly be used to describe his own method of bringing together different heterogeneous theories and concepts.[24]

In this article we have gathered the different heterogeneous elements, from which Deleuze's third synthesis of time emerges. Starting with Kant, it was shown how he revolutionises the philosophy of time, first, by reversing the subordination of time to movement and uncoiling the cycle of time into a straight line; second, by introducing a fracture in the I through the form of time as a form of auto-affection. Deleuze adduces Hölderlin's interpretation of Oedipus to illustrate the impact that the condition of pure and empty time has on the subject. He also gains from Hölderlin the notion of the 'caesura', which distributes a past and a future that are non-coincident or non-symmetrical. The notion of caesura finds its mathematical expression in the notion of the cut, deployed by Dedekind in order to constitute a static and purely ideal conception of continuity. Deleuze, it was argued, makes use of Dedekind's notion of a static continuum in order to create a new notion of time, which has nothing to do with the empirical phenomenon of a continuous flux of moments, but on the contrary with the notion of an a priori static synthesis, which brings together divergent series of past and present moments and future becomings. The Kantian empty form of time, which never changes, thus becomes a static synthesis of time constituted by an irrational cut. For Deleuze, the irrational cut indicates an intensive depth, an outside or virtual event, which breaks with the empirical continuation of space and time. The primary example of such a virtual event is the death of God, which Nietzsche intrinsically connects with a dissolved self. Deleuze argues that Nietzsche's eternal return is Kantianism carried to its highest and most radical form. The Kantian empty form of time produced the split subject or empirico-transcendental doublet, but Kant lost the schizophrenic momentum and reintroduced a new synthetic identity. For this reason, Deleuze resorts to Nietzsche, who maintained the dissolved self and liberated it from the rule of identity and law altogether. Faced with the death of God, the Nietzschean subject becomes ungrounded and free to run through all its possibilities of becoming: it is the universal individual or overman.

The Nietzschean thought of the eternal return is indispensable for Deleuze's third synthesis of time, which introduces a cut or caesura into consciousness and produces the system of a dissolved self. Deleuze thus ties together the themes of the Kantian empty form of time and the Nietzschean eternal return, that is, the straight line and the wheel with its centrifugal force.

> This is how the story of time ends: by undoing its too well centred natural or physical circle and forming a straight line which then, led by its own length, reconstitutes an eternally decentred circle. (Deleuze 1994: 115)

Notes

1. A substantial portion of this article also appears in Chapter 4 of my book *Conditions of Thought: Deleuze and Transcendental Ideas* (Edinburgh University Press, forthcoming 2013). I gratefully acknowledge the editor's permission to republish this material.
2. See Gilles Deleuze, 'On Four Poetic Formulas which Might Summarize the Kantian Philosophy', Preface to *Kant's Critical Philosophy* (Deleuze 1984).
3. In fact, Deleuze contracts here two quotations by Rimbaud from different letters. In his letter to Georges Izambard from 13 May 1871, Rimbaud says: 'Je est un autre. Tant pis pour le bois qui se trouve violon' (Rimbaud 1975: 113), and in his letter to Paul Demeny from 15 May 1871: 'Car Je est un autre. Si le cuivre s'éveille clairon, il n'y a rien de sa faute' (Rimbaud 1975: 135).
4. See Borges 1962: 86–7.
5. Hölderlin's *Oedipus* raises the following problem: if Sophoclean tragedy already involves a thinking of the pure and empty form of time, of a time of abandonment by the gods, then the Kantian revolution, that is, the breaking with ancient cyclical time and the unrolling of time as a straight line, had already been performed in Greece two thousand years before Kant. This view fits well with Deleuze's thought that Ideas are virtual and that they become actualised in different places at different times. We should therefore read Deleuze's claim that Kant revolutionised the ancient cyclical model of time not simply in chronological terms, that is, in terms of historical development, but as the actualisation of a virtual Idea, which is to say that the movement is not going from one actual term to another, but from the virtual to the actual. We owe this suggestion to Nick Midgley.
6. See also Kant 1998: A144/B183 and A182/B224–5.
7. In this lecture course on Kant, Deleuze uses the term 'limit' in two different senses: in a first sense, limit means 'limitation' and refers to the ancient cyclical conception of time according to which time limits something, that is, measures the movements of celestial bodies. Limit in a second sense is said to be characteristic for the linear conception of time, time as pure and empty form. According to Deleuze, limit designates an internal limit, which he describes as 'that towards which something tends'. This definition matches with the mathematical definition of limit during the early geometrical phase of infinitesimal analysis, which depended upon theorems stating the continuous and infinite approximation of magnitudes toward a limiting value (Deleuze 1978b).
8. In his recently published book on Deleuze's philosophy of time, James Williams also renders 'caesura' as 'cut'. However, he does not refer to the mathematical definition of 'cut', which would have helped him in answering the question why the third synthesis is said to involve 'a formal cut, when in fact it is deduced from a somewhat narrow dramatic event (the appearance of a ghost to the Prince of Denmark)' (Williams 2011: 89).
9. It should be noted that both the rational numbers and the real numbers are infinite, ordered and dense number systems. The property of denseness means that between any two numbers there is at least one other number. Denseness is not continuity, as Bolzano mistakenly believed. The property of continuity,

which is attributed to the system of real numbers (but not to that of rational numbers), is precisely defined by Dedekind's method of cuts (see Kline 1972: 985).

10. I am indebted to Nathan Widder for drawing my attention to Russell's and Wittgenstein's critical remarks. For a comprehensive view of the mathematical debate on continuity, see Widder 2008: ch. 2, 'Point, Line, Curve', pp. 22–33.
11. For Russell, 'segments' are series of rational numbers whose terms become closer as the series progresses in order of magnitude. He defines real numbers as segments, and distinguishes segments that have limits and segments that do not (Russell 1919: 72). A rational real number, then, is defined as a segment whose terms converge to a rational limit (for instance, the series 0.49, 0.499, 0.4999, ... converges to the rational number 0.5), while an irrational number is defined as a segment without limit (this shows that Russell still refers to the place of irrationals as 'gaps'). A fuller treatment of real numbers can be found in Russell 1903: chs 33 and 34. For a brief summary see Widder 2008: 27–9.
12. We do not claim that Deleuze refers to Russell or Wittgenstein; in fact, it is doubtful that Deleuze might have even known their criticism of Dedekind. But as will become clear, Russell's and, in particular, Wittgenstein's critical remarks are in a way quite close to Deleuze's modified interpretation of Dedekind.
13. By assigning to irrationals the characteristic of limits of convergent series of rational numbers, Deleuze seems to borrow from Dedekind's definition of irrationals as limits and the axiom that every series of rationals *must* have a limit – in Russell's words, Dedekind's postulation that an irrational limit had to fill the Dedekindian gap (Russell 1919: 71).
14. These two positions are not so much apart as they might seem: thinkers, such as the eighteenth-century philosopher Salomon Maimon and the Neo-Kantian philosopher Hermann Cohen, conceived differentials as both intensive magnitudes and intelligible laws of production.
15. Thus, James Williams rightly insists that Deleuze's model for the third synthesis of time cannot be the ordered line of time, and that the division produced by the caesura does not equal a thin logical point. In his own words: 'the caesura is an event and has a depth to it. It is not instantaneous but rather must be considered with its effect on the points before and after it. This is why the caesura implies a drama: it divides time such that a drama is required to encompass this division. This event-like and dramatic division is in contrast with the thin logical point and set account of the line of time where an arbitrary point is taken on a line and every point before it is defined as before in time and every point after as after in time.... This misses the process at work on Deleuze's thought and model.' (Williams 2011: 91).

    It is true that Deleuze's third synthesis of time cannot be reduced to the number line and the cut to a thin logical point. But it should come as no surprise that Deleuze makes use of Dedekind's idea of a 'cut' and 'static synthesis' without following him in everything he says. Deleuze certainly over-interprets the notion of cut, insofar as he equals it with the irruption of the virtual event (the unthought, the inexplicable, the incommensurable) and the fracture in the subject.
16. For instance, in his cinema book on the time-image, Deleuze explicitly connects Borges's 'labyrinth of time' with the Nietzschean eternal return, as both conceptions of time plunge into a depth that poses 'the simultaneity of incompossible presents, or the coexistence of not-necessarily true pasts' (Deleuze 1989: 131). Borges as well as Nietzsche substitute 'the power of the false' for the form of the true, and a line of time 'which forks and keeps on forking' (131) for the empty form of time.

17. As Nathan Widder argues, the third time-image is distinctly Nietzschean, insofar as it concerns the *series of time*, while the other two time-images, which Deleuze analyses, emphasise the simultaneous layers of time and the coexistence of relations, and are thus rather Bergsonian by nature (see Widder 2008: 48–9). However, all three time-images refer to virtual time and hence 'shatter the empirical continuation of time, the chronological succession' (Deleuze 1989: 155).
18. Suffice here the following references to Klossowski by Deleuze: Deleuze 1990: 280–301 (Appendix III); 1994: 66–7, 90–1, 95, 312, 331.
19. See for instance Deleuze 1994: 6, 241–3, 299.
20. See Nietzsche 1980: 505, 11[163]: 'My doctrine teaches: live in such a way that you must desire to live again, this is your duty – you will live again in any case! He for whom striving procures the highest feeling, let him strive; he for whom repose procures the highest feeling, let him rest; he for whom belonging, following, and obeying procures the highest feeling, let him obey. Provided that he becomes aware of what procures the highest feeling, and that he shrinks back from nothing. Eternity depends upon it.'
21. See Nietzsche's letter to Jacob Burckhardt, 6 January 1889 (Nietzsche 1969: 1351).
22. See Nietzsche's letters to Peter Gast, Georg Brandes and Jacob Burckhardt from Turin, 4 January 1889 (Nietzsche 1969: 1350).
23. Michel Foucault analysed the practice of *parrhesia* in six lectures given at the University of California at Berkeley in 1983 as part of his seminar entitled 'Discourse and Truth'. The complete text compiled from tape-recordings is published under the title *Fearless Speech*, ed. Joseph Pearson, Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2001.
24. I am indebted to Anne Sauvagnargues for pointing out this specific Deleuzian procedure of 'cutting theories together'.

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Ontology of the Diagram and Biopolitics of Philosophy. A Research Programme on Transdisciplinarity[1]

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Abstract

In this article, the diagram is used to chart the movement from Deleuze's transcendental empiricism and engagement with structuralism in the 1960s to Deleuze and Guattari's ethico-aesthetic constructivism of the 1970s and 1980s. This is shown to culminate in a biopolitical critique and decoding of philosophy, which is part of the unfolding of a transdisciplinary research programme where art is seen to come ontologically ahead of philosophy.

Keywords: diagram, biopolitics, signs, aesthetic, structuralism, transdisciplinarity

I

In the eyes of many, my title could read as a *reparation* of the mistake Deleuze supposedly made when he translated Bacon's expression 'a sort of *graph*'[3] as *diagram* (following the French translation of 'graph'), and in doing so invested the term with nothing less than a *Logic of Sensation* dealing with the *figural* conversion of painting's fundamental 'hysteria'. This was frankly laughed at by the global village of contemporary art criticism.[4] One had to be French to learnedly explain that one needed to pass from the diagram's 'asignifying traits' – whose random marks (lines-traits, colour-patches) hurled the 'optical organisation of representation' into *catastrophe*, into *chaos* – to the 'pictorial Fact' of the painting.

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In what could not fail to appear as a classic *Aufhebung*, a line was traced between, on the one hand, the symbolic-abstract coding of the figurative which substitutes for the diagram an axiomatic that is as visual as it is mental, and on the other hand, the manual outburst where the diagram abandons its 'preparatory' stage and attacks the entire painting with its line-patch, carrying the whole surface away with it in the '*all-over*' disfiguration of action painting (Deleuze 2004c: 105–8, ch. XII: 'The Diagram').

Between Kandinsky and Pollock (or Morris)

> [t]here would thus be a tempered use of the diagram, a kind of middle way in which the diagram is not reduced to the state of a code, and yet does not cover the entire painting, avoiding both the code and its scrambling . . . (Deleuze 2004c: 111)

If the new figuration, whereby the figural substitutes itself for the false alternative between the figurative and the abstract, must 'emerge from the diagram', we must nonetheless *step outside the diagram* so as to 'make sensation clear and precise' (Deleuze 2004c: 110). So French, is it not, this will to organise to the point of chaos in order to 'succeed in producing a more profound resemblance' (83) . . . Hence the necessity of *saving the contour* of the line that delimits nothing.

One could argue that if there is an incontestable classicism here, and even so in the schematisation of the three great pathways of modern art, this classicism is rigorously determined by the will to make the 'capture of forces' (a *forcibly* Nietzschean classicism) pass through a constructivist modulation. Making use of the category of synthesiser, this constructivist modulation replaces any model of expression which would hold that forces are simply *present underneath representation*, in which particular the 'matterist' exploration realised, or was the fact of, abstract expressionism.[5] What we are dealing with is a diagram functioning '*as a modulator*' of synthesis, triply freeing planes from the perspective they replace, colour from the painterliness[6] beyond which it is deployed, and the body from the organism it overflows.[7] But this would be to engage in a defence and illustration of the pictorial aesthetic of Deleuze (a position, I say in passing, which is so unlike my own that I wrote *La Pensée-Matisse (2005)*[8] in order to depart from it *completely*). On the contrary, it seems to me that it is more interesting to accept, as all the evidence suggests, that Deleuze's *Bacon* (or, better still, the *Deleuzian Bacon*) originates from strata anterior to the double-sided works co-written with Félix Guattari (*Anti-Oedipus* (1972), *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980), with *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* (1975) functioning as

a component of passage from one to the other).[9] In fact, the double negotiation which Deleuze's *Bacon* engages in with, on the one hand, phenomenology, and on the other hand, modernism, and which leads them to their respective points of rupture (Body without organs vs. lived body, haptic vs. optic[10]) by means of a 'diagrammatic line' held in place by the 'artistic will' (*Kunstwollen*) specific to the *aesthetic image*, testifies to this anteriority and to this independence. This is because Guattari's was a specifically *semio-political* investment in the diagram which manifested itself as the 'power of machinic assemblage [*puissance d'agencement machinique*]' (Guattari 1977: 244)[11] capable of intensely fuelling their joint work.[12]

Well before the diagram underwent its most important conceptual developments in *A Thousand Plateaus* (2004),[13] it is indeed Guattari who had already oriented Deleuze back to the term 'diagram' in an essay from 1975 on *Discipline and Punish*.[14] In this essay Deleuze focuses on the *hapax* Foucault had used when qualifying the Panopticon as 'the diagram of a mechanism of power reduced to its ideal form' (Foucault 1979: 207). But the 'ideal form' is expunged by Deleuze, who immediately connects this to a 'functioning abstracted from any obstacle, resistance or friction' (Deleuze 1975: 1216–17), allowing him to conclude that the diagram must be detached from any 'specific use', that is to say *immanent*. This immanence of the diagram involves the question of politics in an 'abstract machine … coextensive with the entire social field' (1216–17),[15] where the *pure mutations animating the diagram* must be explained by cartography. From the non-representational nature of the diagram, Deleuze in fact deduces that

> *the diagram cannot be used to represent an objectivised world*; on the contrary it organises a new type of reality.… The diagram is not a science, it is always a matter of politics. It is not a subject of history, nor does it survey history from above. It makes history by unmaking its previous realities and significations, constituting so many cutting edges of emergence or of creationism, of unexpected conjunctions, of improbable continua. (Deleuze 1975: 1223; my emphasis)[16]

Here the Deleuzian demonstration suddenly accelerates when it addresses the movement from one society to another through mutations of the diagram, this 'complex' problem which had, with Guattari's help, *practically* set in motion Deleuze's break with structuralism.[17] Everything here goes so quickly, one is swept away by phrases manifesting the *diagrammatic forcing* of the Foucauldian concept of apparatus of power, that really one must project oneself several

years forwards, to *A Thousand Plateaus*, where the differences now established between Deleuze–Guattari (or Guattari–Deleuze[18]) and Foucault are made explicit, to be able to understand the reasons for these differences. One must adopt the perspective of this 'new way of thinking' which is no longer just 'diagrammatism' (as Deleuze put it in his article from 1975[19]) but *a new way of thinking about the diagram affirmed in its full machinic alterity*: 'the diagram and abstract machine have lines of flight that are primary, which are not phenomena of resistance or counterattack in an assemblage, but cutting edges of creation and deterritorialisation' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 585, n.39). Assemblages will thus no longer be 'of power but of desire (desire is always assembled), and power seems to be a stratified dimension of the assemblage'[20] (585, n.39). It is at the end of this Copernican Revolution in desire/power, which involves an entire constructivism of desire dependent on its complete immanence to the social field, that the machine-diagram will be called *abstract insofar as it 'constitutes and conjugates all of the assemblage's cutting edges of deterritorialisation'* (155). So much so that the *enforced* deterritorialisation of the diagram comes first, as the *machinic* key to the movement from the dimension of historical formations as strata to the non-stratified dimension of power as strategy, as found in *Discipline and Punish*. From the archive to the diagram … or from the History (of forms) to the becoming (of forces). We must understand here *a becoming capable of explaining the prevalence of relations of power over relations of knowledge without, nonetheless, remaining imprisoned by 'the immanence of power'*.

(Foucault will himself take on this problem in *The History of Sexuality: The Will to Knowledge*, independently of the *biopolitical critique of philosophy* which it implies for Deleuze *with Guattari:*

> Should it be said that one is always 'inside' power, there is no 'escaping' it, there is no absolute outside where it is concerned, because one is subject to the law in any case? Or that, history being the ruse of reason, power is the ruse of history, always emerging the winner? (Foucault 1998: 95)[21])

Since Deleuze credits Foucault with the notion of 'assemblage' (*agencement*) in his article from 1975,[22] it is therefore at the level of this reoriented 'assemblage' that the Foucauldian problematic of power-knowledge will be renewed, as well as its later adjustment in terms of the relation between discursive formations (referring to the sayable, the set of all enunciations) and non-discursive formations (which designate, in its positive sense (*dans sa forme positive*), the visible, the set of all bodies). In this relation between formations one must bear in mind that

it is necessary to affirm both their *de jure* heterogeneity and *de facto* interpenetration, which are irreducible to the pairing between signifier and signified.[23] Deleuze renewed this in terms (alien to Foucault) of *form of expression* (the sayable) and *form of content* (the visible),[24] which are put in relation and in *relations of force* in a double-sided assemblage which does not formalise expression as an 'assemblage of enunciation' without also formalising contents as a 'machinic assemblage, or an assemblage of bodies' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 155). Deleuze and Guattari go on to say that

> [w]e must therefore arrive at something in the assemblage itself that is still more profound than these sides and can account for both of the forms in presupposition, forms of expression or regimes of signs (semiotic systems) and forms of content or regimes of bodies (physical systems). (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 155)

And it is thanks to Guattari's semiotics and pragmatic critique of linguistics, inspired by a *de-structuralised* Hjelmslev,[25] that the concepts of abstract machine and diagram will inter-define this 'something . . . that is still more profound' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 155) where there is no longer either any substance or form, content or expression, but *'traits' of content and of expression* functioning to ensure the most deterritorialised of connections between *'pure matter'*, that is, unformed matters or *intensities*, and *'pure function'*, that is, informal functions or '*tensors*' (156).[26] At the level of 'the most deterritorialised content and [of] the most deterritorialised expression' (156), retained by the diagram 'in order to conjugate them' (156), one can thus recognise the etymo-archaeology of the diagram as a drawing-writing. Binding itself to (*en prise sur*) a becoming of forces-signs which are at work in the strata, the diagram is the surface of experimentation of an Abstract-Real (*un Abstrait-Réel*), of a writing *flush with the real writing a new type of reality* held in the very fabric of the most concrete of assemblages by the joint deterritorialisation of expression and content. We are dealing with the *virtualities* of a 'revolutionary diagram from which are derived both a new way of doing and a new way of speaking' (Deleuze 1975: 1227) in conditions that will 'display the relations of force constitutive of power' (1227) – and that will reveal economic materialism[27] to be the other side of the structuralist idealism of the signifier – in order to diagram the informal element of forces in which both the visible and the sayable are submerged. It is in these relations of force *between content and expression* that, on the one hand, 'the stabilisation of relations of deterritorialisation' (Guattari 1977: 243) determines itself

from the viewpoint of power and, on the other hand, that is assembled an intensive deterritorialising machine carried by the flows of signs which it involves in diagrammatic processes of conjunction, which are always more dominant over the material flows of all kinds and in which they are at work *anyway*.

It is now my turn to accelerate, and to say all too quickly that we do not touch on the diagrammatic *implication* of Deleuzo-Guattarian (and/or Guattaro-Deleuzian) thought in its most political plane of consistency without it immediately *explicating* and complicating itself as *Art and Politics*. For even if art cannot bring to light the most contemporary 'capture of forces' without also *harnessing the intense-abstract light of the diagram* – 'which renders the sayable visible, and which renders action sayable – but for another language, for another way of acting' (Deleuze 1975: 1226) – the social field must nonetheless first define itself by its lines of flight so that the conjunction (in art *and* politics) can *construct a real to come*. This is a 'Real-Abstract [which] opposes itself all the more to the fictitious abstraction of a supposedly pure machine of expression' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 157; translation modified) since it tries to *bring about the continuum, the conjunction of all that flees* (*tout ce qui fuit*) *and of everything that slides under – and pushes through – the grid or net*. Or to put it another way: so that art ceases to be an end in itself, the artist must – in one way or another, but in the most singular of ways – invest him- or herself in this 'social' affirmation by experimenting with 'signs', not as bearers of *something else* (the invisible at work in the visual-aesthetic image), but as *forces-signs of deterritorialisation and of reterritorialisation*. So art is never an end in itself,

> it is only a tool for blazing life lines, in other words, all of those real becomings that are not produced only *in* art, and all of those active escapes that do not consist in fleeing *into* art, taking refuge in art, and all of those positive deterritorialisations that never reterritorialise on art, but instead sweep it away with them toward the realms of the asignifying, asubjective, and faceless. (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 208)

It is this *sign-aisthesic*[28] (*signesthésique*) politics of art which can be called, as a rigorous contemporary alternative to its 'conceptual' version, *Art after Philosophy*. This 'after' (*après*) does not mean art '*according to*' (*d'après*) philosophy – nor does it mean an analytical finish or varnish (*un apprêt*) applied to philosophy (à la Kosuth) – since ontologically art comes *ahead of* it (*en-avant*) (along with the *postconceptual* critique/clinique of philosophy which it carries with it).

II

To develop this political ontology of the diagram into a biopolitical critique of philosophy and to envelop in its plane of immanence the construction of the question of transdisciplinarity – *as postphilosophical problem* – one must first make the art–politics conjunction operate retroactively on (*rabattre sur*) the historico-philosophical sequence which *stretched the former between Deleuze and Guattari*. In one direction we will find this constitutive affirmation of transcendental empiricism in the *Difference and Repetition of philosophy*, where it is the role of 'the modern work of art' to indicate 'to philosophy a path which leads to the abandonment of representation' by identifying the conditions of real experience – instead of and replacing the conditions of possible experience – (the) experimentation in and of the work of art (*l'expérimentation de/dans l'œuvre d'art*), with the development of its simulacral 'permutating series' (Deleuze 1994: 65–8), etc. This is thus one path, a post/structuralist logic of sense. In the other direction we will be taken to 'this ontological root of creativity that is characteristic of the new processual paradigm' (Guattari 1995: 116), which Guattari preferred to call the 'proto-aesthetic [rather than 'aesthetic'] paradigm' (101), 'to emphasise that we are not referring to institutionalised art' (102), and that the two (Kantian) meanings of aesthetic (theory of the sensible and theory of the beautiful) would be less *conflated in the work of art*[29] than they would be *absolutely deterritorialised* in the 'machination for producing existence' (109), in the 'generative praxis [of] heterogeneity and complexity' (109). We know that such praxis involves this '*diagrammatic politics*' (Guattari 2011: 174), its equally semiotic and material 'onto-logic'[30] having been thoroughly explored in *A Thousand Plateaus* as a machinic and critical (*machinique-critique*) alternative to the play of series on the surface of structures. But it is inevitably also an alternative to the philosophical re-foundation of the transdisciplinary research programme initiated by structuralism, a structuralism which Deleuze had reworked as a 'new transcendental philosophy' (Deleuze 2004a: 174), before giving in to the *anti-structuralist motif* developed in 'real time' (the paradigmatic axis) by Guattari[31] since the *anti-Oedipus* could equally well read as *anti-structure*.[32] Here we must weave (*croiser*) our first historico-philosophical sequence into a second, reorienting the question of transdisciplinarity as *problem of philosophy*.

This sequence starts with the transdisciplinary research programme of structuralism based on linguistics' structural functionalism and

developed in a transformative system of relations mobilising the humanities and social sciences *against the theoretical primacy of philosophy*. This first 'moment' is followed by a *philosophical re-foundation of transdisciplinarity* through the re-definition of structuralism as *the* 'new transcendental philosophy' (Deleuze 2004a: 174), Deleuze's key expression in 'How do We Recognize Structuralism?' – and let us notice (1) that it tends to a *poststructuralist complication* of Structuralism's problematics by a full integration or transduction of Deleuzian 'superior empiricism' (Deleuze's post-Bergsonian *bio-transcendental* empiricism is *differentially re-actualised* in post/structuralist terms); (2) and that, at the end of the article (written in 1967, that is, contemporary with the *Structuralist Controversy*, the Baltimore Conference), Deleuze reinvests or reworks, with the question of the 'structural mutations', the structure/genesis or system/transformation problem in practical terms which are understood as a *challenge to (the new transcendental) philosophy* and as *the criteria of the future*. The third moment – but the transdisciplinary problematics oblige us to reunify *in tension* the three moments – is the moment of the 'rhizome' as this anti-structuralist war machine that can only make *structure take flight* (according to a machinic apparatus that appropriates structure's real-abstraction so as to *animate the whole process radically put into becoming from the outside*) by producing a critique/clinique of philosophy, a kind of *schizoanalysis of philosophy* undertaken from the radical perspective of a *politics of transversalisation* liberating transdisciplinarity from its structural *ordination* as *disciplinary regulation* of structuralist transdisciplinarity (the operational closure of the structure). At the end of the day, Lévi-Straussian *bricolage* is substituted for a pragmatics starting to work as a critical developer of the political economy of language. Pragmatics means thus an anti-linguistic ontology of the sign that extracts the transformational component of post-structuralism, that is, *structuralism driven to its constitutive tension*, redirecting it diagrammatically towards *a total de-epistemologisation and re-ontologisation* to attain – 'at the absolute horizon of all processes of creation': which is to say an 'ontological transversality' (Guattari 1995: 38) – a *politics of multiplicities* as a *postphilosophical ungrounding* (*effondement*) of transdisciplinarity. At its point of greatest tension, in a *post modo*[33] modality which is none other than the politics of thought and politics inside thought (*la politique de/dans la pensée*), as oriented by the analysis of capitalism, it reads, as Guattari puts it: 'Being does not precede machinic essence; the process precedes the heterogenesis of being' (108).

What is at stake in this rupture is a renewed machinic biopolitics of 'assemblages'. The rupture will have begun by *opposing* transdisciplinary experimentation to 'structural interpretation' at the same moment that the 'critique of philosophy' exceeds the philosophy of representation[34] to involve itself in a *clinical practice of the social sciences* (meaning a practice of *all* the human sciences, which become at once pragmatic – and de-structuralised – and political – and re-socialised). For if Guattari puts an end to the project Deleuze had long had of opening philosophy up to *artist-thought* (*la pensée-artiste*) and of *aesthetically* intensifying its system of interpretation in order to let in its own outside (which *forces* it to think, as constrained by the sensibility and the real conditions of these 'new works of today'[35]), it is indeed because his assemblage with Guattari bears a whole new potentiality (and effect) which became necessary after 1968. That is, to make philosophy step outside itself by undergoing a process of *decoding*, which functions textually and arrives at its logic of sense *at the same time* that this process invests the destruction of the codes used by capitalism to represent this very process, and in a historical narrative inseparable from a *semiotic machination* of the subject. (It is here that *Foucault-thought* (*la pensée-Foucault*) will be invested with a *diagrammatic function*.) This means that Deleuze will put the Guattari-effect to work in a biopolitical critique of philosophy which, brought outside itself and into the social field, gains an absolute power of decoding. Its *first effect* will be to undo the philosophical image of thought by breaking that which codes its material-ideal form of interiority. This is the 'book of philosophy' which we no longer propose to replace with another form of *expression* and a new *style* – as Deleuze famously puts it in the preface to *Difference and Repetition*: 'The time is coming when it will hardly be possible to write a book of philosophy as it has been done for so long: "Ah! the old style . . . "' (Deleuze 1994: xxi). Instead, we oppose to it another regime of production which *incorporates* the 'book of philosophy' into the material *milieu* by *plugging* it into the *machinic* conditions of reality of the most external and the most internal of forces. The diagram names this process where signs flush with material flows[36] – and whose cutting edges of creation are ontologically affirmed and analytically assisted – turn back on philosophy's reterritorialisation onto the concept, at the very same moment that philosophy absolutely deterritorialises capital (*porte à l'absolu la déterritorialisation relative du capital*) by suppressing it as an internal limit (Deleuze and Guattari 2003: 98). Postconceptual or postphilosophical mean nothing else than the following: that the general function of diagrammatisation

proliferates beyond itself; not 'in general' – either *philosophically* in general or generally in a *philosophical* manner, solely because of the identity-alterity (not so recently) posited BEING = BECOMING, or MONISM = PLURALISM, 'the furniture we are forever rearranging' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 23) – but rather in *an* assemblage *to be constructed*, always as both a 'collective assemblage of enunciation' and a 'machinic assemblage of desire'.[37]

Notes

1. This paper was presented at the 'Deleuze, Philosophy, Transdisciplinarity' Conference, Goldsmiths University of London, 10–12 February 2012, and is part of the CRMEP's research programme on Transdisciplinarity (AHRC 914469, with P. Osborne and S. Stanford). With the exception of the endnotes, no major changes have been introduced for this publication. When referencing in dual languages, non-English editions of texts follow the English language references.
2. Translated by Guillaume Collett.
3. As found in his Interviews with David Sylvester: *The Brutality of Fact: Interviews with Francis Bacon* (Sylvester 1975: 56/110–11).
4. Cf. Art & Language, T. Baldwin 2004; Roberts 2010 – the first lines of the article read: 'Modern continental philosophers – or more precisely modern French philosophers – have, historically, not been the best or most welcome judges of art. When they have not been hitching a ride on the back of some blue chip reputation in order to stoke the fires of high-end conceptualisation, they have been scuttling around in artistic marginalia pursuing some unfathomable fancy, like a love-struck teenager indifferent to the absurdity of their love-object. Top prize in the former category goes to Deleuze's hystericised Francis Bacon as grand master . . . ' (Roberts 2010: 70).
5. 'But with Pollock, this line-trait and this colour-patch will be pushed to their functional limit . . . a decomposition of matter, which abandons us to its lineaments and granulations' (Deleuze 2004c: 105). Matterism here would be the fruit of the diagram's own self-reflexivity: 'rather than making the flux pass through the diagram . . . , it is as if the diagram were directed toward itself' (117). Matterism *qua* Mannerism.
6. [Translator's note: this is the standard translation of the German *malerisch*, used by Alliez, a word popularised by Swiss art historian Heinrich Wölfflin (1864–1945). This term refers to a manner of painting in a less than controlled style, where the brushstrokes themselves are visible or spill over the drawn lines. Painterliness is found particularly in impressionism and abstract expressionism.]
7. See the whole of Deleuze [1969] 2004b: ch. XIII, 'Analogy'
8. A recent development from this work has been published; see Alliez 2012.
9. Published in 1981, which is to say one year after *A Thousand Plateaus*, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* (2004c) can be considered as directly and autonomously related to *The Logic of Sense* (2004b), *short-circuited* by the hysteria of Artaud's Body without Organs, which endows sensation with a radically non-phenomenological logic (cf. 2004c: ch. VII: 'Hysteria'). The volcanic eruption of the Body without Organs in the very middle of the structuralist logic of sense (13th series) in truth had already put an end to this philosophical project for Deleuze himself.

10. But haptic could equally lead, via Hildebrand, to a modernist phenomenology of art.
11. If it is too late not to follow the standard translation of '*agencement*' as 'assemblage', we ask the reader to keep in mind the '*agencement*' as a *diagrammatic kind of agency*.
12. Cf. Guattari 1977, 1979, 2006, 2011.
13. Developments of the diagram are indissociable from a pragmatics of signs of which we will find more than one sketch in Félix Guattari's *The Machinic Unconscious* (2011), first published in 1979 before *A Thousand Plateaus*.
14. 'Écrivain non: un nouveau cartographe' (Deleuze 1975). The article is republished in a very modified form in *Foucault* under the general title of 'From the Archive to the Diagram' (2006: 1–38).
15. For the Guattarian heterogenesis of the concept of 'abstract machine', see for example Guattari 1995: 35.
16. 'It doubles history with a sense of continual evolution [or becoming]', concludes Deleuze when he repeats this phrase in *Foucault* (2006: 31) (translation modified).
17. It is the end of the article entitled 'How Do We Recognise Structuralism?' (Deleuze 2004a: 170–192) where Deleuze must launch a 'structuralist hero' so as to set up a praxis there.
18. For the montage of this syntagm, cf. Alliez 2011.
19. 'Une nouvelle pensée, positive et positiviste, *le diagrammatisme*, *la cartographie*' (Deleuze 1975: 1223; original emphasis).
20. See Deleuze 2007: we will find the differential principle of the Deleuzo-Guattarian note on Foucault of *A Thousand Plateaus* in this letter addressed to Foucault after *The History of Sexuality: The Will to Knowledge* was published in 1976.
21. Profoundly different from the Deleuzo-Guattarian 'lines of flight', Foucault's political philosophy requires a notion of 'resistance', considered as irreducible vis-à-vis relations of power.
22. Resolutely Deleuzo-Guattarian (and not Foucauldian), the concept of assemblage appears for the first time in *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* (1986), particularly in the last chapter ('What is an Assemblage?/Qu'est-ce qu'un agencement?').
23. In *A Thousand Plateaus* (2004: 66), Deleuze and Guattari return to the whole analysis of the diagram-prison (which makes them return to *The Archaeology of Knowledge*).
24. Cf. Deleuze 1975: 1213, 1219ff. These two terms come from the Danish linguist Hjelmslev from whom Guattari had long appropriated this distinction – not without modifying its structuralist character in order to radicalise the rupture with the pairing between signifier and signified. Cf. Hjelmslev 1968, particularly ch. 13 cited in *A Thousand Plateaus*.
25. Since form continues to fall on matter 'like a net' (an expression of Hjelmslev's) to engender substance as much of expression as of content. Cf. Guattari 1995: 24, 1979: 226.
26. Cf. Deleuze 1975: 1216–17, for the first appearance of the analysis of diagrammatism developed in terms of 'pure function' and 'pure matter' – and related to the Panopticon insofar as it ignores the finalisation of functions (caring for or supervising (*surveiller*), teaching or punishing, etc.), and the organisation of matters (hospital or workshop, school or prison, etc.), from which is derived its 'informal' dimension.
27. 'In any case, content and expression are never reducible to signified-signifier. And . . . neither are they reducible to base-superstructure. One can no more posit

a primacy of content as the determining factor than a primacy of expression as a signifying system' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 76). The lesson here is as much Foucauldian as it is Guattarian (Guattari's anti-Althusserianism).

28. [Translator's note: the Greek term *aisthesis* (αισθησις) refers to sensation, perception, as opposed to intellection (*noesis*). Alberto Toscano explains that, following Alliez's 'distinctive concern with the sensible conditions of philosophy, science and art', *aisthesis* functions 'transversal[ly] … as both affect and experiment, passive synthesis and invention'; see Toscano's preface to Alliez 2004: xi. We should hear echoes of a transversal or transdisciplinary 'synaesthesia' (*synesthésie*) in Alliez's neologism.]
29. Cf. Deleuze (1994: 82): 'Everything changes once we determine the conditions of real experience, which are not larger than the conditioned and which differ in kind from the categories: the two senses of the aesthetic become one, to the point where the being of the sensible reveals itself in the work of art, while at the same time the work of art appears as experimentation.'
30. This is another term Guattari uses; cf. Guattari 1995: 65.
31. See the texts collected in Guattari 1972 – with a preface by Deleuze.
32. Following – and *as an inversion of* – J.-C. Milner's expression in *Le Périple structural* (2002).
33. [Translator's note: in *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, J.-F. Lyotard tells us that '*Post modern* would have to be understood according to the paradox of the future (*post*) anterior (*modo*)' (1984: 81).]
34. According to the movement of thought which leads Deleuze from the Nietzschean critique of Kant to an anti-representative philosophy of Difference and Repetition at first commanded by the post-Romantic appropriation of Proustian literary experience. It is here that 'Thereby is manifested the "philosophical" bearing of Proust's work: it vies with philosophy' (Deleuze 2000: 94), while art is the exclusive domain of an experimentation whose 'problematic' character is precisely defined by its interpretation. This will be reproblematised in structuralist terms ('structural interpretation' in fact comes from the *first* criterion by which we recognise structuralism: the symbolic; cf. Deleuze, 'How do We Recognise Structuralism?', *op. cit.*, p. 172).
35. As 'this [structural] reinterpretation only has value to the extent that it animates new works which are those of today' (Deleuze 2004a: 173). This is the key example of Pop Art in *Difference and Repetition*.
36. According to the animation stands of 'Échafaudages sémiotiques' (1977: 250ff.).
37. This is the definition of assemblage proposed by Deleuze and Guattari at the end of *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* (1986). This is thus rigorously contemporary with Deleuze's 'diagrammatic' article on Foucault. – To conclude in a kind of re-opening, let me say that this *paper* had no other aim than to explore this contemporary diagrammatic regime by means of the unfolding of the same gesture in which I oppose the 'aesthetic regime' of Jacques Rancière. On this diagrammatic agency vs. aesthetic regime, see my 'Body without Image: Ernesto Neto's Anti-Leviathan' (2013 forthcoming).

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Who Are Our Nomads Today?: Deleuze's Political Ontology and the Revolutionary Problematic

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Abstract

This paper will address the question of the revolution in Gilles Deleuze's political ontology. More specifically, it will explore what kind of person Deleuze believes is capable of bringing about genuine and practical transformation. Contrary to the belief that a Deleuzian programme for change centres on the facilitation of 'absolute deterritorialisation' and pure 'lines of flight', I will demonstrate how Deleuze in fact advocates a more cautious and incremental if not conservative practice that promotes the ethic of prudence. This will be achieved in part through a critical analysis of the dualistic premises upon which much Deleuzian political philosophy is based, alongside the topological triads that can also be found in his work. In light of this critique, Deleuze's thoughts on what it is to be and become a revolutionary will be brought into relief, giving rise to the question: who really is Deleuze's nomad, his true revolutionary or figure of transformation?

Keywords: nomads, political ontology, multiplicities, State, dualisms and triads

Introduction

In concluding a paper titled 'Nomadic Thought' delivered to a Nietzsche conference in 1972, Gilles Deleuze sums up the problem of the revolution as follows:

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> As we know, the revolutionary problem today is to find some unity in our various struggles without falling back on the despotic and bureaucratic organization of the party or State apparatus: we want a war-machine that would not recreate a State apparatus, a nomadic unity in relation with the Outside, that would not recreate the despotic internal unity. (Deleuze 2004: 259)

It is no longer the early 1970s, and our world has changed significantly since then. But although the question of 'the revolution' that troubled the political Left of Deleuze's France has changed in tenor somewhat, the problem which Deleuze refers to in the above passage is arguably as pressing now as it has ever been. Recent revolutionary events across North Africa, the Middle East and Greece obviously spring to mind, as does the ongoing attempt of environmentalists to 'find some unity' for their movement, or more specifically, a mechanism that can successfully coordinate mass-action in a way that does not wait for or rely upon State apparatuses. Others are better placed than I am to comment on the particularities of these examples. What I would like to do in this paper, however, is not so much speak about the specifics of these struggles, as investigate what Deleuzian philosophy and politics have to say about revolutionaries in general. In short, who is, according to Deleuze's practice of thought, a real nomad or revolutionary? Who is it that is capable of bringing about genuine and practical transformation? Contrary to the belief that a Deleuzian programme for change centres on the facilitation of absolute deterritorialisation and pure lines of flight, I will demonstrate in this paper how Deleuze in fact advocates a more cautious and incremental if not conservative approach – an approach, moreover, that is revolutionary precisely because of its distancing from the absolute in favour of prudence.

It must be acknowledged from the outset that Deleuze will not exactly provide us with an explicit answer to the question in this paper's title. This is because instead of naming names and setting down step-by-step instructions, Deleuze directs his energies towards altering our understanding and approach to the question of who is a revolutionary and the revolutionary problematic it is a part of. Appreciating the nature of this alteration and the ontology that underpins it will therefore form the major task of this paper. It will be pursued through a close examination of the relevant primary material.[1] To begin with, I will briefly touch on some of the abiding dualisms in Deleuze's work that are largely responsible for determining the shape and direction for much of his political philosophy. Chief among these will be the dualism mentioned in the above quote of the nomad and the State. Following

this initial presentation, which will evidence Deleuze's transdisciplinary practice, I will demonstrate how this basic and well-formed dualism is far more complex than it might initially seem. In fact, I will show how Deleuze's political ontology contains not one but two possible nomads, thus calling into question the dualistic premises upon which much Deleuzian commentary and Deleuzian-inspired political thought is based. After distinguishing between these two nomadic figures, the question with which Deleuze closes his 'Nomadic Thought' essay will be rejoined: who really are our nomads today, our true revolutionary figures of transformation?[2]

Absolute Nomads

1972 was a big year for Deleuze. That year saw the publication of a number of important works, including his much discussed interview with Michel Foucault 'Intellectuals and Power', and his key essay 'How Do We Recognise Structuralism?'. More significantly, it was in that year that *Anti-Oedipus* first appeared. But while there is a good chance that the participants at the 'Nietzsche Today' conference held in the summer of that year at Cerisy-la-Salle (which included luminaries such as Klossowski, Derrida, Lyotard, Nancy, Gandillac and Lacoue-Labarthe) would have been aware of Deleuze's new philosophical direction with Guattari, it is highly unlikely that they would have had any idea what exactly he was referring to in his paper by the conceptual distinction between the nomad and the State. Indeed, when asked a question by Mieke Taat in the discussion following Deleuze's paper about the incongruity between his current work and certain positions in his last book (*The Logic of Sense*), Deleuze simply responded: 'I've undergone a change' (Deleuze 2004: 261). Four years later Deleuze would elaborate on this curt (and rather unsatisfactory) response:

> Fortunately I am nearly incapable of speaking for myself, because what has happened to me since *The Logic of Sense* now depends on my having met Félix Guattari, on my work with him, on what we do together. I believe Félix and I sought out new directions simply because we felt like doing so.... I believe also that this change of method brings with it a change of subject matter, or, vice versa, that a certain kind of politics takes the place of psychoanalysis [the method of *The Logic of Sense*]. Such a method would also be a form of politics (micropolitics) and would propose the study of multiplicities... (Deleuze 2006: 65–6)

Taking advantage of this collaborative material, we find ourselves in a position denied the participants at Cerisy to make sense of Deleuze's understanding and treatment of what he referred to as 'the revolutionary problem today'. What Deleuze is after, to restate his presentation of the problematic, is a way of organising a revolutionary movement, or more specifically, revolutionary *force*, that does not end up reproducing what it is fighting against in the act of resistance. Pure anarchy is one thing, and at certain times a good thing. But such disorganisation is statedly not Deleuze's objective. For him, the question is more exactly: is there a way of *organising* that is more structured than pure anarchy yet avoids the despotic State form? This is Deleuze's revolutionary problem.[3] His response with Guattari is for the most part strategic, as befits the practical thrust of the problem. But it is also ontological. Let us then briefly look at the ontological basis for Deleuze's political philosophy, before specifically turning to his various statements on revolutionaries.[4]

In seeking an alternative kind of organisation to the State form, Deleuze and Guattari nominate its historical opponent: the nomad. It is most common for the term 'nomos' to be associated with the law. Deleuze and Guattari, however, contest this straight connotation by emphasising its opposition to the 'polis':

> The *nomos* came to designate the law, but that was originally because it was distribution, a mode of distribution. It is a very special kind of distribution, one without division into shares, in a space without borders or enclosure. The *nomos* is the consistency of a fuzzy aggregate: it is in this sense that it stands in opposition to the law or the *polis*, as the backcountry, a mountainside, or the vague expanse around a city ('either nomos or polis'). (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 380)[5]

The nomad and the State thus form a dualism for Deleuze and Guattari, whereby the State works to 'reclaim' land by building 'walls, enclosures, and roads between enclosures' while the nomads do not so much tame the earth as populate its expanse, inserting themselves into the continually shifting nature of the desert, tundra, etc. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 381).

As this description suggests, the distinction between the nomad and the State is largely predicated on their differing relations to space, and more precisely, their distribution *of* and *in* space. Deleuze had been playing around with this distinction for some time. As he explains in *Difference and Repetition*, there are two types of distribution, one 'which implies a dividing up of that which is distributed' and another

which is 'a division among those who distribute *themselves* in an open space – a space which is unlimited, or at least without precise limits' (Deleuze 1994: 36).[6] Moving forward to *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari discover another novel way to describe this distinction, employing terms created by the musical composer Pierre Boulez. In his musical compositions, Boulez distinguishes between a smooth space-time that 'one occupies without counting' and a striated space-time that 'one counts in order to occupy' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 477). These two ways of engaging with sound involve contrasting attitudes towards, and experiences of, space-time. In a striated space, a 'standard' is imposed onto music, providing an organisational structure to which sounds then correspond. Frequencies of sound are thus distributed within various intervals respective to the breaks that separate them. In a smooth space, on the other hand, frequencies are distributed without breaks; there is no transcendent scale from which to judge the frequency, for the space-time itself continuously modulates. For this reason, smooth space has no boundaries between one interval and another – there is no inside and outside – since it is composed entirely of an alteration that continuously expands or unravels.

At base, however, all of these distinctions of smooth/striated and nomad/State can be traced back to one of the earliest and most enduring of Deleuzian dualisms: Henri Bergson's separation between differences of nature and differences of degree. As Deleuze explains in his 1956 essay 'Bergson's Conception of Difference', differences of nature are heterogeneous while differences of degree are homogeneous (Deleuze 2004: 32–51). This means that for a difference of nature to be genuinely heterogeneous, it must not merely refer to the difference between two homogeneities, since this would reduce heterogeneity to the identity of homogeneities. Therefore, a difference of nature must differ first and foremost *from itself*: what defines a difference of nature is not merely the way it differs from other external objects, but the way it differs internally, being composed of a heterogeneity on the inside.

Another way that Bergson describes this separation of difference is by employing the theory of multiplicities as developed by the mathematician Bernhard Riemann. Following Riemann, Bergson distinguishes between metric and nonmetric multiplicities, or in other words, those multiplicities that can and cannot be divided without changing in kind. Metric multiplicities lend themselves to striation, for they can be easily sub-divided and manipulated without changing their nature, only their extensive quantity. Nonmetric multiplicities, on the other hand, are smooth, making it impossible to carry out such

operations without changing them in kind or converting a smooth-nonmetric multiplicity into a striated-metric one.

This last remark should flag up why Deleuze and Guattari's ontology, and in particular the theory of multiplicities borrowed from Bergson and Riemann, is of relevance to 'the revolutionary problem', and more broadly, a form of political analysis that proceeds via the study of multiplicities (as the quote I mentioned above on the 'change of method' refers to).[7] If there is a kind of organisation that avoids reproducing the State form, for Deleuze and Guattari it will be ontologically composed as a nonmetric or internally heterogeneous multiplicity – a smooth space or nomadic organisation that is not only 'outside [the State's] sovereignty and prior to its law', but 'of another species, another nature, another origin than the State apparatus' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 352).

In light of this radical alterity between the nomad and the State, it is tempting to emphasise the destructive power of the nomads and their disorganising effect – their process of 'deterritorialisation' – and valorise it in contrast to the oppressive power of a State apparatus. As Deleuze and Guattari express on many occasions in various registers, nomads propagate smooth space by breaking through the walls of striated space in order to 'add desert to desert, steppe to steppe, by a series of local operations whose orientation and direction endlessly vary' (382). Furthermore, the nomad does not just differ from the State, but 'brings a *furor* to bear against sovereignty' (352). This furor is for the purposes of undermining and abolishing the well-ordered territories of States. Nomads are thus said to be 'the Deterritorialized par excellence' (381), since their onto-ethical prerogative and political aspiration is to evade being territorialised and sedentarised, whether on a reservation or through the gradual appropriation of their smooth space by State forces.

But in drawing this sharp distinction between the nomad and the State we must be careful, for although they may differ, it is not the case that nomads are *defined by their opposition* to the State or that they live to fight it. Deterritorialisation and/or destruction of the State, Deleuze and Guattari point out, is 'neither the condition nor the object' of their existence, but at best a 'supplement' or 'synthetic relation' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 471). Similarly, it would be mistaken to construe absolute deterritorialisation as the defining feature of revolutions or revolutionaries, according to Deleuze. For as was illustrated above by his concern for 'the revolutionary problem', what Deleuze is after is not merely a disorganising force, but more specifically an *alternative kind of organisation* – what he hopes for is to *find some unity* of a *particular kind*. Playing up the destructive or negative aspect of the

nomad can thus only take us so far – as far as the revolutionary problem: if we revolutionaries are opposed to the status quo, then what kind of organisation can and could we give rise to, and how will we be able to avoid certain forms that we find detestable? Once this problem is posed, it becomes clear that the deterritorialising effect of nomads will at most be a component within a larger strategy. Subsequently, what is needed is not a further rehearsal of oppositions – the constricting State on one side and the deterritorialising nomad on the other – but an attempt to move in-between these two absolutes in order to determine whether there is a nomadic organisation that could satisfy our revolutionary problematic.

Real Nomads

Moving beyond the opposition of absolutes towards an analysis as to the underlying nature of nomadism is made easier through a recognition that Deleuze and Guattari themselves spend much time complexifying and overcoming their dualistic ontology of nomad/State, smooth/striated, etc. While the early sections of Deleuze and Guattari's 'Nomadology' plateau focuses on clearly distinguishing the pure forms of the nomad and the State, immediately following the completion of this task Deleuze and Guattari begin to unpick and problematise this relation.[8] For example, as it turns out, the smooth and the striated, for Boulez, are not fixed spaces, but rather undergo transformations whereby one becomes the other:

> Boulez is concerned with the communication between two kinds of space, their alternations and superpositions: how 'a strongly directed smooth space tends to meld with a striated space'; how the octave can be replaced by 'non-octave-forming scales' that reproduce themselves through a principle of spiralling; how 'texture' can be crafted in such a way as to lose fixed and homogeneous values, becoming a support for slips in tempo, displacements of intervals, and *son art* transformations comparable to the transformations of *op art*. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 478)[9]

And it gets better. Not only do the smooth and the striated meld and alternate into one another, but they even do so while remaining the same in nature. To explain this Deleuze and Guattari borrow an example from Paul Virilio: the fleet in being (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 387). The purpose of this example is to illustrate how one can spread oneself across the entirety of a smooth space, in this case a vector of sea, at once. Tactically speaking, a fleet of warships can have the effect of extending itself across an expanse of water, simultaneously occupying every crevice

of the vector from its ability to appear at any point without prior notice. This capacity is best epitomised by the nuclear submarine, whose power to strike extends across the globe. By doing so, however, the State navy does not convert the sea – the archetypal smooth space – into a striated space. Rather, the State harnesses the power of the smooth for the purposes of State control. In other words, the smooth is employed by the State *as smooth* for the promotion of striation. The smooth characteristics of the sea are thus maintained, but they are redirected by State powers to achieve a level of control that the State on its own would be incapable of.

Here we have an excellent reason for why Deleuze and Guattari would say: 'Never believe that a smooth space will suffice to save us' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 500). As we can see, in some cases it clearly will not, and might even aid in the repression of nomadic tendencies, even when its nature remains unchanged. Nomadism and smooth space are thus not always easy bedfellows – a fact rarely commented on within Deleuze studies. For the point Deleuze and Guattari are trying to make here is not only that reality is constantly undergoing processes of striation and smoothing, but furthermore that it is not always so easy to tell which is which. If the sea can be striated *as smooth*, then so too can the very concrete of cities be smoothed out, to cite another example:

> [I]t is possible to live smooth even in the cities, to be an urban nomad (for example, a stroll taken by Henry Miller in Clichy or Brooklyn is a nomadic transit in smooth space; he makes the city disgorge a patchwork, differentials of speed, delays and accelerations, changes in orientation, continuous variations . . . The beatniks owe much to Miller, but they changed direction again, they put the space outside the cities to new use). Fitzgerald said it long ago: it is not a question of taking off for the South Seas, that is not what determines a voyage. There are not only strange voyages in the city but voyages in place: we are not thinking of drug users, whose experience is too ambiguous, but of true nomads. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 482)

The earlier suggestion that a space was *either* smooth-nomos *or* striated-polis was therefore somewhat misleading: it is both, as one becomes the other. In one direction, striated spaces are undone from within as urban nomads redeploy the very constructs of the city to a smoothing. And in the other direction, the power of smooth spaces is harnessed for the purposes of control. Articulating the pure and fixed dualisms of nomad/State and smooth/striated is thus only the beginning. While it might be initially convenient to abstract the two apart, this is

only of use insofar as one goes on to complexify these abstractions. As Deleuze and Guattari say in the conclusion of *A Thousand Plateaus*:

> It is not enough, however, to replace the opposition between the One and the multiple, with a distinction between types of multiplicities. For the distinction between the two types does not preclude their immanence to each other, each 'issuing' from the other after its fashion. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 506)

Things are, however, even more complicated. Aside from the various tricky relations between the two types, it turns out that there are more than two types after all. If the nomad and the State are rendered 'immanent to each other', it is by virtue of a third element: the phylum. As Deleuze and Guattari understand it, the phylum is a 'phylogenetic lineage, a single machinic phylum, ideally continuous [and] in continuous variation' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 406), that 'simultaneously has two different modes of liaison: it is always *connected* to nomad space, whereas it *conjugates* with sedentary space' (415). For this reason, the phylum, when conceptualised spatially, is neither smooth nor striated but *holey* – the Swiss cheese of space – since it is expressed in some instances as smoothly spread and in others as contracted into a polis (413–15).

All of this is a bit abstract, but there is a political point. When Deleuze and Guattari set out their version of politics as 'micropolitics', they will do so by employing a further topological triad that will be related to this spatial setup. As Deleuze remarks in an interview on *A Thousand Plateaus*:

> We think lines are the basic components of things and events. So everything has its geography, its cartography, its diagram. What's interesting, even in a person, are the lines that make them up, or they make up, or take, or create. Why make lines more fundamental than planes or volumes? We don't, though. There are various spaces correlated with different lines, and vice versa . . . Different sorts of line involve different configurations of space and volume. (Deleuze 1995: 33)[10]

The primacy of lines is another idea that Deleuze had been working on in his days before Guattari.[11] It is, however, not until the intermediary years between *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus* that Deleuze sets out clearly his analysis of lines in an essay written with Claire Parnet, titled 'Many Politics'. Put briefly, Deleuze claims that all things and events are composed of three types of lines. The first line is the line of rigid segmentarity. These are the great segments of rich–poor, young–old, health–sickness, and so on, which dominate the easily visible and communicable aspects of our social lives (Deleuze and Parnet 2002:

126). In contrast to this line of rigid segmentation, the second line is supple. These second lines are the cracks that split through the lines of great segmentary cuts: 'rather than molar lines with segments, they are molecular fluxes with thresholds or quanta' (124). There is then a third kind of line, a line of flight or rupture. On this line, it is 'as if something carried us away, across our segments, but also across our thresholds, towards a destination which is unknown, not foreseeable, not pre-existent' (125).

So far so good – what we have here is a spatialisation of three different aspects and/or processes of existence: one that consists of our acquiescence to clearly identifiable oppositions; a second that reveals cracks in this façade and various accumulations of exceptions to the binary rule; and a third aspect and/or process of life by which we become something completely new. But now we reach a problem: how do the various spaces we have looked at correlate with these three lines? And more pertinently: *which line is the nomadic line?* Presuming that the molar line of rigid segmentarity aligns with the State and the striated, which of the latter two lines belongs to the nomad: the second line of 'mobile and fluent thresholds' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 127) upon which 'the most secret mutations' occur (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 203), or the third line, the line of abstract detachment and absolute becoming? Adequately responding to this question, I believe, is of critical importance if we are to make sense of Deleuze's revolutionary politics. To do so, however, is by no means straightforward. Let me demonstrate.

In some instances the answer is obvious. For example, Deleuze and Guattari described the three lines at one point as (1) the rigid Roman State, (2) the line of the advancing Huns, with their war machine fully directed towards destroying the Roman peace (*pax romana*), and (3) the barbarians caught between the two, who pass from one to the other (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 222–3). The order of presentation has changed here, but the nomads are clearly placed on the pure abstract line that comes 'from the east' (Deleuze 1990: 129). But on other occasions, the matter is more confused. For example, from pages 130–4 of Deleuze and Parnet's 'Many Politics' essay, the molecular line and the line of flight (crack and rupture) appear to be read together, to the extent that Deleuze and Parnet even feel the need to defend the apparent dualism that 'rigid and binary segmentarity' forms with 'molecular lines, or lines of border, of flight or slope'. And for the remainder of this essay, Deleuze and Parnet will often slip between an analysis of three to one of two (see Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 130–4, 141–2). These confusions persist throughout *A Thousand Plateaus*. In one location, for instance, Deleuze

and Guattari state that 'From the viewpoint of micropolitics, a society is defined by its lines of flight, which are molecular' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 216). Elsewhere, however, Deleuze and Guattari clearly describe the second line as a rhizomatic line in distinction to the line of flight, where it is the rhizome that 'belongs to a smooth space' and constitutes 'anomalous and nomadic multiplicities', 'multiplicities of becoming, or transformational multiplicities' – in short, Bergson's heterogeneous or non-metric multiplicity (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 505–6). Which line is it, then, that is truly nomadic, that belongs to a smooth space? Which of these two lines is the line of becoming, and on which line does creativity occur? The crack or the rupture, the molecular line or the line of flight, the rhizomatic line or the pure abstract line?

There is another problem of significance closely related to this question. When Deleuzians speak of the dualisms major/minor, molar/molecular, State/nomad and others like them, it is common to associate the 'major' term in each set with consolidation, stasis, identity and being, while the 'minor' term is grouped with dispersion, flow, difference and becoming (to name but a few).[12] But as we have seen above, the molar and molecular are themselves only two of three lines, the third of which – the line of flight – is also commonly equated with these same 'minor' terms. How, then, are we to reconcile the three lines with Deleuze's great dualisms? How does three fit into two, and vice versa? This problem is often glossed over and/or inadequately explained in the secondary literature. There are numerous examples, but let us briefly consider two. In his glossary of Deleuzian vocabulary, François Zourabichvili explains for us most capably the contrast between a line of flight and the process of striation, which proceeds via binary couples. He has rather less to say, however, on how lines of flight differ from and relate to molecular lines; indeed, Zourabichvili barely admits the existence of these other lines, and when he does so he is careful to omit their molecular name, preferring to call them by their other moniker – supple (Zourabichvili 2012: 179). Given that Zourabichvili will elsewhere directly relate the molecular to the nomadic and the smooth (182), this omission is certainly most convenient, as it would patently jar with the link he also wants to claim between the line of flight and smooth space (179).

In her essay 'Politics as the Orientation of Every Assemblage', Véronique Bergen goes farther than Zourabichvili in explicating Deleuze's political topology. Bergen, however, does not take note of the slippages in Deleuze's own treatment of the three lines that I revealed above; on the contrary, she reproduces them. After

noting that a Deleuzian political ontology is composed of, on the one hand, the molar/molecular schema, and on the other, the three lines, Bergen proceeds to predictably align the molar/molecular schema with various other Deleuzian dualisms, such as actual/virtual, macroscopic/infinitesimal and history/becoming. But when it comes to discussing the three lines, subtle shifts occur in explication that make it difficult to understand how these two topologies relate. For example, while we are initially told that it is with molecular lines that 'becomings emerge, occurring in a non-chronological time', Bergen subsequently reveals that it is lines of flight 'that are characterised by a primacy that is ontological and not chronological' (Bergen 2009: 36–7). And as her analysis continues, lines of flight are described using the terms 'micropolitics', 'evental efflugences' and 'becoming', in direct opposition to 'macropolitics', 'the state of things' and 'history' (37). It is thus not surprising that when Bergen attempts to juxtapose the two topologies, she fails to refer to all three lines. As she says:

> Mixing the types of lines – the molar being equivalent to hard segmentary lines, the molecular to quantum lines – the 'molar' and the 'molecular' compose a double mode of being, in immanence, which, in every assemblage, signals the existence of a virtual which insists as pure reserve and an actual without resemblance to the transcendental forge from which it emanates. (Bergen 2009: 36)

As we can see here, the dualistic molar/molecular schema is accounted for, but where are all three lines? If the molar term in the dualistic molar/molecular schema is equivalent to molar lines (rigid segmentary lines), then which line is equivalent to the molecular half? Bergen evades this question somewhat by referring to 'quantum lines', but which of the three lines are these? Molecular lines or lines of flight? To the best of my knowledge, the phrase 'quantum lines' never appears in Deleuze's work – he instead refers to lines 'marked by quanta' or 'with quanta'. But to be fair to Bergen, Deleuze is himself confused on this very question. Depending where you look, it can be either the second or third line that is 'marked by quanta' (compare Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 124 and Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 195 with Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 222). The same problem can be found when tracking the respective dangers of the three lines. While falling/reverting into a black hole is at times said to be the danger of the second molecular line, at others times this is the danger of lines of flight (compare Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 138 with Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 205). Thus, while it is clear that molar lines hold up one half of the dualism, we are left to wonder by Bergen and

Deleuze alike as to how the second and third lines conspire to form the other half, whether one takes the place of the other, and/or which one of them is 'becoming' if it is the molar that is 'history'.[13]

What, then, are we to make of all this confusion? Are nomads molecular, or do they instead pursue a line of flight distinct from molecular lines? In light of the shifting and/or confused presentation of the material that I have highlighted – itself exacerbated by the fact that the texts we are drawing from here were written by three people, two of whom never collaborated and could very well have penned the passages in question – we as Deleuzians are somewhat liberated to make of this political ontology-topology what we will (within limits, of course). Granted this licence, and contrary to the previous stated evidence that names the nomad as 'the Deterritorialized par excellence' and the 'man of deterritorialization' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 134), I would suggest that if the nomad is to be the figure of transformation, then it might in fact be more appropriate to place him or her in the continually shifting and amorphous space *in-between* the Romans and the advancing Huns. For is it not the barbarians who come closest to the ontology and ethic of transformation? The Huns are sure of their task – destruction of the State – but the barbarians, by contrast, have mastered the art of disguise and metamorphosis, continually going *between* the Romans and the Huns, becoming one, passing off as another, and then taking up arms against either or both. It is the barbarians, in other words, that are truly between known and immutable identities. As Deleuze and Guattari note at one point: 'It is odd how supple segmentarity is caught between the two other lines, ready to tip to one side or the other; such is its ambiguity' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 205). But is not this 'oddity' precisely the essence of metamorphosis and transmutation? Is not this 'ambiguity', as opposed to pure being or pure becoming, precisely what is so 'Interesting, Remarkable, and Important' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 82)? Such, in my opinion, is the virtue of this other transformative figure, or second force of nomadism, who moves between purities – the molecular barbarians, or what we might possibly think of as the *real* (but not absolute) nomads of Deleuze and Guattari's nomadology.[14]

The majority of Deleuze's pragmatic and prescriptive moments support this reading. Invariably, every call made by Deleuze for 'revolutionary becoming' is tempered with a precautionary reminder. To demonstrate, witness the conclusion to the 'Many Politics' essay (which is then replicated and developed further in the 'Micropolitics' plateau). First, dissolution of the State and the line of rigid segmentarity is not the point in itself. As Deleuze says:

> Even if we had the power to blow it up, could we succeed in doing so without destroying ourselves, since it is so much a part of the conditions of life, including our organism and our very reason? The prudence with which we must manipulate that line, the precautions we must take to soften it, to suspend it, to divert it, to undermine it, testify to a long labour which is not merely aimed against the State and the powers that be, but directly at ourselves. (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 138)

Second, to those who are too sure of their calling, Deleuze has the following to say: 'You have not taken enough precautions' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 138). 'Precaution', 'prudence' – not exactly the words that would support a Deleuzian politics founded on the celebration of absolute deterritorialisation. In fact, in a direct response to those readers who would overly glorify (or attack) his analysis of becoming and deterritorialisation, Deleuze remarks:

> Some have said that we see the schizophrenic as the true revolutionary. We believe, rather, that schizophrenia is the descent of a molecular process into a black hole. Marginals have always inspired fear in us, and a slight horror. They are not clandestine enough. (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 139)

Such 'marginals', in other words, are a bit too obvious. One should not be able to identify a nomad from their haircut. If it were that easy then genuine creation would not need encouraging or protecting. This is why the question of the revolution is so problematic:

> The question of a revolution has never been utopian spontaneity versus State organization. When we challenge the model of the State apparatus or of the party organization which is modelled on the conquest of that apparatus, we do not, however, fall into the grotesque alternatives: either that of appealing to a state of nature, to a spontaneous dynamic, or that of becoming the self-styled lucid thinker of an impossible revolution, whose very impossibility is such a source of pleasure. (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 145)

We can thus see from these passages precisely who is *not* a true revolutionary for Deleuze: both acolytes of pure flux and 'marginals' will be incapable of thinking, let alone bringing about, a 'new type of revolution' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 147).[15] This new type of revolution is not entirely sure of the way forward; it is not even always sure where the impediments are or who are the nomads. But it could not be otherwise, since

> we can't be sure in advance how things will go. We can define different kinds of line, but that won't tell us one's good and another bad. We

> can't assume that lines of flight are necessarily creative, that smooth spaces are always better than segmented or striated ones. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 33)

A tempered position marked by prudence is therefore the most appealing. It is also the most difficult, and in a certain sense, the most radical: as the molecular barbarians know, there is arguably nothing harder than charting one's own path between a binary of oppositional lines. It is no doubt true that Deleuze often partakes in dualistic decisions, especially when it comes to the ontologies of becoming and being. But in the end, Deleuze always hopes to go beyond these, to itinerate between so that he can both become and defend against its dangers at the same time. This is why it is important to remember that what Deleuze calls 'the crack' (originally taken from F. Scott Fitzgerald's autobiographical essay *The Crack-Up*[16]) in fact refers to the molecular or rhizomatic line *in-between* the lines of rigid segmentary that 'proceed by oversignificant *breaks*' and the line of rupture: '*Break line, crack line, rupture line*' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 200). Only then can we understand the following guideline:

> Well then, are we to speak always about Bousquet's wound, about Fitzgerald's and Lowry's alcoholism, Nietzsche's and Artaud's madness while remaining on the shore? . . . Or should we go a short way further to see for ourselves, be a little alcoholic, a little crazy, a little suicidal, a little of a guerrilla – just enough to extend the crack, but not enough to deepen it irremedially? (Deleuze 1990: 157–8)

Become a little bit, but not too much. Leave the shore, certainly, but do so in order that you may find a new land – do not hope to become irrevocably lost at sea. In other words, extend the crack and connect the rhizome, but do not become the rupture. When you do so, a line will be drawn that is distinguishable from both the inexpressive and the expressions of State segmentarity: a nomadic line that is *invested with* abstraction and *connects with* a matter-flow (that moves through it); a *developmental* line of becoming that is not enslaved to the incorporeal surface or corporeal depth, but is the progressive movement between them. That this line is distinct from the line of flight, yet also distinct from the striae that express and organise in an entirely different way (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 498), once again reaffirms the middle status of the nomad that I have re-emphasised in this paper.

Conclusion

What, then, does it mean to be a real nomad or true revolutionary according to Deleuze's political ontology? As we can now see, it is questionable whether an absolute nomad placed in binary opposition to the State is capable of living up to the real nature of Deleuze's nomadism. This is because bringing down a State apparatus is insufficient on its own in responding to 'the revolutionary problem', since there is every chance (as history well shows us) that a revolutionary force will become despotic. Revolutionary forces and becomings thus cannot be simply ascribed to those who call for the Revolution and devote their waking lives to its fulfilment, for not only is it difficult to determine who is a nomad or what is a smooth space by appearance, but the nomad and the smooth are themselves susceptible to appropriation by the State and the striated. These appropriations can occur, furthermore, not simply through the transformation of what was once nomadic-smooth into something statist-striated, but even more worryingly through a maintenance of its nature redirected towards other ends. As Deleuze and Guattari warn:

> We say this as a reminder that smooth space and the form of exteriority do not have an irresistible revolutionary calling but change meaning drastically depending on the interactions they are part of and the concrete conditions of their exercise of establishment. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 387)

As for who are our nomads today, our true revolutionaries . . . ? Ultimately, this is a question to which Deleuze's practice of thought brings us rather than answers – or perhaps more specifically, rephrases and reapproaches as follows: where are your lines, your breaks, cracks and ruptures? Do you recognise these lines in yourself or the various organisations you are a part of?[17] Chances are you will – if Deleuze is correct, then there is a little bit of each in all of us. And chances are that this evaluation can aid in avoiding formations that slide dangerously to one side. If we are thus unable to name names in our search for nomads and revolutionaries, what I think we can safely say is that to be a real nomad or revolutionary in the Deleuzian sense, one must be attuned to the different lines that we are composed of, maintain an appropriate respect for each of them (without collapsing one onto the other), and pursue any engagement and experimentation between them with a healthy dose of 'prudence' and 'precaution'. For it is only through such a practice that creativity and transformation can not only

be embarked upon, but concretely realised in a strata of organisation that facilitates life.

Notes

1. For a comprehensive survey of the field of Deleuze and politics, see Gilbert 2009.
2. Nicholas Thoburn poses a similar question to this in his excellent piece 'What Is a Militant?' (Thoburn 2008). Thoburn's pursuit of this question takes the form of a critique of militant groups (in particular the Weatherman group) through the use of Deleuzian philosophy. My paper, in contrast, will provide a description of this philosophy, followed by a critical analysis of it, for the purposes of addressing a Deleuzian problematic. Thoburn's paper, furthermore, does not really complicate the notion of the militant, but on the contrary specifies and clarifies the figure of the militant, before going on to suggest an a-militant alternative. In distinction to this, my paper will demonstrate the complexities involved in determining the figure of the nomad, and will suggest that there might be more than one alternative. For these reasons and more,

   I would consider our papers to be both distinct and complementary. I would furthermore consider my paper to be distinct from and complementary to Véronique Bergen's 'Politics as the Orientation of Every Assemblage' (2009). As with Bergen's analysis, my paper will emphasise the significance of topology to Deleuze's political ontology. This analysis, however, will subsequently proceed to a critique of this political ontology that reveals insights absent in Bergen's paper.
3. Deleuze is, of course, not the first or last person to identify this revolutionary problem. The purpose of this paper, however, is not so much to integrate Deleuze with other literature on the topic, but rather to articulate more specifically the nature of Deleuze's response to this problematic, and by doing so complicate the dualistic tropes upon which much Deleuzian political philosophy rests, whether normative or descriptive.
4. While much of what I will describe in the first section of the paper is no doubt familiar to learned Deleuzians, I would point out that it nevertheless remains necessary to state the basic concepts and standard positions of Deleuzian thought that this paper will subsequently attempt to complexify and challenge.
5. See also Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 369, where *nomos* is opposed to *logos*: 'there is an opposition between the *logos* and the *nomos*, the law and the *nomos*'.
6. See also Deleuze 1990: 75, where nomadic distribution is explained as 'distributing in an open space instead of distributing a closed space'.
7. For further evidence of how Deleuze and Guattari's conception of the nomad/State and smooth/striated is derived from Bergson's theory of multiplicities, see Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 477, 479, 488.
8. For a fuller analysis of the Nomadology that chronicles the plateau's movements (from dualism to a triad to monism and pluralism) see Lundy 2012: ch. 3.
9. For the Boulez reference, see Boulez 1971: 87 (translation modified). For more on the dissymmetrical passages between and transmutations of the smooth and the striated, see Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 474, 480, 482, 486, 493, 500.
10. See also Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 202: 'Individual or group, we are traversed by lines, meridians, geodesics, tropics, and zones marching to different beats and differing in nature.'
11. See Deleuze 1990: 154–61.
12. For one amongst numerous examples of this, see Buchanan 2008: 16–17.

13. For one further example, see Gilbert 2009: 18. As we find here, the major/minor schema is invoked, molar lines are affiliated with the 'major', lines of flight with the 'minor', and there is no mention of molecular lines. Gilbert, it must be said, is only referring to these issues in passing, as opposed to Zourabichvili and Bergen's more direct/extensive treatments. But it is for this reason that I would bring attention to this example – for if the reconciliation of the two topological schemas is perennially passed over as a problem within the literature on Deleuze and politics, it is for the most part due to such pervasive casual references to, and uses of, the relevant terms.
14. I am willing to concede that this advocation of the molecular barbarian over the nomadic rupture is, to a certain extent, rhetorical. However, given the paucity of coverage within the secondary literature of this middle figure, in between the nomad and State, I would argue that this polemical treatment is justified. One could note, for instance, that it is far more common to find within the secondary literature on Deleuze a defence of the State and the virtues of molarity than it is to find any discussion of molecular barbarians – their positive features and their distinction from both the nomad and State.
15. Thoburn's investigation into 'what is a militant' also arrives at this point (Thoburn 2008: 114). I would point out, however, that Thoburn's route to this conclusion is quite distinct from mine.
16. See Fitzgerald 1945.
17. As Deleuze puts it: 'This is why the questions of schizoanalysis or pragmatics, micro-politics itself, never consists in interpreting, but merely in asking what are your lines, individual or group, and what are the dangers on each' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 143). In drawing attention to this feature, it must be noted that I do not mean to suggest that the question of 'who' is a bad one or needs replacing with the question of 'where'. While I would not disagree with commentators who suggest that the question of 'where' is of the utmost importance to a Deleuzian politics (Bergen 2009: 34–5), what my analysis has endeavoured to demonstrate is no more or less than the manner in which the questions of 'who', 'where' and 'what' are intertwined in Deleuze's thought – a feature that is perhaps most evident in Deleuze's final book with Guattari, in which all of these questions are posed and shown to inform one another. At any rate, the question of 'who are our nomads today?' is Deleuze's own question (Deleuze 2004: 260), and thus one that is presumably worth pursuing within Deleuzian thought, even if or when this pursuit involves forays into topology.

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What Is Called Thinking?: When Deleuze Walks along Heideggerian Paths

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Abstract

When on the last page of *What Is Philosophy?*, Deleuze and Guattari (1995: 218) claim that philosophy needs a non-philosophy, this statement is the result of a long engagement with the problem of thinking in society. It is this engagement that we intend to reconstruct in this article. By developing an original definition of thinking after Heidegger, Deleuze is able to claim that philosophy is not the only 'thinking' discipline. Our point of departure is Deleuze's constant reference to a phrase from Heidegger's lecture course *What Is Called Thinking?*: 'We are not yet thinking' (Deleuze 1988: 116, 1989: 167, 1994: 144, 2002: 108; Deleuze and Guattari 1995: 56). This phrase points to the demand for a new distribution of the relation between philosophy and its outside. The purpose of this article is to trace Heidegger's influence on Deleuze's definition of thinking and to raise two points. First, Deleuze borrows some elements of Heidegger's definition of thinking to further his own understanding of politics as an involuntary practice. For both, the question of thinking is *political*. Second, by departing from Heidegger, Deleuze can democratise the definition of thinking, beyond its confinement to philosophy, by turning to cinema. Deleuze calls cinema the art of the masses because it brings the masses in contact with external signs. Finally, in the last part of this article, we will discuss how Deleuze raises stupidity (and not error) as a transcendental problem that should be constantly fought. In this way, we hope to shed light on how Deleuze moves from Heidegger's question 'what is called thinking?' to the problem of stupidity and shame.

Keywords: Heidegger, involuntary, thinking, politics, cinema, stupidity

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I. Asking the Question: What Is Called Thinking?

A reflection on thinking ultimately requires us to question not only the relation between thinking and being, but also to answer the question 'who thinks?' or 'who can have access to "thoughts"?'. After Heidegger, thinking has to do with ontology and this is even more true for Deleuze who decidedly follows Heidegger's uncovering of the question of being by affirming that 'philosophy merges with ontology' (Deleuze 1990: 179). Yet for Deleuze, thinking refers less to a constituted subject than to a set of singularities and processes that sometimes constitute themselves as a subject (sharing similarities with what Foucault calls subjectivation). Drawing on Simondon, Deleuze's ontology manifests itself as psycho-collective, or impersonal and pre-individual, individuations, always in the making. This Deleuzian ontology is distinct from the ontological difference put forth by Heidegger (as the Being of beings), whose project is a constant search for the un-concealing (*aletheia*) and the clearing of the Truth of Being by de(con)structing the history of Western metaphysics. Deleuze's ontology of the actual and the virtual resembles the twofold nature of Heidegger's ontological difference but ultimately differs from it. This becomes clear when looking at their political thought.[1] As we will see, Heidegger believes that philosophy founds science and that the university should remain independent from politics, whereas for Deleuze thinking happens in all disciplines, as illustrated by the example of cinema. We will attempt to make sense of Deleuze's references to Heidegger in order to understand how – from a Heideggerian perspective – he can develop an understanding of politics as an involuntary practice. The main objective of this article is to understand why, for Deleuze, politics too should start thinking. In this sense, we will be arguing that the question 'what is called thinking?' is not only crucial for Deleuze's philosophy but also for his political thought, since for Heidegger this already is a *political* question.

Deleuze left us with some indications as to how and where his philosophy meets Heidegger's. While in *What Is Philosophy?* he famously wrote with Guattari that 'it is not always easy to be Heideggerian' (Deleuze and Guattari 1995: 108), he did not hide his disagreement with Heidegger's understanding of ontological difference and the project of overcoming metaphysics (Deleuze 1995: 136). There are two places where he explicitly presents his relationship to Heidegger. The first is in the preface to *Difference and Repetition*, where he signposts that the book is, among other things, a confrontation with

him (Deleuze 1994: xix). The theme of the univocity of being that lurks throughout Deleuze's philosophy draws directly from Heidegger's reading of Parmenides and Duns Scotus, while at the same time departing from Heidegger to posit that being is difference independently from identity (A = A) and the repetition of the same.[2] The second is in Deleuze and Heidegger's respective interpretations of Nietzsche. Following Malabou (2010), we can claim that shifting the interpretation of Nietzsche away from Heidegger's reading, but also, more broadly, away from any conservative and reactionary reading, is one of the main objectives of *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (2002). Deleuze discusses Heidegger's reading of Nietzsche by referring to the lecture course *What Is Called Thinking?* in a footnote (Deleuze 2002: 220), criticising his interpretation of the eternal return for remaining bound to identity and opposition. For Heidegger, the eternal return happens in life and is an affirmation against death and weakness, whereas for Deleuze the eternal return cannot be subjected to identity and the same but is the repetition of difference. In Deleuze's case, then, the eternal return belongs to a philosophy of difference that breaks with recollection as a philosophy of identity (Boundas 2009: 332). 'The Identical does not return ... only affirmation returns – in other words, the Different, the Dissimilar' (Deleuze 1994: 299). Since repetition is disburdened from identity and representation, thinking is without an origin and a destiny; most importantly, it cannot happen 'between two things, between a point of departure and a point of arrival, not even between Being and being' (Deleuze 2004: 159).

As Malabou (2010) notes, by interpreting the eternal return as the return of difference Deleuze (with other French philosophers such as Derrida, Blanchot, Klossowski) performs 'an interpretative *coup*', reintroducing a concept that is not found in Nietzsche back into the latter's philosophy.[3] The conflict constitutes without doubt a decisive step in Deleuze's formulations that 'being is difference' and that 'to ground is to metamorphose' (Deleuze 1994: 64, 172). In brief, we find a univocity of being which is disengaged from Heidegger's thought.

Now that we have referred to the main places where Deleuze explicitly confronts and disagrees with Heidegger's philosophical project, we can investigate their common ground. Deleuze borrows the concepts of *Denken* (thinking), *Stimmung* (mood) and *Gelassenheit* (releasement) from Heidegger. We will argue that much of Heidegger's theory of thinking[4] (in relation to waiting and releasement) influenced Deleuze's conception of thinking and other practices as 'involuntary'. The emphasis placed on the involuntary is not an apology for renunciation or

resentment, but rather it means that thinking and other practices must be opened up to an impersonal and collective dimension disburdened from the object and the subject. Thinking, but also other realms, such as politics, can be conceived from the perspective of the involuntary (see Zourabichvili 1998). But before we extend this claim to politics, it is important to understand that this involuntary practice of thinking is both an interpretation and a continuation of Heidegger's claim that 'we are not yet thinking'.[5] For instance, Deleuze notes in an interview soon after the publication of *Difference and Repetition* that: 'what we're looking for these days is a new image of the act of thought, its functioning, its genesis in thought itself' (Deleuze 2004: 139–40).

Although thinking can be conceived as a traditional problem since the first philosophy of Descartes in his *Metaphysical Meditations*, with Heidegger it takes on a collective, hence *political*, meaning that is taken up by Deleuze with different aims. Deleuze wants to 'renew' the image of thought *with* but also *contra* Heidegger: 'It is definitely Foucault, along with Heidegger but in a quite different way, who has most profoundly transformed the image of thought' (Deleuze 1995: 95; translation modified). The expression 'image of thought' should be read as a continuation of Marx's concept of ideology (Sauvagnargues 2010: 38), with the distorted reality here figuring as a certain 'dogmatic' representation within philosophy, a kind of false consciousness existing in philosophy. It is Marxist precisely because this dominating ideology is the result of an alienating historical development: 'An image of thought called philosophy has been formed historically and it effectively stops people from thinking' (Deleuze and Parnet 2006: 10). But equally, the notion of the 'image of thought' can be interpreted in a different and positive way, in which thinking refers to faculties other than the cognitive faculty: a sensibility and a visibility (as we shall see in sections II and V, regarding signs and the cinematic image). For Deleuze, the form of thought should be expressive and performative and not simply reduced to its content: the couple form/content of thought cannot be separated. The image should not simply be used in philosophy as an example or a metaphor, but according to Deleuze (which is arguably true for many twentieth-century French philosophers), the very expressivity found in art should also be considered. To connect thought with images, or to introduce images into thought, is to establish parallels with other spheres of contemporary life, in order to create resonances in tune with the spirit of our time. Indeed, as he puts it, 'What can be more joyful than a spirit of the time? [*Quoi de plus gai qu'un air du temps*]' (Deleuze 2004: 142; translation modified).[6]

It is our claim that the spirit of the time helps differentiate between philosophy and thought. For Deleuze, thought is simultaneously larger and more democratised than philosophy. Another example can help us make this point: in the same text 'Nietzsche and the Image of Thought', Deleuze explains that his project in *Difference and Repetition* is 'simply' to compose the philosophical treatise which synthesises the 'current thought', drawing directly from his present, which is France in the 1960s (Deleuze 2004: 142). The question of the spirit of the time [*air du temps*] can be juxtaposed to Heidegger's concept of *Stimmung*, or 'mood', precisely because it refers to an impersonal realm of affects. Françoise Dastur offers, in *Heidegger et la question du Logos* (2007), an interesting etymological analysis of the word *Stimmung* in German:

> It will be worth noting that *Stimmung* and *stimmen* come from *Stimme*, a German word from unknown origins, but whose first meaning is the voice in its juridical sense as to give a voice to a vote. *Stimmen* consequently means to make one's voice heard, to call, to name, then to be in agreement and also to be disposed, hence *Stimmung*, which has the meaning of tuning (as in tuning a musical instrument), then as a disposition, mood, tonality, atmosphere. (Dastur 2007: 113; my translation)

Deleuze seems to use the expression '*un air du temps*' in a very similar way to this Heideggerian notion of *Stimmung*, as a manner of doing philosophy in tune with its contemporary times. As Dastur quotes from Heidegger's first lectures on Nietzsche, '*Stimmung* is precisely the fundamental manner according to which we are exterior to ourselves' (Dastur 2007: 117; my translation). It is this spirit of the time that shatters the constituted subject and presents the possibility to individuate, to compose with the world as psycho-collective individuations. For both Heidegger and Deleuze, *Stimmung* and *air du temps* are ontological formations rather than psychological perceptions. For both, yet very differently, an image of thought reflects a present, challenging all forms of doing philosophy by inscribing in them a political imperative, and opening thoughts and politics to other realms as the means to a process of transindividuation.[7] In short, thinking is a dangerous and a transformative activity. In order to bring to the fore the political elements contained in this untimely question 'what is called thinking?', it is necessary to think the present against eternal and ahistorical truths. As we may recall here, Foucault claimed that this thought of actuality was first expressed in modern times by Kant, in *What Is Enlightenment?* as an attempt to answer the question: 'what is it in the present that currently has meaning for philosophical reflection?'

(Foucault 2010: 12). Before coming back to the historical determination of thinking (especially in relation to nihilism), we should first turn to the question of the role of signs in shaping the involuntary practice of thinking.

II. The Thinking Path: A Typology of Signs and Thinking as an Involuntary Practice

One of the key themes running throughout Heidegger's lectures on thinking is the process of learning. The emphasis on learning is crucial to understanding the objectives of the book, and as the translator notes in his introduction, Heidegger's 1951–2 lectures on *What Is Called Thinking?* were the first he had been allowed to deliver since his suspension in 1944 for his involvement with the Nazi regime (Glenn Gray in Heidegger 1968: xviii). Here, Heidegger claims that

> in order to be capable of thinking, we need to learn it first. What is learning? ... We learn to think by giving our mind to what there is to think about ... Everything thought-provoking gives us to think ... [What is] [*most*] *thought-provoking is that we are still not thinking*. (Heidegger 1968: 4; original emphasis)

This last sentence is referred to again and again by Deleuze. For Heidegger, if thinking is a human faculty, it does not mean that we are currently thinking. This is the first argument Heidegger presents, that thinking is not an innate faculty but a process to be acquired over time, through a process of learning. In fact, one cannot find what thinking is or what there is to think if one does not attempt to find the 'path' to thinking (Heidegger 1969: 23).

This process of learning is also inscribed in Heidegger's reflections on the role of the university and how knowledge should be taught. This is a concern already evident in his inaugural address at Freiburg in 1929 'What Is Metaphysics?' expressed through the questions of the role and the meaning of the sciences as political questions, concerns that awaken Heidegger from his unpolitical sleep (Heidegger 2003: 24–7). The lecture series *What Is Called Thinking?* raises political concerns but from an untimely angle: the task of thinking needs to be recuperated in the age of the atomic bomb, cybernetics and technology. When Heidegger, referring to *What Is Called Thinking?*, claims that 'perhaps it is also a sign of the times that this book of all my publications has been read the least' (Heidegger 2003: 42),[8] he emphasises the importance of these lectures in his body of work, but also maintains that the political stance

to be found in them is untimely and that the people are not ready to use the antidote to cure their disease.

For Deleuze, as well, thinking has to do with a learning process; it is not about following a 'correct' method but about looking for the path to thinking: 'Thought does not need a method but a *paideia*, a formation, a culture' (Deleuze 2002: 110). However, Deleuze does not fully agree with Heidegger that the concrete contemporary world is a non-thinking time and asserts instead that thinking should be democratised rather than repressed through 'correct' methods and certain institutions. This is precisely why he argues that thinking should be the work of both words and images, the image of thought.

> No one takes thought very seriously, except those who claim to be thinkers or philosophers by profession. But that does not stop it from having its own apparatuses of power … when [thought] tells people: 'Don't take me seriously, because I think for you, since I give you conformity, norms and rules, an image'; to all of which you may submit all the more as you say: 'that's not my business, it's not important, it's for philosophers and their pure theories'. (Deleuze and Parnet 2006: 10)

The last sentence of this quote admirably shows that Deleuze calls for the people to get involved in 'thought' and to refuse the division of labour between thought and action, and the competition between the two. Locating thought in the brain and in society has been a political enterprise ever since the development of phrenology in the early nineteenth century with Joseph Gall and Johann Spurzheim. What is called thinking?, '[T]he question has ceased to be a purely theoretical one. It now seems that more and more of the powers that be [*de plus en plus de pouvoirs*] also take an interest in our capacity to think' (Canguilhem 2008: 7).

Here Heidegger's argument about thinking overcomes two hundred years of mystification about where thinking comes from. To ask about the location of thought, whether 'the brain secretes thought as the liver does bile' (Canguilhem 2008: 8), is to challenge the common belief that thinking is genetic, natural and, most importantly, effortless. In fact, thinking is a natural faculty whose practice does not come naturally to us. How do we come to realise that we are not yet thinking? Heidegger explains that when we are looking for thought, we become aware of its withdrawal, which functions as 'a sign' pointing in a particular direction. 'As [man] draws toward what withdraws, man is a sign' (Heidegger 1968: 9). Heidegger repeatedly refers to Hölderlin's sentence 'we are a sign that is not read' (Heidegger 1968: 9). Surely as a rational animal,

man should be able to think, Heidegger claims, yet it is perhaps because man wants it too much that he is not currently thinking.

If thinking is not a natural condition, then a necessary struggle is required to trigger thought. Again Deleuze agrees with and follows Heidegger on these points: 'we are not going to think unless . . . we are forced' (Deleuze 2002: 110). Thinking is not a voluntary activity but needs to be triggered by the unthought, or what Deleuze calls after Blanchot and Foucault, the outside. Collecting signs for Deleuze mostly means tracing the disjunctive relation between the sensible and the intelligible, between non-sense and sense, between unthought and thought. Only in their discord, when they are 'out of joint', can the faculties produce the new. By emphasising the role of violence and the outside, Deleuze wants to move away from the model of recognition, since the maintaining of their accord fixes the faculties. The chapter 'The Image of Thought' in *Difference and Repetition* presents the difficult argument that for 'real' thinking – that is, thinking the new – the faculties should be discordant in order for them to be raised to their transcendent order (Deleuze 1994: 143).

Deleuze also writes in *Proust and Signs* that learning how to think concerns signs, and compares the thinker to an Egyptologist trying to decipher hieroglyphs and signs, to give them sense and value. Faculties can only be discordant once they are disturbed by external signs. It is these signs that give thought sense and value (Deleuze 2000: 4). 'What is essential is outside of thought, in what forces us to think' (Deleuze 2000: 95). Thinking for Deleuze is both involuntary and always-already involves extraneous elements – what he calls following Blanchot's reading of Artaud, 'powerlessness' (*impuissance*) (Deleuze 1994: 147). This powerlessness resembles what Heidegger calls 'waiting' or 'releasement' (*Gelassenheit*), which is an involuntary disposition towards thinking.[9] By releasement, Heidegger means that 'thinking' should be learned involuntarily, that is, it does not require a 'will': 'thinking is something other than willing . . . releasement does not belong to the domain of the will' (Heidegger 1966: 59).

This 'releasement' also functions in the second part of the lecture course *What Is Called Thinking?* to show that language can be used not as a mere means of expression, but also as a tool to interpret and unconceal the ontological difference to be rediscovered, since 'the time may finally have come to release language from the leash of common speech' (Heidegger 1968: 192).[10] What he calls a 'releasement toward things' (Heidegger 1966: 54) should not be simply understood as the opposite of practice or of any form of activity. On the contrary, since

men only 'want' to think but do not act, he calls for a releasement towards things, a kind of distancing that is already a way of acting: 'it may be that man wants to think, but can't. Perhaps he wants too much when he wants to think, and so can do too little' (Heidegger 1968: 3). In order to reach the thinking stage, one should be predisposed to it by disengaging and distancing oneself from the calculative thinking predominant in Western societies and Western thought.

III. Nihilism and Thought

It is precisely because for Heidegger thinking is a matter of remembering what metaphysical thought has forgotten, of finding 'autochthony' and 'rootedness' (Heidegger 1966: 48–9), that his project (or 'historical mission') for 'Western civilisation' is to attain the truth of Being (Heidegger 2008: 233). Thinking should be understood as part of his philosophy of history, as the project of Western civilisation 'whether or not Western thought has yet attained the ground upon which it stands' (Pöggeler 1987: 4). The 'unthought' in Heidegger is not a desire for the new, but on the contrary the remembering of a forgotten thought. By contrast, for Deleuze the unthought is the radically new, echoing another question that he will ask in a conference paper entitled 'What Is an Act of Creation?' (Deleuze 2003). This thought of the new is a necessity but a pre-individual and impersonal one. While for Deleuze thinking is about becoming outside certain (reactive) conceptions of history, for Heidegger it seems that thinking refers to his philosophy of history as a history of philosophy. This is why in *What Is Philosophy?*, Deleuze and Guattari reproach Heidegger for remaining a 'historicist' (Deleuze and Guattari 1995: 95).

'We are not yet thinking' when we look for thought only to find its withdrawal. In fact, this withdrawal of thought points to the fact that our non-thinking stage is conditioned by the nihilism that lies at the heart of modernity. Heidegger defines nihilism, through his particular reading of Nietzsche, as the loss of meaning and value in our times. As Dreyfus points out, 'the strongest argument that some meaningful practices must have survived is that without some remnant of them we would not be distressed by nihilism' (Dreyfus 2006: 352). This distress is the beginning of thinking for Heidegger, a movement towards discerning the growing immensity of the desert. This is how Heidegger links the contemporary practice of thinking to Nietzsche's diagnosis of nihilism. Heidegger notes that what Nietzsche called nihilism is an anthropological condition within history but not a specific event in

the 'ontic' history, though it is an ontological condition in history as the history of Being. Nihilism is the result of the history of Western thought and the movement within Western history that has necessary links with our condition of thought. Or, with Nietzsche, Heidegger notes the devaluation of the highest values, their degeneration, their perishing and their decadence (Heidegger 2002: 166–7) and this is what the task of thinking has to face.

The overcoming of metaphysics that Heidegger diagnoses is the condition of our presence, of the history of Being, yet metaphysics does not and cannot disappear, as he insists in his essay 'Overcoming Metaphysics'. Hence his task is summarised in a lecture called 'Time and Being' as 'to cease all overcoming' (Janicaud and Mattéi 1995: 7). To stop this overcoming of metaphysics, for Heidegger, is to diagnose and reconquer thought. The condition of our nihilist times is the lack of awareness and knowledge of the history of Being; but on the other hand, memory is the gathering of our thoughts and what we should be striving for. This is what he has in mind when he claims in a public memorial address in 1955 for the composer Conradin Kreutzer:

> Man today is in flight from thinking. This flight-from-thinking is the ground of thoughtlessness. But part of this flight is that man will neither see nor admit it. Man today will even flatly deny this flight from thinking. He will assert the opposite. (Heidegger 1966: 45)

Yet, while we realise that we are 'in flight from thinking', for Heidegger, thinking is not easy and requires a certain degree of patience. This is why he then distinguishes between two kinds of thinking, calculative thinking and meditative thinking, and calls for a 'releasement toward things', defining it as 'this comportment toward technology which expresses "yes" and at the same time "no"' (Heidegger 1966: 54). But this attitude is already a rejection of the mere compliance to technology that was dominating society from the atomic bomb to the turning of logic into logistics, and philosophy into applied sciences. 'For us contemporaries the greatness of what is to be thought is too great', precisely because the current political regimes do not yet know how to accommodate with 'the technological age'; 'we still have no way to respond to the essence of technology' (Heidegger 2003: 47, 36, 37).

In contrast to Deleuze, for Heidegger, it is the task of thinking to invert this 'uprooting of man' by a returning to traditions and to understand that since the high time of Greek philosophy, there has been a decline and a regress, a desert in thought. Nietzsche has completed the history of Western metaphysics precisely because 'the wasteland grows'

(Nietzsche, qtd in Heidegger 1968: 30). This wasteland both prevents and demands thinking. The twentieth century is also for Heidegger the age of representation, the unification of the world that becomes conscious of itself. It is not a simple negation of the age of modernity that thought should accomplish but open itself to the 'incalculable', keeping the possibility of access to the truth as unconcealing. 'Reflection [or "creative questioning"] transports the man of the future into that "in-between" in which he belongs to being and yet, amidst beings, remains a stranger' (Heidegger 2002: 72). Hence, for Heidegger, thought should be a kind of opening of becoming and of newness but as the 'clearing' of Being.

Deleuze, too, speaks of the desert of thought and it is this unthought as an economy of stupidity organised by the dominating flows of capital that is to be resisted. He makes the task of thinking, both philosophical and non-philosophical, one of his prime political projects. For instance, thought in capitalism is the target of Deleuze and Guattari when they write in 1972 that capitalism organises a doubling of 'the capital and the flow of knowledge with a capital and an equivalent flow of *stupidity* [*connerie*] that also effects an absorption and a realisation, and that ensures the integration of groups and individuals into the system' (1983: 235–6). Individuals are not locked and disciplined in institutions anymore but controlled by an ever more vicious flow of money that discredits them through the creation of more debt: 'a man is no longer a man confined but a man in debt' (Deleuze 1995: 181). Using debt, a government functions to integrate and totalise the degree zero of thought, rejecting all theoretical thinking for the celebration of transparent, communicative and calculative thinking (Lyotard 1979: 15–16). Especially in the wake of the financialisation of economy and life, resulting in the economic crisis of 2008 immediately followed by what is now called the Great Recession, Deleuze and Guattari's cartography of capitalism as a flow of capital has never before been so relevant.

Following Zourabichvili (1998), we argue that the goal of politics in Deleuze is the opening of perspectives and the possible. The only way to have a politics of difference is first to start evaluating the desert of thought, to ask about new modes of life (the conditions of *real* experience). In this sense, politics needs to refer to the creation of joyful affects that increase the power to act and be acted upon. This is why the intolerable and outrage are situated at the level of politics in the same way that stupidity and shame paradoxically produce thought. What causes the possibility of an impossibility (an outside) is the intolerable

opening and creation of a new distribution of the possible: 'the possible or I shall suffocate' (Deleuze and Guattari 1995: 177). This rupture occurs at the limit between thought and the unthought, where the intolerable and the shameful can be expressed since this is to accept that 'we are not yet thinking'. It is by taking into consideration the contingency of action and thought that new possibilities of life are created. While creation for Deleuze is defined as a necessity, there is not only one necessity in the same way that there is not only one truth – there is only the production of necessities and of truths. This idea of finding 'new possibilities of life' can seem abstract but it simply refers to how one finds one's necessities, one's truths and this is precisely because for Deleuze 'we only have the truths we deserve' (Deleuze 2002: 104, 110). A thought and a truth are events that are possible when they accept and enter into relations of composition with the contingencies of the given situation.

In sum, while Deleuze is clearly interested in Heidegger's question, he turns it into a new problem about truth and pedagogy. His statement that 'we have the truths that we deserve' is a response to Heidegger's question but also a transformation of Heidegger's own response, 'we are not yet thinking'. If we are not yet thinking and we are to blame for it, this blame is not a moral or dogmatic one but a reaction (it is shame) which seeks to find a way to trigger thought.

IV. Thinking in Relation to Science, Arts and Politics

In one of the most controversial parts of *What Is Called Thinking?*, Heidegger claims that 'science does not think' (Heidegger 1968: 8, 134) and argues that scientists are too preoccupied with doing what 'science does' (research) to have the capacity to reflect on its essence. This expression functions as an order-word that calls to thought. Science does not provide access to the 'incalculable', or 'meditative thinking', but remains at the level of technology as 'calculating thinking'. This also coincides with the age of representation as driving 'everything into the unity of the thus-objectified' (Heidegger 2002: 85). Only the process of thinking can unveil the essence of science since science is too preoccupied with the application and the advancement of technology. 'Perhaps there is a thinking that is more sober-minded than the incessant frenzy of rationalization and the intoxicating quality of cybernetics' (Heidegger 2008: 449). Heidegger does not simply oppose calculative thinking (sciences and applied sciences) to meditative thinking (philosophy) but he retraces the originary task of philosophy as thinking the ground

and the essence of the disciplines, since only philosophy has 'access' to being. Heidegger's critique of the metaphysical–theological foundation of disciplines aims at retrieving 'the power of the beginning' (Heidegger 2003: 3; Macherey 2011: 140–89). This beginning was the irruption of Greek philosophy, and contemporary sciences have forgotten that all sciences originate in philosophy. This argument found in the controversial Rectoral Address from 1933 is extended almost twenty years later in the lectures referred to by Deleuze:

> by way of history, a man will never find out what history is; no more than a mathematician can show by mathematics . . . what mathematics is.
>
> The essence of their sphere – history, art, poetry, language, nature, man, God – remains inaccessible to the sciences . . . The essence of the spheres I have named is the concern of thinking. (Heidegger 1968: 32–3)

Thus, thinking discovers the essence of things and time, whereas the political and economic conditions of a given epoch are organised, according to Heidegger, by other disciplines (history, sociology, economics). 'To think' history is to define the essence of the domain of history and to avoid exhaustive descriptions and analyses of a given age. But, if we follow Heidegger, history cannot think itself (unto itself). Heidegger claims that philosophy grounds the sciences but that the opposite is not true (Heidegger 1968: 131), yet much of his later thought is devoted to this untangling of life and technology as the latter is seen to both enslave and open up new possibilities.

On the contrary, Deleuze responds that 'the idea that mathematicians need philosophy to reflect on mathematics is a comic idea' (Deleuze 2003: 292; my translation). This statement could be aimed at Heidegger, who does not open up all disciplines to creativity and thought. This is particularly true of his study of cinema, for which he became renowned. But he also allows dialogue between the sciences and philosophy. This was argued by de Beistegui in his *Truth and Genesis* (2004) in which, 'by turning to certain recent developments in science, from quantum mechanics to non-linear dynamics and complexity theory', and in order to remain Heideggerian, de Beistegui decided to dissociate himself from Heidegger and follow Deleuze with whom 'it is indeed possible to single out or extract a dimension of Being that is proper to physical and material systems' (de Beistegui 2004: 15).

By leaving science and all applied disciplines to the realm of calculative thinking, Heidegger is unable to imagine what sciences and technology can do beyond the technical reason and the practical determinism that certainly drive most university research activities (we could even speak of

a fascination or a blindness). Deleuze finds a way out of this pessimism and *diktat* of philosophy in Heidegger's thought by democratising the question 'what is called thinking?', that is, the desert of thought (as we will later discuss with stupidity) should 'call' to each of us (Deleuze and Guattari 1995: 107).

By relating thinking to the overcoming of metaphysics, Heidegger builds a hierarchical structure of thinking. It follows that if, for both Heidegger and Deleuze, thinking is a collective and a political attitude as we defined it earlier, for Heidegger philosophy (with poetry) has a privilege over other realms. Heidegger, in the *Letter on Humanism*, presented the danger that philosophy and philosophers face when they believe that they can justify philosophy's existence before the 'sciences' by elevating it to the rank of science, but 'such an effort is the abandonment of the essence of thinking' (Heidegger 2008: 219). Therefore, he believed that philosophy could leave the realm of science and return to thinking, but why could he not argue the same for sciences and the arts (other than poetry), and organise a fruitful dialogue between philosophy and the sciences? This is precisely the significant point of contrast with Deleuze, who has been constantly concerned with opening the realm of thinking up to other spheres, or at least recognising that other realms also 'think'. We shall attempt to explain this movement through his work on cinema-thinking.

V. Deleuze's Question: What Is Called Cinema-thinking?

Cinema 2: Time-Image is a project demonstrating Deleuze's transcendental empiricism at work:

> it is as if cinema were telling us: with me, with the movement-image, you can't escape the shock which arouses the thinker in you . . . simultaneously posit[ing] the unity of nature and man, of the individual and the mass: cinema as art of the masses. (Deleuze 1989: 156, 162)

Deleuze's work on cinema is paradigmatic of his project to democratise thought and philosophy, believing that people cannot simply satisfy themselves with stupidity and baseness of thought, but that if everyone has the capacity to think, one should make use of it, otherwise other institutions will. 'Thought' is a category larger than the categories presented in *What Is Philosophy?* – concepts, affects and percepts, functions, that respectively philosophy, arts and science craft. Thinking is an individuating activity – in the Simondonian sense – linking the psychological and the collective, entitling the artist to believe in this

world: 'the less human the world is, the more it is the artist's duty to believe and produce belief in a relation between man and the world, because the world is made by men' (Deleuze 1989: 171).

Deleuze's work on cinema develops another original element of his philosophy: the role given to the body. Doing away with mind–body dualism (Cutler and MacKenzie 2011: 58) means that the body enters thought and thought communicates with the body: 'not that the body thinks, but, obstinate and stubborn, it forces us to think, and forces to think what is concealed from thought, life' (Deleuze 1989: 189). What is called thinking for Deleuze is then transformed into a journey to the heart of the body, where the mind and the body become indiscernible, where it is no longer of any importance whether it is a movement, an image, or a word that makes us think. For Deleuze, a writer must become a seer and images must become thoughts, since an image only counts for the thoughts that it creates.

That is why Deleuze introduces a general definition of the act of thinking that he partly borrows from Heidegger, though mostly departing from him. Unlike Heidegger, Deleuze is not interested in describing the path to overcoming metaphysics, but the path to creation and the new (Smith 2007). We can now distinguish between Heidegger and Deleuze by asking the question 'who can think?'. While for both thinking is an impersonal activity, for Heidegger only philosophers can 'think', that is, can envisage the end of a metaphysical and theological foundation to philosophy, morality and politics;[11] only they can find the essence of things and disciplines.

By presenting signs – or what Deleuze calls 'noosigns' (Deleuze 1989: 279) – cinema can 'arouse the thinker in you', unfolding the involuntary (or contingent) enterprise of thinking by opening up a transcendental field that goes much beyond the history of Being to form a new image of thought. This can be created from the elements of the film-outside that shape and modify the brain. Already in 1985, with the publication of *Cinema 2: Time-Image*, Deleuze considered the breakthrough in neurosciences as a major event in philosophy, leading us to reconsider the synaptic connections as uncertain and non-deterministic, in short as 'plastic'. The priority given to the brain in Deleuze's work is most evident in the conclusion of *What Is Philosophy?* (Deleuze and Guattari 1995: 201–18), which entitles the brain to having the role of being the junction between the three planes (immanence for philosophy, composition for art and reference for science) where all concepts, affects, percepts and functions occur since it is the faculty of creation. Deleuze celebrates neurosciences so late in his oeuvre because the age of psychoanalysis

was fading and the revolution in neurosciences opened a new field of inquiry and was promising to liberate the 'dogmatic image' of the brain as a centralised machine, deterministic and responding to the laws of Darwinian psychology. But it is also because the plasticity of the brain, its resilience and its transdifferentiation resemble Deleuze's own ontology of metastability and difference, that a philosopher like Malabou can take up Deleuze's work where he left off.[12] While finally Deleuze and Guattari accept that 'it is the brain that thinks and not man' (1994: 210), this falsely appears as a simple claim since 'micro-brains' or synapses are far more than the simple unification or objectification of the brain. Creation is situated in the brain but it does not mean that the brain is the 'content' of a constituted subject. Rather, it means that all synaptic connections individuate and mould being as difference.

In short, Deleuze departs from Heidegger in that despite his creative play with language, the latter is still concerned primarily with thinking in relation to the metaphysical and representational foundation, with Nietzsche in the first part of *What Is Called Thinking?* and Parmenides in the second. Heidegger's definition of thinking remains an aristocratic one: real thought only occurs in philosophy, and in 1966, he goes so far as to wonder whether German and Greek can be the only languages one can think in (Heidegger 2003: 44). On the contrary, in Deleuze the task of thinking is democratised, even in 'the art of the masses' (his definition of cinema) 'the shock wave or the nervous vibration… gives rise to thought' (Deleuze 1989: 162, 158). It occurs when the 'powerlessness' of thought is uncovered as a problem. Cinema is the art of the masses and Deleuze the philosopher of the masses, making the task of thinking available to 'the common man'. The new pedagogy is a culture not of establishing the right method to find solutions and answers, but to raise problems. As he puts it, 'we do not possess a right to the problems' (Deleuze 1994: 158), and as long as we do not have this right we will remain 'slaves':

> Culture, however, is an involuntary adventure, the movement of learning which links a sensibility, a memory and then a thought, with all the cruelties and violence necessary, as Nietzsche said, precisely in order to 'train a "nation of thinkers"' or to 'provide a training for the mind'. (Deleuze 1994: 165–6)

Just as there is not only one 'thinking' discipline, there is not only one correct way to think. Errors are not as violent and problematic as stupidity; the latter can never be fully eradicated but should nonetheless be faced and fought. For Deleuze, we need a nation of thinkers in order

to democratise thought – by way of cinema, for instance – since thinking as explained earlier cannot be voluntary and contingent but must be involuntary and necessary. A new pedagogy means, for him, accounting for the multiple paths to thought since 'we never know in advance how someone will learn' (Deleuze 1994: 165).

VI. Stupidity, or Answering the Question 'What Is Called Thinking?'

It is our thesis that the question 'what is called thinking?' is doubled by a second question: 'a truly transcendental question: how is stupidity (and not error) possible?' (Deleuze 1994: 151; translation modified). Stupidity was defined in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* as '*that which it is a symptom of: a base way of thinking*' (Deleuze 2002: 105; original emphasis). Thinking then becomes a fight against the representation of truth as an ahistorical category: 'It is disturbing that truth conceived as an abstract universal, thought conceived as pure science, has never hurt anyone. In fact, the established order and current values constantly find their support in truth conceived in this way' (Deleuze 2002: 104; original emphasis). This is precisely the task that Deleuze assigns to thinking: to fight against the false problems of stupidity, philosophy must be violent and put the stupidity of our time on display, becoming by the same token *political*. Deleuze reads *Schopenhauer Educator*, by Nietzsche, as one of the best definitions of philosophy against the established order, which for Schopenhauer was Hegel, as the philosopher of the State. Even truth becomes politicised since we only have the truths that we deserve. This 'we' is truly political, a psychic and collective individuation, which is also found in Foucault's re-reading of Kant's text *What Is Enlightenment?*: 'We always have the truths we deserve as function of the sense of what we conceive, of the value of what we believe' (Deleuze 2002: 104).

Hence, if we always have the truths we deserve, we also always have the stupidity that we deserve and Deleuze gives one of his first definitions of philosophy as the discipline that should harm stupidity:

> Stupidity and baseness are always those of our own time, of our contemporaries, our stupidity and baseness. (Deleuze 2002: 107)
>
> [Philosophy] is useful for harming stupidity, for turning stupidity into *something shameful*. Its only use is the exposure of all forms of baseness of thought. (Deleuze 2002: 106)

Hence, stupidity should not be understood simply as the opposite of thinking; for Deleuze stupidity is a form of thinking, but a shameful

one. Yet, it is crucial to understand that stupidity also helps the process of both thinking and individuating, when it is turned into a shameful condition:

> [H]ow could the concept of error account for this unity of stupidity and cruelty, of the grotesque and the terrifying, *which doubles the way of the world*? Cowardice, cruelty, baseness and stupidity are not simply corporeal capacities or traits of character or society; they are structures of thought as such. The transcendental landscape comes to life: places for the tyrant, the slave and the imbecile must be found within it . . .
>
> [A] tyrant institutionalises stupidity. (Deleuze 1994: 151; emphasis added)

To fight stupidity is therefore to fight stupidity relentlessly as a tyrannical form of thought without any hope of final emancipation. Stupidity is not the only state of thought that philosophy should fight but also cowardice, cruelty and madness. But what tyranny wants with its 'bureaucrats of pure reason' (Deleuze 2004: 259) is to 'stop people from thinking' (Deleuze and Parnet 2006: 10), to have institutions or 'thinkers by profession' who think for others. Hence the project of Deleuze is to open philosophy to the outside, to the arts and any form of vitality. While thought and life come together and should revitalise philosophy, this also means for Deleuze to repoliticise philosophy, instead of merely having the labour of pure reason and the constant search for the verification of ahistorical truths. One finds this in his cartography or topology of affects, percepts and concepts, throughout his other books, but it is already on his mind when he writes in 1962: 'The theory of thought depends on a typology of forces . . . We have the truths that we deserve depending on the place we are carrying our existence to, the hour we watch over and the element that we frequent' (Deleuze 2002: 110). The existence of stupidity forces us to think higher than stupidity and find things and signs that call for new possibilities of life. Not that stupidity could vanish, but the constant fight against stupidity is what gives life its fullness, allowing one to live at one's limits: 'We write only at the frontiers of our knowledge, at the border which separates our knowledge from our ignorance and transforms the one into the other' (Deleuze 1994: xx).

We always have the risk of falling prey to stupidity; just as knowledge can never be grasped but only pursued and desired, stupidity can never be expelled from our condition but gives the energy to go beyond our condition (*ek-stasis*). 'Thought understood as pure determination or abstract line must confront this indeterminate, this groundlessness' (Deleuze 1994: 275). This unthought is both stupidity as a shameful

condition as well as a dispersal of singularities and affects that fascinates us.

> Thought is the highest determination, confronting stupidity as though face to face with the indeterminate which is adequate to it. Stupidity (not error) constitutes the greatest weakness of thought, but also the source of its highest power in that which forces it to think. (Deleuze 1994: 275)

It forces us to think because we are ashamed of our condition in stupidity, in this base form of thought. This fascination is not positive or negative but powerful, it gives a sovereignty and a realm of its own for thought. Some degree of stupidity is useful and indispensable for a psycho-collective individuation. Stupidity doubles thought, one cannot go without the other. Advertisements, the media and mundane conversations are needed to sell but also to create social bonds and to weave the social fabric. Without stupidity, there will be no thought and no knowledge. Feeling ashamed is also the expression that Deleuze borrows from Primo Levi to remember that the problem of fascism and Nazism remains a political problem, and that de-Nazification does not only concern Germany but 'each of us', yet not as a generalised guilt or resentment but as by being blemished, or 'sullied' (Deleuze and Guattari 1995: 107).

Deleuze also hints at the need to break away from the old model of the history of 'monuments' by also retaining non-sense and stupidity inside as historical forms: 'this is why history is no less the locus of non-sense and stupidity than it is the process of sense or meaning' (Deleuze 1994: 208). The complementarity of becoming and history functions in the same way as the couple thought–stupidity, precisely because we are never certain of the identity of each. History is not the 'error' of becoming, or becoming the 'error' of history but its unthought, becoming is located within history and vice versa.[13]

A 'thought-event' is precisely one that can be diagnosed and understood only in its conditions of possibility (its problems); stupidity is the problem of thought, it is its double that constantly threatens it. Or, in a different way, Deleuze calls for 'a right to the problems' (Deleuze 1994: 158). Aligning this argument with Deleuze's philosophy of law as jurisprudence (de Sutter 2009) is less to make stupidity 'illegal' or to draw up the right way to think than to establish 'cases' of stupidity, precedents that are already intelligible. Jurisprudence aims at creating new rights. This case-by-case approach is to recognise the role of 'user-groups' (Deleuze 1995: 170). Philosophers, artists and everyone who actualises his or her becoming-thinker shows to new generations the

capacity one has to think. It is much less about the glorification of great men, than about witnessing that the outside and the *Übermensch* is present within us, through life as an immanent process.

VII. Conclusion

We do not yet know how to make good use of poststructuralist thought when it concerns not only our minority but our majority. Poststructuralist thought as practice still escapes us. We stand by Philippe Mengue when he claims that we still do not know which sense we can attribute to Deleuze's concepts (Mengue 2009: 162). This argument is especially perceptive given the situation of the Occupy Movements in London and in New York in 2011 and we cannot help but witness its complete lack of ideas and theories. Hence, what we learn is that stupidity and knowledge are never far apart from one another and always come together; that is why for Deleuze it is the mission of philosophy and the other realms that 'think' to discern one from the other.

Asking the question 'what is called thinking?' is to start talking about politics, but grand politics, where constructions of new earths and new people take place, first in the brain – not of one individual but of a 'collective'. Foucault remarks at the end of his life, trying to shift his focus from a multi-faceted theory of power to the conduct of the self and others by raising again the question of thinking:

> We need to free ourselves of the sacralization of the social as the only instance of the real and stop regarding that essential element in human life and human relations – I mean thought – as so much wind. Thought does exist, both beyond and before systems and edifices of discourse. It is something that is often hidden but always drives everyday behaviors. There is always a little thought occurring even in the most stupid institutions; there is always thought even in silent habits. Criticism consists in uncovering that thought and trying to change it: showing that things are not as obvious as people believe, making it so that what is taken for granted is no longer taken for granted. (Foucault 2000: 457)

Precisely because there are no universal criteria to define stupid institutions, stupid policies and stupid discourses, Deleuze explains that we can only be ashamed of our stupidity, but when stupidity becomes systemic, 'a veritable revolution of the dominant industrial model' (Stiegler 2010: 49)[14] is required, emerging from a new enthusiasm or 'sympathy' (Deleuze and Parnet 2006: 39). In *Difference and*

Repetition, Deleuze explains that (systemic) stupidity is used by tyrants to preserve the existing order, whereas a becoming-revolutionary shows the intolerable and demands to think political difference, or, as Foucault puts it, 'to make harder those acts which are now too easy' (Foucault 2000: 457).

Notes

1. Deleuze's twofold ontology of the real (actual and virtual) has spurred some of the most controversial and heated discussions (Badiou 2000; Hallward 2006). We can also refer to the interesting debate between Reynolds (2007, 2008) and Williams (2008) about the priority of the virtual, and the innovative response by Williams that the notion of intensity functions in Deleuze as the middle ground between the actual and the virtual. Williams's proposition is, in many ways, furthered by Nunes's (2010) political reading of the twofold ontology of the real as a 'politics of the middle', and his interesting discussion of the notion of 'dyad'. However, Nunes remains ambivalent on the question of decisionism in Deleuze and Guattari's work.
2. Deleuze devotes a long footnote in *Difference and Repetition* to Heidegger to point out that he situates himself in the tradition of the univocity of being that Heidegger identifies but he also notes their divergence on the reading of the eternal return (Deleuze 1994: 66). On the question of the univocity of being in Deleuze, see Daniel W. Smith's classic study (2001). However, Miguel de Beistegui has argued recently that Heidegger's treatment of repetition departs from Kierkegaard and a retrospective reading of the early Heidegger highlights some common points of reference with Deleuze's differential repetition; see de Beistegui 2003: 49–50.
3. Malabou points out that this *coup* was started by Heidegger and then radicalised and displaced by Deleuze and Derrida (Malabou 2010: 24).
4. We agree here with Lee Braver that in Heidegger's later writings "'thinking' is being used here as *a technical term* with a distinctive meaning rather than just entertaining thoughts or the activity studied by epistemology" (Braver 2009: 116; emphasis added).
5. A confrontation between Deleuze's concept of 'event' and Heidegger's concept of *Ereignis* (the event of ap-propriation) is much needed but exceeds here the scope of this article. It would complete our attempt to understand Heidegger's concepts of *Denken*, *Stimmung* and *Gelassenheit* in Deleuze's philosophy, since after all for both of them thinking works at the level of the event, yet in different directions. Without being able to develop further, it is important to point out that Boundas's article helps distinguish Deleuze's theory of the event and Heidegger's concept of *Ereignis* as appropriation and recollection. The sense-event in Deleuze as the creation of the new and 'the memory of the future' is to be contrasted to Heidegger's project of gathering and recollection, back to an origin or forward to a destiny. On the event see especially Boundas 2009: 328–30.

   Jonathan Dronsfield (2008) already presented a first account of the confrontation between Deleuze and Heidegger, and in spite of a perceptive reading of Deleuze, Dronsfield comes to the surprising conclusion that questions and problems are similar for both philosophers, and their work becomes then indistinguishable. While being sympathetic to the approach of not trusting

Deleuze to the letter, it seems not only unfair but imprecise to confuse the role of the 'question' in Heidegger with Deleuze's notion of the 'problem' or the 'problematic'. One could have expected references to a tradition in French philosophy (Bergson, Bachelard and others) holding the 'problem' as a central concept.

6. This is also how Deleuze defines structuralism as 'problems, methods, solutions that have a relation of analogy, participating in a free "*air du temps*", a spirit of the time, but resulting from the discoveries and the singular creations in each of the domains' (Deleuze 2004: 170; translation modified).
7. Simondon defines the transindividual as the complementarity between action (at the collective level, dealing with affectivity) and emotion (at the psychic level, dealing with perception). See Simondon 2007: 104–11.
8. A little earlier in the interview, he summarises a theme of his late writings: 'A decisive question for me today is: how can a political system accommodate itself to the technological age, and which political system would this be? I have no answer to this question. I am not convinced that it is democracy' (Heidegger 2003: 36).
9. Bret W. Davis has provided a nuanced study of the notion of *Gelassenheit* (releasement) in relation to the question of the will, by demonstrating that *Gelassenheit* is not simply a negation of the will as unwillingness, even though a sense of passivity is found within it, but could be interpreted as "'actively letting' beings be themselves" (Davis 2007: xxvii). This releasement is also a releasement from the technological 'will to will' without simply being indifference and negligence. Releasement should then be understood as a reworking of Nietzsche's will to power, and could be defined as the 'middle voice' between willing and 'not-willing' (Davis 2007: 16). I would like to thank Gavin Rae for drawing my attention to this book.
10. Heidegger's suggestion is to turn to language (Heidegger 2001: 185–208), and by way of language he wants to find new meanings for old philosophical concepts and to introduce provincial language within a more national-majoritarian language. Translation is violent for Heidegger since it is both creative and generative of thought. In his last book, Deleuze also pays homage to the extraordinary power of Heidegger's play with language (Deleuze 1998: 97–8). Even though for Heidegger, this violence is to bring language closer to its originary place and to follow the 'call' of Greek thinking, Deleuze draws a parallel between Heidegger's creative reworking of language and his own thought.
11. In the confrontation of Heidegger and Deleuze, another point to take into account is the divergence on the end-of-metaphysics thesis. A precise reading of Deleuze's explicit rejection of the end of philosophy (Deleuze 1995: 136) could be developed to contrast the becoming and the event of thought in both philosophies.
12. Malabou argues for the practical use of the recent development in neurosciences at the service of new social and political advancements. Her resistance is to the neuronal ideology that 'models and naturalises the neuronal process in order to legitimate certain social and political functioning' (Malabou 2008: 68). She continues the Deleuzian and Derridean thought of the trace, of difference and becoming by applying it to the plasticity of the brain that is both receiving and giving form. The neuronal turn that she operates is interesting and furthers in many respects some of the remarks that we exposed here. For Malabou, the outside is also included as the possibility of a 'world to come', through an 'explosion' (other than terrorists' explosions) that is necessarily creative and self-generating: 'if we didn't destroy ourselves a bit, we could not live' (2008: 74). If

Malabou can claim after LeDoux that 'you are your synapses', it is encouraging since synapses are gaps and breaks, confirming that we are Difference.

This manifests the necessity to leave the correctness of thought to accept that 'every thought is an aggression' (Deleuze 2004: 139) and necessarily a dangerous and difficult activity. Deleuze later, in 1990, explained his optimism for the liberating potential of science: 'it's for science, rather, to try and discover what might have happened in the brain for one to start thinking this way or that' (Deleuze 1995: 176), yet in 2004, when calling for a neuronal materialism, Malabou writes that 'it seems that the neuronal revolution has revolutionised nothing for us' (Malabou 2008: 68).

13. Dork Zabunyan is particularly clear on this point when he explains that stupidity is contained within thought (and its condition of possibility) whereas the error is exterior to thought, and therefore only remains an adversary exterior to philosophy (Zabunyan 2008: 856).
14. And only then 'psychopower can be thrown over to become noopolitics' (Stiegler 2010: 50), but also a neuropolitics.

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Book Reviews

Jason Wallin (2010) *A Deleuzian Approach to Curriculum: Essays on a Pedagogical Life*, London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

As a field rather than a discipline, education is potentially an interdisciplinary space capable of formulating new lines of thought that traverse the boundaries of the social sciences and humanities. Work in education also potentially serves as a venue for a radical form of pragmatism in terms of its direct impact on people's lives – an aspect of the field that one might think would lead to a greater consideration of education and learning within contemporary political thought. Unfortunately, however, these potentially exciting and important aspects of the field do not often come to fruition. More often than not, the field of education is the home of rigidly conservative work that contributes towards the reproduction of an image of pedagogical life prescribed by the increasingly homogenised, instrumentalised and test-focused interests of local schools and administrators. In higher education the field is becoming increasingly weighted down by the dictates of the neo-liberal marketplace and schizo-capitalism that force schools of education to become sites for the creation of flexible labour (that is, teachers) trained under the mind-numbing mantra of 'skills and knowledge'. At the same time, the arts and humanities – once the site for some of the most innovative and important work being done in all issues related to pedagogy and schooling – is quickly being dissolved in favour of more clearly identifiable forms of 'research' that conform and contribute to the increasingly overcoded domain of formal schooling and the infatuation with profit margin. Finally, at the same time that education has seldom been the home of the invention of new lines of political thinking (unless one understands the emergence of cultural studies as a direct product of the adult education programmes in the UK during the 1960s), there is a surprising disconnection between contemporary political theory and

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questions pertaining to pedagogy in spite of what one could argue is their mutual interdependence.[1]

As this increasingly quantitative image of education has grown in recent years in direct proportion to the privatisation of the public sphere, new pathways for thinking pedagogy and learning have become more and more difficult to come by. Simply put, there is a drastic need to reconceptualise our approach to curriculum, teaching and learning in order to confront the way that pedagogy is currently being conceived of. Jason Wallin's new book, *A Deleuzian Approach to Curriculum: Essays on a Pedagogical Life* is precisely such a project. One of the many aspects of this book that make it so compelling is the way that Wallin is able to provoke the reader to engage with and utilise Deleuzo-Guattarian inspired concepts in exploring how a pedagogical life might go in place of the commonsensical, overcoded and rigidly institutionalised representations of contemporary education. While it is true that the book is directed primarily towards disturbing the habitual imagistic conception of pedagogy and the academic field of curriculum studies (a minor field within a minor field), in true Deleuzian fashion Wallin's work on this topic has implications for a wide variety of intellectual endeavours including philosophy, film studies, music studies and, perhaps most importantly, political theory. While there have been other admirable attempts in curriculum studies to connect Deleuzian thought to education, none have so thoroughly and successfully produced the kinds of conceptual tools necessary to create new pedagogical pathways – ones that are not merely critical, but productive in the sense that they provide the kind of creative impetus that compels us to think pedagogy and curriculum differently.

The argument that is dispersed through the book in relation to curriculum studies extends out of the word *currere* – the Latin etymological link to curriculum that means to run. It is with the understanding of curriculum as a course to be run that Wallin discusses the differences between a pedagogical life that *should be run* and one that *might be run*. In other words, in light of the way that habitual forms of education prioritise the construction of a course of pedagogical life that should be followed, Wallin's book prioritises *the run* thereby opening up our thinking about pedagogy to a range of potential lines of flight that seek to escape the beaten track of developmental, functional, structural and critical educational paradigms. It is perhaps in relation to the latter that Wallin's book is most valuable. Although sympathetic to the liberatory intentions of much critical thought within education, Wallin is careful to highlight some of the problems inherent to critical

pedagogy that allow it to be neatly appropriated into acceptable forms of thinking education. In other words, critical approaches to thinking pedagogy have become formulaic in their approach to critiquing contemporary trends in higher education and, as a result, insufficient to the task of remedying the problems inherent to the dominant image of pedagogical life.

In contrast to critical paradigms in education, Wallin's intention is the 'development of new concepts for pedagogy' that can 'transform the normative limits ascribed to pedagogical being' (9) – a difficult task for sure, but one that Wallin successfully takes on through an engagement with, and corresponding affirmation of, a wide variety of artistic, political and ethical forces that work to weaken the hold of the State of things in education today. Wallin's book is not a watered down approach to theorising education that one often finds in progressive educationalist approach to thinking Deleuze – the end result of which often equates Deleuzo-Guattarian thought with nothing more than the impetus to be more creative. Rather, the book is precisely the kind of active intervention and associated destabilisation of the commonsensical and predetermined course to be run that we need to confront the dominant image of education today. Wallin's engagement with Deleuzo-Guattarian thought is an active one. In other words, Wallin takes on the project of concept creation as a form of tool making in order to lead the reader through a discussion of pedagogical life via specific innovations in the areas of film, games and music.

The book begins with Wallin's prioritisation of the *one* of Spinoza's plane of immanence over the *two* of transcendent thought that marks the terrain of the Judeo-Christian God, Platonic forms, Cartesian ego and Foucault's 'ethics of knowledge'. For Wallin, the problem with transcendent thought is not so much related to the attempt to clearly differentiate right from wrong, but the way that transcendence a priori restricts ways of thought. For Wallin, particularly problematic for education has been the dominance of Marxian, Saussurian and Freudian frameworks that reduce pedagogical life to either the social ontology of the mode of production, the supposed neutrality of the structure of language or the familial Oedipal template. Again, the issue for Wallin is not so much their lack of verifiability as much as it is their power to 'capture' ontological becomings in pre-established images of the world, thus limiting the conceptualisation of difference. Throughout the book, Wallin relentlessly attacks the notion that pedagogy is the act of representing reality and thus merely posited as a form of communication aimed at showing the student the world as it really is.

In following Deleuzian thought, Wallin argues that a way out of the limitations of the otherworldliness of transcendence is through the embrace of Spinoza's *plane of immanence* that reorients a conception of pedagogical life from its already established course to be run, to one of becoming and difference. For him, 'without the presence of two ontological substances the conceptualization of a transcendent beyond would be impossible' (21). In the embrace of the two, learning is posited as that which occurs when one grasps a more accurate representation of phenomena instead of an open form of experimentation along a plane that has no ontological other.

In the world of curriculum studies, transcendent thought orients curriculum towards something to be planned and implemented. In other words, when curriculum is bound to transcendence it becomes territorialised and connected to an already identified course to be run. In the difference between transcendence and the plane of immanence, the concept of *currere* is construed as either a predetermined planned course of action or as an open field of deterritorialised potential. For Wallin, the claim of what *ought* to be run is bound to the work of negation where

> the reactive image of currere is figured, as much like the image of the race-track, within its own circumlocutionary negative feedback loop. In practice this negative feedback system confirms its identity (x = x = not y) by establishing specific parameters of control that discontinue virtual deterritorializations or rogue lines of flight. (33)

Transcendence and the labour of the negative in the form of unhappiness, representation and reduction are replaced by Wallin with the affirmative qualities of joy, liberation and creation. If education is here understood as the reorientation of habit, the state of things is not to be replaced with an alternative representational image of the world as it should exist, but rather with the way it might exist through the embrace of exploration, experimentation and chance. In regard to the affirmative, Wallin argues that what is important in thinking experimentation in the context of curriculum is that we not limit our thinking to the mere 'renunciation of stability', but rather that which renounces all a priori/foundational thinking, whether that emerges from a commitment to the future as a goal to be reached or as a never ending becoming. In both cases, Wallin argues that what is predetermined always imagines curriculum through the lens of the death drive – being as a 'fixed' location fuelled by the desire for identity. Whether that identity takes the form of a true representation or a permanent flow is irrelevant.

The avoidance of such territorialisation is a difficult undertaking, and one that for Wallin necessitates a commitment towards the affirmation connected to the 'powers of the false' – the term Deleuze (2006) utilised in reference to Nietzsche's 'eternal return of the same'. For Deleuze, Nietzsche's teachings of joy, difference and chance are what needs to be affirmed, not the repetition of a pre-constituted image of reality. 'The powers of the false thus become a "practice" of the affirmation of difference that inheres to repetition' not the identitarian logic of the death drive typified in the educational obsession of repeating (40). The 'eternal return of the same' should not be understood as everything always returning as it was before, but rather that difference is always returning and needs to be affirmed in each instance.

As a result, Wallin utilises the Deleuzian simulacrum as a potential way to outmanoeuvre the rigidity of the most readily available image of pedagogical life. For Wallin, '[I]n the Deleuzian positive simulacrum of virtual immanence and difference, the powers of the false mark the creation of counteractualities' (38). Following Massumi (1987), Wallin continues by adding that 'the false might be constituted as a working simulation injected into a society. Here the law is a transcendent truth that underlies reality while the powers of the false work to undermine that reality by seducing the conceptualization of another' (38).

Key here is the commitment to minoritarian production – that kind of unofficial production lying outside of the habitually acknowledged and accepted forms of pedagogy and that sometimes serves as a deceptive simulation of another life. Minoritarian forms of production are what actively bring foreignness to the familiar through an introduction of 'heterogeneity and variation' into the everyday (39). In the case of curriculum studies, minoritarian thought is that which opens up our thinking about pedagogy to a range of artistic mediums not commonly accepted as appropriate ways of engaging with and imagining education. Wallin's intervention into our thinking about pedagogy occurs in two primary ways: first, it aims to bring attention to the kinds of creative interventions often discounted a priori from the scope of pedagogical life; and second, it aims to focus our attention on those specific examples that, like the power of the false, seduce us into a defamiliarisation with what has become most commonplace. As a result, Wallin makes use of specific examples in film, games and music in producing what he calls a 'holey curriculum' – an example of *currere* that relies on minoritarian nomadic, rhizomatic and schizo creations in the process of considering a different form of pedagogical life that might be run. Instead of the

unhappiness of 'moribund' repetition, Wallin leads us towards 'play and artifice'.

Following Rajchman's (2000) conviction that the task of liberation today cannot be limited to a mere position of criticality, Wallin puts forth a number of minoritarian creations that potentially serve as affirmative and revolutionary forms of invention (121). Wallin engages with Jim Jarmusch's films *Dead Man* (1995) and *Ghost Dog* (1999); Todd Haynes's film about Bob Dylan titled *I'm Not There* (2007); the Japanese game Go, the artistic movement *parkour* and various hacking video games; and the most conceptually inspiring forms of improvisational jazz. For Wallin, all of these minoritarian creations serve as examples of an affirmative pedagogy. Respectively, they act as an 'ethics of singularity' and anti-institutional *enculage* or buggery; a body without organs; forms of anti-State deterritorialisation and creative becoming; and an improvisational circuit breaker that works to create a vital life.

With every example Wallin goes into vivid detail, describing the ways that he imagines each of these forms of minoritarian production working against what he refers to as the 'tyranny of overdetermination' – those rigid, predetermined and striated lines of thought that leave the state of things completely intact. In contrast to such pedagogical orientation, the minoritarian creations that Wallin utilises and holds up as affirmative anti-images and examples of how pedagogical life *might go* find common ground in the way that they 'move in difference from the determinations of habit, memory, routine, and the practices of identification in which the individual is often caught' (117).

Although most of Wallin's book is directed towards making connections between artistic creations and new forms of pedagogical thought, he does present us with a couple of specific examples of 'schooling' that resonate with Deleuze's intent to undermine the violence of representational thought. One example comes in the form of the *currere* in A. S. Neill's (1993) Summerhill School that serves as an example of how a pedagogical life *might go*. At Summerhill School there are no bosses; students are free to choose the classes and lessons they attend; delinquency does not necessitate a disciplinary response; and students are fully engaged in decision-making processes free of any formal disciplinary or moral code (180). Most importantly for Wallin, these various aspects of Summerhill exemplify a pedagogical life not driven by the assumption of lack on the part of its students, but instead are constitutive of 'a counter fascist site of desire-engineering capable of collapsing the hierarchical organ-ization of the mechanical

school… releasing the machinic potentials of a pedagogical life from its identitarian or representational mechanics' (180). One might well consider this example of pedagogical life as a form of anti-schooling that puts Summerhill, as well as Wallin, within an anarchist tradition in educational thought that runs through the work of William Godwin (1793), Ivan Illich (1971) and, more recently, Jacques Rancière (1991) among others.

It is Summerhill's approach to pedagogical life that, for Wallin, 'queers' the predominant image of State-run schooling. Here the author imagines a 'queer machine' for curriculum theorising that emerges out of a 'machinic ontology' that moves towards relations and replaces the component-oriented mechanical image of pedagogical life (179). In the case of Summerhill, pedagogy is oriented towards the freeing up of the 'desire-engineering' of its students and not the carrying out of a predetermined map of how learning ought to go. The 'queering' of curriculum is thus based on releasing the potential of new relationships and connections that act to spur the creation of subjectivities prohibited within the domain of the dominant image of schooling.

In much the same way that Summerhill works to create new conceptual relationships regarding how a pedagogical life might go, Wallin's book compels curriculum theorists to create new concepts that can change the trajectory of our thinking about pedagogy. He asks how we might

> think the concept as a *metallurgical* probe-head for creating, registering, and linking viroid lines of flight. In this way, the technics of the concept become intimate to the composition of a *queer machine* for stealing *a* life back from *life in general*. (187; original emphasis)

Wallin's utilisation of the concept of *currere* as a course that *may be run* is an effective example of such an intervention that is bound to the relationality inherent to machinic thought. It is 'the ethical undoing of norms' that machinic thinking provides that allows pedagogical thought to escape the *ought* for what *may be*.

In the midst of the exceptional way that Wallin is able to utilise the thought of Deleuze in thinking through some of the most pressing issues facing contemporary schooling and the state of education today, there are a few questions that emerged while reading the book. The first has to do with the relationship between creativity, learning and disciplinarity. Specifically, what is the role of discipline in the creation of a pedagogical life not bound to pre-constituted images? Might we also be able to think of strict disciplinarity as an impetus to creation? Although Wallin states

on multiple occasions that to engage with Deleuzian thought is not to advocate a permanent form of deterritorialisation, there are times when the critical role that territorialisation might play seems to be ignored. For example, in the case of music and discussion of the potential pedagogical import of improvisational music, the discipline and even preparatory training required to produce those rare cases of improvisation that Wallin seeks to utilise in the service of a pedagogical life seem to go unmentioned. If, against the goal of sonic unity in music and life, we need to 'allow the strands to sing polyphonically and pray that, on occasion, they glow white hot from within' (Aoki, qtd in Wallin 2010: 65), one wonders what role exists for disciplinarity and territorialisation in terms of preparing for the potential of a genuine form of improvisation to emerge. Second, in what ways would a Deleuzian inspired curriculum and pedagogical life work at various age levels in schools or elsewhere? In other words, how might we engage with Deleuze as teachers, researchers, curriculum theorists or concerned community members who are thinking about education and curriculum in terms of toddlers as well as high school students? How might we be able to utilise Wallin's discussion of pedagogical life of a course that *may be run* across various age groups where individual engagement with the world is not always the same? Finally, what is the relationship between a Deleuzian inspired curriculum and institutional settings? More specifically, is what Wallin calls a 'libratory' form of pedagogy possible within the school? Or, as might be imagined, is such education only possible within the context of what Ivan Illich (1971) called a 'deschooled society'?

In conclusion, Wallin's book makes a major contribution to the field of curriculum studies and leaves readers much to consider in terms of our approach to pedagogy, curriculum studies and its relationship to political thought. At a time when most thinking about education plods along with its continued dependence on critical, linguistic, structuralist and developmental approaches to learning and pedagogy, Wallin's intervention into the field could not be more *untimely* in the way that the book acts as a disturbance against our habitual orientation of what constitutes a pedagogical life. If work in the field of education is to inspire new approaches to pedagogy and learning and thus bring to fruition some of the above mentioned potentialities of the field, then curriculum studies needs the kind of engagement with artistic innovations and concept creation exemplified in this book.

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Note

1. Besides Jacques Rancière's *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* (1991) and Alain Badiou's short essay on education in *Handbook of Inaesthetics* (2005) there has been a scarcity of new forms of creative intervention into the crossover between politics and education. The hesitation on the part of political theorists to engage with the question of education is, I believe, worthy of some consideration and thought. As Wallin points out in this book, one semi-recent exception to this rule is Félix Guattari, who did show some interest in A. S. Neill's (1993) *Summerhill School* and Fernand Oury's Group for Therapeutic Education. Deleuze, on the other hand, rarely discussed education directly. One of Deleuze's (1989) few references to education seems to exists in what he called the 'pedagogy of the image' – a concept that he borrowed form Serge Daney's work for the French film journal *Cahiers du Cinema*.

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Steven Shaviro (2009) *Without Criteria: Kant, Whitehead, Deleuze, and Aesthetics*, Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Imagine postmodernism without simulacra, virtuality or deconstruction, but instead with affirmation, passion and a continual emergence of the new. But wait – fantasy, myth and fabulation belong to fiction and art – not to philosophy, at least, not traditionally. And yet, as you may know, philosophy after Deleuze has meant exactly the opposite. Open to experimentation and speculation, today's philosophers are not compelled to speak within classical divisions between art and

science, or technology and the humanities. In fact, philosophers are encouraged to think of themselves as artists, 'creating concepts', as Deleuze and Guattari put it, and vice versa. Moreover, as philosophy fuses with disparate cultural practices and intellectual specialisations (all but enforced in a culture drunk on interdisciplinarity), philosophers can simultaneously think about the history of the field, its predecessors and its future, and do so with passion, emotion and creative visions of what is to come. This is precisely what we find in Wayne State University's DeRoy Professor of English, Steven Shaviro's recent book, *Without Criteria: Kant, Whitehead, Deleuze, and Aesthetics*, published in 2009 with the MIT Press.

The stakes of the project: to rethink postmodern theory – and in particular aesthetics – from the point of view of Whitehead instead of Heidegger. Philosophy from Plato to Heidegger has tended towards '*anamnesis* (reminiscence) and *alatheia* (unforgetting), towards origins and foundations, [and] towards the past rather than future' (71). Whitehead refreshingly breaks with this, showing something new. For this reason alone the text is worth a read, though the intricacies of his break and their importance for constructivist philosophies of the future make Shaviro's clear, eloquently written and insightful book that much more compelling.

Cut to the task at hand, Shaviro's analysis focuses on those aspects of Whitehead's work dealing with aesthetics, beauty, affect, innovation, creativity, his Enlightenment roots and especially his engagement with Kant (143). His critical method involves rereading Kant though Whitehead, and Whitehead through Deleuze. At first, Whitehead appears more like Deleuze than himself, and this is confusing, but such blurring of authorial boundaries is a part and parcel of the technique that many readers will (most likely) recognise as one borrowed from Deleuze. In his time, Deleuze often brought different philosophers into conversation, a process he provocatively termed 'buggery', to describe the way he sneaked in behind an author to reread and rewrite his or her ideas, producing an unrecognisable and monstrous offspring (6). In reference to his own work, Shaviro coins his three-way (between Kant, Whitehead and Deleuze) a 'relay'. Considering the goal – to create a constructivist philosophy for postmodernism (versus simply locating broken origins) – the choice of critical methods is more than par for the course.

In this review I will first discuss Shaviro's analysis of Whitehead and Heidegger, introducing some subtleties of Shaviro's arguments (via Whitehead, Deleuze and Kant) on metaphysics and aesthetics, and then

pause and question whether an aesthetically grounded constructivist philosophy is, in fact, *without criteria*.

Shaviro opens in the spirit of Deleuze proper, posing a 'Philosophical Fantasy' for the future of the field. But reality comes first: on one hand Heidegger asks, 'Why is there something rather nothing?' and on the other hand, Whitehead asks, 'How is it that there is always something new?' What it would it mean if the latter question, not the former, had laid the foundation for postmodern thought? Even in consideration of only these two very basic questions, evidence of the distinction between the two thinkers becomes clear. For Heidegger, *that* anything appears at all is always measured against its absence. But for Whitehead, the phenomenon of newness is creative. Newness is continual, affirmative and essential. Further exploration of the differences between the two reveals not only the complexity of Shaviro's project, but also the tweaking and twisting of thought required for such imaginings.

Both books *Being and Time* (1927) and *Process and Reality* (1929) speak to a crisis in modernity, and address the immensity of scientific and technological change, the dissolution of old certainties and the horrors of war. Both texts are anti-essentialist, anti-positivist, and are actively engaged in working out new ways to think, do philosophy and exercise our 'faculty of wonder' (i). However, the similarities are outweighed by the dramatic differences between the two thinkers.

Consider again the distinction between the tendency to return to origin and error versus the embrace of the creative and the new. This difference is reiterated in their respective approaches to history. Where Heidegger's work is concerned with locating the 'point where it went wrong', where 'possibilities were closed down', Whitehead, on the contrary, 'mines history for unexpected twists' (ix). Heidegger's thesis that the human subject is not only constituted by, but is also eternally haunted by, the enigmas of language, is well known. As he puts it in 1947, 'Language is the house of Being. In its home man dwells . . . ' (Heidegger 1993: 222). In contrast, Whitehead 'warns against' exaggerating the importance of language and consistently points to its 'incapacities' (x). Language enslaves; in its matrix of expression there is only one way out: through paradox that requires one to remember lost and long-forgotten origins. Embrace of the new neutralises this prison house of being and instead pushes forward towards the future.

Shaviro poses a hard and fast distinction on the subject of science and technology. In short: Heidegger is against it, Whitehead for it. Perhaps this is generally accurate; nonetheless I want to introduce a friendly

amendment. While Heidegger warns of the dangers of technology and enframing (*Gestell*), his judgements of modern technology as such may not be intrinsically negative. What I am suggesting is that Heidegger's supreme danger is the inability to *question towards truth*, in which case the danger and responsibility falls on the *human*, not on technological determinism. Regardless, it is undeniable that Heidegger 'demonizes science' (x). There are many examples throughout Heidegger's work, though to accept Shaviro's point here, one need only consider this statement: 'Color shines and only wants to shine. When we analyze it in rational terms by measuring its wavelengths, it is gone' (Heidegger 1993: 172).

Such demonisations are absent in Whitehead, who holds that, the 'red glow of the sunset should be as much as a part of nature as are the molecules and electrical waves by which men of science would explain the phenomenon' (Whitehead, qtd in Shaviro 2009: 144–5). Where phenomenologists focus exclusively on the former (Heidegger, Husserl) and scientists on the latter, Whitehead's metaphysics insists on a consideration of both (145). For Whitehead, science and technology are neutralised and treated as 'abstractions' that are not in themselves negative but merely simplifications and reductions that are necessary parts of life. The danger arises when these reductions are extended into situations 'beyond their limits, pushing them into realms where they no longer apply' (x).

In terms of representation – the holy grail of critical theory – Heidegger notoriously sets the stakes of the impossibility for anything to 'stand forth in [its] being' (xi), a thesis from which postmodernism, post-structuralism and cultural studies have made their bread and butter. Interestingly, Whitehead agrees with Heidegger to the extent that, from Descartes on, Western philosophy has privileged 'clear and distinct' conscious perception (what Whitehead calls 'representational immediacy') at the cost of affect, embodiment and a consideration of the ways 'perception is already grounded in the body' (xi). The distinction being, for Whitehead, that this everyday lack of clarity is the accepted and welcome ground from which his metaphysics is borne.

While metaphysics cannot be boiled down to any single project or person, there are schools. Heidegger's general project has been to seek a way out of the classical, Western metaphysics that began with Plato and Aristotle. Whitehead, however, does not cast away metaphysics at all. Instead, he simply does it. Subjectivity is central to understanding Whitehead's metaphysics because the subject, in his view, is always already embedded in the world. This may seem akin to Heidegger's

concept of 'thrownness' – denoting the factical state of having fallen in the world – but remember, in falling, a subject is drawn back into concealment, into another place and awareness that is *not* of the world. In contrast, for Whitehead, the subject is an 'irreducible part of the universe, of the way things happen. There is nothing outside of experience.' There is no before or after (as in *Being and Time*), only spontaneous configurations and exchanges between data and subjects. As Whitehead puts it, the subject, 'constitutes itself in and through experience; and thereupon it perishes, entering into the 'objective immortality' of a being a 'datum' (Whitehead, qtd in Shaviro 2009: xii).

Whitehead held that the great accomplishment of Kant was not that he placed the subject at the centre of experience (aka Kant's 'Copernican turn'), but rather, that he was the first to conceive of *experience as a constructive process* (47). Kant knew it was impossible to know 'things in themselves', so the alternative he came up with was to glean knowledge of the *how*: the *ways* one is 'involved with whatever it is that we experience or observe'. In this move, the doors opened for post-Kantian philosophy to shift the focus from the epistemological 'what' to the ontological 'how', which also meant philosophy opened itself to singularity and the new. Even though Kant did not go through this door, he nonetheless constructed (fabricated?) the frame.

Whitehead's metaphysics begins in this new space of process and change. Instead of explaining subjective experience through Kant's 'transcendental unity of apperception', Whitehead inverts the supposition and argues that experience moves from objectivity to subjectivity. Emotions do not cause bodily states, he argues; the bodily states come first and the emotions arise out of them (58). Shaviro contextualises this thesis within the tradition of American pragmatist, William James, who also rejects the conventional dualism between mind and object (20). For both, there is no 'stable and essential distinction' between the two. Whitehead proposes further indistinctions between the living and the dead, the human and nonhuman (what postmodernists call 'blurring the boundaries').

The thesis seems retroactively in line with (some) of the ideas emerging in speculative realism and object oriented philosophy today.[1] Indistinctions and anti-essentialist claims about distinctions between life and death pull the carpet out from the anthropocentricism rampant in Western philosophy (primarily in the work of Descartes, Kant, Hegel, Husserl and Heidegger). This has also been the project of Deleuze and Guattari, Foucault and, more recently, Quentin Meillassoux and Graham Harmon. Harmon and Whitehead, in particular, appear to lock

in step with their treatment of the non-human subject. For Whitehead, the subject may be a 'a dog, tree, mushroom, or a grain of sand' (xii) and similarly, in Harmon's object-oriented reinterpretation of Heidegger's work, 'crystal-effects' may be included in his reconception of Heidegger's otherwise anthropocentric and romantic Dasein (human subject). For Harmon, all subjects, whether human or rock, are a part of the 'equipmental contexture' (Harmon 2002: 30), decentring the privileged role of the human in Heidegger's philosophy. There are many, obvious differences between Whitehead and Harmon (and object-oriented philosophy and Whitehead's metaphysics), which must be expanded upon elsewhere.

A constructivist philosophy, or 'critical aestheticism', emerges in Shaviro's rereading of Kant's Analytic of the Beautiful. Instead of looking to the Sublime as *the* definitive moment of rupture, after which one endlessly speaks of impossibility and interpretation (the thesis of choice for postmodernism, poststructuralism and deconstruction alike), in the Analytic of the Sublime a new ground of singular, subjective and aesthetic experience is offered. On this point, the three – Deleuze, Whitehead and Kant – meet. All concur that aesthetic experience is non-personal and singular. In fact, aesthetic experience is so singular and new, it has no foundation at all, and 'offers no guarantees' (1). Herein lies the new ground for a constructivist philosophy, *without criteria*.

Perhaps as a response to the rise in cognitive science or simply the stakes of aesthetics after Rousseau and Goethe, in vogue today is philosophy that prioritises affect as central, if not as precedent, to cognition. On this point, Shaviro finds a surplus of allies. First and most obvious are Deleuze and Guattari. Second is Rancière (only briefly referenced in the book), whose 'poetic regime' abolishes hierarchies and pragmatic criterion, allowing for the proliferation of art and aesthetics in a society based on the 'primacy of fiction' (Rancière 2004: 83). There is also Fredric Jameson who, a decade earlier, argued that all cultural production had become a form of aesthetic production (Jameson 1991). One may also include Debord and Baudrillard, whose theories of the society of the spectacle and the primacy of the visual image equally support the primacy of affect in cultural and aesthetic experience.

But can we (and I mean readers) consider feelings as equivalent to affect? For Shaviro, the answer is a big yes. 'To feel something is to be affected by that something' (58). 'Only after the subject has constructed or synthesized itself out of its feelings . . . can [it] go on to understand the world – or change it' (15). Feeling may be defined in such ways in dictionaries, but it is not the way it is used by Deleuze and Guattari. For them, affect is not analogous to feeling. While both feeling and affect are

emotions, there is an important distinction. Feelings, or 'sentiments', are considered personal, or territorialised forces, 'feelings become uprooted from the interiority of a subject' (Deleuze and Guattari 1972: 356), whereas affects are more free-floating, pre-personal, intensities. They expand:

> Affects . . . relate only to the moving body itself, to speed and compositions of speed among elements. Affect is the active discharge of emotion, the counterattack, whereas feeling is always displaced, retarded resisting emotion. Affects are projectiles just like weapons; feelings are introceptive like tools. (Deleuze and Guattari 1992: 441)

To be fair, Shaviro's conflation of affect and feeling is justified by his reading of affect through Whitehead, for whom feeling is not actually feeling (in Deleuze and Guattari's sense). For Whitehead, an 'act of feeling is an encounter – a contingent event, an opening to the outside – rather than an intrinsic, predetermined relationship' (62). That is, feeling is conceptually on par with affect – both remain open, new, and impersonal. Whitehead-feelings – like affect – are abstract and unformed, 'vector transmission[s]', constituting the a priori conditions for understanding and cognition. Affect and feeling pave the road for diverse, novel entities: the 'ultimate metaphysical ground for everything' (Whitehead, qtd in Shaviro 2009: 62, 149).

And just how far does this fantasy go? For Shaviro, there are no limits. The 'new biology, as much as any new work of art', he writes, 'requires us to abandon everything we think we know, and make singular judgments that cannot be subsumed under preexisting criteria' (16). Readers must decide for themselves if it is even possible to do something like this (one wonders about history, the persistence of memory and the psyche), and furthermore, whether this new groundless-ground of aesthetics, once cleared by Kant, is not already filled with new interiors – a new carpet perhaps – woven with free-floating affect, sensation and physiology. Is without criteria really without criteria, or just certain kinds of (cognitive, rational and categorical) criteria? Either way, this minor and tangential afterthought should by no means deter from the highly significant and important project Shaviro has brought to the table.

Before concluding, a quick note on God. Like feeling and metaphysics, for Whitehead, God is not God in the conventional sense of the term. For him, God is the 'secularization of God's function in the world' (Whitehead, qtd in Shaviro 2009: 105). God is a 'God without a religion', one which is a 'force for novelty, precisely because he does not determine the actual course of events' (135). This is not so much

Leibniz's God of 'best possible worlds', nor Spinoza's privileged God (99–102), so much as it is a God that is (structurally) analogous to Deleuze and Guattari's Body without Organs: a 'recording surface, a site of inscription… "an enormous undifferentiated object… the unproductive, the sterile, the unengendered, the unconsumable" ' (124). Whitehead's God – like the Body without Organs – cannot be used as an excuse or 'fallback explanation' for the conditions created by human beings: 'God accounts for nothing and excuses nothing' (139).

God, then, like aesthetic experience and the Body without Organs, is like a modulator interfacing between data and (non-necessarily) human subject – always open to the new and change. People make science, technology, art and war, not God, language or technology. In the information age, a philosophical fantasy that makes philosophy look more science fiction by way of realistic, down-to-earth insight is, to be sure, a philosophy worth paying attention to.

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Note

1. While Shaviro does not make this link in *Without Criteria*, he has done so as an afterthought in his blog.

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Ian Buchanan and Patricia MacCormack (eds) (2008) *Deleuze and the Schizoanalysis of Cinema*, London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

As with Foucault's famous quote, printed on the cover of *Negotiations*, if one should choose to call oneself 'Deleuzian' it is always with a sense of irony and paradox. To apply Deleuze is not to be 'Deleuzian' in the sense of an acolyte or follower, but rather to draw lines of

flight from Deleuze's thought and expand, rhizomatically, into new terrain. The schizoanalytical project, as exemplified in this collection, performs precisely this dynamic operation. The critics, academics and philosophers here presenting their readings of schizoanalysis of cinema are all embroiled in making Deleuze anew – finding points of contention, adaptation and combination that can spring forth into new epistemologies, ways of seeing and becoming. Although varying greatly in tone and approach, the eleven essays in this collection are all concerned with making new assemblages from the entirety of Deleuze and Guattari's work. Each author takes Deleuze's study of cinema on a new journey, via schizoanalysis, to address issues of how the experience of cinema can allow the schizo to become. Common strands in the collection include: (1) a focus on the socio-political context of filmic production; (2) the interaction between brain, screen and the social field that is formed by experiencing cinema; and (3) faciality and delirium as cinematic affects that express the schizo. Treating each strand in turn (place, space and face), I will examine each of the essays in the collection to explore how they apply and expand on Deleuze and Guattari's theory in order to perform specific actions of schizoanalysis.

Place

The combinations and incursions attempted within the collection are addressed, as Ian Buchanan indicates in the introduction, towards combining conceptual structures from different Deleuzian texts, particularly the use of schizoanalytical strictures from *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus* alongside Deleuze's taxonomy of cinematic images from *Cinema 1* and *Cinema 2*. Several of the contributors also highlight possible weaknesses in the cinema books, specifically addressing concerns with those texts' possible Euro-centrism and concentration on auteur 'high-culture' cinema. In *Cinema 1* and *Cinema 2*, Deleuze's ascetic and exclusive view of the majority of films was that they are null and void, in terms of political and philosophical value, due to their empty repetition. In this view, the true artist's task is to avoid the given, to avoid 'opinion' and stagnant, mediocre thought (thought and images that reinforce the molar aggregates). Buchanan relates this 'gelatinous morass of the given' to the process of commodification in late capitalism, wherein cinema's potential is subsumed into propaganda and a global conduit for interpellation, hegemony and heterogeneity. According to Deleuze, *auteurs* escape commodification by producing avant-garde, signature films that produce genuine differentiation and new lines of flight. Buchanan posits a reversal of this concentration on

the molecular, to instead read the molar structure in order to ascertain how commodification is organised. This is schizoanalysis applied to understand the molar machine in order to better dismantle it, which is how Buchanan brings Deleuzian analysis to a point where any films, no matter how low-brow, can be examined through schizoanalysis for deconstructivist openings into new forms of thinking.

In 'Off Your Face: Schizoanalysis, Faciality and Film', Anna Powell makes her own incursion against the standard application of Deleuzian cinema theory to state that art-house cinema is 'pre-digested'. Auteur and experimental cinema challenges us with illogical cuts, a-temporality and non-linear narrative – but for Powell, this makes applying Deleuze and Guattari's theories to such films all too easy.

In contrast, popular cinema requires more work to deterritorialise, and examining mainstream science fiction and fantasy opens up the schizoanalysis of cinema to other possible lines of flight. In 'Schizoanalysis, Spectacle and the Spaghetti Western', David Martin-Jones addresses the spectacle of modern production and consumption of populist cinema. Referencing Rosie Thomas on Indian cinema and Tom Gunning on silent cinema, as well as Italian westerns produced in the latter part of the last century, Martin-Jones is particularly concerned with the schizoanalysis of the whole socio-political assemblage of cinema. Martin-Jones's essay uses *A Thousand Plateaus*' interactive planes to make a theoretical move to see movement and time-images as an interactive flow, as the linearity of movement-images is perpetually undermined by the virtuality of time-images. Martin-Jones views the time-image is an expression of the molecular, destabilising the molar. From this perspective, the cinema books are a formal taxonomy, but used in conjunction with schizoanalysis of *Anti Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus*, image categories can be opened up to see how images, artefacts and historiographies all interact in re- and deterritorialising flows. Thus, schizoanalysis that takes into account context views cinema as striations, relevant to modes of production of its particular time and place, and its intentionality towards its audience.

With a similar concern for national context and modes of production, in 'Cinemas of Minor Frenchness', Bill Marshall addresses Quebecois cinema as specifically minor – that is, involved in de- and reterritorialisation through non-majoritarian positions of history, geography and language. Marshall states that social groups in these positions can reterritorialise in new language or seek a continual undermining of molar language. This proactive application and cross-fertilisation across Deleuze and Guattari's work is to be commended,

allowing as it does for cinema to be considered truly outside of the realms of signification and representation, not only at the level of time-images but as an entire machinic assemblage, including socio-political contextual factors. This widens the depth and variety of types of cinematic genre and form that can be explored through a Deleuzian lens, and furthermore allows us to take cinematic experience as a conduit for the evocation and instantiation of post-structuralist modes of consciousness and agency.

Space

As well as allowing socio-political factors to be considered in relation to Deleuzian theory and cinema, schizoanalysis of cinema (where multiple aspects of Deleuze are applied to the cinematic experience) allow openings of how cinema can come to expose the non-human, post-subjective aspects of a Deleuzian schizo consciousness. Several of the authors in the collection pursue this line of flight. In 'Schizoanalysis and the Phenomenology of Cinema', Joe Hughes embarks upon a phenomenological comparative study across a range of Deleuze and Guattari's work in order to draw from them a reading of schizoanalysis as particularly relevant to the concerns of post-structuralist subjectivity. According to Hughes's interpretation of Deleuze, images are not abstract ideals but rather particular potentialities or instances in a particular 'material subject' (16). Hughes contends that Deleuze's taxonomy of cinema is thus not semiological but semiotic, describing not a language structure but a phenomenology. Hughes considers the congruence of phenomenological structures in *Logic of Sense* and *Anti-Oedipus* and further applies these parallels to the system of images described in *Cinema 1*, aligning the depictions of unconscious, passive synthesis to demonstrate that 'all three are accounts of the same Deleuzian unconscious' (25). Through the exposition of parallel structures across the work of Deleuze, Hughes establishes that all three texts are examples of schizoanalysis, describing a 'transcendental unconscious beginning with its ultimate elements' (26).

Mark Riley's 'Disorientation, Duration and Tarkovsky' addresses Andrey Tarkovsky's films *Solaris* (1972) and *Stalker* (1979) to reveal how schizoanalysis must come from drawing variant lines. As Deleuze and Guattari expose desire as machinic and performative, to break existing patterns requires that we partake in nomadic practice. Hence the schizoanalytical power of cinema is in its capacity for indetermination. Riley locates this power in cinema specifically to 'temporal

de-coordination', this being the infarction of past into present and thus the virtual into the actual. Cinema is essentially de-coordinated in this way as it is specifically a recording of past experienced in a present. The experience of cinema illuminates that all perception is constituted in this way. The expression of virtuality into actuality is the constant becoming of experience and ultimately all experience is of this dynamic. For Riley, thought begins with an 'encounter with simulacrum' of individuality, but individuation is in fact a disguise or mask. What is experienced in the disorientation of Tarkovsky's cinema is the trace of the virtual that always accompanies phenomenological actuality.

Gregg Lambert's essay 'Schizoanalysis and the Cinema of the Brain' posits that brain and world have an interval, but not a separation. Deleuze's conception of brain function is non-Euclidean, accommodating synaptic gaps and gates that have random, changing connections. This framework correlates with the probability and uncertainty of quantum mechanics in the brain. Similarly, the time-image in cinema exposes quantum leaps of perception and apperception. Lambert illustrates this with reference to Stanley Kubrick's cinema: the delirium of General Ripper (*Dr. Strangelove*, 1964), The Overlook (*The Shining*, 1980) and HAL (*2001: A Space Odyssey*, 1968). The simultaneity of rational and irrational within the films is comparable to the uncertainty of the connection between brain and world. Kubrick's films, which incorporate simultaneity of delirium and the social fields that topographically locate that delirium, thus expose the schizoanalytical relation of multitudinous multiplicitous desire.

Patricia Pisters's 'Delirium Cinema or Machines of the Invisible?' draws its methodology from *Essays Critical and Clinical*. Pisters describes modern image abundance as 'madness'. Cinemas take place within this madness. Pisters uses Deleuze and Guattari's assessment of schizophrenia as a technique to draw philosophical value from immersion in cinematic delirium. Pisters differentiates between two strands of Deleuze and Guattari's treatment of schizophrenia. In *Anti-Oedipus*, we are advised of schizophrenisation, this being the movement and flow/process of de- and reterritorialisation. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, the figure of the schizophrenic is called upon to bring forth rhizomatics, the Body without Organs and Becoming. In both works, schizophrenia may be viewed as either process (breakthrough) or disease (breakdown). Pisters characterises the schizoanalytical project as bringing about a movement from cinema as 'machine of the visible' to 'machine of the invisible'. This is the move from representation and spectatorial interpretation, to brain/screen assemblage. Schizoanalysis is a 'new episteme' – prioritising choice and belief over knowledge.

In 'An Ethics of Spectatorship: Love, Death and Cinema', Patricia MacCormack takes these phenomenological analyses of the cinematic experience a stage further, to expose how we might go beyond mere subjective dissolution and even expressive creativity, into a specifically ethical relation with the world. MacCormack contends that representation, and its analysis through reading, 'massacre' the image. In the cinematic experience, any presumption of analytic understanding of the viewed images as objects of desire, to be resolved into representations, annihilates the Event of connectivity and being-with of the brain/screen assemblage. She states that ethics becomes impossible when interpretation becomes a quest to 'know'. Images cannot be desired as objects, to be understood as alterities, but must be directly absorbed into brain and body as integral to the forming of ourselves, viscera and thought combined. To suspend the assumption of subject/object divide between subjectivity and images is to enter a state of grace and 'we are gracious to cinema to the extent that we open up potentialities of thought without a compulsion to convert images to meaning for knowledge'. Such spectatorship, which allows images to be part of what we are, allows ethics as a love-relation between self, world and social formations.

Face

Continuing with the focus on non-subjective non-identitarian formations of singular consciousness, three essays in the collection address a specific focus to the issue of faciality in Deleuze's writings on cinema. In 'Suspended Gestures: Schizoanalysis, Affect and the Face in Cinema', Amy Herzog questions whether it is anomalous for Deleuze to relate faciality (specifically in Bergman's close-up shots) to a-linguistic, non-significatory expression of affect, given that (1) Deleuze is usually careful to avoid correlation between his taxonomic concepts and particular techniques and (2) Deleuze does not wish to reduce filmic expressions of affect to a communication to be psychologically interpreted. The face in close-up appears to attract both these eventualities, making Deleuze's concentration on Bergman seem, at first, to be problematic. This apparent anomaly is essentially set up as a straw man by Herzog, who goes on to explore the complexity of Deleuze's formulation of faciality, as it relates to the schizoanalytical project of dismantling ingrained assumptions and producing new traversals of the social field. Herzog explicates how the face is in fact integral to schizoanalysis by relating the affective force of faciality to the Bergsonian

interval in perception wherein the inescapable residue of the virtual (and the durational) is found. The face, in evoking both immobility and motion, becomes the 'sheer potential' of the 'suspended gesture'. Herzog addresses Francis Bacon's paintings and Pedro Almodovar's *Bad Education* (2004) as illustrative of the ways that faciality can be harnessed by art to evoke new lines of flight away from subjectivity and expose the constructedness and violence of individuation.

Returning to 'Off Your Face: Schizoanalysis, Faciality and Film', we can see that Anna Powell finds facial mutation to be specifically schizoanalytical because the affect of participating in a cinematic experience where faciality is corroded and delirious becomes an infective, viral force that impacts directly upon our consciousness (as brain/screen assemblage).

In 'Losing Face', Gregory Flaxman and Elena Oxman address the idea of faciality in cinema through a Deleuzian analysis that imbues the face with non-interpretative affect. They state that 'the face renders thinking problematic'. Confronted with the face as ultimately unrecognisable, we are thrown into non-thought, non-philosophy: that which thought arises against. Flaxman and Oxman's elucidation of The Other Person communicates the variability, the 'assemblage of relations' of recognising an Other. The chicken and egg games of self/other priority are exposed as the ongoing expression of thought, of the virtual into the actual. This moves past Kantian processional perception to remove exteriority/internality and replace it with intensity and extensity within variable parameters of contextual relation. Thus, the possible is not predicated as that which can be understood; what can be understood forms as experience out of our relations with the possible (the virtual). Cinema (in close-up) takes the face apart (from the body). Affection writes itself across the face as expressions pass in flux, fluctuating as passion. The affection-image short-circuits translation and representation, expressing instead a direct form of agency. Affect here becomes as expression that is without actualisation, as opposed to linguistically based interpretation that forms fixed identity and a personhood ascribed to that face particularly. The affection-image is thus shown by Flaxman and Oxman to escape the socio-political encoding of the face in modern culture, allowing for a radical reimagining of subjectivity as non-human, imperceptible and faceless.

As with schizoanalysis of cinema's concern for the analysis and deterritorialisation of molar aggregates, the value of using the schizo-analytical elements of Deleuze and Guattari's theories in reference to the phenomenological Event of cinematic experience is very clear. Through

cinema – through the time-image and its exposure of Duration and the Bergsonian gap of singularity as non-subjective consciousness – we can find a way to a post-structuralist ethics where care and love replace the phantoms of rationality and representation. This is an active, radical epistemology that produces multiple possibilities for new ways of engaging as singularities with societal structure and control. This conception places all forms of art at the heart of becoming, without isolating it in any way as a purely aesthetic practice. From the schizoanalysis of cinema as a phenomenology with necessarily ethical results, the category of aesthetics become enmeshed with affect, which in turn is enmeshed entirely in what enjoins consciousness with the flux of multiplicitous becoming. From this position, art and participation in art (of any kind) is always potentially radical when we engage in its Event as a schizo becoming. This collection is thus not just valuable to cinema studies. It also opens up avenues for engaging with wider issues about other art forms such as schizoanalysis of genres of literature, for one, and with ethical questions regarding how to engage, post-structurally, with global exploitation and greed, for another. The collection also raises the issue of how to write Deleuze: analytically and academically or poetically? The structures and strictures of academic writing preclude the rhizomatic, which might be better expressed in music or non-representational art. In the same way that the authors in the collection make a stand, in the spirit of Deleuze, against strict interpretation of his theories, and call instead towards combination, expansion and the advantages of delirium, we may consider if it is appropriate to write on Deleuze, more as Deleuze would push us to write. Patricia MacCormack achieves this, writing with huge passion and immersion in her subject and having the becoming of the thought express itself out of the pattern as much as the content of the words. This is another opening that could be made, from schizoanalysis of cinema and art, to schizoanalysis of what it means to write academically about Deleuze. The collection of essays titled *Deleuze and the Schizoanalysis of Cinema* may be said, then, to be an Event that has molecular potential far beyond the usual conception of writing about cinema, or Deleuze.

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> We're in the midst of a general breakdown of all sites of confinement – prisons, hospitals, schools, families. The family is an "interior" that's breaking down like all other interiors – educational, professional and so on. (...) Educational reforms, industrial reforms, hospital, army, prison reforms; but everyone knows these institutions are more or less in terminal decline. (...) It is not a question of worrying or hoping for the best, but of finding new weapons.
>
> Gilles Deleuze, "Postscript on Control Societies" p. 178

This conference is designed for theorists and practitioners working at the intersection of Deleuze, Guattari, Schizoanalysis and Education to share their work. We welcome papers addressing a broad range of issues relating to institutional education such as schools, universities, technical colleges and other institutions of higher education. We also welcome papers addressing the use of Deleuze, Guattari and their combined works in areas typically associated with mainstream education including pedagogy, teaching, learning, teacher education, theories of self, subjectivity, the space and time of the classroom and so on. Those working outside what may be termed mainstream education in alternative education contexts are also encouraged to participate.

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Introduction

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The papers in this issue of *Deleuze Studies* represent a small selection of more than eighty papers presented at the Kaifeng International Deleuze Conference in May 2012 at Henan University in the ancient capital of Kaifeng City in Henan province. This two-day conference was the first of its kind to be held in China. It was attended by more than ninety Deleuze scholars from around the world, including around thirty from China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Korea and Japan. Those attending came from a wide variety of disciplines including Literary and Film Studies, Anthropology, Architecture, Art and Philosophy. The plenary speakers were Rosi Braidotti (Utrecht), Ronald Bogue (Georgia), Brian Massumi (Montreal) and Anne Sauvagnargues (Paris X). The conference was jointly sponsored by Henan University and The University of New South Wales and organised by Professor Jihai Gao, Professor Paul Patton, and a team of academic and administrative staff and students from Henan led by Dr Jing Yin. Thanks to their efforts and those of the participants, the conference was acclaimed by all who attended as a great success. This conference marked the beginning of a process already underway for some decades, namely the translation of Deleuzian thought and concepts into the diverse languages and cultures of East Asia. It also represented a further small step in the long history of productive encounters between Asian and Western thought. Who knows where this will lead as the Asian century unfolds.

Details of the conference, including the full programme and photos, are available at http://deleuze.henu.edu.cn/index.php/c_home/over_view

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On the Superiority of Anglo-American Literature

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Abstract

In *Dialogues*, Deleuze contrasts French and Anglo-American literatures, arguing that the French are tied to hierarchies, origins, manifestos and personal disputes, whereas the English and Americans discover a line of flight that escapes hierarchies, and abandons questions of origins, schools and personal alliances, instead discovering a collective process of ongoing invention, without beginning or determinate end. Deleuze especially appreciates American writers, and above all Herman Melville. What ultimately distinguishes American from English literature is its pragmatic, democratic commitment to sympathy and camaraderie on the open road. For Deleuze, the American literary line of flight is toward the West, but this orientation reflects his almost exclusive focus on writers of European origins. If one turns to Chinese-American literature, the questions of a literary geography become more complex. Through an examination of works by Maxine Hong Kingston and Tao Lin, some of these complexities are detailed.

Keywords: Anglo-American literature, empiricism and pragmatism, Herman Melville, Chinese-American Literature, Maxine Hong Kingston, Tao Lin

I trust no one is under the misapprehension that the title of this talk reflects my own judgement of the importance of English and American literature. The title, of course, is a citation of the Section Two heading of Deleuze and Parnet's *Dialogues*. In that section Deleuze speaks of

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English and American literature as a single phenomenon, but my focus will be on American literature, how Deleuze conceives of it, and what relevance that conception might have for our gathering here in China. Besides considering the Deleuzian image of American literature as a whole, I wish to reflect on the geographic components of his conception, especially his valorisation of the West, both as locus and as direction. Within that national and geographical context, I will finally remark very briefly on Chinese-American literature, something Deleuze does not himself address.

I. Deleuze and American Literature

In the course of his career, Deleuze makes reference to thirty-eight American writers, most merely in passing. H. P. Lovecraft and Henry Miller are quoted several times in the two volumes of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, while James's 'In the Cage' and Fitzgerald's 'The Crack-Up' are given close, if compact, readings in Plateau Eight of *A Thousand Plateaus*. Deleuze includes a penetrating, brief essay on Whitman in *Essays Critical and Clinical*. But for Deleuze it is Melville who is the most important – indeed, one might say, the quintessential – American writer. Melville's pre-eminence is perhaps not immediately apparent in *Dialogues*, but it is worth observing that Deleuze begins his meditation on Anglo-American literature by making reference to D. H. Lawrence's salute to Melville's genius. Section Two's opening words are, 'To leave, to escape, is to trace a line. The highest aim of literature, according to Lawrence, is 'To get away. To get away, out! [. . .] To cross a horizon into another life [. . .] So [Melville] finds himself in the middle of the Pacific. Truly over a horizon" (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 36; translation modified). Melville's primary function in *Dialogues* is to provide an example of becoming-animal, specifically in the figure of Ahab in his becoming-whale. (We might note that Ahab's becoming-whale is referenced seven times in the becomings plateau of *A Thousand Plateaus*, four times as an illustration of percepts and affects in *What Is Philosophy?*, and once in *Negotiations* in relation to Foucault's thought as a process of 'crossing the line' to the 'Outside' [Deleuze 1995: 111].) It is Ahab's becoming-whale that draws him into a line leading beyond the horizon, toward an open Outside. It is also through Ahab's becoming-whale that Deleuze brings together the themes of betrayal, choice and the demonic in *Dialogues*, in that Ahab's crime is that 'of having chosen Moby-Dick, the white whale, instead of obeying the law

of the group of fishermen, according to which all whales are fit to hunt. In that lies Ahab's demonic element, his treason, his relationship with Leviathan – this choice of object which engages him in a becoming-whale himself' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 42).

Melville's full significance for Deleuze, however, is only revealed in 'Bartleby; or, The Formula', one of Deleuze's finest pieces of literary criticism. Here, Deleuze reiterates *Dialogue*'s points about Ahab's becoming-whale and Melville's enduring effort to trace a line beyond the horizon to an Outside, but he also connects Melville to the themes of minor literature – the deterritorialisation of language, the immediate engagement of the social and political, the activation of collective assemblages of enunciation – while delineating in Melville an American political ideal based on pragmatism, democracy and sympathy. In *Dialogues*, minor literature's deterritorialisation of language is treated in terms of making language stutter, but Deleuze offers no concrete literary instances of this practice. Instead, he concentrates on the English language itself as both a repressive force of global homogenisation and a medium open to multiple internal deformations. These characteristics he finds especially true of American English. 'The American language', he says,

> bases its despotic official pretensions, its majoritarian claim to hegemony, only on its extraordinary capacity for being twisted and shattered and for secretly putting itself in the service of minorities who work it from inside, involuntarily, unofficially, nibbling away at that hegemony as it extends itself: the reverse of power. (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 58)

In the essay 'Bartleby', unlike *Dialogues*, Deleuze offers a specific instance of stuttering in literature – Bartleby's 'I prefer not to' – and submits it to an exhaustive analysis. Bartleby's 'formula' is an essence of stammering, a simple, short phrase whose iteration induces a cascade of deterritorialisations. Bartleby himself belongs to no ethnic minority, but his deployment of his formula is paradigmatic of minor literature's deterritorialising usage of language.

In 'Bartleby', then, Melville shows himself to be an exemplary practitioner of minor literature's deterritorialisation of language, but Melville's treatment of Bartleby, Deleuze shows, is connected to broader themes that echo throughout Melville's works. In Chapter 44 of *The Confidence-Man*, Melville reflects on characters in fiction, differentiating 'new, singular, striking, odd, eccentric, and all sorts of entertaining and instructive characters' from what he calls 'originals'. The original

character, says Melville,

> is like a revolving Drummond light, raying away from itself all round it – everything is lit by it, everything starts up to it (mark how it is with Hamlet), so that, in certain minds, there follows upon the adequate conception of such a character, an effect, in its way, akin to that which in Genesis attends upon the beginning of things. (Melville 1964: 261)

No work of fiction may contain more than one Original, according to Melville (though Deleuze finds two in *Billy Budd*). Deleuze identifies two types of Originals in Melville: monomaniacs (Ahab in *Moby-Dick*, Claggart in *Billy Budd*, Babo in 'Benito Cereno') and hypochondriacs (Cereno and Billy Budd, but 'above all Bartleby' [Deleuze 1997: 80]). These two types, '*monomaniacs* and *hypochondriacs*, demons and angels, torturers and victims, the Swift and the Slow, the Thundering and the Petrified' (78–9), belong to a 'terrible supersensible Primary Nature, original and oceanic, which, knowing no Law, pursues its own irrational aim through them' (79). By contrast, non-Originals, that is, ordinary humans, belong to sensible, rational Secondary Nature of Law. The 'biggest problem haunting Melville's oeuvre', says Deleuze, 'no doubt [. . .] lies in reconciling the two originals, *but thereby also in reconciling the original with secondary humanity*, the inhuman with the human' (84).

Melville envisions that reconciliation in the annihilation of all father figures and the creation of a society of blood brothers and blood sisters. 'The American is one who is freed from the English paternal function', says Deleuze, and in founding a new world society, the American vocation 'was not to reconstitute an 'old State secret,' a nation, a family, a heritage, or a father', but 'to constitute a universe, a society of brothers, a federation of men and goods, a community of anarchist individuals' (Deleuze 1997: 85). Deleuze links the formation of such a universe to American pragmatism, which he regards as less a 'summary philosophical theory fabricated by Americans' than 'an attempt to transform the world, to think a new world or new man insofar as *they create themselves*' (86). (In this regard, Deleuze views Melville as a pragmatist *avant la lettre*.) Pragmatism affirms the world as '*in process, an archipelago*' (86), and the social order it advocates is one of 'islands and straits, immobile points and sinuous lines' (86). Deleuze likens this order to a wall of stacked stones with no mortar, 'a wall of uncemented stones, where every element has a value in itself but also in relation to others' (86). This order is 'an infinite patchwork with multiple joinings', 'a Harlequin's coat' (86). And what holds it together

is trust, hope and belief – not belief in a world to come, but belief in this world and its possibilities.

In pursuing a politics of the archipelago and belief in this world, American pragmatism faces a dual problem: that of overcoming all the particular differences among individuals that breed mistrust, but without succumbing to a fusion of souls in a grand Whole of philanthropy and charity. The solution is to counter particularities with singularities, and to replace charity with sympathy. Singularities are becomings, apersonal intensities that retain specificity without taking on a conventional identity. In their becomings, men and women discover what Melville calls a 'democratic dignity', a radical equality of human beings without regard to their particularities, yet one that recognises each person's singularities. Such becomings, as social phenomena, give rise to collective intensities, which Deleuze identifies with 'sympathy' as opposed to 'charity'. Here Deleuze is following Lawrence in his reading of Whitman and Melville as advocates of what Lawrence describes as 'all the subtle sympathizings of the incalculable soul, from the bitterest hate to passionate love' (quoted in Deleuze 1997: 87). Both singularities and sympathy are produced only when the individual

> takes to the open road (or the open sea) with its body, when it leads a life without seeking salvation, when it embarks upon its incarnate voyage, without any particular aim, and then encounters other voyagers, whom it recognizes by their sound. (Deleuze 1997: 87)

The open road is an American morality of sympathy, one 'with no other aim' than the journey, 'open to all contacts, never trying to save other souls, [. . .] with freedom as its sole accomplishment, always ready to free itself so as to complete itself' (Deleuze 1997: 87).

II. The Specificity of American Literature

In treating Melville as the paradigmatic American writer, Deleuze is able to differentiate American from English literature in his Bartleby essay, though the distinction he draws is somewhat problematic. Melville's Original characters are inexplicable, like life itself, and hence beyond rationality. 'The founding act of the American novel,' says Deleuze, 'like that of the Russian novel, was to take the novel far from the order of reasons' (Deleuze 1997: 81). Surprisingly, however, Deleuze contrasts the American and Russian novel in this regard with 'the English novel, and even more so the French novel' (81). Deleuze also attributes the patchwork ideal of American democracy, central

to the American literary project, to Americans, who, says Deleuze, 'invented patchwork, just as the Swiss are said to have invented the cuckoo clock' (87), even though in *Dialogues* he describes English empiricism as 'a Harlequin's jacket or patchwork' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 55). Yet these contradictions aside, which I regard as rhetorical strategies rather than definitive reassessments of English literature, other elements of Deleuze's analysis remain that may help us determine the specificity of American literature as Deleuze sees it. Deleuze is right to stress in Melville and American pragmatism the centrality of action, process, belief and community. American pragmatism builds on British empiricism, but as Gérard Deledalle notes, in a book cited by Deleuze, the experimentation of pragmatism, unlike British empiricism, is focused on 'the spirit of the laboratory', as Pierce expressed it, on science as method and on the collective enterprise of doing science. The stress on method entails a focus on actions and verifiable consequences, as well as on beliefs – as constituents of habits, as unavoidable in the formulation of hypotheses, and as confirmed or modified through experimentation.[1] Scientific inquiry, being an open-ended activity, envisions knowledge as process, and pragmatists situate this process within a world itself in the process of evolution. And science's collective dimension leads pragmatists to a general theory of action and inquiry as social activities, and eventually to Royce's ideal 'Community of Interpretation' and Dewey's democratic ideal.[2] Deleuze's focus on Melville and Whitman's sympathy, although not a theme in pragmatism, also helps differentiate English from American sensibilities. As Deleuze shows in his first book on Hume, sympathy figures prominently in Hume's social theory, as that which allows individuals to go beyond themselves to form larger communities. But Hume grounds his social theory in private property, whereas Melville's sympathy is part of a 'democratic dignity' that knows no distinctions of property. Sympathy regards the human as such, *homo tantum*, and in this regard, Deleuze argues, Melville's democratic ideal is the counterpart of the Russian communist ideal, Melville's ideal being envisioned as a universal community of immigrants, the Russian ideal as a universal community of workers. In sum, then, both English and American literature pursue lines of flight, deterritorialise language and form patchwork assemblages, but American literature stresses more fully action and process, and it alone articulates ideals of democratic sympathy, belief in this world, a universal community of immigrants and a camaraderie of the open road.

In principle, the open road of American sympathy has no privileged direction, but in its literary historical manifestation it has most often

been the road to the West, as Deleuze notes in *Dialogues* and *A Thousand Plateaus*. In *Dialogues*, he remarks that 'American literature operates according to geographical lines: the flight towards the West, the discovery that the true East is in the West, the sense of the frontiers as something to cross, to push back, to go beyond' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 37). In *A Thousand Plateaus*, he and Guattari state that 'directions in America are different: the search for arborescence and the return to the Old World occur in the East. But there is the rhizomatic West, with its Indians without ancestry, its ever-receding limit, its shifting and displaced frontiers' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 19). In both texts, Deleuze cites Leslie Fiedler's *Return of the Vanishing American* (1968) as the source of his comments, in *Dialogues* referring the reader to 'the whole analysis of Leslie Fiedler' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 154), and in *A Thousand Plateaus* providing a succinct yet detailed summary of Fiedler's book in an extended footnote (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 520).[3] Fiedler's argument is that in pre-Columbian Europe the West already had a mythological significance that would persist in the New World imagination. The map of pre-Columbian Europe consisted of the North (Europe), the South (Africa) and the East (Asia, which, incidentally included China from as early as the second century BCE). The West was not on the map as such, but simply an unknown territory beyond the map's edge, the mythic site of either an earthly paradise (Atlantis, the Blessed Isles) or a forbidden land of death (best represented by Dante's account of Ulysses's transgressive voyage west beyond the Straits of Gibraltar into shipwreck and sin). Fiedler argues that American literature, from its inception, is informed by an imaginary geography that views the West as an Edenic and transgressive territory, a land without women in which American males of European descent divest themselves of their past and form homoerotic bonds with Native Americans, Africans and other non-Europeans. Deleuze ignores the psychoanalytic content of Fiedler's analysis, but agrees that in American literature the journey west is the direction of deterritorialisation. From James Fenimore Cooper, through Melville to Jack Kerouac, the westward journey or voyage is the trajectory beyond the horizon to the Outside. And with Ginsberg, Sanders and others, the movement West ends in a discovery of the wisdom of the East.

In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari oppose the arborescent West of Europe to the rhizomatic East of China, citing Henry Miller's declaration that 'China is the weed in the human cabbage patch' (quoted in Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 18).[4] (For Miller, as for Deleuze and Guattari, the association of China with weeds is high praise, since

the weed is an exemplary rhizome, something that '*grows between*, among other things' [55].) Midway between arborescent Europe and rhizomatic China Deleuze and Guattari situate America. They counter Haudricourt's claim that India is 'the intermediary between the Occident and the Orient', and assert instead that 'America is the pivot point and mechanism of reversal' (19). In America, the movement east toward Europe is the line of reterritorialisation, whereas the movement west toward China is the line of deterritorialisation.

East and West, of course, are both locations and directions. Locations – *the* West, *the* East, West Coast, East Coast, and so on – are largely defined by their pertinent land masses, whether continents, islands or administrative territories (national, state, metropolitan, whatever). Directions, by contrast, are relations, and as we know, relations are separate from their terms. On a globe, every point is both east and west of every other point, depending on the direction in which one travels. Geographically, if not culturally, India is as much between Europe and China as is America. The westward trajectory of much American literature is a function of the European colonisation of the New World, begun on the east coast and continued in the incremental opening of western territories to those pursuing America's Manifest Destiny. (Go west, young man!) Deleuze's focus on American literature's western vector reflects his attention primarily to white authors of European descent. Of the thirty-eight American writers Deleuze names, only three do not fit this profile: the African Americans Chester Himes and LeRoi Jones (Amira Baraka), both cited only once in passing, and, if one labels him a writer, the Hispanic American Carlos Castaneda (a native of Peru). Deleuze, of course, is sensitive to questions of ethnicity and minorities in literary study – witness his analyses of Kafka, Sacher-Masoch and the concept of minor literature in general. In *Dialogues*, Deleuze does say that 'American is worked upon by a Black English, and also a Yellow English, a Red English, a broken English, each of which is like a language shot with a spray-gun of colors' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 58), but he never deals with the writers of black, yellow, red or broken English. One wonders what Deleuze's portrait of American literature would have been like had he read the multi-ethnic literatures of the United States written by immigrants arriving from all directions. And what his geography of American literature would have resembled had he treated authors whose movement to America has been eastward – as is the case with Chinese American writers.

Rather than offer vague generalities about Deleuze, American literature and Chinese American authors as a whole, I would like to

consider two such writers from a Deleuzian perspective: Maxine Hong Kingston, currently perhaps the most famous Chinese American writer, and a much younger, less well-known author, Tao Lin.

III. Maxine Hong Kingston: Becoming-Chinese-American, Becoming-Woman

Born in 1940, Kingston explicitly characterises herself as a Chinese American woman writer. Her first two publications, *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts* (1976) and *China Men* (1980), are hybrid works of what might be called 'memoir fiction' or 'collective autobiography'. The ostensible topic of *Woman Warrior* is Kingston's childhood in Stockton, California, and her relationship with her various female Chinese relatives – mother, grandmother, assorted aunts and distant relations. Yet over half the narrative is devoted to the lives of her ancestors in China and the Chinese myths and tales she absorbed from the 'talk-story' of her kin. Her fiction engages a becoming-woman as she rejects traditional Chinese sexism, refashions folk myths from a feminist perspective, and betrays family secrets about disgraced female ancestors by telling the stories her mother says must not be told. She deterritorialises English through language that is both colloquial and poetic, engaging a wide range of indigenous American and Chinese immigrant rhythms and phrases. Kingston's rendering of Chinese speech in English 'others' the language, such that Cantonese scholars fluent in English, when reading the Mandarin translation of her novel, told Kingston that they could hear the Cantonese rhythms of her Chinese speakers, and hence they retranslated the book into Cantonese (Skenazy and Martin 1998: 45).

If *Woman Warrior* is the story of her female relatives, *China Men* is the story of her male ancestors. More conventional in style than *Woman Warrior*, *China Men* has four principal narrative sections: one devoted to Kingston's great-grandfather's stint as a wage slave in a Hawaiian pineapple plantation; a second to her grandfather's labour on the Continental Railroad in the American West; a third to her father's emigration to California; and a fourth to her brother's army sojourn in Vietnam. In the first three narratives the journey east is highlighted, even more so than it had been in *Woman Warrior*, the goal of that journey being the 'Gold Mountain' (*jīn shāng*) as they called America, a paradisiacal land not unlike the fabled West of European immigrants. Between these biographical chapters, Kingston intersperses smaller stories about Chinese men in America, Chinese myths and stories

(including one she heard as a child about Lo Bun Sun – actually her parents' version of *Robinson Crusoe*). Throughout the work, Kingston stresses the injustices experienced by her ancestors, and in a central chapter, she simply lists the racist federal laws that have been directed against the Chinese from 1868–1978. In this regard, the collective autobiography of *China Men* is decidedly the collective enunciation of a minor people's immediately sociopolitical experience.

In her first two novels, then, Kingston's becoming-woman is a movement westward away from Chinese sexist culture and toward Western concepts of gender equality. For her ancestors, by contrast, the movement east to America is a line of deterritorialisation, a means of escaping class and economic stratification. And in her deterritorialisation of language, she is 'othering' English via Chinese, creating a zone somewhere between East and West.

In her third prose work, *Tripmaster Monkey: His Fake Book (1989)*, Kingston largely abandons autobiographical motifs and stories set in China, focusing instead on the meanderings of Wittman Ah Sing, a poet/playwright and fifth-generation American of Chinese descent living in San Francisco. Kingston has said that in her first two works, she felt the burden of 'translating a whole world, all of China and its myths and history', whereas in *Tripmaster* she experienced a 'great relief' as she explored 'the American language, the language that I hear and speak' (Skenazy and Martin 1998: 144–5), incorporating the riches of canonical American literary language, which she knows intimately, as well as the vibrant slang of the early 1960s, in which the novel is set. Primary among her Euro-American inspirations is William Carlos Williams's *In the American Grain*, but she also alludes to Whitman, Melville (Bartleby in particular), Dickinson, Faulkner, Fitzgerald and Kerouac, among many others. Yet she also makes use of Chinese texts, most notably *Journey to the West* (*Shīyóujì*), the sixteenth-century novel about the monk Xuánzàng's pilgrimage to India, in the company of the monkey Sūn Wùkōng, among others. Kingston makes reference in her title both to Monkey and Xuánzàng, who is also called the 'Tang Tripitaka Master' in the Chinese narrative. Kingston's hero is a Tripitaka trickster monkey, but also a 'tripmaster' in the parlance of the 1960s, that is, someone who guides LSD users in their hallucinogenic 'trips'. Wittman's Bay Area wanderings, from his firing as a toy salesman, to a psychedelic party, to an encounter with a Caucasian girl that leads in a day to a casual marriage, then to visits with his retired vaudeville mother and his peripatetic father, eventuate in the performance of a play he has written, in which all his acquaintances, of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds,

enact an inclusive American collectivity (much like the global America Melville describes in a passage in *Redburn*, which Deleuze cites in his 'Bartleby' essay). Yet Kingston's utopian ideal is also tempered by the polemical edge of Wittman's monologue in the play, a twenty-page recitation of the racist indignities endured by every Chinese American. Wittman travels a good deal, but ultimately his journey is neither westward nor eastward; rather, it is a *voyage sur place*, as Deleuze calls it, a journey in intensities, a 'trip', though one induced less by drugs than by the poetic imagination. Wittman's intensive becoming-other is echoed in Kingston's language, which is replete with allusions to sources high and low, suddenly shifting in diction and cadence, improvisational in its jazz-like riffs, as in this passage describing Wittman as he dances:

> In sync. In sync at last. A ballet dancer and an m.s. spastic – no different – O democratic light. Innards at one with the rest of the world. And why not when we're doing the twist, and Chubby Checker does the twist, 'Let's twist again, like we did last summer,' and the light is a strobe, and a strobili is a twisty pine cone. All right. All right. And –. And –. And –. And then –. Bang bang. Bang bang. But –. But –. But –. Banga. Banga. Lost. Found. Lost. Found. Gotcha. Gotcher teeth. Gotcher face. Boom. Boom. Bomb. The Bomb. Bomb flash. Bomb flash. In what pose will the last big flash catch me? What if. This were. Bomb practice? We're training to dig flashes. And my fellow man and woman aglow. Like fast frequent pulsations of radioactivity. (Kingston 1989: 110)

Kingston, then, clearly fits the profile of Deleuze's American writer, though the journey of her becoming is both west and east, and finally neither, instead being a journey *sur place*, on site. Her becoming-woman and her becoming-Chinese-American entail a deterritorialisation of English, first through Chinese rhythms, then through the rhythms of American polyvalent speech and writing. And her politics follows the line of Melville in seeking a people to come, a collectivity performed and enacted in the artwork of Wittman's aesthetic creation, though one pursued through acerbic critique and resistance to the present and its demonic forces.

IV. Tao Lin: Becoming-Imperceptible

Tao Lin, like Kingston, is a Chinese American, but as writers the two differ in virtually every way. Born to Taiwanese parents in 1983, Lin grew up in a Florida gated community, graduated from NYU, and now resides in New York City. He has written one collection of short stories, two poetry volumes and three novels, *Eeeee Eee Eeee (2007)*, *Shoplifting*

from American Apparel (2009) and *Richard Yates (2010)*. Whereas Kingston identifies herself as a Chinese American woman writer, Lin says that being of Chinese descent has not particularly affected his life or his work. He told one interviewer that in a first draft of *Eeeee Eee Eeee*, the protagonist's parents came from Taiwan, but later he made the protagonist's parents German and replaced references to Taiwan with Germany and those to Shanghai with Berlin. He added that 'I want ideally in my fiction to edit race and name in the same way I might move or delete a comma', since in terms of what he calls 'existential issues', 'there is no difference between a Haitian or a Canadian or whatever', and his interest as a writer is in such 'existential issues' (Vizzini 2007). Most of Lin's characters are in their late teens and twenties, live in New York City, New Jersey or suburban Florida, work in dead-end jobs (when they work), hang out, talk, phone, text, email and Gmail chat, go to each other's apartments, and visit restaurants, bars, stores, malls and parks. In *Shoplifting from American Apparel* Lin incorporates some autobiographical material into the text – chiefly regarding his overnight incarceration for shoplifting – but otherwise the characters and settings are generic and minimally detailed. In terms of plot, things happen, but often in random if unremarkable sequence. Novels start and end, but with no clear markers of inception or closure, the story always remaining in the middle. In *Eeeee Eee Eeee* Lin indulges in the fantastic, his human characters encountering and speaking with a bear, a dolphin, a hamster, a moose and an alien, but these unlikely interactions lead to no unusual consequences. In his subsequent novels, there are no such flights of fancy, each narrative becoming increasingly spare and mundane.

Lin's interest, he says, is in 'existential issues', such as hunger, sleep, sex, boredom, death, and so on, but his approach to these issues has a pervasive strangeness, each fiction creating atmospheres, moods, haecceities, which involve existential issues but extract from them an elusive ambience, difficult to pin down – one that I personally find uncomfortable, often vaguely unpleasant and troubling, yet quietly powerful. That strangeness, I believe, comes from the style. If Kingston resembles Joyce in her exuberant verbal play, Lin is like Beckett in his ascetic reduction of language to its minimal elements. Sentences are short, syntax uncomplicated, diction limited and decidedly unliterary, adjectives rudimentary (good, bad, happy, sad, stupid), descriptions spare. Verbal repetition is pervasive, as are non sequiturs, which generally form low-key, conversational sequences that reappear as leitmotifs in the narrative. At times Lin's minimalism is used to comic effect, as in this passage from *Eeeee Eee Eeee*, when Shawn, Lelu and

Andrew meet 'the president' (presumably, the President of the United States) in a sushi bar and decide that 'it would be good to network with the president':

> They invited the president to eat sushi. At the sushi bar the president said that it was stupid to be the president.
>
> 'Power is stupid,' the president said.
>
> The president said he was an alien. He was from a different planet. He came here and was bored. 'I felt I needed a goal,' he said. 'Now I'm the president. I have no human preconceptions, because I'm from a different galaxy. Listen to me, since I'm the ruler. You chose me. People need to process what I say. [. . .] Politics is a pretend game where it is very important to block out the information that it is a pretend game. I'm the president, I think. There is no good or bad. You arrive. Here you are. No one tells you what to do. So you make assumptions. (Lin 2007: 193–5)

Generally, however, the effects of Lin's stylistic asceticism are more mundane, as in this Gmail chat between the main characters of *Richard Yates*, Haley Joel Osment, a twenty-two-year-old writer living in New York City, and Dakota Fanning, his sixteen-year-old girlfriend living with her mother in New Jersey:

> Haley Joel Osment said he wanted to funnel boiling water into his brain.
>
> 'That would be good,' said Dakota Fanning. 'I just thought of Bono and felt suicidal.'
>
> Haley Joel Osment said he was afraid of missing the train.
>
> 'If you miss the train again I'm going to shit myself,' said Dakota Fanning.
>
> 'I'm going to miss it. I feel like I can't not miss it,' said Haley Joel Osment.
>
> 'I got electrocuted today,' said Dakota Fanning.
>
> 'Sizzling hot,' said Haley Joel Osment.
>
> 'I'm going to be very sleepy tomorrow.'
>
> 'No,' said Haley Joel Osment.
>
> 'I'm always very sleepy the day after electrocution. I won't be able to do anything but lay.'
>
> 'Now what,' said Haley Joel Osment. 'Drink coffee.' (Lin 2010:41–2)

Lin's minimalism, I would argue, is aimed at becoming-imperceptible, which, we will recall, Deleuze identifies in *Dialogues* as 'the goal, the finality of writing' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 45). Lin's language seems anodyne and innocuous, and his characters appear to be like everybody else, nearly anonymous in their lack of distinguishing features, yet a pervasive strangeness signals the unsettling becoming-other of Lin's

fictional world. As befits his minimalism, Lin's political bent is decidedly molecular. His characters float over the world, each a kind of Bartleby 'preferring not to'. They show no career ambition or commitment to work, taking minimum-wage jobs, quitting abruptly or eventually getting fired for absenteeism. They routinely shoplift with no remorse. (Lin has said that he supported himself for extended periods of time by shoplifting goods and selling them on eBay.) Granted, their resistance to capital and consumerism is minimal and without collective organisation, but it is nonetheless omnipresent. Yet Lin's characters are not immune to the diseases of micro-power, which he explores with especial subtlety in *Richard Yates*. There, by the smallest of increments, Haley Joel Osment becomes a controlling, abusive figure, eventually demanding reports from Dakota Fanning of all her activities and of every lie she has ever told, no matter how miniscule. And Dakota Fanning slowly emerges as a bulimic and a compulsive self-harm cutter, the two of them forming an enabling, low-key *folie à deux*.

Kingston and Lin, then, are both Deleuzian American writers, despite their many differences. Whether they are both Chinese American writers, however, is another question. Kingston fits the standard profile of the Chinese American minority writer, whereas Lin seems merely a writer of Chinese descent whose fiction is unmarked by his ethnicity. The continuum I have implicitly drawn, from Kingston's becoming-woman and becoming-Chinese-American to Lin's becoming-imperceptible, could be seen simply as evidence of Chinese American assimilation within American culture and of American-dominated globalisation as a whole. In that case, the differences between Kingston and Lin would be merely functions of time and context: Kingston was reared in the small-town America of the late forties and fifties by parents who maintained in their American home the folk traditions of the pre-industrial, agrarian Gŭangdōng of their childhood, whereas Lin was reared in eighties and nineties suburbia by parents who themselves grew up in the increasingly Westernised world of postwar Taiwan.

In posing this question of Chinese American identity, I have clearly ventured into the territory of identity politics that has made Deleuze and Guattari's concept of 'becoming' controversial from its inception. At issue is the relationship between the minor and minorities, categories that do not always coincide, as Deleuze and Guattari repeatedly stress. Kingston's affirmation of herself as a Chinese American woman writer is an index of the diverse becomings her fiction has engaged, but also a possible sign of reterritorialisation, were one to view her works as eventuating in the reconstitution of fixed definitions of 'Chinese

American' or 'woman'. Lin's lack of interest in his ethnicity, by contrast, need not signal passive cultural assimilation. Just as a white male, like Melville, can become-other and make a minor usage of English, so can a Chinese male, like Lin, and without necessarily doing so *as* a Chinese American. But in Lin's becoming-imperceptible, yet another question arises: whether his 'othering' of the ordinary has been productive of something new or has simply devolved into a simulation of the mundane that is functionally indistinguishable from it. (Here, obviously, I am reviving old arguments about 'contestatory postmodernism' versus 'celebratory postmodernism'.)

Deleuze's conception of American literature – or at least the kind of American literature he finds superior to French literature – makes room for various minorities to pursue lines of flight, deterritorialise English, invent paths of resistance, envision a people to come, and so on, but it also allows members of majorities to do the same, and it does not declare that minorities *must* be minor as representatives of their minority status. Most important, both majorities and minorities can only attain these ends by becoming-minor themselves, whatever their class, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and so on. For this reason, Deleuze's inattention to ethnic writers in his characterisation of American literature is not fatal to his project, and indeed it invites us to perform a discerning and careful examination of multi-ethnic American literatures from a Deleuzian perspective. The lines of flight within American literature, whether westward from Europe or eastward from China, ultimately must be situated on a map of intensities, one whose nomadic coordinates are those of a new people and a new earth. Kingston, Lin and many other Chinese American writers, as cartographers of intensities, complicate, but do not contradict, the Deleuzian image of American literature. Rather, they extend our sense of that literature's powers – of what an American literature can do, and what it might do in the future.

Notes

1. Here, too, the differentiation between English empiricism and American pragmatism is in doubt. As early as *Empiricism and Subjectivity*, Deleuze stresses the importance of belief for Hume. In his 1991 Preface to the English Edition, Deleuze lists as one of Hume's great achievements that he 'established the concept of *belief* and put it in the place of knowledge. He laicized belief, turning knowledge into a legitimate belief. He asked about the conditions which legitimate belief, and the basis of this investigation sketched out a theory of *probabilities*. The consequences are important: if the act of thinking is belief, thought has fewer reasons to defend itself against error than against *illusion*'

(Deleuze 1991: ix). If a distinction is to be drawn between Hume and American pragmatists in this regard, perhaps it is that belief among pragmatists ranges from Peircean belief as grounded in scientific method (a concept close to that of Hume) to James's belief in God and Royce's belief in an Infinite Spirit (views that Hume would have rejected) (see Deledalle 1983: 69–73, 160).

2. Perhaps an extension of Deleuze and Guattari's typology of geophilosophical tendencies could help separate English empiricism from American pragmatism. In *What Is Philosophy?*, Deleuze and Guattari contrast English thought with French and German philosophy by saying that 'the English are precisely those nomads who treat the plane of immanence as a moveable and moving ground, a field of radical experience, an archipelagian world where they are happy to pitch their tents from island to island and over the sea' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 105). We might contrast this characterisation with the geophilosophical tendencies implicit in Deledalle's analysis of the American values that underlie pragmatism: a belief in America as the promised land of liberty, equality and fraternity; in the myth of the pioneer and the frontier; in individualism and democracy; in success; and in 'manifest destiny' (Deledalle 1983: 15). Of course, this is mere speculation, since Deleuze nowhere suggests that he shares Deledalle's view of pragmatism in this particular regard.
3. Deleuze and Guattari's note reads as follows: 'This book contains a fine analysis of geography and its role in American mythology and literature, and of the reversal of directions. In the East, there was the search for a specially American code and for a recoding with Europe (Henry James, Eliot, Pound, etc.); in the South, there was the overcoding of the slave system, with its ruin and the ruin of the plantations during the Civil War (Faulkner, Caldwell); from the North came capitalist decoding (Dos Passos, Dreiser); the West, however, played the role of a line of flight combining travel, hallucination, madness, the Indians, perceptive and mental experimentation, the shiftings of frontiers, the rhizome (Ken Kesey and his "fog machine," the beat generation, etc.). Every great American creates a cartography, even in his or her style; in contrast to what is done in Europe, each makes a map that is directly connected to the real social movements crossing America' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 529).
4. Miller's China, as he himself says, is an 'imaginary China', one that bears little relation to the actual place. In his correspondence with Michael Fraenkel, published under the title *Hamlet* (1946), Miller counters Fraenkel's contention that Hamlet is heroic, asserting instead that Hamlet is cowardly and infected with a modern, Western disease of hyperconsciousness. The diseased Western mentality divides humans into animal and vegetable halves, the first being conscious, the second oneiric. As a result, 'The dream side of life, which the plant glorifies, gets pigeon-holed through our singular vision of things as morbid phenomena. The human side of life is the waking side.' Miller speculates that 'if it were possible to imagine an intermediate state in which one neither is nor does, then China might be regarded as the fairest example. China never becomes anything but China. By virtue of this intermediate logic China is becoming China more and more every day. China is the weed in the human cabbage patch. After every weeding China reappears as China. It has no further aspiration. [. . .] Eventually the weed always gets the upper hand. Eventually things fall back into a state of China. [. . .] If man is ever going to become himself, MAN, and not something different, he will have to stand outside the realm of Idea and, growing more and more satisfied with himself, vegetate. [. . .] My plan, then, in so far as the negation of all effort and purpose may be said to be a plan, is to stop evolving, to remain what I am and to become more and more only what

I am. [. . .] I want to become nothing more than the China I already am' (Miller and Fraenkel 1946, vol. 1: 54–5).

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Translating Deleuze: On the Uses of Deleuze in a Non-Western Context

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Abstract

This paper aims to explore the appropriation of Deleuzian literary theory in the Chinese context and its potential for mapping a new global poetics. The purpose of this treatment is thus twofold: first, it will redefine the East–West literary relationship, and second, it will seek a new ethics of life, as endorsed by Deleuze's philosophy of immanence. One finds an affinity between literature and life in Deleuze's philosophy: in short, literature appears as the passage of life and an enterprise of health and thus seeks new possibilities of life, which consists in the invention of a new language and a new people. But what kind of health may such a view provide for a non-Western individual, people, literature and culture? This investigation further appeals to the medium of translation. This paper argues that the act of translation functions as a means of deterritorialisation that displays continuing variations of a language, and through translation, Deleuze's clinical and critical aspects of literature promote a transversal poetics that transcends the binary, oppositional conception of East–West and an immanent ethics of life that overcomes the sentiment of *ressentiment*.

Keywords: Gilles Deleuze, literary theory, translation, deterritorialisation, ethics of life, global poetics

I. The Problem and the Objective

This paper is inspired by Gregg Lambert's article 'On the Uses and Abuses of Literature for Life', in which Lambert examines Deleuze's

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views regarding literature and its effect on life in a similar fashion to that found in Nietzsche's treatise (Lambert 2000). Lambert's investigation is an allusion to Nietzsche's famous treatise titled 'On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life' (Nietzsche 1997). In it, Nietzsche examines various history ideas found in nineteenth-century Germany and argues that an excess of history may do harm to life when the pursuit of historical knowledge replaces the activities of life. Nietzsche does not oppose the science of history per se, just the abuse of it. More significantly, Nietzsche does not simply offer a criticism of history; he offers an outline for a project for life. The idea of life for Nietzsche, as Craig Lundy explains, 'is not reducible to the biological, but forms an immanent principle that encompasses society and culture' (Lundy 2009: 194). In his article, Lambert changes the topic from 'history' to 'literature' as a response to Deleuze's final published book, *Essays Critical and Clinical* (1997), and explores the idea of viable 'health' for life through critical and clinical use of literature, as Deleuze proposes. Lambert examines the criteria given by Deleuze's aspects of literature and situates them in the current social condition by asking the question, 'What is minor literature today?'

Although I share in Lambert's concerns, in this article my intention is to complicate both the question and its scope by exploring the appropriation of Deleuze's thought, literary theory in particular, in the Chinese context as a potential for mapping the idea of global poetics and finding a workable ethics for life. One can find an affinity between literature and life in Deleuze's thought, but to what extent can the use of Deleuzian literary theory bring about 'health' that can benefit the life of an individual, a people, or even a culture? These questions are suggested by the subtitle, 'On the Uses of Deleuze in a Non-Western Context'. Would Deleuze's philosophy (literary theory) still be the same if translated into Japanese and Chinese? Further, would there be any profound change in using Deleuze in the Chinese context, compared with its use in France, Germany, Japan and other nations or regions? In short, what kind of 'health' can the Deleuzian critical and clinical aspects of literature bring to life for non-Western people and their cultures? In other words, what kind of 'symptomatology' will the use of Deleuze actually produce?

Applying Deleuze's philosophy to a non-Western context is not merely a 'virtual' concern; it is an 'actual' problem. It involves asking multiple questions that concern East–West (literary) relations. It is undeniable that either in the logic of dialectal thinking or in the ideological framework of global mapping, East and West have been consistently

considered as being oppositional, with the West generally assuming a dominant pole, as exemplified by the postcolonial critique of Euro-centrism. Non-Western or Third World intellectuals are sensitive to Western 'imperial' eyes and thus often hesitate to 'adopt' Western theories to try and understand their own lives and cultures. As a result, they are often caught in an ambivalence of love and hatred. Gayatri Spivak's criticism of Deleuze is exemplary of this scenario. According to Spivak, Deleuze's theory embodies the rhetoric of Euro-centrism, thus repeating the typical form of Western subjectivity that eliminates the voice of non-Western 'subalterns' (Spivak 1988). Why and how Deleuze is brought into the non-Western world thus becomes a serious problem. What this argument actually reveals includes a demand for the voicing of the minor (or minority) as well as an entire remapping of global poetics. In other words, if the situation of the minor is not 'ready-made', as Deleuze insists, how can the people of East Asia, China, Japan, Korea and Taiwan be treated according to a concept of minor that has been fashioned elsewhere? Moreover, if a standard global mapping with the West as a privileged perspective is no longer adequate, what kind of global poetics might we imagine beginning from this situation?

A more direct and urgent question should be added to this line of inquiry: that is, the problematic of translation and not only the representation of translation, but also the act of translation itself. Deleuze's early work on Leopold Sacher-Masoch titled *Masochism: Coldness and Cruelty* was first translated into Japanese in the 1970s, and then *The Logic of Sense*, among others, was translated in the early 1980s, much earlier than they were into English in the 1990s. Now we see more and more of Deleuze's works being translated into Chinese, including *A Thousand Plateaus* in 2010. For non-native French speakers, Deleuze is inevitably understood through translation. The translation is not transparent, however, and the translator is never invisible. The translator's grasp of Deleuze's thought and his or her fluency in both the source and target languages certainly determine the success of a translation. We are not passing judgement on the qualities of those translations, however, but rather raising a more essential question: is Deleuze in French the same as Deleuze in English, in Japanese and even in Chinese? For example, it has been noted that the English word 'becoming' cannot fully convey the French '*devenir*', not to mention examining the Japanese word *naru* and the Chinese word *shengcheng* (生成) or *liubian* (流变). Other examples include 'assemblage', 'milieu', 'plan(e)' and 'affect'. There seems an irreducible signifying rupture between the meaning of these terms and their translations. And if this

is the case, what image of Deleuze's thought is offered in a foreign language such as Chinese, and what relation can then be established between French Deleuze and Chinese Deleuze, among others?

II. Translating Deleuze, or the Uses of Deleuze in the Chinese Context

To the best of my knowledge, most of Deleuze's major works have been translated into Chinese because of the growing interest in Deleuze during the last decade. This interest mainly centres on Deleuze's philosophy in relation to contemporary philosophies, and is not limited to Deleuze's thoughts on literature. There is no doubt that Deleuze is basically treated as a philosopher and not a literary theorist. And yet, when it comes to using Deleuze, one may wonder how Deleuze can explain the world and how he treats the arts.[1] We see a few Chinese scholars who make an effort to study Chinese literary texts using Deleuzian aspects of literature.[2] Such attempts immediately invite serious criticism. They ask: how should Deleuze's literary theory be used in the Chinese context, or are Deleuzian aspects of literature appropriate for the study of Chinese literature? These doubts result from the long history of receiving and appropriating Western theories in the East. As early as in the 1960s, Taiwan's academia was open to and embraced the West. Western critical theories, including structuralism, post-structuralism, psychoanalysis, postmodernism, Marxism, postcolonial theories, feminism, queer theories, eco-criticism, and many others, have been introduced and further adopted as the paradigms for literary and cultural studies. In this regard, Deleuze's philosophy and his idea of literature belong to the same line of Euro-American theory. As the quarrels between traditional Chinese literary canons and Western literary norms continue, one thing is for sure: the question is raised once again in the postcolonial atmosphere and in the global context. As a result, this kind of question is not so much an inquiry into the nature of interpretation and criticism as one concerning geopolitical cultural politics.

Consequently, a more direct and urgent question than the use of Deleuze is about the translation of Deleuze. As mentioned above, Deleuze has been appropriated by Third World intellectuals through translation,[3] which inevitably confronts the politics of translation in terms of whether a translation assumes Deleuze's thought as a set of principles of literature, and further stresses the authority of Western theories. Despite the recent discourse on translation that emphasises

'becoming' more than authenticity, Western theories remain the source of its 'originality' in the translation process.[4] Our inquiry then asks how to translate Deleuze for use in the Third World. In this regard, Spivak's understanding of translation provides a useful perspective. She considers the postcolonial reader as the 'outsider/insider', whom she calls 'the reader-as-translator' (RAT), and suggests a solution that produces sympathetic reading as translation: 'precisely not a surrender but a friendly learning by taking a distance' (Spivak 1993: 197). Spivak calls our attention to non-transparent postcolonial intellectuals, such as RAT, when reading and translating White theory. From a postcolonial standpoint, Spivak asks, 'should RAT expect an account of the passing on of the textualisation of the interior of the body through the voice, a metonym for consciousness, from master father to master son?' (199).

Following Spivak's insights on this problem, when translating White theory, should we not be aware that 'theory' has a tendency to legislate and dominate the practice, and even produce an excess that it cannot legislate and control? For example, in *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari compare the Chinese *Tao* to Spinoza's field of immanence, with *yin* and *yang* as its two innate energies and powers (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 157). The RAT is excited and discerned in reading/translating this passage, and yet should one not doubt how Deleuze's body without organs (BwO) should be translated and interpreted by Taoist thoughts, or that the argumentation of *yin* and *yang* should not be surrendered to the Deleuzian assemblages of desire?

How to translate Deleuze, therefore, including his philosophy and literary theory? Does translation mean interpretation or transformation? For one thing, translation confronts neologism. There are many neologisms in Deleuze's writing. Neologism is always a challenging task for any translator of philosophical texts and especially for the translator of Deleuze. Deleuze regards philosophy as a discipline that 'involves *creating* concepts' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 5), which consequently involves producing neologisms instead of simply finding pre-existing terms and concepts. Accordingly, translators of Deleuze confront the problem of creating neologisms in the target language. Creating neologisms in translation should not be regarded as a matter of representation or interpretation of ideas and concepts, however; translation is and of itself an act that is akin to philosophy.

Let us take the translation of the key concept, *devenir*/becoming, as an example. Deleuze's particular use of *devenir*, as 'becoming' in English, has made it somewhat a neologism in French. The Chinese translator must meet the difficulty of finding its equivalent in the target

language. Usually the two Chinese characters *liu* and *bian* are chosen and combined to form a new term to convey the intention of the original. The Chinese character *liu* (流), with the radical of water, connotes the flow of matter and its movements. In addition, because of its close association with time in the Chinese context, the character can indicate the passing of time and time itself (both present and absent, actual and virtual). The meaning of the other Chinese character *bian* (变) is more profound. It has at least three readings of its literal meaning of 'change' (变/易), namely, the simplicity of hexagrams, the changes in time, and change (or more precisely, non-change) in the transcendental sense, based on the teachings of the *Book of Change* (*I-Ching*).[5] As such, the Chinese neologism *liubian* can by no means be treated as the equivalent of the Deleuzian *devenir*. And yet, *liubian* echoes the French *devenir* and marks a linguistic frontier on the terrain of the Chinese language. That is to say, *liubian*, as a foreign term to the Chinese, combines with the French *devenir* to form an indiscernible linguistic zone, whose meaning is indistinguishable but proper neither to Chinese nor to French. In other words, the neologism *liubian-devenir* forms a new zone of exchange, a 'rhizomatic' disjunction that lies in the middle.

As a result, the translation of Deleuze's concepts is less interpretation than becoming/transformation; the former involves representation, and the latter expression. Our suggestion, however, that *liubian* is not close to being the equivalent of *devenir* is not simply to announce the impossibility of any 'complete' translation or to emphasise the conditions of 'becoming' as the representation of translation. Rather, to translate Deleuze is 'to make the sequences vibrate, to open the word onto unexpected internal intensities – in short, an asignifying *intensive utilization* of language' (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 22; original emphasis). In articulating his views on literature, Deleuze proposes a mode of writing and life through the process of minoritising language. The effect of literature on language, according to Deleuze, is to induce a foreign language within the language by pushing itself to the limit; in other words, to stimulate the lines of escape by initiating the forces of deterritorialisation within. The process can thus be enacted and accomplished through the very act of translation.

In his study and practice of translation, Lawrence Venuti relates his translation project to the Deleuzian concept of minor literature. He argues that certain 'radical heterogeneity' introduced by a translational remainder could submit 'the major language to constant variation, forcing it to become minor' (Venuti 1998: 10). This is then the 'becoming' of both the language and the translator; it is a passage of

life within language made possible by translation. Therefore, translation of Deleuze is not a simple 'repetition' that recounts his concepts and ideas, but rather a creation that constitutes life within language. It is with the same regard that translation can be regarded as a 'milieu/medium' in which and by which this new life is given to the language and also the translator. In the preface to the Chinese translation of *A Thousand Plateaus*, Brian Massumi reminds us of the function of translation, as being similar to that of philosophy:

> The Chinese translation of *A Thousand Plateaus* is a rigorous thought-event in its own right, 'involves as much creation and invention' as the original. It is only fitting that the Chinese reader, finding this new creation in their hands, treat the translation of their book as Deleuze and Guattari treat every achievement: break it open. Resist its 'being' European. Don't take it as prescriptive for where is has come from. And especially don't take it as prescriptive for where it has now arrived. Liberate the pure form of its potential – for Chinese thought, in a continuing of its own singular adventure in becoming-between, coming together again in a relation to the great outside its own futurity. (Massumi 2010: 13)

Massumi's provocative statement articulates many ideas. First, Massumi emphasises the function of translation as both 'creation and invention', which is akin to the tenets of philosophy and literature. Translation here for Massumi means mostly representation of translation (the Chinese translation). Yet he also implies the very act of translation by claiming that the Chinese translation is itself a 'thought-event'. Massumi admits that translation should not be treated as a mere copy of the original, and one should treat such tasks as the authors treated the original. It is well known that, for Deleuze and Guattari, philosophy is rigorously 'the discipline that involves *creating* concepts' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 5); this is why Massumi regards the translation of Deleuze's book as a 'thought-event', that is, 'a creative endeavor' (Massumi 2010: 12). Clearly, Massumi elevates translation to where it has the same function as philosophy and literature, that is, to create concepts and affects, respectively.

More significantly, a 'thought-event' is itself an ethical event that concerns life, especially for the Chinese reader. As Massumi explains, to regard translation (the act and its representation) as a 'thought-event' is neither to grasp Deleuze's thoughts as sets of principles, nor to understand them from a certain perspective by way of translation, but rather to incite instead the potentiality of the Chinese thought by pushing the thought itself to a limit, to an outside. This transformation process

can only be accomplished through translating Deleuze, thus forming an unexpected alliance with Deleuze.

III. Deleuze and Us

Deleuze maintains that literature/writing as a passage of life is neither a description of life experience nor personal memories, dreams and fantasies; rather, it is inseparable from actual 'becoming'. Simply put, for Deleuze, to write is to trace the lines of flight, which is a whole 'cartography': 'one only discovers worlds through a long, broken flight' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 36). This is also the task that Deleuze assigns to the writer, namely, to create a new earth, the movement of which is deterritorialisation (36–7). Deleuze distinguishes the writer from the author; the author is simply a subject of enunciation, and the writer, in contrast, is the agent who 'invents assemblages starting from assemblages which have invented him, he makes one multiplicity pass into another' (51–2). The assemblage is 'co-functioning; it is 'sympathy', symbiosis' (52).

The assemblage, instead of the word, idea and concept, is regarded by Deleuze as a minimum real unit and may provide a standpoint for viewing the 'manipulation' of translation. Translation is neither transport of words and ideas from one language to another, nor a search for an equivalent in the target language, but an 'assemblage' in-between two terms and concepts. The Chinese translator speaks *liubian with* and writes *with* French *devenir*: 'a conspiracy, a collision of love of hatred' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 52). Deleuze describes the 'process' of assemblage as 'being in the middle, on the line of encounter between an internal and the external world' (52). Assemblage is the 'function' of the writer, but it is also the 'elements' of translation and the task of the translator. Translation is pragmatic; in every translation, the translator tries experiments, assembling ideas, relations and circumstances. It is what Deleuze calls the 'geography of relations,' whose logic is AND rather than IS (56–7). Or more precisely, AND itself does not specify a relation conjunction; 'it is that which subtends all relations, the path of all relations' (57). Therefore, translating Deleuze into Chinese is on its own account the practice of the art of AND. The Chinese translator speaks and writes in Chinese *with* the French Deleuze. With Deleuze being an indiscernible stranger and a friend, the Chinese translator-writer is using an absolutely foreign language in its own stuttering and stammering in the terrain of Chinese language. And this logic of AND is also the idea for a remapping of global poetics informed by translation.

The translator invents his or her own assemblage in translation, as the writer also does in writing. Further, translation rises into 'becomings' and powers. In this regard, translation becomes a matter of 'health'. Deleuze declares that 'literature appears as an enterprise of health' (Deleuze 1997: 3). This definition, of course, does not mean that the writer constantly maintains good health, despite the opposite suggestion that writers are too often sick, physically or mentally. What Deleuze suggests is that the writer 'processes an irresistible and delicate health' as seen through his writing (3). Here, Deleuze, in following Nietzsche, considers writers as physicians rather than patients (3). Such a Deleuzian concept of 'health' delivered through writing is closely related to 'becoming', that is, a-personal and pre-individual affect. Deleuze concludes by saying, 'Health as literature, as writing, consists in inventing a people who are missing' (4). In a similar fashion, Massumi cautions not to take the Chinese translation of Deleuze as 'descriptive of [where] it has come from' and 'for where it has arrived' (Massumi 2010: 13). Consequently, the Third World translator is required to go beyond *ressentiment* towards the West. Hence, translation of Deleuze becomes not only Nietzschean health, but also Spinozist joy, and this request is precisely the force of Spinoza's question: ' "*What can a body do?*" ', or 'of what affects is it capable?' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 60). Affects for Deleuze are 'becomings', and the Spinozist 'joy' demands demolishment of the superiority of the West over the East and multiplies the maximum of affects. In a similar fashion, Nietzschean 'health' expects and seeks the invention of a new people.

As a result, Massumi's suggestion of the Chinese translation of Deleuze as a thought-event at least speaks of two things. Translation should be regarded as the same task of philosophy as creating concepts, as well as an enterprise of health, just as literature functions in its invention of a new people. Massumi describes such an activity as 'its own singular adventure in becoming-between' (Massumi 2010: 13). This perspective reminds us of the Deleuzian reading of Spinoza. Deleuze playfully titles the final chapter of his small book on Spinoza 'Spinoza and Us' (Deleuze 1988: 122). This phrase, according to Deleuze, primarily means 'us in the middle of Spinoza'; that is to say, 'to perceive and to understand Spinoza by way of the middle' (122). What Deleuze suggests, then, is that to comprehend a philosopher like Spinoza, one cannot simply pursue his philosophy as a single unity through a systematic reading of all his philosophical principles; one must also become involved in 'affective reading' (129), that is, 'the laying out of a *common plane of immanence* on which all bodies, all minds, and all

individuals are situated' (122). We note Deleuze's remark in the phrase 'in the middle of Spinoza': 'to be on this modal plane, or rather to install oneself on this plane – which implies a mode of living' (122). I have concluded this paper by giving this section the heading 'Deleuze and Us'. This mode of being 'in the middle' is what we learn from Deleuze and the works of Deleuze by way of translation: to create a new earth by inventing new assemblages and to obtain a delicate health through the continuous lines of encounter. Translation as a thought-event thus rises to 'becomings' and powers, and the Spinozist translator is born to embody it.

Notes

1. In comparison with the massive amount of English materials on Deleuze studies that includes a variety of disciplines, Chinese studies on Deleuze are limited to the fields of philosophy, literature, art and cinema. These fields are emphasised in the Chinese context not simply because they are Deleuze's primary concerns, but also because of some translations of commentaries on Deleuze, including Ronald Bogue's *Deleuze on Literature*, published in 2006. Bogue's two other books of the same series, *Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts* and *Deleuze on Cinema* are also scheduled to be published. These publications may inspire the use of Deleuze in the Chinese context. It is worth noting that Hong Kong scholar Lou Guexiang published the first introductory book in Chinese language on Deleuze in 1997. In his comprehensive introduction to Deleuze's thoughts, issues concerning psychoanalysis, capitalism, language, literature and the arts are particularly emphasised. This book portrays Deleuze as a philosopher and critical theorist, thus providing a general image of Deleuze's thought to the Chinese reader.
2. In the relatively few articles and papers, Deleuze's idea of literature – for example, minor literature, the fourth person narrative, among others – scatter in criticisms of Chinese and Taiwanese literatures.
3. As it may be argued, Third World intellectuals are mostly bilingual and even trilingual, and likely able to access Deleuze's philosophical writings in their original language, or at least through English translations rather than Chinese ones. By emphasising the appropriation through translation, I use translation here in a general sense, that is, the transportation or transference of Deleuze's thought from the Western to the Chinese linguistic and cultural context.
4. Related arguments can be found in Edward Said's 'Traveling Theory' (1983), Tejaswini Niranjana's *Siting Translation* (1992) and Lydia Liu's *Translingual Practice* (1995), among others.
5. There has been much debate on the Chinese translation for the term *devenir*/becoming; scholars in Taiwan tend to use *liubian* (流变), while the traditional term *shengcheng* (流变) is selected, as in the newly published translation of *A Thousand Plateaus*. It should also be noted that the Chinese syntax *liubian*, albeit a bit awkward, emphasises the process of changing and thus a world of transformation; *shengcheng*, in contrast, suggests a finality or a determinate state of affairs, although it still has the sense of becoming.

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Becoming-Animal: Becoming-Wolf in *Wolf Totem*[1]

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Abstract

Wolf Totem is not a novel which advocates 'molar' wolf characteristics such as violence, brutality and bloodthirstiness, and 'molar' wolf laws such as the law of the jungle and the law of profiting at others' expense, but a novel which reveals to readers a brand new life experience, different affects possessed by the 'molecular' wolf, and the becoming-wolf of human beings. Becoming-wolf is not to imitate the above-mentioned characteristics of the 'molar' wolf, but to see or imagine what affects the 'molecular' wolf has, and make the life force or the assumed life force possessed by the 'molecular' wolf transverse a person, so that he or she can also have those affects. Becoming-wolf is to find a line of flight between man and wolf, to get rid of all the restraints imposed by the Confucian culture on the law-abiding, abjectly obedient people, and thus regaining the force of the 'impersonal, inorganic' life, so as to become different by endless desiring productions, and enhance mankind's power.

Keywords: *Wolf Totem*, Deleuze, becoming-animal, becoming-wolf, molar wolf, molecular wolf

Since its publication in 2008, *Wolf Totem* has broken the majority of sales records in the following consecutive years. It has sold millions of copies both in China and abroad. In 2007, the novel received the first Man Asian Literary Prize, after which it won other major literary awards. It has become a cultural sensation, and has blown a strong 'wolf wind' through China's literary arena, leading to the popularity of different kinds of aggressive and predatory 'wolf culture' and 'wolf

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thinking'. However, there are dramatically different critical responses to the wolf and its nature, which the novel describes in great detail and of which it speaks highly.

The editor of the novel says the subject of the novel is unique, that the writer provides us with 'a spiritual feast by which people in our era will profit all their lives' (An 2004: 1). A famous critic, Lei Da, praises the novel as 'a grand narrative with epic character' (Lei 2005: 4). Wang Xueqian maintains that it represents 'the strong will to life' of the grassland wolves, thus a continuation of the life narrative of twentieth-century Chinese literature (Wang 2005: 68). Ma Weiye says its description of the 'stubborn and intractable, unyielding and indomitable, courageous and vigorous' wolf nature 'renders clear a thrilling life power', thus providing 'mankind with a strong stimulant of life' (Ma 2007: 43). Zhao Shuqin and Long Qilin contend that the writer rewrites the image of the wolf in ecological terms instead of writing about wolves from a pan-moral perspective, thus revealing what wolves really are (Zhao and Long 2007: 25). Some of the detractors say that *Wolf Totem* advocates a brutal, ruthless wolf nature and wolfish living philosophy. Ding Fan and Shi Long contend that the 'wolf nature' and 'wolf spirit' it advocates is 'anti-cultural, anti-civilized and anti-human' (Ding and Long 2008: 21). It amounts to a degeneration of human values and 'the living philosophy it advocates is the animals' out-and-out laws of seeking survival, which defy the moral constraints and values brought into being in the development of human civilization' (26). He Tongbin maintains that 'the nomadic spirit', namely the 'wolf spirit' the writer admires so much, actually advocates 'violence and brutality' (He 2006: 90). Finally, Wu Xiuming and Chen Lijun contend that what *Wolf Totem* advocates is 'the unconditional obedience of the weak to the strong' (Wu and Chen 2009: 27).

Why do literary critics have such opposing responses to *Wolf Totem*? Maybe we can understand this through Deleuze and Guattari's concept of 'becoming-animal'. In fact, what those detractors see in *Wolf Totem* is what Deleuze and Guattari call 'molar' wolves, while what those who praise it or admire it see are 'molecular' wolves. Those critics hold such different attitudes towards the novel just because of the differences between 'molar' wolves and 'molecular' wolves. According to Deleuze and Guattari, 'molar' wolves belong to 'animals with characteristics or attributes; genus, classification, or State animals; animals as they are treated in great divine myths, in such a way as to extract from them series or structures, archetypes or models' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 240–1). These kinds of 'State animals' are 'molar' animals, which are

not the original form of animals, but are constructed by human beings to describe what we do not want to include under the category of 'Man'. Whether in traditional Western philosophy and culture or in China's Confucian philosophy and culture, 'animal' is the 'Other' which 'Man' tries his best to exclude and negate. Confucian philosophy and culture stress that man should have human relations and morals, unlike animals. Mencius once said:

> But men possess a moral nature; and if they are well fed, warmly clad, and comfortably lodged, without being taught at the same time, they become almost like the beasts. This was a subject of anxious solicitude to the Sage Shun and he appointed Hsieh to be the Minister of Instruction, to teach the relations of humanity: – how between father and son there should be affection; between sovereign and minister righteousness; between husband and wife attention to their separate functions; between old and young a proper order; and between friends fidelity. (Mencius 1991: 251–2)

Xunzi once said:

> Hence, what makes a man human lies not in his being a featherless biped but his ability to draw boundaries. Even though wild animals have parents and offspring, there is no natural affection between them as between father and son, and though there are male and female of the species, there is no proper separation of sexes. Hence, the proper way of Man lies in nothing other than his ability to draw boundaries. Of such boundaries, none is more important than that between social classes. Of the instruments for distinguishing social classes, none is more important than ritual principles. (Xunzi 1988: 206)

In other words, it is human relations and morals that distinguish man from animals.

In traditional Western philosophy and culture, 'man' is not a descriptive word, but what Deleuze and Guattari call an order word, which means 'to be a man'. This necessitates the organisation of flesh into a body with will, that is, to negate nature, to exclude or repress the real experiences of the flesh, such as desire, hunger, thirst, anguish or fear, and to prohibit and reject animal instincts. As Georges Bataille says:

> Man is the animal that negates nature: he negates it through labor, which destroys it and changes it into an artificial world; he negates it in the case of life-creating activity; he negates it in the case of death. The incest prohibition is one of the effects of the repugnance felt for his condition by the animal that became human. The forms of animality were excluded from a bright world which signified humanity. (Bataille 1990: 61–2)

The flesh which undergoes various natural experiences is transformed into a human 'body', 'impervious to whatever is not itself, above all impervious to suffering and (ignominious) death, including the experience of desire, hunger, pain, and fear' (Bruns 2007: 707). In order to construct the image of 'man', animals, like flesh, have to be excluded from 'humanity' to become, or to be more exact, to be constructed as, the 'other' which human beings must overcome.

Therefore, a variety of different living creatures are given the name of 'the Animal' by men, despite all the differences which exist among them. As Derrida points out, animal is 'a word', 'an appellation that men have instituted... that they have given themselves the right and the authority to give to another creature' (Derrida 2002: 392). Through naming, men not only place the 'animal' under their authority, but also deprive it of its language, force it to remain in a mute or silent state. According to Derrida, naming is 'a foreshadowing of mourning', for it implies the death of what is named and 'the longevity of a name that survives whoever carries that name' (389). The 'animal' is just such a name: when various kinds of living creatures are named 'the animal', as living beings they are already dead. Benjamin speaks of the 'deep sadness of nature', because he thinks that after man's expulsion from Paradise, 'the eternal purity of the names was violated' (Benjamin 1996: 71–2). As a consequence, the names man gives to nature and all living creatures cannot communicate their mental being or that of man himself (72–3).

In traditional Chinese Confucian culture, the wolf is a 'molar' animal. Confucian culture names the wolf as a 'bloodthirsty, greedy, relentless, cruel, brutal, and cunning' animal. It thinks that the wolf's ungratefulness, bloodthirstiness, bullying and preying on the weak and fearing the strong run contrary to the benevolence (仁), righteousness (义), propriety (礼), wisdom (智) and trustworthiness (信) advocated by Confucian culture; thus the wolf represents everything that has to be excluded by Confucian culture in the construction of 'man' in feudal times. Such derogatory idioms as 'wolfish nature with wild ambitions', 'rapacious as a wolf and savage as a cur', 'run like a wolf and rush like a boar', and so on have been used to measure human morality for thousands of years. Because of such naming, the wolf has been hated, despised by Han Chinese, and has been so distorted and demonised in muteness that it does not even have the right to enter literary works. The only works that write about the wolf, such as Ma Zhongxi's 'The Wolf of Zhongshan' (1999), some stories in Pu Songling's *Strange Tales from a Chinese Studio* (2006) and Ji Yun's *Yuewei Cottage Notes* (2012), depict the wolf as ungrateful, relentless and bloodthirsty, whose nature

is to kill, thus making the image of the 'molar' wolf find its way deep into people's hearts.

We can also see such a wolf image in some passages of Jiang Rong's novel *Wolf Totem*. There are many passages which describe how 'molar' wolves hunt and kill war horses or gazelles cruelly, relentlessly and brutally. After a group of gazelles has been brutally killed by a wolf pack, Chen Zhen said, 'Wolves are evil, killing the innocent, oblivious to the value of a life. They deserve to be caught and skinned' (Jiang 2008: 44). Looking out at the carcasses strewn around the horseshoe bend, Chen Zhen said maybe 'the wolves just love killing' (246). Chen Zhen told Bilgee:

> You can't imagine how much the Chinese hate wolves. We call the most malicious people wolves; we call sex fiends wolves; we say the greediest people have the appetite of a wolf; the American imperialists are referred to as ambitious wolves; and at any time an adult wants to frighten a child, he cries out 'wolf!' . . . [i]n the eyes of Chinese, wolves are the worst, the most vicious, the cruelest thing alive. (Jiang 2008: 271–2)

'The books were mostly of the "Little Red Riding Hood" genre of wolves eating little lambs, or cruel and scary stories of wolves eating the hearts and livers of small children' (Jiang 2008: 329).

Western philosophy and culture constructs the human/animal boundary in order to 'mark the recognition or denial of kinship' (Vint 2005: 287). Just as Derrida points out, the 'animal' encompasses 'all the living things that man does not recognize as his fellows, neighbors or his brothers' (Derrida 2002: 402). This does not only exclude some animals from the category of 'man', but also connects various 'others' – women, black people, lunatics, and so on – to animality, thus excluding them from the category of 'man', depriving them of their 'human' rights, and rendering them in a subjugate position, treating them irresponsibly like animals, so as to strengthen other ways of classification and 'othering' within society (Vint 2005: 287). As Cary Wolfe points out, so long as the humanist discourses persist, it 'will always be available for use by humans against other humans as well, to countenance violence against the social *other* of whatever species – or gender, or race, or class, or sexual difference' (Wolfe 2003: 8).

In fact, Chinese culture also does the same. We can see in historical works and *Wolf Totem* that many minorities, such as Hun, Turk, Wusun, Mongol and so on which compete with Han Chinese for living space, admire wolves and hold them in high esteem. Some regard them as their teachers and some of them even regard wolves as their ancestors. Out of hatred for these nomadic peoples, in order to raise Han Chinese

above other minorities, and in order to exclude them from the category of 'man', Han Chinese construct the image of 'molar' wolves as ruthless, bloodthirsty, cruel and greedy. In the eyes of Han Chinese, 'wolf' is synonymous with cruelty, brutality, ruthlessness, wickedness and greed. Just because of this, Han Chinese need not be ethically responsible for those minorities and no matter how cruelly they treat them, they will not be held accountable morally, and can preserve the image of 'man', just like the way in which Western colonists treated black people.

The wolf in 'becoming-wolf' is different from such 'molar' wolves. It is no longer the negative 'wolf' image constructed by traditional Chinese Confucian culture, no longer burdened with the symbolic meanings traditional Confucian culture has imposed on it, but becomes what Deleuze calls an 'affective' animal, with only active and passive affects. As in the eyes of Little Hans, the horse has become a set of active and passive affect: 'having a big widdler, hauling heavy loads, having blinkers, biting, falling down, being whipped, making a row with its feet' (Deleuze 1997: 64). Wolves have become 'molecular' wolves, which are not defined by the form, organs or functions, but by different points of intensity and thresholds. 'Molecular' wolves walk out of muteness and begin to display a variety of active and passive affects. In Jiang Rong's novel, what we see are not 'molar' wolves hated so much by Han Chinese, but 'molecular' wolves which have the following active and passive affects: wise and smart, courageous, stubborn, patient, family-oriented, with collective spirit, unyielding and indomitable, cherishing independence and freedom; in combat, they are fully cognisant of the limits of battle, highly organised and disciplined; like warriors and strategists, they know how to make plans and set goals, how to spy, encircle, ambush, assault, and intercept; they can resist thirst and hunger, and keep the ecological balance of the grassland.

The meticulous descriptions of the big wars in which the grassland wolves engage show the readers the military wisdom and talents possessed by them, all of which are among the active affects of 'molecular' wolves. The first scene is that in which an army of grassland wolves encircles and entraps a vast herd of gazelles in a half-frozen lake. The second scene, in which a wolf pack massacres a herd of seventy or eighty warhorses, shows the readers that the wolves knew

> weather, topography, opportunity, their own and their enemy's strengths, military strategy, and close fighting, night fighting, guerrilla fighting, mobile fighting, long-range raids, lightning raids, and concentrating their strength to annihilate the enemy… they undertook a measured campaign of total annihilation. (Jiang 2008: 97)

The third is the hunting and killing of the wolves by the grasslanders. Although they were directed by Bilgee, the Wise Old Man of the novel, they only encircled half of the wolves, six or seven of which escape from the trap. The wolves chose the weakest link in the encirclement, 'the group of women, who wore the most colorful clothing and had the fewest lasso poles' (Jiang 2008: 184). After the wolves sank into a desperate situation, having no chance of escape, they still kept their wits about them: 'They fight in threes and fours, coming to one's aid, using their deadly fangs and tasting blood with every bite' (189).

Besides the above-mentioned big wars, there are also many small stories which show their wisdom and intelligence. The grassland wolves know that gazelles run faster than them, so they wait very patiently until 'the gazelle gets up with a full bladder', knowing that it 'can't urinate while running, so before it's gone far, its bladder bursts, its rear legs cramp up, and it stops', only to be caught by the wolf (Jiang 2008: 25). Wolves can use their own bodies as springboards, helping the wolf pack 'fly' into the enclosure. After eating their fill, they 'fly' out, and the last wolf makes 'a springboard out of a pile of sheep carcasses' and flies 'out of the enclosure' (62). Grassland wolves use the bend in a stream to entrap a group of gazelles, hiding 'in the grass the night before' and waiting 'until the gazelles' come to drink. Then they will quickly seal off 'all avenues of escape' and trap 'the gazelles with the help of the stream' (242–3). Grassland wolves discover and utilise circle grass to set an ambush even earlier than humans (223). In the hot sun, when Chen Zhen does not know how to cool off the wolf cub, it digs a hole to shelter itself from the sun, from people and from dangers, the precision and location of which amazes him (335). When grassland wolves attack Batu and Zhang Jiyuan's horses, they make an

> all-out attack from four sides, hitting the east to divert attention from the west, covering for each other, feigning an attack on one side while mounting a major assault on the other; they advanced when they could, and when they couldn't, they tied us up so that we couldn't cover both the head and the tail, or both east and west. This strategy was more lethal than combining forces to launch assault waves. (Jiang 2008: 369)

The most cunning wolves even know how to trick the foals (Jiang 2008: 374).

Becoming-wolf is not to become a real wolf. Neither is it to imitate the behaviours, movements, gestures, and so on of the 'molar' wolf, thus becoming a 'molar' wolf. In *Wolf Totem*, we can see many examples of humans becoming 'molar' wolves. Chen Zhen felt that in the ruthless

war between man and wolf, both sides used 'cruelty to attack cruelty and cunning to thwart cunning', thus man will become more and more ruthless, like the wolf (Jiang 2004: 80).[2] When Chen Zhen, Yang Ke, Zhang Jiyuan and Gao Jianzhong watched the wolf cub kill and eat an old rabbit, they revealed 'the animal nature and the cruelty of loving watching the brutality and bloodthirstiness displayed on the Roman Colosseum, hidden deep down in man's heart' (Jiang 2004: 300). The killing of five wolf cubs excited Dorji (Jiang 2008: 170). Old Wang used a 'greedy, malicious extermination scheme' to virtually wipe out 'a marmot mountain that had been in existence for thousands of years', which renders the marmots near extinction (Jiang 2008: 481). Bao Shungui insisted on wiping out the Mongolian wolves, regardless of the ecological balance on the grassland. The greedy Old Wang and migrants used cruel methods such as dynamite and poison to hunt and kill wolves.

Becoming-wolf is to become 'molecular' wolf. It is to see or imagine what kind of 'affects' or 'percepts' wolves possess, finding or constructing a zone of proximity with the 'molecular' wolf, thus making the life force or the assumed life force possessed by the 'molecular' wolf transverse a human being, allowing him or her to acquire the affects possessed by it. Becoming-wolf necessitates finding an anomaly which marks the border of the multiplicity of the 'molecular' wolf, constructing a zone of proximity with it, and bringing the forces which transverse it into play in oneself, thus acquiring its affects. The Anomaly 'represents the threshold of absolute deterritorialization' (Patton 2010: 127), like the Moby-Dick hunted by Captain Ahab. Old Man Bilgee and the wolf cub play just such a role. Although raised as a pet since it was very little by Chen Zhen, the wolf cub never forgets that it is a wolf: it protects its food desperately and wolfs down the food when fed by Chen Zhen, as if the food is what it has fought to get. Like an ordinary wolf, it has 'an extraordinary ability to survive', and it is 'brave, intelligent, indomitable, patient, life-loving, never satisfied, never yielding, scorning harsh environments, and building a strong and powerful ego' (Jiang 2004: 220).

In Jiang Rong's novel, Bilgee is like a 'wolf king' in the primitive grassland. He possesses the wisdom and intelligence of the 'molecular' wolf, familiar with their ways and military strategies, and can rally hundreds of grasslanders during the wolf hunts, directing them to take the gazelles killed by the wolves, protecting war horses, encircling and hunting wolves. Like the grassland wolves, he has an intimate knowledge of the way of preserving the ecological balance of the grassland, never

killing off all the gazelles, marmots or wolves on the grassland. He also understands the dignity of life and death: he sees 'the grass and the grassland' as '*the* life, the big life', whereas other lives, including humans and wolves, are 'little life that depends on the big life for survival' (Jiang 2008: 45). He understands the meaning of the Mongol practice of 'sky burial': after the bodies of the deceased are eaten by the wolves, their souls will return to Tengger, that is, to nature. He believes that the wolves help turn them from meat-eaters to eaten meat, which is good for their souls, so he holds the wolf totem in reverence. By forming a zone of proximity with Old Man Bilgee and the wolf cub, Chen Zhen becomes wolf.

Before coming to the Mongol grassland, Chen Zhen was a senior high school student, deeply influenced by Han Chinese agricultural culture, hating 'molar' wolves very much. From what Gao Jianzhong (who lives with him in the same yurt) says about him, we know that 'he can neither use his four limbs nor tell the five grains apart' (Jiang 2004: 282). Old Man Bilgee and the wolf cub show him what 'molecular' wolves are like, allowing him to see the amazing world of 'molecular' wolves and many affects possessed by them. He then makes himself experience many of those affects, and thus becomes wolf. We can see this very clearly in the following passage:

> Enormous stress and dangers force Chen Zhen to grit his teeth to persist in his interest in raising and studying a wolf with the wolf's bravery, intelligence, pertinacity, patience, prudence and venturing spirit, and at the same time steel himself to have an indomitable, wild and stubborn personality. All of a sudden, Chen Zhen felt he has inexhaustible strength and the fortitude of never admitting defeat. (Jiang 2004: 281)

Becoming-wolf is 'creation' but not 'representation', so people cannot understand it based on common sense. Grasslanders find it hard to understand Chen Zhen's love for the wolf, his affection for the wolf cub, and the fact that he endures all kinds of hardships to raise the wolf cub. In their eyes, he is 'a man blind to reason' who should be looked down upon (Jiang 2004: 282). Some educated youth makes sarcastic remarks that he has become wolf since he raised the wolf cub, which is actually to the point, but the 'wolf' he becomes is not the 'molar' wolf in the traditional sense.

Becoming-wolf is an example of what Deleuze (and Guattari) call 'the line of flight', which aims to deterritorialise the binary opposition of man/animal, thus making humans escape from all the requirements and constraints imposed by human culture and civilisation, allowing them

to regain the 'impersonal, nonorganic life'. In *Wolf Totem*, we can see becoming-wolf escapes from all the constraints imposed on the law-abiding and obedient people by Confucian culture. After Emperor Wu in the Han Dynasty proscribed all non-Confucian schools of thought and espoused Confucianism as the orthodox State ideology, Confucianism is adopted by nearly all the later ruling classes. Confucian thought rules the country by three cardinal guides (ruler guides subjects, father guides son and husband guides wife) and five constant virtues (benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and fidelity), which requires subject, son and wife to obey ruler, father and husband absolutely, and requires all subjects to be law-abiding and obedient, to obey their rules. The Song Confucianists even put forward as a goal 'to eradicate human desires and maintain the heavenly principles', which aims to turn subjects into obedient and submissive sheep, and eradicate the wolf nature of being disobedient, upholding freedom, independence and dignity. Therefore, to become wolf is to eradicate the sheepish nature of Han Chinese – submissive and unconditionally obedient – to be like 'molecular' wolves, pursuing freedom, independence and dignity, therefore allowing them to regain the 'impersonal, inorganic life' and continuously carry out desiring productions, thus continuously enhancing their life power.

'Impersonal, inorganic life' is 'inorganic, germinal and intensive, a powerful body without organs' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 499), which is productive, creative and free-floating desire, which makes man continuously become other, thus enhancing his life power. This 'impersonal, inorganic life' is not limited to any individual life form or non-life form, but is a creative power possessed by Matter which can organise itself. This power makes Matter continuously produce, thus bringing about a variety of individual life forms and non-life forms. It is through becoming-wolf that Chen Zhen regains this 'impersonal, inorganic life' again, thus enhancing his life power:

> Since becoming bewitched by the grassland wolves, Chen felt that his already listless, weary blood had weakened further and that what seemed to be alien wolf blood had begun to flow in his vein . . . he treasured it even as it became more vigorous and fulfilling. (Jiang 2008: 267).

He began to 'feel fulfilling in both body and soul, and wild and vigorous blood began to flow in his vein' (Jiang 2004: 282); each time he sat down by the cub, he felt as if 'wilderness filled his heart, and he received a transfusion of roiling wolf blood, and the vigorous life in him began to swell' (347).

Therefore, becoming-wolf is not to imitate the 'molar' wolves' cruelty, relentlessness, greed and wickedness, but to see or imagine what affects and percepts they possess, to form a zone of proximity with them, thus making the life force or the assumed life force possessed by them transverse man himself, and make him have various affects possessed by them. Becoming-wolf is to find a line of flight between man and wolf, to escape from all the prescriptions and requirements imposed on people by Chinese Confucian philosophy and culture, thus regaining the 'impersonal, inorganic life', and enhancing man's life power by continuously becoming other. Through Deleuze and Guattari's concept of becoming animal, we can see that *Wolf Totem* is not a novel which advocates 'molar' wolf's characteristics such as violence, brutality, bloodthirstiness, the law of the jungle and the law of profiting at others' expense, but a novel which reveals to its readers a completely new life experience. It shows the different affects possessed by the 'molecular' wolf and the possibility of a becoming-wolf of human beings. Based on Deleuze's thoughts on literature, good literature is that which affirms the 'impersonal, inorganic life', allows it to continuously carry out its desiring productions, thus continuously creating new life experiences, new percepts and affects. In light of this, we can say that *Wolf Totem* is a great novel.

Notes

1. This paper is part of the research results of 'A Study on Gilles Deleuze's Literary Critical Thought' (11YJC752035), Youth Project of Humanities and Social Sciences, supported by the Ministry of Education of People's Republic of China.
2. The English version of *Wolf Totem* deletes many passages from the original Chinese version. When there is no English translation, I have quoted from the Chinese version and provide my own translations.

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Nomadic Ethics

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Abstract

Deleuze's ethics constitutes the core of his philosophy, which proposes a post-humanistic but robust nomadic vision of the subject that respects the complexity of our times while avoiding the pitfalls of postmodern and other forms of relativism. Deleuze's neo-Spinozist ethics rests on an active relational ontology that looks for the ways in which otherness prompts, mobilises and allows for flows of affirmation of values and forces which are not yet sustained by the current conditions. Insofar as the conditions need to be brought about or actualised by collective efforts to induce qualitative transformations in our interactions, it requires the praxis of affirmative ethics. The process of becoming-minor, which necessarily involves becoming-woman, is central to this pragmatic ethical project that includes human as well as non-human actors. This paper addresses this ethics in terms of ontological relationality, affectivity and endurance.

Keywords: Deleuze, ethics, becoming-minor, becoming-woman, nomadic subjectivity, relational ontology, affirmative ethics, non-human, endurance, affect

I. Introduction

The question of becoming-woman and hence the status of the feminine are central to Deleuze's ethics, which both in his specific monographs on Spinoza's thought and the more extensive engagement with affirmative nomadic ontology, constitutes the core of his philosophy.

Deleuze's radical ontological relationality is neutral in terms of moral norms, but it calls for active engagement in the project of

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producing affirmative ethical values. Deleuze's immanence firmly locates the practice of affirmation in the exteriority, the cruel, messy outsideness of Life itself. Creative chaos, however, is not chaotic, but it is rather the virtual formation of all possible forms (Deleuze 1969). Life is not an a priori that gets individuated in single instances, but it is immanent to and thus coincides with its multiple material actualisations. I refer to this generative force as 'zoe', which is the opposite of Agamben's 'bare life', in that it is a creative force that constructs possible futures.

A nomadic Deleuzian ethics prioritises relation, praxis and complexity as its key components. It accordingly promotes a triple shift. Firstly, it emphasises a radical ethics of transformation in opposition to the normative moral protocols of Kantian universalism. It assumes that ethics is not morality, in that it is not confined to the realm of rights, distributive justice or the law. Ethics is rather the discourse about forces, desires and values that act as empowering modes of becoming.

Secondly, it shifts the focus from a unitary and rationality-driven consciousness to an ontology of process, that is to say, ontological relationality. Otherness is approached accordingly as the expression of a productive limit, or generative threshold, which calls for an always already compromised set of negotiations. Nomadic theory prefers to look for the ways in which otherness prompts, mobilises and allows for flows of affirmation of values and forces which are not yet sustained by the current social and historical conditions. Insofar as the conditions need to be brought about or actualised by collective efforts to induce qualitative transformations in our interactions, they require a pragmatic approach. The praxis of affirmative ethics actualises virtual possibilities and therefore constructs possible futures starting from here and now. This constructive approach transforms the negative conditions of the present into productive preconditions for affirmative practice.

Thirdly, it disengages the emergence of the subject from the logic of negation and attaches subjectivity to affirmative otherness. This makes reciprocity into a gesture of creation, not as the struggle for the recognition of Sameness. An ethically empowering relation to others aims at increasing one's *potentia* or empowering force and creates joyful energy in the process. The conditions that encourage such a quest involve processes of transformation aiming at affirming positivity.

Philosophical nomadism therefore shares Nietzsche's distaste for morality as sets of negative, resentful and life-denying reactive passions. This approach is replaced with Spinoza's ethics of joyful affirmation, which implies accountability, situatedness, and the composition of common planes of active collaborative ethical conduct (Lloyd 1994;

1996). Woman, as the privileged site of otherness, is a key component of this affirmative process of counter-actualisation, or intensive becoming.

II. Becoming-woman

Nomadic theory expresses a process ontology that privileges change and motion over stability. This is also rendered in terms of a general becoming-minority, or becoming-nomad, or becoming-molecular/woman/animal, and so on. The minority is the dynamic or intensive principle of change in nomadic theory, whereas the heart of the (phallogocentric) Majority is static, self-replicating and sterile.

Insofar as man represents the Majority, there is no creative or affirmative 'becoming-man': the dominant subject is stuck with the burden of self-perpetuating Being and the task of keeping up existing patterns. This static orientation acquires a schizoid character in the context of advanced capitalism. This is a 'spinning machine' that fabricates quantitative proliferations of objects, commodities and data which leave the power structures unchanged and unchallenged. A logic of quantitative multiplications – multiples of One – constitutes the core of the political economy of contemporary capitalism. This system has no single centre, but a scattered web of poly-located centres, which punctuate the global economy. Their task is to keep capital flowing in profit-oriented directions. No qualitative value or concern is allowed to stand in the way of profit. Nomadic thought opposes to this self-interested, greedy system an ethics of qualitative transformations, becoming-minor, which rests on the recognition of complexity and affirmation and challenges existing power structures.

By extension this scheme also implies that the subjects of power – the various empirical minorities (women, children, black people, natives, animals, plants, seeds, molecules, and so on) – are the privileged starting point for active and empowering processes of transformative becoming. There is no becoming of the centre, but only away from it. This process, however, is anything but automatic.

The marginal subjects who inhabit the multiple locations of devalued difference have their own task cut out for them, insofar as they too often tend to be caught in dialectical relationships of submission, frozen by the paralysing gaze of the master – hating him or her and envying him or her at the same time. For instance, in order to shift from this dialectically binding location, the feminist subject needs to activate different counter-memories and actualise alternative political practices. Becoming-nomadic means that one learns to reinvent oneself and to

desire the self as a process of qualitative transformation. Becoming-minor rests on a non-unitary yet politically engaged and ethically accountable vision of the nomadic subject. Both the Majority and the minorities need to overcome the Dialectic of Majority/Minority or Master/Slave and untie the knots of envy (negative desire) and domination (dialectics) that bind them so tightly. In this process, they will necessarily follow asymmetrical lines of becoming, given that their starting positions are so different. For the Majority, there is no possible becoming-other than in the undoing of its central position altogether. The centre is void; all the action is on the margins.

For the real-life minorities, however, the pattern is different: women, black people, youths, postcolonial subjects, migrants, exiles and homeless may first need to go through a phase of 'identity politics' – of claiming a fixed location or a majoritarian position. This is both inevitable and necessary because, as I have often argued, you cannot give up something you have never had (Braidotti 1991). Nor can you dispose nomadically of a subject position that you have never controlled to begin with. I think consequently that the process of becoming-nomad (-minority, -woman) is internally differentiated and it depends largely on where one starts off from. The politics of location is crucial. In other words, heterogeneity is injected into both poles of the dialectical opposition, which gets undone accordingly. The 'Molar' line – that of Being, identity, fixity and *potestas*, and the 'Molecular' line – that of becoming, nomadic subjectivity and *potentia* – are absolutely not the same. They are two dissymmetrical 'others', although within phallogocentrism they have been captured in a dualistic mould. They are differentiated by structural inequalities that impose Sameness in a set of hierarchical relations. Deleuze defines the Molar/Majority as the standard and the Molecular/Minority as the other in the sense of 'the other of the same'. The central challenge to nomadic philosophy, however, is how to undo this dualistic mode and redistribute the power relations of the two terms. More important than either of them, therefore, is the Line of Flight or of becoming. This is always and only a becoming-minor as in woman/child/animal/imperceptible.

This is an internally differentiated movement which overthrows the oppositional dialectics in a parallel yet asymmetrical move: 'There is no subject of the becoming except as a deterritorialized variable of the majority; there is no medium of becoming except as a deterritorialized variable of a minority' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 292).

Thus, an asymmetrical starting position between minority and majority – centre and margins – needs to be strongly emphasised here

(Braidotti 2011a). This means that the process of de-territorialisation is dual and the quantitative minorities can undergo the process of becoming only by disengaging themselves from the unitary identity as others, which is imposed by their opposition to the majority. It is in this sense that Woman as 'the second sex' or 'the other of the Same' needs to 'become-woman' in the molecular sense of the process, or 'the other of the Other', as Irigaray put it (Irigaray 1974).

Hence the imperative to become-woman as the first move in the de-territorialisation of the dominant subject (also known as the feminisation of Man). For those who start from the position of empirical minorities, on the other hand, more options are open. If the pull towards assimilation or integration into the Majority is strong for the minorities (hence the phenomenon of phallic women), so is the appeal of the lines of escape towards minor becomings. In other words, you can have a becoming-woman that produces Lady Thatcher and one that produces Lady Gaga: neither of them is 'feminine' in any conventional sense of the term and yet they are as different from each other as the workhorse is from the racehorse.

What matters here is to keep open the process of becoming-minor and not to stop at the dialectical role-reversal that usually sees the former slave in the position of new master or the former mistress in the position of dominatrix. We need to go beyond the logic of dialectical reversibility. This is especially important for those social subjects – women, black people, postcolonial and other 'others' – who are the carriers of the hopes of the Minorities. The process of becoming-nomadic is not merely anti-essentialist, but also a-subjective, beyond received notions of individuality. It is a transpersonal mode, ultimately collective. You can never be a nomad; you can only go on trying to become nomadic.

One must indeed start from somewhere specific: a grounded and accountable location, and the process of becoming is a time bomb placed at the very heart of the social and symbolic system which has welded together Being, Subjectivity, Masculinity, compulsory Heterosexuality and (Western) ethnocentrism. The different becomings are lines cutting open this space and demanding from us constant remapping: every time it is a question of finding the new coordinates. This is not only a spatial but also a temporal phenomenon. Crucial to this entire process of becoming-molecular, in fact, is the question of memory (*la mémoire*). The Majority – white, heterosexual, property-owning and male – is a huge data bank of centralised knowledge, which is relayed through every aspect of his activities. The Majority Subject holds the keys to the

central memory of the system and has reduced to the rank of insignificant practices, the alternative or subjugated memories of the many minorities. The line of becoming for the Majority is consequently an anti-memory, which instead of bringing back in a linear order specific memories (*les souvenirs*), functions as a de-territorialising agency that dislodges the subject from his or her sense of unified and consolidated identity.

A nomadic, non-linear philosophy of time as a zigzagging line of internally fractured coalitions of dynamic subjects-in-becoming supports a very creative reading of memory and of its close relationship to the imagination. This is especially important in the case of negative or traumatic memories of pain, wound or abuse. This sort of negative capital is an integral component of the consciousness of historically marginalised or oppressed subjects. The pain and negativity that structure the oppositional consciousness of the 'minorities' are a crucial concern for nomadic political theory and practice. While acknowledging this particular location – as a wounded memory of pain as well as a historically grounded space – nomadic political subjectivity defines the political as the gesture that aims at transcending the present state of affairs and empowering creative 'counter-actualisations', or transformative alternatives.

The corollary of this notion of time and of the political is that the specifically grounded memories of the minorities are not just static splinters of negativity forever inscribed in the flesh of the victims of history. Molecular or nomadic memories are also and more especially a creative force that gives the minorities – or 'wretched of the earth' as Fanon put it – a head start towards the world historical task of envisaging alternative world orders and more humane and sustainable social systems. It comes down to a double-consciousness of both the multiple axes of oppression and hence of hurt, humiliation and pain, as well as the creative force they can generate as motors of transversal and collective transformation.

Please note, however, that, whereas in classical dialectics the empirical minorities are automatically positioned as the motor of historical developments and the guiding principle of revolutionary action and ethical agency, in nomadic politics this is not the case. The negative capital of oppression is just a privileged starting point for a process of transmutation of values – to use Nietzsche's rather more heroic rendition of the same idea – that encompasses the minorities themselves: they have to become-minor as well. They also need to activate their memories against the black hole of dialectical counter-identity claims as well as against the grain of the dominant vision of the subject.

This type of nomadic remembrance is not identity-bound, or ego-indexed, but rather impersonal, or post-identitarian. It is linked to a radical process of de-familiarisation or dis-identification from dominant representational and even self-representational practices. What is at stake in the nomadic theory of becoming is a critique of the centre from the centre. All becomings are minor, that is to say, they inevitably and necessarily move into the direction of the 'others' of classical dualism – dis-placing them and re-territorialising them in the process, but always and only on a temporal basis.

Becoming-woman/animal/insect is an affect that flows, like writing; it is a composition, a location that needs to be constructed together with, that is to say, in the encounter with others. Becomings push the subject to his or her limits, in a constant encounter with external, different others. The nomadic subject as a non-unitary entity is simultaneously self-propelling and hetero-defined, that is to say, outward-bound.

Therefore, it is in the worst possible conceptual taste to even think of being able to separate out the becoming-woman from the other unfolding and deploying of multiple becomings. The process of becoming-nomadic is rather a zigzagging itinerary of successive but not linear steps that, starting from 'becoming-woman', marks different thresholds or patterns of 'becoming-minor' that cross through the animal and go into the 'becoming-imperceptible' and beyond.

'Becoming-woman' is integral to the concept and process of becoming, but there are no systematic, linear or teleological stages or phases of becoming. Each plateau marks a framed and sustainable block or moment of immanently actualised transformations. Thinking across these processes remains the central challenge for critical thought.

III. Minorities and Becoming-minor

There is a positive and creative tension between the identitarian claims of political movements that are grounded in the historical experience of oppression and the empirical transcendental aspirations of nomadic theory to postulate a new collective transversal bond through multiple processes of becoming.

As I asserted earlier, insofar as Man, the male, is the main referent for thinking subjectivity, the standard-bearer of the Norm, the Law, the Logos, Woman is dualistically, that is, oppositionally positioned as his 'other'. The consequence is that there is no possible becoming-minority of man and that the becoming-woman is a privileged position for the minority-consciousness of all. Man as the privileged referent of

subjectivity, the standard-bearer of the norm/law/logos represents the majority, that is, the dead heart of the system. The consequences are on the one hand that masculinity is antithetical to the process of becoming and it can only be the site of deconstruction or critique; and on the other hand, the becoming-woman is a fundamental step in the process of becoming, for both and for all sexes.

This creates an unresolved knot in Deleuze's relation to the becoming-woman and the feminine, which I have analysed extensively elsewhere (Braidotti 2002; 2006; 2011b). It has to do with a double pull, between on the one hand empowering a generalised 'becoming-woman' as the pre-requisite for all other becomings and, on the other hand, calling for its transcendence and worrying about the potentially despotic effect of such a priority or pole position attributed to women.

On the one hand, the becoming-minority/nomad/molecular/bodies without organs/woman starts from the feminine; on the other hand, it is posited as the general figuration for a process of transformation. Deleuzian becomings emphasise the generative powers of complex and multiple states of transition between, beneath and beyond the metaphysical anchoring points that are the masculine and feminine. But they do not quite solve the issue of their interaction.

Deleuze's work displays a great empathy with the feminist assumption that we have to start from the critique of phallocentrism. Insofar as woman is positioned dualistically – as the other – in this system, she is annexed to the phallus, albeit by negation. In this sense and in this sense only can it be said that sexual difference is the primary axis of differentiation and therefore must be given priority. On the other hand, nomadic theory aims at a tendency to dilute metaphysical difference into a multiple and undifferentiated becoming. Which prompts my question: what feminist politics follow from nomadic theory's emphasis on nomadic becomings?

Deleuze comes down on the side of basic feminist epistemological distinction between Woman as representation and women as concrete agents of experience, and ends up making analogous distinctions internal to the category of woman herself. Hence also Deleuze's explicit support for a feminist political position:

> It is, of course, indispensable for women to conduct a molar politics, with a view to winning back their own organism, their own history, their own subjectivity [. . .]. But it is dangerous to confine oneself to such a subject, which does not function without drying up a spring or stopping a flow. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 276)

In spite of such evident support for women's uphill struggle towards achieving full subjectivity, with human and citizenship rights, Deleuze opposes to the 'majority/sedentary/molar' vision of woman as the structural operator of the phallogocentric system the woman as 'becoming/minority/molecular/nomadic'.

The nomadic or intensive horizon is a sexuality 'beyond gender' in the sense of being dispersed, not binary, multiple, not dualistic, interconnected, not dialectical and in a constant flux, not fixed. This idea is expressed in figurations like: 'polysexuality', the 'molecular woman' and the 'bodies without organs' to which Deleuze's de-phallic style actively contributes. This is nomadic queer theory.

Thus, the becoming-woman is necessarily the starting point insofar as the over-emphasis on masculine sexuality; compulsory reproductive heterosexuality; the persistence of sexual dualism and the positioning of woman as the privileged figure of otherness, are constitutive of Western subject-positions. In other words, 'becoming-woman' triggers off the deconstruction of phallic identity through a set of deconstructive steps that re-trace backwards, so as to undo them, different stages of the social-symbolic construction of this and other differences.

IV. Deleuze's Critique of Feminism

Deleuze uses also his theory of the becoming-woman of women as the basis for a critique of identity-based feminist politics. All transformative politics should be about becoming-minor and to dissolve the subject 'woman' into a series of processes geared towards a generalised and 'gender-free' becoming. In other words, it is important to keep in mind the broader picture in order to avoid micro-despotisms and the repetition of power concentrations within the minorities.

Feminists, in other words, are conceptually mistaken, though their political heart may be in the right place, when they argue for a specifically feminine sexuality: exclusive emphasis on the feminine is restrictive. Deleuze suggests that feminists should instead draw on the multi-sexed structure of the subject and reclaim all the sexes of which women have been deprived:

> For us [. . .] there are as many sexes as there are terms in symbiosis, as many differences as elements contributing to a process of contagion. We know that many beings pass between a man and a woman; they come from different worlds, are born on the wind, form rhizomes around roots; they cannot be understood in terms of production, only in terms of becoming. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 242)

These different degrees of becoming are diagrams of subject-positions, typologies of ideas, politically informed maps, variations on intensive states. Multiplicity does not reproduce one single model – as in the Platonic mode – but rather creates and multiplies differences.

Ultimately, what Deleuze finds objectionable in feminist theory is that it perpetuates flat repetitions of dominant values or identities, which it claims to have repossessed dialectically. This amounts to perpetuate reactive, molar or majority-thinking: in Nietzsche's scale of values, feminists have a slave-morality. For Deleuze, feminists would be subversive if, in their becoming, they contributed both socially and theoretically to constructing a non-Oedipal woman, by freeing the multiple possibilities of desire meant as positivity and affirmation. This new general configuration of the feminine as the post-, or rather un-Oedipal subject of becoming, is explicitly opposed to what Deleuze constructs as the feminist configuration of a new universal based on female specificity or rather an exacerbation of the sexual dichotomy. The former aims at de-essentialised forms of radical embodiment; the latter to strategically re-essentialised embodiment.

V. Sexuality beyond Gender

In contrast to Deleuze's ambivalence about feminist politics, feminism strikes a clearer note. Nomadic feminism stresses the theft of the complex, polymorphous and perverse sexuality – in women and in all – and its reduction through the capture of a majoritarian scheme of sexuality that privileges heterosexuality.

As a consequence, nomadic feminism, resting on a relational monistic political ontology, shifts the focus away from the sex/gender distinction, bringing sexuality as process into full focus. The redundancy of the sex/gender distinction for feminist philosophies of the subject had been noted by English-speaking feminists working in Continental philosophy, like Gatens (1991), Grosz (1999), Butler (1991) and Braidotti (1991). Contemporary feminist philosophers argue the same case on different grounds. A renewed emphasis on sexuality, as opposed to classical or queer theories of sex and gender, emerges from the shift of perspective introduced by matter-realist feminism.

In what could be described as a classical exposition of Deleuzian feminism, Gatens and Lloyd (1999) argue that the political ontology of monism, which Deleuze adapts from Spinoza, offers some relevant opportunities for feminist theory. Mind–body parallelism, as opposed to Cartesian dualism, can be rendered in terms of simultaneous effects.

These entail the embodiment of mind as much as the 'embrainment of matter'. There is only one substance: an intelligent flesh-mind-matter compound. This implies that bodily differences are both a banality and a cornerstone in the process of differentiation of variation. The resonances between this feminist project and Deleuze's nomadism are many and many-fold.

Lloyd argues that the parallelism between mind and body and the intrinsically affective or conatus-driven vision of the subject implies that different bodies have different degrees and levels of power and force of understanding. This has clear implications for sexual difference. Given that, on a Spinozist account, the mind is nothing more than the actual idea of the body, sexual difference can reach into the mind as the mind is not independent of the body in which it is situated. If bodies are differently sexed, so are minds.

Lloyd emphasises the extent to which Spinoza recognises that there are distinctive powers and pleasures associated with different kinds of bodies, which then are enacted in different minds. Thus, a female body cannot fail to affect a female mind. Spinoza's mind is not neutral and this, according to Lloyd, has great potential for a feminist theory of female subjectivity that aims at avoiding the essentialist trap of a genuine female nature, while rejecting the idea of the neutrality of the mind.

Although Spinoza gives in to the traditionally subordinate vision of women of his times, and thus excludes women from the polity, Lloyd is careful in pointing out the liberatory potential of Spinoza's monistic vision of the embodied nature of the mind. Its worth can be measured most effectively in comparison with the Cartesian dualistic vision of the mind–body dichotomy, which historically proved more damaging for women than his idea of the sex-neutrality of the mind.

What a female nature is must consequently be determined in each case and cannot be spelled out a priori, because each embodied compound has its own specificity. This is due to the fact that, in a neo-Spinozist perspective, embodied subjects are constituted by encounters with other forces in patterns of affinity or dissonance that gives them very clear configurations which cannot be known in advance.

By extension, they also expose the absurdity of any political project that would aim at 'undoing gender' (Butler 2004). To undo gender would mean to unmake bodies, and much as this aspiration fits in with the consumerist logic of advanced bio-capitalism, it makes very little sense politically.

If for Lloyd and Gatens sexual difference is not a problematic issue, in that it remains of great relevance, for Claire Colebrook (2000) it

is no longer a problem. Sexual difference poses the question of the conditions of possibility for thought as a self-originating system of representation of itself as the ultimate presence. Thus, sexual difference produces subjectivity in general.

According to Colebrook, Deleuze's emphasis on the productive and positive force of difference is troublesome for feminist theory insofar as it challenges the foundational value of sexual difference (Colebrook 2000; 2002). The advantage of a Deleuzian approach is that the emphasis shifts from the metaphysics to the ethics of sexual difference. Deleuze's brand of philosophical pragmatism questions whether sexual difference demands a metaphysics at all.

Colebrook wants to shift the grounds of the debate away from metaphysical foundations to a philosophy of immanence that stresses the need to create new concepts. This creative gesture is a way of responding to the given, to experience, and is thus linked to the notion of the event. The creation of concepts is itself experience or experimentation. There is a double implication here: firstly, that philosophy need not be seen as the master discourse or the unavoidable horizon of thought: artistic and scientific practices have their role to play as well. Secondly, given that ethical questions do not require a metaphysics, the feminist engagement with concepts need not be critical but can be inventive and creative. In other words, experimenting with thinking is what we all need to learn.

This emphasis on the productive nature of desire and the view of sexuality as the vital force that de-territorialises gender and its binary system is the signature of nomadic feminism. Sexuality as the complex, multi-layered force that produces encounters, resonances and relations of all sorts cannot be contained in the power (*potestas*) structures of the dialectic masculine/feminine. It is rather an active space of empowerment (*potentia*) and becoming that is capable of producing spaces of intimacy, experimentation and relation to others.

Sexual difference no longer coincides with the rather narrow field of anatomical and sociological differences between the sexes. This is what I analysed elsewhere (Braidotti 2011a) as the first level of difference. Nor does it stop at level two of the differentiation process – the differences among different categories of women and three – the differences *within* each singular woman. A nomadic process of sexual differing is a permanent fracture and it is a block of becoming positioned outside the gender system, which mobilises untapped forces and energies and sets them to the task of sustaining processes of de-territorialisation.

Given that the only ethical question is the activation of affirmative and sustainable alternatives – then the force of an ethical relation consists

in supporting the actualisation of virtual possibilities geared to the empowerment of higher and larger forms of interrelation with multiple others. If 'empower us to act' is the ethical injunction of nomadic subjectivity, then sexuality as one of the strongest modes of encounters is the necessary premise to the enlargement of one's fields of perception and capacity to encounter and sustain the impact with others. The vitalist force of matter-realist feminism locates sexuality as a concrete and vital resource to both de-centre the individual ego and de-link desire from the restrictions of a gender system that is instrumental to the bio-political management and disciplining of bodies.

The wager is how to bring sexuality to allow the unfolding of ever-intensifying affects and thus to construct sustainable futures of and as becoming-other. Desire as the productive, de-territorialising force of radical encounters is post-identitarian and impersonal. It designs new landscapes of relationality around the face of the beloved, and thus it cannot be restricted to the mere human persona that enacts it. What is needed as the end result of the shift of perspective is a post-individual and non-anthropocentric theory of desire that may do justice to the complexity of materialist and vital nomadic subjects of becoming.

VI. Conclusion: For Nomadic Feminism

Feminist theory constitutes one of the most significant theoretical innovations, in what later became known as 'radical immanence' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987). Let me spell out the main reasons for this parallel.

To start with, let us look at the ethical and political underpinnings of Deleuzian feminism. Feminist theory and practice situates embodiment and hence sexuality, affectivity, empathy and desire as core values in the discussion about the politics of contemporary non-unitary subjects. This feminist philosophical critique of political subjectivity rests on two ideas. The first is the emphasis on the embodied and embedded nature of the subject, which results in unlimited confidence in lived experience. This translates in the politics of everyday life and renewed interest in the present. One has to think global, but act local. The second key argument is a focus on the dynamic interaction of Sameness and Difference. 'Difference' is not a neutral category, but a term that indexes exclusion from the entitlements to subjectivity. The equation of difference with pejoration is built into the tradition which defines the Subject as coinciding with/being the same as consciousness, rationality and self-regulating ethical behaviour. This results in making entire

sections of living beings into marginal and disposable bodies: these are the sexualised, racialised and naturalised others (Braidotti 2006).

Equally central is the focus on power as both restrictive (*potestas*) and productive (*potentia*) force. It also means that power formations are both monuments and documents – as Foucault teaches us – in that they are expressed in social institutions and in systems of representation, narratives and modes of identification (1975). They are both bound historical categories and flows of boundless energy – as Deleuze and Guattari teach us. Far from resulting in a suspension of political and moral action, the subtlety of this analysis of power becomes the starting point to elaborate suitable sites of political activity. Nomadic thought is the socio-political branch of complexity theory.

Furthermore, the emphasis on the politics of happiness or of feeling at home in one's culture – far from being a regression into narcissism – is an incisive comment on the mindless confrontation of dominant morality and social order. As such it encourages the counter-actualisation of different political economies of affect and desire. The pursuit of political felicity is collective, not individualistic and free of profit motivations, being elevated to the gratuitous tasks of constructing social horizons of hope.

This combination of critical acumen and creative potency is what I value most in feminist practice. Feminism put it clearly by voicing the need for a 'double-edged vision' of critique and creativity (Kelly 1979) that goes beyond complaint and denunciation, to offer empowering alternatives.

The ethical lesson of feminism is that there is no logical necessity to link political subjectivity to oppositional consciousness and reduce them both to negativity. Political activism can be all the more effective if it disengages the process of consciousness-raising from negativity and connects it instead to creative affirmation. In terms of the crucial relationship to sameness and Difference, this means that the dialectical opposition is replaced by the recognition of the ways in which otherness prompts, mobilises and engenders actualisation of virtual potentials. These are by definition not contained in the present conditions and cannot emerge from them. They have to be brought about or generated creatively by a qualitative leap of the collective imaginary.

Feminism draws a crucial distinction between the political and politics. Feminist theorists – from Beauvoir (1949) to Haraway (1990) and beyond – have distanced themselves from the nefarious illusion of revolutionary purity, which engenders inevitable flirtations with violence. They were equally suspicious, however, of the universalist

humanistic assumptions and the claim to human rights, or the self-correcting validity of human reason. They stress instead the need for a change of scale, to unveil power relations where they are most effective and invisible: in the specific locations of one's own intellectual and social practice. One has to start from micro-instances of embodied and embedded self and the complex web of social relations that compose the self.

This double emphasis on vulnerability to sovereign power on the one hand and despotic power relations on the other is crucial to a nomadic approach to the political. Activism as a frame of mind consists in connecting philosophy not so much to Politics – as in '*LA politique*' (organised or Majoritarian politics), as to the political – '*LE politique*' (the political movement in its diffuse, nomadic and rhizomic forms of becoming).

This distinction between politics and the political is of crucial importance; in the work of Michel Foucault it is postulated along the double axis of power as restrictive or coercive (*potestas*) and as empowering and productive (*potentia*). The former focuses on the management of civil society and its institutions, the latter on the transformative experimentation with new arts of existence and ethical relations. Politics is made of progressive emancipatory measures predicated on chronological continuity, whereas the political is the radical self-styling that requires the circular time of critical praxis.

In an even more grounded and ascetic tone, Deleuze and Guattari set the desire for transformations or becomings at the centre of the agenda. The crucial distinction for nomadic theory is that of the axes of time and the qualitative degree of affectivity they sustain. Politics is postulated on Chronos – the necessarily linear time of institutional deployment of norms and protocols. It is a reactive and majority-bound enterprise that is often made of flat repetitions and predictable reversals that may alter the balance but leave basically untouched the structure of power.

The political, on the other hand, is postulated on the axis of Aion – the time of becoming and of affirmative critical practice. It is minor and it aims at the counter-actualisation of alternative states of affairs in relation to the present. Based on the principle that we do not know what a body can do, the becoming-political ultimately aims at transformations in the very structures of subjectivity. It is about engendering and sustaining processes of 'becoming-minor'. This specific sensibility combines a strong historical memory with consciousness and the desire for resistance. It rejects the sanctimonious, dogmatic tone of dominant ideologies, Left or Right of the political spectrum,

in favour of a production of joyful acts of transformation. The spontaneous and creative aspects of this practice combine with a profound form of asceticism, that is to say, with an ethics of non-profit to build upon micro-political instances of activism, avoiding over-arching generalisations. This humble yet experimental approach to changing our collective modes of relation to the environment, social and other, is the most pragmatic manifestation of the politics of radical immanence.

The feminist movement is the perfect example of the political in the nomadic sense of the term. Of all the social movements of that period, the women's movement in particular illustrates the self-organising capacity, the organisational energy and the visionary force of a leaderless structure. Historically, the second feminist wave of the 1970s not only was based on the critique of the false universality of the liberal democratic system and the failed promises of its exclusionary humanism; it also interrogated the entrenched masculinism of the allegedly radical Left and of its leaders. Propelled by collectively shared aspirations to freedom, the respect of diversity, the desire for social and symbolic justice, and the 'politics of everyday life', 1970s feminism was a passionate, humorous and politically rigorous movement. Disrespectful of dominant norms, but aware of its responsibility for the masses of women whose rage and vision it embodied, the collective endeavour of the women's movement is one of the most successful political experiments of the twentieth century.

Nomadic feminism is built on the politics of desire as the positive affirmation of a collectively shared longing for plenitude and the actualisation of one's potential, regardless of sex, race, class or sexual preferences. A political form of felicity, this radical aspiration to freedom aimed to confront and demolish the established, institutionalised form of gender identities and the power relations they actualise. The aim of nomadic feminism is the actualisation of a virtual feminine, the structures and parameters of which are to be negotiated and sustained collectively.

Nomadic feminism also renews the task of critical theory. Deleuze (1953; 1962) redefines philosophy in the 'problematic' mode as the constant questioning of the humanistic 'image of thought' at work in most of our ideas with the aim to destabilise them in the 'nomadic' mode.

Deleuze redefines philosophy instead as a radical form of immanence, thus stressing the affective political passions which sustain the theoretical process. Accordingly, Deleuzian feminists are critical of rationality as the dominant vision of the subject and as a human ideal, but, rejecting both the plaintive mode of nostalgia and the glorification of the aporetic,

nomadic feminists propose instead a radical redefinition of thinking as the activity that consists in the act of creation of new forms of thought and of collective experiments with ways of actualising them.

This engagement with the present – and the spirit of the times – sets the political agenda in a variety of realms, ranging from sexuality and kinship systems to religious and discursive practices. The analyses of these themes are transmitted through narratives – mythologies or fictions, which I have renamed as 'figurations' (Braidotti 2002; 2006), or cartographies of the present. A cartography is a politically informed map of one's historical and social locations, to enable the analysis of situated formations of power and hence the elaboration of adequate forms of resistance. Michel Foucault worked extensively on the notion of genealogy or counter-memories as a tool to draw the 'diagrams of the present' in his analysis of the micro-physics of power in post-industrial societies (1975). Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari also stressed the importance of immanent analyses of the singular actualisations of concrete power-formations (Deleuze and Guattari 1987).

Independently of these philosophical notions, feminism also pioneered this method through the practice of the politics of locations (Rich 1985) as a method for grounding activism. It also perfected the strategy of positive renaming and re-signification of the subject. A location is an embedded and embodied memory: it is a set of counter-memories, which are activated by the resisting thinkers against the grain of the dominant social representations of subjectivity. A location is a materialist temporal and spatial site of co-production of the subjects in their diversity. Locations provide the ground for political and ethical accountability. Remembrance, cartographies of locations, political (dis-)identifications and strategic re-configurations are the tools for consciousness-raising which were devised by transformative epistemologies such as feminism and race theory.

In a nomadic perspective, the 'feminine' is neither one essentialised entity nor an immediately accessible one: it is rather both an embodied and embedded location and a site of intensive becoming. It is the effect of a project, a political and conceptual project of transcending the traditional ('Molar') subject position of Woman. This transcendence, however, occurs through the flesh, into embodied locations and not in a flight away from them.

Femininity is caught in the double bind of late postmodernity by being simultaneously 'Other' (of the same) and fully mainstream and integrated in the Majority. Woman today is both the pathetic and despotic face of white femininity and the scapegoat sacrificial victim of a

phallocentric political ontology that requires her symbolic absence and her social marginalisation. Becoming-nomadic points towards fruitful paths of qualitative transformation.

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The Melodic Landscape: Chinese Mountains in Painting-Poetry and Deleuze/Guattari's Refrains

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Abstract

By melodic landscape, this paper points to natural milieus such as mountains whose motifs are caught up in contrapuntal relations. With Merleau-Ponty, the structure of the world is a symphony, and the production of life which implicates both organism and environment as unfurling of *Umwelt* is 'a melody that sings itself'. For the Chinese culture, mountains have been deemed virtuous in Confucianism, immortal by Daoists, and spiritual for a Buddhist to reach a substrate level of pure stream of a-subjective consciousness. A Chinese painter-poet within the 'mountain-water' genre would consider mountains as performance of events, a concert of vibration of light, shape and sound, movement and rest. Insofar as art is to create energy transfer, Chinese artists of mountains aim at concerting with nature as organised by rhythms and conspecifics, unfolding contrapuntal melodies with all kinds of counterpoints. As Deleuze and Guattari's notion of refrains are the three forces or tempos of chaos, earth and world confronting/converging one another, this paper endeavours to find out, first, how Deleuze and Guattari's geological, organic and alloplastic stratifications can be put alongside mountains, animals, plants and arts, and second, how this notion can contribute to our new appreciation of the way Chinese mountains in arts can give out music.

Keywords: mountain-water painting, Daoism, events, refrain, ecosophy

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The *shān shui* (山水) (mountain-water) poetry and paintings have been a main achievement in the history of classical Chinese arts.[1] Numerous works in both have presented mountains as their unique motif and a whole tradition of what can now be referred to as 'ecoaesthetics' has been closely related to 'how' mountains are presented and what values, practices, beliefs and identities are associated with them. For the Chinese culture, mountains have been deemed virtuous in Confucianism, immortal by Daoists, and spiritual and 'holy' for a Buddhist to reach a substrate level of pure stream of a-subjective consciousness. This paper proposes to argue that, for a Chinese painter-poet within this genre, mountains are natural milieus which, through an encounter between artists and their environment, inspire artistic motifs which highlight mountains as performance of events, caught up in contrapuntal relations which bring forward a concert of vibration of spatial-temporal registers such as light, shape and sound, movement and rest. Insofar as art creates energy transfer and makes more and more connections, Chinese artists of mountains aim at concerting with nature as organised by rhythms and their conspecifics such as notes, scores and melodies, all unfolding an aesthetic experience unique in itself.

In order to delineate a systematic argument that Chinese mountains in arts can actually – and physically – give out music, I would adopt a Deleuzian ecoaesthetics of creative difference and repetition, territory-milieu, affect-percept, affirmative becoming, body without organs, haecceity, structural coupling, transversal communication, and so on, all summated onto the context of refrain. By highlighting (here as an image of physics, image and thought) such an odd coupling – indeed, a monstrous cross-breed (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 195) between, say the Daoist and Buddhist philosophy of the natural wilds (which spill over onto art theories and practice) on the one side, and Deleuze and Guattari's ecosophy on the other – my ultimate aim is to extract an ecoethical 'field' in which a certain resonance can be reached between the human and the non-human, the organic and the inorganic, painters-poets and the mountains. Here I would like to put forward three points. First, starting with spatial motifs, Chinese artists categorically turn to 'temporalising' mountains (or their mountain experience), so as to achieve eventful durations and affects, energy flows and oscillating rhythms in a spatio-temporal dynamic, particularly those entities with ethical and religious implications. Second, the hyphen between painting and poetry in the title and throughout this paper functions in emphasising a merger between painting and poetry, where paintings in the Chinese tradition are always accompanied by verses,

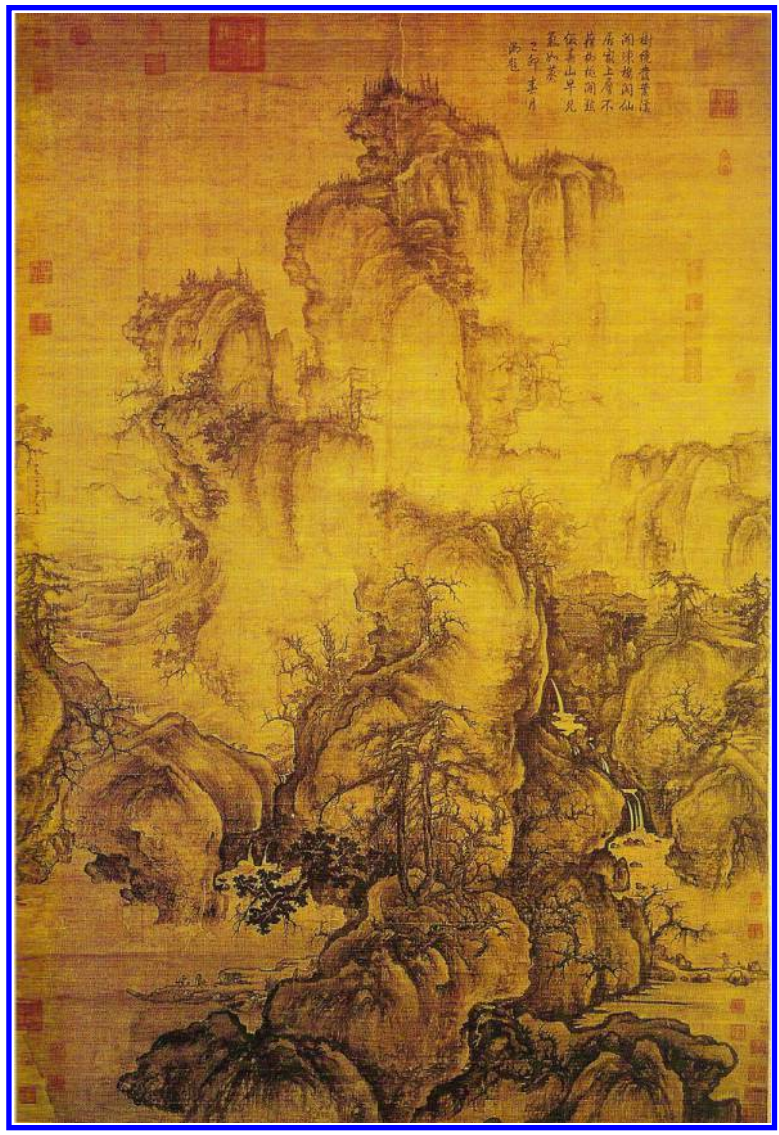


Figure 1. *Early Spring* by Kuo Hsi.

whose rhymes and rhythms are contributive to mobilising the mountain imaginary. Needless to say, the mountain-water poetry as a genre has always been known to be very pictorial, or rather very painterly in its presenting mountains and rivers or streams; hence we have many cases where the painter and poet are one single person. Finally, through a

presentation of Deleuze and Guattari's notion of refrain, the last part of this paper endeavours to find out how Deleuze and Guattari's geological, organic and alloplastic stratifications can be put alongside mountains, animals, plants and rock, and then how the refrain would amply support my argument that 'music in Chinese mountains' moves away from being representational or metaphorical. Amazing as it may sound, I am here making a claim that these mountains in art do physically emit rhythms and music.[2]

It is important here to reiterate that mountain-water painters in the classical world shared a common practice of temporalising their spatial experience. For Merleau-Ponty, perception is primarily conditioned and governed by temporality, and a new level of perception is always established by a movement or bodily motility; and thus there is 'a certain gearing of my body to the world' (Merleau-Ponty 1964: 250). Since in an act of perception, 'the unseen side is given to me as visible from another standpoint at once given but only immanently', the 'perceptual synthesis', for Merleau-Ponty, 'is a temporal synthesis', and 'subjectivity, at this level of perception, is nothing but temporality' (239). Merleau-Ponty's idea here reminds us of the tacit faith of Chinese landscape painters; and especially when Merleau-Ponty talks of 'the body of the painter' who, being 'an intertwining of vision and movement, never ceases adjusting his clairvoyance to them (things)' for a 'maturation of vision' (162, 166), we certainly recall the Chinese painters who 'saturate themselves with travels and looking' (飽游飫看) so that they can 'approximate the form of the Infinite (original void) with a single brush'.[3] This is what Wai-lim Yip calls 'the mobile point of view of the perceiver' in which the painters attempt to 'live with the "total" mountains and "total" rivers' (Yip 1980: 161). Kuo Hsi has this to say in relation to what painters actually do to 'saturate themselves with travels and looking':

> A mountain looks this way close by, another way a few miles away, and yet another way from a distance of a dozen miles. It looks this way from the front, another way from the side, and yet another way from the back. Its aspect changes from every angle, as many times as the point of view. Thus one must realize that a mountain contains in itself the shape of several dozen or a hundred mountains.[4]

When, therefore, Chinese painters theorise the phenomenon that 'Mountain shapes move step by step' (山形步步移) and 'Mountain shapes look differently face after face' (山形面面看),[5] we are affirming Merleau-Ponty's point that 'Everything I see is in principle within my

reach, at least within reach of my sight, and is marked upon the map of the "I can"' (Merleau-Ponty 1964: 162). Here we have a double folding: the time we move around the mountain and the time of the mountain itself.

In the Deleuzian system of time, this exemplifies the fluid nature of the syntheses through bodily movement in relation to sensibility beyond representation. For Deleuze, to repeat is to begin anew, since 'every present passes in favor of a new present because the past is contemporaneous with itself as present' (Deleuze 1994: 81). It is then a question of 'inviting vibrations, rotations, whirlings, gravitations, dances or leaps which directly touch the mind' (8). Right here the 'step by step' and 'face after face' of the Chinese poet finds support from Deleuze's relating repetition in terms of beats and rhythms with 'intensity as the condition for significance in a well-ordered space' (Williams 2003: 171). Each step in our walking is an acquired habit by our synthesising earlier steps as members in a series of time (or events). But then walking in relation to a practice of art has something to do with Ideas in Deleuze and the concept of *xing* (興) (giving rise to poetic ideas) in the Chinese artists. A habitual repetition is not the repetition of the same, and with that in mind, we should consider the repeated steps undergoing a process of virtual syntheses, driving actual syntheses not only in habit and memory, but also creativity.[6] Also, it is important to note here that neither the Chinese poet nor Deleuze is attending to a well-ordered space only. Within a moving field of intensities and a rhythmic change of excitation, the double folding of time in the Chinese practice of art is fully echoed by Deleuze's insistence on a double aspect of the order of intensities: 'Whence the double aspect of the quality as a sign: it refers to an implicated order of constitutive differences and tends to cancel out those differences in the extended order in which they are explicated' (Deleuze 1994: 228).

My first case in point is synaesthesia, the 'hidden sense' that has intrigued both scientists and artists. The word literally means to perceive (aesthesia) together (syn), and scientists have recorded cases of artists who 'experience sounds in images and images in music' (Van Campen 2008: 15). Seeing with one's eyes can evoke hearing of, say, a vibrato, and images with indistinct or fuzzy edges are reported to be able to induce music more easily in synaesthetes. This immediately reminds us of the Daoist concept on the visual perspicuity of *xiang* (象) (originally means elephant but later, phenomena, images and imagination). We remember the interesting parable in *Zhuangzi* '*xiang wang*' (象罔) (shapeless, formless and fuzzy images) which is personified to have

defeated 'knowing', 'seeing' and 'debating' in their efforts of retrieving the Dark Pearl (true knowledge) that the Yellow Emperor has left behind. At any rate, this involuntary fusion of optical and tactical impressions evoking acoustical ones happens more often to children, women and particularly artists such as painters and musicians. We have scientifically supported records of people who can perceive sounds in colour and taste, and for whom smell is mixed up with hearing; and famous musicians such as Michael Torke and painters such as Paul Klee, van Gogh, Wassily Kandinsky and Eugène Delacroix all have testified to their unique experiences of painting in music and music in painting, all aspiring towards the so-called 'total works of art (*Gesamtkunstwerke*)' (Van Campen 2008: 55). As for the Chinese arts, suffice it to say at this point that a montage structure as imaging forth our relation with the universe, with the environment and especially with mountains is always at work by virtue of the embrace of 'fuzziness' in art; and we only have to bring our attention to the design of the characters' etymologically in the concept of *yi-xiang* (意象) which means 'images', where *yi* is made up of the 'sound' placed above our 'heart'.

We have symbiosensation when a body feels certain haptic contactedness (the Chinese term '*chu-dong*' (觸動) – bodily fuzzy encounter as affects in an ethology of forces) in matter or synaesthetic contiguity among senses, thus, as Braidotti puts it, 'freeing organs from their indexation to certain prerequisite functions' (Braidotti 2010: 224). It should be noted here that Chinese medicine, known for its holistic approach, has recently been emphasising the 'musicality' of '*qi*' (氣的樂章).[7] *Qi* (氣) here variously means air, breath, blood flow and vital force or pulsation of the body. Such a synchronising, resonating and entraining dynamism in one's body function holistically, and our health, is defined by a certain harmonics of *qi*. The reason I mention this is that this same *qi* happens to be the major element which becomes the measuring rod whether a mountain-water painting has got what it takes to be a great piece of artwork. All paintings in this genre aspire towards the heraldic motto, namely *qi-yun-sheng-dong* (氣韻生動). *Qi-yun* here refers to 'rhythmic beats of force/energy', and *sheng-dong* means 'lively moving'. The four characters together bring forward an ideal where a dynamic arising and animation of some melodic forces becomes a golden moment in the art of mountains. After all, mountains are geological formations in *I-ching* (《易經》) (*The Book of Changes*) where *qi* or vital force is being energised.

That the Chinese *qi* belongs to the cosmic forces has been widely recognised; it can certainly manifest itself through various channels or

bodies beyond the designated 'organs'. Etymologically, the character *qi* has three layers of cloud or mist set above rice or food; and the way the lines of cloud hanging freely as air-currents would be an excellent visualisation of Deleuze and Guattari's attribute of 'fuzzy aggregates' as 'forces of the earth or of chaos' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 346). For such a 'nuanced' mixture of the visible and the sonorous, Deleuze and Guattari would induce some 'powers or coefficients' which give direction to the very movement of 'deterritorialization of sonorous and visual components', and it is at this very juncture that the two authors of *A Thousand Plateaus* mention the phenomena of synaesthesia:

> This is evident in phenomena of synesthesia, which are not reducible to a simple color-sound correspondence: sounds have a piloting role and induce colors that *are superposed* upon the colors we see, lending them a properly sonorous rhythm and movement. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 347–8)

It should be remembered that Deleuze and Guattari use the phenomena of synaesthesia to support their ideas of body without organs and the cosmic refrains, topics which will be dealt with later in this paper. Suffice it to say here that the Chinese concept of *qi-yun-sheng-dong* does embrace the ideal of fuzziness between painting and poetry as far as mountains are concerned, and both visuality and sound are enshrined in aggregates which are characterised by a certain indiscernibility through a process of becoming-molecular or becoming-imperceptible. Within an ecosystem of art forms, Chinese painting-poetry on mountains enjoys a symbiosis by a surplus value of codes such as lines, colours, ink-dots, brush work and calligraphy; all are granted with intensive transversality through a zigzagging flight in different directions. As an affective assemblage, both the visual image and sound are supposed to be connecting to a materiality of the mountains, rivers or streams, rocks, trees and animals, at the same time surrendering themselves to the mountainous twists and turns, following what they lead to in rhythmic undulations. Within art forms, however, the Chinese painting-poetry of mountains harbours pieces and fragments that refuse to belong to a whole. Between brushes of lines and colour on the one side and the actual calligraphy of characters in a poem's versification and rhyming scheme on the other, there is always a contrapuntal duet that forms a harmony as a universal law of musicality which is radically cosmic in nature. Insofar as art being defined as 'connecting' more and more things/events, such a symbiotic plane of composition orchestrates milieus across discrete art forms which are the most relevant endeavours to the

resounding elements one finds in the Chinese mountains, the elements of the emergent music of nature itself.

The Chinese mountain-painting-poetry is, I would argue, prone to be compared to the Deleuzian concept of haecceity. It 'allows the reformation of (moment of) wilderness' and 'the site of a generalized "haecology"' (Berressem 2009: 71):

> There is mode of individuation very different from that of a person, subject, thing, or substance. We reserve the name *haecceity* for it. A season, a winter, summer, an hour, a date have a perfect individuality lacking nothing, even though this individuality is different from that of a thing or a subject. They are haecceities in the sense that they consist entirely of relations of movement and rest between molecules or particles, capacities to affect and be affected. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 261)

The authors here quote the Japanese haiku to represent the oriental of having 'many more individuations by haecceity than by subjectivity or substantiality' (261); and I would submit that, had they been informed more about Tang poetry or mountain-painting for that matter, they would have been more than happy to accept them as good examples. Painter-poets of mountains generally promulgate a style of highlighting haecceities as individuating of 'thisnesses', as jets of singularities on the plane of a non-human dynamic, matter-movement, as tableaus of intensive forces. Nature being 'conjunctive', expressing itself through 'and' and not through 'is', exhibits contrapuntal arrangements of mutually corresponding melodies, which become what the painter-poet wishes to present in his art. Mountains are then matters, or rather, matter-movements (despite their duration being very very slow) bearing singularities and haecceities. They are modes of individuation in pairs such as the famous wasp/orchid, spider web/flies, night/day, mountain/water, yin/yang, and finally visual image/the sonorous or painting/poetry. 'The intensive field of individuation', by the way, is always 'dramatized' or 'actualized' by spatio-temporal dynamisms within the 'differential relations' (Deleuze 1994: 251), a 'process of progressive determination which is productive of real, multiple temporalities' (Toscano 2006: 193). Therefore, the mountain genre in painting-poetry excels in recording artistically this harmonic duet, these counterpoints in the cosmos, by going deep into elements of go-betweens: water and clouds, criss-crossing waves of earth and rocks, light and fuzzy shadows in infinite stratifications and folds, or folds in folds within a context called 'intra-temporalities'.

We have expounded the kinetic practice of mountain-painter-poets who materialise their relation with the mountainous *qi* which spreads itself to give rise to life as the force of foldedness, hiding the carrying capacity and affordance of the natural wilds. Following this first step of establishing how the painter-poets temporalise their experience in terms of Merleau-Ponty's temporal synthesis with the cosmic rhythm, we have also worked out the way they draw upon a seamless merger between poetry and painting so as to bring forth the idea of *qi-yun-sheng-dong* which in itself already always generates rhymes and rhythms. We can now come to the third point in our arguing for a melodic landscape in this paper, namely, Chinese mountains in art do have some 'power of coefficiency' in emitting actual, physical music. We have mentioned that we need to go into Deleuze and Guattari's concepts such as body without organs, affects/percepts and finally refrains, in order to substantiate our claim as such. But before we actually go into the very folds of these, we may rehearse a bit as to how rhythms emerge from chaos in Deleuze's onto-ecologics:

> From chaos, Milieus and Rhythms are born [. . .] Every milieu is vibratory, in other words, a block of space-time constituted by the periodic repetition of the component [. . .] The milieus are open to chaos, which threatens them with exhaustion or intrusion. Rhythm is the milieus' answer to chaos. What chaos and rhythm have in common is the in-between – between two milieus, rhythm-chaos or the chaosmos: '*Between* night and day, between that which is constructed and that which grows naturally, between mutations from the inorganic to the organic, from plant to animal, from animal to humankind [. . .].' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 313)

The Deleuzian onto-ecologics is such that where there is difference, there is rhythm. In the Plateau entitled 'Refrain', it amounts to any organising rhythmic pattern that brings together heterogeneous entities that function in concert with the natural world. Once again, I need to hark back to the famous poem *Bird-Singing Stream* by the Buddhist poet Wang Wei to initiate our discussion of how refrains can be relevant to Chinese mountain-painting-poetry:

> Human at leisure; cassia flowers falling.
> The night quiets; spring mountain empty.
> Moon rises; startling mountain birds.
> Singing time and time again in the spring stream.[8]

Several steps remain to be taken in our analysis here. First, the poem as a whole is about how movements, duration, movements in-between, or the

coupling of the conditioning with the conditioned, chaos/cosmos/milieus are a composite of the mountain refrains. As Deleuze and Guattari already suggest:

> This emergence of pure sensory qualities is already art, not only in the treatment of eternal materials but in the body's postures and colors, in the songs and cries that mark out the territory. It is an outpouring of features, colors, and sounds that are inseparable insofar as they become expressive. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 184)

Second, we have an 'intensive dynamics of spacing' of a circular movement in terms of Deleuze and Guattari's territorialising, deterritorialising and reterritorialising. Third, the poem incorporates both of my earlier points about the artists' temporalising spatial experience, and as an event, it also illustrates to a certain extent the painterly quality of a poem with sound.[9] What is more important is how it can be put alongside the concept of refrain which conveys certain qualitative measures of speed, tempo and rhythmic milieus as expounded by Deleuze and Guattari. We certainly have had a sizeable body of commentaries on this topic, notably in works by Keith Ansell Pearson (1999), James Williams (2003) and Ronald Bogue (2003a). But what is more relevant to our discussion is a book chapter titled 'Intensive Landscaping' by Yves Abrioux in which 'melodic landscape' becomes the crux of the matter (Abrioux 2009). By recalling our attention to the French '*ritournelle*', the author here expresses his dissatisfaction with the published English translation 'refrain', reasoning that 'ditty' could well be a better choice for the concept, since the latter can convey, even on the etymological level, the notion of 'difference through repetition' as different from Deleuze's '*rengaine*' (mere repetition without creativity) in *Difference and Repetition* (Deleuze 1994: 14).[10] Abrioux quotes the *Oxford English Dictionary* which states that a ditty refers to 'a short, simple song; often used of the songs of birds', and it quotes Cowper's 'Poplar Field' (1800) where 'The blackbird has fled… And the scene… Resounds with his sweet-flowing ditty no more' (Abrioux 2009: 254).

That Wang Wei's poem quoted above is a beautiful encounter with 'ditty' is clear enough. What remains to be worked out is how the 'jumping, skipping and singing' (Abrioux 2009: 255) one finds in ditties make significant sense to the Chinese mountains in art in terms of melodic landscape. By the way, we should note here, that the character *shih* (時) (time) in the last line of Wang's poem has a composite of the sun on the left, and a foot at a point of moving and stopping, thus

creating a certain sense of rhythm; and if the sun is replaced by *yen* (言) (speech) we will have *shih* (詩) (poetry). This is excitingly an echo of Abrioux's argument that to sing is always already to jump or skip (in the sense of, say, art which makes a difference); hence the *shih* as time as well as poetry resounds with Deleuze and Guattari's refrains which effect 'a jump out of chaos' and 'one ventures from home on the thread of a tune' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 311). The very 'crack' which is a 'circle' to join 'cosmic forces' is not just chaos itself, but something that embraces 'sonorous, gestural, motor lines', giving birth to 'loops, knots, speeds, movements, gestures, and sonorities' (311–12). That the lines and cracks relate directly to what we have discussed on haecceities in milieus should be readily recognised; and the whole concept of territory which includes earth as well as 'world' through 'an act that affects milieus and rhythm' is once again the major contribution of the jumps and the skips of refrains. For 'chaos, earth and World are forces or tempos confronting one another and converging within the *ritournelle* as simultaneously, territorialization and deterritorialization' (Abrioux 2009: 257).

It is therefore my major argument in this paper that such a block of expansiveness has become a configuration of intensive forces characterised by a tempo (or allure) unique in Chinese mountain-painting-poetry. From the image of *kung* in poetry, we can finally identify its more visual, and hence more sonorous counterpoint in poetry-painting, namely the famous practice of *liu-bei* (留白) (leaving-it-blank). It takes the form of a mediating line, a crooked but semi-continuous line of white mist or cloud staged right between the 'being-at-homeness' of human habitat and the unapproachable, ungraspable and inexhaustive backdrop of mountain peaks in many artworks of this genre.[11] Technically, this featuring of a more or less cutting off of the mountain as magnitude of extensity into two parts, enacting a seeping edge between the actual and the virtual, is considered to be able to create an incorporeal effect of height and magnitude of such a formation. Philosophically the Daoist concept of *wu-wei* (無為) (non-action) might have concretised itself in such a practice, later to be picked up by *chan* (禪) (Zen) Buddhist paintings where bigger and bigger portions of the painting surface are left blank, having the void as ground, or rather a non-figured and ungrounded as ground, a vast cosmic zone of indetermination which establishes a sense of interconnectedness of percepts. This line of virtuality, or rather, 'a thought without image' (Deleuze 1994: 147), is also to achieve an effect of matters being decomposed, and we have seen paintings with only one-tenth of the

surface occupied by ink brush. This void is also an intensive *spatium* which harbours 'the self-organizing capacities of the cosmos. If there is an empty space vacated by God, it is the space of virtual depth' (Kelso 2010: 128). Here, 'the ground has been superseded by a groundlessness, a universal ungrounding which turns upon itself and causes only the yet-to-come to return' (Deleuze 1994: 91). We should note here that Deleuze and Guattari themselves mention this Chinese practice when they say:

> However, blocs need pockets of air and emptiness, because even the void is sensation. All sensation is composed with the void in composing itself with itself, and everything holds together on earth and in the air, and preserves the void, is preserved in the void by preserving itself. A canvas may be completely full to the point that even the air no longer gets through, but it is only a work of art if, as the Chinese painter says, it nonetheless saves enough empty space for horses to prance in. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 165–6)

Also, in *The Fold*, we find Deleuze even suggests that Leibniz should have heeded 'the full and the void in a Chinese fashion' (Deleuze 1993: 36).[12]

In line with what we have discussed so far, I would turn this blank-space into a kind of 'absolute deterritorialisation' that permits the space to be void of all representation. It is a territory, a zone of proximity, a fluttering and rippling stillness, which encompasses and at the same time cuts across territories as melodic, polyphonic and contrapuntal sensibilia; it is therefore a body, or rather a non-body, of a sum total of intensive affects. All the intensities, duration, body, affect and wildness are lumped into a bunch of quantum-like existence. As 'the colored or, rather, coloring void, is already-force' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 181), it will become, as Colebrook puts it, 'a power to be seen (and varied) again and anew for all time' (Colebrook 2006: 104). Like the zero-point energy in new physics, this line of mist maximises connections and affective moments of the body in this so-called 'smooth' space where, by dismantling molar aggregates, carbon, marrow, water, molecules and particles freely flow. This is a space with an infinity of points and possible becomings, an intense, virtual world of all kinds of reciprocal implications. As 'an aleatory point at which everything becomes *ungrounded* instead of a solid ground' (Deleuze 1994: 200), and as a line between the milieu of human habitat and that of the unapproachable wilds, and as viewer of the painting our eyes move up and down across the divide, armed with Merleau-Ponty's tacit faith in the synthesis relation between the body and temporality,

rhythm is certainly created. Here the world sings itself with points and counterpoints, motifs and counter-motifs, the energies emitted from the brush work back and forth between the calligraphy of the poem and ink and colour of the lines which make up the mountain. Milieus are then orchestrated into a world where contrapuntal relations compose what we call the music of nature. This is a territory that 'joins up not only its spatiotemporal but its qualitative planes or sections: a posture and a song for example, a song and a color, percepts and affects' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 185).

As an art form, the Chinese mountain-painting-poetry provides us with an experience of a piece of landscape, expanding and contracting in repetition, height and depth requiring variable densities, becomes a melodic landscape which seeks to invent relations. It is an event of naming a mode of rhythmic but incorporeal transformation. Materiality takes precedence over representation, whereas matter is matter-movement as an event, an event that drives processes towards heterogeneous assemblages (ecosystems), where there are extensities of things (the matter that bodies forth a mountain), there are spatio-temporal dynamics uniting light waves with sound waves. At this point the Chinese saying *shan-ming-gu-ying* (山鳴谷應) (mountain-sounds-valley echoes) no longer works as a metaphor, since the interaction of the organic and inorganic breaks away from both representation and resemblance to achieve a differentiation status where rhythms occur. Mountains are incidents of extremely slow becomings; and geo-art is especially patient with this slow flow of music, as the earth-artist Robert Smithson remarks in an interview, 'You know, one pebble moving one foot in two million years is enough action to keep me really excited' (Smithson 1996: 205). As Deleuze and Guattari note, 'these relationships of counterpoint join planes together, form compounds of sensations and blocs and determine becomings' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 185). The Chinese painter-poets of mountains assign themselves the job of reminding us that 'we are made of contracted water, earth, light and air – not merely prior to the recognition or representation of these, but prior to their being sensed' (Deleuze 1994: 73). Fuzziness has gained an ontological status. The mountains therefore bring us back to a state of sensation way before our recognising things in the world with specific organs, and with the thematising of the mist as the body without organs, mountains remind us that we are part of our intelligent ecosystem in energetic terms.

Finally, having explored the melodic nature of mountains through painting-poetry, we can conclude that the very purpose of art is to

establish a fluid set of connectivity, sometimes even by resorting to disjunction and disruption just as the line of blank space between milieus within a vortex of energy. Connections are now transversal as all aspects of the mountain's surroundings are molecularised and resingularised as haecceities. The misty line of flight is physically a continuous line of cloud that consists of an aggregate, a nebulous set, a multiplicity whose exact definition escapes us. It can also be considered as a response to Deleuze's 'cut or caesura' in the third synthesis of time, which functions as ordering, assembling 'a seriation and a process of eternal return' (Williams 2011: 14). But the emptiness here is also a kind of pure spatial synthesis or a totality of time in which cosmic energies emerge from the depth, 'announcing the universal ungrounded', which 'unites a bubbling sensibility and a thought which rumbles in its crater' (Deleuze 1994: 230). For Deleuze, this cutting away situates itself at an 'aleatory point' which produces Ideas; and for the Chinese poet-painter, this Deleuzian Idea becomes the character *xing*, where all energies in art arise from an absolute stillness or virtual multiplicities. The mountains as presented by the Chinese painter-poet become the passing of intensities across bodies without organs as body-earth-mountain assemblage, and with Buddhism and Daoism, art here does not present essence but an insubstantiality, impermanence and interpenetration of all phenomena. For the Chinese artists, mountains do resonate together with our somewhat synaesthesian percepts which produce fuzzy bodily encounters of affects, and we are invited by the mountains to participate in a geological and inhuman duration. Facing the mountain, we are to lodge ourselves onto both the geological and social/cultural strata. Here we are to always alert ourselves that categorically all arts have a rhythm, arising from relations between a territory and an outside of this territory. We should finally accept the claim that the mountain-painting-poetry no longer represents reality but is reality itself. Here mountains in art become a physics of life, broken down into quantum-like 'fractals' through a complex composite of different scales, speeds and rhythms. All the rocks, plants, streams and animals are now mixtures of bodies through which affects are created as dark precursors of our contrapuntal rhyming system. According to the art critic Simon O'Sullivan, painting can be 'the making perceptible of the imperceptible, as the making the visible of affect' (O'Sullivan 2006: 47). I would say the leaving-it-blank practice of the Chinese painter tries to present the imperceptible as imperceptible, making the affect felt between the visible and invisible.

Notes

1. The term 'painting-poetry' in the title refers to the long Chinese tradition, in practice as well as in theory, where painting and poetry share a structural coupling, a merge or 'nuanced' overlapping, so as to become one single genre. Not only have we had something called *ti-hua-ju* (題畫句) (annotating-painting-verses), but there have long been explorations as to how paintings could be taken as 'poetry without sound' and conversely, poetry as 'painting with sound'. In many works of the *shān shui* tradition, we always find a poem occupying part of the screen. The famous example is *Early Spring* by Kuo Hsi (Figure 1). It should be noted here that the very calligraphy of the poem should be considered an integral part of the painting. This example, together with many others, would support my highlighting the contrapuntal relationship of words and image, since words in this case become artistic materials themselves.
2. My argument should not be as outrageous as it seems. We do have, after all, support from an art critic who urges us to listen to the beatings of Van Gogh's paintings. In describing Deleuze's philosophy as setting off on a journey where 'becoming' gets started as in a 'free-fall experimentation' and 'groundless-grounds', Johnny Golding calls for our learning to listen to Deleuze's 'task of art', as it 'names the segment' in 'the beat, beat, beatings, pace, speeds of the launching forth' (Golding 2010: 142,148).
3. The quotation is from Kuo Hsi (郭熙) (*c.*1020–90) in *Chung-kuo Hui-hus li-lun* (《中國繪畫理論》), ed. Fu Pao-shih, Taipei: n.p., 1934 (my translation).
4. *Chung-kuo i-shu ching-shen*《中國藝術精神》by Hsu Fu-kuan, Taipei: Hsueh-sheng, 1966, p. 332; trans. James Liu in *The Chinese Theory of Art*, New York: G. P. Putnam, 1967.
5. This is from the famous 'Lin-Quan-Kao-Zhi' (《林泉高致》) by Kuo Hsi, quoted from *Shan-Shui-Hua-Lun* (《山水畫論》) Taipei: Arts Books, p. 59 (my translation).
6. Again, James Williams has an interesting description of this practice of walking with changes of intensities: 'The walk that you take every day is different each time and significant each time because it involves variations in intensities with respect to earlier and later ones and changing relations with wider series. You change with the walk and with the sensations and their intensities' (Williams 2003: 14). Another even more directly relevant discussion of this step-by step mobility can be found in Claire Colebrook's explanation of Deleuze's concept of movement-image and time: 'Instead of seeing each step of my walk as linked up through time, I could see a flowing movement – my continuous passage from one point to another – which I then cut up into distinct steps. I would see the walk not as a collection of steps, but as a process of change' (Colebrook 2002: 40).
7. Wang, Weihung (2002) *qi-te-yue-zhang* (《氣的樂章》)Taipei: *Kuo-jia* Books. This is a book on how *qi* together with blood-flow, pulsation, and veins and arteries, blood vessels, together work towards harmonic dance in a physical way. In terms of what this *qi* can do to the painting of water flow, Philip Ball recognises its dynamic as 'the vital energy of the universe', and he notes: 'In Chinese art, the flow of water is commonly represented as a series of lines, approximating the trajectories of floating particles, like the streamlines employed by fluid dynamicists' (Ball 2009: 14–16).
8. In my 'Buddhist Consciousness, Deleuzian Ecoethics, and the Case with Wang Wei's Poetry', I have performed a detailed analysis of this poem, together with his other works (Wong 2008: 37–56).
9. With its pictorial and sound systems, the Chinese ideogram should be qualified as Deleuze and Guattari's 'sign' in *A Thousand Plateaus*. Stephen Zepke points

out: 'Signs do not, on this account, appear as signifiers or as representations, but as particular assemblages of material forces and functions stratified into relations of content and expression. This understanding of the sign is therefore ontological, because it puts the sign back into contact with the material and vital plane of consistency that constitutes it' (Zepke 2005: 121).

10. I am inspired by such an argument and have been tempted to want to go into a discussion of the exact repetition of the same character in many of the expressions in Chinese, both in daily use but more importantly in poetry. Such a practice, I would wish to argue, invites comparison with the Deleuzian ideas of singularities and multiplicities, difference and repetition. Unfortunately, a discussion of this is beyond the limits of this paper.
11. Whereas one can take the Chinese 'leaving-it-blank' as similar to Deleuze's idea of deterritorialisation by 'freeing the line' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 295) or the 'effacement of the contour' (Deleuze 1993: 32) in Venetian paintings and the baroque, one should note, nevertheless, that instead of an absolute non-doing of any brush stroke, the Western artists turn to making more use of colours so that, say, the dark ground of obscurity takes the place of clear-cut lines in order to highlight the interplay of the deterritorialised matter-function in paintings (Zepke 2005: 127–41). As for the Chinese, this line of mist acts as a dynamic materialisation of emptiness as screen in a Deleuzian sense, itself a connecting through absence, or a frame carved out of space-time (Deleuze 1986: 14), ensuring a 'deterritorialization of the image' (15). It is also a line of indetermination 'both separates and unities' (Bogue 2003b: 43), a mobile cut of duration delinking any fixed schematism. Within this mist, if there is any sense of time left, it would be something like the Deleuzian time as pure memories that does not spatialise itself by linkages or cuts of the montage; it is 'time out of joint and presents itself in the pure state' (Deleuze 1989: 271). Eventfully and eventually, the cut presents a kind of cosmic time, a multisensory space of encounter whose modus operandi is transformation of energy and affects.
12. It may be relevant for us to note that in a conversation between Stefan Czerkinsky the painter and Deleuze, we read: Czerkinsky: 'It sometimes happens that an infinitesimal part of the canvas will remain unpainted, forgotten; and sometimes yet forget to forget. There's a hole' … Deleuze: 'What it is is an interior border that echoes the exterior borders. Together they make up the difference of intensity between which everything happens and communicates' (Deleuze 2004: 283).

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Temporality and Truth

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Abstract

This paper examines the intersecting of the themes of temporality and truth in Deleuze's philosophy. For the ancients, truth was something eternal: what was true was true in all times and in all places. Temporality (coming to be and passing away) was the realm of the mutable, not the eternal. In the seventeenth century, change began to be seen in a positive light (progress, evolution, and so on), but this change was seen to be possible only because of the immutable laws of nature that govern change. It was not until philosophers such as Bergson, James, Whitehead – and then Deleuze – that time began to be taken seriously on its own account. On the one hand, in Deleuze, time, freed from its subordination to movement, now becomes autonomous: it is the pure form of change (continuous variation) that lies at the basis of Deleuze's metaphysics in *Difference and Repetition* (and is explored more thematically in *The Time-Image*). As a result, on the other hand, the false, freed from its subordination to the form of the true, assumes a power of its own (the power of the false), which in turn implies a new 'analytic of the concept' that Deleuze develops in *What Is Philosophy?*

Keywords: Deleuze, Kant, time, temporality, truth, falsity

The concept of truth is inextricably linked to the question of time, if only because the traditional concept attempts to keep truth away from time: a proposition is true when it is true universally, eternally, 'in all times and in all places'. Stated in this manner, the link between the concept of truth and theology is evident. In this paper, I would like to make some preliminary explorations of this link between time and truth: when the form of the true is confronted with the form of time, Deleuze argues,

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the concept of truth enters into crisis. To explicate the nature of this crisis, I have organised my presentation around two phrases that appear in Deleuze's work: *the pure and empty form of time*, which will allow us to examine Deleuze's theory of time; and *the power of the false*, which will allow us to examine Deleuze's claim that time necessarily puts the form of the true in crisis.

I. 'The Pure and Empty Form of Time': Deleuze's Theory of Time

The Ancient Conception of Time: Originary Time

According to Deleuze, the modern mutation in our conception of time occurred with Kant: in Kant's work, time assumed an independence and autonomy of its own for the first time.[1] Before that, however, from antiquity through the seventeenth century, time had been subordinate to movement. Time, in Aristotle's phrase, is the measure or 'number of movement' (Aristotle 1957: 219b5–8). Since there is a plurality of movements in the world, this definition implied a plurality of times. The ancients were therefore led to ask the question: is there something immobile, outside of movement – or at least a most perfect movement – around which all other movements could be measured, a great celestial schema, or what Leibniz would call a kind of 'metaschematism'? Is there a movement of movements in relation to which all other movements can be coordinated?

This question wound up being answered in two different ways because there existed two fundamental types of movement: the extensive movement of the cosmos and the intensive movement of the soul. In the *Timaeus*, for instance, Plato sought to incorporate the movements of cosmos into a vision of a 'planetarium' comprised of eight globes, with the immobile earth at the centre, surrounded by a sphere of 'the fixed' (the stars) turning on its axis, with seven globes in-between (the planets) turning in a reverse direction. These revolving globes start from an initial position, and eventually return to the same position: a great year or circuit of the 'eternal return' (in the Greek sense) which, by some calculations, was thought to last ten thousand years. It was precisely this movement of movements that provided a reference point by which all other movements were to be measured: an invariant, a permanence. Time, in this manner, was subordinated to eternity, to the non-temporal: in Plato's apt formula, time was 'the moving image of eternity' (Plato 1929: 37d). Similarly, in the *Enneads*, Plotinus

incorporated the intensive movement of the soul into the movement of the One, with its emanative processes of procession and conversion.[2] In both cases, the result was a hierarchisation of movements depending on their proximity to (or distance from) the eternal: an *originary time* marked by privileged positions in the cosmos or privileged moments in the soul. The discovery of this invariant was itself the discovery of the true, since truth required a universally commensurable time and space over which it could govern: the form of the true was that which was universal and necessary, *in all times and in all places*. Contemporary modal logic, with its search for what is true 'in all possible worlds', attempts to extend, in a theological manner, the universality of truth from the domain of the real to the totality of the possible.

This conception of time as the measure of movement remains ensconced in our common chronological 'clock' time. Days, months and years measure terrestrial, lunar and solar movements in the cosmos, while weeks and hours are primarily religious determinations of the soul (God rested on the seventh day); and our watches and clocks remain dependent on movement, whether that of a pendulum or a quartz crystal. Modernity no less than antiquity remains engaged in a vast effort to render both time and movement homogeneous and uniform (time tables, time zones, the global positioning system).

Aberrations of Movement: Derived Time

Nonetheless, the Kantian revolution was prepared for by the fact that both these domains – the cosmos and the soul – were haunted by fundamental *aberrations* of movement, where a *derived time* increasingly tended to free itself from the posited originary time. The closer one came to the earth (the 'sublunar'), the more the movements of the cosmos tended to become increasingly anomalous: the unpredictability of meteorological movements, for instance, or the movement of everything that comes-to-be and passes-away. As Michel Serres notes, 'scientists can predict the time of an eclipse [the lunar], but they cannot predict whether they will be able to see it [the sublunar]' (Serres 2000: 67). It is not by chance that, in French and many Latin languages, the same word is used for time and weather – *le temps* – with its various cognates: *temperature*, *tempest*, *temperate*, *temperament*, *intemperate*, *temper* (see Serres 1994: 100). The question became: does the sublunary world obey the metaschematism, with its proportional rules, or does it enjoy an independence from it, with its own anomalous movements and disharmonies? The Pythagorean discovery of irrational numbers

had already pointed to a fundamental incommensurability between the speed and position of the various cosmic spheres. In short, the invariant provided by the 'movement of movements' was threatened by *crises* when movement became increasingly aberrant. Similarly, the intensive movement of the soul became marked by a *fear* that its restless movements in derived time would take on an independence of their own, and would cease to be submitted to the originary time of the One or God (the Fall). The search for 'universals' in philosophy is, in a sense, a remnant of this fear: the very term is derived from the Latin word *universus,* meaning 'turned toward the One' (*uni-* 'one' + *versus* 'turned', the past participle of *vertere*).

However, these aberrant or derived movements – marked by meteorological, terrestrial and spiritual contingencies – remained a downward tendency that still depended on the adventures of movement. They too posed a problem, a choice: either one could try to 'save' the primacy of movement (saving the appearances), or one could not only accept but *will* the liberation of time with regard to movement. In effect, there were two ways in which movement could be saved. The extensive harmony of the world could be saved by an appeal to the rhythms of *rural time*, with the seasons and harvests as privileged points of reference in the originary time of Nature. The intensive harmony of the soul could be saved by an appeal to *monastic time*, with its privileged moments of prayers and vespers; or more generally, by an appeal to an originary spiritual life of interiority (Luther, Kierkegaard). By contrast, the liberation of time would take place in the city, an 'enemy' that was nonetheless engendered by both the rural communities and monasteries themselves. The time of the city is neither a rural life nor a spiritual life, but the time of everyday life: there is no longer either an originary time or a derived time, but only an *ordinary time*.

The Liberation of Time: Ordinary Time

The sources of this liberation of time from movement were multiple, having roots in the Reformation as well as the development of capitalism. Max Weber, for instance, showed that the Reformation became conscious of this liberation of time by joining together the two ideas of a 'profession' – one's profession of faith and one's professional activity – so that mundane professions like that of a cobbler were deemed to be as dignified as any sacred calling. Unlike the monk, whose duty was to be otherworldly, denying the self and the world, the fulfilment of one's duty in worldly affairs became the highest form that the moral

activity of individuals could take. There was only one time – everyday time – and it is in this time that we would now find our salvation (Weber 2002). Likewise, Marx showed that this vision of *temporal activity* ('What do you do with your time?'), which is no longer grounded in a cosmic rhythm or a spiritual harmony, would eventually find its new model in the 'abstract' time of capitalism, which replaced the privileged moments of agricultural work with the any-instant-whatever (*l'instant quelconque*) of mechanised work. Time became money, the form under which money produces money (usury or credit); and money itself became 'the course of time': the abstract time of capitalism became the concrete time of the city (Deleuze 1984: 7 Feb.). It was Heidegger who would ultimately produce a prodigious philosophical concept of the everyday and its relation to time, though he still maintained the old distinction between an originary and a derived time (an authentic time and an inauthentic time).

This liberation of time resulted in a fundamental change in the relationship of philosophy to the thought of everyday life (opinion). Up until the seventeenth century, one could say that, philosophically, everyday life was suspended in order to accede to something that was not everyday, namely, a meditation on the eternal. By contrast, the ordinary time of urban everydayness would no longer relate to the eternal, but to something very different, namely, *the production of the new*. In other words, given the flow of average everydayness, I can either raise myself vertically toward the transcendent or the eternal, at least on Sundays (or Saturdays, or Fridays), through understanding or faith; or I can remain at the horizontal flow of everydayness, in which temporality moves toward the new rather than the eternal (the priority of the future as the fundamental dimension of time). The production of the new will be the correlate of ordinary time in exactly the same way that the discovery of the true was the correlate of originary time with the ancients. The aim of philosophy will no longer be to *discover* pre-existent truths outside of time, but to *create* non-pre-existing concepts within time (Deleuze 1984: 17 Apr., 4 May).

Kant: Time as Independent and Autonomous

If Kant was the first to give a philosophical expression to this new conception of time, it is because he freed time entirely from its subordination to movement, rendering it independent and autonomous.[3] Kant drew the necessary consequences from the cosmological and psychological anomalies of movement: he freed time entirely from

cosmology and psychology, as well as the eternal. In Kant, the Self (the soul), the World (the cosmos) and God (the eternal) are all shown to be transcendent illusions of reason that are derived from our new position in time. Time ceases to be the number of movement, and no longer depends on anything but itself; time no longer measures movement, but movement itself (whether originary or derived, anomalous or aberrant) now takes places within time. The reversal can be seen in the opening pages of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Before Kant, time had largely been defined by succession, space by coexistence, and eternity by permanence.[4] In Kant, succession, simultaneity and permanence are all shown to be *modes* or *relations* of time: succession is the rule of what is in different times; simultaneity is the rule of what is at the same time; and permanence is the rule of what is for all times. Put differently, succession (series) is the synthetic relation between the parts of time, simultaneity (set) is the synthetic relation between the contents of time, and what is permanent (duration) is something that endures in time by passing through successive states and possessing simultaneous states. In Kant, the self becomes a temporal entity that endures in time (permanence), that has intensive states (simultaneity) and that passes from one extensive state to another (succession).

This is what Deleuze means, then, when he says that Kant reconceived time as a *pure and empty form*: time is an empty form that is no longer dependent on either the extensive or intensive movements that fill time; instead, time has become the pure and immutable form of everything that moves and changes – not an eternal form, but precisely the form of what is *not* eternal. Yet time itself is neither succession, nor simultaneity, nor permanence, since time cannot be reduced to any of its modes, or to what takes place within time (its content). We cannot even say that the immutable form of time is permanent, since what is permanent – no less than what is successive or simultaneous – appears and is perceived in time, whereas the immutable form of time itself cannot be perceived. As the pure form of change, time itself is defined by its infinite variability, and the definition of *chaos* that Deleuze gives in *What Is Philosophy?* is itself a description of the pure form of time: 'Chaos is characterized less by the absence of determinations than by the infinite speed with which they take shape and vanish' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 42). In other words, within the manifold of time, chaos is defined by the lack of any synthesis or rhythm between these determinations, 'which spring up only to disappear immediately, without consistency or reference, without consequence (118).

If there is any salvation within this pure and empty form of time – time rendered ordinary – it takes place, in Kant, through the activity of *synthesis*, which is a process brought to bear, not on time itself, but on the modes of time, in order to render both being and knowledge possible.[5] Under the aspect of succession, what appears in time is a multiplicity of parts, which must be synthesised by the subject in an *apprehension* that fixes them in an ever-variable present. Under the aspect of simultaneity, moreover, I must not only apprehend parts in order for knowledge to be possible, but I must also *reproduce* the past parts, that is, I must remember the preceding parts in time and synthesise or 'contract' them with the present parts. Under the aspect of permanence, finally, I can synthesise the apprehended present and the previous reproduced presents with the permanence of something that endures in time, which is related to a concept in an act of *recognition* ('so it's a table'). Readers of *Difference and Repetition* – notably in the third chapter on repetition – will recognise the ways in which Deleuze modifies the Kantian analysis of synthesis in the direction of a concept of *passive syntheses*.[6] The first synthesis (present) is reformulated into the passive organic and corporeal syntheses (habit) that make any receptivity, in Kant's sense, possible. The second synthesis (past), following Bergson, posits the need for a concept of the 'pure' past, without which the passing of time would be impossible. And the third synthesis (future), rather than appealing to *recognition*, instead is the condition for the production of the *new*.

'The more we study the nature of time,' Bergson would later write, 'the more we shall comprehend that duration means invention, the creation of forms, the continual elaboration of the absolutely new' (Bergson 1911: 13). The production of the new – including the activities of creation found in philosophy, science and art – is the direct consequence of this liberation of time. Though the term rarely appears in the text, *What Is Philosophy?* is a book on time, or more precisely, a study of the determinations of thought that take place within the pure form of time. What Hume called the association of ideas (resemblance, contiguity, causality) links together our ideas in time with a minimum of constant rules, thereby forming a realm of *opinion* that protects us from chaos. But philosophy, science and art do more than this, and Deleuze describes their respective activities using his own (created) vocabulary: from the infinite *variability* of time, philosophers extract *variations* that converge as the components of a consistent concept; scientists extract *variables* that enter into determinable relations in a function, thereby providing

a referent within time; and artists extract *varieties* that enter into the composition of a being of sensation (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 202).

II. 'The Power of the False': Deleuze's Critique of the Form of the True

There are many consequences that Deleuze derives from his theory of time, including the analytic of concepts presented in *What Is Philosophy?* But the consequence I would like to briefly examine here concerns the problem with which we began. 'The pure and empty form of time', Deleuze says, places the traditional concept of truth in crisis. In saying this, of course, Deleuze is entering into heavily mined territory, since contemporary philosophers tend to speak of the true with a reverence once reserved for the divine, as if its value is and should be unquestioned. What philosopher would ever want to say that they are not interested in getting at the truth? Yet truth is itself a concept, with its own becoming, and Nietzsche was perhaps one of the first see that the concept of truth itself must be seen as a philosophical problem:

> Let us thus define our own task – the value of truth must for once be experimentally *called into question*. [. . .] Suppose we want the truth: Why not rather untruth? Or uncertainty? Or ignorance? [. . .] Though it scarcely seems credible, it finally almost seems to us as if the problem had never even been put so far – as if we were the first to see it, fix our eyes on it, and *risk* it. For it does involve a risk, and perhaps there is none that is greater. (Nietzsche 2000: 199)

Deleuze's thesis is that the concept of truth enters into crisis when it confronts the form of time: the *form of the true* then gives way to the *power of the false*. But what exactly does Deleuze mean by this? Rather than attempting to resolve this problem, I would simply like to pose five questions that will at least help us lay out the conditions of this problem.

1. Speaking in general terms, the true is not the same thing as the real; it is rather the distinction between the real and the imaginary (or between essence and appearance). The false is not the imaginary; it is rather the confusion of the imaginary with the real (or of the apparent with the essential). What we call error is the act that consists of making this confusion: the false is effectuated in error, which confuses the imaginary and the real. But this leads to the first question: how then do we normally distinguish the false from the true? Response: only the true has a *form* (*eidos*). The false has no form; error consists, precisely, in giving the false the form of the true. Since Aristotle, as we have seen, the form of

the true has had a precise sense: the universal and the necessary. The true is that which is universal and necessary, always and everywhere, in all times and in all places. This is not a universality of *fact* but a universality of *right*. In fact, it may be that people rarely think, and rarely think the true. But to say that only the true has a form is to insist that, in principle, for instance, if you think a triangle, you cannot deny that its three angles are necessarily equal to two right angles. Universality and necessity qualify the *judgements* that are made of the form of the true. Since the false has no form, judgements made about it are by right deprived of all universality and necessity.

2. Who then is the truthful person? In classical philosophy, what corresponds to the real in an idea is its power to *represent*, while what corresponds to the imaginary is the capacity of an idea (or image) to produce a *modification* of my body or soul. The former attains to essences, while the latter leaves one mired in appearances, and the anguish of the passions. The truthful person is thus someone who would allow their body and soul to be modified only by the form of the true. The activity through which this takes place can be called, following Simondon, the *in-formation* of the soul by the form of the true, which takes as its model the Eternal (the universal and the necessary).[7]

3. When does the false take on a power of its own? If time puts the concept of truth in crisis, it does so not at the level of its content ('truth changes with time'), but rather at the level of its form: the form of time takes the place of the form of the true (the universal and the eternal). One must be clear on the nature of Deleuze's critique: he is not making the claim that truth changes over time (for instance, we once thought the sun revolved around the earth, whereas now we think that the earth revolves around the sun), since that does not at all alter the *form* of the true (it was be true 'for all time' that the earth revolves around the sun – or rather, around the centre of gravity constituted by the sun and the earth and the other planets). Nor is he making the claim that truth is, as people like to say, 'relative' (relative to a culture, to an era, to an individual). Neither of these banalities calls into question the *form* of the true, which remains intact. The only thing that can call into question the *form* of the true (which is universal, eternal and necessary, in all times and in all places) is the *form* of time. And when the form of the true is put into question by the form of time, the false is thereby given a *power* of its own: if the false does not have a form, it nonetheless has a power. When, then, does the false take on a power of its own? When it is freed from the model of truth, that is, when the false is no longer presented as being true. What can disengage the concept of the false

from the model of truth? The answer is: time. Just as Deleuze attempts to formulate a concept of difference-in-itself, freed from its subordination to the concept of identity, so he attempts to formulate a concept of the false-in-itself, freed from its subordination to the concept of truth (and error). But this in no way implies the banal conclusion that 'everything is false', which would now be presented as a truth: as Nietzsche said, in one of his most profound phrases, in abolishing the true world we have also abolished the false world of appearances (Nietzsche 1954: 486). There is no longer either truth or appearance, and the false is no longer presented as being true; instead, the false assumes a power of its own.

4. What then is the *power* of the false, and how is it to be distinguished from the *form* of the true? Readers of Deleuze will quickly ascertain Deleuze's response to this question: if the form of the true is derived from the power of *judgement*, the power of the false is a power of metamorphosis, that is, it is a power of *creation*. Creative of what? At this point, there is no reason not to re-employ the word 'truth'. The power of the false is creative of truth – but this is, precisely, *a new concept of truth*: truth is no longer a timeless universal to be discovered, but rather a singularity to be created (in time). 'Philosophy creates concepts', writes Deleuze, 'which are neither generalities nor even truths; they are rather of the order of the Singular, the Important, the New' (Deleuze 2007: 238). The power of the false is nothing other than the power of creation, the power of metamorphosis.

5. A final question: when the form of the true gives way to the power of the false, who then takes the place of the truthful person? Deleuze's response: when the form of time is put into the concept, the *falsifier* [*le faussaire*] takes the place of the truthful person – and the falsifier is more or less equivalent to the artist, the creator. The falsifier is not a liar, since the liar is localisable (the liar 'owns' his lies), whereas the falsifier is non-localisable: the power of the false exists only under the form of a *series* of powers. To ask 'What is a falsifier?' is to ask a badly posed question, since the falsifier does not exist apart from an irreducible plurality or multiplicity: behind every falsifier there is only another falsifier (a mask behind every mask). The question becomes: where is one placed within the chain of falsifiers? As Nietzsche showed, the truthful person is himself nothing other than the first power of the false: Plato distinguished between the true world and the apparent world, but to do so he first had to *create* the concept of the Idea. If the power of the false is what Nietzsche called the will to power, one can distinguish two extremes or two powers within this will, namely, the

will to *judge* and the will to *create*, and it is the latter that constitutes the higher power.

To illustrate this distinction between the will to judge and the will to create, I would like to conclude with a consideration of Orson Welles's final film, *F for Fake*. Deleuze suggests that in fact there have been three great presentations of the theme of the falsifier: in philosophy, there is the final book of Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (the chain of the 'higher' men, each of which corresponds to a power of the false); in literature, there is Hermann Melville's final masterpiece, *The Confidence-Man*; and in cinema, there is Orson Welles's last film, *F for Fake* (see Deleuze 1989: 134, 145; 1984: 12 Jun.). Welles's film is instructive for our purposes because, among many other things, it examines the story of a man named Hans van Meegeren, who in the 1930s famously forged a number of paintings that he claimed had been done by Johannes Vermeer – the great Dutch painter. How did van Meegeren manage to pass off his forgeries as genuine Vermeers? Precisely because he made use of the criteria of experts, and the expert is someone who *judges*: the expert is able to recognise a true Vermeer by means of criteria he himself has established concerning Vermeer's style and periods. All that a forger like van Meegeren has to do is to study these criteria and use them to produce his forgeries – to the point where the expert will declare, 'This is clearly a genuine Vermeer because it corresponds to all the criteria that I have established.' The expert, Deleuze suggests, always has a forger within him, since they are both nourished off the same substance: the system of judgement (Deleuze 1989: 146).

What, then, is the difference between Vermeer and his forger? Both the artist and the forger belong to the chain of falsifiers, but the difference between them lies in this: Vermeer has a power of metamorphosis, whereas the forger and the expert scarcely know how to change: theirs is already an exhausted life that can do little more than judge the creations of others. The expert and the forger are united in their exaggerated taste for *form* (the form of the true), but the artist is able to take the power of the false to a higher degree that is realised, not in form, but in *transformation*.

It is precisely this vision that animates Deleuze's conception of philosophy: philosophy is the enterprise of the creation of concepts (or the creation of truth), that is, the will to power at its highest degree, which has as its necessary correlate the will 'to have done with judgment' (Deleuze 1997: 126). And this power of creation or metamorphosis, for Deleuze, is nothing other than the power of *time*.

Notes

1. For a comprehensive analysis of Deleuze's concept of time, see Williams 2011.
2. For Deleuze's discussions of the respective conceptions of time in Plato and Plotinus, see Deleuze 1984: 7 Feb.–27 Mar. Descartes's modern solution to the same problem was to conserve something invariant *within* movement, namely, the quantity of movement, *mv*, the product of mass times velocity.
3. One of the themes of Deleuze's two-volume *Cinema* is that the cinema, in its much shorter history, nonetheless recapitulated this philosophical revolution in the movement–time relation. For a useful summary of this revolution in the concept of time, albeit from a slightly different perspective than Deleuze's, see John Dewey's important 1940 article, 'Time and Individuality' (Dewey 1998: 217–26).
4. See Leibniz 1956: 15: 'As for my own opinion, I have said more than once that I hold space to be something purely relative, as time is – that I hold it to be an order of coexistences, as time is an order of successions. For space denotes, in terms of possibility, an order of things that exist at the same time, considered as existing together, without entering into their particular manners of existing. And when many things are seen together, one consciously perceives this order of things among themselves.'
5. Deleuze insists that it is important not to confuse the synthesis of time with time itself. In *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* (1962), Martin Heidegger reintroduced an originary time because he wrongly considered the synthesis of time to be an originary time. See Deleuze's critique in Deleuze 1984: 17 Apr.
6. For the *active syntheses* of the transcendental ego found in Kant, Deleuze substitutes a theory of *passive synthesis*, derived in part from Husserl. Joe Hughes provides an insightful analysis of the concept of passive synthesis in Hughes 2008. See also Faulkner 2005.
7. On the concept of information, in this sense, see Simondon 2005.

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Deleuzian Dragons: Thinking Chinese Strategic Spatial Planning with Gilles Deleuze

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Abstract

As symbols of adaptability and transformation, together with qualities of vigilance and intelligence, we argue the relevance of dragons for spatial planning in China. We develop a metaphorical concept – the green dragon – for grasping the condition of contemporary Chinese societies and for facilitating the development of theories and practices of spatial planning which are able to face the challenges of rapid change. We ask Chinese scholars and spatial planners to liberate Deleuzian potential for strategic spatial planning in a 'becoming-between, coming-together' of concepts which can effectively make a difference in the world. Having outlined what we regard as key transversals or diagonals between our reading of Gilles Deleuze and aspects of Chinese philosophy, we then offer the metaphor of strategic spatial planning as Chinese literati landscape painting. This is a form of painting which rejects the idea of the world being supremely organised from a particular point of view, preferring to paint immanence and transformation. Chinese literati landscape paintings, like philosophy and strategic spatial planning, 'look only at the movements'. We conclude that connections between what concepts of Chinese philosophy and those of Gilles Deleuze can do, suggest that in China, a conception of strategic spatial planning as metaphorical green dragon may offer academics and planning

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practitioners a transverse way to relate the legacies of past philosophies and current thinking.

Keywords: spatial planning, Chinese literati painting, concept, transversals, dragons

I. Introduction

> Everything is in[1] transformation [...] There is no possible [stereotypical] model.
>
> *I Ching* (《易经》)

> The assemblages are in constant variation, are themselves constantly subject to transformations.
>
> Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 82

The dragon represents a concentration of energy. Strongly associated with water and merging with clouds and mists, the dragon's energy is diffused through space. A dragon has no fixed form and is constantly evolving. It represents an ongoing process of transformation with the auspicious propensity to reach beyond itself. It symbolises the powers with which a form, such as a city, can be changed. A dragon symbolises efficacy, or strategy effective through variation: Deleuze and Guattari's 'pure strategy' (1987: 353) from the Chinese game of Go (*weiqi*, 围棋), the antithesis of rigid, mechanical practice. As Jullien (2004b: 97) suggests, 'strategic intentionality should have no fixed goal, is fixed in no particular plan, and so can adapt to every twist in the situation'.

As symbols of adaptability and transformation, together with qualities of vigilance and intelligence, dragons are relevant to spatial planning. Both in myths and paintings, Chinese dragons are depicted in a range of colours. A green dragon represents ideas of generating, growing, balancing and striving. It symbolises well-being and happiness, the new or different: 'energy renewed through change' (Jullien 1995: 153). The most auspicious placing for a green dragon is facing moving water – the archetypal smooth space of Deleuzian thinking.

The Urban Planning Society of China argues that 'urban planning is facing unprecedented challenges' which 'require a new planning system and methods' of theoretical innovation, institutional innovation and technological innovation in the production of urban or regional strategic spatial plans for a future twenty years or more. In this paper, we are inspired by the work of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari to develop a concept – the green dragon – for grasping the condition of contemporary

Chinese societies and for facilitating the development of theories and practices of spatial planning which are able to face the challenges.

Much post-structuralist theory, however, is written by Europeans and Americans, who tend to see their worlds through their 'eyes'. We suggest that it is productive to develop a Chinese form of post-structuralism, appropriate to contemporary Chinese cultural, social and economic realities. We take this further and suggest that the ideas of Deleuze and Guattari have sufficient resonances with classical Chinese philosophy to be inspirational for the development of a theory and methodology for strategic spatial planning in a spatially coextensive, fragmented, plural country. This would be a hybrid Deleuzism: 'a palimpsest of nonsynchronous, emergent, and residual formations, a mixture of various space-times, and an overlap of different modes of production' (Lu et al. 2004: 13). We adopt a metaphor of strategic spatial planning as Chinese literati landscape painting to begin to develop a theory and methodology which takes detailed steps along a broader, more flexible, longer-term path or trajectory. We conclude that resonances between Chinese philosophy and the work of Deleuze and Guattari suggest that in China, a theory of strategic spatial planning as metaphorical green dragon illustrative of immanent change may offer academics and practitioners a means to relate the legacies of past philosophies and current thinking.

We now suggest some important points of resonance which can be identified between Chinese philosophy and the work of Gilles Deleuze: change/transformation, propensities/tendencies and blandness/indeterminacy. Space constraints, however, permit us only to indicate these few connections which might hopefully inspire further research.

II. Resonances between Chinese Philosophical Thought and Deleuzian Thinking[2]

Strategic spatial planning, like Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy, should be imaginative and constructive rather than prescriptive or copy-pastes of universal concepts or ready-made 'best practice'. For Deleuze, concepts entail thinking new possibilities, creating productive connections in terms of the 'contingent circumstances and dynamics that lead to and follow from them' (Stagoll 2005: 50). Every problem or experience, then, demands practical engagement, critically thinking new concepts, unsettling or challenging traditional approaches.

Massumi (2010: 9) points out that, for Deleuze, a concept is what it does, rather than what it is. A concept is a set of circumstances; a vector or point of application of a force moving through space (Massumi 1987: xii). Change stems from the power or force relations and the conditions of possibility which they forge. As we indicate below, the Chinese concept of *shi* (势) suggests force or energy of both a particular situation and the dynamic tendencies expressed through it.

For Jullien (1995: 124), Chinese reasoning 'weaves' from case to case, 'via bridges and bifurcations', as a journey of linked phases, the outcomes of which are not defined in advance, but rather unfold progressively, like a scroll. The path along which outcomes unfold does not exclude other possibilities. As one travels the journey, an experience is lived through; a landscape is sketched in.

Change/Transformation

Change or transformation has long been an important element of Chinese philosophical thinking. Epitomised, perhaps, in the *I Ching* (*Yijing*, 《易经》), philosophers and sages for over 2000 years have encouraged active participation in processes of creative transformation. It is known that Leibniz – whose work influenced Gilles Deleuze – was interested in the *I Ching*.

Like Deleuze and Guattari, Chinese thinkers have refrained from constructing a world of ideal forms or archetypes separate from reality. They regard reality, rather, as a 'regulated and continuous process that stems purely from the interaction of the factors in play' (Jullien 2004b: 15). Such a view of interacting elements resonates with Deleuze's account of an assemblage/*agencement* as 'a multiplicity which is made up of many heterogeneous terms and which establishes liaisons, relations between them [... Its] only unity is that of co-functioning' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 69). 'Order', in Chinese thought, is not perceived as coming from a model or strict plan, but is an immanent process, detecting those elements whose configuration is favourable to the task at hand. Chinese thought is 'a thought of processivity' (Jullien 2004b: 121), as is that of Deleuze and Guattari.

The notion of becoming (or moving beyond) is important to Chinese philosophy and also to Deleuze (see, for instance, Deleuze 1994; also Williams 2000 on becoming and architecture). For Chinese thinkers, every situation is rich with the possibility of change. There are no predetermined, rigid goals. According to Confucius's *Analects* (《论语》), there were four things 'from which the Master was entirely free. He had

no foregone conclusions, no arbitrary pre-determinations, no obstinacy and no egotism' (9:4, quoted in Jullien 2000: 240). Consciousness is not fixed, but always in the process of becoming and thus open to possibility rather than being immobilised in a certain point of view. Deleuze developed an ontology of becoming, in which reality is in a continuous state of flux or differentiation. He adopted 'creative becoming as the only way to affirm the underlying real processes of differentiation or constant change behind all apparently static things' (Williams 2000: 203).

Propensities/Tendencies

For Chinese philosophers, strategy consists of two notions: a situation (*xing*, 形) or relation of forces, and tendencies (*shi*, 勢) implied in the situation (Jullien 2004b). A sage can understand the forces present in a situation which constitute its tendencies. Deleuze also regards tendencies as the immanent expression of forces; a thing is 'the expression of a tendency before being the effect of a cause' (Deleuze 1999: 45). To regard issues as having determinable causes and effects, therefore, misses the importance of tendencies which cannot be captured by simple equations. Chinese sages, along with Deleuze, believe in the immanence of transformation. Strategies should develop in relation to the elements (actants) involved and their tendencies, rather than as 'copy-pastes' of 'best practice': 'Nothing could be worse than wanting to repeat what has previously led to success, for since the situation is new, so is its potential' (Sunzi, 孙子, quoted in Jullien 2004b: 177).

Jullien (1995) highlights the importance of *shi* as tendencies or forces generated by the disposition of a thing. As Liu (2008) explains, *shi qi* (势气) refers to organisational morale, *min qi* (民气) is public support, *jing qi* (精气) implies economic vitality and *qi shi* (气势) implies mental force or energy, including intentions and emotions; all of which are relevant to strategic spatial planning.

Strategy, then, exploits the propensities emanating from a particular set of force relationships in order to benefit from them. For Chinese philosophers, propensity 'provides the key to the actualisation of things' (Jullien 1995: 222). The term designates both the particular circumstances characterising different stages of a process or trajectory (perhaps major projects in spatial planning?) and the potential energy or force relations (tendency) produced. As Jullien explains, one should examine such force relations carefully as they offer information about the potential 'evolution of things' (223). Possibility is linked

to the disposition produced in relational links between elements or actants:

> If two pieces of wood are rubbed together, fire results,
> If fire and metal come into contact, fusion results.
> (Huainanzi《淮南子》, second century BC, ch. 1: 5)

In both examples in the quotation above, there is often an intercessor who manipulates the disposition. As such, this bears resonance with the idea of strategic planning practitioners 'tweaking' elements in urban assemblages: 'It is up to the general, and equally to the politician, the painter, and the writer [the strategic spatial planner?] to avail himself of the *shi* (势) [. . .] So as to exploit it to its maximum potentiality' (Jullien 1995: 260). We remind planning practitioners, however, that for Deleuze, production of the new cannot be prescribed or predicted. Neither is it inevitably beneficial and so it should not be automatically regarded as a panacea.

The key to Chinese strategy is to study the forces present, or potentially present, in a range of possible situations and to evaluate, or map, the conditions of possibility of various events taking place, by asking a series of questions, 'appreciating' the relations of force and 'assessing' the dispositions or capacities of actants (*Guiguzi*,《鬼谷子》, ch. 7). The strategist should discover powerful propensities and work out how to harness, exploit or block them. 'To manage things, one must establish the potential of the situation' (ch. 5).

There are strong resonances between Chinese strategy as outlined in the *Guiguzi* (《鬼谷子》) and Deleuze and Guattari's pragmatics explained in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987: 139–40, 146–7). If strategists trace the present, retrospectively untangling or unfolding the constituent relational conditions of possibility, they may be able to 'sense' tendencies (Deleuzian mapping), diagram the relational forces that may come into play 'either as potentialities or as effective emergences' (146) and machine a programme or strategy for what might take place.[3] Strategy is concerned with implicating an effect, folding the outside in, knowing how to tackle a situation ahead of its actualisation; to 'steer it gently' (Jullien 2004b: 126) in the desired direction. Rather than following a predetermined model or template for action, good strategists adapt to circumstances which are often unforeseen and even unforeseeable. Strategy, then, aims not to predetermine an 'infinitely superior reality' (Jullien 2000: 304), but to pay attention to the tendencies which, 'given certain actions could lead to the unfolding of new ways of living' (Lorraine 2011: 3).

The *Guiguzi*'s (《鬼谷子》, ch. 2) advocacy of 'roundness' and 'mobility' upstream or in the longer-term future, together with 'sureness' and 'stability' downstream in the present or shorter-term future, resonate with a multiplanar theory of strategic planning (Hillier 2007; 2011), based in Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) planes of immanence and organisation. The concept of *shi* (势) gives us the importance of both standing back, at a distance, from something to gain an overall impression of the desired trajectory and the main lines (*shi*, 势) involved (see Deleuze's plane of immanence) and also of involvement with the technical detail of composition. 'Contemplating a landscape from afar, one grasps its lifelines; considering it close up, one seizes its substance' (Zong Bing, 宗炳, *Hua shanshui xu*,《画山水序》, quoted in Jullien 1995: 95).

As such, thinkers in the Ming and Qing periods advised artists to outline broad structural lines, or contours, to suggest major masses, while 'wrinkles' imparted detail (Jullien 1995: 98). The overall arrangement depends on a compositional logic (vision or trajectory in spatial planning) that is seen as a source of dynamism.

> Only when the painter, provoked by the very body of the landscape and the divisions through which its life pulsates, has intuitively apprehended its general movement, can the structure of the painting be planned in a more intellectual and controlled operation. (Dan Chongguang, 笪重光, quoted in Jullien 1995: 101)

Shi (势) is advanced at a stage of uncertainty, when it is barely detectable (plane of immanence), to actualise at a stage of detailed observation and measurement (plane of organisation). Resonating strongly with Deleuze and Guattari's two planes (1987; 1994), Jullien (2004b) points out that these are not two levels, but two interrelated aspects of a process.

The conjunction of the indeterminate or indirect with the more immediate, apparent in both Chinese and French-inspired post-structuralist philosophy, illuminates how desire or emotion is transformed into meaning as the two planes are joined. In Chinese poetic theory, for example, the incitatory mode is obscure, sinuous and evanescent (the plane of immanence), while the analogical mode is manifest, direct and clear (plane of organisation). As Liu Xie (刘勰) (fifth and sixth centuries) explained, in incitatory mode, one 'suggests indirectly' in a vague manner, while one 'speaks openly', using 'categorical' references in analogical mode (quoted in Jullien 2000: 154).

Further, 'the incitatory mode consists in being moved through contact with the world, and, while the world is found there, the meaning unfolds elsewhere. [...] The theme is not exposed directly as in the direct and

analogic modes of expression' (Luo Dajing, 罗大经, quoted in Jullien 2000: 154). The incitatory mode opens up all possible perspectives by going beyond their differences. It offers a 'complete availability of meaning' (Jullien 2000: 192) which constitutes indeterminacy or blandness, as Jullien (2004a) translates the Chinese word *dan* (淡) found in Chinese traditions of Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism.

Blandness/Indeterminacy

The word *dan* (淡) has several meanings, including indifferent or bland and exhausted (but not tired). We can see resonances here with Deleuze's conceptualisation of exhaustion as a combinatorial of inclusive disjunctions (Deleuze 1995). Jullien (2004a) argues the positive qualities of blandness, honouring the presence of absence or the not-yet identifiable. He proposes that the bland comprises an unnameable, yet potentially harmonious, combination of all values, embodying an ontology of change and difference which offers an infinite opening for expression and activity.

We advocate that long-term strategic spatial plans should be bland; the advantage of which lies in their not being tied to fixed targets and, as a consequence, they possess the capacity to be flexible. Potentiality should not be blocked by overcoded plans, but allow practitioners to summon up appropriate strategies for new situations. 'A lightly sketched affirmation does not force me to defend a position but rather allows me to evolve as I will, while remaining master of the game' (Jullien 2000: 50).

Blandness or obliqueness, by not setting strict spatial planning targets for around twenty to twenty-five years ahead, allows practitioners more room for manoeuvre in a long-term strategic plan which is 'enriched by its indeterminacy' (Jullien 2000: 190). The intention of such plans is not to direct detailed behaviour, but to favour adaptability in relation to circumstances.

As in Chinese landscape painting, areas of indeterminacy or 'emptiness' allow creativity and a more spontaneous reaction to changing circumstances; the opposite of over-coding and over-regulation which stifle innovation and spontaneity. Indeterminacy captures the flavour of the invisible (*shen*, 神) (*Laozi*, 《道德经》, quoted in Jullien 2004b: 113).

Our outline of resonances above suggests a network of transversals or intersecting diagonals between Chinese and Deleuzian philosophical thought. Transversals assemble multiplicities which affirm their

differences through their connections (Bogue 2007: 2) and which generate new creative possibilities. As such, inspired by Deleuze's reading of Henri Maldiney's discussion of Hsieh Ho's (谢赫) advice to aspiring Chinese artists in the sixth century, we offer the metaphor of strategic spatial planning as Chinese literati landscape painting. This is a form of painting which rejects the idea of the world being supremely organised from a particular point of view, preferring to paint immanence and transformation.

III. Strategic Spatial Planning as Literati Landscape Painting

Deleuze gave a lecture on the subject of Hsieh Ho's (谢赫) advice to Chinese artists (on 27 April 1982) and published his ideas in *Cinema 1: The Movement Image* (1986). He was particularly impressed by Hsieh Ho's (谢赫) suggestion that the painter should first 'reflect the vital breath, that is, create movement' and then 'seek the *ossature* [skeleton]; that is, know how to use the brush' (Maldiney 1973: 167). The primary aim of the painter is to manifest the broad movement of the vital breath (*chi/shi*, 势) through the 'coming into presence' of things. But, as Hsieh Ho (谢赫) pointed out, the painter must also capture individual details in distinct brush strokes delineating the structuring *articulation* (infrastructure), rendering them in their 'disappearing'.

The school of literati, or scholarly, painting emerged in the eleventh to twelfth centuries in reaction to the strict conventions, regulations, minute detail (often tending to pedantry) and colour characteristic of the academic style. The literati style encompassed greater freedom of expression through varying thicknesses of brush strokes and lines of black ink on paper. Although not a typical literati art subject, broad movement and fine detail of the dragon are brilliantly depicted in Chen Rong's (陈容, 1244) work, *The Nine Dragons* (九龙图) (Figure 1). The concept of 'painting the eye of the dragon' refers to painting the eye in detail, often adding it last after less detailed elements have been sketched or outlined.

Deleuze sees in these processes both the two senses of exhaustion – 'the greatest exactitude and the most extreme indeterminacy' (1995: 5) – and two means of constructing space. The first means is a broad conceptualisation of an encompassing, ambient whole within which individual elements are situated and structured. The second means is a local operation whereby an individual element is connected to a neighbouring element and then to another and so on, constructing an open space of related but heterogeneous elements.



Figure 1. Fragment from *The Nine Dragons* handscroll (九龙图／九龍圖), painted by the Song-Dynasty Chinese artist Chen Rong (陈容／陳容) in 1244 CE. (Source: Francis Gardner Curtis Fund, courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Acquisition No. 17.1697.)

Deleuze (1982: 6; 1986: 191) refers to the broad movement of vital breath (*qi*, 气) as an 'organic spiral' in which things appear and disappear 'like the dragon concealed behind the clouds'. He was much taken with the use of lines in Chinese art, incorporating such ideas into the development of lines in his own work (see, for example, Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 497). He liked the indefiniteness of Chinese art as 'not imitative, nor structural, but cosmic' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 280) and the notion of the artist as someone who 'makes a becoming of the world' (Bordeleau 2009).

For Deleuze (1982), Chinese painting resonated with his concept of immanence and, by analogy, with strategic spatial planning. We suggest that the following passage from *Cinema 1* – Deleuze's explication of Chinese painting – can be read as a metaphor for spatial planning as a process of shaping the longer-term future of a city or region through the production of a strategic vision:

> 'All the art of execution is in fragmentary notations and interruptions, although the aim is to achieve a total result'. How can one paint the pike without discovering the broken line of the universe which links it to the rock it brushes in the depths of the water, and to the reeds of the bank where it lurks? But how can one paint it without animating it with the cosmic breath of which it is only a part, an impression? (Deleuze 1986: 192)

Chinese landscapes often depict mountains, in an almost infinite variety of forms, rising through clouds and mists, emerging in the distance. We offer the analogy of such 'mountains in the mist' in long-range strategic spatial planning as the visions or broad aims for a geographical area over a period of perhaps twenty to twenty-five years or longer. Mountains, as a metaphorical 'plane of immanence', function rather like 'a sieve over chaos' (Boundas 2005: 273), depicting desired conditions to work towards, such as sustainability. As Han Zhuo (韩拙) wrote in the eleventh century, 'the landscape is at once extraordinarily entrancing and subtle-evanescent' (quoted in Jullien 2009: 36) and for Wu Daozi (吴道子, eighth century), 'even though, from the perspective of the brush, it is not complete, the sense-intentionality is complete' (quoted in Jullien 2009: 71).

In the foreground, elements in the painting are more concrete and individuated. Like Deleuze's 'plane of organisation', the artist is concerned with the development of identifiable forms. We offer the analogy for strategic spatial planning of local area plans, design briefs and detailed major projects, all of which tend to be relatively local

or micro-scale, shorter term and content specific. They facilitate small movements or changes along the dynamic, open trajectories of the plane of immanence or longer-term strategic plan.

Between the indistinct distance and the elements visible in the foreground, 'a narrow path takes shape' (Jullien 2009: 56). 'Between', here, implies opening a thing wide from the inside and allowing passage through it (95). 'Between' indicates the inseparability of the concrete, tangible foreground form and the more vague, bland, 'spirit dimension' (*xing-shen*, 形-神) of mountains or longer-term desires. As the tenth-century commentator Jing Hao (荆浩) explains, the artist must take care not to get bogged down in form, but keep everything in flight or movement. Jing Hao (荆浩), however, also reminds us that the artist cannot transmit the spirit dimension without resorting to tangible form. The artist, therefore, works between the two planes of spirit dimension and tangible form; not dominated by either, but open to both simultaneously.

Guo Xi (郭熙, eleventh century) wrote that artists must consider landscapes from a distance 'to grasp the lines of force' and must look at the close up 'to grasp their materiality' (Jullien 2009: 146).

> 'Directly before us, the ravines and the mountains, the woods and the forests curve and tangle together. Through that arrangement, the landscape comes to us; we do not tire of its details and our eyes are satisfied in their quest near at hand. From an angle, the far plane that deploys the mountain chains without interruption fades away. We do not tire of that remoteness and our eyes are open to the far reaches of the vastness.' (Guo Xi [郭熙], quoted in Jullien 2009: 156; original emphasis)

Resonance is strong here with Deleuze's suggestion of 'a turbulent, stormy zone where particular points and the relations of forces between these points are tossed about' above the 'solidified [. . .] visual dust' (Deleuze 1988: 121). Practitioners (whether artists or strategic spatial planners) need to engage creatively with this throbbing, pulsating graphic, to 'tear open the firmament itself, to let in a bit of free and windy chaos and to frame in a sudden light a vision that appears through the rent' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 203).

Chinese theorists construct 'a system of variance serving as a framework for difference' (Jullien 2009: 151). Resonant with Deleuze's (1994) ontology of difference, the constitutive being of a mountain, for example, is its potentiality. Form (*xing*, 形) is both a noun and a verb. It implies transformation; something *in* transformation. Painting

thus involves selection of form from a range of different possibilities, as does strategic spatial planning. Both are marked by a choice 'concerning the real' in the principle of its production (Jullien 2009: 205).

Chinese landscape paintings often contain depictions of mountains and water, especially oceans. In fact, as Jullien (2009: 121–2) points out, the term for landscape is *shan-shui* (山-水, mountain-water). Water exemplifies Deleuzian smooth space; seemingly undifferentiated, infinite, irregular, dynamic. Artists regard landscape elements as being in dynamic interaction. Each element of the painted landscape (or strategic plan) exists in relation to the others: 'each element is relational, constitutively and intrinsically' (188). Mountains and water are not regarded as properties, but as capacities (137) to which the artist gives vitality, just as spatial planners may attempt to give vitality to city centres, residential estates, and so on through plans and design guides.

Mountains and water are, in Jullien's (2009: 181) words, 'proposed' to the painting, not as proper forms, but as resources for exploration and exploitation. Plans may designate zones of land use in similar manner. If designation is too narrow, in either painting or planning, vision becomes limited and obstructs the interactions between actants and elements which give rise to beneficial transformation. Artists and planners need some rules, however. For Fang Xun (方薰, eighteenth century), 'wherever there is diligence, there are always rules' (quoted in Jullien 2009: 192) and for Deleuze, we require 'just a little order to protect us from chaos' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 201).

Literati painting, from the Song Dynasty onwards, paints 'intentionality' or potentiality. As Zhang Yanyuan (张彦远, ninth century) suggested, the 'formal resemblance that the painting has in view lies entirely in the brush's motion structuring forms' (quoted in Jullien 2009: 222), which is itself grounded in potentiality. A landscape painting (or a plan) is an image 'not of reality reified into a form, but of the momentum that brings it about' (230). It expresses an aspiration; a propensity.

Rather than describing and representing, the painting seeks to incite flows of energy (*shi*, 势). Rather than fixing qualities, the painting suggests capacities and potentialities. Shi Tao (石涛, seventeenth century) summarises the purpose of painting as 'the great rule of modification assuring the world's continuance' (quoted in Jullien 2009: 233). We propose that the purpose of strategic spatial planning could be summarised similarly.

IV. Conclusion: Painting Deleuzian Dragons

Rather than reveal, Chinese philosophy (and literati painting) aims to indicate. Scholars or sages advise that the deep meaning of a text should unfold gradually rather than be rigidly predetermined. In this paper, we have attempted to identify several resonances between Chinese philosophical and French-inspired post-structuralist thinking. Established connections between the *I Ching* (《易经》), Leibniz and Deleuze suggest that China, as Saussy proposes, could be 'the land where [Deleuzian] poststructuralism can come into its own' (2001: 178).

Following the Chinese year of the Water Dragon, we offer the metaphor for strategic spatial planning of Chinese literati painting which rejected the idea of the world being supremely organised from a particular point of view, preferring to paint immanence and transformation. Literati painting allows glimpses through mists and clouds of what might actualise, yet affords freedom for our understanding to evolve and change as we regard the work on different occasions or from different angles. Literati painting also depicts some foreground elements in detail. This is its inherent realism. Transformational vitality is then provided by 'painting the dragon's eye' of local detail.

Finally, we argue that the potential for change in Chinese strategic spatial planning comes from within, rather than copy-paste application of authors such as Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. Western sources are part of the frame; but only a part. Chinese scholars and planning practitioners should 'break it open' as Massumi (2010: 13) advocates, in order to 'liberate the pure form of its potential' in processes of 'becoming-between, coming-together'.

Notes

1. We thank Paul Patton and an anonymous referee for suggestions which have strengthened the paper. A different version of the paper with a spatial planning (rather than a Deleuzian) emphasis has been previously published in Chinese as 绘制青龙：面向中国战略空间规划的后结构主义理论与方法论, *Urban Planning International*, 25:5, pp. 88–95 (2010).
2. Hillier, as a non-Mandarin reader, has relied on work by François Jullien, as quoted, for her very generalised understanding of Chinese philosophical thought.
3. See Hillier's (2010; 2011) methodology of strategic navigation for similar concept in strategic spatial planning.

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Deleuze's Conception of Desire

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Abstract

Desire is a key concept in Deleuzian philosophy. Deleuze's desire is quite different from that of other thinkers. Both in the West and in China, in the past as well in the present, desire is usually understood as something abnormal, avaricious and excessive, the opposite of rationality, to be controlled and suppressed in man. Deleuze's desire is much wider, referring not only to man, but also to animals, objects and social institutions. In Deleuze's view, desire is not a psychic existence, not lack, but an active and positive reality, an affirmative vital force. Desire has neither object, nor fixed subject. It is like labour in essence, productive and actualisable only through practice. This paper discusses the formation, evolution and limitation of Deleuzian desire.

Keywords: Deleuze, desire, philosophy, Marx, Foucault

Deleuze holds that philosophy is concerned with the creation of concepts, and a new concept may bring about a new way of thinking, then thereby a new way of living. On the one hand, Deleuze put forward many new concepts; on the other hand, he offered new interpretations to many existing concepts. Take the concept of desire as an example. It is taken as a pejorative word in both West and East, signifying something excessive, unjustified and wanton. That is why in China we have the Confucian motto of 'abiding by heavenly justice to suppress human desire', and society looks up to people who are upright as a result of exterminating individual desire. Plato in his *Republic* takes desire as the opposite of reason, something to be controlled.[1] Deleuze, based on his critique of the traditional, orthodox Western philosophy, holds that desire is a positive force, it is not purely psychic, not a lack as usually

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understood but productive in nature; like labour, desire is actualised in the course of practice. This paper discusses the evolution of Deleuze's conception of desire and the many implications of this conception.

Western philosophy since Plato has been emphasising the opposition between mind and body, taking mind as superior to body, rationality as preferable to desire. Representational thinking, Deleuze says, is State philosophy and rationalism derived from Plato and it characterises Western metaphysics. Traditional Western philosophy only cherishes the Platonic and Aristotelian belief that fixity is a nobler and worthier thing than change. Deleuze in his Conclusion to *Difference and Repetition* offers a critique of representational thinking, calling it a site of transcendental illusion. This illusion, according to Deleuze, comes in four interrelated forms which correspond particularly to thought, sensibility, the idea and being.

> In effect, thought is covered over by an image made up of postulates which distort both its operation and its genesis. These postulates culminate in the position of an identical thinking subject, which functions as a principle of identity for concepts in general. (Deleuze 1994: 265)

Deleuze believes there is no such thing as identical thinking subject, and concepts have no fixed, singular meaning.

According to Deleuze, the concept of desire has been misunderstood from the very beginning in Plato. Plato divides the human soul into three components of reason, spirit and desire, in which desire is the opposite of reason and is to be governed by reason:

> Platonic logic of desire forces us to make a choice between production and acquisition. From the moment that we place desire on the side of acquisition, we make desire an idealistic (dialectical, nihilistic) conception, which causes us to look upon it as primarily a lack: a lack of an object. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 25)

The productive side of desire has been neglected until Kant attributed to it the faculty of being, through its representations, the cause of the reality of the objects of these representations. But in Kant, according to Deleuze, the reality of the object is only a psychic reality, so Kant's critical revolution changes nothing essential, and this way of conceiving of productivity does not question the validity of the classical conception of desire as a lack. On the contrary, it reaffirms the validity of representational thinking, uses this conception as a support and a buttress, and merely examines its implications more carefully. Deleuze takes desire not simply as some psychic reality but as something real:

> If desire produces, its product is real. If desire is productive, it can be productive only in the real world and can produce only reality. Desire does not lack anything; it does not lack the object. It is, rather, the subject that is missing in desire, or desire that lacks a fixed subject; there is no fixed subject unless there is repression. Desire and its object are one and the same thing: the machine, as a machine of a machine. Desire is a machine, and the object of desire is another machine connected to it. (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 26)

In her PhD dissertation, published as *Subjects of Desire: Hegelian Reflections in Twentieth-Century France* (Butler 1987), Judith Butler discusses how Hegel in his *The Phenomenology of Spirit* elaborates on the concept of desire. According to Butler, Hegel's discussion of human desire in the sections of The Truth of Self-certainty and Lordship and Bondage was derived from Spinoza's notion of desire as the essence of man, and the endeavour to persist in one's own being. Butler believes that Hegel endorses Spinoza's monistic refutation of the Cartesian mind–body dualism (Butler 1987: 46). Deleuze holds that desire is what makes humanity human. It does not point to any specific object, nor is it the Freudian drive of libido. Kojève, in his famous *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on the Phenomenology of Spirit* (1980), elaborated on the dialectics of Lord and Slave, and concluded that man is his desire.[2] This understanding of desire is highly appreciated by Deleuze.

When interviewed, Deleuze says:

> It was on Spinoza that I worked the most seriously according to the norms of the history of philosophy – but it was Spinoza more than any other that gave me the feeling of a gust of air that pushes you on the back each time you read him. We have not yet begun to understand Spinoza, and I myself no more than others. (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 15)

Michael Hardt, tracing the development of Deleuzian philosophy, emphasises the influences on Deleuze by earlier philosophers such as Spinoza, Bergson and Nietzsche: 'With Bergson, Deleuze develops an ontology. With Nietzsche, he sets that ontology in motion to constitute an ethics. With Spinoza, we will take a further step in this evolution, toward politics' (Hardt 1993: 57). Deleuze agrees with Marx that in the human realm, 'what exists in fact is not lack, but passion, as a natural and sensuous object. Desire is not bolstered by needs, but rather the contrary; needs are derived from desire' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 27). Deleuze holds that social production and desiring production are one and the same thing, they are inseparable.

> The truth of the matter is that *social production is purely and simply desiring production itself under determinate conditions*. We maintain that the social field is immediately invested by desire, that it is the historically determined product of desire, and that libido has no need of any mediation or sublimation, any psychic operation, any transformation, in order to invade and invest the productive forces and the relations of production. *There is only desire and the social, and nothing else*. (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 29)

There is no difference in nature between the desiring machines and the technical social machines, says Deleuze. There is a certain distinction between them in the field of régime, depending on their relationships to size:

> In the first place, technical machines obviously work only if they are not out of order; they ordinarily stop working not because they break down but because they wear out. Marx makes use of this simple principle to show that the régime of technical machines is characterized by a strict distinction between the means of production and the product. Thanks to this distinction, the machine transmits value to the product, but only the value that machine itself loses as it wears out. Desiring machines, on the contrary, continually breaks down as they run, and in fact run only when they are not functioning properly; the product is always an offshoot of production, and at the same time the parts of the machine are the fuel that makes it run. (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 31)

On the one hand, we can say that social production under determinate conditions derives primarily from desiring production; that is to say, natural man comes first. On the other hand, however, desiring production is first and foremost social in nature, and tends to free itself only at the end; that is to say, social man comes first. The double nature of human being as both natural and social determines the dialectics of desire and production.

In expounding Deleuze's conception of desire, Claire Colebrook emphasises the connectivity of desiring machines. Desiring machines are nothing more than their connections or experiences according to her. From the connections of bodies or from experiences, human minds form ideas:

> The child's mouth, for example, that has experienced pleasure at the breast comes to desire or anticipate the breast. In this expectation desire can produce an image or investment. This is what Deleuze means when he says that desire is productive. We often think that desire is for what we lack, but for Deleuze desire is more than the actual. In the case of the child, the mouth's past pleasure produces an idea or image of further pleasure, and this creates an investment. The breast becomes more than what is actually is (a body part)

> and takes on an added virtual dimension – the breast of fantasy, pleasure and desire. (Colebrook 2002: 82)

Desire begins from connection, she asserts. Life strives to preserve and enhance itself and does so by connecting with other desires. These connections and productions eventually form social wholes. When bodies connect with other bodies to enhance their power they eventually form communities or societies. Against the idea that social wholes are formed through ideology, Deleuze argues for social wholes as positive and productive. Social wholes take desires in order to produce interests, coded, regular, collective and organised forms of desire.

In his *A User's Guide to Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Brian Massumi interprets Deleuze's concept of desire as follows: desire is not desire for an object, except to the extent that whole attractors are imposed on the body by reactive forces. It is not a drive in the Freudian sense, and it is not a structure in the sense that language is a structure in the Saussurian model adopted by Lacanians. Desire is the production of singular states of intensity by the repulsion–attraction of limitative bodies without organs (governed by deterministic whole attractors) and non-limitative bodies without organs (governed by chance-ridden fractal attractors). In its widest connotation, it is the plane of consistency as multiple co-causal becoming. On the human level, it is never a strictly personal affair, but a tension between sub- and super-personal tendencies that intersect in the person as empty category. In *Anti-Oedipus*, a tendency of this kind was called a 'desiring machine'. Due to persistent subjectivist misunderstandings, in *A Thousand Plateaus* the word was changed to the more neutral 'assemblage' (Massumi 1992: 82).

We can trace the evolution of Deleuze's conception of desire by a rough examination of his books. In *Difference and Repetition* (1968) Deleuze launches a devastating criticism of representational thinking but does not discuss desire. In *The Logic of Sense* (1969) he mentions desire in several places and discusses it in some detail. In his essay 'Michel Tournier and the World without Others', for example, Deleuze makes an analysis of Tournier's novel *Friday*, which is a rewriting and parody of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. The essay is about perversion, and Deleuze makes it clear that the world of the pervert is a world without Others, and thus a world without the possible. The Other is what makes the possible possible, and the existence of the Other is the condition for the extinction of perversion. On the barren island, without the Other, both Robinson and Friday become pervert. Deleuze calls the concept of

perversion a bastard concept – half juridical and half medical, but neither medicine nor law is entirely suited to it. Perversion, as he says, is not defined by the force of a certain desire in the system of drives. The pervert is not someone who desires, but someone who introduces desire into an entirely different system and makes it play the role of an internal limit, a virtual centre or zero point (Deleuze 1990: 304).

Deleuze believes that the pervert lives in a world without others. When catastrophes fall on the island, Deleuze says, the newly erected desire learns the nature of its true object. Nature and the earth have already told us that the object of desire is neither the body nor the thing, but only the Image. When we desire Others, our desires are brought to bear upon this expressed small possible world which the other wrongly envelops. And when we observe a butterfly pillaging a flower that exactly resembles the abdomen of the female of the species and then leaving the flower carrying on its head two horns of pollen, we are tempted to conclude that bodies are but detours to the attainment of Images, and that sexuality reaches its goal much better and much more promptly to the extent that it economises this detour and addresses itself directly to Images and to the Elements freed from bodies (Deleuze 1990: 313).

When Kierkegaard's hero demands 'the possible, the possible or I shall suffocate', when James longs for the 'oxygen of possibility', Deleuze suggests, they are only invoking the a priori Other. Even desire, whether it be desire for the object or desire for Others, depends on this structure. I desire an object only as expressed by the Other in the mode of the possible; I desire in the Other only the possible worlds the Other expresses. The Other appears as that which organises Elements into Earth, and Earth into bodies, bodies into objects, and which regulates and measures object, perception and desire all at once (Deleuze 1990: 318).

It seems that in *The Logic of Sense* (1969), Deleuze has not yet fully developed his notion of desire, relying heavily on Sartre and others while discussing the Other, perversion, desire, and so on. By *Anti-Oedipus* (1972) he has fairly well developed this concept with Guattari and in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987) he has fully developed this concept. In the chapter 'How Do You Make Yourself a Body without Organs?', Deleuze and Guattari write:

> Every time desire is betrayed, cursed, uprooted from its field of immanence, a priest is behind it. The priest cast the triple curse on desire: the negative law, the extrinsic rule, and the transcendent ideal. Facing north, the priest said, Desire is lack. The priest carried out the first sacrifice, named castration, and all the men and women of the north lined up behind him, crying in cadence,

> 'Lack, lack, it's the common law.' Then, facing south, the priest linked desire to pleasure. For there are hedonistic, even orgiastic, priests. Desire will be assuaged by pleasure; and not only will the pleasure obtained silence desire for a moment but the process of obtaining it is already a way of interrupting it, of instantly discharging it and unburdening oneself of it. Pleasure as discharge: the priest carries out the second sacrifice, named masturbation. Then facing east, he exclaimed: *Jouissance* is impossible, but impossible *jouissance* is inscribed in desire. For that, in its very impossibility, is the ideal. The priest carried out the third sacrifice, phantasy or the thousand and one nights, the one hundred twenty days, while the men of the east chanted: Yes, we will be your phantasy, your ideal and impossibility, yours and also our own. The priest did not turn to the west. He knew that in the west lay a plane of consistency, but he thought that the way was blocked by the columns of Hercules, that it led nowhere and was uninhabited by people. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 154)

We notice several things in the quotation. First, the figurative use of words such as priest, facing north, south, east, sacrifice, and so on, which gives the reader vivid images of different understandings of desire by different people. Deleuze admits having been charged with over-quoting literary works, and his own style of writing philosophical treatises has always been literary. The translator Brian Massumi reserved the French word *jouissance* in its original form, to express exactly what English words could not convey: the combination of happiness and pleasure. The irony is that the priest uses castration to annihilate lack, masturbation to satisfy pleasure, and phantasy to achieve a virtual ideal. The directions are not accidentally chosen. People in the north suffer from severe cold, their temperament is usually austere and solemn, and they practise asceticism and have a better experience of what lack is. Southern people are romantic, easy-going and pleasure seeking; they would use every means to find pleasure, even by masturbation. The East is mysterious to Westerners, the place of one thousand and one nights, people there are both lusty and idealistic, and more likely to enjoy a sort of virtual *jouissance*. The priest did not turn to the west as he knows human nature better than to try that; the way to heaven is blocked by the Pillars of Hercules. Second, we come across two key Deleuzian concepts in the quotation, one at the beginning – 'field of immanence'– the other at the end – 'plane of consistency'. We quote Deleuze himself to explain the concepts:

> The field of immanence is not internal to the self, but neither does it come from an external self or a non-self. Rather, it is like the absolute Outside that knows no Selves because interior and exterior are equally a part of the

> immanence in which they have fused. The slightest caress may be as strong as an orgasm; orgasm is a mere fact, a rather deplorable one, in relation to desire in pursuit of its principle. Everything is allowed: all that accounts is for pleasure to be the flow of desire itself. If pleasure is not the norm of desire, it is not by virtue of a lack that is impossible to fill but, on the contrary, by virtue of its positivity, in other words, the plane of consistency it draws in the course of its process. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 157)

Again the two concepts appear together, and again one at the beginning, the other at the end. In his analyses of Proust, Sade and Masoch, Deleuze finds that they all explore a curious inter-world, in which bodies, words, things and ideas interpenetrate and the traditional demarcations between the physical and the metaphysical become blurred. For Deleuze, plateau, body without organs (BwO), field of immanence and plane of consistency are equated. They are interpenetrating and interconnected, and mutually nested and overlapping. Hence the configurations of a thousand plateaus of interconnections of thought are formed. Deleuze and Guattari give an authoritative interpretation of the plane of immanence. They say that the event does not relate to a transcendent subject (self), but on the contrary, is related to the immanent survey of field without subject. They illustrate the notion of the plane of immanence by stressing its impersonality. For example:

> The BwO is desire; it is that which one desires and by which one desires. And not only because it is the plane of consistency or the field of immanence of desire. Even when it falls into the void of too-sudden destratification, or into the proliferation of a cancerous stratum, it is still desire. Desire stretches that far: desiring one's own annihilation, or desiring the power to annihilate. Money, army, police, and state desire, fascist desire, even fascism is desire. There is desire whenever there is the constitution of a BwO under one relation or another. It is a problem not of ideology but of pure matter, a phenomenon of physical, biological, psychic, social, or cosmic matter. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 165)

Here Deleuze equates BwO with the plane of consistency and the field of immanence, and by logic the three are identical. In the following quotation, Deleuze introduces another concept that is still connected with the exposition of desire:

> Desire is never separable from complex assemblages that necessarily tie into molecular levels, from micro-formations already shaping postures, attitudes, perceptions, expectations, semiotic systems, etc. Desire is never an undifferentiated instinctual energy, but itself results from a highly developed, engineered setup rich in interactions: a whole supple segmentarity

> that processes molecular energies and potentially gives desire a fascist determination. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 215)

Desire is then inseparable from complex assemblages, and assemblages are passional compositions of desire:

> Desire has nothing to do with a natural or spontaneous determination; there is no desire but assembling, assembled, desire. The rationality, the efficiency, of the assemblage does not exist without the passions the assemblage brings into play, without the desires that constitute it as much as it constitutes them. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 399)

For Deleuze, life and work were a synthesis or assemblage of desire, and there is no distinction between public and private, domestic and academic. In fact, he had integrated writing and life as inseparable from each other, and reached an impersonal flux of desire. For him, writing is an experience of life, and life is an approach to academic research. In his mind, philosophy and art do not belong to separate domains of truth and fiction, or of objectivity and subjectivity, but inhabit a single realm of thought, whose fundamental goal is the creation of new possibilities of life.

Deleuze holds that to write is not to impose a form of expression on the matter of lived experience. Writing is a question of becoming, always incomplete, always in the midst of being formed, and goes beyond the matter of any liveable or lived experience. It is a process, that is, a passage of life that traverses both the liveable and the lived. Writing is inseparable from becoming: in writing, one becomes-woman, becomes-animal or vegetable, becomes-molecule to the point of becoming imperceptible. Also, to write is not to recount one's memories and travels; one's loves and griefs; one's dreams and fantasies. In this respect, he is like T. S. Eliot, advocating a kind of impersonal writing. He admits that all literature involves imagination (fabulation), but fabulation does not consist in imagining or projecting an ego. We do not write with our neuroses, because neuroses or psychoses are not passages of life, but states into which we fall when the process is interrupted, blocked or plugged up. Illness is not a process but a stopping of the process. Moreover, the writer as such is not a patient but rather a physician, the physician of himself and of the world.

In this sense, literature appears as an enterprise of health: not that the writer would necessarily be in good health, but he possesses an irresistible and delicate health that stems from what he has seen and heard of things too big for him, too strong for him, suffocating things whose passage exhausts him, while nonetheless giving him

the becomings that a dominant and substantial health would render impossible. The writer returns from what he has seen and heard with bloodshot eyes and pierced eardrums, and sits down to recount what he has experienced. The ultimate aim of literature is to set free, in the delirium, this creation of a health or this invention of a people, that is, a possibility of life.

The desire to become a writer must be supported by vital impulse. Deleuze, on the basis of the inseparable relation between the virtual and the actual, defines the vital impulse as 'a case of virtuality in the process of being actualized, simplicity in the process of differentiating, a totality in the process of dividing up' (Deleuze 1988: 94). Here, Deleuze stresses the virtuality of vital impulse and its corresponding actualisation in matter. Vital impulse is virtual, pre-individual and impersonal. But it can be actualised in matter. The process of virtuality being actualised is also called differentiation.

Deleuze believes that

> nomads in the strict, geographical sense are neither migrants nor travellers, but on the contrary, are those who do not move, those who cling on to the steppe, who are immobile with big strides, following a line of flight on the spot, the greatest inventors of new weapons. (Deleuze 1988: 99)

In this respect, his idea is similar to that of Lao Zi, the great Chinese sage, who says:

> Without leaving his door
> He knows everything under heaven
> Without looking out of his window
> He knows all the ways of heaven
> For the further one travels the less one knows
> Therefore the sage arrives without going
> Sees all without looking
> Does nothing, yet achieves everything. (Lao Zi 1995)[3]

Deleuze sees in Taoism a good example of desire being channelled into healthy use. For example, in Taoism there is the formation of a circuit of intensities between female and male energy, with the woman playing the role of the innate or instinctive force (yin) stolen by or transmitted to the man (yang) in such a way that the transmitted force of the man (yang) in turn becomes innate, all the more innate: an augmentation of powers. The purpose of this practice is for the balance between yin and yang in the human body, and for longevity. The condition for this circulation and multiplication is that the man does not ejaculate. It is not a question

of experiencing desire as an internal lack, nor of delaying pleasure in order to produce a kind of externalisable surplus value, says Deleuze, but instead of constituting an intensive body without organs, Tao, a field of immanence in which desire lacks nothing and therefore cannot be linked to any external or transcendent criterion. It is true that the whole circuit can be channelled towards procreative ends, that is, ejaculation when the energies are right; that is how Confucianism understands it:

> But this is true only for one side of the assemblage of desire, the side facing the strata, organisms, state, and family. It is not true for the other side, the Tao side of destratification that draws a plane of consistency proper to desire. The field of immanence or plane of consistency must be constructed. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 157)

In this passage, Deleuze equates Tao with assemblage of desire, with the BwO, with the field of immanence and plane of consistency. In his view, Confucianism stands for strata, organisms, State and family, while Taoism stands for destratification, for a new possibility of life. We notice Deleuze's use of Marx's idea of surplus value and his praise of the Taoist way of achieving the BwO or the field of immanence and plane of consistency, or assemblage of desire. In Oriental philosophy, Deleuze rests his critique of Western orthodox ideas.

Desire is a key concept in Deleuzian philosophy, and many critics call his philosophy the philosophy of desire. Deleuze holds that all philosophy is political in nature, and his conception of desire is highly political. Deleuze was deeply influenced by the May Movement of 1968 in France, and his philosophy is that which, to a certain extent, stands for the rebellion of the deprived against those in power, a subversion of the marginal towards the centre, a challenge of the buried histories to the established history. It reflects typically many postmodern trends. About the rise of fascism before World War II, scholars have done much research and put forward many valuable explanations. From Deleuze's conception of desire, we can say fascism is desire, is a desiring machine, a desiring assemblage. The thoughts of Hitler, his desire to rid Germany of the shame as a result of World War I, and his ambition to make Germany the greatest power in Europe, even in the world, were widely shared by the masses of Germany. Deleuze agrees with Wilhelm Reich that the German masses were not innocent dupes, that at a certain point, under a certain set of conditions, they wanted fascism, and it is this perversion of the desire of the masses that explains the rise of fascism in Germany in the 1930s.[4] That is also why the German people are more willing to take historical responsibility instead of shifting all the guilt to

Hitler alone. But Reich does not go further, according to Deleuze, falling back to the old division of rationality and irrationality in the human psyche, 'failing to discover the *common denominator or the coextension of the social field and desire*' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 29). In Deleuze's view, we cannot judge desire from the perspective of morality or ethics, as desire is 'beyond good and evil', a Nietzschean notion.

In a political elaboration of structuralist premises, Foucault argues that, first, language is always structured in a specific historical form and is, therefore, always a kind of discourse; second, this discourse invariably recapitulates and produces given historical relations of power; and third, these power-laden discourses produce desire through their regulatory practices. Hence, for Foucault, there is no desire outside of discourse, and no discourse freed of power relations. Deleuze does not make any comment on Foucault's idea, but the two of them share a lot from their readings of Marx.

They both agree with Marx's thesis, 'Philosophers have hitherto only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it' (Marx 1845: 3). They both assent to Marx's assertion:

> The production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men, the language of real life. Conceiving, thinking, the mental intercourse of men, appears at this stage as the direct efflux of their material behavior. The same applies to mental production as expressed in the language of politics, laws, morality, religion, metaphysics, etc., of a people. Men are the producers of their conceptions, ideas, etc. – real, active men, as they are conditioned by a definite development of their productive forces and of the intercourse corresponding to these, up to its furthest forms. Consciousness can never be anything else than conscious existence, and the existence of men is their actual life-process. (Marx 1846: 8)

Deleuze in his elaboration and conception of desire uses quite a lot of Marxian terms such as capital, exchange, circulation, consumption and surplus value. He equates desiring production with social production, the accumulation and release of desire with the buying and using of commodities.

Deleuze makes a distinction between philosophy, science and art. In his view, science aims at the representation of objects and states of affairs by means of mathematical or propositional functions, art aims at the capture and expression of the objective content of particular sensations – affects and percepts – in a given medium, while philosophy

aims at creating concepts, the function of which is to transform existing forms of thought and practice. Here lies the political nature of philosophy. Though influenced by Marx's political economy, Deleuze pays more attention to the micropolitics that involves subterranean movements of individual and collective sensibility, affect and allegiance, than to the macropolitics that involves social classes and the institutions of political government. Paul Patton thinks that the tripartite division of thought outlined in Deleuze's *What Is Philosophy?* resembles the division found in Kant's three critiques, and that science, philosophy and art as distinct modalities of thought correspond to the Kantian domains of theoretical, practical and teleological reason. Kant distinguishes theoretical from practical reason by suggesting that theoretical reason is concerned with the knowledge of objects that are given to us by means of the senses, whereas practical reason is concerned with objects that we produce by means of action in accordance with certain principles. In this regard, Deleuze's philosophy is a form of practical reason (Patton 2010: 138–9).[5]

It is impossible to give Deleuze and his philosophy a fixed label, as can be seen from our discussion of his conception of desire. The conception of desire in Deleuze, like Deleuze himself, is a desiring machine or desiring assemblage, full of vital forces but also contradictions and conflicts. When reading *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus*, we are struck by his erudition, as the books touch on almost all the subjects of human knowledge. The subtitles of the two books are identical: *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. His basic logic is that capitalism creates schizophrenia, and his ambition is to find a remedy for the illness of society. Successful or not, we are not sure, but we should accept Fredric Jameson's comment about Deleuze:

> The greatness of Gilles Deleuze was to have confronted omnivorously the immense field of everything that was thought and published. No one can read the two volumes of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* without being stunned by the ceaseless flood of references that tirelessly nourish these texts, and which are processed into content and organized into dualism [. . .] It seems to me misguided to search for a system or a central idea in Deleuze: in fact there are many of those. It seems preferable to observe the extraordinary process whereby his intelligence rewrites and transcodes its overpopulated conceptual environment, and organizes it into force fields. But that organization, often so luminously schematic, does not aim to give us the truth, but rather a series of extraordinary representations. (Jameson 1997: 395)[6]

If we aim at finding definite, final, universally applicable truth in Deleuze's writings, we are doomed to failure, but if we aim at finding

the infinite complexities, the paradoxes, and behind them, the interesting ways of reasoning, narrating and arguing, we are sure to be rewarded plentifully.

Notes

1. See *Book Nine* of *Republic*, where Plato divides the human soul into three parts, corresponding to three desires and three kinds of people: those loving wisdom, those loving honour and those loving money. He argues that those loving wisdom are the noblest, those loving honour are good and those loving money are bad. Also in *Book Four* of *Republic*, he says that there are two things in the human soul: one is rational for the purpose of thinking and reasoning, the other is irrational, which is promoted by the sensual desire for the satisfaction of physical needs such as hunger and thirst, and so on.
2. Here Kojève's rationale is as follows: the basic driving force of history is man's pursuit for recognition, exhibited most clearly in the realm of politics. One person's desire for success is inevitably in conflict with that of another; those who win in the conflict become masters, and those who lose become slaves. Thus we see the perpetual struggle between master and slave and the forced labour of the slave (Kojève 1980).
3. Lao Zi (571–471 BC) was the tutor of Confucius (551–479 BC), and the founder of Taoism, a philosophy that emphasises the connection between metaphysical and ethical notions. Given the elusive nature of the universal truth, the Tao, Lao Zi conceives a sceptical philosophy that defines the notion of good based on the absence of intentionality and beliefs. According to Taoism, the world is originally one integral, inseparable whole. As the world evolves, the unity divides into two polar extremes, with yin (female) representing passiveness and yang (male) representing activeness. The two are interdependent and mutually enhancing. A movement towards one polar extreme often results in movements in the opposing extreme and when one extreme gets too violent, the tension will cause its opposing extreme to prosper.
4. See Reich's *The Mass Psychology of Fascism* (Reich 1970), in which Reich gives a thorough and in-depth analysis of the rise of fascism in Germany in the 1930s, which finally led Germany into World War II.
5. Paul Patton believes that all philosophy is essentially political, Deleuze's philosophy is particularly so. In *Deleuze and the Political* Patton elaborates further on the political nature of the Deleuzian philosophy.
6. *A Deleuzian Century?* is the journal's special issue on Deleuze, the title being taken from Foucault's assertion that the twentieth century would one day be known as the century of Gilles Deleuze. Jameson's essay is the first in the volume of fourteen essays.

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Introduction: Deleuze, Virginia Woolf and Modernism

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'To write is also to become something other than a writer', Deleuze concludes in 'Literature and Life'. 'To those who ask what literature is, Virginia Woolf responds: To whom are you speaking of writing? The writer does not speak about it, but is concerned with something else' (Deleuze 1997: 6). Just as literature attempts to reach 'the life in things' that is 'the outside of language' (2, 5), the 'writer' is concerned with *becoming* something else (woman, animal, molecule). As Deleuze's example of such a writer, Woolf has become impersonal, imperceptible, indiscernible, thus the question 'to whom are you speaking?' In one of Deleuze's other references to Woolf, she exemplifies the becoming-indiscernible in the naming of the author:

> The function of the proper name (the proper name, here, is precisely not a reference to a particular person as author or subject of enunciation; it refers to one or several assemblages; the proper name brings about an individuation by 'hecceity', not at all by subjectivity)... Virginia Woolf designates a state of reigns, ages and sexes. (Deleuze and Parnet [2002] 2006: 89)

'Virginia Woolf', and for that matter 'Gilles Deleuze', cannot be localised in a time or place; they are traversing planes and taking on becomings. The transversals shared between Woolf and Deleuze are the focus of this special issue: Woolf's becoming-Deleuze; Deleuze's becoming-Woolf.

Deleuze's comments about Woolf's writing (both process and product) appear in texts spanning from the 1970s to the end of his life in 1995, including his *Dialogues* with Claire Parnet, *A Thousand Plateaus* and *What is Philosophy?* with Félix Guattari, and essays such as 'Literature and Life'. A range of Woolf's texts, including *Mrs Dalloway*,

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Orlando, *The Waves* and her modernist feminist manifesto *A Room of One's Own*, are variously cited in Deleuze's discussions of literature. For Deleuze, Woolf's writings are exemplary of 'becoming', 'haecceity', 'affects' and 'percepts', and the 'plane of consistency', and many of these concepts are explored in more detail in the essays collected here. Woolf also provides a rare example of Deleuze's references to a female author, with implications for how we think about the relationship between modernism, feminism and philosophy. Therefore, whilst previous work on Deleuze and modernism has tended to focus on the authors Deleuze wrote about most fully (such as Franz Kafka, Antonin Artaud, Samuel Beckett and Marcel Proust), this special issue demonstrates how Woolf's modernist aesthetics are integral to Deleuze's philosophical concepts. In so doing, we offer a dual examination of the instances where Deleuze 'plugg[ed] into' Woolf's 'electric circuit' (Deleuze 1995: 8) and also of the specific ways in which Deleuze's thought might offer new perspectives on Woolf's novels, essays, short stories and auto/biographical writings, and on the intersection of philosophy and literature more broadly. The essays that follow offer interdisciplinary, philosophically and critically engaged explorations of the creative convergences between Deleuze's and Woolf's writings, which, in turn, also unfold wider debates in fields including contemporary philosophy, feminist theory, modernist studies, animal studies and postcolonial studies.

The earliest attempts to consider the relationship between Deleuzian philosophy and aspects of Woolf's modernism can be found in John Hughes's *Lines of Flight* (1997) where he discusses the Bergsonian and Deleuzian 'movement' of Woolf's first novel, *The Voyage Out*, as well as in Catherine Driscoll's discussion of Woolf's feminism alongside Deleuze, Rosi Braidotti and Julia Kristeva (2000), and Jean-Jacques Lecercle's acute analysis of Woolf's 'Kew Gardens' in *Deleuze and Language* (2002). Following these critics, the relationship between Deleuze and Woolf has been brought to prominence in Jessica Berman's reading of Woolf's (ethical) writing alongside Mieke Bal's reconceptualisation of the Deleuzian 'fold' for feminist studies (2004; 2011) and Beatrice Monaco's *Machinic Modernism* (2008). Monaco's monograph, in particular, aligns Deleuze's thought with the modernist projects of Lawrence, Joyce and Woolf, and includes chapters on immanence and transcendence in *To the Lighthouse* and on form and rhythm in *The Waves* and *Orlando*. In the wake of this scholarship, there have been further attempts to bring their work together: Jason Skeet has provided a Deleuzian reading of *The Waves* and Woolf's essay 'The Cinema' (2008); Judith Allen has used Deleuze's 'rhizome' as a

conceptual paradigm for her discussion of 'wildness' in Woolf's work (2010); Gina Potts has provided a Deleuzian reading of Woolf's anti-authoritarian politics in *Three Guineas* (2010); Laci Mattison has read *To the Lighthouse* alongside Deleuze's conceptualisation of 'the fold' (2011); Carrie Rohman has considered the Deleuzian 'refrain' in her analysis of the inhuman in *The Waves* (2011); Claire Colebrook has considered new possibilities Deleuze offers for our readings of Woolf and of modernist literature more generally (2012); and Derek Ryan has forged creative links between key Deleuzian concepts and Woolf's theorising of the material world, especially in relation to questions concerning sexuality, animality and life itself (2013). In addition, some of the most recent Annual International Woolf conferences included papers focused on Deleuze, as did 'Virginia Woolf Among the Philosophers', a conference organised by the *La Société d'Etudes Woolfiennes* held in Paris (2012).[1] Woolf, then, has emerged in recent years as someone who demands serious consideration in dialogue with Deleuzian philosophy.

This special issue consists of new essays by several of the above-mentioned scholars that further consider the relation between Deleuze, Woolf and modernism. In the first essay, 'Modernism without Women: The Refusal of Becoming-Woman (and Post-Feminism)', Claire Colebrook takes on the concept of becoming-woman alongside Woolf's claim that it is 'fatal for anyone who writes to think of their sex' (Woolf 1989: 104). Such a modernism, according to Colebrook, is one notably separate from the 'regendering' of modernism of the late 1980s and 1990s (although this movement is arguably ongoing) in that it refuses 'both man and woman'. ' "Becoming-woman" ', Colebrook writes, must also 'be read as a defiant and affirmative refusal'. Essays by Beatrice Monaco and Jason Skeet more directly deal with Woolf's influential modernist aesthetics for Deleuze's consideration of how language becomes intense. In ' "Nothing is simply one thing": Woolf, Deleuze and Difference', Monaco provides a technical analysis of difference and repetition in Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse*. Engaging with the 'micro-technics' of Woolf's modernist experiments, Monaco is particularly interested in the 'dynamic tension between prose and poetry or meter and radical rhythm'. Skeet's essay, 'Netting Fins: A Deleuzian Exploration of Linguistic Invention in Virginia Woolf's *The Waves*', focuses specifically on Woolf's verbal and syntactical constructions, including an exploration of four specific linguistic procedures found in this novel. In doing so, Skeet investigates how, for Deleuze and Woolf alike, ontology 'becomes intimately bound up with a problem of language'.

Complementary essays by John Hughes and Carrie Rohman likewise advance arguments surrounding ontology and genre. Hughes demonstrates how Woolf's experimental aesthetics in her 1921 short story collection, *Monday or Tuesday*, corresponds with Deleuze's philosophical thought, as well as Deleuze's 'recasting' of Henri Bergson's 'notions of creativity, virtuality, difference, and multiplicity'. In returning to Bergson via Deleuze, Hughes shows how Woolf's early short story collection is 'emancipated by its dislocation of the armature of conventional novelistic representation, as it pursues modes and themes that can be linked, through stylistic enactment and thematic staging, with Bergson's concepts of the virtual, intuition, sympathy, subjectivity, art, creativity, emotion, and language' and how this emancipation carries over into her later novels. In 'A Hoard of Floating Monkeys: Creativity and Inhuman Becomings in Woolf's Nurse Lugton Story', Rohman details how becomings-animal are important for the becoming-artistic of writing. She reads Woolf's overlooked children's story, 'Nurse Lugton's Curtain', alongside Deleuze's and Elizabeth Grosz's theories of art and the inhuman and argues that this children's book reveals 'an affirmative bio-poetics at the heart of Woolf's aesthetic project and suggests that Woolf's creative sources are embedded in inhuman, biological forces'.

Derek Ryan's essay extends a discussion of becoming-animal by exploring the (perhaps surprisingly) wide-ranging territory of cows in the writings of Woolf and Deleuze. Ryan demonstrates the ontological and ethical implications of Woolf's bovine aesthetics in texts including *Between the Acts* and *Flush*, and underscores the importance of Deleuze's animal philosophy for readings of animals in literature, as well as for animal studies more broadly. Taking her cue from the recent *Deleuze and the Postcolonial* (Bignall and Patton 2010), Laci Mattison transitions this consideration of ethics and becoming to address what scholars have seen as a complicity with imperialism in Woolf's and Deleuze's writings and to emphasise how Deleuze and Guattari's 'worlding' is inspired in part by Woolfian 'moments of being'. These moments are 'ethical enactments of potential becomings', visions and engenderings of new configurations of relationality, of new worlds. Mattison shows how Bernard's moment of being in the last episode of *The Waves* – his 'becoming-savage' – acknowledges an authorial complicity with empire making, while also marking a particularly anti-imperial mode of subjectivity.

In his letter to Michel Cressole, Deleuze outlines two ways of reading a book: the first, a wild goose chase after signifiers (what does it

mean? what does it represent?); the second, 'see[ing] the book as a little non-signifying machine, and the only question is "Does it work, and how does it work?"' The latter practice of reading is 'intensive' and 'relates a book directly to what's Outside' (Deleuze 1995: 8). Such a reading experiences the book 'as a flow meeting other flows, one machine among others, as a series of experiments in the midst of events that have nothing to do with books' (9). Readers of this collection of essays will find Deleuze and Woolf assembling not only with each other but also with various 'Outsides' – gender, language, art, animality, empire – in experimentations with and in the world. These multiple vectors of thought commonly demonstrate the intimately bound relationship between aesthetics, ethics, politics and ontology for both Woolf and Deleuze. The essays which follow thus extend what Bruce Baugh outlines in 'How Deleuze Can Help Us Make Literature Work' (2000), and in so doing, they affirm in varying ways a shared style in Woolf's modernism and Deleuze's philosophy: 'Style, in a great writer, is always a style of life too, not anything at all personal, but inventing a possibility of life, a way of existing' (Deleuze 1995: 100).

Notes

1. As well as 'Virginia Woolf Among the Philosophers', conferences themed on 'Woolf and the City' (New York, 2009), 'Contemporary Woolf' (Aix-en-Provence, 2010), 'Contradictory Woolf' (Glasgow, 2011) and 'Interdisciplinary/Multidisciplinary Woolf' (Saskatoon, 2012) have included Deleuzian readings by Marie-Dominique Garnier, Laci Mattison, Dolors Ortega, Caroline Pollentier and Derek Ryan.

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Modernism without Women: The Refusal of Becoming-Woman (and Post-Feminism)

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Abstract

Just as becoming-woman is a divided concept, looking back to a seemingly redemptive figure of the feminine beyond rigid being, but also forward to a positive annihilation of fixed genders, so modernism was also a doubled movement. But modernism was a pulverisation of 'the' subject for the sake of a plural and multiplying point of view, and like 'becoming-woman', should be read as a defiant and affirmative refusal.

Keywords: becoming-woman, feminism, post-feminism, post-humanist, gender, sexual difference, capitalism

I.

The topic of post-feminism is neither joyous nor rigorous. The 'post' of post-feminism can signal the redundancy of a feminist movement that has achieved about all it could achieve, implying an acceptance of gender politics. From this point of view, certain things are no longer acceptable – unequal pay, sexual harassment, the refusal of reproductive rights, discriminatory language or exclusion from the public sphere – and this renders feminism both triumphant and redundant. Alternatively, post-feminism is also a critical stance that attends to forces that are far more complex than those that could be explicable via categories of gender (McRobbie 2004). It is obvious that feminism has made gains that 'we' (humans and the non-humans who benefited from eco-feminism) are now enjoying; and yet we might also remind ourselves that such hard-won gains are 'one generation away from extinction'.[1]

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It is no less obvious that for all those gains, figures of gender and tired clichés of sexual difference still organise much of our thinking (insofar as we are still thinking). Indeed, perhaps there is a third sense we could grant to the term post-feminism: in addition to referring to the completion of feminism and to the overcoming of the simplicities of feminism, perhaps post-feminism might be more akin to terms such as 'post-modernism' or 'post-structuralism'. Here, to be post-feminist would be at one and the same time a refusal of the implicit borders of gender politics, while also a recognition that any supposed era after feminism will be haunted by the figures of binary sexual difference that were exposed, criticised, deconstructed and parodied. It may well be that we live in a time of the post-human, where we recognise the claims of animals, technology, the planet and other unbounded forces; and yet it is precisely here, in the genre of the post-apocalyptic, that the most tiring gender narratives are repeated. One can think of Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* (2006) in which the world after the end of the world (the world after the destruction of capitalism and civility) is nevertheless ordered by a familial narrative: a man journeys with his son through post-human wreckage, mourning the child's mother. Or, consider any number of post-apocalyptic cinematic events where the disaster narrative is entwined with a heterosexual romance: *The Book of Eli* (2010) is at once a reflection on a world in which the archive of Judeo-Christianity has been destroyed (with one fabled remaining copy of the Bible), and also a terrain in which a heroic Denzel Washington fights the forces of post-human evil. Yet the narrative is still structured (as nearly all narratives are) by a male–female encounter. The heroic Eli not only saves the world by preventing the one remaining Bible from falling into the wrong hands; he also saves Solara, the young female who signifies the future at the film's close.

One might say that it is easier to imagine the end of the world, and the end of capitalism, than it is to think outside the structuring fantasies of gender.[2] There must always be an active male heroism driven by a feminine fragility that appears to hold the promise of the future. Explicit narratives of this form, such as *Children of Men* (2006) in which a world that has stopped breeding is given the feeble hope in the form of a young pregnant woman to be saved by the male lead, are surrounded by less overt regressions to the romance plot and its variants. *The Walking Dead* (2010), *I Am Legend* (2011), *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (2008), *28 Days Later* (2002) – all these imaginings of the end of the world nevertheless remain within a sentimental Oedipal structure of the family. It might make sense to think in Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's

terms that 'becoming-woman' is the key to all becomings (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 291): gender and sexual binaries seem to be the last archaism in a world that is elsewhere proclaiming itself to be post-human. Finance capital has destroyed the notion of a locus of capitalism; the era of the brain and artificial intelligence has put to rest any notion of the exceptionalism of the human; research on non-human languages and cognitive archaeology has meant that we are truly post-structuralist (no longer believing in the linguistic paradigm). We are post-capitalist, post-linguistic, post-political, post-racial and yet not fully post-feminist. We have gone through the performative turn, the affective turn, the non-human turn, the theological turn and the ethical turn, and yet we seem to keep turning back to woman.

Even so, for all the rigidity of gender and notions of woman, surely the twenty-first century seems to demand that we think *beyond* woman, rather than beginning with woman as our first step to human freedom. Why, now, would we want to keep talking about a category as tired and flabby as 'woman'? And why would we want to take a philosophical corpus, such as Deleuze and Guattari's with all its energy directed at moving beyond human normality, and tie it back – again – to the question of becoming-woman? If Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 280) had anything to say on the issue, it was to insist on becoming-woman as a moment of passage, and so – not surprisingly – they cited Virginia Woolf's claim that it would be fatal for writing to 'think of' one's sex:

> All who have brought about a state of sex-consciousness are to blame . . . Even so, the very first sentence that I would write here, I said, crossing over to the writing-table and taking up the page headed Women and Fiction, is that it is fatal for anyone who writes to think of their sex. It is fatal to be a man or woman pure and simple; one must be woman-manly or man-womanly. It is fatal for a woman to lay the least stress on any grievance; to plead even with justice any cause; in any way to speak consciously as a woman. And fatal is no figure of speech; for anything written with that conscious bias is doomed to death. It ceases to be fertilised. Brilliant and effective, powerful and masterly, as it may appear for a day or two, it must wither at nightfall; it cannot grow in the minds of others. Some collaboration has to take place in the mind between the woman and the man before the art of creation can be accomplished. Some marriage of opposites has to be consummated. The whole of the mind must lie wide open if we are to get the sense that the writer is communicating his experience with perfect fullness. There must be freedom and there must be peace. Not a wheel must grate, not a light glimmer. The curtains must be close drawn. The writer, I thought, once his experience is

> over, must lie back and let his mind celebrate its nuptials in darkness. He must not look or question what is being done. Rather, he must pluck the petals from a rose or watch the swans float calmly down the river. (Woolf 1989: 104)

If identity is fatal, and anti-self-consciousness is the order of the day, why would one ever waste thought and ink on this relatively isolated, and manifestly transient, notion of becoming-woman?

One way of defending a continued focus on 'woman', if not 'becoming-woman', would be strategic: even if gender and sexual difference were blunt organising categories, they nevertheless have their persistence and need to be dealt with rather than willed away. Part of the value of psychoanalysis has been in acknowledging the gap between what we may know to be true and an archaic psychic economy that continues to operate. (Juliet Mitchell [1974] argued for the pertinence of psychoanalysis precisely because – and despite the women's movement's reasoned claims – intractable Oedipal structures remained in place.) When Deleuze and Guattari wrote *Anti-Oedipus*, they accepted the truth of the Oedipal individual: insofar as we demand to be recognised as subjects, we must submit to an either/or disjunction of male/female. Yet they strenuously insisted that *subjection* was not the sole logic. Instead, they took up a modernist notion that other forms of language, perception and embodiment would be possible, beyond the current logic of Oedipal individualism. If modernism was in part a critique of the West, and in part a critique of the subject, it was also an ambivalent critique of 'man' tied to a concept of writing. When Deleuze and Guattari quote Virginia Woolf, they are drawing upon an author whose modernism was already in dialogue with centuries of anti-humanist critique, ranging from Friedrich Nietzsche's tirade against a 'consciousness' whose interiority could only be established by a severing from the intensity of life, to Henri Bergson's argument that the intellect had reified the life of spirit. At first glance, modernist anti-humanism seems to be marked by a neo-Romantic positing of 'the feminine' as that which might operate as an exit from the Western subject of judgement. (One can think here of the 'oceanic' conclusion of Joyce's *Ulysses* with the affirmative repetition of Molly Bloom's 'yes' and Julia Kristeva's [1980] appeal to Joyce's 'semiotic' mode of pre-Oedipal poetic language.)

In addition to ostensibly 'feminist' modernisms that celebrated a redemptive power of the feminine, there was also a modernism that refused both man *and* woman. If Deleuze and Guattari's aesthetics

is indebted to modernism, it is not surprising that they appealed to Woolf in their description of the transition from becoming-woman to becoming-imperceptible. Just as becoming-woman is a divided concept, looking back to a seemingly redemptive figure of the feminine beyond rigid being, but also forward to a positive annihilation of fixed genders, so modernism was also a doubled movement. Modernism was in part a logic of the subject in its striving to be nothing other than the distanced observer, or nothing other than any of the personae though which one speaks (Ellmann 1987). But modernism was also an anti-subjectivism, or rather a pulverisation of 'the' subject for the sake of a plural and multiplying point of view. In addition to the arched, refined and urbane distance of impersonality, modernism was also a tactic of positive and positively destructive refusal. One might note, though, that impersonality is a stratum with two sides: on the one hand, in its high modernist mode, especially as articulated by Eliot and Joyce, the artist detaches himself from every constituted voice and becomes a godlike purveyor of all the voices of history; the direction is one of ironic elevation. For Deleuze, by contrast, becoming-imperceptible is not the creation of a grand godlike position that subsumes all viewpoints, but a multiplication of smaller and smaller perceptions, decreasing the distance and elevation of the authorial voice. We could distinguish then between an impersonality of ironic elevation, and a radical becoming-imperceptible that destroys any transcendental subject (Colebrook 2003: 214). Radically anti-humanist modes of modernism would not just be *other than* any determined subject; one would not just be post-human or post-feminist. Rather, one would take up and decompose the rigidity or stupidity of the figures that had strangled thinking, not imagining that one might simply and too quickly will away the forms, figures or 'territories' that had oriented thinking.

'Becoming-woman', I would suggest, needs to be read as a defiant and affirmative refusal. It is quite distinct from the Lacanian notion of imagining that there is no woman (that there is no 'beyond' that would exceed subjection and no 'thing' that would guarantee my enjoyment [Copjec 2002]); and becoming-woman is also distinct from attempts to destabilise the 'heterosexual matrix' from within by repeating and distorting gender's already constituted figures (Butler 1993). That is, 'becoming-woman' is not an authentic recognition that gender is some fantasmatic lure whose 'beyond' I need to think in the form of a radical negation, as in the Lacanian insistence that 'woman does not exist'. Nor does one take up the existing figure of woman to repeat or perform it ironically (Cornell 1991). For both these

positions – that we must negate gender or perform it parodically – suffer from simultaneously overvaluing and undervaluing thinking. Such strategies overvalue thinking by assuming that one can pass from recognising the fantasmatic status of thinking to adopting a distanced and critical attitude; at the same time, the future potentiality of thinking is constrained by not creating or writing other modes of perception. For the Oedipal structure is just that, a style or mode of perceiving: one views the world as a subject, as a point of view opening onto a world that is structured and differentiated according to a certain common logic. The broader claim and project of Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus* is to destroy that style of subjectivism by creating a mode of thought that is not that of a world differentiated by 'a' system of signification for 'the' speaking subject. Becoming-woman is one of the ways in which they imagine a different mode and temporality of perception: not a world that I can only live as always already differentiated, a world to which I am subjected, with only a fantasmatic or negative 'beyond'.

II.

The problem of considering the worth of political or tactical concepts such as 'becoming-woman' opens onto the broader terrain of human stupidity and the relation between stupidity and time. Is it sufficient for us to look back across the philosophical or literary corpus, spot the moments of racial, gendered, sexual, ethnic or historically embedded bias (where thought has allowed itself to be captured by cliché), and then proceed to separate the dynamism of ideas from the stupidity of unthinking inertia? If this were so, then one could see modernism as an attempt to rid thought of its opacities in order to arrive at a moment of renewed vision. One would overcome the limits and biases of thought to arrive at a pure becoming. (And one would apply the same to Deleuze and Guattari, reading certain aspects of their corpus as moments of a 'little Oedipus', where they remained too faithful to their forebears [de Landa 2003].) By contrast, an acknowledgement of something like a transcendental stupidity (Deleuze 2004: 187; Ronell 2002: 20) would require us *not* to see becoming-woman as a local movement, adopted in the late twentieth century to take us once and for all beyond man. Becoming-woman would be a perpetual act of war, waged against both the upright morality of man *and* the redemptive otherness of woman. Further, this might relate to the broader project of a counter-organicism: destroying the parochialism in which the thinking body folds the world

around its own practical needs, imagining itself as a thing among things. There is another capacity for thinking, which would take it beyond its own bounded self, and would do so via perception. Becoming-woman might possess some privilege or legitimacy, not just because it was *not* the perception of man, and not because it would be perception from another point of view, but because it would shift the problem of point of view. Becoming-woman would *not* be perceiving as a woman, but perceiving in such a way that perception would be a form of becoming.

This way of reading becoming-woman would relate directly to Woolf's refusal to think of sex alongside her use of point of view, where sentences move ever closer to intuiting the world of the beings that the narrative voice perceives – the worlds perceived by waves, particles, moths, light and air. In this respect one might read *The Waves* as a Deleuzian/Leibnizian monadology that expresses the truth of the relative rather than the relativism of truth. That is: it is not the case that we are enclosed within signs and can only perceive the world at one remove (where stupidity would be a negative limit, an inability to escape already constituted points of view). Rather, the world is composed of multiple perceptions and points of view, each one finite, but through finitude disclosing the capacity of the world to produce ever more perceptions. There is no grand perception of the whole, no truth of the world beyond perception, but this is because of a positive stupidity: it is precisely in the smallest and most located of perceptions that the world discloses its differences. *The Waves* oscillates between the personal or human attribution of perceptions ('I see . . . ') to the perceptions of a thousand tiny glances. In *The Waves* the sentences shift from human observers who, via perception, are becoming-imperceptible – 'We are whirled asunder. My sense of self almost perishes' – to natural description – 'The sun rose' – to birdsong: 'In the garden the birds that had sung erratically and spasmodically in the dawn on that tree, on that bush, now sang together'. The description of birdsong then shifts and the birds become possible observers, 'perhaps they saw the splendour of the flowers making a light'. What the birds 'perhaps' see is not a world of things, but other perceptual relations, the falling of water producing a possible lens that opens a new world: 'Or they saw the rain drop on the hedge, pendent but not falling, with a whole house bent in it' (Woolf 2008: 59).

To accept a transcendental stupidity is to elevate thinking above the upright image of pure thought and to encounter a swarm of becomings. Becoming-woman would be a strategy that refused both the Lacanian

notion that 'woman does not exist' (or that woman has served as a lure to cover the fact that we are necessarily subjected to a symbolic order that produces the effect of an originary plenitude) *and* an easy post-human exit that would escape man and woman altogether in a moment of post-feminist, post-cognitive and post-Cartesian unity. (One would need to distinguish here between those modes of post-humanism, such as that of Rosi Braidotti [2013] or Donna Haraway [2007] who see the post-human as an ongoing task and challenge, and those that declare the era of man to be already over.) *Becoming*-woman would be an affirmative rejection of reactive negations – would abandon the idea of stepping outside man once and for all – but it would also be a refusal of active submission, or the idea that we always already think within a system that we repeat parodically or ironically.

Becoming-woman, read as a twin refusal (of both purity and subjection), might not then be a minor or casual remark in the works of Deleuze and Guattari and would indicate a different mode of the politics of philosophy: the stupidities that populate the philosophical corpus – including the concept of 'woman' – are indicative of tendencies that always have two sides. The concept of becoming-woman would be beyond good and evil: neither a sign that we might move beyond man to some redemptive outside, nor a mark or stain in Deleuze and Guattari's work that signals a moment of weak (1960s and hippy) and unthinking feminist sympathising. Rather, the concept itself – considered as a *concept* created to do work in reconfiguring the philosophical plane – serves both to reorient the speeds and styles of thinking, and to confront philosophy's concepts with its own stupidity (Weinstein 2010). To this extent, the creation of the concept of becoming-woman might also be aligned with a certain style of modernism: at once recognising that the canvas is always populated with clichés (Deleuze 2005: 8, 61) and that we speak in a wasteland of dead phrases, while at the same time affirming that the refusal of cliché and dead letters does not give us some grand present of rebirth, but instead a more profound death. (Later in this essay I will turn to Woolf's story on the perception of the death of a moth. It is the witnessing and writing of death, the perception of the waning of the spark of life, that takes writing beyond the expressing subject to the life that gives itself in both annihilation and survival.)

In what follows I will argue that a certain valorisation of becoming-woman is already at play in dominant modes of literary aesthetics and politics, and that it is a refusal of this assumed or normative

becoming-woman that is enabled by a reconsideration of Deleuze and Guattari's mobilisation of Woolf's modernism. In brief:

1. If we read modernism as an anti-humanism of impersonality, in which the artist is nothing other than the voices he adopts (distanced from the panorama of futility that he surveys), then we arrive at a modernism of ironic elevation and negation (a modernism of heightened or hyper-subjectivism that perhaps paves the way for today's post-humanism in which man finds himself at one again with a creative life of which he is but one self-aware fragment).
2. Such a modernism would, therefore, be in line with a long tradition of celebrating literary 'becoming' in which writing is pure act, without determining essence, and in which the pure existence of the creative word destroys man as a being within the world and allows something like a pure subject to emerge – a subject who is godlike in his distance from any of the determinations through which he expresses an infinite productivity: 'For this is quite the final goal of art: to recover this world by giving it to be seen as it is, but as if it had its source in human freedom' (Sartre 1988: 63).
3. A *post*-modernism that followed such an anti-human and negative modernism would lead to at least one of the modes of post-humanism that is being affirmed today: a post-humanism in which there is, and never has been, anything like 'man', for man is nothing other than all the events, acts and perceptions that bring him into being (Hayles 1999: 3). Man would always be other than any determined 'man'. Man would always be pure 'becoming', and whatever was, or has been, determined by the notion of 'woman' would always provide man with a playground for his own self-becoming.
4. Against this, we might consider the Deleuze-Guattari-Woolf concept of becoming-woman in which writing occurs not as a self-unfolding but as an encounter with another becoming – two quantities entering into a differential relation. Becoming-*woman* would therefore not be a pure becoming in which 'woman' would stand for playful self-invention, but would be a becoming in which positive traits or tendencies would orient the event of writing. Becoming-woman would necessarily be only one moment in other becomings and would then open a necessarily sexual (but not gendered) writing: writing would be sexual because it would always be in relation to other relations, and sexuality would always

be a form of writing (but not signification) because encounters would produce distinct maps and orientations.

5. Whereas 'the signifier' indicates the dominant system through which the world would be mediated and would be central to theories of gender that define 'sex' as that which precedes and is presupposed by gender norms (Butler 1990), sexuality is tied to a mode of writing in which differences are inscribed in multiple strata. Sexuality would no longer be what takes place among signified genders, for genders would emerge from sexual processes (processes of inscription, tracing, marking, miming, coupling, distancing, perceiving): 'Sexual difference is the principle of radical difference, the failure of identity, destination, or finality. It is the eruption of the new, the condition of emergence, evolution or overcoming' (Grosz 2011: 103).

III.

Before we decide to consign becoming-woman to the dustbin of high theory (and its 'high theoretical', French and affirmatively pseudo-feminist) moments, it might be best to check just once more whether the concept (if it is a concept) has any purchase today. Here are the possibilities:

1. However we articulated feminist projects (equality, difference, androgyny, anti-essentialism) we are now in a post-feminist era. We have achieved whatever could be achieved via gender politics, and we now need to move on to more complex terrain, acknowledging complexities of class, sexuality, ethnicity and culture. Becoming-woman would be a post-feminist concept, a way of thinking the transition from molar women's movements to a micro-politics in which both man *and* woman would be abandoned as basic political units.
2. 'Becoming-woman' was indeed, as Deleuze and Guattari argued, the 'key to all becomings'. If something like the figure of man has been crucial to the ways in which politics has proceeded – assuming a basic social unit of a reasoning individual who acts in order to extend and maximise his interests – then this is both because a certain notion of becoming has been normative and because the figuration of the man of reason is thoroughly Oedipalised.

The liberal subject, as self-defining, is nothing other than his own becoming. One might recognise this valorisation of the self *as pure act*

as Oedipal (as Deleuze and Guattari do). According to this structure, the world as it is in itself lies beyond the capacities of finite human reason, and man can only know the world through the systems and order that he himself has constituted. Man is submitted and subjected to a system of his own making, beyond which he can neither think nor live. Without that system of differences 'he' would have no being. The Oedipalism of this mode of liberalism lies in its formalism and proceduralism: man is subject to a general system, and must always speak of the world only in terms that are shared and communicable; beyond that system of communication and ongoing legitimation there is only the chaos or fantasy of some lost origin. The notion of the 'beyond' of communicative reason, and politics generally, would be fantasmatic and other, figured Oedipally as that imagined plenitude that is constitutively lost when man accedes to the order of society. Man *is* becoming; he is nothing more than his own self-deciding and legislating actions. It follows, for Deleuze and Guattari, that there is no becoming-man; one cannot take on traits or styles or rhythms *of man*, because the very notion of 'man' is that of a being whose existence is nothing other than that of free self-variation. Becoming-woman challenges this normalising Oedipalism in a number of ways. First, if there *is* such a thing as becoming-woman, or entering into variation by taking up those traits and predicates that lie beyond man, then this is because what is other than man is not some dark night of undifferentiated chaos. There are other durations and pulsations of life. For Woolf, the task of writing was not – as one dominant definition of modernism would have it – to present the signifier *as signifier* and to de-naturalise a life that has (ideologically) presented itself as natural when it is indeed thoroughly human and historical (MacCabe 1979). Such a constructivist or mediated notion of reality would not only be Oedipal in Deleuze and Guattari's terms (presenting reality always as given only through organising systems), but would be in Woolf's terms fatally destroyed by sex: it would give the world to us only as it is *for man*. The alternative is not then to write from a specifically woman's point of view – for that too would be the world at one remove – nor to write the world of the animal, as if life were nothing more than multiple mediated and meaningful worlds. Beyond the world as it is given, there would be the durations and pulsations – the moments – from which worlds emerge: the task would be to write the waves and particles that might yield a pure perception. 'Man' would always be the being who – via language, meaning or his own sense of life – gives himself the world. Becoming-woman would be a mode of writing in which the waves and particles that compose the gender of woman might be released.

Deleuze and Guattari write of 'a Continuum inhabited by unnameable waves and indefinable particles':

> The properly musical content of music is implied by becomings-woman, becomings-child, becomings-animal; however, it tends, under all sorts of influences, having to do also with the instruments, to become progressively more molecular in a kind of cosmic overlapping through which the inaudible makes itself heard and the imperceptible appears as such: no longer the songbird but the sound molecule. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 248)

Working against the idea of the writer who exists above and beyond his handiwork, as some presupposed but never discernible ground, 'becoming-woman' is a process of saturation, in which the force of the world composes the writer (or perceiver) as a canvas or zone of perception, nothing more than a refraction of a shower of atoms:

> The mind receives a myriad of impressions – trivial, fantastic, evanescent, or engraved with the sharpness of steel. From all sides they come, an incessant shower of innumerable atoms . . . Is it not the task of the novelist to convey this varying, this unknown and uncircumscribed spirit, whatever aberration or complexity it may display, with as little mixture of the alien and external as possible? (Woolf 1925: 189)

Man is not a composer of the world, so much as one of the world's many compositions (an effect, rather than a ground, of becoming).

Second, 'man' as the basic political unit relies on a racial and historical (and, again, Oedipalised) narrative: in the beginning is the individual who enters into social relations for the sake of collective efficiency; from the nuclear family of father-mother-child, sympathies are extended to broader social groupings, with women also – eventually – being granted the right to enter the public sphere. But for Deleuze and Guattari, the reverse is the case: in the beginning is the territory, in which human bodies assemble according to various rhythms, durations and sympathies with the earth. From that original grouping, or organisation of the 'intense germinal influx', a certain deterritorialisation can occur whereby a single body stands above the group, figured as its point of law. That elevated 'despot' is able to territorialise the network of bodies, at least in part, through an excess of desire – including the taking over of women's bodies. (There would be some convergence here between Deleuze and Guattari's account of social machines being constituted through sexual consumption and Gayle Rubin's [1975] insistence that the token of 'woman' is constituted through systems of exchange. The difference would lie in Deleuze and Guattari's insistence that before there is exchange of women, or before woman is constituted as that which is

exchanged, there is theft: not theft in the face of scarcity, but a theft that produces a power of excess – the despot who, in seizing the surplus of all forms of production, becomes a distinct and organising point of power.)

When 'man' – in the liberal era – regards himself as the basic social unit, who gives himself law and mediation in order to avoid the chaos and psychosis of bare life, he must do so by repressing the racial and collective history that has passed from the intensive difference of life to the generalising figure of man. For Deleuze and Guattari it is not the case that life begins with a figure of man who must come to terms with his world (who must become social and extend from the biological family to the social collective); rather, it is after a long, complex and inhuman history – in which racial, sexual and organic complexity is increasingly reduced to general figures – that the supposedly underlying generality of the human emerges. Becoming-woman would be a way of releasing man from the notion that beyond the sexual binary there is only the primitivism of chaos; by looking at the coming into being of the genders of humanity one would open up a geology. This geology would then open out onto all the racial and historical differentials that have been frozen into the unit of man, and beyond that into all the differentials of life that have been reified into figures of bounded organisms opposed to unorganised matter.

Finally, becoming-woman would challenge both the linguistic figure of modern man, as well as all the declared post-linguistic (supposedly post-human) turns. The notion that we become subjects by submitting ourselves to the system of signifiers, and that we then live this subjection as a law that prohibits some maternal beyond, is thoroughly Oedipal. The concept of 'the' signifier is despotic, and both ties modern Oedipalism back to a history in which the complex territories of life have been subjected to a body that has leapt outside the assemblages of relations, and also looks forward to a 'postmodern' world in which there is supposedly no reality or world other than that given through signifying systems, or in which the pre-linguistic is always given *ex post facto* after the event of sex. If, by contrast, language were considered to be one of many systems – including systems of non-linguistic signs, such as all the gestures we read in a lover's face, or the signs of art in which formed matters can be presented as signs of colour or light as such – then it might become possible to liberate writing from 'the subject' (Deleuze 2003: 167). Becoming-woman would signal that there are positive modes of difference and articulation. It is not language that differentiates; the differences of language overcode far more complex systems. Becoming-woman opens up a positivity that not only destroys

the notion that language differentiates (because there are traits that one can follow, develop, vary and extemporise beyond the man of linguistic communication), but also challenges various supposedly post-human or post-linguistic motifs. It would do so by destroying both the natural kinds of bounded sexes (male or female) and the notion of constructed genders; in its place there would be neither a gender politics nor a sexual politics (in which the polity would be a site for the contesting of variously sexualised interests), but there would be a sexuality of becoming. Every becoming would be sexual because no becoming is a power unto itself: there is no self-present, self-sufficient, self-organising power. When we perceive something like an essence (such as what colour *would be* in all of its potential manifestations for any time whatever), we perceive the force of its expression, a power's capacity to differ in all its events of encounter and actualisation.

IV.

There should be something disturbing, destructive and untimely about the concept of becoming-woman. If we were to define becoming-woman as a temporary strategy of the women's movement, then we would be assuming an orthography of thought: it would be as though we might use certain concepts provisionally, achieve the aims of the women's movement, cleanse thought of its opacities and stupidities, and then move on. But what if man were a persistent transcendence: a tendency of thought or life to be captivated and rendered docile by images of good sense?

One of the notions that lie behind various 'turns' – the affective turn, the vital turn, the performative turn, the non-human turn – is that the figure of man, and the notion of linguistic construction, was an error or false turn that can be overcome by turning to the true life and vitality that is man's real milieu. It is as though we might recognise, by an act of reason, that there is no such thing as man and that we are in fact really emotional, embodied, affective and active beings who – following that recognition – can now live interactively, ecologically and dynamically. The Cartesian subject would be an accident or error that we could will away by an act of decision, allowing us to become post-human and at one with a single world of interconnected life. I would suggest that we think otherwise: Cartesianism is neither an unfortunate nor external lapse, but a result of a tendency for thought to be captured by its own images (Toscano 2010). That tendency – like all tendencies – has two sides, and it is the task of becoming-woman to *deterritorialise* those

traits from which the 'man' of modernity has been composed. According to Deleuze and Guattari's theory of becoming-woman, it is not by annihilating one's being and then taking up a relation of proper knowing towards one's milieu that one overcomes the miserable normality of 'man'. Rather, becoming is always a relation *to* some other becoming: there would be no post-human world or single ecology that we could arrive at after man. Becoming-woman would be *one* line of exit, one way of thinking some mode of duration and rhythm that would yield a particular refrain. From there one might discover other differential pulsions. There would not be a single ground of life that could be retrieved or found after man; but there would be multiple ways in which one might encounter 'a' life. Each predicate, trait or singularity would open to the infinite in its own way. By beginning with woman – and not some general notion of becoming – one would be adopting the truth of the relative (which is quite different from the truth of relativism). And it is here again that we might turn to Woolf and writing: the imperative to write is counter-democratic, if by democracy one were to refer to consensus or majority opinion (and it is no surprise that in this respect modernism in general has been accused of having a certain contempt for the masses). But there might be a destructive, rather than deliberative, democracy in writing and becoming-woman whereby everything that has stood for good sense and propriety is annihilated by a constant and exacting perception. Rather than begin with a relativism, in which there is no view of the world outside that given by various voices, becoming-woman aims to write from a positive perception of traits, with each intuition opening towards a power's capacity. There is a truth of the world, but it is given infinitely, from all the powers to perceive that compose the world in their own way. This might help us to think the specifics of Woolf's style, and the ways in which she writes, neither in a strict free-indirect style (in which sentences occupy a certain mode or way of speaking) nor in stream of consciousness.

One of the key features of Woolf's mode of writing might be given in the contrast between a deliberative democracy and something like a democracy of powers, or what Deleuze refers to as the 'swarm' of the world. Jacques Derrida, for example, has argued that literature is tied to democracy in its capacity to 'say anything'; because the literary text detaches what is said from any ownership of the voice, language circulates freely, *as language*. We see text as text in its own right, producing its relations and differences, performing a relation between inside and outside in its 'scene of writing'. Woolf, by contrast, speaks of her own writing as oriented towards the expression,

perception, articulation and life of other powers: waves, moments, particles, predicates or qualities: 'Life is not a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged; life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end' (Woolf 1925: 189). If a certain privileging of writing manages to relativise the world, presenting the world as always a world from this or that point of view, then Woolf's privileging of perception and intuition would always tie writing to the forces that prompt its movement: 'no perception comes amiss' (154). Becoming-woman is not a writing of, or about, sex – but the writing of becoming-woman is sexual in being drawn towards powers not its own. Such writing would not be a form of relativism, but it would open the truth of the relative, that each perception opens *in its own way* onto an infinite and dynamic whole (Deleuze 2006: 21).

There is a truth of the relative that would open towards an ethics of *amor fati*, or an embrace of the encounters that do violence to thinking (without the prima facie assumption that we know what thinking is). Liberalism is, by contrast, a powerful ethics of relativism: I cannot know the law, cannot know the other's good, cannot make an exception of my own desires or opinions on the basis of possessing better or higher knowledge; from there it follows that I can only act and speak through deliberation and an ideal of consensus, aware all the while that every achieved consensus must be open to further deliberation. Relativism would not be an acceptance that 'anything goes', for it would require me to decide upon those systems that enabled the maximum plurality of opinions; a liberal might have to intervene in cases where unjustified exceptions were imposed. But relativism would be in line with what Deleuze refers to as 'equivocity': there is the world as it is on the one hand, and the world as it is known on the other. Deleuze's univocity posits one substance expressing itself in infinite difference, in which all voices sing the truth of being in their own way: 'MONISM = PLURALISM'. The truth of the relative, in contrast with liberal formalism, would pose a quite different imperative. There would be no possibility of a 'veil of ignorance' that would allow one to act *as if* one might speak from an ideal position of 'nowhere'. Whereas liberalism insists that one can only speak *as if* one might be any subject whatever, Deleuze and Guattari offer a counter imperative to speak for 'any moment whatever': what a force or power would be in all its expressions and actualisations. There would not be 'a' world that might be suspended in order to think in a manner that was purely formal or procedural. There would be multiple worlds, each opened from the

force of a single becoming. It would be the challenge of perception and thinking to encounter the difference of those worlds, not find some abstract point or field of conciliation.

V.

If the foregoing is true, it follows that becoming-woman is only one possible trait or singularity among others, and that its power lies in moving beyond the historical formation of 'man'. If so, with the end of man and the end of liberalism we might also have reached, happily and finally, the end of woman. As already stated, there can be no becoming-man, no orienting oneself towards the styles and motifs of 'man', because man *has always been pure becoming*. He is nothing other than that which exceeds and precedes any of his given acts; his essence is to have no essence other than that which he gives himself though existing. Once becoming-woman opens 'us' (we humans) to the notion that becoming is always singular, always the becoming of this or that singularity and always in responsive relation, then writing would be presented with the tireless and ongoing destruction of genders and proliferation of sexes; it is not that there are beings – women – who become. Rather, what something *is* is its rhythm of becoming. The refrain that beats time to this rhythm is always in relation to other refrains. Becoming-woman would be an orientation to those traits that had been posed as man's other, but once this orientation opened up positive and divergent becomings, we would need to move beyond genders and dehumanise the predicates through which genders and sexual difference had been contained.

Such a jettisoning of becoming-woman would seem to be particularly urgent today, precisely because there is no longer any reason to adopt strategies against liberalism and humanism in a twenty-first century when the problems of climate change, terrorism, systemic economic collapse and mass disenfranchisement are no longer suitably countered by tactics of anti-humanism. It would seem that both sides – both rapacious global capital and post-left, post-feminist thinking – accept that there is no such thing as the man of reason. It is no longer the case that the ruthless market forces of capitalism present themselves as outcomes of free and open individual decision making. In the US, where 'liberal' has become a pejorative (referring to the destruction of family values and leftist interventionism in free markets), the notion of the freely deciding individual seems to have less political force than the sanctity of the markets and efficiency. This is so much the case that when the 2010 US Supreme Court decided that corporations were individuals,

it was the left that was forced to defend the human individual, against the notion of free buying power that could operate beyond a bounded human person. Bourgeois liberal humanism is not the ideological enemy it once was. It would seem to make sense to exit this terrain altogether. In the era of global finance – where there is no longer any capital to buoy up capitalism, and where systems operate by hedging, default swaps, futures and derivatives – it makes no sense either to return to the individual against corporations, or to celebrate some post-human end of man in one great ecology of becoming.

'Theory', too, seems to have long abandoned man, the subject, the system of signifiers and (even strategic) essentialism. After language there was the turn to the body, in which sex could only be known as that which had been belied and reified by gender. If we go beyond the frame of the subject who must recognise herself through the gender system, then we are left with a vital, affective, emotive and non-human order that may be *sexual* (in its proliferating relations, attachments and mutations) but certainly not gendered. If we get over all our feminist and leftist gripes, recognising that workers and women can no longer offer us some outside lever against a patriarchy that no longer has any men left to hold the fort, then it seems the appropriate direction to move towards would be beyond human figures *tout court*.

To pause and offer a possible conclusion: 'becoming-woman' may have had its time, may have once indicated that without *some* attention to sexual difference there could be no real escape from the rigid logic of man, but after more sustained work on sexual difference beyond gender binaries, we should accept that becoming-woman is, as Deleuze and Guattari suggest, the 'key' to all becomings, and that we have moved beyond the 'key' moment to more nuanced post-human (perhaps even post-sex) becomings.

Here is the problem, or series of problems, with such a consignment of this 'key' of becoming-woman to the past: first, do we accept that humans have the capacity to assess their figural and semantic history, locate gender motifs in a blind past, and then move on to the post-human? Do we grant the human species a capacity to see life as it properly is without the intrusion of rigid stupidities, and would life be the type of 'thing' we might view once we liberated ourselves from humanist framings? (Here, I would suggest that we read Deleuze and Guattari alongside Paul de Man's concept of the sublime, where the exit from anthropocentric projection would not be an intuition of nature or the lived world but a brute sense of materiality.)[3] Second problem: do we accept that within a corpus, such as Deleuze and

Guattari's, where the historical event of capitalism and the discovery of the differential calculus disclose some universal truth of life as such, that sexual difference is an unfortunate dated motif that can be grouped with Deleuze and Guattari's almost embarrassing references to drugs (as though they were a little too sixties-ish at certain moments)? Here we would assume some practice of critical hygiene, where the real philosophy and theory might be detached from the unthinking regression to dated stupidities. Doing so would rely upon a distinction between free unimpeded thinking on the one hand, and an external milieu of inherited notions on the other. And it is just that notion of thought as pure self-becoming that Deleuze and Guattari sought to question. Third problem: what do we do with what remains of the archive? Do we stop reading all the works of fiction and cinema that are structured around gender binaries? Do we (theorists or literary critics) place ourselves in a world other than that of a still present and insistent gender binary? Do we avoid the evidence that it is easier to imagine the end of the world and the end of capitalism than it is to imagine the end of gender? Perhaps the problem with Deleuze and Guattari's affirmation of becoming-woman as the 'key to all becomings' was not its dated seventies radical-feminist hint of sexual politics, but its suggestion that one might and should move from becoming-woman to becoming-imperceptible. It seems that in our post-human, eco-aware, post-liberal, post-capitalist and even post-racial world we still remain firmly gendered. This is because gender is not just one mode of establishing distinct kinds, a mode that could be abandoned once we take on a 'process' notion of being or a vitalist and dynamic conception of creatively evolving life; for gender is *the* difference that has been deployed to figure difference in general. And it is gender – the tired male/female binary – that covers over a profound and multiple sexual difference beyond bounded kinds.

It would follow, then, that if we do *not* pass through becoming-woman, and if we go straight to becoming-imperceptible without engaging with the logic of man, then all our post-humanisms will remain as ultra-humanisms. And, to return to Woolf, it would not be the case that Woolf *added* the problem of woman to modernist projects, but rather that whatever modernism would be (whether an apocalyptic vitalism or an affirmative refusal of the trajectory of the West), writing would be destroyed by thinking of one's sex. Writing would need to take place beyond man, which in turn would require a destruction of 'woman'. The structure of *To the Lighthouse* expresses this at the level of content: the first section is organised around familial figures of gender. Mrs Ramsay appears as the epitome of maternal care and

other-directedness; and this female-maternal empathy is opposed to the 'subject/object' philosophy of Mr Ramsay. This 'window' section of the novel, a section with a relatively clear demarcation of narrative voice and character, is severed by the middle section, 'Time Passes'. The final section – following Mrs Ramsay's death and the falling of darkness – describes Lily Briscoe being taken over by the matters that are presented to her. Her 'vision' follows what Deleuze and Guattari describe as haptic; it is as though the eye can *feel* the paint and canvas and draw out its tendencies. The canvas presents itself not as a milieu for creation ex nihilo, but as a resistance or force that elicits a certain mode of becoming. The canvas itself bears a perceptive power or 'cold stare':

> She saw her canvas as if it had floated up and placed itself white and uncompromising directly before her. It seemed to rebuke her with its cold stare for all this hurry and agitation; this folly and waste of emotion; it drastically recalled her and spread through her mind first a peace, as her disorderly sensations (he had gone and she had been so sorry for him and she had said nothing) trooped off the field; and then, emptiness. She looked blankly at the canvas, with its uncompromising white stare; from the canvas to the garden. There was something (she stood screwing up her little Chinese eyes in her small puckered face), something she remembered in the relations of those lines cutting across, slicing down, and in the mass of the hedge with its green cave of blues and browns, which had stayed in her mind; which had tied a knot in her mind so that at odds and ends of time, involuntarily, as she walked along the Brompton Road, as she brushed her hair, she found herself painting that picture, passing her eye over it, and untying the knot in imagination. But there was all the difference in the world between this planning airily away from the canvas and actually taking her brush and making the first mark. (Woolf 1981: 119)

Lily's becoming is not one of self-unfolding, but an encounter between a physical sensation of surging forth that achieves 'an exacting form of intercourse'. If there is a post-human element to this becoming, it does not lie in a return to life so much as a separation or detachment from the lived:

> With a curious physical sensation, as if she were urged forward and at the same time must hold herself back, she made her first quick decisive stroke. The brush descended. It flickered brown over the white canvas; it left a running mark. A second time she did it – a third time. And so pausing and so flickering, she attained a dancing rhythmical movement, as if the pauses were one part of the rhythm and the strokes another, and all were related; and so, lightly and swiftly pausing, striking, she scored her canvas with brown running nervous lines which had no sooner settled there than they enclosed

> (she felt it looming out at her) a space. Down in the hollow of one wave she saw the next wave towering higher and higher above her. For what could be more formidable than that space? Here she was again, she thought, stepping back to look at it, drawn out of gossip, out of living, out of community with people into the presence of this formidable ancient enemy of hers – this other thing, this truth, this reality, which suddenly laid hands on her, emerged stark at the back of appearances and commanded her attention. She was half unwilling, half reluctant. Why always be drawn out and haled away? . . . It was an exacting form of intercourse anyhow. (Woolf 1981: 158)

What emerges is not a figure or scene that expresses the world as it is, but something like difference as such, a line that makes no claim to a physical eternity – for the canvas may lie unviewed in an attic until its destruction – even though it expresses the power of colour and difference for all time:

> Quickly, as if she were recalled by something over there, she turned to her canvas. There it was – her picture. Yes, with all its greens and blues, its lines running up and across, its attempt at something. It would be hung in the attics, she thought; it would be destroyed. But what did that matter? she asked herself, taking up her brush again. She looked at the steps; they were empty; she looked at her canvas; it was blurred. With a sudden intensity, as if she saw it clear for a second, she drew a line there, in the centre. It was done; it was finished. Yes, she thought, laying down her brush in extreme fatigue, I have had my vision. (Woolf 1981: 209)

But it is not only the young female artist whose perception opens onto a world of other durations. Woolf's essay, 'The Death of the Moth', begins in standard third-person description, assuming a common point of view:

> Moths that fly by day are not properly to be called moths; they do not excite that pleasant sense of dark autumn nights and ivy-blossom which the commonest yellow-underwing asleep in the shadow of the curtain never fails to rouse in us. (Woolf 1942: 4)

This 'us' of common accepted perception is disturbed by the passage of perception, which eventually discerns something akin to 'an energy'. The passage begins with description of rooks, but then passes to a different subject of the sentence, 'the same energy':

> The rooks too were keeping one of their annual festivities; soaring round the tree tops until it looked as if a vast net with thousands of black knots in it had been cast up into the air; which, after a few moments sank slowly down upon the trees until every twig seemed to have a knot at the end of it. Then, suddenly, the net would be thrown into the air again in a wider circle

> this time, with the utmost clamor and vociferation, as though to be thrown into the air and settle slowly down upon the tree tops were a tremendously exciting experience.
>
> The same energy which inspired the rooks, the ploughmen, the horses, and even, it seemed, the lean bare-backed downs, sent the moth fluttering from side to side of his square of the windowpane. One could not help watching him. (Woolf 1942: 4)

The subject then becomes an impersonal 'one', so that what is being described is a passage from a living being (rook), to the energy that enables that life, and then to something like that energy's perceptibility:

> Watching him, it seemed as if a fiber, very thin but pure, of the enormous energy of the world had been thrust into his frail and diminutive body. As often as he crossed the pane, I could fancy that a thread of vital light became visible. He was little or nothing but life.
>
> Yet, because he was so small, and so simple a form of the energy that was rolling in at the open window and driving its way through so many narrow and intricate corridors in my own brain and in those of other human beings, there was something marvelous as well as pathetic about him. It was as if someone had taken a tiny bead of pure life and decking it as lightly as possible with down and feathers, had set it dancing and zigzagging to show us the true nature of life. Thus displayed one could not get over the strangeness of it. (Woolf 1942: 4)

The passage of perception, traced from the rook, to energy, to watching to the moth, then travels back via an explicit figure to first person: 'I could fancy that a thread of vital light became visible'.

> The insignificant little creature now knew death. As I looked at the dead moth, this minute wayside triumph of so great a force over so mean an antagonist filled me with wonder. Just as life had been strange a few minutes before, so death was now as strange. (Woolf 1942: 4)

The 'death' here is not a death drive in which life is a quantity of energy aiming to return to quiescence; it is a positive and multiple death in which the sparks of life become discernible in their distinction and singularity as they approach some degree zero. Deleuze and Guattari's notion of becoming-woman, like becoming-animal, is not one of copying or miming, but operates by the perception of traits: and this positive and relational notion of becoming would help to explain why there could be no becoming-man. It would also require a subtle distinction between becoming-woman and various notions of performativity. It is not the case that one becomes who one is by repeating an already given norm or imperative, and then concluding that there must have been

a subject who was the agent of the action. On the contrary, what is repeated when one becomes-woman is not the resulting effect – such as female qualities – but the differential power from which such qualities emerge. In this sense becoming-woman is the reversal of a performative pragmatics or strategic essentialism; one does not adopt a style or norm and then destabilise the figure of woman from within, nor adopt the role of 'woman' ironically (Cornell 1991). Rather, one repeats the tendencies, traits or rhythms from which the figure of woman emerged.

The difference, if you like, is that between Madonna (or Lady Ga Ga) and a Marilyn Monroe impersonator. The latter focuses on the end result and may come to that actuality by any possible ends (cosmetic surgery, practice of speech inflections, mirroring of Marilyn's walk, the re-creation of certain specific dresses); the former repeat tendencies, seizing the event of performance, style, display and movement, becoming a hyper-feminine and yet singular icon. If woman – as an actual social figure – appears as a general composition of certain styles of dressing, moving, desiring, dissimulating, looking, displaying, speaking and feeling, then becoming-woman begins with exploring different modes of dress, appearance, affect and movement. If Marilyn Monroe was a singular expression of a tendency of body-voice-face-screen stylisation, then repeating that differential power (rather than copying the result) would approach something like becoming-Marilyn. One of the key features of the notion of the trait is tied to a broader notion of singularities or pure predicates: each actual individual occurs as the differentiation of a potentiality. Each human body comes into being by drawing on a range of virtual potentialities, and continues to do so for her entire life: not only does my ongoing biological and neurological identity occur in my relation to other powers (such as my brain becoming a reading brain after encountering script, my eye becoming more and more readily distracted with the purchase of various portable screen devices, my bones becoming stronger after years of running, or my blood pressure rising after decades of a Western diet), it is also the case that my given capacity to become in these ways has a long racial, cultural, sexual and political history. This is the partial truth of evolutionary psychology and cognitive archaeology, which have sought to trace our current responses and capacities back to a hunter-gatherer and warring tribal past, along with the early human gendered division of labour. But the problem with cognitive archaeology is not its seeming sexism, or its assumption that 'men are from Mars and women are from Venus'. The problem is that these 'just so' stories are not sexist enough; they do not discriminate sufficiently, nor do they pay adequate attention to

the sexuality of discrimination. Man – the hunter-gatherer and hyper-attentive tribal prototype of our past – is already the result of a desiring history: formed by assembling in territories, organising the body to react first collectively, and then privately, to visual stimuli. As the history of man and social machines continues, what counts as 'man' is the result of reducing racial intensities and sexual difference, and then proposing that there is 'man' in general, eventually emerging as the reading-thinking-reasoning individual of modernity.

To begin to think about the 'traits' that would compose an event of becoming-woman would require both an attention to manifestly stylistic features from which any woman (or man) is composed – so that acts of drag would emphasise the performance of gender in terms of dress, body grooming and modes of comportment – but also to broader traits, the geologies of which are traced by Deleuze and Guattari in the universal history of capitalism. The reading eye that judges in accord with the measuring hand, and that in turn feels itself to be a subject of speech submitted to 'the' law: this composition of the human animal is, Deleuze and Guattari argue, racial and sexual. The notion that there is some universal underlying humanity, presented in general as 'man' (and about whom various neo-Darwinists might theorise), occurs *after* certain traits have been rendered hegemonic, and after a certain understanding of sexuality as private and familial has reorganised (or reterritorialised) collective qualities onto the individual. It is only if I assume that one becomes human by abandoning one's pathological and exceptional (racial, sexual, ethnic) particularities, and does so in order to enter into the great enlightened conversation of consensus, that sexuality is deemed to be private, personal and individual. For Deleuze and Guattari politics and history are sexual: social machines are formations of desire – both the despot becoming powerful by hoarding, consuming and visibly enjoying the violence of public torture, and the later formations of fascism where a series of traits mobilise a body politic (swastikas, jackboots, tanks, anthems, the straight lines of modernist design and so on).

VI.

The concept of becoming-woman – and I would suggest that we think of it as a concept, created to reconfigure a plane of related notions – is tied to a broader history of capitalism. Capitalism, Deleuze and Guattari argue, has always been 'warded' off by various social machines that seek to limit and overcode flows and exchanges: this ranges from obvious

examples, such as early modes of despotism and feudalism in which there is no open market and a hoarding of goods by a central power, to early modern laws against usury, sumptuary laws, royal displays of excess and protective subsidies, as well as a broader and more subtle fixing of bodies as units of exchange (such as capitalist democracies where labouring bodies and commodities become the two flows of capitalism). Becoming-woman is not a solely feminist gesture, or if it is, it is only because feminism (for Deleuze and Guattari at least) is a path to a broader critique. Capitalism is the abstract essence of social machines: desiring life is composed of quantities entering into relation, and it is from those dynamic relations that relatively stable points of bodies are composed. Bodies – human bodies, political bodies, economic bodies, corporate bodies – are mixtures of powers. Quantities, entering into relation, become qualities, and those qualities in turn become relatively stable bodies. Capitalism tends to liberate quantities from bodies, releasing labour power and commodities into a general system without fixed centre or transcendent body, but capitalism also limits the free flow of quantities through an axiomatic of exchange. Nowhere is this axiom more evident than in liberalism, both in its economic form of laissez-faire exchange (which is always an exchange via the market), and in liberal political theory in which I am nothing other than a capacity to deliberate and communicate, always capable of imagining what it would be to think of justice, in general, regardless of my position in the polity.

By contrast, becoming-woman would not abstract from concrete individuals to individuals in general – would not operate *ironically* by imagining that justice or humanity would occur as regulative ideas towards which a process of consensus would tend, but never achieve. Nor would becoming-woman be post-human, if post-humanism were taken to be a return of man to a world of living systems of which he would be but one of many instances. Rather, becoming-woman is the beginning of a humour of depths, moving towards the traits, singularities or predicates that have been actualised by differentiation – and then moving towards the intuition of a virtual potentiality that has a full reality beyond the world as it is given. Becoming-woman would be quite distinct from a performative theory of gender, whereby I become who I am by recognising and seeking recognition. Rather, becoming-woman enables a creatively destructive theory of sexuality in which genders are decomposed into traits, and then further decomposed into tendencies, moving towards the infinitely small, or 'a thousand tiny sexes'.

When Deleuze and Guattari write about capitalism, they do not adopt the still current criticism that capital reduces the qualitative complexity

and richness of the world to system and quantities, with the implication that if we overthrow capitalism's reduction of qualities to quantities, we will return to the full dynamic flux of the world (to the praxis from which technological systems emerged). Deleuze and Guattari are not what Mark Protevi and John Bonta refer to as 'flow enthusiasts'. The problem, for Deleuze and Guattari, is that capitalism is not systemic enough, not quantifying enough, not sufficiently technical. We allow certain blunt figures – such as the image of the working, desiring man of reason – to operate as a limit and lure. It is as though exchange must always serve individuals' interests, and yet we do not ask how it is that something like human interests are constituted historically. How has the commodity-acquiring, property-owning, familial, heterosexual, labouring, reading, judging and political man of modernity been formed? And has not the figure of gender been crucial here: man is deemed to be defined against a femininity that is caring, nurturing, other-directed, domestically attuned, emotional, empathetic and oriented towards a man who will provide suitable genetic material? The current vogue for evolutionary psychology or cognitive archaeology is evidence of a tendency to explain quantities and tendencies from already qualified forces: we argue that the gender system emerges from (say) male interests in spreading as much genetic material as possible, and female interests in investing in quality partners. What we fail to look at is how those bounded forms emerged from intensities: how the human body becomes a gendered, familial and identified labouring individual.

Life arrives, historically, at capitalism because of a certain potentiality that has been 'captured' by capitalist political systems, by relatively open markets. Relations amongst intensive quantities, such as the various forces of a body entering an encounter with (say) the intensive potentialities of another body, are organised in capitalism as a relation between labour and capital. The standard political response has been to try to find some point outside of exchange; but Deleuze and Guattari aim to take capitalism beyond itself. What is required is not a step outside exchange and quantities, but more exchange, more quantification, a multiplication of powers and encounters. Capitalism is neither quantifying nor systematising enough; what is required are far more nuanced, discriminating, systemic (rather than imaginary) systems.

Here, then, one might begin to see the force of becoming-woman: what if the figure of 'man', the supposed basic social unity of life – a unit that today has become entirely rigid in the proliferating pseudo-Darwinian narratives about the emergence of morality, language, art and all other human practices – were to encounter other traits? As

already noted, the concept of becoming-woman is not at all similar to strategic essentialism; it is not the tactical adoption of the voice of woman in order to create a political force. On the contrary, becoming-woman acknowledges the reality of traits, intensities and quantities that need to be released from the dull and insufficiently nuanced systems of gender. It is not the case that – as a certain mode of deconstruction would have it – the concept of woman is some imposed abstraction that has no reality, allowing one only to speak as a woman parodically or ironically. Nor is it the case that 'woman' is some signifier that we are subjected to, which then creates the illusion of the reality of sex. Rather, what has fallen under the concept of woman has *more reality* than the insufficiently technical and systemic concept of 'woman' in its current form allows: what if, historically, what we know as woman were composed from series of complex tendencies? *Becoming-woman* appears, after all, as a concept in Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus* where the modern figure of political man covers over a complex, multiple and intensive history of racial and sexual investments. Practices of marriage, kinship, reproduction, pornography, art, fiction, courting rituals, fashion systems, cosmetic surgery, sports, affective rituals, body styles (and so much more): all these are techniques operating in highly complex ways that neither the notions of gender (as two stable kinds) nor sexual difference (as reproductive chromosomal identity) can intuit. It is fatal, when writing, to think of one's sex. Here we can turn back to Woolf's task of writing: not only does she argue that writing follows from a nuptial that must fall back into darkness, but a darkness of intense difference (so that good writing requires an androgyny that is the consummation rather than annihilation of difference); she also insists that sex requires writing. There is no identity of woman lying in wait to be described, but must be created in an encounter with the force of perception.

Notes

1. I quote Ronald Reagan from his first inaugural speech as governor of California, 5 January 1967, for whom freedom was 'never more than one generation from extinction'. This Reagan quotation was repeated recently by Julianne Moore (playing Sarah Palin) in the 2012 HBO film *Game Change*. Such a reminder of generation-paced extinction was timely in 2012 when the constant threat of civil rights reversals seemed to actualise into a fully fledged war, both with a supposed 'war on women' and with a resurgence of claims of racial lynching. (Democrats accused Republicans of opening a war on women when certain states legislated for compulsory vaginal probe ultrasounds prior to pregnancy terminations, while Republicans countered with an attack advertisement against 'Obama's War on

Women' because the Obama campaign accepted donations from a supposedly misogynist comedian Bill Maher [Halper 2012].) The March 2012 killing of Trayvon Martin was not only compared to a lynching, so were the following calls for his alleged killer's arrest. An article on 'The Lynching of George Zimmerman' (Martin's alleged killer) was posted on Occidentaldissent.com immediately following large rallies calling for Zimmerman's arrest following what Democracynow.org declared to be a 'modern day lynching' (Democracy Now! 2012). Wars and lynching: none of these seems at all 'post' anything, and so we might wonder why we would want to complicate matters at all by turning to 'becoming-woman' when the basic 'molar' issues of race and gender seem so intractable. On the other hand, maybe the fact that we seem to be *still* involved in wars and lynching demands that we think of other strategies.

2. The idea that the end of the world is easier to imagine than the end of capitalism is widely quoted (though the source is vague). See Jameson 2005: 199; Žižek 2011.
3. Paul de Man, *Aesthetic Ideology*: 'The dynamics of the sublime mark the moment when the infinite is frozen into the materiality of stone, when no pathos, anxiety, or sympathy is conceivable; it is, indeed, the moment of a-pathos, or apathy, as the complete loss of the symbolic' (De Man 1996: 126).

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‘Nothing is simply one thing’: Woolf, Deleuze and Difference

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Abstract

This paper explores some key texts of Virginia Woolf in the context of Deleuzian concepts. Using a close reading style, it shows how the prose poetry in *Mrs Dalloway* engages a complex interplay of repetition and difference, resulting in a remarkably similar model of the three syntheses of time as Deleuze understands them. It subsequently explores Woolf’s technical processes in a key passage from *To the Lighthouse*, showing how the prose-poetic technique systematically undoes the structures of logical fact and rationality inscribed in both language and everyday speech to an extremely precise level.

Keywords: Virginia Woolf, Deleuze, difference, repetition, three syntheses of time, rhythm, prose-poetry

It is possible for there to be multiple Deleuzian ‘readings’ of Woolf depending on which theories or sets of terminology we choose to visit in the process. We are fortunate that in her non-fictional writings (letters, diaries) Woolf left ample explanation of her technical processes and the philosophical motivations behind them. Her comments on rhythm in a letter to Vita Sackville-West are a fruitful starting point for a Deleuzian reading:

> As for the *mot juste*, you are quite wrong. Style is a very simple matter: it is all rhythm. Once you get that, you cannot use the wrong words. But on the other hand here I am sitting after half the morning, crammed with ideas and visions, and so on, and can’t dislodge them, for lack of the right rhythm. Now this is very profound, what rhythm is, and goes far deeper than words. A sight, an emotion, creates this wave in the mind, long before it makes words

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> to fit it and in writing (such is my present belief) one has to recapture this, and set this working (which has nothing apparently to do with words) and then, as it breaks and tumbles in the mind, it makes words to fit it. But no doubt I shall think differently next year. (Woolf 1977: 247)

This candid technical admission reveals much about the shared ground between Deleuze and Woolf: in the obvious modernist sense, and in the questions of multiplicity and fragments ('crammed with ideas and visions, and so on') and in the need to synthesise these fragments (the 'wave in the mind') as a means of going 'deeper than words'. There is no '*mot juste*'; words are secondary to sensibility. Woolf needs the element of postmodernist mobility, in this case, rhythm. As I explore in *Machinic Modernism* (2008), rhythm is Woolf's paradoxical tool for working through the fundamental dualism of form/fragment or pluralism–monism that besets the modernist artist-philosopher. In Deleuze's terms rhythm is a 'science of the sensible' (Deleuze 1994: 68) enabling her to pass 'outside' of thought. Woolf's technical journey is often seen as a graduated (in a series of key works) process of working up to a formal 'equation' of rhythm, which is realised in the expression of pure rhythmic form, *The Waves*. Like Deleuze, mobility characterises her working processes; hence 'but no doubt I shall think differently next year' and 'such is my present belief'. If we search for a singular definitive theory or explanation of her technique here, we are disappointed. It depends on which element of the process Woolf happens to be privileging at a given point.

Deleuze comes at the process from the opposite end. If Woolf starts from sensibility and allows words to rhythmically 'find' her, Deleuze starts from words and conscious thought but pushes them to their limits in order to find an exit point and *arrive at* sensibility and the 'unspeakable' (Deleuze 1989: 260). If rhythm for Woolf, the philosophical writer, is the cause, for Deleuze, as highly literary philosopher, it is the effect. He reshuffles and unscrambles the conceptual codes and pretexts of language and philosophical systems and the result is a strikingly sensuous style with an 'evocative, incantatory' rhythm (Bogue 2004**:** 23). His new style of thought almost requires that he enter into a new 'rhythm' of thinking. The 'outside' of thought can partly be sensed or even heard in the rhythm of his language.

Indeed we find rhythm at all levels of Deleuze's discourse, in his decisive formulations: for example, in the key formulation of difference in *Difference and Repetition*, 'it is not the differences which are and must be: it is being which is Difference, in the sense that it is said of

difference' (Deleuze 1994: 48). The dancing rhythm of the sentence is the effect of the action of intrinsic rearrangement of logic, the ontological heaves and shifts that must occur to undo the equivocal and actualise the univocal in language, to reinstate difference as different only to itself, not as negative. Rhythm is the index of its logical alterity. We also find rhythm in his larger 'poetic flights' (Bogue 2004: 23) of conceptual exposition. Deleuze often expounds ideas and concepts in great sweeping and swelling waves; not a linear unfolding but an increasingly expanding circle and process of augmentation; of further qualification and distinction of terms (such as the expansive qualification of the two types of repetition in *Difference and Repetition*) (Deleuze 1994: 97, 106). The rhythm is an effect of his complex, unique process of conceptual 'stuttering', in which concepts and the work of other philosophers are in a constant process of formulation and reformulation. Ronald Bogue describes the process thus:

> concepts Deleuze develops in one book reappear in another, enter into new combinations, then dissolve and form further alliances and interconnections in a third. In each work, the concepts undergo a slight metamorphosis, as if each repetition of a concept were a mere approximation, an effort once again to give it a name, but also a discovery of something new in the concept that only emerges with its restatement in a different context. (Bogue 2004: 22)

The process mirrors Deleuze's theories of difference and repetition in which terms/concepts do not converge onto a singular fixed definition or model, but are subject to a continual process of 'divergence and decentring', of being made and remade, through the displacing and disguising action of repetition. Because pure difference must be that which differs from itself, rather than from what it is not (the orthodox view of difference in the Hegelian model), any concept of difference is false difference; it refers difference to an order of sameness. Difference must always involve an element of repetition, which is its paradox, because no repetition is ever the same; the act of repeating implies an alteration, however slight. The relation of difference to repetition is paradoxical, two-fold; each is 'in' the other.

Repetition is the motor of difference because of its two aspects or forms: one a mechanical, 'bare' repetition of the Same, and another 'clothed' or 'disguised' which allows difference to emerge in-itself. These two repetitions are not independent because the second is hidden in the first; the clothed repetition is 'the singular subject, the interiority and the heart of the other, the depths of the other' (Deleuze 1994: 27).

The mechanical repetition 'is only the external envelope, the abstract effect' (27). Repetition 'at the level of external conduct' relates 'to something unique or singular which has no equal or equivalent' (1–2). To illustrate the duality, Deleuze gives the example of an event like a festival, the 'apparent paradox' of which is that it repeats an 'unrepeatable'; it does not 'add a second and third time to the first, but carr[ies] on the first to "nth" power' (2); cloaked or disguised in bare or mechanical repetition.

Woolf's narrative metaphysic engages this process in which difference reverberates through a two-fold process of repetition and this is actualised in the exchange between poetry and prose. In order to analyse the process, it is important to translate the two levels of repetition – extensive (which produces the world as the same) and intensive (which creates singularity and in which real difference is hidden) – into a distinction of rhythm, namely that which Deleuze sets up between meter and rhythm, between conservative and standardised and radical and discontinuous time. Meter is the regimented form of rhythm which operates in homogeneous space-time and measures 'noncommunicating milieu' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 313). Any use of meter, which can only move between the general and the particular (between general concepts and individual facts), has the same effect as subjecting difference to the identity of the concept. Meter is the empty extensive structure; the beat of spatialised time, devoid of content; it is rhythm's 'conceptual remainder' after it has been cut out of the picture and 'abstracted to its own transcendental plane' (Hulse 2010: 28–9). But the other radical form of rhythm, that which allows difference to emerge, is 'unequal and incommensurable'. 'Always undergoing transcoding . . . it ties together critical moments or ties itself up in passing from one milieu to another. It does not operate in a homogeneous space-time, but by heterogeneous blocks. It changes direction' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 313).

Woolf's prose poetry thrives off a tension between meter and what, for the purposes of its distinction from meter, I shall call 'radical rhythm'. The double action of meter and radical rhythm enables her to set up the tension between inner and outer levels of being; between the 'movement of thought, feeling and bodily sensations in the "depths" and the facts, events and actions on the "surface" of life' (Laurence 1991: 13) that is so important in her novels. Thus repetition as Deleuze understands it is the general action of her narrative. The rhythm of the prose-poetic technique, the dance between meter and rhythm, works the text into

its ontological discoveries, the proper moments when pure difference is encountered in intensity, is 'felt' in the rhythm of repetition, and the paradox of the 'universality of the singular' becomes a concrete part of experience (for both character and reader).

Meter measures out life in equal portions, horizontally scaling meaning; it is the plot-driven, business-like 'getting on from lunch to dinner' (Woolf 1953: 139) approach to narrative of the Victorian realists that Woolf loathed. If meter is a tool of organic generality and spatialised time, repetition is a materialist tool of the parts or fragments. Repetition in poetry can be of a sound, syllable, word, phrase, line, stanza or metrical pattern, and in both poetry and prose it can take the more elaborate form of a symbol, image, motif, recurring or extended metaphor. Repetition presumes synthesis; it allows the author to atomise and unify simultaneously. It cannot operate predictably, only unexpectedly and discontinuously through displacement and disguise. Unlike meter, time's conceptual 'shell', repetition is 'full'; it is both a qualitative spatial and quantitative temporal tool.

Repetition mobilises the spatial relation between part and whole, and the temporal one between present and past. Perhaps the ultimate repetitive 'agent' in this respect is memory, which is central, both thematically and structurally, to Woolf's novels. Memory, as a form of structural repetition and synthesis, is central to the materialist aspect of Woolf's literary technique, as it is to Deleuze's thought. Mary Ann Gillies explores how Woolf uses a series of single images in the novel *Jacob's Room* to foreground memory as a mode of textual synthesis. She argues that Woolf engages memory

> largely through a series of images – leaves, waves, colours, voices (noises), and such personal items as Jacob's shoes – which join the linear narrative to the fragments of Jacob's life that the reader shares, even though these fragments must be imagined since access to them is denied. When a particular image reappears [. . .] the subtle alterations in their representation demonstrates how memory links the two times. (Gillies 1996: 114)

Memory thus enacts the paradox of Deleuze's concept of repetition; it generates difference in the alteration (in which difference differs from itself, rather than from what it is not). The action of displacement in Woolf's technique is not confined to the text, but actually carries into the reading process in that the reader is compelled to use her own memory to connect or 'transcode' the two times. As Gillies therefore argues: 'Woolf expects an affective aesthetic response from her audience and

plays upon this by making them use memory to retain the elements of the novel and the subsequent transformation of early events (objects) by later ones' (Gillies 1996: 114). This displacement of the process onto the reader is the 'disguised' or hidden element of repetition; it draws attention to the exteriority of the book's relation to the world. It is also what we can understand as the passive side to the process in that syntheses are generated elsewhere, outside of the narrative's 'conscious' determination.

The reflexive nature of the technique means that what is inscribed in technical processes cannot but appear as theme. So in *To the Lighthouse*, for example, daily life is conceived as a form of repetition, a physical action of accumulation. Thus Lily observes that she was

> only trying to smooth out something she had been given years ago folded up [. . .] in the rough and tumble of daily life, with all those children about, all those visitors, one had constantly a sense of repetition – of one thing falling where another had fallen, and so setting up an echo in the air which made it chime with vibrations. (Woolf [1927] 2006: 215)

Repetition creates the fabric of daily life. It is the external layer, the regular cycles of habit and daily activity, which accrue and are given to Lily 'folded up'. But of course these repetitive folds are also the 'stuff' of art, and it is the task of the artist to penetrate the 'symmetrical ensembles', the repetition of 'ordinary points', and tap the 'secret vibration' (Deleuze 1994: 2), the repetition of 'dissymmetry' and 'distinctive points' which animate them (27).

Lily's aesthetic problems stand for those of the author; the author symbolically 'repeats' herself in the text through Lily. Woolf's task is to penetrate the everyday, the silted layers of material repetition, the accumulation of the quotidian and the traffic of people and daily events in order to unleash deeper moments of being, the spiritual repetition that animates life. The hindrances to Lily's (and by proxy Woolf's) artistic production derive from the bare repetition of social convention, the social tyranny that would generalise her female status by expecting her to become a wife and not an artist. This includes both Mrs Ramsay's expectations that people 'must marry!' (Woolf [1927] 2006: 59), and the toxic words of the young male academic Charles Tansley: 'women can't paint, women can't write' (42). The book often uses hypnotically repetitive, almost mantra-like phrases, to draw its distinctive characters. It also suggests the tyranny of words and their power to resound and painfully reverberate, to repeat through time, and hinder the individual.

Memory is thus also the symbolic structure of the novel, as well as its materialist action. Memory allows characters to synthesise past and present and is the process in which characters often use the past to find answers to present problems. Philosophical questions, like large-scale waves 'in the mind', are posed or cast and the answers eventually 'return' through memory. Hence Lily does not have her 'vision' and her searching questions about Mrs Ramsay are not answered until the final section of *To the Lighthouse*, during her sustained recollection of the past. Repetition allows Woolf to produce unobtrusive (disguised) syntheses at unexpected moments, when 'the least moments of existence . . . rebound with unforeseen intensity at surprising intervals' (De Mille 2011: 381). It is the unexpected everyday revelations, as opposed to the grand philosophical answers, that Lily finds are important.

In short, repetition allows Woolf to create a flexible form from within, rather than impose a rigid one from without. Because these 'inner' events of consciousness are the big events of the novel, repetition in individual phrases can mark important structural turning points, moments of realisation or vision. Language at such points often has an incantatory power; repetitious individual phrases often signal significant changes in the direction of the plot, hence: 'What does it mean then, what can it all mean?' asks Lily Briscoe at the beginning of third and final section of *To the Lighthouse* (Woolf [**1927**] 2006: 121). The processes of difference and repetition – of repetition but with an alteration – are evident in the two questions and this is a common feature of Woolf's language. The structural tension is always between meter and (radical) repetition. The question seems to ceremonially usher in her creative vision, her event of difference.

This brings me to my final point about repetition. It is no accident that *To the Lighthouse* consists of three main sections. Woolf's most experimental prose-poetic texts reflect Deleuze's use of and preoccupation with triadic structures, and his idea of their 'persistence' (Deleuze 1994: 115). Triadic patterns and rhythms are central to Woolf's literary innovation; her technical structures often repeat via threes. The number three has had symbolic importance throughout history, most notably in religious and magical practices, for example in being associated with the Holy Trinity.[1] Its importance in respect of the philosophies of Deleuze and Woolf is because it is beyond two, beyond dualism. Three is an act of creative repetition. *To the Lighthouse* needs the third section and Lily the third person (beyond the dualism of Mr and Mrs Ramsay) to act as the differentiator.

I. Slicing 'Through Everything': *Mrs Dalloway* and the Three Syntheses of Time

> We are made up of fatigues as much as of contemplations.
> Deleuze 1994: 98

> Even the most mechanical, the most banal, the most habitual and the most stereotyped repetition finds a place in works of art [. . .] there is no other aesthetic problem other than that of the insertion of art into everyday life.
> Deleuze 1994: 365

In Woolf's novels some of the most structurally rich (and strikingly Deleuzian) moments are when the character is portrayed as engaged in practical daily activities and their mind is off guard and passive. These unobtrusive everyday moments are moments of unconscious synthesis, both in the context of the characters (in that memory is revealed as the passive structure of subjectivity) but also in the text which reveals its own 'passive' construction (when content is almost indistinguishable from form). Hence the following moment, portraying Mrs Dalloway going upstairs:

> She began to go slowly upstairs, with her hand on the banisters, as if she had left a party, where now this friend now that had flashed back her face, her voice; had shut the door and gone out and stood alone, a single figure against the appalling night, or rather, to be accurate, against the stare of this matter-of-fact June morning; soft with the glow of rose petals for some, she knew, and felt it, as she paused by the open staircase window which let in blinds flapping, dogs barking, let in, she thought, feeling herself suddenly shrivelled, aged, breastless, the grinding, blowing, flowering of the day, out of doors, out of the window, out of her body and brain which now failed, since Lady Bruton, whose lunch parties were said to be extraordinarily amusing, had not asked her. (Woolf [1925] 2004: 25–6)

This short yet intensive cycle of Being is a composite of thought, emotion, memory and physical movement, a enactment of what Deleuze describes as the 'rhythms', 'reserves', 'reaction times', the 'thousand intertwinings' that make up subjectivity (Deleuze 1994: 98). Rhythm is paramount here; in the metered phrasing we can feel Mrs Dalloway's plodding ascent of the stairs. The passage is a rich composite of both extensive (metered) and intensive (radical rhythm) time. If we take this as a single moment of being, we can discern the three syntheses of time as Deleuze understands them. It is because of the near indivisibility between the subject (Mrs Dalloway's mind) and the form (prose-poetry) that I shall hereafter refer to this as the 'mind-text'.

The First Synthesis: Habit

Woolf starts the first stage or synthesis of this passage 'She began to go slowly upstairs, with her hand on the banisters, as if she had left a party' in meter; three clauses of prose that frame the moment. These three 'noncommunicating' individual units are the metrically 'dogmatic' (Deleuze and Guattari [1987] 2004: 313) building blocks of narrative. They are the 'habit' stage of what I am calling the mind-text; both Mrs Dalloway's habit, the habitual action of climbing the stairs which she performs automatically, but also the representational 'habit' or convention of prose; the grammatical order of subject-predicate clauses and the third-person narrator. Form and content coincide here; meter measures out homogeneous space-time in the same way that the body moves through space in a succession of mechanical steps or units. The action of going up the stairs suggests the cyclical nature of this first synthesis of time; each step is an act of exertion which must be completed before an – identical – other can occur.

This is repetition in its most relaxed and conventional form, the bare mechanical 'material' form; 'repetition of the same' (Deleuze 1994: 97). For Deleuze this habit stage is important because habit is 'the foundation from which all other psychic phenomena derive' (99). This stage shows us the world given in extension, to be viewed objectively, as an apprehension or 'dream' of matter (106) in which everything is 'given at once' (Colebrook 2006:101). In temporal terms it is the condition of the passage of the present, the 'foundation of time' (Deleuze 1994: 101); it establishes the ground that will eventually be ungrounded. This is the least interesting of the three syntheses, existing as it does to provide a foundation for successive stages.

The Second Synthesis: Memory

This 'external husk' of habit quickly gives way to another synthesis which contains a 'kernel of difference and more complicated internal repetitions' (Deleuze 1994: 97). In the fourth clause we move into Mrs Dalloway's psyche (we cease observing her from outside) and into memory and the mind. As with Deleuze's model of subjectivity, in the passage from *Mrs Dalloway* these complicated internal repetitions are a function of memory. If the first synthesis of habit or the present concerned extensity (expressed in prose), the second synthesis, which concerns memory and the past, is intensive; it is that on which rests 'the implication of depth' (289). The implied depth is signified in the

clear shift into poetry, in the stabbing erratic phrase 'where now this friend now that had flashed back her face, her voice' which disrupts the metrical regularity and grammatical order built up in the previous three clauses. Here is a burst of involuntary memory; the illogical phrase, which contrasts with the predictable good sense of the previous phrases, enacts Deleuze's idea that pure memory and the past can only ever emerge as fragment and reappear 'underneath representation' (107). The memory fragment has the fertile 'erotic' (111) quality that Deleuze describes; the repetition of 'now' bringing the memory of 'this friend', and her 'face' and 'voice' (it is likely to be Sally Seton) to immediacy in the reader's mind almost in the manner of an 'optical effect' (111). The syncopated rhythm of the phrase (which falls slightly off beat and yet still just keeps up with the steady meter) creates the effect of a simultaneous 'double level'; a virtual reaching back into the past by memory and the immediate present physical action – her footsteps going up the stairs. The complex rhythm of the phrase actualises the ontological shift into depth and effectively allows the reader to experience this coexistence of present with past, and feel, as Deleuze puts it, a sense of the past 'in-itself' (111) as contemporaneous with the present.

But what is also very clear here is that this past 'in-itself' is still, as Deleuze argues, a 'correlate of representation' (Deleuze 1994: 111), and therefore an illusion. Hence in the following series thoughts, images and associations seem to repeat/spiral from the fertile memory: 'had shut the door and gone out and stood alone, a single figure against the appalling night, or rather, to be accurate, against the stare of this matter-of-fact June morning; soft with the glow of rose petals for some, she knew, and felt it'. In this second synthesis time and repetition are linear as opposed to cyclical; the mind unravels a succession of (apparently) different categories of thoughts. But the narrative, which has returned repetitively to the conservatism of prose (albeit with a slight change – longer phrases now), is ontologically registering little more than the bare repetition that we witnessed previously. This is consistent with what Deleuze says about memory: although it is a 'profound repetition', it is 'hidden by the bare repetitions that it inspires' (364). Memory draws off difference, but cannot escape bare repetition. Radical in itself, memory cannot give birth to anything other than a representation. Therefore, 'in the same movement, the ground falls back into the representation of what it grounds, while the circles begin to turn in the manner of the Same' (364). Thus the imaginative projections, negative contrasts and judgements, reasoning processes, signify the mind-text back in its prosaic comfort zone, under the four shackles of organic representation as Deleuze

understands them. This is not yet living difference, difference in itself, but the mind's pretence of difference.

For Deleuze, involuntary memory, the recurrence of the pure past, is the author of artifice. The imagined or dream-like aspect of memory causes the mind to blend fiction and fact, so here we see it is not clear whether the associations are linked to the recalled real event, or if they refer to associated real past times when Mrs Dalloway left parties, or if the mind is rather impressionistically and self-consciously 'filling in' the story. There is an overall sense of narcissism; a sort of recycled fiction in which the imagination intervenes in order to gather 'the traces of the former present' and model 'the new present upon the old' (Deleuze 1994: 128). By recollecting a real time when she felt like 'a single figure against the appalling night' *or* currently imagining herself as such, Mrs Dalloway's ego is constructing its own 'fatal affection' (Deleuze 1994: 139); feeling left out of a current social event (she has not been asked to Lady Bruton's lunch party), she is privately casting herself as the tragic heroine. The rationalising ('or rather, to be accurate') through which Mrs Dalloway compares her meagre lot with other women whose lives are apparently 'soft with the glow of rose petals' (we should not miss the irony here), is part of the fiction; the psyche is the author of a cruel narcissism.

Mrs Dalloway is feeling both physically and mentally old. Moments like this confirm Deleuze's idea that 'we are made up of fatigues as much as of contemplations' (Deleuze 1994: 98); both the physical act of going up the stairs and the attendant reminiscences and regret that mark her sense of having grown old gather into a powerful singularity of feeling.

The Third Synthesis: The Future

The mind-text process up until this point has been strictly dialectical; a dance between opposites: the moving body and the wandering mind, between prose and poetry, past and present, narrator and character. Apart from the involuntary memory, everything has been unravelled to us as a series of representations, occurring in chronological time/space, and at each point the thought or feeling has been stamped with identity – either Mrs Dalloway's or the narrator's. In Deleuze's terms these first two syntheses/repetitions – habit repetition, memory repetition – fail because they both build up and fail to eliminate the 'I', the subject or ego. But now in this final synthesis dualism is fully released and, as in Deleuze's model, the identity of the subject gives way. This

evacuation of the subject occurs in the final poetic triad, which I have formatted to emphasise its status as such:

shrivelled, aged, breastless
the grinding, blowing, flowering of the day
out of doors, out of the window, out of her body and brain which now failed

In this third triad body and brain, present and past are evacuated in a movement that suggests the time that is 'yet to come'. Woolf has been slowly kneading prose into poetry but now prose completely gives way to poetry; in this final synthesis the prose-poetic method is 'saturated'. The first synthesis established prose in triadic meter; the second synthesis increasingly lengthened this pattern of rhythm + prose by using whole prosaic clauses – 'soft with the glow of rose petals for some, she knew, and felt it' – as one beat (hence a radical stretching of the triad to its limit); and finally here is the 'ultimate' three; the triplicate of three-beat rhythms, of three times three: 'shrivelled, aged, breastless', 'grinding, blowing, flowering' and '*out* of doors, *out* of the window, *out* of her body and brain' (my emphasis). Even as the three threes rhythmically repeat and consolidate the three clauses of the first synthesis they also overturn it, taking it beyond organic representation. The first two triads seem to review and crystallise the essence of Mrs Dalloway's overwhelming feeling of middle-aged womanhood; both mentally, in the harshest idea of it, 'shrivelled, aged, breastless', and as an amorphous physical reality, 'grinding, blowing, flowering', before aborting the feeling altogether.

This third triad, for Deleuze, is the crucially anti-intellectual moment of the 'aborted *cogito*', a state corroborated here in the image of 'out of her body and brain which now failed'. This is the point at which we see 'the thought and production of the "absolutely different" ' (Deleuze 1994: 118) expressed here in series; the abstract states without a subject, 'shrivelled, aged, breastless', and verbs in a present continuous (-ing form) state of becoming, 'grinding, blowing, flowering'. This 'state of free differences' is no longer subject to the 'form imposed upon them by an I or an ego' (Deleuze 1994: 138). These are the kind of structural conditions which give rise to the 'purity' of time, as Deleuze understands it. Uninhibited by the binary of prose, the triplicate of triads (the three within threes) are like time's optimum vehicle; the 'empty' form of time through which pure difference can pass. Woolf's ontological literary technique implodes into the depths of the present moment, showing us that past and future are dimensions of the present.

This small yet rich moment of the text lends much credence to Deleuze's idea that our conscious lives are dictated by affect and in a cycle of 'continuous variations of joy and sadness'. The movement here is deterritorialisation, becoming a movement towards the increasingly abstract and impersonal – and yet entirely lived – feeling of old age. What is so important in Woolf's method of impersonality is that the construction of these emotional moments, whether joyful or, as is the case here, sad, is the same; sadness is no less a passion than joy. The character is passive to the affect, 'therefore passive . . . in the world of passion' (Deleuze 1978).

II. The View 'From Below': *To the Lighthouse* and Difference

One of the central features of Woolf's technique as I have been exploring it is her exploitation of the dynamic tension between prose and poetry or meter and radical rhythm. By pushing the tension of prose-poetry to its limits, narrative ontologically 'saturates' and prosaic and mental sameness are transformed into living difference. The passage from *Mrs Dalloway* reveals how Woolf's differential technique works in the (micro-)depiction of subjectivity. But the complex practices of difference and multiplicity are evident in other spheres of the text; including the 'outer' drama of character interaction. Woolf's central differentiating tool in this sphere is her remarkably flexible use of narrative voice and point of view, the technique of free indirect speech.

In *To the Lighthouse*, the Ramsays' argument about the weather and the viability of a trip to the lighthouse is a prime example of the mercurial use of narrative voice:

> There wasn't the slightest possible chance that they could go to the Lighthouse tomorrow, Mr. Ramsay snapped out irascibly.
>
> How did he know? she asked. The wind often changed.
>
> The extraordinary irrationality of her remark, the folly of women's minds enraged him. He had ridden through the valley of death, been shattered and shivered; and now, she flew in the face of facts, made his children hope what was utterly out of the question, in effect, told lies. He stamped his foot on the stone step. 'Damn you,' he said. But what had she said? Simply that it might be fine tomorrow. So it might.
>
> Not with the barometer falling and the wind due west.
>
> To pursue truth with such astonishing lack of consideration for other people's feelings, to rend the thin veils of civilization so wantonly, so brutally, was to her so horrible an outrage of human decency that, without replying,

> dazed and blinded, she bent her head as if to let the pelt of jagged hail, the drench of dirty water, bespatter her unrebuked. There was nothing to be said.
>
> He stood by her in silence. Very humbly, at length, he said that he would step over and ask the Coastguards if she liked. There was nobody whom she reverenced as she reverenced him. (Woolf [**1927**] 2006: 29)

Again, the text is working dialectically, this time in the context of the arguing couple and comically we are being shown how marriage 'really' (ontologically) *works*, not only as a contest of wills, but with much going on under the surface. Although is it Mr Ramsay who is finally 'right' – the weather is not fine and the trip is prevented – the triumph in this instance is Mrs Ramsay's.

The scene represents the triumph of ontology (of her inner life of feeling and difference) over epistemology (his exterior, factual world). 'Not with the barometer falling and the wind due west' is a harsh fact with the capacity to damage the immediate – internal, domestic – fabric of life; that is, present joy, childish/human expectation and hope. Ramsay's spouting of facts is, in Deleuze's terms, an act of transcendence and, insofar as it denatures the differential richness of life by referring it to a larger epistemological system of meaning, qualifies as a sterile type of repetition. It sucks the positive out of the present. But for Deleuze, 'difference is not negation. On the contrary, the negative is difference inverted, seen from below' (Deleuze 1994: 295). With its domestic setting and highly interiorised rhythmical narrative style, *To the Lighthouse* creates the optimum conditions for both looking at and showing us life as if 'from below'; for undoing the extended world.

The study of the relationship of the Ramsays is by now well-traversed thematic critical ground in Woolf studies, as are the strategies, both structural and symbolic, by which Woolf undoes the external 'masculine' world and shows us the view 'from below'. The quarrel over the viability of a trip to the lighthouse stands for their profound opposition of values, of the rational versus the emotional; his scientific realism and fact versus her humanitarian ethics. In this way the novel has been read as a feminist critique of the individualistic, essentialist 'male-coded thought and language' of Western epistemological systems (Laurence 1991: 26). The refusal of narrative omniscience and the problematising of the third-person narrator in *To the Lighthouse* are often linked to the book's attack on Western philosophy, and seen as symbolic of the idea of 'the problem of achieving epistemological certainty' (Lilienfeld 2006: 44). Feminist and post-structuralist theorists take this further by arguing that the book seeks to displace the authority of a logocentric,

subject-centred order of thinking with a feminist communal vision, one involving a radical 'sharing of voice' (Snaith 1996: 147).

In this respect critics focus much on Woolf's use of free indirect speech, the technique which gives the reader a sense of direct access to the consciousness of the character by blurring the third- and the first-person narrative voice. It has been noted how Woolf uses the technique in a particularly mercurial way, often (although not always) omitting the attributions of thought, thus making the process of identifying what is being reported and what a character is thinking difficult to discern (Snaith 1996: 134).[2] Indeed Woolf's novels absolutely thrive on the instability and ambiguity of the technique; the overlapping of character and narrator, of point of view, the lack of mediation between characters and narrator, has the effect of a 'choral or group protagonist' and this is, Rachel Blau DuPlessis argues, a 'major strategy of female modernism' (DuPlessis 1985: 162).

The problems of narrative indeterminacy, and indeed the ontological stakes between inner and outer, are particularly heightened in this scene; the question is not simply that of identifying point of view (whether it is the narrator or a character thinking), but of identifying whether something is being internally thought/felt or *actually* spoken. The few incidences of actual speech in the text so far have been single verbal interjections punctuating a largely interiorised narrative. Almost all of these actual speech incidences have centred on the question of going to the lighthouse and in the passage above the problem is finally raised through an actual verbal exchange. Earlier scenes have contributed to our sense of the ontologically close relation between speech and facts, implicitly criticising the externality of a male discourse of spoken facts, the capacity of which to inflict human cruelty is presented as an effect of their ontological condition *as* extended. More ethical behaviour tends to be synonymous with a passive female withholding of (harsh) speech. As if to make both these points a whole interlude or subchapter is taken up with Charles Tansley's callous (mechanically repetitive) echoing of his mentor Ramsay's forewarning 'no going to the lighthouse tomorrow, James' and Mrs Ramsay's inner response, 'odious little man . . . why go on saying that?' (Woolf [1927] 2006: 16).

The conflict between inner and outer is played out dramatically here as a battle between silence and speech. Speech's main antagonist in this scene is silence. Symbolically, it is her intensive silence that 'defeats' his external speech, but the text is also 'performing' silence. Silence is both a trope and a practice in Woolf's novel. Silence, argues Patricia Laurence, not only appears as a word, concept and theme, but there

is also a 'lexicon, punctuation, metaphor, space, or rhythm of silence' (Laurence 1991: 3). The turning of the theme of silence to effect in *To the Lighthouse* is part of the wider way, according to Laurence, in which the book displaces speech and dialogue. Silence, particularly women's silence, functions as an 'enlightened "presence" and not just an absence in the conventional sense of "lack" or "emptiness" in life and narration' (11). Here, Mrs Ramsay's communicative silence denotes not the absence of speech but simply a different *kind* of speaking or communication, one that is intrinsically positive.

III. The Triadic Unpeeling of Logic

The couple's argument is staged, unsurprisingly, through a triadic rhythm of assertion and counterpoint in which both husband and wife have three rhythmical 'strokes', and at the end of her third stroke, starting with 'To pursue truth . . . ' and finishing 'there was nothing to be said', he backs down. Mrs Ramsay's strokes enact a progressive undermining of and departure from speech. So her first stroke in the argument is the only instance in which we are supplied with any concrete 'evidence' of her speech: 'How did he know? she asked. The wind often changed.' The indirect speech attribution 'she asked' confirms or 'proves' this. But her next stroke – 'But what had she said? Simply that it might be fine tomorrow. So it might' – which is in free indirect speech (and thus with no accompanying attribution) is more ambiguous. Although the argumentative context, and the fact that it provokes a response in him, suggests that this is *likely* to be spoken, we really cannot be certain. ('What had she said?' indeed! – Mrs Ramsay's words/thoughts coincide with those we might be asking of the text at this point, and this technical literalism is not accidental.) The absence of quotation marks and our familiarity with the personality of the character (which includes a way she has – particularly in the face of male talk and its characteristic acerbic finality – of withholding her thoughts; the Tansley example quoted earlier a case in point) calls into question its validity as spoken. But the final, third stroke, which wins the argument – 'there was nothing to be said' – is unambiguous; she has now stopped speaking. This is categorically thought and not spoken; the act, which is also the 'truth' of its not being said, is axiomatic to the statement.

Therefore where Ramsay's rational order of speech, assertion and fact is premised on the binary of true/false, her virtual order of silence is premised on that of difference. Mrs Ramsay's active silencing of her husband is an analogy of the inner action of the text in which

the order of proof, evidence and logic (Ramsay's order) is empirically dismantled to make way for the logic of positive difference. Difference is revealed through a process of the displacement and reshuffling of the terms/configurations. Speech and silence mark the two ends of a (triadic) process which sees a subtle progressive removal of the textual 'evidence' of speech and utterance. Hence that Mrs Ramsay speaks in her first stroke is 'proven' by the evidence (as opposed to the absence) of the attribution 'she said'. The second stroke is – as the middle ground – unsurprisingly indeterminate; we do not know either way whether speech occurs. But in the third stroke the transformation has happened and logic has successfully been reconfigured into positive terms, because it can be 'proved' that she does not speak (in other words, that her silence is real), but not by the same negative logic that Ramsay would use (that would here involve a total absence of statement; either textual or from the character), but by the non-dialectically negative statement 'there was nothing to be said', in which the negative 'nothing' is couched in positive terms, silence as radical difference.

It would be a mistake to confuse the radically indeterminate effect of this technique with its function/structure; structurally it is in fact uncannily precise, as we see here in the graduated deduction of quotation marks denoting speech, each and every stage of which is needed to overturn Ramsay's logic. We also see the frequent instances here in which the text 'speaks' its own technical truth, as if in obedience to Woolf's claim, quoted earlier, that she 'cannot use the wrong words' (Woolf 1977: 247). It is hard to see how the seamlessness of the method, which carries down onto such minute technical levels, can have been premeditated on the author's part. In my view we must accept Woolf's claim that the method is intuitive – worked out through rhythm. The vocal imbrications and entrances and exits are differential processes executed with logical precision; things *really* could not be any other way.

Critical readings, both modernist and postmodernist, have not been precise or far-reaching in their analysis of the micro-technics of Woolf's texts and her use of rhythm. We would do well to structurally comprehend these differences, rather than simply register their effect (of communality, feminism, and so on). Otherwise there is a tendency to fall back into the dualistic categories of understanding from which Woolf herself was struggling to break free.[3] In order to put her writing and its extraordinary technique into new Deleuzian and interdisciplinary readings, we must continue to expand the categories of our terms, and think of new ways for reading the multiple in writers like Woolf.

Notes

1. According to Stephen Wilson, in Pre-Modern European magical rites three was a 'propitious number' and spells were ritually structured as a three-part process, for example, 'stepping three times over a grave'. Wilson also argues that 'tripartite divisions were a fundamental feature of Indo-European social and cultural ordering' (Wilson 2000: 447).
2. Moreover, understanding the complex focalised narrative voice relies on our familiarity (built up through repetition) with the separate discourses and idioms that define the Ramsays. The task involved in identifying who is communicating (and indeed how they are – through speaking or thinking) can be read in Deleuzian terms as part of the process of repetition, in which the action of the text, and the burden of understanding, is 'displaced' onto the reader.
3. As is the case for example with Snaith's modernist reading, quoted here, which uses the dualism public/private to explain the complex movement between internal and external in Woolf's narratives.

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Netting Fins: A Deleuzian Exploration of Linguistic Invention in Virginia Woolf's *The Waves*

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Abstract

Linguistic invention is a key feature of Virginia Woolf's novel *The Waves*. An exploration of its innovative verbal and syntactic procedures can add to an understanding of Woolf's importance for the philosophical thought of Gilles Deleuze (and his sometime collaborator Félix Guattari). In *A Thousand Plateaus*, *The Waves* is used to exemplify an ontology of becoming. However, in their reference to *The Waves*, Deleuze and Guattari only draw attention to what they term the 'vibrations, shifting borderlines' between and across characters in the novel. Given Deleuze's considerations of style, it is perhaps surprising that he never took up this idea in terms of how these movements also take place at the level of language in the novel, as the explorations in this essay of four different linguistic procedures from *The Waves* show. When Woolf completed writing *The Waves*, she wrote in her diary that she had 'netted that fin in the waste of water'. By investigating the multiple, and often discordant, associations of this image of netting a fin, various connections between Woolf's linguistic procedures and Deleuze's philosophy can be configured, particularly in terms of the approach to language put forward in *A Thousand Plateaus*. Reading Woolf alongside Deleuze in this way reveals how ontology becomes intimately bound up with a problem of language.

Keywords: Deleuze, Virginia Woolf, ontology, language, politics

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It is undone business
I speak of, this morning,
with the sea
stretching out
from my feet
Charles Olson, *The Maximus Poems*[1]

I. Introduction

What makes literature contemporary? According to the poet Charles Bernstein, writing only enters into the present when it breaks formal conventions, creating, in the process, other ways of putting words together. On this basis, Virginia Woolf's *The Waves* maintains a power to disrupt and avert, as Bernstein puts it, 'business as usual, including literary business' (Bernstein 1992: 2): that is, the business of the expressive-realist novel. The linguistic invention that Bernstein identifies as a necessary function of writing is a key feature of Woolf's text, and an exploration of its innovative verbal and syntactic procedures can add to an understanding of Woolf's importance for the philosophical thought of Gilles Deleuze (and his sometime collaborator Félix Guattari). In *The Waves*, Woolf uses language in ways that resonate with Deleuze's concerns. Moreover, Woolf's writing reveals how ontology becomes intimately bound up with a problem of language, a recognition that is crucial for appreciating the conjunction of Deleuze with Woolf.

Writing *The Waves* was possibly the most demanding literary project Woolf ever embarked on, and her diaries offer an insight into the labour put into it as she documented the shifting emotions towards her work.[2] At one point in her diary she refers to *The Waves* as 'the play-poem idea: the idea of some continuous stream, not solely of human thought' (Woolf 1982a: 139). The idea of life as flow and flux also raised a particular problem for Woolf: the development of a narrative technique for conveying her ontological ideas. When the first draft of the book was completed in April 1930 Woolf immediately began a re-write, and it is in the second manuscript that its distinctive structure emerges.[3] In her diary she indicates that 'several problems cry out at once to be solved. Who thinks it? And am I outside the thinker? One wants some device which is not a trick' (257). What resulted needs to be seen as the outcome both of a desire to experiment, to seek out, as Woolf says, 'an entirely new kind of book' (Woolf 1978b: 35), as well as a response to the problem Woolf had encountered. *The Waves* comprises a series of soliloquies by six characters over the span of their lifetimes, which are broken up by short interludes depicting time passing, through a day

and across different seasons, images of the sea, a garden and birds, of a world outside the human. This narrative structure engenders what can be described as rhizomatic writing, expressing being as a condition of becoming, a novel, as Woolf put it, written to 'a rhythm not a plot' (Woolf 1982a: 316).

References in *A Thousand Plateaus* to Woolf's well-known declaration to 'saturate every atom' show that Woolf's writing was relevant to Deleuze's project in a number of ways.[4] For example, the concept of the haecceity is invoked in connection with Woolf (a term adapted by Deleuze from the medieval philosopher Duns Scotus). The significance here is with how Woolf is no longer concerned with

> subjects, persons or characters, which let themselves be attributed, formed or developed. There are only particles left, particles definable solely by relationships of movement and rest, speed and slowness... there are now only haecceities left, individuations which are precise and without subject, which are definable solely by affects or powers. (Deleuze and Parnet 2006: 91)

In *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze and Guattari make specific reference to Woolf's *The Waves* in terms of an 'abstract machine of the waves', with these waves as 'vibrations, shifting borderlines'. They continue:

> In *The Waves*, Virginia Woolf – who made all her life and work a passage, a becoming, all kinds of becomings between ages, sexes, elements, and kingdoms – intermingles seven characters, Bernard, Neville, Louis, Jinny, Rhoda, Suzanne [sic], and Percival. But each of these characters, with his or her name, its individuality, designates a multiplicity (for example, Bernard and the school of fish). Each is simultaneously in this multiplicity and at its edge, and crosses over into the others. (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 252)

For Deleuze and Guattari then, *The Waves* is an example used as part of their exploration of an ontology of becoming that is the focus of the tenth chapter of *A Thousand Plateaus*. Writing is also conceived as becoming, so that, accounting for the processes a writer puts into practice, Deleuze describes these as a movement justified by their own trajectory, so as to 'lose one's face, to jump over or pierce through the wall' (Deleuze and Parnet 2006: 34). Likewise, Woolf refers to her own progress with writing *The Waves* as a case of 'always to follow, blindly instinctively with a sense of leaping over a precipice – the call of – the call of –' (Woolf 1982a: 203). This willingness to pursue something that cannot be put into words also suggests a route into an unknown. As Woolf states, such movement is an escape from the personal, to 'provide a wall for the book from oneself' (Woolf 1978a: 13); that is, a means of becoming-imperceptible. As is made clear at the outset of

A Thousand Plateaus, becoming-imperceptible concerns the conditions for, and the components of, the construction of a subjectivity: 'To make ourselves unrecognizable in turn. To render imperceptible, not ourselves, but what makes us act, feel, and think' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 3). Furthermore, this process of becoming is not a retreat into the imaginary, an escape from life. On the contrary, writing understood as becoming is a flight into the real, this flight itself is life: 'to flee is to produce the real, to create life, to find a weapon' (Deleuze and Parnet 2006: 36), a production that is also possible and even necessary, it should be added, at the level of language.

In their reference to *The Waves* in *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari only draw attention to the 'vibrations, shifting borderlines' between and across characters in the novel, a point relevant to this present discussion, since these movements also take place at the level of language. In addition, it is notable that Deleuze never discussed Woolf to the same extent he did other writers; Woolf, for instance, is not amongst those that Deleuze chooses to examine in detail in *Essays Critical and Clinical*.[5] This omission, I would argue, and the specific nature of the movements that operate in *The Waves*, calls for a further exploration of Woolf's writing alongside concepts drawn from Deleuze's philosophy, in order to examine how 'the abstract machine of the waves' is effectuated in and by Woolf's novel not only at a narrative but also at a linguistic level. However, before undertaking these explorations, we have to consider in what ways language can be considered a shared problem for Deleuze and Woolf.

II. The Problem of Language

On completing *The Waves*, Woolf wrote in her diary that she had 'netted that fin in the waste of water' (Woolf 1982b: 10). A reader might infer from the phonemic connection between 'fin' with 'finished' that Woolf's statement conveys a sense of resolution, the establishment of something whole.[6] However, the idea of a net hints at permeability, whilst a fin is only a partial object. This evocative image therefore raises a number of problems. The water that escapes capture by a net, the almost unnameable 'waste', intimates the liquid flows of experience of the characters in the novel. Furthermore, in her diary Woolf links this fin with an ontological preoccupation:

> I wish to add some remarks to this, on the mystical side of this solitude; how it is not oneself but something in the universe that one's left with. It is this that

> is frightening and exciting in the midst of my profound gloom, depression, boredom, whatever it is: One sees a fin passing far out. What image can I reach to convey what I mean? Really there is none I think. The interesting thing is that in all my feeling and thinking I have never come up against this before. Life is, soberly and accurately, the oddest affair; has in it the essence of reality. I used to feel this as a child – couldn't step across a puddle once I remember, for thinking, how strange – what am I? etc. But by writing I don't reach anything. All I mean to make is a note of a curious state of mind. (Woolf 1982a: 113)

Deleuze provides another way of thinking about Woolf's 'fin', as an idea of writing that draws on the different meanings of this word in French:

> Style gives writing an external end [*fin*] – which goes beyond what is written. And this is the same thing: writing does not have its end in itself precisely because life is not something personal. The only aim [*fin*] of writing is life, through the combinations which it draws. (Deleuze and Parnet 2006: 4)

For both Deleuze and Woolf, writing is always more than itself. In this regard Woolf's fin can point to the presence of a non-human being or force behind language, only ever partially seen. But what precisely is this force? Deleuze and Guattari argue that what lies behind language is a machinic assemblage, so that an individual is always just one element plugged into a collective arrangement of various elements (including psychological, social, technological components): 'Each of us is caught up in an assemblage of this kind, and we reproduce its statements when we think we are speaking in our own name; or rather we speak in our own name when we produce its statement' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 36). Yet, just as Woolf writes about netting a fin, it is through writing that this invisible assemblage is brought into the open. Moreover, just as the fin is the motor principle for the fish, writing carries with it a particular power for directing the assemblage, a way 'to gather the tribes and secret idioms from which I extract something I call my Self' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 84). However, for Woolf this then leads to another problem: of the relation between being conceived as becoming and language. Woolf can only ever 'note' her state of mind, implying that writing is always incomplete, only ever a sketch of reality (something continually evading it) and therefore, by necessity, unfinished.

This concern with ontology is developed throughout *The Waves*, and significantly it is Bernard, the story-telling character or maker of 'phrases and phrases' who also refers to the image of a fin (Woolf 1992: 22). Bernard and Woolf share a complex relationship with it. In old age

Bernard records how 'No fin breaks the waste of this immeasurable sea' (237), a moment he had predicted as a young man in terms of 'a self who does not come' (62). The fin is also used by Bernard to indicate a non-rational sensation or apprehension experienced at the edge of language: 'Leaning over this parapet I see far out a waste of water. A fin turns. This bare visual impression is unattached to any line of reason, it springs up as one might see the fin of a porpoise on the horizon' (157). However, as Woolf reveals in her diary, this image can also suggest something more sinister, as she records how 'now the old devil has once more got his spine through the waves' (Woolf 1978a: 270). A fin, so it seems, is as liable to augur danger as much as it might be attached to a playful porpoise.

The image of the fin indicates Woolf's determination to use her writing to investigate ontological questions, and at the same time the dangers that can be attached to such a project. For Woolf, finding her words (or netting fins) institutes an ongoing oscillation between pleasure and fear, alongside of which is the pervasive threat and even excitement of losing oneself in the vast 'waste' or chaos outside of language. Jean-Jacques Lecercle, in *Deleuze and Language*, describes an analogous alternation, on the one side the determination to push language to its limits into silence, and on the other the 'inexhaustible garrulousness that defeats exhaustion, of the constitutive effability that inhabits even the ineffable' (Lecercle 2002: 2). This problem of language also raises the question as to what it is that words do precisely. In an essay Woolf describes the

> strange . . . diabolical power which words possess . . . to suggest the writer . . . Why words do this, how they do it . . . nobody knows. They do it without the writer's will; often against his will . . . Even words that are hundreds of years old have this power; when they are new they have it so strongly that they deafen us to the writer's meaning. (Woolf 1966: 248)

Here Woolf addresses two different but associated problems that Deleuze likewise highlights. First, the relation between enunciation and the subject, how only through the act of language in use is a subject position actualised. This is why words 'deafen us to the . . . meaning', as a writer realises the forces that allow for language and the tensions from which subject positions are derived, including that of the reader. Second, the connection between the writer and his or her work, the way that words 'suggest the writer'. Just as Deleuze and Guattari, in their study of Kafka (1986), draw upon diaries and letters as much as Kafka's novels and short stories, thus blurring a boundary between life and art, Woolf is interested in what a literary machine tells us about

the qualities and problems of the writer. But such an investigation also shows how the author becomes imperceptible, merely a conduit for words that operate 'against his will'. The *word* in this way is indeed the *wyrd*, as in its ancient sense where to utter/write is to be an agent of an enaction.

Woolf's 'diabolical power' of words echoes the 'order word', a component of the model of language put forward in *A Thousand Plateaus*. In this model, at an elementary level, language functions as command (regardless of grammatical construction) so that any given statement presupposes a particular action. In fact, the relation between statement and act is one of reciprocal presupposition, as Deleuze and Guattari put it, 'each statement accomplishes an act and the act is accomplished in the statement' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 79).[7] Order words operate within a social terrain, as Deleuze and Guattari insist, so that language, since it is neither grounded in signification or subjectification, 'in its entirety is indirect discourse' (84). The critic and poet Denise Riley picks up this problematic of language, and argues that the choice between 'language as speaking us, and our status as freely choosing users of language' is in reality specious. Both approaches – and Riley contends that this opposition is reflected in the contrast between Continental and analytical philosophical accounts of language – fail to grasp language's 'affect as that outward unconscious which hovers between people' (Riley 2005: 3–4). As with the image of Woolf's fin that can give rise to conflicting associations, language is both impersonal and at the same time that which we use to form 'the fibre of the personal... Language as a speaking thing, neither my master nor my instrument, is amiably indifferent to me' (1–7). Riley indicates an important tension here, indifference on one side and amiability on the other, and one which is then reflected, I would argue, in the dynamic that Deleuze and Guattari present between order words and 'passwords', 'compositions of order' and uses of language that convert order words into 'components of passage' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 110).

By emphasising how the order word can be transformed, Deleuze and Guattari thereby reject a purely syntactic model of language. For them, such models are reductive. By postulating rules governing application, they separate language from real world contexts, from what Lecercle describes as the 'ontological mixture of event and sense' (Lecercle 2002: 156). Linguistics, therefore, has to question its basis as a homogenous system established out of language's heterogeneity, as the extraction of constants from variables. This is an enterprise, Deleuze and Guattari

maintain, that goes hand-in-hand with a political agenda whereby language is centralised and standardised, to become a major or dominant language (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 100–1). However, in making this point, Deleuze and Guattari do not then subsequently set up a dualism between major and minor (or between constants and variation in language) as a fixed power relation, so that the major is said to dominate the minor. Rather, they insist that these two poles continually pass over and into each other. There are not two kinds of language in opposition to each other but rather two 'treatments' of language: '*Constant is not opposed to variable*; it is a treatment of the variable opposed to the other kind of treatment, or continuous variation' (103; original emphasis).

Additionally, the conception of pragmatics that Deleuze and Guattari put forward does not involve, as in other models, notions of linguistic competence, or a distinction between language and speech. Deleuze and Guattari argue that such ideas presuppose treating language in terms of an extraction of constants (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 103–4). All the pragmatic features of language (for example, prosodic aspects such as intonation and, I would suggest, the procedures that a reader encounters in *The Waves*) have the ability to put language into a state of continuous variation. This is how language can be said to have a politics: a politics of the pragmatics of language as it continually operates between the two poles of constancy and variation. The problem of how to use language, in line with Woolf's ontological concerns, forms a critical component of *The Waves*, a novel that was written during a highly political phase in Woolf's career.[8] In order, then, to understand the nature of these politics at stake here we must shift attention to specific examples of four different linguistic procedures that Woolf invents in *The Waves*.

III. Linguistic Procedures

The Interstitial Discourse Marker

Deleuze and Guattari's insistence on language as indirect discourse can shed light on what Daniel Ferrer regards as a particular difficulty in reading *The Waves*, namely, how each character's utterance should be 'materially impossible to pronounce . . . at the same time as the actions they evoke', so that the word 'said' in the text cannot be taken literally (Ferrer 1990: 66). The interior monologue of each character is presented in the novel as if it was uttered as exterior speech, as the following example towards the beginning of the book demonstrates:

> 'I see a ring,' said Bernard, 'hanging above me. It quivers and hangs in a loop of light.'
>
> 'I see a slab of pale yellow,' said Susan, 'spreading away until it meets a purple stripe.'
>
> 'I hear a sound, said Rhoda, 'cheap, chirp; cheep chirp; going up and down.' (Woolf 1992: 5)

Ferrer argues that we must understand this narrative structure of *The Waves* as an 'interstitial' construction and 'as essentially figurative', since once the idea of representation is rejected this stylised mode of enunciation can be seen as the narration, not of a dialogic scenario, but of other ways of being (Ferrer 1990: 66). These procedures can only be explored in a space between third- and first-person narrative points of view. Although speech marks separate each voice, they are permeable, so that utterances leak into others through the repetition of language and grammatical structures across different speakers. Additionally, the first person of the present tense used by each character is made to suggest a position of distance that is conventionally associated with a third-person narrative. Ferrer, following a Lacanian conception of psychological loss, sees this style of enunciation as reliving experience in a 'hallucinatory mode' (91). However, in Deleuzian terms, such shifting distances and collectivised voicing allows language to move, to explore its own ambiguities in an interval, a space between fixed points of view. Furthermore, the use of the present tense as the prevailing mode of enunciation for each character's soliloquy is significant as this draws attention to speech as becoming, language as process.

Deleuze and Guattari's concept of a collective assemblage of enunciation can help us understand further this ambiguous position of the discourse marker in Woolf's text. Deleuze and Guattari's insistence on language as, fundamentally, indirect discourse, so that language always 'speaks from a second party to a third party, neither of whom has seen' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 77), posits that language is never grounded in an individual subject's experience. On this basis, they criticise linguistics for tying itself too readily to a concept of individualism (79–80). The characters in *The Waves*, like the subject in Deleuze's philosophy of language, do not occupy a central position in their usage of language; nor do they possess a voice arising from the privacy of an inviolable and isolated mind-space. Instead, they have a status and function as one dimension amongst a multiplicity involved in the construction of a collective assemblage of enunciation. A lack of differentiation between voices and also of voice across

time indicates this collectivised speech-making at work in the novel. Language embodies a multiplicity of externally enmeshed psycho-social conflicts and struggles. The interstitial discourse marker that Woolf devises for *The Waves* enables a particular power of affect that demonstrates a mode of speech mobilising words freed from an individual subject of enunciation. This procedure, and the ambiguous point of view that it produces, has a particular resonance with Deleuze's notion of the point of view made possible by the impersonal power of an event, 'like a third person of the infinitive, a fourth person singular' (Deleuze and Parnet 2006: 48).[9]

Grammatical Variation

Following Deleuze we can go further in exploring the construction of an interval in language, and look at how Woolf creates, through grammatical variation, an expression of the problems of language that concern her:

> 'Those are white words,' said Susan, 'like stones one picks up by the seashore.'
>
> 'They flick their tails right and left as I speak them,' said Bernard. 'They wag their tails; they flick their tails; they move through the air in flocks, now this way, now that way, moving all together, now dividing, now coming together.'
>
> 'Those are yellow words, those are fiery words,' said Jinny. 'I should like a fiery dress, a yellow dress, a fulvous dress to wear in the evening.'
>
> 'Each tense,' said Neville, 'means differently. There is an order in this world; there are distinctions, there are differences in this world, upon whose verge I step. For this is only a beginning.' (Woolf 1992: 14–15)

As Julie Vandivere observes, this passage enacts a movement between indicative and subjunctive grammatical structures, revealing the 'flux between the abstract and the concrete' involved in any process of self-definition, in this case in relation to conceptions of language (Vandivere 1996: 223). Susan uses indicative statements to insist that words have a material reality; they are 'like stones', a comparison also linked with the action of picking the stones up. Bernard expresses a different understanding of language, of its fluidity, mutability and the reliance on words that 'flick their tails', moving 'now this way, now that'. Jinny then moves into a subjunctive construction, the use of the modal 'should' indicating uncertainty and speculation. Her connecting 'fiery words' with a 'fiery dress' also shows a desire to locate language in relation to her own body and not outside of herself, as Susan and

Bernard have done. Differing conceptions of language are associated with different grammatical constructions, also demonstrating dissimilar ways of constructing reality. As Vandivere puts it, the 'indicative signals the myth of the concrete world wherein one can theoretically construct a sense of self, whilst the subjunctive signals a refusal of this myth' (224). This tension is extended into Neville's insistence on a need for order that attests to the differences within language, how 'each tense means differently', which is a difference coextensive with essential differences in the world. Neville's assertions repeat the verb 'to be' four times ('is', 'are'), an attempt to establish order through repetition. Yet this ordering is undercut by the tautological nature of his assertions. As Vandivere comments, the pronouns of the first part of each formulation ('there', 'this') provide no further support for the second part; in other words, Neville's statements do not possess the foundation in concrete reality that they claim and instead move 'pointlessly in circular modification' (Vandivere 1996: 226). Likewise, as the passage moves between the indicative and subjunctive, syntactic parallelism across the speakers ('Those are white words', 'Those are yellow words', the repeated use of demonstrative pronouns at the start of sentences linked with forms of 'to be') underlies an ordering and patterning, which is simultaneously destabilised as these recurring syntactical structures draw attention to the different semantic possibilities between them. This language play recalls Woolf's problems with language and the image of the fin continually oscillating between a potential porpoise or monster.

What also becomes significant here is that this movement across different and repeated forms of syntactical construction both requires and produces gaps, or borders, whilst at the same time the forms of repetition also become a movement across and between these gaps. Such movements constitute an affect, and, moreover, assert the linkage between language and ontology, since 'affects are becomings' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 256). Discussing Spinoza's concept of affect, Deleuze insists that this is not to be conceived as 'indicative or representative, since it is involved in a lived duration that involves the difference between two states' (Deleuze 1988: 48). Woolf's procedure can be understood as an attempt to capture (that is, to net) an affect of language involving the durations, or intervals, of movement between and across different states or forces of grammar, by doing so revealing the fragility of any linguistic or ontological claim.

A Route to the Outside of Language

According to Deleuze, one way to open up language is to engineer a route to its outside, to the point at which language becomes silence or encounters another medium, such as painting or music, to produce what Deleuze terms 'Visions and Auditions', found at its asyntactical and asignifying limits (Deleuze 1997: 5). In *The Waves*, Woolf offers this possibility, something Rhoda discovers when she attends a concert following Percival's death:

> An axe has split a tree to the core; the core is warm; sound quivers within the bark. 'Ah!' cried a woman to her lover, leaning from her window in Venice. 'Ah, ah!' she cried, and again she cries 'Ah!' (Woolf 1992: 133)

Rhoda, in an echo of the singer's repetitious cries, asks: ' "Like" and "like" and "like" – but what is the thing that lies beneath the semblance of the thing?' (Woolf 1992: 134). The repetitions across the syntactical construction of the sentence indicate Rhoda questioning whether language really is governed by a logic of signification, and, hinting at the ontological concerns of the novel, moreover coming up against language's limit-point. The singer's cries are the outside of language, showing this as a pure force of affect, an affective power of pure phonological effect, something that Deleuze dubs 'breath-words' (Deleuze 1997: 5). Here we also encounter that 'waste of water' beyond language's net, and significantly Woolf shows that it is here that a form of community can be founded. At the concert following her question as to what lies beneath language, Rhoda continues:

> Percival, by his death, has made me this gift, let me see this thing. There is a square; there is an oblong. The players take the square and place it upon the oblong. They place it very accurately; they make a perfect dwelling-place. (Woolf 1992: 134)

This is an extraordinary vision, compressing synaesthetic experience into an image of what could be termed molecular community; the sounds made by the 'players' visualised as shapes that build a 'perfect dwelling-place'. For Rhoda, 'The sweetness of this content overflowing runs down the walls of my mind, and liberates understanding' (Woolf 1992: 134). Significantly, Rhoda's vision is explicitly linked to the death of Percival, the event that initiated the trip to the concert, so that Percival functions in the book both as a force instituting the macropolitical body of Empire building (he dies serving British interests in India) but also as an enabler of micro-political organisation. Rhoda has perceived a sonic community of provisional structure: intensive and affective, made possible by the

molecular flows of becoming, and by necessity outside language since this is a form of community founded on what cannot be communicated or shared verbally.[10]

Woolf, in revealing to us the outside of language, where it can become, for example, pure phonological affect, creates a trajectory that in turn formulates a logic confirming the problem of language – the way, as Deleuze puts it, is 'so burdened with calculations and significations, with intentions and personal memories, with old habits that cement them together, that one can scarcely bore into the surface before it closes up again' (Deleuze 1997: 173). Words, Deleuze argues, are so 'bound to the general or the particular' that they lack the force of a disruption, the bursting open of a singular, indefinite intensity that he finds in music or visual arts. Words can smother the speaker, as the characters in *The Waves* demonstrate with their difficult and contradictory relationship to language (as well as with each other). Deleuze's formulation is that it is necessary to push language to its frontier, the outside of language where it becomes a music or an image 'like a new style in which words would at last open up by themselves, where language would become poetry, in such a way as to actually produce the visions and sounds that remained imperceptible behind the old language' (173).[11]

Transegmental Drift

For Deleuze, it is through syntactic creativity that language's becoming is activated (Deleuze 1997: 5). Style is understood in terms of the procedures writers invent to disrupt syntactical conventions, the ways that sentences can be transformed into rhizomes, to be made into a line that turns, bends, or folds back on itself. Deleuze's concept of the stutter refers to those procedures by which language is used in this way. Lecercle provides a useful definition of stuttering as

> the work or play of negation at the linguistic level, which entails consequences, in the shape of variation and the blurring or subversion of constraints at the rhetorical or stylistic level, and eventually points towards the utterly Other which human language, at its limit, enables us to glimpse, beyond the world, at the metaphysical level. (Lecercle 2002: 230)

The stutter is the production of syntactical variables. Almost a decade before starting work on *The Waves*, Woolf had had the idea of a novel in which 'one thing should open out of another' (Woolf 1978a: 13) as a discourse in perpetual movement, a web of proliferating connections that can also function in terms of a movement between words. In *The Waves*,

a particular style of stuttering is put into play through a procedure that Garrett Stewart calls 'transegmental drift', the 'undoing of the clear-cut difference between one word and its grammatically bonded neighbour in the chain of syntax' (Stewart 1987: 432).

Stewart offers the following examples of this procedure. In the novel's second sentence we read that 'the sea was slightly creased' (Woolf 1992: 3). By reading and listening to these words closely, it can be both seen and heard how language is put into motion. There is a chiastic progression from 'sea' to the 'eas' in 'creased' which draws attention to the space between these words, and in this space the shared sibilant in 'was' and 'slightly' drifts when voiced and gives a further semantic potential: 'lightly'. This ambiguity is a moment of vibration as the sound oscillates between two words. Similarly, when Bernard relates Rhoda's death and how, 'I… feel the rush of the wind of her flight when she leapt' (241), a drifting between 'rush' and 'of' of the 'sh' phoneme allows the possibility of hearing the word 'shove'. This vibration can also depend on the effect of voicing two different words in close proximity as in the 'moth-wing quiver of words' (180) in which the shift from sounding the 'g' to the 'q' is what Stewart calls a 'mere quaver of voicing' (Stewart 1987: 424). Sounds can be made to echo and mutate, as with: 'all the blades of the grass were run together in one fluent green blaze' (Woolf 1992: 122). Here 'blaze' is almost a repetition of 'blades', and 'one' echoes 'were run'. These internal rhymes and the drifting of phonemes and morphemes across the boundaries between words produce a subterranean syntax of flows and breaks.[12]

These few examples (Stewart provides many more) indicate how transegmental drift activates several linguistic energies. It creates disequilibrium as words change semantic potential or as morphemic and phonemic elements occupy other positions in grammatical variation. Reading becomes the discovery of 'pass-words beneath order-words… words that pass, words that are components of passage' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 110). Words are also made to vibrate as they become sites of phonological effects and phonetic ambiguity. Stewart identifies a further aspect to this procedure, how this activity incurs the body of the reader into its processes. Reception of the text is disturbed, occurring in the space between 'thinking (reading) and hearing (voicing) the text… an *evocalization*, as it were, of the reader's own physical presence' and a disturbance of sound that thereby privileges the reader's interpretative act and enables his or her active participation (Stewart 1987: 458–9; original emphasis). Language is neither informational nor communicational; it is as 'an act or event of

the real' (Blaser 2006: 113). This, I would suggest, aligns Woolf with a certain conception of writing as 'undone business' (to adopt a phrase from Charles Olson's poetry) as something by necessity incomplete.[13]

The stuttering in the syntactical gaps of Woolf's prose is like a rupture in the language: 'like an eternity that can only be revealed in a becoming, or a landscape that only appears in movement' (Deleuze 1997: 5). The new words that emerge between words recall Woolf's image of fins breaking through the surface of the sea. If such operations are more often associated with poetry than the novel, then this adds to the argument here for appreciating the formal innovations of Woolf's novel writing. As chris cheek explains:

> There are differing kinds of performance and often versions of writings, and this is particularly the case for poems, where there is a kinship between exophonic (sounded out) and endophonic (sounded within) body-mind on page as 'stage' and stage as 'page'. Readers, writers included of course, are temporary operators of a text with which there is reciprocity: a text performs its reader and its writer, and a reader and a writer perform a text. (cheek 2004: 23)

Such time-based operations, or performances, are descriptive of the ways of reading *The Waves* engenders. Furthermore, these uses of the text are supported by Woolf's insistence that reading be seen as an activity 'to refresh and exercise our creative powers' (Woolf 1966: 5). In one of her final essays, Woolf describes the reader engaged in an act of analysis and imagination: 'He can read directly what is on the page, or, drawing aside, can read what is not written... We are in a world where nothing is concluded' (Woolf 1979: 429). This idea of reading 'what is not written' can enable space for the reader's own creativity. It also suggests the possibility of a moment in which a reader challenges all a text presupposes, the reality that it presents as 'natural' (Flint 1996: 196). For Deleuze, too, reading is a creative engagement that exposes and builds on the mutual concerns of philosophy and literature: 'Try your own experiments', Deleuze urges,

> each time there is an assemblage of ideas, relations and circumstances: each time there is a veritable novel, where the landowner, the thief, the man with the javelin, the man with the bare hands, the labourer, the painter, take the place of concepts. (Deleuze and Parnet 2006: 42)

Woolf's syntactical operations function as an emerging dynamic and form flows within the flows of thought constituting the lines of flight or deterritorialisations of each character assemblage in *The Waves*. Each character records their mutations and multiple transformations,

initiated by encounters with other bodies and minds. A process, as Neville describes, 'to be recalled, to be mitigated, to have one's self adulterated, mixed up, become part of another' (Woolf 1992: 67), but also, at the same time, entailing a reorganisation or reterritorialisation. This concern with an ontology of becoming is precisely what Deleuze shares with Woolf, or as she describes it in *The Waves*, 'this veil of being, this cloud that changes with the least breath, night and day, and all night and all day' (Woolf 1992: 245).

IV. Conclusion: An Ontological Politics?

I have argued that Woolf's uses of language, and the linguistic procedures she invents, must be understood in terms of their connection with an ontological problem that preoccupied her whilst working on *The Waves*. These procedures, and the complex cluster of concerns that they raise, are encapsulated in Woolf's image of netting a fin, with its multiple, even discordant, associations. Woolf's concerns have also been shown to resonate with Deleuze's philosophy in a variety of ways, particularly in terms of the approach to language put forward in *A Thousand Plateaus*. This conjunction of Woolf with Deleuze reveals how ontology becomes intimately bound up with a problem of language. By way of a conclusion, I want to sketch three ways in which connections between Woolf's novel, her fin image and Deleuze's philosophy can be said to offer a preliminary mapping for what I would provisionally term an ontological politics.

First, Woolf's image of the fin provides productive, and novel, perspectives on some key Deleuzian concepts. Woolf's image can suggest distinct kinds of movement: floating, swimming and even moving across the water's surface. Behind all these forms of movement hovers, as Deleuze and Guattari state, 'the abstract machine of the waves'. This notion of something operating behind the machinic assemblages behind language is suggested in the motion of the ocean itself, in which Woolf discovers 'eternal renewal, the incessant rise and fall and rise again' (Woolf 1992: 247). The abstract machine of the waves puts into operation a power of repetition which, as Deleuze shows, is a condition of becoming: 'Returning is being, but only the being of becoming' (Deleuze 2004: 50). Woolf's notion of netting fins in a 'waste of water' is then suggestive of how movement is always predicated upon points of stagnation. As Tessa Dwyer comments in relation to Deleuze's work on cinema, this notion of 'waste' is necessary for the 'structural unit which Deleuze identifies as integral to thought, language, and knowledge

production' which is the interval, the space between that allows for movement (Dwyer 1997: 553). Movement subsists virtually in stasis, so that, as Deleuze describes it, the interval 'designates the point at which movement stops and, in stopping, gains the power to go into reverse, accelerate, slow down' (Deleuze 2005: 85). Likewise, Woolf's linguistic procedures function on the basis of a construction of an interval or holes in language. Such procedures show that Woolf does not seek to solve the problems that she sets herself; rather, what she wants to do is expose these concerns, enter into and explore them. This indicates how an ontological politics is alert to its own necessary incompleteness.

Second, Woolf's linguistic procedures implicate the reader in a problem of power. Since minor writers deterritorialise the major language by overturning privileged forms, introducing new semantic possibilities and subverting standardised syntactical and grammatical structures, not only should we consider *The Waves* as an example of minor literature, we also need to consider to what extent, since these procedures can be said to engage the reader in their actual processes, reading *The Waves* is a process of becoming-minoritarian. What matters in a relation between major and minor is not a fixed relation of forces but a process of becoming-minoritarian, one which 'continually oversteps the representative threshold of the majoritarian standard, by excess or default' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 106). In this regard, Bernard makes a significant comment at the close of the novel: 'I begin to long for some little language such as lovers use, broken words, inarticulate words, like the shuffling of feet on the pavement' (Woolf 1992: 199). Later, returning to the street, he notes how, 'The canopy of civilization is burnt out' (247). Woolf's 'shuffling of feet on the pavement', with its combined suggestions of movement, collective agency, and noise, provides us with an image of becoming-minoritarian, that figure of continuous variation that Deleuze and Guattari invoke. Significantly, alongside the shuffling of feet is a usage of language, the 'broken words' (a stuttering) showing that within an ontological politics the problem of language is central.

Finally, Deleuze's recognition of the event as 'incorporeal transformation' is echoed by Woolf when Bernard comments in *The Waves* that 'we are edged with mist. We make an unsubstantial territory' (Woolf 1992: 11). However, there is a further relevance here in connection with this discussion of Woolf's linguistic procedures, since in Deleuze's formulation the event requires close attention to grammatical construction. Deleuze contends that only the infinitive form of a verb captures the process of becoming that is an event, a dynamic distinct from the objects or terms that the event operates with and through

(for example, Deleuze and Parnet 2006: 47). Deleuze's emphasis on verb formation, considered in the light of Woolf's linguistic procedures, draws attention to the relation between thought and the discursive structures of language. Deleuze likewise indicates this relation in terms of philosophy's connection with the novel: for example, he suggests that *Difference and Repetition* can be considered as a type of detective novel (Deleuze 2004: xix), and in *Dialogues* states that there is a way of doing philosophy, of 'philosophising as a novelist, of being a novelist in philosophy' (Deleuze and Parnet 2006: 41).

What becomes apparent, then, from these points of connection between Deleuze and Woolf, is the possibility of an ontological politics, contested and created within and through language. A key component of this politics is the relation between writing and thinking, both conceived in terms of an ontology of becoming. Deleuze's statements on the link between philosophy and the novel (and indeed the ways in which he drew on literature throughout his work) can also be understood as a concern for border crossing, between all kinds of genres, disciplines and discourses, as well as for making problematic whatever forms of expression are used for doing philosophy and/or novel writing. In other words, integral to an ontological politics are the ways in which linguistic conventions are contested. As Woolf shows with her operations of language, this is a necessary resistance against an all too limiting and prescriptive compartmentalisation of thought and creativity. Since reading *The Waves* can be an activity of moving in differing ways between, across and within sentences, Woolf invites us to listen and look and think again. Style, as this examination of *The Waves* shows, can also be said to have an ontological politics, since, as Claire Colebrook puts it, we must ask '*what style* of life something – a political form, a work of art or a philosophy – enables' (Colebrook 2006: 4; original emphasis). The challenge that *The Waves* presents us with, as a novel that seeks to get beneath the 'cotton wool' of daily life, is how to operate its linguistic procedures of 'vibrations, shifting borderlines' in our own lives.[14] How to net fins?

Notes

1. Olson 1960: 53.
2. Woolf began *The Waves* (initially calling it 'The Moths') in July 1929, and, as her diary shows, during the first nine months of writing her mood towards her work alternated sharply. See Woolf 1982a; 1982b.
3. For a comparison of the two manuscripts see Woolf 1976.
4. For example, see Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 280, 329.

5. Deleuze does mention Woolf at the end of the opening essay of *Essays Critical and Clinical*: 'To write is also to become something other than a writer. To those who ask what literature is, Virginia Woolf responds; To whom are you speaking of writing? The writer does not speak about it, but is concerned with something else' (Deleuze 1997: 6).
6. Daniel Ferrer draws attention to this correspondence. See Ferrer 1990: 89.
7. In this context, Deleuze and Guattari (1988: 79) undertake a significant transformation of the concept of redundancy. In linguistics, redundancy is used within a communicational framework: to refer to the use of linguistic constructions that carry more information than is necessary; or at a phonological level, to explain how messages are understood despite the ambiguity of certain phonemic units. However, rather than see redundancy in terms of a transmission of information, Deleuze and Guattari make redundancy primary to the relationship between the statement and the act. Information is a minimal, not maximal, condition for the transmission of order words. Order words are in a relation of immanence or redundancy to the acts they presuppose; language is not a representation or a code, because the statement always 'speaks *on the same level as*' the act (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 87; original emphasis).
8. As Gillian Beer comments in her introduction to the Oxford World's Classics Edition of *The Waves*, this was a period in which Woolf spoke regularly at both public and private events on issues of class and gender (Woolf 1992: xii).
9. Deleuze adopts the phrase 'fourth person singular' from Lawrence Ferlinghetti's novel *Her*: 'and now in the fog a permanent hole, a hole I knew, the seeing-eye of the fourth person singular that saw everything and understood nothing, yet still saw, the eye that saw and understood everything but myself, not able to see that in which it was itself imbedded' (Ferlinghetti 1960: 134).
10. For an examination of the different conceptions of community in *The Waves* see Gordon 2005. My identification of Rhoda's experience at the concert with a certain conception of community is taken from Gordon's formulations.
11. The procedures that Deleuze draws attention to here with regard to Beckett's works for television suggest comparisons with those of Woolf's: using words to 'enumerate, to expound, or to create a decor, which loosens them and allows things and movements to be introduced between them'; 'emphasizing certain words according to an interval or a bar, the rest passing by in a barely audible murmur' (Deleuze 1997: 173).
12. Charles Bernstein has picked up Stewart's term *phonotext* and put forward the notion of *audiotext*, as the 'audible acoustic text' of a poem, in terms of a poet's performance of a poem (an idea relevant, I would suggest, to Woolf's novel in terms of this discussion of the reader's active participation). Bernstein is interested in what he terms aurality or a/orality as the 'sounding of the writing . . . what the mouth and tongue and vocal chords enact' and the relation of these soundings to meanings (Bernstein 1999: 288–9). In a formulation that recalls Deleuze's conception of language's outside and its 'Visions and Auditions', Bernstein proposes an upper limit for the performance of poetry as music (and realised in sound poetry) and a lower limit as silence, realised in visual poetry.
13. In this regard, *The Waves* is again exemplary for Deleuze and Guattari, displaying a 'power of metamorphosis' that corresponds closely to the matter-function of its abstract machine (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 513).
14. Woolf writes: 'From this I reach what I might call a philosophy; at any rate it is a constant idea of mine, that behind the cotton wool is hidden a pattern; that we – I mean all human beings are connected with this; that the whole world is a work of art; that we are parts of the work of art' (Woolf 2002: 85).

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Deleuze, Bergson and Woolf's *Monday or Tuesday*

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Abstract

Deleuze's references to Woolf's work, and his work on Bergson, allow for a more far-reaching as well as more nuanced and diverse account of her correspondences with Bergson than have been noted. Her early collection of stories, *Monday or Tuesday*, reveals a powerful, many-sided metaphysical and aesthetic inspiration that bears out in detailed, various and fundamental ways what can be called the Deleuzian or Bergsonian aspects of Woolf's creativity and style at this crucial phase of her development as a writer.

Keywords: style, subjectivity, aesthetics, temporality, becoming, virtuality, memory, perception, emotion

For at least eighty years, literary critics have found the parallels between Woolf's writing and Bergson's metaphysics irresistible, their accounts tending to concentrate on oppositional framings of *durée* and *l'étendu* and inflected in terms of Woolf's modernist and feminist contentions of mechanical chronology, 'materialist' realism, and masculine politics and rationality.[1] This essay takes Deleuze's various comments on Woolf's writing as signalling towards further nuances in the manifold correspondences between the metaphysical motivations of her writing and Bergson's work, the latter read under the rubric of Deleuze's influential recasting of it in relation to notions of creativity, virtuality, difference and multiplicity.[2] In exploring what is seen as the fundamental nature of Woolf's philosophical inspiration in these terms, the focus will be on what is seen as some of her most decisively experimental and intriguing fiction: the eight short stories comprising her earliest

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collection, *Monday or Tuesday*. The stories were written at a critical early juncture, when her writing was arguably at its most fluid and emergent, and were published in 1921.[3] This focus has at least two main benefits. In the first place, as suggested, the exploratory verve of the stories allows one to identify at close quarters how innately Woolf's creativity is configured by ontological issues and problems. This is a fiction emancipated by its dislocation of the armature of conventional novelistic representation, as it pursues modes and themes that can be linked, through stylistic enactment and thematic staging, with Bergson's concepts of the virtual, intuition, sympathy, subjectivity, art, creativity, emotion and language. In the second place, this focus allows for an account of how decisively this philosophical inspiration contributed to the internal evolution of Woolf's style and thinking, and passed – by way of the minor form of the short story – into the major work. These comments brings to mind Ruth Gruber's argument in her 1935 dissertation, which Woolf herself welcomed in a letter the same year as 'a most sympathetic and acute study of my books' (Gruber 2005: 44). One of Woolf's first and most philosophically minded critics, Gruber identified the Bergsonian strain in Woolf's writing, as well as noting how Woolf's determination to 'write as a woman' was inseparable from the 'variation of experiments' that was 'ultimately liberated' in her work as she attained 'her completed style' (61, 99).

I.

In an extended passage in *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari identify Virginia Woolf as one of those Anglo-American writers who 'made all of her life and work a passage, a becoming, all kinds of becomings between ages, sexes, elements, and kingdoms' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 252). Her novel, *The Waves*, internally divides itself according to the lines of flight of its various narrators, their proper names raised to expression as the designations of the multiplicities they compose ('for example, Bernard and the school of fish'):

> Each advances like a wave, but on the plane of consistency they are a single abstract Wave whose vibration propagates following a line of flight or deterritorialisation traversing the entire plane (each chapter of Woolf's novel is preceded by a meditation on an aspect of the waves, on one of their hours, on one of their becomings). (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 252)

Woolf recurrently identified her style in terms of the idea of the wave as a movement exceeding the representational logic of subjectivity, as in

her comment to Vita Sackville-West that 'a sight, an emotion creates this wave in the mind, long before it makes words to fit it' (Gordon 1984: 193). In 1919, Lytton Strachey praised her for having invented a new form of sentence, and her biographer, Lyndall Gordon emphasised her aesthetic desire to make the 'waves' rhythm . . . sound all through her greatest books' (3). In *Monday or Tuesday*, one can see how her writing comes to accommodate this wave-like capacity of style, capturing the rhythmical, indefinite foldings by which the mind is generated from the sensible, and by which rational, integral subjectivity is conceived as effect and epiphenomenon rather than origin. In such ways, her style reveals itself as expressively conditioned by the affective, by its opening out into the pre-personal fluctuations and intensities that precede and compass cognition, as prefigured in her abiding childhood memory where she had associated the sound of the Cornish waves with 'the purest ecstasy I can conceive' (3).

More broadly, Deleuze recurrently described Woolf's aesthetic practice in terms of concepts of motion and emotion – of passage, intensity, experimentation, sympathy and fluidity – that apply to the qualities, temporality and themes of her work and that can be taken as creating a productive counterpoint with her own thought and reflections about her art. In *Dialogues*, he describes Woolf as one who made 'writing an act of thought and life a non-personal power'. Her writing is an opening or voyaging out like one of Clarissa Dalloway's strolls, 'a walk as act, as politics, as experimentation, as life: "I spread myself out like fog BETWEEN the people that I know the best", says Virginia Woolf in her walk among the taxis' (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 23). For Deleuze, in such ways, Woolf exemplifies that Anglo-American practice of writing that produces encounters and lines of flight through its rigorous experimental expressivity. Woolf's style goes out and goes between, its excursive stylistic intensities and rhythms effectively dislocating the stabilising designations of identity, genre, gender, history, culture and class that she perpetually contests in the forms of content and in the *mise en scènes* of her fiction:

> On her stroll Virginia Woolf's heroine penetrates like a blade through all things, and yet looks from the outside, with the impression that it is dangerous to live even a single day ('Never again will I say: I am this or that, he is this, he is that . . . '). But the stroll is itself a hecceity. It is hecceities that are being expressed in indefinite, but not indeterminate, articles and pronouns; in proper names which do not designate people but mark events, in verbs in the infinitive which are not undifferentiated but constitute becomings or processes. (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 68–9)

Though affirmative of transpersonal events of becoming, it is important to stress the nuance in Deleuze's emphasis on what is 'dangerous', as well as elating, in the vitality expressed through Woolf's writing. The point can be expanded by reference to a conversation with Antoine Dulaure and Claire Parnet in 1985 in which Deleuze described Woolf as a writer whose 'writing has to be liquid or gaseous simply because normal perception and opinion are solid, geometric'. He continued:

> It's what Bergson did in philosophy, what Virginia Woolf or Henry James did with the novel. Not becoming unearthly. But becoming all the more earthly by inventing laws and liquids and gases on which the earth depends. So style requires a lot of silence and work to make a whirlpool at some point, then flies out like the matches children follow along the water in a gutter. Because you don't get a style just by putting words together, combining phrases, using ideas. You have to open up words, break things open, to free earth's vectors. (Deleuze 1995: 133–4)

Her style is identified with the risks of breaking, as well as the 'whirlpool', and the flying, perhaps flaring, matches that children throw into it. Suitably enough, Deleuze's imagery intimates the transporting, inspiring power of Woolf's style, and evokes its vivid, brilliant profusion. However, it also suggests how riven her writing is and how far the values of life and death, inspiration and silence, ecstasy and threat are entwined in the creative, destabilising dynamics of Woolf's work. The subjective displacements of Woolf's writing entail a groundlessness, a power of dissolution and emergence, that is destructive and vortical as well as constructive. The stakes of Woolf's experimental practice as a writer are again suggested by Deleuze's identification of her work here (as in the passage on *The Waves* in *A Thousand Plateaus*) with the water that always offered her the means of unifying and dissolving experience, an element productive of both a line of flight as well as of disappearance. As Joanne Trautmann Banks comments:

> Eventually, of course, all fictions failed to sustain her, and she committed suicide by walking into a river. It was an interesting choice in that water always has dichotomous potentials in Woolf's stories. Water either unifies conflicting elements or it dissolves the self utterly. (Banks 2004: 23)

Of course, this sense of deliquescence precedes the stories collected in *Monday and Tuesday*, and one remembers the emancipating yet fatal sea-voyage in Woolf's preceding publication, *The Voyage Out*.

It is one of the sub-themes of this piece to explore this complex imbrication of the values of extinction and transport in Woolf's writing,

in terms of the 'line[s] of flight or deterritorialisation[s]' it produces, through concentrating on her early short stories and their particular experimental salience in her evolution as a writer. In approaching this ethical duality briefly, one can recall two parallel moments from her later, developed fiction. Fazel Asadi Amjad points out two scenes in *Mrs Dalloway*, where characters 'look . . . from the outside', in Deleuze's terms. In the first of these, the suicidal Septimus is unable to find relief in the old man he spies from the window and ignores him, whereas in the second Clarissa Dalloway becomes the narrative vehicle for an excursive, dislocating and indefinite moment of becoming (Amjad 2011: 130). She muses on the old lady she accidentally espies across the street:

> Oh, but how surprising! – in the room opposite the old lady stared straight at her! She was going to bed. And the sky. It will be a solemn sky, she had thought, it will be a dusky sky, turning away its cheek in beauty. But there it was – ashen pale, raced over quickly by tapering vast clouds. It was new to her. The wind must have risen. She was going to bed, in the room opposite. It was fascinating to watch her, moving about, that old lady, crossing the room, coming to the window. Could she see her? It was fascinating, with people still laughing and shouting in the drawing-room, to watch that old woman, quite quietly, going to bed. She pulled the blind now. The clock began striking. The young man had killed himself; but she did not pity him; with the clock striking the hour, one, two, three, she did not pity him, with all this going on. There! the old lady had put out her light! The whole house was dark now with this going on, she repeated, and the words came to her, Fear no more the heat of the sun. She must go back to them. But what an extraordinary night! She felt somehow very like him – the young man who had killed himself. She felt glad that he had done it; thrown it away. The clock was striking. The leaden circles dissolved in the air. He made her feel the beauty; made her feel the fun. But she must go back. She must assemble. She must find Sally and Peter. And she came in from the little room. (Woolf 2003a: 207)

The exclamation, 'Oh, but how surprising!', introduces the values of sympathetic inwardness and aesthetic responsiveness that the passage conveys and meditates on, as it prises open the heroine's subjectivity and creates its haecceity, or moment of being, unfolding a counterpoint to the customary, defining closures of the clock, self, pity, self-pity, social assembly and the little room. Like the sky that is 'new to her', Woolf's passage dedicates itself to the intensities of a renewal whose impersonal expansiveness goes beyond Clarissa as she also becomes ever-more dissociated from herself ('But what an extraordinary night. She felt somehow very like him . . . The clock was striking. The leaden circles dissolved in the air'). Woolf's writing, with its poetic flashes

and rhythms, 'open[s] up words, break[s] things open', in Deleuze's words, producing the means for an eventual becoming that transcends the self-awareness of the heroine and incorporates the reader, even as it is nonetheless also shadowed by the vocabulary of darkness, dissolution and death that inhabits the writing.

II.

Woolf had experienced one of her most severe breakdowns in 1917, prior to the setting up in July of the Hogarth Press in the basement of her Richmond home with its top-floor view over Kew Gardens. *Two Stories*, laboriously typeset by Virginia, would be its first publication and would include 'The Mark on the Wall', the first-written of the stories in *Monday or Tuesday*.[4] The air of freedom that accompanies the story was very real, bound up with her awareness that her circumstances made her 'the only woman in England free to write what I like' (Lee 1997: 375). Of the story itself, Woolf wrote to David Garnett: 'In a way it is easier to do a short thing, all in one flight than in a novel', and she would later write to Ethel Smyth of how she wrote it 'all in a flash as if flying, after being kept stone breaking for months' (Woolf 2003b: viii). This latter reference is to the arduous process of writing her second novel, *Night and Day*, a work that strains against its own conventional romantic form and thematic fixations. This novel was to be published in 1919 by Duckworth & Co., under the aegis of her half-brother Gerald Duckworth, who along with his brother George had sexually abused Woolf and her sister, Vanessa in their youth.[5]

Within this context, and given its air of untrammelled inspiration, it is possible to see 'The Mark on the Wall' as one of those early signature pieces by which a writer's creativity often appears to announce itself unforeseen, arriving on the page in a *mis en scène* that condenses repeating themes and expresses a singular power of individuation that will unfold itself over and again in later works. Within the story itself, everything proceeds from the indefinite nature of the obscure mark, which becomes the repetitive, generative occasion for the story's inspired displacements of the generic, defining protocols of fictional narration. Sitting in her chair, the narrator ponders the spot, reflecting that it might be a hole, a leaf, a crack, 'some round black substance' (Woolf 2003b: 78) or 'the head of a gigantic old nail' (81). As if by a kind of contagion, the world of the story and the narrator's mind both become affected by radical, proliferating kinds of uncertainty and possibility. The obscure mark forces an opening in the mind, and

thought unravels into bifurcating, disjunctive trails of fancy, association, sensation, reverie, imagination, memory and rumination.

At the start, in a way reminiscent of many Poe stories, the narrator's words passingly mimic a fiction bent on the recognisable world, before disarticulating it: 'Perhaps it was the middle of January in the present year that I first looked up and saw the mark on the wall' (Woolf 2003b: 77). As it continues, the writing accommodates different fluxes of time and becoming, and the material world turns relative, insubstantial and theatrical. The 'three chrysanthemums in the round glass bowl on the mantlepiece' appear hallucinatory, whereas the narrator comes to imagine a man setting out to sit 'himself solidly in an arm-chair', while '[a] shower of ideas fell perpetually from some very high Heaven down through his mind' (79). The paragraphs themselves similarly dissolve into burgeoning images, provisional fictions and serial reflections, as everything becomes process, transformation and multiplicity, and rationality and cognition are overrun on every side: 'because once a thing's done no one ever knows how it happened. Oh! dear me, the mystery of life! The inaccuracy of thought! The ignorance of humanity!' (78). The iterative, mesmerising, sonic and rhythmical features of this prose coalesce with the vocabulary of sinking and slipping to make style the register of that double sense of self-evanescence: both lyrical transport or ecstasy, and the darker gravity of disappearance. Thus at the end of the story, the narrator describes that 'vast upheaval of matter' with '[e]verything . . . moving, falling, slipping, vanishing' (83) and stresses her own fugitive desire to 'slip easily from one thing to another, without any sense of hostility, or obstacle. I want to sink deeper and deeper, away from the surface, with its hard separate facts' (Gordon 1984: 194).

Eventually, the writing leaves the human world behind as the narrator meditates on the becomings of flowers, fish, birds, water-beetles, even of forest trees and insects:

> The tree itself: first the close dry sensation of being wood; then the grinding of the storm; then the slow, delicious ooze of sap . . . how cold the feet of insects must feel upon it, as they make laborious progresses up the creases of the bark, or sun themselves upon the thin green awning of the leaves, and look straight in front of them with diamond-cut red eyes. (Woolf 2003b: 82–3)

Kathryn Benzel and Ruth Hoberman have described the experimental verve of these stories, as Woolf uses the form to develop 'an anti-anthropocentric discourse, dissolving human/nonhuman boundaries, and privileg[ing] the perspective of objects and animals' (Benzel and

Hoberman 2004: 11). Indeed, within this tale the everyday world breaks up, so that all the fixtures of the social world float by on the fast-flowing tide of the narrative as so much absurd and illusory flotsam: the world of photographs and domestic interiors; of 'Sunday afternoon walks, Sunday luncheons, and ... ways of talking of the dead, clothes, and habits'; of Colonels and Archbishops; of national history and 'Whitaker's Table of Precedency'. Eventually, she reflects, 'Knowledge' and subjective identity become apparitional, revealed as absurd fictions – desperate bulwarks against 'the impersonal world which is proof of some existence more than ours', while her mind figures its own dissolution, as if from the bottom of a river-bed:

> Yes, one could imagine a very pleasant world. A quiet spacious world, with the flowers so red and blue in the open fields. A world without professors or specialists or house-keepers with the profiles of policemen, a world which one could slice with one's thought as a fish slices the water with his fin, grazing the stems of the water-lilies, hanging suspended over nests of white sea-eggs ... how peaceful it is down here, rooted in the centre of the world and gazing up through the grey waters, with their sudden gleams of light and their reflections – if it were not for Whitaker's Almanac – if it were not for the Table of Precedency. (Woolf 2003b: 81–2)

The inspired intensity and urgent profusion of 'The Mark on the Wall', with its rhizomatic style, brings to mind the famous diary entry cited by Deleuze whereby she identifies the moment with 'thought', 'sensation' and 'the voice of the sea', and claims that her aim is to 'saturate every atom' and 'eliminate all waste, deadness, superfluity: to give the moment whole; whatever it includes'. She continues:

> Say that the moment is a combination of thought; sensation; the voice of the sea. Waste, deadness, come from the inclusion of things that don't belong to the moment; this appalling narrative business of the realist: getting on from lunch to dinner: it is false, unreal, merely conventional. Why admit any thing to literature that is not poetry – by which I mean saturated? Is that not my grudge against novels – that they select nothing? The poets succeeding by simplifying; practically everything is left out. I want to put practically everything in: yet to saturate. (Woolf 1980: 209–10)

The few years or so that followed the publication of 'The Mark on the Wall' would certainly produce an extraordinary efflorescence in Woolf's short story writing, bearing out her remark to her sister Vanessa that 'I mean to write a good many short things at Asheham' (Lee 1997: 375). As we have seen, Woolf herself appeared to identify this outpouring in terms of a vivacious displacement of generic constraints

and fictional protocols, inseparable from the sense that the form was a respite from her novelistic writing.[6] The other stories in *Monday or Tuesday* were 'Kew Gardens', 'The String Quartet', 'A Haunted House', 'A Society', 'Blue & Green', 'Monday or Tuesday' and 'An Unwritten Novel', and within the collection this sense of emancipation is abundantly, peculiarly, evident. By turns exuberant, aleatory, sketchy or darkly meditative, the stories reveal an experimental variety and effervescence that makes their neglect by writers on Woolf nothing less than 'astonishing', as Benzel and Hoberman have remarked (Benzel and Hoberman 2004: 3). Michelle Levy sees the form as offering Woolf the purest kind of liberation from 'conventional types of plot and characterisation', and it seems undoubted that her experiments in the form would have accelerated her progress from the more hybrid forms of early works like *The Voyage Out* and *Night and Day* towards what Alice Staveley has termed that 'breakthrough modernist novel', *Jacob's Room*, in 1922 (Staveley 2004: 39).

In such ways, the short form allowed Woolf a peculiarly privileged experimental arena to pursue, like Bergson, through a comparable exercise of writerly intuition, 'the conditions of experience, towards the articulation of the real' (Deleuze 1991: 26). As with the latter's philosophy, her stories overturn the false composites that distort the workings of sensation, affectivity, memory and temporality by subsuming them within fictions of human consciousness and narrative. 'The String Quartet' is a clear case of this disruption, narrated by a speaker who finds the initial small-talk and anxieties of the concert hall suddenly exploded by the mercurial music-becoming that consumes the story. As the quartet starts up, the writing compounds itself with the ungrounded, self-differentiating virtuosity of Mozart's music: 'Flourish, spring, burgeon, burst!' (Woolf 2003b: 133). Music blooms in a syntax that rhythmically and sonically dilates, accommodating music's transmission of the percepts of an endlessly expressive, inhuman nature:

> The pear tree on the top of the mountain. Fountains jet; drops descend. But the waters of the Rhone flow swift and deep, race under the arches, and sweep the trailing water leaves, washing shadows over the silver fish, the spotted fish rushed down by the swift waters, now swept into an eddy where – it's difficult this – conglomeration of fish all in a pool; leaping, splashing, scraping sharp fins; and such a boil of current that the yellow pebbles are churned round and round, round and round. (Woolf 2003b: 131)

The writing is expansively subject to the temporal effects of this music as an art of different, coexisting durations. The narrator's imaginings

of water, birds and fish brings to mind Bergson's comments in a comparable passage from *Duration and Simultaneity*, glossed by Deleuze as showing how the pluralism of time coexists with an encompassing, self-dividing monism: 'The flowing of the water, the flight of the bird, the murmur of my life form three fluxes; but only because my duration is one of them, and also the element that conjoins the two others' (Deleuze 1991: 80). One can say that my duration is itself a flux and an instance of duration, while my awareness of other fluxes is predicated on this underlying unity and simultaneity of 'duration as the virtual coexistence of all the degrees of a single and identical time' (85).

Further, through such means 'The String Quartet' clearly transmits the creativity it expresses and corresponds to Bergson's notion of 'creative emotion' as described by Deleuze in *Bergsonism* in response to citations from Bergson's account – in *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion* – of the transcendent, contagious power of music, and the precedence of emotion over representation and volitional subjectivity:

> 'Imagine a piece of music which expresses love. It is not love for a particular person . . . . The quality of love will depend upon its essence and not upon its object.' Although personal, it is not individual; transcendent, it is like the God in us. 'When music cries, it is humanity, it is the whole of nature which cries with it. Truly speaking, it does not introduce these feelings in us; it introduces us rather into them, like the passers-by that might be nudged in a dance.' In short, emotion is creative (first, because it expresses the whole of creation, then because it creates the work in which it is expressed; and finally, because it communicates a little of this creativity to spectators or hearers). (Deleuze 1991: 110–11)

Emotion in art 'expresses the whole of creation' through the work (Deleuze 1991: 110), communicating its vital and virtual power to the audience who participate within it. The work is both microcosm and component of the opening out that it expresses. This recalls Deleuze's discussion of the cinematic image and the ontology of the whole as the 'Open': 'if the whole is not giveable, it is because it is the Open, and because its nature is to change constantly, or to give rise to something new, in short, to endure' (Deleuze 1992: 9).[7] And at the end of Woolf's story, there is a palpable sense of collapse and closure, of everything returning to the partitioned world of social consciousness:

> 'Good night, good night. You go this way?'
> 'Alas. I go that.' (Woolf 2003b: 135)

In 'A Haunted House' the incursive temporal effect of time is of a Bergsonian virtual past that insists in the present as the condition

of its persistence, its coming and going, and which is figured as encompassing the lives of the living and the dead. The narrator's pervasive sense is of the couple who haunt the house, disembodied yet real ('Not that one could ever see them' [Woolf 2003b: 126]). Reunited in death, their continuance is figured as safely contained within the 'pulse of the house' (117). The virtual reality of the past enters into strange, endlessly recurrent commerce with the lives of the living, haunting consciousness itself. In such ways, the story illustrates again the metaphysical nature of Woolf's stories, which can be viewed as profoundly metaphysical essays, open-ended examinations of a philosophical problem of memory, understanding and temporality. And as such, in more general terms, philosophy can appear as itself the silent, virtual, ever-haunting accompaniment, even the milieu, of these fictional explorations and constructions.

Again, in 'Blue & Green', for instance, Woolf does strikingly 'open up words, break things open, to free earth's vectors', in Deleuze's words. The story evokes and ruminates on the changing effects of light, variously reflected, radiated and refracted at various times of the day through the glass pendants of a Tiffany lamp. From a formal viewpoint, the story turns fiction inside out, diversifying its own incidental, fugitive, poetic intensities of perception and reverie. It is an intermezzo, an experimental unfolding of the percept through the substance of language that corresponds to the refraction of light within the substance of the glass:

> The pointed fingers of glass point downwards. The light slides down the glass, and drops a pool of green. All day long the ten fingers of the lustre drop green upon the marble. The feathers of the parakeets – their harsh cries – sharp blades of palm trees – green, too; green needles glittering in the sun. (Woolf 2003b: 136)

The story creates fleeting passages of lyricism, beauty and intensity, as ephemeral effects of colour become transmuted by the narrator into visionary reveries that capture the duration in perception and the associative powers of imagination and memory. In the day, the light's green summons to mind feathers, parrots, palm trees, pools, desert sand, lurching camels, weeded pools and marble before in the evening it yields to a blue that produces images that are much more portentous and troubling, associated with a 'snub-nosed monster' that rises from the depths before being beached where he lies 'blunt, obtuse, shedding dry blue scales'. The story ends with the beast's blue tones staining a

'wrecked rowing boat' and then evoking images of a cathedral, 'faint blue with the veils of madonnas' (Woolf 2003b: 136).

In the title story, 'Monday or Tuesday', the difference between narrator and reader is collapsed in a dense, if elliptical, meditation on ontology and representation that begins and ends with the image of a heron 'shaking space easily from his wings, knowing his way', his autonomy contrasting with the fugitive, riven voice that periodically surfaces in the text to register the narrator's troubled, suspended imperative in 'desiring truth' (Woolf 2003b: 131). Reader and narrator alike are effectively confounded by the quandaries, sensations, imaginings and scenes that succeed each other in the flow of mind as it turns, at once invigorated and questioning, from sky to mountain, from lake to city, and then on to the striking of a clock, the colours of a cityscape, the niceties of social intercourse and the interior of a room. The writing occupies the interval between perception and the closures of rational consciousness, endlessly displacing itself between different frames, modes, registers and types of experience, and confronting the difficulty of 'laboriously distilling a few words'. Writing and reading are both internally divided, between the evanescent actualities of imagination and affectivity, and the synthetic, belated labours of socialised cognition:

> From ivory depths words rising shed their blackness, blossom and penetrate. Fallen the book; in the flame, in the smoke, in the momentary sparks – or now voyaging, the marble square pendant, minarets beneath and the Indian seas, while space rushes blue and stars glint – truth? or now, content with closeness? (Woolf 2003b: 131)

In contrast to the gravity that besets the riven human consciousness, the story returns to the self-sufficiency of heron and sky that effortlessly reveal and express their truth: 'Lazy and indifferent the heron returns; the sky veils her stars; then bares them' (Woolf 2003b: 131).

Ambitious and searching as these stories are, they coexist also with other stories that are more programmatic and less ambitious, easily identifiable with more obvious, familiar and predictable kinds of modernist topics or pretexts. 'A Society' deals with issues of female education and male condescension, whereas 'An Unwritten Novel' deals with the presumptions of writing fiction where life and the life of the individual must always elude one's understanding and judgements. What is clear is that these stories lack the driving sense of metaphysical query

that motivates the collection as a whole and 'Kew Gardens' in particular, perhaps Woolf's most celebrated short story.

III.

Harvena Richter reports that by 1922 at least (the year in which Woolf began to read Proust) 'Woolf had not read Bergson or even Karin Stephen's book on him' (Richter 1976: 72), and Mary Ann Gillies refers to 'the silence maintained by Woolf' on the philosopher (Gillies 1996: 7). It seems impossible that Woolf would have been ignorant of Bergson (though it is possible she chose not to read someone whose philosophical writing, through its very proximity, might threaten to subsume her own literary investigations). Indisputably, Bergson was a major intellectual influence permeating the thought of the period, and aside from the fact that Karin Stephen was her sister-in-law, Woolf's friend, T. S. Eliot, had enthusiastically attended Bergson's Paris lectures in 1913, and his ideas of literature show a canny assimilation of Bergsonian logic.[8] What is also clear is that dominant themes in Bergson's radical metaphysics of vital process, duration and consciousness were part themselves of a larger intellectual assemblage, overlapping in so many respects with the work of writers close to the Bloomsbury group like Alfred North Whitehead, Bertrand Russell and William James.

Following the publication of *Jacob's Room*, Woolf wrote that she had 'found out how to begin to say something in my own voice' (Staveley 2004: 39). This discovery, however, is particularly inseparable from Woolf's most acclaimed story, 'Kew Gardens', published in 1919, and perceptively described by Leonard Woolf as a 'microcosm of all [Woolf's] then unwritten novels, from *Jacob's Room* to *Between the Acts*' (Staveley 2004: 43). But if it was a microcosm, it was by elevating the microcosmic itself to the condition of art. The story's main concern can be said to be with generating open exchanges between sensation and memory, self and other, human and inhuman, garden and universe in ways that call out for description in terms of the metaphysics of heterogeneous multiplicity, of qualitative division, that Deleuze traces throughout Bergson's career in those concepts that themselves implicate and exemplify Bergsonism: duration, memory, *élan vital* (but also emotion, laughter, art). The snail that recurs throughout the story is both other and correspondent to the people that walk far above him. He is consumed within an unfathomable world that nonetheless also

parallels their own passages of mind, between affectivity, absorption and reaction:

> In the oval flower-bed the snail, whose shell had been stained red, blue and yellow for the space of two minutes or so, now appeared to be moving very slightly in its shell, and next began to labour over the crumbs of loose earth which broke away and rolled down as it passed over them. (Woolf 2003b: 85)

The narrator's reiterated references to the snail's progress and perspective emphasises also the story's decentred, inhuman world. Beyond its shell, the snail enacts the mind's experimental, sensitive relation to its outside, in ways which can bring to mind Bergson's description of the self in *An Introduction to Metaphysics*:

> There is, beneath these sharply cut crystals and this frozen surface, a continuous flux which is not comparable to any flux I have ever seen. There is a succession of states, each of which announces that which follows and contains that which precedes it. (Bergson 1916: 22)

The snail also figures the story's rejection of any overarching narrative synthetic viewpoint, by which the fiction could represent the different durations that interweave within it. In such a way, from the celebrated opening, *Kew Gardens* turns inside out the conventional hierarchies and procedures of fiction. The conventional human, subjective and social stuff of narrative is reduced to fugitive inconsequence, as with parenthetical snatches of dialogue that flit in and out of the story's universe. They appear estranged, as if heard from the midst of the flower-bed, or as passing back and forth incidentally within the green-blue atmosphere, the afternoon haze, that envelops the garden, as in the cursory postscript that closes the paragraph ('the men and women who walk in Kew Gardens in July').

> From the oval-shaped flower-bed there rose perhaps a hundred stalks spreading into heart-shaped or tongue-shaped leaves half way up and unfurling at the tip red or blue or yellow petals marked with spots of colour raised upon the surface; and from the red, blue, or yellow gloom of the throat emerged a straight bar, rough with gold dust and slightly clubbed at the end. The petals were voluminous enough to be stirred by the summer breeze, and when they moved, the red, blue and yellow lights passed one over the other, staining an inch of the broad earth beneath with a spot of the most intricate colour. The light fell either upon the smooth grey back of a pebble, or the shell of a snail with its brown circular veins, or, falling into a raindrop, it expanded with such intensity of red, blue and yellow the thin walls of water that one expected them to burst and disappear. Instead, the drop was left in

> a second silver grey once more, and the light now settled upon the flesh of a leaf, revealing the branching thread of fibre beneath the surface, and again it moved on and spread its illumination in the vast green spaces beneath the dome of the heart-shaped and tongue-shaped leaves. Then the breeze stirred rather more briskly overhead and the colour was flashed into the air above, into the eyes of the men and women who walk in Kew Gardens in July. (Woolf 2003b: 83)

Nothing could be more clearly opposed to the rationalities, the masculine order-words and precedents of novelistic realism, than the bifurcating, rhythmically intensified, appositions of this hybrid of poetry, prose, philosophy and painting. Woolf's sentences themselves spread and unfurl, inhabited by silence, proliferation, repetition, and by a material insistence that passes into the sensations that the prose releases. The effect of the writing is to create a quasi-hypnotic zone, in which the reader passes outside him- or herself, mind reconstituted in the multiplicities, the compounds of sensation that are carried forward by the inclusive disjunctions and emergent movements of this prose. In the terms of Deleuze and Guattari's *What is Philosophy?*, Woolf can be said to write the garden as percept, through shifts in scale and temporality that suspend daily consciousness and use language to create 'a bloc of sensations . . . a compound of percepts and affects' independent of the author, narrator or reader who belatedly circulate and pass through the writing like the strolling, anonymous, incidental, provisional figures in Woolf's garden (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 164).

Within the story too, Woolf represents human beings as often estranged and awkward. Their 'figures' 'straggled past . . . with a curious irregular movement', as if irregularity were a marker of their self-division or alienation from the scene. Yet the garden also becomes in the story the condition for individuating moments and transversal, irregular movements, for encounters through which people overcome their divisions from each other and themselves, and from past and present, through entering into movements of inclusive heterogeneity. Relatedness in the passage is again figured as a relation to the outside, conveyed in writing that is endlessly sensitive to nuance, movement and difference, like the snail's eyestalks. The intimacy of a married couple, often the terminus or vanishing point of fiction, is here premised on a strange divergence. The couple are described as bound up with the sense of experience as an evolving, involving whole – with their common acknowledgement that 'one's happiness, one's reality' is bound up with memories of other people: he remembers an earlier lover, and she remembers being kissed by her painting-teacher. The past returns

to them as a Bergsonian virtuality, as if through haze. The past enters into passage with the vivid, obdurate physicality and materiality of the garden itself, in ways that recall the compoundings of memory and perception in *Matter and Memory*: 'perception is never a mere contact of the mind with the object present; it is impregnated with memory-images which complete it as they interpret it' (Bergson 1911: 170).

In this inverted world of 'Kew Gardens', the narrative constantly reverts to the inhuman world and encounters of the snail. At one point his sensibility is taken up with the dead leaf in his path, and the 'high-stepping angular green insect' who stops before it, 'its antennae trembling as if in deliberation' before 'stepping off as rapidly and strangely in the opposite direction' (Woolf 2003b: 85). In parallel, two pairs of people pass by, oblivious to the garden, and incapable of overcoming what divides them. There are first two men, the elder consumed by thoughts of the dead and spiritualism, and the younger sympathetic yet stoical, powerless to communicate with him. In contrast, there follow two elderly women, initially consumed by domestic trivia before one becomes surprised by the flowers, seeing them 'as a sleeper waking from a sleep sees a brass candlestick reflecting the light in an unfamiliar way':

> So the heavy woman came to a standstill opposite the oval-shaped flower-bed, and ceased even to pretend to listen to what the other woman was saying. She stood there letting the words fall over her, swaying the top part of her body slowly backwards and forwards, looking at the flowers. (Woolf 2003b: 87)

The flowers produce a modest yet irrefutable kind of vitality and becoming, as the sensible becomes the involuntary basis for a kind of entrancement, involuntary and temporally indefinite in mode. Finally, a young couple trade inconsequential remarks in 'toneless and monotonous voices', their words betraying their absent-mindedness before again, everyday consciousness is indefinitely surprised and interrupted, affected by a dissolution that in turn yields to a returning, somewhat desperate, sense of a representable world:

> Even when she wondered what sort of tea they gave you at Kew, he felt that something loomed up behind her words, and stood vast and solid behind them; and the mist very slowly rose and uncovered – O Heavens, – what were those shapes? little white tables, and waitresses who looked first at her and then at him; and there was a bill that he would pay with a real two shilling piece, and it was real, all real, he assured himself. (Woolf 2003b: 88)

The indefinitely sustained, rhythmical elaborations of Woolf's style are here again the register of a creative vitality that exceeds and compasses the merely spatial, representable world of cognition, as well as a further index of Woolf's intuitive inwardness with Bergsonian ratios of duration and metaphysics. In this world and language, the transactions of reality, meaning and the self, appear relative, transitory constructs ('there was a bill that he would pay with a real two shilling piece, and it was real, all real, he assured himself'). Again Woolf's world appears to pass into Bergson's, as if the tale was philosophy by other means, a searching allegory and enactment, a becoming-conscious, of processes and principles of becoming made explicit in the latter's work. As Gruber identified, this is the 'inherently Bergsonian' creativity and inspiration of Woolf's writing:

> It is Bergson's problems and solutions which modulate her thinking and with it her style. The poetic concept of reality, peculiar to the French philosopher, is the kernel of her writing . . . It is conceivable that she would have found her way without him; yet living in the Bergsonian atmosphere, she draws even unconsciously from the truths he had established. Life is to be understood, he had proclaimed, not through the brain or mechanical reason, but through poetic intuition . . . Like Bergson, she denounces science in its attempt to explain mechanically the processes of the mind and the human consciousness. (Gruber 2005: 109)

Notes

1. Floris Delattre's 1932 article, 'La Durée bergsonienne dans le roman de Virginia Woolf' is cited by Gillies as the first explicit publication asserting actual influence, though Winifred Holtby in the same year and David Daiches (in 1942) would follow. These and other contributions to the debate over influence are charted in Mary Ann Gillies's, *Henri Bergson and British Modernism*. I am grateful also to Laci Mattison for referring me to Ruth Gruber's 1935 study of Virginia Woolf.
2. The closing paragraph of *Bergsonism* is a neat articulation of Deleuze's Bergson:

   > At the outset we asked: What is the relationship between the three fundamental concepts of Duration, Memory and the *Élan Vital*? What progress do they indicate in Bergson's philosophy? It seems to us that Duration essentially defines a virtual multiplicity (*what differs in nature*). Memory then appears as the coexistence of all the *degrees of difference* in this multiplicity, in this virtuality. The *élan vital*, finally, designates the actualization of this virtuality according to the *lines of differentiation* that correspond to the degrees – up to this precise line of man where the *Élan Vital* gains self-consciousness. (Deleuze 1991: 112–13)

3. The phrase, 'Monday or Tuesday', of course, occurs in Woolf's famous essay, 'Modern Novels' published in the *Times Literary Supplement* in 1919 and later reworked as 'Modern Fiction'. This essay is often taken as a breakthrough piece, a manifesto for the purely psychological and formal dimensions of her work. Nonetheless, in line with the reading offered here, it is also a profoundly

Bergsonian document, and of a piece with these relatively neglected stories, its themes and modes of expression decisively setting themselves against the normative 'order-words', the chronological demarcations, materialism and false composites, of conventional fiction.

4. Famously, the press would soon move on to publish works by T. S. Eliot, Sigmund Freud, Robert Graves, John Maynard Keynes, Vita Sackville-West, Christopher Isherwood, Katherine Mansfield and Woolf herself, though it would turn down an option on early chapters of *Ulysses*. Delivered to the Woolfs over tea by Harriet Weaver in a brown paper bag, Joyce's work, its sheer length aside, was apparently regarded as 'underbred' and too indecent to hazard publishing. See Henig (1973: 203).
5. See Woolf's account in 'A Sketch of the Past' in *Moments of Being* (Woolf 1985: 69).
6. In 1919, her second novel, *Night and Day*, was to be published by Duckworth, a novel consumed by themes of generational conflict.
7. This is a fuller citation of Bergson's description of the emotional and transcendent power of music in *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*:

> We feel, while we listen, as though we could not desire anything else but what the music is suggesting to us, and that this is just as we should naturally and necessarily act did we refrain from action to listen. Let the music express joy or grief, pity or love, every moment we are what it expresses. Not only ourselves, but many others, too. When music weeps, all humanity, all nature weeps with it. In point of fact it does not introduce these feelings into us; it introduces us into them, as passers-by are forced into a street dance. (Bergson 1977: 40)

8. And what could be more Bergsonian (however cunningly dissimilated), for instance, than Eliot's signature statement in his 1919 essay, 'Tradition and the Individual Talent', about the paradoxes of depersonalisation in literary creativity, or the open multiplicity that is literary tradition:

> The existing order is complete before the new work arrives; for order to persist after the supervention of novelty, the *whole* existing order must be, if ever so slightly, altered; and so the relations, proportions, values of each work of art toward the whole are readjusted; and this is conformity between the old and the new. (Eliot 1975: 38)

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A Hoard of Floating Monkeys: Creativity and Inhuman Becomings in Woolf's Nurse Lugton Story

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Abstract

This essay analyses how Virginia Woolf's critically under-examined children's story about Nurse Lugton connects the becoming-artistic of writing to animal becomings. Examining the links between creativity and the other-than-human via Gilles Deleuze and Elizabeth Grosz, I claim that the 'animation' of the stitched animal figures on Nurse Lugton's 'canvas' reveals that art is the enlivenment of vibratory and affective qualities, as opposed to a monumentalising of symbols or concepts. Moreover, the curtain in Woolf's story should be read as creative materiality itself, its folds participating in the self-varying dynamism of the virtual and actual. My analysis of the two published versions of the story, and their accompanying illustrations, outlines an affirmative bio-poetics at the heart of Woolf's aesthetic project and suggests that Woolf's creative sources are embedded in inhuman, biological forces.

Keywords: Virginia Woolf, Nurse Lugton, animal, creativity, inhuman, art, becoming, Elizabeth Grosz, vital materialism, life

Virginia Woolf's children's story about Nurse Lugton depicts a woman whose stitched figures come alive whenever she falls asleep. Lugton sews various animals onto a curtain; they activate after she dozes off and are then returned to their 'frozen' positions on the drapery when Lugton awakens. The tale has been most famously known for

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its discovery in 1963 at the British Museum by Mr Wallace Hildick, amid the manuscript notebooks of *Mrs Dalloway*. That story was titled *Nurse Lugton's Golden Thimble* by Leonard Woolf, and was published by Hogarth Press in 1966. Perhaps less well known is the discovery of a second, revised version of the story in the 1980s at King's College Library, Cambridge.[1] Thus, as Kristin Czarnecki points out, we know that Woolf revisited her tale, re-worked it, and gave it a name, *Nurse Lugton's Curtain*. This revised version was published in 1991 by Harcourt, with accompanying illustrations by Julie Vivas. In the foreword to the original, 1966 Hogarth Press book, Leonard Woolf claims that the 'story appears suddenly in the middle of the text of the novel, but has nothing to do with it' (Woolf 1966: Foreword). This assertion practically begs for a critical response, precisely because Leonard Woolf makes the counter-intuitive claim that the story appears *in the centre* of the *Mrs Dalloway* manuscript yet has 'nothing' to do with it.[2]

This seemingly benign story, however, is not just central to an interpretation of a single Woolf novel, but it also reveals something fundamental about Woolf's understanding of aesthetic principles. Those principles are specifically Deleuzian in that they ground the artistic in the animal and inhuman. It is, after all, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari who write, 'Not only does art not wait for human beings to begin, but we may ask if art ever appears among human beings, except under artificial and belated conditions' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 320). Similarly, Deleuze and Guattari ask whether 'art begins with the animal' and suggest that 'art is continually haunted by the animal' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 181, 182). Woolf's story might be said to literalise this continual haunting of aesthetic practice by the animal or animality.

Indeed, I agree with Czarnecki, who maintains that 'Woolf confronts the creative process head-on in the story' (Czarnecki 2012: 226), as opposed to avoiding it, as other critics have claimed. What is more, this shadow text reveals something foundational about Woolf's views regarding a writer's relationship to the inhuman. The Lugton tale catalogues an awareness of the way that a writer's aesthetic powers are profoundly linked to becomings that are animal in nature. Moreover, the specific becoming-other/becoming-animate of the prosaic curtain suggests a vital materialism in which matter cannot be cordoned off from the forces of life itself. In the wake of such recognitions, the formerly exceptional human creative genius must be recast from its 'verticality' and placed on a horizontal plateau with inhuman artistic intensities.

Despite Leonard Woolf's emphasis on a thematic distance between the children's tale and *Mrs Dalloway*, critics have worked to read the texts together and to understand how they might exemplify both a thematic and a psychological or temperamental reciprocity. Geneviève Sanchis Morgan's 1997 essay goes a long way towards linking the metaphorical work of the children's story with the themes of Woolf's novel, what Morgan calls the 'obvious interrelations between the two' that have to do with 'Woolf's development as a writer and as a modernist [being] predicated on her negotiation of domestic material' (Morgan 1997: 95). Her essay renders both texts, therefore, intellectually serious. Among a number of insightful corollaries that Morgan describes is that between sewing and writing. Convincingly, she makes the case that 'if sewing is a metaphor for writing, or art making, then the nexus of the two stories implies that the key to changing reality lies within the grasp of the artist's needle and pen' (101). Sayaka Okumura elaborates on this theme and calls the knitting Nurse Lugton 'a version of the author herself' and Woolf's 'self-caricature' or 'self-portrait' (Okumura 2008: 175).

If sewing is a metaphor for writing in Woolf, then this modest, critically unheeded children's story might be seen as a key of sorts to Woolf's own understanding of her creative practice. This possibility may be all the more likely because Woolf wrote the tale for children. In the collection *Human, All Too Human*, Diana Fuss discusses three 'border identities' for humanism: animal, thing, child. Her introduction to the book's essays reminds us of the age-old alliance between children and animals, beings whose liminal status troubles the 'integrity of the human' (Fuss 1996: 5). Framing this narrative for children allows Woolf to be less rigid or prescriptive in her 'artistic' and high modernist expectations of herself, as a stylist and a thematic innovator. She can 'play' with the analogue between sewing and writing more easily, without censoring her own conclusions, or judging them as 'childish' or naïve. That is, she can work in a space that is generically removed from the all-too-human, internalised censor that demands respectable, elaborate themes in the serious-minded novel.

Czarnecki takes up the question of just how 'child-friendly' the story really is, a question that has provided occasion for some rather pointed critiques of Woolf's text as being too serious for children.[3] Sceptical of such critiques, Czarnecki intimates that the second version was revised by Woolf to be more accessible to the child who reads or hears it. Perhaps counter-intuitively therefore, the first version of the story often reveals the deep philosophical contours of Woolf's creative vision more clearly. In other words, Woolf's technical revisions for the child reader

occasionally work to dilute the more striking or radical elements of this narrative. For that reason, I often refer to the *Thimble* version (1966) rather than the *Curtain* version (1991).[4]

The opening page of *Nurse Lugton's Golden Thimble* usefully sets the stage for considering questions of the post-human, animality and the vibratory:

> She had given one great snore. She had dropped her head, thrust her spectacles up her forehead, and there she sat, by the fender with her thimble on her finger, and her needle full of cotton, snoring, snoring – on her knees, and covering her apron, a large piece of figured blue stuff. The animals had not moved until – one, two, three, four, five – Nurse Lugton snored for the fifth time. Ah! the old woman was asleep. The antelope nodded to the zebra; the giraffe bit off a leaf of the tree. For the pattern on the stuff was this: all the animals in the world were trooping down to the lake and the pagoda, and the boat and the bridge to drink. (Woolf 1966: 5)

Woolf begins her tale with a snore (in the later version Lugton is asleep at the opening, and the snoring is downplayed). The nurse had given a *great* snore: Woolf commences this 'childish' story with the provocations of vibration. Deleuze and Guattari begin their chapter on the refrain in *A Thousand Plateaus* with a child and vibration: 'A child in the dark, gripped with fear, comforts himself by singing under his breath . . . The song is like a rough sketch of a calming and stabilising, calm and stable, center in the heart of chaos' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 311). Deleuze and Guattari's additional examples on this page are of a female child and a woman, but not of a grown man. Perhaps the most clichéd case of the 'universal' artistic (albeit this universal is often limited to the human) is the mother humming to her infant. The genre of the children's book, as I have already claimed, may allow Woolf to make more explicit these elementary forces of creativity. Children, women, mothers, nurses are expected to rock, sing, sew and play circle games. They have cultural permission to make primal refrains (ring around the rosy) a mainstay of their daily play and ritual.

Elizabeth Grosz theorises the Deleuzian role of vibration for the artistic when she discusses the movement from rhythm to refrain to music as 'nothing but *vibration*, resonance, the mutual condition both of material forces at their most elementary levels, and of music at its most refined and complex' (Grosz 2008: 54). 'What is transmitted and transmuted throughout this vast evolution', she maintains, 'is nothing but vibration, vibrations in their specificity, vibrations as they set objects moving in their wake' (54). The vibratory not only connects human life

to the inhuman, but I would also assert that Grosz figures vibration as a kind of *invitation* to the creative. We inevitably partake in the tremor of the rhythmic and the territorial in Deleuze's terms, to be sure, but the vibratory also functions as an incitement to become *more* vibratory:

> Vibration is the common thread or rhythm running through the universe from its chaotic inorganic interminability to its most intimate forces of inscription on living bodies of all kinds and back again. It is vibration that constitutes the harmony of the universe with all its living components, enabling them to find a vibratory comfort level – neither too slow or too fast – not only to survive but above all to generate excess, further vibratory forces, more effects, useless effects, qualities that can't be directly capitalized. (Grosz 2008: 54)

The story's opening with one great snore signals a provocation to creativity through vibration, and this provocation involves a necessary becoming-inhuman. We can apprehend this necessity through Grosz's broad thesis: art cannot be understood as exclusively human if it is fundamentally about excesses and displays that we share with other animals. In this story, the inhuman becoming-enlivened of art is manifested specifically through animality and, I want to suggest, places animality at the centre of Woolf's own artistic universe.

While it may seem peculiar at first to emphasise Lugton's snoring as Deleuzian vibration, Woolf dwells upon this activity in a text that occupies only six short pages: she accentuates these tremors which seem almost to penetrate and shake the animals 'awake'. By enumerating Lugton's snores, 'one, two, three, four, five' (Woolf 1966: 5), Woolf emphasises the rhythmic and pulsating intensities that resonate from and through bodies, that incite the aesthetic and ultimately get transferred from bodies to proper works of art. Grosz describes how the forces of the universe connect the arts to one another through sensation:

> Deleuze suggests that this is because there is indeed a common force shared by all the arts and the living bodies that generate sensations out of material forms that derives from the universe itself. This is precisely vibratory force – perhaps the vibratory structure of subatomic particles themselves? – that constructs sensations as neural reactions to inhuman forces. (Grosz 2008: 83)

Indeed, Deleuze and Guattari note, 'Sensation is excitation itself, not insofar as it is gradually prolonged and passes into the reaction but insofar as it is preserved or preserves its vibrations' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 211). Lugton's snoring inaugurates the story with an invitation to a becoming-artistic, an initiation of aesthetic emergence through rhythm and vibration.

The opening snores are accompanied by a symbolic beheading and a disavowal of the specular that challenges the centrality of the human in terms of aesthetics, authorship and creative 'vision'. When Nurse Lugton drops her head, she relinquishes the reign of the Enlightenment *cogito* in which human rationality – or in this case human 'genius' – is the source of artistic production. Moreover, as she pushes her spectacles up her forehead, she also specifically renounces a humanist 'vision'. This moment reminds us of Freud's claim in *Civilization and its Discontents* (1930) that the acquisition of human identity coincides with the process of 'organic repression', whereby man replaces the olfactory with the specular in his sensorium. In that text, Freud imagines early man's transition from a quadruped to a biped stance and the various results of this rising up from an animal way of being. Walking upright brings about the rejection of formerly stimulating smells – particularly blood and faeces – and the consequent transition from an olfactory mode of sensing to a visual one. Moreover, organic repression performs a disavowal of the inhuman and thus thwarts the possibility for becomings. Deleuze and Guattari's discussion of desire as lacking a *subject* rather than an object acknowledges this operation: 'it is, rather, the *subject* that is missing in desire, or desire that lacks a fixed subject; there is no fixed subject unless there is repression' (Deleuze and Guattari 2009: 26). Lugton's spectacles represent the dependence upon and, indeed, the sharpening of that most human visuality which helps maintain the static subject. When she removes them, she relinquishes a humanist way of perceiving and being. That, and her vibratory snoring, are answered with the activation of animality in the story. Once the animals realise Lugton has closed her eyes, which they ascertain from the five snores, they come alive.

I. Aesthetic Animals

A significant difference between the original and revised texts is that in the first, Woolf discusses the pattern on the curtain in extraordinarily universal terms. This moment appears on the very first page of the Hogarth Press story. After the initial animation of antelope nodding to zebra and giraffe biting a leaf off the tree, Woolf writes: 'For the pattern on the stuff was this: *all the animals in the world* were trooping down to the lake and the pagoda, and the boat and the bridge to drink' (Woolf 1966: 5; my emphasis). In the later version, Woolf economises to 'all the animals began to toss and prance' (Woolf 1991: [3]). The obvious difference here is that in the second version 'all' refers only to

the animals on the drapery, while in the first version Woolf marshals animality as such by using the phrase 'in the world'. This revision marks an understandable whittling down of what Woolf may have considered 'excess' in her original text. But having all the animals in the world galvanised in an image of creativity clarifies my claim that Woolf reveals in this text how her artistic practice, *pace* Deleuze and Grosz, has its roots in the inhuman. That is, if the curtain serves as a placeholder for creativity, and Woolf figures it as harbouring the activation of animality itself, then we can make more extensive claims about Woolf's own relation to inhuman aesthetic forces.

Grosz has refined her understanding of art as having its roots in animality and specifically in the workings of sexual selection in her most recent book *Becoming Undone* (2011).[5] She emphasises the bodily and affective nature of artistic experience via Deleuze and insists, via Darwin, that animals have the power of discrimination or taste that is central to aesthetic appeal and choice. 'Music, painting, dance, and the other arts', she explains,

> are only possible because the power to appeal and enhance seems to reside in regular ways in [animals'] use of colors, sounds, and shapes for the purposes of resonance and intensification. Art is the formal structuring or framing of these intensified bodily organs and processes which stimulate the receptive organs of observers and coparticipants. (Grosz 2011: 135)

Grosz goes even further to speculate that sexual selection as Darwin outlined it is the 'most elementary form of discernment or taste', and may be understood as 'the evolutionary origin not only of all art, but of language use and intelligence more generally' (Grosz 2011: 136). The idea here is that the protocols of sexual selection may produce and fine-tune 'processes of perception and reception … intelligence, communication, and collective living' (136). Whether or not one agrees with these more catholic claims, Grosz's discussion of enhancement, bodily intensification and taste locates aesthetic behaviours and discernments well outside a limited human purview. In the broadest terms, then, Woolf's story reveals to us the evolutionary underpinnings of artistic experience, emphasising the human's deep ontological coincidence with animality. At its most basic, her writing and creating are linked, stitched we might insist, to animal forces, to the rhythms and affects that are shared not just by humans but by the living in general. The images in both versions command our attention, especially because they represent other artists' rendering of a text that, in my view, is primarily about creativity. The 1966 Hogarth Press book

includes illustrations by Duncan Grant, who was known for his rich use of colour. It is unfortunate that the black and white renderings of his pictures eliminate that element of his work. In contrast, the contemporary version of the story (1991, Harcourt) is illustrated in bright watercolours by Julie Vivas, and it includes more than double the number of images that we find in the 1966 text. One striking fact about Grant's comparatively spare set of images is that the curtain is only represented in two of his six illustrations, while animals are represented in five. Indeed, after the initial image of Nurse Lugton dozing in her chair, every Grant illustration includes animals.

Grant's second and third illustrations are composed only of animals that seem to hover in their own space, which suggests a dream-like quality that critics have discussed as a space 'free of constraints' (Czarnecki 2012: 224) and in which cross-species interactions occur 'peaceably' (Levy 2004: 148). As I will discuss further, the liminal state between waking and sleeping is a prime condition in which becomings can occur. In these Grant images, we see giraffes, zebras, rams, leopards, elephants, birds, bears and monkeys. In the third image, an elephant seems to merge with an ostrich, perhaps suggesting a dynamism and instability of the block of animality itself that also reflects the border-crossing between human and inhuman creativity. The dream-like image of an elephant-ostrich hybrid suggests the constant mutation, improvisation and ultimately species instability that are hallmarks of Darwin's theory of evolution, though these qualities are rarely associated with his concept of species even today. Grosz reads Darwin's account of the unfurling of life itself through a Bergsonian/Deleuzian durational force. She emphasises that Darwin

> develops an account of a real that is an open and generative force of self-organization and growing complexity, a dynamic real that has features of its own which, rather than simply exhibit stasis, a fixed essence or unchanging characteristics, are more readily understood in terms of active vectors of change. (Grosz 2004: 19)

Grosz goes on to detail Darwin's 'quite peculiar, and thoroughly postmodern, account of origin' as it impinges on the idea of species (Grosz 2004: 23):

> Origin is a consequence of human, or rather, scientific taxonomy, a function of language. Origin is a nominal question. What constitutes an origin depends on what we call a species, where we (arbitrarily or with particular purposes in mind) decide to draw the line between one group and another that resembles it, preexists it, or abides in close proximity with

> it… A species is an arbitrarily chosen set of similarities that render other differences either marginal or insignificant. Species are a measure, an incalculable, nonnumerical measure of significant differences. (Grosz 2004: 23)

For these reasons, Grosz claims that, in the 'durational unfolding' of evolution, 'what evolves are not individuals or even species, which are forms of relative fixity or stability, but oscillations of difference' (Grosz 2004: 24). If the image of an elephant-ostrich dismantles our conventional sense of species distinctions in this story, that dismantling only confirms the way in which creativity or the aesthetic sensibilities deterritorialise the human via animality.

That specific deterritorialising of the human as Creator is perhaps most keenly registered in the images of monkeys that Duncan Grant contributes to the original, Hogarth Press edition of the story. The first of these appears on the second page of the text, in the initial animal conglomeration in which the creatures seem to float about unanchored. The monkey in this illustration is almost distressingly hybrid in its oscillation between human and animal features. It appears 'monstrous' or uncanny, with the legs and feet of a monkey, and the head and arms of a human. Particularly strange and even difficult to articulate is the way in which the monkey seems to have a human hairstyle, as if this animal woke up and groomed itself with a comb and hair oil. If hair is a residual reminder in humans of their 'beastly' pre-history,[6] then the taming of the monkey's hair through styling proves especially captivating in our discussion of aesthetic framing. In a fascinating, perhaps unconscious, visual translation, Vivas renders a similarly coiffed monkey in the 1991 *Nurse Lugton's Curtain*. On the third page of text, as the animals begin to climb off and away from the 'blue stuff' – the material of the curtain – one of six enlivened and descending monkeys is drawn in profile and seems to have a cap of human hair. That particular monkey also has unusually human-like hands compared with the other monkeys in the text, whose hands and feet are more web-like.

Like other monkeys envisioned in Woolf's broader fictional universe, the coiffed one in the original edition seems to hold a nut at which it gazes.[7] Its thoughtful contemplation of the object in its possession renders the monkey all the more 'human' and all the less 'animal', as the creature almost appears to be reading a text. If, as Georges Bataille suggests, our development of tool-use as a kind of transcendence of the object subtends the 'human' participation in symbolic systems, then this monkey's consideration of its nut places it at least in a liminal space

between animals, who are erroneously considered tool-less, and humans, at the zenith of technological manipulation.[8] Grant's portrayal of this hybrid creature reminds the reader with an almost shocking force that she too is a primate with an object in hand to contemplate, the very children's book she is reading at that moment. This implicit analogy figures taste and discernment within a dizzying *mise en abyme* produced by the interchangeability between nut and book, between 'animal' and 'human'.

Monkeys figure prominently in the fifth and penultimate illustration of the Hogarth Press edition, as well. Probably the most surreal of Grant's images in the text, this one depicts the imaginary Queen of the fictive town 'Millamarchmontopolis', where the animals roam for their pleasure and to secure food and drink while Nurse is sleeping. The Queen in Woolf's story has come to town in her palanquin and sits reposed, in her regalia. Hovering bizarrely just in front and above her in Grant's image is a cluster of seven monkeys. While some of the monkeys' faces and heads are obscured, there are nonetheless a few that suggest pensive examination. Moreover, the monkey most in the picture's foreground holds a proverbial nut. If Woolf as conventional artist can be understood as residing in the 'trappings' of the Queen's highly symbolic and humanist personage – one with a crown that circumscribes and ornamentalises the 'rational' or conceptual lodged in the head – then we must also reckon with her attendant hoard of floating monkeys. Indeed, the Queen of modernism (and of high modernism) is nearly surrounded by monkeys, and their hovering suggests that her own imaginative sources are animal rather than royal. This image, perhaps more than any other in the 1966 text, elucidates a replete, Woolfian becoming-animal/artistic.

At this juncture in the story, Woolf has emphasised how the awakened animals freely range over Nurse Lugton's apron, despite the fact that in her waking life Lugton is terrified of even 'a little beetle' (Woolf 1966: 11). That Woolf chooses to depict the animals crossing freely from the curtain right onto Lugton's apron powerfully accentuates an intimacy or familiarity with non-human creativity that comes only when the strictly conscious or rational mind is relaxed. Some critics have asserted that the story's reliance on a sleeping state suggests Woolf's dread of the unconscious creative forces at work in her own psyche. For instance, Hodgkins discusses Lugton as Woolf's double and as an 'image of the creative female unconscious', but also argues that the association connotes 'a fear of its author, that of the artist who wants to avoid confronting the creative process lest its products die in their amber'

(Hodgkins 2007: 361). Similarly, Michelle Levy suggests that Woolf's description of Lugton as not seeing the awakened animals amounts to an 'alienation from the animal world' and a kind of 'anthropocentricity' (Levy 2004: 148). Perhaps a more useful way to read the question of conscious and unconscious here is to see the drifting into an unconscious state in the story as the submerging or relinquishing of the humanist self, the 'ego' that attempts to cordon itself off from the natural and affective. That is, when Lugton enters an unconscious or semi-conscious state, the edicts of organic repression diminish and the affective forces of becoming are triggered. Thus, when the head drops and the glasses are pushed away, Lugton opens herself to the inhuman creative forces that are less accessible to the 'waking' self. The snore signals Lugton's letting go of the impossibly reified and carefully maintained 'human', and the ushering in of a world in which the human has a participatory relationship with the animal, natural and material worlds. It is important to put this process in a Deleuzian context. In his late discussions on immanence, Deleuze refers to the dying figure whose individual life 'gives way to an impersonal and yet singular life that releases a pure event freed from the accidents of internal and external life, that is, from the subjectivity and objectivity of what happens', and he discusses small children who 'are infused with an immanent life that is pure power and even bliss' (Deleuze 2005: 28, 30). And it such a liminal subject, fading between waking and sleeping awareness in Woolf's story, that is best equipped to demonstrate the human's interlacing with the other-than-human.

Another monkey that requires attention in these stories is the mandrill. In both versions, Woolf includes a litany of animals just after she declares officially that they had begun to move. Grant does not represent the mandrill; he uses only chimp-like monkeys throughout the Hogarth version. Vivas, on the other hand, depicts an almost Biblical parade of animals (reminiscent of the Ark story) at this point in the narrative, illustrating each of the creatures that Woolf mentions in the passage: 'First went the elephant and the zebra; next the giraffe and the tiger; the ostrich, the mandrill, twelve marmots and a pack of mongeese followed; the penguins and the pelicans waddled and waded, often pecking at each other, alongside' (Woolf 1991: [9]).

The mandrill is an especially interesting case for my argument not because mandrills are the world's largest species of monkey, but rather because they are the most vibrantly coloured. Notably, Charles Darwin wrote in *The Descent of Man* that 'no other member in the whole class of mammals is coloured in so extraordinary a manner

as the adult male mandrill (*Cynocephalus mormon*)' (Darwin 1871: 292). Most descriptions of mandrills emphasise the male's brilliant colouration, with a red stripe down the middle of the face and ridged blue muzzle. The 'rump' is strikingly saturated with bright pinks, blues, reds and purples. Indeed, the mandrill seems almost alien in its pigmentation. In Grosz's terms, such extreme colouration would be understood as a particularly incisive example of the way that sexuality itself requires creativity: 'sexuality needs to harness excessiveness and invention to function at all' (Grosz 2008: 64). Additionally, the mandrill exhibits one of the most pronounced cases of sexual dimorphism in the primate world where males and females are radically asymmetrical in their physical appearances. For Grosz, such divergence specifically links, in a rather surprising philosophical lineage, the work of Darwin and Luce Irigaray around the crucial Deleuzian question of difference:

> Darwin insists that sexual bifurcation, the division of species into (at least) two sexes, is an evolutionary invention of remarkable tenacity and value, for it multiplies difference *ad infinitum*. Irigaray's conception of nature as the differentiating and differentiated condition of subjectivity . . . remains consistent with Darwin's conception of sexual selection – the division of species into two sexes, two different morphologies, and with it the advent of sexuality and sexual reproduction, and the generation of ever-new (genetic and morphological) characteristics and qualities, ever more morphological or bodily differences. (Grosz 2011: 104)

Thus the mandrill is an especially significant animal in Lugton's creative universe because it is a primate whose bodily apparatus testifies to the intensely evolutionary, yet non-adaptive, investment of living beings in the 'spectacular performance' of creative sexuality (Grosz 2011: 125).

Grosz's broad discussion of difference *as such* is too complex for me to rehearse here, but it partly elaborates Deleuze's notion that difference is 'something that distinguishes itself', and that 'is made, or makes itself' (Deleuze 1994: 28). Grosz's assertion that 'difference is the generative force of the universe itself, the impersonal, inhuman destiny and milieu of the human, that from which life, including the human, comes and that to which life in all its becomings directs itself' becomes a useful way to read the animality in and of Nurse Lugton's story and Woolf's writerly process (Grosz 2011: 94). The mandrill in this text functions as an exemplar of creative difference that is specifically aimed to reveal the human's species liminality.[9] That is, the excessively bright, almost painterly monkey seems to insist with a shameless intellectual

effrontery that – clearly – the creative can never be a strictly human affair. Moreover, in Vivas's illustration, the mandrill, who marches along in the Ark-like procession, is the only creature who stares directly out at the reader. As I have noted elsewhere,[10] recent work in animal theory has often coalesced around a kind of 'primal scene' in which subjectivities that we call human and animal confront one another, retreat, respond or otherwise intermingle. Perhaps the most well known of these is Derrida's naked-in-front-of-cat scene and, subsequently, Donna Haraway's insightful reading of its limitations. Testifying to the centrality of the interspecies look or gaze, Kari Weil begins her recent book about the 'animal turn' in critical and cultural theory with Derrida's now well-known proclamation, 'An animal looks at us and we are naked before it. Thinking, perhaps, begins there' (Derrida 2008: 29). Weil rightly emphasises the link between an animal's look and the concept of human nakedness or nudity. 'Does a confrontation with and acknowledgment of another animal', she asks, '*expose* us as humans by stripping us of those clothes and thinking caps with which we have claimed to stake our differences from animals?' (Weil 2012: xv; my emphasis). In this case, the mandrill's gaze can be read as a direct challenge to our humanist notions about the artistic. The monkey's look strips away aesthetic human exceptionalism by emphasising the magnificent becoming-artistic of one of man's more proximate primate relatives.

Similarly, in a subtle but nonetheless striking visual staging of human animality that again seems less than conscious on the part of Vivas, the back cover image for Woolf's short story cleverly shows Nurse Lugton viewed from the back, as she sits in her sewing chair hard at work. We see the back of her kerchiefed head, the chair rungs and pillow she leans upon. The way that Vivas draws the backs of Lugton's shoes, especially the seam down the centre of each heel, makes Lugton's shoes appear entirely hoof-like. Lugton seems to enact a becoming-bovine, which takes on a certain fascinating quality if we consider Nietzsche's claim about reading, art and the ruminative that Weil cites at the outset of her book: 'One thing is necessary above all if one is to practice reading as an *art*. Something for which one has almost to be a cow and in any case *not* a man: *rumination*' (Weil 2012: qtd in epigraph; Nietzsche's emphasis). The point here is that if Lugton is Woolf's alter-ego, then this would seem to be the only visual image of a Woolf-as-writer figure becoming-animal in all of Woolf's oeuvre. Combined with the mandrill's confrontational gaze, the becoming-ruminant of Vivas's final Lugton illustration may be prodding us to ask if the becoming-animal/artistic

of the writer does not also invite or compel the reader into a similar trans-species engagement.

II. This Fold

Okumura makes the important suggestion that Lugton's curtain ought to be understood in terms of textuality. She writes, 'Nurse Lugton is sewing a curtain, the description of whose pattern occupies the story's text. Her textile is equated to the author's text' (Okumura 2008: 175). Reading the curtain as creative materiality itself, in a new-materialist or neo-vitalist register that is indebted to Bergson and Deleuze, pushes these concepts about textuality even further. To start, consider the curtain's most basic, 'architectural' qualities. It is a large piece of fabric that is draped and folded over Lugton's lap. As she works, portions of the fabric are revealed and manipulated, while other portions are inevitably hidden. There are the active vectors being stitched, and in the many folds and creases that remain unworked or latent, there is the virtual, waiting to be actualised. The undulating folds of Nurse Lugton's curtain, coupled with its becoming-animal that serves as engine of the entire story, suggest an almost uncanny enactment of the active and creative force of enlivened matter. Thus for Bergson, the incalculable creativity of organic life exists, which 'we cannot in any way subject to a mathematical treatment' and which exhibits 'continuity of change, preservation of the past in the present, real duration – the living being seems, then, to share these attributes with consciousness . . . [And] life, like conscious activity, is invention, is unceasing creation' (Bergson 1998: 20, 23). Moreover, Deleuze outlines the virtual as a self-differentiating source for life's actualisations:

> The three requirements of a philosophy of life are as follows: (1) the vital difference can only be experienced and thought of as internal difference; it is only in this sense that the 'tendency to change' is not accidental, and that the variations themselves find an internal cause in that tendency; (2) these variations do not enter into relationships of association and addition, but on the contrary, they enter into relationships of dissociation or division; (3) they therefore involve a virtuality that is actualized according to the lines of divergence; so that evolution does not move from one actual term to another actual term in a homogeneous unilinear series, but from a virtual term to the heterogeneous terms that actualize it along a ramified series. (Deleuze 1991: 99–100)

Grosz remarks upon these concepts:

> Each [Bergson and Deleuze] distinguishes life as a kind of *contained dynamism*, a dynamism within a porous boundary, that feeds from and returns to the chaos which surrounds it something immanent within the chaotic whole: life as a complex fold of the chemical and the physical that reveals something not given within them, something new, an emergence, the ordered force of invention. (Grosz 2011: 27; original emphasis)

The folds of Lugton's curtain are more than suggestive of such revelations.

Deleuze insists upon the inseparability of life and matter in his discussions of the fold: 'Organic matter is not, however, different from inorganic matter (here the distinction of a first and a second matter is irrelevant). Whether organic or inorganic, matter is all one' (Deleuze 1993: 7). Grosz also reminds us that, in Bergson's terms, materiality is characterised by repetitions or 'near repetitions' (Grosz 2011: 29):

> The material world is that which is capable of unrolling or unfolding what has been already rolled or folded, that is caused: it is the inevitable unwinding or unfurling, the relaxation, of what has already been cocked and set, dilated, in a pregiven trajectory. (Grosz 2011: 29)

Thus the folding and unfolding of Lugton's curtain not only conjures the latency of the unknown that marks the possibility for the new and unexpected, the creative, but it also gestures towards the regularity with which the material world maintains itself.

If we remain within a Bergsonian framework for a moment more, we can consider how the animals' coming alive from the folds of the curtain might be read as the functioning of *élan vital*. Jane Bennett suggests that the 'task of *élan vital* is to shake awake that lazy bones of matter and insert into it a measure of surprise' (Bennett 2010: 78). What is more, Bennett recalls that the task of this vital spark is to 'increase the *instability* of material formations' (78; original emphasis). This indetermination associated with the creative, what Bergson calls 'a perpetual efflorescence of novelty', may also explain Lugton's trepidation at confronting the animals while she is fully conscious (Bergson 1992: 95). In other words, the creative does involve the incalculable, to use Derrida's terminology, and so Lugton or Woolf's disquiet about this unfolding can be appreciated rather than characterised as retrogressive.

In broader terms, Woolf's particular framing of a becoming-animal through the material or textual in this children's story supports a new

materialist (or vital materialist, in Bennett's terms) understanding of the relation between life and matter. The curtain – which would have traditionally been understood as inert or frozen matter – self-generates activity or force. The fluctuation between a 'living' state characterised through non-human animation and a kind of dormancy – in which the waking Lugton 'caught the animals, and froze them' (Woolf 1966: 15) – might best be understood as modelling the dynamics of material life itself: as Grosz asserts,

> Life is always on the verge of returning to the inorganic from which its elements, its very body and energies, are drawn. Life and matter cannot, in this tradition, be understood as binary opposites; rather they are divergent tendencies, two different directions or trajectories inherent in a single whole, matter as undivided, matter as it includes its 'others' – life, ideality, connectivity, temporality. (Grosz 2011: 32–3)

The becoming-life or animation of the curtain cannot be separated from the curtain itself, although Lugton's sleeping state does suggest that humans are perhaps not ordinarily attuned to this coincidence of life and matter. Grosz carefully explains that in Bergson's view 'life' cannot be understood as a separate or special force that is distinct from matter: 'The common impetus life carries within it is that of *materiality itself*, the capacity to make materiality extend itself into the new and the unforeseeable' (Grosz 2011: 33; original emphasis). More pointedly, Grosz reiterates this idea when she insists, 'Life is that tendency, *in matter* itself, to prolong, delay, detour, which means that matter, "an undivided flux," is as alive, as dynamic, as invested in becoming as life itself' (35). Woolf's text provides a perfectly double-edged example of this in that Nurse Lugton is stitching, writing, creating, thus participating in the activation or the becoming, but also the material or corporeal 'body' or vessel of that activity – the curtain – becomes more than itself semi-spontaneously, activates *itself* through a vibratory animation to take on a 'vitality'. Moreover, it is crucial to read this seemingly paradoxical, double activation as a recognition that human creativity is linked to inhuman creativity. That is, the intricacies of weaving, writing, painting, and so forth, are not without a space of profound overlap with the becoming-artistic of the animal and plant, and even more primitive forms of life. Grosz puts this in fundamental terms when she clarifies how we ought to understand the 'unity of life'. It is not that life can be connected through some genetic web or ecosystem, but rather that

> all life is equally pushed – in its originary emergence from the 'prebiotic soup' of chemical elements through to the vastly variable forms of life that have existed and exist today – by a temporal, or evolutionary, impetus to vary itself, to capitalize on its material conditions, to differ. The unity of life is not an end, a final harmony or cohesion, but the beginning, the impetus all of life shares with the chemical order from which it differentiates itself, and which it carries within it as its inherited resource. (Grosz 2011: 33)

In a traditional reading, the curtain itself might be understood as a proverbial 'blank slate' in materialist terms. In Woolf's story, however, that interpretation must be recalibrated, for the curtain is anything but blank in Deleuze's terms. In other words, one might initially want to read the fabric as one would read the 'canvas' of a painting – an inert substrate upon which art or creativity will be superimposed. But the becoming-animal of the 'blue stuff' suggests that such a reading would be erroneous. I am tempted to speculate about how Deleuze himself would have framed the curtain had he been familiar with Woolf's story in the way he was familiar with *The Waves*, for instance. If, according to Cliff Stagoll, a Deleuzian plane of immanence can be understood as 'a surface upon which all events occur, where events are understood as chance, productive interactions between forces of all kinds' (Stagoll 2005: 204), might Deleuze have recognised Woolf's curtain as such a plane? Might he have interpreted Woolf's curtain as, in his and Guattari's words, 'a section of chaos' that gives '*consistency without losing anything of the infinite*' and that harbours 'variable *curves* that retain the infinite movements that turn back on themselves in incessant exchange, but which also continually free other movements which are retained' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 42; original emphasis).[11] While Deleuze and Guattari refer to concepts here in the realm of philosophy, Woolf's plane in the Lugton story might be understood as referring to her own, or any artist's, creative concepts and the movements and variations, indeed the enlivened manifestations that they undergo. The suggestion in the story of an ongoing repetition of varying becomings-animal during Lugton's waking and sleeping intervals invites this comparison. That is, the reader understands that this 'cycle' of waking craft and sleeping enlivenment, this rotation of animal becoming and dormancy, will continue ad infinitum. As Stagoll explains further, a Deleuzian plane 'represents the field of becoming, a "space" containing all of the possibilities inherent in forces. On this plane, all possible events are brought together, and new connections between them made and continuously dissolved' (Stagoll 2005: 205). Again, the fluctuation

between creative activity and creative dormancy in Woolf's story has a distinctly Deleuzian resonance.

The operative dynamism of the curtain on a systematic level also invites us to read Woolf's text through what Rosi Braidotti calls an 'affirmative' ethics of biopower. Rather than focus unduly on *thanatos* or the questions of mortality and suffering in contemporary philosophy, Braidotti notes that we ought to consider the 'generative powers of *zoē* and to turn to the Spinozist political ontology defended by Deleuze and Guattari':

> Death is overrated. The ultimate subtraction is after all only another phase in a generative process . . . For the narcissistic human subject, as psychoanalysis teaches us, it is unthinkable that Life should go on without my being there. The process of confronting the thinkability of a Life that may not have 'me' or any 'human' at the center is actually a sobering and instructive process. I see this postanthropocentric shift as the start for an ethics of sustainability that aims at shifting the focus toward the positivity of *zoē*. (Braidotti 2010: 212)

What other than the *generative* power of *zoē* is portrayed in Woolf's story, in which it is the Life of non-human animality that subtends 'narcissistic' human creativity? Indeed, the illustration Vivas created to span pages 13 and 14 of the *Curtain* text (if it were enumerated) is a bio-poetic image par excellence. Viewed from above, as if from an aerial perspective, animals dip their heads to drink from a lagoon. We see only their backs, demarcated half-ways each, like cells preparing to divide. The landscape is represented almost as if sliced on a molecular level, with trees spreading out like microbial pili or flagella. The half-circular image, with cellular and microscopic overtones, seems to reference the power or creative potential of *zoē* itself. It is an extraordinary image at the centre of a book about a woman's creative sources in that it embeds her aesthetic powers in inhuman, biological forces.

What Braidotti calls the postanthropocentric shift is indeed what Deleuze often theorised as the impersonal. Grosz describes this decentring of the traditional conceptualisation of human life:

> Deleuze seeks to understand life without recourse to a self, subject, or personal identity, or in opposition to matter and objects. He seeks something impersonal, singular, that links a living being, internally, through differentiation or repetition, to elements and forces that are nonliving. This is what links the concept of life, for him, to becoming-animal, to the Body without Organs, and to immanence rather than to transcendence, the human, or the organism. He is interested in the nonliving tentacles that extend

> themselves into the living, the provisional linkages the nonliving and the living form to enable the living to draw out the virtualities of the nonliving; that is, to enable the nonliving to have a life of their own. (Grosz 2011: 35–6)

The tentacles of the inhuman are not only evident in the cellular image above, but the impersonal link to 'nonliving' forces is powerfully evident in the Vivas illustration that represents Lugton's face as a mountain. Near the end of the story, Lugton is conflated with the landscape: 'They could see her, from their windows, towering over them. She had a face like the side of a mountain with great precipices and avalanches, and chasms for her eyes and hair and nose and teeth' (Woolf 1991: [23]). Vivas draws Lugton's enormous head as partially submerged in the earth, with the sinews of her neck bleeding and blending right into the foothills of the landscape. It is as though her body itself *is* the earth, and her head, putatively the most 'human' and 'rational' portion of her body, can only be partially separated from the forces of the earth. This image recalls Annie Leibowitz's photograph of Rachel Rosenthal, buried neck deep in the desert. But Vivas can take the concept of merging even further because she blurs the distinction between Lugton's neck and the descending ripples of the mountain terrain in her watercolour depiction.

What we find in this story, then, is aesthetic enlivenment as that which takes place beyond the personal, beyond the egotistical, and beyond the human. Art is understood as the becoming-other of life itself, as the perpetual and recurrent emergence of difference, and as something having its foundation more in a latent animality than in a waking humanity. If Nurse Lugton's sewing is figuratively linked to Virginia Woolf's writing, then this 'minor' children's story persuades us to place the becoming-artistic of animality at the heart of Woolf's aesthetic practice. Moreover, the seemingly unremarkable 'blue stuff' of the curtain emerges as the generative, affirmative life-force of matter itself. Woolf's tale of 'magical' animals and curtains is actually a vital materialist narrative in which humans borrow their creative capacities from the becomings-other, from the differentialising and 'excessive' tendencies, of the inhuman.

Notes

1. See Czarnecki's (2012) discussion of both the original and revised texts.
2. It is important to note that Hildick, when writing of his discovery in the *Times Literary Supplement* in 1965, seemed to have a more nuanced, or at least more speculative, set of notions about the relationship between the novel and the story. As Czarnecki mentions, he wondered if the children's story gave Woolf

a sort of relief from the violent themes in *Mrs Dalloway*. See Czarnecki 2012: 222.

3. See for instance Hodgkins 2007.
4. The 1991 version, *Nurse Lugton's Curtain*, is unpaginated and so page numbers in references to it in this article are given in square brackets.
5. It is important to note that conditions of the artistic, according to Grosz, can also be found in plant and insect life. However, she focuses significant attention on animal activities through her re-reading of Darwin and sexual selection in relation to aesthetic questions.
6. See my discussion of human 'fur' in T. S. Eliot's 'Sweeney' poems in *Stalking the Subject: Modernism and the Animal* (Rohman 2009: 35).
7. For instance, the character Jinny in Woolf's novel *The Waves* discusses a monkey that 'drops nuts from its naked paws' (Woolf 1931: 176). Moreover, Louis in the same novel discusses his own social preening in similar terms: 'it is for them that I do these antics, smoothing my hair, concealing my accent. I am the little ape who chatters over a nut' (Woolf 1931: 128).
8. Bataille, like many twentieth-century thinkers and scientists, mistakenly understood tool-use as an exclusively human capacity. See chapter 2 in *Theory of Religion* (1989).
9. It is crucial to note here that Grosz's emphasis on sexual difference, *pace* Irigaray, does not cancel out queer or transgendered identities and thus should not be glossed as such. When discussing Irigaray's claims about sexual difference, Grosz notes that Irigaray

> questions, not homosexuality, nor ethnic identification, but only the disavowal of one's own morphological specificity. However queer, transgendered, and ethnically identified one might be, one comes from a man and a woman, and one remains a man and a woman, even in the case of gender-reassignment or the chemical and surgical transformation of one sex into the appearance of another. (Grosz 2011: 109–10)

   As fluid and flexible, as historically contingent and malleable as sexuality may be, Grosz insists 'there is no overcoming of sexual difference' (Grosz 2011: 111).
10. See Rohman 2012.
11. See also chapter 6 in *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque* in which Deleuze claims that events 'are produced in a chaos, in a chaotic multiplicity, but only under the condition that a sort of screen intervenes' (Deleuze 1993: 76). Laci Mattison discusses the relationship between chaos and art (and the event) in this register, as well, in her 2012 essay 'Woolf's Un/Folding(s): The Artist and the Event of the Neo-Baroque'.

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'The reality of becoming': Deleuze, Woolf and the Territory of Cows

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Abstract

Woolf's modernist animals affected Deleuze and Guattari's animal philosophy, as they describe in *A Thousand Plateaus*. This essay focuses on the significance of these references to Woolf's aesthetics for Deleuzian philosophy, whilst also considering how we can better understand Woolf's broader exploration of animality (in texts including *The Waves*, *Flush* and *Between the Acts*) through close engagement with Deleuze's conceptual framework (in particular 'becoming-animal' and 'de-' and 'reterritorialisation'). In mapping various appearances of one of the oldest domesticated animals, cows, in the work of both, the essay builds an argument about the shared bovine territory in their writings and the ontological and ethical implications of this. It therefore expands upon the relationship between Deleuze and Woolf at the same time as affirming the importance of their animal ontology, ethics and aesthetics for animal studies more widely.

Keywords: Deleuze, Virginia Woolf, animality, animal studies, Donna Haraway, becoming, deterritorialisation, cows

I. Deleuze, Woolf and Animal Studies

"'Ladies and Gentlemen, behold the enemy!"' These words, which announce Donna Haraway's scathing critique of Deleuze and Guattari's treatment of the animal, are symptomatic of the mistrust some commentators have felt towards Deleuzian animal philosophy within the growing field of animal studies. Contemporary philosophers such as

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Haraway criticise 'becoming-animal' because they view it as a flight from the real, everyday, fleshly lives of animals, as well as the coevolutionary stories shared between human and non-human. Where Haraway 'had hoped to find an ally for the tasks of companion species', as she puts it in *When Species Meet*, she instead discovers a 'profound absence of curiosity about or respect for and with actual animals' (Haraway 2008: 27). Haraway is a philosopher 'of the mud' whilst Deleuze and Guattari are philosophers 'of the sublime, not the earthly, not the mud' (28). She goes on to argue that 'becoming-animal' demonstrates one of the clearest displays in all philosophy of 'misogyny, fear of aging, incuriosity about animals, and horror at the ordinariness of flesh, here covered by the alibi of an anti-Oedipal and anticapitalist project' (30).[1] Even when other critics want to claim that Deleuze's philosophy *can* be of value for animal studies, they have often conceded that it does not contain a real interest in ordinary, everyday animals. Therefore, at the same time as arguing for the use of Deleuze and Guattari in discussions of animal ethics, Lori Brown has noted that in emphasising becoming-animal as a means of 'challenging and breaking up various human institutions' Deleuze and Guattari fail to 'address institutions that have a negative impact on other animals' – that is, most of their examples of becomings-animal are concerned with what takes place in 'mental illness, in music and other art forms, in tales of wild men, vampires and werewolves' (Brown 2007: 262). Similarly, when discussing the importance of Deleuze to considerations of animals in art, Steve Baker has written that 'animals, for Deleuze and Guattari, seem to operate more as a device of writing . . . than as living beings whose conditions of life were of direct concern to the writers' (Baker 2002: 95).

Whilst it is true that Deleuze and Guattari do not provide sustained or detailed expositions of the daily lives of animals, the conceptual framework they offer is useful for thinking about human interactions with animals on ontological as well as ethical grounds. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, when they outline three ways in which we can distinguish animals, they are charting the potential to move from humanist doctrines to a post-humanist encounter with the animal and with animality. In other words, where the first two kinds of animals – the 'Oedipal animals' that are 'sentimentalised' and 'individuated' as "'my" cat, "my" dog', and the 'State animals' holding 'characteristics' and 'attributes' that fit them into 'divine myths' – are seen as stand-ins for some seemingly higher human concern, Deleuze and Guattari's third way of approaching animals – as more nomadic 'pack or affect animals that form a multiplicity, a becoming' – takes into account

their capacity to form assemblages, their ability for world-making, rather than assimilating them into an anthropocentric arrangement (Deleuze and Guattari [1987] 2004a: 265–6). What Haraway's critique of Deleuze and Guattari therefore misses is that the comment she finds particularly distasteful – '*anyone who likes cats or dogs is a fool*' – occurs only when they are outlining the Oedipalisation of animals which 'draws us into a narcissistic contemplation' and reinforces the tendency for anthropomorphism. Taking Deleuze and Guattari's (admittedly startling) statement out of context, Haraway risks giving the impression that they are cruelly dismissive of all animals, when in fact they are exposing the ways in which certain animals have been reduced to mere psychoanalytic facades with 'a daddy, a mommy, a little brother behind them' (Deleuze and Guattari [1987] 2004a: 265–6); they are attempting to unsettle and complicate our conceptualisation of human/animal relations by *including* non-human animals in their wider ethico-ontological project of mapping the radical immanence of de-individuated subjectivities (and as they stress even cats and dogs can become pack animals). In direct response to Haraway's accusation, we can note what Deleuze makes clear in *L'Abécédaire* interview – that 'generally people who like animals don't have a human relationship with animals, they have an animal relationship with the animal, and that's quite beautiful' (Deleuze and Parnet 2012).

To have an animal relationship with the animal is what Deleuze and Guattari mean by their concept becoming-animal, that is, to enter into a zone or territory of proximity or indeterminacy, the shared event of becoming different, of becoming entangled with the other in a de- and then re-making of traditional ontological categories of human and animal. As they stress in *Kafka*,

> there is nothing metaphoric about the becoming-animal. No symbolism, no allegory . . . it is an ensemble of states . . . a creative line of escape that says nothing other than what it is . . . it constitutes a single process, a unique method that replaces subjectivity. (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 35–6)

To dismiss Deleuze and Guattari as 'the enemy' of animal studies is to fail to recognise how rare an example they provide in Western philosophy of an animal theory that accounts for both anthropomorphic and anthropocentric uses of animals at the same time as providing a line of flight from such anthropomorphic conceptualisations and anthropocentric arrangements.[2] Deleuze and Guattari's relationship with animals, and with animal studies, should not be characterised by a

lack of curiosity so much as by *fascination*,[3] a more intense, ontological and perhaps ethical encounter with animal life than Haraway allows; theirs is a fascination with 'an animal reality, *and* the reality of the becoming-animal of the human being' (Deleuze and Guattari [1987] 2004a: 267; my emphasis).

As well as seeking to affirm the continued importance of Deleuze and Guattari's approach to animals for animal studies, this essay is specifically concerned with how Deleuze's animal philosophy – and in particular 'becoming-animal' – is influenced by the modernist animal aesthetics of Virginia Woolf. Moving away from the focus on wild men, vampires and werewolves, Deleuze and Guattari playfully invoke Woolf when clarifying that their emphasis on 'pack animals' is not a comment on the fact 'that certain animals live in packs' or such 'evolutionary classifications':

> Virginia Woolf experiences herself not as a monkey or a fish but as a troop of monkeys, a school of fish, according to her variable relations of becoming with the people she approaches.... What we are saying is that every animal is fundamentally a band, a pack. That it has pack modes, rather than characteristics, even if further distinctions within these modes are called for. It is at this point that the human being encounters the animal. We do not become animal without a fascination for the pack, for multiplicity. (Deleuze and Guattari [1987] 2004a: 264)

This essay takes quite seriously Deleuze's linking of Woolf and animal encounters here. Indeed, the specific animals Deleuze chooses to describe Woolf's own becomings-animal are not as strange as they might, at first, appear.[4] That Deleuze describes Woolf's 'experiences of herself' as 'a troop of monkeys', for example, might allude to the fact that one of Woolf's nicknames, used by her family and by herself, was 'the Apes',[5] and it might refer to a passage in *The Waves* when Jinny describes her desire to let go of the mundane 'facts' that limit her 'body's imagination' to 'a monkey' that 'drops nuts from its naked paws' – it is by doing so that she can enter the 'heterogeneous crowd' (Woolf 1998: 146). Additionally, the 'school of fish' in the above quote certainly prefigures a later reference Deleuze and Guattari make to the closing section of *The Waves*, when Bernard describes the naming of himself and his friends as 'only a string of six little fish that let themselves be caught while a million others leap and sizzle' in the 'cauldron' of life (214): 'each of these characters', Deleuze and Guattari write, 'with his or her name, its individuality, designates a multiplicity (for example Bernard and the

school of fish). Each is simultaneously in this multiplicity and at its edge, and crosses over into the others' (Deleuze and Guattari [1987] 2004a: 278).

What we can add to Deleuze and Guattari's list, however, is Woolf's herd of cows, which provide an example of the animal becomings and multiplicities Deleuze detects in Woolf's modernist aesthetics – in her creation of a kind of literature that is fuelled by an affective fascination for non/human assemblages rather than simply a cautious curiosity. Indeed, by considering the cows that appear at crucial, and sometimes surprising, moments in Woolf's writings as well as in Deleuze's philosophy, we can find examples of the ways in which they both invite us to encounter such becomings-animal, demonstrating that Woolf is fascinated, like Deleuze and Guattari, in 'modes of expansion, propagation, occupation, contagion, peopling', as opposed to the emphasis placed by societies, states, natural history and natural science on characteristics and classifications (Deleuze and Guattari [1987] 2004a: 264). Like Deleuze, Woolf is more interested in events than characteristics, in the involution of human and non-human, body and environment, than in the evolution of character or the development of plot. This is evident again when Deleuze and Guattari return to her writings later in the tenth plateau, alluding this time to her 'thin dog' – which Woolf actually takes from fellow modernist Katherine Mansfield's diary (Woolf 1994a: 447) – to exemplify the symbiotic relations formed between the different elements that combine in an 'event' or 'haecceity':

> Climate, wind, season, hour are not of another nature than the things, animals, or people that populate them, follow them, sleep and awaken within them. This should be read without a pause: the animal-stalks-at-five-o'clock . . . Five o'clock is this animal! This animal is this place! "The thin dog is running down the road, this dog is the road," cries Virginia Woolf. That is how we need to feel. (Deleuze and Guattari [1987] 2004a: 290)

Clearly, Woolf's modernist animals are closest to Deleuze and Guattari's third kind of animal, but it is specifically her *bovine* aesthetic that expresses these affect animals. By expanding on the relationship between cows that appear in the writings of both Deleuze and Woolf, we can better understand how philosophy and literature reconceptualise the shared territories between human and non-human. In doing so, we can also challenge the view prevalent in animal studies that an ethical approach to animals must necessarily be one that seeks to provide a particular narrative of this or that animal's life, that seeks to pinpoint

its characteristics and capacities. Deleuze and Woolf demonstrate, following their cows, that the real value of philosophy and literature to animal studies is less about how successfully they document the 'facts' of the lives of animals and more about how they help us to think with, through and about animals. Might not the ultimate marker of respect for the animal be that of responding to the territory it enters in the ontological assembling of life?

II. Cows in Philosophical/Literary Landscapes

As one of the oldest domesticated animals, and one encountered by most humans in Western societies on a daily basis (most obviously in the form of milk and meat, but also in our use of cosmetics, deodorants, soaps and various other everyday products[6]), the presence of cows in Deleuze's philosophy testifies to the fact that he is not simply interested in wild creatures or minor insects.[7] Indeed when recounting his harshest rejections of both Oedipal and classification or State animals, Deleuze is critical of the way cows are reterritorialised within such modes of thought. Cows figure in his rejection of psychoanalytic treatments of animals where myths are created (linked to the Oedipal complex) of them as 'archetypes' or 'models'; in other words, this is where the first two kinds of animals outlined by Deleuze and Guattari meet in anthropomorphic and anthropocentric collusion. As Deleuze puts it in his 'Four Propositions on Psychoanalysis':

> Perhaps the most grotesque pages in all of Freud are those he wrote on fellatio: how in this instance a penis (*pénis*) stands for a cow udder (*pis de vache*), and a cow udder for the maternal breast. In other words, fellatio means you can't find a cow udder to pull, or that you want your mommy, or she has no more milk. This is merely a way of showing that fellatio is not a 'true desire' but means something else, that it is hiding something, some other desire. (Deleuze 2007: 80)

Very similar passages appear in Deleuze's Preface to pioneering queer theorist Guy Hocquenghem's *L'Après-mai des faunes*, where he denounces the fact that such

> bizarre and 'shocking' desire can have no worth of its own; it must be traceable to a cow udder, and from there to the mother's breast. Freud thinks we would get more pleasure sucking on a cow udder. Interpret, regress, push toward regression. (Deleuze 2004a: 285)

Where cows figure in psychoanalysis then, Deleuze is very much against their relegation (or elevation) to figures of speech such as metaphor or

metonymy (Deleuze and Parnet 2006: 57); not only does he criticise psychoanalytic structures of desire, but he also wants to deterritorialise cows whenever they are used as standing for something other than themselves.[8]

In *A Thousand Plateaus*, the territory occupied by cows marks the move from the first two kinds of animals described by Deleuze and Guattari and towards the third kind of affect, pack animals. In this respect, the opening pages of their tenth plateau are particularly relevant, when their discussion is concerned with how natural history works by organising in terms of 'progressions and regressions, continuities and major breaks', and where evolution, as originally conceived, works in terms of 'genealogy, kinship, descent, and filiation': 'Natural history can think only in terms of relationships (between A and B), not in terms of production (from A to *x*)' (Deleuze and Guattari [1987] 2004a: 258). This has important consequences in terms of how we think of relationships between animals, which are conceived as two forms of analogy: a 'series' of 'resemblance' of a and b, b and c, and so on until 'all of these terms conform in varying degrees to a single, eminent term, perfection'; and a 'structure' whereby 'a is to b as c is to d; and each of these relationships realises after its fashion the perfection under consideration'. In other words, what we have here is Nature as 'an enormous *mimesis*' (259). It is when Deleuze and Guattari introduce the change that structuralism and in particular Lévi-Strauss brought, that 'the cow' is reterritorialised:

> Symbolic understanding replaces the analogy of proportion with an analogy of proportionality; the serialization of resemblances with a structuration of differences; the identification of terms with an equality of relations; the metamorphoses of the imagination with conceptual metaphors; the great continuity between nature and culture with a deep rift distributing correspondences without resemblance between the two... structuralism represents a great revolution; the whole world becomes more rational... A man can never say: 'I am a bull, a wolf...' But he can say: 'I am to a woman what the bull is to the cow, I am to another man what the wolf is to the sheep.' (Deleuze and Guattari [1987] 2004a: 261)

It is precisely at the moment in which the cow is used as an example of this structuration of animals that Deleuze and Guattari, almost as if sparked into it by the reterritorialisation of the cow by structuralist thought, are quick to launch 'becomings-animal' in contrast: 'None of the preceding satisfies us... We believe in the existence of very special becomings-animal traversing human beings and sweeping them away, affecting the animal no less than the human.' By focusing on

a correspondence of relations, structuralism denies rather than affirms becomings. The territory marked by cows here escapes structuration within 'the true order' (Deleuze and Guattari [1987] 2004a: 261) and instead marks a transition to post-structuralism: the deterritorialising becoming-animal of Deleuze's own writing. And it is here, in refusing to follow the 'cow' understood through resemblance and analogy, that Deleuze emphasises the 'real' of becoming which is not an escape from the material world as Haraway and other critics within animal studies have argued, but is rather a reconceptualisation of materiality itself (262). It is important to note, too, that directly after this Deleuze and Guattari cite Woolf's 'troop of monkeys' and 'school of fish'; Deleuze's critique of structuralism's reterritorialisation of the cow therefore leads to his entering into closer proximity with Woolf's modernist animals.

The territory staked by cows in Woolf's writings is vaster than might initially be expected – from State cows that are firmly classified as part of pastoral England to an exploration of affect animals that disrupt ontological boundaries between human and non-human and raise ethical questions concerning how humans approach the lives of animals. Whilst Woolf's central role in Bloomsbury in the first decades of the twentieth century often leads to the associations between her writings and the bustling life of city dwellers, she also shows an interest in the natural world; her aesthetics are engaged with a conceptualisation of the non-human as much as the human, of nature as much as culture.[9] Many of Woolf's novels include a consideration of both country and city life, and where a novel such as *Mrs Dalloway* is set predominately in the city, *To the Lighthouse* and *Between the Acts* are set in more rural environments. And whether in her private writings or in her novels, cows are a part of Woolf's literary landscapes.[10] From her private writings, we know that Woolf frequently observed cows at Monk's House, her home in Rodmell in the Sussex countryside (Woolf 1976: 425, 480; Woolf 1977: 514; Woolf 1980: 36), and in one letter she even notes 'cows sheltering' whilst aeroplanes are 'booming' overhead as the war looms in 1938 (Woolf 1980: 281). Woolf's concern for cows is clear when, in the final month of her life, she worries over the 'starving' cows of her friend, Octavia Wilberforce – Woolf is given the task of buying two tons of hay for these cows that had been providing cream and milk to her and Leonard between 1940–1 (Woolf 1980: 475–6). But she clearly sees value in literary cows, too. In 'Outlines' she playfully notes that more attention should be paid to the changing life of non-human bodies and environments:

> There is something very charming in an ancient snowstorm. The weather has varied almost as much in the course of generations as mankind. The snow of those days was more formally shaped and a good deal softer than the snow of ours, just as an eighteenth-century cow was no more like our cows than she was like the florid and fiery cows of Elizabethan pastures. Sufficient attention has scarcely been paid to this aspect of literature, which, it cannot be denied, has its importance.
>
> Our brilliant young men might do worse, when in search of a subject, than devote a year or two to cows in literature, snow in literature. (Woolf [1925] 2003: 184–5).

One of Woolf's earliest literary experiments does indeed pay attention to cows, including a particular cow who 'departed life' due to starvation (Woolf 1994b: 16). 'A Cockney's Farming Experiences', a little-known text which was written by the ten-year-old Virginia Stephen,[11] details how a farmer forgets about this dead cow and is fined by the Sanitary Corporation for leaving it in the middle of the road. Then, feeling guilty about his actions, he thinks he sees a bull coming at him but realises it is actually just a calf going towards the pond and that this calf 'was much more frightened' than he was. Following the episode he is concerned that his wife would 'laugh' at him 'for being frightened by a cow' (16) and then worries that his wife has found a lover. When he discovers that she has not, he returns to the task of milking cows in better spirits; thus at this early age, Woolf reverses the gendered idyllic rural image of the milkmaid milking her cow peacefully. But Woolf also deterritorialises the cow from its typical functionality, its mechanical relationship with humans as provider of milk for consumption, at the same time as she pokes fun at the ineptitude of men ('It is just like a man to blunder') by exposing this man's inefficiency in having his pail upside down and therefore losing most of the milk. This provokes a humorous response from both him and his wife; the cow here provides laughter and 'joy' for the man and couple instead of milk. That is, the cow creates an event rather than fulfilling its characteristic role (20). Yet whilst the first part of Woolf's story ends with the farmer vowing 'I shall never forget my amateur farming experiences', the second part disrupts the zone of proximity created between human and cow. After inheriting money from his aunt, the husband hires an outsider to take over the farming duties and moves away with his wife to settle down near London, visiting the farm only on occasion during spring and summer. The farm becomes merely a place to generate income, and the cows are

reterritorialised as a key part of a capitalist enterprise; we witness the move from amateur encounters to professional profits: 'As the farm gave us a certain sum of money every year I had the satisfaction of feeling my money steadily increasing per annum' (22). Woolf's story therefore marks another example from the history of cows being reterritorialised within systems of exchange, a reterritorialisation that is written into the collective name of the species, where 'cattle' comes from the Anglo-French *catel* meaning 'property' and Medieval Latin *capitale*, meaning 'property, stock' (Velten 2007: 22). Perhaps more than any other animal, then, the cow reinforces Deleuze's point that when animals are removed from their territory by humans this is often due to 'the domain of property and ownership' (Deleuze and Parnet 2012).

Woolf's better-known novelistic landscapes are also populated by cows: in *The Voyage Out*, there are 'farmyards with pigs and cows' (Woolf [1915] 2004a: 320); in *Jacob's Room*, we read of how Jacob watches, and hears, the 'legs of cows' in the 'juicy and thick' grass: 'Munch, munch, he heard; then a short step through the grass; then again munch, munch, munch, as they tore the grass short at the roots' (Woolf [1922] 1992: 29); in *Orlando*, Woolf's protagonist sees 'cattle sprinkled on the dark fields' (Woolf [1928] 2004b: 161); and in *The Years*, we read of how cows 'munched' (Woolf [1937] 2002: 34, 148, 150, 224) and even 'coughed' (150) as they made their way through the smooth space of grassy fields – on a train ride north from London it was the sight of 'a quiet group of cows' that signalled to Kitty that 'they were in open country now' (198). Woolf's attention to such actions of munching and coughing is important in marking the territory of cows, for 'what intervenes in marking a territory is also a series of postures' (Deleuze and Parnet 2012). But it is in *The Waves* – the text Deleuze alludes to when discussing Woolf's becoming-animal – that cows lead us more clearly towards an involution of human and non-human that goes beyond characteristics and classifications and that signals the potential for a shared becoming-other. A clear example appears when Susan escapes the confines of her school and welcomes the beginning of the summer holidays:

> the day is still rolled up. I will not examine it until I step out on to the platform in the evening. I will not let myself even smell it until I smell the cold green air off the fields. But already these are not school fields; these are not school hedges; the men in these fields are doing real things; they fill carts with real hay; and those are real cows, not school cows. (Woolf [1931] 1998a: 48)

The real cows – as opposed to the State cows, or perhaps even Oedipalised cows, encountered in classroom materials and activities – begin Susan's process of escaping from the striated space of 'this school that I have hated' and her smoothing of the day that was 'rolled up' (Woolf [1931] 1998a: 48). Later in the novel, Susan is part of a zone of exchange or assemblage with cows. Unlike Bernard's 'school of fish' which figure in his description of his friends, here Susan is concerned purely with her ontological entanglement in a non-human event:

> 'At this hour, this still early hour, I think I am the field, I am the barn, I am the trees; mine are the flocks of birds, and this young hare who leaps, at the last moment when I step almost on him. Mine is the heron that stretches its vast wings lazily; and the cow that creaks as it pushes one foot before another, munching; and the wild, swooping swallow; and the faint red in the sky, and the green when the red fades; the silence and the bell; the call of the man fetching cart-horses from the fields – all are mine. I cannot be divided, or kept apart.' (Woolf [1931] 1998a: 78)

Susan is not claiming ownership over the natural world, but, in a similar vein to Woolf's, and Mansfield's, 'thin dog' cited by Deleuze, she is entangled in an ecological assemblage which includes 'the cow that creaks'. This is an example of where, as Susan describes a few pages later, 'all the world is breeding', and part of Woolf's worlding is undoubtedly cows 'push[ing] one foot before the other' and munching their way across the field (Woolf [1931] 1998a: 81). Woolf's countryside cows extend Deleuze and Guattari's description of *The Waves* beyond the indeterminate combinations of the human friends in the novel, emphasising that non-human animals are also 'simultaneously in this multiplicity and at its edge' (Deleuze and Guattari [1987] 2004a: 278).

The change from cows reinforcing the idyllic associations with the countryside landscape to cows as part of non/human assemblages is a more sustained theme in Woolf's final novel, *Between the Acts*. Detailing an English village pageant set in June 1939 on the eve of World War II, Woolf examines fears not only for humanity but for animality and the natural world. From the opening page, the proximity of human and cow that this novel will at various points explore is set out for the reader, when the first character we are introduced to, Mrs Haines, is revealed to have 'never feared cows' (Woolf [1941] 1998b: 3) – having lived in the Cornish town of Liskeard (where her family had lived for many years), she would have stayed near the cattle market that took place every Thursday.[12] And in the early stages of the novel, before the pageant begins, there are instances where Woolf playfully imagines a

'cow language' (25) and notes a desire of 'propinquity' shared between humans and cows (34). When the pageant begins, cows firmly mark their territory, with their presence more clearly affirmed due to the absence of humans on the stage:

> 'Ambitious, ain't it?' she said to Bartholomew, while they waited. Chuff, chuff, chuff went the machine. Could they talk? Could they move? No, for the play was going on. Yet the stage was empty; only the cows moved in the meadows; only the tick of the gramophone needle was heard. The tick, tick, tick seemed to hold them together, tranced. Nothing whatsoever appeared on the stage. (Woolf [1941] 1998b: 75)

But on this occasion, the presence of cows simply pacifies the audience, so that they 'sat gazing; and beheld gently and approvingly without interrogation':

> The view repeated in its own way what the tune was saying. The sun was sinking; the colours were merging; and the view was saying how after toil men rest from their labours; how coolness comes; reason prevails; and having unharnessed the team from the plough, neighbours dig in cottage gardens and lean over cottage gates. The cows, making a step forward, then standing still, were saying the same thing to perfection. (Woolf [1941] 1998b: 120–1)

Here, the cows' gentleness is transposed onto the audience, all of them settle into the calm and consoling territory associated with pastoral life: the return of 'coolness' and 'reason' after action.

As the novel progresses, however, we witness encounters which challenge the view of humans and cows divided by certain characteristics or features, or of cows that, as Bonnie Kime Scott has recently noted, 'model human behaviour' in Woolf's text (Scott 2012: 166).[13] As 'the stage was empty' and Miss La Trobe becomes 'paralysed' by the perceived failure of the play, it is cows who come to the rescue:

> Suddenly, as the illusion petered out, the cows took up the burden. One had lost her calf. In the very nick of time she lifted her great moon-eyed head and bellowed. All the great moon-eyed heads laid themselves back. From cow after cow came the same yearning bellow. The whole world was filled with dumb yearning. It was the primeval voice sounding loud in the ear of the present moment. Then the whole herd caught the infection. Lashing their tails, blobbed like pokers, they tossed their heads high, plunged and bellowed, as if Eros had planted his dart in their flanks and goaded them to fury. The cows annihilated the gap; bridged the distance; filled the emptiness and continued the emotion. (Woolf [1941] 1998b: 126; see also 77, 108, 157–8, 175)

Here cows are no longer passive extras in the background of the pageant, but are affirming their presence in 'the present moment', bellowing as an event of the pageant and of Woolf's novel. What we see here is less the cows making a 'human connection' (Scott 2012: 165) and more so the deterritorialisation of humanity where the human makes an *animal* connection. Articulating themselves in their herd, the cows 'annihilated the gap' not just between the acts of the play but between the past ('primeval') and the present (modernity), the relations between themselves and the human audience. Crucially, the 'dumb yearning' of the cows becomes precisely what 'bridged the distance' and 'continued the emotion' – their lack of language here is not seen as a privation.[14] Indeed the privation is on the side of the human audience; what they lack is an ability to engage with the play outside the chains of rationality and recognition – they continually need to know what the meaning of the pageant is, and how this relates to them. Woolf mocks this human desire for recognition, and the cows are in on the joke:

> Miss La Trobe waved her hand ecstatically at the cows.
>
> 'Thank Heaven!' she exclaimed.
>
> Suddenly the cows stopped; lowered their heads, and began browsing.
>
> Simultaneously the audience lowered their heads and read their programmes. (Woolf [1941] 1998b: 126)

The cows are not interested in any recognition from Miss La Trobe and they evade her attempt to capture them within her pageant, her attempt to thank them as though they had been actors on her stage. Her seemingly innocent wave is actually her effort to control the cows just as she wanted to capture her audience (she continually worries that they are 'slipping the noose'; Woolf [1941] 1998b: 161). But the cows resist the call to fall under human control, to become moulded or modelled as State animals, precisely because they do not desire to become stage animals.

The cows launch the becoming-animal of Woolf's novel, and specifically play their role in the becoming-animal of Lucy Swithin. Like the cows, Lucy is not interested in fixed meanings and rational responses, and like the cows she escapes the feelings the other characters have of being 'caught and caged', 'exposed', 'neither one thing nor the other', 'suspended, without being, in limbo' (Woolf [1941] 1998b: 158–9). Instead she affirms, reminiscent of Susan's 'I' in *The Waves*, the assembling of life shared amongst human and non-human: 'Sheep, cows, grass, trees, ourselves – all are one. If discordant, producing harmony.' This is not simply 'a circular tour of the imagination' as dismissed by

William and Isa (157), but a material-semiotic becoming. That is, if cows signal 'present-time reality' to the audience of the pageant (and to the reader of Woolf's novel), crucially this present-time reality is not one where human and non-human animals meet in homogeneous unity (161); rather, it is in the proliferation of differences that do not obey hierarchical rules, the affirmation of heterogeneous assemblages which include the cows as well as the human audience. This is evident as the pageant reaches its final act, when Miss La Trobe presents shards of glass reflecting to the audience:

> Ourselves! Ourselves!
>
> Out they leapt, jerked, skipped. Flashing, dazzling, dancing, jumping. Now old Bart... he was caught. Now Manresa. Here a nose... There a skirt... Then trousers only... Now perhaps a face... Ourselves? But that's cruel. To snap us as we are, before we've had time to assume... And only, too, in parts.... That's what's so distorting and upsetting and utterly unfair.
>
> Mopping, mowing, whisking, frisking, the looking-glasses darted, flashed, exposed. People in the back rows stood up to see the fun. Down they sat, caught themselves... What an awful show-up! Even for the old who, one might suppose, hadn't any longer any care about their faces.... And Lord! the jangle and the din! (Woolf [1941] 1998b: 165)

We read that 'the very cows joined in' to this multiplicity of mirrors reflecting the deterritorialisation of subjectivity as well as of nature: 'the reticence of nature was undone, and the barriers which should divide Man the Master from the Brute were dissolved' (Woolf [1941] 1998b: 165). As Louise Westling put it in her eco-critical reading of Woolf's text: 'this is the proper context for rethinking human destiny: a giddy tangle of forms and beings within each kind dances its own rhythm, irrepressibly intertwined' (Westling 1999: 867).

The final appearance of cows in *Between the Acts* involves 'a crude glass painting of a cow in a stable' rather than cows in the fields. Upon entering a public house, Miss La Trobe observes this painting, following which

> she raised her glass to her lips. And drank. And listened. Words of one syllable sank down into the mud. She drowsed; she nodded. The mud became fertile. Words rose above the intolerably laden dumb oxen plodding through the mud. Words without meaning – wonderful words. (Woolf [1941] 1998b: 191)

The combination of the artistic reproduction of the cow (despite its unsophisticated quality) and the words that make the mud fertile, affirms the becoming-animal of Woolf's novel itself, where a material-semiotic entanglement is presented – the muddy conceptualisation that leads to

consideration of a new type of language. The celebration of 'words without meaning' signals the pushing of language to its limit, what Deleuze describes as the becoming-animal of the writer:

> in a sense, if the writer is indeed one who pushes language to the limit, the limit that separates language from animality, that separates language from the cry, that separates language from song . . . One has to be on this limit . . . You always have to be at the limit that separates you from animality, but precisely in such a way that you are no longer separated from it. There is an inhumanity proper to the human body, and to the human mind, there are animal relations with the animal. (Deleuze and Parnet 2012)

We might draw a comparison here with the 'little language such as lovers use, words of one syllable such as children speak' that Bernard desires in *The Waves*. In fact, Bernard barely wants to sound human at all when he declares 'I need a howl; a cry . . . I have done with phrases' (Woolf [1931] 1998a: 246), and at one point he even specifies that what one really needs is 'a bark' (210). In the above quote from *Between the Acts* Woolf therefore provides us with an image of language and materiality meeting in a reconceptualisation of hum/animality; so at the same time as forming affinities with Deleuze's view of animality, the passage presents Woolf (and Deleuze) as, like Haraway, thinkers of the mud.[15]

III. City Cows: *Flush*, Flesh and *Anton Reiser*

Bringing Woolf and Deleuze into closer dialogue shows that they are also thinkers of the flesh. As Woolf recognises in *Between the Acts*, 'we're all flesh and blood under the skin' (Woolf [1941] 1998b: 36), and it is in moving away from the muddy countryside territories occupied by cows that Woolf's fleshly considerations of human–animal relations are most troubling, and that most clearly marks her ontological but also ethical affinity with Deleuze's becoming-animal (a concept which contrary to Haraway's claim about 'horror at the ordinariness of flesh' actually finds its reality precisely in the fleshly zone of indeterminacy between cow and human). This material-semiotic zone of proximity, a zone of fleshly reconceptualisation of human and animal relations, is shared by Woolf and Deleuze in their exploration of cows that are quite literally deterritorialised from their rural dwelling and reterritorialised in the city in Woolf's 1933 text *Flush: A Biography* and in Deleuze's reading of Karl Philipp Moritz's *Anton Reiser* (1785–1790).

It is not clear whether Deleuze and Guattari knew of Woolf's *Flush*, but they do bring Woolf and Moritz into a shared zone of proximity with cows in those pages of *A Thousand Plateaus* just before they outline their three kinds of animals:

> The German preromantic Karl Philipp Moritz feels responsible not for the calves that die but before the calves that die and give him the incredible feeling of an unknown Nature – *affect*. For the affect is not a personal feeling, nor is it a characteristic; it is the effectuation of a power of the pack that throws the self into upheaval and makes it reel. Who has not known the violence of these animal sequences, which uproot one from humanity, if only for an instant, making one scrape at one's bread like a rodent or giving one the yellow eyes of a feline? A fearsome involution calling us toward unheard-of becomings. These are not regressions, although fragments of regressions, sequences of regression may enter in. (Deleuze and Guattari [1987] 2004a: 265)

The section from *Anton Reiser* that Deleuze and Guattari allude to occurs in Part Three of Moritz's 'psychological novel' (as it is subtitled), after the narrator describes Anton's childhood reflections on '*the limitations imposed on each individual*', on the alienation of '*being lost amid the multitude*', and of the efforts to counter this:

> Often he would think himself into the entire being of another person – sometimes when he was walking along the street close beside a complete stranger – . . . he would press as close to such a person as decency permitted, in order to spend a moment in his atmosphere, and to see whether he could not penetrate the partition that separated this stranger's memories and thoughts from his own. (Moritz 1997: 182)

The narrator then recalls how Anton had witnessed the beheading of four criminals near Hanover, leading to the feeling that 'humanity seemed to him so worthless and insignificant that he buried his destiny and everything else in the idea that *humanity could be cut to pieces like an animal*' (Moritz 1997: 183; my emphasis). The shared vulnerability of human and animal is therefore brought to the fore; the simultaneous realisation of human dominance (those who will cut to pieces other humans and animals) and a more humble form of human agency (those who can be cut to pieces).

What is most striking about this passage, and why Deleuze was so drawn to it, is that it is about more than a simple bemoaning of the loss or lack of individuality, and of the fact that humanity could be reduced to such a 'small' and 'insignificant' act that compares to the 'cutting down of a tree in the forest, or the slaughter of an ox'; it intimates an

interest in the plight of the animal rather than only the human, and the affirmation of a shared vulnerability that brings them into a zone of proximity with each other:

> Thenceforth, whenever he saw an animal being slaughtered, he always compared himself to it mentally – and as he so often had the opportunity to see this happening at the butcher's, for a long time all his thoughts were fixed on the attempt to divine the difference between himself and such a slaughtered animal. – He would often stand for hours staring at a calf, with head, eyes, ears, mouth, and nose; and just as he did with *human strangers*, he would lean as close as possible to the calf, often in the foolish delusion that he might gradually manage to think himself into the being of such an animal – he wanted intensely to know the difference between himself and the animal – and sometimes after contemplating it for a long time he would forget himself so far that he really believed that for a moment he had apprehended the *nature of the existence* of such a being. – In short, from his childhood onwards he often wondered what it would be like for him if he were, for example, a dog living among people, or some other animal. (Moritz 1997: 183; original emphasis)

Indeed his search for 'some essential difference between himself and the animal' (Moritz 1997: 183) only leads him to the animality shared by human and non-human. Struggling to come to terms with the fact that 'he *had* unalterably to be *himself*, and *could* not be anyone else; that he was constricted and *confined* in himself' his senses are 'restored' by the realisation that

> that evening his landlord, the butcher, would give him fresh sausages to *eat* – and that the parlour would be warmly *heated* – These entirely sensual, animal ideas renewed his urge to live – he entirely forgot his humanity, just as he had done after the execution of the criminals, and returned home as an *animal* in his inclinations and sensations. (Moritz 1997: 184–5; original emphasis)

The narrator adds: 'As an *animal* he wished to go on living' (Moritz 1997: 185); the vitality of life is intertwined with the animality of life. What Deleuze sees in this novel is human and animal brought into a zone of proximity, a deep sympathy or symbiosis, a sense of shared territory.[16]

Although approaching the question of the animal from a very different literary tradition, Woolf's *Flush* shares similarities with *Anton Reiser* in that both explore the reterritorialisation of cows in striated city spaces (London and Hanover, respectively). Woolf's fictional biography writes the life of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's cocker spaniel – from his early

years in the country to a rear bedroom in London's Wimpole Street, dognapping and incarceration in Whitechapel, a journey abroad to Florence, and finally his death on Barrett Browning's lap. Whilst critics for a long time overlooked this text as a relatively unserious work which does not contain the innovative aesthetics or philosophical import of Woolf's more famous modernist texts such as *To the Lighthouse* and *The Waves*, there is now an increased interest in Woolf's canine aesthetics and philosophy in modernist studies and animal studies. Where the early critical responses that did take this text seriously tended to focus on its allegorical significance – where Flush was viewed as a vehicle to explore human concerns of gender and class – more recently attention has turned to how Woolf offers a nuanced exploration of the relationship between human and dog.[17] Yet Woolf's underdog book *Flush* is also populated by a variety of other animals; as Jeanne Dubino has illustrated, these include 'wild and tamed species – a menagerie of cats and lions and tigers, partridges and parrots and rooks, elephants and fish and fox, black beetles and blue bottles, hares and fleas' (Dubino 2012: 151). Although Woolf's canine protagonist remains a fascinating example of a literary exploration of animality accompanied by all these other animals, the most ethically charged and ontologically challenging passage of Woolf's fictional biography concerns a species that is absent from this menagerie: the cow.

In the fourth chapter of Woolf's text, after Flush has been dognapped from his home in the gentrified Wimpole Street, and before we learn of his suffering in the seedy area of Whitechapel where he is held for ransom,[18] the reader's attention is turned to the plight of cows resident nearby. As I note towards the end of my discussion of *Flush* in *Virginia Woolf and the Materiality of Theory*: *Sex, Animal, Life* (2013), Woolf refers to Thomas Beames, the British writer who undertook investigative journalism in Victorian London in his 1852 book *The Rookeries of London*:

> He was shocked. Splendid buildings raised themselves in Westminster, yet just behind them were ruined sheds in which human beings lived herded together above herds of cows – 'two in each seven feet of space'. He felt that he ought to tell people what he had seen. Yet how could one describe politely a bedroom in which two or three families lived above a cow-shed, when the cow-shed had no ventilation, when the cows were milked and killed and eaten under the bedroom? (Woolf [1933] 1998c: 52)

Whilst much of the remainder of this paragraph in *Flush* goes on to focus on the suffering of the human beings living in these and similar

conditions, it is significant that Woolf's narrative emphasises the exposed vulnerability of these cows, and that the sentence she quotes directly, 'two in each seven feet of space', refers to them. This phrase is actually taken from the Hon. Frederick Byng's 1847 pamphlet addressed to the inhabitants of St James, Westminster, which is quoted at length by Beames:

> Two of these sheds are situated at the angle of Hopkins and New Streets (*real Rookeries*), and range one above the other, within a yard of the back of the houses in New Street. Forty cows are kept in them, two in each seven feet of space. There is no ventilation save by the unceiled tile roof, through which the ammoniacal vapours escape to the destruction of the health of the inmates. Besides the animals, there is, at one end, a large tank for grains, a store-place for turnips and hay, and between them a receptacle into which the liquid manure drains, and the solid is heaped. At the other end is a capacious vault with a brick partition, one division of which contains mangold-wurzel, turnips, and potatoes; and the other a dirty liquid, called brewers' wash, a portion of which is pumped up, and mixed with the food of the cows. (Cited in Beames 1852: 214–15)

A report compiled by a medical practitioner, Mr Anselbrook, concludes: 'From the above-mentioned facts it is obvious, that much of the milk sold at the West End of the Metropolis is elaborated in the udders of animals unnaturally treated, and kept in an atmosphere impregnated with gases detrimental to common health' (cited in Beames 1852: 215). Indeed we now know that adverse effects on such confined cows (including in our contemporary context) can lead to various health problems ranging from infertility to lameness, and bringing cows into man-made territories has also posed risks for human health (for example, with measles, smallpox and tuberculosis).

Woolf therefore records another example of cattle as an object of exchange, as a kind of property that will be used to serve humans. But within the capitalist workings of the city, there is no longer even the kind of connection between human and cow that was possible on the farm – these city cows are not allowed to find their territory amongst the grass and the open air. The constriction facing such cows might be an effect of the way that anthropocentric attitudes to animals – whether through Oedipalisation or classification – result in a lack of interest in having an 'animal relationship with the animal', but the outcome is a very real, fleshly reterritorialisation. Woolf's city cows expose the fact that, as Hannah Velten has shown, 'in contrast to the pastoralists who still struggle to rely on the live cow for their

livelihood, Western civilizations have reverted to being reliant mainly on the dead cow – for meat and leather' (Velten 2007: 127). What is so difficult for Woolf (and for Beames) to describe in the above passage, and what is most troubling for the reader, is the way in which these cows are already reduced to food and drink by the humans with whom they share such close living quarters. Beames himself argues that this is overwhelming evidence that cow-sheds, including underground sheds in Whitechapel which 'reek with an abominable odour', are 'dens of destitution' and a 'disgrace to our age' (Beames 1852: 213–16). But in exposing the vulnerability of the shared proximity between human and animal here, Woolf launches the becoming-animal of her work and of her readers – the ethical and ontological questions raised challenge our treatment and conceptualisation of animals and how their very being is subsumed, or indeed *consumed*, by humans. In other words, Woolf's confined city cows occupy the territory of thought as well as of material reality. Instead of simply recognising the plight of these cows, Woolf calls on us to respond to their situation; these cows are affect animals calling the reader to question the ethical and ontological limits of our hum/animality.

Key in all of this is not to stop at pity, but to explore the way in which these encounters create a new relation between, and conceptualisation of, human and animal. As Deleuze and Guattari note in *What is Philosophy?*, 'the slaughter of a calf remains present in thought not through pity but as the zone of exchange between man and animal in which something of one passes into the other' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 109). And as Alain Beaulieu explains, if we are to discover an animal ethics in Deleuze's philosophy,

> it is not an ethics of compassion in the face of suffering but rather an ethics through which one becomes worthy of the zone of proximity that happens, an ethics of solidarity with affects that seem to be the furthest from those simply produced by humans. This ethics, or more precisely this ethology, asks us to be on the lookout (*aux aguets*) in order to grasp sign-affects common to both human and non-human beings. (Beaulieu 2011: 83)

Part of a Deleuzian animal ethics, or ethology, is therefore to understand that the ontological questions his philosophy raises concerning non/human boundaries are also fleshly questions concerning the real world – his is not a philosophy of the sublime of no use to those traversing the muddy field of animal studies.

The distinctly bovine territory shared by Woolf and Deleuze is evinced through a reading of Woolf's modernist animals, where she herself

is concerned with the immanent entanglements of human and non-human life. For what Woolf finally explores in *Flush* is the 'reality of becoming' as described in *Francis Bacon*, where Deleuze argues that Bacon's paintings draw our attention to the fact that

> meat is not dead flesh; it retains all the sufferings and assumes all the colours of living flesh. It manifests such convulsive pain and vulnerability, but also such delightful invention, colour, and acrobatics. Bacon does not say, 'Pity the beasts', but rather that every man who suffers is a piece of meat. Meat is the common zone of man and the beast, their zone of indiscernibility. (Deleuze [2003] 2005: 17)

Francis Bacon then returns us to Moritz and *Anton Reiser*, where part of the above passage detailing how Anton would 'stand for hours staring at a calf' is cited,[19] leading Deleuze to conclude that 'animals are part of humanity . . . we are all cattle'. For Deleuze, this is precisely 'the reality of becoming', which is not a question of resemblance between man and animal but 'a zone of indiscernibility more profound than any sentimental identification: the man who suffers is a beast, the beast that suffers is a man'. 'What revolutionary person', asks Deleuze, 'in art, politics, religion, or elsewhere – has not felt that extreme moment when he or she was nothing but a beast, and became responsible not for the calves that died, but *before* the calves that died?' (Deleuze [2003] 2005: 18). We can reject Haraway's accusation of his 'horror at the ordinariness of flesh', because, while Deleuze's cows might take part in his ontology without him having paid great attention to their fleshly realities, we can see here that he is clearly drawn to fleshly encounters. Woolf's encounter with cows in *Flush* similarly points to such a territory of indiscernibility. The 'horror' for Woolf, as for Deleuze, is not directed towards the 'ordinariness of flesh' but towards the ways in which this ordinary flesh is (mis)treated despite the fact it signals a zone of proximity between humanity and animality. By confronting this particular reality of becoming, we might find a way to affect a positive deterritorialisation of these cows that resists reterritorialisation within humanist and capitalist environments. This is the ontological and ethical territory in which Deleuze and Woolf ask species to meet.

Notes

1. For an even more scathing and polemical dismissal of 'becoming-animal' see Vitamvor 2009/10.

2. In *The Beast and the Sovereign*, Derrida speaks of Deleuze and Guattari's 'great, rich chapter' on becoming-animal (in *A Thousand Plateaus*) and urges students to read Deleuze's writings on the animal '*in extenso*': 're-read it all', he recommends. Derrida (2009: 141–2).
3. Calarco 2008: 42–3. Despite Calarco's interest in Deleuze and Guattari's writings on the animal, however, they are only discussed in a few pages of his book. Calarco instead concentrates on Heidegger, Levinas, Agamben and Derrida.
4. Within Woolf studies attention has also been paid, for example, to Woolf's 'queer fish' (see Simpson 2003). See Carrie Rohman's essay in this volume for a discussion of Woolf's monkeys.
5. Woolf referred to herself in numerous letters as the Apes (for some examples see Woolf 1976: 106, 157, 393).
6. 'While 54 per cent of a slaughtered cow is used as beef products for human and pet consumption, the rest of the carcass (fat, bones, viscera and hide) is broken down by renderers into a range of other substances. For example, beef fat and fatty acids are used in show creams, crayons, floor wax, margarine, cosmetics, deodorants, detergents, soaps, perfumes, insecticides, linoleum, insulation and refrigerants' (Velten 2007: 157–8).
7. Although beyond the scope of this current essay, it is important to note that cows also populate Deleuze's own discussion of the history of philosophy: in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* Deleuze discusses the rumination of cows in relation to 'The Voluntary Beggar' in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (Deleuze [1983] 2006: 156); in *Difference and Repetition* he argues that Hegel was too harsh in his rejection of Schelling's conception of absolute knowledge as 'a night in which all cows are black' (Deleuze [1994] 2004b: 240) and also references Bergson's discussion of two kinds of recognition: 'that of the cow in the presence of grass, and that of a man summoning his memories: the second can serve no more than the first as a model for what it means to think' (170–1).
8. Interestingly, when it comes to conceiving of non-Oedipal desire in *Anti-Oedipus*, cows this time figure when Deleuze and Guattari refer to cattle in their example of 'breaks-flows out of which desire wells up, thereby constituting its productivity and continually grafting the process of production onto the product'. They describe the 'continuous, infinite flux' of 'the anus-machine and the intestine-machine, the intestine-machine and the stomach-machine, the stomach-machine and the mouth-machine, the mouth-machine and the flow of milk of a herd of dairy cattle ("and then … and then …")' (Deleuze and Guattari [1977] 2004b: 39).
9. For a discussion of Woolf and nature see Alt 2010; Czarnecki and Rohman 2011; Scott 2012.
10. Perhaps more than any other animal, cows are associated with the idealism of rural life, including the image of the milkmaid (Velten 2007: 67). Whilst Woolf's exploration of rural environments is far from idealistic, her writing, as I have shown, does at various points portray the cow's association with rural territories. Woolf notes both this link with milkmaids and with women in texts including *Orlando* and 'On Being Ill'.
11. This story was written for the *Hyde Park Gate News*, the family newspaper written by the Stephen children. It was first published in 1994.
12. See < http://www.liskeard.gov.uk/Historic-Liskeard.aspx > .
13. Scott notes that Woolf's depiction of the bellowing herd of cows might be influenced by her reading of Freud on the herd instinct before working on *Between the Acts* (Scott 2012: 165).

14. As Derrida outlines in *The Animal That Therefore I Am*:

> It would not be a matter of "giving speech back" to animals but perhaps of acceding to a thinking, however fabulous and chimerical it may be, that thinks the absence of the name and of the word otherwise, and as something other than a privation. (Derrida 2008: 48)

15. Braidotti has suggested that what is shared between Haraway and Deleuze, and also her own 'nomadic subject', is a deep 'alliance' in presenting theories which are 'materialist' and 'neo-literal', and therefore not limited to the 'textual' and 'resolutely not metaphorical': 'Haraway shares with Deleuze two key features: serious neo-foundational materialism on the one hand and a rigorous theory of relationality on the other' (Braidotti 2006: 200).
16. In *The Animal Side* Jean-Christophe Bailly describes this novel as providing 'the most poignant narrative of the possible community – through thought – between man and beast' (Bailly [2007] 2011: 23). He suggests that

> behind the wish to move beyond simple pragmatic proximity and beyond customary practices, what is imposed is an instance of nonjudgement, a place from which it would be impossible even to think about values of establishment or hierarchies [. . .] while the calf in question may indeed be 'poor in world,' then at least one can and must plunge down into that poverty and contemplate it – a mystical vantage point here might have me say 'contemplate it in all its splendor' – but it seems to me that Moritz is elsewhere, is headed somewhere other than into this type of pathos. The 'nature of the creature's existence' is a feeble glimmer, it does not fall straight like a ray, indeed it scarcely illuminates at all; but with what it makes perceptible, or between what it makes perceptible and the open, the possibility *is opened* of a thought about a relation that would no longer owe anything at all to humanist postulations or dreamy effusions. (Bailly [2007] 2011: 25)

17. For details of this changing critical response to *Flush* see Ryan 2013: 132–8.
18. Elizabeth Barrett Browning's Flush was actually stolen three times in total (in 1843, 1844 and 1846), as Woolf herself notes (Woolf [1933] 1998c: 109), and this was not an uncommon occurrence at the time (see Adams 2007: 26–8, 36–8; Snaith 2002: 620).
19. Due to the different translations, Deleuze's citation in *Francis Bacon* is slightly different from the one I quote above from Moritz's text:

> a calf, the head, the eyes, the snout, the nostrils . . . and sometimes he lost himself in such sustained contemplation of the beast that he really believed he experienced, for an instant, the *type of existence* of such a being . . . in short, the question if he, among men, was a dog or another animal had already occupied his thoughts since childhood. (Deleuze [2003] 2005: 18)

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Virginia Woolf's Ethical Subjectivity: Deleuze and Guattari's Worlding and Bernard's 'Becoming-Savage'

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Abstract

In Virginia Woolf's 1931 novel *The Waves*, one of Bernard's many becomings – his 'becoming-savage' – reveals a point of intersection between Woolfian aesthetics and Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy. Moreover, a triangulation of Woolf's 'moments of being', Deleuze and Guattari's 'worlding', and (post)coloniality provides a new and productive node for examining the debates surrounding imperialism in these thinkers' works, and an insistence that Woolf, read alongside Deleuze and Guattari, offers an alternate and precisely ethical way of being in the world.

Keywords: postcolonial, imperialism, primitivism, becoming, worlding, moments of being, language, de/territorialisation, subjectivity, ethics, desire

I. Woolf, Deleuze and Guattari and the Postcolonial

Jane Marcus's 1992 paradigm-shifting essay, 'Britannia Rules *The Waves*', carved out a space for thinking about Virginia Woolf's writing alongside imperial politics, and, ever since, scholars have examined and debated Woolf's relationship (whether it be critical or complicit) with empire. Twelve years after publishing this essay, Marcus revised her initial argument in the introduction to *Hearts of Darkness: White Women Write Race*, in which her earlier essay is reprinted, and claimed,

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'*The Waves* does write empire, despite what I argue in "Britannia Rules *The Waves*" ' (Marcus 2004: 13). Marcus continues to account for her own complicity and eagerness in limiting *The Waves* to a singular 'anti-imperialist' narrative:

> The overdetermined radical reading of the chapter that forms the center of this book ['Britannia Rules *The Waves*'] is derived, I now think, from the cultural need to produce a white English feminist voice of modernism that is not totally racist and makes a certain critique of imperialism. . . . Woolf gives us the text for the reading. But that is not all she gives us. She gives us texts for many other readings, including one that mourns the loss of empire. Do we have a right to ask that *The Waves* offer itself to only one reading? (Marcus 2004: 13)

Marcus's question suggests an ethics (in the Spinozian sense) inherent in literary scholarship: the necessity that scholars come open to the difference and multiplicity a book like *The Waves* holds at its very core and that they be receptive to ontological change (of both subject and object, reader and text). Beatrice Monaco describes Woolf's writing as 'a kind of blueprint for good practice: an ethical, implicitly ecological, and a spiritual achievement' (Monaco 2008: 190). Following the ethical practice Woolf models, then, requires readers of her work to cast aside predetermined or overdetermined answers and to be sensitive to the various and variant registers and rhythms of her books. Quite certainly, an anti-imperialist rhythm is embodied in *The Waves* – and in many others of Woolf's books – but as Marcus realises, *The Waves* is not wholly or entirely against empire, as the title of Kathy Phillips's 1994 *Virginia Woolf Against Empire* supposes.

An alternate reading of Woolf's writing about empire arises in an examination of how her aesthetics influenced the process philosophy of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari and, in particular, how Woolf's revision of subjectivity as a creative de- and reconfiguration (those transitory and illusive moments of being) intersects with her critique of the enforcement of borders – between nations, genders, races, and so forth. Deleuze and Guattari's theory of worlding, becomings-indiscernible/-impersonal/-imperceptible, 'becoming-everybody/everything' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 280), is importantly inspired in part by Woolf's moments of being: the 'saturated atom'[1] often figured as a ring, drop or globe in *The Waves*. Jean-Jacques Lecercle upholds moments of being as 'the best illustrations . . . of the Deleuzian event' (Lecercle 2002: 151), but Woolf's aesthetics are also an integral node of Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical (and literary) lineage. And in turn, their

interpretation of Woolf usefully illuminates the politics implicit in her aesthetics. In moments of being, one realises the 'pattern', the ontological and ecological network of connections, that we are not discrete entities but that, as Woolf writes,

> we . . . are connected with this; that the whole world is a work of art; that we are parts of this work of art. *Hamlet* or a Beethoven quartet is the truth about this vast mass that we call the world. But there is no Shakespeare, there is no Beethoven; certainly and emphatically there is no God; we are the words; we are the music; we are the thing itself. (Woolf [1976] 1985: 72)

Moments of being, then, are not intended as something that happens only on the page, in an insular 'text', but an occurrence that always opens into the world, crafting more and more ever mobile connections. A moment of being has nothing to do with a sense of self as static, complete and unified, but of a self perpetually in motion and in assemblage with other durations. Understood in these terms, moments of being are ethical enactments of potential becomings, and, as such, Woolf's fiction and Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy offer an unbounded way of being in the world in place of the imperialistic enforcement of borders.

Within the past twenty years, both Deleuze and Woolf scholarship has responded to various turns in postcolonial studies. Gayatri Spivak's early critique of Foucault and Deleuze in 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' (1988) and the recent *Deleuze and the Postcolonial* (Bignall and Patton 2010) are notable scholarly contributions on this point, as are the influential arguments of Marcus, Steven Putzel, Urmila Seshagiri, Anna Snaith and the like. Woolf's moments of being and Deleuze and Guattari's conception of 'worlding' stand in difference to the theory of worlding postcolonial critics like Spivak have advanced. Instead of violently severing groups of people into categorical communities, Deleuzian worlding creates, through a dispersal of subjectivity, fluid and ever rippling-outward radical communities. This worlding requires an aesthetics of desire as a function of deterritorialisation. As Deleuze argues and Woolf's fiction demonstrates,[2] fear reinforces borders, territorialises subjects, and consolidates both the 'self' and the 'other'. Cycles of de- and reterritorialisation(s) occur throughout Woolf's work, most noticeably in *The Waves*, which Deleuze and Guattari cite as an abstract machine (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 252). More particularly, one of Bernard's many becomings in *The Waves*, his 'becoming-savage', reveals a point of intersection between Woolfian aesthetics and Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy that might begin to resolve the uneasy gap between both Woolf's and Deleuze's writings and postcolonial studies.

The Waves importantly recognises its own complicity with empire, and at the very intersection between authorial imagination and subjectivity, Woolf (via the author figure, Bernard) exposes 'epistemic violence' (Spivak 1988: 280–1), but she also offers a new notion of subjectivity in her insistence on an ontology of desire, the transgression of boundaries and an 'immeasurably receptive' (Woolf 1931: 291) mode of being which de- and reterritorialises, although momentarily, an unessentialised view of both subject and world.

Spivak, in her important essay 'Can the Subaltern Speak?', argues that Deleuze's philosophy (as well as Foucault's) not only offers nothing for postcolonial studies but values, implicitly, a Eurocentric 'transparent' subject. As Andrew Robinson and Simon Tormey write in 'Living in Smooth Space: Deleuze, Postcolonialism and the Subaltern', 'it is clear that unless the claims advanced by Spivak are examined on their own terms, there will continue to be a significant barrier to the reception of Deleuze – and indeed Deleuze and Guattari – as "postcolonial" thinkers' regardless of the ways Deleuze and Guattari's thought has impacted current theorists of postcoloniality (Robinson and Tormey 2010: 20).[3] Robinson and Tormey aptly identify Spivak's (mis)reading of Deleuze and Guattari as they revalue these philosophers as productive (re)thinkers of postcolonial studies. They rightly and usefully locate the crux of Spivak's misinterpretation of Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy on her Lacanian insistence on a lacking subject, thus her resulting claim that Deleuze's philosophy disallows 'counterhegemonic ideological production' (Spivak 1988: 275). Robinson and Tormey respond by emphasising that Deleuze and Guattari do indeed

> have a counter-project, whether it is "ideological" or "counterhegemonic" is more doubtful; but in this case, the response might be: why should it be? Ideology by its very structure requires the reproduction of the lacking subject; (counter)hegemony requires the reproduction of arborescent integration. (Robinson and Tormey 2010: 31)

Given Deleuze's (and Guattari's) emphatic insistence on desire as a productive force (not a quality arising from a predetermined lack), Robinson and Tormey show that subjectivity for Deleuze and Guattari is by no means 'transparent', as Spivak claims. 'Desire is not something "possessed" by the sovereign subject', they write, 'but something inter-, sub- and extra-subjective' (Robinson and Tormey 2010: 22). The subjectivity with which Deleuze and Guattari are concerned is not 'transparent' or given, but it certainly is 'imperceptible' and thus in process. This imperceptibility relies precisely on desire as the creative

force of becomings and also underscores the ways in which Deleuze and Guattari's reading of Woolf informs their philosophy. Moreover, a triangulation of Woolf's aesthetics, Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy, and (post)coloniality provides a new and productive node for examining the debates surrounding imperialism in Woolf's writing, as well as Deleuze and Guattari's, and an insistence that Woolf, read alongside Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy, offers an alternate and precisely ethical way of being in the world.

II. Subjectivity, Psychoanalysis and the Primitive

Woolf's oeuvre displays a nuanced concern, in both form and content, with subjectivity as a flux of becoming and as a network of (self-) differentiation in which, as John Hughes argues in his Deleuzian reading of *The Voyage Out*, characters, in interrelation, dramatically affect each other in durational, unforeseen and irreversible ways. Moments of being as modes of affective change hinge, then, on an opening outward of the individual or 'character' and result in a durational flux of desire in which borders between self and other are momentarily dissolved and finally reconfigured. These moments critique Helen Ambrose's fascination in *The Voyage Out* with a 'new world' and the imperial imagination revealed in the cross-stitched landscape she begins onboard the *Eurphrosyne* – 'a great design of a tropical river running through a tropical forest, where spotted deer would eventually browse upon masses of fruit, bananas, oranges, and giant pomegranates, while a troop of naked natives whirled darts into the air' (Woolf [1915] 2004: 27) – and demonstrate the ways Woolf's aesthetics influenced Deleuze and Guattari's theory of worlding (as becoming-imperceptible, -indiscernible, -impersonal). This influence becomes most obvious in a reading of *The Waves*, one of the novels explicitly cited by Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus* when they put forth their philosophy alongside Woolf's writing.

Deleuze and Guattari's emphasis on *The Waves* comes as no surprise for those familiar with their philosophy and Woolf's fiction, for it is in this novel that the question of the 'self', both philosophical and ethical, is most pronounced. Although Hughes is right to emphasise the 'characters' participation in modes of relation' in *The Voyage Out* (Hughes 1997: 157), 'characters', in the traditional sense, still figure prominently in Woolf's first novel. (We might locate the change in her treatment of 'character' with *Jacob's Room*, as Arnold Bennett does, and with Woolf's response to Bennett's critique in 'Mr. Bennett and

Mrs. Brown', later revised and retitled as 'Character in Fiction'.) In *The Voyage Out*, Hirst tells Hewet that those peopling the hotel are 'all types' and that he 'could draw circles round the whole lot of them, and they'd never stray outside' (Woolf [1915] 2004: 102). Hirst's circle-drawing is a tool of categorisation and thus of the creation (and enforcement) of borders. Woolf certainly criticises Hirst's view of a world of chalk circles around people's feet (via Hewet's comments to Rachel), but not until *The Waves* does she formally and most explicitly dissolve the notion of 'character' to which those like Hirst subscribe.

From the outset of *The Waves*, boundaries are introduced; in the next moment, these lines of division lose hegemony. In the first lyrical interlude, the narrator describes 'the world seen without a self' (Woolf 1931: 287): 'Gradually as the sky whitened a dark line lay on the horizon dividing the sea from the sky'. Then, 'the surface of the sea slowly became transparent and lay rippling and sparkling until the dark stripes were almost rubbed out' (7). These lines of division lack permanence. They exist based upon light and (inhuman) perspective.[4] When light and perspective change, the lines fade and almost disappear. The six voices in *The Waves*, while arguably different, similarly lose their subtle distinctions as we read through the text, as images or phrases are introduced by one voice and later drift in and out of the narrative in another voice. These six voices are named (Bernard, Susan, Neville, Rhoda, Louis and Jinny), but Woolf notably did not intend these voices as characters. In a diary entry dated 8 October 1931, Woolf writes: 'The W[aves] is not what they say. Odd, that they (The Times) shd. praise my characters when I meant to have none' (Woolf 1982: 47). Alternately, Woolf envisioned these six voices as an irreducible whole, as a network of difference and of self-differentiation, not as quantifiable parts of a set.[5]

Woolf's formal choice to name the voices of *The Waves* parallels, also, Deleuze and Guattari's authorial decision in *A Thousand Plateaus*. They bring this stylistic choice into the larger philosophical tract by discussing, in the introduction, the reason they have kept their names:

> Out of habit, purely out of habit. To make ourselves unrecognizable in turn. To render imperceptible, not ourselves, but what makes us act, feel, and think. . . . To reach not the point where one no longer says I, but the point where it is no longer of any importance whether one says I. We are no longer ourselves. Each will know his own. We have been aided, inspired, multiplied. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 3)

This passage remarkably echoes Woolf's words in the first chapter of *A Room of One's Own*: ' "I" is only a convenient term for somebody who has no real being… (call me Mary Beton, Mary Seton, Mary Carmichael or by any other name you please – it is not a matter of importance)' (Woolf 1929: 4–5). For Woolf, Deleuze and Guattari, the 'I' paradoxically becomes a marker of imperceptibility. Certainly, these reasons for using the conventional (although refigured) 'I' might likewise be appropriate for a reading of *The Waves*, where 'I' is often mirrored and refracted in order to disrupt the idea of a singular self and where the globed moment of being makes perceptible the moment of imperceptibility, of worlding, in which subjectivity is revealed outside the narrative constraints of 'character in fiction'.[6]

To contextualise Woolf's aesthetics of subjectivity (and Deleuze's parallel philosophy of becoming), a larger discussion of the historical, philosophical theories of subjectivity becomes necessary; thus Freudian psychoanalysis (central to the 'primitive' in modernist literature) becomes a significant contrast for Bernard's figuration of the 'savage' in *The Waves*. Freud's thought notably influenced Woolf's Bloomsbury circle, as studies such as Elizabeth Abel's have shown; and the Woolfs of course published the first English translations of Freud at the Hogarth Press. Although Woolf claims not to have read Freud until after meeting him in 1939, she would have been familiar with the basic tenets of his theory and those of Melanie Klein (who lectured at Adrian and Karen Stephen's home) through conversations in the Bloomsbury Group.[7]

Seshagiri's reading of Freud accurately highlights the primitivist impulse of *Interpretation of Dreams*, which 'argued that each individual's movement from infancy to adult consciousness reenacts humanity's development from (dark) savagery to (white) civilization' (Seshagiri 2010: 29). This same theory of the subject figures prominently in *Totem and Taboo* (1913), the definitive translation of which was edited by Lytton Strachey's brother, James. In the first chapter of *Totem and Taboo*, 'The Horror of Incest', Freud claims:

> There are men still living who, as we believe, stand very near to primitive man, far nearer than we do, and whom we therefore regard as his direct heirs and representatives. Such is our view of those whom we describe as savages or half-savages; and their mental life must have a peculiar interest for us if we are right in seeing in it a well-preserved picture of an early state of our own development. (Freud [1913] 1950: 1)

The rhetoric Freud uses to convince his audience to attend to his argument, then, while positing a connection between the 'civilised'

and the 'barbarous', clearly categorises the two separately and affirms that, by studying the 'savages' and 'half-savages', civilised man might learn something about his former self and something about his own psychology.

Moreover, Freud overlays his study of the barbarous ('the most backward and miserable of savages, the aborigines of Australia') with his predetermined answer: the Oedipus complex. Freud links the neurotic and the savage in *Totem and Taboo* by way of a discussion of desire and repression (or, the 'fail[ure] to get free from the psycho-sexual conditions . . . [of] childhood'). 'It is therefore of no small importance', Freud writes, 'that we are able to show that these same incestuous wishes, which are later destined to become unconscious, are still regarded by savage peoples as immediate perils against which the most severe measures of defense must be enforced' (Freud [1913] 1950: 17, 1). By tracing the development of the Oedipus complex from the present and material danger to the unconscious, Freud continues to affirm the relation of the barbarous to the civilised, while also differentiating the two.

For Freud, desire originates from a 'lack' (castration), and desire always points to the familial structure (desire for the mother or father, desire to kill the mother or father, and so on). Deleuze and Guattari critique Freud on precisely this point when they discuss the multiplicity of assemblages: 'packs in masses and masses in packs' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 34). 'What does psychoanalysis have to say about all of this? Oedipus, nothing but Oedipus', they write. Psychoanalysis 'flattens everything, masses and packs, molecular and molar machines, multiplicities of every variety. . . . It all leads back to daddy' (34–5). For Freud, then, 'there will always be a reduction to the One: the little scars, the holes, become subdivisions of the great scar or supreme hole named castration; the wolves become substitutes for a single Father, who turns up everywhere' (31). Notably, 'Oedipus is the figurehead of imperialism' (Deleuze and Guattari [1977] 2009: xx), thus Deleuze and Guattari's alternate reading of the Wolf-Man show them to be not only anti-Oedipal, but also anti-imperial. The reading of the Wolf-Man Deleuze and Guattari offer exactly parallels their insistence on becoming(s) and multiplicity in difference to Freud's reduction of desire as lack and of psychoses to the Father.

> All of this should be understood in intensity: the Wolf is the pack, in other words, the multiplicity instantaneously apprehended as such . . . . If the unconscious knows nothing of negation, it is because there is nothing negative in the unconscious. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 31)

Deleuze and Guattari once again affirm: there is no lack, nothing but the fullness of desire.

Furthermore, in his case study of the Australian aborigines, Freud's discussion of desire and taboo (as a 'social danger' [Freud (1913) 1950: 33]) is entangled with a rhetoric of contagion (along with the expected moral and biopolitical overtones):

> Anyone who has violated a taboo becomes taboo himself because he possesses the dangerous quality of tempting others to follow his example: why should he be allowed to do what is forbidden to others? Thus he is truly contagious in that every example encourages imitation, and for that reason he himself must be shunned. (Freud [1913] 1950: 32)

Freud later reiterates the connections he draws from desire to morality to contagion:

> The magical power that is attributed to taboo is based on the capacity for arousing temptation; . . . it acts like a contagion because examples are contagious and because the prohibited desire in the unconscious shifts from one thing to another. (Freud [1913] 1950: 35)

Desire, for Freud, spreads like a disease if left unchecked, and his language here strikingly parallels the rhetoric of imperialism and reinforcement of borders between colony and metropole, civilised and barbarous, self and other.[8] Of course, 'the self is only a threshold, a door, a becoming between two multiplicities' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 249), and contagion is precisely an infection of becoming: 'what interests us are modes of expansion, propagation, occupation, contagion, peopling. I am legion' (239).

Woolf understands desire differently than Freud, however, and Deleuze and Guattari's critique of Freudian theory rests in part with their reading of Woolf. When Deleuze and Guattari write 'Virginia Woolfs experiences herself not as a monkey or a fish but as a troop of monkeys, a school of fish, according to her variable relations of becoming with the people she approaches' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 239), they echo their critique of Freud in '1914: One or Several Wolves'. Deleuze and Guattari affirm Virginia Woolf(s) is not one: she (and her writing) are a multiplicity, a peopling impossible without contagion.[9] Virginia Woolf is a pack of woolfs, and the W[o]olf is a 'multiplicity instantaneously apprehended as such' (31). Moreover, Deleuze and Guattari understand moments of being as nodes of desire in Woolf's fiction, and their discussion of desire as a worlding, as a reconfiguration of subjectivity, has notable implications for Woolf's figuration of the 'savage' in *The Waves*. Importantly, the 'savage' does not appear in *The Waves* as a case

study of what we (the 'civilised') once were, as Freud argues in *Totem and Taboo*. Here, I echo Abel's affirmation of Woolf's acute analysis in 'Freudian Fiction' (1920) that psychoanalysis had become, even in her time, 'a colonization of the literary field that transforms "characters" into "cases" through the application of a doctrinal "key" that "simplifies rather than complicates" ' (Abel 1989: 17). Instead, the 'savage' allows submersion in a moment of being, a reconfiguration of subjectivity as a network of difference in which the radial other no longer consolidates the self but instead reveals the porousness of identity (and of 'nation') as such. The 'savage' indicates Woolf's insistence on and celebration of the qualitative the multiplicity of subjectivity (Deleuze and Guattari's wolf pack), not as a part of subjectivity that should be repressed but as part of the self ever unfolding in the world – a celebration of identity as qualitative multiplicity.

In this way, Woolf differentiates herself from other modernist writers and artists of the time, who, as Simon Gikandi argues, subsumed the primitive (especially in visual art, but not exclusively) as an 'appropriat[ion] [of] the other' and, in so doing, 'separate[d] the body of the savage from its aesthetic objects so that the latter could be valued even in the face of hostility toward the former' (Gikandi 2005: 42). Gikandi writes: 'modernism is seen as having embraced the other as part of the same.... The canonical view of modernism is that it represents a positive form of ethnocentrism, what has come to be known as primitivism'. However, Gikandi does not see the primitive as a 'positive' and instead argues that it is 'an apotheosis of the dialectic of identity and difference that is so crucial in the making of modern culture' and that 'one cannot have a discourse of primitivism that is not at the same time an inscription of the radical difference of the other' (44–5). Gikandi is right only insofar as identity is dialectical and resolves itself by way of synthesis (in Hegelian fashion); however, when subjectivity is understood differently – as multiplicity – the 'savage' no longer consolidates or synthesises the self.

Although Gikandi does not reference Freud, his argument relies precisely on the notion of the repression of desire and the discussion of the primitive so apparent in *Totem and Taboo*. After highlighting Roger Fry's writing about African sculpture ('Negro Sculpture') in *Vision and Design* and by way of concluding his own argument, Gikandi posits:

> If Africa did not exist as the site in which the fears and energies of modernism could be projected, it would have been invented ... Africa is the unconscious

> of modernism – its 'absent cause' – a force whose presence can neither be negated nor endorsed and must hence be repressed. (Gikandi 2005: 49)

Gikandi is precisely correct in his affirmation that Africa, if not a material sight of otherness, 'would have been invented'. And in part, the idea of Africa (and the colonies more generally) circulating in modernist texts was a site of invention: a created, exoticised place onto which the 'selves' could project their fears of otherness. However, through Bernard, as author-voice in *The Waves*, Woolf subtly critiques this projection and repression by representing the imperial imagination in which, as Marcus has shown, India is conflated with Africa (Marcus 2004: 84) and the 'savage' is at first figured as the self-consolidating other, although Woolf, by the conclusion of *The Waves*, disrupts this idea.

III. Language, Imperialism and Bernard's Becoming

In *The Waves*, Woolf is particularly concerned with the ethics of language, and, as Deleuze and Guattari affirm, representational language disallows becomings, while language, in becoming minoritarian and thus intense, can engender becomings. Thus, Bernard, as author figure, must move beyond representational language before he can experience qualitative becomings. Throughout *The Waves*, Bernard 'writes [things] down in his notebook under A or under B' (Woolf 1931: 70), thus limiting himself to a quantitative experience with language, where (word) + (word) + (word) = (linked phrase). The products of his word equations can then be categorised in alphabetical order in his little notebook, where they remain handy until a particular moment necessitates the use of one of these crafted phrases. Instead of experiencing stories as qualitative, as multiple and multiplicitous, he limits his role as author to the quantitative, and, as a result, Bernard's words are static and merely representational. He has yet to figure out how to make language 'stutter', how to make language surpass representation and become intense.

Moreover, as author-voice, formations of the self always relate to language and meaning(s) for Bernard, and throughout *The Waves*, we hear him questioning the fixity of these constructs. He contemplates as he waits for the others to meet him for dinner:

> what am I? There is no stability in this world. Who is to say what meaning there is in anything? Who is to foretell the flight of a word? It is a balloon that sails over tree-tops. To speak of knowledge is futile. . . . We are forever mixing ourselves with unknown quantities. (Woolf 1931: 118)

The ambiguous phrase 'unknown quantities' could suggest unmeasured quantities or might indicate measurable quantities of unknown substance. Either way, Bernard's emphasis here is on the unknown or unmeasured and proves that he has not yet escaped from a quantitative mindset. Thus, this moment of flux must return to the limits of stasis. Bernard thinks: 'But, as I put down my glass I remember; I am engaged to be married. I am to dine with my friends tonight. I am Bernard' (Woolf 1931: 118). By naming himself, by crafting a linear narrative for his 'character', by giving that character actions, Bernard attempts to claim his (singular) identity. As Deleuze and Guattari affirm, desire produces a subject in the process of slipping between haecceities in perpetual, ontological becoming; thus, 'there is no fixed subject unless there is repression' (Deleuze and Guattari [1977] 2009: 26).

In the above passage, Bernard represses multiple identities and so restricts himself from mixing with 'unknown quantities'. Yet, in other moments of the novel, Bernard recognises himself as multiple. He says: 'I do not believe in separation. We are not single' (Woolf 1931: 67). In the concluding episode of *The Waves*, Bernard's soliloquy brings the novel to a point of something close to a conclusive territorialisation as he again posits questions of the self. 'I have been talking of Bernard, Neville, Jinny, Susan, Rhoda, and Louis', he says.

> Am I all of them? Am I one and distinct? I do not know. We sat here together. But now Percival is dead, and Rhoda is dead; we are divided; we are not here. Yet I cannot find any obstacle separating us. There is no division between me and them. As I talked I felt, 'I am you.' This difference we make so much of, this identity we so feverishly cherish, was overcome. (Woolf 1931: 289)

Bernard's language here, however lovely, suggests a claiming of identity or a territorialising of the subject in a subsumption of difference into homogeneity. While *The Waves* exhibits Deleuzian becoming throughout, Bernard's synthesising attempt here is not yet one of becoming. Rather, Bernard's language appears at first as more congruent with the Hegelian dialectic, as Bernard 'overcomes' the difference between himself and the other voices (otherwise called 'characters') in the novel in an attempt to 'represent' himself.[10] In contrast, Bernard's moment of being in a later passage is made possible precisely because he has replaced dialectical logic with a new philosophical framework, an understanding of life and of the so-called 'self' as process, a perpetual becoming. And importantly, this epiphany surfaces in *The Waves* when Bernard contemplates his relationship with the radical 'other', the 'savage', whom he mentions in key passages.

Bernard exposes his imperial imagination when he creates a narrative of his friend Percival's death and also demonstrates an authorial epistemic violence by crafting an Orientalised depiction of the 'savage'. Bernard says:

> The cart sways incompetently from side to side. Now one wheel sticks in the rut, and at once innumerable natives in loin-cloths swarm round it, chattering excitedly. But they do nothing. Time seems endless, ambition vain. Over all broods a sense of the uselessness of human exertion. There are strange sour smells. An old man in a ditch continues to chew betel and to contemplate his navel. (Woolf 1931: 136)

According to Bernard, Percival then 'solves' the 'Oriental problem' by 'righting' the cart (Woolf 1931: 136). Unlike Woolf, who uses this moment to mock British 'solutions' to the 'problems' in India, Bernard views Percival as 'a God' (136). Later, when Bernard recalls the cart and the old man (whom he later calls the 'savage'), he attempts to consolidate the self (and by extension, the nation) through a contrast between the 'civilised' and the 'savage', his British self and the colonial other: 'I do not wish to be a man who sits for fifty years on the same spot thinking of his navel', Bernard says. 'I wish to be harnessed to a cart, a vegetable-cart that rattles over the cobbles' (185). Bernard characterises the 'natives' as lazy, 'chattering' people who contemplate their 'navel[s]', and, in so doing, uses the rhetoric of imperialism to create an image of the 'savage' so that he can territorialise the self.

Yet by the conclusion of *The Waves*, Bernard recognises the ways he has used storytelling to affirm his own, singular identity and, in like manner, realises that to tell the true story of his life, he must include more than his so-called 'self', more than his singular voice. Bernard accurately understands his life to be an assemblage not only of people, places, memories, scents and visions, but also of 'dreams', 'half-articulate ghosts' and 'unborn selves' (Woolf 1931: 289). Bernard affirms that even the 'savage' is part of his network of self-differentiation. Certainly, as part of Bernard's imperial imagination, the 'savage' is part of his 'self' and, as the (radical although homogenised) 'other', has allowed Bernard to consolidate his identity. But when *The Waves* is understood in terms of Deleuzian becoming (as Deleuze and Guattari would have it and as scholars like Monaco have previously argued), we notice that Bernard (and Woolf) push this point beyond a simple affirmation that the 'savage' has figured as a projection of fears and repressed desires (in the psychoanalytic sense) – although this recognition, in part, allows for Bernard's self-differentiation, his ontological becoming. Bernard

states: 'There is the old brute, too, the savage, the hairy man who dabbles his fingers in ropes of entrails; and gobbles and belches; whose speech is guttural, visceral – well, he is here. He squats in me' (289). This comment shows that Bernard's soliloquy has moved away from the language of the Hegelian dialectic. He recognises that there exists no 'essential' or 'actual' self (Hegel [1807] 2001: 635), but rather 'a new assembly of elements' (Woolf 1931: 279) in which the borders between selves and voices disintegrate but in which difference is not flattened into homogeneity. Bernard and Woolf thus craft 'unity out of multiplicity' (Woolf 1938: 143). This 'new assembly', both one and multiple, is the multiplicity of the wolf (pack) and of the 'Virginia Woolfs' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 239). Monaco understands the last episode of *The Waves* in precisely this way, for, as she affirms, 'it submerges all duality in the univocal substance of narrative. . . . Bernard is paramount in this process in which everything becomes what it is not, and yet to acknowledge this, is a creative act in itself' (Monaco 2008: 183).

In this last episode of *The Waves*, Bernard comes to understand the 'savage', the 'old man in' the 'ditch' whom he has upheld as his 'radical other', as part of his network of enfolding self-differentiation:

> He now holds a glass of fine old brandy in his paw. He brindles, purrs and shoots warm thrills all down my spine as I sip. It is true, he washes his hands before dinner, but they are still hairy. He buttons on trousers and waistcoats, but they contain the same organs. He jibs if I keep him waiting for dinner. He mops and mows perpetually pointing with his half-idiot gestures of greed and covetousness at what he desires. I assure you, I have great difficulty sometimes in controlling him. (Woolf 1931: 290)

While Bernard initially imagined the 'savage' as someone distinct from his class and from himself, he recognises that no distinguishing boundaries exist between him and the other voices in the text or even between him and the imagined 'savage'. Bernard has savage-ised the 'savage' just as he has 'orientalised the Orient', and, in so doing, he has upheld the rhetoric of fear that is the foundation of imperialism. But Bernard's insight here corrects the imperialist and psychoanalytical idea (exemplified, for instance, in *Totem and Taboo*) of desire supposedly created through lack, which must then be repressed, exorcised from a community, in order to contain the 'barbarous' and to protect the metropolis from contagion. In this passage, Woolf uncovers this rhetoric with the direct acknowledgement of 'desire' and 'control'. As Deleuze and Guattari affirm, the only thing lacking in desire is the subject, and when desire is not captured and overcoded by control,

becomings occur: when desire is no longer 'repressed', becomings-otherwise transform the subject. Thus, the 'savage' can be situated on a plane of consistency out of which differentiation can be actualised, and Bernard's moment of being (or worlding) is a node of virtuality that activates a new assemblage of subjectivity. Moreover, this connection is precisely ethical, in the Spinozian sense, and might be understood alongside Simone Bignall's arguments in 'Affective Assemblages: Ethics Beyond Enjoyment', in which she argues 'that aspects of Deleuzian philosophy privilege a certain idea of careful sociability, which expands the realm of practical ethics . . . to include unmediated qualities of interpersonal relationship as defining aspects of political and ethical life' (Bignall 2010: 79). It is this sort of ethical politics that Woolf gestures towards at the conclusion of *The Waves* when Bernard opens himself outwards in a connection with the 'savage' and, in so doing, creates new possibilities for community and subjectivity.

Moments of being are inherently temporal, thus Bernard's connection with the radical 'other' occurs necessarily in and through what Henri Bergson calls *durée*. In the durational moment of being when Bernard connects with the 'savage' and, in so doing, creates a radical community, Bernard escapes his previously limited, quantitative mindset. He stops counting and categorising and instead experiences a qualitative, narrative vision. Duration (and durational difference) for Woolf, Bergson and Deleuze is a qualitative concept; thus, Bernard's selves are not measurable and categorical but immeasurable and unable to be categorised. He states:

> Immeasurably receptive, holding everything, trembling with fullness, yet clear, contained – so my being seems . . . . It lies deep, tideless, immune, now that he is dead, the man I called 'Bernard,' the man who kept a book in his pocket in which he made notes. (Woolf 1931: 291)

Bernard recognises the self that he had previously imagined, a complete person in possession of Being, a singular 'self', to be a false version, a limitation. Furthermore, Bernard revises his earlier 'unknown quantities' (Woolf 1931: 118) to 'immeasurab[ility]', and the language here proves Bernard has abandoned his quantitative outlook for a qualitative one.

It is no surprise, then, that Bernard also releases his notebook, letting it and all it symbolised (categorisation, linked phrases, representative writing, and so forth) drop to the floor. Bernard instead wishes to move beyond representative language and to communicate more fully, more truthfully: 'I need a howl; a cry', he says. 'When the storm crosses the marsh and sweeps over me where I lie in the ditch unregarded. I need

no words. Nothing neat. None of those resonances… false phrases. I have done with phrases' (Woolf 1931: 295). Not only does Bernard tell us he is done crafting 'false phrases' – part of his linguistic and epistemic violence as author-figure – but he also assembles in a moment of being with the 'old man in' the 'ditch' without naming him, and in this moment, desire moves freely and Bernard no longer even attempts (or comments on the attempt) to repress it. In this way, the linguistic separation of the earlier 'He squats in me' (289) dissolves. There exists no distinction between 'he' and 'me' in this later passage, where the man formerly known as Bernard 'lie[s] in the ditch'. This moment of being remains inconclusive to the extent that these moments by necessity are only momentary, not total or complete. To understand them thus would be to miss the point, to relegate becoming(s) to a teleology. Importantly, *The Waves* concludes at the side of permeable borders where '*the waves broke on the shore*' (297), the point of potentialisation where ever more ethical formations of subjectivity are made possible in ever new configurations of community: becomings enable through desire. In an openness with the world, then, Bernard shows us the way into a being in the world that is not founded on the borders between self and other or of nation and colony but instead gestures towards the ways in which we might more ethically assemble in time as well as in space in a community of difference.

Notes

1. Writing of *The Waves*, then conceived as *The Moths*, on 28 November 1928, Woolf writes, 'The idea has come to me that what I want now to do is to saturate every atom' (Woolf 1980: 209). Deleuze and Guattari quote this entry when discussing worlding (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 280).
2. North most clearly articulates this point in *The Years*:

   > They're all afraid; afraid of being laughed at; afraid of giving themselves away.… We're all afraid of each other, he thought; afraid of what? Of criticism; of laughter; of people who think differently… That's what separates us; fear. (Woolf 1937: 414)

3. Robinson and Tormey (2010: 20) list thinkers Uday Singh Mehta, Achille Mbembe and Arjun Appadurai.
4. On this point see Rohman 2011; Monaco 2008: 177–9.
5. Deleuze discusses the difference between the 'whole' and the 'set' in particular relation to Bergson's notions of the 'open' and the 'closed' (most directly formulated in *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*). While the set is closed, 'the whole', according to Deleuze,

   > is of a different nature, it relates to time: it ranges over all sets of things, and it's precisely what stops them completely fulfilling their own tendency to become completely closed. Bergson's always saying that Time is the Open, is what changes – is constantly changing in nature – each moment. (Deleuze 1995: 55)

6. See also Ruth Porritt's useful analysis of how the 'sense of "I" is cast into doubt' in *The Waves* in her article, 'Surpassing Derrida's Deconstructed Self: Virginia Woolf's Poetic Disarticulation of the Self' (1992: 327). Porritt examines the increasing repetitions of 'I' in the novel as the six voices age:

   > As the sound or voice of 'I' begins to stand starkly alone, the signifier is loosened from the signified. . . . The word 'I' is becoming fragmented and dispersed in its meaning. . . . Did 'I' ever actually carry a message of self-identity, a message of self-presence? (Porritt 1992: 328)

   Notably, Woolf's conception of the self differs from Derrida's, which is one of the reasons that limiting Woolf to a Derridean framework is unsatisfying. Derrida's conception of difference remains Hegelian: difference is always 'outside'. Thus, it is no surprise that Porritt finds *The Waves* 'surpassing' Derridean theory. She concludes: 'The success of the individual voice implies the language and values shared by "We." A self is not an entity in its own right, but what exists in relationship with others' (Porritt 1992: 334).
7. See Woolf 1984: 202, 248–9 for an account of Woolf's meeting with Freud in January and beginning to read his work in December. Abel provides an insightful discussion of Woolf's reaction to the psychoanalytic debates surrounding Freud's work in the 1920s. Although, as Abel makes clear, Woolf claims not to have read Freud until 1939 (Abel 1989: 14), she did, at least, remark on the proofs of his *Introductory Lectures* in a letter to Molly McCarthy, dated 2 October 1924 (18–19).
8. As Anne McClintock writes,

   > Central to the idea of degeneration was the idea of contagion (the communication of disease, by touching, from body to body), and central to the idea of contagion was the peculiarly Victorian paranoia about boundary order . . . The poetics of contagion justified a politics of exclusion. (McClintock 1995: 47)

   McClintock's argument, of course, takes a cue from Foucault's study of the ways in which leper colonies were historically replaced by houses of confinement for the mad (*Madness and Civilization*) and how these sites of confinement were also part of the imperial and capitalistic structures of 'civilisation' (McClintock 1995: 47).
9. 'Virginia Woolfs' has been changed to 'Virginia Woolf' in Continuum's 2004 edition of *A Thousand Plateaus*; I have kept the plural here, as it playfully expresses the deterritorialisation of the proper name and the multiplicity of subjectivity. Deleuze and Guattari's points on the one and multiple are obviously taken, also, from a reading of Bergson:

   > In Bergson there is a distinction between numerical or extended multiplicities and qualitative or durational multiplicities. We are doing approximately the same thing when we distinguish between arborescent multiplicities and rhizomatic multiplicities. Between macro- and micromultiplicities. On the one hand, multiplicities that are extensive, divisible, and molar; unifiable, totalizable, organizable; conscious or preconscious – and on the other hand, libidinal, unconscious, molecular, intensive multiplicities composed of particles that do not divide without changing in nature, and distances that do not vary without entering another multiplicity and that constantly construct and dismantle themselves in the course of their communications, as they cross over into each other at, beyond, or before a certain threshold. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 33)

   See also Deleuze's discussion of the unified multiplicity of duration in *Bergsonism* (1988: 37–43, 76–92).

10. Hegel writes of the process of recognition in *Phenomenology of Spirit* as a dual and mutual system of othering – between master and slave and also between artisan and the crafted object – which induces a 'pure abstraction of being-for-self' (Hegel [1807] 2001: 632). Yet no mutual overcoming of contradiction (the highest stage of difference for Hegel) exists between the voices in *The Waves*. Bernard's language seems Hegelian, but the novel disallows Hegelian synthesis (a negation of the initial negation) because Woolf's project moves beyond the sort of representation or reflection that, according to Hegel, creates consolidated subjectivity. As Neville states earlier in the novel, Bernard has crafted these other voices with his writing and has attempted a 'being-for-self' like that of the Hegelian artisan or worker. Bernard believes that he has come to a greater understanding, a synthesis of lives that evades other characters in Woolf's novels or comes too briefly, too momentarily, to be considered as more than a *moment* of being. Perhaps, Bernard's 'overcoming' here results from his role as author-voice. While his attempted 'synthesis' is beautiful and even moving, an inherent violence exists in such a statement. He does not say that these voices are inextricably linked (as in a network or assemblage, which of course, the book is), but that 'I am you' – *subject*, verb, *object* – a representation or reflection of himself as his (crafted) characters.

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Entering Deleuze's Political Vision

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Abstract

How can Deleuzians make his philosophy as accessible as possible to political theorists and democratic publics? This essay provides principles to enter Deleuze's political vision, namely, to research the etymology of words, to discover the image beneath concepts, to diagram schemata using rigid lines, supple lines and lines of flight, and to construct rules that balance experimentation and caution. The essay then employs this method to explicate a fecund sentence about politics in *A Thousand Plateaus* and presents a case why Deleuze deserves greater visibility in the political theory canon.

Keywords: A Thousand Plateaus, Deleuze, democracy, philosophy, politics, vision

The task of political philosophy – according to Sheldon Wolin in his classic text, *Politics and Vision* – is to 'fashion a political cosmos out of political chaos' (Wolin 2004: 9). Many of the great statements of political philosophy arise in times of crisis, that is, when old paradigms and institutions have been shattered – for instance, in post-war Europe (Reggio 2007). A political philosopher advances a political metaphysics that includes categories of time, space, reality and energy; he or she describes what exists, but, more importantly, illuminates 'tantalizing possibilities' to inspire the formation of a better world (Wolin 2004: 20). A political philosopher may have a method, that is, a step-by-step procedure for initiates to arrive at predetermined destinations, but what gives a political philosophy richness is 'extra-scientific considerations', that is, knowledge of literature, cinema, religion, metaphysics, scientific

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developments in other fields of inquiry, and the history of ideas (Wolin 1969). A political philosopher participates in a tradition of discourse, an ongoing conversation about how to order collective human life. And yet a great political philosopher innovates, that is, expresses a vision that no one has seen before, in the same way that Van Gogh's paintings have changed how many of us view sunflowers or starry nights. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, it seems, we need a new epochal political theory to make sense of our fast-paced, interconnected world in which multiple constituencies interact on many registers of being (Connolly 2002).

Deleuze may be becoming 'our Kant', that is, the philosopher who orients contemporary discussions of epistemology, metaphysics, ethics, politics and aesthetics in the same way that Kant dominated those discussions in the high Enlightenment (Protevi 2001: 6–7; see also Negri 1995: 108). Take Deleuze's magnus opus, *A Thousand Plateaus*.[1] The book constructs a stunning array of concepts to redescribe political time ('the geology of morals'), political space ('smooth' and 'striated', 'territory', 'earth' and 'the Natal'), political bodies ('assemblages', 'rhizomes', 'bodies without organs', 'multiplicities', 'apparatuses of capture' and 'war machines') and political energy ('macro- and micropolitics'). On the one hand, the book displays Deleuze's apprenticeship in the history of philosophy, with concepts recast from Hume, Kant, Leibniz, Bergson, Nietzsche and others (Jones and Roffe 2009). On the other, Deleuze presents a singular vision that seems to accomplish the mission he assigned transcendental philosophy in *Difference and Repetition*: to explore the upper and lower reaches of this world, that is, the mysterious factors that influence politics but that elude traditional categories of political science (Deleuze 1994: 135). For many leftist political theorists and activists today, Deleuze provides the impetus to replace or reformulate Marxist–Leninist and liberal–republican paradigms (Svirsky 2010).

Anyone who has read or taught *A Thousand Plateaus* knows, however, that the entry cost to glimpsing Deleuze's political vision is high. Consider, for example, Ian Buchanan's 'preliminary guide for how to get started' reading the first volume of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*: *Anti-Oedipus* (Buchanan 2008: 152). Buchanan recommends that newcomers to that book examine Deleuze's earlier work (particularly *Difference and Repetition*, *The Logic of Sense*, *Empiricism and Subjectivity*, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, *Dialogues* and *Negotiations*), study the classic texts of psychoanalysis (including by Freud, Lacan, Bettelheim, Klein and Reich), master the literature on

historical materialism (including books by Foucault, Sartre, Fanon and Turner) and peruse the referenced literary sources (including by Artaud, Lawrence, Proust, Beckett, Büchner, Nerval and Butler). Presumably, once one has accomplished this task, then one may begin to tackle the imposing secondary literatures addressed in *A Thousand Plateaus* on geology, linguistics, politics, aesthetics and (a thousand?) other topics. To be sure, great philosophers always demand time and effort and generate multifaceted research projects. Given that Deleuze envisioned his philosophy as an 'open system', whereby 'concepts relate to circumstances rather than essences', Deleuze scholars may rightly rejoice at all the myriad directions contemporary Deleuzians may explore (Deleuze 2005: 32). Yet setting the intellectual bar to entering Deleuze's political vision too high may confirm the accusation that Deleuze is a 'highly elitist author, indifferent toward politics' (Žižek 2003: 20). Is there a way to make Deleuze's 'grand style' (Olkowski 2011) more accessible without compromising its intellectual rigour or precision? May one democratise Deleuze's esoteric or hermetic passages, as it were, without collapsing into common sense?[2]

One of the more surprising remarks that Deleuze made in an interview about *A Thousand Plateaus* – a book in which one protagonist, Professor Challenger, empties a lecture hall (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 64) – is that he wants to forge alliances with like-minded people:

> The question that interests us in relation to *A Thousand Plateaus* is whether there are any resonances, common ground, with what other writers, musicians, painters, philosophers, and sociologists are doing or trying to do, from which we can all derive greater strength or confidence. (Deleuze 2005: 27)[3]

Deleuze was indifferent, though not necessarily hostile, to many features of democratic politics as traditionally understood, including governance by the majority and the rule of public opinion (Patton 2010a: 161–84). Yet Deleuze declared himself a leftist (*homme de gauche*) and envisioned a left composed of an 'aggregate of processes of minoritarian becomings' in which everybody has some hand in governance though no one easily identifiable group (majority) dominates (Deleuze and Parnet 1996; see also Tampio 2009). Deleuze saw *A Thousand Plateaus* as a work of left political philosophy and wanted his book to be comprehensible to a wide array of people (each of whom is plied by difference and does not fit neatly into categories that define a majority). Deleuze did not think or desire his work to be easily accessible to currently existing mass populations, but he also did not envision himself as a beautiful soul who

cared about his own salvation rather than the well-being of society.[4] The question remains, though, how can Deleuzians advance the project of identifying or making common ground with an array of intellectuals and activists to enact concrete change? How can one make *A Thousand Plateaus* as easy to understand as possible while still honouring Deleuze's vision in all its singularity and complexity and injunctions to use it as a toolbox rather than as a package containing a settled meaning (Buchanan 2000)?

This essay proposes a handful of principles to facilitate entering Deleuze's political vision. Initially, I offer several rules of thumb that make Deleuze's political theory comprehensible with little more than a good dictionary and sketchpad. To extract these rules I plumb Deleuze's writings on Hume, Nietzsche and Bergson, as well as his books written in his own voice; and, once again, I emphasise that Deleuze's political theory 'ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 7). Deleuze's philosophy is an intricate, plastic and porous system that demands both careful study and receptivity to developments in philosophy, art, science and politics.[5] There is no royal road to Deleuzian political philosophy: but there are straighter ones. To substantiate this point, I explicate a sentence that contains an important political teaching of *A Thousand Plateaus*. The aim is not to simplify the Deleuzian 'abstract machine', or conceptual system, but to present a way to diagram the machinery so that others may more readily plug into it. I conclude by explaining why Deleuze deserves a more prominent place in the academic political theory canon.

I. The Political Vision of *A Thousand Plateaus*

> To comprehend *what is* is the task of philosophy, for *what is* is reason. As far as the individual is concerned, each individual is in any case a *child of his time*; thus philosophy, too, is *its own time comprehended in thoughts*. (Hegel 1991: 21)

A Thousand Plateaus may be the philosophical work that best captures our time in thought. Such a statement must immediately be qualified. Deleuze's entire philosophical corpus evades and opposes the Hegelian account of the phenomenology of spirit (Hardt 1993; Widder 2008). Each chapter title of *A Thousand Plateaus* has a date, but the dates are not arranged sequentially, thus subverting any attempt to find a

historical metanarrative that explains humanity's roots or *telos*. Deleuze prefers to view history stratographically, rather than chronologically, meaning that 'luminous points', physical or noetic, from the past may rise up to enrich or disrupt the present (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 59; see also Lampert 2006). Yet our time expresses its own singularity, both because of political, economic, technological and social changes from earlier milieus – such as the collapse of the Soviet Union, the accelerated construction of global markets, the emergence of the Internet, and the growing consensus in favour of treating men and women as equals – as well as because the historical archive has a renewed vitality in our age. Today, we can travel the world quickly in thought and extension and thus take an interest in the history of humanity, religion, science, music, mathematics, the state, capitalism and other topics discussed in *A Thousand Plateaus*. Such investigations are spurred by curiosity, but also by a practical conviction that we have a much broader palette of ideas and practices than heretofore to paint, in words and deeds, our time. In this essay, I indicate why Deleuze may be the philosopher who best expresses the spirit of the age, though a fuller defence of his paradigm will require the sustained effort of Deleuzian political theorists to show its timeliness.

A Thousand Plateaus stretches the Greek definition of politics as *ta politika*, that which happens in a *polis*, or city. Take the sentence: 'everything is political, but every politics is simultaneously a *macropolitics* and a *micropolitics*' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 213). Most political scientists view politics as 'who gets what, when, and how' (Lasswell 1936). Deleuze differs from most political scientists by refusing to privilege human rational actors as the main or sole actants in the political realm as well as by attributing primary motivation to sub-representational desires rather than self-conscious interests. Political scientists may enter Deleuze's terminology by distinguishing levels of analysis, from state policies and elections to public opinion and political psychology. But that entry point may misrepresent the elusive and mysterious features of the micropolitical that Deleuze wants to illuminate. Deleuze views the political, in terminology he primarily used in the late 1960s, as an Idea. An Idea is a 'virtual multiplicity' defined by 'differential relations' and 'concomitant singularities' (Deleuze 2004: 100). Like a Platonic Idea, the Deleuzian Idea transcends the actual world that we perceive with our naked eyes and helps structure, or pilot, those things that we see and touch. Deleuze's Idea, though, is Dionysian, or wild, combating every effort to place an Apollonian, or static, framework upon it (Deleuze 2004: 101; see also Smith 2012: 106–21).

In the defence of his *doctorat d'État*, published as 'The Method of Dramatization', Deleuze uses terms that are both philosophic and poetic to describe the elusive forces that press us to think anew: Ideas inhabit 'a zone of obscure distinction' that generates more stable concepts and things, but Ideas also have an intrinsic power to overturn established orders (Deleuze 2004: 101). Like Hannah Arendt, Deleuze celebrates the political as the site of natality, the capacity to give birth to something new (Arendt 1998). Deleuze differs from Arendt, though, through his astonishing statement that everything – not just humans in their civic or personal roles – is political. Deleuze stretches and deepens the field that political theorists may investigate to determine how we – now including the trans- and non-human – do and ought to live together in the universe.[6]

So is it proper to describe *A Thousand Plateaus* as a work of political philosophy or political theory? Political philosophy, in academic political science departments, often refers to the quest 'to replace opinion about the nature of political things by knowledge of the nature of political things' (Strauss 1989: 5). Deleuze does not endorse Platonic metaphysics or its accompanying elitist politics, but given his extensive reflections on the nature of philosophy, we may still consider the possibility that he is a political philosopher. In the 1960s, Sheldon Wolin argued for a type of political philosophy – subsequently called political theory – that privileges the exercise of the imagination over reason. In this respect, Deleuze – whose first book, *Empiricism and Subjectivity*, dedicates a chapter to the power of the imagination in ethics and knowledge – would probably call himself a political theorist. But does this term connote a dualism – between theory and practice, or possible and real experience – that Deleuze sought to overcome (Smith 2012: 89–105)? *Theoria*, in Greek, means 'a looking at' (from *thea* 'a view' + *horan* 'to see'); *praxis*, from the Greek *prattein* 'to do', means 'action'. Theory, put simply, is what we do with our eyes and practice is what we do with our hands. The Platonic tradition tries to maintain a sharp distinction between these two activities. Deleuze recasts this dualism rather than discards it entirely. In an interview with Michel Foucault called 'Intellectuals and Power', Deleuze explains:

> The relationships between theory and practice are [...] partial and fragmentary. On one side, a theory is always local and related to a limited field, and it is applied in another sphere, more or less distant from it [...] Practice is a set of relays from one theoretical point to another, and theory is a relay from one practice to another. No theory can develop without eventually

> encountering a wall, and practice is necessary for piercing this wall. (Foucault 1977: 206)[7]

For Deleuze, it is senseless to talk of disembodied philosophising. We always inhabit bodies that interact with other bodies in concrete physical locations. Nerves connect our eyes and hands, and skin is porous. There is an open circuit linking the images in our eyes, concepts in our brains, sensations on our fingertips, and actions of other bodies.[8] And yet, Deleuze insists, the relationship between sensibility and thinking is asymmetrical, meaning that there is always a disjunction between Ideas and concepts, on one side, and actuality on the other. Corporeal practices can jolt thinking, but they cannot determine it. Conversely, Ideas and concepts can prompt action that transforms the political sphere, but there is always friction in the transition from theory to practice. Deleuzian political theory is a sort of practice insofar as it enriches our vision of political possibilities and inspires us to work toward goals that would otherwise have remained occluded or unimagined.

II. How to Enter Deleuze's Political Vision

Let us now propose a few rules, extracted from years of reading and teaching *A Thousand Plateaus*, to facilitate a deeper comprehension of its political vision.

First Rule: Track Etymology

A philosopher masters concepts in the same way that a painter masters percepts or an author masters affects (Deleuze and Guattari 1994). Deleuze's method minimises as far as possible 'typographical, lexical, or syntactic creations' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 22). Deleuze's language is both strange and familiar.[9] How? In his *Introduction to Kant's Anthropology*, Foucault notes that Romance languages follow 'the secret law of a Latinity [. . .] which serves to guarantee the intrinsic exchange value of what is said' (Foucault 2008: 98). If one uses a dictionary to find the etymology of Deleuze's concepts in *A Thousand Plateaus*, one almost inevitably finds a Latin, Greek and/or Indo-European root. One of the key concepts of *A Thousand Plateaus*, for instance, territory (*territoire*) – and its cognates territorialisation and deterritorialisation – emerges from both 'earth, land' (*terra*) and 'to terrorise' (*terrere*) (Connolly 1995: xxii).[10]

Why does Deleuze say that 'etymology is like a specifically philosophical athleticism' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 8) or that we learn to think in dictionaries (Deleuze 2005: 165)? Clearly, a philosopher must master the art of thinking and concepts are the basic thought units that enable us to mentally grasp the sensible. Intuitions without concepts are blind: to see with our minds, we need to have a reservoir of concepts. The purpose of Deleuze's earliest philosophical monographs is precisely to practise using mental tools and weapons that he can redeploy in his own philosophy (Deleuze 2005: xv). Reading a dictionary does not suffice to think new thoughts, but it is crucial exercise in a philosophical apprenticeship.

In addition, studying etymology lets you recover a language before Christianity 'ruined the Roman preservation of the Greek enlightenment' (Lampert 1996: 174). When Deleuze uses an ordinary word 'filled with harmonics so distant that it risks being imperceptible to a nonphilosophical ear' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 8) he is taking up the project of the Nietzschean Enlightenment: to resituate the accomplishments of the 'West' upon an Epicurean, rather than a Platonic, metaphysical foundation (Lampert 1996: 166–86). 'The untimely is attained in relation to the most distant past, by the reversal of Platonism' – and the way to do that is to use words in a sense before they were overcoded by democratic Platonism, or Christianity (Deleuze 1990: 265). In sum, Deleuze, like Nietzsche, thinks the art of etymology empowers one to think clearly and in a way that circumvents, at least in part, the Christian inheritance (Nietzsche 2007: 34).

Second Rule: Find Images

Let us dwell more on why etymology helps clarify thinking. One of the surprising features of researching the etymology for concepts in Deleuze's most abstract, dense passages is that virtually all of them have a root in a concrete object. 'Art thinks no less than philosophy, but it thinks through affects and percepts' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 66). Hegel drew a sharp line between concepts and percepts: 'in *thinking*, the object does not present itself in picture-thoughts but in *Notions*, i.e. in a distinct *being-in-itself*' (Hegel 1977: 120). According to the Hegelian narrative of the history of philosophy, primitives (such as the Egyptians) thought in terms of images and sculptures, whereas the march of self-consciousness is defined by its abstraction into concepts or Notions.

Deleuze, on this front as on many others, opposes Hegel's effect on philosophy. This is how Deleuze advises a fellow philosopher:

> In the analysis of concepts, it is always better to begin with extremely simple, concrete situations, not with philosophical antecedents, *not even with problems* as such (the one and the multiple, etc.). Take multiplicities, for example. You want to begin with questions such as what is a *pack*? [...] I have only one thing to tell you: stick to the concrete, and always return to it. (Deleuze 2006: 362–3)

Deleuze, like many of the canonical figures in the history of political philosophy, 'sticks to the concrete', even if the concrete today differs from that of earlier eras.[11]

Deleuze's defence of picture-thinking goes back at least to his reading of Hume. In *A Treatise of Human Nature*, Hume extols Berkeley's idea that 'all general ideas are nothing but particular ones, annex'd to a certain term, which gives them a more extensive signification, and makes them recall upon occasion other individuals, which are similar to them' (Hume 2000: 17). Abstract ideas always bear the trace of a sensation or impression: 'the image in the mind is only that of a particular object, tho' the application of our reasoning be the same, as if it were universal' (Hume 2000: 18). Thinking cannot be reduced to sensations given to us: Deleuze and arguably even Hume himself recognise that the mind imposes conceptual casting upon the raw material of sensation (Kerslake 2009: 4). Yet Deleuze shared Hume's suspicion of a priori theorising and thought that it led to duplicity or confusion. That is why Deleuze opens the English translation of *Dialogues* by declaring that he has always been an empiricist, committed to tracing 'concepts from the lines that compose multiplicities' (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: viii).

Finding the image, though, does not mean sticking to the banal. Hume's example of returning to the everyday, famously, is playing a game of backgammon (Hume 2000: 175). Deleuze calls his project *transcendental* empiricism, however, to suggest that we need to experiment with our philosophical studies and corporeal practices to open the aperture through which we receive the world. "'Transcendental empiricism" is a kind of cognition that violates the normal rules of experience, yet nevertheless attains a "superior" realisation of sensation, imagination and thought' (Kerslake 2009: 26; see also Colebrook 2002: 69–89). Deleuze is an empiricist, but he resists the attempts to domesticate the faculties through the doctrines of good and common sense. To visualise the strange, we may need to employ intellectual and

visceral techniques on our singular and collective bodies (see Connolly 2002: 80–113).

Third Rule: Diagram Schemata

A Thousand Plateaus uses the method of 'stratoanalysis' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 22). Stratum is from the Latin *stratum* 'layer' (and the Indo-European base **stre-to-* 'to stretch'); analysis is from the Greek *analysis* 'break up, unfastening'. Stratoanalysis means to diagram the layers, sides and components of a body. Deleuze wrote his book on Francis Bacon with reproductions of the paintings in front of him (Smith 2005: xi). One helpful exercise when reading Deleuze's texts is to reverse this project: to diagram their conceptual arrangements, or schemata.[12]

In *What Is Philosophy?* Deleuze advises philosophers to master 'the art of the portrait':

> It is not a matter of 'making lifelike', that is, of repeating what a philosopher said but rather of producing resemblance by separating out both the plane of immanence he instituted and the new concepts he created. These are mental, noetic, and machinic portraits. Although they are usually created with philosophical tools, they can also be produced aesthetically. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 55)

A 'noetic' portrait – from Greek *nous* 'mind' – represents the structure and content, the bones and flesh, of a philosophical argument. We need to grasp a philosophical argument with our minds; but we can also use our hands and eyes to make the argument more intuitive.

Take, for example, the paragraph from *A Thousand Plateaus* that opens: 'Let us consider the three great strata concerning us, in other words, the ones that most directly bind us: the organism, signifiance, and subjectification' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 159). One way to diagram this argument is to draw a circle with a compass, lifting the head frequently to convey 'the principles of connection and heterogeneity' that makes all borders in the universe porous (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 7). Then, with a ruler, one may draw lines to make three strata, which may be labelled organism (body), signifiance (soul) and subjectification. And yet, the purpose of this paragraph is to draw attention to the side of the body (the one facing the pole of scission) that fluctuates and decomposes.[13] We may then make one side of our circle more perforated, with lines of flight fleeing this side of the body, and label the strata disarticulation, experimentation and nomadism (Figure 1). There is much more work to do to make this paragraph comprehensible

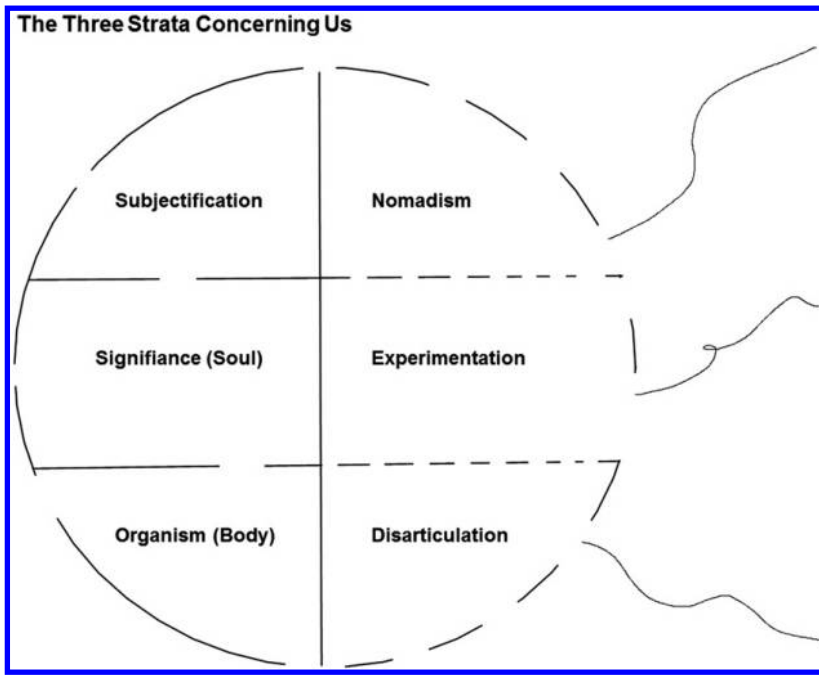


Figure 1. A diagram of the schema for *A Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 159–60).

or usable: but we can begin to appreciate the Apollonian (and not just Dionysian) features of Deleuzian political theory.

This strategy also gives us a clue to why Deleuze calls his philosophy a 'constructivism' in *What Is Philosophy?* Like Kant in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Deleuze thinks that philosophers can gain insight from mathematicians about how to construct concepts, objects and figures. What makes Deleuze a Kantian is his recognition that *we* draw the lines that define our concepts and mental representations of reality. Yet, in his practical philosophy, Kant thinks that *pure* practical reason lays the ground for the object of our striving (the 'realm of ends'), whereas Deleuze agrees with Hume that imagination is the key faculty of ethical and political thinking (Deleuze 1991: 55–72). The significance of this fact, for us, is that each of us may draw or fill in the schema with our own impure content. Just as there are no straight lines in nature, so too there are no straight lines in Deleuzian schemata (a wooden, plastic or metal ruler always has tiny divots). That is why Deleuze recommends cartography rather than decalcomania, map-making rather

than tracing: because any such drawing (one circle, two sides, three strata) is a provisional start to practical reflection or experimentation (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 12).

Fourth Rule: Construct Theories

A norm is an ought-claim; it is also, etymologically, a 'carpenter's square' (Latin *norma*; Greek *gnomon*). By diagramming Deleuze's arguments, we begin to see that he is a profoundly normative thinker when he asks how we ought to draw the lines that compose our individual and collective bodies (see also Jun 2009). 'How do you make yourself a Body without Organs?' – the title of Plateau Number 6 – could also be restated: how ought we balance the side of our bodies that tend towards order with the side that opens up onto difference? An ethical question: how do I experience the heightened sensations afforded by drugs without self-destructing or contributing to social violence (Connolly 1999: 97–114)? A political question: how do we delimit the identity and borders of Europe or North America in conditions of globalisation (Braidotti 2006)? Once we attend to the normative dimension of *A Thousand Plateaus*, we begin to see a pattern of injunctions.

First, map or diagram the body of which we are composed. Deleuze speaks of 'territories and deterritorializations measured with the craft of a surveyor' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 160). Political theorists ought to avail themselves of empirical research produced by political scientists using techniques such as multiple linear regression, as well as relevant scholarship produced by sociologists, historians and economists.

Next, chisel the borders that delimit our identities. 'It is an inevitable exercise' for humans who must breathe, eat, defecate and perform other activities that involve taking or releasing things into and out of our bodies (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 149). But it is also a political question par excellence: how do we define our ethical and political subjectivities? What historical material do we want schools to teach or not teach? With what countries, international organisations and foreign political parties do we want to forge alliances? What bodies threaten our integrity or amplify our joy? Deleuze's criteria for addressing these questions are Spinozist: 'life and death, youth and old age, sadness and joy' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 151). Sadness and joy diminish or increase the power of a body; thus, evaluative criteria always shift depending on the body and the forces that act upon it: 'each individual's pleasure or pain differs from the pleasure or pain of another to the

extent that the nature or essence of the one also differs from that of the other' (Spinoza 2002: 309). There is no a priori answer to the question of how to draw or puncture the lines that define us: so we need to experiment. And the sensibility of *A Thousand Plateaus* – though more sober than *Anti-Oedipus* (Holland 1999; Buchanan 2008) – is that we need to experiment more aggressively: 'Let's go further still' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 151).

Yet Deleuze also recommends the 'art of caution' to ensure that we do not experiment recklessly. 'You don't do it with a sledgehammer, you use a very fine file. You invent self-destructions that have nothing to do with the death drive' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 160). Philosophy, for Deleuze, may be about exploring the powerful and mysterious forces above and below the level of perception (the molecular), but *political* philosophy means translating these insights into concrete practice: 'molecular escapes and movements would be nothing if they did not return to the molar organizations to reshuffle their segments' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 216–17).

In an article on 'Dramatization as Method in Political Theory', Iain Mackenzie and Robert Porter detail the provisional and experimental procedure that Deleuze recommends for constructing concepts and principles. 'Dramatization is a method aimed at determining the dynamic nature of political concepts by "bringing them to life", in the way that dramatic performances can bring to life the characters and themes of a play script' (Mackenzie and Porter 2011: 482). A philosopher performs the role of screenwriter and director, issuing prompts on what to think as one goes through a text. But the text itself does not come alive unless the reader invests his or her own thoughts, interests and desires into it. Deleuze's philosophy has a systematic character that rewards determining how the parts fit together. Deleuze viewed his writing as an egg in which concepts and themes shoot off into every direction and yet reunite into a whole (Deleuze 2005: 14). At the same time, Deleuze encourages his readers to experiment with the concepts, looking for new ways to use them and to enlarge the stock of concepts. 'In political theory, dramatization as method requires that we stage new relations within and between the concepts that animate politics in order to express the indeterminate yet endlessly provocative nature of the Idea of the political' (Mackenzie and Porter 2011: 494). This process combines intellectual, aesthetic and practical faculties: no two people will dramatise a political theory the exact same way. Still, a political theory can provide a useful function by outlining a 'realistic utopia' towards which political bodies can strive (Patton 2010a: 185–210).

III. A Political Aphorism

> An aphorism, properly stamped and moulded, has not been 'deciphered' just because it has been read out; on the contrary, this is just the beginning of its proper *interpretation*, for this, an art of interpretation is needed. (Nietzsche 2007: 9)

There is a difference between how philosophers exposit their ideas (*Darstellung*) and how they formulate them (*Forschung*) (Hardt 1993: 87). I have been articulating an 'art of interpretation' that enables us to see a pattern, a refrain, in many of Deleuze's key political arguments; in this section, I employ this art to decipher a remarkable political theoretical statement in *A Thousand Plateaus*. This analysis reveals more of the steps (the *Forschung*) than may be necessary for most Deleuze commentary or application. But my hope is that this procedure will help us understand and explain to others – who may be on the fence about whether to invest time and energy in the Deleuzian venture – the power and appeal of Deleuze's vision.The aphorism addresses the question: how you do make yourself a body without organs? Or, how does one, as a political actor, maximise joy and minimise sadness (cf. Deleuze 1988: 28)?

> This is how it should be done: Lodge yourself on a stratum, experiment with the opportunities it offers, find an advantageous place on it, find potential movements of deterritorialization, possible lines of flight, experience them, produce flow conjunctions here and there, try out continuums of intensities segment by segment, have a small plot of new land at all times. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 161)

The image that informs the title of *A Thousand Plateaus* may be 'the landscape of Limousin, specifically the Millevaches plateau [Deleuze] could see from the windows of his house at Saint-Léonard-de-Noblat' (Dosse 2010: 249). Regardless, the terms in this passage paint a landscape of land (stratum, place, deterritorialisations, land), sky (lines of flight) and water (flow conjunctions).

Deleuze invites us to imagine ourselves inhabiting this landscape. Lodge is from the Frankish **laubja* 'shelter'; stratum is a 'horizontal layer'. To lodge yourself on a stratum means to inhabit a slice of the world: to be part of a family, country, religious group, profession, school of thought or any other customary practice. In each of our worlds, there are elements of stability, flux and uncertainty; the challenge is to diagram them with the 'craft of a surveyor'.

We can schematise this passage, like so many in *A Thousand Plateaus*, by drawing a circle with a perforated line down the middle, with the left side of the circle more solid (though, importantly, with holes) and the right side more porous, with lines of flight escaping out the side. The circle represents ourselves: the left side is our 'normal' or 'established' side (with a family, career, major language, profession, favourite sports teams, and so forth), the right side is our more experimental side (that gently challenges established family norms, that stretches the canon of our academic disciplines, that ignores popular customs and adopts unusual ones, and so forth), and the 'lines of flight' emanating from that side represent our nomadic tendencies of which we may not recognise their origin or anticipate their destination (listening to new music may germinate these tendencies).

Deleuze's practical rules in this passage are more 'counsels of prudence', given the various landscapes we each inhabit, than 'categorical imperatives', which apply unconditionally to every rational being (Kant 2002). On the one hand, Deleuze clearly presses us to test out (Latin *experiri*) new possibilities of life, to make the hemisphere of traditional values and practices smaller and the hemisphere of new values and practices larger. For each layer, stratum, we can try out appropriate strategies: say, by making friends with peoples of other religions, by attending lectures in other academic disciplines, by learning other languages, by going to the movies, by ingesting hallucinogens, by practising yoga, and so forth. If we are to imagine ourselves inhabiting a landscape, Deleuze presses us to cultivate a more 'wild' garden. On the other hand, Deleuze's advice to 'keep a small plot of new land at all times' indicates that we should not gamble everything at once in our experiments. Hard drugs or violent revolutionary politics may be terrible ways to become a BwO. From the perspective of a United States citizen, Deleuze reveals how misleading the dualities between liberals and conservatives, Democrats and Republicans, can be: we all balance traditional and experimental elements, though that fact does not diminish the still-relevant ethical distinction between how we balance those sides.

Finally, we have many options for how to flesh out this passage, for one, because we all inhabit multiple strata. In the same paragraph, Deleuze notes that 'We are in a social formation; first see how it is stratified for us and in us and at the place where we are; then descend from the strata to the deeper assemblage within which we are held' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 161). Social is from the Latin *sequi* 'to follow' and implies any way in which two or more humans

are connected. We could apply this passage to ourselves and our spouses, ourselves and our mentors, ourselves and Egyptian activists, ourselves and other people who aren't rich, and so forth. An aphorism 'must produce movements, bursts of extraordinary speed and slowness' (Deleuze 2006: xiii). The aphorism we are considering can move fast, as when a college student interprets this immediately in connection to how she ought to participate and intervene in her sorority ('gently tip the assemblage'); but the aphorism can also linger in our minds and produce new thoughts and connections ('actually, what happens in Egypt affects our own way of life', or 'maybe I thought I was more open-minded than I was on this particular issue: how can I expand my thinking or acting in productive ways?'). Deleuze's political vision bears the mark of its creator; but it also aims to enrich rather than supplant the singular ways that each of us views the world and ourselves. A genius does not want to be imitated but to be emulated 'by another genius, who is thereby awakened to the feeling of his own originality' (Kant 2000: 195). By this definition, Deleuze's political vision is both genius, or profoundly original, and aims to help all of us produce our own fresh ways of seeing the world.

IV. Deleuze and the Political Theory Canon

Wolin's *Politics and Vision* has been an extraordinarily influential text for leftist academic political theory since its original publication in 1960 (Frank and Tambornino 2000; Connolly and Botwinick 2001). Yet the updated edition dismisses postmodernists such as Deleuze for both misreading Nietzsche and corrupting democratic theory and practice with playfulness (Wolin 2004: 708). In a recent survey of political theorists in the United States, Deleuze is ranked number thirty-eight among scholars who have had the greatest impact on political theory in the past twenty years (Moore 2010: 267). Several decades into Foucault's prediction/invocation of what would come to be known as a Deleuzian century, Deleuze has not yet entered the canon of the history of political thought, though an increasing number of anglophone political theorists in political science departments employ Deleuzian approaches (see Beltrán 2010; Bennett 2010; Connolly 2010).[14]

Why should political theorists treat Deleuze with the seriousness hitherto reserved for Rawls and Habermas (numbers one and two in the aforementioned survey)? First, Deleuze illuminates aspects of the virtual level of politics that elude traditional political science and

theory. Joshua Ramey has shown that Deleuze participated in the hermetic and mystical traditions, as when he extols 'a politics of sorcery' in *A Thousand Plateaus*. As Rawls's and Habermas's constant invocations of reason and reasonableness attest, there is something deeply unsettling for post-Enlightenment philosophers to think about magic and the occult. Yet Kant himself recognised that there were limits to what could be explained phenomenally, and thus many of his most interesting (and controversial) passages consider the realm of reality that we can only think about but not know. Deleuze's explorations of the 'virtual' – his recasting of the Kantian 'noumenal' – illuminate 'the multiplicity of experiential states in which lines are blurred between human consciousness and animal awareness, between biopsychic life and the nature of matter itself' (Ramey 2010: 10). From the perspective of thinking about the subtle forces that influence politics – for instance, the way that support for a political idea or movement, as in the 2010 Arab Spring, can spread like wildfire – Deleuze provides an invaluable pair of lenses. Just as Van Gogh presented the energy radiating from trees, stars and sunflowers in a way that cameras cannot, Deleuze portrays the political flows and lines of flight that slip beneath the radar of most political scientists and theorists.

In addition, Deleuze provides a normative framework that enables us to recognise both the greatest threats to contemporary liberal democratic societies as well as the most fruitful avenues to their transformation. Al-Qaeda is a 'rhizome' – that is, an acentred, multidimensional, often-imperceptible network – that has befuddled political scientists and actors around the world. Deleuze helps us recognise the existence of these non-State 'war machines' and, as should be clear from Deleuze's more 'conservative' statements, marshal the resources to combat them.[15] More affirmatively, though, Deleuze's vision presses us to live life with a greater appreciation of the porosity that defines our ethical and political subjectivities. Many of us know, on some level, that bodies take things in from and leak out into the world and that, for instance, in seven years our bodies will retain none of their current cells. Yet this philosophical insight constantly combats the common-sense habit of ascribing fairly stable identities to bodies. Part of Deleuze's brilliance is that he provides a philosophical vocabulary – grounded in the roots of European languages and anomalous – to appreciate the plasticity and openness of our political identities, territories, parties, economies, and so forth. Reading Deleuze gives us insight into how to fold joy into our political practices.

Notes

1. Félix Guattari contributed key concepts – including the 'refrain' (*ritornello*) – to *A Thousand Plateaus* and wrote important essays and books on his own, including *The Three Ecologies* and *Chaosophy* (Dosse 2010; see also Guattari 1996 and Genosko 2009). In this essay, I focus on 'Deleuze' rather than 'Deleuze and Guattari' for two reasons. First, Deleuze had expressed his political vision before meeting Guattari in 1968 – see, for instance, the discussion of institutions in *Empiricism and Subjectivity* or the treatment of nomads in *Difference and Repetition*. Second, Deleuze wrote the final drafts and built a conceptual system from Guattari's 'schizoid writing-flow' (Smith 2006: 36–7). Deleuze is the proper name for the candidate to enter the history of political philosophy. On how proper names describe a collective machine of enunciation that includes multiple voices, see Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 37–8.
2. Or: 'Can we really envision and concretise a Deleuzian political activism, a becoming-active so badly needed in relation to today's political state of affairs?' (Thiele 2010: 29).
3. See also Deleuze's remark in an interview about *Anti-Oedipus*: 'We're looking for allies. We need allies. And we think these allies are already out there, that they've gone ahead without us, that there are lots of people who've had enough and are thinking, feeling, and working in similar directions: it's not a question of fashion but of a deeper "spirit of the age" informing converging projects in a wide range of fields' (Deleuze 2005: 22).
4. Deleuze rejects the mantle of 'the self-styled lucid thinker of an impossible revolution, whose very impossibility is such a source of pleasure' (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 145).
5. 'Deleuze and the political can only refer to an open-ended series of relations between philosophy and politics, a series of encounters between philosophical concepts and political events' (Patton 2000: 10). Political thinkers can better grasp the singularity of contemporary political events by using and modifying Deleuzian concepts; see Hickey-Moody and Malins 2007. This process can be intensified, though, by a deeper grasp of how Deleuze's system fits together, and this essay aims to disclose a procedure to do that.
6. Deleuze's main contribution to contemporary political theory, according to Nathan Widder (2012: x) is 'an unwavering attempt to expose [the micropolitical], investigate its mechanisms and dynamics [. . .], show how it unfolds to form the concepts and categories that define so much of personal, social, and political life, and explore how it can be engaged and adjusted'.
7. On the differences between Deleuze's and Foucault's conceptions of the theory–practice relation, see Patton 2010b.
8. On the political implications of a Deleuzian conception of the body–brain–culture network, see Connolly 2002.
9. 'Perhaps it is finally the strangeness of the lexicon, the heterogeneity of the abstract terms and their sheer number that are most striking about Deleuze's diction: an abstract, incorporeal, alien vocabulary for a new foreign language' (Bogue 2004: 12). The question becomes, though, how can we democrats popularise Deleuzian insights?
10. The etymologies in this essay draw upon the *Oxford English Dictionary* (http://www.oed.com) and the *Online Etymology Dictionary* (http://www.etymonline.com).
11. Classical political philosophy 'hardly uses a term which did not originate in the marketplace and is not in common use there' (Strauss 1989: 130). On the one hand, Deleuze, in the Straussian narrative of the history of political philosophy,

is a modern, refusing his assent to otherworldly metaphysics or elitist politics. On the other, Deleuze replicates the ancients' efforts to follow 'carefully and even scrupulously the articulation which is inherent in, and natural to, political life' (Strauss 1989: 61). Robert Pippin (2005) argues that Kant and Hegel do the best job articulating the concepts of modern life. I contend that our era – the 'postmodern', for lack of a better alternative – requires a different conceptual system and that Deleuze may be its finest exponent. Even though Deleuze's political philosophy requires intense effort to analyse the concepts and synthesise the whole, the language almost always emerges from simple images, such as the flow of a stream or a gust of wind.

12. Much of the best Deleuzian secondary literature may be similarly diagrammed; see, for instance, Véronique Bergen's essay on the Deleuzian 'cartographic task' (Bergen 2010).
13. *A Thousand Plateaus* employs intuition, the method of Bergsonism: 'If the composite represents the fact, it must be divided into tendencies or into pure presences that only exist in principle (*en droit*)' (Deleuze 1988: 23). In *Bergsonism* Deleuze speaks of any body having two slopes, or directions, space and duration, whereas in *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze employs other comparable distinctions, such as between the poles of fusion and scission. On the one hand, Deleuze's philosophical corpus as a whole grapples with the question of how to convey the distinctions and interconnections between the visible and the invisible, the actual and the virtual. On the other, Deleuze tries out several 'planes of immanence' that do not necessarily present the (political) cosmos in the same way (Patton 2010a: 9–15).
14. Deleuze is a prominent figure in academic disciplines across the humanities and social sciences, but his name rarely appears in top political theory journals such as *Political Theory*, the *American Political Science Review* or the *Journal of Politics*. One purpose of this essay is to help Deleuzians explain Deleuze's importance to political theorists and indicate how his work may be translated into debates about matters such as immigration, the environment or economic justice.
15. For instance, Marc Sageman's (2008) examination of terror networks may be enriched through Deleuzian concepts of the crack (*fêlure*), regimes of signs, war machines and lines of destruction. This topic merits its own books and articles: I merely mention it as a promising research agenda for Deleuzian political scientists.

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'The People Are Missing': Palestinians in Kuwait

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Abstract

This paper explores the effects of the Iraqi invasion on the Palestinian community in Kuwait. Specifically, it considers Gilles Deleuze's notion of the 'missing people' in relation both to the Palestinians deported after the 1991 Gulf War and to the majority of Kuwaitis who have not acknowledged the effects of this disappearance on either the Palestinians or themselves. The first section revisits the circumstances surrounding the deportation of approximately 380,000 Palestinians from Kuwait, while the second considers what was lost as a result. The final section proposes an 'ethics of the missing' as a possible means to engage and transform some of the ensuing problems.

Keywords: Deleuze, Palestinians, Kuwait, ethics, missing people, virtual, becoming

1991 is the year the Palestinian community in Kuwait went missing. Of the 380,000–400,000 Palestinians that lived and worked in Kuwait before the Iraqi invasion, only about 70,000 remained by the end of the year (Lesch 2005: 172). The consequences of the Gulf War on Palestinians deported from Kuwait to Jordan, Gaza and the West Bank are ongoing (Le Troquer and al-Oudat 1999). While the economic and, to some extent, political effects of this event on Palestinians can be calculated, the psychological, social and cultural effects are harder to tabulate. Twenty-two years on, between 55,000 and 70,000 Palestinians remain in Kuwait. They maintain a low profile, understandable given their precarious legal, socio-political and economic status. Kuwaitis tend

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to remain silent regarding what can be described as the 'overlapping yet irreconcilable experiences' of living with and without Palestinians in Kuwait (Said 2004: 143). The effects of the untimely disappearance of this once vibrant and dynamic community on Kuwait and its citizens are generally not recognised as worthy of investigation by Kuwaiti scholars or the general population.[1] As it turns out, the people who are missing are not only the deported Palestinians but also a community of people in Kuwait who register this deportation as a mistake and this absence of Palestinians as a loss. This Kuwaiti silence can be read as a symptom of a greater tendency to brush aside singular histories, cultures and experiences in the name of the majoritarian, monovocal narrative of the Islamo-Kuwaiti nation. I contend that the disregard of such singularities as well as the highly partisan manipulation of national and historical memory keep Kuwait at an impasse. A move towards the figuration of a less monolithic and more ethical community to come necessitates acknowledging or remembering these missing singularities, the missing Palestinians not least of all, and, in the process, becoming worthy of the event that happened.[2]

I. Disappearance

The causes and circumstances of the disappearance of the Palestinian community in Kuwait after the Gulf War have been well documented (Abed 1991; Human Rights Watch/Middle East 1991; Lesch 1991; Mattar 1994; Amnesty International 1996; Ghabra 1997b). Nonetheless, I would like to revisit some of the details relevant to my analysis. Kuwait's production of oil coincided with the Nakba (setback) of 1948, and the first major wave of Palestinians to Kuwait was a direct result of this coincidence (Ghabra 1987: 33–80; Pappe 2004: 141–82). This group of migrants consisted of urgently required teachers, engineers, doctors, civil servants, scientists, technicians and labourers (Ghabra 1987: 33–80; Brand 1988: 110–15; Lesch 2005: 163). The second wave of Palestinians came after the June 1967 war (known as the Naksa or catastrophe). This group consisted mainly of families of men already in Kuwait or new families deciding to leave behind the intolerable conditions of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza (Ghabra 1997b: 326; Lesch 2005: 164). The population of Palestinians in Kuwait grew from 15,173 in 1957 to 77,712 in 1965 and 147,696 in 1970 (the latter increase linked to the civil war in Jordan) (Lesch 2005: 163). In terms of percentage of the entire population, Palestinians went from 7.3 per cent in 1957 to 20 per cent in 1970 (Lesch

2005: 163). By 1990, the Palestinian population had reached between 380,000 and 400,000 (17–18 per cent of the entire population).

The complex and contradictory history of Palestinian–Kuwaiti relations attests to the often irreconcilable position of Palestinians in Kuwait. On the one hand, this community was organised, productive, rooted and relatively secure. As the largest and oldest expatriate group in Kuwait, the Palestinian community played a special role in the country's economic, political and social development. Palestinians occupied important positions in various ministries (notably the Ministry of Electricity and the Ministry of Public Works), in government bureaucracy, in the field of education (at primary, secondary and university levels) and in the media (Brand 1988: 111–12, 122). Kuwait's political and financial support of the Palestinian cause was strong. Abdul-Reda Assiri has outlined Kuwait's financial contributions to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) from 1961 until 1989 (Assiri 1990: 40). Government cash grants for this period amounted to approximately $892 million (Assiri 1990: 147–50). In addition, starting from 1965, a 5 per cent 'liberation tax' was deducted from the salaries of Palestinians working in Kuwait and contributed to the Palestine National Fund; from 1965–89, this amount totalled $122.5 million (Brand 1988: 122; Assiri 1990: 40). Aside from financial aid, Kuwait had been both politically and ideologically supportive of the Palestinian cause, often against other Arab states and, at times, the United States. The PLO established its first headquarters in Kuwait in October 1964, and Palestinian political activity was generally well supported by the Kuwaiti government. Palestinian cultural and social activities were popular and widely recognised. In 1967, with the new influx of Palestinians and overcrowding in government schools, Kuwait's Ministry of Education agreed to allow the PLO to operate its own schools using government school buildings and facilities at no expense (Brand 1988: 118–19).

On the other hand, despite their relative security, Palestinians in Kuwait had serious grievances that generally went unacknowledged by the Kuwaiti government and population. For example, while the Ministry of Education's decision to allow the PLO to operate its own schools may seem accommodating, in fact, singling out Palestinian students for different treatment would have exacerbated their sense of alienation from the Kuwaiti community. The PLO schools were closed in 1975 (for, as Laurie A. Brand explains, 'educational, financial, and political reasons'), and Palestinian children were 'reintegrated into Kuwaiti government schools' (Brand 1988: 120). But because overcrowding at government schools remained an issue, new regulations passed

in the 1980s once again threatened Palestinian students – especially those whose parents could not afford to register them in private schools (Brand 1988: 120–1). Even at the university level, Palestinian students encountered serious restrictions. Only 10 per cent of students accepted to Kuwait University – the only university in the country at the time – were permitted to be non-Kuwaiti. But, as Brand notes, 'this does not approach the number of Palestinian high school seniors seeking to continue their education' (Brand 1988: 121). Ann M. Lesch states that 'these restrictions, intended to discourage Palestinians from bringing their families to Kuwait, caused enormous resentment' (Lesch 2005: 166). For Palestinians, education has become a means of survival, and any threat to the educational process was, and continues to be, taken extremely seriously (Ghabra 1987: 76; Lesch 2005: 167).

On top of the uncertainty faced by Palestinian students and their parents, all Palestinians faced a threat to their residency in Kuwait. Very few Palestinians, even those born in the country and never having resided or worked anywhere else, had any hope of acquiring citizenship. Kuwait's naturalisation laws are notoriously restrictive. The nationality law of 1959 defined as 'first category' Kuwaitis those men and their descendants established in Kuwait since 1920. The children of Arab or Muslim fathers born in Kuwait could no longer obtain citizenship and neither could Arabic speakers who had worked and resided in Kuwait for ten years (as both groups had been allowed to do according to the 1948 nationality law). Nonetheless, tens of thousands of individuals, including hundreds of Palestinians, continued to be naturalised by the government after 1959, although, as per the law, naturalisation limited some of their rights. Further amendments to the nationality law over the years restricted rather than opened up opportunities for naturalisation. In 1960, for example, the number of individuals from outside the Gulf that could be naturalised was fixed at only fifty a year. Furthermore, non-Arab applicants had to reside in Kuwait for at least fifteen years before their applications were even considered. In 1981, naturalisation was restricted to Muslims only. In addition to Kuwait's own laws, Arab League resolutions which prohibited Arab countries from granting citizenship to Palestinians – purportedly in order not to weaken Palestinian political resolve and territorial claims – further reduced the chances for Palestinians to gain Kuwaiti citizenship (Shiblak 1996: 39). Unlike other migrant workers in Kuwait, who could return home once their contracts were up or they reached retirement age, most Palestinians had nowhere else to go.

Along with its restrictive naturalisation laws, Kuwait's *kafala* or sponsorship system was an added burden for Palestinians. The *kafala* system, introduced in 1975, requires that any non-Kuwaiti entering Kuwait must be sponsored by an individual Kuwaiti or a Kuwaiti-owned company. The Kuwaiti sponsor (*kafil*) must sign a form issued by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour to confirm that the non-Kuwaiti works for him or her; that any change in contract will be reported to the Immigration Department; and that the sponsor will pay for the worker's repatriation once the contract ends. Children below the age of twenty-one can be included on a working parent's residency (if that working parent's salary reaches the required minimum amount for inclusion). In practice, the *kafala* system is often abused, with sponsors selling sponsorships to the highest bidders and terminating or threatening to terminate sponsorships as they see fit. For the sponsored (especially those illegally sponsored), this results in a precarious residency. For Palestinians without citizenship in Kuwait or anywhere else, the *kafala* system was especially difficult. Male children above the age of twenty-one of parents living and working in the country could not remain on their parents' residencies. This meant that if they could not find a job or secure illegal *kafala* in Kuwait, they could be deported.

The economic downturn of 1986, caused by a serious drop in oil prices, led to unemployment in Kuwait (Ismael 1993: 162–3; Lesch 2005: 166). This, combined with a policy of 'Kuwaitisation' – a push to replace non-Kuwaiti workers with Kuwaitis – further restricted residency, entrance visas and employment opportunities for Palestinians (and other non-Kuwaitis). In 1989, due to its budget deficit, Kuwait drastically reduced its foreign aid in general; it halved aid to the PLO in particular, from $49.8 million in 1988 to $24.9 million in 1989 (Assiri 1990: 150). Political tensions in the country having to do with, among other things, the ongoing effects of the Suq Al-Manakh financial crisis of 1982, the Iraq – Iran war, recent terrorist attacks on Kuwaiti soil (linked to Kuwait's partisan support of Iraq), as well as pressure from Kuwaiti political activists for increased democratisation and a restoration of the National Assembly (unconstitutionally dissolved since 1986) contributed to a general atmosphere of unease. The government worried that the Palestinian community could trigger violence in Kuwait, as it had in Jordan and Lebanon. Finally, the Palestinian intifada was to become a cause for concern for the Kuwaiti government. As pro-intifada demonstrations in Kuwait became more political, leading to clashes with police, the government began to fear the effects on the local prodemocracy movement and on communal divides (Crystal 1992: 131).

In short, then, increasingly unequal education and employment opportunities in the 1970s and 1980s, together with restrictive practices against Palestinian social, political, residency and civil rights meant that life in Kuwait, while perhaps better for Palestinians than in other places, was far from perfect. It created a situation that can be described, in Edward Said's sense, as 'irreconcilable' or, in Deleuze's terms, as 'intolerable' (Said 2004: 143; Deleuze 1995: 171).[3] For Deleuze, the only viable response to the intolerable is through a 'people's revolutionary becoming', a process of becoming-minoritarian that invents or constitutes the people who are missing (Deleuze 1995: 171). This has been an ongoing process for Palestinians since their expulsion from Palestine in 1948. In Kuwait it resulted in the creation of an active and dynamic minor community. However, this hard-won state of affairs – precarious and problematic though it was – would not last.

The complex conditions of life for Palestinians in Kuwait described above make the response of some of these Palestinians to the Iraqi invasion understandable. Palestinian-Kuwaiti political scientist Shafeeq Ghabra has argued that Palestinians in Kuwait consisted of 'Iraqi sympathizers, opponents or protesters of the invasion, and neutral bystanders' (Ghabra 1997b: 328). He concludes that soon enough any 'sympathy for Saddam among Palestinians turned to feelings of fear and disgust' and that the at least 200,000 Palestinians who left Kuwait to Jordan 'could be classified as protestors' (Ghabra 1997b: 336–7). Add to that the 30,000 Palestinians who were already outside Kuwait for their summer vacation, this meant that only between 150,000 and 200,000 Palestinians remained in occupied Kuwait (Lesch 1991: 46; Mattar 1994: 41–2).

This is not to deny that some small groups of 'thugs, looters, opportunists, and ideologues' – Palestinians among other nationals – may have tried to benefit from the occupation (Ghabra 1997b: 336). Furthermore, some vulnerable and impoverished Palestinians – with no other recourse to income – may have participated in the workforce following Iraqi commands in order to survive (Ghabra 1997b: 331 – 2; Abu-Baker 2000: 53–4). Finally, as Ghabra has discussed, a small number of Palestinians did collaborate with the Iraqis and indeed acted violently against Kuwaitis (Ghabra 1997b: 334). However, based on the analyses and numbers provided by Ghabra, Lesch, Philip Mattar and Tawfiq Abu-Baker, among others, it is unlikely that most Palestinians in Kuwait supported the invasion.[4]

The position of the majority of the Palestinian community in Kuwait must not be confused with that of the PLO leadership, Palestinians

outside Kuwait, and Palestinian militants sent into Kuwait from Iraq (Lesch 1991: 46; Mattar 1994: 38–42; Ghabra 1997b: 333; Abu-Baker 2000: 56).[5] Examples of Palestinian resistance to the Iraqi occupation and assistance to Kuwaitis during the occupation are numerous. For example, several key leaders of Fatah were assassinated for their pro-Kuwait stance; some Palestinians worked with the Kuwaiti resistance, while others assisted their Kuwaiti friends to acquire food and supplies; Palestinians at Kuwait University helped salvage important papers for Kuwaiti professors; Palestinians who worked in the medical services and in the ministries of water and electricity helped to ensure that these essential services continued to operate; Palestinian bankers protected crucial bank records; and so on (Ghabra 1997b: 338–42).

The Kuwaiti response after liberation to the perceived Palestinian betrayal was disproportionate and, in Deleuze's Spinozist sense, unethical.[6] Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch/Middle East (formerly Middle East Watch), among others, have documented these widespread abuses, which included arbitrary arrests, unfair trials, summary executions, torture, detention, beatings, kidnappings and mass deportation (Human Rights Watch/Middle East 1991; Amnesty International 1996; Ghabra 1997b: 342–7; Lesch 2005: 170–2). The brutality of the initial Kuwaiti reaction subsided by June 1991, thanks to the efforts of the Kuwaiti Association to Defend War Victims, the Kuwaiti Bar Association, international pressure, a Palestinian committee organised to help resolve the volatile situation, and the intervention of then Prime Minister Saad Al-Abdallah Al-Sabah (Ghabra 1997b: 344). However, social, political and economic pressures against the remaining population of Palestinians in Kuwait continued, making it almost impossible for them to reside in the country. Palestinian students were banned from government schools and Kuwait University; Palestinians were restricted from working (both in the government and private sectors) and their residency permits were not renewed; rent, water and electricity bills for the period of occupation were enforced on Palestinians while such bills were cancelled for all Kuwaiti citizens; among many other forms of constraint and harassment (Lesch 2005: 171). 'It was', as Ghabra puts it, 'clear that Kuwait would no longer tolerate a large Palestinian community, and would have preferred that none stayed' (Ghabra 1997b: 346).

Today only about 55,000–70,000 Palestinians remain in Kuwait. A small percentage of these are Gazans with Egyptian documents who lack the Israeli permits needed to return to Gaza and, through international pressure, have been allowed to stay.[7] The rest, citizens

of various countries, are in Kuwait on residency permits that must be renewed annually or once every two years, but only if their employment contract is also renewed. Many parts of Hawalli, once the heart of the Palestinian community, are still eerily desolate. In autumn 1991, Michael Dumper came to the following prescient conclusion about the Palestinian community in Kuwait: 'Pockets of Palestinians will survive as restaurateurs, managers, and technicians, dependent as never before upon government and Kuwaiti approval. But the large, vibrant, challenging, virtually self-sustaining community has gone, probably forever' (Dumper 1991: 123).

II. Aftermath

As a result of the events described above, the Palestinians have become, once again in their modern history, a people who are missing. But what exactly is it that has gone forever and what are some of the implications of this loss to Kuwait? In terms of Kuwait's economy, the loss of the Palestinian community has meant a loss in rental and consumer spending. Unlike South Asian workers, who remit most of their earnings, Palestinians spent much of their income in Kuwait (Cordesman 1997: 62). Furthermore, the mostly unskilled, non-Arabic-speaking labour force that has replaced the Palestinian 'managers, professional and technical workers, and senior civil servants' is ill-equipped to manage financial capital or to move the country 'into the strategic development stage of a capital-intensive economy' (Ismael 1993: 177–8). The policy of Kuwaitisation has also contributed to this problem. While, in theory, Kuwaitisation aims to make the country more self-sufficient by replacing foreign labour with Kuwaiti labour, in practice, a government-imposed quota that forces private companies to hire a specific number of Kuwaitis is detrimental to productivity and discourages foreign investment.[8] It perpetuates an environment of non-professionalism, where Kuwaitis in the private sector are made to feel as though their positions are secure regardless of their performance (Al-Moosa and McLachlan 1985: 35–6). The situation is even worse in the public sector where firing Kuwaitis is prohibited.

In terms of Kuwait's demographic, the deportation of the Palestinians did nothing to reduce the ratio of Kuwaitis to non-Kuwaitis. If, as has been argued, Kuwait had hoped to use the circumstances of the invasion to reduce its reliance on foreign labour and balance the ratio of Kuwaitis to non-Kuwaitis, this plan has failed (Russell and Al-Ramadhan 1994). Based on the latest census in 2005, Kuwaitis are estimated to make up

39.5 per cent of the population today, with expatriates estimated to make up the majority 60.5 per cent (Kuwait Central Statistical Bureau 2011: 43). Of the expatriate population, at most 6.6 per cent are Palestinian. Had Kuwait considered naturalising a larger portion of this productive population (based on merit, contributions to the state, length of residency or other considered criteria), which for over forty years had helped to build the modern state, it might not have been in the demographic quandary it remains in today. The decision to naturalise mainly Bedouin was made primarily because it was believed they would be more supportive of government interests than others (as they had been historically) and because the government hoped it could count on their political support (Ghabra 1997a: 366).[9]

In the early decision to exclude Palestinians (and most other nationals) from citizenship, what was forfeited, in addition to highly skilled, educated and nationally loyal potential Kuwaitis, was an opportunity for diversity within the community and the chance to cultivate a sense of openness toward plurality and difference. As non-Gulf Arabs with a distinct cultural identity, their own specific social norms, dialect, culinary traditions and religious practices (Christian as well as Muslim), the large community of Palestinians in Kuwait contributed substantially to the country's heterogeneity. Because Palestinians and Kuwaitis shared educational experiences (most teachers in Kuwait were Palestinian and many Palestinians attended government schools), work (Palestinians were both employees under Kuwaiti bosses and bosses of Kuwaiti employees) and space (though the majority of Palestinians lived in Hawalli, shops, restaurants, streets and other communal spaces, obviously, were shared), differences were experienced at close range and, in most cases, comfortably. Citizenship would have legitimated this de facto heterogeneity of the country, helping to prevent the consolidation of a divisive national, social, cultural and religious logic.

Today, as was the case before the invasion, Kuwait remains sharply divided between Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis, both politically and in terms of identity (Longva 1997: 43–54; Al-Nakib 2000: 202–6).[10] Instead of a heterogeneous, open, 'experimental nation', Kuwait has become a closed, limiting, homogeneous and intolerant place (Bensmaïa 2003: 8). The 'virtual' presence of the missing Palestinians expresses this post-invasion striving for homogeneity (Deleuze 1989: 78). Réda Bensmaïa points out that 'under today's postmodern conditions, it is not geographical or even political boundaries that determine identities, but rather a plane of consistency that goes beyond the traditional idea of nation and determines its new transcendental configuration'

(Bensmaïa 2003: 8). Experimental nations are, for Bensmaïa, 'nations that writers have had to imagine or explore as if they were territories to rediscover and stake out, step by step' (Bensmaïa 2003: 8). Such experiments are 'transversal'; they 'assemble multiplicities, yet in such a way that the differences among entities are not effaced but intensified' (Bogue 2007: 2).

Transversals connect the seemingly separate without obliterating singularities.[11] As Ronald Bogue points out, they can form what Deleuze and Guattari describe as a 'people to come' (those who are, for now, missing) (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 110; Bogue 2007: 3, 14). Kuwait's categorical divisions and politics of exclusion not only prevent experimental, transversal people-as-nations from actualising. They also prevent any active recognition of the potential benefits such experiments could have for everyone in the country. The seeds of this outcome were sown, I would argue, when Kuwait did not have the foresight to recognise the Palestinian community as anything other than a potentially threatening outside. To regard those Palestinians born in Kuwait, educated in Kuwait, working in Kuwait, often speaking Kuwaiti dialect, familiar with Kuwaiti customs and culture, and with nowhere else to go as outsiders displayed a short-sightedness and paucity of imagination for which certain segments of the population continue to pay today (among them women, naturalised citizens, immigrant labour and the *bidoun* – that is, those without citizenship, not to be confused with Bedouin).

With the loss of the Palestinian community, Kuwait also lost its ethical standing among its non-Gulf Arab neighbours. Before the invasion, Kuwait was financially and politically supportive of the Palestinian national movement (Assiri 1990: 40; Crystal 1992: 129). In addition, the Kuwaiti population was generally sympathetic to the Palestinian cause. Palestinian leaders were permitted to organise themselves politically in Kuwait, and, as mentioned, the PLO opened its office there in 1964. The Fatah movement, led by Yasser Arafat, established its headquarters in Kuwait, where it remained until 1966. Military training, myriad organisations, social and cultural programmes, union work, fundraising and demonstrations were all sanctioned activities for Palestinians in Kuwait before the invasion. Jill Crystal states that 'all that was explicitly forbidden was a military presence. Implicitly forbidden was the use of Kuwait as a battleground for internal Palestinian divisions and involvement in domestic Kuwaiti political issues' (Crystal 1992: 131). Crystal identifies the first intifada as the turning point away from full government support of Palestinians, since the government began to fear

both the potential of a more militant Palestinian community within its borders (especially given past events in Lebanon and Jordan) and the effects this could have on the prodemocracy movement among Kuwaitis themselves (Ryan and Stork 1977; Crystal 1992: 131). But despite these concerns, Kuwait's support of the Palestinian national movement financially, diplomatically and morally continued mostly intact. Kuwait's support of the Palestinian cause and the Palestinian community within its borders provided a bridge, a way to connect itself with non-Gulf Arabs politically and emotionally aligned with the cause. Had the deportation of Palestinians from Kuwait not occurred, this connection might have provided Kuwait with a valuable means to establish stronger relations with countries in the region other than those in the Gulf. By opening itself up in this way, it may have been able to expand its political influence, increase its national security and overcome its dangerous 'siege mentality' (Assiri 1990: 129). Assiri attributes this 'sense of encirclement' to the fact that 'the state's immediate environment frequently has been politically inhospitable to its existence and survival' (Assiri 1990: 129). As it stands today, Kuwait is more alienated than ever from its Arab neighbours – the citizens of these countries, if not their governments (Joffe 1993: 187). In addition, for reasons that go beyond the scope of this paper, Kuwait's political standing in the Gulf has also waned. Saudi political influence and social pressure now dominate a once fiercely independent Kuwait, while Qatar and the UAE, specifically Dubai and Abu Dhabi, have replaced Kuwait in attracting financial investment, garnering international prestige and in terms of sheer cultural clout.

Despite these negative repercussions for Kuwait, it took the Kuwaiti government thirteen years to normalise relations with the Palestinian Authority and twenty-two years to reopen a Palestinian embassy in Kuwait in 2013. In 2004, the government announced that it was no longer seeking an apology from the PLO and that the Palestinians were forgiven; nonetheless, Mahmoud Abbas apologised 'to Kuwait and the Kuwaiti people for what [the Palestinians and the PLO] did' (BBC 2004). There have been a number of visits by Palestinian delegations to Kuwait since then, and, officially, Kuwait's support of Palestine and its cause is solid. In August 2008, the government donated $80 million to the World Bank to support the Palestinian Reform and Development Program (PRDP) (El Naggar and Assaf 2008). Kuwait has continued to support the PRDP, contributing a total of $230 million to date (World Bank 2012). During the Israeli bombardment of Gaza in December 2008, Kuwait's National Assembly strongly condemned

Israel's 'genocide' of unarmed civilians (Kuwait Times Staff Writer 2008). The Arab Economic, Social, and Development Summit, already scheduled to be held in Kuwait in January 2009, coincided with the events in Gaza, and Kuwait was in a position to take a leadership role among the Arab delegates over the issue, which it did (KUNA 2009). The Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah, described Israel's attack as a 'war crime and a crime against humanity' (Al Jazeera Satellite Network 2009). Public sympathy was strongly expressed for the Gazans in Kuwaiti newspapers, during a number of demonstrations, and through both public and private financial support (Taleb 2008). More recently, sixteen Kuwaitis – including Salafi member of the National Assembly, Walid Al-Tabtabai, and Deputy Secretary General of the Union of NGOs of the Islamic World, Mubarak Mutawwa – were part of the flotilla which attempted to breach Israel's naval blockade of Gaza in May 2010. On this occasion Mutawwa stated, 'Kuwait suffered the injustice of the Iraqi invasion in 1990. At that time of need we had the support of peace-loving nations. This is what Gaza needs now' (Kholaif 2010; translation modified). In addition to such financial and political support, the ongoing social and cultural work of the Kuwaitis for Jerusalem Committee, formed in 2000, has been a welcome development.

These positive steps by the Kuwaiti government are promising and should not be ignored. However, most average Kuwaitis today still do not express regret over the post-liberation events. At best, they are indifferent to or ignorant of the issue; at worst, they continue to hold a grudge. There remain voices in Kuwait that actively express anti-Palestinian sentiment, though none as virulently as Fuad Al-Hashim of *Al-Watan* newspaper in his daily column, 'Exclamation Point!!' For example, on 29 December 2008, two days after Israel's attack on Gaza, Al-Hashim had the following to say:

> I ask the Palestinians one question: How would the residents of Gaza and the West Bank feel if they saw the entire Kuwaiti population out demonstrating and shouting, 'With chemicals, Olmert, from Ramallah to Gaza?' Or, 'With nuclear weapons, Levy, from Jineen to Rafah?' [. . .] If they have forgotten the slogan, 'With chemicals, Saddam, from Kuwait to Damman', we have not!! (Al-Hashim 2008: 6, 21; my translation)

Not only is Al-Hashim's ill-timed tutorial to a besieged population struggling for survival in poor taste; it reveals that at least some in Kuwait have not learned from their post-liberation mistakes. Rather than accounting for the pre-invasion ambiguities that existed in the

relationship between Kuwait and the Palestinian population living within its borders and reading the reaction of those few Palestinians who collaborated with the Iraqis within the terms of such ambiguities, Al-Hashim continues to respond as reactively and indiscriminately as some Kuwaitis did immediately after liberation. The general lack of response to Al-Hashim's anti-Palestinian bent in Kuwait suggests that his position may be an extreme version of the norm.

Twenty-two years on, even those who follow a less vicious strain of Al-Hashim's thinking still have not taken responsibility for Kuwait's own role in constituting the reactive responses of those few collaborating Palestinians, have not apologised for the violence done to Palestinians in Kuwait after liberation, and have not accounted for the damage done both to Palestinians and Kuwaitis with the disappearance of this once integral community. In fact, in the conclusion to his recent study, Falah Abdulla Al-Mdeiris states that while official relations between the governments of Kuwait and Palestine may be on track to normalisation, the majority of the Kuwaiti population have no inclination to normalise relations with Palestinians (Al-Mdeiris 2008: 98). However, without a nuanced recognition of Kuwait's own complex role in past events, the conditions for an ethical polity are, I would argue, gravely undermined.

III. An Ethics of the Missing

In the context of the Israeli occupation and 'ethnic cleansing' of Palestine, there is a serious danger in describing the Palestinians in Kuwait or anywhere else as missing (Pappe 2006). To state that the Palestinians are missing in Kuwait is not in any way to suggest that this population no longer exists; nor is it simply to mark their absence in Kuwait as a result of the post-liberation events of 1991. For Deleuze, an absence of the people is no cause for sorrow or alarm but, rather, an opportunity for invention and experimentation. He declares, 'The missing people are a becoming, they invent themselves, in shanty towns and camps, or in ghettos, in new conditions of struggle to which a necessarily political art must contribute' (Deleuze 1989: 217). This process of invention intensifies the instant power proclaims: ' "There have never been people here" ' (Deleuze 1989: 217). It is as though, paradoxically, the emphatic denial of a people's existence uncovers their presence. Nowhere is this denial more evident than in the well-known Zionist declaration: 'A land without a people for a people without a land'. Deleuze describes this as the Zionist tendency to act 'as if the Palestinian people not only must not exist, but had never existed' (Deleuze 1998a: 30).

In the context of this denial of Palestinian existence, it may seem a dangerous move to consider utilising Deleuze's notion of the missing as an ethical apparatus. However, Deleuze makes a distinction between the actual Palestinians thrown out of Palestine – those Israel claims are missing who clearly are not – and the Palestinians who then begin to resist this event and Israel's denial – those who begin to constitute themselves as a people (Deleuze 1995: 126).[12] If the former Palestinians are not missing (they exist despite Israel's denial), the latter are, in fact, missing and will remain missing as long as a transformative struggle continues.

Therefore, to say that the Palestinians of Kuwait are missing, in Deleuze's sense, is to mark their ongoing virtual presence. Every present moment involves both an 'actual' present and a mirror-image 'virtual' present (Deleuze 1989: 79). The virtual component of the present is both what the actual present once was and some iteration of what it might still become. Virtualities may or may not be actualised at any particular moment, but they are always real and present (Deleuze 1991: 96–7). Deleuze explains this somewhat paradoxical understanding of time this way: 'The past does not follow the present that it is no longer, it coexists with the present it was. The present is the actual image, and *its* contemporaneous past is the virtual image, the image in a mirror' (Deleuze 1989: 79). In conventional terms, the Palestinians were a part of Kuwait's history, its past, and with their disappearance, they are no longer a part of its present. But understood from the perspective of a Bergsonian conceptualisation of time, the missing Palestinians currently maintain a virtual presence in Kuwait; they coexist with the present they once were and could yet become.[13]

What would an actualisation of this virtual presence look like? The outcome of any actualisation can never fully be predicted in advance. Regrettably, the likelihood of reintroducing a thriving Palestinian community within Kuwaiti borders is small. Nonetheless, an actualisation of the currently virtual Palestinian presence in Kuwait may have other effects. Today, as I have argued, it is rare to find Kuwaitis who acknowledge the rich history of Palestinians in Kuwait, the many contributions of Palestinians to the development of their country, and Kuwaiti complicity in tearing this important community apart. Such Kuwaitis are, in other words, themselves missing. Constructing a viable ethics in Kuwait necessitates an elaboration of the relationship between these two missing peoples, a transverse reconstruction, in other words, between minoritarian and majoritarian forces.

Understandably, as a 'democracy' in progress, Kuwait has made and continues to make mistakes.[14] To actualise the virtual presence

of the Palestinians in Kuwait might provide a means to negotiate the irreconcilable issues and crises that plague this small nation-state.[15] It may, for example, help actualise Kuwaiti recognition of its spotted recent history and, through this memory, a way towards an alternative future. Deleuze describes this kind of memory as 'the strange faculty which puts into immediate contact the outside and the inside, the people's business and private business, the people who are missing and the I who is absent, a membrane, a double becoming' (Deleuze 1989: 221). Putting the inside into contact with the outside through memory transgresses the divisive structuring of national identity and practice Longva and others have identified as dominating and disrupting Kuwaiti society, politics, and economics (Ismael 1993: 129–50; Longva 1997: 43–147). Paradoxically, the very existence of Kuwait – or a certain version of Kuwait – depends on its remembering the Palestinians who are missing as well as the history of their disappearance. This process can be described as a becoming-Palestinian of all Kuwaitis. It would involve the counter-effectuation of the event of Palestinians in Kuwait – that is, for Kuwaitis to recognise in terms other than those they have been rehearsing for the last twenty-two years what happened and what they helped make happen (no longer someone else's fault) (Deleuze 1990: 149; Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 158–9). This is not to say Kuwait will cease to be without this counter-effectuation, without such an ethics of the missing.[16] What it does mean is that the potential for a Kuwait open to differences, singularities and multiplicities, a Kuwait more capable than it currently is or ever has been of finding ethical and equitable resolutions to problems faced by those residing within its borders – both Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti – will diminish.

During a recent conference about Arab feminisms held in Beirut, Kumkum Sangari commented that to remove or to forget the past means that we are reduced to the temporality of the present, which would indicate either that we are in survival mode or that we are deeply embedded within the capitalist world system (Sangari 2009). Unlike Palestine, Kuwait's survival is not immediately under threat, although it has been in the past and, given its volatile location and its rentier status within the global economic system, it might be again. Kuwaitis may choose to ignore the past (that is, the virtual present) because they continue to feel threatened and under siege. Or, they may have unwittingly forgotten the past because the capacity to think critically required for such an engagement with memory has been thoroughly overwhelmed and liquidated by capitalist consumption. Either way, the Palestinians remain missing from Kuwaiti history,

Kuwaiti consciousness and Kuwaiti conscience. Without this memory of the actual past and the virtual present, however, the country is in danger of losing its ethical bearings.[17] What is at stake in this call to memory is the difference between a Kuwait open to the virtual potentialities of the future perfect and a Kuwait trapped in the present with no way back and only a distressingly restricted and one-dimensional way forward.[18]

Notes

1. The fine work of Palestinian-Kuwaiti political scientist Shafeeq Ghabra is exceptional in this regard (Ghabra 1997b). For a recent study more representative of the Kuwaiti stance, see Al-Mdeiris 2008.
2. In *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze declares, 'Either ethics makes no sense at all, or this is what it means and has nothing else to say: not to be unworthy of what happens to us' (Deleuze 1990: 149). My argument is that majoritarian Kuwait has not become worthy of the event of the Palestinians in Kuwait – not of their historical presence and participation in the country since the early twentieth century, not of their alleged 'betrayal' of Kuwait in 1990, and not of their ongoing or virtual presence as a missing people. This inability to transmute circumstances and occurrences into something worthy has precluded (and continues to preclude) an ethical outcome and polity in Kuwait.
3. Said states, 'Overlapping yet irreconcilable experiences demand from the intellectual the courage to say that *that* is what is before us' (Said 2004: 143). He adds, 'Only in that precarious exilic realm can one first truly grasp the difficulty of what cannot be grasped and then go forth to try anyway' (144). Said arrives at his notion of the irreconcilable in part through his assessment of the Palestinian – Israeli impasse – the elusiveness of any fair resolution to this conflict. His own work exemplifies how the intellectual tries anyway and, in the attempt, manages to create opportunities again and again. That such chances are often ignored or, in the worst case, bring punishment to those who dare to produce them does nothing to diminish their exigency. Said's proposition, while perhaps more tempered than Deleuze's enthusiasm over the missing, remains intransigently persistent.
4. In an interview conducted in 1990, during the Iraqi invasion, Kuwaiti political scientist Hassan Al-Ebraheem stated: 'Contrary to what some have reported, our information is that the Palestinian community in Kuwait has been especially supportive both of the resistance and of persons in hiding, and has manifested little collaboration with the Iraqi forces. In fact, the reports of Palestinians who have themselves witnessed the character of the Iraqi occupation are now being felt in Jordan' (Al-Ebraheem 1991: 98).
5. For an analysis of some of the reasons behind the 1990 Palestinian position on the Gulf crisis, see Hallaj 1991; Husseini 1991: 99–101; Finkelstein 1992; Abu-Baker 2000: 92–105.
6. Deleuze would describe the Kuwaiti response as a form of *ressentiment*, unethical because unworthy of the event (of the Palestinian community in Kuwait in all its historical complexity). He puts it this way: 'To grasp whatever happens as unjust and unwarranted (it is always someone else's fault) is, on the contrary, what renders our sores repugnant – veritable *ressentiment*, resentment of the event. There is no other ill will. What is really immoral is the use of moral notions like just or unjust, merit or fault' (Deleuze 1990: 149).

This incapacity on the part of most Kuwaitis to grasp the event of Palestinians in Kuwait (and the actions of some of them during the invasion) in any terms other than 'betrayal' or 'fault' or 'injustice' reveals a majoritarian rigidity that continues to choke invention and experimentation in Kuwaiti society and politics today (recent debates in parliament focused around so-called 'morality' issues, at a time when the economy, education, healthcare and environment are in serious crisis, exemplify this narrow-minded rigidity).

7. Lesch put the number of Gazans in Kuwait in 2000 at 7,000 (Lesch 2005: 172). It is difficult to confirm the total number of Palestinians in Kuwait in 2013, in part because the majority hold passports from other countries. The Office of Palestinian Affairs in Kuwait estimates the total number of Palestinians in Kuwait today at anywhere between 55,000 and 70,000 and those with *laissez passer* between 6,000 and 7,000.
8. A recent brief published by the National Bank of Kuwait reports that Kuwait 'lag[s] significantly behind the rest of the [Gulf Cooperation Council states] as the least attractive destination for [foreign direct investment] in the region' (Al-Nakib 2010: 2). Reasons commonly identified for this low rate of investment include Kuwait's 'bureaucracy, stringent regulations, limited foreign ownership, and inflexible labor laws' (2). The policy of Kuwaitisation is one such inflexible law.
9. Between 1965 and 1981, about 220,000 people were naturalised, most of which were Bedouin (Ghabra 1997a: 364). This rate of naturalisation continued until the invasion in 1990 (Longva 1997: 72).
10. Anh Nga Longva identifies two additional classificatory dichotomies that structure Kuwait's politics of exclusion: Arabs and non-Arabs, and Muslims and non-Muslims (Longva 1997: 45). These oppositions divide the community into a complex set of insiders and outsiders, with some non-Kuwaitis (Arab Muslim men, for example) at times more inside than some Kuwaitis (women, among others). However, such categorical ambiguities in Kuwait today are as unacknowledged as they were before the invasion. The split between insiders and outsiders remains entrenched, to the disadvantage of those who happen to occupy the wrong side of the divide and to the detriment of the country's potential diversity.
11. For a discussion of transversality as intercultural experimentation and its potential benefits to collaborative struggle in Israel–Palestine, see Svirsky 2012.
12. For a sample of his comments on the Palestinians, see Deleuze 1998a, 1998b, 1998c, 2006: 194–200, 333–4.
13. Philippe Mengue suggests that this missing 'people' as virtual is 'condemned to be *forever* "to come", that it cannot have any historical existence. Always thought, never present' (Mengue 2008: 229). For Mengue, this creates a problem with regards to politics 'because peoples in their political actuality and reality have already been deserted' (234). Mengue resolves this problem by arguing that 'although the people [. . .] is necessarily virtual as Deleuze will have it, it must coincide with the plane of immanence proper to politics and to democracy, the plane that rightly *traverses* all "communities", all social formations, and is the sole guarantor of a veritable and effective "democratic future"' (238). My sense is that the missing people in Kuwait (both as the virtual Palestinians and the yet to come ethical Kuwaitis) can launch a process of 'becoming-democratic'–pointing 'towards future as yet unrealised forms of democracy'–that may not be politically efficacious immediately or actually but is nonetheless urgently required (Patton 2008: 180).
14. Despite its ostensibly democratic political institutions, it would not be correct to classify Kuwait as a 'democracy' as it is theorised by Deleuze and Guattari

in *What Is Philosophy?* (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 108–9); see Patton 2008 for a lucid analysis of Deleuze and Guattari's understanding of democracy. 'Becoming-democratic' involves struggling on various fronts against 'democracy' as it currently exists (Patton 2008: 193). In Kuwait today, becoming-Palestinian would contribute to such a process.

15. In addition to the Palestinian problem discussed here, some of the intractable issues Kuwait faces concern the rights of the *bidoun* (stateless), expatriate labour (especially female domestic labour) and women; the discriminatory *kefala* (sponsorship) system; the tribal system and sectarianism; and the environment, among many others. In confronting such issues, Kuwait (by which I mean the government, the National Assembly or parliament, and citizens in general) tends not to look to its own past (that is to say, its virtual present). Instead, in the last two decades at least, Kuwait has turned to an atavistic Islam and to its role as a dependent oil supplier in a capitalist world system for solutions. Neither has proven to be especially beneficial to an ethical democratic practice in the country (if the last six dissolutions of parliament since 2006 are anything to judge by).
16. Audronė Žukauskaitė labels this Deleuzian understanding a 'minor ethics' (Žukauskaitė 2011: 193). Because I want to emphasise the component of the missing people in my analysis of the case of Palestinians in Kuwait, I choose to use an 'ethics of the missing'.
17. Along with the commendable efforts of the Kuwaitis for Jerusalem Committee (active since 2000), the more recent MinRASY Projects has also worked in innovative ways to generate this form of active memory. Formed by a Palestinian couple in Kuwait (both with long-established families in the country), MinRASY Projects since 2011 has organised a series of public interventions in Kuwait specifically as a means to trigger a local recollection of the Palestinian community, their history and their contributions. In May 2012, MinRASY sponsored a successful exhibition titled *Museum of Manufactured Response to Absence* (*MoMRtA*) as an intervention at the Museum of Modern Art in Kuwait. Curated by Ala Younis and, significantly, under the official patronage of the National Council for Culture, Arts, and Letters of the State of Kuwait, *MoMRtA* commissioned over twenty artists to produce objects in response to the historical presence and absence of the Palestinian community in Kuwait. The exhibition catalogue states: 'In light of the lack of collective images, narratives, and archives, memory is taken as the main point of reference for the museum's objects. Fragile and fragmented, this is a memory that has been accumulated, dismantled, reassembled, and at times lost. The museum's objects conflate pieces from this recollected past in order to recognise and make sense of the present, an act that bestows them with an appearance of being at once real, impossible and unreal, and that addresses, imagines and reclaims the story and legacy of Palestinians in Kuwait' (*Museum of Manufactured Response to Absence* 2012). This compelling exhibition conveys a sense of the golden age of Palestinian–Kuwaiti collaboration and coexistence, as well as the trauma and regret over its untimely loss. That *MoMRtA* as well as the simultaneously displayed sound installation piece *Unplified* by Tarek Atoui (inspired by Ghassan Kanafani's novella *Men in the Sun*) were both exhibited under the patronage of the National Council for Culture, Arts, and Letters at a government institution (the Museum of Modern Art) may signal a meaningful shift in official discourse and attitude toward the past. MinRASY's active engagement with the public – through commissioned installation pieces in public spaces, film screenings and panel discussions, as well as exhibitions specifically dealing with Palestinians in Kuwait – can encourage Kuwaitis to revisit an otherwise forgotten

past and to engage with it constructively towards the amendment of its outcome. For more on MinRASY Projects, see < http://www.minrasyprojects.com > .

18. The activities of Zochrot – an Arab-Jewish NGO in Israel that aims to remember the Nakba and spread awareness of its history among Jewish-Israeli people – provides an excellent model for the kinds of memory practices that could be of use in Kuwait (see < http://www.zochrot.org/en >). On the productive uses of traumatic memory from a Deleuzian perspective, see Parr 2008.

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Deleuze's Aesthetic Answer to Heraclitus: *The Logic of Sensation*

Filippo Carraro

Abstract

The painter Francis Bacon and the philosopher Gilles Deleuze agree with Heraclitus: any phenomenon is constituted of movement or becoming and no appearance endures. I read *Francis Bacon, The Logic of Sensation* from the perspective of the Heraclitean flux. This allows me to show the eminent role of forces (movement beneath the soil of visibility) in the work of Deleuze, which he inherits from the Greek philosopher. I point at sensation as Deleuze's re-thinking of the notion of becoming. 'How can an artist make an object endure?' The artistic product, for Deleuze, embodies the force to recreate itself, and thus to endure in the universe. This phenomenon is a bloc of sensation.

Keywords: creation, Deleuze, Francis Bacon, Heraclitus, movement, real, sensation

I. The Figure is an Instance of Becoming

The work by Bacon, Cézanne and other painters represents a dynamic field of interpretation of the images it presents, rather than a static copy of them. In *Logic of Sensation*, Deleuze outlines his comprehension of art as an aesthetic *experience* (which, thus, includes time and motion). Deleuze's logic of sensation, in fact, assumes that modern painting produces 'musical' and 'rhythmic' effects, rather than resting on the unvarying opposition of copy and model (see Deleuze [2003] 2004: 71ff., 82ff.). However, although the artist's interest is greatly kindled

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by the task of 'rendering movement', it is Deleuze's idea that in any creative process becoming is affirmed together with being – as in rhythm, subsequent beats are musical when they are thought of as part of a 'simultaneous' silent duration.

In Bacon's experience the primary pictorial subject, the Figure, is not just a compound of colour and form. The artist is never satisfied with 'rendering the visible'. Deleuze believes Bacon's aim is to 'render visible', that is, to discover the hidden pieces of a fact and to manifest them on the canvas. Common objects, as we *see* them, are images that can be separated into their two components: form (contour) and matter (which in painting is a question of colour). To render the visible would be to paint what one sees: contour and colour. In order to achieve his aim of rendering visible, however, Bacon has to paint what *seeing* means for him. This is to paint sensation; otherwise he would be painting what he senses. Therefore, to paint sensation is to re-create or re-interpret the perspective of the subject seeing, in addition to reproducing the object seen. Subject and object are indissoluble (Deleuze [2003] 2004: 34). For Deleuze, art does not associate a content to a correct formula which expresses it. Instead, art is interested in decomposing (sensed object, on the one hand, and viewing subject, on the other hand) and recomposing (sensation). The painter shares the musician's attentiveness for the harmony of the two moments: his aim is composition in the sense of a melody. Better put: his art consists in a resonance between visible and invisible, or heard and unheard. '*It is rhythm itself that would constitute the Figure*' (71).

Bacon never paints *one* Figure, he rather paints coupled figures, under the influence of a single force (Deleuze [2003] 2004: 65). Painting, being a matter of combining the dynamic and the static aspects, utterly prepares the audible aesthetic experience. More than melody, thus, canvases are places of resonance (69). A Figure is sensation, but sensation is 'difference of level' (65). Art aims not at reproducing the sensed model, but at re*producing* sensation. (Bacon's Platonism appears rather weak when he says that his series of Popes is meant to *re*produce Velázquez's work.[1]) Bacon, in an interview (easily accessible online), reveals to Melvyn Bragg his ambition as a painter: 'I want to be able to *re-make* in another medium the reality of an image that excites me', he insists. Inevitably, Bacon's Figure is not *one* figure. It only achieves the task of enveloping sensation by presenting not simply the superficial level of images or clichés, but also the level 'beneath'. Deleuze repeats that painting is not so much about representing images as it is about metaphysical forces. 'Everything is force' (Deleuze [2003] 2004:

59). For him, 'we can go behind the [apparent] movements to these forces'; in fact, 'the visible movements of the Figures are subordinated to the invisible forces exerted upon them' (62–3). In Bacon's work, Deleuze suggests separating three things: a Figure, its levels (a system of subordination) and the re-composition of its levels in one sensation. We have Pope Innocent X; we have the visible mouth and the invisible forces that make it; and we have the re-making of the aesthetic experience of the scream as such. From *one* representation Bacon leads the philosopher to an event (a movement, a becoming), that is, the moment in which a sensation passes from the level of an impetus to that where it becomes visible.

The question of sensation (that is, the essence of the artist's creativity) follows, for Deleuze, the stages of a thought that considers becoming together with being (or the river of chance together with the circular power of time). At first Deleuze acknowledges that any affirmation of being entails an affirmation of becoming. In order to recapitulate Deleuze's *Francis Bacon*, I found it necessary to compare this work with what the tradition attributes to Heraclitus. Heraclitus writes that by stepping in the same river one can only be flown upon by different water (Krik [1954] 2010: 367). Similarly, he writes that the sun rises every day and is ever changing (264). Everything is transformed, for the Obscure; for, if it were not, then it would not *be*. 'Even the barely-drink disintegrates if it is not moved' (255). In this affirmation of becoming, Deleuze is similar to Heraclitus and, with respect to the Obscure's convictions, he states:

> [Heraclitus] *made an affirmation of becoming*. We have to reflect for a long time to understand what it means to make an affirmation of becoming. In the first place it is doubtless to say that there is only becoming. No doubt it is also to affirm becoming. But we also affirm the being of becoming, we say that becoming affirms being or that being is affirmed in becoming. (Deleuze [1983] 2002: 23)

At first, thus, it is clear that Deleuze absorbs both notions. A second stage concerns their relation. If a Figure affirms becoming and being, what possibly admits their link? Logic allows to say that becoming just becomes, and thus to conclude that only being *is*. In aesthetics, however, Deleuze shows that an eye is not simply limited to contemplate what *is*. An eye is already a philosophical subject; it can always ask the question, 'what sustains that which I see?' There is a difference between a logical and crystallised 'screaming *before* or *about*', and an aesthetical 'screaming *at*' the forces it is going to become (Deleuze [2003] 2004: 61).

We are presented here with a figurative notion of image and a figural one. We could say that, with Bacon, Deleuze works on a separation of levels, and, by repeating the question 'what sustains?', a difference returns. The logic of sensation can bind being and becoming together for it works on a difference of level. Thus, we get a glimpse of a second element of similarity between Deleuze and Heraclitus, who also considers the confrontation of stable beings (the day as opposed to the night) to be a function of a 'divine Logos' (Krik [1954] 2010: 33), that is, the visible determinations to be a product of grounding forces.

We get to a last stage, the threat of Platonism. Difference of level is not new in philosophy, and Deleuze has to face Plato's philosophical reasons, if he wants the Heraclitean becoming to support his point of view on art (that the pictorial subject is not a copy, but embodies sensation and, even, a sensation that 'moves'). To put it differently, Deleuze has to show that there is no 'model', in the height of the sky; that the grounding forces also collapse under the strokes of becoming; that the reality of becoming is not contradicted as an unchanging reality. A third question arises: how can becoming be preserved? The Heraclitean answer to this question would be that there is no mistake in thinking becoming as a superficial effect of a 'stable' divine ground, precisely because, apart from metamorphoses, becoming is an immanent principle with no depth, or a cause with no substance different than its pure effect. 'War is the father of all and king of all' (Krik [1954] 2010: 245). Similarly, Deleuze describes the Figure. A Figure is already many entangled figurative moments; they fight like wrestlers, or they re-compose the rhythmic meter. It is a *war* of bodies that affirm one fact (one battle) (Deleuze [2003] 2004: 66). Our third question is answered as follows: becoming is not contradicted because only its surface returns – only the river of succession.

Bacon never stopped admiring those static images of movement – he never abandoned the question of 'how to render movement' (Deleuze [2003] 2004: 58). Time marks the passage from image to image; therefore images are present from time to time. The issue of a present that flows (the Baconian Figure, which descends the stairs – see *Portrait of a Man walking down Steps*, 1972) encounters one of the most beautiful answers in the wonder of the Obscure: one is the way up and the way down (Krik [1954] 2010: 105). As if we were before a paradoxical image or a 'geometrical improbability', the Figure is not more the isolation of the bodies that wrestle (before up, afterwards down), than it is the dynamic zones of the painting where the two bodies are indiscernible – a third possible body which is at once up and down.

In the same manner rhythm is not more a separation of two distinguished beats, than it is a re-composition of undistinguished intensity between them (resonance).

Heraclitus, like Deleuze, distinguishes between the level of the visible succession and that of an invisible co-existence. Heraclitus admires and praises the unrecognised and unseen connections. 'The real constitution of things – he says – [...] is accustomed to hide itself' (Krik [1954] 2010: 227). We also know that the distribution of distinguished and distinguish*ing* (of image and of force) in Deleuze corresponds to the relation of subordination of visible to invisible. In other words, on the one hand, the philosopher isolates the metamorphoses or oppositions visible to the naked eye, and, on the other hand, he points at forces which minister their becoming. Heraclitus, in a very similar manner, subordinates objects of succession (earth, water, soul) to forces of creation/destruction (life/death): 'For soul it is death to become water, for water it is death to become earth; out of earth water comes-to-be, out of water, soul' (339).

To the third issue we add that both Deleuze and Heraclitus say that the face of the invisible is that of *war*, but to war they assign a special meaning. The face of the ground is never collapsed to an identity: Heraclitus never says that all things, being at war, face the *same* (death). War is rather a principle of affirmation of becoming, for it is the generative concept of a philosophy that, within the field of battle, separates and *recomposes* forces (hunger – satiety, life – death). Deleuze also signals that war is not the cause of the coupling sensations; it is a surface effect. War, thus, should not motivate a figurative pessimism, for it is only one face of a figural optimism:

> What produces the struggle or confrontation is the coupling of diverse sensations in two bodies, and not the reverse, so that the struggle is also the variable Figure of two bodies sleeping intertwined, or which desire mixes together, or which painting makes resonate. (Deleuze [2003] 2004: 69)

There is something in the Deleuzian thought on art, which, without replacing endurance with temporariness, the figural with the figurative, or, even, the circle with the river, turns to the moment of birth as the clue of the whole business of becoming. What matters in art, for Deleuze, is the creative process of the artist, and not a static model of 'beauty', re-interpreted and copied to the best of the artist's abilities. The artist does not 'repeat' the model, nor does his work represent a 'different copy'. If the artist re-makes something real, all of Deleuze's effort is directed at arguing that any experience is an entirely *creative* experience.

In any experience (for instance, the aesthetic experience I have watching a painting) a new 'I' is created (an 'I' that has contracted the power of seeing the scream). It is a phenomenon of difference, or a habituation and repetition of one's 'I'.

Becoming is *creative* because, as rhythm, it has the same force of time to 'accumulate', to 'pass', to coagulate sensation or to destroy it. Deleuze's forces account for a becoming that becomes something; for Deleuze, an image truly endures on condition that it reveals the forces that sustain it. In the creation of a body, or in the re-creation of a Figure, a spirit becomes independent from every 'now' and every 'before'. It simply appears; it simply becomes and comes into being. If in *Difference and Repetition*, by creation, a body faces its destiny, in *Francis Bacon*, a Figure unshackles itself from the artist, as if the creator were able to bestow on it the strength that allows it to reproduce its own 'pictorial' life (see Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 163–5). 'This is the reality of becoming.'

If Bacon represented a figure opposed to the embodiment of its fears, he would have involved a segment of temporality in his representation. He would have painted the scream and the horror, as if they were two objects interacting through a spatiotemporal opposition (here is the feared and there is the scream; horror is the future and the squeal anticipates it). However, Deleuze notices that the artist avoids by all means presenting a given opposition of subject and object. This supports the Deleuzian intuition that art must rule out narration and temporal succession. At the core of this accord between the artist and the philosopher it is worth quoting the words by the philosopher himself: 'difference remains not the given itself but that by which the given is given' (Deleuze 1994: 226). Difference is never the product more than it is the producer. We must affirm the creative power of difference, for it 'makes itself, as in the expression "make the difference"' (28). The challenge in painting time is that of registering the difference in its making – the individuation of a spatiotemporal opposition in its source.

As to the destructive power of becoming, or the negative power of difference, the Deleuzian must understand that they are 'moments' of a creative difference and repetition. 'End' is just a face of becoming; its correlate – death – is only its negative representation. *There is no end*. (Aesthetic) experiences are products of a mechanism of difference and repetition. In Deleuze's writings there is a connection between 'becoming' and Difference, 'different' and negation. In fact, becoming and Difference represent the positive head of a negative facial expression,

or partial difference per negation. The excitement we sense for life is a creative source from where both different lives and a succession of deaths take place; life affirms both different lives and possible deaths (see Deleuze [2003] 2004: 62). Indeed, difference, for Deleuze, is no less generative than permanence and preservation are devitalising moments of an experiencing spirit.

II. Painting a Living Fact Alive, Painting Sensation

According to Deleuze, Bacon focused on the static as well as on the dynamic component of the aesthetic experience (in accordance with his philosophy of becoming and with the ancient image of the river). How then is a body real beyond a sequence of representations? In other words, how, despite the violence of an image's deformation (I used to be one metre tall, now I am one metre and eighty) can the body survive? Understanding the Deleuzian appreciation of the painter in *Francis Bacon*, therefore, means to be able to adopt the following point of view: we can sense something real beyond and besides the constant brutality with which facts are exposed to change.

An image can change and yet keep hold in the realm of the visible; it can assume much-distorted contours and colours; it can even change its mode of activity. The artist's aim is precisely to 'record' how things are, and how they can become in the future. This is why Bacon puts so much stress on the notion of 'free marks' or 'chance': 'I want a very ordered image – he says – but I want it to come about by chance' (Sylvester 2008: 56). Bacon's basic idea is to introduce a dose of chance or chaos into a pre-given image (like in a photograph), and thereby to trap the figure in its most natural movement, that is, in its most factual, intense appearing. Precisely this power of re-creating the real is what Bacon sought in his work (172), and clearly this is what makes art difficult and the life of the artist a struggle.

Merleau-Ponty had done something similar with Cézanne as Deleuze attempts to do with Bacon in *Logic of Sensation*. Merleau-Ponty writes that the artist discovers 'the geological foundation of the landscape' (Merleau-Ponty 1964a: 17); that the artist looks at 'germination', at birth, and puts all his effort into capturing the continual rebirth of existence. As with Bacon, Cézanne was plagued by self-criticism and doubt. Merleau-Ponty gives a name to his struggle: 'he considered himself powerless because he was not omnipotent, because he was not God and wanted nevertheless to portray the world' (Merleau-Ponty 1964a: 19). Though Bacon's life was probably very different from

Cézanne's, it is safe to say that they were both struggling for the same task: to paint the real, to paint the world, to avoid second-hand images, photography and clichés. In a word, their desire was to re-create reality. As with Heraclitus, the real constitution of things is thought of as hidden. The artist, who wants to capture a fact in its innocence, or in the moment of its pure presence, has to select its representations, clean its surface and reach what is beyond visibility. Painting is about creating forces, not about imitating skills.

Deleuze's focus on forces rather than on the represented images shifts the idea of art as imitation to that of art as creativity. Deleuze, by the notion of force, might be denoting a face of becoming, and contrasting the artist's creativity with the subject's static dependence from an object-model. Creativity, however, must not be interpreted as an inversion of such a dependence relation; in fact, Deleuze would not simply expect Bacon to populate the world by generating unknown images. Creativity is rather a complex process where the artist bestows on his creature the spirit of an independent struggler for survival, not without gaining for himself a renovated organ of sensation. For Deleuze, the aesthetic experience is always a double creation of a Figure and of a viewer – that is, a mutually dependent process of sensation.[2] Firstly, sensation coagulates on the side of the canvas; that is, a painter moulds a new Figure. Secondly, sensation coagulates on the side of the viewer; that is a spectator is educated to see (I learn from Bacon to appreciate the untold effort required to open a door). An artistic experience is a complex moment when a bloc of sensation produces the independence of the work from the subject, and measures their distance. This is creation proper; that is, to render durable a moment of the world, or to make it exist in its own right (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 172).

Bacon, as Cézanne, was aware he had the mission to germinate, to implant on canvas the seed of the unseen perception; but Bacon also knew that he was not God. He could not create *ex nihilo*, for to create is always situated in a possible creation (Deleuze [2003] 2004: ch. 11). However creative the act of painting appears, the artist is limited to what is already on the blank canvas. The artist starts with decomposition, de-organisation (some say reduction). He compresses what is under his sight until it explodes. Only then will a new creation be possible: the artist moves reality or deforms it (making any object pulsate: compressing a head, letting a face come under explosive forces – see Deleuze [2003] 2004: ch. 8; Sylvester 2008: 8–18). In Bacon's portraits, he painted heads, not faces. Why heads? Because the head is the de-humanised human face. The head reminds one of a known person, but it is violently

manipulated under the hands of the artist. (Bacon's interest in that which is impersonal or purely de-subjectified recurs in *Interviews*; see Sylvester 2008: 40, 51, 194ff.) The body is also mere body, just matter under the pulsation of cosmic forces, the same that moves dust and planets in the universe. Perhaps this is even the same that actually makes the universe itself expand. The artist applies this merciless rhythm on heads and on other human bodies. Up and down, inhalation and exhalation, compression and expansion, the painter paints the forces that strike and inhabit the body. Bacon lets invisible forces 'strike the head from very different angles' (Deleuze [2003] 2004: 58).

The movement that distorts Bacon's Figures is not the spatiotemporal movement that drags creatures around (from place to place) until they meet their end. Rather, it is the same 'sacred source' that creates them.[3] 'What I want to do – says Bacon – is to distort the thing far beyond the appearance, but in the distortion to bring back to a recording of the appearance' (Sylvester 2008: 40). Pope Innocent X, for example, is moving *in place* when he makes his appearance first in the work by Velázquez (1650) and then in the work of Bacon (1953). Change is of two types: a change in place and a change of place. The latter is supported by the framework of narration: firstly there is the 'here', and then comes the 'elsewhere'. The former type of change, in contrast, is not as clear and straightforward: it is the exploration a subject makes of its own space, of the space where the subject takes place. Change is essentially movement, but of two types: a change in place is analogous to a movement of creation, while a change of place is analogous to a movement of narration. In his book on Bacon, Deleuze develops an ontology of artistic creation, that is, a study of movement that allows a 'fact' to occur. The first and only rule of this ontology is to exorcise the figurative or illustrational, of which narration is the correlate. What Deleuze was struck by in Bacon's work, and what he attempted to provide a philosophical account for, was the way Bacon was able to preserve the likeness between what he painted and the living object, all the while allowing the artistic product to move in place. Bacon attempts to preserve the likeness between the thing painted and the living thing, but not without allowing the artistic product itself to move in place. In so doing, Deleuze absorbs into his philosophy Bacon's task of 'reporting' or 'recording' sensation (Sylvester 2008: 60). Sensation is precisely what survives change.

Painting, in Deleuze's *Francis Bacon*, ministers the liberation of what is beneath representation (Deleuze [2003] 2004: 49, 52) – it captures a presence that survives change. Though faithful to a vision of flux, what

Deleuze is looking for is that element in flux which does not change, die or vanish. He looks into the way Bacon speaks about and understands his own work, and works out the philosophical implications of an artistic movement that tries to 'trap a living fact alive'. The resulting *Logic of Sensation* constitutes the philosopher's attempt to extrapolate from the work of Bacon the kind of movement that allows sensation to endure, that is, to persist in its rhythm.

What Deleuze wants to rule out is the type of movement that would never allow a fact to endure (namely, the movement of narration, the chain of which merely displaces sensation rather than allowing it to accumulate around the image). Bacon must exorcise figuration. The sole movement that inhabits his Figures must not be a movement that takes place in time; instead, time collapses on the original moment of the Figure's appearance. It is the Figure's movement of creation. Figures are not to tend to any model outside of time or to a narrative completion in time. They have to endure in the portion of time that allowed them to come to be and to reproduce that movement – this is why Deleuze insists on Bacon's capacity of painting time as such. They must stand up on their own, allowing a moment of the world to exist by itself (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 164, 172). In much the same way, Merleau-Ponty was sensitive to Cézanne's wish to render the type of movement that sustains itself, is preserved in the object, and does not pass away. This is the issue of a creating original-time. Merleau-Ponty writes about Cézanne: 'an emerging order, of an object in the act of appearing, organizing itself before our eyes' (Merleau-Ponty 1964a: 14). In Deleuze's words: the artist concentrates a bloc of sensation *from the whirlwind of time and makes this bloc imperishable*, or at least it tends toward this direction as much as possible. Art must endure; the subject painted on the canvas must be capable to stay where he is, to do what he is doing, to scream his scream, forever.[4]

The study of appearances (as it is understood by Merleau-Ponty) allows Deleuze to conceive of becoming as subject to the laws of aesthetics. Aesthetics, in this sense, means simply 'that I see', or 'that which allows me to see'. In Deleuze's hands, the philosophical problem of sensuous determination may point at a series of artistic solutions. Among these Deleuze selects Bacon's paintings and interviews. It is here, with the converging of becoming and Bacon's Figures, that Deleuze's notion of difference is illuminated by Bacon's notion of sensation (that which hits upon one's nervous system). The action of a force on a body creates sensation: here an organ might temporarily take place. An eye 'sees' and 'allows the body to see'; it moves. From a sensation localised

on the head it transits to other parts of the body. Other parts of the body become visible:

> Painting gives us eyes all over: in the ear, in the stomach, in the lungs [...] This is the double definition of painting: subjectively, it invests the eye, which ceases to be organic in order to become a polyvalent and transitory organ; objectively, it brings before us the reality of a body, of lines and colors freed from organic representation. And each is produced by the other: the pure presence of the body becomes visible at the same time that the eye becomes the destined organ of this presence. (Deleuze [2003] 2004: 52)

It is as if the river became 'coagulated' sensation with the body leaning towards new sensations. We can therefore see how for Deleuze and for Bacon perception of the real is not a matter of sight, but a matter of creation. Their central problem is to capture and explore those forces that sustain the visible. Deleuze's insight into art is that capturing forces, which is the same as *painting sensation*, pushes a bloc of sensation outside of the circle of narration. The artistic Figure enters durability precisely within this movement.

Deleuze radicalises the question of 'germination' that troubled Cézanne: art not only reveals to us how things appear, but also the process through which they appear. In this way, art shows us how the real is created. For *art creates in the same way* – undoubtedly, Deleuze refers to a 'materialist creation'. Deleuze goes further than Heraclitus: metamorphosis is always already exposed to novelty, that is, to indetermination. For him, to the sequence earth – water – soul there follows nothing like its circular inversion (soul – water – earth). The three-layered Figure is the living present opened to *creative* zones of affirmation:

> Life alone creates such zones where living beings whirl around, and only art can reach and penetrate them in its enterprise of co-creation. This is because from the moment that the material passes into sensation, as in a Rodin sculpture, art itself lives on these zones of indetermination. They are blocs. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 173)

Logic is the realm of the ordered surfaces of meaning, and the sight that seizes upon such layers captures something of the reality that logic organises. It is as if the *terms* of some logic had the same creative power upon reality that the divine *Verbum* has on the shaping of being. Deleuze discovers some of those *terms*, and these are in line with Heraclitus's obscure but divinised reality.

III. Becoming and Sensation, Save the Contour

In *The Logic of Sensation* – chapters 1–11 – everything is in movement. Movement is the key to the interpretation of the book, because movement is taken as the true character of sensation as such. A perennial exchange between 'opposites' occurs – a perennial coupling of sensed and sensing. Just as physicists increasingly tend to conceive of matter as intensity, so Deleuze believes that whatever *is* in being is nothing but high-speed motion. An example will help us further understand. Let us take a worldly object and reveal its nature of pure motion. A mouth: the compound of teeth, lips and a hole. What is a mouth? How do cosmic forces relate to it? How does a mouth become a mouth?

Do I need to escape? We can assume that, in order for us to conceive of an organ, we also need a function for it.[5] What is the function of the mouth, for instance? Bacon might have suggested that the mouth's function is 'to let it out', or 'to let it in': a man wants to free himself through his own mouth (or through the washbasin – which amounts to the same thing). Bacon then has some solid, undetermined material which is the body, but the body does not have any organs yet. It is rather an 'indeterminate organ'. Furthermore, this unformed body is traversed by an intense wave which, in Deleuze's words,

> traces zones and levels on this body according to the variations of its amplitude. When the wave encounters external forces at a particular level, a sensation appears. An organ will be determined by this encounter, but it is a provisional organ that endures only as long as the passage of the wave and the action of the force, and which will be displaced in order to be posited elsewhere. (Deleuze [2003] 2004: 47)

Then a mouth comes to being – as a result of the unapparent intense movements under the radar of visibility.

It has been mentioned how the primacy of invisible movements over the representation of the appearing object brings Deleuze's ontology closer to that of Heraclitus. Deleuze considers the example of how two rather differentiated images reveal their invisible becoming, that is, how they lead to a region of being that allows no differentiability itself. Man and beast are not only similar; they are the same 'thing' in the realm of becoming:

> This is not an arrangement of man and beast, not a resemblance; it is a deep identity, a zone of indiscernibility more profound than any sentimental identification: the man who suffers is a beast, the beast that suffers is a man. This is the reality of becoming. (Deleuze [2003] 2004: 25)

But the experience of movement and becoming in Deleuze's work on aesthetics recapitulates the flux of Heraclitus, and adds two notions to it: creation and sensation. Becoming rests on the aesthetical encounter of a movement that creates and a movement that coagulates sensation; we have already seen above: 'painting gives us eyes all over'. For Bacon, these two are spontaneously related in the work of art: art creates sensation and it accumulates sensation around its creatures. But it is only with Deleuze that Bacon's intuition assumes an ontological import. Painting creates sensation (on the canvas and on the viewer), and sensation accumulates around creatures (around the 'I' and around the Figure). Music, for instance – the crossing of a number of waves in a complex topography of vertical and horizontal distances – has the power of generating and dissolving bodies. Different speeds, different timbres and music's crucial power of emanating sensation make this possible. The same is also true of Nature: there is first the tension that makes the appearance of different species of animals vibrate, and also a rhythm of several coordinates of sensation: food chain, or suffering. The concept is that the artist faces and manipulates chaos, or the flux. He filters the reality of becoming through the levelling of sensation (suffering, the need to escape, and so on); and finally he *creates*, that is, he allows an image to differentiate itself from those movements that make any image vanish into something else (flux). The Figures of Bacon, for instance, are objects which are able to sustain their own appearing; they do not undergo the movement that resembles first man, then beast; first soul, then water, then earth. They already *are* that movement – indiscernibility; they are closer to a pure bloc of sensation.

Deleuze discusses how the artist deals with movements that nest themselves in any possible appearance. In addition, although it is the task of the artist to break up the sovereign optical organisation, to face the chaos and reproduce its movement, he admits that the artist is never to let the catastrophe proliferate and shadow the Figure-ness. The hands of the artist touch the chaotic movements, his brushes and sponges recreate some of them on a canvas – then, the fight to limit and control the catastrophe begins (Deleuze [2003] 2004: 111). The artist faces the chaos or flux – the graph of the waves of a musical instrument, the several forces making the planets rotate – and strives to trap a fact alive, without allowing it to vanish. 'Save the contour' (110).

One might want to ask whether the mouth painted by Bacon (or the mouth of the figures which take shape on any *topos* of his canvas) is indeed a coming to rest of the flux. Is the activity of the artist a production of those differences that stop the flowing of differences?

Deleuze describes the artistic experience of creation as follows. In the first place the artist has to face the chaos by means of introducing on his canvas a-pictorial marks. This destroys the emerging figuration. It is as if the dominion of our daily sight is destabilised by measured doses of the unseen – it is in this pre-pictorial moment that the invisible chaotic reality of flux shows its face. However, the experience of this latent catastrophe can be dealt with in very different ways; every great painter has to find his way in it. 'Where painters differ is in their manner of embracing this non figurative chaos, and in their evaluation of the pictorial order to come, and the relation of this order with this chaos' (Deleuze [2003] 2004: 103). Deleuze designates the different 'manners' with a technical term: the notion of diagram. 'Van Gogh's diagram, for example, is the set of straight and curved hatch marks that raise and lower the ground, twist the trees, make the sky palpitate' (102). A diagram is called an 'operative set', and it is 'a possibility of fact – not the fact itself' (110).

Firstly, the question above receives a negative answer. Deleuze does not see the artistic product as an arresting of the flux which characterises any appearance whatsoever; instead, Deleuze is addressing art in general, though of course he focuses on the work of Bacon in particular. In the work of different artists, the flux finds virtually compossible resting points (Bacon and Kandinsky, Kandinsky and Pollock, and so on). In this sense it is not only Bacon's Figures that are an answer to the Heraclitean flux; it is also Deleuze's Figure-ness (the fact established by a bloc of sensation).

There is still another reason for giving a negative answer to the question above. If the work of the artist tries, at any price, to limit the chaos which precedes the becoming of the object, it does not do so by collapsing movement onto rest or difference onto the model. The fact that a bloc of sensation is able to endure does not mean that a bloc of sensation receives a fixed shape; to endure means not 'to be so' – 'to be lips, to be teeth, to be tongue'. What enduring requires at the very least is to be able to re-create the movement that first allowed the appearance of a mouth. The Figure traps movement as a fact – the fact that a mouth moves. A mouth becomes a scream – a mouth screams. And a scream becomes an ear – the ear that listens to the scream. Deleuze speaks of a metamorphosis that does not dissolve the mouth into a sound, and the sound into its listener: 'sensory becoming is the action by which something or someone is ceaselessly becoming-other (while continuing to be what they are), sunflower or Ahab' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 117). Thus, Deleuze's idea is not that the artistic product is a visible portion of an invisible chain in metamorphosis.

Art does not need an object as we commonly see it (like what happens with photography), because art can deal with its invisible becoming and produce the schema of a new possible appearance of 'it'. With the notion of diagram, Deleuze reformulates the concept of flux in terms of what allows invisible movements to make an object appear. The diagram, being an operative set, balances itself between probability and obscurity; it gives access to new areas of sensation. It is true that art needs contours (just as appearance needs 'something' to be seen), thus it necessarily 'stops' movement, as Deleuze acknowledges – 'and above all, a new figuration, that of the Figure, should emerge from the diagram and make the sensation clear and precise' (Deleuze [2003] 2004: 110).

IV. The Logic of Sensation

How does a mouth become *this* mouth? This is an ontological question. A similar question, posed along aesthetic lines, seems to be the one Deleuze is after: how does a painter paint a mouth with his brushes, and how does that mouth on the canvas create the painter's actual mouth, out of the brushes' reach?

We shall hereafter read Deleuze's *Francis Bacon, The Logic of Sensation*, in particular chapters 1–11, starting from the last ones: we shall read it as a *phenomenology of sensation*. Indeed, our aim is to understand how in each chapter movement – inhalation and exhalation, compression and expansion – gives rise to a lasting figure of Bacon's art. We have to go through several 'levels of complexity' of motion: every chapter develops one or more phenomenological steps that describe the artistic co-creation of the real. One instance of the levels or steps might work as an example. In *Francis Bacon* terms like 'human meat' and 'animal meat' (dog), are terms of a perpetual becoming opposite of the opposite. A dog easily becomes a man in Bacon, and vice versa. However – and here is the idea of an aesthetical answer to Heraclitus – the incessant flux between the two poles of the movement is the starting point, both for Bacon and for Deleuze, for the search of the *being* of the flux, that is, for something stable in the flux – its measure and source. In the context of this example, there is something invisibly at work: the Figure-spirit. The spirit is neither human nor animal: it is their zone of indiscernibility. It is the unapparent that sustains the apparent, an approximation to the notion of a bloc of sensation. Hence, in the Deleuzian lexicon there are not only terms for the flux, but, prior to those, there are terms for a durable entity, Figure-ness, that is, a fact of nature.

Most of the chapters from 1–11 in *Francis Bacon* reproduce the schema of the Heraclitean flux-movement whilst offering the aesthetical answer Bacon put forward – a fact, or stable reality. Thus, we now read the work by Deleuze aiming at grasping both the terms of the metamorphoses, and a stable fact that sustains those opposites. That is, those terms of a logic of sensation that, underneath the range of visibility of the naked eye, grants our worldly sensation.

Preliminary Movement: The Painter Jumps into the Canvas and the Canvas Offers Him a Chance to Escape – Chapter 11

A canvas is never blank, not even before the artist paints on it. It is an imposition: our sight is dominated by historical clichés, and the less visible they are, the more powerful they are. Bacon's cleaning woman would not 'see' these clichés; she would think that the canvas was empty. On the contrary, Bacon knows in advance that that which is in his head or around him in his studio represents the most probable, that is, the image which is already given on the canvas. The blank canvas is not a mirror, but it contains virtually – with high probability – what is usually seen around. There is already a flowing of appearances that reaches the canvas from the head of the painter, or from his room. In addition, a response of the canvas is already there, and this is a less probable mirroring of that which is around – a distortion. An artist sees those invisible movements that support both probable figuration and its distortion. He 'apprehends' – Bacon says – the presence of pre-pictorial connections between the movements of his brushes and the emergence of an actual object. A Figure emerges: the Heraclitean flux (the movement that takes the man and the canvas closer) has found the first measure of its own motion. Between figuration and chaos an artist makes an object again, a pictorial Figure.

Invisible Movements of the Figure An Acrobat Balanced between Fame and Death – Chapter 6

The Figure in Bacon is the result of movements of invisible forces, and indeed it is itself in constant movement: how can it be durable, then? Its movement, insofar as the artistic work has achieved its task, is itself invisible, internal and external to time and space. The movement of the Figure is not spatiotemporal (Deleuze often states that the Figure *is time*). The Figure in Bacon actually seems to have honoured the first and only rule of Deleuze's ontology of creation, because it excludes

figuration and avoids narration. There is no narration in Bacon: Deleuze insists on the capability of the artist to leave historical time out of his paintings. But the lack of narration is not the stillness of a heavy stone, but the equilibrium of an acrobat, suspended between probable death and fame. He vibrates internally, he wants to live but his life is consigned to immobility, balancing between the forces of gravity and death. The portraits, the Figures, the acrobats, every object of Baconian creation 'moves "in-place"', a spasm towards life facing the forces of fear (see Deleuze [2003] 2004: 61–2). All of this movement, which is actually the will of an object to emerge over chaos, is not for nothing, but in fact approaches eternity. The Figure exists, so to speak, more than ordinary objects themselves.

What Comes to Pass at the Heart of a Figure: Both Force and Sensation – Chapter 8, or the Rebirth of Existence in Pure Sensation

One unsettled issue in Deleuze's *Logic of Sensation* is the relation between 'force' and 'sensation'. Is the Figure the result of unapparent chaotic forces or is it the artificial bloc of sensation? Definitions do not help. Consider for instance the confrontation of the two expressions that Deleuze uses: 'paint the sensation' and 'painting forces'. What is painting, the capturing of forces or the rendering of pure sensation? The following hint provides some guidance: sensation 'remains at the basis of perception, perception in turn being what brings about the creation of events' (Conley 2005: 244). Perhaps the Figure is not everything in the Deleuzian aesthetic universe, but there is still room (and there must be) for a perceiver. The perceiver distinguishes forces that constitute, in their play of visible and invisible, organic Figures and definite shapes. The Figure reciprocates by emanating sensations, so that the perceiver is once again hit by forces which have now acquired the artistic nature of a bloc of sensation: 'some paint comes across directly onto the nervous system' (Deleuze [2003] 2004: 35). This 'outcome' has eternally already gone back from the perceiver onto the body of the Figure, and it *makes* its reality (as if the cosmic forces could in fact subtract from the perceiver some of its reality with the scope of increasing the reality of the object on the canvas). A sensation, through the organs, strikes a body, then organs dissolve again, but the wave is the real as such. It immediately hits the perceiver (there is no time in-between its production and its effect) and 'when sensation is linked to a body in this way it ceases to be representative and becomes real'. The perceiver hit by the sensation *develops another organ*, the organ that was dissolved in figuration by

the intensity of the sensation (Deleuze [2003] 2004: 45). The exchange occurring between the Figure and the Figure's perceiver is the becoming real of the sensation itself, its bypassing of the perceiver's subjectivity and its formation as a bloc of sensation. This is the Figure then: defined by the income of directed forces while emanating filtered sensations. This is its equilibrium, this is the flux of which the Figure is the filter; this is the eternal pulsation of opposites and the emergence of the acrobat. Bacon has obtained the subject of what Merleau-Ponty calls the 'continual rebirth of existence': the Figure.

In the remaining part of the book that we will focus on (chapters 1–11, excluding those already analysed, namely 6, 8 and 11), Deleuze explores the logic of the Figure's movements; that is, its logic of sensation. From now on the terms of these movements will be eminently 'Baconian': 'animal', 'hysteria', and so on. These terms introduce levels of complexity of the Figure's movement within Bacon's work alone, therefore they cannot really be used to refer to the work of any other artist. *The Logic of Sensation* is an aesthetical answer to the problem of the Heraclitean flux: everything is in motion, yet some reality makes its way towards being, passing from the realm of invisible forces towards the surface of a canvas. What follows is precisely the exemplification of this rule of motion in Deleuze's *Logic of Sensation*. Deleuze's work is the analysis of the levels of complexity through which the artistic object passes. Every chapter corresponds to a certain level of complexity. In order for the birth of the artistic object to take place – this is where Deleuze responds to the problem of the Heraclitean chaos – we must read through Deleuze's presentation in reverse order. The reason for this is that Deleuze's presentation proceeds by unfolding the logic of sensation, while another task is pursued: the concentration of all movements onto one single coagulation of reality.

From the Fall to the Figure – Chapter 10, Considering the Case of a Triptych

A sensation, being defined by different levels of intensity, circulates throughout the painting (Deleuze [2003] 2004: 76). This is already – Deleuze says – a third level of complexity, with the third level corresponding to a movement that, step by step, will eventually lead to an artistic answer – a real permanence on the canvas. Different objects stand for active and passive rhythms (no doubt 'activity' and 'passivity' represent relational notions, as the definition of rhythm suggests), and

their difference is produced by random spurts of paint, which Bacon likes to utilise. The active and the passive interact with each other and correspond to a restless, invisible movement, like the water in a river, which is relatively still and inexplicably ever changing. Let us take a step back to what Deleuze calls a second level of complexity: the passive and the active rhythms form a body or a materiality on the canvas. These are attendants of the movement.[6] They become the visible attendant and the rhythmic attendant. A last step back (to the first level): before, the two attendants were standing only for an attendant-function, depending on the moment of the viewer's perception. The mere function now indeed receives a body of its own, and in fact it is painted: an explicit attendant really observes another attendant, the rhythmic one, who is not observing, but is being observed. The co-presence of two opposite, yet complementary, functions is the cause of the multiplication of the three levels analysed above.

From Resonance to the Figure/Fact – Chapter 9, on Bacon's Bodies

The two attendants (it can also be just one) are in fact the outcome of a more superficial movement: the movement of sensation that involves a subject of sensation, the Figure, and a perceiver of it (the attendant or attendants). 'Rhythm itself would become the Figure.' The vibration between Figure and attendant(s) is a rhythm without narration: this is Bacon's challenge – to paint time without narration. The two must be one *fact*, immediately connected, 'coupled together like "wrestlers"' (Deleuze [2003] 2004: 68) in a single body struggling within itself because of the presence of deeper energies, and never telling a story. From the multiple rhythms dealt with in chapter 10 Bacon obtains a concentration of rhythms, united in a single fact, and led by the Figure: rhythms 'constitute the Figure' (71). Art produces a new reality as the emergence of dark movements under its surface: the Figure's body, or body-vibration.

From the Discovery of 'the material reality of bodies'[7] to the Body without Organs – Chapter 7, the Hysteric Body

The body previously created is mainly the body of a Figure, or, so to speak, the leader of the painting – a human body. The human body is an organism, but the living body is not (for the organism is not life; it is what imprisons life, as Deleuze states). The living body (what we are going to discover on top of the invisible movements which any

materiality is subjected to) is the body of those forces that escape the organised-body and can do without it. The real body is the body without organs, that is, a hysteric body that 'makes' present. Within any body there are the intensities of a sensation, which, when encountered, create an organ: that is our body, or what one easily claims to be a fixed, or given, state. The organ is nothing but a hysteric *adjustment* (Deleuze [2003] 2004: 47) for a provisional liberation of tension. In that point, at that time, painting discovers the pure presence of which it is made: movement, the hysterical movement of a body. Hysteria is the new *figure*, the new aesthetic discovery that derives from the vibration of a body without organs and the organism through which to escape.

From a Hysteric Body to the Real Body – Chapter 4, the Corporeal Spirit

The body without organs is a potential body, or a molecular body, that contains every relation of movement and rest required for the creation of a molar entity. This woman, that girl, this dog, that Christ: these all have an indiscernible basic nature of meat. Meat is true. It is that in which Bacon finds his faith (Sylvester 2008: 23, 46) – though he was not a believer – and what compels him to paint a becoming-animal 'not without the animal becoming spirit at the same time' (Deleuze [2003] 2004: 21). Meat is true because it is the ground of indiscernibility of the ever-becoming (of the hysteric body): there is not a mere analogical correspondence between man and dog, they are not simply 'alike'. However, if the painter is religious enough, then he can see a spirit struggling between man's metamorphosis into a beast, suffering, and at the same time see a beast's metamorphosis into a man, suffering. *This is the reality of becoming*: an animal spirit, or a Christ, whose vital breath tends to resurrection, but which is concealed by a corporeal nature (20) – its destiny is to remain part of *this* movement, and never to ascend.

From the Spirit, through the Material Structure, and to the Fact – Chapters 3 and 1, the Last Shape

The spirit is not the conclusion, because Bacon believes that there is no longer religious possibility, but just 'game' (Sylvester 2008: 29). According to Bacon, Christ and other religious subjects are incapable of transcendence. The only movement they undergo is the same movement every piece of meat undergoes. Chapter 10 deals with the flow of active and passive; chapter 9 discusses the vibration of the attendants.

Every chapter points to a certain level of the Heraclitean flux, and names two opposite constituents; chapter 7, for instance, names the body as given, and the hysteric body without organs. Every chapter represents a level of complexity of the flow. However, there is never mere 'flow', but 'Figure-ness' too: the perceiver of the flow, its *measure* and its *filter*. 'After all, the human body, is in a sense a filter' (Sylvester 2008: 199). For instance, in chapter 4, the flow is represented by the coupling of Bacon's human and animal body. They become, restlessly turning into their opposite, man into dog, dog into man. Yet the canvas grasps hold of these forces of chaos, which, without this grasping hold, would lead to a vanishing of humanity and animality in their meaningless narration. In this way, Bacon paints the Figure-spirit. This is precisely what both emerges from and resists the flux. Heraclitus is challenged by the presence of attendants: *they experience the flux and measure the sensation it emanates, upon their body*. The spirit is not the end. The flow leads back towards its opposite. The Figure-spirit is then the subject of a renewed motion, more superficial than the others: athleticism. At the same time the Figure 'wants to pass to a vanishing point to the contour in order to dissipate into the material structure' (Deleuze [2003] 2004: 17); and 'the material structure curls around the contour in order to imprison the Figure' (14). Eventually, the pulsation between the Figure and the material structure allows the last shape of the Baconian universe to emerge: the matter of fact. This is precisely the event occurring between the Figure and the material structure, via the round contour. The fact, or the matter of fact, rules out figuration because its movement is capable of being without distance and duration. The fact is the bloc of sensation.

V. The Aesthetical Answer to Heraclitus

It remains true: 'Cold things warm themselves, warm cools, moist dries, parched is made wet' (Krik [1954] 2010: 149). It is as if the Heraclitean universe is reshaped. The Obscure used a 'naturalistic' vocabulary – the wet and the dry, the day and the night, the rivers, the fire, and so on. But Deleuze, still maintaining the logic of the Heraclitean movement, pushes Heraclitus's naturalism towards an aesthetical understanding. The dry and the wet become the Figure and the Material structure, or the Figure and the Attendant, or even the Human and the Animal, which forever face off against each other, becoming each other, and vanishing in a moment of indiscernibility.

Bacon wanted to paint something real, but lived in chaos – his studios, too, were extremely chaotic. The real emerges from chaos – from the

game of an incessant movement from the invisible to the visible and again into the invisible – and not 'from nothing' and into 'nothing'. The aesthetical creation does not proceed *ex nihilo* (like God's creation). It requires an unformed material. Indeed, art co-creates the real – and co-creation is a form of re-creation.[8] In chaos there is matter (the meat that Bacon has to shape); while in the void there is nothing, not even the invisible. The chaos that the artist starts from is unintelligible, mysterious, yet it can be grasped in a schema: the becoming opposite of each opposite. The Obscure confronted the problem of becoming: everything is just what it is as long as it becomes its opposite. He called this 'river' and 'flux'. Thus, flux is not simply pure chaos, for pure chaos is beyond representation – how can the pure metamorphosis be painted, or described? Heraclitus gave the schema of chaos, the river, and described it as the hidden flowing of 'every piece of meat' into its opposite.

What does not emerge in Ancient Greece, however, is an account of how something becomes *something*, for Heraclitus seems to have stopped before this problem. For him, indeed, things simply become. In Heraclitus's notion of becoming we also find the problem of endangering its nature, that is, providing a proof that a multitude is not simply one – as in the example of the wise man, who fails to distinguish the day and the night, for they are one (Krik [1954] 2010: 155). But how, then, does something become *that* something? The original intuition of an aesthetics that creates, like Deleuze's, is precisely this: 'unity is multiplicity' (Deleuze [1983] 2002: 24), the opposites never melt into *one*. A man becomes an animal, but not even the deepest sorrow can fuse together man and dog. We can still sense the difference. To sense is to affirm a difference. For difference, rather than being the static opposition of a double identity (subject and object) is the dynamic instance 'at the origin of individuation' (the self individualises and the indeterminate assumes contours). The affirmation of a difference is the superficial effect of a spirit's becoming *something*.

It is here that Deleuze intervenes. His idea is that art has something to say to chaos. Deleuze shares with Heraclitus the view that the cosmos is a compound of terrific invisible forces (chaos). However, the case is not true that chaos is pure darkness, because darkness, like void, allows no flesh: something rises towards the surface and becomes visible. Thus, if there is chaos, there is flesh, hence there is something; and whatever it is (dust, apples or heads), it is able to endure in the life of the universe. Deleuze is still in agreement with Heraclitus when he claims that what endures is unseen by most. The colour changes, the object changes, the

apple changes . . . but *art has something to say to the river of becoming* because there are apples that render themselves independent from the flow of becoming-something-else. They exit the circle of the 'model', stand up on their own, and become themselves the forces that allow any material to express its sense (and the sensation turns *colouring* – see Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 167). There are things which move faster than the movements of the cosmos, and these things are artistic products, blocs of sensations. The *Verbum* creates reality, but does not *refer* to anything; it just makes things come into being by naming them. Thus, it does not express any opinion, contrary to what most think. Ordinary language, perhaps, expresses opinion, but not the *Verbum*. Art co-creates reality; it compels its object to run faster than any possible referent, and to germinate in time even without a perceiver. All art needs is a support or material; aside from that it is autonomous or sufficient – it is a 'sacred source' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 172). Apples and smiles are preserved untouched, and so are organs and mouths. These are terms of an aesthetic language that, without giving opinions, re-makes the real. (Not only different affirmations, but also affirmations of differences.)

Notes

1. I refer to Bacon's Study after Velázquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X, 1953. Every molecular region of the Figure's model (by Velázquez) is faithfully 're-made', just with the exception of the irrational and hysteric presences of his body which are liberated (Sylvester 2008: 26).
2. To be at once at various levels – to be force and to be effect, like the motive power that takes the form of the displaced foot on the path – is to be the artistic Figure. Aesthetics, for Deleuze, can let this possibility become real; that is, art can create a Figure. The artist and the spectator belong to the movement of creation: they are one of the aspects of becoming. The other aspect of becoming is the work of art. If, on the one hand, there are the creator-artist and the creature-work, on the other hand, there is the one who sees and that which is seen. In the aesthetic experience 'sensation' depends on 'creation'. But here, where the creativity of the artist shapes a bloc of sensation, a turn occurs. The dominion of the objective images of the artist's world gains life, the Figure senses. We have the impression that it is the work of art that watches the spectator, as in the case of the forest and Paul Klee (Merleau-Ponty 1964b: 167). Becoming undergoes an inversion of dependence of viewer and viewed. Creation occurs not more on the canvas than on the organs of the spectator. Sensation creates (the artist paints what he sees) because creatures sense (the Figure is like the organ of sight through which the spectator sees a new world). To be at various levels means to be already 'inside the painting', almost be the Figure. It means to be not more sensation or creation, than it means to be their becoming.
3. The words by Bacon are: 'an illustrational form tells you through the intelligence immediately what the form is about, whereas a non-illustrational form works first upon sensation and then slowly leaks back into the fact. Now why this should be, we don't know. This may have to do with how facts themselves

are ambiguous, how appearances are ambiguous, and therefore this way of recording form is nearer to the fact by its ambiguity of recording' (Sylvester 2008: 56–7).

4. Understanding what the artistic work is about is to take into account its power as an artistic product: rendering visible (according to Klee's remark) is more than merely rendering the visible. And this, far from simply being the artist's concern, also has philosophical implications. Two different kinds of notions of visibility are contrasted at present: Deleuze's and Merleau-Ponty's. While the latter believes that visibility concerns a question of vision ('appearances'), Deleuze transforms visibility into an ontological issue. For Deleuze, the artist does not only contribute to the education of our natural vision (see Merleau-Ponty 1964a: 14), but also presides over the coming into being of the thing as such. While Merleau-Ponty believes that art reinforces the capability of vision that lies beyond what is seen, Deleuze puts forward the idea that art reproduces the materialisation of the thing as such. Merleau-Ponty, in contrast, is concerned with 'the exact study of appearances' (Merleau-Ponty 1964a: 11).
5. Bacon ascribes to every organ a certain function, and actually he seems to make the creation of an organ dependent on its function (Deleuze [2003] 2004: 48, 51–2). But one has to contrast between an organic function and an inorganic one. An organic function, such as eating for survival, is ascribed to the mouth by someone that takes the existence of a mouth (and the life of an organism) for granted (a biologist). An inorganic function, in contrast, has nothing to do with the vital activity of an organism. In Bacon, for instance, the mouth takes on another function entirely: it becomes a hole through which an affect escapes. With Bacon and Deleuze, then, one has the chance to question the organic being of the mouth itself (rather than its biological use), both its emergence into the realm of being and its disappearance. While in biology, for example, a vital function serves as the teleological aim of an organ's existence, in Bacon's painting, and in Deleuze's ontology, the function sustains the being of the organ as such, giving it a consistency, or a shape, independent of an organic, teleological aim. Deleuze's notion of function is found prior to the one of organic function: it is the organ-isation of the (organic) function.
6. How can anything create and be created? An object painted on a canvas is 'created': apples. However, Cézanne's apples are illuminated from within (Merleau-Ponty 1964a: 12). Bacon's heads are similar to Cézanne's apples: they are solid bodies with a solidity that is self-creating; or again, they are sensations that are thickened into meat. Thus apples and heads can create: they create themselves. But not *ex nihilo* because then it is a matter of belief; they create themselves for a viewer. Bacon's attendants are signs of viewers. In front of an attendant a head, or a Figure, or an apple, deploys its meat. An attendant is a 'constant or point of reference in relation to which a variation is assessed' (Deleuze [2003] 2004: 13). In Bacon there is not only the function-Figure but the function-Perceiver, too (but they can be united into one).
7. Deleuze [2003] 2004: 55.
8. Bacon seems to maintain that art does not make the real in the same way that a god creates things. For when God produces something, his creature is 'nature'. Bacon, however, thinks that the product of men, and of the artist himself, is artificial. Every production, in other words, is a form of re-production; thus even art, while co-producing the real, is actually re-producing something real. This, nevertheless, should not be confused with the fact that the artificial reproduction of the real is a second-hand reproduction. On the contrary, he believes that 'reality in art is something profoundly artificial and that it has to be recreated' (Sylvester 2008: 172).

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Another Use of the Concept of the Simulacrum: Deleuze, Lucretius and the Practical Critique of Demystification

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Abstract

While many of the most important figures in the history of philosophy have employed the concept of the simulacrum in one way or another, a detailed study of this usage has yet to be written. In this essay, I will attempt to tell the story of a sequence in that history of that usage, by focusing on one of Deleuze's case studies of the concept of the simulacrum. To do so, I will focus primarily on one the appendices to *The Logic of Sense*: 'Lucretius and the Simulacrum'. In order to understand what I will call the Deleuze–Lucretius encounter, I will proceed as follows. After a few initial guiding remarks regarding the general project of the 'inversion of Platonism', we will outline some of the most fundamental features of atomistic physics. This will allow us to discuss Lucretius' thoughts on the clinamen, the swerve. This, in turn, leads directly to the concept of the simulacrum. With such a picture of Lucretian physics in hand, I will pivot to a discussion of Lucretius' ethics. The ethics consists of a critique of superstition in terms of a general project of demystification. Although this sequence will concentrate mostly on what became one of the appendices to *The Logic of Sense*, I will end by looking at the more general usage of Lucretian atomism, especially as it functions in *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense*.

Keywords: Lucretius, Deleuze, simulacrum, clinamen, atomism, demystification

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I. Introduction

While many of the most important figures in the history of philosophy have employed the concept of the simulacrum in one way or another, a detailed study of this usage has yet to be written. In this essay, I will attempt to offer a second sequence in the history of that usage, by focusing on one of Deleuze's case studies of the concept of the simulacrum.[1] In the appendices to *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze locates two uses of the simulacrum in the ancient world: 'Plato and the Simulacrum', and 'Lucretius and the Simulacrum'. I will focus primarily on the latter. In order to understand Deleuze's encounter with Lucretius, I will proceed as follows. After a few initial guiding remarks regarding the general project of the 'inversion of Platonism', we will outline some of the most fundamental features of atomistic physics. This will allow us to begin a discussion of Lucretius' thoughts on the clinamen, the swerve. This will, in turn, lead directly to the concept of the simulacrum. With such a picture of Lucretian physics in hand, I will pivot to a discussion of Lucretius' ethics. The ethics consists of a critique of superstition in terms of a general project of demystification. Although this sequence will concentrate mostly on what became one of the appendices to *The Logic of Sense*, I will end by looking at the more general usage of Lucretian atomism, especially as it functions in *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense*.[2] In sum, this project is important because the Deleuzian engagement with ancient and Hellenistic philosophy is both a rich and relatively unexplored area of Deleuze studies. I thus hope that this short article acts as one of the early precursors to the beginning of the study of Deleuze's encounters with ancient and medieval philosophy.

II. The Subversion of Transcendence

In 'Plato and the Simulacrum', Deleuze examines Plato's use of the concept of the simulacrum in terms of the context of a larger Nietzschean project: the reversion or inversion of Platonism. The early Nietzsche, in fact, describes his entire philosophical project as 'an *inverted Platonism*: the farther removed from true being, the purer, the finer, the better it is' (Heidegger [1979] 1984: 151–2).[3] Such a reversion does not simply imply a reversal of the order of supplementarity, in which materiality or appearance displaces essence or Platonic forms as the primary term in a strict ontological dualism; it is, instead, an uncovering of the very motivation for establishing the distinction between essence and appearance in the first place. We will address this motivation in a moment.

In 'Lucretius and the Simulacrum', however, Deleuze does not simply continue the project of reversing Platonism. For Deleuze does not oppose himself to Lucretius as he opposes himself to Plato. Instead, Deleuze takes up Lucretius as one of his many 'conceptual personae' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994).[4] To take up a conceptual persona is not merely to think like or imitate a thinker, for thinking, according to Deleuze, is not subjective. Rather, it is an act of immersion in a 'biology of intellectual action' (Alliez 2004: 83). Such an immersion is then not a grounding on a fixed plane, but more of an immersion in a collectivity of coordinated forces and movements, such as the force of the clinamen or the movement of collections of atoms. The point is not to assume a final resting place or complete picture beforehand. Instead, taking up a conceptual persona is more akin to becoming a part of a dynamic world already in motion. In this way, Lucretius – along with Hume, Spinoza, Nietzsche, and so on – is one among many of the conceptual personae that Deleuze takes up. Deleuze, then, takes up the Lucretian atomistic world as it is already in motion. This is why such a project is more of a subversion or diversion of mythic or transcendent philosophies, and, in some important sense, Lucretius is already a subversion of mythic/transcendent philosophies because atoms and movement are immanent. It is a subversion because it is a turn (*vertere*) under or below (*sub*), a turn to the dynamic movement of atoms of below, and it is a diversion because it is a task of 'think[ing] the diverse as diverse [. . .] the production of diversity' (Deleuze 1990a: 266).

III. The Diversity of Nature in Lucretian Physics

According to Deleuze, the main principle of Lucretian physics is diversity. Diversity is a combination of difference and multiplicity, of heterogeneity and composition. In such a naturalist philosophy, diversity is inseparable from nature and the products of nature. Nature is, in short, 'the production of the diverse', it is the system of 'differential relations of the diverse to the diverse (Deleuze 1990a: 266). Thus, the project of Lucretian naturalism is not to subsume nature under a single governing concept or relate it to an incomparably transcendent Idea, but 'to think the diverse as diverse' (266). In Nature, 'diversity appears in three intertwined aspects [. . .] [s]pecificity, individuality, and heterogeneity' (266). Every species is a collection of diverse individuals; every individual is different from every other; every individual is composed of heterogeneous parts. Each species, individual or atom is differentially related to each other.[5] Thus, the products of nature are diversities of

multiplicities that differentially relate to each other through the mere fact of diversity.

Perhaps the most important implication of the principle of diversity in Lucretian naturalism is the impossibility of totalisation. As Deleuze says, '[t]here is no combination capable of encompassing all the elements of nature at once, there is no [...] total universe' (Deleuze 1990a: 267). The denial of a totalising one is the affirmation of immanence and the denial of transcendence. This is one way in which Lucretius differentiates himself from Epicurus' predecessors: the older thinkers 'identified the principles with the One or the Whole'; they postulated a One, such as the Heraclitean fire, and then 'worked top-down', so to speak.[6] In the other direction, Lucretius postulates the elements at the base of nature and 'works bottom-up', forcing his philosophy to generate the diverse products of nature rather than assume them as already given, either explicitly or implicitly. Lucretius, then, recognises that diversity cannot be thought under the over-determining power of the concept of the One. That is, the One cannot generate the diverse without breaking some of the fundamental laws of atomism – nothing comes from nothing, something only comes from something, and so on (Lucretius 2001: I, 157–265). Unlike his pre-Epicurean predecessors, Lucretius did not fall prey to the temptation to totalise, to draw a closed picture of nature. Thus, while Lucretius does exhibit fundamentally pre-Epicurean and modern scientific drives – to display the fundamental structures of matter – he is simultaneously distinct from both. To be specific, Lucretius is not under the illusion, as is the case with much of modern science since the postulation of the Einsteinian divine ideal, that a unified theory is possible.[7] Deleuze calls this kind of science, a 'minor or [...] eccentric science', a mad science (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 361).[8] As we will see, the clinamen and the simulacrum are the principles of the impossibility of the determination of the whole of nature.

Given that nature is diversity itself, and given that this diversity is non-totalising, it is evident that nature is 'not collective, but rather distributive [...] not attributive, but rather conjunctive: it expresses itself through "and", and not through "is"' (Deleuze 1990a: 267). Nature is distributive in that it is a nonlinear, dynamic, open-ended system; it is an interwoven knot of becoming; it is an incalculable, forming and deforming swarm of atoms. As Deleuze says of the Leibnizian monadic world, the world is a '*pure emission of singularities*' (Deleuze 1993: 60). In short, moving bodies are distributed according to a non-totalising logic of diversity rather than unification under a concept. Following the contour of this logic of diversity, nature is conjunctive in that it

is produced out of diversity, rather than assumed beforehand. Nature is composed of this *and* this *and* this *and* this, ad infinitum. Lacking predetermined order or *telos*, atoms are able to connect with other atoms in almost an infinite number of ways. Each species, each individual, each world is capable of ever-new conjunctions, conjugations, combinations and compositions. 'Everything is formed out of connections, densities, shocks, encounters, concurrences, and motions' (Lucretius 2001: I, 633–4). The Lucretian atomistic world rests of the edge of many infinites: it is the site of the infinite collisions of infinite atoms in an infinite number of combinations in an infinite space over an infinite amount of time.

This is not to say that nature does not produce local unities, for there are certainly organised bodies and worlds. Rather, it is just that there is no unifying whole that completely enframes the world. This is an important example of 'philosophical pluralism [. . .] Nature is indeed a sum, but not a whole' (Deleuze 1990a: 267). Unlike the popular expression that explains the magic of organic wholes, 'the whole is more than the sum of its parts', in Lucretian naturalist physics, the whole is actually less than the sum of its parts. As Deleuze and Guattari might say it, where n is the number of dimensions in a world, the following expression conveys the sum of the Lucretian world: n - 1. The whole is never an assumed principle but merely a mythological or transcendent postulation that results from the confusion of kinds of infinites.[9] Individual bodies are not defined by an overarching unifying concept or even the centre of the body, but by the limits or borders where bodies come into contact with other bodies. In short, rather than the One, the diverse is celebrated. With this general picture of the Lucretian world at hand, it is now possible to address some of the specific details that Deleuze finds in this world.

IV. The Principles of Naturalism: The Clinamen and the Simulacrum

Perhaps the most easily identifiable character of Lucretian physics is atomism. As a naturalist, Lucretius starts from the bottom up, producing the great complexity of the universe from simple parts. This is one meaning of the subversion of transcendence. Starting at the bottom, there are two basic components of the world: atoms (*atomos*) and void (*inane*). Everything is produced from these two basic elements. Since they are sub-sensible, atoms are strictly thought objects, not sensible in themselves. Atoms then constitute the limit of the thought of matter,

the minima of thought: they are that level below which thought cannot venture. It is not possible to think anything smaller than the atom. Just as there is a minimum of sensation, a level below which sensation is not possible (which, as we will see, is the simulacrum), the atom is the minimum of thought. So, as sensible objects are given to the senses, thought objects are given to thought. Through a method of analogy,[10] Epicureanism passes 'from the sensible to the thought and the thought to the sensible by means of transitions' (Deleuze 1990a: 268).

The sum of atoms is infinite in number, as is void or space. Void is the pure, smooth space traversed by cascades of atoms. Atoms and space 'are interlaced in such a manner that the sum of the void and the atoms is itself infinite' (Deleuze 1990a: 269). Despite these three infinites, Lucretius does not abuse the concept. In fact, discerning true from false infinites, as we will see, is an important feature of Lucretianism. While there are an infinite number of atoms of the same shape and size, the shapes and sizes of atoms are not infinite. There is thus some limitation to the combination of atoms, and this limitation is necessary in order to maintain the appearance of order out of the seemingly chaotic movement of atoms in the void. This is not to say that atoms only combine interspecially, for every individual body is composed of different atoms, every body is heterogeneous. Speaking of animal bodies, for example, Lucretius says, 'each individual animal is composed of bones, blood, veins, heat, fluid, flesh, and sinews, and these too have differences [. . .] corresponding to differences in the shapes' (Lucretius 2001: II, 670). Again, the natural world is fundamentally diverse.

Resemblance does, of course, exist, but it is produced by the power of the diverse. The ancient order of being is thus reversed, or subverted. Deleuze notices two powers in the Lucretian world, the power of the diverse and the power of resemblance or identity: 'the power of the diverse and its production, but there is the power of the *re*production of the diverse' (Deleuze 1990a: 271; my emphasis). This second power is a consequent of the first. An individual body is made of a heterogeneous constellation of particles moving at various speeds. Constituted as and by this diversity, the body sheds some atoms and gains others. The point is to maintain the integrity of the composition of the body. The atoms that are shed from the body can then drift off and combine with other atoms in a similar combination, and this other constellation might resemble the first body. In this way, the power of resemblance or identity, the power to reproduce the diverse, is derived from diversity itself. This is a departure from his Platonist and Aristotelian predecessors who thought that diversity was a degeneration from a prior identity.

Bodies, then, are heterogeneous complexities 'born, in fact, into already complex settings' (Deleuze 1990a: 271). A body is constantly losing and gaining constitutive parts, new atoms are continuously swapped for old atoms, and the body's setting allows it to remain temporarily composed. That is, a body appears amidst an environment that receives the atoms sloughed off of the body, and that same environment also replenishes the body with new atoms over the span of the life of the body.

Amidst all of these swirling clouds of atoms constantly clanging and clattering off of each other, a stochastic organisation emerges. This is not to say that order is imposed from some outside, transcendent position. Instead, order, of whatever degree, emerges from the interaction of matter with itself. Matter flows into and out of itself; it folds and unfolds itself with greater and greater intensity. This intensity increases until it reaches a certain point, a threshold. Upon crossing this threshold matter self-organises. Out of the churning ripples and currents of matter, due among other things to the increasing intensity among the atoms, distinct patterns of behaviour emerge. Take, for example, a hurricane. Prior to the formation of the familiar swirling patterning of a hurricane, there are a number of intensive processes – fluctuating temperatures, wind speeds, changes in pressure, and so on. These processes increase in intensity until they reach a certain point at which the familiar cyclonic shape of the hurricane emerges. Order has emerged out of seeming chaos; matter has organised itself. The patterns of emergent behaviour then constitute an individual – a hurricane, a rock, a river, an organism, and so on. The individual, however, is only temporary. In the case of a hurricane, the cyclonic pattern lasts just long enough for meteorologists to name it. At any point, however, the individual is susceptible to a shock to the system that interrupts the coordinated behaviour and disperses the constituent parts. This is the death of the individual, the end of a hurricane.

All of this, however, presupposes a means of sparking this self-organisation. In order to offer a more compelling picture of the power of matter to self-organise by means of the behaviour of matter itself, Lucretius posits the famous notion of the clinamen.

The Clinamen

The history of the reception of the clinamen is quite mixed. Many have considered the clinamen an embarrassing weakness, if not a downright absurdity, in atomism. In ancient Rome, for example, Cicero called it 'a childish fiction', an 'arbitrary invention', even 'unscientific' (Cicero 2001: 19–20). Later, in a post-Newtonian world in which mechanical

causation and physical determinism reigned supreme, the clinamen was considered simply an unfortunate misstep of early science. In contemporary times, however, especially considering the popularity of such scientific ideas as quantum mechanics and hydrodynamics, the swerve found a more receptive audience.[11] However history has treated the clinamen, even Lucretius himself was nervous about putting forward such a controversial thesis. As he broaches the topic he says, 'I am anxious that you should grasp a further point [. . .] the swerve' (Lucretius 2001: II, 217–21). Yet to explain away the clinamen as merely an act of epistemological immaturity misses the power of the figure of the clinamen. For Lucretius, unlike some sciences of the modern era, confronted an undisplayable, ungraspable feature of the structure of matter. As we will see, the figure of the clinamen, like the simulacrum, functions as that which prevents the closure of metaphysics.

One common mistake is to consider the clinamen simply a cause. This is an unfortunate misreading that likely results from the domination of the popular model of mechanical and linear causation as it has appeared in the history of the physical sciences. The clinamen, though, is not simply a mechanical cause. Instead, due partly to its fundamentally sub-minimal nature, it cannot be determined or isolated as simply another linear cause. Instead, the clinamen is the difference that makes a difference, 'a generative differential element', 'a fluxion' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 489; Serres 2001: 4). It is the 'self-different which relates different to different by itself' (Deleuze 1994: 119). It is the smallest possible degree, not even an identifiable degree but merely a difference in degree; it is the smallest possible difference between degrees, 'an infinitesimal degree', '*nec plus quam minimum*', literally, 'no more than the minimum' (Lucretius 2001: II, 223–4).

While the clinamen is not itself reducible to yet another mechanical cause, it is still related to causality and causal series. Deleuze might call it a 'quasi-cause' (Deleuze 1990a: 6, *passim*). While such an unfamiliar phrase is not immediately clarifying, it is meant to open up enough space to introduce alternative forms of causality, such as nonlinear or non-deterministic causality. That is, unlike the standard model of mechanical causation, nonlinear causation does not communicate determinate effects upon atoms or compounds. Instead, a quasi-cause establishes certain conditions for the eventual self-organisation of atoms. The clinamen is a quasi-cause in that, in itself, it is undetermined, but it serves as the ground for atomistic determination; it is determinability as such. As a quasi-cause, the clinamen is the figure of the 'irreducible plurality of causes or causal series, and the impossibility of bringing causes together

into a whole' (Deleuze 1990a: 270). Causation is thus inherently divergent, as is nature; this means that causation is never complete. Since causation is never complete, there is always an excess to the system; this excess is the gap or tear in being, it is the clinamen. Thus, the clinamen is, in itself, not thinkable as a determinate cause. Instead, it is concealed below the plurality of causes and causal series. Lucretius himself describes the clinamen as nothing more than a 'shift of movement', a change, a difference (Lucretius 2001: II, 221). It is an ontological interruption, the destabilisation of conceptual determinacy, an ever-so-slight divergence in order that relates the diverse to the diverse.

Since it is not of the order of determinate and linear causality, it does not take place in a specific space and time, but is below sensible and thinkable spatiality and temporality. It is the slightest, undetectably slight, declination from rectilinear motion. As Lucretius says, 'at times quite uncertain and uncertain places, they [the atoms] swerve a little from their course, just so much as you might call a change of motion' (Lucretius 2001: II, 219). The clinamen cannot be causally, temporally or spatially determined because it conceals itself, because the sensible phenomenon covers it up. '[I]t has no place other than that which it lacks [...] because of the way it perpetually displaces itself under its own effects' (Deleuze 1994: 120). The swerve is so slight that its time and place are thus indefinite or uncertain, *incerto tempore ferme incertisque locis* (at times quite uncertain times and places). Given such uncertainty, we might call it a different time and place altogether. This does not mean, however, that the clinamen is simply a chance or random occurrence, simply a mistake that breaches natural laws. For, as Deleuze says, 'the clinamen or swerve has nothing to do with an oblique movement which would come accidentally to modify a vertical fall' (Deleuze 1990a: 269). Instead, the clinamen is an indication of a non-localisable dynamism that is irreducible to an isolable space, time, concept or cause. Thus, at the heart of being is a tear, an aberration, a warp that undergirds, without grounding, matter. It is that which prevents unification by maintaining the diverse in nature. The clinamen maintains this diversity in that it prevents closure, unification or totalisation. It is the maintenance of this diversity that offers the powers of self-organisation to matter.

This is what is meant by the impossibility of subsuming nature under the Whole or the One. Through the figure of the clinamen, the infinitesimal declination, nature remains open-ended. The clinamen is that which subtracts from the Whole, it is that which precludes the completion of causal series, it is that which prevents the closer of metaphysics by means of the unification of a totalising picture, a One.

Simulacrum

Although this paper is about the use of the concept of the simulacrum in Lucretius, the two concepts of the clinamen and the simulacrum are inextricably linked, so much of what Deleuze says about the one will apply to the other. Accordingly, similar to the clinamen, Lucretius' account of the simulacrum, especially in its role in a theory of perception, is much maligned; simply considered as an account of perception, Lucretius' use of the simulacrum is not very convincing. The confusion that surrounds this discussion might have something to do with the corruption of the text.[12] Deleuze, however, while conceding the obscurity of the account, argues that it is actually the 'invention of a brilliant, though difficult, Epicurean theory' (Deleuze 1990a: 273). If we turn to Deleuze's interpretation of the concept of the simulacrum as it appears in *De Rerum Natura*, an intriguing picture emerges, one that has a distinct philosophical target. To be specific, Lucretius' target is the Platonist-style transcendent turn and the distinction between model and copy such a turn implies.

On a very general interpretation of the Platonist theory of perception, the truth of any material object in the world, such as an urn, is not the organisation of matter itself, but the transcendent ideal Form in which the urn participates. According to Platonism, rather than directly addressing the object of this world, understanding the truth of the materially instantiated urn requires a turning away from nature and towards the Form. Upon grasping the Form of the urn, knowledge is gained, but at the price of denying the power of nature. As said earlier, by means of such a reference to a transcendent norm, Plato discerns true from false claimants to wisdom. This is why the general form of the Platonic question is: 'what is [*ti estin*] [. . .] *x*?' and not 'Who? How many? Whence? How? Where?' and so on. False claimants answer the 'what is it?' question by reference to objects in this world rather than articulate an essential transcendent identity. Truth is otherworldly; falsity is thiswordly.

As said, such an interpretation is overly general and possibly unfair to Plato's texts, and Deleuze himself is sometimes guilty of ignoring certain passages that construe Forms as quite nuanced and dynamic rather than static essences that nature imperfectly instantiates. The *Timaeus*, for example, in which there is a theory of geometrical atoms, complicates the overly simplified Platonist story just given. In that dialogue, there is a long and nuanced tale that involves not just ideal Forms and defective copies but also a demiurge, the *khora* or receptacle, two kinds of atomic

triangles, and so on. Since the main motivation for this paper is to explore Deleuze's engagement with ancient philosophy, it is important to recognise some of the shortcomings of Deleuze's account of Plato. Still, while it is true that Deleuze sometimes ignores nuances of Platonism, it is important to remember that the Nietzschean–Deleuzian inversion of Platonism is not simply an anti-Platonism but more of a 'rejuvenated Platonism' (Smith 2006: 108). This is why Deleuze locates what he calls 'the most extraordinary adventure of Platonism' near the end of Plato's *Sophist* (Deleuze 1990a: 256). There, Platonism was pushed to the extreme, to the edge of irony, where Plato discovered 'that the simulacrum is not simply a false copy, but that it places in question the very notions of copy and model' (256). This leads Deleuze to ask: '[w]as it not Plato himself who indicated out the direction for this reversal of Platonism?' (Deleuze 1994: 68). In the end, whether or not Deleuze perfectly depicts Platonic texts, it is enough for our purposes to recognise the important role transcendent objects, however dynamic or static they may be, play in atomism's bitter rival, Plato.[13]

According to Lucretian naturalism, atomic compounds constantly emit a 'sort of membrane [. . .] bark', 'filmy form, or images [*simulacra*]' (Lucretius 2001: IV, 42–52.)[14] Such a claim again depends on the method of natural analogy: as cicadas shed sleek coats, as calves shed superficial membranes, as serpents shed skins, atomic compounds shed 'visible discharges' (Lucretius 2001: IV, 58–64). These sloughed-off simulacra, then, 'float this way and that through the air', crossing great distances, sometimes encountering thick obstacles (Lucretius 2001: IV, 33). Sometimes, these flitting simulacra reach and pass through sensory organs. Our access to objects, then, is dependent on the movement of these simulacra. This is the key point: though perception is dependent on simulacra, simulacra are not, in themselves, perceivable. This, for two reasons, size and speed: simulacral 'texture is so fine that they cannot be seen individually', and 'the images [*simulacra*] move at an extraordinary speed' (Lucretius 2001: IV, 89, 214). While 'the simulacrum is [. . .] imperceptible', it produces sensible images (Deleuze 1990a: 274). The perceived 'image bears witness to the succession and summation of simulacra' (277). Simulacra are thus the imperceptible spark of sensation, the inaccessible although necessary 'differentials of diverse orders' (275). They are the differences that make the difference in a fully haptic universe.

While there is no recourse to a transcendent formalist norm, simulacra, like the clinamen, are not perceived because they occur below a certain minimum. That is, while the clinamen occurred below the

minima of thinkable space and time, simulacra occur below the minima of sensible space and time. Simulacra are so slight, so lithe, so swift that they are not really complete entities unto themselves. 'That is why at any time in any place all kinds of images are ready at hand [. . .] so immense is their velocity, and so immense is the store of them' (Lucretius 2001: IV, 798–800). A simulacrum is more like speed itself, the speed of light, a pure instant of time, an absolute point, a temporal singularity, an infinitesimal. It moves at a time faster than sensible time, *puncto tempore*, for a point has no dimensions. Still, such an explanation finds no recourse to other worlds. In this way, simulacra are more like collections of speeds, themselves the measure of difference, that do not relate to any transcendent original. This is why simulacra are not imperfect copies of formal originals, but copies of copies, copies without originals. In fact, they are not really copies at all. As the bodies that cast off the simulacra are heterogeneous, collections of different parts, simulacra are equally heterogeneous, equally differential. Nature then is a texture of difference, a heterogeneous diversity of differences, and perception is generated out of this natural texture of differentiality.

Amidst all the clouds of simulacra constantly swimming about the world at different speeds and thicknesses, constantly bombarding bodies, simulacra intersect themselves and sometimes get caught up in each other. This explains the appearance of mythic creatures, fantastical dreams and erotic fantasies. The perception of a centaur, for example, is the result of the intersection of the images of a horse and a man. The problem is when the received image of the centaur, which is only the effect of simulacra and not simulacra themselves, is taken as representative of the object itself. 'In virtue of their speed, which causes them to be and to act below the sensible minimum, *simulacra produce the mirage of a false infinite in the images which they form*' (Deleuze 1990a: 277; original emphasis). Moving at the speed of light, false infinites – mythic creatures, jealous gods, obscure objects of desire – are illusions produced from the impact of the dance of simulacra. Before going further, let us situate this discussion of true and false infinites and the illusions produced by simulacra.

V. True and False Infinites: Critique of Superstition

The theory of infinites is found in the first two books of *De Rerum Natura*, and Deleuze contends that his theory of the infinite is an essential feature of Lucretius' naturalist physics. As we have seen, such an atomistic universe is filled with many infinites, but the number of

infinites is not infinite. This theory, Deleuze argues, 'conforms to the fundamental object of physics: *to determine what is really infinite and what is not*, and to distinguish the true from the false infinite' (Deleuze 1990a: 272; original emphasis). What are the true and false infinites?

First, the true infinites: 'the sum of atoms, the void, the sum of atoms and the void, the number of atoms of the same shape and size, and the number of combinations or worlds' (Deleuze 1990a: 272). We have already seen how these infinites work and combine. Second, the false infinites: 'parts of the body and of the atoms, the sizes and shapes of the atom, and above all, every worldly or intra-worldly combination' (272). We have also seen how these elements are not infinite, but limited. The point of all of this is to notice almost a Platonic method of selection, albeit a fully immanent and thiswordly one: to select the true infinite from the false infinite. Lucretian physics thus offers an immanent method of selection that can apply to the diseases of the soul that were running rampant amidst the Greco-Roman people. Let us return to the beginning of *De Rerum Natura* in order to see how this theory of the infinite and the method of selection play out.

At the beginning of Book I, Lucretius sets out two main goals of his work: to give an account of the basic principles of nature and the nature of simulacra. As he says,

> it is imperative that I give a correct account of celestial phenomena, explaining what principle governs the courses of the sun and the moon, and also what force is responsible for all that happens on earth [...] and disclose what it is that visits us when we are buried in sleep or lie awake in the grip of sickness and gives us the terrifying illusion of hearing and seeing face to face people who are dead, and whose bones are embosomed in the earth. (Lucretius 2001: I, 127–36)

Two things are immediately apparent. First, notice that although Lucretius claims he is giving a correct account of the behaviour of the atomistic universe, he does not claim to give a completed picture of a closed universe. Rather, he has merely located principles, forces and features of the matter of the natural world. This account thus produces a non-completed, open-ended world of diversity and multiplicity. Second, these two things, the principle governing movement and that which causes illusions, are, respectively, the clinamen and the simulacrum. This is where the theory of infinites comes in.

According to Deleuze, the clinamen and the simulacrum 'give birth to the double illusion of infinite capacity for pleasure and an infinite capacity of torment' (Deleuze 1990a: 277). At first, such a claim might

seem to cast the clinamen and the simulacrum in a bad light in that they are the responsible parties for the sense of disturbance and pain that virally spread through the Greco-Roman people. Yet such an interpretation misses the greater picture. The point of the Lucretian theory of the infinite is to discern true from false infinites, and this principle would then draw the Epicureans to these two sub-minima – the clinamen and the simulacrum. Yet this move does not mean that these sub-minima are, in some sense, to be denied; instead, they are the location of the minima of thought, that below which thought and sensation cannot venture. For the

> movement of the atom in a minimum continuous thinkable time bears witness to the declination [the clinamen], which nevertheless occurs in a time smaller than this minimum. Similarly, the image bears witness to the succession and summation of simulacra, which occur in a time smaller than the minimum of continuous sensible time. (Deleuze 1990a: 277)

Thus, the clinamen occurs in a time below thinkable time, a time that cannot, in itself, be thought, and the simulacra occur in a time below sensible time, a time that cannot, in itself, be sensed. As Lucretius says, the clinamen occurs at 'no more than the minimum' (*nec plus quam minimum*), and the simulacra 'are only just too small [and fast] for our eyes to discern' (Lucretius 2001: II, 244; IV, 112–13). The very attempt to think, and thus conceptually determine, anything occurring in this sub-conceptual time is to break the goal of the project of philosophy as naturalism. To recall, the goal of naturalism is 'to think the diverse as diverse' (Deleuze 1990a: 226). Thus, to try to think below the minima of thinkable time risks dissolving the diverse and importing the notion of the Whole or the One. To conceptualise the clinamen or the simulacrum is to subject such subversive features of nature to the governance of a concept. Such a temptation implies a closed picture of nature, and Lucretianism warns against this temptation. For to fall prey to this temptation is to conflate true and false infinites. Religion and myth do not heed this warning, and thus insert mythological tales of monsters and vengeful gods. That is, mythology tries to think below the minima of thinkable time; religion tries to explain nature through chimerical concepts. In this way, through the insertion of unifying concepts below the minima, religion and myth do not distinguish the true infinite from the false infinite. In fact, they abuse this distinction. This leads to the abuse of life.

Naturalist physics, by contrast, merely locates two differentials – the clinamen, the minimum of thought, and simulacra, the minima of

sense – as the sources of false infinites. Through such a location, Lucretianism fulfils its two clearly stated goals: 'to give the correct account of celestial phenomena [. . .] and what force is responsible for all that happens on earth [. . .] and disclose what it is that [. . .] gives us the terrifying illusion' (Lucretius 2001: I, 127–36). Celestial and terrestrial phenomena find their governing principle in the clinamen and the source of terrifying illusion is simulacra.

VI. The Critique of Superstition and the Project of Demystification

This is not to say that the Lucretian physical worldview is finished, for it clearly involves many inconsistencies, contradictions and implausibilities. The project succeeds, however, on many accounts.

First, by withstanding the temptation for recourse to transcendent explanations, Lucretius offers a completely immanent physics/metaphysics. Yes, he was not able to offer a completely correct account of the behaviour of nature, but no subsequent science has. Every science – from Aristotelianism to Newtonianism to quantum mechanics – is fundamentally incomplete. In fact, the open-ended, nonlinear, dynamic character of Lucretian naturalism actually accords well with many of the scientific developments in such sciences as hydrodynamics and thermodynamics. One of the problems with transcendent explanation is the depiction of nature as incomplete and imperfect, as a mere copy, as a lack, as a failure. Nature, for such a position, is false and distortive of truth because it is materially and constantly in flux. By locating truth beyond the material world, nature is always-already false, which is why it is no wonder that sadness, pain and anxiety ruled the Greco-Roman soul. Again, this is the abuse of life. Lucretius, however, acting as a good Epicurean symptomologist, eliminated every possible hint of transcendence, he 'denounce[d] everything that is sadness, everything that is the cause of sadness, [. . .] [he] deprived the negative of all its power' by affirming the 'positivity of Nature' (Deleuze 1990a: 279).

Second, and this follows from the fully immanent character of Lucretianism, the turn to transcendent and mythic explanations was diagnosed as one of the most pernicious symptoms of the Greco-Roman disease. By locating the source of myths and illusions, false infinites, through the figures of the clinamen and the simulacrum, Lucretianism was also able to announce the affirmation of the diversity of this world. Since nature is fundamentally diverse, Lucretius offers us '[n]aturalism as the philosophy of affirmation; pluralism linked with multiple affirmation'

(Deleuze 1990a: 279). This is why one of the first atomistic moves is a making-false or becoming-simulacrum of the event. As a simulacrum, the event is neither a copy nor an original, but 'contests *both* model *and* copy at once' (2; original emphasis). The very motivation for such a distinction disappears by making nature simulacral. What is left is the natural world not as a derivative copy of some more primary perfection but as a site of the production and generation.

Third, Lucretian physics and ethics also inaugurates the 'enterprise of "demystification"' (Deleuze 1990a: 279). Religion constantly denies the power of the material world by spreading myths about divine activity and transcendent truths. In this way, nature becomes an overly enchanted place of uncontrollable and disorderly behaviour subject to the whim of fickle gods. Naturalism, however, affirms the power of nature to generate everything that is seen, felt and thought. Lucretian naturalism is thus also 'the practical critique of all mystifications' (279). This is why the project of practical demystification is another version of the art of counter-actualisation. As we saw above, the first two steps in this process are the aetiology or classification of desires and the prognostication about the diseased status of Greco-Roman society. These two steps constitute the movement of flattening – the move from depth to surface, where '*everything now returns to the surface*' (7; original emphasis). As Deleuze says of Spinoza, this is an art of organising encounters on an atomic surface of infinite variation. The final step, the ethical deployment of the Epicurean treatment, is the practice of counter-actualisation. This involves two phases. On the one hand, after extraction from a state of affairs in which some life or atomic assemblage is embedded, there is the specification of adjunct fields. That is, the possibilities for interaction among atomic assemblages are opened up once everything is placed on a single plane. Now, since there is no transcendent hierarchy striated and thus preventing communication among all other atoms and compounds, everything can communicate with everything else. This is the movement from a fully actualised state of affairs to a virtual plane of communication. On the other hand, there is the 'condensation of singularities [. . .] the ultimate sense of counter-actualization' (178). This involves the realisation of the truth of atoms and void beneath all phenomenological experience. The healthy Epicurean 'strains his entire personality in a moment that is always further divisible', at least to the atomic register, 'in order to open himself up to the impersonal and pre-individual' (150). In this way, there are two sides to each natural event: there is the part of an assemblage that is the actualisation of some potential for atomic combination

and the part of that assemblage that cannot be actualised – the first is actualisation and the second is counter-actualisation. This is how the art of counter-actualisation inserts conjunctions – this atom *and* this atom *and* this atom *and* so on – that make different assemblages and atomic series resonate so as to spark variations that open up space for new possibilities for life. Such an ethical programme involves giving aesthetic consideration for new forms of life. Even stronger, it involves the Nietzschean impulse to turn morality into an aesthetic practice, the practice of selecting affects. In a different language, such a practice of making ethics into a practice for living as art (from ethics to aesth-ethics) is akin to 'making oneself a body without organs', a variable surface opened up to streams of affects, sensations or simulacra that can alter the structure of an atomic compound in different ways. This is how the atomistic critique of demystification leads to the positive project of the Epicurean version of the 'great health'.

VII. The Conclusion is Nothing to Us: Atomic Deleuze

On the face of it, the story of the Deleuze–Lucretius encounter might seem out of place in Deleuze studies, for a quick glance throughout Deleuze's texts does not reveal anywhere near as many references to Lucretius as it does, for example, to Spinoza, Kant or Nietzsche. If Deleuze's engagement with Lucretian atomism was so important, one might contend, then surely he would have written much more explicitly on the topic, if not devote a book-length study to Lucretius, as he was wont to do with philosophers he took as essential to his own work. Still, while Deleuze does not spend much time explicitly addressing Lucretius and atomism, he does engage this ancient tradition, more implicitly than explicitly, in almost all of his texts. It is thus my hope that this small essay helps begin to pull out the full shape of this encounter. As Deleuze says, '[p]hilosophers introduce new concepts, they explain them, but they do not tell us, not completely anyway, the problems to which those concepts are a response' (Deleuze 1990b: 136), and this applies to Deleuze himself. It is thus the task of contemporary Deleuze studies to uncover or de-solve texts 'in his own name' so as to extract the problems to which Deleuzianism responds. It is clear to me that some of the most important problems to which Deleuze responds are found in *De Rerum Natura*.

As further motivation, there is also a historical reason for import of the Deleuze–Lucretius encounter to Deleuze studies. Given that the conceptual foreground to Deleuzian philosophy is highly influenced by

early modern philosophy, science and mathematics (Leibniz, Hume, Spinoza, and others), and given that the re-emergence of atomism upon the rediscovery of *De Rerum Natura* is the conceptual background for much of the development in that early modern period, it follows that atomism has a strong, albeit possibly indirect, influence on Deleuzian thought. In the hopes of further clarifying such a conceptual background, I argue for the importance of exploring this conceptual background (atomism) to a conceptual foreground (early modern philosophy) of Deleuzian philosophy.

Still, while it is important to engage *De Rerum Natura* directly, as this paper has done, in order to negotiate Deleuze's encounter with Lucretius, it is equally important to stress the ways in which Lucretius functions in Deleuze's own texts. In order to see some of the more significant ways in which Lucretian atomism influences or functions in Deleuze's text, I will conclude by making two broad gestures towards some areas in Deleuze's texts in which Lucretius plays an important role. These are certainly not the only ways in which Deleuze encounters Lucretius, but they are the two most directly relevant to what appears above. The complete account of the Deleuze–Lucretius encounter must be delayed for another day.

First Gesture

One of the most direct uses of atomism appears in chapter four of *Difference and Repetition*. This is where Deleuze most explicitly explains one of the most important concepts of his own philosophy: Ideas. This concept appears throughout Deleuze's works, although it often appears under many different guises, including: 'structure', 'multiplicity' and 'problem'. After developing an account of what he means by 'Idea', Deleuze offers a few examples of Ideas in different domains so as to further illustrate this concept. Although he says that these examples were 'chosen almost at random', I do not think it is any coincidence that he chose atomism as the first example of an Idea (Deleuze 1994: 184).

Just as Deleuzian Ideas are the objective structures of thought, atoms, for Lucretius, are the 'objective elements of thought' (Deleuze 1994: 184). This is not to say that the thought of atoms is the thought of a single ontological element that subsists without reference to other virtual elements. Instead, the thought of the structural variations of multiplicities of atoms is nothing more than an early attempt to think the ontological genetic structures differentiated in a virtual dimension. Thus, 'it is indeed essential that atoms be related to other atoms at the heart of structures that are actualized in sensible composites' (184).

This is why the thought of atoms is the thought of virtual multiplicities. Further, the thought of the relations among atoms is an early thinking of the kind of relationality that Deleuze locates as functioning in the differential relations that populate Deleuzian Idea. What brings these multiplicities of atoms together is the clinamen: 'the clinamen is the reciprocal determination that [. . .] produce[s] [. . .] a relation between the differentials of atoms in movement' (184). In the very thought of atomism, then, we see an early formulation of some of the fundamental features of Deleuze's ontology. Besides claiming atoms as objective elements of thought and the clinamen as the spark for reciprocal determinations, atomism sets out some early features of a philosophy that is both immanent and materialist. For the postulation of atoms focused thought on a genetic virtual dimension that is fully immanent yet not reducible to any actualised empirical configuration. Like the nature of the virtual/actual relation, sensible assemblages do not resemble the multiplicities of atoms that produce them.

In this sense, talking of the Deleuzian theory of problems or Ideas seems particularly Lucretian when we consider the essentially genetic and productive nature of Lucretian atomism. For neither Deleuze nor Lucretius traces the ontological structure of the world from the empirical manifold of phenomenal experience; nor do they postulate a final form existing or subsisting beyond the world towards which everything is tending or striving. Instead, they both argue for particular conceptions of the genetic ontological structures of the world and then try to produce the world out of them. That is, the world is a divergent solution to the main problem: how do we produce the world given that everything is, for Lucretius, atoms and void or, for Deleuze, differential elements, differential relations and singularities corresponding to those relations? The real world through which we have experience, about which we think and in which we act is a diverse set of solutions to this problem. And the evaluation is not in terms of the truth or falsity of the solution but in terms of the ordinary or remarkable solutions determining the problem. For philosophy, Deleuze says,

> does not consist in knowing and is not inspired by truth. Rather, it is categories like Interesting, Remarkable, or Important that determine success or failure. Now, this cannot be known before being constructed. We will not say of many books of philosophy that they are false, for that is to say nothing, but rather that they lack importance or interest, precisely because they do not create any concept or contribute an image of thought or beget a persona [or produce a problem] worth the effort. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 82)

The point is to evaluate the problem itself, is to affirm the endless production, creation or becoming of this world and its solutions in the very process of their becoming. The state of the Deleuzian or Lucretian world remains problematic, and this should not make us worry, cower in fear or feel guilty, but to affirm it and to live joyfully, guided by the joyful affirmation of a life of pleasure. Lucretian atomism affirms this world not because it stays the same, but because it differs, because it continues to make a difference. Deleuzianism clearly resonates with such principles.

Second Gesture

There are more important features of this Deleuze–Lucretius encounter. Lucretius' account of the emergence of thought through the encounter with simulacra in perception resonates in Deleuze's story of the violent, seemingly paradoxical, encounter with the being of the sensible, the *sentiendum*, and its relation to *cogitandum*. The central Lucretian element of this encounter is the role of the simulacrum in sensation. Since simulacra are not perceived, in that they occur below a certain minimum, they function as what Deleuze calls the *sentiendum*, that which must be sensed (in terms of the transcendental sensibility) but cannot be sensed (in terms of empirical intuition). As Lucretius says, 'we may be sure that sensation can be produced from the insensible' (Lucretius 2001: I, 929–30). So, when Epicurus says that all sensations are true, he means a real event takes place in the sensory encounter, that is, there is a real affective encounter, a real change in bodily disposition (Rist 1972: 19–20). All sensations are then true not in the sense of accurately resembling some prior identity but in the sense of being the real location where a difference is made. Lacking resemblance to a model, it is a difference without an original or model that determines what kind of thing it is, a common definition of a simulacrum. Out of this violent encounter with simulacra, thought erupts. The encounter with variable contour of such a heterogeneously and differentially composed natural world is how the Epicurean subject emerges, that is, how it first becomes the site of a certain pattern of moving collections of sensations and, eventually, gains knowledge of this very process. Another name for this is 'learning'.

Learning, then, involves an encounter with problems that does not make us merely reconfirm what we already think, feel, believe and opine, but that disrupts our thoughts, feelings, beliefs and opinions. We are forced, in a way, to confront something nonsensical and to make sense

of it. In the end, once sense holds sway and the faculties have returned to a sense of stability, knowledge arises (Hughes 2009: 85).[15] Gaining knowledge, then, is not a process of reading or tracing the process of the production of sense of the product (such as knowledge), but of a direct, violent and disruptive encounter with the problem or Idea. Deleuze calls this process of reaching the problematic conditions an 'apprenticeship' (Deleuze 1994: 166). The production of thought and knowledge is then another instance of actualisation, albeit this time the result is thinking. And just like any other process of actualisation, the product is never finished, actualisation is never completed, learning is never over. For 'learning is, after all, an infinite task' (166).

In the end, the telling of the story of the Deleuze–Lucretius encounter not only contributes to the expansion and improvement of Deleuze studies but is essential to a fuller appreciation of all things Deleuzian. As of now, there is very little written on this exact subject, which means that this small story will be almost the first of its kind on the atomism/Deleuze relationship.[16] It is thus my hope that this article will be considered one of the earliest movements in the elaboration of Deleuze's encounter with ancient and medieval philosophy. While I have told the story of the Deleuze–Lucretius encounter, I must leave it to others to pick up this narrative and tell the story of, for example, the Deleuze–Aristotle, Deleuze–Stoicism[17] or Deleuze–Scotus (Kaufman 2012) encounters. In a Deleuzian sense, I hope that any future story about Deleuze's encounters with ancient and medieval thinkers does not take the form of simple analogies. For merely pointing to similarities across time is certainly not a very Deleuzian project. Even more, these early thinkers constitute more than a background condition for the possibility of Deleuzianism. Instead, such thinkers, I contend, constitute the genetic conditions for the production of real Deleuze studies.

Notes

1. This is the second sequence in the history of the use of the concept of the simulacrum because Daniel W. Smith has written the first sequence. See Smith (2006) for his sequence.
2. The Deleuze essay on which this paper concentrates was originally published as 'Lucretius and Naturalism', *Études Philosophiques*, 1961.
3. Heidegger quotes from an early sketch from Nietzsche's first treatise (1870–1).
4. See chapter 3 of *What Is Philosophy?* for a complete account of conceptual personae.
5. Lucretius speaks of the diverse quite explicitly in many places. For example, 'no object whose substance is plainly visible consists only of one class of atoms; each is composed of a mixture of different seeds' (Lucretius 2001: II, 585).

6. See Lucretius 2001: I, 635–920 for more on Lucretius' critique of Heraclitus, Empedocles and Anaxagoras.
7. As is well known, Einstein popularly critiqued quantum mechanics by saying that 'God does not play dice.' However metaphorical it may have been, Einstein's statement supposes that the chaotic thesis of quantum mechanics was impossible because nature was inherently ordered, perhaps by a transcendent God.
8. As for Lucretius' relations to science, Michel Serres, for one, has identified some important principles – such as turbulence and fluid mechanics – that have become some of the hallmarks of what Serres calls postmodern science. See Serres' book *The Birth of Physics* for more on this claim. Ilya Prigogine, the Nobel Prize-winning physical chemist, and Isabelle Stengers, a popular philosopher of science, celebrate the link between Lucretius and postmodern science in their famous book *Order Out of Chaos*. See Prigogine and Stengers 1994: 141.
9. The theory of infinites will be explained below.
10. Lucretius' method of analogy is used to persuade the reader via everyday experience and examples. Such a scientific form of argumentation does not appeal to myth and mystery. Rather than blindly adhering to a particular pre-established doctrine, Lucretianism is science as a social method. Claims made on nature must pass the test of debate, verification through personal experience, and so on. Thus, Lucretian naturalism approaches the world as an arena of experimentation rather than merely searching for corroboration in what one already believes.
11. In a text recently translated into English, Michel Serres takes up Lucretian physics/metaphysics as an important contribution to the science of hydrodynamics. For Serres, one of the problems with many interpretations of Lucretius stems from an improper choice of model. Typically, one thinks of atoms as completely independent and static entities that merely aggregate. While such an interpretation is not completely incorrect, it misses something important: the importance of conceiving of atoms as in motion. In order to remedy this misapprehension, Serres turns to the study of fluids and the behaviour of fluids in order to grasp the atomic world as one of constant flux and motion. For Serres, then, atomic motion is more akin to hydrodynamic behaviour than static atomism. See Serres 2001.
12. Some sections of Book IV are either corrupt, and thus illegible, or simply lost. At IV: 45–56, for example, a section that most likely was originally part of Book II is inserted. Also, at IV: 80, there is a confusing lacuna.
13. According to Diogenes Laertius' *The Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, 'Aristoxenus, in his Historic Commentaries, says that Plato wished to burn all the writings of Democritus that he was able to collect; but that Amyclas and Cleinias, the Pythagoreans, prevented him, as it would do no good; for that copies of his books were already in many hands. And it is plain that that was the case; for Plato, who mentions nearly all the ancient philosophers, nowhere speaks of Democritus; not even in those passages where he has occasion to contradict his theories, evidently, because he said that if he did, he would be showing his disagreement with the best of all philosophers.'
14. There are actually two forms of emissions – deep emanations, such as 'smell, smoke, heat', and so on, and surface emissions, simulacra. I have not made this distinction because it is not directly salient to Deleuze's discussion. See Lucretius 2001: IV, 70–97 for more.
15. Hughes says, 'learning is the progressive determination of the Idea which will give rise to knowledge'.

16. In fact, there is only one published article dedicated solely to this topic. Brooke Holmes, the excellent classics professor at Princeton, has written a well-crafted article on Deleuze's '*Lucrèce et le simulacra*', which appears in her recently published edited collection *Dynamic Reading: Studies in the Reception of Epicureanism* (2012). While this is the first and only piece dedicated solely to this Lucretian–Deleuzian encounter, it remains a highly classicist piece, and so it trades particular philosophical nuances in order to focus more on explication and terminology clarification. Hanjo Berressem published an article on Michel Serres' text on Lucretius and hydrodynamics, which mentions Deleuze's reading of the clinamen in '*Lucrèce et le simulacra*'. Still, this article, while rewarding in itself and admirably historically informed, focuses more on Serres' own work and so is only interested in Deleuze insofar as it relates to Serres. (See Berressem 2005.) Warren Montag also recently presented a wonderful paper on the clinamen and conatus in Lucretius, Spinoza and Deleuze, although this is yet to appear in print. Besides these three, there is nothing written on this exact subject.
17. Such as Sellars 2006.

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Deleuze and Kuki: The Temporality of Eternal Return and '*un coup de dés*'

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Abstract

Shuzo Kuki is a Japanese philosopher, belonging to the Kyoto school, who lived about a hundred years ago. He learned philosophy in Europe and developed an original theory of contingency, by accommodating the Asiatic way of thinking on the one hand, and Western philosophy (Bergson, Heidegger and neo-Kantianism) on the other. In this article, I show that we can find similarities between his theory of contingency and the philosophy of Deleuze, especially in regard to the subject of temporality and eternal return. Needless to say, the theory of the third time is a crucial theme in *Difference and Repetition*, and is closely related to the time of eternity, and the original or primitive contingency. Taking into consideration these aspects of time is indispensable in examining in depth the concepts of difference and virtuality. Kuki's theory of contingency, which incorporates early twentieth-century European philosophy, elucidates these concepts in an unexpected way. Therefore, my aim in this article is not to attempt a comparison between Eastern and Western thought by quoting Deleuze, but to illustrate a hidden lineage of thought, which runs from the nineteenth century (neo-Kantianism, Bergsonism, and so on) into the philosophy of virtuality of the twentieth century. This same lineage appears in Japan in Kuki's theory, and Deleuze's thought is, at least in one aspect, a modern manifestation of the same roots.

Keywords: contingency, temporality, eternal return, Kyoto school, Eastern thought

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I. Introduction

There was a Japanese philosopher who developed a philosophy very similar to that of Gilles Deleuze about forty years before him. His name was Shuzo Kuki. He was born in Tokyo in 1888 and died in 1941, so he did not have any relationship with Deleuze; however, as the descendant of a noble, he stayed for a long time in Europe where he learned philosophy from Heidegger in Germany and from Bergson in France, and also taught phenomenology to Sartre. Therefore, it is not so strange that he has an affinity with Deleuze. I believe that this correspondence has many significant implications for understanding the foundations of Deleuzian philosophy in its transcultural expanse. Thus, what is important when comparing these two philosophers is not the difference between their cultural backgrounds, but to discover a latent relation between their logic per se.[1]

Kuki's most important work is *Gūzensei no Mondai* (*The Problem of Contingency*, 1935) (Kuki 2011b),[2] which is also a very metaphysical work. In this book he gives a detailed classification of types of contingencies. Interestingly, the main themes in this work are gambling (*kake*) and disjunctive contingency (*risetsuteki gūzen*) – the latter being a concept that closely resembles Schelling's 'original contingency'.[3] In this context, Kuki also discusses the temporality of Eternal Return. '*La notion du temps et la reprise sur le temps en orient*' (Kuki 2011a: 284–93), a French lecture that Kuki gave at the conference in Pontigny, formed the groundwork for this theme.

This lecture was delivered in 1928, and is one of Kuki's very first works. In this lecture he depicts oriental time not only as transmigration, but also as a 'vertical time' as opposed to 'horizontal time' and as '*extase métaphysique-mystique*' as opposed to '*extase ontologique-phénoménologique*' (Kuki 2011a: 291). In other words, he depicts oriental time as a vertical ekstasis. Furthermore, he does not deal with time's continuity or its *réel* (actual) aspect, but instead deals with time's discontinuity and its *imaginaire* (fictive) aspect (290). The word *imaginaire* bears a close affinity to Deleuze's thought, especially his discussion in *The Logic of Sense* where he claims that the actual is supported by a shadow-like double, and that the virtual is a kind of *contre-effectuation* (counter-actualisation). While it is impossible to discuss time without contemplating a vertical ekstasis, vertical ekstasis cannot be experienced within actual time; it can only be imagined.[4] Thus, it is not surprising that Kuki quotes in his illustration of contingency the exact same phrase of Marcel Proust that Deleuze uses

as the definition for 'Idea': 'It is not actual but real, not abstract but ideal.'[5]

The similarity between Deleuze and Kuki on these subjects is noteworthy. Deleuze quotes Mallarmé's expression '*un coup de dés*' in both *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense* as the key phrase of these books. Furthermore, he gives the theme of 'gambling' the status of 'radical origin' in chapter 4 of *Difference and Repetition*. This discussion has a deep relation with 'the third synthesis of time' – the temporality of Eternal Return. In the temporality of Eternal Return, the formation of singularities that generates individuals is described as *point aléatoire*, that is, as points randomly extracted as in a game of roulette. Accordingly, as it is the distribution of singularities that comes into question, the gambling indicated as '*un coup de dés*' can be considered to be embodied within every instant across time. In other words, because every instant is included within the temporality of Eternal Return, it exists as a gamble – an absolute contingency lacking any necessity of occupying a particular location. This sort of conception shows very well the significance of Deleuze's depiction of the third synthesis as a time of ungrounding. Contingency, then, is one of the most critical ideas in his philosophy. By focusing on the problem of contingency and by interweaving the discussion of vertical time, this paper aims not only to explicate the philosophical relation between Deleuze and Kuki, but also to suggest a direction of development for Deleuzian philosophy.[6]

II. Kuki's Theory of Contingencies

I shall start by giving an outline of *Gūzensei no Mondai*. This work, which was submitted to Kyoto University as Kuki's doctoral dissertation, was written after a long study in Europe under the influence of *la philosophie de la vie*. The core of this work is Kuki's classification of contingencies. Kuki considers contingency, as contrasted with necessity, to be extremely important in the discussion of modality. He therefore emphasises the significance of the 'present' as the point where 'events' take place. This view runs counter to Bergson and Heidegger, who consider the past and future to be significant respectively. What is important for Kuki is the 'now and here [*ima koko*]' – the 'this present'-ness characterised by a severance in the flow of time. This present is not something, as Heidegger assumes, that is authenticated by a forerunning future while it itself can only be grasped as corruption (*Verfallen*). Neither is it merely a single limit of the past as Bergson assumed. For

Bergson, the past is what guarantees the continuity of time's flow and is the only thing that is real. On the contrary, Kuki is interested in the present as something that is on the one hand an instant in a flow but on the other a reality in itself – a point where being comes into contact with nothingness. As he writes, 'The temporality of possibility is the future; the temporality of necessity is the past. In contrast, the temporality of contingency is the *present*, symbolised as "now"' (Kuki 2011b: 209).

The 'present' Kuki is dealing with here is neither a mere physical point in time nor the so-called '*présent vivant*', but an 'event-ness' which acts as the precondition for both the physical present and *le présent vivant*. Kuki in fact uses such phrases as '*punctum saliens*' and 'differential emission'. Consider his following illustration: 'Contingency is at the same time reality and nothingness. The vertex *nihilum sive esse* bears the power, as a point of production, for the existence of the entire triangle' (Kuki 2011b: 187–8). (In Kuki's schematization, an upside-down triangle comprises the necessary, the possible, and the contingent, and the whole triangle exists above the line of impossibility, which runs through the vertex signifying the contingent.) He continues: 'Though contingency is in the adjacent relation of subalternate opposition to impossibility, and is grasped within the dimension of nihilism, it has been understood to be that which gives birth to *reality* and chants the actuality of the self' (Kuki 2011b: 213). We can see that the point of production (*punctum saliens*) is what displays the 'now and here' as a contingent reality.

Furthermore, the fact that Kuki expresses the emotivity of the present as 'surprise [*odoroki*]' also bears important implications. This is because surprise, unlike Heidegger's anxiety or Bergson's nostalgia, is an emotion that arises from a 'present' event.

> What is the emotion that corresponds to contingency? Just as the words *kigū* (fortuitousness) and *kien* (a strange coincidence) suggest, the emotion that corresponds to contingency is *surprise* [...] Contingency evokes the excited feeling of surprise because a problem is thrown out *before one's eyes* unsolved. The emotion of surprise is based on present-ness, the temporality which characterises contingency [...] Contingency is a modality in which being embraces the present while witnessing nothingness. (Kuki 2011b: 215; original emphasis)

The emotion of surprise Kuki is dealing with here can be said to be an emotion related to the occurrence of existence itself, and the fundamental contingency of this existence.

That Kuki perceives the 'present' as a sort of 'event-ness' or 'happening-ness' is clear also from his ensuing account, where he

interweaves 'exception and individuality [*reigai*, *kobutsu*]', 'unexpected meeting [*kaikō*]' and 'destiny = original contingency [*unmei*]' into the aspect of 'present'. It seems that Kuki here is discerning, in the vertical depth of the 'present', the temporality of Eternal Return, just as Deleuze does. While it is true that Kuki does not explicitly use the term Eternal Return here as he does in '*Propos sur le temps*', considering that his discussion of contingency takes place in the realm of 'metaphysics' and that it deals with the aspect of disjunction 'thrown out like a cast of the die', it is clear that Kuki's conception of contingency is deeply connected with Deleuze's conception of the third synthesis of time.

To get a fuller understanding of this connection, we need to move on to Kuki's classification of contingencies. Kuki simply divides contingency into three realms. The first is called the 'categorical contingency [*teigenteki gūzen*]', the second 'hypothetical contingency [*kasetsuteki gūzen*]' and the third 'disjunctive contingency [*risetsuteki gūzen*]'. A possible interpretation would be that the first contingency, which is a logical state, is supported by the second contingency, which has a strong 'event-ness', and that at the foundation of these two contingencies the third contingency is interwoven, which is the realm of a metaphysical original contingency.

The first contingency deals with exception-ness. It defines contingency as the deviation from a law. The examples Kuki gives on this aspect are four-leaf clovers and cold summers. Both of these instances inevitably provoke the feeling of strangeness. It is this sort of 'exception-ness' that Kuki refers to as 'contingency'. Nonetheless, what should be noted here is that Kuki designates to this sort of exceptional contingency the aspect of 'individuality'. Individuality should not be confused with subjectivity. In each instance, an individual stands out by its particularity and its difference from others. Here, Kuki is clearly rejecting the sort of individuality that is defined by the hierarchical structure proper to an Aristotelian genus–species relation.

The above outlook markedly overlaps with that of Deleuze. In chapter 1 of *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze states that the Aristotelian genus-differentia definition of species, in which individuals are depicted within a hierarchical system of negation, is none other than the doxastic conception of representation. In this section, Deleuze illustrates the Hegelian concept of infinity and the Leibnizian concept of infinitesimal as something that intoxicates the identity of representations. Though Deleuze does not accept these concepts in this argument after all, he does invoke the Leibnizian apparatus of differentiation in his theory of individuals. In the sixteenth series of *The Logic of Sense*,

he illustrates how a singular point forms an individual, by rereading Leibniz's concept of compossibility (which matches his doctrine of pre-established harmony) as incompossibility. While Deleuze does not associate 'exception-ness' with 'individuality' as Kuki does, he does accord with Kuki in trying to grasp the reality of things as a sort of inessentiality, or as an extra-essential affair. An individual is a one-time occurrence and is particular in itself. It is this aspect that Kuki refers to as the contingent exception.

Kuki depicts the second contingency as a complement to the first. Let us return to the example above. A four-leaf clover is certainly an exception. Yet, there must be some reason to this exceptionality. For instance, the clover might have been injured during its embryonic phase, or there might have been some influence from the soil. In the instance of the cold summer, the phenomenon may be roughly explained by distributions of high atmospheric pressure and other global weather conditions. In either case, it is possible to find a reason that explains the exceptionality. However, there is still a problem here. It may certainly be possible to find a reason for the occurrence of an exception, but the reason this exception provokes the feeling of 'surprise' is that it is manifested in the present as 'now and here'. This must have some connection with the concept of 'unexpected meeting'. In this context, Kuki gives the example of a falling brick that hits a balloon that is hovering along a street. People would be surprised if the balloon breaks. Why is this? Of course, it is because the event of a brick falling and breaking a balloon that happens to be hovering along the street seems to be an extremely contingent happening. Nonetheless, it should be possible to physically explain why the brick fell; for example, because the cement that was sustaining it might have crumbled with age or perhaps because it had lost its strength via the influence of earthquakes or storms. The same goes for the balloon. There is nothing irrational in the motion of these objects. In spite of this, people are surprised if these two series of events happen to meet 'now and here'. This is because these two series are 'independent'; what provokes surprise is the fact that they happen to 'come across' at this place 'now and here'. In other words, 'individuals' and 'events' are all 'unexpected meetings' of various series at this place 'now and here'. It is in regard to this that Kuki takes up the problem of the second contingency.

Let me say in passing that the Japanese expression for 'hit [*ataru*]' (as in the brick falling and hitting the balloon) is in an extremely obscure voice. It is in neither the passive nor the active, but rather stirs up something in the area in-between. When I win a bet, for example, in

horse racing – the word for 'win [*ataru*]' in Japanese is the same as the word for 'hit [*ataru*]', and can be expressed in both the active and passive voice – I inquire into whether 'I made it win [*ateru* – active voice]' or 'it simply won by chance [*ataru* – passive voice]'. The Japanese terms '*ateru*' and '*ataru*' are very ambiguous. While '*ateru*' is active and '*ataru*' somewhat passive (in contrast with '*ateru*'), the past perfect tense '*atatta*', normally uttered when one wins a bet, is in a voice that can only be described as being in the middle of the active and passive voices. This word shows clearly a situation in which, though one certainly exists in this place, and his activeness can be exercised only in this moment in time, he (the subject) can normally do nothing to control what happens in that instant. Gambling is a typical example of such a situation.

In connection with this kind of middle voice, the psychiatrist Bin Kimura has emphasised the significance of the realm of '*aida* [between-ness]' in Japanese. For Kimura, there is a dynamic space of 'between-ness' in between the subject and object that cannot be distinguished as either self or other, and the subject is carved out of this dynamic space. This 'between-ness', while containing the germ of the self, cannot be said to be within the domain of the self. In 'Timing and Self' (Kimura 2003), in which Kimura illustrates relations with others through the example of timing, he explains this affair thus: if the self attempts to do something in this realm of 'between-ness', every action becomes somewhat like a gamble. Kimura has pointed out that the middle voice can be found in archaic languages such as ancient Greek. The middle voice has also been taken up in Benveniste's language theory,[7] and has connections with Michel Henry's discussion of *videre videor*.[8] All the same, I believe that this middle voice is distinctly close to Deleuze's membrane-surface-like realm of 'event-ness', as it is neither in the passive nor the active, but displays the extreme where the active is able to form upon the foundation of a passive Nature.[9]

Finally, in the third contingency, a metaphysical 'overlooking' viewpoint (precisely in the Deleuzian '*survol* = survey' sense) is proposed. This is a viewpoint which surveys the independent series of the second contingency. In the eyes of a finite existence, the unexpected meeting of such series may appear to be a mere coincidence. Yet from the viewpoint of an existence that can oversee every event in the world, the unexpected meeting of such independent series may have been decided a long time ago: Kuki refers to this as 'destiny'. His argument could be put this way: even if the fact that 'I am human' is predetermined, I can ask 'why am I not Egyptian or Chinese?' and 'why wasn't I born in some other period in time?' Furthermore I can ask, 'even if "I am a

living thing", why am I a human and not a bird or a bug?' It may be that each disjunctive member, when it is realised, is prescribed a specific quality. Individuality can be understood as having various states of such potential disjunctive elements within it, and in turn these elements form an individual by acting as a self-limitation for the individual.

From this point onwards, Kuki's discussion begins to resemble the Buddhist circle of transmigration. The theme he is discerning here can be understood as that of 'destiny' determined by an original contingency, namely, that there exists something like an original thrust (*un coup de dés*), and that if such a stroke started the motion of different/ciation, then it is absolutely impossible for us to intervene into such a domain of radical gambling – an area displayed specifically as the original contingency. Nonetheless, it is because there exists such a domain in which everything must be passive that it is possible for me to exist 'now and here', and for 'this thing' (*haecceitas*) to 'be' while at the same time being contingent. Kuki gives a very gripping illustration of this extreme contingency in the last part of his book.

> Contingency is non-conceptual. It is non-relational. It is law-less, order-less, unconcerned, and indifferent. Contingency has no purpose. It has no intention. It has no connections. It cannot be relied upon. It is blind; it has no eyes. As Shakespeare writes, contingency has 'no bottom'. As Hegel writes, it has 'no reason'. In contingency, nothingness deeply encroaches being. Insofar as this is so, contingency is a fragile existence. Contingency merely ties to 'this place' and 'this instance' an acute and fragile existence. (Kuki 2011b: 249)

I would like to point out that in Kuki's original Japanese text, the expressions of negation all include the character '*mu*', which means 'nothingness'. Also in Kuki's quotation of Shakespeare, it may be possible to discern the same state of affairs that Deleuze does when he describes the third synthesis as a time 'out of joint'. For Kuki, the root of contingency is the spearhead of 'being' that touches 'nothingness' itself, and it is none other than this contingency that forges the 'present'.

III. Kuki and Deleuze on Contingency

Kuki's three contingencies can be said to correspond to the three passive syntheses in the theory of temporality of *Difference and Repetition* (although there are of course some divergences). The first contingency, which deals with the 'individual', is none other than the synthesis of *le présent vivant*, where the active self is formed. This falls under what Deleuze calls *le fondement*. Both Kuki's first contingency and Deleuze's

first time deal with the concrete formation of something real against the backdrop of the virtual. Kuki's second contingency, which deals with the 'unexpected meeting', does not have any direct correspondence with Deleuze. However, if the series of causes Kuki discusses are understood in some sense as the reality of the past, then this precisely evokes the paradoxical situation portrayed by Deleuze, in which the past influences the present. For Deleuze, the temporality of events is extracted within *le circuit indiscernable*, where the past and present circulate. In addition, the time of the past is indicated as the time of *la fondation*. These factors connect with Kuki's regarding this affair as the grounds for exceptionness.[10]

Finally, the third contingency deals with something very akin to the third synthesis as *l'effondement* and the temporality of Eternal Return in Deleuze. This is no longer a domain in which the past and the present sustain each other – or in other words, a domain in which the wonder of individuals and events 'now and here' are explained by the past – but is rather something that can be understood only as a metaphysical, inexperimentable realm. This is not a normal temporality, but a temporality which, by virtue of being a temporality of infinite repetition, vertically cleaves the present. Kuki states in his Pontigny lecture '*Propos sur le temps*' that this temporality, in contrast with the horizontal phenomenological temporality which focuses on the present, is a mystical, metaphysical temporality.

> In this sense [Heideggerian sense] ekstasis is *horizontal*, so to speak. Nevertheless, regarding transmigration, we can say that there also exists a *vertical* ekstasis. Each present countlessly encompasses an identical time – in the future on the one hand, and in the past on the other. This implies a present possessing a thickness of infinite depth. This ekstasis is no longer phenomenological. It is rather mystical. Hence the word ekstasis regains to some extent its conventional meaning. (Kuki 2011a: 404)

Kuki's description of this sort parallels Deleuze's depiction of the temporality of Eternal Return as a time of ungrounding. Since there is no present that has a necessity of being *that* present in the temporality of Eternal Return, this temporality can relate with the present only as a randomly extracted point (*point aléatoire*). Thus, this temporality, in contrast with the phenomenological temporality, expresses itself to be completely groundless, its manifestation being related to the realm of radical contingency '*un coup de dés*'. Normally, one may think that the temporality of Eternal Return is a world of absolute necessity. However, the aspect of infinite repetition and the discussion of '*un coup de dés*' as

an absolute originality indicates that this temporality is something that destroys such a contingency–necessity framework. This overlaps with Kuki's discussion, in that it is extracting a realm involving an 'absolute gamble'.

Of course, we must not overlook the divergences between Kuki and Deleuze, as they are, after all, separated by a long time span. There remain until the end in Kuki's argument the conceptions of 'subject' and 'self', which Deleuze probably would have dismantled at one point or another. This is perhaps because Kuki was then under the influence of existentialist thought. Also, in contrast with Deleuze who, while following to some degree a Bergsonian style of thinking, develops a synthesis of time, Kuki is interested particularly in the aspect of 'now and here' in the 'unexpected meeting'. Kuki's 'disjunctive contingency' that corresponds with the third synthesis is certainly important, as it has connections with Deleuze's disjunctive synthesis, but he does not pursue this idea any further by investigating the aspects of existence such as virtuality and difference. What is important for Kuki is the 'surprise' of the 'present'. While he does discuss evading the 'present', it may safely be said that what Kuki has in mind is rather the non-present-ness implied within the present.

Nevertheless, keeping Kuki's argument in mind should be beneficial in interpreting Deleuze's arguments. The problem is how the realm of the third synthesis is related to the domain of genesis dealt with in *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense*. When Deleuze speaks of the temporality of Eternal Return and the intervention of eternal time into the present, he is speaking of a paradoxical realm which makes possible the formation of event-ness by dismantling it at the same time. For Deleuze, it is assumed that the repetition indicated within Eternal Return is the 'absolute difference'. The infinite linearity of this absolute difference possesses '*la cohésion secrète*' (Hölderlin) within 'the ordinal number' – a recurrence with no recurring. What we must consider here is that this temporality, while being a sort of insane temporality, is none other than the temporality where an event denotes its particularity, as '*toutes les fois* [each time]' and '*une fois pour toutes* [once and for all]'. The overlapping of the expressions 'each time' and 'once and for all' indicates, firstly, that while the present is merely a *point aléatoire* in Eternal Return – or in Kuki's terminology, that the present is only *l'imaginaire* of a vertical ekstasis,[11] meaning that it can be an object of thought but cannot be experienced – it is at the same time displayed 'once and for all' as a 'here and now-ness'; and secondly, that there is no contradiction between these two aspects. The present exists between

reality and non-reality. The question here is whether one emphasises the non-reality implied within the vertical directionality or the construction of the present as 'surprise'. However, these two are in fact opposite expressions of the same matter. The seemingly contradictory state of being identical with every other moment in time, while at the same time being a moment which can be expressed only as this moment, is what constitutes the enigma of here and now. This is illustrated in *Difference and Repetition* as follows:

> The order of time has broken the circle of the Same and arranged time in a series only in order to re-form a circle of the Other at the end of the series. The 'once and for all' of the order is there only for the 'every time' of the final esoteric circle. (Deleuze 1995: 114)

This description is stated more explicitly, in relation to the subject of gambling, in *The Logic of Sense* as follows:

> (one long thought) [. . .] everywhere insinuating chance and ramifying each thought, linking the 'once and for all' to 'each time' for the sake of 'all time'. For only thought finds it possible *to affirm all chance and to make chance into an object of affirmation.* (Deleuze 1990a: 71; original emphasis)

Particularly, Deleuze deals with the subject of infinite time (which corresponds with the third time in *Difference and Repetition*) in connection with gambling and the game (*le jeu*).

> In reality, *the number of drawings is infinite. No decision is final, all diverge into others. The ignorant suppose that an infinite number of drawings requires an infinite amount of time; in reality, it suffices that time be infinitely subdivisible.* (J. L. Borges, quoted in Deleuze 1990a: 72; original emphasis)

Deleuze states that this sort of time is the *Aîon* (the third synthesis indicated within eternal time).

A game that decides on victory or defeat is meaningless. When Deleuze probes gambling and contingency to the bottom, he criticises the ideas of victory and defeat. He rejects Pascal's game and Leibniz's game, and instead emphasises a Mallarméian world of playing. This is precisely the point where the theory of the third synthesis, the 'radical origin' and 'events' intertwine (events should in this context be perceived as an absolute playing). This game, which has no winners or losers, is related to the problem of activity and passivity in gambling, not to mention the indeterminacy of the sphere of the subject.[12]

'*Un coup de dés*', the original stroke of the cue, the playing that started this world, is implied in some sense as a 'distant resonance' within the present, in the aspect of being 'each time' and 'once and for all'.

What Kuki perceives within the 'unexpected meeting' in this place 'now and here' is the self as a contingency connected with eternity. In the same way, Deleuze sees within the present the resonance of an original repetition.

IV. Towards a Philosophy of Contingency and Event-ness

What Kuki calls the vertical present in contrast to the horizontal present may, in Deleuze's expression, certainly be something that evades the present. This is clearly indicated from a different perspective in *What Is Philosophy?*, especially in chapters 5 and 6, where Deleuze defines science as the actualisation of the virtual, and in contrast identifies the endeavour of philosophy as counter-actualisation. The question we must consider is: would it be possible, in line with this direction, to import into the philosophical stage the discussions on contingency and event-ness outlined above?

Yet there is still a problem here, because the way in which Deleuze (Deleuze and Guattari) treats philosophy as counter-actualisation in his later period work *What Is Philosophy?* contains some obscurity. Although in retrospect, if we are to take his characterisation seriously, would not chapters 4 and 5 of *Difference and Repetition*, where Deleuze discusses actualisation, become science?[13] Also, what would happen to the significance of Deleuze's prudently limiting counter-actualisation to the arts related to the body (pantomime, the performing arts) in *The Logic of Sense*?

Counter-actualisation, a term used in *The Logic of Sense*, is depicted, in relation with the event-ness of the surface, as something closely connected with a sort of fictionality, especially in the twenty-first series of this book. Deleuze's taking up as an example arts related to the body (pantomime and the performing arts) clearly accentuates the unreality of the body's double, the body itself being an actualised concrete reality. This must have some connection with the fact that both Deleuze and Kuki emphasise contingency in their discussions of the arts (see note 12). However, in *What Is Philosophy?*, the 'restriction' that was present in *The Logic of Sense* is removed. Here, counter-actualisation can be read as a term ascribed to 'philosophy' in general. If philosophy is conceived as counter-actualisation, then which part of Deleuze's own philosophical practice should be expressed as counter-actualisation? An elucidation of this problem is a task yet to be undertaken. Furthermore, art is established in *What Is Philosophy?* as the third domain alongside philosophy and science. It seems as if the Deleuze in *What Is Philosophy?*

is removing from the domain of philosophy the various elements that he originally interwove into it. In contrast, the Deleuze in *The Logic of Sense* presents art – depicted as performances using the body, that is, counter-actualisation – as a domain completely different from philosophy, precisely as something that discovers the very *percept* and *affect*. If so, then this leads to another problem. Namely, should the description of event-ness in *The Logic of Sense* be classified only as art? In connection with the aspect of art presented in *What Is Philosophy?* on the one hand, and the concept of philosophy itself on the other, I believe it is possible to pursue a different direction, by developing the ideas of 'contingency' and 'event-ness' outlined in this paper.

The transition of the idea of counter-actualisation in Deleuze has significant implications for our interpretation of this concept. Defining counter-actualisation as philosophy seems like limiting oneself to a sort of practice in the area of virtuality. We can see this from the fact that although the early Deleuze dealt with the problem of genesis (whether it be dynamic genesis or static genesis) and placed emphasis in drawing a line of actualisation from the space-time of the Ideal, the later Deleuze, in his collaboration with Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, develops these ideas into *espace lisse* (smooth space), or as the problem of *agencement* (assemblage).

However, if we consider the fact that Kuki always understood 'event' within the horizontal–vertical relation, we should be able to find another direction. For example, it is necessary to examine not only Deleuze and Guattari's emphasis of 'minor science' as opposed to royal science in *A Thousand Plateaus*, but also their portrayal of metallurgy and metallic handicraft as instances of this minor science. Metallurgy is certainly a form of science. Yet, it is science as a war machine – a minor science which stands in opposition to royal science, namely, science that connects with striated space and becomes hierarchised within the state. This is clear from the fact that, firstly, the metal dealt with in metallurgy is something that escapes the Aristotelian genus/species classification (which employs the idea of phylum), and secondly, that metallurgy is executed by the band, a nomadic subject. Mine development, which metallurgy presupposes, involves from the outset the element of gambling (consider the gold diggers). It can be said that metallurgy is a science of event-ness itself, a science which embraces a sort of counter-actualisation.[14] This topic becomes increasingly important, insofar as this kind of science is related to non-organic life (which the later Deleuze emphasises) and the living of this sort of life itself.

In this connection, it is necessary to consider various forms of minor science, such as the science of fractals, neuroscience, the Tardeian science of groups and the biology of morphogenesis. While these are certainly sciences, they are concrete endeavours of counter-actualisation. In this sense, these sciences can be considered to be highly metaphysical, just as Kuki contemplated the conjugation of the vertical and the horizontal, and attempted to grasp everything within the instant of contingency.

To conclude, we have examined two points in this paper. We have seen, firstly, that Kuki's discussion of contingency has close affinities with Deleuze's theory of temporality and his discussion of genesis in time, and secondly, that it is rooted in the ideas of vertical time and Eternal Return – ideas which constitute the essence of both philosophers' ontologies. What we have discussed is not a mere comparison between Eastern and Western philosophy, but a possible direction of development for thought after the twentieth century. I believe these themes indicate the contour of a new philosophy to come.

Notes

1. After a long study in Europe, Kuki became a professor at Kyoto University and established the first French philosophy course in Japan. However, he did more than merely introduce European thought. One of his main works, entitled *'Iki' no Kozō* (Kuki 2011a), makes use of hermeneutic methods to illustrate the aesthetic sensitivity proper to Japanese culture. This book has been translated into many languages and is probably Kuki's most read work. *'Iki' no Kozō* contains, form an aesthetic point of view, extremely illuminating implications, and is an important work in Japanese aesthetics. However, the concept of 'Iki' presented in this work can be characterised as a development, along the lines of emotivity, of the notion of personality, pertaining to the contingency expressed by two objects meeting unexpectedly, which was dealt with in *Gūzensei no Mondai*. I shall expound on the connections between *Gūzensei no Mondai* and *'Iki' no Kozō*, and the discussions on art in the latter, on another occasion. For English translations of *'Iki' no Kozō*, see Kuki (1997) and Kuki (2004a). For a French translation see Kuki (2004b). For a German translation see Kuki (1999).
2. *Gūzensei no Mondai* has been translated into French (Kuki 1966).
3. On this concept, see the later Schelling's *Philosophische Untersuchungen über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit und die damit zusammenhängenden Gegenstände* (Schelling 1997) and *Philosophie der Mythologie: Nachschrift der letzten Münchener Vorlesungen 1841* (Schelling 1996).
4. Of course, it is true that Kuki's discussions are grounded on Heidegger and Bergson's theories of time. However, we must consider the fact that, already at this stage, not only did Kuki postulate the time of Eternal Return (which is connected with his discussion of contingency), but his claims also parallel those of Deleuze, who propounds time as ungrounding (that is, as the third synthesis of time) while criticising the Bergsonian notion of continuous time. Accordingly, Kuki's idea of vertical time should not be regarded as a contrast between the Orient and the Occident, but rather as an original development of Heidegger and

Bergson's theories of time, completely independent from Deleuze. This seems to suggest that Deleuze's theory may be a sort of inevitable display of what would happen if one expands Bergson's ideas upon a backdrop of nineteenth-century philosophy.

5. In his discussion of hypothetical contingency in *Gūzensei no Mondai*, Kuki quotes Proust's *In Search of Lost Time* (Kuki 2011b: 131). The phrase he quotes is the same phrase Deleuze considers to be fundamental in illustrating the 'Idea' (Deleuze 1995: 269). This must have some significant meaning.
6. In this connection, we must also consider the philosophical background of Deleuze and Kuki's relationship. Both Deleuze and Kuki base their thought on late nineteenth-century philosophy: both have direct or indirect connections with Neo-Kantianism, Bergson and Peirce, and both are heirs of what Pierre Montebello calls 'the other metaphysics', that is, the genealogy of natural philosophy (Montebello 2003). Though this is an important subject that is yet to be discussed, I shall expound on this on another occasion.
7. On the meaning of the middle voice in ancient Greek, see Benveniste (1973).
8. On this, see Michel Henry's *The Genealogy of Psychoanalysis* (Henry 1993). Henry's discussions involve a dimension which lies in-between the passive and the active. I believe that this dimension forms the boundary separating the natural, passive self, on the one hand, and the active self which itself emerges from this dimension, on the other.
9. A theme similar to the middle voice can be found in Deleuze's joint works with Guattari, namely the concept of 'free indirect discourse'. 'Free indirect discourse' was emphasised by Bakhtin as the example of a discourse by a multi-voice subject, in which the enunciated sentence is displayed by the indirect discourse-like quotation of a direct discourse. Deleuze and Guattari emphasise the free indirect discourse in *A Thousand Plateaus*, where they illustrate language as pragmatics. Furthermore, in the section where he discusses 'perception image' in *Cinema 1* (Deleuze 1986), Deleuze takes up the 'free indirect discourse' of P. Pasolini's film theory. In this section he writes of a 'semi-subjectivity'. Semi-subjectivity is none other than Deleuze's conception of impersonal perception.
10. Actually, Kuki further classifies the second contingency into various subcategories. However, the subcategory particularly relevant in this context is the 'causal positive contingency [*sekkyokuteki gen-inteki gūzen*]'. The crux of this idea is the witnessing of two causal series converging 'without purpose'. The emotion of surprise that this circumstance generates forms the basis for the existence of an 'individual'. Therefore, this surprise, rather than itself being something subjective, can be said to be an emotion related to the individual events of the world itself. One cannot avoid being surprised by the present.
11. Whenever Kuki uses the term 'ekstasis', he is basically alluding to Heidegger's discussion of time. However, when he speaks of Eternal Return as a vertical ekstasis and depicts its actualisation as *l'imaginaire*, he is using his own terminology.
12. Contingency and probability are also important topics for the later Deleuze, who deals with works of art. For example, in chapter 11 of *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* (2003) where he deals with the paintings of Francis Bacon, he discusses the problem of contingency, while taking up the theme of game as he did in *The Logic of Sense* (1990a). In this section he emphasises 'the mark of chance', which does not indicate probability whatsoever. The same can be said of his discussions in *Cinema 2* (1990b), where he takes up the image crystal – a sort of metamorphosis of the third synthesis of time which already refuses to obey the sequence of time – and also where he proceeds to discuss the body and brain (especially chapter 8, where he discusses the 'Markov chain' in the notes).

The problem of contingency in the arts also has strong bearings on the last chapter of *What Is Philosophy?*, where he inquires into philosophy and eventness.

13. Although *What Is Philosophy?* is published as a joint work with Guattari, it has been said that it was actually Deleuze who wrote almost the entire book. From the outset, it cannot be denied that this book, which bears the title *What Is Philosophy?* and develops an account that looks as if Deleuze has returned to the ideas of his early philosophy, seems like a regression from Deleuze's collaborations with Guattari, who brought to the fore a radical form of praxis. However, it should not be overlooked that in this work, which is composed mainly of Guattarian themes such as the *plan de consistance* and *géo-philosophie*, the definition of 'philosophy' has undergone a transformation. How does Deleuze describe in this book the process of 'individuation' from his early work? Is there not a problem after all in asserting that this kind of inquiry is science? I believe these topics are significant in the examination of the later Deleuze's 'philosophy'. Deleuze does not seem to be clear on these points.
14. It can be interpreted that Deleuze and Guattari's adoration of metal and their topicalisation of metallurgists is a discussion directed completely against Heidegger, who based his contemplation of earth on agriculture and the lives of the peasants. In contrast with Heidegger's earth and peasants, which are easily absorbed into the state, Deleuze and Guattari's band always escapes outside the state, although it may make deals with the state.

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Images of Time in Deleuze; Naked Life, Dumb Life, A Life; How to Live Alone

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Images of Time in Deleuze

Deleuze's major theses on time reappear in a dramatised manner in his books on cinema, where they conquer an aesthetic operationality that illuminates them as a whole. Take the most enigmatic idea that organises these books, the emancipation of time. *Time is out of joint*, exclaims Hamlet. Time is off its hinges! What does it mean for time to have left its axes, returned to itself, pure time? Deleuze alludes to a time freed from the tyranny of the present that previously it bent, and available, henceforth, to the most eccentric adventures. Bruno Schulz says, in another context, that time is a disordered element that is only kept in check thanks to an incessant cultivation, a care, a control, a correction of its excesses. 'Free of this vigilance, it immediately begins to do tricks, run wild, play irresponsible practical jokes, and indulge in crazy clowning' (Schulz 1980: 283). Schulz recalls that we carry a supernumerary load that does not fit on the train of events nor on the two-track time that supports it. For this precious contraband that he calls Event, there are those lateral tracks of time, blind detours, which stay 'suspended in the air, errant, homeless', in a multilinear streak, no 'before' nor 'after', neither 'simultaneously' nor 'consequently', the most remote murmur and the furthest future communicating at a virginal beginning. Thus, in the continuous time of linked presents (Chronos) the time of the Event (Aeon) is constantly insinuated, in its non-dialectical, impersonal, impassable, incorporeal logic: 'the pure *reserve*', pure virtuality that never stops supervening.

To this, Deleuze stresses a cinematographic procedure that consists of unlinking the peaks of present from their very actuality, subordinating

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this present to a flow that crosses it and overflows, in which precisely there is no more past, present or future, rolled up into a 'simultaneous, inexplicable' event. In the Event, the peaks of de-actualised present coexist, or yet one single event is distributed in distinct worlds according to different times, in such a way that what for one is past, for another is present, for a third is future – but it is the same event (as illustrated in Alain Resnais's 1961 film *Last Year at Marienbad*). Sidereal time or a system of relativity, says Deleuze, because it includes a pluralist cosmology, in which one single event is distributed as incompatible versions in a plurality of worlds. This is not a god that chooses the best of possible worlds, but a Process that passes through all of them, 'simultaneously' affirming them. It is a system of variation: given an event, not hitting it against a present that actualises it, but making it vary in diverse presents that belong to distinct worlds, although in a certain, more generic sense, they belong to a single shattered world. Or, given a present, not exhausting it within itself, but rather finding the event in it through which it communicates with other presents in other worlds, swimming upstream in the common event in which all are implicated: the Virtual Tangle.

Suppose there is a gigantic ontological Memory, made up of sheets or deposits of the past, kinds of strata, that communicate amongst themselves in order to be funnelled and exert pressure on a peak of present. Some of Resnais's characters, for instance, go from one stratum to another, stroll between levels, cross ages of the world, transversalise Time, or every time they recreate the distances and proximities between the diverse singular points of their lives. Let us stick to a comfortable image, time as a handkerchief: each time we blow our nose, we slip it into our pocket, crumple it in a distinct way, so that two points of the handkerchief that were previously distant and did not touch (like two distant moments of life according to a timeline) have now become contiguous, or they even coincide, or contrarily, two points that were next to each other have now irremediably been separated. As if time were a big mass of clay, every time it is moulded the distances between the marked points within it are rearranged. This is a curious topology where we witness an incessant transformation, modulation, that reinvents and causes to vary the relationships between the many sheets and their scintillating points, each rearrangement creating something new, plastic memory, always remade, always to come; mouldable mass of time, or better, able to be modulated, and about which Deleuze comes to exclaim, like a Christopher Columbus: it is Land, muddy vital means! When cinema is embroiled in this order of virtual coexistence

it invents its paradoxical, hypnotic, hallucinatory, indecisive sheets. In this Bergsonian line, the memory stops being a faculty inside of man; it is man that inhabits the inside of a vast Memory, World-Memory, gigantic inverted cone, virtual multiplicity of which we are a determined degree of distension or contraction. Even the philosopher and the pig, as in a metempsychosis, take up the same cone, the same life at distinct levels, jokes Deleuze.

Time comes to be conceived no longer as a line, but rather as a tangle, not like a river, but like land, not flow, but mass, not succession, rather coexistence, not a circle, but a whirl, not order – infinite variation. Instead of referring to a consciousness of time, it seems befitting to bring it closer to hallucination: going mad from this time off its axes, not without relation to the temporality of those that, off their axes, are designated as crazy.

Time and Madness

Always speaking of time, Deleuze evokes an absurdity: time which is decentred, aberrant, wild, paradoxical, floating or even sunk. It does not seem abusive to consider that time's going mad, as Deleuze works with it, communicates directly with the temporality of so-called 'clinical' madness. Meanwhile, on the other hand, a good part of the literature on psychoses is entirely unarmed when facing the multiple temporal figures that proliferate before one's very eyes in the clinic, and that 'psychological' theories find difficult to embrace, keeping in mind a temporal normalcy to which they are habitually prisoners. It is very rare to think about the temporality of psychosis in any other way besides under a privative mode. Even in a phenomenological or existential approach to psychoses, from Minkowski to Maldiney, in Binswanger or Jaspers, despite the undeniable descriptive interest that they present, verified multiplicity ends up being referred to a modality presupposed as an ideal, prioritising, for example, certain structures of being-in-the-world, transcendence, anticipation, the project, starting from an originary present, and so on. But also within strictly psychoanalytic literature, with rare exceptions, the non-unity of the psychotic temporal experience is subsumed to its failed futuration, in the form of timeless representations, in such a way that there is a chaotic immanence that is refused in the name of a significant elsewhere precisely not assumable by the psychotic. Ultimately, it is entirely an apology for historicising, whose fulcrum is the I historian, as Piera Aulagnier would say. Thus, somehow temporality ends up being identified with historicising. With

everything that this perspective can present as interesting, or useful, and even necessary in the clinic, it has the inconvenience of hindering the reception of becomings in psychosis. Deleuze and Guattari's reflection, in opposing becomings to history, could help to rethink this temporal heterogeneity of psychosis that so defies the time of reason, even psychoanalytical reason.

Deleuze says it clearly: History is a temporal marker of Power (Bene and Deleuze 1979: 103). People dream about starting or restarting from scratch, and also fear where they will arrive, or fall. We always seek the origin or outcome of a lifetime, as a cartographic addiction, but we scorn the middle, which is an anti-memory. That is when it hits the highest speed, where the most different times communicate and cross one another, where there is the movement, becoming, whirl, as Deleuze says literally (pp. 95–6). And the question to be answered is simple: what temporal figure do we create in order to think such a turbulent medium, such a virtual multiplicity? In any case, what should not fail to intrigue us is the fact that certain phenomena of psychic disturbance expose, more than any other, pure virtuality *as* virtuality, precisely detached from any centred or oriented actualisation. The temporal incongruences that appear in determined subjective configurations, and that also have marked cinema since its inception, strike, as is seen, at the very philosophical matter.

The Philosopher and the Schizophrenic

But what would it serve to converge Deleuze's times and the temporality of madness? Not, in fact, to suggest that the philosopher be in possession of a theory of time that the psychological domain has had trouble elaborating – a pretension that would come to contradict the same idea that Deleuze has made of the relationship between philosophy and non-philosophy, since the role of philosophy is not to legislate over other domains, nor that of these domains to apply philosophical concepts, insofar as each discipline constructs its instruments 'with its own means'.

It would be necessary to start at Deleuze's relationship with schizophrenia, or better, the intrinsic relationship that entertains the philosopher *and the schizophrenic that inhabits him*, this schizophrenic, 'who lives intensely within the thinker and forces him to think' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 70), initiating an 'event that is too intense', of a distinct nature, however, different from 'a lived condition that is too hard to bear' that attacks the clinical schizophrenic-entity, the psychosocial type. What temporal disturbances does this produce, that

is, *the schizophrenic on the inside of the philosopher*? Or rather, which times engender this conceptual character in him? What thought of time is the philosopher impelled to forge, starting from there, and what 'maddened' images of time is he tempted to liberate? And, lastly, how does he see his philosophy being harassed, from end to end, by these images?

To say it in the most simple way: several images of time collected in the previous section from a problematic of madness, although they contrast with the gathered images of time in Deleuze such as those that we briefly referred to, can go into free play with them, made of distance and proximity, contrasts and interferences, overlays, transvariations, remissions, abductions and talents. The potential for investigation that is inferred in this discordant accord, as much in relation to the *times of philosophy* with its own rationalities, as to the *times of madness* with its unreasoning, should not be underestimated.

Time and Thought

Cinema would have served Deleuze for revealing some of these conducts of time, giving off images that are diverse, evolutionary, circular, spiral, declining, broken, saving, fleeting, illocalised and multi-vectoral – time as bifurcation, discrepancy, gushing, oscillation, split, modulation, and so on. It is plausible to assume that the interest that Deleuze dedicated to them comes from a more radical determination than he lets us glimpse, in stressing the ambition of cinema to penetrate, apprehend and reproduce thought itself. Thought and time would thus be, immediately, in a relation of indissoluble co-belonging. Indeed, what is inferred from Deleuze's writings on time is that the very thought could not remain foreign to the project of freeing itself of a certain idea of time that formatted it, or from the axis that bends it. In this sense, Hamlet's enigmatic exclamation about time that leaves its axes is coupled with the exigency of a thought off its axes, that is, of a thought that has finally stopped spinning around the Same.

As well as criticising the sameness of a so-called dogmatic image of thought, Deleuze fustigates a hegemonic image of time. In asserting a thought without image, so that other images may come towards thought, Deleuze also calls for time with no image in order to liberate more or other images of time. The so-called dogmatic image of thought is well known: it is explored from *Nietzscheand Philosophy* to *What is Philosophy?* But what would it be, this image of hegemonic time refused by Deleuze? Briefly, we say: it is time as a circle. This is not

exactly circular time, but the circle as a profound structure, in which time is reconciled with itself, in which beginning and end rhyme, as Hölderlin says. What characterises the circle is its monocentring around the Present, its chained and oriented Movement, as well as its underlying totalisation. The circle with its centre is a metaphor of the Same. And even if the Present is in a remote and nostalgic past, or an eschatological future, neither for that reason does it discontinue functioning as an axis that bends time, around which it spins, redesigning the circle which we thought we had just escaped. It is there, ultimately, again and again, the time of Re-presentation.

To time as a Circle, Deleuze opposes time as Rhizome; no longer rediscovered Identity, but open Multiplicity. The logic of multiplicity was exposed and worked on, among other texts, in the description of the rhizome in *A Thousand Plateaus*. A rhizome can be entered from any side, each point connects with any other, it is made of movable directions, no beginning nor end, but just a means, through which it grows and overflows, without referring to a unity or derivation from one, neither subject nor object. What does time become, therefore, when it comes to be thought of as pure multiplicity or operating within a pure multiplicity? The rhizome has no temporal sense or direction (the direction of the arrow of time, good sense, the sense of common sense, ranging from less differentiated to more differentiated), nor does it rediscover a prior totality that it would be in charge of, abolishing itself, making it explicit in the concept. It possesses no sense or direction and is unrelated to any teleology.

But is this Deleuze's last word with regard to time? For this virtual multiplicity is as if it were ploughed and stirred at every point, along its entire length, no longer by a circle, which the author refuses, but by what might be called – and the expression is already in Plato's *Timaeus* – a Circle of the Other. A circle whose centre is the Other, this other that can never be the centre precisely because it is always other: a decentred circle. It is the figure that best suits Deleuze's original reading of Nietzsche: in the repetition there returns only the non-Same, the Unequal, the Other – Being of Becoming, Eternal Return of Difference.

You can call this Other the Future (the regal repetition is that of the future, says *Difference and Repetition*). But if there is in Deleuze, as in Heidegger, a privilege of the future, it is not deductible from a problematic of Finitude, but rather from the Work, which rejects its supports, Habit, Memory, Agent. The future is not, for man, an anticipation of his own end, his own death, the extreme possibility of his being, nothing presents it as a being-for-death, since it is not from

the ipseity that it can be thought, but a proto-ontic flow. If in Deleuze's elaboration of this future the Open is an important benchmark, it then refers to the outside, more than to Being. Let us say that the Open for Deleuze is closer to Blanchot than it is to Heidegger. It is under the sign of an Exteriority, then, that thought can gain a determination of future.

Time of Creation

As already mentioned, Deleuze's criticism of a so-called dogmatic image of thought is made on behalf of a thought without image. Now, this means that thought, without a prior Model of how to think (for example: thinking is to seek the truth) opens up for other adventures (for example: thinking is to create). Everything changes from one to another. Deleuze says that they are two different planes of immanence, classic and modern, that of the will to truth, on the one hand, and that of creation, on the other. And each is inseparable from a certain concept of time that fills it. Should we not suppose that a philosophy of difference, like that of Deleuze, has set itself the task to fill this modern plane of immanence with a concept of time belonging to thought defined as creation, and no longer as the will to truth?

The theorisation of Deleuzian time, despite its many obscurities, would be to then think of a time consentaneous to the force of the new. If there is a profound fidelity to the Bergsonian project, it can only be carried out successfully when, with Nietzsche, time is elevated to its ultimate potential, to making return to… difference. Only the selective eternal return, affecting the new, equalling the Unequal itself, only Time as Difference can inaugurate with the Future, discontinuous and disruptive, a relation of excess, such as the Work or the Beyond-Man, for which Zarathustra is not mature enough and yet he announces it. The future as the unconditioned that the instant affirms, is what Nietzsche would have called Untimely and whose importance Deleuze never stops emphasising.

If Michel Serres is correct in attributing to philosophy the function of 'inventing the conditions for invention', we must add that, in the context which concerns us, this would also, and above all, mean reinventing the conditions for the invention of other times that are not those already consecrated by history. It deals with, ultimately, undoing the solidarity between Time and History, with all the ethical, political and strategic implications of such an ambition. In thinking the substantive multiplicities and processes operating within it, driving out the most unusual temporalities, in the arc that goes from the Untimely to the

Event, will Deleuze not have given voice to those who, as he says in a Benjaminian echo, 'History does not take into account'? It is not, evidently, only the oppressed or minorities, though it always deals with them as well, but the minority-becomings of each and every one: not exactly the people, but the 'people who lack', the people to come.

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Naked Life, Dumb Life, A Life

Musulman

I would like to begin with the most extreme – the *musulman* – and do so by returning briefly to Giorgio Agamben's description of those who, in concentration camps, received this terminal designation (Agamben 1999). The *musulman* was the vagrant corpse, a bundle of physical functions in their final gasps (Améry 1995). Curved upon himself, this vile being, without will, had an opaque gaze, an indifferent expression, a pale grey skin that was both thin and as hard as peeled paper, a slow respiration, a very low-pitched speech, undertaken at great cost... The *musulman* was the detained one who had given up, indifferent to everything that surrounded him, too exhausted to understand that which awaited him shortly: death. This non-human life was already excessively emptied of the ability to suffer (Levi 2000). But why *musulman*, if what was at stake were mainly Jews? Because the *musulman* handed his life over to destiny, in line with the banal, prejudiced and certainly unjust image of a supposed Islamic fatalism: the Muslim is the one who submits without reserve to divine will. In any case, when life is reduced to the contour of a mere silhouette, as the Nazis would themselves say in referring to prisoners as *Figuren* (figures, mannequins), what appears is the perversion of a power which does not eliminate the body, but maintains it in the intermediary zone between life and death, between the human and the inhuman: the survivor. Contemporary biopower, Agamben concludes while twisting Foucault's conception, reduces life to a biological afterlife, *produces survivors*. From Guantánamo to Africa, this is confirmed every day. The incumbency of contemporary biopower is no longer to produce death, as in the regime of sovereignty, or to make live as in the regime of biopower, but *to produce survivors*. It does not bestow death, nor life, but produces and manages *survivors*. And with them, the *afterlife* (Agamben 1995: 205). Let us remain for the moment with this odd postulate. Power makes survivors, produces the state of a biological afterlife, reduces man to a residual, non-human dimension,

which the *musulman* in the camp on the one hand and the neo-dead of intensive therapy rooms on the other, incarnate in two opposed yet complementary extremes. The afterlife is a human life reduced to its biological minimum, to its ultimate nudity, to a life without form, to the mere fact of life, to what Agamben calls *naked life*. But those who see naked life merely in the extreme figure of the concentration camp *musulman*, or the refugees in Rwanda, are misled without understanding what is most terrifying: that in a certain way *we are all in this terminal condition*. Even Bruno Bettelheim, a survivor of Dachau, in describing the camp's chieftain, qualifies him as a species of '*musulman*', 'well fed and well dressed'. The executioner is equally a live corpse, living that intermediary zone between the human and the inhuman, the biological machine deprived of sensibility and nervous excitation. The condition of survivor, of *musulman*, is a generalised effect of contemporary biopower, not being restricted to totalitarian regimes, and fully including Western democracies, the society of consumption, of mass hedonism, of medicalised existence, that is, of the biological approach to life in an all-encompassing scale, even in a context of luxury and biotechnological sophistication.

The Body

Let us take as an example the over-investment of the body which characterises our actuality. For a few decades, the focus on the subject has been dislocated to the psychic intimacy of the body itself. Today, the I is the body. Subjectivity has been reduced to the body, to its appearance, its image, its performance, its health, its longevity. The predominance of the bodily dimension in the constitution of identity allows for talk of a bio-identity. It is true, as it occurred a hundred years ago, that we no longer face a body made docile by disciplinary institutions, a body striated by the panoptical machine, the body of the factory, the army, the school. Today everyone voluntarily submits themselves to an ascesis following the scientific and aesthetic precept in gyms or in cosmetic surgery clinics (Sant'Anna 1995, 2001). This is also what Francisco Ortega, following Foucault, call bioascesis. We find the adequation of the body to the norms of show business, along the celebrity-type format. Given infinite possibilities of bodily transformation announced by genetic, chemical, electronic and mechanical prostheses (Costa 2004), the obsession for physical perfection under the compulsion of the I to cause desire in the other and the idealisation of the body's image, substitute the self-imposed

mortification (bodily mutilation even at the cost of well-being) with a promised erotic satisfaction. The fact is that we embrace voluntarily the tyranny of a perfect body in favour of a sensorial enjoyment whose immediacy makes the suffering undergone even more surprising. The bioascesis is a care of the self, but differently from the ancients, whose care aimed at the good life – something which Foucault also called an aesthetic of existence – our care aims at the body itself, its longevity, health, beauty, good shape, scientific and aesthetic happiness, or what Deleuze would call fat-dominant health. We shall not hesitate in calling it, even under the modulating conditions of contemporary coercion, a fascist body – in the face of such an unattainable model, a good chunk of the population is placed in a condition of subhuman inferiority. Moreover, in the domain of biosociality the body becomes an information packet, a genetic reservoir, a statistical dividual (I belong to the group of the hypertense, of HIV-AIDS, and so on), which only strengthens the risks of eugenics. Any weekly magazine with its health, beauty, sex and nutrition slogans which are adopted happily as scientific precepts, and therefore, as imperatives, only illustrates this context. We are, in any case, surrounded by the register of a biologised life … (Sibília 2002). While reduced to the mere body, to the excitable and manipulable body, from show business to the mouldable body, it is to the domain of naked life that we are reduced. We continue in the domain of the afterlife, of the mass production of 'survivors' in the broad sense of the term.

Survivalism

Allow me to broaden the notion of survivor. In his analysis of 9/11, Slavoj Žižek contested the use of the adjective coward to describe the terrorists. After all, they were not afraid of death, contrary to the Westerners who not only praise life but want to preserve and prolong it at all costs. We are slaves of survival, even in a Hegelian sense; we do not risk our lives. Our culture aims above all at this: survivalism, no matter at what cost. We are Nietzsche's Last Men, who do not want to perish, and prolong their agony 'immersed in the stupidity of daily pleasures' – *Homo suckerius*. Žižek's question is also Saint Paul's:

> Who is really alive today? … What if we are 'really alive' only if we commit ourselves with an excessive intensity which puts us beyond '[bare] life'? What if, when we focus on mere survival, even if it is qualified as 'having a good time', what we ultimately lose is life itself? What if the Palestinian suicide bomber on the point of blowing him- or herself (and others) up is, in an

> emphatic sense, 'more alive' . . . ? What if a hysteric is truly alive in his or her permanent excessive questioning of his or her existence, while an obsessional is the very model of choosing a 'life in death' [. . .] to prevent [some] 'thing' from happening? (Žižek 2002: 88–9)

Obviously, at stake here is not any incitement of terrorism, but a caustic criticism of what Žižek calls the 'post-metaphysical' survivalist posture of the Last Men, and the anaemic spectacle of life dragging itself as a shadow of itself, where an aseptic, painless existence is prolonged to the fullest in a biopolitical context. Even pleasures are controlled and artificial: coffee without caffeine, beer without alcohol, sex without sex, war without casualties, politics without politics – a virtualised reality. For Žižek, death and life do not designate objective facts but subjective existential positions, and in this sense he plays with the provocative idea that there would be more life on the side of those who, without concessions, and in an explosion of enjoyment, reintroduced the dimension of absolute negativity into our daily lives with 9/11 than on the side of the Last Men, which include all those who drag their shadows of life as living dead, postmodern zombies. It is against the backdrop of this desolation that the terrorist act inscribes itself, giving the appearance that vitality has migrated to the side of those who, in a lust for death, managed to defy our cadaverous survivalism. Baudrillard too calls attention to the contrast between systems such as our own, which are 'disenchanted', 'without intensity', and include 'protected existences' and 'captive lives', and cultures of 'high intensity', even in their sacrificial aspects. What we detest in ourselves, Baudrillard reminds us, is that which Dostoyevsky's Great Inquisitor promises domesticated masses: an excess of reality, of comfort, of accomplishment, the kingdom of God in earth. All of which Nietzsche, moreover, would judge, in the historical process of *décadence* he analysed insistently, as a gregarious abasement of humanity. In any case, if the present context in the West for Žižek is fertile for the evocation of the Last Men's passive nihilism, or even to detect among us the fulfilment of the capitalistic and biopolitical belief in the Great Inquisitor, where bread, servitude and tepid happiness would free us from disquiet and revolt, any association of 9/11-type terrorism with nihilism is a perfect countersense. The death of man claimed by Nietzsche, on the wake of the death of God, has no any relation to genocidal or suicidal onslaughts. Overcoming nihilism, the beyond-man, in its turn, points to a new way of feeling, thinking and evaluating, to a new way of life and even to a new type of subjectivity,

a transmutation of all values that is the opposite extreme of sacrificial faith and the doctrines which support it.

We can say that in the post-political spectacle, and with the respective abduction of social vitality, we are all reduced to biological survivalism, at the mercy of biopolitical management, worshipping low-intensity forms of life, submitted to a tepid hypnosis, even when the sensorial anaesthesia is transvestied as hyperexcitation. As Gilles Châtelet put it in *Vivre et penser comme des porcs*, we face the existence of cyberzombies, grazing indolently between services and commodities. It is *beastly life* as a global abasement of existence, a depreciation of life, its reduction to naked life, to an afterlife, the final stage of contemporary nihilism.

Giorgio Agamben retrieved the roman notion of *Homo sacer* to indicate those who were excluded from the sphere of human rights, but also from the divine, banished from political community and exposed to a relation of exception with sovereign power, even in death, without any of this constituting a crime (Agamben 2002). If this notion allows us to not only think the logic of the concentration camp, now made a political paradigm of the present, but also the zones in which this state of exception has become a commonplace, in a deeper sense, and as democracies themselves have their political space abducted and emptied with politics restricted to administrative policies, we would all be *Homo sacer*, reduced to biological survivalism, to naked life, at the mercy of biopolitical management and its strategic contrivances. When life is reduced to beastly life on a planetary scale, when nihilism becomes itself so visible in our own laxity, in the consuming hypnosis of *Homo suckerius* or in a dominant good health, it is worth asking first, what could still shake off this state of lethargy from us, and second, whether catastrophe is not installed in our everyday ('the most sinister of guests') rather than in the sudden irruption of the spectacular event of a terrorist attack against the Empire's capital.

Bloom: this is the name the magazine *Tiqqun* gave, in today's nihilism, to life without the form of common man (Tiqqun 2000; also in the magazine *Tiqqun* 2001). Inspired by one of Joyce's characters, it would be a human type that appeared recently on the planet, and which designates the pale, thin existence of common, anonymous man, although perhaps a man agitated with the illusion that his existence may be overshadowed with boredom, solitude, separation, incompleteness, contingency – nothingness. Bloom designates this affective tonality which characterises our age of nihilistic decomposition, the moment in which it rises to the surface, and this because it fulfils a pure state, the metaphysical fact of our strangeness and inoperativeness, beyond

or below the social problems of misery, precariousness, unemployment, and so on. Bloom is the figure with represents the death of the subject and its world, where everything fluctuates in an indifference without qualities, where no one recognises themselves in the triviality of a world of infinitely exchangeable and replaceable commodities. It matters little how the contents of life, which we visit in our existential tourism, alternate; Bloom is already incapable of joy as well as suffering, in an illiteracy to emotions of which he only collects diffracted echoes.

The Body that Can't Go On

What could shake off this state of lethargy, laxity, exhaustion from us? David Lapoujade gives an inviting Beckettian definition of the body: 'The body is that that can't go on' (Lapoujade 2002: 82ff.) But what is a body that can't go on? It can no longer take that which coerces it, from both without and within. In the first place, the civilisational sterilisation which fell upon it, as shown by Nietzsche in exemplary fashion in *The Genealogy of Morals*, or more recently by Norbert Elias (2012) as he describes the way in which what we call civilisation is a result of a progressive silencing of the body, of its clattering, its impulses and movements. Secondly, the body that can't go on is the deference which has been imposed upon it by disciplinary society, by the panoptical machine in schools, the army, prisons and hospitals. And finally, we add the following, while bearing in mind what we said before: the body that can't go on is the biopolitical mutilation, the biotechnological intervention, the aesthetic modulation, the bioinformatic digitalisation of the body, the sensorial numbness that this anaesthesia-inflicted context has laid down upon it... In sum, and in a broader sense, the body that can't go on is a survivalist mortification, be it in the state of exception or in everyday banality. The '*musulman*', the 'cyberzombie', the 'show business body', 'fat-dominant health', the *Homo suckerius* and 'Bloom', however extreme their differences appear, resonate in the anaesthetic and narcotic effect, configuring, in the context of a terminal nihilism, the impermeability of an 'armored body' (Pessanha 2002).

In the face of this, it would be necessary to retrieve that which is most proper to the body, its pain in the encounter with exteriority, its condition of a body affected by the forces of the world and its capacity to be affected by them: its affectability. At stake here is the introduction of another relation with life, with life 'before' it has received a form, or as it frees itself from these forms, or even, with a dimension of life below or beyond the form which it tends to acquire. This is what, in

my view, Deleuze called *a life*. *A life* is not at all abstract; it is the most elementary, life in its immanence and positivity, stripped of all that which wants to represent or contain it. The entire problematic of the body without organs is pre-eminently a variation around this biopolitical theme, life unmaking itself from what imprisons it, from the organism, the organs, the inscription of diverse powers upon the body. *A life* is all the contrary to naked, dead, mummified, shelled life. If life has to free itself from social, historical and political moorings, is not that to re-encounter something of its denudified, dispossessed animality? No one better than Artaud saw this. Kuniichi Uno, Artaud's, Deleuze's and Guattari's translator to Japanese, put it like this:

> But he [Artaud] never lost the intense sense of life and of the body as a genesis, or auto-genesis, as an intense force, impermeable, a mobility without limits which doesn't let itself be determined even by the terms bios or zoe (two names for life given by the Greeks, one which designates the form of life, the other the very fact of life). Life for Artaud is undeterminable, in all senses, while society is made up of infamy, bootlegging, commerce, which don't cease to satiate life and, above anything else, the body.[1]

It would be enough to meditate on Artaud's enigmatic phrase:

> I am innately genital, and if we examine closely what that means, it means that I have never made the most of myself. There are some fools who think of themselves as beings, as innately being. I am he who, in order to be, must whip his innateness. (Artaud 1970: 9)

Uno says that someone innately genital is someone who tries to be born through himself, who creates a second birth, beyond given biological nature. We could say, with Artaud, that we are innate but that we have not yet been born, in the strong sense of the term. Let us listen to what Beckett heard Jung say of one his patients: the fact is that she has never been born. Transporting this sentence to his work, Beckett creates an I which has not been born, and it is precisely this I that writes about the other I which has already been given, been born. This refusal of biological birth is not one arising from a being which does not want to live, but of a being which demands to be born again, always, at all times. The innately genital is the story of a body which puts in question its body as something which has been born, with its functions and all its organs as representatives of orders, institutions, visible or invisible technologies, all of which aim at managing the body. It is a body which has the courage to challenge that socio-political complex which Artaud called the judgement of God, and which we call biopower, a power which falls upon our body. This refusal of birth in favour of a self-birth

does not mean the desire to dominate one's own beginning, but, as Uno says, to recreate the body which has in it the power to begin. The life of this body, he insists – as long as it, on the one hand, discovers in the body the power of genesis, and on the other, liberates itself from the determination which weighs upon it – means war on biopolitics. Perhaps this is one of the few points where we agree with Badiou, as he affirms that for Deleuze the name of being is life itself, but not life understood as a gift or treasure, or as an afterlife, but instead as a neuter which rejects all categories. As he puts it:

> All life is naked. All life is a becoming naked, the abandoning of garments, of codes and organs; not that we are headed to a nihilist black hole, on the contrary, all this is in order to sustain the point where actualization and virtualization interchange, in order to become creators. (Badiou 1998: 32)

But is Badiou right in designating this life as naked? The life to which he refers cannot be, as Uno had already noted, *zoe*, the name given by the Greeks to designate the fact of life, as a mere biological or animal fact, or as a life reduced to biological nudity by the state of exception's juridical order, or even, as the techno-scientific manipulation of nihilist movement brought about by capital. *A life*, as Deleuze conceives it, is life as virtuality, difference, invention of form, impersonal potency and beatitude. *Naked life*, on the contrary, as Agamben has already made evident, is life reduced to its state of mere actuality, indifference, deformity, impotence and biological banality. And this not to speak of *beastly life*, as the entropic exacerbation and dissemination of naked life in its nihilist limit. If these lives are so opposed, and at the same time so overlapping, it is because in the biopolitical context it is life itself which is at stake, life itself as a battlefield. In any case, as Foucault said, it is at the point, in life, where power concentrates with greatest force that from now resistance will be anchored, but this to the extent that the signals are changed; in other words, at times it is in the extreme of *naked life* that *a life* is found, as well as virtuality, immanence, pure potency, beatitude, on the extreme of manipulation and the decomposition of the body.

If, from Nietzsche and Artaud to present-day youth, with their experimentations and researches, a diagnosis of beastly life has been generated, where the body retrieves its affectability and even its power to begin, is it not because in them beastly life has become intolerable? Maybe there is something in the extortion of life that should happen so that this life may surge altogether differently... Something must be exhausted, as Deleuze sensed in *The Exhausted*, so that a different game may be conceivable...

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How to Live Alone

In the early 1980s, in a class about cinema, if I remember correctly, Deleuze was interrupted by a student, a little psychotic, like many who attended his courses; some were even Guattari's patients, or former inmates of La Borde, and composed such a heterogeneous audience, made up of philosophers, architects, painters, drug addicts, vagrants... The guy asked Deleuze why people were left so alone, why there was such a lack of communication nowadays, and unravelled his sad story about how we are victims of abandonment and helplessness. And Deleuze, sensing that his class was being driven off track, replied gently, before proposing a small break: the problem is not that we are left alone, the problem is that we are not left alone enough. Indeed, Deleuze never tired of writing that we suffer from an excess of communication that we are 'riddled with pointless talk, insane quantities of words and images', so that the problem is no longer getting 'people to express themselves, but of providing little gaps of solitude and silence in which they might eventually find something to say'. And to invoke the smoothness and the right not to have anything to say, this condition 'so that one might frame the rare, or even rarer, thing that might be worth saying' (Deleuze 2005: 129).

But what is this solitude that Deleuze called for, one that he came to qualify as 'absolute solitude' when referring to the creator, a condition that he detects in Nietzsche, Kafka, Melville, Godard and so many others? It is the world's most populous solitude. 'Populated not with dreams, phantasms or plans, but with encounters' (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 6). Because what matters is that at the bottom of that solitude we can meet people without even knowing them, movements, ideas, events, entities. As he says:

> We are deserts, but populated by tribes, flora and fauna. We pass our time in ordering these tribes, arranging them in other ways, getting rid of some and encouraging others to prosper. And all these clans, all these crowds, do not undermine the desert, which is our very own ascesis; on the contrary they inhabit it, they pass through it, over it [...] The desert, experimentation on oneself, is our only identity, our single chance for all combinations that inhabit us. (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 11)

What fascination they exercised over him, these hybrid types, solitary, desert, while men of the group, the gang, like Lawrence of

Arabia . . . Deserts populated by becomings, encounters, traversed by movements of deterritorialisation and depersonalisation . . . Even when they took a name, this name designated foremost an event rather than a subject, more a collective assemblage than an individual, foremost an intensity than a form. In short, a most singular point, opening for the largest multiplicity: rhizome. As the philosopher says, leave the 'black hole of our Ego' where we lodge with our feelings and passions, to unmake the face, become imperceptible, and paint ourselves in the colours of the world (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 45–6, after D. H. Lawrence) . . . The most absolute solitude, in favour of more radical depersonalisation, for a different conjugation with the flows of the world . . . Become a molecule, becoming-imperceptible, meddle in the course of things and there proliferate, propagate everywhere . . . It is the becoming-viral of thought, whose other name is desire. 'The epitome of desiring solitude and the epitome of the socius', as Guattari wrote in his notes (Guattari 2006: 367). Or as in Godard: being alone to be part of a criminal conspiracy, or a production studio, and turn into a gang; in any case, desertion, betrayal itself (family, class, nation, the status of author), being served by solitude as a means for encounter, in a creative line of flight.

Thus, it is anything but a solipsism, solitude is the means by which one deserts the form of the Ego and its infamous commitments with a determined totality in favour of a different combination with the flows of the socius and the cosmos in such a way that the challenge of the solitary, as opposed to any autistic reclusion, is always to find or recover a maximum of connections (Deleuze 1997: 52). Call for a people to come. Make possible another community. Establish a different interaction between the singular and common.

Take the figure of Bartleby, the scrivener described by Melville, who replies to every order of his boss: 'I would prefer not to.' The lawyer oscillates between fraternal compassion and indignation, between pity and repulsion, with this employee planted behind the screen, who barely speaks, barely eats, pale and thin like a lost soul unable to be gotten rid of. With such passivity, he empties of meaning the impulse that previously turned the gears of the world, and makes everything run, in a deterritorialisation of language, places, functions and habits. And makes everything slide in a wild escape. From the depths of their solitude, these individuals do not only reveal the refusal of a poisoned sociability, but are the calling for a kind of new solidarity, the plea for a community to come. Not a community based on hierarchy, paternalism and compassion, as his employer would like to offer, but

the community of celibates, the society of brothers, a federation of men and goods, a community of anarchist individuals, that Deleuze often finds in American literature, as opposed to the inquisitorial utopia of the collective soul. And he asks: what remains of souls once they no longer cling to an identity, but also refuse to melt into a universal totality? What remains is precisely their 'originality', that is, a sound that each one *produces* when it takes to the open road, when it leads its life without seeking salvation, when it embarks upon its incarnate voyage, without any particular aim, and then encounters other voyagers, whom it recognises by their sound. Against the European morality of salvation and charity, a morality of life in which the soul is fulfilled only by taking to the road, open to all contacts, never trying to save other souls, turning away from those that produce an overly authoritarian or groaning sound, forming even fleeting and unresolved chords and accords. The community of the celibates is that of whichever man and his singularities that cross one another: neither individualism nor communionalism.

In light of these remarks, let me mention a course given by Roland Barthes many years ago on the subject of *How to live together*, when he confessed that the title resulted from a kind of obsession, and his research on the subject, therefore, was the fruit of a fantasy that had long been haunting him. Interestingly, he only states this fantasy of living together, and Barthes already discards collectivist utopias where everything is meticulously regulated and shared. The idea of a common life is immediately cleared of several hellish images of coexistence, from the Phalanstère to unpalatable company, from the family to the restaurant. It seems impossible to wrap up the fantasy of living together without its counterbalance, a guarantee of solitude, times of isolation, spaces of imprisonment, mechanisms for escape and distancing. Barthes's original fantasy appears clearly: a human agglomeration where everyone can, at the same time, live their own rhythm. Even if power tends to impose a homogenous rhythm on the life of a collective, as in a monastery, prayer time, meal time, rest time, each would have the right to their own rhythm, a *ruthmos*, a temporal form that is flexible, mobile and transient. Against the power of a single rhythm, the call for the idiorrhythm. But is not an idiorrhythmic community an insane utopia? From *The Magic Mountain* to Robinson Crusoe, the life of Spinoza (who rents a room in a boarding house and occasionally goes down to talk with his hosts – a true hermit, says Barthes) to the most burning actuality, the question that returns is this: how to create a structure of life that is not an apparatus of life? How to live together and escape the tyrannical gregariousness? How to reject the

forms of living together that suffocate singularity? Maybe by inventing a game made of distances and differences . . . A 'socialism of distances', where what is shared is the asymmetry . . . But another note creeps in at the end of the course, without which this panorama could not be complete: the experience of *dépaysement*, of expatriation, the voluntary exile. Drop everything, escape, leave, even if this movement's nature is internal, spiritual, imperceptible, made without ostentation or vanity. As if any collective were unthinkable without a line of flight. Perhaps the community itself, in the strong sense of the term – and history is full of examples – can only be born from a desertion, an exodus, however solitary, mystical or psychotic it may seem.

In a more clinical context, psychoanalyst Nathalie Zaltzman evokes the anarchist drive of the 'irreducibles', beings whose lives are punctuated by dramatic ruptures, and fight fiercely against 'imprisoning organizations of life'. If these lives can give off an almost epic image, we must remember that these people are caught in a 'solitude that cannot be shared nor alleviated', they are devoid of what we habitually surround ourselves with in order to protect ourselves from solitude and death (Zaltzman 1994: 34–5). What matters above all is

> to ascertain the extent to which they do not attach to anyone or anything, to what extent they remain free to abandon everything, to spoil everything . . . to give everything. They are not concerned with protecting the reasons that bind them to life; what keeps them busy is making sure they are free of any ties. Because they do not go into exile from themselves, they expatriate themselves in all of their lives. (Zaltzman 1994)

Such is attested by the anarchist geographer Élisée Reclus, who was repeatedly deported, exiled and imprisoned: 'I'm tired of eating and drinking, sleeping in a bed and going around with full pockets. *I need to die a little from hunger, to sleep on the gravel . . .* ' (quoted in Zaltzman 1994). Here there is, by tortuous paths, an urgency in the demonstration that one is alive, even at the price of constantly being exposed to death. The anarchist drive is that which fights the binding intention of Eros, which is annexation, ownership, annulment of alterity – gregariousness. The libertarian impetus, with its antisocial load, has a demoniacal, or even terroristic, halo. But what is at stake, even here, is a resistance against the 'unifying domain, deceptively idyllic, sweetening and leveling of ideological love' (Zaltzman 1994: 66), an impulse to make the whole structure of power, authority, connection and their sacred ghosts fly through the air. To relieve yourself from the love that everything embraces and paralyses, is not Thanatos, but rather

a vital struggle against death. I think that many characters of Dostoevsky are this type: they test out their leeway, mobility and vitality, even if they need to flirt with the demonic. Against the Grand Inquisitor from Dostoyevsky, who guarantees the herd with pacified happiness by buying their docility, the Underground Man is unwillingness personified, the refusal of the promise of narcotic quietude, the frenetic rejection of all truth, divine or scientific, in favour of an impatient freedom. Remember that the Grand Inquisitor got his biotechnocapitalistic and planetary version – what remains is knowing who are the underground men of today.

Like Thomas Bernhard, Juliano Pessanha, in his beautiful trilogy, gives himself the task of denouncing the pact of universal hypocrisy that ensures such daily existence, and reveals the metaphysical cement that, at every instant, prevents us from *collapsing*. But, paradoxically, in these books we see crumble one by one all the competent characters that guarantee the 'business of the administration of life', parents, educators, psychiatrists, socialisers, men of culture – all of which sometimes play the part of jailors of life. From the autobiography of the character Gombro (no doubt inspired by the writer Witold Gombrowicz), we have access to the survival strategies that a child invents in order to challenge all those who prostitute the word and make it the instrument of a generalised pretence. How to avoid the assassination that is proposed to us since the most tender age, how to get around the obliteration of one's own face, how to escape the narrative of oneself which has always already been outsourced by those who 'care' for us or 'love' us? The author offers a poetic answer. Only by returning on his own to the suffocation and retaliations ('I spent most of my life screaming in tunnels, windows, and alleys'), laying out in writing his early perception of death and pain. Only then is the factual linearity of a life broken, and it can be punctured by the series of questions that have characterised it:

> Is anyone there? Is there some true life on the planet? Why do the so-called family life, and the so-called scholastic life, and the so-called social life crush the possible child? Why is it that only the frauds survive, those who identify with the dead child? (Pessanha 2002)

In times of 'total mobilization', of 'existential alcoholism', there is a voice that introduces a word of hesitation, of waiting and presentiment. It resonates with Bartleby, but also with Saint Paul's question taken up by Žižek. From the bottom of his break, Gombro asks for other places for visiting, where living-together and living alone are articulated in a different manner.

How many have not tried it, and taking more torturous paths? Since Barthes had disclosed his personal fantasy of living together, namely, the monastery on Mount Athos, I will also allow myself to take one example, a little out of fashion, coming from the psychiatric field. Enclosure by enclosure, everyone has their fantasy. Well, Jean Oury, who, along with Félix Guattari, directed the La Borde clinic, practically committed himself into the clinic along with his patients in this old, decadent castle. The question that bothered him for the rest of his life, although in a specific clinical context, is similar to that of Barthes in the monastic setting, and certainly not unlike the fate of the Gombros, Bartlebys and Blooms whom we run into on every corner of this postmodern asylum that is ours: how to sustain a collective and at the same time preserve the dimension of singularity for each and every one? How to create heterogeneous spaces, with their own tonalities, distinct atmospheres, allowing each to connect in his or her own way? How to maintain an availability that facilitates encounters, but does not impose them, an attention that allows for contact and preserves alterity? How to make room for chance, without programming it? How to sustain a 'kindness', and allowing the emergence of a speaking from which there grows the affective desert (Oury 1980: 83)? When she described La Borde, Marie Depussé referred to a community made up of smoothness, because it was softened from being rubbed with pain. For example, these people need a bit of dust that protects them from the violence of the day. Even when sweeping, it must be done slowly: 'It's while you revolve around their beds, collect their crumbs, touch their blankets, their bodies, when the smoothest dialogues occur, the infinite conversation of those who fear the light with those who take upon themselves the misery of the night' (Depussé 1993: 105). Not an aseptic utopia, perhaps because the psychotic is there, fortunately or unfortunately, to remind us that there is something in the empirical world that is falsely spinning.[2] It is true that it all seems to belong to an almost Proustian past. But even Guattari never failed to acknowledge his debt to this experience of collective life in which he also delved deeply, and the effort he invested in checking the 'mark of singularity for the smallest gestures and encounters'. He confesses that out of that he could 'dream about what life could become in the urban conglomerates, in schools, in hospitals', if the collective Assemblages were subjected to such a 'baroque treatment' (Guattari 1992: 189). But currently we are far from following such a direction even and especially in a networked capitalism, which highly celebrates connections and monitors them for different ends. Besides this, what is seen is that in parallel to the absolute

connectivity a new anguish is intensified – that of the disconnection. Not only the anguish of being disconnected from digital networks, but also the networks of life, access to which is increasingly mediated by commercial tolls, unaffordable for a large majority. Still, we should be able to distinguish this socially produced 'negative solitude', what Katz called 'positive solitude', namely, that which consists of resisting a despotic socialitarianism, and challenging the tyranny of productive exchanges and social circulation. In these disengagements, sometimes, partial subjectivities are outlined, celibate machines that are resistant to a compulsory social re-enlisting. I will allow myself to mention an extravagant example, about a theatre company that I have coordinated for almost ten years, consisting mainly of users of mental health services. Some years ago we were invited to the prestigious International Theatre Festival in Curitiba. To our surprise, we stayed in a first-class hotel. Installed on the spinning sofa in the lobby, one of our actors places his coffee on the table, opens a newspaper, lights a cigarette. He is thin, white hair, very blue eyes. I watch from afar and tell myself: that could be Artaud, or some Polish actor reading the reviews in the newspaper about his play. Then I look down and see these big twisted yellow toenails sticking out from a pair of beach sandals... As if to say, not even close. Perhaps Deleuze and Guattari's beautiful saying fits here: territory is primarily the critical distance between two beings of the same species; marking their distances. What is mine is primarily my distance, I possess nothing if not distances... The animal and monstrous bloc, the indomitable toenail, a sign of inhumanity, that is one's distance, one's solitude, but also one's signature.

The Argentinian playwright Eduardo Pavlovsku created a character that humorously shows this claim by another type of surrounding. Let us take his character Poroto, which means bean. His most constant concern is to figure out how to escape situations that arise. Where is he going to sit at a party so he can escape at any moment? What excuse will he come up with when he runs into someone on the street, like Kafka, in his diaries, tells of how to get rid of a fat Jewish lawyer? How will he get out of such and such a commitment? And he comes to exclaim a sentence that is a punch in the stomach for many psychoanalysts, enough with connections, just contiguity of velocities. Would we not have here the outline of something peculiar to this universe of ours, so far from the time when no one stopped 'discussing the relationship'? A subjectivity that is more schizo, flowing, rhizomatic, having more to do with surroundings and resonances, or distances and encounters, than ties? Would it be possible to read in this perspective some contemporary

attitudes, no longer dissidence with respect to a disciplinary society and its rigid logic of belonging and affiliation, but rather to a surveillance society, with its flexible mechanisms for monitoring and the conjugation of flows?

In a small book titled *The Coming Community* (2007), Agamben evokes a resistance, not like before, that of a class, a party, a union, a group, a minority, but rather that of a whatever singularity, of the whatever one, which precisely is not any one, because it is 'amiable' in the singularity that belongs to it. For example, that anonymous man who stood up to a tank in Tiananmen Square, who is no longer defined by his belonging to a particular identity, whether of a political group or a social movement. Or the Arab revolt, that sort of ubiquity and multitudinous resistance, without a party flag, not delegating to any leader or institutionalised movement the leadership or the power of representing, hence the strength of such anonymity. This is what the state cannot tolerate, the whatever singularity that refuses it without constituting a mirrored replica of the state itself, in the figure of a recognisable identitarian formation, like a party, an ideology, and so on. Whatever singularity, which does not claim an identity, which fails to assert a social bond, which denies all belonging, but manifests its common being – this is the condition, as Agamben said several years ago, of all future politics.

In describing the May 1968 movement, Blanchot might have evoked some inaugural traces of a sociability to come, in referring to this mix of presence and absence, the gathering and dispersion, of no plan and refusal to take power to which something would be delegated:

> That is what makes them formidable for the holders of power that does not acknowledge them: not letting themselves be grasped, being as much the dissolution of the social fact as the stubborn obstinacy to reinvent the latter in a sovereignty the law cannot circumscribe, as it challenges it. (Blanchot 1988: 33)

It is an impotent potential, a-social society, association that is always ready to dissociate, 'always imminent dispersal of a presence momentarily occupying the whole space and nevertheless without a place (utopia), a kind of messianism announcing nothing but its autonomy and its *inoperativeness*' (Blanchot 1988: 33). If there is the sneaky loosening of the social bond, it is because at the same time it affirms the inclination to that which is shown to be as impossible as it is inevitable – the community.

This is one of today's challenges, to rethink the idea of community, mainly facing an emptied sociality, when nostalgia resurges from the community like that space of intimacy, sharing and unity. As Jean-Luc Nancy has shown, one should suspect that phantom of the lost community, by all means Christian, as well as that of the prospective ideal that such nostalgia produces. Because according to him, the community has not taken place. 'Nothing was lost, and for this reason nothing is lost. We alone are lost, we upon whom the "social bond" (relations, communication), our own invention, now descends heavily' (Nancy 1991: 11). That is, and from a more paradoxical approach, Nancy suggests that the community today is only thinkable if it is taken away from fusion, homogeneity and identity with itself. As necessary conditions, community has heterogeneity, plurality and distance, as opposed to all communional metaphysics. Instead of modelling a communitarian essence, it deals with thinking the insistent and unusual exigency, for community is made of interruption, fragmentation and suspense, composed of singular beings and their encounters. Hence, because the very idea of social bond that is insinuated in the reflection on community is crafty, because it precisely omits this *between* without which we slip into identitarian fusionality. Thus, if community is the opposite of society, it is not because it would be the space of an intimacy that society has destroyed, but almost the opposite, because it is the space of distance that society, in its movement of totalisation, never stops evoking. The community as the sharing of a separation given by singularity, in the relationship of the Other with the Other, while society would be the relationship of the Same with the Same.

But this metaphysics of alterity is perhaps no longer enough for us. We should be situated in the full contemporaneity, and its positive processes, accompanying Maurizio Lazzarato, for example, when he defines our present day not so much by the hegemony of immaterial labour, but rather by diffusion, by the contamination of minority behaviours, and practices of counter-conduct; what engenders bifurcation processes in relation to dominant subjectivity, unprecedented singularisations and unusual assemblages, as much in the network outside of it. The nature of contemporary productive cooperation, both in its dissident and constructive dimensions, would be indissociable from the propensity for collective life today. Accordingly, Sloterdijk may be right in suggesting that we no longer revolve around the terms of solitude and engagement, like several decades ago, but of cooperation and communication. It is unfortunate that when he questioned our anthropological solipsism with his theory of spheres, in order to contest the primacy of

ontological individualism, he resorted to dual metaphysics, of being-two. At least Barthes left his reflection in a more suspended state, although dichotomous. When he evokes the living-together, he resorts to the living-alone that would save it from communitarian oppression. And when he thinks about the being-alone, he evokes the collective as a compensating protection: 'Being a foreigner, it is inevitable, necessary, [desirable], except when night falls.' As if living-together would only serve 'to confront together the sadness of the night' (Barthes 2002: 176).

Perhaps what is lacking here, in this still dual logic, made of dichotomy and compensation, reciprocal between solitude and the collective, evoking what today constitutes the common backdrop, is precisely the 'common'. The contemporary mutation brought to the surface, in an unprecedented way, because of its economic and biopolitical core, the prevalence of the 'common'. Today, the common is not only language, but intelligence, knowledge and its corresponding ingenuity, but also a widened sensoriality, the uninterrupted circulation of flows, collective synergy, of affective plurality and of the resulting collective subjectivity. In short: the common is the social *bios*, the potential of life from the multitude. If that is the case, if the common can be conceived as a vital and virtual backdrop, a heterogeneous reservoir in continual variation, we must add two things. On the one hand, in a control society like ours, this 'common' tends to be blocked, privatised and expropriated, whether by mechanisms of subjective lamination, or by the procedures of hierarchical centralisation, whether from the marketing use of differentiations (transformation of individuals into dividuals). No one talks about the monitoring of perception, sexuality, health and sociability. On the other hand, the extraordinary polyphony of the multitude virtually overflows command systems and their strangulations. It is an entire pluriverse which deserves the greatest attention, with its diverse, punctual and ephemeral modes of association directed toward action, social hazing and political satire. From the group of motorcycle couriers in São Paulo who use their phones as indiscreet cameras and put their movies directly on the Internet, bypassing the mediatic watch over the city, with over 100,000 visits a day to their site, to that one solitary performer who is one of the first to arrive at the crash site of the TAM airline at the São Paulo airport and with his cell phone becomes the outspoken representative of the Brazilian secret service amid the police and firefighters, denying or allowing the landing of helicopters and simulating that he is the one who monitors the landing area, while with his other ear capturing the CNN news report

that, among other things, informs him of the imminent arrival of the governor of São Paulo by helicopter, helping him in his 'performance', I see small war machines everywhere, introducing a chaos factor or spreading germs to a new sensibility. Madmen, illegals, people in favelas, poets, musicians, the unemployed, the poor, invisibles of all types who roam our cities and claim something else, for which we do not yet have a name. All of them are aware of the disproportion present in the relation of forces, current biopowers and its hegemonic and enslaving racism, in the words of Giuseppe Cocco and Toni Negri in their analysis of Latin America, the perversion of incentive laws and the manipulation of large capital, the mafia that dominates our congress, the machinic servitude, the capitalistic semiotics that go directly to the affects; however, none of this seems to demobilise them, on the contrary... And in refusing the designation of the periphery, or the excluded, or even minorities, in rejecting the position of the worthless in this unequal war, in avoiding a frontal war or the militarisation of the fight or whining resentment or the social assistance call for social inclusion, without neglecting the effort to reach, by increasing pressure, the proper current legislation, they simply reiterate the statement of what they hold, emitting torpedoes of affect, insisting on the constitution of the common and in the game of singularities that seems to be its most obstinate conviction, even if out of their mouths it takes on other names, less noble, or philosophically incipient. All of them are, in my opinion, war machines that, according to Deleuze and Guattari's definition, do not have the objective of war, but that of creation.

But why, in a context where we do not have any given or prior exteriority that would anchor our resistance, as decades ago could have been the case of the proletariat, the marginal, the madman or the artist, in a context in which all these figures were devoured, in a moment of such planetary homogenisation, in which there is no longer any outside whatsoever and we are all inside a megamachine, whose mechanisms increasingly are capillaries of the calibration of affects, including the calibration of fear and threat, to talk like Brian Massumi; why precisely there, at this moment when apparently the totality of the planet, space, time, existence, the body and subjectivity are taken by assault; why precisely is it in the midst of such an atmosphere of machinic control, with their nihilistic effects, that we have seen these improbable and uncommon retaliations coming from the most unexpected places, re-encountering in the *chandalas* (the 'excluded' from India, those without caste, banned from all social commerce), biopolitical imagination and collective intelligence that entirely deserted

the spaces of political or aesthetic representation and their sterile perversion? One thing is certain: challenging the kidnapping of the common, disseminating its autopoietic focuses, focuses of irradiation, contagion and propagation, that are intensive, under-represented, pre-individual, a-significant, they reconfigure the collective subjectivity and its potential for affectation... They have no name, no power, do not dominate the institutions, we hardly know if they exist or where they are, but from that fluctuating threshold that constructs its plane of consistency. I do not want to idealise them, and if I use them in a somewhat similar way to how Nietzsche used the Jews of his time (in whom he saw a 'promise' of another Europe), or Deleuze used the schizos (in order to think about a deterritorialisation of the social), it is just to say this: perhaps they are one among the many war machines of the present time, that infiltrate and deviate and shift the brutal logic of the economic and militaristic and cultural war carried out by the established powers, enforcing their states of potential and their constituent strength, precisely refusing the will for power.

There is something, moreover, that should draw our attention throughout this journey – more so than the theme of solitude, this persistence of the theme of flight... But it is as if its relationship with the problem of the collective was still too extrinsic. Sometimes the collective is thought of as preserving the margin of escape that would compensate for its oppression (being able to flee from it), sometimes the very collective is thought of as a compensation for an all too solitary escape. The community, as is seen in this digression, would have a function of relief, balm and compensation, almost as a protection against unbearable solitude, while at the same time, solitude as a protection against the unbearable weight of the collective. Maybe what is most difficult is to think about escape and the collective together, the collective itself as a line of flight, the line of flight as a collective. In other words, between living-together and living-alone there is no pacifying dialectic, but a complex game, without synthesis: the disjunctive collective (Borges 2010).

Maybe it all depends, at bottom, on a strange theory of the encounter, in which the relation precedes its terms. To encounter is to affect and be affected, infect and be infected, envelop and be enveloped. Even in the extreme of solitude, encountering is not extrinsically colliding with someone else, but experimenting with the distance that separates us from them, and flying over this distance in a crazy back-and-forth pattern. Nijinsky says:

> I am Apis, I am an Egyptian. I am a Red Indian. I am a Negro. I am a Chinaman. I am a Japanese. I am a foreigner, a stranger. I am a sea bird. I am a land bird. I am the tree of Tolstoy. I am the roots of Tolstoy. (Nijinsky 1971: 20)

The heterogeneous contaminate and communicate, but each also envelops this or that which is encountered, takes possession of its strength, but without destroying it. Thus, out of this distance that Deleuze has called 'politeness' (Oury 'kindness', Barthes 'delicacy', Guattari 'softness'), at the same time there is separation, back-and-forth, flying over, contamination, mutual enveloping and reciprocal becoming. It is an overall weird connection, because it disconnects where powers want connections, and connects where we want disconnections. As in the schizo. One could also call it sympathy: an action at a distance, reverberation in the virtuality from what we differ (and not identity), the action of one force on another, constitutive potential. Neither fusion, nor intersubjective dialectic, nor metaphysics of alterity, but enveloping composition, disjunctive synthesis, polyphonic game. Hence Deleuze's question, of a Spinozist nature: 'How can a being take another being into its world, but while preserving or respecting the other's own relations and world?' (Deleuze 1988: 126). With this, Deleuze relaunches, in an inseparable and mixed-up manner, living-together and living-alone on a large scale, pointing to another sociability, and even to a community to come. A subjective ecology would need to sustain the disparity of worlds, forms of life, points of view, rhythms, gestures, intonations and sensations, and encourage its proliferation rather than kidnap it in a universal modulation, such that each singularity preserves, not its identity, but its power of affectation and envelopment in the immense game of the world. Without that, every being sinks into the black hole of its solitude, deprived of its connections and the sympathy that makes it live.

It would be necessary to depart from the precarious lives, anonymous deserters, people suicided by society, not only to thematise the meaning of these solitudes, but also that of the evanescent gestures that reinvent sympathy, and even a solidarity in the contemporary biopolitical context. Among a Gombro, a Poroto, a Bartleby, a Walser, even a Bloom, but also among the performer at the airport, a Bradley Manning, the dissident analyst of the intelligence service for the US military, or an actor in our schizoscenic theatre company, I see, at times, the outline of what might be called an uncertain community, not unconnected with that which has obsessed the second half of the twentieth century,

from Bataille to Agamben, namely: the community of those who do have community, the community of the celibates, the inoperative community, the impossible community, the gaming community, the coming community, or even a socialism of distances. One thing is certain: facing the terrible community that has spread across the planet, made of reciprocal monitoring and frivolity, these beings (but will it just be them?) needed their solitude in order to give rise to their crazy bifurcation, and conquer the place of their sympathies.

Notes

1. Uno, Kuniichi (n.d.) 'Pantoufle d'Artaud selon Hijikata', unpublished.
2. Jean Oury, psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, director of La Borde clinic.

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Book Reviews

Petr Kouba and Tomáš Pivoda (eds) (2011) *Franz Kafka: Minority Report*, Prague: Litteraria Pragensia.

This slim and elegant volume collects some of the lectures given in Prague at the Deleuze and Guattari summer school 'Franz Kafka and the Perspective of Minority' in July 2010. The volume appeared only a few months after the event, and this rapidity in the publication process is perhaps the first problem we encounter. The book gives in fact the impression of a certain haste in the editing and publishing and also in the general concept, beginning with the fact that there is no proper introduction. The two-page-long introduction by Petr Kouba is limited to a few basic remarks: it specifies that the book is not about Kafka and his work (something that perhaps a different title or subtitle could – or should – have made clear), but rather about Deleuze and Guattari's reading of Kafka, and more precisely about the 'notion of minority'; and provides a very short definition of 'majority' and 'minority', and of 'major' and 'minor language'. Kouba, however, does not dwell on the difference between the use of the noun and of the adjective, and more specifically on the problems that the use of the term 'minority' generates in the current debate. I will return on this point later. A proper introduction could have provided a stronger concept and rationale for the volume.

To my knowledge, in fact, there is no monograph or collection of essays focusing specifically on Deleuze and Guattari's take on Kafka. There are of course plenty of journal articles and book chapters, and the Kafka connection is in part explored also in a number of volumes focusing on Deleuze and literature. Kouba and Pivoda's volume, therefore, fills a gap in the literature, but it could have done it in a much more articulate and conscious way. What the introduction might have done, for example, is to discuss and clarify some issues arising from the title, which of course playfully combines the subtitle – and central

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concept – of Deleuze and Guattari's book, 'Toward a Minor Literature', with the title of the 2002 Steven Spielberg movie, *Minority Report* (the arty cover is also a still from the film), but falls (or leads the reader to fall) into the trap of confusing and equating 'minor literature' with 'minority literature'. When they define 'minor literature' in chapter 3 of the Kafka book, Deleuze and Guattari do not speak of the notion of 'majority' and 'minority', but rather of 'major' and 'minor' literatures and uses of language. They do indeed briefly analyse the notions of 'majority' and 'minority' in 'Postulates of Linguistics', the second plateau of *A Thousand Plateaus*, quoted by Kouba in the introduction; however, they emphasise that what they are interested in is the major or minor 'mode' or 'use' of the language. This is no secondary issue, especially today, with the proliferation of, and an increasing interest in, the so-called 'minority literatures' or literatures of the minorities. Ronald Bogue briefly touches on this problem in a footnote of his excellent contribution to the volume: in appropriations of the concept of 'minor literature' by recent critics, he writes:

> all too often the term is used as a synonym for 'minority literatures,' and through that term, Deleuze and Guattari are recruited for the defence of identity politics, which, of course, is antithetical to Deleuze and Guattari's conception of minor writing. (64)

The issue is not mentioned elsewhere in the book, with the exception, implicitly and in passim, of Gregg Lambert's essay, which however does not dwell on it. Kouba and Pivoda missed indeed the opportunity to situate this volume – and the notion of 'minor literature' – within the contemporary debate.

Another sign of this haste in the publication is Miroslav Petříček's contribution, which is the simple transcript of the lecture he gave at the 2010 summer school; the lecture has not been reworked or expanded (it covers fewer than five pages), and not even the rhetorical mannerisms of the spoken address have been edited out. The short essay does not lack in interest: starting off from an analysis of the 'literary machine' in the Kafka book, Petříček connects the notion of 'machine' with that of 'structure' and investigates the similarities and differences between the two, with the help of Deleuze's 1973 essay 'How Do We Recognize Structuralism?' The argument is that the notion of 'machine' is a sort of evolution of that of 'structure', an evolution which 'retains, develops and intensifies its implications' (59). Of particular interest is the (brief) reference to the Prague structuralist school (better known as the Prague Linguistic Circle or Prague School, 1928–39), which developed a notion

of structure as open, or rather as an 'opening', and thus akin to the Deleuzian notion of 'productivity'. However, these interesting insights are not developed into an articulate analysis and remain at the level of fragments or suggestions.

The same applies to Catarina Pombo Nabais's contribution. Pombo Nabais is the only contributor who was not a speaker at the 2010 summer school, and her brief essay puts forwards a very interesting argument: from the Kafka book onwards, she writes, Deleuze subverts his own previous interpretation of Kafka, which still relied on a traditional, psychoanalytical notion of literature and literary interpretation, and embraces a 'new joy' which liberates him from the psychoanalytical understanding of literature. She points out that Deleuze's previous interpretation of Kafka, contained in the second part of *Proust and Signs* (added in 1970 to the 1964 first edition), uses a Lacanian notion of law grounded in the tripartition symbolic/imaginary/real within desire. Here the consciousness of the law as identified in Kafka is called 'depressive', as opposed to the 'schizoid' consciousness identified in Proust. The radical turn brought about by the publication of *Anti-Oedipus*, Pombo Nabais argues, is not entirely acknowledged and never explicitly discussed by Deleuze, and thus his new programme in the understanding of literature, as proposed in the Kafka book, is 'not completely honest' (33). This is indeed a big claim, which should be extensively articulated and supported by a much more thorough analysis of the texts. Pombo Nabais instead drops the discussion precisely where she should have gone deeper. Moreover, in my view, she mistakenly underplays the role of Félix Guattari in Deleuze's 'fundamental theoretical transformation' (41), a point that, again, the essay should have explored at length.

Despite their limits, however, Petříček's and Pombo Nabais's texts also testify to one of the strengths of Kouba and Pivoda's collection: the volume puts together a number of perspectives coming from different cultural and philosophical traditions, enriching thereby the discussion and the analysis. Besides Petříček, who was a student of Czech philosopher Jan Patočka, and Pombo Nabais, who comes from Portugal and works in France, Kouba's own contribution also opens to inputs overcoming the 'traditional' circle of (anglophone) Deleuze studies, as does the essay by Nick Nesbitt, who, though coming from the American tradition of French studies, has lived and worked in Prague and is thus receptive to some different inputs. If these cultural and also stylistic differences do occasion a certain disharmony in the whole, they certainly – and more importantly – provide interesting

stimuli. Moreover, the above criticisms do not imply a negative judgement on the project as a whole, and do not intend to dismiss its undeniable qualities: some of the contributions are indeed outstanding, and many of the ideas and concepts put forwards are original and worth pursuing.

Together with Ronald Bogue's, an excellent contribution is certainly that by Gregg Lambert, which deservedly opens the volume. In a way, Lambert's essay substitutes for the missing introduction, since it focuses on 'Kafka and the Question of a Minor Literature' and attempts to situate the notion of minor literature within the contemporary debate. The essay is not limited to a mere exposition of the concept of minor literature, but rather extends the discussion to the questions 'what is writing?', 'why write?', and 'for whom does one write?', with reference to Kafka's status as 'modernist' writer (and thus to the 'modernist ideology' or clichés about the writer) and to the contemporary politics of writing. Lambert's starting point is the observation that today 'the project of becoming a writer has a meaning even before it is actually a project of writing, or before the question of whether the particular work has merit is even raised' (9). That is to say, the project of writing is today always already framed by the ideology of globalised markets. This is the thesis put forward by Peter Hallward in *Absolutely Postcolonial* (2001), which updates and revises Jameson's famous theses about postmodernism, and is therefore the constant referent of Lambert's argument. Against Hallward's thesis, Lambert attempts to wrest the political value of the project of writing from this ideological framework, focusing on Deleuze and Guattari's notion of 'bachelor machine', which describes a 'social' process, a 'social' desire, and thus contrasts the 'logic of singularisation' that Hallward identifies within modernist (and postmodernist, postcolonial) ideology. The importance and actuality of Deleuze and Guattari's book on Kafka resides precisely in the attempt of 'wrestling' Kafka's work – and more generally the project of writing – from the 'always already' of the ideologies of both the 'Kafka-myth' and of the myth of the modernist writer.

This scenario also constitutes – implicitly – the background against which to read Petr Kouba's contribution. Kouba focuses on the 'perspectives from the outside' and starts off by reading Kafka's story 'The Burrow' through the concepts of *Umwelt* (biological environment) and *Umbegung* (the totality of all *Umwelten*) developed by the biologist Jacob von Uexküll in his studies about animal and human worlds. The sound the animal in 'The Burrow' hears

is read as coming from an 'absolute outside' and, as such, as that asignifying and thus deterritorialising 'sonority' Deleuze and Guattari analyse in the first chapter of the Kafka book. Kouba links then this asignifying, deterritorialising sonority to the 'perspectives from the outside' developed by the ethnological method, whose origins he seeks in Montesquieu's *Persian Letters* (1721) and Voltaire's *Mocrom*é*gas* (1752). Kouba certainly could have explored more in depth the link between Deleuze and Guattari and Uexküll, whose theories are mentioned in the discussion about '*Territoire*' and 'animal music' in *A Thousands Plateaus*' twelfth plateau, 'Of the Refrain'; moreover, on this connection, and on the notion of 'sonority', there exists a bibliography which should perhaps have been discussed. However, what strikes me most is the contrast between the notion of the writer as an 'outsider' that Kouba proposes, and Lambert's long critique of the 'modernist ideology' which pictures the artist 'as foreigner, as stranger, as criminal, as outcast or class-traitor' and so on (21). Is a 'bachelor' (in Deleuze and Guattari's view) the same thing as an outsider? Is there not an opposition between the bachelor's – or even the nomad's – deterritorialisation, which operates from within, and the gaze from the outside? That is, I have the impression that the all too 'traditional' notion of the artist as 'outsider' ends up 'reterritorialising' Kafka and Deleuze and Guattari's interpretation into that modernist ideology that they attempted to dismantle.

A different connection, that between Deleuze and Guattari's Kafka and Heinrich von Kleist, is thoroughly and masterfully explored by Ronald Bogue. Kafka notoriously considered Kleist one of his masters, and in the Kafka book Deleuze and Guattari draw a parallel – and a distinction – between Kafka's 'minor literature' and Kleist's 'literature of war'; in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987), they further explore the meaning of a 'war machine' (plateau 'Treatise of Nomadology: The War Machine') as related to, but distinguished from, Kafka's 'bureaucratic machine'. Bogue, with the help of a little book strongly influenced by Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy, Mathieu Carrière's *Für eine Literatur des Krieges, Kleist* (*For a Literature of War, Kleist*, 1981) – a true companion piece to Deleuze and Guattari's *Kafka* – articulates the concept of a 'literature of war' to show that Kleist provided Deleuze and Guattari with an important means of extending the notion of the literary in their subsequent works. The differences between Kafka and Kleist, Bogue argues, should be viewed not in terms of an opposition of minor literature and a literature of war, but rather 'in terms of

literature's immediate relationship with a war machine in Kleist and with a bureaucratic machine in Kafka' (64).

The final contribution by Nick Nesbitt could have provided a companion piece to Bogue's thorough analysis: like Bogue, Nesbitt aims at developing an insight which is briefly mentioned in the Kafka book – a connection between Kafka and masochism enclosed in a long parenthesis in chapter 7 – but which remains unexplored. He thus links Deleuze's definition of masochism in 'Coldness and Cruelty' (his 1966 introduction to Sacher-Masoch's *Venus in Furs*) – 'the enactment of a systematic subversion of the law via dissidence' (91) – to the experiment in emancipation undertaken by the bachelor machine of the Kafka book. He then extends the analysis of dissidence to an (all too brief) reading of Jan Patočka and Václav Havel, who, unlike Deleuze and Guattari, emphasise the necessity of a dissident politics of 'truth' to be counterpoised to the state's politics of lie. The idea is extremely interesting, and it is a pity therefore that Nesbitt proceeds tentatively and without articulating in depth the connections and the differences between the Sacher-Masoch essay and the Kafka book (and between Deleuze/Guattari and Patočka/Havel). Moreover, he takes a surprising text as an example of Kafka's emancipative/dissident strategy: the 'Letter to His Father'. This letter, Nesbitt argues, expresses Kafka's masochistic politics of dissidence, in which, like Sacher-Masoch, he signs a contract with the Mother to escape from the Law of the Father. In short, Nesbitt attributes a sort of 'truth-value' to the letter, and this stridently contrasts with Deleuze and Guattari's reading in the first few pages of chapter 2 of the Kafka book, where they write right at the beginning: 'Kafka knows quite well that nothing in it [the 'Letter to His Father'] is true' (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 9). And right after the parenthesis on masochism in chapter 7, they emphasise that the 'pact with the Mother' (Oedipal incest) entails 'reterritorialisation', and that a true deterritorialising 'pact' (schizo-incest) happens only with sisters, maids and whores (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 67). Nesbitt risks here therefore to re-Oedipalise the bachelor machine and the masochistic pact. This is not the place to explore these issues and problems, which must however be pointed out to the reader.

Though the last contribution to the volume perhaps leaves the reader a bit disappointed, Kouba and Pivoda's collection is finally to be welcomed. It fills a gap in the literature, contains some excellent essays and proposes original and interesting ideas and insights, which hopefully will be pursued in future publications. Moreover, it emphasises the interest and the importance of Deleuze and Guattari's interpretation of

Kafka, which must be explored further. The reader is left asking for more, and this little book could work as stimulus for new research. On the other hand, Kouba and Pivoda's volume is a missed occasion because it keeps its ambitions too low: certainly, it defines itself as a collection of 'reports', which besides originate (though this is not specified anywhere in the book) from a punctual and limited experience, the 2010 summer school in Prague. However, even within the limits of this 'modesty', there were the premises for a stronger contribution to both the Kafka and the Deleuze and Guattari scholarship.

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The history of science is populated with magical entities: phlogiston, the ether and animal spirits, as well as borderline beings that migrate from magic to legitimate consecration. The God particle, atoms, planets, the gay gene and perhaps the brain are undecidably poised between fanciful fictions that might close down inquiry by operating as a black box, or that might be genuinely 'real' insofar as their posited existence allows for more explanation and richer worldly engagement than other possible objects. What happens when an entity is poised between philosophical creation and scientific function? One might say that atoms are at once philosophical concepts, allowing us to imagine life *as if* it were composed of basic irreducible units, at the same time that atoms are also functions,

allowing for the creation of new forms of energy, destruction and physical prediction.

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, who provide the theoretical ballast for Patricia Pisters's magisterial work on the neuro-image, offered one of the most practical and *im*practical ways of distinguishing concepts from functions. Concepts are created by philosophy, are intensive and open new orientations that reconfigure the plane of thought upon which they are composed. Concepts do not label what is already there, but bring new modes of inquiry and being into existence. The brain is, therefore, strictly speaking a concept. If we employ much of the work that Pisters draws upon – theories of a mind that is extended, enactive, embodied, embedded and affective – then the brain is not simply a thing within the world (something that has extension), but is genuinely conceptual insofar as it reconfigures the problems we pose about almost anything. The brain is not an organ housed within the body that then enables cognition, processing and judgement of the world. To create a *concept* of the brain is to look at how relations among forces are altered, creating new speeds, responses, desires and new worlds. Just as every painting alters the history of painting, so the formation of a philosophical concept transforms the very possibility of philosophy. It makes sense – if we think of the brain as a dynamic and plastic network that becomes what it is always in relation to encounters that are at once felt in the body, but also extend beyond the skin to the light, sound and smell of the world – that philosophy would no longer be concerned solely with judgement, analysis, universal foundations or even truth in general. It would also make sense that philosophy might need to confront cinema: not because cinema tells stories or offers examples about which we philosophise, but because cinema as the composition and variation of images might also be akin to the brain, akin to a new style of philosophy. If the brain is not an organic but a dynamic and plastic and interactive network, then it makes sense not only to extend the mind beyond the body, but also to extend the neural paradigm to the non-human and not necessarily organic relays of images that make up the world. The brain would be a dynamic creative network composed of images, where the image includes sensations and affects that go beyond visual perception. Similarly, the cinema would not be realistic or representational but an exploration and reconfiguration of thinking – where thinking is now understood *not* solely as logical, theoretical or assertoric, but emotional, sensational and affective.

Key to Pisters's argument is a reconfiguration of film theory that goes back to a lost moment in cinema studies when it may have

been legitimate to consider the screen in relation to perceiving and feeling bodies. For Pisters this potential for considering the screen in its dynamic relation with the human body as a sensory-motor apparatus was quashed by an ideological resistance to seeing film as anything other than a text that might be analysed rigorously and semiotically. If, however, we consider recent work in neuroscience – both theories of schizophrenia that indicate a dominance of affective rather than bounded or logical thought, and theories of the extended mind – then the screen and cinema become philosophical scenes in which the very composition and synthesis of the world come into view:

> The way neural activity here is embedded in a sensorymotor dynamic is an example of a 4EA position compatible with a Deleuzian framework. [...] If externalism means [...] that neurological processes are fundamentally connected to the brain, incorporate bodily and external processes, and thus maintain a relation between the inside and the outside, then the 'strange encounter' between Deleuze and cognitivism becomes quite plausible. Their meeting is in fact an exploration of the implications of the brain as screen, halfway between the external world and internal brain processes. (77)

Pisters begins her journey, however, less concerned with the brain as a philosophical concept than as the other possibility articulated by Deleuze and Guattari: the functions of science. The brain is also something that can be the object of a theory that would explain the world's states of affairs. The brain, here, is less of a paradigm shift in the posing of problems than it is the opening of a new terrain of inquiry: fMRI images and new diagnostics allow for the new ways of approaching clinical problems such as schizophrenia and delirium. Pisters ties Deleuze and Guattari's seemingly vague and figural accounts of schizophrenia to specific findings and case studies: 'Recalling Jill Bolte Taylor's story, we could argue that Deleuze and Guattari's concern for schizophrenia relates to a similar desire to create more awareness for the "world of the right hemisphere" in a dominantly left hemisphere culture' (46). It is this side of the brain – the brain as a function of science, as a way of considering the ways in which the mind perceives and composes its world – that Pisters explores in an early chapter on cinema and delirium. Here, the book is less concerned with the brain as a concept – the creation of a new orientation for thinking – and more with the brain as an object that, studied in its pathology, allows us to think of cognitive and neural processes more generally. So the states of delirium, fragmentation and disorder explored in films such as *The Butterfly Effect* (2004) are for Pisters ways of opening out onto broader

problems of the socio-political field. She even cites a study that concludes that mental disorders among Moroccan immigrants to The Netherlands are higher than among Dutch natives, indicating that, 'Environmental factors thus seem to be important as potential triggers of schizophrenia, which is confirmed by recent neuroscientific findings. [...] In sum, modern neuroscientific findings consider schizophrenia a brain disorder that can be related to abnormal synaptic connections and plasticity' (43).

The key manoeuvre occurs when Pisters does not allow this functional dimension to dominate the book's trajectory and instead makes two decisive methodological shifts. First, the supposed pathology of schizophrenia indicates something about mind in general, so that 'abnormal synaptic connections' might perhaps be better thought of as counter-normative synaptic connections, and would then include the cinematic creation of new image machines as well as the philosophical creation of aberrant syntheses: what if we imagined an image's or thing's power to think? Second, she shifts from considering delirium as depicted in film, to film itself as a mode of delirium, delusion or power of the false. Ostensibly examining films about magic, such as *The Prestige* and *The Illusionist* (both from 2006), Pisters develops a notion of film, perception (and then imagining more broadly) as illusion, *which cannot be placed as secondary to or distinct from cognition*:

> Visual illusions (such as the Necker cube, and the spectacle on a film screen) demonstrate that perception in itself can be ambiguous, alternating between different interpretations of illusions that are both real on our brain-screen. Film viewing is such an illusion, which nevertheless triggers the activation of information within the neocortex, allowing us not only to see but also to understand, learn from, and interpret visual information. The workings of perception of reality and illusory perceptions of reality (like cinema) are quite similar. (82)

Here, Pisters's text and ongoing method is poised between two possibilities. The brain may be considered as a function – as a thing within the world that composes and recomposes images, and that in turn allows us to theorise other phenomena, such as the cinema and the mind and a general approach towards perception. On such a reading art can be studied for what it discloses about human organisms as sensory-motor apparatuses. Like certain pathologies, the illusions and delusions of cinema give us an intensified version of what occurs in thinking and cognition more generally. On the other hand, if cinema and the brain are screens that similarly compose and recompose images, then neither can be seen as like or explicative of the other; instead, one might think

of the world – beyond cinema and the brain – as a plane of interacting and mutually recreating images. The first approach, where the brain is a function, places art and the image within explanation, and allows us to perhaps form a Deleuzian rapprochement between cinema and science. We could refer to this as the neural or cognitive paradigm, where what we now know about the brain allows us to think differently about cinema and television. On the other hand, it may be that the science of the brain requires new philosophical concepts, and this is where Pisters takes her analysis with her notion of the 'neuro-image'. If, for Deleuze, there is the movement-image, where cinema confronts the world's composition through the interplay of movements, and the time-image, where cinema can fold different layers of time *not connected by a common space or movement*, then there should also be a neuro-image. Here, Pisters opens the neural beyond perception and synthesis of the world, to the cinematic power to present the history, politics, intensity and ethnicity of the world via the conjunction of images. If the brain is plastic, and *not* housed in the human organism, then it makes sense to consider our increasingly cinematic and televised milieu as an extended and intense domain of images that are at once thoroughly global and neural. This is not so much a neural paradigm, where the brain explains other entities, as it is a neuro-imaginary, where the thought of the political field as a war of images shifts the very mode of analysis and critique. The War on Terror is a war of images, a 'new regime of images':

> it was not until the second historical moment [after 1989 and the fall of the Berlin wall], 9/11 – the attack on the twin towers and their dramatic collapse in 2001, caught on countless professional and amateur cameras and distributed in a dense global network across different media – that the conditions of the large-scale emergence of the neuro-image were amplified, its qualities having already been signaled in the preceding decade. This crisis marked the end of (relative) post-Cold War euphoria, during which time even war had seemed to become 'nonwar' in a disappeared or faded political present. The violent attack by Islamic fundamentalists definitively transitioned US power toward the era of the War on Terror, with the war(s) in Iraq and Afghanistan as its most visible and dire consequences. With every attack, or seemingly apparent threat, increased measures of control and surveillance became more severe and invasive – ranging from the proliferation of CCTV cameras to full-body scans at airports and hyperinvasive and expanded data-mining by governments and companies. (301)

Like all books worth reading, Pisters's work on the neuro-image raises more questions than it answers. How do we understand the very

notion of the 'neuro'? Is the brain and its neuro-paradigm a scientific lever for thinking critically about the politics of images, such that it becomes increasingly important (by way of science) to recognise the brain as plastic and tied to illusion? If this were so, then there would be some privilege attached to the science of the brain that would help to explain the functioning of images in philosophy and art. In part, such a use of scientific functions to make a claim about cinema is precisely the method that Pisters pursues. One might then criticise her project for its convergence of science with art, creating an equivocal relation whereby science is of a higher order of being and reality in its capacity to explain art. But to do so might require remaining unfaithfully faithful to Deleuze: for is not the claim of the cinema books that an event outside of philosophy requires a new mode of philosophy and not just the incorporation of new themes or objects? If that is so, then the 'neural' (like cinema) might signal a way of thinking the neural *outside the brain*, such that the notions of plasticity might not be borrowed from neuroscience to apply to other domains but might require a rethinking of the very notion of domains, and even of sites or modes of thinking. Just as Pisters refers to the ways in which surveillance culture has off-loaded the tasks of imaging and the politics of imaging to a zone that no longer has the form of a polity, perhaps we also need to think of the neural as a form of plastic, decentred but also fractal and explosive mode of relations that takes place outside what has come to be thought of as life.

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Jeffrey A. Bell (2009) *Deleuze's Hume: Philosophy, Culture and the Scottish Enlightenment*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Two questions guide Deleuze's reading of Hume's philosophy in *Empiricism and Subjectivity*: first, 'how does the multiplicity of ideas in the imagination become a system?' and second, 'how can a subject transcending the given be constituted in the given?' Jeffrey A. Bell shows how, with these questions, Deleuze extends Hume's empiricism to develop his own transcendental empiricism. Although a great deal has been written on Deleuze's transcendental empiricism, surprisingly little has been written on his relationship to Hume, and Bell's *Deleuze's Hume* is the first book-length study of this relationship published in the English language.

In part, *Deleuze's Hume* appears to have been formulated as a response to Alain Badiou's criticism, in *Deleuze: The Clamor of Being*, of Deleuze's theory of the virtual. Bell discusses this criticism at length in chapter 1 and returns to it throughout the book, making his point most explicitly towards the end: 'That Deleuze has "no way of thinking singularity" is evidenced, for Badiou, by Deleuze's continued adherence to empiricism, even his Humean transcendental empiricism' (131). According to Badiou, Deleuze's empiricism makes him incapable of thinking the new as a rupture with what is, because he secures the primacy of the one over the multiple; what Deleuze considers to be creative and new is simply a continuous folding and refolding of the given. Bell rejects this criticism by constructing a defence of Deleuze on the basis that Deleuze is able to think singularity precisely *because* of his Humean transcendental empiricism.

Key to the construction of this defence is discovering what Bell calls a process of 'historical ontology' in both Hume's and Deleuze's philosophies. Considering the importance of historical ontology for Bell, it is surprising that so little is said to introduce it at the outset (a brief footnote on Ian Hacking's use of the term is the only context provided). Bell uses it to draw attention to the heterogeneous multiplicity of the (human and non-human) given that precedes the constitution of identities. Within the context of Bruno Latour's notion of 'relative existence', he argues that there is not an ahistorical and autonomous reality waiting to be discovered and constructed according to historical, human practices; rather, 'construction' and 'autonomous reality' are synonymous and we should think instead in terms of relative existence, whereby what *is* acquires relative existence as singularities acquire greater or fewer connections with other singularities. Whether discussing the actualisation of the virtual or beginning with the actual in order to release the virtual that is inseparable from it, historical ontology underlines the creativity of this process: what is creative and new is not simply a folding or refolding of a multiplicity. In taking this approach, Bell's aims are far more ambitious than presenting a straightforward exegesis of Deleuze's reading of Hume; his overall aim is experimental: to explore the power of empiricism, and demonstrate what it means to think 'and' instead of 'is'.

The book is divided into six chapters. The first two specifically address Deleuze's sympathetic reading of Hume, in particular how the importance Deleuze gives to the associationism in Hume's philosophy defends Hume from other, critical readings which focus on his atomism and regard the multiplicity of impressions and ideas as independent

identities. The concepts of the virtual and the actual, though used neither by Hume nor by Deleuze in *Empiricism and Subjectivity*, are central to Bell's interpretation and the relationship between them is at the heart of every chapter: the virtual–actual distinction is the dualism that defines Deleuze's transcendental empiricism, and the multiplicity of impressions and ideas in the mind is a virtuality out of which an actual subject is constituted. Bell justifies this approach in two ways: first, by showing how it is possible to apply these concepts in a way that 'is not unreasonably stretching Hume's thought in directions unwarranted by the questions at the heart of Hume's project' (46); and second, because his analysis of Deleuze's thought is not restricted to *Empiricism and Subjectivity*.

In general terms, whereas the first two chapters centre mostly on Deleuze's reading of Hume, the rest of the book is an inquiry into the historical and political implications of thinking Deleuze and Hume. Chapter 3, which examines the relation between what is new and the historical conditions out of which the new emerges, focuses on Deleuze's very difficult concept of 'counter-actualisation'. The movement of counter-actualisation accesses the pre-individual singularities (the virtual multiplicity) that are inseparable from individuated actualities. Principally, and in anticipation of chapter 4, Bell analyses what he refers to as a 'problematising' approach to history, which he argues is common to both Deleuze and Hume. In contrast to those historical accounts which seek to understand what actually happened and to give as accurate an account of it as possible (or, we might say, how actualities became actual), Deleuze and Hume problematise the actual in order to bring about its transformation. An example of this, which Bell uses to contrast Badiouian and Deleuzian readings, is Haydn's music and its break with the Baroque style. According to a Badiouian reading, the event of Haydn's music was the void of Baroque music, a completely new beginning that later became naturalised as the classical style. Bell's usual method when opposing the Badiouian reading is to carry out a reading of the event that draws attention both to the conditions of its creation (in this case, the circumstances that fostered experimentation in Haydn's musical education) and also to how the event is irreducible to these conditions. Bell's discussion of counter-actualisation is further developed through a study of the event of 22 September 1912, when Kafka wrote his first properly 'Kafkaesque' work, 'The Judgment'; as with a problematising history, a writer moves beyond the actualities of what is written to the impersonal power of the virtual. In the examples of Haydn and Kafka, counter-actualisation moves beyond actualities to the

impersonal power of the virtual and reveals the transformative powers that are inseparable from actualities.

This analysis of counter-actualisation is continued in terms of the role of the intellectual in society (chapter 4) and, more specifically, Hume's role in the Scottish Enlightenment (chapter 5). For Hume, the innovative and abstruse thoughts of geniuses had a destabilising effect on commonly accepted beliefs (deterritorialisation), but only when these innovative thoughts were themselves accepted (reterritorialisation). For Deleuze, the intellectual is not one who represents established discourses, but one who counter-actualises or problematises an intellectual field. The political implications of Deleuze's problematising or counter-actualising approach to history are raised in these chapters, and enable Bell to draw a sharp contrast between Hume and Deleuze's Hume: namely, that whereas Hume's conservative tendencies establish him as a reformer, Deleuze's Hume, being far more experimental insofar as he is able to counter-actualise the actualities of state power, is argued to be revolutionary.

What is emphasised most of all throughout Bell's study is the creativity of Deleuze's Humean empiricism: whether it is Hume's role in the Scottish Enlightenment, Kafka's literary genius or David Sudnow's improvisational jazz, the power of the virtual is tapped into when conditions allow for an imperceptibility in which experimentation is possible. The political implications of this are addressed extensively in the sixth and final chapter. It is also in these terms that Bell makes his final rebuff to Badiou's criticism of Deleuze by affirming the creative multiplicity. This discussion centres on allowing for a social multiplicity to become effective in expressing itself. That is, a multiplicity that expresses its diversity rather than differentiating itself according to the niches that capitalism carves out to make consumers predictable. In this context, Bell discusses societies of continuous control and instantaneous communication, in which creative energies are placed in the service of the market. Bell's concluding argument draws on the need for becoming-imperceptible to a becoming-revolutionary. Since creativity occurs away from the market place, a becoming-revolutionary politics advocates 'a self-imposed leave of absence' (153) or break with the flow of communication. For it is only then that a problem may emerge with a transformative potential that affirms the power of the social multiplicity.

Writing in a very clear and engaging style, Bell succeeds in rightly emphasising the importance of Deleuze's Humean transcendental empiricism as a way of refuting Badiou's criticism. Just as Hume sought

to account, within the given, for that which is irreducible to the given, so too is Deleuze shown to affirm multiplicities and facilitate the creation of that which is irreducible to anything actual. This book does not fall short of its ambitions, and Bell's embrace of the multiplicity that precedes the identities of Deleuze and Hume persuasively demonstrates the transformative power of thinking Deleuze's Hume.

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Gilles Deleuze and the Missing Architecture

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Abstract

This essay combines experiential writing, quotes from Virginia Woolf's novel *The Waves* and Gilles Deleuze's philosophy in order to indicate that architecture remains a largely overlooked instance of the world. This is particularly problematic in the context of the question of immanence, which can be understood to lie at the core of Deleuze's philosophy. Architecture's relation to thought is discussed here via Deleuze's writing in *Difference and Repetition* and pursued in conjunction with Simone Brott's notion of architectural 'effects'. Rather than seeing encounters with architecture as the site of recognition of the habitual and routine, our experience of architecture-as-world should be understood to ceaselessly contribute to the emergence of thought. Brian Massumi's writing offers one potential direction to pursue, via the notion of the diagram tied to experience before it is fed into the loop of architectural design and its accompanying representational techniques.

Keywords: architecture, experience, sensation, thought, immanence

Prologue 1: Belgrade 1990

> The light struck upon the trees in the garden, making one leaf transparent and then another. One bird chirped high up; there was a pause; another chirped lower down. The sun sharpened the walls of the house, and rested like the tip of a fan upon a white blind and made a blue fingerprint of shadow under the leaf by the bedroom window. The blind stirred slightly, but all within was dim and unsubstantial. The birds sang their blank melody outside.
>
> Woolf 1994: 8

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This is the memory then, the false memory of the event. The year is 1990, 1991 and I am sitting inside a room that appears to be a simple white cube. The walls are on a grid (as far as the eye can tell) except in one of the corners behind the door, where the white surface juts out by exactly 97 mm. There is a single, tall window opposite and the view opens onto Kalemegdan. But what is known of the outside, what matters, is the light and the trees, the ceaseless pattern of movement cutting across individual leaves. The window is as old as the building and doesn't close properly. The paint that coats it is peeling. If you stand close enough, you can see the small, sharp flakes that drop off if you shut the window too vigorously.

The year and the location might speak of a different kind of events to you and there will definitely be violence in this story, only not the kind you might expect. Meanwhile, consider the room closely, every object and every variation in it, every fragment that presents itself and the conjunctions the fragments form unexpectedly. Observe carefully. The point is that even if you don't, you will keep perceiving. And so will the room.

There is a desk, long and white. There are two bookcases. A bed. There is a large box on the floor, made of iron, its interior lined with felt. You are aware of its feel even when the box is closed and you are thinking something else. There are several lamps in the room; no light issues from them currently. Blue patterns chase each other across the carpet, two shades of blue alternating at the periphery of your vision. They are always present, even when the eyes are trained on the desk's white surface, on the open book, on the marks that cover the page. The edge of the table, the turning point: made of brushed steel, it cuts a thin, crisp line and reflects the light that moves with the smallest shifts in the position of your body. Your body that is never perfectly still.

It is at this desk that I spent afternoons reading (I am still there, in that room, even if it looks nothing like this today.) It was 1991, 1990. I was reading a novel and would occasionally lift my eyes to look at the view outside (light-movement-leaves). The room was imperceptibly contracting and not all of it had to do with my breathing.

Prologue 2: London 2012

> The sun laid broader blades upon the house. The light touched something green in the window corner and made it a lump of emerald, a cave of pure green like stoneless fruit. It sharpened the edges of chairs and tables and stitched white table-cloths with fine gold wires.
>
> Woolf 1994: 24

Last night, in this flat on Bermondsey Street, I dreamed of having written all this before. I dreamed that Deleuze and Guattari claimed that art begins with the house, not with flesh; that architecture should be understood as the first of the arts (not the last, as some others might have it); that architecture is, above all, about frames, the way in which frames interlock, and that this would appear again in other arts, in painting as well as film (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 186–7). I dream of having written that they claimed the frames to hold compounds of sensations; sensations, compounds, that is exactly what they write.

And then, there was the Australian philosopher, one of the first to write about architecture and invoke Deleuze's name. She claimed that art was the extension of the architectural imperative to organise earth, its space. Architecture binds forces, allows qualities to live 'their own life' (that is exactly what she writes), constituting territory, allowing sensations to emerge and resonate, 'for the sake of intensity alone' (Grosz 2008: 12). It is the question of pure beings of sensation, I remembered reading (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 167). The phrase remained.

I dream that the most important thing was the role sensations are given in architecture and that it was the first of the arts, always the first. In the dream, I seem to be trying to convince anyone who would listen that philosophy keeps missing the point, that no one can see what can be seen so clearly.

I.

> The sun fell in sharp wedges inside the room. Whatever the light touched became dowered with a fanatical existence. A plate was like a white lake. A knife looked like a dagger of ice. Suddenly tumblers revealed themselves upheld by streaks of light. Tables and chairs rose to the surface as if they had been sunk under water and rose, filmed with red, orange, purple like bloom on the skin of ripe fruit. The veins on the glaze of the china, the grain of the wood, the fibres of the matting became more and more finely engraved. Everything was without shadow. A jar was so green that the eye seemed sucked up through a funnel by its intensity and stuck to it like a limpet. Then shapes took on mass and edge. Here was the boss of a chair; here the bulk of a cupboard. And as the light increased, flocks of shadow were driven before it and conglomerated and hung in many-pleated folds in the background.
>
> Woolf 1994: 87–8

I have written elsewhere about the relationship between architectural theory and the uptake of Deleuze's philosophy since the 1980s, and

the current position of Deleuze and Guattari's thought in architecture (Jobst 2013). In short, the uses of Deleuze in architectural discourse have been confined to a handful of concepts, primarily derived from *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, and closely related to the rise of the digital. Apart from being a severe reduction of the scope of Deleuze's philosophical project, this is also a case of marked oversight of the consequences of architecture's positioning as 'the first of the arts'. The stress on the question of sensation is in architectural theory still seen to be associated with architectural phenomenology, rather than Deleuze's philosophy – with all the problems the phenomenological context poses.

Meanwhile, the writing on contemporary and conceptual arts, including performance and dance, is edging ever closer to acknowledging architecture as that ever-present context of all creation and the inevitable aspect of the insertion of art into everyday life, which Deleuze qualified in *Difference and Repetition* as the key question (Deleuze 1994: 293).

It is in this context that the publication of Simone Brott's *Architecture for a Free Subjectivity: Deleuze and Guattari at the Horizon of the Real* in 2011 offered a much needed reorienting of Deleuzian thought within the discourse of architecture. Brott's is a project of reinscribing the question of the production of subjects into the uptake of Deleuze's philosophy forged in architecture in the 1990s, when it was largely emptied of its political connotations. Throughout the book, Brott shows that more is to be had from Deleuze when redressing the period of what is today understood as the discourse of post-World War II architectural theory, with all its subsequent crises and transformations. Brott's aim, to elucidate the relation between subject and object in a radically novel way (a question that keeps resurfacing in architecture in various guises despite – or precisely because of – the strong push in the direction of textual analysis that coloured architectural theory in the wake of Derrida's philosophy), is a valiant and important one. But, as clearly shown in her own conclusion, to pose the question of the subject might also lead to the recurrence of the problems the question of subjectivity encountered at every turn in the development of architectural theory (Brott 2011: 120–1).

There is another, affiliated question to be posed here, which covers a similar territory in ways in which architecture hasn't yet engaged, let alone architectural theories based on Deleuze's philosophy, and this is the question of architecture's relation to thought. Underlying this is the question of immanence, which should be key when addressing Deleuze with architecture in mind. What is the sequence leading from

'built environments' to thought and back, and how does this reflect on Deleuze's philosophy?

II.

> The sun struck straight upon the house, making the white walls glare between the dark windows. Their panes, woven thickly with green branches, held circles of impenetrable darkness. Sharp-edged wedges of light lay upon the window-sill and showed inside the room plates with blue rings, cups with curved handles, the bulge of a great bowl, the crisscross pattern in the rug, and the formidable corners and lines of cabinets and bookcases. Behind their conglomeration hung a zone of shadow in which might be a further shape to be disencumbered of shadow or still denser depths of darkness.
>
> Woolf 1994: 118

In *Immanence: Deleuze and Philosophy* Miguel de Beistegui writes that the question of immanence should be understood as the key notion orienting Deleuze's work, culminating in his collaboration with Guattari in *What Is Philosophy?* Importantly, it is here that we encounter the link between thought and the sensible, in ways that need addressing both in architecture and the arts – let alone philosophy in the field of Deleuze studies, which has so far been largely blind to the overwhelming presence of architecture as an inescapable instance of the 'world'.

De Beistegui writes that the creation of concepts

> is not a creation *ex nihilo*, but an effort to extract from the sensible the singular points at which the constitution of a phenomenon, whatever its nature, is being decided. In that respect, whilst created, concepts are the concepts of the sensible itself. (De Beistegui 2010: 6)

Furthermore, concepts are

> produced in response to specific events that take place in the empirical world. If this understanding of concepts as originating in the sensible itself amounts to a form of empiricism, Deleuze immediately goes on to characterise it as a 'superior' form of empiricism, or as a *transcendental* empiricism, thus doing away with the very opposition between empiricism and idealism. (De Beistegui 2010: 6)

De Beistegui is keen to show that the consequence of this conception of philosophy vis-à-vis the real is that the 'horizon' that precedes concepts (and orients their formation – plane as plan) and from which concepts emerge – what Deleuze will repeatedly address as the *image of thought* in his work on Nietzsche and Proust, in *Difference and Repetition* as well

as in *What Is Philosophy?* – implies that 'non-philosophy figures (quite literally) at the heart of philosophy' (De Beistegui 2010: 10).

The notion of immanence, traced in Deleuze's work in such a way, De Beistegui claims to be something other than a straightforward Deleuzian concept. Immanence is not a concept, he writes, or if it is, it should be understood as a concept of a radically different kind. 'It is an image, precisely: the plane of immanence is "the image of thought, the image thought gives itself of what it means to think, to make use of thought, to find one's bearings in thought [. . .]" ' (De Beistegui 2010: 12). Importantly for a discussion on architecture, the focus here should be on what the notion of immanence implies with regard to sensation and that which is in architecture broadly discussed under the banner of experience.

'Thought happens', De Beistegui further writes,

> as a result of an *encounter* with the outside. It is a response – a creative response – to something that has taken hold of us. What does this mean? It means [. . .] that the conditions of thought are not within thought itself, that thought is not its own ground, and so certainly not that of the intelligibility of the real. This is the extent to which Deleuze is an empiricist: our concepts are generated from our encounter with the external world; the external, sensible reality is where they originate. (De Beistegui 2010: 13)

Immanence, in other words, 'preserves the world, and the possibility of its meaningfulness, from being assigned to an origin that is not inner worldly. It turns thought itself into a worldly event' (De Beistegui 2010: 16) – one in which architecture is yet to be properly accounted for.

> As a result, to think immanently is to render thought immanent to reality, to its chaotic becoming, its variations, and its vibrations. It amounts to constructing an image of thought that is not posited in advance, independently of the real itself, and orienting it from the start, but that grown from within the real, or Being. Throughout, immanence designated the method as well as the content of thought, the manner in which thought must unfold as well as the matter from which it unfolds. (De Beistegui 2010: 192)

This 'matter' from which thought unfolds is where architecture should be brought into focus in the writing on Deleuze in ways overlooked so far, no doubt due in part to the cursory discussion of architecture in Deleuze's writing itself, as well as his work with Guattari (whose engagement with architecture, as Simone Brott shows, was more extensive (Brott 2011: 75–96)).

Unlike in the case of cinema, literature or painting, Deleuze and Guattari's writing on architecture (in particular in its broadest sense, as

the *built environment*, or what could tentatively be termed 'organised matter') is woefully cursory. That this shouldn't deter us from drawing out ways in which their work opens an incredibly rich territory for it nevertheless is clear, for instance, in the way Laura Cull indicates performance might need to be taken (Cull 2009: 1–21), or Simon O'Sullivan and Stephen Zepke approach contemporary art (Zepke and O'Sullivan 2010: 1–11). The simple starting point for this is the following: if thought unfolds from matter, what difference does it make that so much of the matter already comes 'designed' in a very particular way? And where does this organised matter resist the purpose assigned it?

III.

> The windows showed erratically spots of burning fire, the elbow of one branch, and then some tranquil space of pure clarity. The blind hung red at the window's edge and within the room daggers of light fell upon chairs and tables making cracks across their lacquer and polish. The green pot bulged enormously, with its white window elongated in its side. Light driving darkness before it split itself profusely upon the corners and bosses; and yet heaped up darkness in mounds of unmoulded shape.
>
> Woolf 1994: 131

Simone Brott writes in *Architecture for a Free Subjectivity: Deleuze and Guattari at the Horizon of the Real* of the subject/object problem of architecture, and proposes that architecture should be approached through the concept of 'impersonal effects':

> What I call the impersonal effects, are the inchoate, not-yet-determined fragments of architectural encounter, as opposed to the personal effects of identity, individuality or the constituted collective. Effect is not, in Deleuze's sense, ephemeral – an effect *of* something more primary; but rather, like a 'magnetic effect,' it is a productive force, an effect that works and creates. By extension, the project here is to find and express, by architectural means, the image of effects. (Brott 2011: 1)

The architectural encounter on which the conception of impersonal effects relies

> does not signal an in-between, a space between persons and concrete forms, as troubled for decades by architectural criticism [...] Rather, it is an event that comes before the crystallization of all things, it is the abstract surface of all singularities coming into being. (Brott 2011: 2)

This is a redefinition of what has, in architectural theory, been the question of experience, as considered in architecture throughout the

twentieth century from the side of function, use, programme, or indeed the architectural event.[1]

> As such, there hovers a cloud of architectural effects which constitute what might be called the architectural *real*, or that from which every particular series is crystallized. Walls, objects, and other components clustering around us are teeming with loose effects, and what emerges is an ongoing accumulation of a particular selection, or arrangement. Architectural effects are 'mobile,' displaced as a 'nomadic distribution' within an indeterminate pool of possible experiences. Every encounter is born via a complex selection procedure which renders it unique for each person, even if it replicates an authorized reading, reiterating the same effects for anyone, anytime. If 'I' have a subjectivity, it is a general and anonymous power to attract perceptual arrangements, to envelop a series of aesthetic, social and other effects, like anyone else. But it is also the phenomenon of having been selected, of an unconscious leaning for this set of effects. (Brott 2011: 43)

These architectural encounters should ultimately be understood in the light of the role of perception in Deleuze's project. As Brott writes, '[i]t is precisely the early theory of perception that clarifies the sense in which the personological subject is derivative for Deleuze. In his early conceptual apparatus, perceptions are conceived of as unique material powers that come before the subject' (Brott 2011: 38). This is the result of the fact that 'perceptions in Deleuze's thinking operate at the level of presence' (39). Differently put, 'perceptions and impressions do not represent something more real or original "outside" themselves, but are continuous with matter' (39).

Such a strong stress on experience and perception will ultimately reorient the understanding of architecture when it comes to locating 'creation' in it and, as a consequence, this will reorient the role of 'design'.

IV.

> The red curtains and the white blinds blew in and out, flapping against the edge of the window, and the light which entered by flaps and breadths unequally had in it some brown tinge, and some abandonment as it blew through the blowing curtains in gusts. Here it browned a cabinet, there reddened a chair, here it made the window waver in the side of the green jar. All for a moment wavered and bent in uncertainty and ambiguity, as if a great moth sailing through the room had shadowed the immense solidity of chairs and tables with floating wings.
>
> Woolf 1994: 144–5

It is at this point that I would like to take a slightly different route, and with a slightly different aim in mind, from Brott's. While the discussion regarding subjectivity in architecture is one of great importance – if nothing else because of the long history of the subject/object dichotomy plaguing architectural discourse – what Deleuze's philosophy helps think is the very relationship between architecture and the 'emergence' of thought. Rather than ask how the subject is constructed through the architectural encounter, I would like to question the importance of the emergence of thought within what Brott has outlined, since this will be the key not only to understanding the 'use' of Deleuze's philosophy in architecture but also in helping architecture address a philosophy in which immanence is assigned such a central role.

The potential problem with the way architecture is defined in *What Is Philosophy?* – as the formation of blocs of sensation through acts of framing – is that the definition implicitly still considers architecture from the side of its 'obvious' creation, namely design, even if the side of experience is clearly implicated. If we consider the 'worldly' event of thought through the conceptual vocabulary of the kind that Brott offers (that is, the architectural encounter as brought forward through impersonal effects), it becomes clear that architecture remains a fairly unaccounted instance of the 'world', which we keep encountering, increasingly so if we consider that as of 2007 it is estimated that there are more inhabitants living in urban environments than anywhere else on the planet.

Architecture-as-world, understood to give rise to thought in its own way, would in turn help rethink architectural creation, that is, its obvious *praxis*, precisely from the side of thought's emergence from that which is present in and as the world, that is, immanently. So what does it mean to 'think' in Deleuze's philosophy?

V.

> The evening sun, whose heat had gone out of it and whose burning spot of intensity had been diffused, made chairs and tables mellower and inlaid them with lozenges of brown and yellow. Lined with shadows their weight seemed more ponderous, as if colour, tilted, had run to one side. Here lay knife, fork and glass, but lengthened, swollen, and made portentous. Rimmed in a gold circle the looking-glass held the scene immobile as if everlasting in its eye.
>
> Woolf 1994: 164–5

In *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze writes in relation to Plato's *The Republic* that the text

> distinguishes two kinds of things: those which do not disturb thought and (as Plato will later say) those which *force* us to think. The first are objects of recognition: [. . .] this is a finger, this is a table, Good morning Theaetetus. (Deleuze 1994: 138)

The inclusion of a piece of furniture is a telling proclamation regarding architecture and its potential, or lack thereof, to provoke thought.

Deleuze writes that:

> concepts only ever designate possibilities. They lack the claws of absolute necessity – in other words, of an original violence inflicted upon thought; the claws of a strangeness or an enmity which alone would awaken thought from its original stupor or eternal possibility: there is only involuntary thought, aroused but constrained within thought, and all the more absolutely necessary for being born, illegitimately, of fortuitousness of the world. (Deleuze 1994: 139)

It is hard not to see in this description of the violence necessary for the emergence of thought, as opposed to recognition, an echo of Brott's description of the architectural encounter:

> There is, in the architectural encounter, an unmistakable *agencement* that pre-exists all personal agents navigating space; the most apt translation of this Deleuzian term might be 'arrangement.' In this capacity, it is an anonymous architecture as pure indifference that seizes us, and not the reverse, a subjectivizing agency prior to the constitution of any building or subject. The selection of effects is accomplished by a certain savagery that transcends personal choice or personality. (Brott 2011: 43)

While the 'savagery' spoken of here relates to the way the arrangement of effects rearranges the seemingly immutable unities of architecture as well as those of the subject, it is nevertheless indicative of what needs to be regarded carefully if the approach to the relation of architecture and thought is to be investigated from the other end – the violence of the encounter that gives rise to thought itself.

Deleuze writes:

> Something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but of a fundamental *encounter*. What is encountered may be Socrates, or a temple [!] or a demon. It may be grasped in a range of affective tones: wonder, love, hatred, suffering. In whichever tone, its primary characteristic is that it can only be sensed. In this sense, it is opposed to recognition. In recognition, the sensible is not at all that which can only be

> sensed, but that which bears directly upon the senses in an object which can be recalled, imagined and conceived. The sensible is referred to an object which may not only be experienced other than by sense, but may itself be attained by other faculties. It therefore presupposes the exercise of the senses and the exercise of the other faculties in a common sense. The object of encounter, on the other hand, really gives rise to sensibility with regard to a given sense. (Deleuze 1994: 139)

This proposition is yet to be properly confronted with the question of architecture and its position in the 'world', with all its immanent relations to thought. Differently put: if architecture is to be understood as an instance of the world and therefore via the sensible as constant potential 'food for thought', what are the conditions under which simple recognition is replaced by thought as creation? The built environment is 'teeming with loose effects' (Brott 2011: 43) and they have the power to trigger thought – and not just to lead to recognition as in 'this is a table'.

VI.

> All the colours in the room had overflown their banks. The precise brush stroke was swollen and lop-sided; cupboards and chairs melted their brown masses into one huge obscurity. The height from floor to ceiling was hung with vast curtains of shaking darkness. The looking-glass was pale as the mouth of a cave shadowed by hanging creepers.
>
> Woolf 1994: 186

It is from the direction of Brian Massumi's tangential engagements with architecture and his expansion of the Deleuzian frame through the utilisation of A. N. Whitehead and William James (as well as Massumi's collaborative work with Erin Manning) that this question is likely to be addressed with more specificity. In *Semblance and Event: Activist Philosophy and the Occurrent Arts* Massumi writes (in the context of process philosophy and its 'activist' incarnation) that his concern is with 'the question of how the makeup of an occasion of experience effectively and constructively includes its own beyond' (Massumi 2011: 14). This he approaches 'through the concept of *techniques of existence*', whereby a technique of existence is 'a technique that takes as its "object" process itself, as the speculative-pragmatic production of oriented events of change' (14).

In order to question what these techniques of existence 'do pragmatically-speculatively', Massumi uses the concept of the diagram, as adopted from Deleuze and Peirce. According to this, techniques of existence 'abstract'; and to

> abstract in this fuller sense is a technique of extracting the relational-qualitative arc of one occasion of experience – its subjective form – and systematically depositing it in the world for the next occasion to find, and to potentially take up into its own formation. (Massumi 2011: 14–15)

As a 'technique of existence' the diagram is therefore 'a way of informing the next occasion of these potentials for self-formation' (Massumi 2011: 15). It is important to note, however – as this will be crucial for the discussion on where to 'look' for creation in architecture before the rather obvious stage of 'design' commences – that 'all of this concerns experience. In experience is to be found the *genesis of things*' (15).

The concept of the diagram has, by now, an established place in architectural theory: it was to be found in the special issue of *ANY: Diagram Work* (No. 23, 1998) (where a version of one of the chapters in Massumi's book first appeared); it was key to Peter Eisenman's *Diagram Diaries* in 1999, and in the more recent AD Reader *The Diagrams of Architecture* (2010) edited by Mark Garcia, to name but the more visible sources. Largely, though, the diagrams spoken of in architecture are still thought in relation to the acts of design and the 'representational' paradigms they involve (drawing, modelling), and do not necessarily focus on the question of experience first and foremost – even when experience is implied.

> The diagram, as explained above, is a word that activist philosophy uses to name a speculative-pragmatic procedure for navigating the complexity of experience's passing, taking special aim on the 'critical' moments. These are the junctures where one moment of experience's passing passes into another, informing it of (in-forming it with) the potential to become again: techniques of existence. (Massumi 2011: 25)

How does architecture relate to these 'critical moments' that mark the passing of experience and allow for an understanding of techniques of existence that are finely attuned to architecture's (omni)presence? Part of the answer lies in the stress on the experiential side of architecture, where the 'genesis of things' is to be found. As is the case with Brott's approach, Massumi's careful 'unfolding' of the question of experience indicates that only an understanding of thought as finely attuned to the milieus in which it arises will offer a sufficiently nuanced understanding of our material environment. Without shifting the emphasis towards experience, and its role in the emergence of thought, architecture will remain locked in the realm of recognition ('this is a table').

VII.

> As if there were waves of darkness in the air, darkness moved on, covering houses, hills, trees, as waves of water washed down streets, eddying round single figures, engulfing them; blotting out couples clasped under the showery darkness of elm trees in full summer foliage. Darkness rolled its waves along grassy rides and over the wrinkled skin of the turf, enveloping the solitary thorn tree and the empty snail-shells at its foot. Mounting higher, darkness blew along the bare upland slopes, and met the fretted and abraded pinnacles of the mountain where the snow lodges for ever on the hard rock even when the valleys are full of running streams and yellow vine leaves, and girls, sitting on verandahs, look up at the snow, shading their faces with their fans. Them, too, darkness covered.
>
> Woolf 1994: 187

Further elaborating on experience via the concept of the diagram, Massumi writes that the diagram brings about the 'final' question, that of 'experience in nonhuman forms of life, and in nonliving matter itself' (Massumi 2011: 25). The world is made of expression, he writes, which means that it is made of experience; as a result, perception can be said to be everywhere in the world. He writes:

> the question of the nonhuman revolves around the question of nonhuman perception. In what way can we say that what we have the tendency to separate out as 'dumb matter' in fact perceives and is therefore, by the precepts of activist philosophy, experientially self-creative? (Massumi 2011: 25)

And even more pointedly when it comes to the question of the missing architecture:

> even outside any encounter with human perception, the electron, the mountains, the tree involve perceptions. They *are* perceptions in themselves: they *are* how they take account, in their own self-formative activity, of the world of activity always and already going on around. (Massumi 2011: 26)

How is this not to be said of architecture? And how do we account for the fact that architecture is matter already organised, by the human, in a very particular way?

> Whenever we see, whenever we perceptually feel, whenever we live abstraction, we are taking in nonhuman occasions of experience. We are inheriting their activity, taking it into our own special activity as a *human* form of life: as a society of occasions of experience contributing to a continuing growth pattern it pleases us to call our human self. (Massumi 2011: 26)

As Simone Brott writes, the constant process of subjectivisation is inevitably influenced by architectural encounters and our experience perpetually coloured by the impersonal effects of architecture. To deny its presence – to pretend that all architecture can ever be is *recognised* – is simply an oversight, an error.

For Massumi though, the important stress will fall on the side of the (human) body. He writes that '[l]ike all animal forms of life, the human has a technique of existence whose role is to selectively channel the nonhuman activity always going on all around into its own special activity' and this technique 'is the body itself' (Massumi 2011: 26–7). He also writes that:

> The senses are procedures of the body as technique of existence. The body is the seat of bare activity: the region of indistinction between the human and matter where something doing is always already just stirring, before it starts to take definitive experiential form. (Massumi 2011: 26–7)

This is then the key place from which to go back to art (and the imperative to probe its insertion into life) and consider Deleuze and Guattari's proposition that architecture is the first of the arts. It is not with flesh that art begins, but with architecture, they write (1994: 186); this should not be discounted, as it establishes a very clear imperative to regard experience – and all of perception, human or other – as already in the 'region of indistinction' between *architecture as matter* and the human.

That is why I would suggest that the link to ecology that Massumi is keen to make towards the end of his introduction to the book should be taken with a crucial caveat in mind: body and nature as always already *of, in and through* architecture. 'The one-word summary of its relational-qualitative goings on: *ecology*', he writes. 'Activist philosophy concerns the ecology of powers of existence. Becoming in the midst. Creative change taking place, self-enjoying, humanly or no, humanly and more' (Massumi 2011: 28). Note the 'more' that goes by the name of architecture.

Coda: Belgrade to London, Pivot 1999

> The waves broke on the shore.
>
> Woolf 1994: 234

During the day, this flat in London is filled with light, whatever the weather outside; the walls are white and the rooms appear as cubes. But they never are; they are never perfect, never ideal forms, however

simply you dress them. If you look more closely, the walls are not straight; the ceiling is covered with cracks and there are incredibly small fissures spreading out from the top corners of the windows made of aluminium and plastic, like something tectonic. You need to observe, spend time. The more closely you (proprioceptively) look, the more becomes revealed of this environment that accompanies every word you read.

The table is made of oak, composed of two pieces. If you feel under its surface you will find a latch that releases the mechanism: the table can be transformed, extended. It indicates the possibility of more bodies around it than might be initially conceived. But this is what you already recognise; it is the question of use. Right now there is only one body seated, and the line, the controlled crack in the surface, is undisturbed, closed; just a narrow slit to the right of your hand as you hold the book you are reading, as you type the words that emerge. Only the smallest grains of grit find their way inside. You leave them where they are but remain aware of their presence. You don't have to watch them to know that they are there.

There is no bed in this room; the beds are upstairs. The ceiling creaks even when no one is on the level above. The sounds from the street below are different at night, or when it rains. And underneath this flat there is another, and all the other rooms you have never been in, none of them the same.

You are reading (I was reading in Belgrade) and something jolts your thought (my thought within the images Virginia created) and you cannot separate it from the violence of the seemingly controlled crack in the surface of the table (the gleam on the edge of my table in Belgrade) that has lodged itself at the periphery of your vision, almost present, never perfectly graspable, somewhere behind your eyes.

Note

1. On the transformation of the concept of 'function' in architecture see Forty 2000.

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Deleuze and Beckett: An Immanent Encounter

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Abstract

Understanding the exact nature of Deleuze's debt to Kant forms a large part of contemporary Deleuzian scholarship, a project made all the more urgent since the publication of Meillassoux's critique of correlationism in 2007. These Kantian readings present Deleuze as someone who continues Kant's transcendental project by reconsidering the nature of 'immanent critique'. Immanent critique is no longer seen here as part of the critical enquiry into the possible conditions of experience, but as a staging of an encounter with the genetic principle constituting these conditions, the real condition common to both the human subject and the world in which he or she lives. Such is the implicit demand of genetic recasting: that critique in its immanent form is something we can experience and learn. Presented with this demand, this essay addresses the problem of staging this immanent form of critique. It looks to Deleuze's essay on the work of Samuel Beckett, 'The Exhausted', to suggest a possible site for such an encounter with constitutive principle. Specifically, in Deleuze's discussion of … *but the clouds* … it finds a theory of the image, which can be understood in genetic terms, as a theory of the virtual. Thus the essay puts forward the thesis that Beckett, in constructing the image through the exhaustive process, recreates the virtual plane, in its openness and flux.

Keywords: Beckett, Kant, exhaustion, the virtual, the image

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I. Immanence

The starting point for this essay lies with a claim made by Christian Kerslake in his 2009 study on immanence, *Immanence and the Vertigo of Philosophy: From Kant to Deleuze*. When negotiating between Deleuze, Spinoza and Hegel, he suggests that imagination, in its transcendental form, is something we can encounter, empirically speaking, in the here and now. More so, he argues that for Deleuze, immanent critique consists precisely of such an encounter. He writes:

> It is the transcendental imagination, which is ultimately constitutive for human experience, and unless we learn the 'hidden art' of the imagination to which Kant alluded in his remarks on the Schematism, the human being is destined to remain enclosed in the *constituted* frameworks of its finitude. (Kerslake 2009: 20)

In Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, the transcendental imagination is capable of a 'hidden' or, according to Pluhar's translation 'secret', art (Kant 1996: 213). It is able to mediate between the pure categories of understanding (as derived from Aristotelian logical judgements) and the pure forms of intuition (space and time) by producing 'schemas' of sensible concepts, rules according to which our intuitions are determined by concepts. Though, as one of the conditions of possible experience, transcendental imagination is essential for cognition, it itself cannot be known, as in, it is not something we can 'divine from nature' and 'lay bare before ourselves' (213). Yet Kerslake seems to suggest that this 'hidden art' – this spontaneous productive capacity for schema – might be something we can 'learn'. Indeed, if we do not acquire this kind of talent, we are not performing Kant's critical project correctly.

To understand more of the nature of Kerslake's claim, we must further consider the context in which it is written. Despite Deleuze's anti-Kantian position being well known, Kerslake's account belongs to a strand in contemporary Deleuzian scholarship which seeks to unfold the exact nature of Deleuze's debt to Kant, a task all the more urgent since the publication of Quentin Meillassoux's critique of correlationism in 2007.[1] Kerslake together with Daniel Smith (1996), Joe Hughes (2008, 2009) Levi Bryant (2008, 2009) and Edward Willatt (2009) sees Deleuze as inheriting Kant's critical project, to the extent that, like Kant, Deleuze wishes to perform 'a critique of values upon which critique is founded' (Bryant 2009: 32–3). However, for Deleuze, these founding values are not the kind described in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, comprising the a priori forms of intuition, categories of the understanding and ideas

of reason. Instead, he finds an alternative set of principles elsewhere, with an altogether different character. Hughes repeatedly quotes from Deleuze's 'The Idea of Genesis in Kant's Esthetics' (Hughes 2008: 17–18; 2009: 4):

> The first two Critiques indeed invoke facts, seek out the conditions from these facts and find them in ready-made faculties. It follows that the first two critiques point to a genesis, which they are incapable of securing on their own. But in the aesthetic *Critique of Judgement* Kant poses the problem of the genesis of the faculties in their original free agreement. Thus he discovers a ground still lacking in the first two critiques. (Deleuze 2004a: 61)

The reference now is to the way in which Kant describes transcendental imagination in the early chapters of the third critique, the second moment of the judgement of taste. Here the pleasure of beauty is different from the pleasure associated with the agreeable as it derives from 'a state of mind' in which the faculties of imagination and understanding are in 'free play' (Kant 1987: 217–19). In *Desert Islands* (Deleuze 2004a: 63–4), but also in *Difference and Repetition* (Deleuze 2004b: 180, 183, 210) and other work on Kant (Deleuze 2008: 42–5), Deleuze emphasises how this free play of the faculties produces a 'quickening' or 'furthering' of powers. When free, imagination is that which 'arouses' understanding, and understanding in turn is that which 'puts' imagination into 'play' (Kant 1987: 296). Such arousal is even more apparent in Kant's discussion of the sublime, in which imagination's confrontation with its limit is directly responsible for the 'outpouring' feeling of the suprasensible power of reason (Kant 1987: 226). Hughes, but also Kerslake, shows how Deleuze rewrites this kind of productive confrontation as genetic principle, not simply responsible for arousing feelings of the suprasensible, but responsible for the very constitution of our subjectivity, with all its associated faculties.[2]

Setting Kerslake's argument into the above context, we begin to understand why he might consider transcendental imagination to be constitutive for human experience. He subscribes to the view of Deleuze as a post-Kantian thinker, someone who responds to the demand for the 'unconditioned self-grounding principle that must lie at the basis of knowledge' (Kerslake 2009: 18). This he finds in Kant's concept of the transcendental imagination, providing imagination is not reduced here to its function in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, as the mere schematic 'transcendent application of its synthesis', but is seen at its most productive, whether in Heidegger's existential ontology of constitutive finitude or in the post-Romantics' philosophy of the imagination.

For Kerslake, imagination in this constitutive sense takes over the role usually granted to the Spinozian model of immanence, in which the world is seen to be the 'expression of God' and God's 'divine infinity' is that in which the entire world participates (Deleuze 1992a: 176; Kerslake 2009: 34–6). We can also see why, if Kant's critical project is to be continued correctly, it must uncover this kind of self-grounding principle. Without learning more about the nature of transcendental imagination's 'hidden art', Kant's critical enquiry remains incomplete and we are destined to remain with the 'simple conditioning' of fact in 'ready-made faculties', rather than sure to discover the genetic ground of these faculties (Deleuze 2004b: 192). However, this kind of recasting of Kant's transcendental project still leaves the question of immanent critique unanswered. What we cannot understand is how – how is such a principle to be uncovered? How is this hidden art of the imagination to be uncovered, encountered and learnt?

This is the point at which my essay begins. I would like to suggest that Deleuze does indeed stage his immanent critique as an encounter with an unconditioned principle – in Kerslake's terms, an encounter with a productive sense of Kant's transcendental imagination – and he does so most profoundly in his late essay on the work of Samuel Beckett. I would like to propose 'The Exhausted' as a site for this kind of immanent critique (Deleuze 1998).

II. 'The Exhausted'

At first glance, Deleuze's essay might not seem the best site for such an encounter. 'The Exhausted' makes no direct reference to the concept of immanence and only broaches the question of the genetic principle indirectly, through the concept of 'birth'. We learn, for instance, that to be exhausted is to be exhausted 'before birth' (Deleuze 1998: 152). Similarly, Deleuze describes the one who is exhausted – seated in darkness, 'head sunk in crippled hands' – as an original witness, present 'before being born' (155–6). However, the essay does not expand on these few comments and these comments taken by themselves should not be seen as evidence of immanent critique, though they remain quietly suggestive. Primarily, the essay is meant to serve as a postscript to the first French translation of Deleuze's television plays and as such, represents Deleuze's first serious discussion of these works. Although Deleuze had referred to Beckett prior to the publication of 'The Exhausted' – notably in *Difference and Repetition* (Deleuze 2004b: 100) and in *Cinema I* (Deleuze 2005: 68–70) – it is only here and in the essay

'The Greatest Irish Film (Beckett's "Film")' (1998) that he examines the work in depth.

Yet to see the essay as a piece of art criticism providing a necessary introduction to *Quad*, *Ghost Trio*, *... but the clouds ...* or *Nacht und Träume* is equally problematic. For one, we learn very little about the context of these works – nothing about where and when they were first staged, nothing of their actual staging, their complicated scripts and exacting camera work, nothing of their historical or critical backgrounds and nothing of their critical significance. Indeed, we learn very little about them at all, except how they might pursue the concept of exhaustion. In this sense Deleuze's essay is closest to how Levi Bryant describes Deleuze's engagement with artwork in terms of a 'new theory of aesthetics' (Bryant 2009: 33). According to Bryant, Deleuze looks to different artists (as well as novels and, of course, film) in order to show how these might be seen as 'producing' or 'individuating' different forms of sensibility (33). Taking his cue from Deleuze's work in *What Is Philosophy?*, Bryant writes: 'The aim is not to represent these artists or determine what they meant, but to analyse the percepts they invented, and uncover the capacities for affecting and being affected they have brought into the world' (33). Bryant's interpretation would be convincing were it not for the fact that 'The Exhausted' does not uncover any such percepts or affects. It does not develop a theory of aesthetics any more than a theory of art, and makes no reference to sensation, perception or experience of any kind. Instead, we are simply presented with a concept of exhaustion and then shown how this functions in Beckett's work generally and in the television plays specifically.

Thus the essay follows a very rigid structure and can be easily divided into three parts. In the first third, Deleuze identifies his central concept of exhaustion through contrast and comparison with the concept of realisation. He then shows how Beckett enacts this concept of exhaustion through the particular way he uses language in his novels, plays, and radio and television pieces. In this second third of his argument, Deleuze attributes to Beckett a kind of meta-approach, a manipulation of the possibilities inherent in language. Finally, in the last third, he outlines the role of exhaustion in each of the television plays individually. Only in this sense can we see 'The Exhausted' as staging a kind of immanent enquiry, in that it provides an analysis of the principle of exhaustion first put forward or 'contributed' by Beckett (Deleuze 1998: 154).

What then is exhaustion, this principle to which most of Beckett's work is seen to adhere? For Deleuze, exhaustion is one way in which we can approach the possible. Whereas in our everyday activity we tend

to realise the possible by pursuing certain 'goals, aims and plans', in exhaustion these are renounced and all of possibility is affirmed (Deleuze 1998: 152). Deleuze also stipulates that only a truly exhausted person can perform this kind of logical exhaustion, as only someone truly exhausted can renounce all aims and plans. Thus logical exhaustiveness and physiological fatigue are closely linked (154–5).

We can see how this principle might be relevant to Beckett's work, if we think of Beckett as performing this kind of double exhaustion through his use of language. Once again, the same kind of distinction applies: whereas under normal circumstances we use language to name the various projects we wish to realise, Beckett renounces such familiar grammatical and syntactical structures precisely in order to affirm all possible permutations. This kind of meta-construction Deleuze calls language one, and he associates it most closely with the earlier novels and theatre pieces. And just as logical exhaustiveness is dependent on the person's physiological fatigue, so it is that we cannot consider the exhaustion of words without the accompanying exhaustion of the voices that utter them, including, necessarily and problematically, the writer's own. This kind of self-silencing Deleuze calls language two, and he sees it as a feature of Beckett's work from *The Unnamable* onwards.

More directly, we can also see how this same exhaustive principle might apply to *Quad*, *Ghost Trio*, *... but the clouds ...* or *Nacht und Träume*, though in a somewhat different shape and form. All of these later works pursue what Deleuze describes as the third language of exhaustion, the exhaustive language of spaces and images. It is as if we had reached a point at which the previous exhaustions of languages one and two opened up a space for the extra-linguistic, which can only now be adequately explored. In all cases, we are presented with either a space (*Quad*, *Ghost Trio* and *... but the clouds ...*) or an image (*... but the clouds ...* and *Nacht und Träume*) that is indeterminate in nature – that is not one realised possibility, but seems to affirm them all. So, for instance, in *Ghost Trio* the protagonist does not sit in a particular room but in a grey rectangular space. When the camera zooms in, in order to present the bed, the window or the door, they all appear as the same grey rectangle. Similarly, the face of the woman who appears to the protagonist of *... but the clouds ...* is not the face of any particular female character but a blurred close-up. Furthermore, Beckett often seems to accentuate this 'any-space-whatever' and 'indefinite' image: in *Quad* the four actors get to traverse all sides and diagonals of the square; in *Ghost Trio* the protagonist opens the door, opens the window and looks under the bed in successive order; and in *... but the clouds ...*

he lists all possible ways in which the woman had previously appeared to him. And it must also be added, that like with the exhaustions of languages one and two, this kind of more logical side of exhaustion is accompanied by physiological fatigue. In … *but the clouds* … and in *Nacht und Träume* we actually see the silent protagonist, sitting in the dark, head down on 'crippled hands' (Deleuze 1998: 155).

III. Immanent Readings

But what then of the concept of immanence, with which I introduced this essay? How is this concept relevant to 'The Exhausted', when all that seems to be discussed is the question of exhaustion and the way in which this concept is played out in literature, theatre and television plays? Where can we find the transcendental concept of imagination, and with it, the staging of an immanent critique, in which the nature of this transcendental imagination is learnt?

First of all, it must be said that in 'The Exhausted' Deleuze's debt to Spinoza is very much apparent. When Deleuze first distinguishes between the exhaustion and the realisation of the possible, he makes the following remark on the exhausted person and his state of exhaustion: "'That the impossible should be asked of me, good, what else could be asked of me." There is no longer any possible: a relentless Spinozism' (Deleuze 1998: 152) From this we learn that the point at which we can no longer come up with further possibilities is the point of 'Spinozism'. Whatever exhaustion may or may not be, it remains Spinozian in character. But to begin reading 'The Exhausted' in such a way is somewhat problematic, because it involves us taking into account a reversal of terms.

To understand more of this reversal, we need to return to Kerslake and the problem of immanent critique. Other than unfolding the exact nature of Deleuze's debt to Kant, Kerslake is very good at showing how for Deleuze, Spinoza's ontology foreshadows post-Kantian attempts to ground philosophy in genesis. According to Kerslake, Deleuze finds an equivalent to the kind of unconditioned self-grounding principle demanded by the post-Kantians, in Spinoza's idea of expression. Because Spinoza's God is that which 'expresses itself in the world' and the world in turn is the 'expression' of this God, we can construe the expressive nature of this divine being as a prototypical immanent principle (Deleuze 1992a: 176).

Providing we keep to Kerslake's post-Kantian discussion of immanence, the terms here are of the 'real' rather than the 'possible'. The question is not of those conditions – what Deleuze identifies as

the Kantian ready-made faculties of intuition, understanding and reason – which allow for the possibility of experience. These he dismisses as mere conditioning (Deleuze 2004b: 192, 201, 216). Rather, Deleuze always aims to uncover the genetic ground of the world shaped by these faculties, the 'real' ground that underlies our already constituted experience. Kerslake (2009: 18, 83) but also to an extent Hughes (2008: 17–18; 2009: 3–4) and Smith (1996: 29) point to the well-known passage from *Difference and Repetition*: 'In fact, the condition must be a condition of real experience and not possible experience. It forms an intrinsic genesis, not an extrinsic conditioning' (Deleuze 2004b: 192). It might therefore seem strange that Deleuze alludes to Spinoza when identifying exhaustion with the exhaustion of possibility. 'The Exhausted' clearly states that relentless Spinozism is the 'impossible' moment at which the exhausted person exhausts the possibility as a whole. However, as Asja Szafraniec points out in her study of Beckett, Deleuze's late essay calls for a reversal of these two terms (Szafraniec 2007: 120–1). The 'possible' here is not the same as the Kantian 'possible', that Kantian world experienced under the conditions of the transcendental subject. In fact, it is closer to the original self-grounding principle associated with Spinoza, demanded by the post-Kantians and described by Kerslake. Or as Deleuze writes, 'God is the originary, the sum total of possibility. The possible is realised only in the derivative, in tiredness, whereas one is exhausted before birth, before realising oneself, or realising anything whatsoever (I gave up before birth)' (Deleuze 1998: 152). We have encountered this concept of birth before, when first introducing 'The Exhausted'. I have described it as quietly suggestive. We can now see how it might signify a great deal more, dealing with that originary state which lies at the heart of any philosophical model seeking a genetic approach to the problem of immanence.

Following on from this reversal of terms, we can also see how immanent critique might be staged as an encounter with this originary state. To pursue a course of relentless Spinozism – both logical and physiological exhaustion – to the point at which there is no further possibility, is to assume a state that in the Spinozian model is God's only. This, in a sense, is what Beckett achieves in his work, a certain God-like presence. According to Szafraniec, just as Spinoza's God exhausts himself to become everything he understands, the writer exhausts himself in the process of writing, 'to be a flux, which combines with all other fluxes' (Szafraniec 2007: 120). Anthony Uhlmann argues something very similar in his 1999 study, although in this case, God does not represent 'Absolutely everything' but negatively, 'Absolutely nothing' (Uhlmann

1999: 14). Taking into account the three levels of Spinoza's ontology, he suggests that Beckett's exhaustion is the exhaustion of modes or individuated things, both in the attribute of extension and the attribute of thought. It is this exhaustion of modes that requires the merging with the plane of immanence, the univocity of Being or Spinoza's substance or God.

However, it must also be said that to read 'The Exhausted' in this Spinozian fashion is to follow a strand in Deleuzian scholarship which tends to neglects its more Kantian aspects. Here I would like to turn to Audrey Wasser's recent essay on 'The Exhausted', 'A Relentless Spinozism: Deleuze's Encounter with Beckett' (2012). Like Szafraniec, Uhlmann and others, Wasser begins by pointing out the Spinozian element of 'The Exhausted'. However, unlike other commentators, she emphasises the carnal or passional nature of Spinoza's thought in the ontology of 'sense' rather than 'essence' or 'substance'.[3] For Wasser, it is not Spinozian God that is key to understanding Deleuze's essay, but rather Spinoza's definition of affect as indicating a bodily change of state. Specifically, she is interested in how such a definition of affect impacts our understanding of thought, as also capable of being affected.

In her interpretation of Deleuzian transcendental empiricism, thought changes with every 'sensible encounter'. She uses the term 'encounter' in a post-Kantian fashion, to describe thought's confrontation with a sensible limit, familiar from the discussion of the sublime, especially of the generative role it plays in Deleuze's recasting of Kant's transcendental project. For Wasser, every time something is sensed, thought is forced to think, precisely because it is confronted with something exterior and independent of it. Such a 'midpoint' of thought is useful when considering the double concept of exhaustion, because the point of exhaustion – the point at which we no longer have any further possibility at our disposal – might also be construed as a confrontation with a limit. More so, it is a confrontation with a limit that has a bodily aspect. Just as in *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze might be seen as holding the respective 'fatiguing' of the faculties responsible for the transmission of shock to the final faculty of thought, in 'The Exhausted' physiological exhaustion is very much part and parcel of the exhaustive process.[4] As Deleuze emphasises, it is only when we are 'sufficiently disinterested' to pursue our goals, aims and plans that we can arrive at the point of exhaustion (Deleuze 1998: 154). Thus for Wasser, Beckett's is not so much a 'relentless' but a 'relenting' Spinozism, which in orienting Spinoza towards the corporeal, serves to make this most abstract of universes a little more concrete (Wasser 2012: 128–9).

This allows us to make the tentative conclusion that the constitutive principle invoked in 'The Exhausted' might be construed as a kind of productive confrontation with a limit, familiar from Kantian discussions of the sublime but also clearly at work in the exhaustive process. In this sense, we can understand his as an immanent critique in the Kantian tradition as 'the critique of the values upon which critique is founded', in that this confrontation with limit is central to thought. Beckett, by engaging with the exhaustive process, presents such a principle directly. *Quad*, which Wasser discusses in detail, would be one such instance of an immanent critique. *Quad* illustrates the constructive function of the exhaustive process, its players tiring at the four corners but exhausting the space in the middle (Wasser 2012: 129–30).

Yet in light of the recent research carried out by Smith, Hughes, Bryant and others, Wasser's interpretation is also incomplete. To further expand on how this might be the case requires a far more detailed account of the genetic line that begins with sensibility and the material impression, and proceeds via the creation of faculties to thought, and ultimately representation. To do so, I would like to turn to Joe Hughes, whose work on this problem of genesis in a Kantian context is exemplary.

Both in *Deleuze and the Genesis of Representation* (2008) and in his introduction to *Difference and Repetition* (2009), Joe Hughes convincingly argues that the midpoint of Deleuzian epistemology lies not with the violence of the sensible encounter but with the creation of the virtual. This is not to say that he dismisses Wasser's kind of genetic account entirely. According to Hughes, in *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze does trace the principles of thought back to the initial violent meeting between the subject and the unrecognisable, fragmented object. Hughes would also agree that this shock results in the creation of thought appropriate to this wounding difference (and, of course, the entire series of faculties, sensibility, imagination and memory, each dealing with the violence in its own way). However, for Hughes, it is important that the process Wasser describes culminates in the establishment of a future and open state of 'determinability', more familiar to readers of *Difference and Repetition* as the 'virtual' realm of 'multiplicity' (Deleuze 2004b: 214–79).

From Hughes we learn that Deleuze's epistemology is always the story of two asymmetrical halves. In the first, we get to see how the virtual is established and the idea progressively determined. According to the terms of *Difference and Repetition*, this process involves larval subjects, repetitions and passive synthesis, and Wasser's account is useful insofar as it shows how the force of the encounter both constitutes

a series of 'passive selves' or 'larval subjects' and causes these genetic elements of unconscious subjecthood to be exceeded (Wasser 2012: 130–3). However, to complete this trajectory of thought, the idea must be brought back from its futuristic virtual horizon and actualised in the present. Otherwise, it is very clear how the violence of the sensible encounter might be seen to be disruptive of thought – indeed, responsible for its 'mutation' – but not how this violence might allow for determination. While this shift of midpoint might seem overly technical, it bears on the problem of unconditioned principle, in that it is the virtual and not the encounter, which ultimately determines our knowledge of the object.

Furthermore, such a shift of midpoint also has an impact on the ontological aspect of Deleuze's argument, especially as presented by Kerslake. Kerslake shows that Deleuze builds his concept of imagination on Spinozian ideas of God and his expression. Imagination in its productive form takes over the role previously granted to Spinoza's concept of God, as the one self-grounding principle. If there is a Spinozian aspect here, in Hughes's argument, it can also be found in this discussion of virtual midpoint. We can rewrite the path that begins with the encounter and leads via the idea back to determination, as the story of how Being is 'wrestled' from unindividuated beings so that it may be restored to them as individuated.[5] It takes place within the Nietzschean world of the will to power, in which the only difference is the difference in intensity. In such an intensive world, the point of determination occurs with the thought of the eternal return, this defined as the moment of awareness equal to the bodily experience of the world of intensity and violence.[6] While Hughes draws comparisons with Spinoza's idea of substance as 'that which is in itself and conceived through itself' (Hughes 2009: 64), we might see how the figure God also meets these criteria.

Does this, however, impact our understanding of 'The Exhausted'? Can we still see it as an immanent encounter, in the sense of Kantian immanent critique? If so, is it a pre-critical, metaphysical encounter with a Spinozian God? Or rather, do we come here face to face with the violence of the sensible encounter between body and material impression? And where, in these very different accounts, can we find a place for the virtual?

IV. The Virtual Image

Before answering, I would like to move away from these ontological interpretations to consider one aspect of 'The Exhausted' that these tend

to overlook. Wasser but also Bryden and Szafraniec all seem to ignore the fact that Deleuze's essay culminates with the theory of the image. As we have already seen, in the second part of his essay Deleuze shows how Beckett uses language to reach a state of exhaustion. Deleuze identifies the construction of three different successive meta-languages: the first consisting of the exhaustion of words, the second of voices, and the third of the extra-linguistic elements of space and image. Suggestively for our consideration of immanent critique, he describes the final state of exhaustion as 'the point of "Imagination Dead Imagine"' (Deleuze 1998: 158). When Beckett does manage to exhaust words so that it no longer is a question of 'a combinatorial imagination' imagining a whole of a series, and when Beckett does manage to exhaust voices, so that the 'imagination sullied by memory' is no longer pierced with 'unbearable memories, absurd stories or undesirable company', then he achieves this most difficult of points (158). At this 'immanent limit of language' appears the visual or aural image (158). It would seem, then, if we wish to learn more about Deleuze's concept of the transcendental imagination and how it may be encountered, we must examine the nature of this unsullied image more closely.

The problem, however, is that the nature of this visual or aural image is poorly understood. Many of the Spinozian accounts I have referred to tend to overlook the concept of the image in favour of the other extra-linguistic element mentioned in 'The Exhausted' and found in Beckett's work, namely, the concept of space. We have seen how Wasser, for example, focuses her discussion on *Quad*, in which Beckett's exhaustion of space is most apparent (Wasser 2012: 129–30). Mary Bryden also ends both of her essays on 'The Exhausted' with a discussion of this work (Bryden 1996: 90–1; 2002: 89–91). Other commentators simply shift our attention to other texts. Szafraniec (2007) draws on Deleuze's *Cinema* books while Uhlmann in his essay 'Image and Intuition in Beckett's Film' (2004) prefers a more Bergsonian approach. The situation is not helped by the fact that Deleuze himself is very vague at this stage of the argument. Or rather, the image presents itself as vague.

If we look briefly at Deleuze's treatment of the image in the second part of 'The Exhausted', we can see why the image might be accompanied by a sense of confusion. On the one hand, Deleuze presents the image as something 'singular', nothing more than 'a woman, a hand, a mouth, some eyes' (Deleuze 1998: 158). As the image is considered to be free of both words and voices, this kind of sense of singularity feels appropriate. On the other hand, Deleuze also describes the image as a

'process', something very much emphasised by Mary Bryden (Bryden 2002: 86). These women, hands, mouths and eyes that appear after the exhaustions of languages one and two are not 'objects' (though they might appear this way from 'the object's point of view') but 'a process' (Deleuze 1998: 159). However, Deleuze seems to be unclear as to what kind of a process the image is. At first, he describes the image as a 'ritornello', something that comes and goes, like the patch of sky in *First Love* (159). Once again we can see how such a definition of the image is appropriate to Beckett's work, evoking, for instance, the way in which the face of the woman appears and disappears in … *but the clouds* …. But then Deleuze also argues that the nature of the image is 'self-dissipating' (160). Thus the image is also known for its short-lasting, explosive character. It does not return but ends, quite suddenly, in an explosion that 'captures all the possible' (161).

If we consider this vague concept of the image in relation to the virtual, however, then many characteristics of the image become clear. Before engaging in such a comparison, let us first return to Hughes and his account of Deleuze's genetic alternative to Kantian epistemology. So far, I have shown how the genesis of thought can be traced back to an initial encounter between the body and material object. The shock of this initial encounter is then transmitted through the various faculties in an attempt at interpreting this violence, and here Wasser's account (2012) is useful to understand more of this process. However, despite acknowledging the virtual's constitutive role in the determination of the object, I have not yet described how this violence constitutes the virtual. In order to show the relation between the two – the image of 'The Exhausted' and the virtual of *Difference and Repetition* – we need to establish what happens after the moment at which all the attempts at interpreting the violence leading up to this breaking point are cast aside, together with all the passive selves and larval subjects.

In *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze describes this virtual platform in the following way:

> The system of the future by contrast must be called a divine game since there is no pre-existing rule, since the game bears already upon its own rules and since the child player can only win, all of chance being affirmed each time. (Deleuze 2004b: 142)

From this we learn that the virtual has two main characteristics. First of all, the system of the future has no pre-existing rule. A Kantian enquiry into conditions that allow for the possibility of experience will not discover in this Nietzschean world a priori forms

of intuition, categories of understanding or idea of reason. The genetic set of principles – what in *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze terms 'ideas' – must be constituted, each time anew.[7] However, these are nothing more than mere 'differentials', valueless in themselves and only acquiring a value when they enter a reciprocal relation with one another (Deleuze 2004b: 216–19).

Second, this system of the future has no subject, or at least, not the kind of subject familiar from Kantian philosophy. Instead, the subject of the future is appropriate to a system without pre-existing rules, a contingent or 'aleatory' point to the idea's valueless differential (Deleuze 2004b: 247–51). The point at which the child player affirms all of chance and throws the pair of dice is the aleatory point at which differential ideas are placed in a reciprocal relation with each other. While it might seem that this point takes on the role of Kantian apperception in that it lends thought the kind of unity comparable to the 'I think', we must remember that there is no unified consciousness in Deleuzian epistemology. Here within the system of a 'dissolved self', the 'I' is always 'fractured' (108–10).

Keeping these characteristics of the virtual in mind, let us return to Deleuze's theory of the image. The first characteristic of the image is its singularity. After the respective exhaustions of words and voices, Beckett leaves us with no more than 'a woman, a hand, a mouth' (Deleuze 1998: 158). These singularities might be understood as 'indefinite' because in becoming free of both voices and words, they retain nothing of the 'personal' of the imagination sullied by memory and nothing of the 'rational' of the combinatorial imagination sullied by reason (158). Interestingly enough for our comparison with the virtual, while these singularities can be described as indefinite (we do not know, for instance, what woman, whose face, what mouth is being referred to here), Deleuze also describes them as 'determinate' (160).

The indefinite/determinate state of image also helps us understand why Deleuze describes it as a 'process' and not an 'object'. It is important to remember here that at stake in Deleuze's essay is an exhaustive process taking place on two different levels. This process is not easy; it is exhaustive; it is draining. As Deleuze writes, to reach this point of the image is 'extremely' difficult and very few painters, musicians, writers have managed to achieve it (Deleuze 1998: 158–9). Once it is achieved, however, this state is almost impossible to maintain. The effort required to keep the image free from all associations is simply too great. This is why the image tends to appear and disappear and eventually, to explode in an act of self-dissipation.

Indeed, it is this image's act of self-dissipation which binds the third language of exhaustion most closely with the virtual sphere. As we have already learnt, the process of exhaustion takes place on two different levels. On the one hand, it consists of the logical exhaustiveness and we can see how its affirmation of chance echoes the description of the child player with its throw of dice found in *Difference and Repetition*. On the other hand, the affirmation of chance in logical exhaustiveness is dependent on the fatigue of the one who exhausts. As Deleuze argues, only someone who is 'sufficiently disinterested' can exhaust possibility in this way (Deleuze 1998:154). Therefore, we can see Beckett's constructions of languages one, two and three as his successive attempts at reaching that state of fatigue which would allow for logical exhaustiveness. While in the language one of words we might still encounter characters responsible for the construction of 'inclusive disjunctions', the silencing of voices of language two has a direct impact on subjectivity. Again, as we have already seen, the narrator's voice is one of the many voices necessarily included in the exhaustive process. In the language three of image, however, Beckett dispenses with the kind of agency associated with languages one and two. No one exhausts the image; the image exhausts itself.

V. … *but the clouds* …

Without making any claims at this early stage, it is worth noting a couple of points. The concept of the virtual and the concept of the image seem to share some important characteristics. For one, both can be understood as a 'principle' (though the exact nature of this principle is yet unclear). The state of exhaustion in which the image participates – more than that, achieves – is described by Deleuze as 'originary', as the sum of all possibility. Realisation of determinate goals is, in this case, only the 'derivative' (Deleuze 1998: 152). Likewise, the virtual is that which ultimately allows for the determination of the object. Both the virtual and the image are characterised as 'indeterminate', either as 'indefinite' or 'without pre-existing rule' (Deleuze 1998: 158; 2004b: 142). Both also achieve such an indeterminate state in a similar way, by dispensing with a certain kind of established subjective agency. The virtual subject is no more than an aleatory point – the exhausted person, 'disinterested' (Deleuze 1998: 154). We can, however, learn more.

The best example of this relation between the image and the virtual can be found in the third part of 'The Exhausted', in Deleuze's discussion of … *but the clouds* …, a short television play, first screened by the

BBC in 1976 as part of a longer programme dedicated to the work of Samuel Beckett. The play follows the central character's attempts at the recollection of a woman's face. We see how he shuffles across a centrally lit stage, east to west and west to east, changes his clothes off-screen and eventually ends up in the 'mental sanctum' in the north, where the image had previously been seen.[8] There, head in hands, he recalls how on other nights 'she' had appeared to him, to stay briefly, to linger and to mouth the words of *The Tower* by W. B. Yeats, 'but the clouds in the sky' (Beckett 1984: 261). As we hear the protagonist's account, the image of a woman's face 'invades' our screen (Deleuze 1998: 170).

As this kind of 'sentimental' examination of 'lost love' (Ackerley and Gontarski 2004: 77), it is not immediately apparent how … *but the clouds* … engages with the more theoretical questions of the virtual. However, it is worth noting that Deleuze introduces the play by suggesting that in this work, Beckett returns to the 'post-Cartesian' theories found in his earlier novel, *Murphy* (Deleuze 1998: 169). Specifically, he refers to chapter 6 of the novel, in which Beckett distinguishes between the various zones of Murphy's mind. From the 'riotous potpourri of many metaphysical systems' that this chapter evokes (Fletcher 1965: 54), we learn that within the hollow sphere of Murphy's mind the universe assumes three distinct forms. Beckett identifies the first form as the 'actual', the second as 'virtual' and the third as 'virtual rising to actual' or 'actual falling to virtual' (Beckett 2011: 107). Already here we gain an initial insight. There is a virtual at work in … *but the clouds* …, and this virtual belongs to its protagonist's earlier counterpart, Murphy. There is also a second point to be gained. Whereas Murphy has both mental and physical experience of the actual, the virtual is mental only. Though Murphy enjoys all three forms of his universe, if he wants to move from one zone to another – indeed, if he wishes to invoke the virtual state – he can only do so according to the 'law of inversion' (Deleuze 1998: 169), by keeping his body at rest.

Indeed, I would like to argue that Deleuze uses this reference to Murphy to map the virtual/actual distinction onto the logical/physiological distinction of exhaustion he has developed so far. For Deleuze, the image is 'virtual' in that, like Murphy's virtual universal, it is 'mental' in nature. This is the one aspect of the image that Deleuze emphasises in a particular section of the essay that has no equivalent elsewhere. The sanctum in which the protagonist sits when invoking the image 'has only a mental existence; it is a mental chamber' (Deleuze 1998: 169). Similarly, what 'matters' here is no longer the exhaustion of

space, 'but the mental image to which it leads' (169). We can therefore conclude that the process of exhaustion is also such a mental activity. At the very least, both the logic of exhaustion and Murphy's mental acrobatics conform to the same law of inversion. Both require a physical or physiological exhaustion on the protagonist's part.

Such a mapping of one distinction onto the other becomes even more obvious in the following section, where Deleuze repeats many of his former claims about the image, but this time keeping to his newly established mental framework. He still insists that the image of … *but the clouds* … raises 'the thing or the person' to the state of 'an indefinite' (Deleuze 1998: 170). He also argues that the image 'cannot be separated from the process of its own disappearance' because 'the energy' that the image carries results in its 'self-dissipation' (170). However, in this case he presents the characteristics of the image as part of a mental activity. When we first see the protagonist sitting at his desk, he states, 'When I thought of her, it was always night. I came in –'(Beckett 1984: 259). But then immediately, he corrects himself, 'No that is not right. When she appeared it was always night. I came in –' (259). 'To raise something or someone to the state of the indefinite is to "call to the eye of the mind"' (Deleuze 1998: 170).

The exhaustion of the image then, insofar as the image achieves a state that is both 'indefinite' and 'self-dissipative' (Deleuze 1998: 170), constitutes a mental process, which can be understood in virtual terms. When the protagonist 'stops thinking' and begins to "'call to the eye of the mind"', he begins to engage with this kind of virtual mental process (170). However, we must also note that Deleuze evokes the virtual indirectly, through a reference to Beckett's earlier novel, *Murphy*. It is still unclear how Murphy's virtual relates to the virtual of *Difference and Repetition*. This relation between the two different forms of virtuality Deleuze only establishes later, in the final stage of his analysis, where he explains, first, more about the kind of mental activity that Murphy engages in when he puts the law of inversion into action; and second, the consequences for the protagonist, whose call to the eye of the mind is rewarded by the appearance and subsequent disappearance of a woman's face.

Regarding the state of exhaustion required of dissipating image, Deleuze writes:

> [The image] announces that the end of the possible is at hand for the protagonist of … *but the clouds* … [. . .]. There is no longer an image, anymore than there is a space: beyond the possible there is only darkness,

> as in Murphy's third and final state, where the protagonist no longer moves in spirit, but has become an indiscernible atom, abulic, "in the dark … of … absolute freedom". (Deleuze 1998: 170)

Once again Deleuze refers to the hollow sphere of Murphy's mind to make his point, but this time, to the experience Murphy has of its actual, virtual and in-between forms. When Murphy first lies to rest, in order to travel through the different zones of his mind, he initially encounters a world that is very similar to our own, for which it acts as a kind of parallel. In this zone of 'light' Murphy can, for instance, enjoy mentally reciprocating a kick that he had received physically, when in the physical world. Providing he rests further, Murphy can then enter the second zone of 'half-light', comprising 'forms without parallel' (Beckett 2011: 110). This second, more unfamiliar world he can only enjoy through contemplation, in the manner of Dante's Belaqua.[9] But Murphy's 'third and final state' belongs to the third zone of 'darkness' in which there are no forms, whether parallel or otherwise. Beckett describes it as 'a flux of forms, a perpetual coming together and falling asunder of forms' (112). There are 'no elements or states, nothing but forms becoming and crumbling into fragments of a new becoming' (112). To engage in the mental activity productive of the image – to call something to the eye of the mind – is to therefore participate in this kind of state of flux.

If we now compare the two different forms of virtuality – that belonging to Murphy and that of *Difference and Repetition* – their mutual resemblance becomes clear. When Beckett describes the third zone of darkness as a world 'without element or states', he also explains that these forms become and crumble into fragments of a new becoming 'without love or hate or any intelligible principle of change' (Beckett 2011: 112). While a Spinozian aspect cannot be entirely dismissed, it is difficult not to see this world as resembling the Deleuzian virtual realm of multiplicity.[10] Like the open system of the future, it has no pre-existing rule. And furthermore, like this system, it has a mathematical equivalent. Deleuze likens the idea to the reciprocally determined differential; Beckett, the flux of forms, to a 'matrix of surds' (113).

Similarly, Beckett's description of Murphy evokes the kind of subjecthood Deleuze associates with the open system of the future and the progressive determination of the Idea. We have seen how the child player, free of any prior associations, rules the open system of the future. We have also seen how Ideas are progressively determined at a contingent or aleatory point. In Nietzschean terms, the thought of the eternal return is the moment of awareness equal to the bodily

experience of the world of intensities. It is the 'blind', 'acephalic' (headless) and 'aphasic' (speechless) point, at which 'powerlessness is turned into power' (Deleuze 2004b: 249–50). Consider then the following description of Murphy at this point: 'Here he was not free, but a mote in the dark of absolute freedom. He did not move but was a point in the ceaseless unconditioned generation and passing away of line' (Beckett 2011: 112). In the third zone of darkness, Murphy loses the degree of sovereignty and freedom he found in zones one and two. He can no longer reciprocate kicks or contemplate beatitudes. This last zone is also not a zone through which Murphy can mentally traverse. Whatever its treasures, they are not the kind among which he can 'move'. Rather, he becomes a point within the overall movement, reduced to a mote within the general freedom.

VI. Birthplace

From our comparison it would seem that the relation between the two concepts, the image of the third language of exhaustion and the virtual of *Difference and Repetition*, is quite strong. Both involve the construction of a mobile and fluctuating mental state in which the individual or the subject responsible loses a sense of agency. So much we learn from Deleuze's reference to Murphy and his third and dark state, described by Beckett in terms of the virtual. Nevertheless, this still leaves one question unanswered, the question with which I began this exploration of 'The Exhausted'. Does it follow that Deleuze's is an immanent critique in the post-Kantian sense? Can we find in 'The Exhausted' an encounter with what Kerslake describes as the unconditioned self-grounding principle that lies at the basis of knowledge? Is this what Beckett manages to achieve with the making of the elusive image, the learning of Kant's transcendental imagination, understood by Deleuze as a constitutive, genetic ground?

In Kerslake's Kantian terms, immanent critique would necessarily encounter self-grounding principle in the guise of Kant's transcendental imagination, the hidden power, which in Deleuze's rewriting of Kant's transcendental project assumes a major constitutive role. In 'The Exhausted' we encounter such real conditions in the concept of the self-dissipating image. For what else is the virtual with which Deleuze introduces … *but the clouds* …? This is Murphy's virtual as presented in Beckett's early novel, the third form assumed by the hollow sphere of Murphy's mind, experienced as a mobile and dark world of continuous becomings. We can conceive this virtual as a Spinozian world, the flux,

which combines all other fluxes, as described by Szafraniec (Szafraniec 2007: 120). We can also, by following Hughes's interpretation, present it as the midpoint of a trajectory that begins with the violence of the sensible encounter and ends with the determination of the object. As such, the virtual is constitutive of the actual world, an actual world that the Kantian would recognise as his or her own, the world of distinct objects, experienced by the individual subject.

We can see how the virtual of the self-dissipating image might be construed as such a constitutive ground if we once more consider Deleuze's remarks on God and origin. As we already know, Deleuze introduces the distinction between exhaustion and realisation by writing: 'God is the originary, the sum total of possibility. The possible is realised only in the derivative, in tiredness, whereas one is exhausted before birth, before realising oneself, or realising anything whatsoever (I gave up before birth)' (Deleuze 1998: 152). According to Spinozian interpretations of 'The Exhausted', this one original God, the sum of all possibility, is a Spinozian God, the one substance from which all emerges. Equally, however, we can construe this originary God-like state as the virtual realm of *Difference and Repetition*. The virtual too is there 'before birth', in that it is before the determination of the world of distinct objects and individual subjects.

Indeed, Hughes's account shows how this world of extension and quality must presuppose an altogether different world of intensities, without such extensions and qualities. However, it needs to be noted that this priority of the God-like state of the virtual – the exhaustion before birth – is constitutive, in that it lies at the 'origin' of such an objective world. While ultimately all representation can be traced backed to the initial material encounter in sensibility, Hughes's account has shown how this of itself is not sufficient for determination. Determination only occurs in that moment when violence erupts to establish the Nietzschean system of the future and with it, those ideas which give rise to the principles of actualisation.

We can also see how Deleuze's discussion of the self-dissipating image might answer the post-Kantian demand for a self-grounding principle of subjectivity. When making the distinction between exhaustion and realisation, Deleuze defines the time and place prior to birth as both before 'realising anything whatsoever' and before 'realising oneself' (Deleuze 1998: 152). In Kantian terms, the one who actively realises different goals, aims and plans is nothing other than the individual subject, negotiating the world of distinct objects; whereas the one who is exhausted exists prior to the realisation and thereby prior to such

subjectivity. In section II of this essay, I have mentioned two instances in which Deleuze refers to 'birth'. In the first instance Deleuze makes his reference to the Spinozian God; in the second he writes:

> Tiredness affects action in all its states, whereas exhaustion only concerns an amnesiac witness. The seated person is the witness around which the other revolves while developing all degrees of tiredness. He is there before birth and before the other begins. (Deleuze 1998: 155–6)

Prior to such subjectivity is the 'amnesiac', who is witness to the 'other' and this other's endlessly tiring activity. A very specific kind of subjecthood is at stake.

It is this very specific subjecthood of the seated person that embodies self-grounding principle. If we return to our discussion of the Deleuzian epistemology, this has shown that, just as the world of objects presupposes the world of intensities, the world of a unified, conscious subject presupposes passive and unconscious subjecthood. I have referred to Wasser's essay as a particularly good account of the series of 'larval subjects' and 'passive selves' that form the first half of Deleuze's epistemological trajectory. Yet I have also argued that the type of figures dominating Beckett's late work, notably the seated protagonists of … *but the clouds* … or *Nacht und Träume*, resemble the fractured subjects and passive selves of Wasser's account no more than they resemble the single unified consciousness of the Kantian subject. Instead, Beckett's figures are appropriate to the mobile, fluctuating world to which they belong. 'Before birth' and 'before the other begins' is the child player who throws the pair of dice, the aleatory point at which differentials enter a reciprocal relation with each other. Like Murphy in his third and final state, these subjectivities embody a Nietzschean kind of intense self-awareness, their power of determination arising from their seeming powerless. This is how we ought to understand the seated protagonists of … *but the clouds* … or *Nacht und Träume*: as those subjectivities sitting at the origin of determination, presiding over the virtual platform.

Finally, we are in a position to discuss how 'The Exhausted' might stage its specific kind of immanent critique. Providing that we accept the virtual of 'The Exhausted' as the kind of self-grounding principle found in Kantian readings of *Difference and Repetition*, we can reconstruct Deleuze's essay as an encounter with such a principle. Going through Deleuze's argument systematically and beginning with the between exhaustion and realisation, we know that the possible is either something we realise by setting goals, aims and plans, or it is something we exhaust,

precisely by renouncing these kinds of aims. Exhaustion incorporates 'the sum total of possibility', whereas realisation is only 'derivative' (Deleuze 1998: 152). Mapping then the one distinction onto the other, the possible corresponds to principle or condition, and the real to that which is conditioned by this principle. In our terms, as derived from Hughes's reading of *Difference and Repetition*, the affirmation of the possible as a whole corresponds to establishment of the virtual and, in the same way, the process of realisation to the actualisation of the virtual in the world of objects and subjects. Beckett, by renouncing the aims associated with realisation, in fact renounces the conditioned. The double exhaustion of logic and fatigue allows him to uncover what in normal circumstances is obscured: the principle of the conditioned. For Kerslake, this was the hidden power of Kant's transcendental imagination; in our case, this is the virtual realm of multiplicity. Through this exhaustive process, Beckett uncovers that generative mixture of openness and flux, hidden by the qualities and extension of the object it actualises.

Continuing our systematic analysis, we can see the construction of the three languages of exhaustion as Beckett's way of staging his immanent critique. The distinction with which Deleuze began his essay once again applies. Just as Deleuze opposes the process of realisation to the process of exhaustion, he opposes the language associated with realisation with the type of language characteristic of Beckett's late work. Under normal circumstances we use language to help establish the aims of realisation, to name these aims and to voice them. In other words, we use language to construct our actual world. Beckett on the other hand, first by exhausting words, then voices, and then finally those extra-linguistic elements which appear in the absence of both word and voice, disrupts the realising function of language to manifest the virtual. The protagonist of … *but the clouds* … and the female face, the series of television plays which includes … *but the clouds* … but also *Quad*, *Ghost Trio* and *Nacht und Träume*, the third language of images and spaces: all can be seen as Beckett's way of recreating the conditions of the virtual plane, without the actual that is conditioned by it. The following remark only seems to confirm such an interpretation:

> But the image is more profound because it frees itself from its object in order to become a process itself, that is, an event as a 'possible' that no longer needs to be realised in a body or object, somewhat like a smile without the cat in Lewis Carroll. (Deleuze 1998: 168)

We can therefore conclude that to encounter self-grounding principle is to encounter such a 'smile without the cat'. Or rather, 'The Exhausted' places a demand on us: not to realise; not to name and voice; not even to think (as the protagonist of … *but the clouds* … makes clear, the woman appears not because she is thought, but only when invoked). We must renounce all that has to do with the realisation of possibility, and with this, a little of ourselves. If we loosen the grip of subjectivity sufficiently to achieve that impossible tension of the image, an image no longer bound by reason or memory, then we are free, like Murphy, to move among our mind's treasures.

VII. Conclusion

In the *Critique of Judgment*, Kant brings to the concept of transcendental imagination a new aspect. Whereas the first critique presents imagination as nothing more than a 'hidden power', a spontaneous synthetic capacity thought necessary for cognition but ultimately unknowable, in the third critique imagination assumes a more active role. In its free play with the faculty of understanding, it 'quickens' this power, and their mutual 'arousal' is something that can be felt. In 'The Exhausted' Deleuze shows how Beckett, in the exhaustion of the image, reaches a state comparable to that of Kantian imagination (imagination here reassuming its productive 'arousing' role) in that Deleuze associates the exhaustion of the image with a certain kind of freedom. Just as there is freedom when imagination is no longer restricted by the determination in concept, there is freedom to be found in the virtual state, in the darkness of Murphy's mind. Insofar as Beckett's late television plays achieve the remaking of this virtual state, the productive imagination becomes something 'learnt'.

Thus we can conclude that 'The Exhausted' stages an immanent critique, in that we uncover something of a hidden constitutive power and we learn more about the nature of self-grounding principle; however, we need to account for our own reversal of terms. That *Difference and Repetition* is a rewriting of the first critique from the point of view of the third is by now a well-rehearsed argument. In contrast, I have read the 'The Exhausted' in light of *Difference and Repetition* – Deleuze's third critique from the point of view of the first – to show how it adds to our understanding of the virtual in the genesis of knowledge. In this sense, 'The Exhausted' performs its own kind of immanent criticism.

Notes

1. See especially the first chapter of Meillassoux's *After Finitude* (2008: 1–27), where the critique of Kant is first laid out and is at its most explicit.
2. We can also include Bryant in this list, who refers to Deleuze's *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (1992b) to argue Kant's critique is incomplete. Despite denouncing the transcendent, Kant does not show how the categories are a 'result of a genesis' (Bryant 2009: 32–3). What we require is a 'genesis of reason itself' as well as a 'genesis of the understanding and its categories' (Deleuze 1992b: 85).
3. That Deleuze's is a philosophy of 'sense' rather than 'essence' or 'substance' is a central claim of his Kantian interpreters. See, for instance, how Hughes introduces his phenomenological argument in *Deleuze and the Genesis of Representation* (Hughes 2008: 16–17).
4. Wasser draws on the account given in *Difference and Repetition* pp. 98–100. This is particularly appropriate, as Deleuze happens to refer to Beckett directly when defining fatigue's role in passive synthesis and the constitution of time as a living present.
5. The epistemological slant of my essay prevents me from a more in-depth discussion of ontological difference. For further reading of the ontological argument in *Difference and Repetition* and the Deleuzian drawn trajectory of Duns Scotus, Spinoza and Nietzsche see Hughes 2009: 53, 62–4. Badiou 1999 is another key interpreter.
6. Deleuze refers to the concept of the eternal return at various points in *Difference and Repetition*. See especially pp. 304–5 for the distinction he draws between the 'thought' of the eternal return and the 'feeling' of the will to power.
7. Deleuze shows how the 'idea' is constituted in chapter IV of *Difference and Repetition* (Deleuze 2004b: 214–79). He introduces the idea as a Kantian 'problem', proceeds through a discussion of modern calculus and develops the concept by referring to other mathematical, biological, Marxist examples. In this rather complex way, Deleuze aims to explain the precise nature of the new 'ideal' synthesis of difference.
8. Deleuze uses the term 'mental chamber' to describe the dark space in which the protagonist sits and evokes the image (Deleuze 1998: 169). In the play, the protagonist simply states 'vanished in my little sanctum and crouched, where none could see me, in the dark' (Beckett 1984: 259).
9. Belaqua of Dante's *Divine Comedy* acts as a prototype, not only for Beckett in his characterisation of Murphy, but also for Deleuze. Szafraniec notes the similarities between the exhausted person and his 'predecessor' Murphy, who both, like Dante's Belaqua, do 'nothing' that can be 'discerned' (Szafraniec 2007: 122).
10. See P. J. Murphy's essay for an explicitly Spinozian interpretation (Murphy 1994: 225–7).

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In the Still of the Moment: Deleuze's Phenomena of Motionless Time

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Abstract

A process philosophical interpretation of Deleuze's theories of time encounters problems when formulating an account of Deleuze's portrayal of temporality in *The Time-Image*, where time is understood as having the structure of instantaneity and simultaneity. I remedy this shortcoming of process philosophical readings by formulating a phenomenological interpretation of Deleuze's second synthesis of time. By employing Deleuze's logic of affirmative synthetic disjunction in combination with his differential calculus interpretation of Spinoza's and Bergson's duration, this phenomenological interpretation portrays time as given to our awareness in immediacy rather than through a continuous process of unfolding. The viability of this alternate approach calls into question the claims that Deleuze is strictly a process philosopher and anti-phenomenologist.

Keywords: Deleuze, time consciousness, phenomenology, Bergson, cinema

I. Introduction

Husserl's and Merleau-Ponty's analyses of time-consciousness portray phenomenal time as flowing continuously on account of a progressing synthesis that blends the moments of our awareness.[1] Their accounts are suited for a description of temporality as it appears to us as a flowing succession, for instance when time seems to drag on slowly while we are bored waiting for a bus or train. Yet, does time always appear to

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us as an extending, continuous flux? Consider for example when we look in the mirror and for the first time suddenly notice signs of our aging. In that shocking instant, we do not feel the gradual passage of some number of years; rather, we are given those years all at once in a phenomenal flash. So, it seems temporal phenomena are not always continuous, and thus our phenomenological analyses of time would benefit from a description of non-flowing temporal appearings. We will examine how Deleuze's cinematic examples of motionless temporality illustrate the disjunctive synthesis of virtually simultaneous moments that are given instantaneously. Our account runs contrary to process readings of Deleuze's time syntheses, as for example the one we find in James Williams's recent book *Deleuze's Philosophy of Time: A Critical Introduction and Guide*. According to such a process-philosophical reading, Deleuze's time syntheses cannot be instantaneous; for, processes require more than one moment to transpire. So, one of the reasons Williams excludes Deleuze's second cinema book *The Time-Image* from his account is because it says the past and present synthesise each *instant* (Williams 2011: 162).

Nonetheless, *The Time-Image* is quite useful for phenomenologists who wish to analyse temporal appearings, because cinematic experiences are uniquely able to present to our awareness 'a little time in its pure state'. So, by first examining Deleuze's notion of instantaneous becoming, we will find that *The Time-Image* builds upon Deleuze's earlier treatment of the second synthesis in *Difference and Repetition*, rather than contradicting it as the process interpretation would argue. Thus, a danger we risk by reading Deleuze's temporal synthesis solely in process terms is that it limits our ability to obtain the phenomenological value of Deleuze's philosophy of time.

II. Motionless Becoming: The Logic of Intensive Temporality

To explore the basic logic of Deleuze's motionless temporal synthesis, we will first follow his treatment of Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* at the very beginning of *The Logic of Sense*. Deleuze refers us here to the scenes when Alice's size increases, so that he may illustrate the 'pure event' of becoming. As Alice becomes larger, she of course becomes larger than the size she just was. But in that same stroke, she is as well 'growing' smaller than the size she is now becoming: as she 'moves-toward' a larger size, this motion is a movement into another relation, in this case, a relation with an even larger size. In this way, the pure event of becoming places 'before' and 'after' – past and future – together as two



Figure 1. Alice becoming larger and smaller simultaneously. (Source: adapted from Carroll and Tenniel 1866.)

incompatible but coincident states of affairs. 'Before' and 'after', in this way, become simultaneous (Figure 1):

> When I say 'Alice becomes larger', I mean that she becomes larger than she was. By the same token, however, she becomes smaller than she is now. Certainly, she is not bigger and smaller at the same time. She is larger now; she was smaller before. But it is at the same moment that one becomes larger than one was and smaller than one becomes. This is the simultaneity of a becoming whose characteristic is to elude the present. Insofar as it eludes the present, becoming does not tolerate the separation or the distinction of before and after, or of past and future. It pertains to the essence of becoming to move and to pull in both directions at once. (Deleuze 1990a: 3/9)[2]

In a strange way, the pure event occurs between 'before' and 'after', yet also somehow the two are simultaneous. We will explain this through Deleuze's distinctions between intensity and extensity. Note that when Deleuze discusses Spinoza's duration and affect in a class lecture from 1981, he offers a description similar to his account of pure becoming. In this Spinozistic context, an affection is 'the instantaneous effect of an image of a thing on me' (Deleuze 1981). So, consider if we first see our enemy Peter and then turn our head and notice our charming friend Paul. Here we are affected by a succession of images that with each instant increases our power of acting (Deleuze 1978). Our affections are always varying continuously in this way like waves or curves, but at any

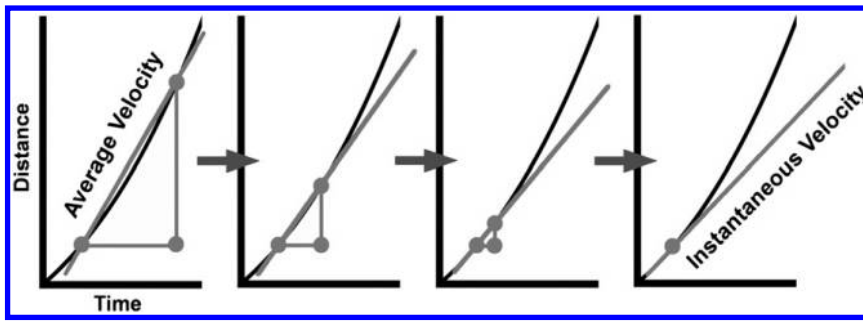


Figure 2. Finding instantaneous velocity.

one given moment, we experience an instantaneous affection, which is the degree to which we are tending to increase or decrease in power. Deleuze, building from his calculus interpretation of Spinoza's diagram of infinity, portrays the instantaneous affection as being something like a curve's tangent that has been found by using the infinitesimal analysis of Leibniz's early calculus techniques (Deleuze 1981).[3] So let's first consider how we may use differential calculus to determine instantaneous velocities, because this will aid us in understanding what Deleuze means by instantaneous affection. We could graph a curve showing an accelerating increase in velocity (the change in distance per the change in time). We can then determine the average velocity within an extent of time by drawing a line that connects the points on the curve at the beginning and at the end of the delineated time interval. Now, by using a technique from infinitesimal calculus, we can bring together the distant points along the curve – keeping in mind the degree of change between them – until they are infinitely close, that is, until only an infinitely small amount of distance lies between them (Figure 2). The line that the infinitely close points now draw is the tangent, which tells us how fast the object was tending to go in that instant. This is its instantaneous velocity at that moment along its motion.

To explain the duration involved in instantaneous affection, Deleuze turns to 'the phenomenon of passage' in Bergson's duration:

> you can consider psychic states as close together as you want in time, you can consider the state A and the state A′, as separated by a minute, but just as well by a second, by a thousandth of a second, that is you can make more and more cuts, increasingly tight, increasingly close to one another. You may well go to the infinite, says Bergson, in your decomposition of time, by establishing cuts with increasing rapidity, but you will only ever reach states. (Deleuze 1981)

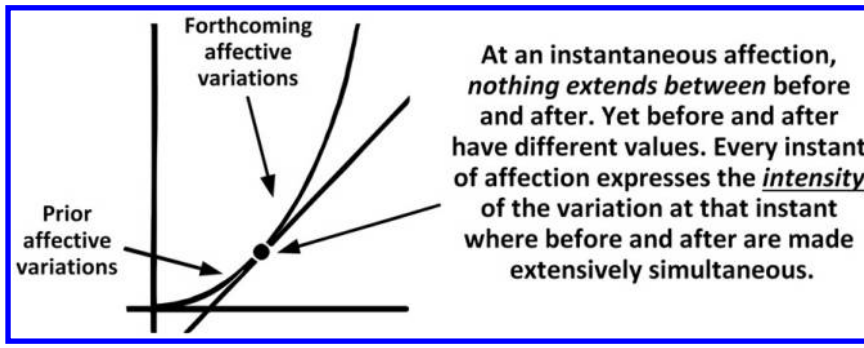


Figure 3. Using infinitesimal calculus to find instantaneous affection.

Deleuze draws a parallel between Bergson's psychic states and Spinoza's levels of affection. As we noted, things affect us in ways that either increase or decrease our power, and these changes are continuously varying. At an instant of our affection, we are at some level of power. But from one instant to its immediate successor, there is no temporal gap extending between them; however, there is an intensity of change that we experience as the phenomenon of passage. Bergson's and Spinoza's duration, according to Deleuze, is found between instants brought infinitely close together. He explains:

> duration is always behind our backs, it is at our backs that it happens. It is between two blinks of the eye. If you want an approximation of duration: I look at someone, I look at someone, duration is neither here nor there. Duration is: what has happened between the two? Even if I would have gone as quickly as I would like, duration goes even more quickly, by definition, as if it was affected by a variable coefficient of speed: as quickly as I go, my duration goes more quickly. [...] A′, A, A″; A is the instantaneous affection, of the present moment, A′ is that of a little while ago, A″ is what is going to come. Even though I have brought them together as close as possible, there is always something which separates them, namely the phenomenon of passage. This phenomenon of passage, insofar as it is a lived phenomenon, is duration.[4] (Deleuze 1981)

Deleuze interprets the continuous variation between the curves in Spinoza's circle diagram in his 12th letter, 'The Letter on Infinity', to be like an infinite series of instantaneous affections. So, we might depict this using a curve and tangent like we did when finding instantaneous velocity (Figure 3).

Thus, duration here is not merely something occurring over the course of a series of moments but can rather be what happens between moments

brought infinitely close together such that no time extends between them. Duration in this sense is a matter of the *extensive simultaneity* of a 'before' and an 'after', whose differential relation implies an *intensive succession*, an 'intending' or inner tension from the incompatibilities between 'before' and 'after'. Because no extent of time separates 'before' and 'after', they temporally coincide, extensively speaking; however, 'after' *intends* or is *striving to extend* past 'before' with a certain degree of *intensity*, just as the moving body is tending to go at a certain velocity in that instant.

Deleuze's logic of synthesis, then, will allow for the temporal convergence of 'before' and 'after' without their assimilation. We call it 'logic' here, because it makes use of the logic of exclusive disjunction; yet, also involved are what he considers Leibniz's 'alogical' concepts, *compossibility* and *incompossibility*. They are alogical, because they are not matters of identity and contradiction, which apply only to what is possible and impossible (Deleuze 1990a: 196/201). Yet unlike Leibniz, for Deleuze the incompatibility or incompossibility of states of affairs is the condition for events to occur. If at any instant all the states of affairs in the world were compatible or compossible, then there are no conditions in the world calling for resolution, and hence everything might be at rest or in redundant motion. Or as for Leibniz, all events would be precalculated in advance by God on the basis of the compossibility of monads' predicates. Yet as Bergson notes when discussing mathematical predictions of future eclipses, this strips the series of events of their temporal character by placing all forthcoming occurrences together simultaneously in that single calculation (Bergson 2001b: 194–7/149–50). So, compossibility does not account for how events unfold through time. But if time and becoming are real, then every instant would need to contain incompossible states of affairs whose incompatibilities on the one hand provide the motive force for bringing about alterations in the succeeding moment while also on the other hand leave indeterminate and un-precalculable these future events.

So recall the prior example: as Alice's size increases, she *becomes* larger and smaller than herself. But, it is logically impossible that she *be* larger and smaller than herself. Her largerness and her smallerness can only coincide in the case when she is caught in the act of changing, when her growth is the intensive degree of variation between infinitely close moments. So the combined states of affairs, 'Alice is larger than herself' and 'also she is smaller than herself', is a logical impossibility and can never actually be so. Yet, 'Alice becomes larger than herself' and 'in the same stroke she becomes smaller than herself' are not so

much impossible when combined as they are incompossible, meaning that throughout her continuous growing, these states of affairs really do coincide, but they cannot stay that way for longer than a fleeting instant. If they remained so for longer than an infinitely short moment, the *becomes* of 'becomes larger and smaller' turns into the *is* of 'is larger and smaller', which we said was impossible. Thus, for as long as her largerness coincides with her smallerness, there will necessarily be a forthcoming successive moment when either she keeps growing (transforming her given largerness into a smallerness related to a new largerness) or she stops growing (causing her smallerness to cease being smaller than another larger size, because there will be no larger size that she is attaining to).

For Deleuze, incompossible states of affairs are combinable on account of a synthesis, namely, what he calls 'affirmative synthetic disjunction'. In an exclusive disjunction, either *A* or *B* can be true, but not both. However, in Deleuze's synthetic disjunction, *A* and *B* are not compatible states of affairs, yet both are affirmed and coincident. There is a classic example in the field of intensional logic and semantics that will illustrate. Oedipus had every reason to believe he was not the criminal bringing the curse upon Thebes. Yet, there arrived a moment when it became undeniable that he was the man who killed his father and married his mother. In that transitional moment, Oedipus affirms two incompatible states of affairs: that (1) *he could not possibly be his wife's son* and yet nonetheless that (2) *he did indeed marry his mother*.[5] And also, at this moment in the tale, Oedipus undergoes an instantaneous alteration, an intense moment of becoming, changing from great king to blind vagrant. Just as his both being the son and not the son of Jocasta are simultaneously affirmed in the moment of transition, so too is his being both the king and an exile of Thebes. The logic of affirmative synthetic disjunction, then, allows for the coincidence of 'before' and 'after' in pure becoming.

III. The Second Synthesis of Time

Mementos can cause our minds to 'flash back' to an earlier time. These moments, which have fallen away to the past, appear now to our current awareness. And yet we do not mistake them for the present; in fact, we might even be charmed or perhaps shocked by how different things once were. What we notice, then, is not merely the past state of affairs; we are aware as well of the temporal differences that make them so foreign to the present. Thus, flashbacks can serve as a fertile source for

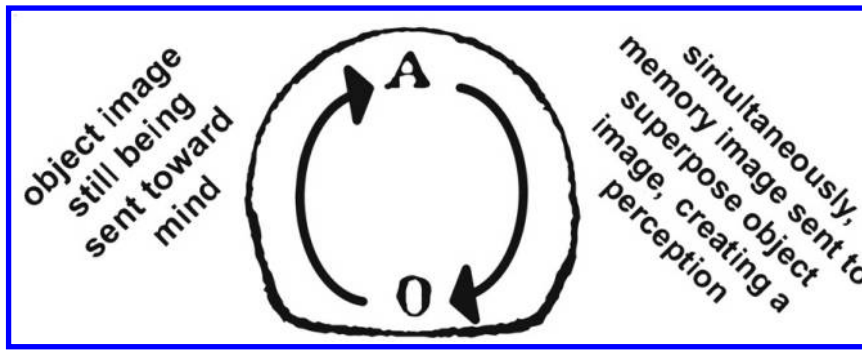


Figure 4. Innermost circuit of Bergson's memory circuit diagram. (Source: adapted from Bergson 1911: 128.)

the investigation of time as a phenomenon, that is, for when time *its very self* appears to our awareness. We now explore the way Deleuze explains Bergson's pure past through cinematic flashbacks. This will allow us to characterise the second synthesis of time in *Difference and Repetition* as being the 'then' of the past combined with the 'now' of the present; the intensive temporal difference between them is a phenomenon of time.

Deleuze turns our attention to Bergson's expanding circuits diagrams to help explain the contemporaneity of the past and the present in flashback recollections. Bergson first has us consider what he calls an 'after image' (*image consécutive*). It is always a part of our perception. We look at some object, then abruptly avert our gaze to another place. For a split second, the image of the initial object will carry into and overlay upon the new scene we see (Bergson 2001a: 125/105). The prior object remains in our field of perception, even though it is actually no longer there. Instead, it is virtually there. The virtual past image inserts itself so thoroughly into the new actual image that 'we are no longer able to discern what is perception and what is memory' (125/106). Perhaps this is why fast moving objects leave a blurry trail behind them. For example, as David Hume notes, when we rapidly swing around a burning coal in the dark, we perceive a full red circle (Hume 2007: 28). According to Bergson, just while the perceived image is sent to our brain, the most recent image in our memory has already arrived upon and overlaid our current perception, with both moving lightning fast in a continuous circuit (Figure 4) (Bergson 2001a: 127/107).

So when we are looking at something, already mixed into this perception are the remnants from the prior perception. This is the tight *O–A* circuit in Bergson's diagram. Keep in mind how time is

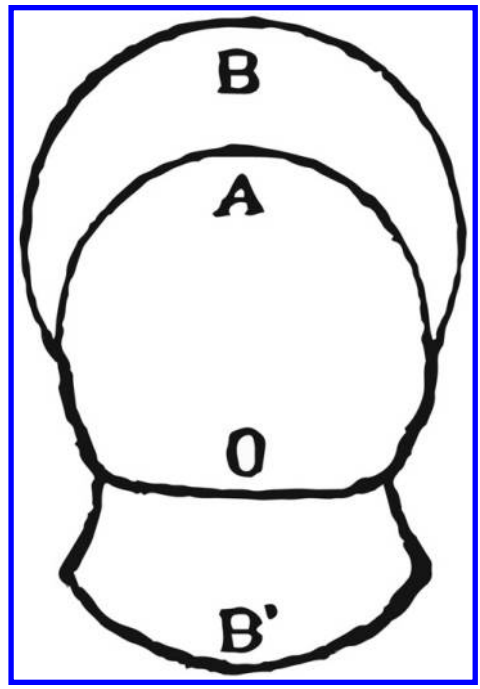


Figure 5. A successive memory-perception circuit. (Source: adapted from Bergson 1911: 128.)

ever-passing, so even if what we perceive seemingly remains unchanged, it will still differ from what we just saw. The flow of time leaves its mark on the prior image, giving it the character of having-passed (Bergson 1922: 2/2). A new *O–A* circuit always arises each instant of our perception, no matter how noticeable the variations are in what we see. But then, we might wonder, what happens to the even older images as the new ones continue entering our memory? Bergson says they get pushed out into wider and more encompassing circuits (Figure 5).

When we turn away our gaze, what was previously object *O* now becomes what we call past-object *B′*. (Former object *O* is not actually there, but it is a part of the past that is implied in what is actually present.) All the while, memory-image *A* has become what we now call memory-image *B*, which corresponds to the past-object *B′* that it is an image of. This is all because a new object *O* and its new memory *A* have entered our perceptual awareness. But note how in the diagram, the wider *B* circuit channels into the new *O–A* circuit. This is because both the most recent memory-image and the *next* most recent one together

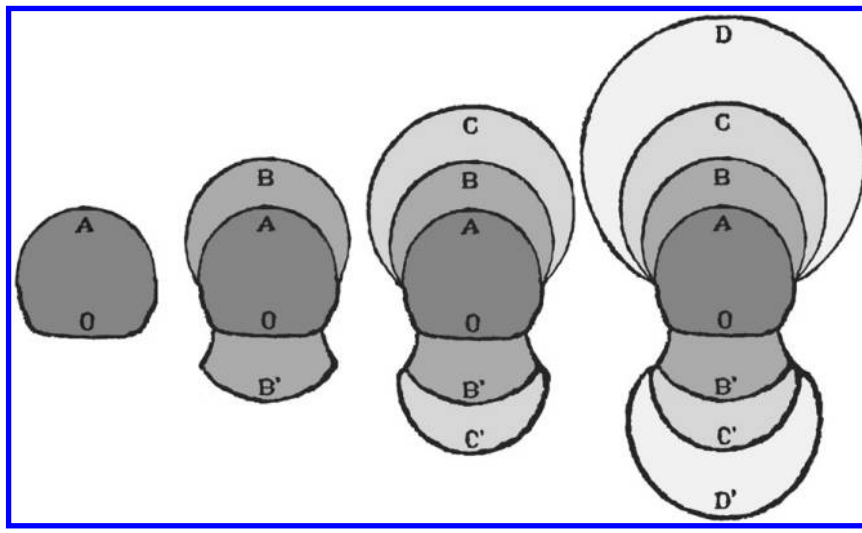


Figure 6. Growing memory-perception circuits. (Source: adapted from Bergson 1911: 128.)

overlay upon our field of perception, even though we might not notice the two. In a way, our older memories still keep contracting with the present, but only in an implicit manner. So even if the previous after-image is no longer vibrantly apparent to our perception, it still is helping to shape the way we see the current image. This is important for Bergson, because the whole of our past is at least implicitly superposed into our present experience. 'In truth', writes Bergson, 'every perception is already memory. *Practically we perceive only the past*, the pure present being the invisible progress of the past gnawing into the future' (Bergson 2001a: 194/163; original emphasis).

With this in mind, we might imagine how the circuits of our perception continue billowing outward as time passes on. The older circuits keep enlarging as our perception alters perpetually (Figure 6).

Yet even though all of our past is always interposed in the present in an implicit way, sometimes what we see causes one recollection to stand out more explicitly among the rest. Often we observe something in our daily life that causes certain prior memories to flare out before our 'mind's eye' (Figure 7). And sometimes our flashbacks can be so vivid that they drown out the actual things we see. We then begin to feel as though we are reliving that past experience.

Deleuze illustrates these recollection circuits with the cinematic flashbacks in Marcel Carné's movie *Daybreak* (*Le Jour se lève*, 1939)

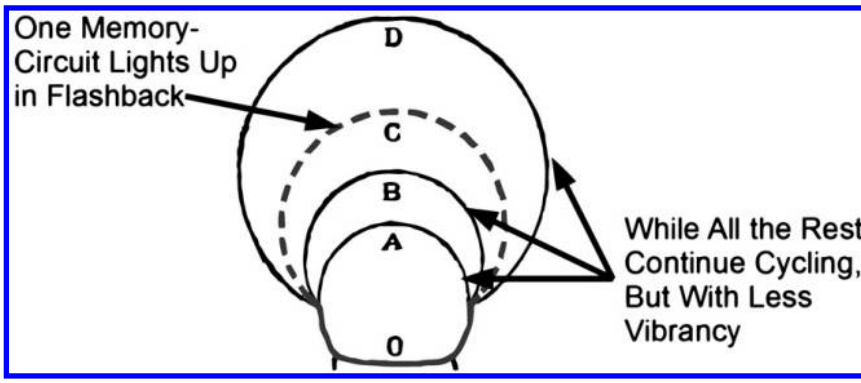


Figure 7. Flashback as not excluding other layers of memory. (Source: adapted from Bergson 1911: 128.)

(Deleuze 1989: 48/46/67–8). The film follows events happening from sundown to dawn. During this short period, a murderer flashes back into his past. The movie begins with a man being shot and falling down a flight of stairs in an apartment building. The murderer barricades himself in his room so that the police cannot force their way in. Throughout the night he has three flashbacks, each one triggered by some visual reminder. This first one takes us back to him meeting a young woman he falls in love with. This flashback loop draws us the deepest into the past, so it would correspond to one of the widest circles in Bergson's circuit diagram. But, whenever we return to the present, we hear a heavy doom-filled bass and drum beat. It gives us the feeling we are moving inevitably toward a fatal end. So during the flashbacks, the past is so vibrant that it completely covers over the actual present things standing before him in his room. As viewers, we only see what he is remembering and not the events still carrying on in the present while he dreams. But, because upon returning we hear that fatal march toward the end, we are reminded that even while reminiscing, we never escaped the current doomed situation. Throughout our own lives, we are always experiencing the combination of the past and present, no matter how attentive we are to the present or how vibrantly the past flashes into our mind. The events of the murderer's next flashback, then, continue after those of the prior one, so it is a smaller circuit closer to the current inner loop. Here we learn more about the rivalry he has with an older man over the young woman. When we return from this flashback, day breaks, and his building is surrounded by police and a crowd of spectators. He rages at them from his window high above, furious that they would treat him like a freak.

This outburst triggers him to recall his explosion of anger that led to the murder he just committed last night. In this final flashback, we now see him shoot the love rival in his room. The victim falls down the stairs, just as we saw when the film began. This is the tightest recollection circuit so far. It brings us to his final act, in the present: he shoots himself in the heart. In a way, this is like all the painful events of his life contracted into his current action.

Now, consider if we were to memorise a series of spoken lines for a play. Each time we practise it, we create a new individual memory. When it comes time to perform, we merely begin with the first word, and the rest seem to follow automatically, without our needing to recall any single rehearsal. All the previous times were contracted into that present moment of automatic habitual bodily performance. But after the show, someone might ask us about how we memorised the lines. Then we could relax and daydream about those moments, seeing them in their vivid detail (Bergson 2001a: 89–92/75–8).

Bergson illustrates this with his famous cone diagram. As new things enter our memory, they add to a cone (Bergson 2001a: 196–7/162–3). If we are acting automatically, like when performing something we rehearsed, then we are down closer to the *S* point. Being near this tip does not mean our memories have gone away. Rather, they are all contracted into our physical actions, like how a performance expresses physically all our memories of past recitals. When instead we daydream about the past, the images expand out in our minds, as during a flashback. In these moments, we reside at a higher layer of the cone. Always we are varying somewhere between automatic action and dreamful reflection, so we might be at any of the many possible layers of expansion or contraction of our memory (Figure 8) (Bergson 2001a: 210–12/176–8).

So during flashback scenes, the character's memory leaps up to a higher level. But during an action scene where she acts automatically, her memory is contracted into the present moment, down at the cone's tip. We are always changing level, varying 'melodically' between our intense physical engagement in the present moment and our drifting somewhere in dreamland (Deleuze 1994: 83–4/113–14). So the larger circuits are more distant memories, and the higher cone levels are increased degrees of expansion of one part of those memories.

The cone levels and the circuits are not equivalent, but we might place them in correspondence by noting that when moving to a distant circuit, we are also expanding our memories. To illustrate this, we first observe one of Deleuze's references: Bazin's explanation of Carné's flashback techniques. Bazin notes how in literature, action happening in the past

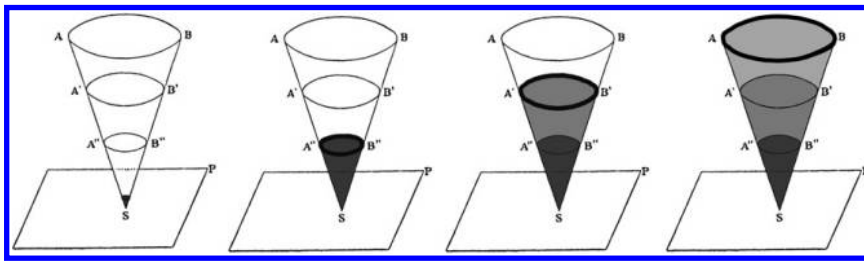


Figure 8. Varying layers of memory expansions that are contemporaneous with the present. (Source: adapted from Bergson 1911: 211.)

can be described by using past tenses of a verb. However, in film there is no easy way to clearly demarcate past and present events, especially ones happening in the same locations, because they will look about the same when projected on the screen. In *Daybreak*, for example, the hero has his final flashback while sitting in his room, and it takes him back to the events the day before also happening in that very place. The table – as it is there now – appeared about the same the day prior. So Carné must convince our eyes that the story is moving in and out of the past even though the scene looks nearly identical in both cases. Bazin observes that when a scene shifts between the present and the past events recalled in the mind of the hero, Carné uses an exceptionally long dissolve where the image of the previous scene fades out little by little so as to allow the next image to gradually fade into clarity. The dissolve has the effect of recreating the way we physiologically experience a transition to recollective daydream: our eyes become fixed, our pupils enlarge, and the images we see become blurred as our imagination grows more vibrant (Figure 9) (Bazin 1998: 78–80).

The other sort of flashback Deleuze discusses is Mankiewicz's 'forking' or 'bifurcation' (Deleuze 1989: 48–9/47/68). We noted before how incompossibility for Deleuze is prerequisite for an event to occur. In terms of forking, this means that events take place when they veer off down an unforeseen path, yet as we will see, this also means that at the moment of divergence, circumstances have multiple virtual tendencies of development that were incompossible with one another. Such forkings for Deleuze also correspond to a sort of flashback that unites past, present and future into a single instant. Thus, bifurcations not only introduce newness into our lives, they also are partly responsible for the continual coexistence of the 'before' and 'after' in our experiences. When there is an unforeseen forking, this event is momentous; it is memorable even while it is still happening. We can tell already that we

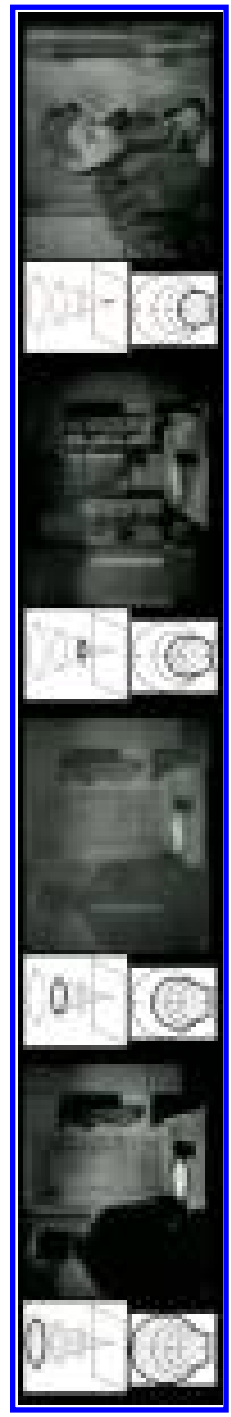


Figure 9. Transitioning vibrancy from flashback memory-images to perception-images in Carné's *Daybreak* (1939). (Source: images on the left of each still adapted from Bergson 1911: 128, 211.)

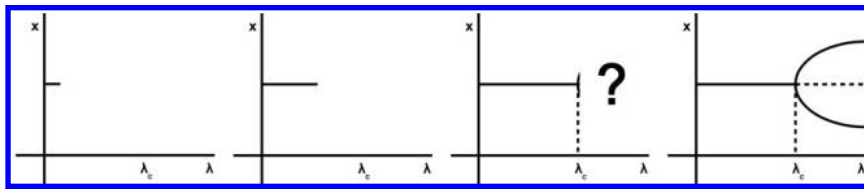


Figure 10. The indeterminacy of variation at a birfucation point. (Source: based on a figure in Prigogine and Stengers 1984: 161.)

will recall it often in the future. So from the beginning it appears to us as a memory for future recollections. But also, these events are momentous for another reason. They cause us to recall another event in the past, lighting up one of the various 'circuits' in our memory.

The two senses of bifurcation are tightly bound together. To illustrate, Deleuze refers us to a scientific model from Prigogine and Stengers's *Order Out of Chaos* (1984) (Deleuze 1989: 49/47/69). Imagine that we are running a faucet at a low enough level of flow that the water falls in a straight column. We then very gradually increase the flow until suddenly, when we reach a critical moment in the increase, the smooth column becomes chaotically turbulent. To further describe these sensitive transition points in complex systems, Prigogine and Stengers quote J. C. Maxwell:

> the system has the quantity of potential energy, [. . .] which cannot begin to be so transformed till the system has reached a certain configuration, to attain which requires an expenditure of work, which in certain cases may be infinitesimally small, and in general bears no definite proportion to the energy developed in consequence thereof. For example, [. . .] the little spark which kindles the great forest, the little word which sets the world a fighting, [. . .] the little spore which blights all the potatoes [. . .]. (Maxwell, quoted in Prigogine and Stengers 1984: 73)

But, there are systems that when reaching such a 'singular point' can develop in one of two different directions of qualitative evolution. For example, in certain chemical systems, if you increase one parameter, such as the concentration of one chemical, the system is pushed further and further away from a state of equilibrium. If pushed far enough, it reaches a 'bifurcation point' where, for instance, the spatial distribution of that chemical can follow one or another opposite path of configuration, with the choice being entirely unpredictable (Prigogine and Stengers 1984: 161–2) (Figure 10).

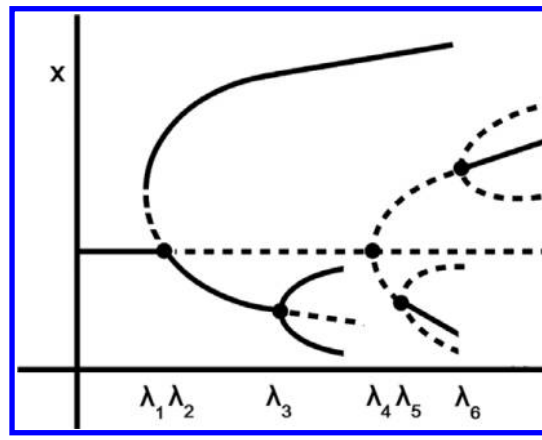


Figure 11. Multiple indeterminate branching variations. (Source: based on a figure in Prigogine and Stengers 1984: 170.)

In fact, in some complex systems, there can be bifurcations of bifurcations. As Deleuze writes, each of the forkings 'constantly split up any state of equilibrium and each time impose a new "meander", a new break in causality, which itself forks from the previous one, in a collection of non-linear relations' (Deleuze 1989: 49/47/69). Prigogine and Stengers explain that

> the 'historical' path along which the system evolves as the control parameter grows is characterized by a succession of stable regions, where deterministic laws dominate, and of instable ones, near the bifurcation points, where the system can 'choose' between or among more than one possible future. (Prigogine and Stengers 1984: 169–70) (Figure 11)

Deleuze further elaborates on the structure of simultaneously branching paths with Borges's short story, 'The Garden of Forking Paths' (1962) (Deleuze 1989: 49/47/68). It describes a Chinese monk's unfinished manuscripts for a novel with this same title. The novel went unpublished because it was incomprehensible. The chapters did not proceed just sequentially. A following chapter would be like an alternate version of the same prior one: 'in the third chapter the hero dies, in the fourth he is alive' (Borges 1962: 24). Each of these variations is like one of the possible paths the chemical system can choose; however, in the case of the novel, the story chooses all possible lines of development at the same time:

> 'the garden of forking paths' was the chaotic novel [...] forking in time, not in space. [...] In all fictional works, each time a man is confronted with several alternatives, he chooses one and eliminates the others; in the fiction of Ts'ui Pên, he chooses – simultaneously – all of them. *He creates*, in this way, diverse futures, diverse times which themselves also proliferate and fork. (Borges 1962: 26)

Thus:

> all possible outcomes occur; each one is the point of departure for other forkings. Sometimes, the paths of this labyrinth converge: for example, you arrive at this house, but in one of the possible pasts you are my enemy, in another, my friend. (Borges 1962: 26)

For this reason, the structure of the novel is

> an infinite series of times, [...] a growing, dizzying net of divergent, convergent and parallel times. This network of times which approached one another, forked, broke off, or were unaware of one another for centuries, embraces all possibilities of time. We do not exist in the majority of these times; in some you exist, and not I; in others I, and not you; in others, both of us. (Borges 1962: 28)

In Mankiewicz's *Barefoot Contessa* (1954), there is a remarkable scene that showcases both senses of bifurcation (the veering off into a new direction and the simultaneity of alternate lines of development) (Deleuze 1989: 49/47/68). The soon-to-be Contessa quite abruptly switches companions, taking her down a drastically different path. But this scene was remembered by two different people, each in their own way and with their own slight variations. Each recollection of the event occurs at a different time in the movie, and they have their own unique camera angles and divergent details, even though the dialogue is the same. What we note especially is the sudden instant of the slap, that crack in the flow of time, when the next moment is completely undetermined, entirely discontinuous with the present. But we also observe the simultaneous forking paths: in one recollection, the slapped man looks longer to the Contessa after the slap, while in the other case, he quickly looks to the Count (Figure 12). So there are two sorts of temporal simultaneity in that dramatic moment: (1) the Contessa's prior course and the new detour converge upon one another at the moment of the slap, bringing 'before' and 'after' together all at once; and also (2), there is a simultaneity of the different perspectival renditions of the same course of action.



Figure 12. Mankiewicz's *Barefoot Contessa* (1954). Top: the Count slaps the soon-to-be Contessa's current lover, causing a fork in the story's development; bottom: the subsequent deviation in the story is remembered with slight variations by different people (left and right).

Now, is it not also the case that when we recall the past, we often fill in missing details that we were previously unsure about, and in that way create bifurcations of the same remembered event? Each time we recall some incident, the recollection seems to vary slightly from the other times when we remembered it. If it were exactly the same with each recollection, then would it not be a sort of automatism on account of the boring redundancy? Perhaps these memories have the character of the past not merely because they differ from the present but also because each recollection differs from the others. That might suggest that when a memorable bifurcation occurs, implied in it are many virtual ways to recall it.

We will keep this in mind while examining another of Deleuze's examples of bifurcating time: Mankiewicz's *A Letter to Three Wives* (1949) (Deleuze 1989: 49/47/68). In this story, there are three married couples. All the husbands share a common female friend, Addie.

One day, she writes a letter to all three wives, which they read together. Addie explains she ran off with one of their husbands. However, she does not specify which man it is. The wives will be unable to find out until later that night when they see if their husband comes home to them. During that day, each wife reflects on her marriage, looking for what might have gone wrong in the past. So the unpredictable forking of receiving the surprising letter spurs each one to flash back to a moment in the past where their relationship seemed to take a turn (or fork) for the worse. A forking in the present, then, recalls a different forking in the past. In one case, a wife, new to her social circle, feels out of place. Then at a dinner event, she suddenly happens upon her husband and Addie chatting privately outside in the dark. We can see in the wife's face that she recognises even back then there is some implicit importance to this event, even though it is not yet evident. So, the present forking event of receiving the letter calls her mind back to the previous forking when she discovered her husband chatting outside in the dark with Addie. But then later in the story, she receives a message that seems to confirm her suspicions, although it is still ambiguous, and she makes that same facial expression again, linking all three moments together. Hence, the present bifurcation is not just a flashback; it also in a way is preparing itself for future recollections, by having implicit and indeterminate significances that might later unfold through another dually recollective and precollective forking. Thus, we see even further how bifurcational flashbacks render 'befores' simultaneous with 'afters' (Figure 13).

Yet, these cinematic examples show the union of *particular* past memories with actual present ones. The second synthesis of time, however, involves an even more basic simultaneity of 'before' and 'after'. But, first we need to observe the danger of seeing time as initially an event happening purely in the present, then secondly moving into the past. The problem is that the past itself has a temporal character that is different from that of the present. Seeing a past event merely as a former present is regarding the past as a modification or as a degree of the present. Yet, if the past and present are different in kind, then the past is not just a former presence; it has a temporal character all its own. *Daybreak* begins in the present, with the hero having just shot his love rival. At the end of the film, that same initial event is recalled with the moments just leading up to it. But throughout the movie, we come to see the hero's loving, calm and patient side. His murder, with all its violent passionate anger, loses its character of actual presence, as moments of calm humanity take its place. It is an act he cannot change, unlike how he is in control of his



Figure 13. A wife in Mankiewicz's *A Letter to Three Wives* (1949) experiences three bifurcational moments, the middle of which being dually both a recollection and a 'precollection'.

current actions, as for example his own willing decision to kill himself at the end. Present moments somehow become radically different sorts of moments in time, not as being 'less present' but as being something real that is recalled in the present as a moment completely different than the present one. The past has something relatively established about it, while the present is more indeterminate.

This poses two problems for explaining memory. One is that the present moment in a way disappears from presence, in that it ceases to be an influenceable and active present, and yet all the while it still exists in another form, with its own unique temporal character and traits that differ in kind and not in degree from the present in passage. So, it is not even a matter of the present fading away, becoming less of a present. The present becomes something it is not, the past. But how can this radical transition be explained if it is not a graduated continuous modification? Yet also, if there is exclusively the present that abruptly becomes past, then we have another similar difficulty in explaining memory. As a present moment goes deeper into the past, if the change is continuous, then it remains tied to the present moment it once was, because in a way, it still is that present, only in a diminished form. But if 'after' succeeds 'before' without any overlap or graduated change

between them, then passing moments have no actual connection to the present they once were. The murder at the beginning of *Daybreak* ceases to be. The viewer and hero are constantly living through a changing present. But, the ending recollection of the murder is presumably tied to a present that we experienced at the film's opening. So, how does the passing present maintain its recollective correspondence to the present it once was, if the transition is abrupt and the former present ceases to exist? According to Deleuze, Bergson's solution to these problems is the 'past in general' (*le passé en général*) (Deleuze 1991: 56–9/51–5; Deleuze 1994: 81–2/110–11). Bergson himself, however, does not frequently use this specific phrase. In one of the rare instances, Bergson writes:

> Whenever we are trying to recover a recollection [...] we detach ourselves from the present in order to replace ourselves, first in the *past in general*, then in a certain region of the past – a work of adjustment, something like the focusing of a camera. But our recollection still remains virtual [...]. Little by little it comes into view like a condensing cloud [...]. (Bergson 2001a: 171/148; my emphasis)

Deleuze and Deleuzian Bergsonists, according to Mathew Kelly, interpret this to mean that there is a general past that is coexistent with the present, as would be suggested by the cone diagram, and that present events have a dual character, being both past and present simultaneously (Kelly 2008: 20). It is important to broaden the analysis from the particular pasts as in the cinema examples to the 'past in general', because the second synthesis is not so much a process of actively overlaying past memories synthetically with present events; rather, the simultaneity of past and present is already inherent to the structure of our immediate temporalised consciousness. It is not just that a present moment passes into the past while its virtual memorial content remains in our consciousness. No moment, not even the first in our lives, is able to pass unless it did not already begin in the 'past in general'. So the general past is a prerequisite for the passage of the present:

> How would any present whatsoever pass, if it were not past *at the same time* as present? The past would never be constituted if it *had not been* constituted first of all, at the same time that it was present. [...] The past is 'contemporaneous' with the present that it *has been*. (Deleuze 1991: 58/54; original emphasis)

Or as Deleuze further puts it, past and present, 'before' and 'after', are 'crystallized' together. Bergson speaks of crystallisation when elaborating on his cone diagram, discussing the general idea, whose essence 'is to be unceasingly going backwards and forwards between

the plane of action and that of pure memory' (Bergson 2001a: 220/180). In the cone diagram, the general idea at point *S* 'would take the clearly defined form of a bodily attitude or of an uttered word', but at the top layer *AB*, 'it would wear the aspect, no less defined, of the thousand individual images into which its fragile unity would break up' (see again Figure 8) (220/180). Yet, the general idea does not remain fixed at either extremity; rather, it 'consists in the double current which goes from the one to the other,–always ready either to crystallize into uttered words or to evaporate into memories' (221/180). Here Bergson is not using 'crystallize' in exactly the same sense as Deleuze uses it. For Bergson, it refers to the condensation of memory down into current bodily expression. Yet, note that this crystallisation happens at the tip of the cone, at the immediacy of action, where the entirety of our memory makes direct contact with the present instant of our actual bodily activity. It is not that some memories are further up in the cone while others are found lower within it. Each layer has every memory; but in the higher cuts, the memories are more expanded into discrete images. Down at the tip, all memories are still being expressed, just none are regarded in their distinction from the others. This is like how when finally performing a practised piece, the musician's fingers do not express each prior recital individually; rather, the movements express all past enactments together at once in the present motion. Deleuze's crystallisation, then, is not so far off from Bergson's meaning of the term, because for Deleuze it is the intensely tight union of the 'past in general' with the immediate present. Deleuze also speaks of this interlocking of the past and present as being two contracted but divergent tendencies, like with Bergson's symmetrical jets of time. Bergson notes that 'the formation of memory is never posterior to the formation of perception; it is contemporaneous with it. Step by step, as perception is created, the memory of it is projected beside it, as the shadow falls beside the body' (Bergson 1920: 157/138). Memory, then, is 'twofold at every moment, its very up-rush being in two jets exactly symmetrical, one of which falls back towards the past whilst the other springs forward towards the future' (Bergson 1920: 160/140). To illustrate, Deleuze suggests his own diagram in *Cinema 2*: *The Time-Image* (Figure 14).

Deleuze writes that this fundamental operation of time is what constitutes the crystal-image:

> since the past is constituted not after the present that it was but at the same time, time has to split itself in two at each moment as present and past, which differ from each other in nature, or, what amounts to the same thing, it has to split the present in two heterogeneous directions, one of which is launched towards the future while the other falls into the past. Time has to split at the

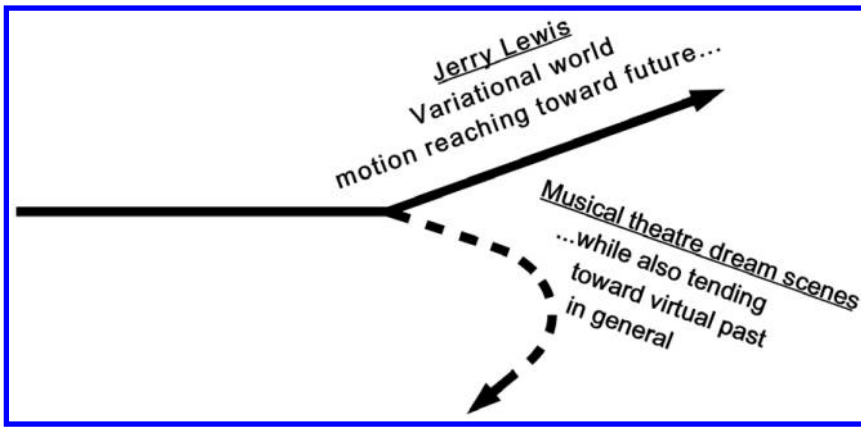


Figure 14. Deleuze's diagram for Bergson's double jets of time, with additional description. (Source: based on a figure in Deleuze 1989: 295/285/109.)

> same time as it sets itself out or unrolls itself: it splits in two dissymmetrical jets, one of which makes all the present pass on, while the other preserves all the past. Time consists of this split, and it is this, it is time, that we *see in the crystal*. [. . .] We see in the crystal the perpetual foundation of time, non-chronological time [. . .]. (Deleuze 1989: 81/79/108–9; original emphasis)

Thus, the present moment immediately *self-distinguishes* itself:

> What we see in the crystal is therefore a dividing in two that the crystal itself constantly causes to turn on itself, that it prevents from reaching completion, because it is a perpetual *self-distinguishing*, a distinction in the process of being produced; which always resumes the distinct terms in itself, in order constantly to relaunch them. (Deleuze 1989: 81–2/79/109; original emphasis)

This self-distinguishing will be important later when we examine Kamler's *Chronopolis* (1983). For now, we note Bergson's example of 'paramnesia' or déjà vu, the illusion of already having been there. As well in this description we find his other rare usage of 'past in general', for he writes that in such a 'false recognition' of paramnesia, 'the illusory memory is never localized in a particular point of the past; it dwells in an indeterminate past, the past in general' (Bergson 1920: 137/119). Deleuze emphasises here that because déjà vu is both a recollection of a presumed past but also a direct perception of the present, 'there is *a recollection of the present*, contemporaneous with the present itself' (Deleuze 1989: 79/77/106; my emphasis). Deleuze then refers us to a number of filmed musicals with dream sequences that resemble déjà vu-like recollections. These 'memories' do not recall real events in the past,



Figure 15. The dreamlike 'past in general'. Left: Minnelli's *Yolanda and the Thief* (1945); right: Minnelli's *The Band Wagon* (1953).

but rather they merely have the feeling of the past as if given presently, although in a dream-like way. The colours are vibrantly bright yet with a pastel softening; and while the scenes depicted are fantastical, they, like dreams, vaguely and indirectly play out the dramatic tensions going on during that part of the story's progress. We see this, for example, in Minnelli's *Yolanda and the Thief* (1945) and *The Band Wagon* (1953) (Figure 15). This unspecified past in the dream scenes, then, illustrates the present memorial facet of Bergson's 'past in general'.

But, if the present moment is unique from the past, then duration also involves injections of radical difference and newness into present action. To help us conceptualise this, Deleuze refers to scenes in works by comedic performer, actor and director Jerry Lewis, where the chaotic forces of variation reverberate through his body and the world around him (Deleuze 1989: 65–6/62–3/88–90). These forceful energies produce new phenomenal data that push duration forward by infusing it with waves of original differential content. Consider, for example, how Lewis's body spasmodically collides with a malfunctioning, catastrophic world around him in *Who's Minding the Store?* (1963), *The Patsy* (1964) and *It's Only Money* (1962) (Figure 16).

Recall how the present instant is always in a state of self-distinction: it is both the moment that it is tending to become while also being the moment that is right on the verge of passing away. Now consider Deleuze's analysis of the creation of temporality in a Polish animated film: 'In [. . .] *Chronopolis*, Piotr Kamler *fashioned* time out of two elements, small balls manipulated with pointed instruments, and supple sheets covering the balls. The two elements formed moments' (Deleuze 1989: 105/101–2/137–8; original emphasis). Notice he speaks here of forming moments, and not a flow of time, and also not an extending



Figure 16. Jerry Lewis and catastrophic world variation. Top: Tashlin's *Who's Minding the Store?* (1963); middle: Lewis's *The Patsy* (1964); bottom: Tashlin's *It's Only Money* (1962).

passage of time. When the two elements make contact, some new variation results in the sheets of clay. The figure, with each contact, becomes something different (Figure 17). But, it does so by changing from what it already was. What it was, and what it is becoming – its 'before' and its 'after' – coincide with each moment of contact, because the figures always seem to be in-between different and unique formations.

The portrayal of time in this scene is not the extending and flowing passage of duration through which the changes happen, like how each frame of the movie-film blurs together with its neighbours. Each moment is a variation; all are bifurcations, because not everything in each moment is explicitly predictable in the prior one. Synthesis is found completely in each single frame alone, where the 'before' is being synthesised simultaneously with its 'after'. So even though there is a steady flow of alteration throughout this sequence, in any one created moment, there is already the temporality of becoming.

Deleuze also offers Ozu's 'still life' scenes as examples of images of the pure form of time:

> The vase in *Late Spring* is interposed between the daughter's half smile and the beginning of her tears. There is becoming, change, passage. But the form of what changes does not itself change, does not pass on. This is time, time itself, 'a little time in its pure state' [...] The still life is time, for everything that changes is in time, but time does not itself change [...] Ozu's still lifes endure, have a duration, over ten seconds of the vase: this duration of the vase is precisely the representation of that which endures, through the succession of changing states. A bicycle may also [...] represent the unchanging form of that which moves, so long as it is at rest, motionless, stood against the wall [...]. The bicycle, the vase and the still lifes are the pure and direct images of time. (Deleuze 1989: 17/16–17/27–8)

The daughter has been reluctant to marry, because this would leave her widowed father all alone, creating too much drastic change in both his and her lives. Yet in this scene, she consents to her father's wishes, and decides in fact that she will marry. However, at that moment of her decision, Ozu shows the still life scene of the vase. This grand climactic moment of the film's narrative is substituted by a pure visual stillness. We feel an intense dramatic change while perceiving a motionless image. The actual events coming before and after are not present in the still life, but they are both implied in the same still image, because this transition point in the story marks the most drastically different 'before' and 'after'. We feel in this moment the coincidence of before and after in their motionless simultaneity (Figure 18).



Figure 17. 'Before' collides each moment with 'after' as ball-tipped sticks mutate sheets of clay in Kamler's *Chronopolis* (1983).



Figure 18. A daughter makes a life-changing decision, but at the peak the drama, Ozu shows a still life image of a vase, in his *Late Spring* (1949).

IV. Conclusion

So contrary to time as an extending process in motion, we have instead a still image of time. James Williams's process interpretation was able to explain the second synthesis of time, Bergson's pure past, as it is in *Difference and Repetition*, but not as it is in *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, where time is evidently a matter of instantaneity and simultaneity. For Williams the problem is that the cinema books 'fall short of a satisfactory rendition of Deleuze's philosophy of time', and so we should not consider them as a principle source when accounting for Deleuze's notion of temporality (Williams 2011: 161, 163). What we instead propose here is that the process reading alone provides an unsatisfactory account of Deleuze's philosophy of time, because it is unable to bring together Deleuze's major writings on temporality, and also it does not do justice to their phenomenological value. And Deleuze, a life-long cinephile, tells us that when studying philosophy, cinema was a major part of his intellectual endeavours: 'after the war, I started going to the movies again, but this time I was a philosophy student. [. . .] It was not a matter of applying philosophy to cinema. I just went straight from philosophy to cinema and back again' (Deleuze 2006: 283–4/263–4).[6] So, would we be surprised if throughout his life Deleuze developed his ideas on temporality while he watched and studied films, and only later in his career devoted entire books to the art form?[7] There seems to be reason enough to regard Deleuze's *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* as a core resource for investigating his theory of time. And as we have seen, it is in this text that Deleuze gives a 'buggered' reading of Bergson's duration. Deleuze saw his task of reading texts in the history of philosophy as interpreting them in such a way that they give birth to 'monstrous' offspring that are really the product of that philosopher's thought, while at the same time being in some way alien to it (Deleuze 1995: 6/15). In the case of his reading of Bergson, Deleuze uncovers a sort of temporality that is fully given even before there is the motion of succession. Because Deleuze refers us to specific cinema scenes, we can actively experience the collisions of images that give us impressions of still temporality. Also, because we are given these impressions, Deleuze's explication of motionless time is of particular interest to phenomenological analyses. In Carné's *Daybreak*, when the hero returns from a flashback, images of the past collide with those of the present, and the tensions between them give us the viewers the impression of the time in-between. This is time given to our awareness as a phenomenon. And Deleuze provides the theoretical

material for concrete analyses of this sort of motionless time that is intensive, rather than flowing and extensive. Thus, phenomenology could expand its analyses of time consciousness to include a different sort of temporal phenomenon, if it takes note of Deleuze's writings on cinema.

Notes

1. For Husserl's analyses of the consciousness of the flowing succession of time, see for example the lectures from the year 1905 in Husserl 1991/1966a: §§ 7–45 and from this text's Supplement, paragraphs 1–52, 56–7, 239, 252–3, 257–63, 272–4, 313–25. The continuous running-off of retentions – along with the horizontal integration of retentions, intentions and protentions – constitutes time-consciousness in its unbroken flow. For more on the passive synthesis of moments of our awareness combined on the basis of associating similarities, which constitutes the continuity of the flow of phenomena, see Husserl 1974: 370–8; 1966b: 1–35, 65–78, 117–48; 2001: 27–72, 106–21, 162–95. Merleau-Ponty builds from Husserl's horizontal integration model of time-consciousness and characterises the flow of phenomenal time as a thrust of 'transition synthesis' (*synthèse de transition*/*Übergangssynthesis*): 'there is time as [. . .] a fountain: the water changes while the fountain remains [. . .]; each successive wave takes over the functions of its predecessor: from being the thrusting wave in relation to the one in front of it, it becomes, in its turn and in relation to another, the wave that is pushed; [. . .] from the source to the fountain jet, the waves are not separate; there is only one thrust . . .]. Hence the justification for the metaphor of the river' (Merleau-Ponty 1958: 489–90/484).
2. In parenthetical citations, the pages for the English version are given first and the French second, with the exception of Deleuze's *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, where we give the first English edition first, the second English edition second and the French edition third.
3. The first and second chapters of Simon Duffy's *The Logic of Expression: Quality, Quantity and Intensity in Spinoza, Hegel and Deleuze* (2006) give an excellent, detailed account of Deleuze's calculus reading of Spinoza's 12th Letter.
4. The prime-markings for the *A*s are based on the French transcription by Denis Lemarchand at *La Voix de Gilles Deleuze en ligne* (< http://univ-paris8.fr >) rather than on the one at < http://webdeleuze.com > . See either the *Gallica bibliothèque numérique* (< http://gallica.bnf.fr >) or the *Voix de Gilles Deleuze* recordings, part 2, at around 07.50 minutes.
5. In his *Metalogical Theory of Reference: Realism and Essentialism in Semantics*, Roger Vergauwen offers a formulation of this example. Consider the following inference (1) Oedipus wants to marry Jocasta, (2) Jocasta is the mother of Oedipus, thus (3) Oedipus wants to marry his mother. If we only look at the extensional meanings, the 'normal' denotations of the expressions, this is a valid inference. But, if we consider the intensional meanings that are more context dependent, this is not a valid inference (Vergauwen 1993: 27–8).
6. Michel Ciment describes Deleuze as being a cinephile already in 1956 (Dosse 2010: 105–6).
7. This idea along with numerous others in this article (for example, time as difference, and the non-redundancy of recollection) are the contributions of Roland Breeur of the University of Leuven, Belgium.

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Beyond Figuration and Narration: Deleuzian Approaches to Gwen John's Paintings

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Abstract

In this paper I trace pictorial acts that move beyond figuration and narration, particularly focusing on Gwen John's portraits of women and girls, the work of her maturity as an artist. In doing this I make connections between John's and Cézanne's letters about their painting techniques and direction. The analysis draws on Deleuze and Guattari's approaches to the work of art. I discuss in particular the concept of faciality in the *Thousand Plateaus* and the problem of painting forces in Deleuze's work on Bacon, *The Logic of Sensation*. My argument is that an analysis that goes beyond phenomenology and semiotics opens new ways of seeing and appreciating a modernist woman artist's paintings, and sheds new light on the way her art allows the female figure to emerge as a woman-becoming-imperceptible within a patriarchal regime of signs.

Keywords: Gwen John, Cézanne, faciality, colourism, rhythm, form, painting forces, becoming-imperceptible

> I learnt so much at those two visits. I didn't know how much till now. Some things I had found out but it was satisfactory to have them confirmed and expressed well. For instance, I said 'a cat or a man, it's the same thing', you looked rather surprised. I meant it's an affair of volumes.
>
> NLW MS 21468D, ff. 180v

In August 1936 Gwen John[1] an expatriate Welsh artist, who mostly lived and worked in Paris, was writing to her artist friend and fellow student

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at the Slade, Ursula Tyrwhitt, a letter containing a significant albeit strange statement: "'a cat or a man, it's the same thing" [. . .] it's an affair of volumes'. This epistolary extract concentrates in a rather radical and provocative way the artist's ideas around art in general and painting techniques in particular: although John's work was mainly revolving around portraits of women and young girls, her art moved beyond the conventions and constraints of figurative painting. In this paper I trace pictorial acts that move beyond figuration and narration, particularly focusing on John's portraits of women and girls, the work of her maturity as an artist. In doing this, I follow approaches to the work of art informed by Deleuze and Guattari's philosophies. My argument is that an analysis that goes beyond phenomenology and semiotics opens new ways of seeing and appreciating a modernist woman artist's paintings and can shed new light on the way her art allows the female figure to emerge as a woman-becoming-imperceptible within a patriarchal regime of signs.

I. Portraits and Faces

Gwen John was mostly a portrait painter although she also did some still lives, landscapes and in the early phases of her work she drew and painted her cat a lot.[2] Since the early phases of the appraisal of her work, John's portraits have been discussed 'as of feminine gentleness, delicacy and refinement . . . a world of pale spinster passions . . . modest paintings of lone women in domestic interiors' (Tickner 2004: 31–2). John's lonely figures have further invoked strong affects and enthusiastic critical responses; what is recurring in the range of critical appreciations of John's work is the centrality of the face in the discussions that revolve around her portraits. But the face is also central in Deleuze and Guattari's analyses; as Ronald Bogue has noted: 'the human face [is] a key component not only in painting but in the functioning of language and sign systems, the formation of subjectivity and the deployment of power relations' (Bogue 2003: 79).

Bogue discusses language in the context of what Deleuze and Guattari have theorised as 'regimes of signs' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988), wherein body and language are interrelated and thus 'the configuration of the face is inextricably tied to the evolution of the voice' (Bogue 2003: 81). Moreover, language is not seen within the structuralist frame of Saussurean linguistics 'as a self-referential system of acoustic images (signifiers) and mental concepts (signifieds)' (Bogue 2003: 82). For Deleuze and Guattari, language is considered as action and is

charted within larger socio-historical and cultural networks, multi-levelled assemblages of actions:

> We call any specific formalization of expression a regime of signs, at least when the expression is linguistic. A regime of signs constitutes a semiotic system. But it appears difficult to analyse semiotic systems in themselves: there is always a form of content that is simultaneously inseparable from and independent of the form of expression and the two forms pertain to assemblages that are not principally linguistic. (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 111)

What is the role of the face then within the polyvalent regimes of signs? According to Deleuze and Guattari, the face is central in a process, which they call *faciality*: 'the face crystallises all redundancies, it emits and receives, releases and recaptures signifying signs … the face is the Icon proper to the signifying regime' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 115). *Faciality* is then a material process, '[reigning] over that whole constellation of significances and interpretations' (115). *Faciality* further depends on the specific regime of signs it is related to. In Deleuze and Guattari's (1988) analyses there are four semiotic systems or regimes of signs: (1) a presignifying primitive regime; (2) a signifying despotic regime; (3) a postsignifying passional regime; and (4) a countersignifying nomadic regime.[3] These historically conditioned systems have their own principles and characteristics, although they always overlap and interact with each other. The role of the face is crucial within the despotic and the passional regime, but not important in the primitive regime, while the face in the nomadic regime is not really elaborated. In his commentary of the despotic regime, Bogue gives a comprehensive outline of its properties and constitutive elements:

> The biunivocal correlation of signifier and signified, the dominance of the arbitrary signifier over the signified, the identification of the signifier with law and authority … the positioning of signifiers in an infinite chain of self-referential interpretation—all are characteristics of the despotic regime [ultimately associated] with the state form of social organisation. (Bogue 2003: 83)

While 'the despot becomes the unifying source of all signification' (Bogue 2003: 84), there is no central organisation in the passional regime; signs are rather organised 'in relation to an obsessional point of subjectification, an object of fixation from which issue two forms of the subject: the subject of enunciation [the one who speaks] and the subject of the statement [the one who is spoken of]' (Bogue 2003: 84). In this light, the face that is most interesting for Deleuze and Guattari's analyses

is the face that is effectuated by both the despotic and the passional regime, the face 'that brings together a despotic wall of interconnected signifiers and passional black holes of subjective absorption' (Bogue 2003: 90), what Deleuze and Guattari call the *white wall–black hole system* (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 167).

Indeed, Deleuze and Guattari stress the way language and faces are inextricably linked, and point to the multifarious ways that faces visualise and sustain 'arborescences and dichotomies' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 179). What is therefore distinctive about Deleuze and Guattari's approach is the way they link facial expressions to the function of the disciplinary society, particularly stressing the role of the face in processes of subjectification. While charting the codification of the face, Deleuze and Guattari have also considered *lines of flight*: 'how do you get out of the black hole? How do you break through the wall? How do you dismantle the face?' (186). Dismantling the face, becoming imperceptible through colour, flying away towards the realm of the faceless, this is then 'the problem' of painting for Deleuze and Guattari. But, how can you deterritorialise the face when painting portraits? The painter can do that, Deleuze argues, by liberating lines and colours on her canvas (Deleuze 2003: 52).[4] Cézanne, upon whom Deleuze draws, has emphasised the function of lines and colours in painting:

> Lines parallel to the horizon give breadth … lines perpendicular to the horizon give depth. But nature for us [men] is more depth than surface, whence the need to introduce into our light vibrations, represented by the reds and yellows, a sufficient amount of blueness to give the feel of air.[5]

Liberating lines or colours thus becomes crucial: 'it is through colour that you become imperceptible' (Deleuze 2003: 187). Deleuze's work on Bacon has taken this proposition further and it is to artistic actions of dismantling the face and becoming imperceptible through the modulation of colour that I have focused my analysis on John's portraits. Having discussed faces and the concept of faciality in Deleuze and Guattari's vocabulary, my second move will now be to clarify the distinction between the figurative and the figural in Deleuze's thought.

II. On the Figure and the Motif

Deleuze discusses the problem of the figure drawing on Jean-François Lyotard's concept of the *figural*, noting in a footnote how Lyotard uses it 'as a substantive in order to oppose it to the figurative' (Deleuze 2003: 173). Deleuze's footnote is the only reference to Lyotard in his book

on Bacon, since there are differences between his and Lyotard's take on the notion of the figural: while Lyotard makes connections between the figural and the unconscious, Deleuze 'relates the figural to sensation, affect and the play of material forces' (Bogue 2003: 116). Although Bogue acknowledges and discusses these differences, he nevertheless argues that Lyotard's notion is important in understanding Deleuze's analysis.

In Lyotard's (1971) exposition of the concept then, 'language points to a world outside itself and thereby opens itself to the visual' (Bogue 2003: 113). But how can the 'truth' of the visual be disclosed? If it becomes readable and enters the order of language, then its truth is lost. It is only in the event[6] that its truth can emerge; as an event, the figural disrupts temporal and spatial orders and creates conditions of possibility 'for the essential heterogeneity of the visual field [to be] approached' (Lyotard cited in Bogue 2003: 114).

Andrew Gibson has further noted that 'the figural' in Lyotard's thought is an energetic and transgressive force, which violates the rules of discourse, refuses to respect the laws of its invariants and its spacings, and cannot be accommodated within any account of pure forms (Gibson 1996: 61).

Genealogical approaches to the history of painting in general and of portraiture in particular have indeed unveiled significant *events* in the process of artistic creation and reception.[7] More specifically, Cézanne's and Bacon's work have been considered in Deleuze's analysis as critical events in artistic practices of dismantling the face, going beyond the boundaries of illustrative and narrative art and introducing new ideas and techniques in the modulation of colour. In this genealogical line then, John's paintings and particularly her self-portraits and portraits of women will be seen as events in the visualisation of the female figure in its Deleuzian conceptualisation, as a bloc of sensations, affects and percepts, a theme that I will now follow.

In discussing the figural, Lyotard has suggested that 'to learn to see is to unlearn to recognise' (Lyotard 1971: 114). How can painting contribute to this process of *unlearning*? Since the figural is not connected to the unconscious for Deleuze, his suggestion is embedded within the material assemblage of painting practices:

> The Painter has many things in [his] head, or around him, or in his studio. Now everything he has in his head or around him is already in the canvas, more or less virtually, more or less actually, before he begins his work. They are all present in the canvas as so many images, actual or virtual, so that

> the painter does not have to cover a blank surface, but rather would have to empty it out, clear it, clean it. (Deleuze 2003: 86)

For Deleuze, therefore, 'the painter's problem is not how to enter into the canvas, since [he] is already there, but how to get out of it, getting out of clichés, getting out of probability' (Deleuze 2003: 96). Escaping clichés, following lines of flight, create conditions of possibility for the work of art to emerge as 'a bloc of sensations … a compound of percepts and affects … a monument standing up alone' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 164). But once the painter has deterritorialised herself from the striated spaces of the canvas, she still needs to return to it, open up smooth spaces and confront the chaos of the world and the infinity of time through creation. 'Perhaps the peculiarity of art is to pass through the finite in order to rediscover, to restore the infinite', Deleuze and Guattari have poetically noted (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 197). Here, Cézanne's ideas of grasping the moment through painting, opens up a plane of new possibilities: 'A minute of the world goes by. To paint it in its reality! And to forget everything else. To become reality itself' (in Doran 2001: 115). Indeed, Cézanne's idea of 'becoming the minute' is at the heart of Deleuze and Guattari's discussion of the work of art as a compound of sensations, percepts, affects and becomings:

> It is Mrs Dalloway who perceives the town—but because she has passed into the town like 'a knife through everything' and becomes imperceptible herself. *Affects are precisely the nonhuman becomings of man, just as percepts*—including the town—are *non human landscapes of nature*. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 169; original emphasis)

But 'to become with the world' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 169), painters have to overcome the prejudices, biases and clichés they were nurtured with and face the world and their canvas with fresh eyes and clear minds. Only then, Cézanne argues, can the artist become 'a receptacle of sensations' (in Doran 2001: 111) and can render her mind 'a photographic plate' where the evanescent forces of nature can be recorded and transferred to, 'translated' into the canvas. What is interesting in Cézanne's urge above is the importance of 'forgetting' as a precondition for painting the reality of the fleeting moment.

'Memory plays a small part in art', Deleuze and Guattari have notably argued (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 167). This anti-memory stance may seem to contradict their idea that the work of art should be conceived as a monument, standing up alone (164). But the monument in Deleuze and Guattari's discussion of art 'is not something commemorating a past, it is a bloc of present sensations that owe their preservation only

to themselves … the monument's action is not memory but fabulation' (168) they write, further explaining that 'creative fabulation has nothing to do with a memory … or with a fantasy' (171).

Fabulation is thus conceived as a creative process through which the artist frees life by recurrent interventions, artistic practices that throw light on the virtual elements and possibilities that surround and condition what has been actualised, 'those visions fixed in time and space', or what Giacometti calls styles (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 171). Virginia Woolf's literary modalities of expanding a moment into duration can easily be transferred from the plane of writing to the plane of painting, Deleuze and Guattari argue (172), through the channels of creative fabulation.

But here the question arises: how can the artist 'create the syntactical or plastic methods and materials necessary' for creative fabulation? (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 173–4). If sensations, percepts and affects go beyond consciousness, feelings and memories, exceeding the actual, the lived, the narrated and the remembered, how can they be possibly expressed on the canvas without being dependent on a subject who feels and thinks, or rendered into referents of a symbolic object? How can a painter create a landscape that sees, or a portrait as a percept in the absence of woman? How could the mirror exist without the old woman it reflects?[8] Deleuze notes that the opposition of the figure to the figurative is indeed a very subtle and precarious process. How can pure figures emerge in the canvas without having been contaminated by and restricted within the limitations and constraints of 'academic concerns' and figurative clichés, without having been facialised by despotic and passional regimes of signs?

This is indeed a difficult process, passing through a series of stages that Deleuze carefully delineates. The painter is first trying to clean her head and her canvas from figurative givens and clichés, what Deleuze calls the 'prepictorial figuration'; then she goes through 'the second figuration' when she tries to reconstitute the figure through the pictorial act (Deleuze 2003: 97). There is a thus a fort/da movement in painting: in her first encounter with the canvas, the painter has to step back, clean the canvas and her head, prepare her brain to become, according to Cézanne, 'a recording device, a receptacle of sensations' (in Doran 2001: 111); then she has to become attentive to her image, surrender herself to it, stop thinking and try to see, meditate. Only then will she become able to reconstitute a visual whole, 'a motif' for Cézanne or 'a diagram of forces' for Deleuze out of which a non-figurative figure might emerge. In Cézanne's thought, having a motif is indeed a crucial condition for art

'to be realised' (in Doran 2001: 112). But what is a motif? The motif is a pictorial assemblage of sensations and becomings, the appearance in art of all the changes that continuously happen in the world and which we so often fail to notice. In Cézanne's poetics:

> There must not be even one loose stitch, a gap where emotion, light and truth can escape. Try to understand, I guide my entire painting together all the time. I bring together all the scattered elements with the same energy and the same faith. Everything we see is fleeting, isn't it? Nature is always the same, but nothing about her that we see endures. Our art must convey a glimmer of her endurance with the elements, the appearance of all her changes. It must give us the sense of her eternity. (in Doran 2001: 110)

When Cézanne talks about Nature, he includes, of course, human nature, 'the nature which is out there … and the nature which is in here' (in Doran 2001: 111). The motif is essential whether an artist paints a landscape or a portrait and in attaining her motif, the artist should strive to find harmony: 'we should find general harmony, like that expressed by colours' (in Doran 2001: 112). There is an exquisite moment in Cézanne's discourse on the idea of the motif – a sense of being bathed in colour while painting a portrait – that is reminiscent of John's monochromatic portraits of women:

> Well, when I was painting *Vieille au chapelet* (Old Woman with a Rosary), I saw a tone of Flaubert, an atmosphere, something indefinable, a bluish and russet colour, which emanated, it seemed to me from *Madam Bovary*. In vain I tried reading Apuleius to chase away the obsession, which I feared would be too literary and would hurt my painting. Nothing worked. This great-bluish-red aura descended over me and sang in my soul. I was completely bathed in it. (in Doran 2001: 112)

Maybe when John was painting her own *Young Woman Holding a Rosary*[9] she might have felt being bathed in a blend of grey colours and tones that we can see in this painting as well as in the other three virtually identical paintings: *The Pilgrim*,[10] *Young Woman in a Grey Cloak*[11] and *Woman with Cloak*.[12] Bathed in grey, like her portraits, John must have felt safely confirmed as an artist since, according to Cézanne, 'if a painter has never painted grey, he is not a painter' (in Doran 2001: 118). This feeling must have been reinforced by the enthusiastic letter of her Slade friend Michel Salaman who wrote to her in 1926 about the *Pilgrim*:

> the you I hold tight to is the you of over twenty years ago and I suppose a different being to the one I am writing to; yet not entirely for I have your picture and there is so much of the Gwen I know in it that I love having it and want more. (cited in Langdale 1987: 165)

Cézanne's fear for his painting 'not to be hurt', as expressed above, is also exemplary of the precariousness of moving beyond 'the figurative' that Deleuze's analysis has identified. How can the artist go through this narrow gorge, create conditions of possibility for pure 'figures' to emerge, and what would a move beyond 'the figurative' and the narrative entail? Lyotard (1971) addresses this question by delineating 'two ontologically distinct spaces: a textual space of recognisable coded entities and a figural space of metamorphosing unconscious forces' (cited in Bogue 2003: 115). The figural can thus have various manifestations, but Lyotard chooses Cézanne's paintings as an exemplar of the materialisation of the figural in painting. In doing so, he particularly points out how the Cézannean landscapes disrupt the homogeneity of space and raise an aesthetic awareness of the loss of visible unity. In this context Cézanne's landscapes become events for the manifestation of the figural.

Lyotard is further attentive to the form–figural relation: the figural traverses form without destroying it, but rather it opens form to its other (Gibson 1996: 62). Cézanne has lucidly grounded this rather abstract statement in reflecting on what the art of painting should grasp:

> I mean that in this orange I am peeling, in an apple, a ball, a head, there is a culminating point, you see, and this point, in spite of terrible effects of light, shadow, colour sensations, is always the closest to our eye. The edges of objects fade towards another point on the horizon.[13]

The form of a subject or an object is therefore retained if it can be presented and seen in a single colour: 'in order to paint in the essence of the world, the vast world, one has to have the eyes of a painter who, in a single colour, sees the object, seizes it and relates it to other objects within [himself]' (Cézanne in Doran 2001: 121). Taking this proposition in John's paintings again, it is through the grey that the female figure emerges in *The Pilgrim*. The painting is not about a woman in grey: the grey constitutes the female figure; it becomes the woman that the painter or the viewer seizes and relates to other objects within herself. As Salaman aptly put it in his letter to John above: 'there is so much of the Gwen I know in it'.

Bogue has further noted that the textual/figural opposition should not be conflated with 'the traditional opposition between representational and nonrepresentational art' (Bogue 2003: 115). I would further add that establishing boundaries between the textual and the figural is in itself both problematic and impossible. One should rather try to discern volumes of the textual and the figural – perceived signs and

pure sensation – in the work of art in general and in John's portraits in particular. As John was writing to Tyrwhitt, in August 1936, the object – or subject for that reason – in a painting is of no importance; a painter should only be concerned with what would work towards the harmony of the composition:

> As to your drawing, I hope you will make a picture of it and as you were not satisfied with the fair figure put something else there, a pot of flowers for instance. Personally I thought the fair figure too important for a good composition and should have preferred a smaller object.[14]

John's epistolary advice to her friend on how to handle the problem of the 'fair figure' reminds us of Deleuze's take of the figural as a bloc of sensations, affects and the play of material forces, and therefore it is to the discussion of forces that the third analytical move of this paper will now turn.

III. Forces, Rhythm and Form

Gibson has suggested that the figural for Lyotard is an energetic space of forces and 'the liberation of forces is both an aesthetic and a political project' (Gibson 1996: 59). Lyotard, however, does not show how this liberation can be effectuated. Deleuze does this by drawing on Henri Maldiney's (1973) theory of rhythm and its relation to form. As Bogue notes, there is a distinction between perception and sensation in Maldiney's phenomenological theory of rhythm and form.[15] As a rational organisation, perception comes after sensation, an extra-linguistic realm that humans share with animals and wherein unconscious and unreflective becomings occur. Sensation, Deleuze further notes 'is transmitted directly and avoids the detour and boredom of conveying a story' (Deleuze 2003: 36); it is already beyond narration. Movement is crucial in sensation, although in a spiral form of space/time interchanges. Thus the perceptual space of geography with its maps, systems of coordinates and fixed properties is contrasted to the sensory space of the landscape, 'a perspectival world enclosed by a horizon that constantly moves with us as we move' (117).

Art, therefore, for Maldiney renders visible the invisible realm of sensation and Deleuze takes up this thread when he argues that 'the task of painting is defined as the attempt to render visible forces that are not themselves visible' (Deleuze 2003: 56). Deleuze's argument is critically important in my analysis of John's figurative paintings and particularly her portraits and self-portraits: what I have found most

intriguing in these paintings is the way they engulf the viewer in the sensory realm of forces that they have rendered visible. My interest has therefore moved towards exploring this plane of forces, unveiling more about their material and expressive roles, their form and their rhythm.

In following the above analytical interest in John's paintings, I have been drawn by Maldiney's suggestion that art 'is not a discourse [and thus] it is not made of signs but of forms' (Bogue 2003: 118). Just as signs for Deleuze (2001) are not restricted within the signifier–signified relation – they are not recognisable, but can only be sensed or felt – forms for Maldiney are not taken as 'static shapes or as sets of fixed relations; [they should rather be understood] dynamically as a process of spontaneous emergence and self-shaping' (Bogue 2003: 118). This is how form, as a process of 'autogenesis', is inextricably linked to rhythm, 'the unfolding pattern of the self-shaping activity' (Bogue 2003: 119).

Here again, Maldiney's conceptual couplet of form and rhythm as the style that the aesthetic concern should be about makes connection with the importance of rhythm in Deleuze's philosophy of *difference and repetition*. In the study of rhythm, according to Deleuze (2004), there is a distinction between static and dynamic repetition. Static or cadence-repetition should be perceived as 'an isochronic recurrence of identical elements' (Deleuze 2004: 23). Within dynamic or rhythm-repetition, however, 'tonic and intensive values act by creating inequalities or incommensurabilities between metrically equivalent periods of spaces' (23). Dynamic or rhythm-repetition in Deleuze is thus conceptually close to what is rhythm for Maldiney: 'this sense of form in formation, in perpetual transformation in the return of the same' (cited in Bogue 2003: 119).

The figural in John's paintings actually emerges as an effect of perpetual transformations of the figurative. Art historians and critics have particularly noted the repetition and recurrence of themes, gestures and postures in her paintings and particularly her portraits.[16] These recurrences, however, are never mimetic repetitions. John's portraits create a musical rhythm of differences and repetitions that would fascinate her friends and fellow artists. As Salaman was writing to her after her only retrospective exhibition in 1926 at the Chenil Galleries in London:

> It was indeed a chastening joy to stand there amongst those pale quiet songs of yours—like listening to the still music of the harpsichord—only there is nothing antique or archaistic about your work, they are so intensely modern in all but their peacefulness. (cited in Tickner 2004: 45)

It is therefore to the unfolding of this rhythm in paintings that I will now turn: how does rhythm manifest itself in painting? Maldiney (1973) charts three planes in the unfolding of rhythm: 'a vertiginous disclosure of the chaotic world of sensation; a systolic condensation of element towards definite shapes; and a diastolic eruption of forces that dissolve those shapes' (cited in Bogue 2003: 119). We can have glimpses of these three movements in the manifestation of rhythm in artists' narratives, particularly when they talk about the unique experience of losing themselves in their canvas:

> In order to paint a landscape correctly, first I have to discover the geographic strata. Imagine that the history of the world dates from the day when two atoms met, when two whirlwinds, two chemicals joined together. I can see rising these rainbows, these cosmic prisms, this dawn of ourselves above nothingness. I immerse myself in them when I read Lucretius. I breathe the virginity of the world in this fine rain. A sharp sense of nuances works on me. I feel myself coloured by all the nuances of infinity. At that moment, I am as one with my painting. We are an iridescent chaos. I come before my motif and I lose myself in it. I dream. I wander. Silently the sun penetrates my being, like a faraway friend. It warms my idleness, fertilizes it. We germinate. (Cézanne in Doran 2001: 114)

Cézanne's moment of being 'as one with my painting' becomes Maldiney's exemplar of the rising of the experience of sensation, the first movement in the manifestation of rhythm. John has left similar traces in her letters. As she was writing from Toulouse to her friend Tyrwhitt in the winter of 1903:

> I do wish you were here! You would like this place, it is very artistic—the country round is wonderful especially now—the trees are all colours. I paint my picture on the top of a hill—Toulouse lies below and all round me can see the country for many miles and in the far distance the Phryenees [Pyrenees]. I cannot tell you how wonderful it is when the sun goes down, the last two evenings have had a red sun—livid I think is the word, the scene is sublime then, it looks like Hell or Heaven.[17]

The 'iridescent chaos' for Cézanne, or the sublime scene of the sunset that 'looks like Hell or Heaven' for John create conditions of possibility for the work of art to emerge within the sensory plane; the process of systolic condensations as the second move in the manifestation of rhythm then follows. In the Cézannean world of artistic creation again:

> The next day, a beautiful morning, slowly geographical foundations appear, the layers, the major planes form themselves on my canvas. Mentally I compose the rosy skeleton. I can see the outcropping of stones under the

> water, the sky weighs on me. Everything falls into place. A pale palpitation envelops the linear elements. The red earths rise from an abyss. I begin to separate myself from the landscape, to see it. (Cézanne in Doran 2001: 114)

In John's notebooks, there is a poetic entry on 30 August 1922, marking this moment of systolic condensations when the artist detaches herself from the chaotic wholeness of the sublime and focuses on specific shapes and forms, repossesses things that she thought she had known, tries to see them again, rediscovers their forms:

> 1st thought.
> Turn gently toward your work.
> Instead of this sudden discouragement and sadness take up in your mind a leaf, a flower, a simple little form and find its form, take it into your possessions as it were.
>
> 2nd. Every day you may add to your possessions—every flower and leaf and other things may be taken possession of as it were. You have seen nearly everything vaguely.[18]

By asking her imaginative interlocutor to 'take a simple little form and find its form', John seems to adopt Maldiney's distinction between form as a static shape and form in formation, or rather perpetual transformation as discussed above. We tend to consider forms as static shapes, only because 'we have seen everything vaguely', according to John above. It is the artist's work to repossess things, try to look at them more closely, so that she can create forms of the invisible sensory realms, the virtual worlds that surround us. But in doing so, the artist has already entered the third plane of diastolic eruptions, she has unleashed the forces of the figural that Lyotard's analysis has pointed to, although not sufficiently analysed. This is the moment for Cézanne when painting starts, colours take over and forms and shapes dissolve once again:

> With the first sketch, I detach myself from these geological lines. Geometry measures the earth. A feeling of tenderness comes over me. Some roots of this emotion raise the sap, the colours! An airborne, colourful logic quickly replaces the sombre stubborn geography. Everything becomes organised: trees, fields, houses. I see. By patches: the geographical strata, the preparatory work, the world of drawing all cave in, collapse as in a catastrophe. A cataclysm has carried it away, regenerated it. A new era is born. The true one! The one in which nothing escapes me, where everything is dense and fluid at the same time, natural. All that remains is colour, and in colour, brightness, clarity, the being who imagines them, this ascent from the earth

> towards the sun, this exhalation from the depths towards love … Everything drops. Everything falls into the horizon. From my brain onto my canvas, from my canvas towards the earth. (Cézanne in Doran 2001: 114–15)

On the diastolic plane then, it is colour that matters, unleashing sensory forces but keeping them together in the experience of the aesthetic. John's artistic strength was indeed in the realm of colours; her 'fine sense of tone' was duly noted by her teacher Whistler, as recorded in her brother's autobiography:

> Mr Whistler with great politeness asked me to make Gwen his compliments. I ventured to inquire if he thought well of her progress, adding that I thought her drawings showed a feeling for character. 'Character?' replied Whistler. 'Character? What's that? It's *tone* that matters. Your sister has a fine sense of *tone*.' (John 1954: 45; original emphasis)

John's attention to colours has further been noted by her biographer: 'she revealed that she had begun to work with a colour wheel [which] consisted of several layers of revolving discs of colour charts so that it was possible by turning the different layers, to arrive at compatible tones' (Roe 2002: 255). Her biographer draws here on John's notebooks, which carry traces of how preoccupied she was with thinking around forms, colours and tones. Indeed, John's notebook entries inscribed the phases of *prepictorial figuration* and *second figuration* as discussed by Deleuze above:

> 11 March 1920[19]
> Method of application
>
> 1. On seeing the subject note the form, the colour, the tones.
> 2. Meditation, Decision on the form, the colour, etc
> 3. The painting. (To save time mix the colours beforehand)
>
> April 1921[20]
> Method of observation
>
> 1. the strangeness
> 2. colour
> 3. tones
> 4. personal form

Having gone through the phases of application and observation when the painter has to clean her head and her canvas from pre-given figurations and clichés, she then moves to the phase of second figuration or 'the method of execution' in her own terms:

Method of execution[21]

1. observation of the 4 points
2. mixing of colours
3. lines in pencil for eye training
4. painting of personal forms out of 9f background

As Maldiney (1973) reminds us again, having considered the interchange of systolic condensations and diastolic eruptions emerging from the sensory chaos in the process of creativity, we can now see more clearly how rhythm arises as the time of 'form in formation' as discussed above. Clearly this rhythm cannot be externally regulated, but rather creates 'its own temporal framework, and when we experience the artwork we also enter into the implicated time of its form, a perpetual Now outside commonsense coordinate' (Bogue 2003: 121).

So far in this section, I have looked into the unfolding of the form–rhythm relation within Maldiney's three phases of sense experience, whereby form and matter are inextricably linked. But the matter of form in painting is the canvas and the colours. In the next section I want to focus on the play of colours in the realm of sensation. This will be the fourth move in the rhythm of my analysis of John's later paintings.

IV. On Colours

'The colour system itself is a system of direct action on the nervous system' argues Deleuze (2003: 52). But how do colours intervene in rendering visible forces that are themselves invisible, how do they play around visible bodies and objects in the process of artistic creation and reception? Deleuze is very careful in distancing Cézanne's idea of the role of colours from that of the Impressionists:

> sensation is not in the 'free' or disembodied play of light and colour (impressions); on the contrary it is in the body … Colour is in the body, sensation is in the body and not in the air. Sensation is what is painted. What is painted on the canvas is the body, not insofar as it is represented as an object, but insofar as it is experienced as sustaining this sensation. (Deleuze 2003: 35)

Charting a diagram of forces is Deleuze's suggestion for coming to terms with sensation in painting, and his concept of the diagram runs in parallel with the Cézannean 'motif' as explicated above. 'Painting elevates colours and lines to the state of language' Deleuze notes

(Deleuze 2003: 113), his argument resonating again with Cézanne's idea that 'words and colours have meaning' (cited in Lloyd-Morgan 2004: 127). But the language Deleuze refers to is an 'analogical' language, which is opposed to the 'digital' language of overcoded discursive utterances and 'consists of expressive movements, paralinguistic signs, breaths and screams and so on' (Deleuze 2003: 113). The analogical language can be sensed and felt, but never recognised or learned.

So how does painting work as an analogical language? According to Deleuze, it has three dimensions: planes, colours and bodies (Deleuze 2003: 118). Colour seems to be the most important of the three, since 'analogy finds its highest law in the treatment of colours' (120). Deleuze further discusses the process of modulation, drawing on Gilbert Simondon's (1964) critique of the matter/form opposition and his argument that 'forms are determined through the establishment of a particular regulation of energy' (Bogue 2003: 134). Modulation and mould are inextricably linked in Simondon's analysis: 'to mould is to modulate in a definitive manner, to modulate is to mould in a continuous and variable manner' (cited in Deleuze 2003: 192), and therefore colourism is a process of modulation and moulding.

How then does the modulation of colour participate in the form–rhythm relation that keeps together the three moments of the experience of sensation? Colourism discloses the sensory world of the landscape and intervenes in the systolic moments wherein the forms of subjects and objects are in the process of becoming: colours do not fill in pre-existing forms, but rather liberate lines, figures and objects, unleash forces of continuous transformation of the form and thus create conditions of possibility for the diastolic moment of mingling again subjects and objects with their surrounding world. As has been reported by Joaquim Gasquet, Cézanne thought that 'there is only one route for rendering everything, for translating everything: colour. Colour is biological … Colour is living, all alone it breathes life into things' (in Doran 2001: 120).

Deleuze enumerates the 'practical rules of colourism', particularly stressing the 'broken tones' in Bacon's work. Broken tones emerge when primary and complementary colours are mixed in unequal proportions, 'the addition of a bit of orange to blue [yields] a "broken" muddy blue' (Bogue 2003: 151). 'Colourism' then, Deleuze argues, 'consists of relations of warm and cool, of expansion and contraction' but also of 'regimes of colour, the relations between these regimes and the harmonies between pure tones and broken tones' (Deleuze 2003: 152). Having discussed the importance of colour in Deleuze's analytics,

I will now consider John's particular practices of colour modulation, which create conditions of possibility for forces to be released from her paintings and for her figures to enter the process of *becoming imperceptible*.

V. Colourism, Forces and Figures in John's Portraits

As already discussed, the problem of painting for Deleuze is not to reproduce or even invent forms, but to capture forces. But what does this mean? Force in Deleuze's approach is closely related to sensation. While, however, the play of forces creates conditions of possibility for sensation to be felt, and painting renders the artist's sensations visible through colour, force itself cannot be sensed, felt or experienced, since the sensation 'gives something completely different from the forces that condition it' (Deleuze 2003: 56). Thus the attempt to capture the ever dissolving and disappearing forces, charting, as it were, the conditions of sensation becomes the problem of painting.

Since what can be sensed is the effects of forces, the problem of capturing forces in the history of painting was conflated with the problem of decomposing and recomposing effects, Deleuze notes (2003: 57–8). However, the problem of how invisible forces can be made visible remained largely unaddressed, till it became central in Bacon's work. I want to consider this problem in John's portraits, revisiting the connections between Bacon and Cézanne – as discussed by Deleuze – and Cézanne's notion of sensation.

Cézanne's influence on John has been noted by her biographers and art critics[22] and has been inscribed in her letters. As she was writing to Tyrwhitt on 30 August 1936: 'Oh a sudden thought! Perhaps you would like to read a little book I have about Cézanne. I'll put it in with the others. It is *very* precious to me so please send it back or bring it in October.'[23] Cézanne's notion of sensation would be the epigraph John chose for the only solo exhibition that she had in 1926 at the Chenil Galleries in Chelsea. John had further used Cézanne's notion of realisation of a work of art to talk about the need to 'realise' her little paintings. As she was writing to Tyrwhitt in the same letter above: 'I am tired of not knowing how to realise my little paintings (realise is Cézanne). I think *finish* would be a better word in my case.'[24] But how has such 'realisation' actually occurred?

It has to be noted here that John's art went through a radical transformation after her move to Paris in 1904; by the late 1910s she had abandoned the academic layered technique and had been intensely

working with colour, which she applied directly on the canvas without preparatory drawings, 'in short dabs and flicks from a well-loaded brush [appearing] to skip across the tops of the canvas weave' (Bustin 2004: 196, 198). John's technique of '[dabbing] colour on in a lively mosaic of short strokes' (Tickner 2004: 38) blurred the boundaries between figure and ground. Moreover the interplay of colours and subtle lines was creating a musical effect: 'The subtly irregular contours, ashy colours and minor variations of tone vibrate in the eye, producing something like a visual equivalent to musical resonance' (Tickner 2004: 38).

John's figures therefore emerge through the rhythm of the systolic and diastolic movements of sensation – her colours engender 'rhythmic characters' (Deleuze 2003: 72). Rhythm in her paintings, however, is not attached to her figures. As in Bacon's paintings, in John's later portraits 'it is rhythm itself that would become the Figure, that would constitute the Figure' (Deleuze 2003: 71). The rhythm/figures of John's later paintings are usually two-third or three-quarter length with pyramidal bodies and small heads, often out of proportion, their background is plain, both chromatically and structurally, while the distinction between figure and ground is always blurring. The body posture is equally simple and immobile: arms held close to the body, hands folded or holding a book, a letter, a piece of fabric or a black cat. There are slight changes in the appearance of the figure: their hair can be loose or plaited and they are usually enfolded in dresses or cloaks of broken tones that sometimes give the title of the composition: *Girl in a Blue Dress*,[25] *Girl in a Green Dress*,[26] *Girl in a Mulberry Dress*,[27] *Young Woman in a Grey Cloak*.[28] Sometimes the figures wear hats or very minimal jewellery or other accessories that are again inscribed in the title of the painting: *Young Woman Wearing a Large Hat*,[29] *Woman with a Coral Necklace*,[30] *Portrait of a Young Woman Wearing a Locket*,[31] *Seating Woman Wearing a Blue Bow*,[32] *Young Woman in a Red Shawl*,[33] *Girl with a Blue Scarf*.[34]

It almost seems that the hats, bows, shawls, scarves, necklaces and the colours of the dresses matter much more than the actual figures. If the work of art is a bloc of sensations, 'sensation refers only to its material: it is the percept or affect of the material itself, the smile of oil' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 166). Emerging from an assemblage of sensations, percepts and affect, John's female figures sustain the chromatic composition of the picture and animate the play of colours and tones that seem to be the main preoccupation of the artist. After all, the sitter can be no more than 'an affair of volumes' in John's letter that has initiated this paper. Moreover, in many of John's later portraits there

are some deliberately unfinished areas of canvas as in *La Petite Modèle*.[35] Cézanne's influence is striking here: 'colour sensations, which make light in my paintings, create abstractions that keep me from covering my canvas or defining the edges of objects where they delicately touch other objects, with the result that my image or picture is incomplete', Cézanne was writing to Emile Bernard on 23 October 1905 (in Doran 2001: 48). As John's notebooks show, unfinished, elusive and seemingly without details as they are presented, her portraits have nevertheless been carefully thought of, in many more details than we are allowed to perceive:

> 13 March 1932[36]
> The making of the portrait:
> The strange form.
> The pose and proportions.
> The atmosphere and notes, the tones.
> The finding of the forms (the sphere-the hair, the forehead, the cheek, the eye, the nose, the mouth, the neck, the chin, *the torse*).
> Blobbing
> the sculpting with the heads.

John's methodical approach to the realisation of a portrait seems to follow Cézanne's suggestion: 'You have to have a method … People have to play games. That's what I search for in painting. I don't have a doctrine like Bertrand, but you have to have theories, sensations and theories' (in Doran 2001: 94). Art historians and critics have thus characterised John's pictures as a debt to Cézanne. 'The two artists share a detached approach to the figure and both arrange their models in severe, simple poses' (Jenkins and Stephens 2004: 148). In this light, details were not important and when they appeared, they would only function as compositional elements, *colour events*, as I will further suggest.

Like Cézanne then, John's attention was directed to the depth of her portraits not the surface: 'one can alter, decorate, caress the surface, but one can't touch depth without touching truth … I would rather smash my canvas than invent or imagine a detail', Cézanne had written (in Doran 2001: 117). Although indifferent to mundane details, John was, however, very much interested in painting extraordinary details, blots of paint that would irrupt in her canvas to compose the harmony of colours she was attaining to reach. In this light, she would use colour to chart diagrams of what Deleuze has called 'asignifying traits', 'involuntary free marks lining the canvas' (Deleuze 2003: 5); these traits do not carry any

symbolism, they are not metaphors, 'they are devoid of any illustrative or narrative function' (5) and 'mark the emergence of another world' (100). In this light, the tiny bunch of flowers on *Mère Poussepins*' table[37] or the red and blue feathers in *The Japanese Doll*[38] create a fine balance between 'descriptive sign' and 'coloured matter' (Tickner 2004: 29); they become, I suggest, *colour events* that spring from the canvas blurring the boundaries between the figural and the figurative as in Deleuze's analysis above. Colourism lies indeed at the heart of what truth in portraiture should revolve around.

Thus, the painting of a portrait for John – carefully mediated as it was – becomes a Deleuzian diagram or a Cézannean motif, 'something that combines sensation and the solidity of a framework' (Bogue 2003: 132). Cézanne's motif was of course a view of the Mont Saint-Victoire, a great pointed mountain in the area of Aix-en-Provence.[39] As Tickner has pithily commented, the figure of *The Convalescent*[40] painted more than fifty times was John's Mont Saint-Victoire, her *motif* (Tickner 2004: 39).

I have already discussed above John's preoccupation with forms, tones and colours and the way she kept experimenting with her paintings, moving away from the academic conventions of her art education. Her notebooks and contemporary close examination of her paintings have shown that experimentation did not mean contingency and accidental use of colour. In Cézanne's thought, 'the artist can never be too conscientious, or too sincere, or too submissive to nature, but [he] must be more or less master of [his] subject and above all his means of expression [adapting] them to his motif' (in Doran 2001: 121). John's notebooks show indeed that she was adopting an analytical approach that she kept revisiting and reviewing. She was in a way very attentive to the charting of her diagram, following perhaps, as Bustin has commented, Whistler's exhortation to 'distrust everything you have done without understanding it ... You must know how you did it, that the next time you can do it again' (Bustin 2004: 196). John's analytical approach is reflected in her work and has been textualised in her letters since the very early stages of her career.

What I therefore suggest is that there is an interplay of volumes of the textual and the figural – perceived signs and pure sensation – in John's portraits, effectuated through her distinct pictorial acts, her own colourism. But how can we discern the play of forces in these portraits? Drawing on the three fundamental elements that Deleuze identifies in Bacon's paintings, namely Structure, Figure and Contour (Deleuze 2003: 144), I will consider the first two in John's portraits: her structuring monochromatic fields and the sitting female figures.

Indeed, the monochromatic fields of the later portraits are fundamental elements of John's compositions. Static and motionless as these female figures seem to be, they are mapped in a field of invisible forces moving in different directions and with different intensities. Following Deleuze's discussion of Bacon's paintings, I will thus make *a diagram* of the forces that John's portraits render visible.

VI. Charting Forces in John's Portraits

As already discussed, John's portraits follow the rhythm of systolic and diastolic movements in Deleuze's analysis: the systole delineates the figure and goes from the structure – the monochromatic field – to the figure, while the diastole sends out forces that extend the body to the structure of the painting and beyond it to the realm of sensation shared by the viewer. I have already discussed the unfolding of the rhythm of the systolic and diastolic movements in the art of painting. Here, I want to focus on the diastolic phase and particularly the forces unleashed by the work of art and shared by the viewers. What I suggest is that in John's later portraits, the monochromatic fields enveloping the female figures create the stage for forces of solitude to leap out from the canvas and make connections with forces of the Woman-becoming imperceptible.[41]

As most art critics have noted about John's portraits, her sitters appear motionless and impassive; they seem to do nothing more than just looking, maybe reading a book or a letter, holding a rose, a piece of fabric, a rosary or a cat in their lap.[42] Frozen in time and lost in space, the figural image is nevertheless 'the focus of intense concentration [and through] the fine discriminations of tone, the desaturated colour harmonies, [it] requires us to peer fixedly, … to respond to her attentiveness with our own' (Tickner 2004: 40).

Bathed in the colours of the monochromatic field, John's figure gradually dissolves in the bare background and the Woman, who loves and cares and offers her self as a spectacle to the gaze of the other, enters the cycle of becoming imperceptible. Driven by the force of the colours, the face breaks the despotic white wall without disappearing in the passional black hole, following lines of flight from striated regimes of signs. As Tickner has eloquently put it: 'Gwen's broken application and feathered contours dissolve the figure into its surroundings, giving the impression of a slight vibration as though the air was fizzing with dust-motes' (Tickner 2004: 45). Thus the monochromatic fields absorb the figure, making visible the forces of her becoming imperceptible.

Indeed, the female figures of John's portraits, I argue, emerge as events, idealised representations of femininity deterritorialised from domesticity and being connected to the world of absent-mindness; this was the sphere of creativity and pure thinking that John and her friends had experienced during their years at the Slade but had lost after their marriage. Edna Clarke Hall (née Waugh), who had studied at the Slade with John, would mostly fervently express her will for privacy and solitude and the need to be 'absent-minded' in a letter to Ida Nettleship[43] written in the autumn of 1906:

> It is a tremendous tax to have children always at hand for whom one is responsible without feeling an intimate love in their personalities … I never paint now partly because I have very little time and chiefly because I can never allow myself to be absent-minded. (cited in Thomas 2007: 97–8)

It is this existential need for being absent-minded that John's portraits capture, visually expressing a notable phrase from her notebooks entered on 11 July 1922: 'I don't live when I spend time without thought' (cited in Tickner 2004: 41). John's repetitive portraits of absent-minded women should not therefore be seen as a series of attempts to capture the essence of her sitter but as pictorial acts creating a rhythm of difference and repetition, engaging with the logic of sensation in painting. As Tickner has noted, 'repetition in [John's] work is better understood as a typically modernist engagement with the process of picture-making as the work is tested through repeated confrontations with an identical motif' (Tickner 2004: 39).

But there are more things happening in John's portraits as the forces of solitude and imperceptibility that leap out from the canvas dismantle and reconfigure boundaries not only between the painter and the sitter, but also between the viewer, the sitter and the painter, the self and other. John was indeed a noticeable presence as a painter sending out strong emotions and affects to her sitters. She was definitely following Cézanne's advice that 'one must look at the model and feel very exactly … express oneself distinctly and with force'.[44] Jeanne Robert Foster, her American patron's partner, had definitely felt this force and did write about the unique experience of sitting for John in a letter to John Quinn on 16 September 1921:

> She cannot endure having the pose changed by a hairs breadth after she has arranged it. She takes down my hair and does it like her own. She wants to draw the shape of my head. She has made me sit as she does and I feel the absorption of her personality as I sit. She is very much annoyed with necklaces

> and bracelets … She is more myself than I am when I am with her. (Foster cited in Langdale 1987: 89)

There is an intense play of forces between the painter and the sitter making connections between the self and other. Gasquet has reported this unique and intensive relationship between the painter and the sitter in observing Cézanne painting the portrait of his father:

> Most of the time, even though he had his brushes and his palette in his hand, Cézanne looked at my father's face, examined it. He didn't paint. From time to time, with a trembling stroke of the brush, he laid on a thin touch, a bright stroke of blue, which defined an expression or brought out and highlighted a fleeting aspect of his character. (Gasquet in Doran 2001: 147)

The force of this unique I–you relationship that Gasquet recounts above and Foster expresses in her letter to Quinn – I exist through you and you become me when you paint me – radically opens up the self to the other and sets up a narratable scene into which the viewer him- or herself is irresistibly drawn.[45] The imperceptible female figures of John's portraits force the viewers to raise existential questions about themselves and the world, they interrogate the ethics and aesthetics of what human communication entails and they leave signs of an experience of time as duration (Bergson 2002), the impossibility and greatness of grasping a moment in time, momentarily living in the present. Sensory experiences of seizing the moment are invoked by the fine interplay between the ordinary and the extraordinary in many of John's paintings wherein 'unremarkable objects and ordinary people are imbued with radiance and rendered beautiful' (Tickner 2004: 45). But as Tickner further notes, beauty is very differently grasped in John's paintings:

> It is not a question of beauty … through an idealisation of the intrinsic qualities of a particular woman … It is rather to do with the way in which a certain kind of ordinariness, subjected to an intense beam of attention but depicted with a kind of calculated austerity … can evoke this feeling of delight, desire, pleasure and resignation … Something ordinary, something slipped beneath the horizon of our attention like a breath or a heartbeat, is recovered, transfigured and made luminous. (Tickner 2004: 45)

This beauty springing from the ordinary rendered extraordinary through the art of colour forces John's viewers to wonder: why haven't I noticed this little bunch of flowers or that red feather before, what is this world around me, what is this present that I find myself in and what am I doing here? These are existential questions that arise from John's own colourism, her 'oyster-whites, blue greys and duns, the closely

graded tones and occasional accents of colour' (Tickner 2004: 45). Thus, following Cézanne's wish 'to paint space and time and make them forms of the sensibility of colours' (in Doran 2001: 124), John has painted images that have inspired her viewers to reimagine women and women's times to come.

Notes

1. Gwen John (1876–1939) was born in Wales, studied at the Slade and moved to Paris in 1904 where she lived and worked till the end of her life. Her long affair with Auguste Rodin has been discussed at length in her two biographies (Chitty 1987; Roe 2002) and a series of art history monographs (Langdale 1987; Taubman 1985; Foster 1999). See Tamboukou 2010 for an extended discussion of her letters.
2. For a critical appreciation of John's work see Langdale 1987; Foster 1999; Taubman 1985; Jenkins and Stephens 2004.
3. See Deleuze and Guattari 1988, particularly chapter 5: 'On Several Regimes of Signs'.
4. As the subject of this essay is a woman, the painter is treated as feminine throughout.
5. Cézanne's letter to Emile Bernard, 15/04/1904 (in Doran 2001: 29).
6. In its Deleuzian configuration within a long philosophical tradition that goes back to the Stoics, 'the event is not what occurs (an accident), it is rather inside what occurs, the purely expressed. It signals and awaits us . . . it is what must be understood, willed and represented in that which occurs' (Deleuze 2001: 170).
7. See Deleuze 2003, particularly the chapter 'Every Painter Recapitulates the History of Painting', pp. 122–43. It also has to be noted here that Deleuze sees painting as 'an analogical language' (Deleuze 2003: 113), a concept that I will discuss in the fourth section of the paper.
8. Here I paraphrase and play with Deleuze and Guattari's questions in chapter 7 of *What Is Philosophy?* (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 169).
9. Langdale 1987: 165, pl. 231, cat. no: 108.
10. Langdale 1987: 87, pl. 127, cat. no: 107. See < http://www.wikigallery.org/wiki/painting_198025/Gwen-John/The-Pilgrim > (accessed 24 January 2014).
11. Langdale 1987: 166, pl. 232, cat. no: 109. National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. See <http://cybermuse.gallery.ca/cybermuse/search/artwork_e.jsp?mkey=2392 > (accessed 24 January 2014).
12. Langdale (1987: 167), pl. 233, cat. no: 166. See < http://www.davidrumsey.com/amica/amico545515-6900.html > (accessed 24 January 2014).
13. Letter to Bernard, 25/7/1904 (in Doran 2001: 46).
14. NLW MS 21468D, f. 180.
15. Maldiney has drawn on Straus and Merleau-Ponty in his understanding of sensation as a kind of autopoesis. See Grosz 2008: 83.
16. See Langdale 1987, particularly chapter 4; Foster 1999, particularly chapter 6; Tickner 2004: 39; Jenkins and Stephens (2004: 148).
17. NLW MS 21468D, ff. 7a–7b.
18. Notebook entries (in Lloyd-Morgan 2004: 128).
19. Notebook entry (in Lloyd-Morgan 2004: 112).
20. Notebook entry (in Lloyd-Morgan 2004: 117).
21. Notebook entry (in Lloyd-Morgan 2004: 118).

22. See Roe 2002; Langdale (1987: 97); Tickner (2004: 39).
23. NLW MS 21468D, ff. 182v; original emphasis.
24. NLW MS 21468D, ff. 182v.
25. Langdale 1987: 144, pl. 190, cat. no: 32. National Museum of Wales. See < http://www.museumwales.ac.uk/en/art/online/?action=show_item&item=1018 > (accessed 24 January 2014).
26. Langdale (1987: 96), pl. 148, cat. no: 99. National Museum of Wales. See < http://www.museumwales.ac.uk/en/art/online/?action=show_item&item=1019 > (accessed 24 January 2014).
27. Langdale 1987: 147, pl. 247, cat. no: 136. Southampton Art Gallery. See < http://www.wikigallery.org/wiki/painting_198138/Gwen-John/Girl-in-a-Mulberry-Dress > (accessed 24 January 2014).
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41. 'Woman' in upper case denotes here the figure of the woman within the striated spaces and discourses of a patriarchal regime of signs.
42. See for example *Girl with a Cat on her Lap* (< http://www.wikigallery.org/wiki/painting_198133/Gwen-John/Girl-with-a-Cat-on-her-Lap >); *Girl in Profile* (< http://www.wikigallery.org/wiki/painting_198134/Gwen-John/Girl-in-Profile >); *Girl in Rose* (< http://www.wikigallery.org/wiki/painting_198029/Gwen-John/Girl-in-Rose >); *Girl Holding a Rose* (< http://www.wikigallery.org/wiki/painting_198124/Gwen-John/Girl-Holding-a-Rose >) (all accessed 24 January 2014).
43. Nettleship was also John's fellow student at the Slade and later became Augustus John's first wife.
44. Letter to Bernard, 12 May 1904 (in Doran 2001: 30).
45. Narratability here is taken from Cavarero's (2000) philosophy that I have discussed elsewhere at length (see Tamboukou 2010).

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A Life between the Finite and Infinite: Remarks on Deleuze, Badiou and Western Buddhism

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Abstract

This article explores the resonances between certain concepts of Deleuze and Badiou and a Western Buddhism that is figured, in Foucault's terminology, as a particular 'technology of the self'. In particular Deleuze's readings of Bergson and Spinoza are brought into encounter with Buddhist doctrine and practice alongside a consideration of the figure of the *bodhisattva* who is further compared to Badiou's account of the subject. At stake in these enquiries and experimental conjunctions is the laying out of a particular – and liveable – diagram of the finite–infinite relation, or, we might say, a specifically Western *dharma* for a contemporary production of subjectivity.

Keywords: Buddhism, Badiou, Bergson, Spinoza, meditation, ethics

I. Introduction: Deleuze and Buddhism

This article serves as a brief appendix, or after-thought, to my recently published monograph *On the Production of Subjectivity* (2012). Therein I staged a number of philosophical – and psychoanalytical – encounters and attempted to draw a series of diagrams of the finite–infinite relation that followed from the latter. In general, I was interested in exploring certain aspects of post-Kantian thought which, rather than positing a gap, or bar, between the finite and the infinite suggested some kind of continuum or passage between the two. I was especially interested

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in how these composite diagrams might offer up different possibilities for a contemporary subjectivity beyond those lifestyle options typically proffered by neo-liberalism. In philosophical terms the key opposition I explored was between Deleuze (and Guattari) and Alain Badiou, pitching their particular and different ontological statements and concomitant theorisations of the subject against each other (although, it has to be said, Deleuze's own writings are not concerned with the subject *per se*, but rather with a kind of pre- and post-subjective state). I knew whilst writing that book that Buddhism, especially as it is practised in the West today, offered a different perspective on this particular philosophical contretemps, and indeed the themes of my book in general, but it seemed to me that such a consideration would require more than footnotes, hence the present article which returns to both Deleuze (and specifically his Bergsonism and Spinozism) and Badiou – and brings these into a further and somewhat experimental encounter with a Buddhism that is figured as what Michel Foucault might call a 'technology of the self'.[1]

Before turning to Deleuze's own writing, however, it is worth noting that the collaboration with Guattari, and especially *A Thousand Plateaus* (1988), has itself many, perhaps more explicit, resonances with contemporary Buddhism albeit, of course, it is without a Buddha (I will return to this important omission below). Certainly with concepts like 'faciality', Deleuze and Guattari have theorised the human as a particular mode of organisation that is, as it were, set against the world (a moment of fixity in a world of change). Likewise the emphasis on pragmatics – that *A Thousand Plateaus* is a book to be used and not just read – resonates with Buddhist texts that are, precisely, manuals for a subject's transformation. In this pragmatic function *and* in its own ontological pre-suppositions – which affirm becoming over Being – *A Thousand Plateaus* has profound resonances with Eastern thought in general, and, indeed, Deleuze and Guattari reference Taoism in the especially constructive and pragmatically orientated plateau 'November 28, 1947: How Do You Make Yourself a Body without Organs?'. To a certain extent the final chapter of my above-mentioned monograph explores this area through an application of the concept 'probe-head' (taken from *A Thousand Plateaus*) to the contemporary production of subjectivity. We might make the claim in the present context that probe-head names an experimental Western Buddhism released from any debt to a Buddha (or indeed to traditional Buddhism itself). In fact, we might say further, that such concepts are less Buddhist *per se* and more simply *dharmic* when this names the ontological conditions of existence, the

transitory state or mode of our own particular being, and an ethics that leads from the conjunction of these two (as we shall see this has profound resonances with Spinoza's own *Ethics* (1989)).

Buddhism then offers a particularly practical solution to a problem: simply put, our desire for permanence in a world characterised by impermanence (hence our particular existence is marked by *dukkha* – or 'unsatisfactoriness'). Indeed, Buddhism offers an ethical programme aimed, ultimately, at a kind of self-transcendence, at least of a self that is fixed and set against the world. Traditionally this has also meant a certain asceticism and, indeed, a desire to negate all sense of self. But, and this is especially the case in more Westernised practices, it also implies a constructive project – an experimental testing, in resonance with Spinoza's own ethical programme, of what our bodies are capable, and, indeed, into what we might become as individuals. Again, in Spinozist terms, this is the exploration of different modes of being, or, as Guattari might have it, simply the production of a different kind of subjectivity. Hence, for myself, the resonances between Buddhism and *A Thousand Plateaus*, and, indeed, the *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* project more generally. But what about Deleuze's single-authored and more philosophically involved writings themselves? Is there a sense in which these can also be brought into useful conjunction with a Western Buddhism (I will keep to this term in what follows), especially around this question of the finite–infinite relation?

Once again, it can be remarked straight away that Deleuze and Buddhism both hold to a similar ontology (although Buddhism is not a philosophy *per se*, it still makes ontological claims): of a kind of groundless ground of being. For Deleuze, in *Difference and Repetition* (1995), this is the thesis of difference in itself (an original difference as it were), and an idea of repetition that names a kind of generative moment/movement of this difference. It also informs his philosophical dyad of the virtual/actual and, indeed, the important thesis of their reciprocal determination (this being Deleuze's Univocity).[2] In the Buddhist tradition this ground that is not a ground is approached in different ways, but perhaps most usefully for the purposes here it can be characterised in terms of the tri-concept of impermanence–interpenetration–insubstantiality, or 'conditioned co-production'. Here, ultimately, there are only conditions producing other conditions; a web of interconnectedness that has something in common with Henri Bergson's own thesis on all matter being in constant contact and 'communication' with all other matter. Man, insofar as he has a body, is part of this 'global' network, but also, in Buddhist terms, stands

against it (in Bergson's terms man is a subtraction; he is a 'centre of indetermination', or veritable hole in the universe).

Both of these ontological claims – of Deleuze and Buddhism – can be brought under the umbrella term of immanence. Deleuze himself refers to Spinoza as the 'prince of immanence', and himself as a Spinozist before anything else insofar as his philosophy, like Spinoza's, specifically orientates itself against any form of transcendence. Buddhism's own 'turn' to immanence is perhaps what best distinguishes it from other pantheist religions that still hold to a certain transcendence (simply, God or gods). Indeed, Buddhism, we might say, is the eruption – and affirmation – of the plane of immanence within history. Or, to say the same differently, Buddhism announces the relegation of God to a minor player in man's destiny centuries before Nietzsche announces God's death. Of course, Buddhism does not stop here, that is, with the assertion of a certain ontology, but, again, as a pragmatics, offers various techniques and technologies for the subject's transformation that follow from the ontology. In Deleuzian terms we might say, Buddhism provides instruction on how to access – and in a sense determine – this groundless ground of our being: meditation, for example, that allows for a contact with an infinite potentiality that lies behind our habitual, and finite, being (following Deleuze's thesis in *Difference and Repetition*, we might say that this is contact with the third synthesis of time – the time of Aion, 'hidden' behind the first synthesis – the habitual sense of time formed by the reactive mechanisms of the organism). Paradoxically, this is not an experience a given subject can have if we understand such a subject as a bundle of habits and volitions (indeed, Deleuze very much has this conception of the subject – or individual – in common with Buddhism). But it is a state achievable by man, under his own efforts.

Buddhist meditation then allows access to an outside, to that from which our subjectivity has itself been formed or folded. Once more, in Deleuzian terms, this is to 'access' a certain virtual realm. If Deleuze's thought allows for different actualising machines – different forms of thought – then Buddhism suggests that the very virtual itself might be directly 'experienced' in some sense, albeit this experience will have to be 'translated' once a subject 'returns' to the actual. We might also say that in the different practices Buddhism advocates we also see the reciprocal determination of the actual back to the virtual (through certain processes of selection and repetition that in themselves foreground different relations of intensities). Indeed, the virtual and the actual are co-determinate in this sense. They are two sides of the same coin (and it is in this sense, ultimately, that there is no path in Buddhism,

no journey: nowhere to go). I will return to this important, but counter-intuitive 'movement' in a moment.

II. Bergsonism and Buddhism (the Gap and the Mystic)

For Bergson, especially in Deleuze's reading of him, this virtuality is accessed through a certain gap – between stimulus and response – that is opened up in experience and as a result of the increasing complexity of the brain–body assemblage. It is this gap that defines the human since it implies the possibility of moving beyond pure animal reactivity. The resonances with Buddhism are striking in this specific area and are worth tracking through. In Buddhist terms we are in contact with the world through our sense organs (and mind is also considered a sense organ in this understanding). This contact involves perceptions which then produce sensations. We are in fact very close indeed to the Bergson of *Matter and Memory* (1991) here. These sensations are themselves accompanied – we might even say, at this stage, are followed – by feelings, of either pleasure or pain. In the Buddhist understanding of the conditioned self (our transitory mode of being) all this is given. The feelings, the sensations, the perceptions, indeed, even the sensory organs themselves are the result of previous actions and volitions (they are 'old karma'). The next stage, however, is crucial: feeling produces craving and aversion, which then produces grasping and so the whole wheel of rebirth – or 're-becoming' – continues (we set up the same conditions which in the future will produce the same reactions). We might say that this is the point at which signification comes in (with the articulation of desires, or simply the affirming/negating of the world). It is also the instalment of a judging subject (who, in the terms of *Anti-Oedipus* retroactively identifies him- or herself with these judgements).

We might also, with Bergson, see this as the moment of memory, at least in its habitual sense (in Buddhist terms, these habitual reactions are our *samskharas* that, again, actually constitute our selves). However, it is also at this point that the cycle can be broken – precisely at the point between feeling and the acting on that feeling (again, the craving). Meditation, at least in one of its forms (*samadhi*), is simply the cultivation of awareness of this point, this moment of 'decision' – and the prolonging of a certain pause, a dwelling 'in' the gap. Again, for Bergson, it is also through this gap (Bergson calls it a 'hesitancy') that memory, this time in the sense of the 'pure past' (or, again, a virtuality), pours in. In itself this allows for a certain creativity to replace our more reactive modes of behaviour; a kind of liberation from the (utilitarian)

concerns of the organism. In Buddhist terms we might think of this pure past, that is also the ontological background of our limited being, as a kind of vast storehouse of memory, when this is also the memory of other humans, of animals, of plants – of all life (going further, this might also include the non-organic life of Deleuze's thesis); a veritable teeming reservoir of life worlds.

We might jump ahead slightly here and bring Deleuze's Spinozism, and specifically the concept of affect, to this Bergsonian virtual. For Deleuze–Spinoza affects are a prior moment, even before feeling. They are, as it were, themselves virtual. But in fact one does not come without the other: sensations and feelings go hand in hand (just as the virtual and actual always come together). Affects are always present in our experience albeit never in a pure state. As Brian Massumi has it in his essay on 'The Autonomy of Affect' (1996) they are not transcendent, but immanent to experience. This realm of affect is a non-personal place, before the mechanisms of the ego – the likes and dislikes (the habits) – have kicked in. Crucially, it continues to exist alongside our typical sense of self (we might say our signifying self). Indeed, this other non-human state that always and everywhere accompanies our typical sense of ourselves is what Deleuze and Guattari, in *A Thousand Plateaus*, call the 'body without organs'. Buddhist meditation, this time as insight practice (*vipassana*), allows an experimental encounter with this other place – of forever changing relations of intensities – that in itself produces a self-overcoming (again, the self here understood as a bundle of volitions). This 'knowledge' – of impermanence–insubstantiality–interconnectedness – is not solely intellectual but is, precisely, bodily. It is a direct experience, registered on the body – of the rising and fallings, the comings and goings, of sensation. This is an inhuman experience that our typical sense of a fixed self tends to obscure in the very production of that self. In Buddhism this wisdom-insight also implies an ethics insofar as an understanding of this impermanence and interconnectivity leads to compassion (I am everything, and everything is I). I will return to this properly inhuman ethics below.

Buddhist meditation is then itself an essentially creative act that is ethical (a self-overcoming), but also aesthetic insofar as it involves cultivating a certain kind of profound disinterested attitude towards the world (in fact, it is our typical craving – grasping and pushing away – that constitutes our world). Indeed, it is this 'letting be' that reveals a certain reality that was masked by our instrumental attitudes and intentions. For the Buddhist such a mode of being must involve great

mindfulness (hence, again, meditation; dwelling in the gap) but also, again, wisdom; an understanding – that might, in fact, be intellectual in the first instance – of the conditionality of all things (the arising and passing away of all phenomena, thus the futility of grasping). Hence the specific purpose of study within Buddhism. These two (meditation and study), alongside an ethical practice in what we might call a molar sense (the cultivation of a lifestyle that allows for a quieting of the mind that itself allows for the necessary focus) constitute at least one understanding of the Buddhist path. To put this in Deleuzian terms: Buddhism can be understood as an ethico-aesthetic strategy for accessing the virtual realm of affects, and in so doing producing what we might call a *trans*human becoming.

We might turn to another of Bergson's books to develop these apparent resonances with Buddhism. Indeed, Bergson's writings on the mystic, it seems to me, are a further bridge between Deleuze's own writing and Western Buddhism, for although in *Matter and Memory* Bergson only posits, as a demonstrative technique, the existence of a someone who 'experiences' the pure image and the pure past (that is, a pure virtuality), in *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion* (1935) he describes the mystic as precisely someone who inhabits the gap (in this case 'in-between' the fixed rituals and morals of society) and thus, as it were, accesses the infinite. This insight might only be temporary, but nevertheless it can transform the subject who experiences it, and indeed the world in which a mystic returns and acts. The important point here is that an individual subject, as a finite being, can experience the infinite *directly* even if only temporarily. For Bergson intelligence cannot achieve this (the latter serves the ends of a particular organism, or, simply put, is instrumental), hence, intuition, which we might characterise as the world 'thinking' through man. Here is the crucial passage on Deleuze's own take on this mystical experience – the accessing of 'creative emotion' – from towards the end of *Bergsonism*:

> The little interval 'between the pressures of society and the resistance of intelligence' defines a variability appropriate to human societies. Now, by means of this interval something extraordinary is produced or embodied: creative emotion. This no longer has anything to do with the pressures of society, nor with the disputes of the individual. It no longer has anything to do with an individual who contests or even invents, nor with a society that constrains, that persuades or even tells stories. It has only made use of their circular play in order to break the circle, just as Memory uses the circular play of excitation and reaction to embody recollections in images. And what is this creative emotion, if not precisely a cosmic Memory, that actualises all

> the levels at the same time, that liberates man from the plane (*plan*) or the level that is proper to him, in order to make him a creator, adequate to the whole movement of creation. (Deleuze 1988a: 111)

Here the mystic is an individual that moves beyond the human when the latter is defined as being pinned to the plane of matter. Indeed, the typical human, in *The Two Sources*, is a being predominantly of habit and reactivity – and is further defined by a specifically utilitarian memory (as well as by the fixed codes and morality of a given society). The mystic, on the other hand, actualises all the levels of the cone of memory, or, we might say, lives – *feels* – all of life in its plenitude and complexity (we might say that the mystic is a specifically intensive being in this sense). Crucially, this mystic is also a creator and, indeed, assumes responsibility for the creation of his or her own self. As Deleuze puts it right at the end of *Bergsonism*:

> This liberation, this embodiment of cosmic memory in creative emotions, undoubtedly only takes place in privileged souls. It leaps from one soul to another, 'every now and then', crossing closed deserts. But to each member of a closed society, if he opens himself to it, it communicates a kind of reminiscence, an excitement that allows him to follow. And from soul to soul, it traces the design of an *open* society, a society of creators, where we pass from one genius to another, through the intermediary of disciples or spectators or hearers. (Deleuze 1988a: 112)

In Buddhist terms this is the *sangha* – the community of those who follow the *dharma*. In Buddhism this defines any community of Buddhists (when this is a community defined also by friendship), but it also names the community of *arahants*, or those who have achieved 'awakening'. In the last sentence of *The Two Sources* Bergson himself suggests that it is these exceptional individuals who fulfil 'the essential function of the universe, which is a machine for the making of gods' (Bergson 1935: 317). This, it seems to me, is Bergson's own thesis of reciprocal determination in which man can come to determine the very conditions that had determined him.

This question of reciprocal determination in relation to actual Buddhist practice itself is more complex, but what can be said, in Buddhist terms, is that both the conditioned (actual) and unconditioned (virtual) are, ultimately, the same. At a certain level of understanding or awareness (we might even suggest a knowledge such as that of Spinoza's third kind) the actual *is* the virtual, just as the virtual *is* the actual. In this 'place' to speak of a subject who has this other kind of experience is no longer accurate insofar as dualisms, such as subject–object,

conditioned–unconditioned, but also, crucially, virtual–actual, no longer hold. Or, if they do hold, they are in a constant state of inter-penetration – or a reciprocal relation. It is in this sense, again, that the actual determines the virtual out of which it has itself been determined. Another way of saying this is that Deleuze's 'virtual Ideas' (relations of intensity) are determined by the life that lives them (depending on how we live, certain virtual Ideas become clear and distinct, others retreat into a darker obscurity). Or, what I am determined by is in turn determined by how I live.

III. Badiou and the *Bodhisattva*-subject

For an alternative take on this question of mysticism, and its relation to a specifically Western Buddhism, we might turn briefly to Alain Badiou and to his book on *Saint Paul* (2003), for, of course, Paul has a mystical experience – an event happens to him in Badiou's terms – that results in a dramatic conversion. Not surprisingly, however, for Badiou, it is not this experience itself that is the defining moment for Paul. Rather, it is the consequences of this experience (following the logic of *Being and Event* (2005) and *Logics of Worlds* (2009) it is the what happens *after* the event that is crucial in terms of the subject). In Badiou's case this is so pronounced that the actual content of the experience (in the case of Paul, the resurrection of Christ) is at one point in *Saint Paul* figured as superfluous to the real business of maintaining a fidelity to it through actions in the world. Paul operates then, for Badiou, as a paradigmatic case study of the production of a subject insofar as he is produced as one through an event and, crucially, an ongoing active fidelity to it.

Bergson's mystic is likewise active and very much 'in' the world. In fact, Bergson places the Christian mystic (though Paul himself is not mentioned), who re-enters and engages with the world, above, for example, the realised Buddhist, who, Bergson argues, withdraws from the world. In this sense we might say Bergson's mystic, like Badiou's Paul, also maintains a militant fidelity of sorts to their 'experience' insofar as it determines a future course of action. We might want to argue, however, given what I have written above, that meditation is certainly not a withdrawal from the world (it would seem, rather, to be a direct engagement with the world as it is incarnated in our very being), but nevertheless the point is well made that accessing the infinite has a very real impact on the finite in terms of what happens after this 'experience'. I will return in a moment to a figure in the Buddhist tradition for whom this return is defining.

In passing, it is worth noting that the content of the event for Paul – Christ's resurrection – is, in actual fact, that which allows for the infinite to enter the finite (it is, after all, a conquering of death). As such, Badiou is somewhat inconsistent in his treatment of this particular event. The resurrection allows for a thorough reordering of the relations between life and death; simply put, after the 'resurrection-event' a different course is open to any subject who wishes to 'escape' mortality or the finite – simply because he or she can 'decide' to accept the fact of resurrection (Badiou here writes of a thought of life pitched against a thought of death). To quote Badiou: 'Only a resurrection redistributes death and life to their places, by showing that life does not necessarily occupy the place of the dead' (Badiou 2003: 85). It is in this sense also that the resurrection-event – or, we might even say the 'Christ-event' – is the 'abolition of the law, which was nothing but the empire of death' (86). The latter law determines and protects a certain partiality (and particularity) against a truer universalism (and the 'greater' law of love that leads from the latter, for, as Badiou remarks, 'No truth is ever solitary, or particular' (90)). It is this true universalism – that the Christ-event is for all (this being precisely the 'Good News') that characterises Paul's fidelity (and, indeed, the interest of Christianity for Badiou). The subject then, as mapped out here, is precisely a 'universal singularity' (13). All events are for all in this sense (although specific to certain situations or 'Conditions' in their occurrence, nevertheless, they are always *transpositional*).

In *On the Production of Subjectivity* I have gone into more detail about how this thesis of the event – and of the subject attendant on it – maintains a certain gap between the finite and the infinite (despite what Badiou himself might claim). In fact, for Badiou, the event, as otherworldly occurrence, paradoxically produces this gap. We might note here, briefly, that for Deleuze events, on the other hand, are precisely worldly – when they are thought of as the reciprocal passage between the virtual and actual. In relation to Paul it is then no accident that Badiou's paradigmatic example of an event is transcendent (the hand of God as it were). In *Being and Event* itself the event is figured as precisely *not* from God (indeed it is from a not-God, or, a not-One), but there is still a definition of the event as outside the situation/world as given, and, precisely, outside of any given individual. Hence also the chief *modus operandi* of such a subject is necessarily faith.

In fact, there is a figure in the Buddhist tradition that somewhat parallels Badiou's Paul *and* Bergson's Christian mystic and yet – and this would make such a figure of particular interest to Badiou – is a figure

of immanence rather than of transcendence (that is to say, it is a figure for whom the excess that the event announces is an excess of the world rather than a beyond the world). A figure for whom resurrection is not the defining event, but who nevertheless offers a different thought of life 'beyond' the finite: the *bodhisattva*. We might say, in fact, that the *bodhisattva* – a later Mahayana construction – is conjured as a solution to the problem of the finite–infinite relation, or, in more Buddhist terms, of time and eternity. The *bodhisattva*, by definition, is a kind of not-quite-Buddha (not quite dwelling in eternity), who chooses to remain in, or, precisely, return to, this world. This is to remain in *samsara* (time), forgoing *nirvana* (eternity), until all other sentient beings have themselves passed over to this farthest shore.[3]

In Badiou's terms there is an event – or experience – that provokes this militant and compassionate activity of the *bodhisattva*: the arising of the *bodhicitta*, or, simply 'the will to enlightenment' (itself attendant on a certain tension – again, a desire to withdraw from the world versus a desire to be militantly involved with the world). It is this that sets the *bodhisattva* off on the way. It is what we might call the '*bodhisattva*-event'. This event, by definition, is universalising in that it is open to all (anyone can make the decision to follow the path of the *bodhisattva*), and also, more profoundly, it is a will to *nirvana for all*. In Badiou's terms it is a thought of the generic. This, a kind of enlightenment for all beings or for none, is again the Mahayana correction to the individualist spiritualism that the earlier Hinayana tradition became susceptible to (the retreat from society, the private thinker, and so forth). Hence, we have the '*bodhisattva* vow' to actively engage oneself in the welfare of all beings situated within time and to relinquish enlightenment until all have also achieved it. We might figure this as an extreme fidelity to an event that itself is a demonstration of the generic (and that, again, asserts a life outside of simple finitude). In terms of Badiou and *Saint Paul* it is a thought of life (the interconnectedness–interpenetration–insubstantiality of all things) pitched against a moribund thought of death (a general nihilism).

In Badiou's terms the *bodhisattva* is then precisely a subject in that he or she maintains an extreme fidelity to an event albeit it is not, strictly speaking, one that occurs in one of Badiou's four Conditions (art, science, politics and love). Indeed, it implies, we might say, a fifth Condition – or, more specifically, a kind of modification of Badiou's Condition of love insofar as here it is less the love of another individual than the love of the world itself that constitutes the event. This 'spiritual event' – the arising of the will to enlightenment *for all* – is itself dependant

on the prior event of the Buddha's enlightenment (just as Paul-as-subject, in Badiou's account, experiences his own event that is dependent on the 'Christ-event'). This fidelity is also premised on a faith of sorts – in the Buddha's enlightenment. Simply put, it is a faith that human enlightenment is possible. In relation to what I have already said about meditation it seems to me that, crucially, it is also a faith that can be tested in and against experience. In Buddhism it is never blind faith, but more a working hypothesis that is then decided by experience. The bar – between the finite and the infinite – is also configured here more as a decision than an actual bar; a decision to remain subtracted from the infinite as it were.

In fact, Western commentators have commented that the Buddha, as a figure of eternity, and the *bodhisattva*, as a figure in time, are indeed ontologically separate (one cannot get to the eternal via time), but that nevertheless it might be possible to hold both perspectives at once, a kind of holding of the two in tension (see Sangharakshita 1988). From a Deleuzian perspective we might say, in fact, that the *bodhisattva* is the site of a finite–infinite weave, or, again, of the reciprocal determination of two fields. We might say, further, that this is the difference between the two dominant models of Buddhist practice in the West: one of the path, and one of the non-path (put simply, enlightenment, from a certain perspective, is a long way off and yet, from another, is right here, right now).

Whether, in fact, an individual temporarily accesses the infinite before returning to the mundane, or it is possible to hold the two coextensively – as meditation would seem to imply – the crucial issue is that there is a two-way passage, at least of sorts, between the finite and the infinite; or to say this differently, the finite and the infinite are part of the same reality and are thus, again, in a relation of reciprocal determination. Nevertheless, as I mentioned above, the finite 'accessing' of the infinite – as Enlightenment – is paradoxically not an 'experience' one can have. In Badiou's terms a subject of this experience cannot be reduced to the 'organisation of sense experience' that defines a given individual 'in the world'. That said, such an experience can happen to one, and, indeed, and this is crucial, can and must be prepared for. This is why Buddhism places such emphasis on ethics, or what one might call in this particular context, following William Blake, the cleansing of the doors of perception – seeing the world free of *kleishas* (or 'defilements'). In terms of what we might call a subtractive ontology, it is not as if 'more' needs to be added to the subject in order that he or she transform and 'achieve' the infinite, but rather that a series of blinkers need to be

taken away (again, this would return us to Bergson's definition of the human as a series of shutters closed against the universe). There is then a further difference with Badiou here, for this notion of preparation and of the various practices implied by it, that links Buddhism to the stoics, would seem to be at odds with Badiou's notion of the unbidden nature of the event. Indeed, for Badiou no preparation is possible – it being the nature of an event to arrive unannounced and unexpectedly.

IV. Spinozism and Buddhism (Ethics and Immanence)

Our final philosophical figure can be brought in at this point as a contrast to Badiou and in resonance with Buddhism, namely, Spinoza, who is, of course, a key precursor, along with Bergson, for Deleuze. For Spinoza, preparation is not only possible, but necessary (Badiou's understanding of Spinoza, at least in *Being and Event*, seems to wilfully ignore this determining rationale of the *Ethics*, that is to say, that it is a *programmatic* text). To very briefly summarise the programme of the *Ethics* (following Deleuze's own reading): the first kind of knowledge names our typical way of being in the world in which we are ignorant of the true causes of our experience and thus subject to random encounters and the affects produced by them (this, we might say, is *samsara*, though we might also suggest that it is Bergson's plane of matter – the terrain of the reactive sensori-motor schema). The second kind of knowledge entails beginning to understand the causes of our experience and thus the concomitant organisation of life so as to produce specifically joyful encounters and the construction of 'common notions' attendant on these (this, we might say, is the Buddhist path; in relation to Bergson, we might suggest that it is also a path away from the plane of matter via the gap I mentioned above – a disjunctive synthesis in Deleuze and Guattari's terms – that thus allows a certain amount of freedom from habit).[4] This second kind of knowledge, although, as Spinoza suggests, producing a joyful life in and of itself, is but the preparation for a further third kind of knowledge, where all the world is a joyful encounter, in fact, where there is a sense of identification with the world, a veritable beatitude. This third kind of knowledge is also, according to Spinoza, 'under the aspect of eternity' – or, we might say, is an 'experience' of the infinite (in relation to my discussion of Deleuze's Bergsonism above this is a kind of dwelling in the base of the cone, the third passive synthesis of a still time in which past, present and future are equally present). Insofar as this progression in knowledge implies an ethical programme, precisely

of experimentation, selection, repetition, then we might also say that it is an example of the actual determining the virtual.[5]

Deleuze's lecture on 'The Three Kinds of Knowledge' (2003) is useful here in pointing out that the three kinds of knowledge might equally be thought as three kinds of body that we already have, or three ways in which we might relate to our existing bodies. As such, it is not so much that we 'go' anywhere with Spinoza's ethical programme, but rather that we realise certain things that are already here. The same goes for Buddhist practice: there is a path, but on reaching the end, one understands that there was never anywhere to go (after all, where could one go?). In fact, we might usefully compare Deleuze–Spinoza's three bodies with the traditional three kinds of body of the Buddha (the *trikaya* doctrine): first, the *nirmanakaya* or 'created body' that functions on a human/historical level (this is a transitory mode of being, subject to change); second, the *sambhokaya* or 'body of mutual enjoyment', an archetypal body that 'represents' different aspects of Buddhahood (we might say that this is the joyful body of the second kind of knowledge); and third, the *dharmakaya* or 'body of truth', an 'aspect of Absolute reality' that 'exists' in eternity (see Sangharakshita 1988: 6–11). The *dharmakaya*, like Spinoza's third kind of knowledge, is an experience of eternity (or, again, more precisely, *sub specie aeterni*) that is discontinuous with time but also coterminous with it. It is in this sense that Buddhism is not exactly an eternalism (believing in an immortality of the soul or, as it were, an afterlife for that soul), but rather, like Spinoza, posits an eternity that is here and now, albeit occluded.

Spinoza's 'labour' of the second kind of knowledge has its correlate in Buddhism with the 'Noble Eight Fold Path', or simply ethical living (involving 'training principles': right speech, right action, *sangha* or community, and so forth). Traditionally, these are foundational practices aimed, again, at quieting the mind, allowing for focus. Both Buddhist and Spinozist systems of ethics are then, ultimately, about the creation of the conditions that might allow for the possibility of the arising of insight or truth, which, in fact, they determine insofar as such an insight, following Spinoza, is insight into the particular modal essence that we 'are'. Again, the actual programme determines the virtual destination. The path, in this sense, determines the goal. Or, again, through this ethics we paradoxically become a cause of ourselves.

There is a discontinuity of sorts between the second and the third kinds of knowledge (they are different in kind), but there is also a passageway between them (this technology of passage being, precisely, joy). In fact, the third kind of knowledge *is* similar to the second (both

are, after all, a knowledge of modal essences), albeit with the former it is more immediate knowledge, instantaneous, the result of a realisation, or insight, rather than of the processual construction of concepts or, strictly speaking, of the 'ethical life' itself. Insight is then an event of sorts, but one that needs careful preparation (discipline and training) and, we might remark, supportive conditions in order to work through its consequences.

Spinoza's *Ethics* is then remarkably similar to a Buddhist system of ethics seeing as both emphasise a kind of programme for man, but then ultimately something more inhuman. Indeed, it is as if there are two ethics: the one of the path – human, mediated, requiring effort; and the one of the goal – inhuman, immediate, effortless. The two are connected insofar as the former builds a platform towards the latter, but they are also qualitatively different because the first is a technology of the subject, whereas the second is, properly speaking, 'of' the object – or, we might say, is the becoming-world of the subject. Indeed, for myself, Spinoza's *Ethics* reads like a treatise of a future Buddha, and a specifically Western one, insofar as it is written the other way around: whereas the Buddha, having achieved insight, then attempts to put in place a system that will allow others to reach the same destination (from goal to path), Spinoza works from the path, from a rigorously worked out ethics based on reason – that then arrives at the same place almost despite itself: two different perspectives producing two similar ethics (and two similar ethical destinations).

We might briefly turn here to Deleuze's last essay on 'Immanence: A Life' (2001) in which Deleuze's indebtedness to Spinozist formulations is made explicit, and in which we can see further resonances with Buddhist insight and experience. Deleuze writes:

> We will say of pure immanence that it is A LIFE, and nothing else. It is not immanence to life, but the immanent that is in nothing is itself a life. A life is the immanence of immanence, absolute immanence: it is complete power, complete bliss. (Deleuze 2001: 27)

For Deleuze this is also what he calls the 'transcendental field', which is 'distinct from experience in that it neither refers to an object nor belongs to a subject … It therefore appears as a pure pre-subjective current of consciousness, a qualitative duration of consciousness without self' (Deleuze 2001: 25). For Deleuze it is on the thresholds of life that this transcendental field becomes perceptible, but, we might say, this is also precisely the terrain of meditation. In this essay, perhaps Deleuze's most mysterious, the question of reciprocal determination

is again posed insofar as the 'virtualities, events, singularities' of this impersonal life 'are actualized in a state of things and of the lived *that make it happen*' (31; my emphasis). There is also, once more, the suggestion that this 'life' implies 'the immensity of an empty time where one sees the event yet to come and already happened, in the absolute of an immediate consciousness' (29). It seems to me that the same immediate consciousness is at stake in Nietzsche's eternal return; at least as Deleuze understands it, but also in the Buddhist idea of insight that precisely offers a way out from our own linear temporality and with it our finitude.

Indeed, we might say that a life of immanence is also a life of Buddhism – or, perhaps more accurately, a life of *dharma* when this names the truth of condition co-production but does not identify this with an actual figure that lived its truth – and which can thus remain tied to a particular historical moment and geographical location. Perhaps, ultimately, this is what a Western Buddhism needs to be: a *dharmic* practice released from any debt (or homage) to the Buddha, but one that is also not entirely abstract, at least insofar as this means non-corporeal, but that is, again, tested 'in' experience, on the body – when the latter is itself rethought as the site of an actual–virtual interface. A life of pure immanence then, but, crucially, also a life that needs to be lived, which is to say, a plane of immanence that must also be constructed:

> This plane of immanence or consistency is a plan, but not in the sense of a mental design, a project, a program; it is a plan in the geometric sense: a section, an intersection, a diagram. Thus, to be in the middle of Spinoza is to be on this modal plane, or rather, to install oneself on this plane – which implies a mode of living, a way of life. What is this plane and how does one construct it? For at the same it is fully a plane of immanence, and yet it has to be constructed if one is to live in a Spinozist manner. (Deleuze 1988b: 122–3)

Later, in his small book on Spinoza, *Practical Philosophy*, from where the above quote is taken, Deleuze gives a more specific description of the 'experience' (when this is not an experience of a subject) on and of this plane:

> There is no longer a form, but only relations of velocity between infinitesimal particles of unformed matter. There is no longer a subject, but only individuating affective states of an anonymous force. Here the plan is concerned only with motions and rests, with dynamic affective charges. It will be perceived with that which it makes perceptible to us, as we proceed. (Deleuze 1988b: 128)

As individuals, we are, as it were, folds in this plane – looking back at it. In fact, we are a product of this plane (what else could we be?), but we are also a kind of extraction – or transcendent capture – of certain parts of it (hence, precisely, *dukkha*). We might compare this strange description above with the words of the Buddhist Heart Sutra that likewise articulates a certain 'experience' – or intuitive understanding – of impermanence–insubstantiality–interconnectedness as that which produces form, but also non-form. A certain kind of post-human perspective on, but also of, immanence:

> Here then,
> Form is no other than emptiness,
> Emptiness no other than form.
> Form is only emptiness,
> Emptiness only form.
>
> Feeling, thought, and choice,
> Consciousness itself,
> Are the same as this.
>
> All things are by nature void
> They are not born or destroyed
> Nor are they stained or pure
> Nor do they wax or wane.
>
> So, in emptiness, no form,
> No feeling, thought, or choice,
> Nor is there consciousness.
> No eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind;
> No colour, sound, smell, taste, touch,
> Or what the mind takes hold of,
> Nor even act of sensing.
>
> No ignorance or end of it,
> Nor all that comes of ignorance;
> No withering, no death,
> No end of them.
>
> Nor is there pain, or cause of pain,
> Or cease in pain, or noble path
> To lead from pain;
> Not even wisdom to attain!
> Attainment too is emptiness.
> (Sangharakshita 1990: 14–15)

V. Conclusion: Towards a Western *Dharma*?

I suggested in my introduction that a Western Buddhism might be less motivated by the abolition of the self than by a more constructive project – to make the self anew and in accordance with certain truths about the world (not least its impermanence). This constructive attitude is an important feature of Deleuze's reading of Spinoza, precisely that it offers an aesthetics of living, or 'an Art, the art of the *Ethics* itself: organizing good encounters, composing actual relations, forming powers, experimenting' (Deleuze 1988b: 118). It seems to me, ultimately, that Badiou's own philosophy also lends itself to this perspective insofar as to be a subject in the world is also to create oneself anew in that world. Indeed, despite the differences I have highlighted (on the other side of the event as it were), there do seem to be further resonances between Badiou and Buddhism on this other side of the event – in terms of fidelity. In fact, from a certain perspective, insight itself is secondary to what one does with it. For both Badiou and Buddhism it is this fidelity itself that changes the situation (in Buddhism, the situation of an individual life).[6] Indeed, Spinoza's second kind of knowledge might, at least in one sense, be productively brought into encounter with Badiou's 'subject-knowledge' that is produced by grouping those positive 'post-evental' encounters that follow the logic of the event. In these terms Badiou's theory of the subject also implies an art of living, at least of a sort.

Crucially, however, for Badiou this does not seem to be a matter of what we might call affective-knowledge. Indeed, a theory of affects is inevitably – and conspicuously – missing from Badiou's system in *Being and Event* (and although *Logics of Worlds* goes some way to addressing the missing worldliness of *Being and Event*, it nevertheless pays very little attention to affect). It is as if the impermanence and radical 'undecidability' of the world – the emotional *mess* as it were – that actually constitutes lived life (the micro events of the virtual–actual weave) would only spoil the purity of the event and the matheme of the subject that follows from it. Likewise, there is no equivalent of Spinoza's third kind of knowledge, *except* as the inexplicable and unbidden event. The subject, in Badiou's system, is forever caught in knowledge of the second kind (and perhaps the first), but maintains a faith in the third from which he or she is barred by a narrow but unbridgeable chasm. The third kind of knowledge, we might say, is direct knowledge *and* experience of the generic, the universal.

With Deleuze's Bergsonism and Spinozism, as with Buddhism, there are then two important differences to Badiou: first, the infinite can be prepared for (the conditions of its arising can be put in place, albeit the arising itself is fundamentally different in kind to the efforts of that subject); and second, the infinite can be experienced – this being Spinoza's third kind of knowledge, a beatitude in which the whole world agrees with one, and Buddhist Enlightenment, again a complete identification with the world. Crucially, this experience – as evidenced by Bergson's mystic – is not just a private affair but involves a concomitant involvement in and with the world (put simply, compassion). We might say that this last characterisation of a mode of being firmly involved with the world, in fact a veritable becoming-world of the subject, operates as a necessary corrective to those who seek redemption in an escape from the world.

We might suggest here that the figure of the ontologist, the crucial figure of Badiou's theory of the subject (insofar as it also names Badiou himself) is also a figure who is necessarily barred from experiencing the generic despite being able to prove its existence. This is in contrast to the Buddha, at least as the latter accesses the infinite and incarnates it in their very being. Deleuze's actual/virtual dyad allows a way in to think this co-presence of the two realms, their mutual interpenetration. And the *bodhisattva* is a figure who operates on this edge between the actual and the virtual, with one foot in time and one in eternity, all the while maintaining an extreme fidelity to the 'truth' of the event of the Buddha's Enlightenment. Badiou's subject, in the world but barred from the truth which he or she nevertheless produces, is the melancholy double of this *bodhisattva* for whom there is no bar, or if there is, it is because a decision has been made to instate it as the condition of compassionate action. This *bodhisattva*-subject then is very much in the world, but not entirely of it.

I want to end these remarks on Deleuze, Badiou and Buddhism on a personal note. It is rare to find spaces, places or communities in which a genuine production of subjectivity is taking place. It seems to me that within certain practices of Western Buddhism there is something experimental going on – an attempt to think and practise the *dharma* in a modern and Western context, which does not involve a wholesale turn to the East and a plundering of exotic narratives and images. This has meant, for some, the utilisation of Western myth and specifically pre-modern images and narratives (and also a turn from Christianity to a renewed paganism). I have written about this utilisation of the past to

combat the impasses of the present (and, indeed, about a contemporary paganism) elsewhere – in relation to Deleuze and Guattari's own ideas of a mixed semiotic.[7] In fact, to a certain extent radically new images and narratives are required for a Western *dharma*, and, no doubt, are being drawn and written as I write (and will be based on the experiences of subjects that are themselves involved in practice). What, however, is offered here is the beginning of a more philosophical exploration of some resonances between Buddhism and certain strands of post-Kantian philosophy, when philosophy itself is to be understood, following Pierre Hadot (1995), as 'a way of life'. Indeed, this is to excavate an older model of philosophy, one that held before the splitting of the latter into theology and the more academic and hermeneutic discipline of philosophy that exists today. It is also one that is interested, following Foucault's ideas on the 'Care of the self', in spirituality – and in a transformation of the subject – rather than in a knowledge that is merely apparent to the senses as they are (and, as such, it marks a turn from the Cartesian subject). Might we also say, following François Laruelle, that this is a future-looking philosophy, or, in Laruelle's terms, a non-philosophy that is intent on renewing the conditions of thought itself (and not limiting it those to models already subsumed *by* philosophy)? If philosophy is used in this non-philosophical programme (as with my take on Bergson and Spinoza above), this will be for eminently practical ends and not as merely a further addition to philosophical discourse itself (which, as Lacan has told us, is a discourse of the master – and, as such, maintains certain power relations, or, indeed, stymies any possibility of transformation).

The next step, it seems to me, in this development of a Western *dharma* would be the integration of these different strands (conceptual and abstract – mythopoetic and embodied) and the concomitant development of different kinds of practices and new rituals that allow a subject to sidestep him- or herself, to become other. After all, it is one thing to write, or talk, about transformation but it is another to put this into practice especially in terms of an engagement with emotion – and affect – beyond the intellect. Deleuze himself offers some interesting lines of thought here, for example with his essay on Robinson's adventures on the desert island in 'Michel Tournier and the World Without Others' (1990), or, to return to the essay 'Immanence: A Life', in the cast of literary characters that themselves live different intensive states. The collaborations with Guattari go even further in this direction. Indeed, with the theorisation of the practice of schizoanalysis alongside the development of an expanded ethico-aesthetic paradigm Guattari himself,

it seems to me, has much to offer Western Buddhist practitioners (Buddhism here operating precisely between the therapeutic and aesthetic registers). Ultimately, however, although Deleuze and Guattari, alongside their philosophical precursors such as Spinoza and Bergson, offer a particular philosophical take on Western spiritual practices, the practices themselves will always operate at the sharp edge of experimentation and development. After all, a life of immanence, a life between the finite and the infinite, is always richer – and more surprising – than any philosophical account that can be given of it.

Notes

1. There have, of course, been many other comparative studies of Buddhism and Continental philosophy. As indicative see the work of David Loy, for example the volume *Lack and Transcendence: The Problem of Death and Life in Psychotherapy, Existentialism, and Buddhism* (2001). In terms of recent French thought there is now a large literature on Derrida/deconstruction and Buddhism, though still relatively little on Deleuze and Buddhism (an exception here is N. Robert Glass's essay on Tibetan Buddhism, 'The Tibetan Book of the Dead: Deleuze and the Second Light' (2000)). Although not on Deleuze and Buddhism *per se*, there is also a growing secondary literature on Deleuze and Spirituality/Mysticism. See for example the monograph by Christian Kerslake on *Deleuze and the Unconscious* (2007), the special issue of *SubStance* on 'Spiritual Politics After Deleuze' edited by Joshua Ramey (2010), and the monograph, also by Ramey, on *The Hermetic Deleuze: Philosophy and Spiritual Ordeal* (2012). In terms of Deleuze's third important philosophical precursor, Nietzsche, and the resonances with Buddhism, see Robert Morrison's book on *Nietzsche and Buddhism* (1997), and also my own comments on Nietzsche's eternal return in the third section of my first chapter of *On the Production of Subjectivity* (2012). (It seems to me that Nietzsche's overman has profound resonances with the Buddha, notwithstanding Nietzsche's own sometimes dismissive view of Buddhism which he aligns with Schopenhauer and the extinguishing of the will. It is my contention, in what follows, that a Western Buddhism – or simply *dharma* – is more usefully thought as constructive, which is to say, as offering an alternative production of subjectivity.) Finally, Hume might also be said to explore Buddhist themes, especially in his account of habit as that which, ultimately, constitutes us as individuals. My own understanding of Buddhism in what follows comes from my involvement in the Tiratna Buddhist movement and I want to thank here those Buddhist order members that introduced me to Buddhism (especially Rijumitra) or have led retreats and study days that have informed my take on it. In particular I want to acknowledge the friendship and conversations of both Nagapriya and Samudradaka and the writings of Sangharakshita whose own translation of Buddhism into the West informs more or less all of my own take on Buddhist doctrine and practice. In relation to this involvement see my two earlier attempts at bringing my understanding of Buddhism into contact with Deleuze (and Guattari) in two short articles both written for *Parallax*: 'In Violence: Three Case Studies Against the Stratum' (2000) and 'Writing on Art (Case Study: The Buddhist Puja)' (2001). The gambit of this particular essay is that Buddhism, especially in the figure of

the *bodhisattva*, figures the finite–infinite relation as a specifically liveable one. It goes without saying that my take on Buddhism leaves out far more than it contains, and, indeed, merely skims the surface of a very rich and varied tradition (and takes more than a few short cuts in its account); likewise, my accounts of Deleuze, Bergson and Spinoza, and Badiou focus solely on certain details that might be brought into productive encounter with Buddhist doctrine and/or practice. For a more sustained account of these four thinkers – specifically in relation to the production of a contemporary subjectivity – see my recent monograph mentioned above.

2. My understanding of the reciprocal determination of the actual and virtual is indebted to James Williams's laying out of this complex terrain in his critical introduction to *Difference and Repetition* (2003).
3. For an account of the *bodhisattva* vow, in relation to the *bodhicitta* and to the nature of conversion within Buddhism, see Sangharakshita 1994 (my understanding of the *bodhisattva* in general is also indebted to Sangharakshita 1988). Sangharakshita points out that the *bodhicitta* is not the only event that might produce a conversion; it is, however, one that produces a properly altruistic orientation (a fidelity to the generic). In general, however, a Buddhist might be defined by what we might call a '*dukkha*-event' (illness, old age, death, and so forth) that then begins the desire for something beyond finitude. This in itself constitutes an important difference to a thinker like Spinoza for whom the thought of death is always ethically counter-productive – although it is worth noting that it was Spinoza's grasp of his own finitude that led him to explore the terrain of the *Ethics*. In relation to this it seems to me that a further key area that needs to be addressed in terms of the mobilisation of Buddhism as a radical 'production of subjectivity' today is the relation of this inherent *dukkha* of human experience to our particular capitalist mode of production.
4. Indeed, another Buddhist doctrine – of the twelve *nidanas* – links the break in the circle of re-becoming (reactivity) to the shift to a spiral upward path (towards Enlightenment). Here *dukkha*, instead of leading to further grasping, gives way to the arising of faith. The spiral path, in an echo of Spinoza, is characterised by ever increasingly joyful states (indeed, joy itself is the technology of progression on the spiral path).
5. In passing it is interesting to note that although Ancient philosophy, at least in Pierre Hadot's account, likewise emphasises preparation and an ethical programme (precisely 'philosophy as a way of life'), the actual ethical destination differs to Buddhism, or indeed, to Spinoza. To quote Hadot: 'With the help of these exercises, we should be able to attain to wisdom; that is, to a state of complete liberation from the passions, utter lucidity, knowledge of ourselves and of the world. In fact, for Plato, Aristotle, the Epicureans, and the Stoics, such an ideal of human perfection serves to define *divine* perfection, a state by definition inaccessible to man. With the possible exception of the Epicurean school, wisdom was conceived as an ideal after which one strives without the hope of ever attaining it' (Hadot 1995: 103). It seems to me that this asymptotic account of progression has much in common with Badiou's subject who is barred from the truth although endlessly approximates it, as opposed to, for example, the mystic in Bergson's account who, we might say, becomes divine. Might this also be figured: Plato vs Buddha?
6. A more sustained and close comparative reading of Badiou's system with Buddhist doctrine would be a worthwhile pursuit, though not, perhaps, for *Deleuze Studies*. To point towards just one further resonance: the central importance of the 'void' for Badiou – the empty set that is contained within any given situation or world (and upon which the latter is constructed) – and

the centrality of *sunyata* (emptiness) within Mahayana Buddhism. This also has bearing on what I say above in my Introduction about Deleuze's ontology (of difference in itself). I have dealt with the differences between Badiou and Deleuze on these grounds (their different takes on multiplicity) in *On the Production of Subjectivity* (2012); suffice to say here that from a Buddhist perspective these ontological questions are always subsumed under the more practical concerns of a given individual's transformation.

7. See, again, the last section of the last chapter of *On the Production of Subjectivity* (2012).

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The Eternal Return of Teaching in the Time of the Corporation

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Abstract

This article addresses the new conditions under which teachers are making the choice to teach. Our core contention is that the reorganisation of schools according to the logic of the corporation, as described in Deleuze's 'Postscript', is changing the flows and forces on the primary surface of 'the classroom'. These changes block the usual movements of teaching to discipline, normalise and individualise, which was the role of the school as precursor to the factory. Blocked from repeating, or returning, teaching as it has always been done, teachers must actively re-will to teach; teachers cannot use order words to name themselves and direct flows and forces as they have usually been done. While many choices to teach will be undertaken, the most popular being that of choosing to teach toward the corporation, the repetition of teaching toward enclosed spaces becomes less compelling. Like Nietzsche's Zarathustra, teachers, who have the courage to actively choose, face a new dawn in which teaching cannot be what it once was. In that moment they must choose to repeat that choice an infinite number of times, the choice of eternal return, and it is from here that new times might begin.

Keywords: teaching, eternal return, Zarathustra, Deleuze and Guattari, metallurgy, control society

I. Introduction

Calls for radical change to education in general, and teachers and teaching in particular, are not new. However, contemporary governance

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and policy reflect an amplification and intensification of change (or reform) agendas within which teaching finds itself. Using Deleuzian notions of the control society and eternal return, this paper argues that the flows and forces of the classroom are being reshaped by the intensification of corporate logics that privilege competition, rankings and certain forms of closeness as agents for educational change. In this abstract machine, teachers are paradoxically being asked to embrace new mechanisms while repeating past teachings. However, the challenge for us is to find ways within this machine to uncode flows, release lines of flight and conceptualise teaching anew. To do this, we turn to Zarathustra and Deleuze's reading of eternal return to suggest that one possible line of flight is that of a teacher whose indeterminacy, uncertainty and disruptive immanence is war machinic, where that focus is on challenging the order-word 'teach' that binds many teaching acts to endless repetition.

A new concept is required due to the 'darker and fiercer horizons that face us' (Roy 2008: ix). Disciplinary institutions such as schools, which have traditionally functioned as places of enclosure, affecting normalisation as individualisation and marked surfaces (bodies, classrooms, knowledges), are adopting corporate and free-market ideology (Apple 2005). These surfaces break down, or deterritorialise, as discourses around education shift to embrace economic and productive logics, which, as Hardt explains, 'progressively' removes the 'distinction ... between inside and outside' (Hardt 1998: 140). One way to think of this is as a change in the different intensities of certain 'closenesses': on the one hand, the closeness of a particular notion of morality and care as affected by various disciplinary and religious logics, and on the other hand, the closeness of consumer to product, as affected by many newer, and increasingly compelling, corporate logics of education.

This is not to say that these corporate logics, which Ball (2003) describes as markets, managerialism and performativity, have not previously operated within educational surfaces. Schools have been using textbooks for decades; and using testing to bring about changes in classroom teaching that speak to business logics of efficiency has a long history (Callahan 1964). Rather, the argument we make is that these logics have become increasingly compelling, or intensified, directing flows and forming desires through these surfaces in recent times. Many of the 'reforms' of schooling, such as testing, rankings, standards, new curriculums and new pedagogies, aim to open, or make visible, the inside of the classroom, and, to an extent, the inside of the teacher and students whose interactions form classrooms.

Territories are constantly changing, shifting, as the '*machinic assemblage* of bodies, of actions and passions' meets the '*collective assemblage of enunciation*, of acts and statements, of incorporeal transformations attributed to bodies' (Deleuze and Guattari 2005: 88; original emphasis). This interaction is affected 'on a vertical axis, the assemblage has both territorial sides, or reterritorialised sides, which stabilize it, and cutting edges of deterritorialisation, which carry it away' (88). For example, teachers are called on to be professionals, while also being asked to accept 'the role of deskilled technicians groomed to service the needs of finance capital and produce students who are happy consumers' (Giroux 2012). Good teaching, as a specific sign of good sense, is changing[1] in a way dominated by the 'neoliberal governance of education itself', as exemplified by the requirement that 'educational institutions must *make themselves auditable*' (Connell 2009: 217–18; original emphasis). In education, this has led to global reform agendas that use policy and performative practices to reshape teachers' work, and by extension, teacher subjectivities (Rizvi and Lingard 2010). The imagination of good teaching is now dominated by corporatised notions of teacher effectiveness and quality (Connell 2009; Clarke 2012).

The corporatised landscape of teaching is constructed within global reform agendas (Rizvi and Lingard 2010) that increase distrust of teachers (Gale 2006) and introduce greater external surveillance and auditing in/of classrooms (Thompson and Cook 2014a; Shore 2008). This landscape is dominated by powerful corporate bodies, such as Pearson Education and Teach for America, and global policy experts, such as those in the OECD (Lingard 2010; Ball 2010), that promote the consumption of educational products by inducing flows that necessitate different returns of the teacher. While these affect discursive or signifying shifts in teaching that are both externalised and internalised by the teacher, the teaching event is also changed. Teaching events are those 'always ephemeral incidents, contingent on material circumstances, and full of action and motion and temporality. Unlike objects, events seem to gobble up space and time, taking up the flow of temporality and spilling out into surrounding space' (de Freitas 2013: 581). These new intensities and altered flows that are forming and intensifying call forth new events that are new returns of teaching.

These new abstract machines of education, which privilege specific outputs and measures, change what is being produced on this surface. Education works differently. These new returns of teaching in the classroom place less importance on flows that manifest (and induce) care for curriculum. Nor can they follow transcendent patterns of the

good student at a particular stage of his or her development. These flow patterns are losing intensity, while other lines through which forces flow intensify. It is not a question of what needs to be known but one of using, even becoming, streams of indexation or evaluation (understood simply as the ascription of some value according to an index of valuation). Wallin argues that the 'commodification of contemporary education is characterised by the often-valorised notions of *perpetual becoming, interminable prolongation*, and *recommencement*' (Wallin 2010: 133; original emphasis). These notions signal new flows into and out of the classroom, these new machines of commodification, and change what can be spoken of as teachers and teaching.

One example of this is the new flows of surveillance through databases and accountability that 'opens' the classroom. Teachers are encouraged to constantly channel and facilitate a student's willingness to swim in the sea of data (always affected by specific currents). In doing so, they prepare their students for testing and, more specifically, the test to come. The result is that the teacher no longer directs striated curriculum flows toward student bodies (teachers are not to 'teach to the test'). In this instance, the disciplinary logic of care for individual students is being overlaid (or superimposed) by the produced desire to be responsive to the data generated.

II. The Corporatisation of the School

The school, like all disciplinary institutions and, indeed, society itself, is being overtaken by what Deleuze refers to as the corporation, but what we refer to as corporate logics, or the logic of the corporation (in order to emphasise the noology in play). While Deleuze accepted Foucault's account of the organisation of disciplinary societies as a series of sites of enclosure through which individuals pass, he was convinced that 'we were leaving them [enclosed spaces of disciplinary society] behind' (Deleuze 1995b: 178). For Deleuze, the central expression in societies of control is the corporation:

> The family, the school, the army, the factory are no longer the distinct analogical spaces that converge towards an owner-state or private power – but coded figures – deformable and transformable – of a single corporation that now has only stockholders. (Deleuze 1995b: 181)

The corporation's axioms overlay (or are superimposed on) the disciplinary traditions of the liberal democratic institution (Savat 2009). Continuousness is one example. Disciplinary societies had termination

points for each of their spaces (from family to school to factory – perhaps via barracks, prison or hospital – each of which finishes with its subjects at some point). In a disciplinary society 'one was always starting again', whereas in control societies 'one is never finished with anything – the corporation, the educational system, the armed services being metastable states coexisting in one and the same modulation, like a universal system of deformation' (Deleuze 1995b: 179).

The rise and ubiquity of the corporation, understood as a noology or way of thinking, means that all other 'institutions' gradually adopt corporate logics. For, 'just as the corporation replaces the factory, perpetual training tends to replace the school, and continuous control to replace the examination, [which is] ... the surest way of delivering the school over to the corporation' (Deleuze 1995b: 179). When it came to the school system, Deleuze noted the emergence of 'continuous forms of control, and the effect on the school of perpetual training, the corresponding abandonment of all university research, the introduction of the "corporation" at all levels of schooling' (182). Schools do not disappear but are reorganised or retooled and teaching is reconfigured within modulatory policy machines (Thompson and Cook 2014a), digital surveillance technologies (Bogard 1996) and the increasingly performative cultures operating at all levels of education (Ball 2003). Certain desires are encouraged; the desire for patterns that represent better numbers as evidence of the quality, and therefore linearity and recordability, of events overlays the care for individuals.

In a control society 'Individuals have become "dividuals," and masses, samples, data, markets, or "banks" ' (Deleuze 1995b: 180). Whereas in disciplinary societies enclosures served to mould individuals according to specific requirements, 'controls are a modulation, like a self-deforming cast that will continuously change from one moment to the other, or like a sieve whose mesh will transmute from point to point' (179). The computer as database constantly evaluates the dividual's new position like 'floating rates of exchange, modulated according to a rate established by a set of standard currencies' (180). The continuous collection of data on teaching, such as through high-stakes testing, value-added measures and continual re-accreditation, exemplify this dividuation. Teachers must understand and practise teaching in the context of auditable outputs assembled anonymously and at a distance from the classroom. Care for students' knowledge (curriculum) as some concern for bodies close by, is represented, at best, through commodified measures or becomes meaningless and counter-productive (such as when schools focus attention only on the performance of those students who

may improve test scores). It is not that teachers have stopped caring for their students; it is that this does not register in databases measuring 'quality'. Mercieca argues that these corporate ethics of standardisation and performativity infusing schools 'give the teacher "permission" to not get involved in the lives of students' (Mercieca 2012: 44). The challenge is to understand teaching in terms of forces, flows and the ways teachers connect to children, despite the policy environment which aims to remove or distance them. In other words, we need new theoretical weapons that enable the 'teacher and students to "surpass" the idea of themselves and the kind of life they live' (44).

III. The Classroom as Surface

To explore the effects and affects of the logic of the corporation on the school in this paper, we conceive the classroom as a surface. This both reflects the topological character of Deleuzian theory (Thompson and Cook 2014c) and registers the character of the corporation as spirit or gas (Deleuze 1995b). In a disciplinary system a classroom is understood as an enclosed and limited space; whereas in a control society a classroom can best be understood as a surface formed by streamlines or laminar flows (Savat 2013: 175). Mechanisms on this surface combine to form machines that interrupt certain flows, release specific energies and operate with varying degrees of intensity. The 'nature' of the classroom is not given before this classroom is constituted but as it is constituted. Fixing our gaze on the classroom is a risky one, and we acknowledge the temptation to define it, set limits and codify or represent it as certainty. However, we use the term to designate the concrete space where virtual and actual flows, multiple temporalities (past, presents and futures) and events meet to produce and capacitate bodies and acts of enunciation. So 'the classroom' has to be continually made and remade as an event and is remade through the forces and flows that traverse the space to produce a territory.

'The classroom', then, is an event formed by and as specific interactions that bring 'a change in intensity where the virtual and actual re-combine and the effects of this change multiply and proliferate the many futures of the situation' (de Freitas 2013: 588). Furthermore, these events are relatively common at the molecular, albeit less common at the molar.[2] The point is not that we seek events in the classroom; they are already occurring, and will continue to occur. Rather, it is that we seek to understand which events are being enabled, affected, made more likely within the current regime of signs, and what possibilities there are to

affect new possibilities beyond that classroom. To paraphrase Deleuze, we think any classroom is defined 'by its lines of flight, it flees all over the place, and it's very interesting to try and follow the lines of flight taking shape at some particular moment or other' (Deleuze 1995a: 171). In this, we see the potential of this theorising to 'put education to work for its own undermining' (Pederson 2012: 366). To do this, we must grapple with teaching and Deleuze's eternal return.

In this construction, then, the classroom is less a static location than a moment where the two planes, or surfaces, of consistency and organisation intersect and interact to form territories. A territory 'has two notable effects: *a reorganisation of functions and a regrouping of forces*' (Deleuze and Guattari 2005: 320; original emphasis). This reorganisation and regrouping is fluid and dynamic, and constituted through the de- and re-territorialising planes of consistency and organisation. The plane of consistency is the 'relations of speed and slowness between particles' that implies 'movements of deterritorialisation' (270). The plane of consistency is continually engaging with the plane of organisation, which is 'constantly working away at the plane of consistency, always trying to plug the lines of flight, stop or interrupt the movements of deterritorialization, weigh them down, restratify them, reconstitute forms and subjects in a dimension of depth' (270). Teaching, then, is a way of occupying the territory of the classroom, in response to the flows, couplings, and forces that move with varying speeds and slownesses across that surface. While these may be spatial, they must also be temporal; the teaching-event constantly moves between organisation and consistency, while also being produced through habits and memories of past and present teaching events (Thompson and Cook 2014b). Another way to approach the teaching event is, as Zemblyas suggests, recognising that it 'has always been a game of knowing and unknowing, learning and ignorance' that requires 'a pedagogy of unknowing' (Zemblyas 2005: 140).

The important thing is that the classroom surface formed requires oscillation. The speeds and slownesses of flows that capacitate bodies in various ways, legitimate various enunciative acts on the communicative surface are always machinic. New machines, new logics and more importantly, new intensities of old logics arrayed on the surface, form and reform. How can we understand this flux, what tools do we have to begin to map the ways that this surface works? In the following section, we present the idea of oscillation as central to beginning to map the affects of educational surfaces, in which new flows and forces emerge as corporate logics interact with pre-existing assemblages of teaching.

This has the potential to produce both repetition and difference depending upon the machines at work, as we discuss in later sections.

IV. Metallurgic Returns

If we conceive the school to be a series of modern disciplinary events that continually refounded a certain territory, then the classroom was, from the beginning, a surface produced by what we describe as metallurgic returns. The metallurgic return is the repetition of the same movement, and one that we think mirrors that of Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the metallurgist. There are multiple ways of thinking teaching, and therefore the classroom, that are fundamental to the forces, flows and connections that form the teacher, student and classroom as a precursor to other institutions of enclosure. One of these noologies of the classroom reflects its place in the transitions from family to factory. It is a spatiality of preparation for a world of work. Another noology has the classroom as a space of interaction of bodies. It is a close-by state that manifests the qualities of haptic interaction. Both of these noologies operate in the disciplinary classroom and teaching becomes oscillation, an alternation between two drives or passions: one to instil knowledge, to mould or shape; the other to be with, to be close-by. It is not a case of extinguishing one drive and its passions for the other drive and its passions. Both movements must be performed for a disciplinary classroom to form, and it is a question of which prevails at some moment. As Smith points out, 'when we talk about the "I," we are primarily indicating which, at the moment, is strongest and sovereign within us; my so called "self-identity" is in fact a differential flickering from drive to drive' (Smith 2012: 327). Thus the I-teacher who adopts a close-by, haptic position and the I-teacher who adopts a transcendent, distanced or optic position is the same I-teacher, but one inhabited by a different passion or drive. In each moment a particular will is expressed against or over other wills and this becomes 'I'. For 'each of us has multiple perspectives on the world because of the multiplicity of our drives – drives that are often contradictory among themselves, and that are therefore in a constant struggle or combat with each other' (326).

The crucial point is that both the movements of moulding and the movements of being close-by must be continually enacted; for the mould can only be introduced once the ore has been found and readied for that mould. In moving close to the student a teacher affects 'passion and sincerity' that 'will permeate the atmosphere of the class, the learning context and the subsequent educational practice' (Cole 2011: 553).

This affect does not determine the encounter with students, as it will meet 'an undifferentiated plane in the educational context between the students that will draw in parts of their social lives and perhaps not actively involve the teacher' (553). This produces a surface that functions with an ethico-spatial register that regulates how a teacher moves – or more precisely, what movement is possible within which space (Deleuze and Guattari 2005). Only by moving close can the teacher fully enclose the student through normalisation as individualisation.

Teachers, in disciplinary spaces, have always moved between machines that lead them to acquire a sense of the ideal student (as the productive-disciplined student-toward-worker) and practices and affects in the classroom in face-to-face/body-to-body relations with students (Thompson and Cook 2013). The close-by captivating confluences with students that occur as teaching are not the directive-machines that provide the mould that teachers are to reproduce. There is a balance, a series of oscillations between the close-by interactions with the students and the far-away machines of curriculum, policy and other normalising machines. There is also, as de Freitas suggests, a back and forth movement between past and future, as each teaching event is 'a moving and unravelling thread trailing off behind and ahead' (de Freitas 2013: 588). It is too easy to say that these are the macro and micro effects, because they interact, overlap and flow. The importance of this discussion is that teaching oscillates to induce flows that have previously resulted in a disciplinary classroom as a matter of course.

Teachers have regularly faced a challenge of returning. For questions of what it is to be a teacher arise when teachers must link their inside (events, ethics, interactions) with the outside (logics of teaching, policy, overcoded representations, morality) associated with producing the 'right' kind of teaching through the immediacy of close-by interactions with students. In this, the teacher is like the metallurgist. Whereas the metallurgist follows the seams or flows of ore to produce metal implements, the teacher follows the flows on the planes of consistency and organisation with students that potentially produces events. The back and forth movement of territorialisation requires that the teacher/metallurgist is always having to actively choose.

Teachers, like metallurgists, are 'in themselves double: a hybrid, an alloy, a twin formation' (Deleuze and Guattari 2005: 415). This oscillation that produces events means that the classroom always contains possibilities (lines of flight) that have only been enhanced by the ways in which new (and old) forces and flows operate with altered and/or specific intensities and limits. The working to and fro between

closeness and distance places teaching in constant flux. However, we would be foolish to allow this oscillatory function to stand as some pining for a disciplinary past within these new machines. Rather, the question of what is possible, what is beyond the control, should not privilege a return of the certainty, and indeed violence, of the disciplinary.

Also like metallurgists, teachers come under the control of the state while enjoying 'a certain technological autonomy, and social clandestinity, so that, even controlled, they did not belong to the State any more than they were themselves nomads' (Deleuze and Guattari 2005: 405). They may have been exposed to ordering but remained artisans who were 'determined in such a way as to follow a flow of matter … The artisan is *the itinerant, the ambulant*. To follow the flow of matter is to itinerate, to ambulate. It is intuition in action' (409; original emphasis).

Teachers in the society of control must ask themselves new questions of return, and in enacting and instantiating those self-interrogations as will to power return same as difference. They must find new ways to finish the sentences: 'Teaching is …', 'Teachers are …', Students are …' and 'Classrooms are …'. And teaching in classrooms will be affected anew. No longer able to care as they once had and to return their teaching in a classroom striated by the state, teaching in a control society is care for scores, for externalities. It is no longer care for students in the service of the state, but care for students' scores in the service of the corporation as manifested by an 'inexorable rivalry presented as healthy competition' (Deleuze 1995b: 179). This represents a 'significant transformation' in the notion of care itself (Savat 2013: 15; Stiegler 2010).

V. Eternal Return and the Teacher

But metallurgic returns of the same are not the only forms of return, and, for Deleuze fall short of Eternal Return. The teacher is choosing, but it is not a profound existential choice of a moment to be repeated forever. Flows associated with metallurgic returns were facilitated, energised and resourced (these might all be the same thing) in the disciplinary classroom. They are no longer facilitated, energised and resourced at the same levels in a classroom coming to manifest the logic of the corporation. New horizons face teachers. They can work feverishly to maintain the flows and repeat a bizarre caricature of metallurgic returns. Or they can choose otherwise. Teachers who have been used to working

with and within the various striations that overlay and underpin the classroom may no longer be able to continue to teach as they have done previously. As a result of the effects of corporate logics in and as the classroom, teachers face a landscape unlike that for which they have been prepared and in which they are confronted with choices more direct and disturbing than those to which they are accustomed in a disciplinary society. This means that the usual (lesser) moments in which the question 'what am I doing teaching?' is becoming the question 'who am I?'

The bringing forth of a moment of deeper choice requires an engagement with eternal return (a concept from Nietzsche that Deleuze deploys in a particular manner). This is not because teachers face eternal return for the first time, as their betweenness makes eternal return always in question. Teachers face eternal return in a corporate landscape, however, that makes returning the same as the same (disciplinary copy) increasingly difficult, and the attempt to manifest sameness becomes authentic and disruptive (that is, simulacral) difference. 'Good teaching' has become coded through and within corporation-speak, rather than the disciplinary past; we hear references to value-added measures, efficiency, quality, all understood within neoliberal reforming agendas that no longer require teachers to manifest moulding.

While many teachers will refuse eternal return for as long as they are able, at some point teachers have to do something else. Each must forcefully re-will him- or herself to become another teacher. To do this they must manifest will to power, as this is crucial for the eternal return of teaching in a classroom within which important disciplinary striations have been smoothed by the corporation. For Deleuze, eternal return and will to power are 'the two most fundamental concepts in the Nietzschean corpus' (Deleuze 2004a: 117). Will to power defines human being and is the motor of return.

This is significant because on any given day, across the Western world, thousands of teachers walk into their classroom and begin to teach. While we must not forget that there was teaching before there were classrooms or even teachers, each time a teacher walks into a classroom something particular happens, a particular moment of teaching is enacted. And while this teacher finds him- or herself in this classroom, it is not for the first time and not for the last time. The questions that arise here concern what connects these moments of teaching. In the first instance, each of these teachers walking into each of these classrooms repeats what they have done before. They enact teaching as they understand it, and as they have been trained to understand it. 'This teacher' walks into 'this classroom' and his or

her teaching begins, as it has begun before by this and every other teacher.

Life, according to Nietzsche, '*must ever surpass itself*' (Nietzsche 1954: 125; original emphasis). It is a 'will to procreation, or impulse towards a goal, towards the higher, remoter, more manifold' (125). Will to power 'is not simply a drive to survive – which would be better served by maintaining a state of equilibrium – but a drive to expand, to "go forth and multiply", to become ever more numerous' (Keeping 2012: 77–8). Enacting will to power is recognising our responsibility for good and evil, and making good and evil *our* good and evil. Choosing the 'right' thing to do now is to destroy the 'right' thing to do then. Choosing the 'right' way to teach now is manifesting will to power. For 'good and evil which would be everlasting – it doth not exist! Of its own accord must it ever surpass itself anew' (Nietzsche 1954: 125). Thus, 'he who hath to be a creator in good and evil – verily, he hath first to be a destroyer, and break values in pieces' (126).

Following Deleuze, the moment of eternal return requires an embracing of my fate and not passive acceptance of my fate (as some Nietzscheans would have it[3]). In affirming my fate, *amor fati*, I embrace all that I have done in the past that leads to this moment of eternal return of the same as different. It is an active affirmative event. If the eternal return requires us to engage a will to do this forever, then it represents a profound existential moment (though not an individual moment). Eternal return requires active choosing and it is this active choosing in a landscape radically altered by the corporation that makes the return of the same as the same (copying) increasingly impossible for most teachers.[4]

Once teachers recognise and embrace eternal return (as many are being forced to do), they have no choice but to re-will to teach in a manner that they will return infinitely. They must be creative, or as Mercieca has suggested, surpass the forces and flows that have typically designated teaching in order to embrace a 'becoming-teaching' that requires new organisations of flows, forces and understandings of the limits of connectivity (Mercieca 2012: 46). 'It is the *thought* of the eternal return that selects… . The thought of the eternal return eliminates from willing everything that falls outside the eternal return, it makes willing a creation, it brings about the equation "willing = creating" ' (Deleuze 1983: 69). The principal question, though, is not one of the origins of the creativity that is affected as will to power, but of its qualities and of its force. The crucial difference is between teaching that is willed with little force or intensity and that which is

willed forcefully and with maximal intensity. 'The eternal return is the new formulation of the practical synthesis: *whatever you will, will it in such a way that you also will its eternal return*' (68; original emphasis). Another's power, a recollection of some teacher from my past, may flow through a teacher's body that affects it, but this must be done intensely to affect will to power and eternal return of *my* teaching (and not out of habit).

Even if eternal return implies recurrence, it only does so to deny the return of the same, Similar or Identical. Each of these is of the past, whereas repetition as will to power and eternal return is of the future. It is of teaching's future. It is a calling into the future, as a repetition that looks forward to future repetitions. In the end, or beginning, 'what is produced, the absolute new itself, is in turn nothing but repetition: the third repetition, this time by excess, the repetition of the future as eternal return' (Deleuze 1994: 90). Eternal return brings something 'into being which cannot do so without changing nature' (71). For teachers, this is a process of selecting as teacher, or teaching, and enacting this with force.

This reminds us that will to power and eternal return concern intensities. Nietzsche's 'eternal return is taking us into a dimension yet unexplored: neither extensive quantity nor local movement, nor physical quality, but a domain of pure intensities' (Deleuze 2004b: 122). As 'the instrument and expression of the will to power', the eternal return 'raises each thing to its superior form, that is its nth power' and 'eliminates "half-desires" ' (125). The eternal return and will to power do not demand that one cease doing, to cease teaching for example, but to do whatever we choose to do to the nth degree. In being subjected to new forces, teachers must engage teaching with a heretofore lost intensity. (To do so, for us, requires attaining the speed of the nomad and, therefore, the possibility of becoming-war machines.) It is to this future that we also look in this discussion of eternal return, will to power and teaching in the control society.

VI. Zarathustra and Teaching

If we follow Nietzsche's story of Zarathustra's returns, we think this makes sense of the situation in which teachers find themselves and the choices that confront them. For us, Zarathustra performs two metallurgic returns before realising that the only way to be a teacher (of will to power, which is the highest truth) is to engage eternal return and make an active choice Different from every choice he or she has previously made. Nietzsche's Zarathustra illustrates both the

metallurgic movement and that movement that engages eternal return. The paradox for the contemporary teacher, who understands and is comforted within contours of the disciplinary apparatus of the school but is increasingly forced to encounter a new conception of teaching in a control society (replete with heightened intensities and a sense that his or her disciplinary care is under attack), mirrors the experiences of Nietzsche's Zarathustra. To us, Zarathustra expresses the hopes and frustrations of teaching, trying to understand change and engage ethically with a post-ethical (post-disciplinary) world. Zarathustra is a teacher, and in his journey we gain some tools to better understand teaching.

While he is up the mountain (the metallurgist is likely to be digging), Nietzsche's Zarathustra discerns the coming of the Higher Ones. He descends to tell the nearby townsfolk of their future but they laugh at him and think him a fool. He has not connected. 'But still am I far from them, and my sense speaketh not unto their sense' (Nietzsche 1954: 15). He goes back up the mountain to, in our reading, reflect on his teaching practice. He realises that he must connect and seeks 'living companions, who will follow me because they want to follow themselves' (17). He fails once more, however, when his companions become believers. Believers cannot become Higher Ones.

Zarathustra's is a far more demanding mould than those teachers enact. He seeks self-made people. 'Ye had not yet sought yourselves: then did ye find me', he complains. He is forced to bid those who seek to learn from him to 'lose me and find yourselves; and only when ye have all denied me, will I return unto you' (Nietzsche 1954: 82–3). While it is demanding, it remains for us available, as a result of the effects of the logic of the corporation on the classroom. The classroom is not what it once was. The teacher can't simply return the old processes associated with moulding the future worker.

We note that leaving the classroom is the last of Zarathustra's teaching movements. He comprehends his greatest sin and what he must do as a teacher to correct this. His greatest sin turns out to be ' "*Fellow-suffering! Fellow-suffering with the higher-men!*" ' (Nietzsche 1954: 368; original emphasis). This he must end by leaving; for he has *his* work to do. ' "This is *my* morning, *my* day beginneth: *arise now, arise, thou great noontide*!" – Thus spake Zarathustra and left his cave, glowing and strong, like a morning sun coming out of gloomy mountains' (368; original emphasis).

As Deleuze pointed out, Nietzsche did not finish *Thus Spake Zarathustra* and we do not know what was to become of its central

figure (Deleuze 2004a: 117). We note, however, that for Deleuze 'the revolutionary problem today is to find some unity in our various struggles without falling back on the despotic and bureaucratic organization of the party or State apparatus' (Deleuze 2004b: 260). This eternal return has the potential to help answer Deleuze's questions: 'who are today's nomads, who are today's Nietzscheans?' in the classroom (260).

VII. The Challenge of Zarathustra

So, now that the metallurgic return is blocked, the challenge of eternal return is for the first time real and the infinitive 'to teach' and the order word 'teacher' must be actively re-willed, because teaching has to be actively re-willed Differently, due to effects of the logic of the corporation. The problem for teaching is that the usual practices for constituting the territory 'teaching' are beginning to function through different oscillations. Two affects are important. First, the corporation's logic prevents the classroom from returning individualisation, which was hitherto its function. This diminution of normalising flows toward individualisation in the classroom and the intensification of dividuating flows mean that specific flows of the close-by have increased energy. Normalisation as individualisation required acting at a distance according to a transcendent model. It necessitated the return of an optic relationship in which students were positioned according to externally determined notions of the normal and normal progression. The second affect of the increased impact of the logic of the corporation in the classroom is that haptic teacher – student relationships are more likely to eventuate. This is significant, as Roy notes, because haptic space 'is insurgent space, whose gradients are produced region by region, neighbourhood by neighbourhood, through connections, deterritorializations, intensities and observances' (Roy 2005: 32). Most importantly, for this discussion, haptic space 'induces new becomings, and is reciprocally produced by such becomings' (32). It is to the breaking of habits, or habitual returns, that we must now shift our attention, for it is here that the importance of eternal return in the classroom may be found.

There are no longer teachers and students, there are singularities, creative, unfettered and acentred, such that each becoming-teacher/student manifests speed. To put it another way, teachers must change how they move so as not to induce a classroom of any type or configuration. It is not enough to 'get close' to the students – a frequent

tactic that Foucault saw as a strategy of biopower played out in the classroom (Foucault 1988) and which we understand in terms of normalising–individualising oscillations. Rather, the event that might be called teaching requires a letting go, an embracing of '*unthought*, non-identitarian potentials' (Wallin 2011: 286; original emphasis). There is no easy movement for teachers trapped by the 'natural inner movement' of the classroom (Jones 1990: 74).

Nor is it enough to suggest that for teachers to embrace eternal return the classroom must go online or become 'flipped' by technology, because classrooms are still centred places–ordering and categorising still function. The teacher who embraces eternal return must let go of teaching and the name of the teacher. It is not possible, as some have suggested, to adopt pedagogy and curriculum practices as 'nomadic' while participating in and releasing flows as teaching through corporate logics. This must be a political act, the teacher embracing a line of flight '*that delimits nothing, that describes no contour*, that no longer goes from one point to another but instead passes between points [...] a mutant line of this kind that is without outside or inside, form or background, beginning or end' (Deleuze and Guattari 2005: 497–8; original emphasis). And this may be one possibility of Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the war machine, that turns its disruptive potential onto the Oedipalised, certain and constrained flows contained in the order-word 'teacher'. After all, as Wallin suggests:

> the task of creating *a* pedagogical life is not that of occupying a ready-made plane or territorialising a new space in one's name. Rather, the task of creating *a* life might be thought as one whereby we learn to occupy a plane in order to make it holey, that is, to introduce fractal contours upon its striated form, preparing the ground for emergence of *a people yet to come*. (Wallin 2010: 130; original emphasis)

VIII. Conclusion

The teacher is not alone in being confronted by, and being afforded the possibility of, embracing the future and the future of the future (in willing for a repetition that will be repeated, if not always in the same way, eternally). In the teacher we find at least one of those whose movements have been changed, even while staying the same, by the intensifications produced by the increasing effects of the logic of the corporation (we also find the doctor caught in the super-clinic and the politician trapped in the endless opinion poll). Joyful, exuberant and

vibrant engagement (return) to a classroom made anew and made for a future embraced becomes possible. As do darker outcomes.

Notes

1. Discursive formations and construction of good teaching have always been responsive to shifting social, political and economic imperatives (Jones 1990). These have an effect on logics of regulation and registration (Connell 2009), teacher education (Moore 2004) and public perceptions of what constitutes becoming-teacher.
2. This explains for us Deleuze's comment in an interview with Negri that: 'They say revolutions turn out badly. But they're constantly confusing two different things, the way revolutions turn out historically and people's revolutionary becoming' (Deleuze 1995a: 171).
3. This, for Deleuze, 'wrong' interpretation is forcefully presented by Malabou (2010).
4. As Ward points out, 'Deleuze seems to feel that a great deal is at stake in getting the interpretation of eternal return right' (Ward 2012: 107). Central to this 'right' interpretation is Deleuze's view that eternal return was not the 'repetition of the identical … [but] evoked a process of transformation in which "reactive" forces were eliminated' (101). Kerslake makes two vital observations in this context. Embracing my past, by understanding it as the past that I willed, necessitates that 'the "I" who wills the past must be different from the "I" who took themselves to be determined by the past' (Kerslake 2007: 36). This means that I cannot project an identical self into the future because 'the eternal return implies the dissolution of the identical subject in the future as well. Eternal return implies that if I am going to re-will a previous action, I will only be able to do so by taking it as the act of another, someone with whom I can no longer identify myself' (36–7). We also concur with those who reject the view that Nietzsche adopted a determinist position that meant that *amor fati* must be love of one's future fate. Nietzsche casts 'fate in terms of that which was rather than that which must be' (Grof 2003: 35).

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Book Reviews

Ruben Borg (2007) *The Measureless Time of Joyce, Deleuze and Derrida*, London and New York: Continuum Literary Studies

When it comes to reading or reviewing books devoted to comparative philosophy, one often finds it difficult to actually come across an original perspective on the authors about whom such volumes are supposed to be. They usually present a condensed synthesis of a number of well-known concepts that are connected to those thinkers, whereas the significant commentary work ends up being neglected, making the effort of drawing connections among those ideas more difficult, or even nebulous, for the reader, who is left completely alone in confronting and elaborating a personal view on them.

In the specific case of a book which deals with a heterogeneous and elaborate subject such as literary criticism within deconstructionist theories, this task seems an extremely complicated one to accomplish, yet *The Measureless Time of Joyce, Deleuze and Derrida* manages to successfully achieve it and delivers a clear, progressively incisive outlook on how the concept of time can be turned into a *fil rouge* that fuses some central hints of the above-mentioned French thinkers with the elaborate poetics of James Joyce.

More specifically, this long essay is to be praised not only for its clarity, which is with no doubt the result of a thoughtful research on Joycean *Finnegans Wake* (1939) and a profound interest in the latest developments of French contemporary philosophy, but also for the author's ability of underlining the central focus of his own work from the very start: how can we all be true philosophical readers of Joyce? Or more precisely, how can contemporary French philosophy help us become aware of the beauty of this monumental literary work without being threatened by its bizarre, complex language?

It is in fact the choice behind the hidden mechanics of Joyce's lexical selection, grammar, puns and disparate quotes that interests Ruben

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Borg, and the fact that such a compendium cannot and should not be reduced to a subconscious selection to be related to the so-called artistic inspiration alone, in naively romantic terms. Beyond semiotics, and beyond hermeneutics as well, the primary intent of this essay is to apply a new interpretative model to modernist literature: in other words, the principle at work here could be summed up to a single Deleuzian question: 'How does this text function?' rather than 'What does it mean?' We may find the answers to both these questions to overlap in the end; nonetheless, the path leading to such a conclusion must be discovered and elaborated individually, as the book itself will demand it.

In conclusion to this brief introduction, and before going into any further detail about the structure and the contents of the volume, there is an essential preliminary remark to be made: despite quoting a number of eminent philosophers from our tradition, namely Aristotle (2005) and Vico (1968), any possible reader of this book must be completely free from misleading preconceptions about the philosophical value of deconstructionism, in order not to perceive it as a confused compound of opinions which lead to no logical conclusion, where 'conclusion' stands, in traditional academic terms, for an unfailing and unquestionable final resolution. On the contrary, the rational scheme on which the book is organised will facilitate a deeper understanding of the basic epistemological questions at stake within deconstructionism itself (in spite of the complexity usually associated with the works of Derrida and Deleuze), accentuating how powerful their thought is when applied to literary critique.

At the same time, it also provides Joycean scholars and enthusiasts with innovative interpretative tools which resourcefully combine the contributions of renowned critics, such as Eco (1989), Attridge (1988, 1995), Lewis (1957) and Paris (1967), among others, with insightful personal philosophical declinations by the author himself.

The volume is divided into three chapters, each one centred on a different perspective on how 'time' develops within the narrative style of *Finnegans Wake*, trying to abstract general stylistic choices from seemingly paradoxical extracts of the text itself.

The very nature of the practice of reading is questioned by Borg, who aims at stressing the performative aspects of the eccentricity of the creative fluid structure of Joyce's latest masterpiece, where human language, as Derrida wrote in his 'Ulysses Gramophone: Hear Say Yes in Joyce' (1988), is committed to complete equivocity.

What does time have to do with all this?

The answer provided by the author in Chapter 1, 'Time's Nature', begins with a striking consideration: *Finnegans Wake* is a Babel of lexicon, where words which are not featured in any dictionary can find their own place without being reduced to a forced translation, but rather invalidating any authoritative definition. Yet these words are available to our reading: they appear as singular inventions which are able to represent an image of time's self-differential movement by 'staging a narrative performance that is unmoored from the synthesizing activity of the transcendental subject' (32).

The encyclopaedic aspect of *Finnegans Wake* is encountered both as a compendium of the totality of human experience on one hand, and, on the other, as a faithful acceptance of the obscurity in which human action (past, present and future) repeats itself and celebrates its own erasure and retracing. Joyce manages to do so thanks to his stunning ability to manipulate languages in order to create neologisms and paronomastic terms which, even though often annoying at a first approach, do seem to possess a unique capacity of fascination and appeal. The incongruence and the paradoxes they imply should be read as Joyce's endeavour to conjugate the deployment of a figural language with a conception of time that focuses on its peculiar (and incessant) passing and fading.

Chapter 2, 'Time in Figures', specifically deals with the impersonality of the language spoken by Joyce and the characters of his novels, paying much attention to a supposed unconscious force which is thought to be at work underneath the psyche (and the self) of both the author and the readers. This concept is close to the Bergsonian idea of an interrelatedness of past, present and future in spite of the existence of a conscience, traditionally intended to be capable of grasping the passages which should mark the boundaries between two following instants.

The reference to the works of Henri Bergson, especially *Time and Free Will* (1910) and *Creative Evolution* (1944), is essential to Borg, and the author makes a targeted and thoughtful use of some quotes taken from said volumes: the French philosopher's intuitions represent a perfect means to link the need to outline a disruptive mark between the original genius of language and logical thought, within a perspective that takes the power of metaphorical expressions into primary consideration.

From a Bergsonian point of view, as Borg repeatedly states, the nature of words is a mobile and transferable one: it is therefore only through a totally inventive syntax that the conception of time as 'now', as the living present of metaphysical tradition,[1] can be surpassed in favour of a non-mathematical, more truthful and productive relation to it.

This last assumption is not to be understood as a mere attempt at escaping the logical path of rational research, but as one of the most powerful and influential theses of twentieth-century philosophy, which has not yet been completely investigated in its theoretical potential.

When Bergson affirms that time is invented or it is nothing at all, he opens an entirely new perspective on how linguistic multiplicity can express its contents, and this can be accounted for as a reliable criterion to take into serious consideration when synthetically deciphering *Finnegans Wake*. According to such a premise, the number of forms and expressions held in everyone's conscience is indefinite and unquantifiable, pushed forward by desire, held back by unwillingness to act, unforeseeable in its combination, resisting the idea of a passing of time as a prefigured consequence of instants in linear expansion. Indeed, *Finnegans Wake* makes the now perishable, by creating a 'probapossible' future, where the surplus of citations, the almost obsessive repetition of puns, its subtle irony, all design a seemingly anarchic plot.

Past, present and future are to be perceived as an inter-subjective flow that cannot be foreseen, where everything circulates, tracing changes and nonetheless remaining unconceivable for the so-called transcendental conscience. A fluvial imagery that demands a great interpretative effort from readers and, at the same time, entails a loss of identity which is nevertheless sensed as captivating.

This chapter, therefore, aims at explaining why Joyce did not opt for a traditional narrative style, and the basic answer to such a question lies in his faith in the *élan vital*, as Bergson would have said; what Borg seems to suggest is that Joyce represents an enduring source of investigation for theorists because he intentionally provided, more than the de facto thinkers we are more accustomed to, a never-ending motive for philosophical enquiry.

Chapter 3, 'Making Time', is mostly devoted to the description of the portmanteau, the heart of Joyce's ventriloquism, his most personal elaboration of the philosophical assumptions mentioned above into a figural invention. The portmanteau is a rhetorical firework that exceeds good measure, and blurs any effect of fixity in the narrative structure of the novel; it undermines our faith in grammar and, as Borg himself affirms, reminds us that 'there are texts we still need to learn how to read' (65). The description of the internal mechanics of the portmanteau shows how the concept, any concept, can be transgressed and redirected from its regular communicative task towards a particular type of harmonic dissonance. Moreover, the portmanteau being a special kind of pun made up by the apparently mathematical sum of

different signifieds in a single signifier (Eco 1989), when this happens within a narrative scheme, it makes room for an unaccounted textual configuration which Joyce poetically shapes to purposely create an effect of duplication and bisection which is both to praise, in aesthetic terms, and to deconstructively analyse.

Does this rhetorical device have anything to do with time at all?

Deleuze's opinion about the portmanteau provides a significant explanation: as he wrote in *Proust and Signs (2000)*, the modern work of art is a truth-producing machine that has no problem of meaning, only a problem of use, and therefore it must not be accused of guilty relativism, but rather be seen as a semantic tool capable of placing truth into a temporal connection with a totality that is yet to be unified, understood or completed.

The question of time is thus interpreted as a part/whole issue, and it informs us about the importance of the fragment against the final product, stressing how a dialectic relationship is always impracticable in such occurrences, especially within modernist literature, if not at all when it comes to a description of language–subject mechanics. In other words, teleology fails at helping us approach complex semiotics, especially when they are consciously conceived in order to elude truth as a logical given statement; hence an aporetic device as the portmanteau demonstrates how close Joyce and the basic deconstructionist stances of Deleuze and Derrida are. The tales of Shem and Shaun, for instance, do fit into this conceptual frame as they represent an effective attempt at comparing two types of radical difference without reducing one to the other.

Narrative is a practice that requires an infinite work of recombination, which must have openly surrendered to errancy and dissociation. Joyce himself agreed with this when he wrote that every word we use represents a Trinity, composed by three different elements: a sense, a sound and a power to evoke pictures.

Here lies the strong bond which links and creates a transdisciplinary bridge between Joyce and the deconstructionists: what the Irish writer attempted in his long-pondered novel and Deleuze and Derrida have repeatedly asserted in their works is precisely the urge to testify a void at the origin of our so-called subjectivity, and to set this necessary incompleteness free from the ghosts of classic metaphysics. Deconstruction not only works on the discrepancies and contradictions within the text, any type of text, but it also posits them as the essential and ever-enduring elements upon which reality, the materiality we experience in our daily existence (and try to express in linguistic/aesthetic

forms), is constructed. Joyce should therefore be considered a pioneering figure of deconstructionism according to this perspective; he managed to create exceptional works of art whose design is intentionally drawn on the rhetorical dramatisation of such a logical impasse, as Borg suggests.

In Chapters 4 and 5, 'The Rhetoric of Memory' and the conclusive 'Technologies of Forgetting', this investigation is pushed even further. *Finnegans Wake* often seems to deliberately cross the line that separates hyper-productivity from waste. In doing so, it shows a profound worry for the multitude of information it carries on, through a constant display of an excessive mnemonic work that is afraid of lacking decent self-maintenance. It therefore challenges the normal egocentric schemes of progress and remembering by altering the regular distinction between the subject's interiority and the objective world. By taking into account a remarkable extract about the Willingdone Museyroom, a landmark of the Dublin landscape, we get closer to Joyce's idea of the past as a fusion of both dream-work and a cumulative recollection of objects, without any apparent criteria of selection.

Like a storage space (or a rubbish dump, as Joyce vividly describes it), individuals create history by accumulating elements from the past and including them in simulacra of their 'living presents': imagery is the focus of the ego, and in the *Wake* we can face how this interiority is intentionally shaped into words to be open for anyone to see and explore.

This aspect is matched with what Derrida describes as a work of 'spectral spiritualization':[2] we keep a memory of the other, yet this relation undergoes a fundamental phenomenological impossibility, where (as the trace of the trace, the giving of the gift, etc.) oblivion haunts our urging grasp for narcissistic completeness. Borg continues his investigation by taking into account the influence of Vico and *The New Science* (1968), focusing on the strong impact the Viconian themes about the origin of history had on making of Joyce's paragrammatical style, and he definitely makes a valid point with this: since Vico is interested in putting the obscure to work in his etymological explorations, he chooses indefinite and unthought connections to be the basis of primordial knowledge *tout court*.[3]

The true etymologist, the one who is interested in putting Time and Word at the very heart of his own research, 'establishes a symmetry between poetic instinct and the historian's principle of etymological reconstruction' (114): in the end, there is no more authoritative or self-evident way to trace the history of humanity than by producing it

through a metaphorical work of reassemblance, given that the principle which rules over the making of mankind is unconscious and primarily sensory. There cannot be any exact science capable of demonstrating that there is a rational principle to control the development of civilisation, making history foreseeable and computable. We can only rely on 'imaginative metaphysics'.

Vico's influence is not a simple supposition but a well-documented fact: in *Finnegans Wake* we can find many occurrences of the portmanteau word 'vicociclometer', a term which (explicitly recalling the name of the Italian thinker) should supposedly indicate a mechanic and simultaneously mnemonic device which rearticulates and recycles the narrative on the premise that history itself is, according to Joyce, a combination of catastrophes, eccentricities and erotic/heroic acts all unified by the legacy of the past, which is nothing but a pre-grammatical force of re-elaboration.

Quoting Deleuze, we can comprehend history through the vicociclometer as a co-implication of the virtual and the actual: time preserves itself in the totality of the past, but it also disarticulates the present by introducing a memory whose value lies in the capacity of creating an image of time as a whole. This is only partly true, and Borg highlights it; there is indeed a principle of combination at work in the Wake, but it functions in a completely different way: if there is a 'totality' of the past, it can be achieved exclusively through the dual activity of *memoria* and *fantasia*. It is not given to the human eye. It is not there to be seen or perceived as a permanent mark, and thus it could not possibly ever be posited or given for granted.

Overall, this book is an outstanding post-structuralist work that shows how self-knowledge, which is in many points of view the very first task of philosophy, necessarily entails a compromise with rhetorics, as well as with a supplement of materiality: truth needs to be *fabricated*, as it is only through a creative approach with immanence that we can try to secure ourselves some convincing, yet temporary, answers.

One might argue that the title of the volume does not suggest an exhaustive coverage of either Deleuze's thought or Derrida's, but that would be a misleading remark to make. This text disseminates scattered suggestions about how to approach their works by addressing the Joycean text (purportedly about the origins of language and time as history): in doing so, Borg's book not only delivers a brilliant application of deconstructionism to comparative studies in the Humanities (with a striking revisional reading of Joyce's most elaborate masterpiece),

but also stands out as a solid independent philosophical essay which provides a number of significant hints for the contemporary thinker.

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Notes

1. And, in strictly contemporary times, the living present as intended by Husserlian phenomenology.
2. Such themes are treated in Derrida's *Spectres of Marx* (1994). Another significant comparison outlined by Borg is that with Blanchot's theory of the 'fragment': the French literary theorist develops within his text *Awaiting Oblivion* (1999) a paronomastic chain that disarticulates all secure definitions putting the accent on how thinking is only possible through thinking alone. Whereas Joyce tends to opt for cumulative series, Blanchot tries to simulate an essayistic style. Borg underlines that, despite the different styles, their idea of memory as errant thought, falling outside the economy of time self-differential logics, is ineed very similar.
3. The original Latin expression coined by Vico in *The New Science* is '*homo non intelligendo fit omnia*' (Vico 1968: 115). This is the opposite of the traditional metaphysical principle according to which man rules over things once he can prove he understands them.

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According to Félix Guattari, we have the unconscious we deserve. In Guattari's work the unconscious is the mirror of the ideological superstructure implanted within subjectivity, confusing us into believing that subjectivity is immanent to our 'essential nature'. In fact, the unconscious reterritorialises and deterritorialises through extreme effort, and through exertion it moves conscientiously. Dreams constitute a concrete-abstraction of the differential social dynamics housing the material aspects of our waking life. If we take Guattari seriously, dreaming is irreducible to pure physiology, as in chemicals exciting the cerebral cortex or synapses firing in the frontal lobes. For Guattari, science cannot be isolated from societal influences, and it is not advisable to group energetic, physico-chemical, biological, libidinal intensities as separate from emotional, aesthetic, revolutionary, scientific intensities. Systems of intensity are combined, even rhizomised upon themselves. Bios, or life-forces, constitute intensity, and in his analysis there is no distinction between these fields of resonance. Even physico-chemical bios is social and capable of deterritorialising (69–70). In this theory, the unconscious is never a-social or a-political, but an otherwise imaginative processes to be unleashed by its liberation, and doing so exemplifies a non-totalising creative poeisis at the threshold of reason.

Elsewhere, in *Anti-Oedipus* for instance, the unconscious is theorised as a factory capable of non-essentialist desiring-production. Content is always inextricably linked to the social field cohabitated by subjects. For instance, in this text Guattari says the social field in capitalism creates an 'intersubjective mush'. If the unconscious is a machine, it is constituted by a deterritorialising and reterritorialising mechanism because no general assemblage overhangs it in an essentialist manner. The unconscious is inscribed and can recreate itself according to its position within the social field of relations that situate, place and eventually move it. But we are not entirely passive receptacles for the dominant ideologies like doctrinaire Marxists might have us believe.

In taking on the other behemoth of modernism, namely Freud, this text provides a wonderful critique of psychoanalysis as well.

For Guattari, Freud is too reductive because epigones of his work theorise that unconscious drives relate back to repressed libidinal urges centred in the Id pushed down into latency so as to streamline the functioning of civilisation by the Super-Ego. In fact, the first line of the text points to Guattari's disgust with Freudian theorists whose work reduces the unconscious to a cinema that only shows child pornography on an endless loop. These theorists are essentialist, because they ultimately posit a hopeless world where a priori sexual instincts constitute the basis of all human agency. On the other hand, the alternative offered by Guattari claims that if the unconscious is machinic, then our psyche can be assembled and re-assembled as we so desire within very specific material conditions. In my opinion, Guattari's theorisations are far more liberating because they are never fatalistically tied to instincts, base sexual desires (the cinema with an endless loop of child pornography), or even economic determinism (material forces of production form an ideological prison). To paraphrase Lacan, God is not dead, but simply unconscious.

The unconscious is not a theatre that perennially showcases Sophocles's *Oedipus Cycle* ad nauseum. Interestingly enough according to Jacques Rancière, *The Oedipus Complex* is the most performed play in all of Western theatre. In essence, the character-archetypes in *The Oedipus Cycle* have seeped into the collective unconscious. This is not because the curtain on the Oedipal stage unveils (or manifests) the innate a priori libidinal sub-conscious. Rather, according to Guattari, subjects often 'hallucinate history' as if it were real. The Oedipal superstructure does not mirror our own unconscious nature, but vice versa. If we indeed have the unconscious we deserve, and carry around socially, what we dream culturally mirrors the semiotic impulses encoded in the ideological superstructure.

The machinic unconscious is mirrored by capitalism unceasingly recreating abstraction, the void and the reproductive splitting of isolation. An individuated subject in relation to assemblages of enunciation constitutes the media's ideological refrain in capitalism. Abstraction forms lines of flight always already linked to key institutions of power, and this produces difference and a sense of belonging to a territoriality of reference like a nation or a corporate family. Communication is resonance, and the simulacrum of concepts should fold onto reality, not the other way around. Capitalism eliminates asperity, a harsh critical tone, and replaces it with an electronic teddy

bear that warms our hearts with intersubjective soporific simulations aimed at distracting from its oppressive, fascistic, exploitative modus operandi. This is how the capitalistic dream-phantasy becomes machinic, by eliding the fact that it is mechanical, and re-presenting itself as human(e). Concealed beneath the human(e) facial surface of the capitalist lies the Terminator bent on destroying all that resists its path to global hegemony.

But abstracting machines are never completely bound to fixed universal coordinates. There is always space to manoeuvre. One can pull out, detach, or unplug from the machine by first recognising that it exists (53).

If interpellation beckons the subject towards individuation, then it can also serve as content filling the black hole of subjectification: my face is not my own. In doing this, every voice is related to a face, be they real, imaginary or composites. These facial montages open up options of assemblage that never cease intertwining with the world, and this is schizoanalysis in a nutshell. Partial objects can be split and reassembled any way one desires but always already interconnected with the political and social elements that influence its construction.

We see the smoothing of space in the single direction of faces wherein the faciality of landscaping dissolves territoriality and the limits of natural sociality neutralise 'excessive' machinic effects engendered by systematic decoding of flows. How decoding flows can be systematic is properly outlined in several places in the text.

The becomings of the multitude disappear on behalf of a central eye from which all spatial, rhythmic, moral coordinates radiate. Yet, Guattari also argues in different circumstances the 'evil eye' effect is unfathomable. Reminiscent of Lacan's definition of paranoia as a subject who knows the answer to everything, Guattari's facial formulas answer for every possible situation. His definition of the facial is that it poses a response and responsibility to all possible experiences. This is outlined in his theorisation of elementary first principles, rudiments underlying expressions of the face. His example is straight out of the Frost/Nixon interviews where he describes a 'Chief of state acquiescing into a frank and grave acquiescence' (92). No point of mystery can resist the inquisitorial gaze of the signifier.

Guattari outlines the various constellations portending real subsumption. The tendency towards relativising all universal standards means that power is soft and hard. Affects, perception, thoughts, human relations, machinic 'growth' of profit, matters of expression, all elaborate a sense of differential, decoded power that subsumes every

field so as not to appear at all. In fact, Guattari is brilliant on this point. Several times in the text he alludes to the nefarious manner in which capitalism produces interpellation machines to speak through the mouths of individuals (73).

Guattari's position is that the media is not merely 'sedating' or 'calming' instinctual representation, but rather that it creates various manipulations aimed at the operators of the enunciation capable of concentrating and minimising the semiotic components implied by power relations. This goes against structural linguistics wherein the structural dimensions of power are schizzable, but appear seamless, and practically invisible even though extremely reliant on representations and spectacles. Yet, there is hope because the unconscious is constituted by machinic propositions that no semiological or logico-scientific propositions can ever grasp in an exhaustive fashion (149). Its assemblages are not delivered randomly to the axiomatic of universals: the only 'law' they uphold is a general movement of deterritorialisation. *The Machinic Unconscious* is a careful study of tendential scattering, schizzing, becoming implacable, slipping out of place, out of line, wherein the nefariousness of social order comes undone through the breakdown of borders. In his work Guattari shows how boundaries are blurring, lines of demarcation are breaking down, and the irreducibility of unconscious powers to the reifying tendencies of any hegemonic discourse.

In this text there is a beautiful contrast between the theoretical insights in the first half of the book, and in the second half, their application to an epistemological object, namely *Remembrance of Things Past* by Marcel Proust. The first half of the book establishes the major themes, some of which presage *A Thousand Plateaus*. Concepts such as faciality and the refrain are woven into field studies on various animal species, but are also used to discuss the media and bio-physico flows of circadian rhythms; whereas the section of the text devoted entirely to Proust is so much more than a contribution to literary theory, and should not be overlooked by Deleuze scholars.

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Deleuze and the Concepts of Cinema

Preface

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Man is the animal who goes to the cinema.
Giorgio Agamben

The grounding idea of this book is the one expressed in the final pages of Gilles Deleuze's two volumes on cinema, where the author advocates the coincidence between cinematographic art and philosophy. By imagining a divinatory hour – the 'midday-midnight' – during which asking what cinema consists in means at the same time asking what is philosophy, Deleuze commenced a novel way of understanding the relationship between the two practices: the former creating images while the latter invents concepts. In this new scenario, philosophy does not consider films – and perhaps their narrative content alone – as a mere repository of examples used to corroborate its reflections as sometimes happens in the contemporary landscape of the philosophy of cinema, which goes as far as to treat stylistic choices as sheer accessories. According to Deleuze, the bond between cinema and philosophy is rather one of radical analogy, in which it can be said that both deal with the same problems although each one using its own tools and expressive devices.

Now, which form might this relationship take? If, as Deleuze writes in the context of his direct questioning about the very nature of philosophy,

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'[the philosopher] assumes in advance the goodwill of thinking ... [and] all his investigation is based on "premeditated decisions"' – that is, if what is necessary to philosophise is the feeling of an urge – this need emerges when the philosopher, rather than commenting on the work of a certain director, feels that they share a certain question or a common cause. This kind of friendship based on the sharing of the same goal, of the same preoccupation, is also the moving reason for Deleuze to engage a certain philosopher (whatever his philosophical tradition) or a certain artist. However, with cinema this encounter seems to take place in a more spontaneous and powerful way than with other artistic expressions, because it originates in a collision – sometimes violent – with images. These images often reveal an 'unexpected disposition' to show the life of the mind as condensed into a vision.

In this sense, the true objects of the theory of cinema are the concepts that cinema generates when understood as a practice of images. In this sense, philosophy alone – when understood as a conceptual practice – is able to 'constitute the concepts of cinema itself', as the last line of *The Time-Image* as well as the very title of this volume read. My journey winds around some of those concepts, ten in all. The book represents in the first place an introduction to Deleuze's reflection on cinema, but aspires at the same time to emphasise some of its aspects over others – trying at once to carefully avoid, as Deleuze himself once claimed, a double reproach: namely, both excessive erudition (which makes the reading complicated and tedious) and exaggerated familiarity (which in venturing to reproduce the style of the author at hand always gives poor results).

This volume envisages an exposition, carried out in the first four chapters, of the fundamental steps of *The Movement-Image* and *The Time-Image* in the wake of Bergson's thought. First, the book presents the issues of cinema that Deleuze labels as classical: namely, the idea of movement as the smallest unit of film, that is the sequence shot (*plan-séquence*), and the articulation of the cinematographic image into perception, action and affection ('Movement'). Second, it reconstructs the emergence of modern cinema: the possibility of rendering the theme of time through images – a theme which, independently from the evolution of the plot, becomes central with the appearance and diffusion of a novel cinematographic style ('Time'). In describing the two eras of cinema I shall focus on the passage to modernity, that is to the moment in which, departing from neorealism and *nouvelle vague*, some philosophical issues such as those of virtuality and falsity seem to act as the real characters of films ('Virtual' and 'Modernity').

The central part of the book represents instead a pause in the constellation of problems originating from the theme of falsity understood as the capacity of art – and of cinema in particular – to progress in always novel and original ways falling outside the question of truth ('Falsehood'). The overcoming of truthfulness and judgement means for Deleuze believing in life as an affirmative force and in an immanent system of values ('Life'); thus conceived, the becoming of a reality gets constituted through a series of acts and inventions similar to the ones of art, which does not imitate, but rather repeats, reality. In the case of the cinematographic device, this is a repetition that is already characterised since its origin as shifting and, paradoxically, as difference ('Repetition'). As regards the issue of falsity as a potentiality of art and of modern cinema, Orson Welles is the director with whom Deleuze shares a common cause. At the origin of this encounter we can situate the thought of Nietzsche, who first inspired the concept of life as a force constantly trying to overcome itself and as faithfulness 'to the Earth and to human beings'. As regards repetition, I will instead investigate a common cause with Freud: this rather difficult task – whose outcomes will be less obvious if compared with the philosophical and cinematographic friendships just suggested – moves from the idea that the passage from the compulsion to repeat to repetition as differential movement can be envisioned already in some Freudian writings.

Finally, I shall offer a reading of some films related to some particular Deleuzian philosophical categories: the line of thought which from repetition as difference leads to the themes of the double and of the simulacrum will be reprised through a film by Raúl Ruiz ('Simulacrum'); in the film *The Most Dangerous Game* by Ernest Schoedsack and Irving Pichel, I will locate a plot, various characters and some places depicted and constructed in a modality which confirms the interpretation, critical as well clinical, of sadism (and masochism) defended by Deleuze in *Coldness and Cruelty* ('Sadism'); a confrontation with Picasso's painting as it is shown at work in the film by Henri-Georges Clouzot will represent the occasion to highlight the theme of chance, of involuntariness and of the freedom of hazard in the pictorial processes as well as in art in general ('Chance').

Movement

I.

In the first half of the 1980s, with the two volumes *The Movement-Image* and *The Time-Image*, Gilles Deleuze inaugurated a novel modality of thought on cinema that is radically distant from a simply critical perspective, but also different from an a posteriori reflection on cinema's products. The two texts, fully inscribed in the overall philosophical arch preceding them of which they embrace the theoretical premises, assume as their point of departure the affirmation of a strong analogy between the two practices: the one of cinema and the one of philosophy. Differently from other theories – for example, far removed from the semiotical attempt to grasp the semiotic structures and narrative element of films – Deleuze's theory does not consider the numerous films mentioned in his books as object to be analysed or as aesthetic outcomes to be evaluated, but rather as products of an inventive act analogous to the one taking place in philosophy.

Thus, in order to follow his investigations on the cinematographic image, the theoretical premise that we should be accepting does not regard first and foremost cinema, but rather philosophy itself, which would not be a contemplative, reflective, or communicative activity as it has been often believed, but rather is defined by Deleuze as a 'continuous creation of concepts' in a way analogous to cinema's being a creation of images. And if concepts are, and remain, signed – 'Aristotle's substance, Descartes' cogito, Leibniz's monad, Kant's condition, Shelling's power' – some of them 'make do with an ordinary everyday word that is filled with harmonics so distant that it risks being imperceptible to nonphilosophical ears', while others 'must be indicated by an extraordinary and sometimes even barbarous or shocking word' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 7–8). It is precisely because of the invention

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of new concepts, at times conveyed by ordinary words presented in a new light while at others invoked by means of unexpected neologisms, that Deleuze shows the intertwinement of the two practices, the one artistic and the other conceptual; an intertwinement that does not take place when one reflects on the other, but rather when we realise that both should answer with their own proper tools the very same issue, as 'the tremors are the same, but the fields are different' (Deleuze 2006: 284). The chief feature of cinema is in fact its unexpected approach to exhibiting spiritual life, so that it can be said that it partakes in the history of art and thought.[1]

The preface to *The Movement-Image* presents the work as a taxonomy, a classification of cinematographic signs explicitly referring to the categories as they have been elaborated in Charles S. Peirce's logic. It is however in the following paragraph that we find named the real tutelary deity of the work, that is Henri Bergson, to whom Deleuze had already dedicated a collection of essays twenty years earlier (Deleuze 1991a). Now, in what way does this reiterated encounter between these two philosophers take place? The punctual and even unprejudiced attitude of his remarks on Bergson as developed in the two texts under consideration says something important about Deleuze's idea of the history of philosophy.

We find the finest explanation in François Zourabichvili's *Deleuze: A Philosophy of the Event* (2012), which, by offering a key to understanding Deleuze's distinctive philosophical commentary, individuates its peculiarity in the original usage of the 'free indirect discourse'. The reference here is to Pasolini's notion of *free indirect discourse* in literature and *free indirect subjectivity* in cinema, understood as the possibility to 'speak directly … in the first person' (Pasolini 2005: 185).[2] It is with this expression stolen from Pasolini, that Zourabichvili described the continuous confrontation of Deleuze with the authors he comments on: rather than a re-elaboration of the thought surveyed, what takes place is an exchange, a process of giving and borrowing. Both in the case of the quotation of thinkers in his texts, and in that of the monographs each dedicated to a specific philosopher (not only Bergson, but also Nietzsche, Kant, Leibniz and Hume) or to a particular artist (Francis Bacon, Marcel Proust), in fact there emerges a common cause between the commentator and the one being commented on which makes their thoughts rather indiscernible. This is exactly what takes place in the two volumes on cinema, which can be also read as an original and privileged pathway to the philosophy of Bergson and, at the very same time, as an approach to the

thought of Deleuze having the advantage of immediately exhibiting his philosophical roots.

If, as we shall see, the four theses on cinema – two on movements in the first volume and two others on time in the second one – are presented as commentaries on Bergson's thought, then we can say that, in the first place, Deleuze borrows the very notion of image from *Matter and Memory*. Such a notion defines matter as it is understood by common sense, which is resistant to accepting the idea of both something whose existence is independent from the subject perceiving it, and of an object whose existence depends on its being perceived. Before any philosophising, that is before any sort of realism and idealism, we employ the language of images, as Bergson wrote in the Preface of the seventh edition of his book:

> Matter, in our view, is an aggregate of 'images'. And by 'image' we mean a certain existence which is more than that which the idealist calls a *representation*, but less than that which the realist calls a *thing* – an existence placed halfway between the 'thing' and the 'representation'. (Bergson 1988: 9)

II.

Moving from this substantial affinity, *The Movement-Image* is inspired by Bergson and, paradoxically, by his critique of cinema, which in the last chapter of *Creative Evolution* is depicted precisely as false movement. Bergson writes:

> Such is the contrivance of the cinematograph. And such is also that of our knowledge. Instead of attaching ourselves to the inner becoming of things, we place ourselves outside them in order to recompose their becoming artificially. We take snapshots, as it were, of the passing reality, and, as these are characteristic of the reality, we have only to string them on a becoming, abstract, uniform and invisible, situated at the back of the apparatus of knowledge, in order to imitate what there is that is characteristic in this becoming itself. (Bergson 1944: 332)

Deleuze will return to those pages in order to affirm, contrary to Bergson, how deeply Bergsonian cinematographic art is once presented as that image having movement, understood as unpredictability and creation, as its essence. Cinema is thus not a sum of still sections reconstructed a posteriori with the addition of movement, as mobility belongs already to its smallest unity, the sequence shot, which is a section of the duration scale witnessing a continuous qualitative modification. Deleuze opposes Bergson's thesis with the idea of movement as a constitutive,

ontological state, an immediate given of the cinematographic image understood not as an image of the object in movement but rather as *movement-image*. In cinema, the static points of false movement are replaced by shots, intrinsically mobile sections which, by determining the relationship between the elements of the definite whole selected by the framing, qualitatively modify at the same time the whole film.

The idea of cinema as adhesion to reality in its unpredictability, and thus as a device whose specificity is that of rendering movement and duration, can be found even before Deleuze in the reflection of André Bazin, to which I will return when discussing the themes of modernity and chance. If the photographic lens shoulder the burden once carried by the plastic arts by taking advantage of a 'transfer of reality' running from the thing to its reproduction made possible by its automatic genesis, the birth of cinema winds up a process launched by photography, adding to the image of things that of their movement and duration: in this sense what is shown is not a simple reproduction, but rather the 'digital imprint' of reality.

According to Deleuze, movement as qualitative transformation functions in two diverse directions, one relative and one absolute: in respect to what is framed, as the constitution of relationships internal to a closed system, and in respect to the whole – determined by a montage which is already anticipated and envisaged in the shot – as the expression of the duration which does not cease from changing. With this idea of montage as a general compositional principle, Deleuze joins an already well-established tradition, which starting with Eisenstein aimed at portraying it as a procedure of general organisation, that is, as a relationship between the various parts which is not established a posteriori, but which is rather already in place in the sequence shot. The shot, the movement-image, is the mobile section of the duration, the translation of the parts, the transformation of the whole. However, if the framing necessarily determines though its process of constitution an out-of-field (*hors-champ*) – which is not only an extension of the scene, a 'relative elsewhere', but also and most importantly a 'radical Elsewhere', a 'dimension of the spirit' – then the duration of the film is also an opening to the absolute. It is the montage, by operating on the figures already in motion, to extract the idea, the duration; the mobile sections embody in this way the image of time, an indirect image because it is independent and subordinated to movement. Deleuze writes:

> The only generality about montage is that it puts the cinematographic image into a relationship with the whole; that is, with time conceived as the Open.

> In this way it gives an indirect image of time, simultaneously in the individual movement-image and in the whole of the film. On the one hand, it is the variable present; on the other the immensity of future and past. (Deleuze 1986: 55)

Despite the shot being a unity in movement, some interruptions will always emerge in the montage so as to remind us how if on the one side there are the parts and their relative correspondence within a given system, still the Whole is elsewhere. These fractures in the montage do not witness the discontinuity of cinema, but rather remind us of its changing continuity: that is, the absolute one of duration. By breaking the unity into two or three sets, the usage of the false connection in cinema becomes thus a flight from the relative continuity of the closed system, the exhibition of a twist that is already an attitude of the spirit showing the dimension of the Open.

III.

If the first comment to Bergson can be characterised as a confutation of his critique of cinema in the direction of an acknowledgement, in this art, of the full manifestation of the Bergsonian duration, the second comment makes use of the first chapter of *Matter and Memory* – titled 'Of the Selection of Images for Conscious Presentation. What Our Body Means and Does' – with the goal in mind to track down and describe the three mutations of the movement-image: the *perception-image*, in its partial and selective grasping of the object; its extension in the reaction, that is, the *action-image*; and the gap between the two, a hesitating interval on the part of the subject which makes possible the manifestation of pure qualities, free from any kind of utility, distinctive of the *affection-image*. Departing from the assumption of the identity between movement and image Deleuze sketches a classification of the diverse modes of the cinematographic image and of the corresponding indirect marks of time, in a continuous passage from theory to concrete cinematographic examples.

To begin with perception, the speculative premise of Bergson's thought is that of the quasi-coincidence between perception and thing:

> For it is possible to sum up our conclusions as to pure perception by saying that there is in matter something more than, but not something different from, that which is actually given. Undoubtedly, conscious perception does not compass the whole of matter, since it consists, in as far as it is conscious, in the separation, or the 'discernment,' of that which, in matter, interests our

> various needs. But between this perception of matter and matter itself there is but a difference of degree and not of kind, pure perception standing toward matter in the relation of the part to the whole. (Bergson 1988: 71)

The perception of objects or of the images of matter would thus be constituted of those very objects, only framed from the point of view of another particular image. The distinction between perceiving and what is perceived is thus for Bergson only a matter of degree: while things are complete, objective images, perception is subtractive and selective, since it is a function of the interests of the subject. The definition of *perception-image*, the first modality of any cinematographic image, moves from these theses, overcoming at the same time the duality of subject and object at work in natural perception in order to delineate a precise statute of cinematographic perception, which consists in a 'being-with' of character and camera:

> It is a case of going beyond the subjective and the objective towards a pure Form which sets itself up as an autonomous vision of content. We are no longer faced with subjective *or* objective images; we are caught in a correlation between a perception-image and a camera-consciousness. (Deleuze 1986: 74)

Here Deleuze is envisioning an entwinement between two diverse perspectives: the empirical subject, the character, who acts, and the transcendental one, the camera-consciousness, watching him or her acting and reflecting on him or her. Here we encounter once more the free indirect subjective: 'the fundamental characteristic of the "free indirect point-of-view shot" is not linguistic but stylistic . . . [It can thus] be defined as an interior monologue lacking both the explicit conceptual element and the explicit abstract philosophical element' (Pasolini 2005: 178).

As reaction and unavoidable extension, the perceptual moment of the image corresponds to the active modality – *the action-image* – representing the second pole of the sensory-motor scheme; perception selects the elements, curving the universe so that the action will hit the functional aspect of the percept, which in turn is already directed and predisposed to action itself. The suspension, in the interval created between the perception and the hesitant action, is occupied by the third mutation of the image, the *affection-image*. Here the movements, which do not remain images of perception nor become action, are absorbed by the subject as expressions and pure quality. The appearance of affectivity in the image is made available by what might be

labelled as 'retracted action', to borrow Maurizio Grande's expression (in particular, in reference to expressionist cinema):

> The zone of indeterminacy of a living being allows one not to act nor to react, that is to substitute action with the expression of affectivity, of the subject's interiority conveyed by one's face – which, in its turn, becomes the glaring reflection of the affects, potentialities, and qualitative transformations of affects through a retracted action, an action we might label as *internal to the affections*. (Grande 2003: 386; original emphasis; my translation)

These movements of subjectivity characterise each film, and yet, despite there being no single work made up of a single kind of image, still one of the three species is always dominant in a certain author or genre of film, as it will be evident in the framing, in the shot or in the montage.

The archetypical work of affection-image, featuring the expressive presence of close-ups and the representation of an indefinite, anonymous space, is *The Passion of Joan of Arc* (1926) by Dreyer, 'an almost exclusively affective film'. The very exhibition of affective and sensible qualities is noticeable in Bresson's characters, in Rohmer's stories, in Bergman's close-ups and in Antonioni's colours. The typical cinematographic genres of action-image, characterised by both realism and a well-determined space and time, are instead the documentary (one might think of Flaherty's *Nanook* (1922), in which the actions of the leading character modify the environment by attenuating its hostility), the psycho-social film (Deleuze's example is the realistic look of King Vidor's production as displayed in *The Crowd*) (1928), as well as the detective story and western, in which the transformation of the initial situation through the characters' conduct follows a narrative thread which usually leads to the re-establishment of order.[3]

Besides the three fundamental modalities Deleuze individuates other models as well: the *impulse-image* – a 'degenerate affect' or 'embryonic action' determined between the idealism of affection and the realism of the act, characteristic of Buñuel's films such as *The Exterminating Angel* (1962) or *Simon of the Desert* (1965) – the *reflection-image*, intermediary between action and the *relation-image*, the last variation of the cinema of movement which goes beyond the sensory-motor scheme and guides the passage to the time-image. By overcoming – to use Peirce's terminology – the self-referring firstness of the affect as well as the secondness of the act (a dual moment in itself as it gets realised in the perception act, thus referring to itself only through something

other), the relation-image constitutes itself as thirdness, introducing a third term connecting the other objects in place. According to Deleuze, the introduction of the mental image as thirdness, that is, a relationship between the objects and the other images, takes place with Hitchcock's cinema, whose crime plot often introduces the figure of the witness as third – as in the case of the paralysed James Stewart forced to observe in *Rear Window* (1954). Deleuze writes:

> There is not only the acting and the action, the assassin and the victim, there is always a third and not accidental or apparent third, as a suspected innocent would be, but a fundamental third constituted by the relation itself, the relation of the assassin, of the victim or of the action with the apparent third … This perpetual tripling also takes over objects, perceptions, affections. (Deleuze 1986: 201)

As Deleuze explains at the beginning of the volume on time while summarising the images and signs of classical cinema, there does not exist an intermediate moment between perception-image and affection because perception functions here as an ideal zero grade, that is, as a necessary moment which is presupposed by the other modalities, which necessarily constitute themselves as its continuation. With thirdness there appears in films a reflexive, relative element that jeopardises the duality of action, in this way letting other kinds of sign emerge.

The summary of the proper forms of the cinematographic system of action and of movement taking place at the beginning of the second volume allows Deleuze to measure up with the two principles of Metz's semiology: the idea that cinema is constitutively narrative and that the shot is the smallest narrative utterance. His answer moves once again from the fundamental presupposition of movement as the most authentic and immediate given of the cinematographic image: the narration would not be one among its given elements, but rather determined as a consequence derived from the combination (montage) of images themselves. These, on the other hand, cannot be substituted by utterances because in this way they would be deprived of the essential dimension of movement. In this sense it can be said that the image is an utterable more than an utterance, that is, a sign of reality which might virtually become discourse and narration. The advantage of Peirce's semiotics, whose classification is surveyed in greater detail in the second volume, is that, at least in the beginning of the semiosis, signs are not conceived from the point of view of language, but rather from the point of view of the phenomenon itself.

IV.

The decline of the action-image is thus a constitutive aspiration of cinema, which ever since its beginnings took the form of a vocation – shared with literature – to go beyond the unitary dramatic plot: it is a representative structure carrying within itself the very possibilities and ambition of its own overcoming. That cinema has as its intimate essence the conditions of its modification, and that its actuality is produced by its progression leaving open the possibility and the necessity of the encounter with the unforeseeable, shows evidence of its Bergsonism. *The movement-image*, begun with the critique of Bergson's statement on cinema, ends up acknowledging the cinematographic image with the very essence of movement and duration:

> There is always a moment when the cinema meets the unforeseeable or the improvisation, the irreducibility of a present living under the present of narration, and the camera cannot even begin its work without engendering its own improvisations, both as obstacles and as indispensable means. There two themes, the open totality and the event in the course of happening, are part of the profound Bergsonianism of the cinema in general. (Deleuze 1986: 206)

The movement-image, having reached its limits, extends from relation-image to the mental-image, questioning its very statute with the appearance of a third element which breaks the duality of the sensory-motor scheme, and initiating a crisis in the action system representing the classical form of representational cinema. The final break of these schemes takes place only when the relation-image is not considered as the realisation of the traditional system any more, as it happened in the United States at the time of its birth, but rather as the conscious passage to a new order. The social, economic, political and ethical reasons of such a crisis were fully in place in post-war Italy, in the next decade in France and in the following one in Germany, as long as the essence of modern cinema got expressed in the urgency to abandon realism and the narrative form so as to unleash what Deleuze defines as *opsigns* and *sonsigns*, that is, purely optical and sound situations unrelated to any perceptive reference and dislocated in a void space.

In this way movement gets rid of its logical schemes, the intertwinements between perception and act, and loses its centre of determination, through which it was able to control time by indirectly representing it through the montage of the essentially mobile sections. The revelation of an aberrant and a-centred movement discloses another image that allows time – already in place before any happening – to emerge immediately. The dispersive situations typical of modern cinema,

albeit free from any relationship of cause–effect and characterised by discontinuity and fragmentation, create in fact yet another kind of bond; that is, they relate directly with thought and time making them 'sensible' and 'visible and audible'. The third and fourth commentaries on Bergson elaborated in *The Time-Image* analyse the deep meaning of this sketch of time as well as of its two dimensions of past and present in modern films:

> If normal movement subordinates the time of which it gives us an indirect representation, aberrant movement speaks up for an anteriority of time that it presents to us directly, on the basis of the disproportion of scales, the dissipation of centers and the false continuity of the images themselves. (Deleuze 1989: 37)

Notes

1. For the relationship between philosophy and cinema, see Angelucci 2013.
2. According to Pasolini, the closeness and the exchanges between the style of the author and the mood of the character depicted represent the conditions of possibility of a cinema of poetry; a cinema that would embody the nature of the cinematographic images as a 'natural language of reality'.
3. Deleuze further divides the action-image into Large and Small form: while the former follows an S A S' scheme, according to which an initial situation is outstripped by a different one through some kind of action, the latter is characterised by an A S A' scheme for which the initial action reveals a situation which invites a new action.

Time

I.

Proceeding from the coincidence between image and movement, the two comments to Bergson elaborated in *The Time-Image* investigate the characteristics of the new cinema of opsigns and sonsigns, situations which do not respond to – and are thus unrestricted by – the sensory-motor scheme. In this kind of film, movement naturally continues to be part of the image as its constitutive datum, and yet what steps in the foreground is time – temporality 'in person', as Deleuze writes – and its mechanisms. The direct performance of time in image, the essential novelty of modern cinema, allows Deleuze to get Bergson slightly closer to Kantian philosophy: by defining time as a pure form of subjectivity, Bergson operated the first reversal of the relationship between time and movement in the direction of the subordination of the latter to the former.

A synthesis of Kantian philosophy in relationship to this reversal of the concept of temporality appears in the 1986 Deleuzian essay 'On Four Poetic Formulas Which Might Summarize the Kantian Philosophy'. The liberation of pure, non-chronological time completed by Kant is here resumed by Deleuze in the poetic formula 'the time is out of joint' – a line pronounced by Hamlet, the tragic hero par excellence who brings to bear the emancipation of time:

> Time is out of joint, the door off its hinges, signifies the first great Kantian reversal: movement is now subordinated to time. Time is no longer related to the movement it measures, but rather to the time that conditions it. Moreover, movement is no longer the determination of objects, but the description of a space, a space we must set aside in order to discover time as the condition of action. (Deleuze 1998: 27–8)

In his third comment on Bergson, the first in the volume on time, Deleuze reprises the theses presented in the second chapter of *Matter*

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and Memory dedicated to 'Of the Recognition of Images', distinguishing two different kinds of perceptual response: a habitual, mechanical one, configured as a sort of mechanical reaction of sensory-motor extension of perception itself, consisting in an '*instantaneous* recognition, of which the body is capable by itself' (Bergson 1988: 92); and an attentive, active one, characterised instead by the appearance of a hesitation when facing the perceived reality, an uncertainty in the response forcing the subject to reflect and search in his or her memory, similar to the way the camera gets a certain figure into focus. In the former type of recognition the reaction movement takes place on the very same level of the perceived object, while in the latter the subject examines his or her past before coming back to the present moving through several different dimensions in always novel circular – more or less wide – movements, which Bergson, by offering a geometrical scheme (Bergson 1988: 104), called circuits, 'circles of memory'. If the result of habitual perception is the sensory-motor image – the thing itself, exhibited in classical, narrative cinema films – in the case of attentive recognition, what is attained is a pure optical and sound image, a description of the object.

The affective-image as well, first presented in the volume dedicated to movement, is defined as what inhabits the interval between perception and reaction (as we shall see, Deleuze's critique of Jacques Rancière will revolve around this proximity). However, in Deleuze's description, affection widens the perceptual matter on its very sensory-motor dimension, while the pure optical and sound image produces a different element which does not extend but rather fulfils the gap: the dimension of the spirit or temporality, enabling the activity of the subject to attain a whole new sense. The pure optical image, which at first appears as poorer in content and more rarefied as it substitutes the thing rather than presenting it, will reveal itself as richer and more 'typical' than the former, in which perception is distracted by the activity of selection of the sensory-motor scheme in view of the action:

> Conversely, the pure optical image may be only a description, and concern a character who no longer knows how or is no longer able to react to the situation; the restraint of this image, the thinness of what it retains, line or simple point, 'slight fragment without importance', bring the thing each time to an essential singularity, and describe the inexhaustible, endlessly referring to other descriptions. (Deleuze 1989: 45)

If the sensory-motor image originates from the linear nexus between perception and reaction accompanying the narrative procedure in cinema, the answer to the question about the identity of levels, the

circuits enacted by the activity of attention in perception, and thus by the pure optical image, is much more problematical to obtain. According to Bergson, the answer consists in recollection-images, recalled in the memory by the subject during the perceptual hesitation. Deleuze opens up the range of possibilities by suggesting a series of couples in which it is essential to bear in mind that the two terms are *by nature* different: the real and the imaginary, the physical and the mental, the actual and the virtual. The linear links making possible the extension of objective perception in the associated reaction get progressively more complex, become circular and, in the continuous passage between the two different ontological dimensions, represent 'the layers of one and the same physical reality, and the levels of one and the same mental reality, memory or spirit' (Deleuze 1989: 46). It is a perpetual oscillation between two indiscernible and yet distinct moments, in which to each aspect of the perceived thing there corresponds a recollection, a thought connected via a circuit which simultaneously creates and delete its image, a unity constituted by the coalescence of all its visited and contradicted sheets. The Deleuzian definition runs as follows: 'The purely optical and sound situation (description) is an actual image, but one which, instead of extending into movement, links up with a virtual image and forms a circuit with it' (Deleuze 1989: 47).

But what, in cinema, plays the role of the virtual? I want to go straight to the answer offered by Deleuze, leaving aside for the moment the path covered to achieve it – a path which I shall survey in detail in the next chapter dedicated to this concept. The immediate and always reversible virtual double of the actual gets actualised as a point of 'indiscernibility' between the two ontologically different dimensions; such a virtual double is what Deleuze calls the *crystal-image*, that is, the heart and root of pure optical and sound images:

> But here we see that the opsign finds its true generic element when the actual optical image crystallizes with *its own* virtual image, on the small internal circuit. This is a crystal-image, which gives us the key, or rather the 'heart', of opsigns and their composition. The latter are nothing other than slivers of crystal-images. (Deleuze 1989: 69)

II.

In crystals – an ordinary word granted a new meaning, like the practice of inventing concepts acquires a new meaning – 'there is this mutual search – blind and halting – of matter and spirit' (Deleuze 1989: 75). The

actual and the virtual engage in a continuous exchange, so that the two moments, although distinct, are not discernible, as they find their existence and meaning only in their reciprocal presupposition, in their being one relative to the other: a virtuality is constituted as such only in relationship and opposition to an actuality of which it constitutes the virtual, and vice versa. This indiscernible bond is not the result of a subjective, psychological impression (in that case it would in fact only consist in an inability to distinguish them, the fruit of confusion or error), but is rather an 'objective illusion' of the image, as its duplicity is constitutive to its very nature.

The aesthetic figures proper of the structure of crystal are a series of pairs representing ways in which the couple of actual–virtual can be articulated: the opaque–limpid couple – which already gets manifested in the interplay between the visible and the obscure character of acting a certain role, in which the actor hides him- or herself and leaves the character to emerge – and the seed-surrounding couple – which instead expresses the circulation of potentialities as a germination and transformation of the surroundings. Whether the determinations of classical cinema – that is perception, action and affection – often find their cinematographic equivalent in a general characterisation of film, Deleuze individuates various poetic concretisations of the crystal-image in the objects, details and recurring motifs of many films of modern cinema: the mirror[1] reflecting the virtual figure of an actual character – think about, among the many mentioned films, some selected scenes of Losey's *The Servant* (1963), the end of Orson Welles' *The Lady from Shanghai* (1947) or the hotel of Alain Resnais's *Last Year at Marienbad*; (1961) the ship, with the upper part above the waterline visible and limpid, and the lower part hidden below the waterline and opaque (as, for example, in Federico Fellini's *And the Ship Sails On*, 1983); and the rain, which reveals itself as the seed of change in some movies by Akira Kurosawa (for example, already in *Rashomon*, 1950) and Michelangelo Antonioni (for example, *The Night*, dated 1961, in which the rain represents the sign of a transformation in the life of the characters).

However, besides the configurations of the crystal-image, what interests Deleuze is its genesis: the crystal is 'the most fundamental operation of time', constantly splitting into a past tending to its self-preservation and a passing present leaning towards the future. This differentiation into two dimensions – which, however, coexist and do not cease to swap and convert into each other, despite always in the process of their differentiation – represents accurately the Bergsonian definition

of non-chronological time, and shows also 'what we see' exhibited in the image of the crystal as its genetic element and constitutive structure: 'what we see in the crystal is time itself, a bit of time in the pure state' (Bergson 1989: 82).

> The crystal reveals a direct time-image, and no longer an indirect image of time deriving from movement. It does not abstract time; it does better: it reverses its subordination in relation to movement. The crystal is like a *ratio cognoscendi* of time, while time, conversely, is *ratio essendi*. What the crystal reveals or makes visible is the hidden ground of time, that is, its differentiation into two flows, that of presents which pass and that of pasts which are preserved. (Bergson 1989: 98)

In modern cinema the crystal appears in different shapes: the typical perfection of Max Ophüls's films (*The Earrings of Madame de . . . , dated 1953)*, which conveys the coalescence of actual and virtual in a unitary scene without gaps; the rift typical of the work of Jean Renoir through which, besides the short-circuit of real and imaginary and present and past, a new reality is revealed by means of the substitution of the simple shot with the depth of field, an opening to the future (think of the use of water in Renoir's films, as for example in *Boudu*); the formation and growth resulting from the richness and continuous multiplication of Fellini's images, true revelations of life expanding in its spontaneity; the decomposition, the object of Visconti's cinematography, revealing the historical and natural collapse of a world – not only of a certain social class, but also of a 'spiritual family' – obscured and in decline.

III.

The occasion of a perspicuous understanding of the radical difference and of the continuous exchange between present and past, actual and virtual, as well as of the preservation of pure recollections, is offered by the Bergsonian scheme of the inverse cone at play in the third chapter of *Matter and Memory*. The apex of the cone, occupied by the representation of the constantly progressing present, rests on the plane of actuality, while the volume represents the totality of recollections, the memory in itself, by nature different from the dimension of experience and yet always in potential contact with it: if pure recollection gets revealed to the sensory-motor mechanisms in its totality – thus allowing the body to react and accomplish the task suggested by the present – such mechanisms would facilitate the unconscious and idle recollections descending from the heights of pure memory to materialise and come

back to life, focusing on action. According to Deleuze, this scheme is particularly apt to represent the first non-chronological image of time, the one grounded in the past which gets preserved: in fact, the volume of the cone efficaciously depicts a memory which is *déjà-là*, which pre-exists and in which we move in the search for recollections; not some mental and interior state, but a Being-memory, a world-memory, a pure virtuality that we penetrate and in which we lose ourselves. In the geometrical figure the coexistence of the diverse moments of the past also appears evident, the more or less wide sections of the cone, each of which contains at the same time the totality of recollections:

> Between the past as pre-existence in general and the present as infinitely contracted past there are, therefore, all the circles of that past constituting so many stretched or shrunk *regions*, *strata*, and *sheets*: each region with its own characteristics, its 'tones', its 'aspects', its 'singularities', its 'shining points', and its 'dominant' figures. (Deleuze 1989: 99)

We settle – or 'jump' as Deleuze writes – in one of the two circles of memory depending on the different quality of the recollection sought through the diverse sheets of our past.

In the picture of the cone the statute of the present is also immediately apparent as a narrower and more contracted point than the past, as its extreme limit; a present which elapses in the very moment in which it is perceived, 'its pure present being the invisible progress of the past gnawing into the future' (Bergson 1988: 150). If, however, the present in itself is considered as stripped of its actuality – as the pure recollection was freed from the necessity of its actualisation in a recollection-image – we obtain the second direct figure of time, grounded on the contracted present of the apex of the cone, the 'peaks of present' freed from their sensory-motor extension. The present becomes thus an ecstatic dimension removed from its function of converting recollections into acts, a function of which Deleuze, making reference to Augustine's thought, exhibits in three simultaneous elements: *memory* (present of the past), *attention* (present of the present) and *wait* (present of the future).

> We find ourselves here in a direct time-image of a different kind from the previous one: no longer the coexistence of sheets of past, but the simultaneity of peaks of present. We therefore have two kinds of chronosigns: the first are *aspects* (regions, layers), the second *accents* (peaks of view [*pointes de vue*]). (Bergson 1989: 101)

The figure of time in person depicting the past in general despite its sheets appears in what Deleuze considers as the first film of modern

cinema: namely, *Citizen Kane* (1941) by Orson Welles, the first director who showed a time-image exploring entire sections of the past in their existence. In the film the writer of a newsreel is given the task of reconstructing the life of the tycoon Charles Foster Kane following his death: after reading his diaries, the journalist interviews his second wife, the head of the board of governors of his newspaper, his best friend and the butler who assisted him during his last years. The goal of the inquiry is that of discovering the meaning of the mysterious word uttered by Kane on his deathbed, but the enigma is revealed only to the eyes of the spectators – and not to those of the characters – in the last scene, in which is filmed a pile of by then useless objects once belonging to the protagonist in the past being thrown into the fire by the attendants: 'Rosebud' is the sign impressed on the wooden sled with which Kane used to play during his childhood.[2]

Each witness who gets interrogated about the life of the protagonist represents a section, a virtual sheet of his past, which, however, is unable to designate a re-enacted recollection, that is, a 'presentified' image which has lost its past character, as it was happening in the flashbacks typical of movement. Moving from Bergson's distinction between *recollection-image*, which actualises the past in relationship to the present in function of what it perceives, and the *pure recollection*, which should keep the mark of virtuality, Deleuze translates cinematographically this distinction by individuating a difference between flashbacks, that is, the 'presentifying' past, and sheets of the past, that is, exhibition of pure recollection in itself. Here the story, that is, the point of view of each witness on the various parts of the life of the protagonist, leads to the evocation of entire regions of virtuality precisely because it is unable to find what it was looking for and actualise it in a recollection-image. The evocation takes place not through the transformation of the past into actuality, but rather by jumping into another ontological dimension, that is, by settling itself from the present into pure recollection.

All the stylistic innovations produced by Welles with the collaboration of the director of photography Gregg Toland aim precisely at the liberation of time in itself: the use of *deep focus* with the goal of keeping contemporaneously in focus all the elements and scales of the shot; the use of the grand wide-angle lens, which enormously widens close-ups and pushes the background away; the particular illumination, emphasising volumes provoking a stark contrast between light and shadow; the shots from bottom up or from unusual angles. The result is a depth of field that substitutes a simple juxtaposition of plans

and levels independent from each other with the construction of a diagonal perspective, in which the background is in communication with the foreground as well as with the intermediate levels. Welles' aim is not only that of forcing the spectator 'to "read" all the sheets of the image, as the actions eventually taking place in the background are not inert and merely decorative anymore but rather true active operators of dramaturgy' (Provenzano 1994: 125; my translation). The liberation of this profundity allows in the first place the appearance of the *continuum* of Bergsonian duration, of the temporal dimension that, once emancipated from the subordination of space, shows itself freely. In its function of remembering, the novel conception of the depth of field allows Welles to represents also its misfortunes, the temporal disorders illuminating its double structure, its virtual side:

> The sheets of past exist, they are strata from where we draw our recollection-images. But either they are in any case unusable, because death is a permanent present, the most contracted region; or they can no longer be recalled because they are breaking up and becoming twisted, scattered in a non-stratified region. (Deleuze 1989: 115)

In *Citizen Kane* we see realised the two cases of 'illness of memory' about which Bergson wrote. The first one, in which the recollection cannot be invoked any more, represents the running theme of the film: Rosebud is an element of the life of Kane so distant and buried in the past that the images pass by and touch slightly without being able to catch and centre it, and the recollections of those who were closer to him in life are completely ineffective. The second case, in which the recollection is still evocable but cannot be utilised any more, can be appreciated in the film as well: all the images of the life of the protagonist recalled by the witnesses are revealed as useless, as there is no present able to accommodate them because of Kane's death, which imposes itself in the first scene as an unavoidable premise. At the end of the film the meaning of the word 'Rosebud' is revealed in vain, being literally 'for no one'.

In this as well as in other Welles films, the parabola of recollections – which are unable to emerge from the past or rather reappear only to fade into the void[3] – is according to Deleuze not representative of a sort of nihilism the way he understands it, whose profound sense would simply lie in the vanity of human existence. The significance of the unavoidability or the idleness of the past symbolises the origin of the 'permanent state of crisis' of the concept of time, which, by emancipating itself from the subordination of movement, forces its joints to reveal hallucinatory presences, the coexistence of

diverse moments, and paradoxical connections. In *Citizen Kane* 'all the coexistent strata are in touch and adjacent to each other' (Deleuze 1989: 115), and time secures its autonomy also through the reports of the witnesses, who are unable to solve the mystery, but who in their reports evoke events which they cannot objectively know. It is the disease of the memory, the impossibility of remembering or making use of the recollection, the incapacity to discern the various moments of the past jeopardising the very idea of truth.

The image of time as the contraction and de-actualised peaks of the present makes instead its appearance in many films of the late Buñuel. If in *The Movement-Image* Deleuze mentioned the director as a representative of affection cinema, a type of cinema in which the power of impulses emerges with emphasis, its late works, by abandoning the naturalistic perspective and the scheme of perception–action, seem to attain a vision of the image as the manifestation of different and simultaneous worlds. In this way, the finale of *Belle de jour* (1967) shows in the protagonist's husband a paralysis that took place and yet did not take place; also, *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie* (1972) offers different and irreducible versions of the very same lunch, not subjective and imaginary points of view, but rather 'different objective worlds' disclosing simultaneously.

Both figures of non-chronological time are present in the film by Alain Resnais, written and directed with the collaboration of Alain Robbe-Grillet, *Last Year at Marienbad*, which fully conveys the crisis of imagination-action and the emergence of the elements of modernity: the nomadic characters, the accumulation of cliché, the appearance of thought as the only true protagonist. The story is that of a confrontation between the irreducibly different memories of a man and a woman confronting and evoking two diverse and incommensurable pasts; it is in fact only the man who can remember what happened during the last year in Marienbad and wants to persuade the woman about his recollection. Deleuze attributes to Resnais the interest for the past and its virtual sheets, as well as for its jeopardisation dictated by abandonment of a fixed centre from which to observe it (which in the films by Welles could have been individuated, for example, in the death of Kane, while here it disappears for a multi-voiced memory, each of which is extraneous and incommensurable to the others); the feminine character, which lives in the passage between two presents, at times suspicious while at others convinced of the version offered to her, is instead more akin to the conception of Robbe-Grillet, oriented towards a perpetual present perpetually divided from its actuality. It might well be that the

two characters of the film settle on two different regions of memory, preventing them from having the same recollections, but it might also be that the authors meant to create what Deleuze defines as a 'sheet *of* transformation' – paradoxical, hypnotic, hallucinogenic – allowing the communication between fragments belonging to different ages, which establishes a continuity between the elements of the different levels.

The 'crystalline' cinema, which has abandoned the regime of action and causal connections in favour of an image which 'no longer has space and movement as its primary characteristics but topology and time' (Deleuze 1989: 125), aspires to the creation of a virtual sheet pervading all the others, it 'rolls them up and unrolls them', radically questioning identity as a principle of representation and arriving at a narration which goes beyond truth and falsity, beyond the actual and the virtual.

Notes

1. In this sense, meta-cinema, that is, the many reflections on cinema conducted through the cinematographic medium, would not be, according to Deleuze, a testimony of a lack of vitality, of the plunging of the cinematographic art to its 'death', but rather one of the modalities typical of its enrichment.
2. According to Roberto Campari, the theme of bygone childhood lies at the centre of *Citizen Kane*, as he argues in his *Film della memoria. Mondi perduti, ricordati e sognati* (2005); in an interpretation already in place in the volume by André Bazin, *Orson Welles* (1992) – which still represents an authoritative reference in the vast literature on the director – which does not stand in contradiction with the one offered by Deleuze, in which, however, the loss of the past is devoid of any individual and psychological connotation.
3. In *Mr. Arkadin* (1955), for example, the past gets re-evoked only to be cancelled and destroyed as well: the private investigator recruited by Arkadin to investigate his own past explores the virtual sheets, but such an exploration aims at eliminating all that comes to light. In his work on this film, Michele Bertolini did not neglect the link between fiction and time's disharmony (see Bertolini 2004).

Virtual

I.

In order to trace the path that brings Deleuze to the individuation of the crystal-image as the nucleus of the exchange between actual and virtual, an exchange enabling modern cinema to represent the genesis of time, we should go back to Bergson, and more precisely to the two kinds of perceptual response sketched in *Matter and Memory*. As already noted, for Bergson there is a habitual, automatic recognition having roughly the form of a mechanical reaction to perception itself, and an attentive recognition, characterised instead by a kind of hesitation, an uncertainty inducing the subject to reflect and inquire into his or her memory.

If the sensory-motor image originates from the linear link connecting perception and reaction that constitutes the relations of cause–effect structuring the narrative procedures, the question raised during attentive recognition lying at the base of the pure optical image will be much more complex to address. Linear links become circular and enact a continuous exchange between two ontologically different dimensions, that is, past and present, two indiscernible and yet distinct moments united by a bond according to which each aspect of the perceived thing corresponds to a recollection, to a thought. The two dimensions through which this perpetual exchange takes place, that is, the actual and the virtual, the present and the past, would thus necessarily coexist – a quite shocking and unsettling statement, which will be thematised in a progressively assertive way, but which in the pages dedicated to the pure optical image initially appears almost as a platitude. In this context it would thus be worth repeating the already quoted definition of this image of modern cinema offered by Deleuze: 'The purely optical and sound situation (description) is an actual image, but one which, instead of extending

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into movement, links up with a virtual image and forms a circuit with it' (Deleuze 1989: 47).

It is also worth repeating at this stage the question on the nature and genesis of the virtual, this time following the details of the path covered by the author for its full articulation. As a first step Deleuze takes Bergson's suggestion by analysing recollection-images and their connection with the actual in cinema via the flashback. This procedure, announced by fading effects or conveyed by the overlapping of images, constitutes a conventional and extrinsic method which allows the linear progression of the narration or alternatively displays the deviation and bifurcation of time, showing enigmatically, for example, all the possible effects of a certain situation. The precise moment in which the situation splits, in which the possibility of a deviation gets revealed – a moment which cannot but display itself afterwards – is, for instance, often at the centre of some scenes of the films by Joseph Manckiewicz; for example, in a flashback scene of *All About Eve* the recounted character becomes in its turn a narrator, having sensed the duplicity of the woman and what could have had happened. In any case, the flashback falls short of its role, since, besides receiving the justification of its existence from the outside, reveals itself as non-virtual. In fact, it 'does not deliver the past to us, but only represents the former present that the past "was" ', showing in the film a recollection-image already far from pure-recollection, already 'actualized or in process of being made actual, which does not form with the actual, present image a circuit of indiscernibility' (Deleuze 1989: 54).

The Deleuzian conclusion is that actuality enters authentically in contact with virtuality only when perception, unable to form either sensory-motor images or recollection-images, fails in the recognition, thus accommodating sensations without any objective correspondence and which do not extend to the sensory-motor level. The virtual correlate of the pure optical image gets displayed in those disturbances of memory, or 'failures of recognition' – in the hallucinations and in the delirium characteristic of the most extreme situations, but also in everyday dreams and amnesias – which the Soviet expressionist and surrealist cinema elected among the most significant themes of their cinematographic production. This leads us to our second step.

Deleuze refers once again to the second and third chapters of *Matter and Memory*, in which the analysis of the dreaming state is used as confirmation of the conception of the phenomena of memory and recognition just expressed. According to Bergson, the dream is the extreme state of 'an entirely contemplative memory' (Bergson 1988: 155), the possibility of the emergence of the totality of fluctuating

recollections given the relaxation of the nervous tension and the collapse of the attention purely directed to action. The dormant person does not cease to receive sensations, but his or her perception does not result in a sensory-motor response either, rather it enters into contact with a mutable and diffused set of recollections and with the past in general. Perception is not connected here with any particular recollection-image, but rather establishes an extremely dispersive and loose connection between actuality and virtuality which Deleuze, reprising the Bergsonian scheme, defines as '*the largest circuit or "the outermost envelope" of all the circuits*' (Deleuze 1989: 56).

In comparison with recollection-image, which gets actualised by responding to the call of the perception-image, the diffused sensations of the dormant person, despite him or her being unconscious about them, provoke the transformation of the virtual into an actual which in its turn becomes the virtuality of the subsequent actualisation, in a process of infinite feedback and chasing: the most vivid cinematographic example is without doubt *An Andalusian Dog* (1928) by Luis Buñuel, with its succession of images in perpetual becoming. The images of the dream, scattered, dissociated and yet ascribable to one single sensation, the initial one which remains implicit and present, are rendered cinematographically in two different modalities: on the one side through fades, complex movements of the camera, special effects; while on the other through simple cuts in the montage, creating an unreal processuality of still real objects. On the one side, rich and overloaded means, while, on the other, ellipses. The law to which they respond is the same: namely, a wide circuit with loose perceptual links in which the preceding makes reference to the succeeding without any interruption.

However, as occurs in the recollection-image actualised in a flashback, in the film the loss of the sensory-motor connection taking place while asleep is compensated most of the time by the use of an explicit dream-image, in which, once again, the indiscernibility of the virtual and the actual is not guaranteed: we have an unaware dreamer and a spectator aware that what he or she observes is not the reality of wakefulness. In order to define these states of estrangement in which this split does not get explicitly manifested, Deleuze uses the notion of 'implied dream', a dream in which the pure optical and sound image – which has lost any automatic extension as well as a seemingly virtual recollection-image or an explicit dream image to which it relates – extends instead in a 'movement of the world', in a depersonalised movement which does not belongs to the character any more, but rather to the space around him or her:

> The world takes responsibility for the movement that the subject can no longer or cannot take. This is a virtual movement, but it becomes actual at the price of an expansion of the totality of space and of a stretching of time. It is therefore the limit of the largest circuit. (Deleuze 1989: 59)

The depersonalised movement par excellence is the musical comedy, in which the dancer-actor abandons his or her subjectivity and lets the over-personal movement carry him or her, entering the dance in the 'implied dream'. The dances of Fred Astaire and Gene Kelly give access to another world, but so also do some moments of Vincente Minnelli's films, in which the real and the imaginary become indiscernible. The very same movement of the world characterises the outcomes of the evolution of the burlesque genre, which, starting with the emphasis on sensory-motor situations (Laurel and Hardy), introduces at first some affective elements (Buster Keaton), then mental images (in Groucho Marx's nonsenses), up to provoking a rupture of the sensory-motor bounds in which the character does not act, but rather blends into the movements of the world, in an energy unconsciously sucking, involving and dragging him or her (Jerry Lewis).

Departing from a virtuality correspondent and coalescent to its own actuality, to the co-present reflection of a reality, via the hypothesis of recollection-images we thus reached the great circuit of the explicit or implicit dream-images, the continued succession of indistinguishable moments, representing the widest and most dilated level of the Bergsonian scheme. Isn't this exactly what we were looking for?

> Should not the opposite direction have been pursued? Contracting the image instead of dilating it. Searching for the smallest circuit that functions as internal limit for all the others and that puts the actual image besides a kind of immediate, symmetrical, consecutive or even simultaneous double. The broad circuits of recollection in dream assume this narrow base, this extreme point, and not the other way around. (Deleuze 1989: 68)

We thus reached our intended destination: the most contracted circuit, immediate and always reversible virtual reflection of the actual, point of indiscernibility between the two ontologically different dimensions, the root of pure optical and sound images. Here Deleuze truly brings to its extreme consequences the Bergsonian intuition about the relationship between matter and memory in hesitant recognition, and in the following words by Bergson the character of the crystal description can already be appreciated; words which also at the same time show Bergson's greater attention to external reality, although depicted in the immediacy of its opening to the spiritual dimension:

> Every *attentive* perception truly involves a *reflection*, in the etymological sense of the word that is to say the projection, outside ourselves, of an actively created image, identical with, or similar to, the object on which it comes to mold itself. (Bergson 1988: 102)

In the genesis and structure of the crystal-image we see reinstated the radical affirmation of the existence of virtuality in itself, which allows Deleuze to subtract time to its exteriorisation and at the same time rebut the interpretation of Bergsonian duration in terms of internal life and psychological state. If time continuously splits up into present and past, and each moment of life has contemporaneously in itself the two elements of perception and recollection which the crystal embodies in its constitutive double nature, then virtuality – that is, pure recollection, the past, memory, the spirit – exists *outside* one's subjectivity and consciousness, *in* time. It is rather consciousness that, by recalling, gets installed in the virtual, it moves in time, which is thus not internal to the subject but rather gets configured as a 'form of interiority' which the subject *inhabits* and is unable to escape. In this sense the idea of the crystal, as an inorganic mineral, stresses efficaciously the a-subjectivity and over-personal character of Deleuzian time, the radical questioning of personal identity and the refutation of a temporality in terms of the psychological and interior life of the mind. In *Difference and Repetition* (first published in 1968) we already find Deleuze describing virtuality in these terms:

> We opposed the virtual and the real: although it could not have been more precise before now, this terminology must be corrected. The virtual is opposed not to the real but to the actual. *The virtual is fully real in so far as it is virtual.* Exactly what Proust said of states of resonance must be said of the virtual: 'Real without being actual, ideal without being abstract'; and symbolic without being fictional. Indeed, the virtual must be defined as strictly a part of the real object – as though the object had one part of itself in the virtual into which it plunged as though into an objective dimension. (Deleuze 1994: 208–9)

II.

The idea of a duration existing outside one's subjective consciousness, although in constant touch with it, emerges as the central theme of the chapter of *Matter and Memory* titled 'Of the Survival of Images', to which Deleuze refers in his fourth comment on Bergson, following the splitting of the crystal towards the two directions of the past and the present. In those pages Bergson remarked in the first place on the

radical difference between the two dimensions: the present, being sensory-motor, consists in sensations and movements, while the past, as pure-recollection, is characterised as un-extensive and divided by perceptions, so that the contact between the two via the recollection-image, that is, the actualisation of a part of the past in view of the action, is not characterised as a gradual passage but rather as a leap between two ontologically distinct moments. This distinction in kind between matter and memory – which, although maintaining its necessity, becomes indiscernible in the smallest circuit (or, if you will, in the Deleuzian crystal) – represents the necessary condition for the existence of a virtual in itself, of a past which, even when idle, gets preserved in its state of latency. Given the definition of the present as '*what is being made*', what is no longer present would not be what is no more, but rather what is useless, unused, but not for this reason inexistent: thus 'there will no longer be any more reason to say that the past effaces itself as soon as perceived than there is to suppose that material objects cease to exist when we cease to perceive them' (Bergson 1988: 142).[1] Bergson concludes:

> This survival of the past per se forces itself upon philosophers, then, under one form or another; the difficulty that we have in conceiving it comes simply from the fact that we extend to the series of memories, in time, that obligation of containing and being contained which applies only to the collection of bodies instantaneously perceived in space. (Bergson 1988: 149)

The importance in Bergsonian philosophy of the preservation of the past in itself, which according to Deleuze is one of the less understood aspects of Bergsonism, has been already tackled in the essay 'Memory as Virtual Coexistence' (Deleuze 1991a), focused on the very question of the existential and ontological difference between the two temporal dimensions, according to which the passage from one to the other should take place by means of an immediate installation, *d'emblée*, as Bergson himself wrote. In the essay Deleuze highlights the connection of this conception with the new characterisations of the present as act and utility rather than existence, and of the past as inactivity and virtuality, as 'an immemorial or ontological Memory':

> There must be a difference in kind between matter and memory, between pure perception and pure recollection, between the present and the past … We have great difficulty in understanding a survival of the past in itself because we believe that the past is no longer, that it has ceased to be. We have thus confused Being with being-present. Nevertheless, the present *is not*; rather,

> it is pure becoming, always outside itself. It *is* not, but it acts. (Deleuze 1991a: 57)

Deleuze continues:

> The past, on the other hand, has ceased to act or to be useful. But it has not ceased to be. Useless and inactive, impassive, it IS, in the full sense of the word: It is identical with being in itself … At the limit, the ordinary determinations are reversed: of the present, we must say at every instant that it 'was,' and of the past, that it 'is,' that it is eternally, for all time. This is the difference in kind between the past and the present. (Deleuze 1991a: 55)

This point, a memory which is always 'already there', is the focus of Alain Badiou's interpretation, according to which the existence of a self-preserving past determines in Deleuze's thought a 'de-temporalisation of time' that would make him an involuntary disciple of Plato. This time passing and yet eternal as ontological and virtual memory becomes truth itself, which Deleuze substitutes for the idea of truth understood as a normative and abstract category. The power of falsity as virtual Being is nothing other than the new name which Deleuze gives to truth, a truth which is the expression of the eternal and which the philosopher defends 'with gentle violence', in a reflection which Badiou defines classical as his own thought is classical (Badiou 1999). In this sense Deleuze is even compared to Hegel, because for both the 'sovereignty of the One' implies the idea of truth as the preservation of the immanent, as absolute past (virtuality for the former, concept for the latter). The divergence between the two reflections amounts to the structure of memory, which on the one side operates through differentiations and virtualisations, while on the other through firm steps, through 'monumental figures'.

However, besides the obvious acknowledgement of this gap, whose seminal importance has been admitted by Badiou himself, it should be noted that the differentiation through relation is for Deleuze much more than a modality of the memory, as it consists indeed in its structure, that is memory itself. Pure virtuality is in fact conceived as in continuous communication and incessant relation with the actual, with which it establishes an exchange enacting a qualitative transformation: it is eternal, inasmuch as it does not cease to exist, but not static, as it keeps changing. In this sense the present is both the actual image but also what moves on because a new present comes in, while the past is pure virtuality, related to its own present. In cinema the revelation of temporality in itself – shown in the crystal of the two streams of past and present constantly encountering, exchanging and splitting – gets displayed through the two chronic images which do not make reference

to the series, but rather to the order of time: the former grounded in the past which gets preserved, existing for itself, and allowing the appearance of entire fields of memory, which Deleuze defines as sheets of the past; the latter is instead grounded in a deactualised present – already split in modern cinema by its sensory-motor extension – and becomes an ecstatic dimension subtracted to the actualising function of converting the recollection into action, using it as a response to the perceptual act.

The challenge here is that of appreciating the nature of the impulse enabling the passage to the virtuality in its irreducible ontological difference from the actual: it is surely not an intellectual or psychological process, but rather a dribbling or suspension of the habitual which forces time 'out of joint', as Hamlet said. On the other hand, if it is true that between the two dimensions – which are simultaneously indiscernible – there is a continuous short-circuit, then this disentanglement from actuality would never be absolute and complete. In his introduction to the Italian edition of Deleuze's essays on Bergsonism, individuating the two key words of his reading of the volume in the terms *difference* and *virtual*, Pier Aldo Rovatti insists on the exchange and on movement. He writes:

> The conjunction is essential; the 'and' which connects and mobilizes the virtual and the actual, since it is precisely this mobilization which confers to the virtual its character of reality. That 'coexistence' … is once again the mark of the discharging of time operated by the virtual, and yet its difference is now recognizable as a complex movement of differentiation whose circularity allows us to glimpse the rhythm of a constant oscillation rather than the pause on a position (the virtual) or the other (the actual). (Rovatti 2001: xvi; my translation)

Note

1. The affirmation of the existence of a pure past in itself cannot but make one think of Proust's conception of time. However, Deleuze himself suggests the difference between Proust and Bergson, for whom the pure past, although existent and real, is not by any means a lived experience. See Deleuze 2000.

Modernity

I.

The notion of modernity, which Deleuze connects with the emergence after the second world conflict of a new kind of image, has actually been associated by scholars with the very origins of cinema, to note in the first place its 'late arrival' compared with other forms of artistic expression. This aspect is particularly evident in the theories advanced immediately after the invention of cinema, since it has been connected to the themes of the legitimacy of cinema as an art and of the position of the new device within a stable system, thus constituting a recurrent motif of the aesthetic reflection. To claim that cinema is the latest art in terms of appearance meant for the first theorists that, although dependent on a new technical invention and born as a predominantly amusing and recreational event, still the cinematographic event should be given its rightful place among the forms of artistic expression. If it is possible to individuate some typical paradigms of modernity emerging from the course of the various theories of cinema – cinema as a technical innovation, as a possibility of a new perception typical of the modern subject, as a mirror of contemporary society – Deleuze, by reformulating a distinction already in place in the reflection of André Bazin, envisioned a radically different theoretical and stylistic division between classical and modern (De Vincenti 1993: 19).[1]

According to this reading, the essence of modernity – a notion which in Deleuze's understanding does not have a merely historical-chronological connotation but rather a 'distinctive transcendental, trans-historical character' (De Gaetano 1996: 101; my translation) – got manifested in the urgency – felt in Italy after 1945 with neorealism, in the next decade in France with *nouvelle vague*, and in the following one in Germany – to abandon the classical narrative form. In this way we see in

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films the emergence of 'purely optical and sound situations', of images disconnected from perceptual connections and dislocated in an empty space, and a precise theoretical connotation. This new modality, which seems to offer a renewed autonomy to image itself, certainly has its social, economic and political causes, but embodies in the first place a different stylistic attitude of the film, which is not centred any more on the relationships of cause–effect and perception–action typical of the concatenation of events in classical narrative cinema. As already noted, the cinematographic regime of modernity gets associated with the possibility of an immediate presentation of the virtual and of temporality 'in person': whereas in classical cinema the progress of events was conveyed through the characters' activity, through movement, the new narrative way makes truth and falsity indiscernible from the very choice of the themes through the usage of – among other things – *décadrages* and false recollections.

The novelty in the cinematographic style of movements and authors of modernity has been already stressed, obviously, by scholars; it is worth remembering, for example, the pages of Bazin on neorealism, aimed at emphasising the distance of the new cinematographic form from the classical one. In his essay on the Italian school of Liberation, referring to Roberto Rossellini's *Paisà* (1946), the French critic highlighted precisely the difference between the two narrative logics: the modern, neorealist one in which the spirit of the spectator, facing the fragments of reality jumbled by an elliptic montage, should pass from one fact to the other 'as one jumps from rock to rock in order to cross the river', and the other of classical *découpage*, in which the facts engage with each other 'as a chain in a pronged wheel', as if they are 'at the service' of our imagination.[2]

The description that Deleuze advances at the end of the first volume on cinema conveys the manifest signs of the new image, which according to him threaten in various ways the system of action: the 'dispersive situation', an ensemble of uncertain and empty spaces; the 'deliberately weak links', not following a well-defined logic any more; the 'voyage form', in which space is experienced in a casual way; the 'consciousness of clichés', the awareness that a such a loosely cohesive world might find its unity only in the current clichés of the time; and the 'condemnation of the plot' (Deleuze 1986: 210), the revelation of the existence of an occult power feeding such clichés, which, by mixing up with its very same effects, cannot be confined.

In Rossellini's *Germany, Year Zero* (1948), a film in which all these features patently appear together, the child-protagonist is certainly more

a 'seer' (*voyant*) than an 'agent' (*actant*); the child wanders in the dispersive reality of the devastated post-World War II Berlin menaced by the clichés of the time, and his suicide should be read as an extreme act of condemnation against such conditions. In France the *nouvelle vague* elaborated the features of neorealism in a reflexive direction by loosening up even further the sensory-motor bonds, creating a cinema of purely optical and sound situations in which objects, signs and acts are not functional to the scenic action anymore, but acquire autonomous value.

Among the many films one might mention, the symbol of the French *nouvelle vague* is the image of the face of Jean-Paul Belmondo covered with blue paint in the finale of *Pierrot le fou* (1965) by Jean-Luc Godard, a tale of the crazy journey of Marianne and Ferdinand-Pierrot, completely devoid of sensory-motor bonds: to the complete disorder of the narration and the rarefaction of the characters correspond the aesthetic fullness of each scene and the stylistic richness of a film which blends together analogical shots and digital video, ellipses, repetitions, citations, gazes in camera, and false connections. Deleuze comments:

> In these we see the birth of a race of charming, moving characters who are hardly concerned by the events which happen to them – even treason, even death – and experience and act out obscure events which are as poorly linked as the portion of the any-space-whatever which they traverse. (Deleuze 1986: 213)

II.

The difference between the two cinematographic regimes – classical and contemporary, organic and crystalline, of movement and of time – is articulated by Deleuze in the sixth chapter of *The Time-Image* along three registers: description, narration, and story. In the first place, from the *descriptive* point of view, organic cinema presupposes the autonomous existence of its own objects, independently from the depiction operated by the camera, in order to build a sensory-motor situation in which the character acts or reacts within the bounds of the circumstance he or she is experiencing. With the crisis of the action-image, description replaces what is being filmed, constituting itself the dismantled, created and cancelled object that the subject observes and registers but of which he or she is no 'agent' any more: the autonomy from a specific environment qualifies these objects as purely optical and sound situations, separated from any possible reaction and lacking any motor extension.

The existence of such bonds, of causal and logical connections obeying the rules of succession and simultaneity, guaranteed in classical cinema the continuity of that reality which was presupposed by, and which at the same time defined, the regime of the imaginary as its opposite pole, determined in contrast as the self-contained moment in which images would appear as incoherent and disconnected. The questioning of movement-cinema generated a novel relationship between the real and the imaginary, two ontologically different regimes which in the new kind of description constantly overrun each other to the point of becoming indiscernible. The perpetual exchange between the two dimensions is presented as an unbroken short-circuit, where the smallest circle – in which the actual, with its continuous and imperceptible oscillations, gets transformed without pause in its virtual and vice versa – represents the true essence of what Deleuze defines as the crystal.

III.

From a *narrative* perspective, in classical cinema the development of the linear scheme of perception–action guides the plot, which maintains in this way a presumption of truthfulness also in the presence of dreamlike elements or recollections in the montage, rendered through juxtapositions and ellipses. In this field of forces, corresponding to a Euclidean space, time is represented only indirectly because it derives from movement, and its flow is pictured through action: it is a chronological time. Once the sensory-motor schemes have been abandoned, modern narration gives life to characters moving into a pure optical situation in which the anomaly of movement becomes the rule and space is not organised according to Euclidean rules or determined paths any more. Deleuze writes:

> Now what characterizes these spaces is that their nature cannot be explained in a simple spatial way. They imply non-localizable relations. These are direct representations of time. We no longer have an indirect image of time which derives from movement, but a direct time-image from which movement derives. (Deleuze 1989: 129)

The general consequence of this immediate exhibition of temporality is that time in itself, chronic and no longer chronological, jeopardises the very concept of truth. What is at stake is not a simple version of content relativism, for which different opinions would correspond to different times, but rather the difficulty (for thought) of obtaining a direct connection between truth and the structure of time, as it

emerges from the history of philosophy with the ancient paradox of the contingent futures. In the context of Leibniz's proposed solution to the paradox – according to which tomorrow something can take place or not in two diverse worlds, both possible but not 'compossible', so that it is the 'incompossible' (and not the impossible) which progresses from the possible, and the past can be true but non-necessarily so – Deleuze quotes Borges's *The Garden of Forking Paths* in order to claim the co-presence in the same world of incompossible elements, in a labyrinth of time in which the 'pasts' are not necessarily true. Deleuze writes that 'nothing prevents us from affirming that incompossibles belong to the same world, that incompossible worlds belong to the same universe' (Deleuze 1989: 131); and 'contrary to what Leibniz believed, all these worlds belong to the same universe and constitute modifications of the same story' (Deleuze 1989: 132). This is the norm of the new falsifying narration of crystalline cinema, which proposes and amplifies a modality of description in which the real and the imaginary are indiscernible, displacing the narrative veracity and the sensory-motor concatenation of movement-image.

Deleuze dedicates a chapter of *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque* (1992) to the Leibnizian notion of incompossibility: for Leibniz, the contradiction is not between Adam sinner and Adam not sinner, but rather between Adam not sinner and the world in which he committed sin. This exemplifies the new relationship that Leibniz calls 'incompossibility', and it is from among this divergent series of possible worlds, although incompossible between each other, that God would pick the best one. Deleuze quotes Borges again, who instead would like God to keep all incompossible worlds existing at the same time. The main difficulty is that, should he actually behave like that and thus violate the rules of his own game, God would become a mendacious, trickster, deceiving deity: we face once again the problem of the false (Deleuze 1992: 71).

On this theme Deleuze's examples are copious and captivating. The abandonment of a narrative striving for truth and the emergence of the forger characterise the whole work of Alain Robbe-Grillet: in particular, the protagonist of *The Man Who Lies* (1968) is not 'a localized liar, but an unlocalizable and chronic forger' (Deleuze 1989: 132). Among the films by Alain Resnais, Deleuze mentions *Stavisky* (1974) – perhaps not his greatest achievement, but rather the one which 'contains the secret of the others': the film revolves around an investor who built his wealth on frauds, thus unmasking a world which is in its turn deceiving. Pure descriptions and the bond between falsity and temporality are the

underlying cipher of Jean-Luc Godard's work, of which in this context Deleuze mentions *The Big Swindler* (1964), inspired by an episode of Herman Melville's *The Confidence-Man*. This novel by Melville realised in literature precisely what the last book of *Zarathustra* accomplished in philosophy: the exhibition of a continuous and in-becoming series of forgers, presented through characters transforming and 'metamorphosing' into each other in a continuous shift, in which beyond each figure there always lies another. A great author of falsifying cinema is Orson Welles, whom we have already encountered as the director of *Citizen Kane*, and whom we will have the occasion to meet again.

The power of the false – not a criterion of evaluation or merit, but simply the intimate motive of modern cinema – becomes thus the general principle of the new cinematographic regime, capable of inspiring very different directors and in whose work it does not appear as a separated or self-contained moment but rather as the paradoxical foundation of all characters – including those traditionally striving for truth:

> So that investigators, witnesses and innocent or guilty heroes will participate in the same power of the false the degrees of which they will embody … The truthful man will form part of the chain, at one end like the artist, at the other end, the nth power of the false. (Deleuze 1989: 133–4)

What is missing in this continuous postponement is the undeniable element at the base of every truthful narration and in general of the regime of movement built on action: namely, the system of judgement, that is, the possibility to identify a character and to individuate its coherent and bonding features. In the perpetual becoming of the new system, characterised by a plurality from which it is impossible to obtain any unity, the 'Ego = Ego' formula gets replaced by Rimbaud's 'I is another' formula.

IV.

Eventually, as regards the register of the *story* as well – that is, the relationship between subject and object, where objective stands for what the camera sees, and subjective for the point of view of the character – crystalline cinema unhinges the element of truthfulness, that is, the encounter of the two points of view, thus making impossible any definite and unmistakable identification. In the 'cinema of poetry' theorised by Pasolini the camera adopts, for example, an inside view, which simulates the manners and point of view of the characters in a mimetic relationship, so that the objective and the subjective images blend together and contaminate each other thus becoming

indistinguishable. In his essay on the cinema of poetry of such authors as Antonioni, Godard and Bertolucci, Pasolini writes:

> The creation of a 'language of film poetry' thus implies the possibility of making pseudostories written with the language of poetry. The possibility, in short, of an art prose, of a series of lyrical pages … The camera is therefore felt for good reasons. The alternation of different lenses … etc. – this entire technical code came into being almost out of impatience with the rules, out of a need for an irregular and provocative freedom, out of an otherwise authentic or delicious enjoyment of anarchy. But then it quickly became the canon, the linguistic and prosodic patrimony that interests contemporary filmmaking the world over. (Pasolini 2005: 184)

Deleuze reprises Pasolini almost literally in his description of the style of modern cinema, neither subjective nor objective:

> The story no longer refers to an ideal of the truth which constitutes its veracity, but becomes a 'pseudo-story', a poem, a story which simulates or rather a simulation of the story. Objective and subjective images lose their distinction, but also their identification, in favor of a new circuit where they are wholly replaced, or contaminate each other, or are decomposed and recomposed. (Deleuze 1989: 150)

If Deleuze locates the origin of this change in Fritz Lang's as well as, once again, in Welles' films, this transformation of the subject–object connection is even more interesting in the cinematographic genre which more than any other aspired to the truth: namely, documentary and investigative films. This affirmation of a new will to storytelling, going beyond real and fiction, in direct and realistic cinema represents one of the most significant outcomes of the search for new expressive modalities. If the ideal of truth, sublimed by the selective and multiplying force of shots, was invariably tied to the cinematographic fiction from which it derived and on which it necessarily depended already in the masterpieces of the classical documentary cinema, in the 1970s investigative films – with the documentary films, shot in Quebec, by Pierre Perrault and the *cinéma-vérité* by Jean Rouch – tended to abandon the old schemes and get to the reality beyond the conditioning truth–fiction dichotomy as well. From the 1970s on, in fact, even in reportages and investigative cinema the relationship between the subjective and objective points of view underwent a progressive modification, aligning with *cinéma-vérité* in its search for an authenticity going beyond the truth–fiction dichotomy. A circumstance that exemplifies this cinematographic genre – in particular, Deleuze makes reference to Perrault and Rouch – is that in which the camera

catches the characters in real and daily situations, but with the aim of showing their reaction to the camera's presence, which is emphasised so as to invite an interaction on their behalf. In this way the reality–fiction alternative becomes obsolete, because the authentic effect on reality as presented by the film is produced and created by cinema itself.

The goal of Perrault's criticism against fiction was the abandonment of the model of truth underlying it, the attainment of a pure 'storytelling function' through which a certain group, by re-telling itself, becomes other than itself without betraying itself and being false; the power of the false offers to the real character, as well as to the director, the possibility to invent, converting his or her story into 'the flagrant offence of making up legends'. Cinema should not fix the identity of a character, real *or* fictitious, through its objective and subjective aspects, but rather catch the becoming of the real character when he or she starts to 'make fiction' him- or herself, when he or she enters 'the flagrant offence of making up legends', contributing in this way to the invention of his or her own people (Deleuze 1989: 150–1).

In a similar way, the work of Rouch, who began with ethnographic reports from African countries and produced fictions starting with *Dionysos* (1986), can be labelled as *cinéma-vérité* since, by going beyond any pre-established ideal of reality to which fiction refers, it became the producer and creator of truth. The characters of Rouch – and the director as well, who through the use of an active and engaged camera becomes a character himself – in the unfolding of the simulating stories, and in the perpetual becoming other than themselves, form an image exceeding the confines of the present so as to catch the before and after, dimensions connected in a continuous transformation; what emerges here is the direct image of time in the form of unbroken becoming:

> The character must first of all be real if he is to affirm fiction as a power and not as a model: he has to start to tell stories in order to affirm himself all the more as real and not fictional. The character is continually becoming another, and is no longer separable from this becoming which emerges with a people. (Deleuze 1989: 152)

V.

At this point it should be noted how the distinction between modern cinema and classical regime – which, as we saw, we found already in Bazin – is reworked by Deleuze with a different emphasis, being the foundation of his entire theory of cinema, which he divided in the

two volumes on the movement-image (the classical form) and time-image (the modern one), respectively. In *Film Fables* (Rancière 2006) Jacques Rancière questioned precisely the possibility of a neat distinction between the two ages of cinema. In the first place, Rancière does not see in the two modalities advanced by Deleuze two separate moments built in opposition, but rather two different points of view on images, united by an 'infinite spiral'. Rancière argues for this first basilar diversity in opinion by noticing the difficulty arising from the overlapping of the breaks in history and the ones internal to the image, that is, the attempt by Deleuze to envision an immediate connection between art and some of the events external to it. How is it possible, one might ask, to operate a classification about the kinds of sign by means of a heterogeneous factor? In regards to this first objection it should be noted right away that art and history represent different but not separate levels, and that the possibility of a repercussion of historical and political happenings on art can hardly be questioned, the more so from within a – convincing – conception such as Rancière's, who on more than one occasion theorised a strong bond between aesthetics and politics. In point of fact, in *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible* (Rancière 2004) Rancière individuated in the artistic practices the visible forms of an organisation of the sensible, a 'partition' founded on the ways of life, on politics, and on the form of activities structuring the concept of citizenship.

Going back to the divide between classical and modern in cinema, which Deleuze defines in terms of two different logics of the image, it is for Rancière rather one taking place at the transcendental level: the very same images can be considered either from the point of view of a philosophy of nature, which examines them as material events, or from the point of view of a philosophy of spirit, which instead sees them as a form of thought, without assuming any breaking point pointing to the crisis of modernity. The potentialities of purely optical and sound situations of the time-image were already expressed in what Deleuze, in *The Movement-Image*, defined as the affection-image, that is, an image which, through the hesitation in the active response, gives rise to the predominance of the sensible qualities. This is demonstrated by the fact that certain authors discussed in the first volume return as an example of a new configuration of the image in the second; the example given by Rancière is Robert Bresson. According to Rancière, this notion of cinematographic image as a phase distinct from the classical age seems to be affected by the very same problems haunting modernism in general, with its affirmation of the autonomy of art as the manifestation of its peculiar essence. In fact, it conceals the complexity

of what he defines as the passage, begun in the nineteenth century, to the aesthetic regime of arts, a regime in which 'the image is not the codified expression of a thought or feeling. It is rather the way in which things themselves speak and at the same time are silent' (Rancière 2009: 13). This enfranchisement from the mimetic requirement is guaranteed not so much by the liberation and autonomy of art from any representative pressure, but rather by the unity of the opposites exhibited in this kind of image: the unity of the pure passivity of things and the pure activity of creation. Cinema thus embodies the completion (and at the same time the confutation) of the aesthetic regime, uniting the passivity of the mechanical eye of the camera with the activity of the director as sovereign will:

> Cinema, due to its technical apparatus, literally embodies this unity of contraries in the union of the passive and automatic eye of the camera and the conscious eye of the director … Unlike novelists and painters, who are themselves the agents of their becoming-passive, the camera cannot but be passive. In the cinema, the identity of contraries is there at the outset, and hence lost from the outset. (Rancière 2009: 117–8)

The necessity of a more elaborated vision of artistic modernity in general, in which the autonomy is achieved at the price of a contrast, and the unity of the opposites – activity and passivity – as the engine of cinema in particular, are certainly very important and fecund suggestions. For example, the definition of cinema as a 'countered fable', indicating a correlation between what is visible and what is sayable in terms of an interdependence, persuasively determines the debate on the topic 'cinema: visual or narrative art?' animating the first film theories (and which still animates the discussions in the Anglo-American analytic debate). The contrast between the two elements in the binary representative regime of cinema indicates, according to Rancière, that the visible element can manifest itself in all its breadth only by emerging from the plot, that is, by fighting with it, with the Aristotelian 'fable'. The power of the image shows itself as a 'gap', in collision with the narrative concatenation which becomes its antagonist, but also the necessary form for its emergence.

However, from this perspective there does not follow the impossibility of individuating a modern phase of cinema as Deleuze envisions it, keeping in mind firstly that in his writings the notion of modernity does not ever have a merely and rigidly chronological acceptance, if only in an extremely superficial understanding. Although its predominance can be appreciated starting from neorealism, the category of modernity

explicitly acquires with its classical counterpart a trans-historical meaning – it suffices to think that *Citizen Kane* by Orson Welles, dated 1941, is indicated as the first film of the new regime of time. That the two texts on cinema do not aspire to constitute a history is explicitly stated by Deleuze at the start of the first volume, while what he means by classification can be clearly learned in a conversation which appeared in 1986 in *Cahiers du cinéma*, now collected in *Two Regimes of Madness*:

> There is nothing quite so amusing as classifications and tables. A classification scheme is like the skeleton of a book; it's like a vocabulary or a dictionary ... Every classification is similar: they are flexible, their criteria vary according to the cases presented, they have a retroactive effect, and they can be infinitely refined or reorganized. Some compartments are crowded, and others are empty. In any classification scheme, some things which seem very different are brought closer together, and others which seem very close are separated. (Deleuze 2006: 285)

Therefore, a classification is thus understood by Deleuze as an infinite and always unstable list. If it is true that each film – classical or modern – presents itself as a split and contrasted fable in which it the gap existing between the passivity of the mechanical eye and the purposiveness of the director's choice is noticeable, in the narrative concatenation of events and the force of the pure image of the cinema of a certain age we can acknowledge with Deleuze a predominant mark of freedom from certain schemes and of self-reflexivity without having the pretence of building a history of cinema on it, nor a rigid scheme within which each element should square with the other in a definitive way. The clues of this transformation of the image can be appreciated in the style of the direction – the camera movements, the rhythm and system of montage – but also in the interest in some recurrent themes and figures (the child, the invalid, the fool, the neurotic). These incarnations of an impossibility in the perceptual response, rather than necessary allegories – since, as Rancière writes, the rupture of the sensory-motor connections 'cannot be identified as an actual difference between types of images' (Rancière 2006: 116) – represent the signs of a deep-seated impotence and renouncement of action.

The roots of the distinction between the two kinds of image lie precisely in the emergence of a radically different dimension – that is, virtuality as time in itself – and in the abandonment of actuality – that is, dropping the Bergsonian terminology adopted by Deleuze, the idea that in modern cinema the situation and the characters exist independently from action, acquiring on the contrary their very existence from their

being placed at the suspension of movement; that is to say, not simply overcoming the motor scheme, but rather by breaking it from within. This is also what Deleuze indicates as the difference between affection-image, the anchor internal to the organic regime of movement, and time-image: the hesitation featuring them discharges in one case in the plan of actuality while in the other through a complete immersion into memory. In this context the words of Maurizio Grande are once again of help:

> Deleuze is able to classify the affection-image as movement-image (and not as time-image) because in this case we have the indirect representation of the time of interiority through the interruption of 'edited' action. Close ups interrupt the progression of action and inscribe the duration of the expression of affection on a face inscribed in an anonymous space subtracted to any determinate space and to the indirect representation of time resulting from the montage. (Grande 2003: 386; my translation)

Going back to the Bergsonian language of *Matter and Memory*, in the case of affection we can speak of a hesitation in the response that does not provoke a 'leap' in memory, but rather stays in the sensory-motor present of mechanical recognition, while instead the time-image contemplates a search in the past animating perceptive recognition. Departing from a non-historic-chronological perspective, although descriptive and classificatory in the specific and paradoxical sense indicated by Deleuze, the identification of a tension internal to cinematographic art denoting its belonging to the aesthetic regime as the unity of contraries (the overlapping and interplay of two diverse attitudes) does not prevent the possibility of a new modern modality of the image, with its distinctive predominant character (both formal and related to its contents), and in which the virtual dimension becomes pre-eminent and directly exhibited.

Notes

1. Giorgio De Vincenti, in his volume *Il concetto di modernità nel cinema* (1993), focused on the theoretical line hailing from Bazin, individuating 'the combination of the meta-linguistic commitment with the recovery of the reproductive aspect' as its moving theme.
2. Rancière defined such a discrete character of images, which in modern cinema gain a certain aesthetic harmony by almost emerging from the narration and imposing themselves in their visual power, as the 'great parataxis' of modern cinema. See Rancière 2009.

Falsehood

I.

The question of falsehood, central to Deleuze's philosophy of cinema as already appreciated in the discussion of the difference between modern and classical cinema, animates the interpretation which he gives of the poetics of Orson Welles, an uncommon director with an overflowing personality on whom it is worthwhile to pause. The numerous interviews Welles gave during his career reveal a vital and contradictory character; the director generously offered himself to the camera, pronouncing on serious and substantive issues with self-confident nonchalance and without renouncing his taste for paradox. Always characterised by the magnitude of his style – aristocratic and yet anarchical, as he himself portrayed it – there coexisted different attitudes and reactions: the director appears authoritative with the young Peter Bogdanovich, who carefully gets prepared for their meetings for the book interview (Welles and Bogdanovich 1992);[1] he looks sincerely saddened even by the only partially negative reception of his work, which sometimes annoyed him; he is at times revengeful and occasionally elusive in revealing the well-known unlucky events related to the production of some of his films. Convinced of the primacy of the work over the author, Welles reveals at times a certain impatience for theoretical issues, as for example in his interviews with the cinematographic critiques of *Cahiers du cinéma*,[2] and he often downplays the importance attributed to the direction and to the methodology used.

Despite this plurality of behaviours and positions, or rather precisely because of the brilliant intertwinement of all these elements, there emerges a common trait representing the neatest cipher of Welles' personality and work: the love for life and for the existent, which the director fully enjoys and whose inevitable contradictions he consciously

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endorses. The indulgent treatment that Welles reserves for the contradictoriness of reality – which is evident in his characters if it is true that, to use the words Shakespeare gave to Hamlet to talk about dramatic art, cinema should 'hold a mirror up to Nature' – does not surface only formally, but it gets explicitly thematised several times. To Kenneth Tynan, who asks him for clarification on the incompatibility of certain assertions of his, Welles replies:

> For 30 years people have been asking me how I reconcile X with Y! The truthful answer is that I don't. Everything about me is a contradiction, and so is everything about everybody I know. We are made out of oppositions; we live between two poles. There's a Philistine and an aesthete in all of us, and a murderer and a saint. You don't reconcile the poles. You just recognize them.[3]

Welles' extraordinary ability to create, and in the majority of his films also to interpret, remarkable negative characters, always animated by a tender commitment, originates within this eternally conscious acknowledgement of human duplicity and ambiguity. In fact, the director 'chivalrously' offers to felons all the possible justifications for their crimes, shrouding them in a tragic mist, preventing in this way the spectator from elaborating a clear moral evaluation. The publishing tycoon protagonist of *Citizen Kane* (1941) is a man abusing his authority and wealth, but the public cannot but feel compassionate for the character, combining the greatness of his endeavours with the melancholy of the loser. The possibility of judging him is also complicated by the fact that we are unable to decide who the true Kane is, whether he is the one described by his protector, by his wife, by his collaborator or by the butler. In *Othello* (1952) Iago certainly is the traitor, whose treachery, as Welles says, finds no other reason than his nature, but the same Othello is unable to understand the complexity of reality, and the motive for his search for truth is hideous envy. The plot of *Mr. Arkadin* (1955) consists in a continuous switch of roles, all inspired by fiction: the billionaire Arkadin is approached by the swashbuckler Van Stratten who wants to blackmail him, but who in turn gets hired to reconstruct Arkadin's past, not because the latter has completely forgotten it due to amnesia, as he wants others to believe, but rather with the goal in mind of getting rid of the witnesses to his fault, among whom, as will become clear at the end, there is the detective himself.

In *Touch of Evil* (1958) all the leading characters are on closer inspection morally dubious. Captain Quinlan, who uses false evidence

in order to frame the true culprits, has the moves and the appearance of a real felon, who however, by means of dishonest methods, operates in the service of justice: 'He was some kind of man. What does it matter what you say about people?', the ambiguous fortune-teller Tana, performed by an outstanding Marlene Dietrich, says about him after his death; Menzies, Quinlan's devout assistant, stages a plain betrayal, notwithstanding that his friend once saved his life; even the righteous agent Vargas, as Welles himself would remark in an interview, in order to reveal Quinlan's crimes obsessing him, does not hesitate to neglect his wife, exposing her and putting her in danger.

A plot full of tricks is also found in *The Lady from Shanghai* (1948), in which the seaman O'Hara falls in love with the wife of the wealthy lawyer Bannister, who hires him on their yacht leaving for the Caribbean; once back in San Francisco, the seaman – as a result of lies, shootings, and extortions – falls into Bannister's trap and is unjustly accused of the murder of his partner. The famous and visionary finale, in which O'Hara, eluding justice, assists the showdown between the billionaire and his wife Elsa (portrayed by a Rita Hayworth transformed by Welles into a dark lady far from the cliché of the Hollywood diva), which takes place in the mirror room of an amusement park, symbol of the multiplication of tricks and of the deformation of identities. In contrast to the films previously mentioned, here the director remarkably interprets the role of the positive hero, moralist and naive close to credulity. His last line, however, results in being meaningful and ironic, challenging with its jeering tone all the acquired certainties: 'I'd be innocent, officially. But that's a big word, innocent. Stupid is more like it. Well, everybody is somebody's fool. The only way to stay out of trouble is to grow old. So I guess I'll concentrate on that.'

The moral ambiguity of these figures staged by Welles – to mention only a few films in which the refusal to judge the characters is evident[4] – is an element that the critics have stressed since from his earliest works: François Truffaut remarked on it in an article on *Arts*, André Bazin in the *Observateur* and most importantly in the interview conducted together with Charles Bitsch and Jean Domarchi and published in *Cahiers du cinéma* in 1958, whose declared aim is that of 'discovering the ideal character recurring in all his films'.[5] Initially Welles tends to minimise the recurrence of a common trait in all his great interpretations: his personality as an actor is the cause of the predilection for a humanity *bigger than life*, majestic in its wickedness and often tragically defeated (the first three films mentioned, *Citizen*

Kane, *Othello* and *Mr. Arkadin*, open with the death of the protagonist). As an actor, Welles states that he feels the obligation to enrich with his better part the morally hideous characters he plays, to be loyal to the role he plays, for which he should offer the best justification. In this way, not without a certain delight in disorienting his interviewers, Welles begins the conversation manifesting his hatred for Quinlan, a 'despicable' man like Kane, for whom however – and here the subversion begins – one can feel sympathy and repugnance at the same time. In the same way, Arkadin is an opportunist born out of a corrupted world, of which he however represents the best possible expression, as his spirit is 'courageous and passionate'. In answering the many questions asked, the director reveals more and more, acknowledging that his condemnation is only intellectual, that is, conveyed only by thought and not by heart, admitting his disinterest, or even repulsion, for the rhetorical and sentimental values of bourgeois morality, in favour of an adhesion to life in all its aspects, of an aristocratic ethics:

> [Generosity is] the chief virtue. I hate all the opinions which deprive humanity of the least of its privileges; if any creed demands that one should renounce something human, then I detest it … I detest anyone who wants to cut off a note from the human scale; at every moment one ought to be able to strike any notes one desires. (Estrin 2002: 57)

It is only within this vision that one can thus appreciate the cipher of the Wellesian motif of *character*: not simply one's personality or temperament, but 'the way one behaves when one denies the laws one should obey, and refuses to act in accordance with the emotions one feels; it's the way one behaves in the face of life and death' (Estrin 2002: 74). The obvious reference is to the tale of the frog and the scorpion recounted in *Mr. Arkadin*: the frog agrees to carry the scorpion on her back beyond the river believing that the scorpion will not bite her as that would be illogical, given that in that case he would die as well; but the scorpion bites her anyway, drowning with her, because, as he replies, 'I can't help it, it is my character.' Welles plays with the possible interpretations of this fable each time someone mentions it in an interview, and if his interlocutor believed he or she had identified a 'scorpion' or a 'frog' in one of his characters, in most cases the director hastened to contest him or her or say, for example, that yes, it is true, the scorpion is a scoundrel, but, in the first place, it is the frog who behaves unwittingly. The sole certainty is the underlying conviction of this poetics, that is, once again the impossibility of reconciling

contradictions, the acknowledgement of the ineluctability of human duplicity: if it is not legitimate to justify a morally biased action with the pure and simple exhibition of one's character, doing it implies some tragic and fascinating dignity and standing, a sort of heroism whose attraction is difficult to resist.

II.

The Nietzscheism of Welles, already noticed by Bazin, Bitsch and Domarchi, lies at the centre of Deleuze's reading of his cinema; he in fact expresses the cornerstone of Welles' critique of truth with a quick and penetrating formula: 'affect as immanent evaluation, instead of judgment as transcendental value' (Deleuze 1989: 141). Welles' aim is thus not that of facilitating the collapse of an entire system of judgement in order to establish a different evaluative criterion acting as the superior principle, but rather that of judging every being and every action 'in relation to the life which they involve': 'the good is outpouring, ascending life, the kind which knows how to transform itself, to metamorphose itself according to the forces it encounters' (Deleuze 1989: 141). As he writes in conclusion to his 1962 volume on the German philosopher, Deleuze imagined 'Nietzsche withdrawing his stake from a game which is not his own' (Deleuze 1983: 195), intending to replace the usual, mistaken interpretations – first of all the one of the will to power as a will to control – with the acknowledgement of the sense of Nietzschean philosophy in the affirmation of multiplicity, of difference, of becoming.

This 'joy of the diversity', the exhibition of an always innocent life – a theme which naturally is also profoundly Deleuzian and which culminates in the affirmation of an 'aesthetic of believing' (a 'need to believe in this world, of which fools are a part', Deleuze 1989: 173, a theme which I shall reprise later) – gets realised in the cinema of Welles as well. However, if the affinity between the director and Nietzsche has been highlighted since the 1950s, and the interpretation of the power of the false in Welles' cinema offered by Deleuze reprised by the critics, only a few of them stressed and deepened its most robust theoretical aspect and import, which is, as Alain Badiou writes in his monograph on Deleuze, the 'main road' to access the Deleuzian idea of truth and his theory of time.[6] If in classical cinema, in *The Movement-Image*, narrative time emerges through movement according to the linear perception–action scheme guiding the story as well as the characters, with modernity the true protagonist of film is time itself, conveyed

through opsigns and sonsigns, purely optical and sound situations, descriptions completely disjoined from any relationship with action.

As we have already seen, in *The Time-Image* the difference between the organic regime, classical or kinetic (related to movement), and the crystalline one, modern or chronic (time-related), is reprised and specified by using three different registers: description; narration, that is, the development of the sensory-motor scheme; and the plot, that is, the elaboration of the subject–object relationship in the film. The chapter in which this survey is operated is titled 'The Powers of the False': if in these pages Deleuze stresses the connection between the exhibition of pure time and the questioning of truth, the renunciation of the pretence of a truthful narration to make space for the force of the transformation and becoming finds in the cinema of Welles a first and still unsurpassed example.

III.

The movie that Deleuze considers as the manifest of cinema as the power of the false is *F for Fake* (1975), the last film directed and presented to the public by Welles. *F for Fake* presents to the spectator as a sort of documentary, although a rather peculiar one. Using some material shot in Ibiza by François Reichenbach in 1968 for a never completed investigative film on the falsification of works of art, Welles blends the portraits of some characters connected in various ways to artistic fiction: Elmyr de Hory, forger painter theorising the indistinguishability of authentic paintings from false ones; his biographer Clifford Irving, an American reporter who authored a fake autobiography of Howard Hughes, a rather controversial figure in himself; Reichenbach himself, presented as an ex-art merchant who buys some imitations by de Hory. The insertion of some scenes filming the director in slow motion while mounting the film makes evident the reflexive character typical of post-documentarism, of which Welles has been an interpreter by imposing, as Adriano Aprà writes, 'the concept of literary cinema and together the one of *fake documentary*' (Aprà 2003: 368; original emphasis; my translation). In some interviews, refuting the over-simplifying label of documentary, Welles spoke in fact of this film as a 'personal essay', a 'free-form essay on fakery'; it thus consists in a filmed meditation 'in the first person singular',[7] whose true protagonist is the false and its relationship to art.

However – and this is the other necessary and complementary aspect of the overcoming of the alternative between truth and falsehood – the

spectator should fully adhere and trustingly abandon him- or herself to the fiction, which is the true protagonist of the film: the very act of watching and believing in what is seen seems likewise to be a decisive theme, implied by the most noticeable of the entanglements between truth and lie. This is the sense of the episode on voyeurism inserted at the beginning of the film, interpreted by Oja Kodar and inspired by her novel *The Girl Watchers*, in which a charming and showy woman walks along the street followed by the stares of the men. Welles expects from the public an enchanted gaze, a suspension of the incredulity similar to the one experienced while attending the show of an illusionist. As he replies to Bogdanovich, 'To me, magic begins and ends with the figure of the magician who asks the audience, for a moment, to believe that the lady is floating in the air' (Welles and Bogdanovich 1992: 182): the Deleuzian *croyance*, the belief in the world, extends also to its deceptions.

In the first scene the director appears precisely in the shoes of an illusionist, introducing himself as a charlatan and announcing that the themes treated in the film will be trickery, frauds and lies,[8] joining from the very beginning the unbroken series of forgers he introduces as narrator and sarcastic barker. Also evoked in the course of the film are both his debut as actor at the Dublin Gate Theatre, where he was hired after lying about his alleged long experience as a star on the American stages of Broadway, and the launch of his Hollywood success, started 'with a flight into fakery … by flying saucers' (Welles and Bogdanovich 1992: 182), thanks the radio trickery of *The War of the Worlds*. The only situation in which Welles reflects on his vision of art without any ironic tonality or mediation – in an atmosphere of nostalgia for a past time, a time before the separation between artist and artisan – is his monologue in front of Chartres cathedral, against which charm 'the juridical problem' of true and false annihilates in the aesthetic assessment: only the ugly is 'unauthentic' (Salotti 2000: 158; my translation). This extraordinary endeavour without signature is described by Welles in *F for Fake* as a 'rich stone forest' that, although perhaps will be demolished one day, now witnesses the mark of humankind and 'the anonymous glory of all things'.

The story of the false adventure of Oja Kodar as Picasso's model, ending with a fight between the painter and Oja's grandfather – who would have falsified the paintings for which she posed, destroying the originals – completes the chain of fakers. Welles intervenes again to disentangle this whirling twist of falsifications, once more in the role 'cosmopolitan hypnotist' (Deleuze 1989: 145): an hour before he promised to tell nothing but the truth while now, at the end of the film,

he confesses that for the past seventeen minutes he has lied his head off, because reality – 'the toothbrush waiting home for you in its glass, a bus ticket, a pay-check, and a grave' – does not matter at all, and the only truth the professional liar ought to serve is art.

The richness and importance of the themes surveyed show that this film is neither the result of a new idea due to fortuitous circumstances,[9] nor a sheer 'adventure of the intellect, a flickering of paradoxes ..., an amazing labyrinth of mirrors' (Farassino 2004: 99; my translation), but rather a thoroughly poetical declaration in which all the themes most cherished by the director are displayed: illusion and magic, the primacy of the endeavour over its author – claimed in many interviews given to journalists and film critics – and also what Bogdanovich labelled as the pessimism of the Wellesian vision united with the optimism of his style, but above all the false and becoming, the trickery ousting the true and radically overturning its supremacy. Borrowing the words that Eric Rohmer dedicated to another work by Welles, *Mr. Arkadin* (Rohmer 1990: 137), under the eyes of the spectator a downright 'universal deception' takes place, in which truth and appearance result as inextricably entangled in a long and evolving chain of forgers: François Reichenbach, Elmyr de Hory, Clifford Irving, Howard Hughes, Welles, Oja Kodar and her grandfather, and Picasso himself. About the painter it is said in the film that, after having branded as fakes a number of canvases carrying his signature, he would have replied to those asking for the reason for his certainty that 'I can fake a Picasso just as well as anyone else'; what has gone missing is thus the idea of truth as a model to which falsehood contrasts as a copy, as an alternative. It is the affirmation of the negative, of difference in itself not ascribable to any identity, and Welles fully achieves all the transformations of crystalline cinema previously recalled: description substitutes action; the claim of narrative truthfulness is completely suppressed; identification results in being impossible, unresolvable.

Once the ideal of truth is deposed together with the world of appearances accompanying it as its correlate, what remains for Deleuze are power relationships among bodies, the influence of some powers over others, all nevertheless devoid of any unique and identifiable centre. The alternation between long sequence shots and fragmentary montage typical of Welles' films finds coherence, equilibrium and harmony precisely in the exhibition of the intensity of the different powers, filmed simultaneously in their relationships or singularly, in a fragmented succession so as to reproduce the multiplication of driving centres which were already displayed in the narrative plot or in the ambiguity of

the characters. In the Wellesian work we witness for the first time the cinematographic mutation according to which linear movement built on an action core is replaced by an aberrant, anomalous movement which gets autonomy from its fixed structures, allowing in this way the liberation of time itself.

However, what is displayed in *F for Fake* as well as in the other films by Welles is not the total absence of a centre (which according to Deleuze is realised in the cinematography of Alain Resnais), but rather a radical metamorphosis of such a concept: 'The center ceased to be sensory-motor and, on the other hand, become optical, determining a new regime of description; on the other hand, at the same time, it became luminous, determining a new progression of narration' (Deleuze 1989: 140).[10]

The centre ceases to be a spatial and driving constant, and becomes in the first place a point of view, a glance from which the different filmed elements form a series in perpetual becoming. The succession of plain images within the short montage presents thus an alternation of descriptions and produces a concatenation and collection of different figures and aspects of the same character merging into each other. The other face of this 'architecture of vision' is instead a theory of shapes, in which the projection caused by a distant source of light marks and emphasises the volumes of the bodies and the connections among the multiple forces in play: it is the depth of field of Wellesian sequence shots.

In the end, in Welles' cinema we always have a single protagonist imposing him- or herself, that is, the forger exhibited in his or her transformations: the series of figures representing the metamorphoses of the false fastened to each other by treacheries and impostures, can be spotted from *The Lady from Shanghai* (in the 'infernal trio' composed of the attorney Bannister, the wife and her partner) up to the great series of characters in *F for Fake*. Here the collection of forgers is 'extensive and perfect', and ranges from 'the truthful man', who represents the premise for the very existence of the forger, his alibi, up to the artist himself, in whose creations the power of the false, the impossibility of distinguishing truth from mere appearance, is multiplied to the umpteenth degree. Differently from the common liar, the artist, who brings to bear the troop of fakers, does not get petrified nor crystallised in a figure of the metamorphosis 'acquiring a different form', but rather seizes the transformation itself, integrating it in the temporal perspective of becoming: the hoax becomes in this case a creation of something new. If for forgers, therefore, metamorphosis is restricted to their form of being, in art the thing in itself gets transformed in something new,

'because truth is not to be achieved, formed, or reproduced; it has to be created' (Deleuze 1989: 146). The artist – and this is the conclusion of Welles, Deleuze, but also of Nietzsche and Bergson – is the creator of truth.

With this sequence of evolving characters, which populate Welles' films as more or less elevated degrees of the will to power, is effected according to Deleuze a liberation of time from its subordination to movement, which finds its particular standing in the quality of becoming. We find here at work the second kind of chronosign, consisting in 'time as a series', that is, a succession which is not exterior, empirical or chronological any more, but rather intrinsic and chronological, in which 'the before and the after are not ... successive determinations of the course of time, but the two sides of the power, or the passage of the power to a higher power' (Deleuze 1989: 275). The series as a direct time-image has among its features that of questioning truth:

> The false ceases to be a simple appearance or even a lie, in order to achieve that power of becoming which constitutes series or degrees, which crosses limits, carries out metamorphoses, and develops along its whole path an act legend of story-telling. (Deleuze 1989: 275)

When movement loses its centre and becomes aberrant, thus encouraging the autonomy of time, the paradoxes coming to light – the impossibility of evoking the past, the emergence of an idle present, the union of a before and an after in perpetual becoming – impose a new logic which breaks up the order or the temporal series, thus making the ideal of truth collapse. This theme is connected with the Nietzschean pronouncement about the adhesion to *life* that will be the focus of the next chapter, which I shall introduce with the following long quotation from Deleuze's book on Nietzsche's philosophy:

> The activity of life is like a power of falsehood, of duping, dissimulating, dazzling and seducing. But, in order to be brought into effect, this power of falsehood must be selected, redoubled or repeated and thus elevated to a higher power. The power of falsehood must be taken as far as a *will* to deceive, an artistic will which alone is capable of competing with the ascetic ideal of successfully opposing it. It is *art* which invents the lies that raise falsehood to this highest affirmative power, that turns the will to deceive into something which is affirmed in the power of falsehood. For the artist, *appearance* no longer means the negation of the real in this world but this kind of selection, correction, redoubling and affirmation. (Deleuze 1983: 103)

Notes

1. In his introduction to the book collecting the interviews with the director from 1968–73, Bogdanovich recounts that Welles, when revising the text, modified not only his answers, but also sometimes the questions and the comments of his interviewer.
2. See the interviews to Welles by André Bazin and Charles Bitsch (*Cahiers du cinéma*, June 1958), and by Bazin, Bitsch and Jean Domarchi (September 1958), collected in Estrin 2002.
3. Interview by K. Tynan in *Playboy*, March 1967, now collected in Estrin 2002: 147.
4. The duplicity of the characters and the impossibility of judging them are also appreciable in other films by Welles beyond those mentioned. The deceit in judgement is, for example, the explicit protagonist of *The Trial* (1962), but also in this case Welles surprises his interviewers by showing his antipathy for K., very likely not responsible for what he is being persecuted for, but equally guilt, because he is an accomplice of the society in which he lives. Among the other greatly wicked figures it is worth remembering Harry Lime, a character in *The Third Man* (1949) by Carol Reed and portrayed by Welles, who contributed to the film, writing the dialogues. In the interview with A. Bazin, C. Bitsch and J. Domarchi, Welles declared about this issue that 'I wrote everything to do with this character, I created him all around' (Estrin 2002: 68); and continued 'I detest Harry Lime: he has no passion, he is cold; he is Lucifer, the fallen angel' (Estrin 2002: 71). For an account and an in-depth analysis of Welles' films, see Naremore 1978.
5. Interview with A. Bazin, C. Bitsch and J. Domarchi, in Estrin 2002: 51.
6. See Badiou 1999.
7. This is how Nepoti expresses himself in an essay titled 'Orson Welles: il cinema in prima persona' (2004), dedicated to *F for Fake* and to *Filming Othello*.
8. Before deciding on its definitive title, Welles pondered a number of titles, among which were *Hoax*, *Question Mark* and *Nothing but the Truth*.
9. The 1971 text *The 'Citizen Kane' Book* by Pauline Kael called into question the authorship of the script of *Citizen Kane* – which, by the way, was the only category of the film that won an Oscar despite being a candidate nine times with, among other things, best film, best director and best male actor in a leading role – attributing all the merit to the co-screenwriter Herman J. Manckiewicz.
10. Deleuze reprises here the analyses on the baroque by Michel Serres in his *Le Système de Leibniz* (1968). Through his depth of field Welles reproduced in the modern age the change in thought which took place in painting during the seventeenth century.

Life

I.

An overall view of the work of Gilles Deleuze discloses a strange but forceful coherence, an unexpected cohesion in a reflection open to multiple directions due to a continuous circulation of concepts, which, because they make reference to each other, result as invariably entwined. Among the issues informing virtually all his work is the recurring question about the nature of philosophy, which stands out in his two volumes on cinema as well. As we observed, if art creates sensible aggregates, characters, images and sounds, philosophy creates new concepts behind which there hide the questions and problems of a certain time. What is at stake is thus a conceptual practice which does not have to do, at least immediately, with truth and falsehood, a practice which is not abstract at all, but rather very concrete because it presents itself as a production, an invention of concepts meant to open a problematic space of discussion. Philosophy and art enter in this way into a mutual relationship of resonance with each other, not because one reflects upon the other, but rather for intrinsic reasons: both are 'sorts of separate melodic lines in constant interplay with each other' (Deleuze 1997a: 125). Philosophy does not retain any primacy in the reflective activity, and yet it does not suffer from inferiority for what concerns the act of creation.

If to philosophise means precisely to find the question, raising the problem and inventing always new concepts, the study of the history of philosophy represents thus a training, an apprenticeship in which, moving from the original concept created by a certain author, one goes back to the problem or issue that the new concept aims to answer. In commenting on philosophical texts one does not merely enact a double abstraction – that is, one does not reflect on the results of a previous reflection – but rather one engages in a philosophical portrait

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(once again the analogy with art and painting comes to view): a mental and conceptual portrait which does not reproduce what a certain thinker said, but rather explicates what he or she suggested, the unsaid implicit and present in what is said. However, it is also true that we read authors when we share with them the urgency of a problem, when we share the originality of a concept, as witnessed in Deleuze's usage of Bergson; as a result of this, there is thus no difference between philosophy and the history of philosophy.[1] In fact, in his work Deleuze never ceased to comment on other authors and at the same time, in doing so, convey his own personal and original thought.

Among the authors sharing a common cause with Deleuze we find Nietzsche, the philosopher of immanence together with Spinoza, a thinker who fought any transcendental principle. One of the 'zones of indiscernibility' between their thoughts – together with that of philosophy just mentioned – is the concept of life as inorganic power, a becoming force which incessantly struggles to overcome itself and at the same time a relationship between these elements. Once again this is a theme suffusing Deleuze's entire work, echoing and engaging many other aspects in a short-circuit which gives to its speculative movement the particular coherence just mentioned: suffice to remind that his last writing, *L'Immanence: une vie* . . . , is dedicated precisely to the idea of an indeterminate life, a life free from any individuation. However, I would like now to focus on a 1962 text by Deleuze dedicated to Nietzsche; a text which first of all takes credit for having inaugurated a new literature on the German philosopher in France, dismantling the interpretative habits of the previous decades.[2]

II.

The Deleuzian literature on Nietzsche starts from the reprisal of the now forgotten Pre-Socratic unity of thought and life, an overall unity in which life activates thought and thought affirms life. As Deleuze would write very clearly in the introduction to his 1965 anthology of Nietzschean studies (available in English in the collection Deleuze 2001):

> We now have only instances where thought bridles and mutilates life, making it sensible, and when life takes revenge and drives thought mad, losing itself along the way. Now we only have the choice between mediocre lives and mad thinkers. (Deleuze 2001: 66–7)

The loss of this overall unity of active life and affirmative thought is perspicuously introduced and explored in his earlier book on Nietzsche,

in which the attempt to free the German thinker from any dialectical reading as well as the recognition of the core of his philosophy in the pure affirmation of becoming are achieved by making use of the Nietzschean notions of sense and value.

If for Nietzsche consciousness is only the symptom of a deeper transformation, of the unconscious activity of those forces which does not belong to the spiritual order, the sense of a phenomenon, an object, a body, is represented by the quality of the power necessary to take it over by dominating another power of a different sign. The relationship among the powers in play has nothing to do with an idle body, as the latter never configures itself as something neutral, but rather it represents a force submitting to the one, among the conflicting forces, most akin to its sense. Nietzsche does not negate the essence of a phenomenon, but rather he derives it from its affinity with the forces controlling it: the question of 'what?' gets replaced by the question of 'who?', which asks in the first place about the dominant forces, understanding phenomena as symptoms of their underlying forces. A body would thus be the result of a domination, an 'arbitrary product' whose unity is determined by the relationship between dominant and dominated forces. Envisioning an equivalence among the two forces, believing that their encounter might generate an equal result, is an illusion which according to Nietzsche characterises science, because the essence of a force lies precisely in the difference of quantity between the two forces originating it, in the result of their encounter: as Deleuze would put it, it is the differential element constituting its quality. There are thus active, affirmative forces – which when pushed to their extremes affirm their difference – and reactive, negating forces – which are able to dominate the active ones not by constituting a bigger force, which would acquire in its turn an active quality, but rather by acting through decomposition, that is, by separating the active force from what is in its power and involving it in the reaction.

In his *Bios. Biopolitica e filosofia* (*Bios. Biopolitics and Philosophy*, 2006), Roberto Esposito examines the Nietzschean will to power as a continuous 'strengthening of life', and investigates the relationship between the forces and the activity of the reactive forces 'draining it from within', separating it from itself. According to the author, in Nietzsche's philosophy the modern immunitary dynamic of 'the negative protection of life' figures in two different ways: as a process against whose contamination Nietzsche warns us to protect ourselves – since what allows life's conservation is also what blocks its expansion – but also as a process of decay that should be promoted and hastened in

order to free the field to new affirmative forces. In Deleuze's reading there does not seem to take place any irreducible conflict between these two attitudes, because the triumph of affirmative forces, the necessary outcome of the history of nihilism itself, consists in a complete reversal which does not take place piecemeal or gradually, but rather through a transmutation of values: the negative to endorse is the one which becomes active, aggressive, joyful.[3]

In *The Genealogy of Morals* Nietzsche individuates the triumph of the reactive forces in history in the figures of resentment, bad consciousness and ascetic ideal, an ideal which inevitably allies with nihilism by devaluing existence and the mundane world through the fiction of a super-sensible world and values higher than life; the hatred for life results in a love for the exhausted, sick life in which what gets expressed is the will to nothing. But the ideas of good and the divine presiding over this moral and religious conception are accompanied, in the perspective of reaction, by the idea of truth typical of the speculative situation which Nietzsche radically criticises: it is from this excessive interest of thought for the reactive forces that derives the pretence, usually expressed by philosophers, that human beings strive for truth. Actually, the truthful person seeks truth because of being moved by completely different reasons, by

> something more profound: 'Life against life'. He wants life to become virtuous, to correct itself and to correct appearance, for it to serve as the way to the other world. He wants life to repudiate itself and to turn against itself. (Deleuze 1983: 96)

The conflict between knowledge and life and the contraposition of the two worlds, the one sensible and the other transcendental, thus reveals their essential moral nature: the favourite activity of the seeker of truth 'is the distribution of wrongs, he renders responsible, he denies innocence, he accuses and judges life, he denounces appearance' (Deleuze 1983: 96). Thought, on the other hand, should not be informed by truth understood as an abstract universal, but rather by the elements of meaning and value originating from it. Since from the essence of what is human necessarily follows its complicity with reactive forces, so that the presence of active forces has the only function of fostering the 'universal becoming-reactive', in order to enact a transmutation of value Nietzsche reflects on the Overman, not a human capable of surpassing himself, but rather one other than human.

According to this reading, the first misunderstanding to discard is the one regarding the will to power, which represents the genetic element

of force, the internal completion giving it meaning and value, a flexible principle inseparable from force but not identical with it. The will to power is thus not a will to control, because the will, being the very source of values and admitting no external and pre-constituted end, cannot aim at control. On the same lines, Deleuze refutes the previous interpretations of the other key Nietzschean concept of eternal return as a cycle, a return of the same, resulting in a final state allegedly identical to the initial one.

According to Deleuze, the eternal return is in the first place a cosmological doctrine implying the affirmation of pure becoming, that is, the critique of the possibility of its final stage, from which the cycle of time should commence: if becoming were meant to become something, then it would have already done it. Since instead there does not exist any being contrasting becoming in itself, there is a being of becoming itself, which is precisely the return. Second, the eternal return works as an ethical and selective principle of the will to power, on the basis of the formula according to which 'whatever you will, will it in such a way that you also will its eternal return'. This affirmation of the will, a will which desires and bears the repetition and the return of the object of its affirmation, allows thus the transmutation of value, of the reactive forces into active ones, reaching the destruction – affirmative and not reactive – of nihilism: through the eternal return negation is actively negated and 'something comes into being which cannot do so without changing nature' (Deleuze 1983: 71). Eternal return reproduces a becoming that cannot but be active, being the 'yes' that the world says to itself, the cosmic expression of the Dionysiac spirit.

From this philosophy of will and of power derives the other Nietzschean concept deeply felt and shared by Deleuze: the innocence of existence as becoming. If each force is inseparable from what is in its power, the relationship among forces is characterised in the first place as non-guilty, that is, as radically innocent:

> We create grotesque representations of force and will, we separate force from what it can do, setting it up in ourselves as 'worthy' because it holds back from what it cannot do, but as 'blameworthy' in the thing where it manifests precisely the force that it has. We split the will in two, inventing a neutral subject endowed with free will to which we give the capacity to act and refrain from action. (Deleuze 1983: 23)

The most profound sense of Nietzschean philosophy understood as the affirmation of becoming consists not only in acknowledging that life is becoming, multiplicity and chance, but also in accepting and affirming

it: the real virtue does not consist in renouncing each passion but rather in embracing them, saying 'yes' to life and to the world. For this reason, Deleuze's admiration for Kant, who invented many new concepts, led the French philosopher to the refutation of his 'system of tribunals'. Deleuze substitutes the judgement based on the value that transcends life, as if life were a sin to expiate, with an immanent evaluation carried out on the base of vital exigencies, which are in themselves innocent.

In *Essays Critical and Clinical* (1998) Deleuze dedicates an essay to the question of judgement; through the work of four authors – Nietzsche, Lawrence, Kafka and Artaud – Deleuze thematises a way of existence without judgement that, although not explicitly referred to the cinema of the time, finds in the incessant novelty of its creation the characters of pure description and of falsifying narration:

> What disturbed us was that in renouncing judgment we had the impression of depriving ourselves of any means of distinguishing between existing beings, between modes of existence, as if everything were now of equal value. But is it not rather judgment that presupposes preexisting criteria (higher values), criteria that preexist for all time (to the infinity of time), so that it can neither apprehend what is new in an existing being, nor even sense the creation of a mode of existence? Such a mode is created vitally, through combat, in the insomnia of sleep, and not without a certain cruelty toward itself: nothing of all is the result of judgment. Judgment prevents the emergence of any new mode of existence … Herein, perhaps, lies the secret: to bring into existence and not to judge. (Deleuze 1998: 134–5)

The loss of any centre is associated with the disappearance of the system of judgement, irrevocably lost in the perpetual becoming which erupts as vital force, not truthful but rather falsifying. What remains is not a centre with its confronting forces, but rather the connections of the various forces at play, each referring to the others and inseparable from them.

The practical side of this speculative project – that is, the affirmation of the manifold which Deleuze obviously welcomes – consists in feeling the joy of the diverse, having the aesthetic form of the tragic in which any form of anguish or nostalgia for something lost is replaced with the joyful acceptation of plurality and of difference: 'tragedy (is) frank, dynamic, gaiety' (Deleuze 1983: 18), and Dionysus 'is the god for whom life does not have to be justified, for whom life is essentially just' (Deleuze 1983: 16). In *Time-Image* (a book which is Nietzschean as much as Bergsonian) the vindication of an ethics of joy translates – as already

said – into the affirmation of an aesthetic of *croyance*, of faith: the need for 'Christians or atheists' to make the world an object of belief. If – as clearly appears in modern cinema, with its errant characters and disconnected spaces – the link between us and the world is broken as we are no longer organically and necessarily related to life, we need to substitute this disrupted link with faith, with the belief in 'this world, of which fools are a part' (Deleuze 1989: 173), and not in any transcendental dimension. Once the link between perception and reaction featuring the film of the classical regime is severed, cinema conveys the fragility of individuals, not agent but rather seer, facing something intolerable and unthinkable which, however, does not present as an exceptional event, but rather as a daily banality. As Deleuze writes, we should thus 'make use of this powerlessness to believe in life, and to discover the identity of thought and life' (Deleuze 1989: 170), that is, that identity which according to Nietzsche represents the Pre-Socratic secret par excellence.

The reactive judgement accusing life and its multiple becoming finds expression not only in ethics and religion, but in knowledge itself, which Nietzsche accuses of opposing vital values, considering itself as an end or offering its services to the reactive forces. Only a critique of knowledge would give new meaning to thought, making it affirmative, capable of following the vital forces to their extreme limit, so that thinking would be equated to the creation of new possibilities of life. The affinity between thought and life, concealed by a reactive understanding of knowledge, is guarded instead by art, in which takes place a sane rather than a sick will to power, totally free from the ascetic ideal. Deleuze's reading highlights two aspects of the tragic conception of art typical of Nietzsche: the vindication of an aesthetic of creation and the concept of art as the power of the false. In the first place, Nietzsche opposes the philosophical tradition that runs from Aristotle to Schopenhauer passing through Kant, for which art would be a disinterested activity. By observing art from the point of view of the artist, it would rather appear as 'a stimulant of the will to power'; the vision of a work of art does not comfort, purify or sublimate, but rather energises the will enacting the vital and active forces of the artist. If vital activity, which deceives and seduces, is akin to the power of the false, in art falsehood gets affirmed, doubled, elevated to the highest degree, making the artist a creator of new possibilities of life on par with the thinker. The power of the false is thus able to inspire very different authors and works, but the first director who endowed the image with the power of the false is, as already observed, Orson Welles, whose cinema is

dominated by one kind of protagonist, the forger, exhibited in his or her various transformations. If the Nietzscheism of Welles is manifested in the first place in the perpetual critique of truth, it clearly appears also in his refusal (obviously connected to the first aspect) of the system of judgement, revealed in the extraordinary capacity to create magnificently wicked – and often tragically and gloriously loser – characters without committing to any moral evaluation, and indeed always inspired by a tender adhesion to life.

III.

One can ask at this point, what are the consequences of this adhesion to life? The Deleuzian classification of direct time-images – coexistence with the past, simultaneity of the peaks of the present, future becoming as creation – introduces, in the second volume on cinema, the big theme of cinematographic practice: namely, the relationship with thought. The automatic movement of the image (aspired to by all arts but achieved only by cinema) is able to '*communicat*[*e*] *vibrations to the cortex, touching the nervous and cerebral system directly*' (Deleuze 1989: 156) generating a total shock to thought. This 'noochoc' (a 'barbaric' and traumatic word, designating the philosophical invention of a concept) is not characterised as a mere logical possibility, but rather as a power forcing us to think, reactivating in us a 'spiritual automaton', an automatic subjectivity able to push thought itself to its limit.

In movement cinema the image was thought as an organic totality, as a dialectical unity built around the constitution of its parts; thought was integrated in the image, shaped as a circuit, an open spiral comprising the film, the director, and the spectator. We thus have a sensory-motor unity in which the image and the concept are connect in a Hegelian way, and which represents the relationship between persons and the world, human beings and Nature, individuals and masses. According to Deleuze, in classical cinema all the modalities of the relationship between image and thought are in place in the work of Eisenstein, in which he individuates an organic moment (from perception to the concept), a pathetic one (from the concept to affection), and a dramatic one (in which image and concept coincide). However, for Deleuze the greatness of cinema as the new thinking and art of the masses ended up not only in the mediocrity of some productions, but most importantly in propagandist manipulation, which 'brought together Hitler and Hollywood, Hollywood and Hitler' (Deleuze 1989: 164): totality transforms into totalitarianism.

The occasion to abandon this phase is not offered by a renewed strength of thought, but rather by its lack, by a vacuum: the revelation of a constitutive impotence situated in its centre as an inability, an impossibility to think. Departing from the cinematographic experience and the writings of Antonin Artaud, Deleuze describes in fact a modernity that is unable to vindicate the unity of being and knowing, but only the difference, the interstices, the breaches, and a cinema forcing individuals to face the unthinkable. The films of purely optical and sound situations showed something that can be seen but not thought precisely because they have a seer character as the protagonist, deprived of any sensory-motor reaction. The way out of this sort of paralysis is for Deleuze an utterly moral choice, a wager almost *à la* Pascal. The absence of a unitary wisdom leads thought to belief, to the need of Christians and atheists to make the world an object of faith, given that we are not connected to it by an organic and necessary relationship. The Nietzschean model, by replacing wisdom with faith in the world in which we live, represents once again the end point of an idle thought.

Within the system of belief, the image of modernity develops a strong bond with the body, with its daily or ceremonial attitudes and stances representing life and the forces resisting the great categories of thought. 'Give me a body then' is the formula of a certain kind of cinema (Bene, Antonioni, Godard) built around the couple posture–voyeurism, finding its opposite pole – 'Give me a brain' – in intellectual cinema. The latter, as concrete as physical cinema, displays the cerebral mechanisms (Resnais, Kubrick), replaces the corporeal affections with the mental landscapes, which become 'our problem or our illness, our passion, rather than our mastery, our solution or decision (Deleuze 1989: 212). In fact, with the disappearance of the classical representation of the mind as interiority and harmonious totality, the determination of the cerebral activity by integration, differentiation and association necessarily fails; in this context interruptions acquire absolute value and are reproduced in modern cinema as loose images occupying the place left free by the system of movement.

The very evolution from classical to modern cinema reverberates in the issue of sound, which for Deleuze is not a separate element added a posteriori to the image, but rather a new component which radically transforms the image itself. Within the sound system – also comprising music, sounds as well as noises – words act as the herald of this shift, representing the sphere of sociality. If in the earlier phase of spoken cinema the verbal act was essentially interactive, concerning the relationship between two subjects, in the films in which the story is narrated by an

out-field voice it becomes reflexive, and eventually autonomous when, free from any visual bond and even from the invisible one of the external narrator, it becomes itself the object of an autonomous framing. When the two movements of the image become reciprocally autonomous and indispensable, and the verbal act becomes itself an act of creation, the audio-visual image originates, which marks a third period in the story of cinema after silent and spoken cinema. In its last transformation, due to aesthetic and then technological causes, the image, become digital, is a sort of tableau of information, a spurt of information skating the surface, constituting and dissolving into other images.

Once again this is the passage from one system to another, from an indirect representation of time to its transcendental presentation in modern cinema, which in conclusion to his book – after having tackled the issue of sound and mentioned the birth of the information-image – Deleuze labels as a central moment for his theory. A theory which fiercely resists the charge of being abstract, defined by Deleuze as a practice related to others, and in this case to cinema.

Notes

1. Deleuze tackles this issue at length in the video-interview with Claire Parnet (Deleuze 1997b).
2. See Vattimo 2005: 146–7 and Vozza 2006: 146–51.
3. See Esposito 2006, and in particular chapter 3 on Nietzsche, in which the Deleuzian interpretation is mentioned as well.

Repetition

I.

As its very title suggests, at the origin of the 1968 volume *Difference and Repetition* we find the intertwinement of two lines of research: the first investigating a concept of difference free from negation, that is, a difference which is not a difference from, which is not opposed to anything, but which in its being unrelated to any model is rather autonomous and not subordinated to the identical. In this sense, later in the book Deleuze will speak of the simulacrum, the reflection or double described as a copy, however lacking any identity to the thing it refers to: 'not [a] simple imitation but rather the act by which the very idea of a model or privileged position is challenged and overturned' (Deleuze 1994: 69). Deleuze's project is thus that of subtracting difference from its 'state of malediction', that is, making it thinkable in itself without predicating it on something else and mistaking the copy for the original; a project of overturning Platonism which should necessary undergo a substitution: the replacement of generality and equivalence with *repetition* understood as the elevation to power, as the always novel affirmation of singularity.

We thus reach the second line of research of the text: the advancement of a concept of repetition in which all 'bare' repetitions, mechanisms and stereotypes might find their logic, as if repetition constituted the hidden structure of an always 'differential' criterion. There is a substantive difference between repetition and resemblance. In the former the singularities constituting the series are not interchangeable: it is not a matter of adding a second, a third or a fourth instance, but rather of bringing each time the first instance to the nth power. In repetition there takes place a variation, a 'modification' in which we can trace its automatisms and compulsions as well. In short: according to Deleuze

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these two directions – repetition and difference – cannot but join forces so that repetition as the affirmation of (pre-individual) singularities defines the proper working of difference.

According to Deleuze, from this point of view it is possible to draw a connection between Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. The unbridgeable gap between Kierkegaard's God and Nietzsche's Dionysus, indeed a hardly arguable distance, makes their convergence on the theme of repetition even more momentous. In fact, both oppose repetition to all forms of generality. Kierkegaard relates repetition to a selective test, making it the supreme object of the will and of freedom, specifying that it is not a matter of drawing something new from repetition, but rather of making repetition as such a novelty. Extracting something new from it would consist in fact in a contemplative, reflective act implying a meditation, whereas renewing repetition itself by reaffirming one's choice is an action, an affirmative performance.

If Deleuze shares with Nietzsche more than a common cause, we witness here once again the staging of the theme of the eternal return, which consists precisely 'in conceiving the same on the basis of the different' (Deleuze 1994: 41). With Nietzsche the eternal return becomes a formal law overturning Kantian morality on its very field. The maxim becomes: 'whatever you will, will it in such a manner that you also will its eternal return' – a maxim in which repetition literally substitutes universality. If making repetition the very object of the will means getting free from what enchains us, Deleuze insists on the fact that what enchains us is without doubt repetition itself. The existence of the same, the alike, the mechanical and for us oppressing repetition of the 'chain' is neither negated nor ignored; simply enough, it is only by moving from these premises that it is possible to find a principle of differentiation, since 'if we die of repetition we are also saved and healed by it – healed, above all, by the other repetition' (Deleuze 1994: 6). Such repetition that saves us consists in a choice, a selective act, the staging of an element which results each time in being shifted, masked and different without there being any prototypical principle or ultimate term of the series: 'The whole mystical game of loss and salvation is therefore contained in repetition, along with the whole *theatrical game* of life and death and the whole positive game of illness and death' (Deleuze 1994: 6; my emphasis).

One might ask, where does this strange closeness between Kierkegaard and Nietzsche come from? Both are interested in movement, says Deleuze, a movement based on novelty as opposed to the idea of an abstract logical movement, that is opposed once again to mediation.

Both substitute in fact mediated representations with direct signs: the leap for the former and the dance for the latter. This non-mediated movement, which does not move through opposition but rather directly, is repetition. As Kierkegaard affirms in *Fear and Trembling*: 'I only look at movements' (Kierkegaard 1986: 67), to which Deleuze comments: '[this] is the language of a director' (Deleuze 1994: 9). This idea of a theatrical game, of dramatisation, of direct presentation, is in fact a feature of philosophy but above all of art; it is at bottom what unites art and philosophy understood as inventive practices of sensible aggregates or of concepts. Both Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, writes Deleuze, invented for philosophy 'an incredible equivalent of theatre' (Deleuze 1994: 8), a theatre made of those conceptual characters which are the product of the philosophical practice itself.

In the conclusion of the book, after speculating about the coexistence between mechanical and hidden repetition, Deleuze arrives precisely at a characterisation of art:

> Perhaps the highest object of art is to bring into play simultaneously all these repetitions, with their differences in kind and rhythm, their respective displacements and disguises, their divergences and decentrings; to embed them in one another and to envelop the one or the other in illusions the 'effect' of which varies in each case. Art does not imitate, above all because it repeats; it repeats all the repetitions, by virtue of an internal power (an imitation is a copy, but art is simulation, it reverses copies into simulacra). (Deleuze 1994: 293)

At the beginning of *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze commenced his investigation exactly from art, characterising both the unconscious and art as two manifold fields each endowed with 'a power peculiar to repetition' (Deleuze 1994: xix).[1]

II.

Granted that both the unconscious and art possess *each its peculiar power of repetition*, is it possible to imagine an encounter between the two? That is to ask: once the Deleuzian conception of creativity and the Freudian idea of the unconscious are acknowledged, is it possible to envision a point of contact between these authors over the theme of repetition? Despite the fact that in *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze criticises Freud for his use of the compulsion to repeat – a bare, mechanical and non-differential repetition – as his primary theoretical element, I think it is possible to trace such a connection. My goal is

not that of picturing a Deleuzian Freud, nor of establishing who is right, but rather that of investigating the possibility of endorsing a psychoanalytic perspective in aesthetics and in the reflection on art in general and cinema in particular, which does not endorse a symptomatic approach emphasising content over form, but rather one attentive to procedures and formal modalities. To put it in a nutshell: thinking aesthetic experience as an always different point of view on the same, a staging, a repetition employing formal processes and structures on which psychoanalysis can tell us something interesting.

In his 1914 'Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through' (Freud 1958: 147–56), Freud asserts that the first goal of the psychoanalytic technique is that of filling some memory blanks by overcoming the resistances caused by repression: *remembering*, being the chief goal of psychoanalysis, does not fill by chance the principal dominant position it does in the title. Freud observes soon after that, very often, we deal with a recollection that could not have been properly forgotten, as it was never conscious, never being present to consciousness.

If in the hypnotic method the progress of the act of recalling was simple, separated from the rest, with the application of the new psychoanalytic technique the patient does not recall the elements removed but rather puts them to work, reproducing those very elements not as recollections but rather as actions: she repeats them without being aware of it – for example, she does not claim to recall being hostile towards her parents' authority, but rather she puts to use this dynamic with the therapist from the very beginning of the treatment. The compulsion to repeat represents her way of recalling, through staging the removed elements. The bigger the patient's resistance is, the greater the intensity with which the recalling is substituted by this staging, by this repetition of the same.

Freud's conclusion is thus that, although it is always better to remember, still repetition represents the beginning of the cure:

> We render the compulsion harmless, and indeed useful, by giving it the right to assert itself in a definite field. We admit [the transfer] into the transference as a playground in which it is allowed to expand in almost complete freedom … The transference thus creates an intermediate region between illness and real life through which the transition from the one to the other is made. (Freud 1958: 154)

Repetition is thus at the same time the illness from which we necessarily depart, and the mode of treatment available to us. This repetition in a monitored setting takes place in transfer understood as exercise, gym,

implementation and staging. We are dealing with an active repetition, and not a passive movement (in fact, it has to be acknowledged, it is not enough to be aware and informed about one's own compulsion), and this same which we implement by returning to it is exactly a repetition in another environment, a repetition of the same from another point of view (perhaps with some degree of choice involved in the process).

Another place where Freud tackles this theme is his 1920 essay 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle': in this case it seems harder to relate repetition to a differential element because Freud here presents the compulsion to repeat as a manifestation of the inertia proper to the living organism, as the expression of the conservatory nature of living, the impulse to restore an ancient situation and thus the inanimate condition. However, the presentation of the *Fort-Da* advanced in this text tells us much more than that: the eighteen-month-old boy (Freud's nephew) he had the occasion to observe while repeating the game of making the wooden reel disappear (accompanying the gesture with a '*Fort*', 'go away') and sometimes, but not always, making it reappear (greeting it with a joyful '*Da*', 'there'), staging in this way the disappearance of his mother (and sometimes, but not always, her comeback), felt the pleasure of being able to dominate a situation which he previously only suffered. Freud writes:

> At the outset he was in a *passive* situation – he was overpowered by the experience; but, by repeating it, unpleasurable though it was, as a game, he took on an *active* part. These efforts might be put down to an instinct for mastery that was acting independently of whether the memory was in itself pleasurable or not. (Freud 1961: 10)

If one of the hypotheses explaining the screams of joy accompanying this game might be the revenge against his mother, whose absence makes her guilty, a better explanation is that the repetition of this act answers to an impulse of appropriation and mastery.

Later in the text Freud will return to the theme of repetition as ownership, describing it as what sometimes represents the only possibility in the analytic situation, given that, despite the patient being informed about her lost memories, since she did not actually and properly forget anything because she was never conscious of it, she cannot as a consequence be persuaded of the exactitude of what the therapist tells her. In order to stop repeating, it is thus not enough to abstractly recall, endowed with the right information passed on by the therapist, but rather it takes an operation similar to the theatrical one, that is, transfer. In this way repetition, an active staging, ceases to be

a compulsion and turns out to be the cure: it could change from one's chain to one's liberation, as Deleuze thought about Nietzsche's eternal return.[2]

In point of fact, writing about Freud in *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze himself claims that together with the idea of inertia, which remains in any case the main Freudian paradigm, it is possible to spot another model at play: that according to which the death drive transforms repetition into an archetypical, positive and affirmative transcendental instinct. In this sense, for Deleuze Freud's abandonment of the hypothesis of a real traumatic event experienced during childhood – which would be the definitive mark of a mimetic repetition, a copy beneath which something hides – in favour of phantoms of affirmation, that is, a repetition already masked and differential – already operated by Lacan as well – is crucial.

III.

The field par excellence in which it is possible to repeat the same, elevating it to the nth power, putting it to use, presenting a different point of view by a mere ostensive act, is the one of artistic representation. Here the same which gets repeated is literally so, as it is suggested by one of the most reputable ideas in the history of aesthetics, that is, the theme of *mimesis*, and yet in artistic simulation the differential element distinct from the original reproduced is already present. In cinema the ambiguity built into the idea of repetition is particularly pronounced: films can in fact be both extremely faithful to reality, thanks to the mechanical genesis of its device, and also truly autonomous, given their exhibition to the public and precisely in virtue of their capacity of accurately reproducing reality, almost creating a world in its own right. In the history of film theory, the sensational experience of attending the creation of a world of simulacra has often been stressed: since from 1896 when Maxim Gorky reacted to the screening of the Lumière Brothers' cinematograph at Nizhny Novgorod's fair, where in an article he described the spectacle as a reign of shadows, a place inhabited by spectres and ghosts, to the work by Morin, *The Cinema, Or the Imaginary Man*, which depicts the film as a double, a reflex of the world (Morin 2005).

By welcoming the Deleuzian idea of a cinema exhibiting the working of thought first in the modalities of perception, affection and action, and later manifesting itself in the impossibility of any organic thinking – with the consequent weakening of the sensory-motor relations – the psychical

process of repetition understood as a mechanism of ownership displays as the direct affirmation of difference, of a difference autonomous from its model, and thus as the elevation of the false. The description of the object replaces the object itself; a falsifying narration takes the place of a plausible story; the truthful relationship and the neat distinction between the subjective and the objective points of view is transformed in a modality of the camera in which the gaze of the director is indiscernible from that of the character. What emerges in this kind of cinema is the thematisation and the direct presentation of the working difference of the power of the false as a series of forces which *gets repeated* by making reference to each other.

In this sense, the question of repetition thus understood has to do with art overall, but with cinema in particular, given the potentialities of its device – and, precisely because it is a device able to catch in unexpected ways the life of thought, many films and authors of the modern turn thematised this concept. Reprising some cinematographic examples already analysed and present in Deleuze's texts on cinema, in *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie* (1972) by Luis Buñuel, with its series of incomplete lunches, we can individuate a repetition in which the series is constituted by a succession of truthful and false acts blended together simultaneously; while in *F for Fake* by Orson Welles, which I have already commented at length (see chapter on 'Falsehood' above), we find a repetition in which the differential element is clearly at work through the thematisation of a 'series of fakeries'. However, in order to illustrate the idea of art as differential repetition inspired by both Deleuze and the psychoanalytic perspective, a good example of thematisation of repetition is the genre of the remake, and in particular two remakes of the very same film: Alfred Hitchcock's 1960 *Psycho*.

In 1998 Gus Van Sant realised a *shot by shot* remake using the same cuts and montage as the original film, but also with some important differences: the film is not in black and white, is staged in contemporaneity, and is more explicit in some sexual scenes. Furthermore, some hidden frames have been added (in the well-known shower scene, which in Hitchcock's original film is based on the storyboard drawn by Hollywood's most famous graphic designer Saul Bass, Van Sant adds the image of a stormy sky). This 1998 remake, not impressive in its results, is the closest thing to the original, and still the faithful reference to its model seems at once too similar and yet not similar enough.

The idea behind the video installation *24 Hour Psycho*, shown for the first time in Glasgow in 1993 by the Scottish artist Douglas

Gordon, represents instead a repetition which is at the same time a simple exhibition. In this work Gordon offers a version of Hitchcock's film slowed down to fit into 24 hours, with about two frames per second, rendering the images solemn and immersive through this simple operation of temporal alteration. Gordon himself characterised his work as an installation primarily aiming at an act of reappropriation rather than at a reproductive imitation. In the words of the artist, this remake represents an act of 'affiliation' aiming at putting in crisis the very ideas of the model, authorship and originality of a piece of work.

Notes

1. The third field mentioned by Deleuze is language.
2. This very wringing of the same content from what I suffer to what I embody refers to the theme of the symptom-sinthome in Lacan: the identification with one's symptom, with what is most singular in us, the embodiment and thus transformation from subjected element into the object of one's freedom. See Lacan 2005.

Simulacrum

I.

In the past few chapters I had the occasion to discuss the issues of difference, and the power of the false and of repetition in the theoretical exposition of Deleuze's thought; I now want to show how these are depicted cinematographically in the work of the Chilean director Raúl Ruiz, and in particular in a film which has at its centre precisely the idea of a repetition capable of subverting the model from its privileged position. The 1978 film *The Hypothesis of the Stolen Painting* is built exactly around the theme of the simulacrum, literally understood as phantasmagorical double, the creation of a 'world of ghosts'; the film, although not mentioned by Deleuze, is able to distil in images the 'conceptual characters' depicted in his thought.

Summarising in detail the plot of a film by Ruiz as well as explicating all its references is a bewildering experience, since each screening is characterised by the appreciation of new, unexpected details and references. It is also bewildering to take into consideration his entire production, which has been described as a corpus 'so big, ramified and alive that it resembles a *monumental universe*' (Turco 2007: 94; my translation); a sort of vegetal organism animated by an internal dynamism recalling the idea of a work of art typical of romanticism. The director himself defines the films as living beings: he writes that 'we watch them and they watch us back' (Bruno 2007: 350; my translation).

It is with such displacement and bewilderment that the spectator witnesses *The Hypothesis of the Stolen Painting*, screenplayed by Pierre Klossowski and organised in series of *tableaux vivants*, a combinatory play full of vanishing points, cross-references among paintings, but also literary and philosophical citations. The reference external to the film is in the first place to the work of Klossowski: the fantastical novel

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The Baphomet (1965), focused on the mysterious figure of Baphomet, the idol who according to the legend was adored in the Middle-Ages by the Templars; but also the earlier *Diana at Her Bath* (1956), an interpretation of the myth of Diana and Actaeon, who was eaten alive by dogs after being transformed into a deer for having observed the nudity of the divinity.

The possibility of a linear vision of the film is complicated by the interplay between the two narrators, a voice out of field and the narrator internal to the film, the collector (played by the actor Jean Rougeul) guiding us through a series of paintings of the imaginary nineteenth-century painter Tonnerre (a character created by Klossowski). The two are in constant dialogue throughout the film, alluding to some mysteries never revealed before and contradicting themselves on the number, nature and meaning of the paintings displayed. The puzzlement experienced by the spectators is an intentional result sought by the director, revealed by the recurrence of the presence of mirrors in various shots and by the interplays of luminous reflections, images and atmospheres recurring also in his other works, for example in the 1999 film on Proust's *Recherche* titled *Le Temps retrouvé*.

The challenge to recount and describe the seven living paintings at the centre of this peculiar narration, although a difficult one, should be consciously accepted and possibly met if one wants to focalise those traits in which the theme of the simulacrum emerges, the philosophical theme at the heart of most of Ruiz's cinema, but even more at the core of Klossowski's literary and pictorial production, oriented towards a reinvention of the figurative departure from imaginary and mythological subjects. Even before the credits, the film begins with a long and extended framing – a city street lined by buildings and parked cars – which seems to play an intentionally disorienting function. It in fact represents a calculated hoax arranged by the director: it seems to suggest a narration staged in contemporaneity and in a precise geographical place in which the story will take place, while immediately afterwards the spectator is conducted to an isolated internal corner of the world, free from every context, in which time and space are indeterminately suspended (the garden full of fog in which some of the living paintings are displayed during the story seems a still and protected extension of such internal environments as well).

After the credits there are two quotations, both on the theme of the body escaping death: from Victor Hugo: 'Human consciousness has expired; On the cadaver he squats, gloating, mired; Seated in triumph, he turns to crow; Each time he deals the corpses a blow'; and from

Klossowski himself: 'What do you see? What do you feel? Is it pain or is it ecstasy that keeps you afloat in space?' These are the last words pronounced by the Master Knight of the Templars to the gorgeous nude adolescent, suspended in the void, whose hanging he ordered. Minutes before the Knight spoke: 'it is a body indeed, but even if it is without life it is not a corpse', and in fact the body of the young lad will come back to life again.

While the camera frames a mirror, a dispute between the two narrators in disagreement about the number of paintings left by Tonnerre takes place: according to the collector, the paintings of the series are not six, but rather seven as, each of them being connected to the next by a detail, a gap in such a thread leads to the speculation that, as the title of the film also suggests, one of them was stolen. Before the beginning of the tour of the paintings organised by the collector we see, outside the series, the canvas of a naked boy hanged, an explicit reference to the myth of Baphomet; the series begins soon after this quick shot. The first canvas is actually the second of the series: the arrival of a knight catches off guard two Templars playing chess. The canvas has an odd detail, namely two sources of illumination (suggesting, as the narrator tells us, the idea of a world with two suns). At this point the collector reveals one of the reasons for the scandal that these paintings occasioned in the nineteenth century: the series alludes to the Ceremony (most likely the ceremonies of initiation of the Knights Templar). But, as the collector reiterates, paintings do not allude to; they rather show.

The camera goes out into the garden but before it does we have a glimpse of a dummy reproducing, or rather serving as a model for, a painting hung on the facing wall. The enigma of the first canvas presented is solved by pointing to a living painting in the garden, the first of the series of Tonnerre: the scene of Diana and Actaeon, plus a third character spying on them through a mirror reflecting a ray of light which passes through the window of the canvas previously analysed. Now we see it again as a *tableau vivant*: besides two suns, there is on the one side the light of the sun, while on the other the ray of light reflected in the mirror. In this *tableau vivant* the page witnessing the chess game is also visible. At this point the collector draws our attention to the presence of a mirror shaped as a half-moon, although remarking that this is not sheer speculation on the art of reproduction, as *what matters are the figures, the shapes*.

The mirror shaped as a half-moon returns in the third canvas, the one with the hanged boy we first saw, surrounded by many characters. Here the collector turns the electric light on, playing with the illumination by

inverting light and shadow so as to concentrate attention on the figures. A mask also appears, which represents the only element we know of the stolen canvas. The fourth painting is precisely the one of the mask, but we cannot see it since, as mentioned, it has been stolen. The fifth painting is the one discarded from the 1877 exhibition due to a scandal involving some members of high society: it is a multiple painting, composed of episodes illustrating a penny dreadful about a family tormented by homosexual rivalries, ending with a suicide by hanging. Obviously we cannot determine what relates this to the preceding canvas. The narrator tells us that Tonnerre defended himself against the accusation by stating that the paintings allude to, and do not show, whereas the collector replies that they show indeed.

The sixth canvas presents the characters of the previous paintings grouped in trios. There are naked women and demons as well, whose presence is perhaps explained by the missing canvas. The movements of the characters form curves, which in turn form circles and thus spheres. The seventh canvas of the series represents a burning sphere with the figure of Baphomet at its centre, the androgynous demon venerated by the Templars, conceived as a body without soul. At this point the collector interrogates himself on the enigma of the series and on the importance of the theme of the ceremony of initiation of the Knights Templar. He thus shows the photographs, the stylised pictures of some of the anatomical models used for the paintings: in these pictures the paintings disappear and the only things left are the gestures, the bodies. The film ends with suggestive images of the collector strolling in a forest with the whole series of paintings hanging from the trees.

II.

In order to determine the atmosphere and the sensation produced by this film, which is almost without any plot and yet so complicated, I will borrow the words of Alessandro Cappabianca, who states that 'in tracing a certain profile of Ruiz it seems as if we should always be mindful of the hypothesis of a missed film (or sequence). Something is missing, and this introduces in the discourse an exciting element of chance' (Cappabianca 2007: 53; my translation). In the light of this complexity and richness of mentions and references, the spectator watching and reflecting on the film is assailed by a sort of bad conscience, according to which something seems missing, that is, 'a piece is missing', as a missing painting. However, we should stress that behind these refractions, series, combinations and multiplications there is no meta-filmic intention, no

auto-reflexive approach of the camera. There is thus no speculation on representation, but simply the revelation of a world of bodies without soul, of appearances in which is displayed what is usually hidden. This is the point of the insistence of the character of the collector on the theme of showing, of disclosing, a disclosing which gets beyond reality and is able to catch the hidden and invisible part. The director himself notes this aspect in the introduction to the volume dedicated to his work: 'cinema . . . is the art of showing the invisible part of each thing belonging to the Creation' (Bruno 2007: 9; my translation); and continues: '[my aim] is to show the invisible demons dancing in the air and eluding the drunken eye of told realities. The unmentionable *simulacra*' (Bruno 2007: 8; my emphasis; my translation).

The theme of the double and of the simulacrum is often explicated by Ruiz in his interviews, and is above all one of the recurring themes of the thought and of the narrative and pictorial work of Klossowski, co-screenwriter of the film. As Michel Foucault writes in "*The Prose of Actaeon*", all the figures which Klossowski 'delineates and brings to life in his language are "simulacra" '. And the definitions of the simulacrum that Foucault offers right after the quoted statement immediately recall the principal themes of the film by Ruiz: 'a vain image (as opposed to reality)' – in the film the paintings, the *tableaux vivants*, the models, the bodies without soul; 'a representation of something (in which this thing delegates and manifests itself, but withdraws and in a sense conceals itself)' – the game of exchanges and refractions, and even more the mystery and vacuum of the stolen painting; 'a falsehood that causes one to take one sign for another' – a hidden enigma in the images; 'a sign of the presence of a deity (and the converse possibility of taking this sign for its opposite)' – obviously the demons, and especially the figure of the androgynous, of the Baphomet who keeps appearing in the paintings and in the story; 'the simultaneous coming of the Same and the Other (originally, to simulate meant to come together)' – that is the continuous reference from the painting to the *tableaux vivants*, a repetition, however, animated by a rift, by a difference (Foucault 1998: 127).

A few lines further on Foucault adds that we need to establish a rigorous repartition between signs and simulacra, since they do not belong to the same field of experience, although sometimes they happen to coincide. The simulacrum does not in fact fix a meaning, but is rather something that *appears* and 'it is of the order of appearance in the shattering of time' (Foucault 1998: 128). Simulacra, spirits and the bodies of the living paintings are not signs of something else, but rather

they have a certain relevance of their own, in the gestures, forms and figures: the paintings, as the collector says, do not allude to, but rather show; that is, the shown paintings are not signs but rather simulacra, as one might paraphrase it. The strong analogy between the philosophical cipher of Klossowski and the thought underlying Ruiz's poetics seems thus focused around the double, the simulacrum whose nature is that of pointing to something else while at the same time revealing itself in its powerful impact as image. The result is the creation of an unfamiliar world, perplexing and yet identical to ours, in which through what Foucault calls the 'thin insinuation of the Double', the Other becomes the Same. On this point, these lines by Foucault describing Klossowski's language seem to echo the cinematographic language of the Chilean director, and of this film in particular:

> Klossowski's experience is situated . . . in a world ruled by an evil genius . . . This world would not be Heaven, or Hell, or limbo, but quite simply our world – a world, finally, that would be the same as ours except that, precisely, it is the same. In this imperceptible divergence of the same [think about the divergence between painting and *tableau vivant*], an infinite movement [the one of the camera] finds its place of emergence . . . The A = A equation is stirred by an endless internal movement that diverts each of the two terms from its own identity and refers them to each other through the action (the force, the treachery) of this divergence itself. (Foucault 1998: 126)

The description of two identical but different worlds, divided by a rift in which the movement insinuates itself, thus evokes Klossowski's language, Ruiz's films and the creative procedures proper of both thought and art suggested by Deleuze in an interplay of hopefully not too complacent references. It is Deleuze himself who in the pages of *Difference and Repetition* mentions Klossowski in this regard:

> Pierre Klossowski has clearly noted . . . [how] taken in its strict sense, eternal return, means that each thing exists only in returning, copy of an infinity of copies which allows neither original nor origin to subsist. That is why the eternal return is called 'parodic': it qualifies as simulacrum that which it causes to be (and to return). (Deleuze 1994: 66–7)

The philosophical theme of the simulacrum and of the double at play in the film, it must be repeated, does not derive from the contribution of Klossowski alone, but is completely and explicitly shared by Ruiz, who defines cinematographic images as 'instances of doubling or splitting', 'shamanic journeys mechanised by means of cinematography' (Bruno 2007: 39; my translation). The power of the double returns in its original theory of the cinematographic fruition, according to which it

can be said that during the experience of vision the spectator projects another film onto the one playing on the screen: there is a double film, projected by the single spectator, overlaying the film itself, differentiating and at the same time repeating it, making the film 'palpitat[e], as if it was breathing'. We can clearly see how this process of splitting, difference and repetition of the manifestation of simulacra might become vertiginous: we project a double of the film onto the film, which is in itself a splitting of the real thanks to its mechanical genesis; in this case what the film shows us are the paintings and the double of the paintings in the *tableaux vivants*.

III.

The elaboration on doubles, simulacra and spirits is, however, in Ruiz also an exercise in concretisation, an 'actualisation of the illusory' within matter, since the vision of the transcendent there realised is a 'tactile vision', corporeal and concrete. In this sense Edoardo Bruno (2007) defines Ruiz's cinema, which seems capable of actualising and materialising all that is metaphysical, a 'materialist' cinema – in a deeper sense of materialist than how cinema has always been anyway. The evidence of this concrete character of the work of the Chilean director can be easily appreciated in the film under discussion, whose real protagonists are the *bodies* in their almost sculptural plasticity, a plasticity emerging thanks to the style and the sinuous and engaging movement of the camera. The camera shows in fact the corporeity of the various figures by moving closer to and away from them, moving around them, making them alive in their concreteness, showing them, as Ruiz himself would say, as a totality in constant outburst.

It was the painter Mark Rothko, although starting from very different (mostly technical) considerations, who defined plasticity in painting as exactly this movement in space, as the advancement and moving back determining – in the painter as well as in the spectator – almost an 'entry' into the canvas, using a line which seems to be written for this film:

> Plasticity, then, is the sensation of reality impaired to us by means of the sensation of things moving back and forth... In painting, plasticity is achieved by a sensation of movement both into the canvas and out from the space anterior to the surface of the canvas. Actually, the painter invites the spectator to take a journey within the realm of the canvas. (Rothko 2004: 47)

Thanks to the presence of the *tableaux vivants* in *The Hypothesis of the Stolen Painting*, the camera literally insinuates into the painting,

moves and surrounds the represented bodies realising what Ruiz himself in some interviews calls a tactical vision;[1] a 'looking through one's chest, through one's skin' able to show the simulacra as well as the spirits in their corporeity.

Note

1. The language is similar to the one employed by Herder (2002) in his description of the perception of sculpture and of the close vision of the statues through an eye that pats, that touches.

Sadism

I.

The protagonist of the 1932 film *The Most Dangerous Game* by Ernest Schoedsack and Irving Pichel, taken from a story by the American writer Richard Connell published in 1924, is Count Zaroff, a Russian aristocrat who owns a castle on a desert island. The count, by moving the channel lights surrounding the island, provokes shipwrecks with the goal of kidnapping the survivors and using them as human prey for his hunting, since hunting other species had begun 'to bore' him. The castaway Bob Rainsford, a famous big-game hunter just back from Sumatra where he conducted a tiger hunt expedition and author of many books and reportage on the topic, is forced to participate in the count's cruel game and to rescue himself and Eve, the only woman present on the island. The latter, who has survived a previous shipwreck together with her brother – who will be killed first by the count – is offered by Zaroff as the 'prize' for what he considers as 'outdoor chess'.

In this film there are many aspects worth noting from a historical perspective: in the first place, its germinal character and thus its modernity, that is, the fact that it has inspired and keeps inspiring various remakes thus offering various ideas for many fantasy, horror and adventure films (the latest film inspired by *The Most Dangerous Game* is *Hard Target*, directed by John Woo in 1993). Second, its evident metaphorical character, that is, its being 'a fantastical transfiguration of the fears and aspirations of an entire epoch' (Esposito 2004: 802; my translation): the disquieting atmosphere of a menacing state of nature represented by the island and the events taking place bring to the scene the fears of post-1929 America. It is also interesting that a good part of the cast acted in the film *King Kong*, directed by Merian C. Cooper and Schoedsack himself, which came out the following year (1933);

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a film that, among other things, reprises in an even more spectacular key the theme of uncertainty and the disquietudes characteristic of the time.

The aspect of the film I would like to focus on, however, is a different one, and it will emerge only after having illuminated some elements of the plot and of the construction of the characters. In the first place, it is worth underlining the *symmetrical constitution* of the two male characters, the cruel count and the castaway hero: the former is a foreigner while the latter is American, but both are hunters and devotees of the practice of big-game hunting in two symmetrical contexts. Before the shipwreck, the character of Rainsford, while still on the boat with his crew, is called into question in a discussion on the practice of hunting where he defends its legitimacy not because it is a practice necessary for survival, but rather as a sport and amusing activity. Rainsford accurately avoids responding to one of his friend's insistent questioning about the certainty of his convictions, should he have been a tiger... After the shipwreck, we find Count Zaroff entertaining his hostages–guests during an evening at the castle, explaining his passion for hunting, the pleasure of killing and the necessity, after having tried several hunting weapons in order to escape boredom, of changing species of animal. The count starts off by telling Rainsford that he could find a reasonable point of view on hunting solely in the latter's books: 'we are kindred spirits', he asserts. Thus, the two characters are presented as each being the double of the other, although diametrically opposed as regards their most exterior traits: Rainsford is portrayed by Joel McCrea, an actor who specialised in the positive role of the American hero, that is, tall, blond-haired and athletic, with a virile and clean look; Count Zaroff is portrayed by Leslie Banks, with an asymmetric face, a gloomy appearance and a scar on the forehead that the actor stresses by continuously patting it.

The second element is the *eroticism* suffusing the whole film. The female character, attractive, fragile and almost completely passive during the whole time she and Rainsford are on the run together (she also remains an observer when the actor, a few feet from her, is about to fall into a pit while fighting with one of the count's hunting dogs), is an object of conquest for both the male characters: the sexual prey of the count but also an object of love for the hero. The conquest, however, is postponed since Eve is the very prize of the game, of the match, and as such she is part of the contest, whose reward and final verdict consists in killing. As Count Zaroff says in the middle of a disquisition on the amusement of hunting: 'Kill and then love! When you have known that, you have known ecstasy.' Only when united with the pleasure of killing

it is possible to experience the pleasure of sexual conquest. Eroticism and cruelty are thus part of the same system.

It being a game, a contest, it is obviously a system governed by rules, rules that the count values over everything else: the first step is that of showing the victims his room of trophies in which he preserves, with variously graphical devices for conservation, the heads of his prey. His declared intent is that of inculcating in the victim, considered as a 'player' on a par with himself, the seriousness of the game which is about to begin, a seriousness which – as is obvious even without taking Roger Caillois to figure it out – is the indispensable presupposition for the success of any game. Furthermore, the count concedes his prey some hours' advantage and the possibility of saving themselves: they will be free if they are able to survive the sunrise of the next day on the island. As we can see, and this is the third element, the cruelty of the count has nothing to do with uncontrolled violence, since hatred is also a natural instinct animated by a *lucid rationality*, cold, determined and objective. Zaroff is a 'sanguinary gentleman' who respects the forms, the rules of both hospitality and of the game, and naturally because of this his cruelty is even more terrifying.

II.

At this point, the comment by Paolo Mereghetti (2014) according to whom *The Most Dangerous Game* is 'one of the most Sadean films ever made' should not be surprising. Following Maurice Blanchot's analysis in his *Lautréamont and Sade* (Blanchot 2004), but also in the writings of Georges Bataille (Bataille 1986), Count Zaroff has all the features of Sade's 'sovereign man'. First of all, the external emblem of the title:

> Sadean humanity is essentially composed by a small number of all-powerful men, who had the will to raise themselves above laws and place themselves outside prejudice … These extraordinary men generally belong to a privileged class: they are dukes, kings, even the pope himself … They owe to their birth the privileges of inequality. (Blanchot 2004: 11)

There are obviously those who, although not patrician by birth, are however capable of increasing their power, because they have the power to commit a crime. Inequality is thus for Sade, and Zaroff, a fact of nature: some individuals are necessarily slaves and victims, while others are brave enough to follow their natural instincts, which are those of pleasure and egoism, of subjecting other human beings. Destruction and affirmation coincide and are natural instincts, since nature, as Sade

writes in the novel *Justine*, 'is a perpetual succession of crimes' and 'does not allow for crimes to endanger its economy', thus making it inconceivable for 'the weakest [to] really offend the strongest' (Sade 2012: 62–3).

Another element explicitly present in the construction of the character of Zaroff, noticed by virtually all interpreters of Sade, is the primacy of crime over lust. In *Justine* a man argues for the reasons of the rape he just committed on his victim by saying:

> in some people lust can be generated by the very act of crime! I'll go further, and say that it is therefore the case that crime alone arouses and precipitates it, and that there is not a single pleasure in the world that it does not inflame or increase. (Sade 2012: 186)

This quotation echoes the already mentioned line by Zaroff: 'Kill and then love! When you've known that, you have known ecstasy.' In Sade, as Blanchot writes,

> crime matters more than lust, and the cold-blooded crime is valued more than the one committed in the burst of passion; but the crime committed in the rigidifying of the sensitive part, the obscure and secret crime, is the most valued of them all. (Blanchot 2004: 37–8)

The taming of the sensitive part is thus what allows the moment of suspension, in which the instinct is curbed and subordinated to crime: 'in order for passion to transform into energy it should be contained, mediated by a necessary moment of insensibility; only in this way it would reach its greatest intensity' (Blanchot 2004: 38).

In order for the sovereign men to give priority to crime over lust it is necessary to possess cold blood and self-control, what Blanchot defines as insensibility, apathy, indifference, stoicism. About her misadventures, the virtuous Justice claims: 'such is the fatal indifference that, more than anything else, characterizes the mind of the true libertine' (Sade 2012: 174). Were Count Zaroff not focused on himself and unable to experience any kind of emotion, and his attraction for Eve held and mediated by crime, he would not be a sovereign man, but rather a mediocre man satisfied by the 'average pleasures'. This is the motif that Bataille puts at the centre of the chapter dedicated to Sade in his *Erotism*, in which the supremacy of crime over passions, insensibility and apathy, are lived as the overcoming of the personal self, which seems to be extremely well suited to Zaroff's philosophy:

> These exigencies [that the crime should reach the pinnacle of crime] lie outside the individual, or at least they set a higher value on the process begun by him

> but now detached from him and transcending him, than on the individual himself. De Sade cannot help bringing into play beyond personal variety an almost impersonal egotism. (Bataille 1986: 175)

Moreover, from the encounter of sexuality and rationality, blender together in their sharp coldness without the mediation of any feeling for others, there derives another recurrent theme of Sadean writings which seems in part suggested in this film as well: in the words of Moravia, 'the habit of rationalization, that is the systematic justification – of an intellectual and ideological kind – of one's sexuality' (Moravia 1976: xi). As we briefly saw earlier, the characters of Sade's novels argue, rationally explain and offer a justification of their cruelty, building a system of thought and restating their motivations with an almost obsessive frequency – especially in some of his writings. In a similar way the count, in particular in the first part of the film, digressing on his great passion for big-game hunts, is not satisfied merely with having some victims but moreover wants to convince them of the ineluctability of his behaviour as a strong man superior to average humanity.

III.

If anything, *The Most Dangerous Game* is a Sadean film in the Deleuzian interpretation offered in *Coldness and Cruelty* (1991b), a text declaring as its goal that of understanding the clinical dimension of sadism and masochism from a literary viewpoint. Sade and Sacher-Masoch were in fact for Deleuze first of all great writers, but also great clinicians, who gave their names to a perversion as doctors created the name of the illness studied. They were, even more, great anthropologists, because they individuated the features of a whole world view, of a conception of the human being, of nature and culture. The key point of the book is in fact the idea that both sadism and masochism have been too quickly merged under the concept of sadomasochism, that is, in particular, it was the vision of Masoch which suffered a 'spurious dialectical unity' with Sade. According to Deleuze, they represent instead two different clinical and literary entities, two completely independent systems between which there would be no contact (sadomasochism exists as a third variant distinct from either).

Let us for now accept the definition of the sadistic system as a separate system, literally and clinically. In the first place, as Deleuze remarks, 'a genuine sadist could never tolerate a masochistic victim' (Deleuze 1991b: 40), quoting in this respect a passage from *Justine* in which

the victim of the sadistic monks explains to the protagonist how they want to be certain that their crimes lead to cries, since they would refuse whoever offers him- or herself spontaneously. On the other hand, the masochist him- or herself does not really need a truly sadistic torturer, as in a masochistic situation the latter should behave without hatred, as the heroine of Sacher-Masoch's *Die Seelenfängerin* claims about the masochist practice: 'you cause suffering out of cruelty… while I kill without mercy but also without hatred' (quoted in Deleuze 1991b: 41). Furthermore, the woman torturer should be 'trained', educated by the masochist according to his most secret design, according to his desires; but the idea of an education as well as of the contractual character of the relationship between the two protagonists of the masochist system finds no space in the sadist system.

Using these affirmations as a key to reading the film, it is clear why as a victim Rainsford meets well the count's tastes, being an expert big-game hunter capable of defending himself and far from being disposed to suffering; it is worth recalling how in the 'dangerous game' the victim is Rainsford and not Eve, the female character, who is indeed the very prize of the game; that is, she could be the victim of a sadistic game only *after* the hunting, about which the film tells us nothing. This allows us to understand the disinterest of the count for the character of Eve's brother, who during the evening at the castle immediately presents himself as a 'victim of circumstances', and who will be killed as first almost with indifference because of his weakness (a 'charming child', as the count says referring to him), and complete ignorance of the practice of hunting and of the rules of the game. However, in his analysis Deleuze is far from saying that the victim of sadism is him- or herself sadistic; rather, he claims that the victim has nothing to do with masochism, being an integral part of the sadistic situation, of the sadistic system: he or she belongs to it. Whether the victim of the sadistic game carries some masochistic traits, he or she possess them as those specific masochistic traits which constitute the counterpart, the symmetrical image of the sadism of the other, and not as masochist elements in themselves, which would be completely extraneous to the whole context. Deleuze writes:

> The victim cannot be masochistic, not merely because the libertine would be irked if she were to experience pleasure, but because the victim of the sadist belongs entirely in the world of sadism and is an integral part of the sadistic situation. In some strange way she is *the counterpart of the sadistic torturer*. (Deleuze 1991b: 41–2; my emphasis)

The idea of the double is witnessed in the novels of Sade by the figures of Justine and Juliette, the virtuous and the perverse, two young women who, although having opposite reactions to their misadventures, as sisters had the same formation and came from the same parental system. The ideas of the double and of symmetry are perhaps the most evident features of *The Most Dangerous Game*, on which the film insists with an almost didactic emphasis: the two male characters seems to be in complete opposition, the contrast of the sinister aspect of the one and the bright appearance of the other; and yet the two are bound by their passion for the 'most dangerous game'. Thus, if Zaroff is the sadist par excellence, Rainsford, the hero, is not a masochist, and yet neither is he a sadist, but rather an integral part of the game, of which he knows the rules, decided by the count and received without any major dissent, and of which he employs all the possible tricks which the count reveals without any mystery.

If thus the male characters fully participate in the game, accepting its rules, tricks, spatial limits, and escape routes, this is not a mere accident, as both become strenuous and explicit advocates of it in two symmetrical discourses: the one at the beginning of the film, by Rainsford, while the other during the evening in the castle, by the count, blunt demonstrations of the necessity of evil and the survival of the fittest. The alternation of scenes of action and cruelty with moments of sheer theorisation about the desire to kill and the ineluctable character of evil recalls the theme of lucidity and cold blood noted by readers of Sade, but even more it seems to faithfully reproduce the storyline of his novels. On the one hand, we find the detailed descriptions of the particular scene of sex and cruelty, the obscene language and the obscene details, while on the other we have pure theory, the most elevated abstraction, the philosophical justification of cruelty and of the negative. For Deleuze, this double level, as I already had the occasion to comment, represents precisely the clinical and literary character of sadism:[1]

> The imperative and descriptive factor, represents the *personal* element; it directs and describes the personal violence of the sadist as well as his individual tastes; the second and higher factor represents the *impersonal* element in sadism and identifies the impersonal violence with an Idea of pure reason, with a terrifying demonstration capable of subordinating the first element. (Deleuze 1991b: 19–20)

The vision of sadism as a self-standing situation, independent and based on its own rules, recalls the spatial idea of the limit and its overcoming present in the film in various ways. The adventure begins

precisely with the violation of a limit, the one of the channel lights, a signal which should indicate the right way and which in this case should not be followed: the captain of the boat voices his doubts, since the lights seem to be in a different position than the one indicated by the maps, in an area characterised by menacing reefs and infested by sharks. Furthermore, the boat is sailing very close to an island with a sinister reputation. The owner of the boat, however, sceptical of what he calls fantasies, tells him to keep going: once the lights are passed, we witness the heralded shipwreck and the landing of the sole survivor on the sadly famous island. The hero is catapulted into a zone ruled by different regulations, beyond what is known, at the boundaries of civilisation.[2] The signals of a sinister world, different from the familiar one, are all present: in the first place the forest full of vegetation and shadows, then the castle, sadistic place par excellence, with its inhabitants – not only the count but also his uncanny servants – its disquieting position and emblems, visible already on the main entrance gates. However, once we pass through the entrance and venture beyond the boundaries we find ourselves inside yet another delimited system, the one of the sadistic game, a closed system in itself as well, represented by the confinement in the castle watched by ferocious dogs and by the island itself, a geographical space limited by the sea and by dangerous cliffs from which it is impossible to escape.

Notes

1. A personal–impersonal double level focuses on the negative and negativity, whereas masochism, by stressing the contractual and ritual element, proposes a system made by expectations, suspensions and avoidance of reality.
2. On the theme of the island, see Previti 2010.

Chance

I.

In the previous chapters I had occasion to evoke the reflection of André Bazin, the most influential post-World War II French cinematographic critic, founder of the *Cahiers du cinéma* and forefather of an interpretative line of modern cinematography in which Deleuze's thought is also inscribed. Bazin's idea of the poetics of Italian neorealist directors, to which he dedicated many essays and articles, can be well summed up in the parallel between the facts alternating as in the mechanism of a gear (the plot of classical cinema, in which each scene is replaced by the subsequent one as for the scheme of perception and action), and the images presenting to the spectator as unrelated, fragmented, each with its own narrative and aesthetic autonomy (the hesitation of the camera, the persistence on the scene of modern cinema and purely optical and sound image).

But the theoretical nucleus of Bazin's thought, that is, the constitutive relationship between cinematographic image and reality, is already in place in his 1945 seminal article 'The Ontology of the Cinematographic Image'. Those few pages, which after the death of the author in 1958 were chosen to open the comprehensive edition of his writings,[1] clearly present such a relationship not as a rhetorical, political or ingenuously idealistic device – as it has been often mistakenly portrayed – but rather as the necessary outcome of the features and possibilities of the cinematographic device capable of offering an extremely faithful reproduction of our world. Thanks to its 'mechanical genesis', cinema is configured as a 'digital imprint' of reality: the film is impressed by a trace capable of adhering to life and showing the true nature of things and human beings.

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The concrete consequence of these theoretical premises is the fact that, according to Bazin, in order to accomplish the specificity of this medium we need a film renouncing any spectacular aim, the use of studios to shoot as well as any narrative montage envisaging a fast sequence of scenes. In order to support and show the flow of our reality, sequence shots, improvisation, externals, and amateur actors should be privileged. Italian neorealism, which Bazin followed attentively since its beginnings and on which he wrote profusely, represents the incarnation of this theory. In the work of authors such as Roberto Rossellini, Vittorio De Sica and Cesare Zavattini, the fact, the 'fragment of reality', is respected in its integrity, bringing to completion the most proper nature of the cinematographic device, representing that impulse towards reality obtained by its mechanical origin. It is necessary, however, to clear the ground of any characterisation of this realism as an ingenuous one: as the most attentive interpreters of Bazin did not fail to notice, the critic underlined several times how 'every realism in art was first profoundly aesthetic' (Bazin 2005b: 25): if every form of art is fed by the contradiction according to which the illusion of reality is always the fruit of artifices, work and technique, the contact with the immanence of reality at the centre of neorealist works does not represent a stylistic transgression and a return to the rough ground of reality, but is rather the result of an artistic evolution and of an expressive progress.

In order to show the most salient features of this reality that cinema constitutively strives to represent, I shall pause for a moment on the 1945 article. The main feature of this pioneering text, which represented a milestone for an entire generation of studies in the theory of cinema, is the multidisciplinary approach of the author, who calls into play anthropology, psychoanalysis, and the history of art in order to characterise the birth of photography and cinema as part of a precise wider evolutionary course. Such a course has as its goal the reproduction of reality, which is however caught in its flow, in its unpredictable character. Bazin considers the origin of plastic arts from a psychoanalytic point of view, individuating the motif of the birth of painting and sculpture in what is defined as the 'mummy complex':

> The religion of ancient Egypt, aimed against death, saw survival as depending on the continued existence of a corporeal body. Thus, by providing a defense against the passage of time is satisfied a basic psychological need in man, for death is but the victory of time. To preserve, artificially, his bodily appearance is to snatch it from the flow of time, to stow it away neatly, so to speak, in the hold of life. (Bazin 2005a: 9)

The defence against time and death by means of the preservation of corporeal appearances, lying at the origins of the Egyptian practice of mummification, is the primary function not only of religious sculptures but of all plastic arts in general, of sculpture and painting in their attempt to snatch life from what Bazin, following Bergson, calls the 'flow of time'. With the evolution of civilisation the belief in the magical function collapses and the portrait replaces mummification: a practice which certainly does not snatch the subject from physical death but rather saves it from the spiritual one by perpetuating its memory.

Following this direction, the arrival of photography and later on cinema would represent the fulfilment of the aspiration of Western painting, which finds its roots in a psychological need to substitute the real world by its double. The consequence is that in this framework the birth of the photographic image constitutes a fundamental event for the very evolution of the plastic arts. In the midst of the nineteenth century, the invention of photography, with its essentially objective character, enabled in fact both painting and sculpture to free themselves from the obsession with resemblance, to abandon the disposition to the plausible and to realism so as to reach a new aesthetic autonomy. The burden of realism would be carried by the photographic eye, the lens substituting for the human eye, taking advantage, thanks to its automatic working, of a transference of reality from the thing to its reproduction compelling us to believe in the existence of the represented object. The birth of cinema brought this process of adhesion to reality commenced by photography to its full realisation, adding to the image of things that of their movement and flow:

> The film is no longer content to preserve the object, enshrouded as it were in an instant, as the bodies of insects are preserved intact, out of the distant past, in amber. The film delivers baroque art from its convulsive catalepsy. Now, for the first time, the image of things is likewise the image of their duration, change mummified as it were. (Bazin 2005a: 14–15)

What is shown in films is not, therefore, a simple reproduction, but the very object made eternal and free from its contingent aspects, and yet not deprived of its movement: it is, indeed, a digital imprint.

II.

One might ask, however, what is the reality about which Bazin speaks, towards which cinema seems to constitutively lean? At this point the answer should be clear: it is neither, or at least it is not only, a political

and ethical reference to the comprehension of the post-war social reality, nor the fidelity to some model according to which the film should be a *mimesis*, a faithful copy. What is at stake is rather the realisation of the possibility which cinema alone carries among the various arts: namely, the restitution of time in itself, or, to use the words of the philosopher from which Bazin gets his inspiration, the return of duration. The philosopher is obviously Bergson, and the idea of life as real duration aims in the first place at defining time as an unbroken flux which creates in its continuous flow, as a non-mechanical evolution marked by novelty. Contrary to the mathematical representation we often employ, our consciousness tells us that our lived experience is a becoming, a flux which cannot be represented by the 'spatialised' time of the sciences made of discrete and homogenous instants, whose fixity is nothing but the illusion of our perception. In his 1907 *The Creative Evolution*, a text in which, paradoxically enough, cinema is used as the example of what for the philosopher is the contrary of duration – that is, the illusory movement of perception – Bergson writes: 'What is real is the continual change of form: *form is only a snapshot view of a transition*. Therefore, here again, our perception manages to solidify into discontinuous images the fluid continuity of reality' (Bergson 1944: 328; original emphasis).[2]

At a closer look, the theme of the possibility of a cinematographic restitution of time as becoming, which will be a central theme in the theory of cinema, can be usefully investigated by means of a concrete example. Going beyond the predictable reference to Italian neorealism – think, for example, about the poetics of shadowing by Cesare Zavattini, defined by Bazin as 'something like Proust in the present indicative tense' (Bazin 2005b: 7) – I shall concentrate on a cinematographic work of the 1950s to which Bazin dedicates a short piece, boldly titled *A Bergsonian Film: The Picasso Mystery.*

The cinematographic work is obviously *The Picasso Mystery* (1956), directed by the screenwriter and director Henri-Georges Clouzot, one of the protagonists of French noir cinema of the 1940s, a 'narrator of a violent and guilty world, depicted with anguish and lucidity free from any illusion, [an author] in whose heritance of naturalism is above all a declaration of moral coherence and expressive vigor' (McGilvray 2003: 74). In the film dedicated to Picasso, the director abandons the narrative and realist description as well as the reflection on evil that characterised many of his detective stories, and investigates the enigma of creativity in order to show the painter *at* work, in the literal sense of the words. In fact, thanks to a white canvas, made transparent by

the lighting system, behind which is placed the camera, Clouzot, with the help of the photography of Claude Renoir, is able to record live the genesis of each painting. The painted canvas completely saturates the shot so that the spectator is able to witness the creation of the work by facing it, almost assuming the point of view of the painter without having the artist in his or her field of view. To the first strokes traced on the canvas are added, through montage, layer after layer, other strokes and colours until the composition of the completed figure is obtained. Cinema, therefore, thanks to its mechanical nature, reveals in this way the 'various paintings which lie under the canvas' – as Picasso himself says in the film – each of which, at each stage, appears as the complete and definitive one. The result is a documentary on painting in general rather than on a painter in particular: in slightly more than one hour the film shows in coloured close-ups the 'making' of a dozen paintings spaced out by some black and white scenes showing the artist in his studio.[3] Picasso, meeting the challenge of the film, improvises drawings and oil paintings and accepts the restrictions due to the length of the film, which inevitably dictates the time available.

III.

In the case of literature and theatre, Bazin pronounces in favour of an 'impure cinema' that is able to – and should – blend with other artistic expressions, with pre-existing languages, and use them for its own good, representing by now a mature autonomous art and thus ready for comparisons and exchanges. In a similar way, the encounter between cinema and painting might produce remarkable results, fecund for both. If 'The higher standard and the low cost of photography and the ease with which pictures are taken, has at last contributed to the due evaluation of painting and to establishing it unalterably in its proper place' (Bazin 2005a: 119), if, thanks to colour photography, 'painting has been able to become the most individual of arts, the most onerous, the most independent of all compromise while at the same time the most accessible' (Bazin 2005a: 119), the mechanism of cinema capable of registering movement can contribute to reveal all the secrets of painting: *The Picasso Mystery* represents a shining example of this very possibility. In the first place, thus, this film shows a configuration and modality of the alliance between the two arts, in which cinema, after having freed it from the obsession with verisimilitude and offered it a wider accessibility and independence, is once again at the service of the pictorial art.

Having claimed that cinema is capable of revealing the mechanism of painting, it is still an open question how it does so. My guess is that it does not do so as a didactical film or a documentary would, but rather – as Bazin claims at the opening of his piece on film – by simply showing it and making it visible. What is excluded a priori by the director in his way of realising the film as well as in the simple choice of its subject is the idea of conveying a message or offering an explanation. Picasso himself is not able to give a key to reading his art, as his acts are not ruled by a sequence of cause and effect, but rather, as one might put it, by a continuous series of effects (as his famous phrase 'I don't search for, I find!' reminds us, depicting him as extraneous to any attempt at research, and always in possession of the result). In this sense the meaning of the film is profoundly Bergsonian: each line painted by the artist appears as totally unexpected, because it is the creation originating from another creation, such as – as Bazin writes with a certain emphasis – 'life which generates life' (Bazin 1997: 211):

> There is not in fact any line, any patch of color which do not appear – to appear is the right word – as rigorously unpredictable. An unpredictability which supposes, conversely, the non-explanation of the composed departing from the simple. The thing is so real that the whole principle of the film as spectacle and even, more precisely, as 'suspense' resides in this delay and *perpetual surprise*. (Bazin 1997: 211; my emphasis)

If the first filmic revolution affecting art consisted in the abolition of the frame, according to which thanks to the shot the pictorial universe corresponds to the whole universe,[4] this film clearly displays the second big novelty: the possibility of exhibiting the duration of the painting as its essential part, because what lies at the centre of the film is the completion of the work as a task *in fieri*, and not as a result. What we are able to see thanks to the cinematographic mechanism and to the procedure employed by Clouzot are the intermediate states considered not as inferior realities, as steps necessary to reach the fullness of the painting, but rather as the very focus of the work. In the film Picasso himself does not consider them as sketches or simple drafts, but as paintings in themselves – they are paintings under paintings – although they are sacrificed for the overlapping painting, the one with which the painter decides to interrupt the series:

> What *The Picasso Mystery* reveals is not that creation takes a certain amount of time, which we already knew, but that duration may be an integral part of the work itself, and additional dimension, which is foolishly ignored once a painting has been completed. More accurately, all we knew until now were

> 'canvases', vertical sections of a creative flow more or less arbitrarily decided upon by the painter himself, in sickness and in health. What Clouzot at least reveals is the painting itself, i.e., a work that exists in time, that has its own duration, its own life, and sometimes – as at the end of the film – a death that precedes the extinction of the artist. (Bazin 1997: 212)

If the work-in-progress of painting or its transparent realisation were not new in cinemas, Clouzot, by excluding from the film any didactical, biographical or descriptive aspect, has the merit of making them the true and only spectacular elements of his work, obtaining the entire film from the vision of duration in itself. As already said, the idea that cinema is the only device able to reveal the proper temporality of painting highlights among other things an often present and essential element of Bazin's thought: namely, the conviction that the novelty of the cinematographic image brings to bear change and evolution for all other arts as well. In this case we can say that cinema complicates the traditional system of arts as it was envisioned by Lessing in the eighteenth century, making painting – paradoxically enough – a temporal art.

The will of the director to make visible the becoming beyond the forms also justifies, according to Bazin, his decision to accelerate the action, killing any idle time or showing more than one stroke at the same time. The restrictions of montage, very far from a strict prescription as has been usually understood, are eluded when, for example, the acceleration is exhibited, manifested but not used to deceive and seduce the spectator with a false combination of images: Clouzot understood the necessity of the time of the show (as opposed to that of reality) – given that *The Picasso Mystery* is a film and not a documentary – that however neither betrays nor distorts real time, Bergson's concrete duration.

In a way, in some similar aspects to Clouzot's project on Picasso, the aspiration to make duration visible, the flow of time, lies at the centre of the poetics of the contemporary artist Bill Viola. With the aid of digital composition, in his art videos Viola presents the themes of the great pictorial works of the tradition in a composition in which movement is played in slow motion. Examples of this appearance of time in person, as Deleuze would have called it, of a fourth dimension which seems to be constituted as 'thinking' and tangible in front of the spectator (almost a concretisation of the Bergsonian idea of 'the cone of memory'), are works by Viola such as *The Greeting* (1995), inspired by Pontormo's *Visitation* (1514–16), or rather *Emergence* (2002), with Christ emerging from the baptismal font in an extreme slow motion which makes the movements of the various characters fluctuate in the visual field. As the artist himself comments:

> For me one of the decisive moments of the last one hundred and fifty years is the animation of the image, the advent of moving images. Perhaps one day we would acknowledge that the insertion of the time factor in visual arts has been as crucial as the affirmation of the value of perspective by Brunelleschi, opening in this way the three-dimensional space in painting. Nowadays painting has a fourth dimension, and images have acquired life… The true basic instruments, the true raw material, are not the video camera or the monitor, but rather time and experience. (Viola 2008: 191; my translation)

IV.

The unpredictable and surprising character of Picasso's painting revealed by Clouzot's films carries another element worth noticing, which, however, is barely appreciable in Bazin's writing, mentioned only in the long quotation reported in the previous paragraph without being properly developed. It is what we might call the role of *chance*, of the strange contingency guiding the pictorial gesture once we describe it not as the outcome of cause–effect relations, but rather, exactly, as the spontaneous outcome of the artistic process.

The theme of fortuitousness strongly emerges in the analysis of another great painter, namely Francis Bacon, that Gilles Deleuze sketches in his *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* (2003). His painting, whose aim is that of making visible the invisible forces operating on bodies, shifting them and deforming them, is defined as neither an abstract nor a figurative art, but rather as a 'figural' one. A figural painting is one capable of preserving the figure without becoming an illustrative or representative gesture, without implying a narration (curiously enough, this is the goal of Clouzot as well, who with *The Picasso Mystery* realises a film halfway between realism and abstraction, a film which is clearly neither narrative nor constituted by images alone, similarly to experimental avant-garde films). What might the painter do in order to overcome the pictorial character of painting without taking the road of pure abstraction, avoiding both painting clichés and subverting pictorial clichés by means of exclusively intellectual operations? Deleuze answers:

> 'Free marks' will have to be made rather quickly on the image being painted so as to destroy the nascent figuration in it and to give the Figure a chance, which is the *improbable itself*. These marks are accidental, 'by chance'; but clearly the same word, 'chance,' no longer designates probabilities, but now designates a type of choice or action without probability. These marks can be called 'nonrepresentative' precisely because they depend on the act of chance

> and express nothing regarding the visual image: they only concern the hand of the painter. (Deleuze 2003: 93–4)

However, the involuntary and casual aspects are necessarily accompanied by an element of selection that enables the free manual movements, the 'accidental' marks sketched by the painter, to be re-introduced in a cohesive and even more powerful whole.

This reading of the artistic activity of Bacon, so congenial to Deleuze's philosophy in its attention to the impersonal aspect of chance as to make one think of a stretching of his own thought, is in truth an almost literal transposition of what the painter himself claims in various interviews, and in particular in his conversations with the critic David Sylvester. Bacon insists more than once on the fortuitous character of his gestures as the only possibility of realising the operation he is most interested in: namely, 'opening the valves of sensation', 'placing a trap' to catch dynamism, arriving at a definition of himself as 'a medium of chance'. A too self-conscious and intentional practice, in fact, risks missing its mark of capturing the forces and the vital element, which can be truly seized only by 'inevitable' marks and colours driven by the odd necessity of chance (Sylvester 2003: 17, 50, 120, 84; my translation). And chance is recalled by Bacon as an always present vital force going beyond the specific moment of painting. For example, to the question on the reason why, if life is a game without any sense as he often claims, he still wants to live, he replies: 'I am avid of living, and I am avid as an artist. I am avid of what chance can, and I hope will, give me: what overtakes by far whatever can be logically calculated' (Sollers 2001: 13; my translation). This new logic obtained by illogical means, united to the avidity for life, places Bacon in the series of overflowing and extreme characters dear to Deleuze, in which Welles partakes as well, with whom the painter shares a love for Shakespeare and for the great tragic figures (as well as a bizarre form of Nietzscheism: as Bacon would say, 'my male ideal? The Nietzsche of the football team' (quoted in Sollers 2001: 44)).

From the point of view of the pictorial production, the casual, involuntary marks are 'capable of suggesting deeper ways with which trapping the fact one is obsessed with', without limiting oneself to the simple illustration of the object represented (Sylvester 2003: 50; my translation). This aspect, which aims at the destruction of any figurative eventuality, is well described by Deleuze:

> These almost blind manual marks attest to the intrusion of another world into the visual world of figuration. To a certain extent, they remove the painting from the optical organization that was already reigning over it and rendering

> it figurative in advance. The painter's hand intervenes in order to shake its own dependence and break up the sovereign optical organization: one can no longer see anything, as if in a catastrophe, a chaos. (Deleuze 2003: 101)

But Bacon does not fail to highlight at the same time how instinct and spontaneous gestures are rooted in a certain kind of knowledge and wisdom, and should involve the establishment of a certain order if one wants to 'open up a field of sensations', if one wants to violently affect 'the nervous system' of the spectator. In this sense, as Deleuze himself notices, chance coincides with an act of choice, free and hazardous. As we can read in a 1962 interview,

> You know, in my case each painting . . . is something fortuitous. I foresee it in my mind, I foresee it, and yet I am almost never able to realize it as I foresaw it. It transforms when I apply the color . . . And color often does better than I am able to do. Is it a fortuitous fact? Perhaps one might say that that is not accidental, because choosing to preserve a part of this chance over another becomes a selective process. One obviously tries to keep the vitality of the hazard preserving the continuity. (Sylvester 2003: 16; my translation)

The burst of hazard into continuity, of chaos into order, of recklessness in knowing, belongs for Bacon in the first place to the initial phase of a work, a pre-pictorial act in which the artist might throw the colours casually onto the canvas or draw some lines without precisely knowing where he or she is driving to ('I rush my hand. Very simply I push the painting in the hand and I rush it' (Sylvester 2003: 81; my translation)); still, such a burst can take place in the middle of the work as well, when the painting can undergo some unexpected transformations leading the artist to unforeseen places, transformations instantly hitting the spectator the more so when they are accomplished almost without will. In this respect Bacon tells us how more than once, out of pure exhaustion, he covered a painting he considered trivial and too illustrative with colours and casual brush strokes, and suddenly acknowledged that those marks, intended to destroy the painting, were closer to the image he was striving to achieve. Eventually, although not explicitly acknowledged, the casual factor seems to determine the outcome as well, given that the painter, driven by a mix of unconsciousness and consciousness, takes the instinctive choice to stop his hand.

All this – and indeed this is a result only cinema is able to obtain – is clearly noticeable at work in the Picasso painting for Clouzot, although in Bazin's piece this is related to the spontaneity and novelty of the creative act, rather than to the unconscious and irrational forces to

which Bacon often refers to in his conversations on painting. The relation between Bacon and Picasso, of which we find no trace in Deleuze, has on the other hand been stressed by Philippe Sollers who, by not overlooking the theme of chance, individuates in both painters a 'payback critical of the passive spirit', as well as the ability of their paintings of 'disorienting' the walls, obliging 'the whole room, the building and even the streets to show themselves in their fragile duration' (Sollers 2003: 29, 57, 57; my translation).

The casualness of Picasso's first manual gestures is evident in one of the earlier scenes of the film, which captures the genesis of a drawing departing from two marks, one horizontal and the other diagonal, traced by the painter utterly by chance, as is evident to any spectator, and then reconciled so as to form a figure. The infinite possibilities of metamorphosis of the painting in its composition appear, for example, in the scene in which the painter meets the director's challenge of finishing the painting in a brief time window, dictated by the length of film left. In one of the few lines of the film, Picasso says: 'Wait and see, I'll have a surprise for you.' He then draws some lines which initially form a flower bowl, which transforms itself under the eyes of the spectators into a fish, then suddenly turns into a rooster, and, at the last second, into a face. Thus, the decision sanctioning the completeness of the works seems to be guided by a will that is not entirely rational.

Bacon mentions precisely Picasso in answering a question by Sylvester about the possibility of a relationship between the very process of painting and the sensation accompanying the game of roulette (which the painter claims to love for its impersonality, as opposed to the personal relationship players often try to establish with other gambling games), the impression of being synchronised with the wheel and thus unable to fail. He answers: 'Here, I am sure that there is in point of fact a very strong connection. After all Picasso once remarkably said: "I don't need to gamble, as I constantly play with chance"' (Sylvester 2003: 88; my translation).

Notes

1. The collection of the vast majority of his writings was published in four volumes between 1958 and 1962 with the general title *Qu'est-ce que le cinéma?*, translated in English in the two volumes titled *What Is Cinema?*
2. The last chapter of *The Creative Evolution* is titled 'The Cinematographical Mechanism of Thought and the Mechanical Illusion'. In it, Bergson equates the illusory perception of a false movement composed by a series of homogenous

instants to the succession of cinematographic frames (see the first chapter in this volume, 'Movement').

3. Regarding the use of colour, Bazin comments on Clouzot's decision to realise the film in black and white (however impressed on a coloured film) except for the moments in which the (coloured) paintings are shown, stating that in this way Clouzot is able to reproduce the mental process according to which, by contemplating a painting, we annihilate natural reality to the advantage of the pictorial one.
4. Bazin speaks of this 'first revolution' in the chapter titled 'Painting and Cinema'.

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Deleuze, Darwin and the Categorisation of Life

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Abstract

I begin with Deleuze's criticism of the Darwinian concept of difference as leading to the inaccurate assumption that difference occurs within individuals and species. Deleuze radicalises Darwin's theory by disrupting the ontological stability of species and extant individualities. I examine how Deleuze's project relates to punctuated equilibrium and the discovery of the amount of variation within the human genome, showing that these recent developments make Deleuze's critique less applicable by showing that Darwinian classification schemes should include a greater openness to difference. A complete alignment between evolutionary biology and Deleuze may be impossible given the limitations of evolutionary biology, but evolutionary biology can rethink the ontological permanence it gives to species and individuals.

Keywords: Deleuze, evolutionary biology, Darwin, difference, classification, species, punctuated equilibrium

I. Introduction

In the years following his trip on HMS *Beagle*, Charles Darwin challenged the meaning of variation within living things, formulating his theory of evolution by natural selection to explain the diversity of characteristics living things possess. Since that time, evolutionary biology has incorporated Mendelian inheritance and the relatively new field of genetics to offer better explanations for the origins of new

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species and novel individuals. A century after Darwin, Gilles Deleuze qualifies and resituates, without opposing, philosophies of 'univocal being' in which 'Being is said in a single and same sense of everything of which it is said' (Deleuze 1994: 36) within his larger 'philosophy of difference'. As Deleuze himself recognises, there are a number of points of convergence and divergence between these two theories in their explanations of how difference appears and operates within the world. Both theories reject a typology that classifies entities into universal, absolute categories and propose a system by which new beings and new differences can come into existence; yet Darwin stops short of privileging differences over individuals, and instead provides the notion of species with a sense of ontological stability incompatible with Deleuze's concept of individuation. Darwin references individual differences rather than taxonomic structures, but from a Deleuzian perspective, Darwin's use of the categories of individuals and species presupposes processes of individuation that constitute individuals which can subsequently be sorted into species. This paper examines these similarities and differences between Deleuze's philosophy of difference[1] and Darwin's theory of evolution, focusing on Deleuze's compliments and criticisms of the Darwinian project. Deleuze critiques Darwin because the Darwinian concept of difference is 'difference inherent in individuals' rather than 'individual difference', a concept that leads Darwin to inaccurately assume that difference occurs within individuals and within species whereas a true philosophy of difference claims individuals and species develop through processes of individuation. Deleuze's philosophy of difference borrows from Darwin the critique of hierarchical classification schemes that substitutes a dynamic model, but radicalises Darwin's theory by disrupting even the ontological stability of species and extant individualities. Since there have been several important shifts in evolutionary biology since Darwin, this paper also examines how Deleuze's project relates to two more recent developments within the field, punctuated equilibrium and the discovery of the amount of genetic variation within the human genome, focusing on whether the Deleuzian critiques of Darwin's version of evolution are still applicable. These recent developments within evolutionary biology make the Deleuzian critique of Darwin less applicable to contemporary evolutionary studies, as these discoveries have shown that the Darwinian classification schemes are in need of revision to include a greater openness to difference. While a complete alignment between evolutionary biology and Deleuze may be impossible given the technological and structural limitations of evolutionary biology, at the very least evolutionary biology

can rethink the ontological permanence it gives to the categories of species and individuals.

II. Deleuzian Ontologies

A preliminary difficulty confronting this project is the variation between Deleuze's ontologies as expressed in *Difference and Repetition*, *A Thousand Plateaus* and even *What Is Philosophy?*, for how Deleuze situates and explicates both processes of individuation and their relationship to species and extant individuals shifts as Deleuze modifies his project. It is worthwhile to recall some of the differences between these works before moving into a direct comparison of Deleuze, Darwin and contemporary evolutionary biology. One of the most popular characterisations of Deleuze, made by Alain Badiou and Slavoj Žižek among others, is that Deleuze's ontology works out into a transcendental idealism inasmuch as it reinstates an ontological divide between the immanent and the transcendent. *Difference and Repetition* and *Logic of Sense*, according to this analysis, set up an ontological system where subjective processes precede and condition experience, a system that starts with the empirical and seeks its necessary transcendental conditions.[2] As Deleuze desires to escape subjectivity and the focus on the immanence of appearance that characterises phenomenology, his early work is aimed at developing a transcendental critique of representation that draws from Kant the notion of synthesis and production in order to explain the conditions necessary for the possibility of the real. Yet Deleuze wants to avoid entirely accepting the Kantian position, and so posits that the syntheses which produce the real are not subjective constructs but are embedded in the very production of reality rather than in the manner in which it is represented. Alistair Welchman's commentary on the project of the early Deleuze says 'Deleuze effects a speculative reconstruction of reality that is not relative to specifically human interests, . . . a reconstruction driven by the transcendental and critical thought that the real processes of production of empirical objects cannot themselves be objects' (Welchman 2009: 32). *Difference and Repetition* portrays the processes that produce objects as transcendental and outside the bounds of immanence for the purposes of situating them as conditions of reality rather than elements of reality itself. In studying these processes, Deleuze's investigation begins in the empirical realm and gradually traces back to their transcendental conditions; it keeps a foot in the field of experience, and in doing so essentialises the nature of the empirical just enough so that Deleuze is

never able to fully escape a concept of subjectivity nor a presupposition of the products of the transcendental processes being described. *Difference and Repetition* depends on a form of subjectivity, as in its description of the syntheses of time it posits 'larval selves' that think about and draw together temporality in order to ground it (Deleuze 1994: 78). Such larval selves are fragmented pieces of subjectivity spread out across the organic stratum, and as such they are in part necessary for the constitution of temporality as it is consciously apprehended. The fact that, as Welchman says, 'it appears that living/lived time is still *constituted* by contemplative subjects/selves . . . ' (Welchman 2009: 43; original emphasis), indicates that the subjective constitution of representation that was the hallmark of Kant's transcendental idealism is not completely absent from Deleuze's early ontology.

Yet this changes in *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus*, where, in partnership with Guattari, Deleuze resituates the transcendental as a process within the materiality – which Deleuze defines as desiring-production – of the world. The fundamental difference in method is that whereas in *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze began from the empirical, in *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze begins with the transcendental, or with the notion that experience is constituted. Deleuze does not work back to the syntheses, but begins with the notion of synthesis by seeing it as immanent within the empirical. One does not have to leave the empirical to get to the transcendental conditions – they are completely contained within it. The clear difference in ontology is that there is no need for a metaphysical subject, no need to ground the transcendental within the organic stratum; the transcendental now comes as part and parcel of the materiality of the world. In explaining this relationship with regards to temporality, Welchman says:

> Nevertheless, two important changes are obvious: in the first place, the role and position of anything like the subject have changed; and, in the second place, the syntheses are no longer understood as constitutive of temporality. Underlying these changes is a modification of Deleuze's basic strategy from attempting to ground his thought on a transcendental constitution of time dependent on the organic stratum to a kind of temporalisation (schematisation) of logical operators into a transcendental conception of matter. (Welchman 2009: 49)

Temporality, which in *Difference and Repetition* had been conceived of as dependant in part on a mode of subjectivity, becomes, in *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus*, caught up in the understanding of

matter as desiring-production. In making this shift, Deleuze extricates himself from a transcendentally constituting subjectivity.[3]

Deleuze's attempt to supplant Darwinian evolution refers to a constituting plane that precedes individuals, as the failures of Darwinian evolution, from a Deleuzian perspective, come from its attempt to adhere to the stability of individuality and species as ontological forms, a failure which Deleuze works to overcome by uncovering the transcendental condition for individuals, species and other kinds. How successful this attempt is, and how much it separates itself from the contemporary field of evolutionary biology, depends in part on where such transcendental conditions are located. This point can be made clearer with a discussion of Deleuze's critique of the category of species in *Difference and Repetition*.

III. Deleuze, Darwin and Speciation

Because of the problem associated with previous means of representation – that it subjugates difference to a larger unity, but only by assuming the unity rather than demonstrating it (Deleuze 1994: 33) – Deleuze argues for the primacy of individuation over species, or of the need for science and other related discourses to deal first with the conditions for the appearance of the singular individual and second with that individual's categorisation. The reason for this is that processes of individuation have ontological priority over species, as the very idea of species presupposes the existence of individuals, constituted by processes of individuation, which can be sorted into categories. Not only do species presuppose individuation, but species presuppose that individuals constituted as such are open to change through sensation and intensity (247). It is clear that Deleuze inherits this concept from Gilbert Simondon's examination of the genesis of individuals, where Simondon posits the necessity of a principle of individuation in order to properly situate the individual within the study of the growth of organisms:

> *Research carried out under these assumptions* [*that individuation need only be studied in regards to an individual's characteristics*] *accords an ontological privilege to the already constituted individual.* Such research may well prevent us from adequately representing the process of ontogenesis … *The idea that individuation might have a principle at all is a crucial postulate* … (Simondon 1992: 298; original emphasis)

Simondon opposes any study of organisms that begins by conceiving of the living individual as a constant essence, a unity incapable of

fundamental disruption. He articulates as an alternative a study of the preindividual, or the processes of individuation that provide entities and relations their eventual fixity. Albert Toscano's excellent study of theories of individuation in *The Theatre of Production* emphasises how this study is a necessary condition for any other scientific study, saying:

> Simondon proposes we turn to a domain – that of the preindividual – where neither relationality nor individuality can be branded with the fixity that would allow them to be subjected to a logic of predication. To comprehend the genesis of individuals . . . is therefore inseparable from the task of thinking the genesis or constitution of the relation itself. (Toscano 2006: 137–8)

Individuation, as the study of the processes that give determination, predicates and fixity to entities and relations one encounters, does not assume the individual but seeks the conditions of its formation. By definition it also does not assume speciation or the particular grouping of organisms along the lines of genealogy and inherited traits. For both Deleuze and Simondon, species are an illusion patterned onto the appearance of individuals via individuation. Whatever their utility in a scientific sense, they do not provide the tools for judging individuals in terms of their uniqueness and precise configuration. But it would be a mistake to think Deleuze's system of individuation exactly copies that of Simondon, for Deleuze, unlike Simondon, refers his system of individuation back to differentiality and multiplicity, thus finding a way to describe the beginnings of a system without recourse to preconstituted individualities like Simondon's preindividualities (and, arguably, the larval selves of *Difference and Repetition*). Simondon disassembles the ontological primacy of the individual, but does so by referring to the ontological order of a principle that constructs individuals in a certain way. Deleuze, by contrast, posits multiplicities that do not count as units, principles or universals, and which as a result are constantly open and productive of difference (Toscano 2006: 162). Unlike the Aristotelian ontology which designates the categories as prior to and more essential than individuals (Aristotle 1984: 1037b29), Deleuze is able to conceive of individuals apart from any categorical apparatus by looking at processes of individuation, and as a result the necessity of having an ordering concept or image prior to the individual disappears:

> It is not the individual which is an illusion in relation to the genius of the species, but the species which is an illusion – inevitable and well founded, it is true – in relation to the play of the individual and individuation. (Deleuze 1994: 250)

Scientists and philosophers have continually resorted to the method of categorising objects, ideas, faculties and other existents through generalised groups as in doing so they are able to develop a useful knowledge that seems to explain the nature of the world they inhabit. Deleuze's concern comes from the fact that the knowledge developed hides the more basic phenomenon of individuation. To use the language of species before one has understood the processes that constitute an individual is to conceal life as it actually is. Deleuzian biologist Stanley Shostak makes a similar point in *Evolution of Sameness and Difference: Perspectives on the Human Genome Project*, saying that to use characteristics to understand and classify beings before really understanding how individual beings are constructed leads to absurdity:

> In the epistemology of life, nothing ranks higher than sameness for communicating, especially communicating ideology with conviction. As a consequence, many patently absurd assertions about life go unchallenged in 'ordinary science' and are only elevated in 'revolutionary' science: molds and mosses have a thallus (even if their thalli are the same only in word); Embryophyta and Metazoa produce embryos (with nothing whatsoever to recommend the comparison); head, thorax, and abdomen, appendages, jaws (mandibles, maxillae), and limb (trochanter, tibia, etc.) exist in insects and vertebrates (sharing nothing more than their names). (Shostak 1999: 39–40)

Shostak believes the problem with science emphasising sameness is that it posits sameness without considering whether the category is warranted, and either ignores or hides the important role difference plays in constituting the unity of life. Species, as units of biological classification defined by a similarity of characteristics – conventionally, the ability of individuals within that group to interbreed – are an example par excellence of this problem, and the reason why Deleuze's critique of Darwinian evolution will focus in large part on speciation.[4]

Realising the limits of species indicates that a proper conception of difference and the correct organisation of series needs to open itself to chance, to an evolution of forms, leaving behind restrictive regimes of representation. This does not mean that categories like species or divisions by kind need to be abandoned, but they cannot be taken as ontologically sound:

> The principle of degradation obviously does not account either for the creation of the most simple system or for the evolution of systems (the threefold difference between biological systems and physical ones). The living therefore testifies to the existence of another order, a heterogeneous order of another dimension – as though individuating factors or the atoms taken

> individually with their power of mutual communication and fluent instability there enjoyed a higher degree of expression. (Deleuze 1994: 255)

In a sense, Deleuze is trying to rehabilitate a sense of creativity at the heart of reality – an opening to becomings and differences that opposes a causal or deterministic worldview. Viewed from this perspective, *Difference and Repetition* is a response to a realist understanding of the world that sees the actual as all there is and claims the only task for philosophy and science is finding the proper categories and representations to understanding the world. Deleuze's reference back to the differences underlying and conditioning representation does the work of instilling the world with a creativity which cannot be subjugated to similitude, as there is no way to take them up into an already existing category.

Before moving on to a discussion of Darwin and contemporary evolutionary biology, it is important to review the conceptualisations Deleuze gives science throughout his corpus, so as to be in a better position to see just how well contemporary evolution fits into Deleuze's ontology. Although I have so far been primarily discussing *Difference and Repetition*, because that work never provides science as a whole with a theoretical formulation, Deleuze's other works must be taken up. What is relevant within *Difference and Repetition* is what is discussed above: the critique of similitude, the call for a study based on difference, and the search for the transcendental conditions of the real. These characteristics, understood in broad strokes, continue to hold true in Deleuze's later work with Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?* The primary difference between the two works – at least in regards to scientific knowledge – is the relationship that philosophy has to science, for *Difference and Repetition*, beginning as it does in the empirical, implies that the conceptuality of philosophy must begin from the same starting point as science. From that point, philosophy delves into the transcendental conditions, while science articulates the ontology and the relationality of the entities which have been constituted (inasmuch as such things can be studied empirically and, through a scientific methodology, given a degree of intellectual rigor).[5] By contrast, *What Is Philosophy?* claims that the difference between the two fields lies in their relationships to the infinite chaos, or differences, at the heart of being. Philosophy works on concept, providing a consistency to the chaos and bringing it all together to contain it; science works on functions and propositions, attaching itself to the chaos in order to grasp its operations. Science accomplishes this by slowing down the speeds of the

chaos so it can draw up a schematic of it, one replete with formulas and variables. Science actualises the plane of immanence, in part by describing relationships and mechanisms that illustrate how objects, forces and elements behave within specific environments. Evolution by natural selection, as a model for understanding the production and perpetuation of variation within populations, operates as such a mechanism. Because of the approach science takes to the infinite chaos, it is unable to ever grasp the whole of being; instead, by its very nature, it produces breaks and discontinuities – blind spots that science recognises as thresholds beyond which it cannot function:

> It is not only the diversity of these limits that entitles us to doubt the unitary vocation of science. In fact, each limit on its own account generates irreducible, heterogeneous systems of coordinates and imposes thresholds of discontinuity depending on the proximity or distance of the variable … Science is haunted not by its own unity but by the plane of reference constituted by all the limits or borders through which it confronts chaos. (Deleuze and Guattari 1991: 119)

Science allows a grasp on the world through the construction of grids and references (Deleuze and Guattari 1991: 127). The category of species functions as a frame of reference that enables a demarcation of the world, but the category runs into its limits when it tries to conceptualise the individual. The nature of science means that the truth of species is not absolute, but relative. Science is creative, but what it creates are determinations and quantities of information (132). Describing science like this undermines arguments that portray science as the ultimate interpreter of how things are. Science adds important understandings to our collective knowledge, but it does not occupy by itself a privileged place among the various fields mobilised to engage with difference.

The limit of this reading of science to that talk of a science of functions and functives is to talk of a science expressed through theories, hypotheses and axiomatic propositions; while this is true for some variations of science, there are other means by which science is conducted. Manuel DeLanda's comparison of Deleuze's various ontologies makes this point clear, as 'All the examples of "functives" (the components of functions) given in WIP [*What Is Philosophy?*] come from classical mechanics. No mention is made, for instance, of the operators of quantum physics, which use functions themselves as inputs and outputs' (DeLanda 2002: 221–2). Recent discoveries within science have opened pathways to think of entities and forces outside the functive model, and are more open to the chaos which underlies

it. In addition to the quantum mechanics DeLanda mentions, there are also new fields of computer modelling and contemporary models for evolutionary variation. The picture of science in *What Is Philosophy?* is the modern mechanics and dynamics of individuals like Darwin, Curie and Einstein, but contemporary science is more adaptable to the organic, rhizomatic ontology Deleuze discusses in other works.

In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari paint a different picture of what they call nomad or minor science. This science is contrasted to the royal or major science of axiomatic propositions, for while royal science deals with the field of exact and inexact, nomad science deals with anexact – that which is neither inexact nor exact, but which expresses itself as a vague essence. While royal science works to describe, set out, verify and segregate, nomad science follows, connects, flows and problematises. Whereas state science works out principles, nomad science opens itself to new problems, searching not for answers but for opportunities for new encounters:

> Royal science is inseparable from a 'hylomorphic' model implying both a form that organizes matter and a matter prepared for the form; it has been shown that this schema derives less from technology or life than from a society divided into governors and governed, and later, intellectuals and manual laborers … It seems that nomad science is more immediately in tune with the connection between content and expression in themselves, each of these two terms encompassing both form and matter … [nomad science] *follows* the connections between singularities of matter and traits of expression, and lodges on the level of these connections, whether they be natural or forced. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 369)

Royal science is formalised and established, and as such continues to articulate along the same lines again and again. Once chemistry received its theoretical elaboration through the concept of weight, and once Euclidean geometry articulated a theory of gravitational parallels, they both became forms of royal science (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 370). Yet when a new element is introduced which shifts the theoretical grounding of such science, one finds a space for nomad science. Thus Deleuze calls nomad science, or smooth space, 'the space of smallest deviation' (371); it does not overturn royal science, but neither does it work with it. It vectors off in another direction, not trying to discover the forms and axioms that royal science does, but to see where the singularity of their new direction leads. Ideally, both sciences can work in concert (inasmuch as that is possible, seeing that one cannot unify the two completely), for while nomad science can invent problems, it

takes royal science to develop solutions via its theoretical apparatus (374). Nomad science deviates from the functive science of *What Is Philosophy?*, and is more open to changes than axiomatic science. As such, it can perhaps theorise contemporary scientific discoveries in a way functive science cannot; as DeLanda says, it is 'the "more Deleuzian" approach to the subject' (DeLanda 2002: 223).

These two theories of science, the functive, axiomatic one and the nomadic one, are both vital to an encounter between Deleuze and contemporary evolutionary biology, as without both it is impossible to see how science can and should react both to the Deleuzian critique from the perspective of difference, and to the recent discoveries of punctuated equilibrium and genetic diversity. Before beginning that encounter, it is necessary to discuss Darwinian evolution and Deleuze's response to it to provide the proper context for the developments in contemporary evolutionary biology.

Charles Darwin, with his book *The Origin of Species*, introduced the theory of evolution by natural selection, proposing a solution to one of biology's most fundamental problems: how to account for the similarity and diversity observed in living things and life forms. Darwin's observations suggest that individuals could be viewed as products of a sequence of certain biological events. Instead of categorising living things by morphology, Darwin proposed a mechanism or process for how groups such as species came to be. Individuals' characteristics depend on the characteristics of their ancestors:

> By the theory of natural selection all living species have been connected with the parent-species of each genus, by differences not greater than we see between the natural and the domestic varieties of the species at the present day; and these parent-species, now generally extinct, have in their turn been similarly connected with more ancient forms; and so on backwards, always converging to the common ancestor of each great class. (Darwin 1909: 335)

Knowing that there is a historical process underlying biological classification opens up the possibility that there might be more than one classification system. If the genealogies of living organisms converge in the past on a common ancestor, then at some point in the past the classes of things were different, and they will change in the future. Species once existed that have since become extinct or are present in different forms. The integration of fossils into evolutionary theory supports the thesis that natural selection can lead to extinction or to the survival of species. Darwin supports his theories of evolution by natural selection by revealing the similarities between extinct species

and currently existing species, although many forms did not contribute to current groups (Darwin 1909: 370). The Aristotelian system may have been a useful tool, but it loses its utility as it fails to account for change. Life forms must be in a state of constant change if we are to make sense of the empirical evidence provided to us. 'Scarcely any paleontological discovery is more striking than the fact that the forms of life change almost simultaneously throughout the world' (373). Change must involve the generation of variation in a manner both random and undirected, while another force – natural selection – weeds out that which is not adaptive.

Darwin develops his theory of evolution by natural selection by focusing on differences among individuals as a driver of continuous change. Darwin claims differences among individuals (even within the same species) occur naturally – some people are just taller, thinner, faster, and so on, than others – and some of these differences help individuals survive and reproduce, passing the advantageous trait to their offspring. In order for the trait to be selected for, it must be heritable, as even the traits of the most healthy and fit organism in a population will not be selected for if the organism fails to reproduce. Individuals without a selected trait will have fewer offspring – or be less fit, in Darwinian language. Over many generations, assuming that the trait continues to provide an advantage in reproduction, that trait will become common in the species, possibly displacing individuals without it. Individuals without that trait may develop a different trait that is similarly advantageous, leading to a new deviation from the original line, or they may just decline in number as the individuals with the selected trait expand:

> But if variations useful to any organic being ever do occur, assuredly individuals thus characterized will have the best chance of being preserved in the struggle for life; and from the strong principle of inheritance, these will tend to produce offspring similarly characterized. This principle of preservation, or the survival of the fittest, I have called Natural Selection. (Darwin 1909: 141)

For Darwin, there is no archetype or intelligence that is shaping the development of species and the production of new and unique individuals; it is a natural force working independently of any telos. Yet because of natural selection, small differences – a slightly larger beak, thicker fur, and so on – can become, over time, differentiating qualities that distinguish one species from another, inevitably changing

the previous classification system. Inheritance, variation and natural selection are, together, the three core elements of evolutionary theory.

Deleuze references Darwin because individual differences are critical to the process of evolution. Instead of seeing difference only through the lens of representation, Darwin's theory examines individual differences. Darwinian evolution is not motivated by movements towards similarity but by divergences of groups of organisms. Processes of individuation are highlighted rather than processes of unification:

> The great taxonomic units – genera, families, orders, and classes – no longer provide a means of understanding difference by relating it to such apparent conditions as resemblances, identities, analogies, and determined oppositions. *On the contrary*, these taxonomic units are understood on the basis of such fundamental mechanisms of natural selection, as difference and the differentiation of difference. (Deleuze 1994: 248; original emphasis)

In Darwin's view, classification systems result from fundamental processes that lead to difference – processes like natural selection of individual heritable variation. Individual differences are transmitted from one generation to another and the most fit are likely to be passed on. Thus nature selects for those traits that enable organisms to adapt to environments and may lead to divergence of populations. Deleuze identifies three Copernican revolutions at work in Darwinism: the formation of individual differences via a divergence of traits and constitution of populations, the revelation of the links between differences through the coordination of traits within a population, and the production of differences as the ongoing basis of differentiation and connection (Deleuze 1994: 249). Darwinism, in other words, allows the thought of categories reshapeable by processes of individuation and the idea that individuals have within themselves individuating differences (250). However, Darwinism fails in a crucial way for Deleuze, as it references only differences borne by individuals and not individual differences as such. Darwin still provides the notion of species with ontological stability by positing that the 'fields of individuation', as Simondon calls them, remain the same for all individuals within a certain species, that only once one goes outside the species can one find a different field of individuation:

> However, this field of individuation is posited only formally and in general: it seems to be 'the same' for a given species, and to vary in intensity from one species to another. It seems, therefore, to depend upon the species and the determination of species, and to refer us once more to differences borne by the individual, not individual differences. (Deleuze 1994: 252)

Darwin's model is still constrained by similitude and generality; whatever differences exist between individuals are dependent upon what differences the category of species will allow for, and difference is not freed from blockages and regimes of representation. Differences within individuals are still referred to a larger field of similitude (that of species), and as a result Darwin is unable to see the individual as the production of differences (or the result of processes of individuation).

Deleuze's discussion of evolution and Darwinism, both the positives and the negatives, extends beyond *Difference and Repetition* into his other work. In an essay written on Bergson, Deleuze states that biology shows the process of differentiation at work, and that life itself is the process of difference. Darwin helped associate the problem of difference with life in his theory of evolution even though he had a false conception of vital difference and conceived of it as something external rather than something internal. Bergson, according to Deleuze, fixes this problem by developing a concept of internal difference:

> Life is the process of difference. In this instance, Bergson is thinking less of embryological differentiation than the differentiation of species, i.e. evolution. In his idea of evolution, Darwin helped associate the problem of difference with life, even though Darwin himself had a false conception of vital difference. Opposing a particular mechanism, Bergson shows that vital difference is an *internal* difference. (Deleuze 2004: 39–40)

Deleuze's book on Bergson discusses Deleuze's positive view of evolution. Evolution, according to Deleuze, takes place from the virtual to the actual – it is a process of actualisation and creation. As a result, when speaking of evolution it is important to avoid interpreting evolution either as the 'possible' being made actual or in terms of pure actuality. Evolutionism is not a sequence of actual determinations along a single line; to conceive of it as such is to eliminate chance – or vital life – from it, and to again subsume life under a concept. Deleuze argues that a philosophy of life should carry three requirements: first, it must conceive of vital difference as internal to itself, not external; second, differences must be seen not as entering into relationships of association and addition, but dissociation and division; and third, vital difference must be seen as involving a virtuality that is actualised according to lines of divergence (Deleuze 1988: 98–9). It is clear from these notes that Deleuze advocates reshaping evolution and biological classification systems by emphasising internal difference and vital life over similitude and deterministic constructs.

The encounter in *A Thousand Plateaus* between the character Professor Challenger (representative of Deleuze's philosophy) and traditional evolutionary theory illuminates an alternative to biological classification systems that embodies these three requirements. This alternative can be schematically described as a relationship of double articulation between the plane of consistency and the plane of organisation that leaves open how differences are concretised in concepts, words and substances – or, to use the vocabulary of *A Thousand Plateaus*, how strata are formed. In the first articulation, the articulation of content, particular molecular units are chosen from particle flows and given form through an ordering of them in terms of relationship and sequence – as Deleuze and Guattari put it, content is 'formed matters'. The second articulation, the articulation of expression, provides mechanisms that shape such matters and produces composites with these matters – as Deleuze and Guattari put it, expression is 'functional structures' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 40–3). These two articulations, which exist in reciprocal presupposition, select from the differences, haecceities and speeds of the plane of consistency before ordering, binding and using them to produce entities, categories and formations. The strata formed by double articulation are characterised as

> giving form to matters, of imprisoning intensities or locking singularities into systems of resonance and redundancy, or producing upon the body of the earth molecules large and small and organizing them into molar aggregates. Strata are acts of capture, they are like 'black holes' or occlusions striving to seize whatever comes within their reach. They operate by coding and by territoriality. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 40)

A stratum works to subsume differences and intensities into its territorialisation – to capture whatever happens to fall into its sway. To be clear, this process that forms and perpetuates a stratum differs from the changes that entities undergo on a particular stratum, as for each stratum there is both an interior and an exterior milieu. The materials within a certain stratum have already been concretised – are already articulated – and, while it is furnished by the intensities and differences beyond it, is part of the stratum (just a different part from the formed objects) (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 49). The value of this framework is that it rethinks biology and evolution through difference in order to avoid the pitfalls of representation. Species, organisms and differences within individuals are traceable back to individual differences and divergent series rather than categories of

similitude. Moreover, by defining materiality outside of a mechanistic or deterministic framework,[6] Deleuze accounts for the movements and changes evolutionary theory describes without binding life to a restrictive or static conception of it.

This new ontology reinterprets Darwinism by describing Darwin's two contributions to a theory of difference as 'the substitution of populations for types, and the substitution of rates or differential relations for degrees' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 48). By focusing on populations, Darwin uncovers a mechanism for the formation of organisms within an environment that does not posit forms as pre-established but sees individuals within species as open to a whole assemblage of possible forms. Darwin says:

> The many slight differences which appear in the offspring from the same parents, or which it may be presumed have thus arisen, from being observed in the individuals of the same species inhabiting the same confined locality, may be called individual differences. (Darwin 1909: 59)

Individual embryos themselves, according to Darwin, seem to follow some 'higher organization' (Darwin 1909: 483) which compels organisms to develop according to a previously sketched-out structure; yet embryos themselves admit to a degree of variation between them, implying that there are no eternal necessary forms organisms fall into but that the cause of an individual's development is at least in part determined by 'conditions to which either parent, or their ancestors, have been exposed' (483). Additionally, as Darwinian natural selection of organisms always occurs within an environment, a particular organism's ability to survive is not measured according to an absolute form of excellence, but in relation to other organisms and the environments it inhabits. The evolution of organisms is relative and contextual, not totalised. Nevertheless, traditional Darwinian evolution does not discuss the processes of individuation that Deleuze refers to in his work. It takes place within the strata of *A Thousand Plateaus*, or alternatively within the actual of *Difference and Repetition*, as evolution applies itself primarily to individuals and the differences that they allow; there is no discussion of the double articulation or actualisation of the virtual that Deleuze respectively discusses in these two works. Yet it does begin the process of breaking the individual down, and of opening spaces to see beyond concretised forms, as Darwin points to processes preceding the individual that are responsible for shaping it – namely, the 'conditions' inherited from ancestors. The Deleuze of *Difference and Repetition* is closer to Darwin than the Deleuze of later works,

for Deleuze, like Darwin, begins his work there by examining the empirical individual before tracing back to the conditions necessary for its constitution. Deleuze posits the virtual and 'larval selves' in that work as a condition necessary for the possibility of individuals just as Darwin posits evolution by natural selection as a condition necessary for the possibility of differences within individuals. By contrast, *A Thousand Plateaus* does not even begin in the same place as Darwin, but sees it necessary to first construct the field of empiricism from which a Darwinian study of differences within individuals can function. The Darwinian project of *On the Origin of Species* and *The Descent of Man* is conditioned by the project of *A Thousand Plateaus*. Despite these differences, Darwinism begins the process of thinking difference by avoiding reference to categorical absolutes while contributing to the study of multiplicities through seeing organisms in terms of their variable traits. What must be avoided is reifying a representation of evolution, or modelling evolution solely through categorical frameworks that hide the 'chaos' Deleuze and Guattari reference in *What Is Philosophy?*

A great deal of the literature written about the connections between Deleuze and Darwin focuses on the ways in which Deleuze tries to rescue evolution from mechanistic or reductive perspectives. To save inheritance from determinism, Deleuze warns against seeing the egg as an already elaborated place, or heredity as a known event, as to make that claim is to reduce or erase the becoming at the heart of natality. The event of a new being cannot be seen as already decided – in fact, it represents a place of decoding and deterritorialisation. Despite the knowledge scientists have gained regarding DNA and the workings of inheritance, it is impossible to know the nature of an individual when all that exists is a fertilised egg. Keith Ansell-Pearson writes:

> In both cases Deleuze's aim is to show that the question of heredity is not simply one that is *given*, either by the species or by the continuity of the germ-plasm. Rather, heredity becomes transfigured, and is made vital, through the becoming of the new individual and through a 'law of life' that goes beyond laws of genealogy and filiation … Natality is always inseparable from processes of decoding and deterritorialisation. (Ansell-Pearson 1999: 9; original emphasis)

Deleuze does not want to reduce inheritance or evolution to a geneticist account which claims that all major attributes of a person can be determined solely by examining that person's genome. An element of chance is necessarily part of any becoming, and the introduction of something new into the world opens the door to reinterpreting

sedimented ways of understanding the world.[7] Evolution cannot be reduced to a 'germ-plasm' such as DNA, but neither can it be seen as applying only to species or organisms – holding either of these views restricts the flow of difference and makes evolution conform to a certain image. Evolution is a productive power, yet when it is applied *only* to species or applied *only* to extant organisms, its ability to produce becomes limited and localised; Deleuze is interested in freeing evolution by privileging the dissolution of forms rather than containment within them (Ansell-Pearson 1999: 81). A proper conception of evolution sees it as a movement involving the production of individuals, and not as a progression from individual to individual, nor as a movement from general to particular:

> The moves Deleuze is making here are crucial to his insight into germinal life and to his attempts to articulate a philosophy that conceives of the evolution of organisms as complex systems in terms of a field of individuation and intensities. (Ansell-Pearson 1999: 95)

Among the advantages of reinterpreting evolution is that this new perspective will free up the concept of life from an attachment to a mechanistic concept of evolution, one that sees life as occurring only within certain boundaries and fields.[8] As Elizabeth Grosz points out, the concept of life is something that Deleuze returns to again and again, continually trying to elaborate a definition of it not bound by conventional notions of subjectivity or recognisable forms of what constitutes the living and non-living. Deleuze's interest in pre-subjective forces and modes of living other than the human one reveal his desire to get beyond a concept of life circumscribed by common sense (Grosz 2007: 297). It escapes any restrictions put upon it by the deterministic or mechanical explanations of science, creating a more productive and organic concept.

IV. Punctuated Equilibrium and Genetic Variation

To see how Deleuze's project applies to recent developments, this paper will focus on two specific developments in recent evolutionary biology that have important consequences for our understanding of the organisation and evolution of organisms: the theory of punctuated equilibrium and recent measurements of the amount of variation within the human genome. Both will be discussed in terms of how they have modified the conceptualisation of evolution before moving on to a discussion of how Deleuze would react to them.

Punctuated equilibrium claims that evolution is not a gradual process that shifts one form to another. Instead, variation accumulates through periods of relative stasis, followed by radical shifts over relatively short periods of time. This process creates new forms before returning to periods of relative stasis for extended periods of time. The shift often occurs in a small and isolated segment of the population. Instead of seeing the slow evolution of a large group of organisms towards a new form, one sees a subsection of the group suddenly break off from the rest of the group and rapidly evolve into a different form. In the paper generally credited with providing the first comprehensive description of punctuated equilibrium, authors Stephen Gould and Niles Eldridge write:

> In summary, we contrast the tenets and predictions of allopatric speciation with the corresponding statements of phyletic gradualism previously given: 1) New species arise by the splitting of lineages, 2) New species develop rapidly, 3) A small sub-population of the ancestral form gives rise to the new species, 4) The new species originates in a very small part of the ancestral species' geographic extent – in an isolated area at the periphery of the range. (Eldridge and Gould 1972: 96)

The picture of punctuated equilibrium keeps much of Darwin's original theory in place – the idea that new species arise from variation inherent in previous species, the claim that the specific changes are selected via natural means, and the notion that changes are passed along generation to generation by reproduction – but changes how scientists see the origin of new species. For a long time after the acceptance of evolution as a theory, scientists had no explanation for gaps in fossil records where no evidence existed of an intermediary between two distinct species. Most assumed that a lack of data was the cause. Punctuated equilibrium explains the gaps and posits a new way in which new species could occur. No evidence exists because changes occur over a relatively short period of time (evolutionarily speaking), and new species develop because they originate in an isolated part of a population (where it is easier for a mutation to spread). Punctuated equilibrium also reinterprets the creative force in the formation of individual differences, seeing such creation as more of an explosion outward than a constant pressure in one direction. One often-quoted example of punctuated equilibrium, the Cambrian Explosion (the event 600 million years ago where the number of identifiable species increased rapidly over a short period of time, establishing most of the species currently recognised), is responsible for much of the diversity existing today. According to Gould,

it seems as though this explosion was part of a naturally occurring phenomenon:

> Perhaps the explosion itself was merely the predictable outcome of a process inexorably set in motion by an earlier Precambrian event. In such a case, we would not have to believe that early Cambrian times were 'special' in any way; the cause of the explosion would be sought in an earlier event that initiated the evolution of complex life … The pattern of the Cambrian explosion seems to follow a general law of growth. This law predicts a phase of steep acceleration; the explosion is no more fundamental (or in need of special explanation) than its antecedent period of slower growth or its subsequent leveling off. (Gould 1978: 127)

Punctuated equilibrium, building on Darwin's insights, posits a new process of evolution and explains the incredible diversity of life that Darwin's theory cannot.

The second development in evolutionary biology is a relatively new one, having only recently been published, and its implications are yet to be completely understood. With the recent sequencing of the human genome, scientists such as Sarah Tishkoff, Esteban Parra and Michael Bamshad have discovered an unexpected amount of genetic variation within human individuals and populations. The result of this achievement has led to a rethinking of the role variation plays within populations. Expectations of variation prior to the sequencing of the human genome were that if one were to take two individuals at random and compare their genomes, for the most part they would be the same, with differences appearing in one in every 600 or so base pairs; however, subsequent to the completion of the human genome it was discovered that on average a difference appears in one in every 60 base pairs. This appears to contradict traditional evolutionary theory, which claims that variation is eliminated by natural selection, which weeds out variations not as fit as other variations. Darwin explains this aspect of his theory in his discussion of extermination:

> therefore if an area be inhabited by very many species, each or nearly each species will be represented by few individuals; and such species will be liable to extermination from accidental fluctuations in the nature of the seasons or in the number of their enemies. The process of extermination in such cases in such cases would be rapid, whereas the production of new species must always be slow. Imagine the extreme case of as many species as individuals in England, and the first severe winter or very dry summer would exterminate thousands on thousands of species. (Darwin 1909: 140)

While nature inevitably and necessarily produces variation by the process of mutation, it also destroys it by the process of natural selection. This does not mean that individuals within a species will eventually become identical because mutation continually generates variation. There is a constant process of generating new variation and eliminating variation. Evolution by natural selection leads to certain traits becoming less important. Many believed that the amount of variation within the genome would be limited by natural selection. Yet a number of experiments mapping genetic variation across populations have revealed that groups once thought to be mostly genetically homogenous actually contain a remarkable amount of genetic variation. Over time, the genes and DNA sequences that code for particular traits have not disappeared but formed 'dead' genes littering the human genome (Coyne 2009: 67). For example, human populations within parts of East Africa, instead of containing fairly homogenous genotypes, actually possess one of the greatest amounts of variation among all the populations on the planet (Tishkoff *et al.* 2009: 1035–44). The variation in human populations is mirrored by linguistics, culture and history as well. A recent study examining the correlation between skin pigmentation and genetic diversity discovered that even people with similar skin colours have significant amounts of genetic variation between them – as the same skin colour may be caused by multiple different genetic configurations. As the authors put it, the trait of skin pigmentation is 'an example of how misleading simplistic interpretations of human variation can be …' (Parra 2007: 101). The cause of this large amount of variation is not yet known, as this discovery is relatively new, but it has problematised how subgroups of humans are classified. While earlier discoveries regarding human genetic diversity have cast doubt upon race as a biological classification (Livingstone and Dobzhansky 1962: 279–81), the excessive amount of genetic diversity within populations calls into question categories such as population (Tishkoff and Kidd 2004: S26), ethnicity (Royal and Dunston 2004: S5) and geographic location (Bamshad *et al.* 2004: 601). As one researcher puts it,

> For hundreds of years, we have based inferences of individual ancestry on proxies, such as differences in physical appearance, language, or derivative concepts of ethnicity and race. None of these characteristics is determined entirely by genetic or environmental factors, but separating out the relative contribution of each will often require sorting individuals into ancestral groups … (Bamshad *et al.* 2004: 607–8)

The study of evolutionary biology and genetics does not support the categorisation of organisms strictly by appearance, function or other obvious categories. Instead, the processes constituting the individual – such as their genome derived from their ancestral lineages – need to be the locus from which classifications of any sort gain utility and efficacy. With the revelation of the amount of diversity within the human genome, it is possible to see the stability of species – and other representations – being undermined not only over a period of time as evolution selects for new traits, but also from within the present moment as individuals, genes and pre-subjective processes take on more ontological weight in the understanding of difference and variation within all organisms.

These developments are, of course, not representative of the entirety of evolutionary biology's development post-Darwin, since like any field there are multiple voices directing its progress which are not always in agreement; however, they are relevant to this paper as they are illustrative of several ways in which variation and difference have been reinterpreted since Darwin's time. But what would Deleuze think of such developments? Deleuze would welcome any casting off of a representation or image used to restrict the flow of difference, and both developments mentioned above can be interpreted as doing such, but it is possible that the developments just replace one representation for another. In regards to punctuated equilibrium, for example, the authors of the original paper advocate using the punctuated equilibrium model instead of the model of gradual evolution in most cases. If the punctuated equilibrium model were to replace the one of gradual evolution, then Deleuze would charge evolutionary biology with substituting one representation for another. While punctuated equilibrium has been shown to be a reasonable model in certain cases, scientists for the most part have avoided completely replacing gradualism with punctuated equilibrium, referring to individual cases and their relationships to one another to determine which model for evolutionary change is adequate. Both punctuated equilibrium and gradualism are being kept around as possible explanations, but neither is referred to as the only – or the most common – way in which evolution occurs (Coyne 2009: 4–5). Moreover, the theory of punctuated equilibrium – by referring to the production of difference in certain cases as an explosion – throws the light back upon the productive forces that create difference and variation in a way Deleuze would find positive. Yet punctuated equilibrium is not wholly Deleuzian, as it gives the concepts of species and evolution by natural selection the same epistemological cachet Darwin did. As punctuated

equilibrium still functions under these concepts, it fails to focus on processes of individuation and, according to Shostak, weakens natural selection as a scientific tool:

> The problem is that lumping everything under the aegis of natural selection may yield something too attenuated to support a scientific hypothesis. Possibly natural selection could account for 'equilibria,' or stabilizing selection, but it could not, at the same time, account for 'punctuations.' (Shostak 1999: 234)

Punctuated equilibrium loosens the restrictive representations that have characterised evolution, but does not fully open evolution to new possibilities and differences.

Next, the discovery regarding the amount of variation present in the human genome is partially consonant with Deleuzian ontology inasmuch as it problematises certain categorisations of individuals and emphasises individualising elements and processes (such as those involved in the production of the human genome and historical factors like language). Categories like race, population and ethnicity – which are unable to capture the extant individual but only approach him or her – are losing their ability to explain genetic variation while individuating processes within the human genome are becoming more useful and valuable to scientists studying this discovery. This discovery is not fully consonant as it makes no reference to the virtual, treating all the elements it discusses as actual. While certain categories and evolutionary models are destabilised, one is not returned to difference or chaos but to a different part of the stratum. Mutation and variation receive a greater emphasis, but they do not achieve an overturning of representation. Despite the differences, these developments in evolutionary biology have led to an increasing focus on difference, variation and heterogeneity, upsetting well-established views on evolution and variation.

It is uncertain whether degree science – as it is generally practised – can be made to accord with Deleuzian ontology given the divergent projects of science and philosophy. The contrasting nature of *What Is Philosophy?*'s functive model of science in comparison with *A Thousand Plateaus*' major/minor science requires a nuanced and multifaceted approach to this question. If we approach these developments with the functive model, it is unlikely that science can ever be fully reconciled with Deleuzian ontology, as both punctuated equilibrium and the discovery of greater variation are based on studies and experiments carried out under rigid methodological considerations, which, for science, are crucial for determining validity. From a

Deleuzian point of view, such considerations are interruptions that limit, slow or constrain productive difference in order to produce truth in a certain way – as a result, their ability to properly conceptualise difference is circumscribed. Additionally, while the original criticism that Deleuze had of Darwin – that he considers differences within individuals, not individual difference – has lost some of its efficacy as more scientists focus on individualising processes and avoid rigid categorical distinctions; it is not the case that scientists have abandoned their use or dismissed them as illusory and fictitious. For scientists, certain categories have proven salient through genetic research and, as a result, have an ontological reality that Deleuze would reject, claiming that their ontological reality appears only because of a certain image of thought that cannot be sustained when one moves to a philosophy of difference. A Deleuzian scientist – as much as there can be one within the functive model of *What Is Philosophy?* – should place greater emphasis on processes of individuation, and allow his or her models for individuals and populations to remain open to new formations and organisations (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 70). Shostak's alternative to evolution, devolution, is formulated along these lines:

> Devolution is the descent (collapse) of qualities upon successors through assimilation into chimeras and parsing out into fragments. In its failure to 'differentiate' and 'equate,' devolution exchanges differences for sameness through exclusion and sameness for difference through repetition. (Shostak 1999: 151)

For Deleuze and Shostak, the fluid and discontinuous should be emphasised over the rigid and articulated.

The major/minor science model of *A Thousand Plateaus* reveals a way of aligning scientific study with Deleuzian ontology in a way that *What Is Philosophy?* does not, as its conceptualising of the relationship between the hylomorphic, striated model of major, or royal, science and the smooth model of minor, nomadic science demonstrates how a science that embraces difference and a science of theories and formulas can interact. A key point that runs throughout *A Thousand Plateaus* is that while the conceptual structures, or striations, that dominate traditional ways of conceiving of being hide difference, they are not in themselves bad, but are 'inevitable [phenomena] that [are] beneficial in many respects and unfortunate in many others' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 40) – conceptual structures have strategic and tactical values as points of reference but should not be misunderstood to fully articulate reality itself. As discussed above, minor science does not add to major science

but vectors off from it, pursuing singularities and their connection to traits of expression. In these terms both the theory of punctuated equilibrium and the discovery of the amount of variation in the genome have elements of minor and major science. Each can be considered in part minor science inasmuch as both follow singularities not explainable through the dominant model of evolution (for punctuated equilibrium the singularity is the lack of fossil records, while the discovery of the variation in the genome is the singularity). Scientists exploring these discoveries work to realign evolutionary theory around the singularities, in the process deterritorialising and reterritorialising the field of evolutionary biology. As can be seen from the discovery of variation, following a singularity can have repercussions far beyond the field of biology itself, but also for philosophy, history, sociology and elsewhere – as such, it does not just deterritorialise but 'constitutes and extends the territory itself' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 372). To the degree that these developments in evolutionary biology undo and shift the earlier model of evolution, they are analogous to the nomad science of *A Thousand Plateaus*, and as such are not incongruous with Deleuze's ontology. Yet while these developments function apart from major science, much effort is made by the scientific establishment to reincorporate them into major science; that is, to fit them into the dominant conceptual framework as much as possible rather than embrace and extend their difference. Proponents of major science have trouble accepting these singularities as such, so in order to explain the singularities in a manner amenable to them, the proponents try to reinscribe them into the manufacture of major science. That this is the case is apparent in the large portions of the papers announcing these discoveries devoted to connecting them to the strata demarcated by evolutionary biology. Deleuze and Guattari warn against doing this with minor science, as 'the extent that ambulant procedures and processes are necessarily tied to a striated space – always formalized by royal science – which deprives them of their model' is the extent to which nomad science involves itself in striations again and makes it 'still possible to cut the flow into layers' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 372).

The studies of the punctuated equilibrium and genetic diversity, because of the endeavour made to develop them as concepts within major science, do not truly function as minor science, but at most as a quasi-minor science. They are connected with an apparatus that seeks their description within a formula, and as a result they are not seen as 'inseparable from a sensible intuition of variation' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 369) as nomad science desires to be. While their opening to

singularities and to a reinterpretation of theory pushes them towards nomad science, there is no principle of difference at work in their development – only a contingent appearance of difference. For science to include a nomadic approach along with its royal approach, and thus in line with the ontology of *A Thousand Plateaus*, the study of these developments would need to be more open to following singularities and less interested in their being taken up by the strata of major science.

The manner in which biologists now approach understanding evolution and the categorisation of individuals has more in common with Deleuze's ontology than a classical Darwinian understanding of evolution, but contemporary scientific methodology and modelling techniques prevent evolutionary biology from being completely Deleuzian. A completely Deleuzian evolutionary biology may not even be a possibility, as in order to clarify what they have already determined, scientists have had to rely on increasingly complex technologies and scientific procedures (such as neuroimaging and PCR synthesis) which can be developed and programmed only by using a certain image of the human as a biological animal. Were scientists to try to let their ideas develop along more open and flexible lines, it is questionable whether they would be able to proceed along these increasingly complex lines. The development of modern evolutionary biology seems to require that scientists make use of certain representations before they move to the processes that constitute the individual, as it is only through a representation that some processes relevant to the study of evolutionary biology can be uncovered and observed. At most, were scientists to take the concept of nomad science seriously, science could develop with an eye on difference and singularity and with less of an institutionalised practice of reincorporating discoveries into major science. Even Shostak, whose reinterpretation of evolution does make a difference internal to scientific research, begins with a space where differences are already partially represented rather than with difference itself. Deleuze's characterisation of science in *What Is Philosophy?* as slowing down the infinite chaos indicates that he was aware of the challenges involved in getting science to embrace difference.

V. Conclusion

In closing, it is worth taking note of what is at stake in this discussion of the relationships between evolutionary biology and Deleuzian ontology.

Primarily, the encounter between the two calls into question our conception of what the self is. Common means of identification – be it race, gender, geographic location or otherwise – are problematised, as is a unified understanding of ourselves. How we are able to relate ourselves to others is a question that needs to be studied because of the ideas put forth in this paper. Caught up in this sense of self are the fields of ethics and politics as well, both of which often make use of one's sense of identity in developing theories and principles. Yet as neither Deleuze's nor evolutionary biology's discoveries entail the loss of the self, but rather the removal of its sense of unification, the space that needs to be theorised is not a radical departure from existent notions but a substantial modification and resituating of current knowledges. Old categories like race, ethnicity and ancestry that have shown themselves to be without justification need to be discarded, and new categories based on an individual's particular genesis – highlighting traits strongly influenced by genetic factors like physiology or the possibility that one will express a certain condition – need to be developed in line with the variety of information that has been uncovered about the nature of the self by science and philosophy.

It is likely that Deleuze would think positively of the above developments in evolutionary biology, seeing a substantial shift towards a philosophy of difference from where science was at in the time of Darwin. Since that time, science has identified a number of sites and mechanisms Darwin was unaware of – such as DNA and patterns of inheritance – that have called into question both common classification schemes and the ontological purity of the individual. The focus on studying difference and variation has increased while the biological models previously relied upon have been re-evaluated time and time again. Still, the process of articulating biology through an understanding of difference – that is, a biology that has not institutionalised an investigative model dominated primarily by conceptual structures but has the tools to study flows and singularities as well – is not complete, as certain methodological and ontological assumptions about the nature of science and its relation to the individual remain which are still grounded in a philosophy of similitude, and some recent technological advances seem conditional upon scientists not completely transferring to a Deleuzian ontology. Yet despite these apparent obstacles, it is possible that one day science will reach the point of a philosophy of difference, as science's open-ended nature and willingness to question its assumptions are some of its greatest assets.

Notes

1. Deleuze articulates this philosophy in several ways throughout his oeuvre. For the sake of consistency, this paper works primarily from the formulation it receives in *Difference and Repetition*.
2. See Žižek 2012: 19–20 and Badiou 2000: 69. Žižek claims there are two versions of Deleuze's philosophy, and that only the first version frames ontology in this way.
3. Manuel DeLanda opposes this interpretation, saying that there is no major break between early and late Deleuzian ontology, but rather that the terminological distinctions and conceptual differences between works 'are slightly displaced relative to one another but retain enough overlaps that they can be meshed together as a heterogenous assemblage' (DeLanda 2002: 202). This reading of Deleuze's work ignores the importance of contemplation Deleuze gives in *Difference and Repetition* to the constitution of the self, such as when he says 'There is a self wherever furtive contemplation has been established, whenever a contracting machine capable of drawing together a difference from repetition functions somewhere' (Deleuze 1994: 78–9). There is no corollary to such contemplation in the equivalent concept that DeLanda identifies in *A Thousand Plateaus*; rather, such constitutions occur apart from subjective contemplation, as constitutions of intensities that occur within materiality (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 329).
4. Historically, it is worth noting that Darwin did not have a concrete definition of species in his published works, and in fact commented on the problems of defining the term on several occasions (including in *On the Origin of Species* and *The Descent of Man*). His working definition for species was 'a classificatory term provisionally given to a group for the purposes of convenience and which emphasizes resemblance, but which does not differ substantially from variation' (Darwin 1909: 68).
5. It may even be more accurate to say that science, or at the very least a scientific orientation, is part of what constitutes the entities in the world. This would make *Difference and Repetition* more akin to the later Deleuze, but it is debatable whether or not the system of *Difference and Repetition* can sustain that interpretation.
6. Material, for Deleuze, has three fundamental characteristics: it is molecularised, it has a relation to forces to be harnessed, and it is defined by the operations of consistency applied to it (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 345). There is no such thing as base substantiality, as material for Deleuze has relations, trajectories and speeds. It thus cannot be defined according to perfunctory, automatic rules.
7. Importantly, Deleuze is joined in this view by numerous evolutionary biologists who also see knowledge of DNA and the genome being used to apply determination inappropriately, leading to reductionism. For a good example, of this view, see Lewontin 1991.
8. Several scientific discoveries support this critique of mechanistic conceptions of life. Francis Jacobs' *The Logic of Life* describes the irreducible role of difference and disparity in transcriptions of genetic codes vital to the functioning of evolution (Jacobs 1974: 290–2), while Shostak describes research that shows the possibility of conceiving of life as plural and open rather than singular and determined (Shostak 1999: 151).

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The Rise and Fall of the Simulacrum

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Abstract

Deleuze adopts Nietzsche's manifesto for an overturning of Platonism. However, the consensus view is that Deleuze's project is best understood as a revision not a repudiation of Platonism. Deleuze's engagement with Platonism centres on *The Sophist*. Out of Plato's concept of phantasm, Deleuze fashions a new concept: simulacrum. In *Difference and Repetition*, simulacra are invited to rise and affirm their rights; and yet Deleuze later abandons the concept entirely. Why? Although suitable for the purposes of critique, it became otiose in wider applications. More generally, and against the consensus view, I argue that the trajectory of the concept of the simulacrum is emblematic of Deleuze's anti-Platonism.

Keywords: Plato, Sophist, Aristotle, image, simulacrum, multiplicity

I. A Reversal that Changes Everything

Deleuze's ambition in his 1968 masterwork *Difference and Repetition* is 'To rescue difference from its maledictory state' (Deleuze 2001: 29). Against the backdrop of a failed classical philosophy of difference, he marks out a new domain of ontological difference that is prior to identity. Integral to this project, it seems, is the creation of the concept of simulacrum. Simulacrum can simply mean an image or a semblance. Daniel W. Smith explains that it 'is the Latin term for "statue" or "idol", and translates the Greek *phantasma*' (Smith 2006a: 89). However, Deleuze gives the term a new definition and a special status within the radical philosophy of difference: 'Simulacra are those systems in which different relates to different *by means of* difference itself' (Deleuze 2001: 299). And yet by 1993, Deleuze muses, as if only with the benefit

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of hindsight, 'It seems to me that I have completely abandoned the notion of the simulacrum' (Deleuze 1993: 8, cited in Smith 2006a: 116). Even more startlingly, 'In his ... "Preface" to ... Clet-Martin's book ... Deleuze states that the concept of "simulacrum" was never an essential part of his philosophy' (Roffe 2005: 250).

When, echoing Nietzsche, Deleuze announces, 'The task of modern philosophy has been defined: to overturn Platonism', we may understand this as a necessary condition for rescuing difference (Deleuze 2001: 59). However, the translation of '*renversement du platonisme*' has been a bone of contention (Deleuze 1968: 82). Warning of a 'fatal' misunderstanding, James Williams points out that the primary sense of '*renversement*' is 'reversing' and that this is the most apposite translation (Williams 2003: 79). I will not disagree but dispute where that leaves us. In *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze puts the assertion made in *Difference and Repetition* into the question that we now want to ask: 'What does it mean "to reverse Platonism"?'(Deleuze 2003: 253). Although Deleuze's answer only raises more questions, it explicitly links reversed Platonism with simulacra: "'to reverse Platonism" means to make the simulacra rise and to affirm their rights among icons and copies' (262).

The secondary literature on reversed Platonism is well-trodden ground which I will not re-tread here.[1] No single or simple interpretation emerges but on one point there is a consensus. According to Williams, by reversing Platonism, Deleuze aims only 'to tweak the Platonic structure in order to avoid an error with severe consequences with regard to difference' (Williams 2003: 79). If 'tweaking' means slightly revising, this takes us uncomfortably close to validating Alain Badiou's provocative complaint that, far from overturning Platonism, Deleuze has only produced 'a Platonism with a different accentuation' (Badiou 2000: 26). Smith, like Williams, is keen to emphasise that the issue is structural and reversal (or inversion) is very far from repudiation:

> Far from refusing Platonism in its entirety ... Deleuze's inverted Platonism retrieves almost every aspect of the Platonic project ... Deleuze's inverted Platonism can ... be seen as a rejuvenated and even a completed Platonism. (Smith 2006a: 105)

This is the view against which I argue.

What is a Platonic structure? Paul Patton's adumbration of the theory of Ideas or Forms would probably pass muster as the standard account: '[Platonism is] the distinction between the realm of Ideas or that which truly is, and the sensuous realm of relative nonbeing or mere appearance' (Patton 1994: 144). So, a Platonic structure has two tiers. However,

Deleuze invariably wants to go one step beyond any standard account, and in this case, several steps. First, it is 'insufficient to define Platonism by reference to the distinction between essence and appearance. The primary distinction which Plato rigorously establishes is the one between the model and the copy' (Deleuze 2001: 264). Plato is the father of Western philosophy only because he is the creator of the malign concept of 'representation':

> Platonism . . . founds the entire domain that philosophy will later recognize as its own: the domain of representation filled by copies-icons . . . defined by an intrinsic relation to the model or foundation . . . To the pure identity of the model or original there corresponds an exemplary similitude; to the pure resemblance of the copy there corresponds the similitude called imitative. (Deleuze 2003: 259)

Representation is wholly at variance with the new domain of difference that Deleuze wishes to inaugurate: 'We propose to think difference in itself independently of the forms of representation which reduce it to the Same' (Deleuze 2001: xix).

Let us set the supposed structural affinity between Deleuzianism and Platonism alongside the following passage:

> Consider the two propositions: only that which is alike differs; and only differences are alike. The first formula posits resemblance as the condition of difference . . . According to the other formula, by contrast, resemblance, identity . . . can no longer be considered anything but effects, the products of a primary difference . . . The question is whether these two formulae are simply two manners of speaking which do not change things very much, or whether they apply to two completely different systems . . . one of which is capable of changing everything. (Deleuze 2001: 116–17)

The first formula privileges 'resemblance': the hallmark of Platonism. In choosing the second formula, Deleuze reverses the priority normally given to identity over difference but in so doing intends to leave nothing in its original place. It is a reversal that changes everything.

II. The Nature of Images

As we have seen, Deleuze baulks at defining Platonism in terms of the two-tiered distinction between essence and appearance, and proposes instead the distinction between model and copy. However, this too turns out to be insufficient. To follow in Deleuze's footsteps to the source of Platonism, we need to consider the complications that flow from Plato's treatment of the nature of images. In the *Republic*, using the example of

a bed, Socrates adds a third tier to the Platonic structure when he posits 'three kinds of beds. The first is in nature a bed, and . . . a god makes it . . . The second is the work of a carpenter . . . And the third is the one the painter makes' (Plato 1997: 1201; *597*). Socrates makes it clear that the god and the craftsman can both be said to be the 'maker of a bed'. The painter, however, is only an 'imitator of what the others make'. Deleuze notes how, in the *Sophist*, this Platonic structure is elaborated again, turning three tiers into four, by another distinction within the tier of imitation: 'Plato divides in two the domain of images-idols: on the one hand there are *copies-icons*, on the other there are *simulacra-phantasms*' (Deleuze 2003: 256). The thrust of Plato's argument runs:

> *Visitor*: One type of imitation . . . is . . . likeness-making. That's . . . whenever someone produces an imitation by keeping to the proportions of length, breadth, and depth of his model, and also by keeping to the appropriate colours . . .
>
> *Theaetetus*: But don't all imitators try to do that?
>
> *Visitor*: Not the ones who sculpt or draw very large works. If they reproduced the true proportions of their beautiful subjects . . . the upper parts would appear smaller than they should, and the lower parts would appear larger, because we see the upper parts from farther away and the lower parts from closer . . . What are we going to call something that appears to be like a beautiful thing, but only because it's seen from a viewpoint . . . ? Wouldn't appearance-making be the right thing to call expertise in producing appearances that aren't likenesses? (Plato 1997: 256; *235d–236c*)

Stepping beyond the model and the copy, Deleuze now, therefore, defines Platonism by reference to:

> [the] more profound distinction . . . between the copy itself and the phantasm. It is clear that Plato distinguishes, and even opposes, models and copies only in order to obtain a selective criterion with which to separate copies and simulacra, the former founded upon their relation to the model while the latter are disqualified because they fail both the test of the copy and the requirements of the model. (Deleuze 2001: 265)

Deleuze and Guattari defer to Jean-Pierre Vernant's analysis of the origins of Greek thought (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 4; see n. 4). Yet Vernant flatly contradicts the crux of Deleuze's argument: 'The opposition Plato establishes at *Sophist* 235d–e between two types of *eidōla* [images] cannot have any fundamental import' (Vernant 1991: 169). He notes that Plato, having made the distinction between icon and phantasm, only a little later runs the two back together again: 'those things . . . which you [Theaetetus] thought you should call by the one

name, *copy*, to cover them all' (Plato 1997: 260; *240a*). Stanley Rosen also notices that 'the initial distinction between icons and fantasms is blurred at crucial points' (Rosen 1983: 151). For Vernant, Plato's aim is only to establish 'an opposition between demiurgic activity, on the one hand, and mimetic [imitative] activity on the other' (Vernant 1991: 170). Divine demiurges have populated the natural world with plants and animals and so forth. Human craftsmen lack true knowledge of the Idea but by virtue of what Plato, in the *Republic*, calls 'right opinion', make beds that one can actually sleep on and houses that one can actually live in (Plato 1997: 1206; *601e*). By contrast, 'Imitation is far removed from the truth, for it touches only a small part of each thing and a part that is itself only an image' (1202; *598b*).

So in Vernant's analysis, the general lesson given in the *Republic* applies with equal force to the distinction made in the *Sophist*:

> The painter's bed, whether it is a faithful copy (*eikōn*) ... or whether it is a simulacrum (*phantasma*) intended to produce an effect of trompe-l'oeil ... is ... in both cases an imitation of a visible bed produced by the artisan; it is not an imitation of ... the idea ... of the bed. (Vernant 1991: 169)

In a rather jumbled footnote, Vernant seems to include Deleuze among those 'who claim there was a mimeticism of Forms that Plato would have admitted as both possible and desirable in the domain of art' (Vernant 1991: 169; n. 6). This is, possibly, implicit in Deleuze's claim that:

> If copies or icons are good images ... it is because they are endowed with resemblance. But resemblance ... goes less from one thing to another than from one thing to an Idea, since it is the Idea which comprehends the relations and proportions constitutive of the internal essence ... The copy truly resembles something only to the degree that it resembles the Idea of that thing. (Deleuze 2003: 257)

Be that as it may, it is clear that Deleuze's more substantial point is to ask us to 'consider now the ... simulacra. That to which they pretend ... they pretend to underhandedly ... without passing through the Idea'. And in the parallel passage in *Difference and Repetition*, after first clarifying that 'the *same* ... characterises the Idea as the thing itself', he goes on, 'The whole of Platonism ... is dominated by the idea of drawing a distinction between "the thing itself" and the simulacra' (Deleuze 2001: 66). Smith defends Deleuze against Vernant's objection by claiming that Vernant 'nonetheless supports the thrust of Deleuze's reading when he says that the problem of the *Sophist* is "to articulate what an image is, not in its seeming but in its being ... the *being of*

semblance"' (Smith 2006a: 119; n. 31). But if Vernant is right and, for Plato, the domains of the Idea and the Image (be it icon or phantasm) are fundamentally disconnected, the platform for Deleuze's critique of Platonism seems rather fragile.

Which is not to say that Vernant's objection carries all before it. For example, it can be argued that the use of the Theory of Forms in the particular passage of the *Republic* upon which Vernant relies

> [Is itself] in some respects anomalous... Plato has a god bring Forms into existence, though elsewhere they exist eternally and no one creates them. Forms are often thought to be paradigms existing in nature, which perhaps makes it puzzling how there could be Forms of man-made objects such as a bed (as opposed to the Forms of Justice, Beauty ...) For someone seeking a coherent interpretation of Plato's philosophy, this passage... may raise more puzzles than it solves. (Janaway 2009: 392)

So, perhaps Deleuze's claim can evade Vernant's objection entirely. Deleuze argues that 'Plato distinguishes, and even opposes, models and copies only in order to obtain a selective criterion with which to separate copies and simulacra'. Deleuze is, in effect, claiming that Platonism is not founded on the Theory of Forms; it is instead the Theory of Forms that is founded on the distinction between icons and simulacra. Ideas or Forms are only a downstream effect, a consequence of Plato's more covert concerns. Hence, Deleuze and Guattari can complain: 'Plato said that Ideas must be contemplated, but first of all he had to create the concept of Idea' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 6). Smith gestures towards a similar reading when he says that 'In Deleuze's interpretation, Plato's singularity lies in a delicate operation of sorting or selection that *precedes* the discovery of the Idea' (Smith 2006a: 91). On this view, Plato's real concerns ultimately find their best expression in the distinction between two kinds of image. If that is the case, Deleuze can still coherently claim that the distinction between images is the fulcrum of Platonism. Whether it *is* the case, comes down to an analysis of Plato's motives.

III. Plato's Motives

Deleuze is not alone in reading the *Sophist* as an experimental Platonism that is not necessarily consistent with the *Republic*.[2] More importantly, Deleuze's readings in the history of philosophy are always partisan and creative, always a matter of looking through the cracks. Returning to the question of what it means to reverse Platonism, Deleuze tells us that 'to reverse Platonism must mean to bring... [its] motivation out into the

light of day, to "track it down" – the way Plato tracks down the Sophist' (Deleuze 2003: 253).[3] So, if 'reverse' is the right word to use, it may be because the reversal which is at stake is what we might now call 'reverse engineering': taking an existing product or application apart and finding how it works, reducing it to formula, tracking it back to the machine code, as it were. Hence, Deleuze takes yet another step in search of the motive power of Platonism. Before following, let us notice that if Deleuze finds no sympathy with Plato's motives, then 'reversing' Platonism is a repudiation of it.

According to Deleuze,

> The motive of the theory of Ideas must be sought in a will to select and to choose. It is a question of 'making a difference', of distinguishing the 'thing' itself from its images, the original from the copy, the model from the simulacrum . . . The Platonic project comes to light only when we turn back to the method of division. (Deleuze 2003: 253)

The following questions are supposed to be rhetorical:

> Far from being one dialectical procedure among others . . . is not division the one which replaces all the other procedures from the moment it appears, and gathers up all the dialectical power in favour of a genuine philosophy of difference? Is it not simultaneously the measure of both Platonism and the possibility of overturning Platonism? (Deleuze 2001: 59)

I still feel in need of an answer. Why does division deserve this status? Deleuze does not provide an answer until his final summing up:

> In [Plato's] case . . . a moral motivation in all its purity is avowed: the will to eliminate simulacra or phantasms has no motivation apart from the moral. What is condemned in the figure of the simulacra is the state of free, oceanic differences. (Deleuze 2001: 265)

Ultimately then, behind the method of division lies Plato's will to separate the sheep of identity/sameness (the originals and icons) from the goats of pure difference (the simulacra). Deleuze makes it clear that Plato's project is inimical to his own.

According to Deleuze, Plato's dialectical method for achieving his moral ends comprises 'four figures: . . . the selection of difference, the installation of a mythic circle, the establishment of a foundation, and the position of a question–problem complex' (Deleuze 2001: 66). This emphasis on method and structure supports Williams' case for arguing that reversal is not repudiation but revision:

> Each of the figures of the Platonic structure corresponds to an aspect of Deleuze's own work . . . Thus, in parallel to Plato's structure . . . we find

> Deleuze's structure of selection through affirmation or expression, of eternal return and dramatisation, of ideas as multiplicities of pure differences and problems. (Williams 2003: 80, 82)

Williams goes on to concede: 'That this is only a parallel and not an exact correspondence can be explained through Deleuze's main criticism of Plato. For Deleuze, ideas do not have an identity – they are multiplicities of pure differences' (Williams 2003: 82). What strikes me about the above elements is how stratospherically far they take us from Plato: it is not Plato's name that resonates in the background but Nietzsche (affirmation, eternal return and dramatisation), Spinoza (expression), Bergson (multiplicities) and Kant (ideas and problems).

What is more, the 'four figures of the Platonic dialectic' are only that because Deleuze told us that they were in the first place. Contrast it, for example, with what has come to be called Plato's method of hypothesis:

> First, it consists of the process of identifying a hypothesis such that its truth is necessary and sufficient for a determinate answer to the question under consideration . . . The second process is to determine whether the hypothesis in question is true. (Benson 2009: 88)

Is there not already a suspicion that Deleuze has created a Platonic dialectic in his own image? If so, it is not particularly surprising that Williams should be able to map elements of Deleuze's project onto it. Moreover, quite apart from the supposed Platonic dialectic, there is the problem of the supposed Deleuzian dialectic. Constructing a Deleuzian dialectic of any sort flies in the face of the fact, as Ian Buchanan puts it, that 'Deleuze does not have any truck with dialectics in general' (Buchanan 2000: 192). Insofar as Buchanan then goes on to construct a Deleuzian dialectic, it is notable that it is closer to Adorno than to Plato. Williams himself offers yet another version of a Deleuzian dialectic: '[1] Critique; [2] The reciprocal search for actual and virtual conditions; [3] The search for completeness in terms of reasons determined by conditions; [4] The dice throw, or creative and destructive forgetting' (Williams 2003: 19). My point is that, when freed from the factitious constraint of a Platonic context, the Deleuzian dialectic, if there is one, turns out to be remote from the supposed four figures of the Platonic dialectic; that being said, I will now track Deleuze's account of those four figures.

IV. The Selection of Difference

Deleuze's grand project is to rescue difference. Accordingly, the first substantive chapter of *Difference and Repetition* is entitled 'Difference in Itself'. If reversing Platonism involves bringing its motivation to light, and if that motivation is a will to select or choose, then one must be clear about the nature of the concept of difference within which one is operating. If one is going to try to discriminate between true images (icons) and false ones (simulacra), how does one tell the difference, without knowing what makes a difference in the first place? Deleuze goes on to write an alternative history of Western philosophy from the perspective of a concept of difference; a history that starts with Aristotle and ends with Plato, having gone via Hegel and Leibniz (Deleuze 2001: 30–68). This bizarre trajectory can only be justified by the fact that, for a reason yet to be determined, Deleuze wants to end with Plato. But for the moment, let us note that Deleuze's reading of Plato is set in the context of his reading of Aristotle.

It is not fanciful of Deleuze to attribute a concept of difference to Aristotle: 'Aristotle says: there is a difference which is at once the greatest and the most perfect' (Deleuze 2001: 30); and references *Metaphysics X* (Deleuze 2001: 308; n. 2). Thus Aristotle lends his huge authority to Deleuze's project. Aristotle interprets the search for the greatest difference in terms of seeking the maximum scope, or stretch, of difference. He seeks a perfect difference. Deleuze's critique of Aristotle's concept of difference operates at three levels: genus; species; and the individual. Deleuze, like Aristotle, begins in the middle. Aristotle is here accused of a 'confusion disastrous for the entire philosophy of difference: assigning a distinctive concept of difference is confused with the inscription of difference within concepts in general' (Deleuze 2001: 32). What characterises Aristotle's concept of specific difference is that 'two terms differ when they are other, not in themselves, but in something else, thus when they also agree in something else' (Deleuze 2001: 30). Aristotle operates within the horizontal plane, distinguishing one species from another species (e.g., bird from man) by their unique differentiating features (see Widder 2001: 439). But by Aristotle's account, for two things to differ at all, they must first be gathered under a higher overarching conceptual identity (e.g., animal). Identity is prior to difference; and it is Aristotle's deference to identity that is the target of Deleuze's negative critique: 'only in relation to the supposed identity of a concept is specific difference called the greatest' (Deleuze 2001: 31).

Damned as the enemy of difference, Aristotle is also, however, recognised as its friend. Deleuze warms to the manner in which, for Aristotle, difference can only operate over a certain range. Once over-stretched, difference breaks and assumes a different nature; once it escapes the domain of identity, it 'tends to become simple otherness . . . established between uncombinable objects' (Deleuze 2001: 30). Aristotle is the fair-weather friend of difference because for Aristotle, difference is a means of connection not disconnection. This explains why Williams, for example, can distil out of *Difference and Repetition* the ethical principle that: 'It is best for our actions to connect with all things that have brought them about and that they can bring about' (Williams 2003: 5). It is a principle that has a future in Deleuzianism: 'Principles of connection and heterogeneity: any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be' (Deleuze and Guattari 2002: 7). In Aristotle's philosophy, as much as in Plato's, Deleuze looks for points of contact with his own philosophy of difference.

Deleuze's history of the philosophy of difference moves on to Hegel and Leibniz; it is a catalogue of errors, albeit that Leibniz emerges with the most credit of anyone (even if we included Plato). So, why does Deleuze want to end with Plato? Plato, like Aristotle, turns out to be not only villain but also hero; or more precisely, he *could* have been the hero. Deleuze ends his history of difference with Platonism because here Deleuze claims to detect the first glimmer of the gold that is pure difference. Difference has, we are told, been placed under cruel constraint by Aristotle and Hegel: 'like an animal in the process of being tamed, whose final resistant movements bear witness . . . to a nature soon to be lost . . . With Plato [however] the issue is still in doubt' (Deleuze 2001: 59). Deleuze's support for this assertion lies in his analysis of the *Sophist*.

Deleuze's critique of Plato begins by looking back to Aristotle: 'Our mistake lies in trying to understand Platonic division on the basis of Aristotelian requirements. According to Aristotle, it is a question of dividing a genus into opposing species' (Deleuze 2001: 59). Rosen concurs that 'diaeresis, or the division and collection in accordance with kinds [is] a method that will play an important role in the *Sophist*' (Rosen 1983: 2). Whether Plato is, in fact, collecting 'in accordance with kinds' is precisely the issue that Deleuze will dispute. Were one to orientate the *Sophist* relative to Aristotle's method, one might say that the parties were setting out to differentiate the species 'sophist' from that of 'statesman' and 'philosopher', each of which is part of some

larger genus. Deleuze asks an apparently incongruous question: '[Plato] divide[s] art into arts of production and arts of acquisition: but then why is fishing among the arts of acquisition?' (Deleuze 2001: 59).

The relevance of this question is partly explained by the fact that before beginning the serious business of tracking down the nature of the sophist himself, the parties to the dialogue agree to try out the method of division on '*an angler* . . . recognizable to everybody, but not worth being too serious about' (Plato 1997: 239; *218e*). Rosen sees more Platonic irony at work here than Deleuze, and accordingly offers yet another definition of Platonism:

> Platonism may be equated . . . with the thesis that human beings in general, and philosophers in particular, have access to the true nature of things. Platonism in this sense asserts that vision of pure form is the acquisition, not the production, of truth. (Rosen 1983: 14)

So, Plato's otherwise rather capricious-sounding choice to begin the divisions by dividing acquisition and production is already philosophically loaded. Rosen, like Vernant, argues that, for Plato, 'Images in general "are and are not" and are thus *all* [i.e., icons as well as phantasms] associated with non-being and falsehood' (Rosen 1983: 152). And yet the crucial distinction between the acquisition of truth and the production of truth still seems to be bubbling underneath the Platonic distinction between images; Rosen goes on: 'An accurate image [an icon] is not false in the same sense as an inaccurate image [a phantasm]. The latter deceives, whereas the former does not, concerning the proportions of the original' (152). Plato surely intends us to align the maker of accurate images with the philosopher, who 'acquires' the truth, ugly though it might seem, and the maker of beautiful but inaccurate images with the sophist, who 'produces' a truth tailored to human desires and matching a distorted human perspective.

The Visitor asks Theaetetus 'If every expertise falls under acquisition or production . . . which one shall we put angling in?'; and Theaetetus answers, 'Acquisition, obviously' (Plato 1997: 239; *219d*). So, to go back to the point of Deleuze's earlier question, Deleuze is, in effect, asking, why is it obvious? But this, in turn, is only an echo of Aristotle's famous critique of Plato's method: 'According to Aristotle . . . [the method of division] not only lacks "reason" by itself, it lacks a reason in terms of which we could decide whether something falls into one species rather than another' (Deleuze 2001: 59). Aristotle complains that it is simply assumed that it does. To see Aristotle's point we might consider how the method is applied once matters *do* become serious. After the practice

session, the Visitor and Theaetetus go on to make five different episodes of division. At the end of each of the divisions they locate the sophist. Taking the first division as an example, it is agreed that the sophist and the angler are both hunters. Hunting is divided into two: 'one for land animals and one for swimming animals' (Plato 1997: 242; *221e*). They choose to follow the branch devoted to land animals because they already know that is where the sophist is to be found. This branch is further divided into 'Tame things and wild ones' (*222b*). After some discussion as to whether human beings are wild or tame, they settle on tame; and they choose that branch of the division because they know that is where the sophist is to be found, no other reason is offered. And so on and so on, down and down.

We see, therefore, the wisdom of Deleuze's insight that unlike Aristotle, 'The essence of division does not appear in its breadth, in the determination of the species of a genus, but in its depth, in the selection of the lineage' (Deleuze 2003: 254). Plato is drawing a family tree: 'Difference is not between species . . . but entirely on one side, within the chosen line of descent: there are no longer contraries within a single genus but pure and impure, good and bad' (Deleuze 2001: 60). For Deleuze, Aristotle's objection is a cause for celebration not condemnation:

> Aristotle . . . saw what is irreplaceable in Platonism, even though he made it precisely the basis of a criticism of Plato: the dialectic of difference has its own method – division – but this operates without mediation, without middle term or reason; it acts in the immediate and is inspired by Ideas. (Deleuze 2001: 59)

This is how Plato 'makes a difference' in contrast to how Aristotle does it.

For reasons that will become plain in a moment, Deleuze's analysis shifts at this point, from the *Sophist* to the *Statesman*:

> The statesman is defined as the one who knows 'the pastoral care of men' but many introduce themselves by saying 'I am the true shepherd of men', including merchants, farmers, bakers, as well as athletes and the entire medical profession. (Deleuze 2001: 60)

These people seem to have nothing to do with one another. The Platonic process seems to have produced a muddle but, according to Deleuze, this is because we are thinking too much like Aristotle. According to Deleuze, the method of division has nothing to do with species: 'The meaning and the goal of the method of division is [not the analysis of species among

a larger genus but] the selection among rivals, the testing of claimants' (Deleuze 2001: 60).

What is germane for my general purposes, and has special relevance in the context of 'the selection of difference', is that, even if Deleuze has rescued Plato from Aristotle's objection, it is not so as to give Platonism a stake in the modern philosophy of difference. Plato's vertically orientated branching structure is an example of what Deleuze and Guattari will come to describe as arborescent: 'Arborescent systems are hierarchical systems . . . [in which] an individual has only one active neighbour, his or her hierarchical superior . . . The channels of transmission are preestablished' (Deleuze and Guattari 2002: 16). Far from it being the case that, despite wide differences in philosophical content, there are, nonetheless, structural affinities between Deleuze and Plato, the iconic Platonic structure, the tree, is entirely inimical to Deleuze's project: 'We're tired of trees . . . They've made us suffer too much' (15). The authors place their modern schema in sharp opposition:

> Multiplicities are rhizomatic, and expose arborescent pseudomultiplicities for what they are . . . An assemblage is precisely this increase in the dimensions of a multiplicity that necessarily changes in nature as it expands its connections. There are no points or positions in a rhizome, such as those found in a structure, tree, or root. (Deleuze and Guattari 2002: 8)

The concept of multiplicity, with its components of rhizome and assemblage, will fill the place left by simulacra.

V. The Installation of a Mythic Circle

I left Plato in an apparent muddle. Deleuze rightly reflects 'the reader's great surprise' when the way out of it comes 'by introducing a myth' (Deleuze 2001: 60). The role of the myth in Deleuze's reading of Plato can be expressed more clearly in the context of the *Phaedrus*. Here the target is the lover: the one who has 'lost his head', has gone mad. Should he/she still enjoy our favour? According to Plato's voicing of Socrates, it would be an easy question to answer 'if madness were bad, pure and simple; but in fact the best things we have come from madness when it is given as a gift of the god' (Plato 1997: 522; *244a*). Plato tells a complex story about the origin and nature of souls. Souls chase the chariots of the gods around a circuit, beyond the rim of which lies 'the plain where truth stands': the realm of the Ideas or Forms. All the souls strain to keep pace with the gods so as to be able to see what lies there (526; *248c–d*). For Deleuze, this allows Plato to 'determine which – lover,

poet, priest, soothsayer or philosopher – is elected to participation in reminiscence . . . : which is the true claimant, the true participant, and in what order the others follow' (Deleuze 2001: 61). How exactly?

Williams advises: 'the myth tells of how things were originally divided and it allows that division to return later' (Williams 2003: 81). By 'originally', I gather we are to understand an archetype in the manner of Mircea Eliade's thesis with regard to the structure of Platonism: 'reality is acquired solely through repetition or participation; everything which lacks an exemplary model is "meaningless" i.e., it lacks reality' (Eliade 1989: 34). Such a philosophy of static identity clearly has no Deleuzian future. Indeed, Williams' point is only that a modern dynamic Deleuzian concept of the Idea will, as we shall see, come to occupy a similar position in an overall structure. Deleuze emphasises that even if the Platonic Idea allows a 'return', of some kind, 'Plato is certainly not a protagonist of eternal return' (Deleuze 2001: 61). Certainly not, because Deleuze is invoking his radical reading of Nietzsche:

> We misinterpret the . . . 'eternal return' if we understand it as 'return of the same'. It is not being that returns but rather the returning itself that constitutes being insofar as it is affirmed of becoming and of that which passes. (Deleuze 1983: 48)

Deleuze remains loyal to the doctrine of the eternal return and yet abandons the concept of the simulacrum. This presents a problem because Deleuze explicitly connects the eternal return with the concept of the simulacrum: 'What . . . is the content of this third time . . . What is this content which is affected . . . by the eternal return? . . . it is a question of simulacra, and simulacra alone' (Deleuze 2001: 299). In his book on Deleuze's philosophy of time, Williams has no doubt that 'The content of eternal return is series and simulacra' (Williams 2011: 127). I am arguing that Deleuze abandons the concept of the simulacrum because it becomes otiose. However, if the concept of the simulacrum includes a component of 'novelty', without which we cannot drive the eternal return, my argument is stopped dead in its tracks. In a seminal article Smith asks: 'What are the conditions of the new that one finds laid out in Gilles Deleuze's philosophy?' (Smith 2007: 1). The concept of the simulacrum finds no place in his reply. Instead we find: 'When the virtual is actualised, it *differentiates* itself, it produces the new' (17). I, therefore, agree with Smith, who concludes, in the wake of Deleuze's abandonment of the concept of the simulacrum, that 'The process of simulation is more properly characterized as the process of actualization (or even more precisely, the complex process of "different/ciation")'

(Smith 2006a: 116). If this is all the conceptual machinery we need for radical novelty, I may now take up again Deleuze's critique of Plato.

We have seen that Deleuze claims to detect in the dialogues of 'division' a repeated four-fold pattern, the third element of which is the invocation of a myth. However, this scheme is immediately threatened (and this explains the earlier mentioned shift to the *Statesman*): 'It will be objected that... the *Sophist*, presents no such myth' (Deleuze 2001: 61).[4] Deleuze replies that this is because 'in this text, by a paradoxical utilization of the method, a counter-utilization, Plato proposes to isolate the false claimant *par excellence*, the one who lays claim to everything, without any right: the "sophist"'. Smith notes how

> Deleuze distinguishes between two spatial dimensions in Plato's thought. The dialogues of the *Phaedrus* and the *Statesman* move upward toward the 'true lover' or the 'true statesman', which are legitimated by their resemblance to the pure model... Platonic *irony* is, in this sense, a technique of *ascent*. (Smith 2006a: 98)

In Deleuze's own words: 'The popular and technical images of the philosopher seem to have been set by Platonism: the philosopher is a being of ascents' (Deleuze 2003: 127). Whereas, 'The *Sophist*, by contrast, follows a descending movement... a technique of descent' (Smith 2006a: 98). Rosen, in turn, reflects that 'We are not simply engaged in the task of defining a pure form... We are hunting men' (Rosen 1983: 84). The distinction between the directions of the dialogues adds lustre to Deleuze's claim that, at the nadir of the descent, Plato himself is the first to toy with a radical anti-Platonism: 'It may be that the end of the *Sophist* contains the most extraordinary adventure of Platonism: as a consequence of searching in the direction of the simulacrum and of leaning over its abyss' (Deleuze 2003: 256).

Rosen quotes, initially with approval, Deleuze's general claim that 'In Plato, an obscure debate is carried out in the depths of things, between that which submits to the action of the Idea and that which escapes this action (copies and simulacra)' (Deleuze 2003: 7, cited in Rosen 1983: 172). However, Rosen objects that 'Deleuze oversimplifies in saying that "the copy is an image endowed with resemblance; the simulacrum is an image without resemblance"' (Rosen 1983: 172, citing Deleuze 2003: 257). To follow Rosen's objection we need to recall the paradigm of monumental statuary or huge paintings that is played out in the *Sophist*. Deleuze seems to be content to remain within this paradigm of the observer of an optical image:

> Plato specifies how this nonproductive effect is obtained: the simulacrum implies huge dimensions, depths and distances that the observer cannot master. It is precisely because he cannot master them that he experiences an impression of resemblance. This simulacrum includes the differential point of view . . . which is transformed and deformed by his point of view. (Deleuze 2003: 258)

But Rosen argues, 'An image that does not resemble X cannot be an image of X. Despite its "dissymmetry," the fantasm looks like the original to the viewer' (Rosen 1983: 172–3). From the observer's point of view, the huge statue has 'the look' of a human being: it is, therefore, contrary to Deleuze's claim, an image that resembles something, namely that 'look' that we recognise as human.

Rosen's objection is reasonable, but is it fatal to Deleuze's argument? To oversimplify is not the same as being wrong. But perhaps the more accurate accusation, in this context, is exaggeration rather than oversimplification. Deleuze can quite coherently concede the existence of the phenomenon of resemblance, indeed at times he does. All that he needs to deny is that resemblance is fundamental. Beyond that, perhaps Rosen's objection would be fatal, if it were to be the case that one could not, even in principle, make sense of an 'image without resemblance'. And yet Rosen, earlier, manages to make sense of it himself. He notes how the Visitor is happy to shift the paradigm away from the optical, and towards the discursive, by the dramatic device of speculating that the sophist will sometimes 'seem to you [Theaetetus] to have his eyes shut, or else not to have any eyes at all' (Plato 1997: 260; *239e*). Now, a true statement, about a tree, for example, does not look like a tree. Yet Rosen concludes that, for the Stranger, 'true statements are images as well [as false statements]' (Rosen 1983: 155). This kind of linguistic turn is not the direction of Deleuze's argument, but we may grant that Deleuze has, thus far, only given a negative definition: the simulacrum is an 'image without resemblance'. If Deleuze can also make positive sense of the nature of an image without resemblance, then Rosen's objection is not fatal. I shall return to this later.

VI. The Establishment of a Foundation

For Deleuze, the essence of Platonism is its four-fold method. We are now brought to see how the third element of that method is the establishment of a foundation: 'The role of the ground appears in all clarity in the Platonic conception of participation . . . (And no doubt it is this foundation which provides division with the mediation it seems to

lack . . .)' (Deleuze 2001: 62). Williams is the first to admit that, having established such a foundation, Deleuze and Plato part company forever: 'For Deleuze, ideas do not have an identity – they are multiplicities of pure differences . . . Deleuze and Plato cannot be reconciled on this issue' (Williams 2003: 82).

So far, I have characterised 'simulacral' as being the nature of images without resemblance, as images built on difference. In fact, Deleuze's definition of the concept is much denser: 'These differential systems with their disparate and resonating series, their dark precursor and forced movements, are what we call simulacra' (Deleuze 2001: 126). Indeed, it conforms to Deleuze and Guattari's stricture that 'Every concept has components that may, in turn, be grasped as concepts' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 19). Let us take just one of those components, namely, the concept of 'series'. Does it have a Platonic parallel? I raise this question here because one might seek such a parallel in the seminal Platonic doctrine of 'participation'. The Idea of Justice, for example, possesses justice in 'first place': 'What possesses in first place is the ground itself . . . As for those whom we call just, they possess the quality of being just in second, third or fourth place . . . or in simulacral fashion' (Deleuze 2001: 62). However, the instances of justice do not form a series. To be a series entails a connection between the members of the series, whereas here the only connection is back to the Idea, albeit at varying levels of participation. What is more, for Plato, to the extent that the actual diverse instances of justice participate in the Idea, at whatever remove, they are, by definition, not simulacra.

However, perhaps a more obvious place to look for a Platonic parallel might be in reading the Platonic concept to mean copies of copies. But this is the very interpretation that Deleuze denies:

> If we say of the simulacrum that it is a copy of a copy, an infinitely degraded icon, an infinitely loose resemblance, we then miss the essential, that is, the difference in nature between simulacrum and copy . . . If the simulacrum still has a model, it is . . . a model of the Other. (Deleuze 2003: 257–8)

In other words, there is, on the basis of Deleuze's own reading of Plato, only the false image and the Idea of dissemblance which it internalises: there is no series. As we have seen, the concept of series is but one of a number of necessary components of Deleuze's larger concept of simulacrum, and yet it is already a component that finds no Platonic parallel. My interim conclusion is that the point of contact between Deleuze's dense concept of simulacrum and Plato's phantasm is, at best, skin-deep. Although well adapted for the purposes of Deleuze's critique

of Plato, once the Deleuzian concept broke free of those confines it became otiose.

VII. The Position of a Question–problem Complex

Let us move on to the final stage of Deleuze's reading of the Platonic dialectic. Deleuze presses Plato for an answer to the question, 'In what, exactly, does the grounding test consist?' (Deleuze 2001: 63). Smith explains that 'If the foundation as essence is defined by the original and superior identity or *sameness* of the Idea, the claimant will be well-founded only to the degree that it *resembles* or imitates the foundation' (Smith 2006a: 96). However, to know to what extent the image resembles the Idea, one would first have to know what the Idea, in some sense beyond the limits of a purely visual paradigm, looked like. Yet, as Rosen points out: '[the Visitor] never explains how we know pure forms. They are simply cited as though they are directly accessible; and in discussing them, [he] continues to use cognitive terms derived primarily from the language of vision' (Rosen 1983: 87). Rosen seems to settle for the Platonic myth and signs off with: 'If Plato teaches us anything, it is that philosophers identify themselves, through speeches and deeds, by the nobility and comprehensive eros of their souls' and sophists by 'the weakness of their souls' (326). In effect, philosophers will just know how to pass the grounding test, whereas sophists will not.

Deleuze is not content with either of the above replies to the question: 'In what, exactly, does the grounding test consist?' In the most innovative part of his critique of Plato, Deleuze links the mythical component of the Platonic dialectic with what he calls the question–problem complex:

> Myth tells us that it always involves a further task to be performed, an enigma to be resolved. The oracle is questioned, but the oracle's response is itself a problem . . . We must recall that Plato defined the dialectic as proceeding by 'problems'. (Deleuze 2001: 63)

This explains Deleuze's claim that 'within Platonism in general, myth and dialectic are distinct forces . . . Division overcomes this duality and integrates myth into the dialectic' (Deleuze 2001: 61). Rosen offers some general support: 'Philosophy, as portrayed in the *Sophist*, and in the entire Platonic corpus, is not a doctrine but a problem' (Rosen 1983: 324). However, Deleuze presses this insight further than Rosen, or possibly, Plato would be prepared to go.

The argument is akin to that which begins *The Logic of Sense*. Here, the text at stake is the famous passage in *Alice in Wonderland* when Alice changes size. Why should this be seen as problematic in any fundamental sense? Williams, in his book on Deleuze's philosophy of time, translates the relevant passage: 'It is at the same time, in the same play, that one becomes bigger than one was, and that one renders oneself smaller than one becomes' (Williams 2011: 139). One might object that this is obfuscation on Deleuze's part because Alice is never both larger and smaller in the same instant of time. However, as Williams goes on to explain, 'Deleuze is not referring to instants but to plays, to a process like a move in a game' (139). This is to say, not unreasonably, that the implications of the current move, in a game of chess for example, reverberate through all the previous moves, as well as the moves yet to come, but not within any conventional measurable stretch of time. It is, instead, part of a process, and Deleuze's general point, as Williams puts it, is that 'all processes of becoming take place together' (139).

But what has it got to do with Plato? According to Deleuze, Plato invites us to 'distinguish between two dimensions: (1) that of limited and measured things... and (2) a pure becoming without measure' (Deleuze 2003: 1). The allusion is to the following passage from *Philebus*:

> *Socrates*: Check first in the case of the hotter and the colder whether you can conceive of a limit, or whether the 'more and less' do not rather reside in these kinds, and... do not permit the attainment of any end... [Protarchus agrees 'strongly']. You... remind me rightly with your pronouncement of 'strongly' that it and equally its counterpart 'gently' are of the same caliber as the more and less. Wherever they apply, they prevent everything from adopting a definite quantity. (Plato 1997: 411–12; *24a–c*)

As Deleuze takes up the story, "'Hotter" never stops where it is but is always going a point further, and the same applies to "colder"' (Deleuze 2003: 2). Deleuze looks only for what he needs in the history of philosophy. Accordingly, in Platonism he finds traces of the fecund problematicity that we recognise as central to his own theory of Ideas, but it places Deleuze in closer proximity to Kant than to Plato.

Indeed, elsewhere, this is exactly how Smith argues: '*Difference and Repetition* can be read as Deleuze's *Critique of Pure Reason*' (Smith 2006b: 45). The grand structure of *Difference and Repetition* traces a series of transcendental deductions, very loosely in the manner of Kant. In chapter two for example, Deleuze deduces the existence of the three

syntheses of Time; in chapter five, he carries out a parallel deduction with regard to the nature of Space. The Deleuzian theory of Ideas may have a Platonic ring to it, but it owes more to Kant. The opening of chapter four makes it evident that Deleuze intends it to be a creative reworking of the Transcendental Dialectic: 'Kant never ceased to remind us that Ideas are essentially "problematic"' (Deleuze 2001: 168). Kant distinguishes three such Ideas: 'Pure reason ... furnishes the idea for a transcendental doctrine of the soul ... a transcendental science of the world ... and ... a transcendental knowledge of God' (Kant 1983: 323; *A334–5*). Smith explains that 'Such Ideas are *thinkable* ... but they are not *knowable*, since there could never be an object of experience that would correspond to them' (Smith 2007: 4–5).

For Kant, therefore, it is not the world (*qua* an actual thing) that is the object of 'the Idea of the world', it is rather this 'problem'. Conventional wisdom has it that, for Kant, Ideas are concepts that lack an intuition. Deleuze radicalises this by arguing that Kant had a better insight (but did not realise it): the Idea is, in Kant's own words, 'a *problem* to which there is no solution' (Kant 1983: 319; *A328*). Deleuze extends Kant's unwitting insight to argue for Ideas as structures that are inherently and infinitely problematic: 'These Ideas do not disappear with "their" solutions, since they are the indispensable condition without which no solution would ever exist' (Deleuze 2001: 168). Deleuze's complaint against Kant is that it is only the Idea that is inherently problematic: 'The problem lies wholly with the Idea – objects of experience and concepts can be detached from its problems' (Williams 2003: 142). Deleuze aims to make actual things inherently problematic.

For Deleuze, 'Every thing, animal or being assumes the status of simulacrum' (Deleuze 2001: 67). But it is equally true that 'Everything is a multiplicity in so far as it incarnates an Idea' (182). And it is the concept of multiplicity that stands the test of time. Deleuze claims 'that Ideas ... do not exist only in our heads but occur here and there in the production of an actual historical world' (190). Ideas have us, rather than the other way around. Deleuze transmutes Kantian Ideas into vehicles of ontological difference: 'Modern thought and the renaissance of ontology is based upon the question–problem complex' (195). To answer the question from Rosen, that I left hanging earlier, Deleuze *does* provide a positive account of how there can be an image of X that does not resemble X: the relation of actual things to Ideas is not one of resemblance but is, instead, akin to the intimate relationship between a question and an answer.

VIII. The Fall of the Simulacrum

What, then, are we to make of the peculiar fate of the concept that ties Deleuze most closely to Plato? Smith offers the following conjecture on Deleuze's abandonment of the concept of simulacrum: 'That things simulate a transcendent Idea has a meaning only in the context of Platonism. In Deleuze's own ontology, things no longer "simulate" anything' (Smith 2006a: 116). In other words, Deleuze drops the concept because it becomes not only otiose but also potentially misleading. Smith also extends the scope of the question I have posed in this article by asking: why does Deleuze not turn to Plato again, in earnest, until *What Is Philosophy?* (Deleuze and Guattari 1994).[5] He answers:

> Deleuze does not ascribe to Greek thought the importance that one finds in Nietzsche... or Heidegger... Deleuze's philosophical heroes... tend to be found, not at the origins of philosophical thought (Socrates, Plato), but in its maturation in the seventeenth century (Spinoza, Leibniz). (Smith 2006a: 116)

Agreed, but this sits unhappily with the same author's claim that Deleuzianism can be seen as a completion of Platonism.

I have to some extent already anticipated the starkest challenge to the redundancy of the concept of the simulacrum, which comes from Williams: 'The concept of the simulacrum is crucial to understanding the relation between times and between the actual and virtual in Deleuze's thought' (Williams 2011: 190; n. 5). If this is right, then I am wrong, but then again, so, apparently, is Deleuze. However, in the same endnote, Williams offers only 'reservations' about 'approaches that leave it [simulacra] out', citing Miguel de Beistegui's *Truth and Genesis: Philosophy as Differential Ontology* (2004). Earlier Williams stresses 'the parallels between [Beistegui's] process account of genesis and Deleuze's process account of time' (Williams 2011: 190; n. 2). But Williams goes on to claim that Beistegui is forced to introduce 'a Kantian and phenomenological vocabulary of noumenon and phenomenon which remains abstract in terms of actual processes and ties Deleuze too closely to phenomenology' (190; n.5).[6] To my mind, Beistegui's explicit denial of such a charge remains fully Deleuzian in vocabulary and structure:

> If there is anything like a phenomenological reduction in Deleuze's thought... it lies... not in the reduction of... [the] phenomenon to the transcendent sphere of consciousness... but in the reduction of the phenomenal to its... pre-individual and genetic horizon... In other words,

> phenomena are themselves reductions, they are … instances of the solutions of problems or differential relations that constitute them. (Beistegui 2004: 286)

If Beistegui really does leave the simulacrum out whilst remaining fully Deleuzian, he must, on the face of it, be an ally to any thesis concerning the redundancy of the concept of the simulacrum. In fact, things do not turn out that way. Deep in the endnotes we find: 'In a way … the entirety of Deleuze's thought … can be seen as a meditation on the simulacrum' (Beistegui 2004: 371–2; n. 56). And in plain sight:

> Phenomena are not so much constituted or given as they are generated or produced, not by external causes and first principles … but by a pre-individual differential complex that is entirely immanent to the system in which it explicates itself, a set of conditions that are far more impersonal than phenomenology will have ever allowed. This … is what allows Deleuze to speak of the phenomenal as 'illusory' … and … brings Deleuze in great proximity to Plato. (Beistegui 2004: 311)

However having built this sandcastle, Beistegui immediately knocks it down by clarifying that if phenomena, for Deleuze, are illusions, it is not by virtue of their relation to 'a sphere of being … that would be less illusory, more real, really real as it were … Such a view would amount to … the crudest of Platonism' (Beistegui 2004: 311). Beistegui seems to argue that it is to avoid such crudity that Deleuze calls phenomena 'simulacra'. In other words, there are no foundational identities of the sort we find in Plato.

And yet, ironically, the concept of the simulacrum seems to court the very misunderstanding that Deleuze, it seems, wished to avoid. Williams is forced to address it:

> The misunderstanding would be that he is opposing simulacra to another kind of real entity in his system. This is not the case: simulacra and differences are all that there is in series and an error is made when something that is a simulacrum is taken to be objectively real. (Williams 2011: 128)

Does this mean that the phenomenal world of actual things is, in some way, not real? Williams plays this question through Deleuze's philosophy of time which is not quite the same thing, and yet he is prepared to go as far as to say that 'It would be a mistake to speak of the real time of objects, because when viewed in relation to the processes giving rise to them, the objects are not real' (Williams 2011: 129). Yet, if we take the longer view, we cannot seriously doubt Deleuze's commitment to the reality of the world: 'It may be that believing in

this world ... becomes our most difficult task ... This is the empiricist conversion ... we have lost the world' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 75).

In the longer run too, and despite his own testimony, in what sense can Deleuze really be said to have abandoned the concept of the simulacrum? The answer is not purely a matter of conjecture. We know that, for Deleuze, a philosophical concept is not the same as the name of that concept: 'Although concepts are ... baptized, they have their own way of not dying while remaining subject to constraints of renewal' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 8). Concepts are, instead, multiplicities: 'There are no simple concepts. Every concept has components and is defined by them' (15). Accordingly, as we have seen, the concept of the simulacrum contains the components of 'series', 'dark precursor' and more; one can, however, find very little parallel for this inner conceptual machinery in Deleuze's critique of Plato. Looking at Deleuze's philosophy as a whole, it is clear that he does not abandon the concept of series, for example, when he abandons the concept of simulacrum. All he realises he has thrown overboard, I suggest, is the name of the concept and with it the Platonic ballast that was never really an important part of his system and which muddles us more than it enlightens us. Deleuze knows that 'Concepts are not eternal'; they are born and die in response 'to our problems, to our history, and above all, to our becomings' (27). In what sense, therefore, had the problem or history changed? Not because difference had been rescued but, possibly, because Plato had been overthrown.

Notes

1. Patton, for example, argues that 'both senses [overturning and reversing] are involved in Deleuze's version of the escape from philosophy's Platonic past' (Patton 1994: 143).
2. Much of Stanley Rosen's commentary is devoted to refuting the so-called 'predicationalists' (e.g., G. E. L. Owen) for whom 'Plato's "metaphysics" is a gradually ripening episode in the ancestral saga of Fregean analysis ... Owen's assertion that the paradigm-copy model does not appear in Plato's "later" dialogues ... is ... indefensible' (Rosen 1983: 196).
3. Typographical error corrected: the English text reads 'reserve' instead of 'reverse'.
4. In fact the *Sophist* does contain a myth: the Visitor tells the story of the Battle of the Giants (Plato 1997: 267; *246a*). We must conclude that, for Deleuze, it is the wrong kind of myth.
5. There is also the, breathtakingly brief, late essay, 'Plato, the Greeks' (Deleuze 1997: 136–7).
6. Williams' reference to Beistegui 2004: 227 is incorrect. Perhaps p. 277 was intended; also see p. 311.

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Scoring the Rhizome: Bussotti's Musical Diagram

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Abstract

The score of Piece Four of Sylvano Bussotti's *Five Piano Pieces for David Tudor* is the most important image in *A Thousand Plateaus*. It serves as a prefatory image not only to the Rhizome plateau, but also to the work as a whole. It functions as the book's musical score, guiding readers in their performance of the text. Embracing John Cage's graphism and aleatory practices, Bussotti created his own 'aserial' new music, one that celebrated passion and Bussotti's open homosexuality. The visual elements of Piece Four include a deterritorialisation of the standard piano score, a diagram of the composition's abstract machine, and a drawing that Bussotti had produced ten years before writing *Five Piano Pieces for David Tudor*. The drawing itself is a rhizomic artwork, with details that echo visual motifs throughout *A Thousand Plateaus*. The superimposition of the drawing on the deterritorialised framework of the standard piano score conjoins the visible and the audible, faciality and the refrain, in a single artefact.

Keywords: Sylvano Bussotti, John Cage, David Tudor, graphism, art and music

During the last decade, I have taught a semester-long seminar on *A Thousand Plateaus* five times, and last fall I thought I was well prepared for the fifth iteration. But at the end of my lecture on the book's first section, a student who had been an aspiring opera soprano in a previous life asked, 'What do you have to say about the musical score on the opening page?' and all I really had to say was, 'I've never given it

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much thought.' I managed to improvise a few vague observations until the class period came to a welcome end, but after class I began studying the score and its provenance, discovering very soon that the work is not only fascinating in its own right, but also of great significance for *A Thousand Plateaus*. Like so many references in *A Thousand Plateaus*, the Bussotti score operates both internally and externally, reverberating within the book while opening the text to proliferating connections with the outside world, those rhizomatic connections extending so seamlessly that it is impossible to determine which elements are intentionally referenced by Deleuze and Guattari, and which are fortuitously evoked through the citation.

Each of *A Thousand Plateaus*' fifteen textual sections is preceded by a visual image, and that of Bussotti's score is the most important of them all. Aside from Bussotti's score, few of the visual images add a great deal to the text. Some are mere visual examples of specific elements in the plateau that follows (the Ark of the Covenant preceding 'On Regimes of Signs'; the wooden chariot drawing at the beginning of the Nomadology plateau; the photographs of an Etruscan amphora and plate prefacing the Becoming plateau; the crazy quilt before 'The Smooth and the Striated'). Others have a humorous or sardonic edge: the lobster of 'The Geology of Morals' ('God is a Lobster, or a double pincer, a double bind' [Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 40]); the Buster Brown comic of 'Three Novellas'; the partridge trap of 'Apparatus of Capture'; the Postulates of Linguistics plateau's image of the ominous Doctor Mabuse issuing *mots d'ordre*; the Conclusion's 'Computer Einstein' portrait, representing the machine–human interface of the electronic, the inorganic, the corporeal and the mythical.

A few require more careful elucidation. Deleuze and Guattari's poetic caption for the photograph preceding 'One or Several Wolves', 'Field of Tracks, or Wolf Line', only attains full clarity after one consults the list of Illustrations and learns that the photograph is titled 'Wolf Tracks on Snow'. Here, the text–image relation is more complex than in many other plateaus, in that the literal wolf's trace is a figurative image of the Freudian erasure of wolves as packs and the wolf as animal (rather than substitute father). The image captioned 'Dogon Egg and Distribution of Intensities', which precedes the Body without Organs plateau, has a textual counterpart in the reference to 'the BwO as the full egg' and 'The tantric egg' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 153), but its full significance is only made evident in *Anti-Oedipus*, where Deleuze and Guattari expound at length on the Dogon's world-egg as Body without Organs and its relation to the status of incest within the Dogon's complex

mythology (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 154–8). A similar expanded resonance emerges if one uncovers the reference that inspired Deleuze and Guattari to preface the Faciality plateau with Duccio's *The Calling of Saint Peter and Saint Andrew*. Deleuze and Guattari's contrast of the frontal face and the profile is mapped onto the distinction between the despotic and passional regimes, but only upon consultation of Jean Paris's *L'Espace et le regard* (1965), a central source in the plateau, can one appreciate the rich network of artistic associations that Duccio's painting is capable of activating.

If there are images that might rival Bussotti's score in importance, they would be Léger's *Men in the Cities* (preceding the Segmentarity plateau) and Klee's *Twittering Machine* (placed before the Refrain plateau). Without Léger's title (provided solely in the list of Illustrations), the relationship between the image and the plateau is only intuitively evident, but once identified, the painting lends the plateau added resonances, linking it to discussions of the city in the Nomadology and Apparatus of Capture plateaus, while retaining its implicit echoes of the Faciality plateau through its 'probe-head' images of abstract frontal and profile faces. Klee's *Twittering Machine* obviously evokes birds and refrains, but the reference to Klee itself brings to mind Klee's writings on music and painting and his own practice as a painter, dancing to music as he painted. In the cases of both Léger and Klee, modern painting's polysemic densities lend the images a considerable power as components of *A Thousand Plateaus*, and this power is only reinforced by their association with such key concepts as micropolitics, segmentarity and the refrain.

Nonetheless, Bussotti's score still remains *A Thousand Plateaus*' most important image, and for a number of reasons. If nothing else, it has pride of place – it is the first image you see when you start reading the book. The 'Authors' Note' ('*avant-propos*' in the French) advises the reader that 'To a certain extent, these plateaus may be read independently of one another, except the conclusion, which should be read at the end', and in the English translation, the reader could possibly choose to turn first to a plateau other than the Rhizome plateau and thereby avoid viewing Bussotti's score, since the 'Authors' Note' is on a right-hand page facing a blank left-hand page. But in the original French edition, the '*avant-propos*' is on the left-hand page directly opposite Bussotti's score on the right. Hence, even if you should choose to read other plateaus before the Rhizome plateau, you have already seen this image. Of course, you have also seen the opening text of the Rhizome

chapter, but significantly, seeing the text provides very little information about the section in question. No doubt you cannot help instantly deciphering the plateau's large-font title, but the rest of the text is merely generic typography, meaningful only when you actually start reading the smaller-font text. By contrast, the image of Bussotti's score is absorbed as a single entity, and, as we shall see, this fact is central to Bussotti's interrogation of the relationship between the visual and the aural, as well as the verbal.

Further, the Rhizome plateau itself has a special significance among the fifteen sections. It is titled 'Introduction', and if the conclusion should be read last, it would seem that the introduction should be read first, even if Deleuze and Guattari do not say as much. The rhizome text was published as a separate book in 1976, the only plateau to appear by itself. ('One or Several Wolves' and 'How Do You Make Yourself a Body without Organs?' also were published before 1980, but as articles in the journal *Minuit*.) In the 1976 book, as in *A Thousand Plateaus*, the text is labelled 'introduction' (though the word followed 'rhizome' rather than preceding it), which indicates that even in its early formulation, the section possessed an introductory function, though in its 1976 form, the question must arise, 'introduction to what?' An introductory exposition of a concept that deserves further exploration? Or an introductory harbinger of things to come, a tantalising preview of the rhizomatic complex that will be published as *A Thousand Plateaus*? Both seem plausible, and both stress the text's position as something preceding something else.

More important, the concept of the rhizome, among all those of *A Thousand Plateaus*, best characterises the book itself, and indeed, Deleuze and Guattari directly address the questions of the Book and their own status as authors in the Rhizome plateau. And finally, 'Introduction: Rhizome' is something like an operatic overture to the book, densely packed with motifs whose full significance will become apparent only after reading the entire text. If read first, and read carefully, the Rhizome plateau should be confusing, difficult, even opaque at times, and in that sense, it is a baptism by fire, a fitting introduction to the authors' uncompromising strategy of always working in the middle and of forcing readers to leap unprepared into the middle with them.

Bussotti's score has a similar inaugural, introductory function. It was not included in the 1976 book *Rhizome: Introduction*, which, despite what one might initially think, indicates not the score's lesser but its greater importance. Both the plateau and the score can stand alone,

and hence the image has a certain autonomy. It is a fitting image to introduce the first plateau, but it should also be seen as the entire book's master image. If the Rhizome plateau is the work's overture, Bussotti's composition is its score. It tells us how to perform *A Thousand Plateaus*, how we should play the book.

Bussotti is a multi-talented artist whose productions include music, drawings, paintings, costumes, theatrical productions, films, poems and prose works. Born in 1931, he came to international prominence in 1959 with the composition under consideration here, *Five Piano Pieces for David Tudor*, a piece inspired by his experiences the previous year when he first attended the Internationale Ferienkurse für Neue Musik (International Summer Courses for New Music) in Darmstadt, Germany. Initiated in 1946 by Wolfgang Steinecke, the Darmstadt Ferienkurse in its early years focused on works of quasi-tonal modernism, but by 1952, three young composers had emerged as leaders of an increasingly influential avant-garde: Luigi Nono, Karlheinz Stockhausen and Pierre Boulez. They were proponents of atonal serialism, a rigorous and severe formalism that severed musical elements, in Attinello's words, 'from any continuous and meaningful context and reformulated [them] as nondirected, temporally arbitrary (i.e. reversible) patterns' (Attinello 2007: 29). However rich the variations in serial practice, 'the *style* (as distinguished from the technique) of serialism, as it is usually understood, [was] one of nearly mathematical purity' (29).

The year Bussotti first attended the Ferienkurse, 1958, was also the year John Cage made his inaugural appearance at Darmstadt. On 3 September, Cage collaborated with David Tudor in two-piano performances of works by Earle Brown, Morton Feldman, Christian Wolff and himself; later, Cage delivered three lectures, during which Tudor played various works by Cage and others. Cage's presentations were highly controversial and their subsequent influence on avant-garde music was profound. For some composers, Cage's experimentations with sonic textures and chance were inspirational; for others, they were anathema. Among those most opposed to the aleatory aspect of Cage's approach was Boulez, who later caustically derided the post-Cage adoption of chance as a compositional practice:

> Notable in several composers of our generation at the present time is a constant preoccupation, not to say obsession, with chance… . The most elementary form of the transmutation of chance is located in the addition of a philosophy dyed with Orientalism and masking a fundamental weakness in

> the technique of composition; this would be a recourse against the asphyxia of invention, recourse to a more subtle poison that destroys every embryo of artisanship; I should willingly qualify that experience – if it is one – in which the individual, not feeling responsible for his work, simply throws himself into a puerile magic out of unavowed weakness, out of confusion, for temporary assuagements – I should willingly qualify that experience as chance by inadvertence. (Boulez 1968: 35)

Bussotti, by contrast, was among those who responded positively to Cage's experimentations with chance, adopting aleatory effects in many of his compositions in the decade following 1958, as is evident in the *Five Piano Pieces for David Tudor* of 1959.

It is important to note, however, that Bussotti's embrace of chance was idiosyncratic, and in one major regard, antithetical to Cage's sensibility. Boulez saw in Cage's aleatory methods a retreat from the responsibilities of a rigorous serialism, but both composers treated sounds in a detached and intellectual fashion, whereas Bussotti approached music as a personal, emotional and erotic medium. In the prefatory note to *Due voci*, composed between May and December 1958, Bussotti declared himself an advocate of 'aserialism', which he defined as the 'dialectical rebellion of the humanistic attitude in the man who writes music, against the stiff aridity of systems' (cited in Ulman 1996: 188). As Ulman observes, what Bussotti sought in *Due voci*, and in many of his subsequent compositions, was to infuse 'the gestural and sonic world of the serial avant-garde with the intimacy and subjectivity which serialism had sought through impersonal rationality to avoid' (188). The aim of Bussotti's aleatory methods was not, as Cage advocated, 'to let sounds be themselves' (Cage 1961: 10), but to invite performers to participate with the composer in an affective interpersonal event. In this regard, Tudor's influence was essential. A champion of American new music and the leading avant-garde pianist of his generation, Tudor was not simply a technical virtuoso but also a gifted improviser whose manipulations of all components of the piano greatly expanded the instrument's range of sonic possibilities. He tapped, thumped and beat the wooden frame, operated the pedals as percussive accessories, reached inside the piano and plucked, scratched, rapped and strummed the strings, sliding fingers up and down, coaxing overtones and eerie whispers from the instrument. Of necessity, given the elaborate gestures and broad movements required to execute the score, Tudor's stage performances, besides generating exotic sounds, also functioned as theatrical events, during which, as Richard Toop writes of another Bussotti piano composition for three players, the piano becomes 'a prone

body, alternately caressed, cajoled and assaulted by its suitors' (cited in Griffiths 1981: 127).[1] It is no doubt in large part this theatrical and affective dimension of improvisatory practice that drew Bussotti to experimentations with chance.

Bussotti's theatrical and libidinal proclivities, it should be noted, were manifest not only in his music but also in his person. Many have remarked on the tumultuous effect of Cage's presentations at Darmstadt in 1958, the theoretical repercussions of which were compounded by the personal animosities Cage's appearance unleashed – Boulez and Stockhausen had long vied for dominance at Darmstadt, often acrimoniously, and it was Stockhausen who had invited Cage to Darmstadt and who defended Cage's music from the vociferous attacks launched by many of the participants in the 1958 Ferienkurse. But Smith and Attinello argue persuasively that Bussotti may well have been an even more disturbing presence than Cage at Darmstadt in 1958, chiefly because of his flamboyant and forthright gay sexuality. Boulez and Cage, like many gay men in the 1950s, were quiet about their sexual orientation, and in the closed, hothouse atmosphere of Darmstadt, Bussotti's frank behaviour seems to have provoked considerable unease:

> Bussotti made certain underlying connections between music, avant-gardism and homosexuality all too evident; while inspiring some of the younger gay figures to be less secretive about their behaviour, and even apparently introducing some participants to sexual experiences heretofore only imagined by them, he also definitely alarmed and annoyed the senior figures, particularly Boulez. (Ormond-Smith and Attinello 2007: 110)

Bussotti's homoerotic approach to music was already implicit in his 1958 *Due voci*, with its text from La Fontaine celebrating voluptuousness, and it was explicit in the texts of *Pièces de chair II*, composed between 1959 and 1960. In the fifth of the *Five Piano Pieces for David Tudor*, Bussotti provides above the two-stave piano score a third line labelled '*voce*', apparently meant to be sung, with a text reading, 'I don't say no to the boys with clear eyes/ but I LOVE/ more than all those the ones with/ black eyes that shine' (cited in Ormond-Smith and Attinello 2007: 112). Bussotti's eroticism reached full efflorescence in his 1964 composition *La Passion selon Sade*, a musical and theatrical work whose score combines musical notations, complex charts, diagrams, drawings of characters and other graphic elements. As Ulman comments,

> In *La Passion* the latent eroticism of Bussotti's graphic style and opulent instrumental writing becomes explicit: the flautist must strip partially, the

> singer and conductor lie together on a divan, the percussionist functions as torturer, and the two pianos characteristically alternate between violent deluges and delicate explorations of unusual sonorities [...] Cage's theater of the absurd had been transformed, with the added inspiration of Artaud's 'theatre of cruelty', into Bussotti's 'theatre of Eros', which would grow ever more expansive: by the end of the sixties, Bussotti had even embarked on his first grand opera, *Lorenzaccio* (1968–72). (Ulman 1996: 189)

The chance Cage advocated, then, was for Bussotti a mere vehicle for creating improvisatory music-theatre. Yet if Bussotti responded favourably to Cage's experiments with chance, he was even more deeply affected by Cage's explorations of the graphic dimension of musical scores. A number of Cage's scores from the 1950s departed radically from standard notational practices. Many consisted solely of graphic, non-musical elements, as in *Variations 1* (for any instrument), *Aria* (for solo voice) and *Fontana Mix* (electronic score), all produced in 1958. *Variations I* consists of a prefatory page of instructions and six plastic transparencies, the first of which bears twenty-seven dots of various sizes, the following five of which have five randomly drawn lines each. The performer(s) is (are) to superimpose the lines on the dots in any way, using the dots as notes and the lines as trajectories of five sonic elements. *Aria* is a twenty-page setting of words and word fragments in Armenian, Russian, Italian, French and English. The vocal lines, Cage explains, 'are drawn in black, with or without parallel dotted lines, or in one or more of 8 colors. These differences represent 10 styles of singing. Any 10 styles may be used and any correspondence between color and style maybe established' (Cage 1960: preface). Near each squiggle are snippets of text that the soloist is to render in song. *Fontana Mix* includes ten pages with six curved lines each, ten transparencies with randomly placed points, and a transparency with a rectangular, ruler-like grid of small squares, 100 squares long, 20 squares wide. The performer generates the score by placing a transparency of points on a sheet of lines, and then superimposing the grid at any chosen angle. Once assembled, the given complex of points, lines and grid are translated into electronic sounds according to Cage's general instructions for utilising the graphic elements to generate the tone, colour and pitch of sonic events.

The influence of Cage's treatment of the score as visual artefact is immediately evident in the *Five Piano Pieces for David Tudor*, especially in Piece Four, and throughout much of his career, Bussotti continued to

make dual use of the score as musical notation and graphic medium – to such an extent that he is typically classified in music histories as an exponent of 'graphism' (a movement all too often dismissed as a frivolous musical dead-end).

Three of the *Five Piano Pieces for David Tudor* premiered at Darmstadt in 1959, with Tudor at the keyboard, and from its initial execution, Bussotti's aleatory methods came under fire. Following the performance of one of the pieces, an audience member asked Tudor to play the piece again – obviously, in an effort to question the validity of the entire improvisatory enterprise. Stockhausen refused to allow a repeat performance.[2] That same year, the complete score appeared in print. Since then, the piece has remained one of the best-known of Bussotti's compositions, and the image of Piece Four perhaps the most-often reproduced of all Bussotti's scores.

Thus, the opening visual image of *A Thousand Plateaus*, when contextually situated, brings together a number of themes. Generated amidst the 1958 Darmstadt turmoil surrounding Cage's lectures, Tudor's performances and Bussotti's gay flamboyance, the *Five Piano Pieces for David Tudor* represents a challenge to the ascetic serialism of Boulez, an 'aserial' amalgamation of aleatory composition, theatrical performance, unconventional graphic notation and affectively charged textures. To label the score as inherently 'homoerotic' would be far-fetched, but, as I hope to show, it does possess a decided sensuality that unsettles the score's more conventional, geometric elements. This interplay of chance, corporeal performativity, graphic experimentation and affective intensity provides a fitting preface to the entirety of *A Thousand Plateaus*.

To understand Piece Four of *Five Piano Pieces for David Tudor*, we must first consider the composition's prefatory page, which bears a brief text by Bussotti in Italian and German translation. In English, the text reads as follows:

> The expression 'David Tudor' used in the title is not a dedication but, so to speak, a kind of indication of the instrument.
>
> The written musical characters realize a scale that goes from traditional written notes to signs as yet musically unknown: *disegno* [drawing, design].
>
> In one case (piano piece 4), an autonomous *disegno* by the author, from ten years earlier, is pianistically adapted. Often the sonic acts that such a *disegno* may generate remain in the hands of the pianist.

> The five pieces, taken from a more vast cycle and hence dissociated from that cycle, reunite here in a minor cycle virtually placed within the global cycle. Thus, a finished part (piano piece 2) in its global context becomes unfinished, a complete part (piano piece 5) incomplete. (My translation)

Bussotti's first prefatory sentence tells us that the musical instrument is the machinic assemblage 'Tudor-piano' (and since Tudor died in 1996, the composition is now unplayable – at least if one takes Bussotti's comment literally). Just as Deleuze and Guattari insist that the book is a machine plugged into other machines (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 6) and that there is no separation between the lives and times of authors and their works (41), so Bussotti writes for a Tudor-piano machine, and invites us to view the composition as a machinic assemblage of 'Bussotti-score-Tudor-piano' and to plug that machine into other machines. Bussotti then states that the score's components run the gamut from conventional musical notation to unknown graphic signs. A quick glance at the score's five pieces confirms Bussotti's assertion, though it would seem that in each piece conventional notation is scarcely present, and is almost immediately sent speeding along a deterritorialising line of flight into a galaxy of cryptic signs and designs.

Bussotti's score stages a confrontation of the aural and the visual, of music and the plastic arts, a fact Bussotti explicitly states in the preface's third sentence, informing us that Piece Four started as an autonomous 1949 *disegno* that was 'adapted pianistically' ten years later. As Roland Barthes says in a profound one-page essay on Bussotti, the composer's basic principle is that 'writing is not a simple instrument'. A Bussotti score

> constructs a homological space [...] one part wizard's book of multiple signs, refined, coded with infinite minutiae, and one part vast analogical composition, in which the lines, the locations, the flights, the stripes are charged with suggesting, if not imitating, *what is actually happening* on the concert stage [...] A Sylvano Bussotti manuscript is *already* a total work [...] visibly, it is an ordered jumble of drives, desires, obsessions, which expresses itself graphically, spatially, *in ink*, one might say, independently of what the music communicates. (Barthes 1995: III, 387–8)

As overture to *A Thousand Plateaus*, Piano Piece Four juxtaposes two of the book's central aesthetic concerns: painting (the Faciality plateau) and music (the Refrain plateau), each art with its own problem: painting, that of the face-landscape, and music, that of the refrain. But just as music proves to have '*rhythmic faces or characters* and [...] *melodic landscapes*' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 318), so painting

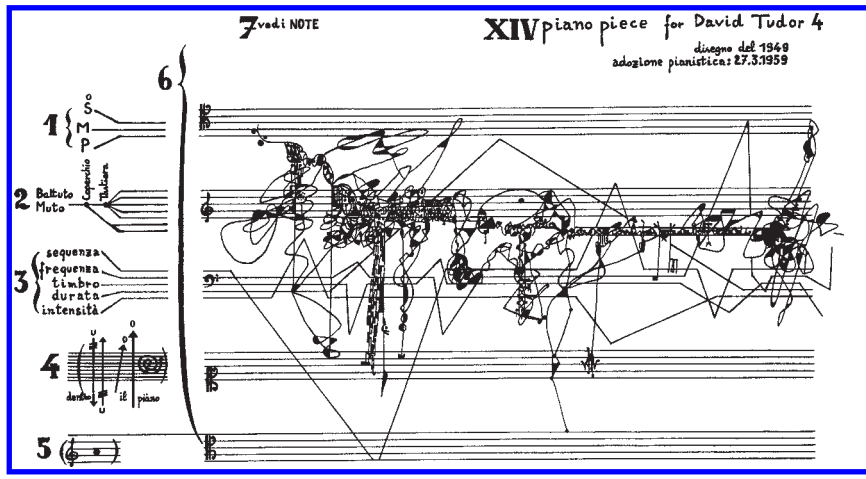


Figure 1. Piece Four, Sylvano Bussotti's *Five Piano Pieces for David Tudor*. © 1959 Ricordi, Milano. (Reproduced with permission of the publisher.)

has its refrains, and in Bussotti's score, sonic and visual landscapes and refrains enter a zone of indiscernibility that opens onto a plane of consistency composed of speeds and intensities within an unformed matter.

And now to the score of Piano Piece Four (Figure 1). The composition title is preceded by the Roman numeral XIV, indicating that this is part fourteen of the virtual 'global cycle' from which it has been extracted. (That global cycle, consisting of fourteen sections, was published in 1960 as *Pièces de chair II*.) The other four piano pieces for David Tudor are labelled in accordance with their positions within *Pièces de chair II*, as 'V b)', 'VIII', 'd)' and 'I a)'. The basic unit of a traditional piano score consists of a two-stave system, the top stave most often registering notes for the right hand and marked with a treble clef, the bottom, bass clef stave bearing notes for the left hand. Lines two and three of the score have the traditional treble and bass clefs, but the five lines of the bass stave zigzag wildly across the other four staves (Figure 2). Lines one, four and five have C-clefs, the line bisecting the capital-B-like shape representing middle C. The C-clef on line one is conventionally referred to as a 'tenor clef', line four a 'soprano clef' and line five an 'alto clef'. C-clefs have specialised uses for certain instruments, and are virtually unheard of in piano music, as are piano scores with five staves (designed for five-handed pianists, perhaps?). And as we shall see, only line five's C-clef actually designates a specific musical note.

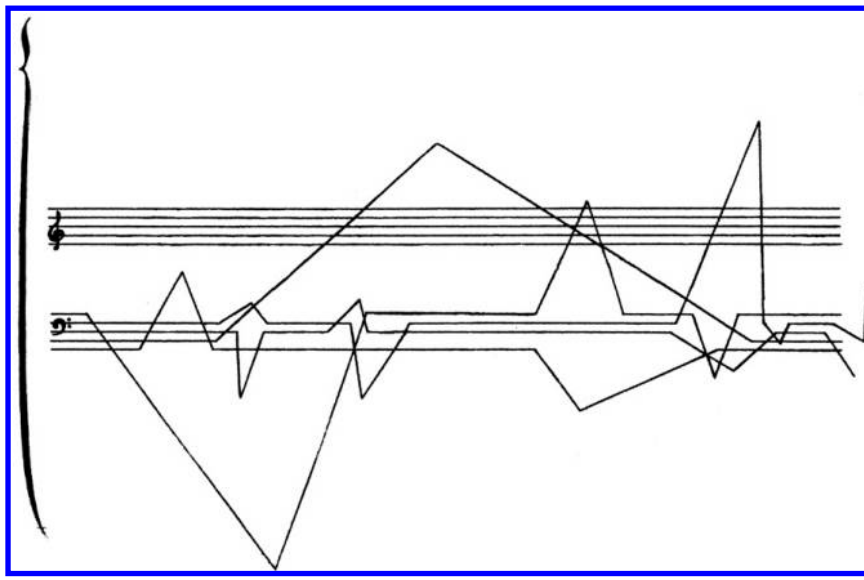


Figure 2. Treble and bass clef of Piece Four.

In my reading of the score, the left-hand margin units numbered one through five indicate the performance components that will be activated when the full composition, labelled six, is actually played.[3] Unit One is the most obscure of the score's components. No explanation of the significance of the P, M and S is provided in the score, but according to Bussotti (personal communication),

> The three letters in question signify: P = pizzicato M = muted (stop the sonority) and S = *sordina* [muffled] with all the means of directly transforming the sounds; introduction of paper between the strings, application of different pieces of material between the same.[4] (My translation)

Hence, when graphic marks touch the top stave, the performer is to reach into the piano, pluck the strings (*pizzicato*), dampen the strings with the hands (muted), and sound the strings prepared with paper and other materials, either by striking the corresponding keys of the keyboard or by sounding the strings directly (plucking, striking). (The use of the 'prepared piano' was one frequently employed by David Tudor in compositions he performed, and hence an appropriate component of a score dedicated to him.)

Unit Two designates the two fundamental operations of all piano playing: striking strings and muting them. But Bussotti extends these

operations beyond the keyboard to the lid of the piano, scored with an additional two lines. If you follow stave two left to right, in fact, you find that midway through the piece two extra lines appear, replete with enigmatic markings. Hence, all the standard keyboard functions of piano playing are represented by one treble clef stave, rather than the two stave, treble–bass clef system, and the lid is assigned a role comparable to that of the keyboard.

Unit Three is the most complex and most important of the five units. Its components are the basic elements of any sound. Each of the five zigzag lines charts movements in an analogue scale of less and more, of increases and decreases in some continuum. The intensity line charts volume, louder and softer. The duration line registers the tempo, faster and slower (the peak of the duration triangle marking the composition's fastest tempo). Timbre in music designates the quality of a sound, that which differentiates a flute from an oboe, for example. The timbre line's continuum, I propose, is that of dark and light, or if you have a synaesthetic mind, like Olivier Messiaen's, the line might be seen as traversing the sonic analogue of the visual chromatic spectrum from the edge of the infrared to the limits of the ultraviolet, or from cool to warm colours, or from light to heavy saturation. (Such visual analogues of sonic qualities are legitimate here since Bussotti's score is both an aural and a visual artefact.) The frequency line designates variations in pitch, lower and higher sounds, from 20 hertz to 20 kilohertz. I have concluded that 'Sequenza', the most puzzling of the terms, refers to the sequentiality of sonic elements, that is, the differentiation of separate sonic events via the temporal gaps between sounds. The continuum charted by the sequence line ranges from a maximum distance between sounds, to the minimum of simultaneity. Thus, the base of the sequence line marks a moment of simultaneity, in which the player makes all sounds at once – and that nadir coincides with the greatest concentration of design marks on the score.

If you extract the five lines (Figure 3), what you have is the diagram of the composition, in Bonta and Protevi's words, 'the outline of the traits of expression of an abstract machine, the "nonformal functions" linked to the "phyla" of "unformed matters" or "traits of expression"' (Bonta and Protevi 2004: 79). The five components of Unit Three name the unformed matter and nonformal functions of sound in general, and the lines outline the specific disposition of that matter/function within this composition.

Unit Four, 'inside the piano', directs the performer to reach into the piano and strum the undampered strings up, down and in an outward

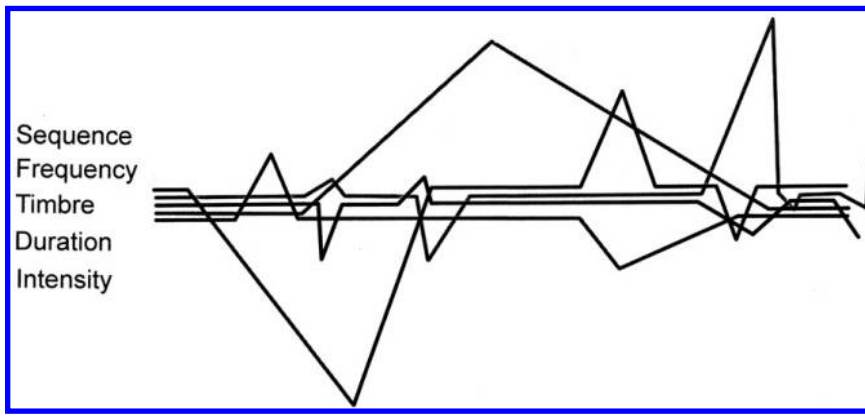


Figure 3. Unit Three of Piece Four.

spiral motion. Unit Five is Bussotti's little joke. The score's drawing touches the fifth stave only at one small point atop the stave. That point, if read as a musical note on the alto clef, is A above middle C. Five's parenthesis notates the same pitch with the more common treble clef, as if to remind the performer how to read the unusual alto clef, lest he or she forget how to do so.

Unit Seven, atop the score, says 'see note', in other words, see the prefatory sentence indicating that the score was originally a 1947 *disegno* that was 'pianistically adapted' on 27 March 1959. With some laborious graphics editing, you can expose the original drawing, which, to my eye, is a thoroughly rhizomatic design (Figure 4). The clear horizontal axis of the drawing delineates the plane of some undetermined rhizomatic growth suspended in space, such that the elements below the horizontal axis are as rootless as the elements that rise above the axis. The drawing's forms are non-representational, but decidedly organic rather than geometrical. Amid the drawing, one finds shapes resembling a tendril and fruit, a spider-like creature suspended from a thread, a column of shapes resembling plant cells or rock crystals.

Tubers, polyps, leaves, stamens, pistils, shoots and stems may be discerned in the thicket of forms (Figure 5).

The composition has a vertical axis, and if one wishes to formulate an analysis correlative to that which Deleuze conducts in *Francis Bacon* (1981), one might situate the drawing's generative locus of chaos, which Bacon calls the 'graph' ('*diagram*' in the French translation), in the zero

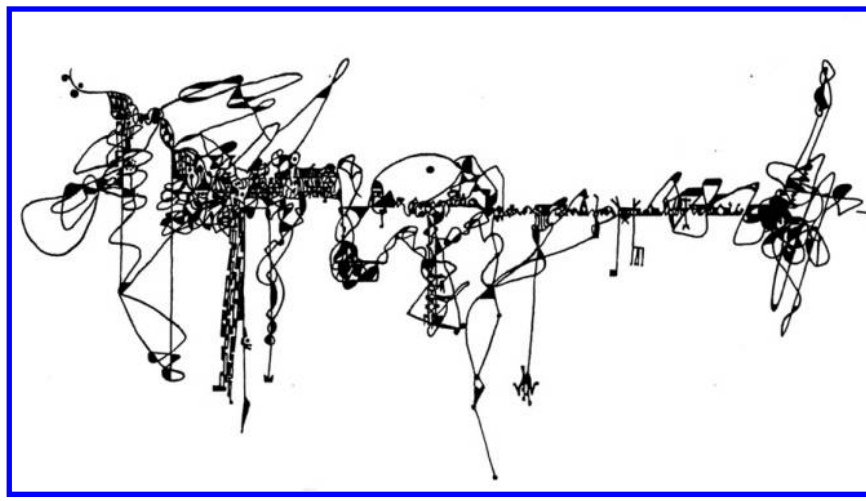


Figure 4. Bussotti's 1947 *disegno*.

point of the X–Y axes (Figure 6). From that site one can imagine the form emerging. But any one of the lines of flight so designated could be an initiating line of involution, from which the acentred rhizomatic design emerges.

My hypothesis, however, is that the point on the bottom stave, the A above middle C, is the generative source of the composition (Figure 7). It is Paul Klee's 'grey point', a 'nowhere-existent something' or 'somewhere-existent nothing' (cited in Bogue 2004: 80), a fundamental point of chaos that leaps out of itself, tracing a line that may eventually delineate all forms and volumes. Deleuze and Guattari invoke Klee's originary point of chaos at the inception of the Refrain plateau, providing a visual analogue of music's generation of refrains from a sonic point of chaos. In Bussotti's A above middle C, then, the sonic and visual meet. That point may be read as a musical symbol and as a drawing component. There the realms of sound and sight converge in a point of undecidability, which generates the soundscape and landscape inscribed on the ink-covered paper of the score.

If music and art are envisioned as planes of consistency, the musical score exists on one plane, the drawing on the other (Figure 8). The A above middle C, the point common to the two planes, fixes the line of intersection of the two planes. If the planes are then rotated toward one another, they merge in a single plane, a plane of consistency

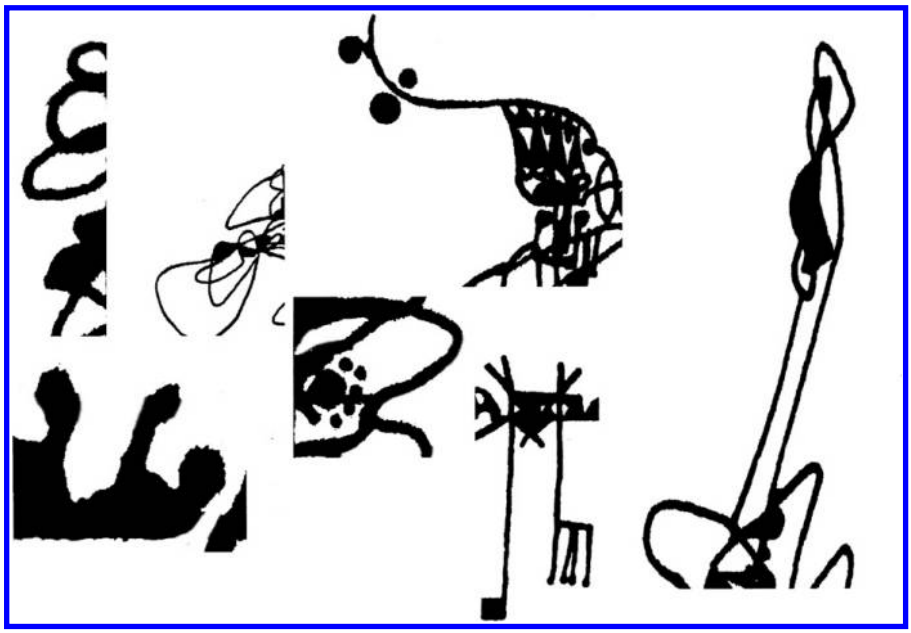


Figure 5. Tubers, polyps, leaves, stamens, pistils, shoots and stems.

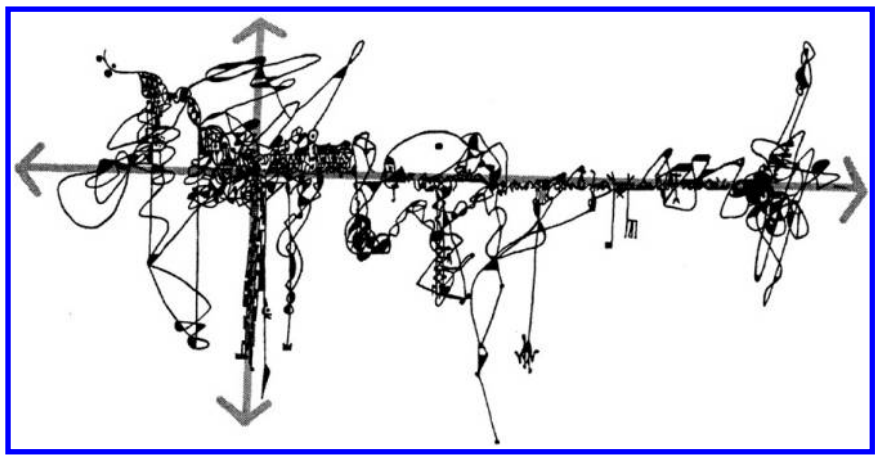


Figure 6. Horizontal and vertical axes of Bussotti's drawing.

common to the drawing and the sound score, and that plane is embodied in the score itself, a sheet of paper diagraming an abstract machine.

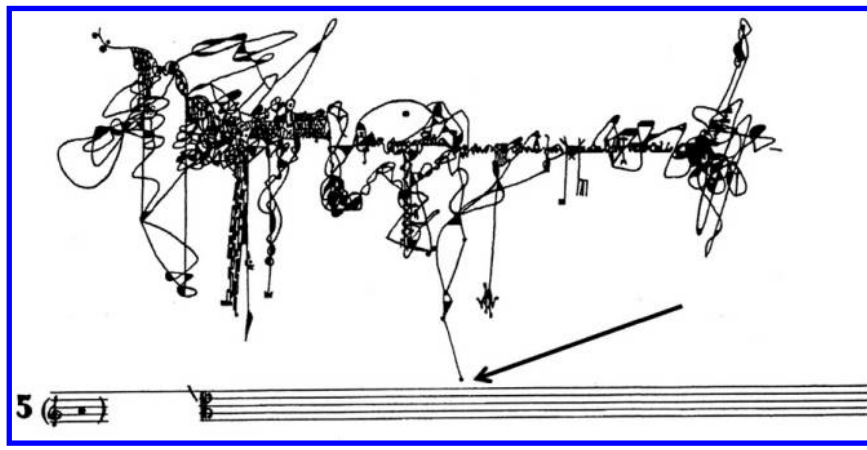


Figure 7. A above middle C (Klee's 'grey point').

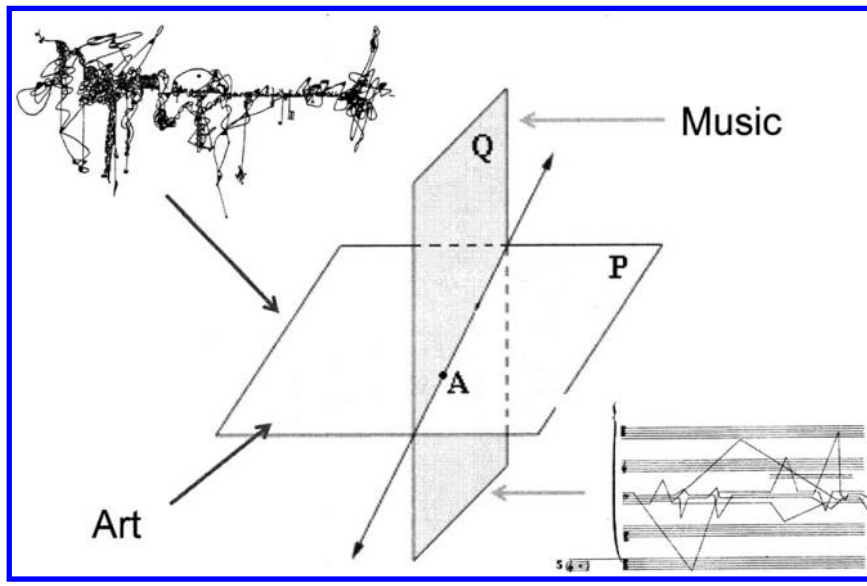


Figure 8. Planes of art and music.

But Piano Piece Four is also the score of *A Thousand Plateaus*. It serves as an overture to the book, replete with strata of sedimentation, abstract lines of flight, becomings-animal, plant and mineral, supple and rigid lines of segmentarity (Figure 9), white wall–black hole machines of

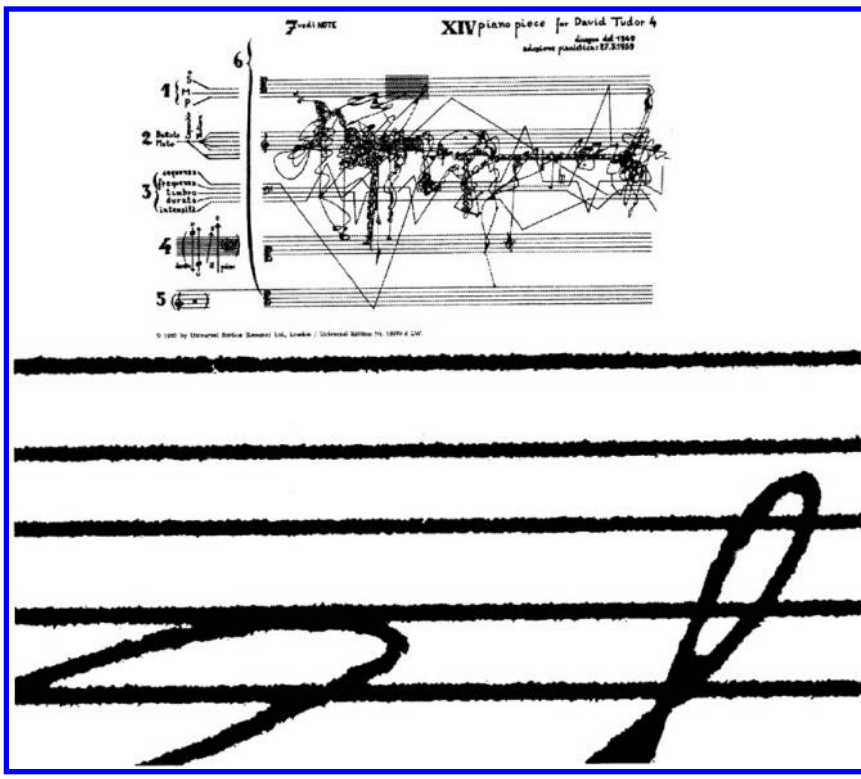


Figure 9. Supple and rigid lines of segmentarity.

faciality (Figure 10), regimes of signs (Figure 11), smooth and striated spaces. Bussotti's score tells us how to perform the book – to follow and enact its variations in intensity; to explore the varying duration of tempos of reading; to savour the timbres of tones, voices and vocabularies; to discover the work's varying frequencies and resonances; and to sample its component textual passages in sequences separated by varying distances, or to perform components in simultaneities assembled in the virtual memory space of coexisting sheets of the past. In engaging these five elements, we activate the diagram of *A Thousand Plateaus*' abstract machine, a realm of pure speeds (duration, frequency, sequence) and affects (intensities, timbral qualities).

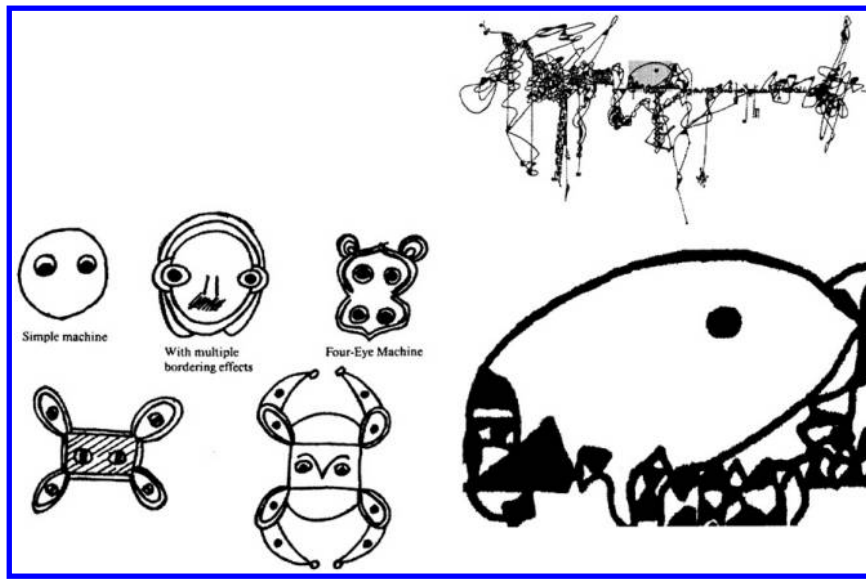


Figure 10. Machines of faciality in *A Thousand Plateaus* and Piece Four.

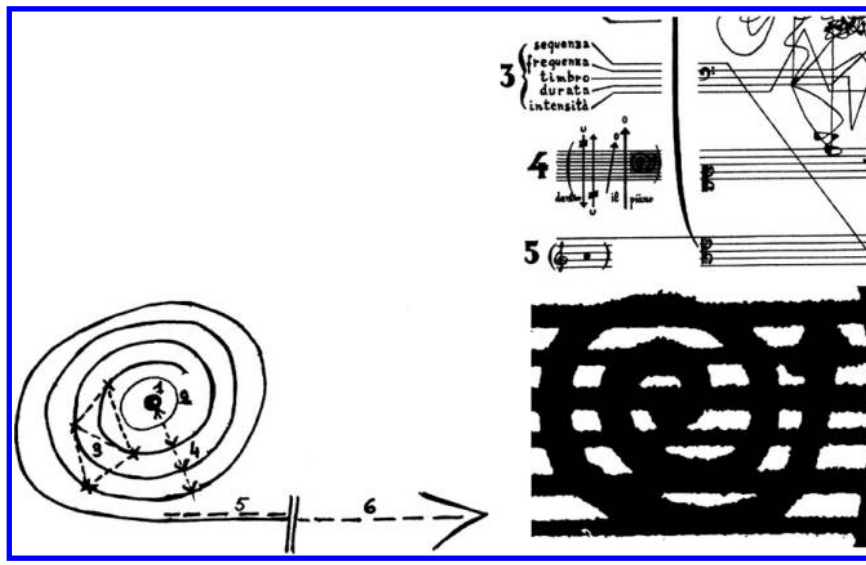


Figure 11. Regimes of signs in *A Thousand Plateaus* and spiral arrow in Piece Four.

Notes

1. Besides playing a key role in the development of the New York School's early piano music, Tudor was also an influential force in the dissemination of American new music in Europe. As Beal shows, 'Over a brief but fertile period of unprecedented international exchange, Tudor operated as an ambassador of [American new music], and his diplomatic presence at key new music venues in West Germany—especially at the *Internationale Ferienkurse für Neue Musik* (International Holiday Courses for New Music) in Darmstadt between 1956 and 1961—established American experimentation's controversial yet ultimately stimulating presence in conversations about new music' (Beal 2007: 78).
2. Similar objections to the improvisatory nature of the composition arose during performances of *Five Piano Pieces for David Tudor* in other venues. Cope records that 'Bussotti's *Five Pieces* was performed in Los Angeles three times in one concert, by three different performers. More conservative members of the audience, obviously appalled by the lack of recognizable similarities among the performances in structure, length, instrumentation, or motive, reacted antagonistically to both performers and work… . In reference to these performances Halsey Stevens has pointed out that : "… if Mr. Bussotti had wandered into the hall and didn't know what was going on, he would not have had the remotest idea that those three performances, or any one of them, might have been his own piece. They were so totally different in every respect that the only thing he could lay claim to was having designed the score, not to have composed the piece. Aleatory music, it seems to me, as it is frequently pursued, is an amusing parlor game …"' (Cope 1989: 165).
3. Other readings of the score, of course, are possible. Erik Ulman, in personal correspondence, argues that the numbered elements (save number seven) are to be performed in sequence. No doubt his alternative is but one of several other possibilities, all of which may be justified by Bussotti's prefatory remark that the execution of the score rests 'in the hands of the pianist'.
4. Bussotti's email message of 18 October 2012, written in French, reads as follows: 'Les trois lettres en question signifient: P = pizzicato M = muted (estomper la sonorité) et S = sordina avec tous le moyens de transformer directement les sons; introductions de papier entre les cordes, applications de morceaux différents entre les mêmes.'

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A Redemptive Deleuze? Choked Passages or the Politics of Contraction

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Abstract

When they want to discredit the political relevance of Deleuze's thought, Hallward considers counter-effectuation as a 'redemptive gesture', and Rancière describes Deleuze's history of cinema as a 'history of redemption'. Each time, redemption refers pejoratively to a break 'out of this world' and a form of apolitical passivity, in an attempt to reduce Deleuze to be a mere 'spiritual' thinker, simply renewing 'that "Oriental intuition" which Hegel found at work in Spinoza's philosophy' (Hallward 2006: 6). But is it all that simple? How should we envisage the relationship between creativity and redemption, politics and passivity in Deleuze's work? And in what way does that concern Deleuze's philosophy connection to the Non-West, and namely China?

Keywords: spirituality, China, subjectivity, Peter Hallward, dramatisation, politics

> Contemplating is creating, mystery of passive creation, sensation.
> Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 212

In the conclusion of *Time-Image*, discussing Syberberg's cinema, Deleuze opposes the time-image and the creative fabulation to the realm of information. Quite surprisingly, this opposition is placed under the sign of redemption: 'redemption, art beyond knowledge, is also creation beyond information.' (Deleuze 1989: 270) This passage finds a strange – one might say apocalyptic – echo toward the end of *Difference and Repetition*, where art's highest possibility is defined as

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the production of a repetition or contraction, that is, 'a freedom for the end of a world' (Deleuze 1994: 293).

Incidentally, when they want to discredit the political relevance of Deleuze's thought, Hallward considers counter-effectuation as a 'redemptive gesture', and Rancière describes Deleuze's history of cinema as a 'history of redemption' (Rancière 2001: 150). Each time, redemption refers pejoratively to a break 'out of this world' and a form of apolitical passivity, in an attempt to reduce Deleuze to be a mere 'spiritual' thinker, simply renewing 'that "Oriental intuition" which Hegel found at work in Spinoza's philosophy' (Hallward 2006: 6). But is it all that simple? How should we envisage the relationship between creativity and redemption, politics and passivity in Deleuze's work? And in what way does that concern Deleuze's philosophy relation to the Non-West?

It will become clear soon enough that I mostly disagree with Hallward's rigorous yet quite reductive reading of Deleuze. As I shall argue in more details, Hallward's spiritual anathema directed against Deleuze, although suggestive in many ways, largely misses its target. Nevertheless, I do believe it is important to give an echo to Hallward's critique and to directly put into discussion the so-called 'spiritual' aspects – and effects – of Deleuze's philosophy. Spirituality is a tricky word, and we can easily see how it can work as an insult, especially when coming from the 'pure politics' end of the contemporary philo-political spectrum. Let me thus say for now that where Hallward wishes to nail down Deleuze's philosophy using words like 'redemptive' or 'spiritual', I will read these characterisations as attempts to problematise the (a)politicality of modes of existence induced by Deleuze's philosophy.

Avoiding the comfort zone of simply commenting (or joyfully banging) on Hallward's rather disincarnated critique of Deleuze's work, I will first try to briefly and reflexively address the production of subjectivity in Deleuzian academic milieus. The idea here is to give Hallward's critique some sort of anthropological and practical ground, fleshing out Deleuzian processes of political subjectivation by relating them to the emergence, in recent years, of a transnational Deleuzian academic community and, to a certain extent, hegemony. This committed or self-compromising characterisation of some potentially undesirable side-effects that might derive from a Deleuzian stance articulates around the danger, acknowledged by Deleuze in the first place, of becoming beautiful souls through the affirmation of 'pure differences'. This first section could thus be read as a sort of distant but potentially sympathetic echo to Hallward's repeated affirmation that

Deleuze's thought is ultimately useless politically speaking, and that it is better understood as a 'redemptive' and deceptively academic way *out* of this world.

I will then move to a more direct discussion of some of Hallward's thesis, which he mainly develops in three different occasions: in a 1997 article entitled 'Gilles Deleuze and the Redemption from Interest', in his 2001 book *Absolutely Postcolonial*, and most importantly in his 2006 monograph on Deleuze, *Out of this World: Deleuze and the Philosophy of Creation*. The point will be to show just how unspecific, instrumental and, in the end, little convincing Hallward's use of the spiritual reference is in his inquiry into Deleuze's philosophy. This will be followed by a rather contrasting reading of Deleuze focused on some of the many *choked passages* he dramatically stages in his writings and which are, symptomatically indeed, mostly overlooked by the Badiou-inspired readings of his work. What is at stake here is Deleuze's *method of dramatisation* and its culmination in what I will call a *politics of contraction* innerving all of his work. Deleuze's dramatisations are of the foremost importance if one is to seriously take into account his complex and stimulating relation to the Non-West – and namely, China.

I. The Problem of the Beautiful Soul

'Give me a body then'!
Deleuze 1989: 189

In the *Hermeneutics of the Subject*, Foucault defines spirituality as an 'ethical work on oneself' (*un travail intérieur d'ordre éthique*). Discussing the concrete social conditions of this ethical work, its relation to the moral law and the kind of practical challenges it involves, Foucault goes on to suggest that the care for the self and its ethopoietical effects necessarily involve some form of contrasting social belonging:

> The care of the self cannot appear and, above all, cannot be practiced simply by virtue of being human as such, just by belonging to the human community, although this membership is very important. It can only be practiced within the group, and within the group in its distinctive character. (Foucault 2005: 117)

I think that, for the sake of this article at least, Deleuzian milieus and the intense affective commerce they generate are consisting and 'distinctive' enough to be envisaged not only as academic circles, but as potential forms of the kind of spiritual or ethopoietic groups Foucault alludes to.

From this (insider) perspective, the first element that I would like to discuss in echo to Hallward's critique is the danger of becoming beautiful souls. As far as I know, Hallward does not directly use this term to describe Deleuze's position; nonetheless, it is easy to imagine how he could have done so, describing a Deleuzian subjectivity that refuses acting, moving out of history and in order 'to preserve the purity of its heart, flees from contact with actuality' (Hegel 1967). Interestingly, Deleuze himself discusses the problem of the beautiful soul in the preface of *Difference and Repetition* and later in this same book:

> There are certainly many dangers in invoking pure differences which have become independent of the negative and liberated from the identical. The greatest danger is that of lapsing into the representations of a beautiful soul: there are only reconcilable and federative differences, far removed from bloody struggles. The beautiful soul says: we are different, but not opposed. [...] The *notion of a problem*, which we see linked to that of difference, also seems to nurture the sentiments of the beautiful soul: only problems and questions matter. (Deleuze 1994: xx; original emphasis)

This passage strikes me as a quite convincing description of an obvious tendency among contemporary academic Deleuzians, a tendency disturbingly compatible with communicational consensus and open-ended relational aesthetics. Indeed, it is easy to imagine how a misunderstood philosophy of difference can very well blend with existential liberalism, or how a vulgar understanding of Nietzsche's critics of resentment can fit with omnipresent psycho-pop positive thinking and its horror of 'negative feelings'. Here, one might think of Žižek's famous characterisation of North Americans as natural-born Deleuzians, suggesting that Deleuze's philosophy is perfectly suited for late capitalist yuppies (Žižek 2004: 183). Or again, as Stengers puts it in her discussion about how the capacities of practitioners must be conceived of as *situated*: 'When it is a question of "politics", even cosmopolitics, this constraint is crucial if we are to avoid the trivial dream of an angelic future: souls, now without bodies, would assume a relationship of perpetual peace' (Stengers 2011: 395).

Deleuze spells out the danger of the beautiful soul by asserting not only the affirmative and potentially aggressive and selective power of difference, but also the contractive power of wrath,[1] although adding that practical struggles or 'Revolution never proceed by way of the negative' (Deleuze 1994: 208). Significantly, as he contemplates the danger of the beautiful soul, Deleuze ultimately invokes Marx as some sort of political guarantee against it: 'Differences, nothing but

differences, in a peaceful coexistence in the Idea of social places and functions … but the name of Marx is sufficient to save [the philosophy of Difference] from this danger' (207). The idea of revolution deprived of its negativity is not politically radical enough in the eyes of Žižek, Hallward and the like. For them, the invocation of Marx here does not preserve Deleuze from ultimately being a mere 'spiritual' thinker, unable to properly and wilfully face 'the abyss of the [revolutionary] act' (Žižek 2002: 8).

II. Redemption or Dramatisation?

Hallward's reading of Deleuze aims to unveil the unifying redemptive logic he finds at work in his philosophy. Part of the interest and originality of Hallward's reading is that it gives great importance to the idea of becoming-imperceptible, which he describes as the 'exclusive telos' and 'the redemptive re-orientation of any particular creature towards its own dissolution' (Hallward 2006: 3). I will propose an alternative analysis of this undoubtedly crucial idea in the following section. For now, suffice it to say that Hallward considers Deleuze's philosophy as a way to escape the world's actual constraints, a dematerialising body of thought 'oriented by lines of flight that lead out of the world' (3), toward blissful virtuality. In this perspective, becoming-imperceptible constitutes the utmost expression of Deleuze's spiritual attempt at self-virtualisation.

Hallward situates Deleuze's thought as part of a 'late-modern revival of post-theophanic conception of thought' (Hallward 2006: 160), that is, a conception of the world in which 'God expresses himself in all things, and all things are an expression of God' (5). Hallward considers that this theophanic conception of the world merges with what he calls a 'singular mode of individuation', defined as an ongoing, self-constituent process of differentiation 'that creates its own medium of existence or expansion' (xii). Hallward identifies this logic of the singular as the main *modus operandi* of postcolonial studies:

> Singular configurations replace the interpretation or representation of reality with an immanent participation in its production or creation: in the end, at the limit of 'absolute postcoloniality', there will be nothing left, nothing outside itself, to which it could be specific. (Hallward 2001: xii)

Opposed to that logic of the singular we find what Hallward calls the specific, a mode of apprehending the real that takes into account the actual constraints of the material and historical world. The specific is

'the space of the historical as such [...], the place where we make our own history, but not in the circumstances of our choosing' (Hallward 2001: xii). What matters here is how this specific, historical materialist approach is said to allow for an 'active negotiation of relations and the deliberate taking of sides, choices and risks' (xii), while the singular logic tends to dissolve any subject–subject or subject–object relation into one 'beyond-subject' (5). The keywords here are of course 'active', 'deliberate', 'choices' and 'risks', as opposed to a presumably passive process of dissolution into the Oneness of Being.

That being said, what is most striking in Hallward's description of Deleuze's project is how little specific he is in associating Deleuze with just about any religious strands of thought. In his quite influential 1997 article 'Gilles Deleuze and the Redemption from Interest', Hallward even draws a parallel between Deleuze and Saint Paul, simply because the later also favours an 'other-worldly redemptive force' (Hallward 1997: 6). This of course sounds retrospectively quite ironic when considering that one of Hallward's main philosophical influences, Alain Badiou, turns precisely to Paul in his *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism* (1997) in order to further exemplify his notion of the Truth-Event and the conversion process of his 'subject to truth', as the title of Hallward's book on Badiou goes.[2] Fortunately though, in *Absolutely Postcolonial* and *Out of this World*, Hallward becomes somewhat more specific, dropping the reference to Paul and mostly insisting on Bergson, Spinoza, Ibn-Arabi, Suhrawardi, Meister Eckhart, Plotin, Eurigena and just about anybody part of the Neoplatonic tradition, suggesting that 'Deleuze's project resonates with and renews that "Oriental intuition" which Hegel found at work in Spinoza's philosophy' (Hallward 2006: 6).[3] To understand just how all these references ultimately work as an all-encompassing and virulent spiritual anathema, one has to keep mind that in his book *Absolutely Postcolonial*, Hallward comes to define the singular mode of individuation as some sort of creationist power, thus suggesting that 'Deleuze's philosophy might best be approached as the reinvention (in apparently post-Darwinian terms) of a genuinely contemporary version of radical creationism' (Hallward 2001: 15). In the endnote following this excerpt, Hallward indeed reveals that the title of the book on Deleuze he was working on at that time is entitled *Creationism in Philosophy: Deleuze* (342). Fortunately, Hallward was convinced in one way or another that it would be better to drop this reference to creationism, which indeed is nowhere to be found in what became *Out of this World: Deleuze and the Philosophy of Creation*. Nevertheless, I do believe this anecdote is most significant,

as it highlights Hallward's unspecific and largely instrumental use of the spiritual reference in his inquiry into Deleuze's philosophy.[4] In the end, one might ask: if Hallward really wanted to tackle the issue of the so-called redemptive or spiritual dimension of Deleuze's thought, should he not at least have considered minimally Deleuze and Guattari's crucial references to Taoism and witchcraft in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987), those to Zen Buddhism in *Logic of Sense* (1990), or better still, his explicit insistence on the theme of belief in the world in *Time-Image* (1989) or to empiricist conversion in *What Is Philosophy?* (1994)? A little bit further but still not out of reach, could he not have taken a better look at Whitehead's crucial influence on Deleuze's cosmic vitalism, and how it potentially intersects with Process theology?[5]

The main reason why Hallward believes he can call Deleuze a redemptive philosopher without considering Deleuze and Guattari's enunciative position as sorcerers in *A Thousand Plateaus* and their almost indecent reference, academically speaking, to Carlos Castaneda's initiatory journey, and more generally, to anything that would bring us closer to what in *Anti-Oedipus* (1983) is defined as the 'living center of matter' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 19), has probably to do with how he fully endorses Badiou's interpretation of univocal ontology as a mere variation amongst neoplatonic philosophies of the One. Here, I agree with Daniel Smith when he suggests that 'one must not be led astray as [Alain Badiou seems to have been] by the prefix "uni" in the term "univocity": a univocal ontology is by definition irreconcilable with a philosophy of the One' (Smith 2001: 174). Along the same line, I would argue that Badiou's and Hallward's overtly metaphysical readings hypostase Deleuze's dramatic movement of thought, systematically missing the practical and ethical horizon in which speculative propositions concerning univocity can be judged properly – is it not for this very reason that Spinoza's ontology is called an *ethics*? Hallward largely ignores the question of the modes of existence and its corresponding material passages and ethical *mises en jeu*. He consistently leaves aside all these moments where Deleuze describes and stages movements of plunging into chaos, dramatic passages on the line, struggles for creating planes of consistency, all of which concern the lived relation to events in the first place. 'The whole world had passed what seemed like a physical crisis point', Deleuze writes in *Difference and Repetition* (Deleuze 1994: 189); 'The event, once willed, is actualized on its most contracted point, on the cutting edge of an operation' (Deleuze 1990: 149); 'A concept is therefore a chaoid state par excellence; it refers back to a chaos rendered consistent,

become Thought, mental chaosmos. And what would thinking be if it did not constantly confront chaos?' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 208); or again, on a more openly revolutionary mode:

> 'We' must condense all the singularities, precipitate all the circumstances, points of fusion, congelation or condensation in a sublime occasion, Kairos, which makes the solution explode like something abrupt, brutal and revolutionary. Having an Idea is this as well. It is as though every Idea has two faces, which are like love and anger: love in the search for fragments, the progressive determination and linking of the ideal adjoint fields; anger in the condensation of singularities which, by dint of ideal events, defines the concentration of a 'revolutionary situation' and causes the Idea to explode into the actual. It is in this sense that Lenin had Ideas. [. . .] Anger and love are powers of the Idea. (Deleuze 1994: 190–1)

With Hallward, we simply lose sight of this type of critical passage: everything is said to divinely flow upward on some sort of philosophical stairway to heaven, in a unilateral (and apolitical) movement toward God and its own redemptive dissolution. Instead of putting so much emphasis on the theophanic, it would have been much more interesting to see Hallward discussing Deleuze's conception of the dynamic and dramatic processes by which Ideas are actualised and differentiated. It could have brought him to ask Deleuze, more than thirty years after Maurice de Gandillac: 'Is your dramatization a theodicy?' (Deleuze 2004: 107)

In the last instance, what is at stake here is Hallward's transcendentalist and deeply voluntarist interpretation of creation in Deleuze's philosophy. Like God, creation is everywhere in Hallward's book: every single chapter's title in *Out of this World* bears mention of it. And even if he does not explicitly refer to creationism any more, one cannot miss how he conceives of creation in a manner as voluntaristic as a creationist might imagine God's initial act of creation to be. If Hallward proves himself to be so blind to the corporal and transversal dimension of creative passages and transmutations in Deleuze, it is because his radically voluntarist political stance makes him totally oblivious to the question of the soul and its contractive power, or what Deleuze, in the conclusion of *What Is Philosophy?*, calls 'the mystery of passive creation, sensation' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 212). Deleuze's cosmic vitalism indeed requires a conception of creation that is not simply a matter of how to actively access God or the Truly Creative as Hallward would like us to believe. It always involves an intimate and complex relation to an outside felt as necessity and imposing its

corporeal constraints. This is precisely what Deleuze means when, in a crucial passage of *Time-Image*, he requires a (forced) body for thought:

> 'Give me a body then': this is the formula of philosophical reversal. The body is no longer the obstacle that separates thought from itself, that which it has to overcome to reach thinking. It is on the contrary that which it plunges into or must plunge into, in order to reach the unthought, that is life. Not that the body thinks, but, obstinate and stubborn, it forces us to think, and forces us to think what is concealed from thought, life. Life will no longer be made to appear before the categories of thought; thought will be thrown into the categories of life. The categories of life are precisely the attitudes of the body, its posture. 'We do not even know what a body can do': in its sleep, in its drunkenness, in its efforts and resistances. To think is to learn what a non-thinking body is capable of, its capacity, its postures. (Deleuze 1989: 189)

To put it in other words: one has to feel oneself as trapped (*s'éprouver coincé*) (Deleuze 1989: 170), for 'creation takes place in choked passages' (Deleuze 1995: 133). Paradoxically enough considering Hallward's view on the matter, it is perhaps the very idea of becoming-imperceptible and its embedded reference to China that best illustrates how creation in choked passages and dramatic becomings *actually* take place in a Deleuzian perspective.

III. China and the Line[6]

> *To have become a line was a catastrophe, but, even more, it was a surprise, a prodigy*. All of me had to pass along this line. *And with the most appalling jolts*.
>
> Henri Michaux [1956] 2002: ch. 5, 'Experimental Schizophrenia'; my emphasis

At the core of Hallward's peremptory dismissal of Deleuze's philosophy's political relevance, we find the concept of becoming-imperceptible. And at first sight, Hallward does seem to have a point: for what does it mean to pass along the lines of creation and become-imperceptible, if not to vanish and dissolve in cosmic anonymity? Is that all that Deleuzian micropolitics has to offer? In what sense is becoming-imperceptible supposed to allow for renewed ways of conceiving the production of political subjectivities in a time of media saturation and global mobilisation? In what way does it contribute to a 'redemptive' interruption of the flow of information or connect with Deleuze and Guattari's famous statement about how, nowadays, 'we do not lack

communication [...] we lack resistance to the present?' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 108)

Considering Hallward's spiritual anathema and the way he confines Deleuze's philosophy to be a mere theophanic extension of some 'oriental intuition', what is most delightfully striking perhaps in the unfolding of the idea of becoming-imperceptible is to see just how embedded in the Far East it appears to be in the first place. For a close reading of Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus* reveals something that has remained relatively unnoticed among Deleuze and Guattari's readers: the progressive emergence of the concept of becoming-imperceptible in that book is intimately intertwined with references to China, the main one referring to the figure of the Chinese traditional painter-poet. Significantly, while going into much detail when elaborating his wild spiritual orientalist argument about a post-theophanic Deleuze with the becoming-imperceptible for 'exclusive telos', Hallward simply ignores the very poetics of this crucial idea, which is not theophanic at all and refers to what could arguably be considered one of Deleuze's (and Guattari's) most significant engagements with the Non-West in his work – namely China.[7]

The first reference to China in *A Thousand Plateaus* is made right in the introduction, amidst a discussion opposing transcendence and the search for the root-foundation, 'a specifically European disease' as Deleuze and Guattari say (1987: 18), and oriental immanence and its rhizomatic structure. 'Of course it is all too easy to depict an Orient of rhizomes and immanence', they write (20); and in fact, they do not insist much on this contrast. But it is in this context that an image appears, an image that will permeate the entire book, that of grass:

> China is the weed in the human cabbage patch... . The weed is the Nemesis of human endeavor... . Of all the imaginary existences we attribute to plant, beast and star the weed leads the most satisfactory life of all. [...] Eventually the weed gets the upper hand. Eventually things fall back into a state of China. The weed exists only to fill the waste spaces left by cultivated areas. It grows between, among other things. The lily is beautiful, the cabbage is provender, the poppy is maddening—but the weed is rank growth ...: it points a moral. (Miller, cited in Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 18–19)

This first reference, through Henry Miller's work (it is a quote from his *Hamlet*), is quite unaccommodating, seemingly giving way to an unrestricted orientalism. But *A Thousand Plateaus* is not exactly concerned with questions about adequate or politically correct cross-cultural representation or of how to talk properly of the cultural 'other'.

In fact, if they do question rapidly the validity of such a delirious description of a weed China, they immediately redirect this interrogation into an openly prospective sense: 'Which China is Miller talking about? The old China, the new, an imaginary one, or yet another located on a shifting map?' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 19) The question of an adequate representation of the cultural other is thus methodically let in abeyance. Methodically, that is, insofar as the introduction of *A Thousand Plateaus* seeks to define a method not so much to describe but to effectively reach for the multiple.

The first seven chapters of *A Thousand Plateaus* read as so many approaches toward a radical critique of psychoanalysis, linguistics and ultimately, of the problem of the signifier. Progressively, the idea of making the multiple takes shape, through concepts like collective assemblages of enunciation (*agencement collectif d'énonciation*) and the Body without Organs, up to the asserted necessity of 'undoing the face':

> If human beings have a destiny, it is rather to escape the face, to dismantle the face and facializations, to become imperceptible, to become clandestine, not by returning to animality, nor even by returning to the head, but by quite spiritual and special becomings-animal, by strange true becomings that get past the wall and get out of the black holes, that make faciality traits themselves finally elude the organization of the face. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 171)

The expression 'escaping the face' marks a distance in relation to antagonistic models (face-to-face politics, so to speak), and defines a micropolitical field characterised by the exigency to dis-occupy identity. It is in the midst of this philosophical journey that we find the second Chinese reference, which comes up in a totally unexpected way – a rapturous line of flight: 'Cross the wall, the Chinese perhaps, but at what price? At the price of a becoming-animal, a becoming-flower or rock, and beyond that a strange becoming-imperceptible, a becoming-hard now one with loving' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 187). If the Chinese reference here remains quite unspecific (which Chinese are we in fact talking about?), its direction and its function, nonetheless, are indisputable: it is a breach made in the horizon of the signifier, a vanishing point from which to organise an escape. But this remains nevertheless all too abstract. We lack an indispensable relay between 'making the multiple', 'undoing the face' and 'becoming-imperceptible': art, an artistic doing, which the third reference makes more intelligible.

The conception of art exposed in *A Thousand Plateaus* takes on the developments on incorporeal transformations and the shaping up

of bodies that were initiated in the discussion on linguistics and the signifier. For Deleuze and Guattari, it is never something like art for art's sake that is at stake, but a conception of art that directly involves *life*:

> Art is never an end in itself; it is only a tool for blazing life lines, in other words, all of those real becomings that are not produced only in art, and all of those active escapes that do not consist in fleeing into art, taking refuge in art, and all of those positive deterritorializations that never reterritorialize on art, but instead sweep it away with them toward the realms of the asignifying, asubjective, and faceless. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 187)

Deleuze and Guattari insist repeatedly on the active nature of the line of flight, which is never a flight into passivity or imagination. If that was the case, it would immediately lose its political dimension, as Hallward misguidedly suggests. The theme of the line, which runs through all of *A Thousand Plateaus*, ties together art, politics, ethics and the cosmic. And it is precisely in this passage from ethics to the cosmic that we find the third reference to China. In the chapter 'Becoming-intense, Becoming-animal, Becoming-imperceptible', the work on oneself and the cosmic dimension it involves are summed up in the idea of 'becoming like everybody else'. First, the properly ethical challenges are brought forth:

> If it is so difficult to be 'like' everybody else, it is because it is an affair of becoming. Not everybody becomes everybody [and everything: tout le monde – trans.], makes a becoming of everybody/everything. This requires much asceticism, much sobriety, much creative involution: an English elegance, an English fabric, blend in with the walls, eliminate the too-perceived, the too-much-to-be-perceived. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 279)

Deleuze and Guattari insist on the very materiality of this work of elimination and reduction at the level of the living tissues of the human. They then write: 'By process of elimination, one is no longer anything more than an abstract line' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 280). What matters here is that this becoming-line involves a radical putting at stake of existence, in the realm of impersonality. Becoming-line is a highly dramatic contraction – a life in one stroke, a stroke of life.

To become-line is never to close oneself up: on the contrary, it is an essential condition to communicability and availability, a way to directly participate in the gestation of the world. 'Becoming everybody/everything (*tout le monde*) is to world (*faire monde*), to make a world' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 280). Drawing lines that world: this is the meaning of the becoming-imperceptible and everybody put forth in *A Thousand Plateaus*. It is in this very passage of the

becoming-line and the making-world that we find the third Chinese reference, which is undoubtedly the most serious and suggestive one. At the meeting point of ethics and the cosmic, Deleuze and Guattari encounter the traditional Chinese painter-poet as described by François Cheng in *L'Écriture poétique chinoise*. A painter-poet that, instead of pursuing the resemblance, 'retain[s], extract[s] only the essential lines and movements of nature' (280): an artist-abstractor that is therefore 'not imitative or structural, but cosmic' (280). The Chinese artist invoked in *A Thousand Plateaus* is the figure who, after ethical work on herself, is able to make of the world a becoming, to pass entirely along the lines she draws, in the impersonality of creation. 'One is then like grass', Deleuze and Guattari finally say, 'because one has made a necessarily communicating world, because one has suppressed in oneself everything that prevents us from slipping between things and growing in the midst of things' (280). It is perhaps Li He, a Buddhist Chinese poet of the late Tang dynasty, who best sums up this etho-cosmic participative becoming with the world:

> The brush perfects the creation
> Heaven has not all the merit! (Cheng 1996: 17)

After this close reading of the emerging of the idea of becoming-imperceptible in *A Thousand Plateaus*, a question remains: does the micropolitical horizon of thought, culminating in the idea of becoming-imperceptible, really lead to any actual production of political subjectivities? Do we not find in it the seed of a form of life exclusively concerned with existential flexibility and ways of adapting to all circumstances, in brief, a perfect guide for survival in the era of neoliberal productivism and globalisation of precariousness? Rancière, for example, is categorical: indirectly criticising Deleuze among others and disqualifying any focus put on metamorphosis and becomings, he unambiguously states: 'There is no such thing as Dionysian politics' (Rancière 1998: 200).

The becoming-imperceptible and the becoming-line involve a dramatic experience of stifling or of ethopoietical claustrophobia, as Wittgenstein would put it. There lies the politics of contraction that innerves all of Deleuze's work: choked passages where one experiences oneself as stuck, plunges into chaos from which no one comes back unscathed. *A Thousand Plateaus*' reference to Henri Michaux is crucial here, with his evocation of 'major ordeals of the mind' and other 'miserable miracles', accelerated linearity experienced in the flesh and moments of schizophrenia that tear down the sphere that we normally are and in

which we 'survey panoramas' (Michaux [1956] 2002: ch. 5). Michaux's description of the passage along the line (cited in the epigraph of this section) expresses a sense of danger, a perilous threshold, a challenge which is simultaneously intimate and tearing off the outside: to become a line, 'only a line', the horror of a line along which 'all of me had to pass'. This 'all of me' suggests something both necessary and exhaustive: the concentration of oneself must be total; its achievement cannot suffer any failing; it is all or nothing. It is by this very condition, it is according to this capacity or power that the body can find and create new marks. The passage along the line entails a transformative interruption of the ordinary relation to oneself. It involves a performative moment 'on the line', in which the movement of abstraction ensures its unity, or better, its watertightness. The becoming-line is a moment of sustained tension, a moment of anonymity in the surpassing of oneself, a dramatic desubjectivation that ultimately amounts to an interruption of the identity service. And this process of desubjectivation can as well give way to a becoming-Chinese.

IV. (Un)timely Contractions

In the conclusion of *Out of this World*, Hallward claims that 'by posing the question of politics [. . .] in the apocalyptic terms of a new people and a new earth [. . .], the political aspect of Deleuze's philosophy amounts to little more than utopian distraction' (Hallward 2006: 162). In the light of this article, we can easily imagine that what Hallward intends by 'apocalyptic politics' is yet another way to evoke the redemptive dissolution of all things in the ecstatic process of absolute creation. Yet, to a certain extent, I agree with Hallward that Deleuze's politics does involve some sort of apocalyptic component. One might think of *Difference and Repetition*'s foreword here, with its somewhat cryptic affirmation that this book 'should have been an apocalyptic book (the third time in the series of times)' (Deleuze 1994: xxi); or again, in the conclusion of *What Is Philosophy?*, where we read that as the brain plunges into chaos, 'In this submersion it seems that there is extracted from chaos the shadow of the "people to come" in the form that art, but also philosophy and science, summon forth' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 218). But instead of interpreting these passages in terms of ethereal or utopian dissolution, I believe we should read them in terms of ethical, aesthetical, political and, ultimately, *temporal contractions*. Redemption? A limit happens – and in its drawing, a virtual becoming-line.

In this regard, and as far as a people to come is concerned, I would suggest, following Agamben's distinction in *The Time that Remains*, that the word 'messianic' is more accurate than 'apocalyptic' to describe this process of temporal-liminal contraction. For are we not intimately confronted here with the very necessity of a time-image, that is, not an image of the end of time (apocalypse proper), but rather an image to bring (chronological) time to an end – a messianic or contracted time thus understood as 'the time the mind takes to realize a time-image' (Agamben 2005: 66)? What matters here is how value is introduced in the world, or in other words, how a certain mode of existence is intensified and brought to its creative limit. To believe in the world, then, is indiscernibly active and passive; it is to contemplate – and *be contracted*.

It is a convincing account of this movement of exacerbation of difference or (un)timely contraction which is utterly missing in Hallward's reading of Deleuze. Nowhere is it clearer than at the very point where Badiou paradigmatically extracts, in a typical bad-faith-subject-to-truth way, the expression that will become his war cry against Deleuze: 'the Clamor of Being'. As is well known, the expression is taken from the very last lines of *Difference and Repetition*, which read as follows: 'A single and same voice for the whole thousand-voiced multiple, a single and same Ocean for all the drops, a single clamor of Being for all beings: [. . .]'. Everything happens as if Badiou has stopped reading at this point and refuses to consider what follows the colon, that is, the affirmation of the disjunctive and dramatic play of difference and repetition as such: ' . . . on condition that each being, each drop and each voice has reached the state of excess – in other words, the difference which displaces and disguises them and, in turning upon its mobile cusp, causes them to return' (Deleuze 1994: 304).

If we define politics as a matter of contraction in the element of ethics, the problem of believing in this world becomes politically crucial and should not be confused with any simple wilful belief or 'will of the people', as the title goes of one recent article by Hallward. In order to be brought to a level of political intensity, the problem of believing in the world, in this 'specific' world, requires envisaging a *singular end* to it – its Eternal Return, in the terms of *Difference and Repetition*. A singular end thus, so that

> Difference may at last be expressed with a force of anger which is itself repetitive and capable of introducing the strangest selection, even if this is only a contraction here and there – in other words, a freedom for the end of *a* world. (Deleuze 1994: 293; my emphasis)

Notes

1. 'Nevertheless, we believe that when these problems attain their proper degree of *positivity*, and when difference becomes the object of a corresponding *affirmation*, they release a power of aggression and selection which destroys the beautiful soul by depriving it of its very identity and breaking its good will' (Deleuze 1994: xx; original emphasis).
2. Hallward would probably reject this rapprochement altogether, since he disagrees in the first place with Žižek's idea that 'religious revelation is the unavowed paradigm of his [Badiou's] notion of the Truth-Event' (Žižek 2000: 183), arguing instead that 'the model for Badiou's fidelity is not religious faith but mathematical deduction pure and simple' (Hallward 2003: 149).
3. Perhaps due to the excitement of having found yet another religious reference in Deleuze's writing, Hallward symptomatically misreads a reference to Zen Buddhism in *What Is Philosophy?* (Hallward 2001: 11), missing the yet simple fact that in this passage, Deleuze and Guattari establish a correspondence between Zen Buddhism and Wittgensteinian 'silence of logic', *not* with their own philosophy (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 140). For a more conclusive reference to Zen Buddhism in Deleuze's philosophy, Hallward should have looked, for instance, at the passages in *Logic of Sense* where he discusses the wise (stoic) man's humoristic stance and the ethics of the mime.
4. Hallward's demeaning use of the word 'creationism' should therefore be radically contrasted with Guattari's 'axiological creationism'. 'The (Guattarian) "creationist" perspective celebrates the existence of every given type of being that specifically poses the question of what counts for its mode of life. Axiological creationism concerns the production of existence for everything for which existence implies a "gamble", a risk, the creation of a point of view about what, from then on, will become a milieu' (Stengers 2010: 37). Note that Guattari's notion of creationism involves a radical implication *in* the world and the production of a highly specific mode of existence.
5. For an interesting discussion of the partly missed encounter between Deleuze and Process Theology, see Isabelle Stengers, 'Beyond Conversation. The Risks of Peace' (2002).
6. This section is a condensed and revised version of 'La Chine et la ligne. Une étude de la référence chinoise dans *Mille Plateaux*' (Bordeleau 2009).
7. In Deleuze's later books, there are at least three other significant references to the East, each of them being irreducible to Hallward's simplistic theophanic schema. In his *Foucault*, the Far East is associated with a 'culture of annihilation' (Deleuze 1988: 106); in *The Fold*, with what he calls the 'Eastern line' as opposed to the full Baroque line. Then, in *What Is Philosophy?*, Deleuze discusses his notion of the plane of immanence in contrast with François Jullien's idea of an 'absolutisation of immanence' found in antic Chinese thinking (Deleuze 1994: 74). From the perspective of the production of subjectivities, it is certainly the passage in *Foucault* that is most interesting. In the chapter 'Foldings, or the Inside of Thought', a certain Orient is opposed to the Western subjective folding: 'The appearance of a folding of the outside can seem unique to Western development. Perhaps the Orient does not present such a phenomenon, and the line of the outside continues to flow across a stifling hollowness: in that case asceticism would be a culture of annihilation or an effort to breathe in such a void, without any particular production of subjectivity' (Deleuze 1988: 106). For a more detailed discussion of this passage in relation with the Chinese-Buddhist idea of inferno, see Bordeleau 2013.

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Deleuze, the '(Si)neo-realist' Break and the Emergence of Chinese Any-now(here)-spaces[1]

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Abstract

By creatively expanding Deleuze's concept of the time-image crystal, I productively fold together and engineer an encounter between two comparable cinematic movements otherwise separated by huge vistas of time and space. Here, I work to plicate the post-war Italian neorealist movement which Deleuze saw inaugurating the modern cinema, with a 'postsocialist' mainland Chinese movement that I playfully call '(si)neo-realism'. The films of both historical moments formulate comparable break-away cinemas which are often considered moral or socially responsible art cinemas best approached through André Bazin's 'ontological' film philosophy lens. By using Deleuze, however, I hope to move beyond these realist discussions to explore how both movements are also fruitfully thought in terms of introducing distinct yet analogous mental relations into the image during historical junctures defined by radically transforming psycho-geographies. Like Deleuze's discussions of neorealism, (si)neo-realism is considered a loose impulse or mode that collectively bears witness to confusing and bewildering mental experiences from within a turbulent period of cultural, ideological and historical upheaval: which demands new ways of perceiving, thinking and acting. Without wanting to fall into a problematic auteur paradigm, I necessarily employ the films of Wang Xiaoshuai as emblematic examples of the wider impulse or trend. Indeed, Wang's films perfectly reify a new ethico-aesthetic form of Chinese cinema marked by a proliferation of new spaces, characters,

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experiences and narrative structures. Here, I also strive to do what Deleuze did not in his writing upon film, and explore the break-ups, breakdowns and breakthroughs in specific relation to a complex contextual web of political and cinematic ecosystems. Throughout this process I try to put Deleuze to work by using the films and context to re-interrogate and re-evaluate the time-image models as they appear within and across his *Cinema* books.

Keywords: Deleuze, Chinese cinema, André Bazin, neorealism, time-images

I. Introduction

Since the 1990s, mainland China's biggest contender for an 'alternative' or 'break-away' cinema has been pinned to a loose band of maverick directors hailing from what has variously been called the Postsocialist, Post-Wave, Newborn-, Sixth-, Post-Sixth-, or Urban-Generation of filmmakers. This mixed grab bag of directors boasts state-school graduates from the Fifth-, Sixth- and D-Generations respectively, alongside a wider cohort of amateur and non-professionals.[2] The films are usually assembled on account of a perceived predilection for an unpolished style, raw gritty realism, Art film ethico-aesthetics, or for unflinchingly focusing upon social problems affecting the culture's non-official underbelly. Over the past twenty years the impulse has often been branded an underground, avant-garde or – if one buys into the self-aggrandising myths – 'illegal' cinema.[3] If we uncritically accept the 'Banned in Beijing' branding many of these films receive, we also necessarily confront one of film history's most glaring ironies. For these films are deemed inappropriate on account of exposing issues of class inequality, powerlessness and systemic corruption confronting individuals (and groups) under an insidious system of capitalism and foreign influence (globalisation): which is to say, exactly the sort of stories previously sought by the ruling Party to propagandise and extol the virtues of communism. Beyond this historical repetition (or Nietzschean return) in the form of political farce, any opprobrium or unfavourable domestic reception must be linked to the filmmakers' adoption of a warts-and-all 'docu-style' that seditiously records China's profoundly uneven and unprecedentedly rapid process of modernisation and globalisation.

The new impulse crystallised in Wang Xiaoshuai's *The Days* (1993) and Zhang Yuan's *Beijing Bastards* (1994), with both being observed

to blur the boundaries between documentary and fiction in Chinese cinema for the first time. Each embraced a low-budget 'on the street' video style, to relate dispersed and distended narratives that traced the interweaving lives of disaffected artists and social outsiders. Thereafter a growing wave of stark realist films – including *Postman* (1995), *On the Beat* (1995), *Pickpocket* (1997), *So Close to Paradise* (1998), *I Love Beijing* (2000), *Beijing Bicycle* (2001), *The World* (2003), *Blind Shaft* (2003), *Drifters* (2003) and *Lost in Beijing* (2007) – aesthetically, formally and politically (or in various combinations thereof) followed suit, by focusing upon disempowered characters confronting new social problems and ideological/identity issues.[4] By sharing common ethico-aesthetic characteristics, the films can be understood as delimiting the territories of a loose movement or style which typically focuses upon disempowered or disenfranchised agents, underclass migrants or adult-children struggling to come to terms with China's rapidly transforming socio-political psycho-geography.

The multiplicit movement is often understood as marking a decisive break with China's established artistic and 'literary' cinematic traditions; especially its national and nation-building models. The decidedly alien politics and aesthetic have often forced domestic and foreign critics to seek international trends or movements for comparison, or to help describe the texture and feel of the new impulse. The renewed drive for stark social (as opposed to socialist or revolutionary) realism, for instance, leads many to compare the trend to a post-war European vérité or neorealist style (see *inter alia* Wright 2001; Zhang Yingjin 2006, 2007; Berry 2006, 2007; Johnson 2006; Tonglin Lu 2006; Braester 2007; Reynaud 2007). Such discourses often emerge alongside a renewed critical encounter with André Bazin's neorealist exegesis and/or ontological writings. And although these coordinates remain useful, and undoubtedly enrich any consideration of the Chinese films, I maintain that beyond the obvious drive for higher levels of social realism, the films also appear symptomatic of a more fundamental philosophical and ideological rupture, which erects thought-provoking parallels with Deleuze's philosophical writing on the neorealist tradition. Taking Deleuze's lead, I argue that the Chinese films can also be understood as part of a wider response to comparably disorienting and confusing experiences emerging in the wake of disjunctive and disruptive historical events. Indeed, many critics discuss the Chinese films' reflecting a cultural zeitgeist, or marking a significant 'paradigm shift' (Lai 2007: 232) in Chinese filmmaking linked to a wider 'existential crisis' (Zhang Yingjin 2007: 49). Such views also invoke Deleuze's writing

upon the Italian post-war cinema, then, and can help account for a motific loosening of action-image drives, the introduction of new mutant characters, the breaking down of traditional ways of perceiving and acting, and the introduction of new mental relations into the image. Elsewhere I ultimately maintain that these films set the scene for the full-blown emergence of a PRC time-image within Lou Ye's *Suzhou River* (2000): a film I read as an autodidactic philosophical equivalent to *Last Year in Marienbad* (1961), and which for Deleuze, following André Labarthe, was the apogee and 'last of the great neo-realist films' (see Deleuze 2005b: 7; Fleming 2014).[5]

For me, the Chinese impulse autodidactically reifies or transmutates what Bazin and Deleuze each saw as the most important features and enduring value of the neorealist 'event'. Although some critics have already employed distinctly Deleuzo-Guattarian labels including 'minor' (Zhen 2007: 1) or 'nomadic' (Johnson 2006: 49) to describe this alternative film movement, I argue that Deleuze's neorealist time-image models offer the best ethico-aesthetic fit for explaining and understanding the wider movement. Conceptually expanding Deleuze's time-image crystalline model allows us to fold together, and engineer an encounter between, two historical movements otherwise separated by huge vistas of time and space. Here, plicating the post-war neorealist movement with a postsocialist mainland cinema that I playfully call '(si)neo-realism'.[6] For the sake of space, I predominantly limit analysis to key similarities and commonalities flowing between the movements at the expense of differences, which are obviously multiple and vary in degrees. In passing we could enumerate the appearance of newer digital spaces and virtual communication realms opened up and explored in the modern Chinese films (such as the animated SMS spaces in *The World*, or the computer game realms in *Beijing Bicycle*), or the unique and key role of female directors in the Chinese movement (like Ning Ying or Li Yu, for example), or even some differences that are quasi-similarities, such as both movements employing operatic sounds from their respective national traditions to score images of poor marginal characters.

Although I necessarily skirt the work of multiple directors in a compare and contrast fashion, space dictates I limit the focus to the work of Wang Xiaoshuai, who offers himself up as the best fit for this particular exercise, not only because his films inaugurated the (si)neo-realist trend, but also because they remain emblematic of the wider impulse as the new millennium unfolded. What is more, in films such as *The Days*, *So Close to Paradise*, *Beijing Bicycle* and *Drifters*, Wang forces viewers to engage with time as a pertinent theme or loaded

and spatialised trope. More pragmatically, Wang also literally serves to bridge the Italian and Chinese traditions in both his capacity as board member for the *BigScreen Italia* film festival (a festival exclusively dedicated to links between Chinese and Italian cinemas) and on account of directing *Beijing Bicycle* (*Seventeen Year Old's Bicycle* in its Chinese formulation), which is an overt homage to, and expansion upon, Vittorio De Sica's 1948 masterpiece *The Bicycle Thieves*: which Bazin felt formulated the ultimate 'expression of neorealism' (Bazin 1999: 205).

As *Beijing Bicycle* constitutes Wang's most 'commercial' and internationally famous film to date, I use it here as a path into his lesser known or distributed works (and the movement more generally). Beyond being an updating and transmutation of an earlier film, *Beijing Bicycle* can be understood as an expansion of De Sica's work because it follows the dispersed and fragmented story of two interconnected characters linked by one stolen bicycle, as opposed to De Sica's sole focus upon Ricci (Lamberto Maggiorani). *Beijing Bicycle* first follows the story of the migrant worker Guei (Cui Lin) who uses the bike as a courier after having moved to Beijing from the countryside. The following section introduces a Beijing schoolboy called Jian (Li Bin) who buys the bike in a narrative ellipsis after it has been stolen from Guei. The film thereafter cuts back and forth between two patchwork assemblages of places, characters, relationships and desires that constitute the characters' lives. We follow Guei's hopeless search around Beijing for his missing bike, his somewhat contrived ('unrealistic'?) chance re-encounter, and subsequent battle to get it back from Jian; whom he and the audience assume stole it. Viewers learn Jian 'legitimately' bought the bike on the black market, though, and we see how the prized 'libidinal' (Lin 2009: 98) commodity helps him get a girlfriend and acceptance from bicycle-gang peers. The film's ethical texture is complicated by learning that Jian bought the bike illegally because his father failed to deliver on a promise: to gift him one if he succeeded at school. The boys thereafter attempt a doomed (quasi-socialist) time-share agreement, but problems and violence follow the bike, until the film ends with the brutal destruction of the bicycle and the savage murder of a gang member.

Wang employs the bike as a loaded and load-bearing prop, then, to help expose the changing reality of Beijing (and by extension China) as a material and ideological space and place, and as a tool to open up some of the different concomitant and heterotopic realities facing migrant and city people within the same mental-material spaces. Beyond its representational value, the bike also serves to affectively bring to the fore newer forms of implanted capitalist desire associated with objects

and commodities under China's rapid process of modernisation and globalisation. Besides plot and dispersed narrative structure, though, we must also question how it is that this film, or indeed the wider movement to which Wang belongs, reflects Italian neorealism as a historical movement and as a 'philosophical' cinema that provokes or stimulates new ways of perceiving and thinking. To do this we have to begin plugging Deleuze's film-philosophy into the sino-cinematic *mode*, albeit refraining from uncritically forcing Deleuze's (predominantly European) models onto or over an unwitting and uninviting Chinese movement. In striving to put the Deleuzian theory to work, we must also use the films to re-interrogate Deleuze's *Cinema* project, then, and employ the (si)neo-realist cinema to rethink the factors and conditions Deleuze originally attributed to the 'global' shift from movement- to time-image categories.

By using this modern Chinese movement to rethink Deleuze's film-philosophy on fresh terrain, this project necessarily follows in the wake of David Martin-Jones's pioneering work into world cinemas that threaten to destabilise Deleuze's *Cinema* project. Martin-Jones repeatedly illuminates how 'non-European' films challenge us to refine, adapt and develop Deleuze's global distinction between movement- and time-image regimes: whilst themselves encouraging a productive deterritorialisation of his models in relation to a wider cinematic context. Martin-Jones examines how Hong Kong films (a non-mainland Chinese national cinema) leading up to and overlapping the 1997 handover, for example, expressively toys with movement- and time-images as part of a wider response to an intense period of socio-political turbulence. He here deepens our understanding of how notions of national identity are historically constructed or delimited by film (Martin-Jones 2006). In *Deleuze and World Cinemas* (2011) he further deterritorialises Deleuze's Eurocentric models by exploring yet more moments of global crisis emerging during other historical junctures, all the while stressing that to better understand world cinemas, scholars must practise what Deleuze did not, and re-situate or re-connect discussions with the surrounding rhizomatic web of economic, social, historical, geopolitical and cultural forces affecting the cultures and filmmakers (Martin-Jones 2011: 16). Taking heed, I thus strive to contextualise the emergence of this new break by situating it within the historical and cultural (and cinematic) events that help constitute the before and after of the movement-event. I thereafter work to draw out Deleuze and Bazin's different philosophical approaches to neorealism, before using Deleuze to explore the aesthetic and stylistic features that link together this Chinese impulse with the earlier Italian movement. At this point, then, we must first turn to the

disjunctive or disruptive concept of a historical or 'cinematic' break typically used to frame and contextualise both movements, as this in part factored into what interested both Bazin and Deleuze in neorealism in the first place.

II. On Clean Breaks and Breakdowns

Deleuze argued the most decisive break in cinematic history was grounded in the aftermath of World War II, and was related to the breakdown of older ideological systems and the emergence of new experiences of space-time fostered by a devastated post-war situation and new atomic age. In cinematic terms, these contributed to a shift away from the classical action-image era of storytelling towards a new modulating (art cinema) time-image mode in the (predominantly) European context (Deleuze 2000). This period was concomitant with a return to cinematic or artistic *zero* by the Italian filmmakers who 'politically' sought to escape cinematic artifice and escapism (qua mindless entertainment). Much ink has already been spilled over the historical conditions and cultural context that Italian neorealism marks a break from. Deleuze, for example, predominantly linked it with a break from an American or Hollywood tradition, but it is also fruitful to point out that neorealism also marked a national break from the 'micro-fascist' escapist cinema of Mussolini. It is well known to nearly all Western film students that since the mid to late 1930s Italian cinema was tightly imbricated with church and fascist politics under Mussolini's Ministry of Popular Culture. And that after nationalising the industry, the Italian Dictator controlled filmmakers by schooling them at the new Centro Spermentale di Cinematografia: a state-sponsored film-school that encouraged the production of escapist 'white telephone films' which idealised patriarchal power and promoted obedience to state and family. With the advent of synchronised sound, Mussolini strove to foster a unified national identity by eliminating regional dialects or accents from domestic screens, forcing films to address audiences in an official standardised Italian for the first time. Until relatively recently, far less was taught about Chinese cinematic history and traditions in the Western university circuit, and although this is something being redressed by many institutions today, it is worth while taking time to sketch out what exactly constitutes the before and after of the (si)neo-realist movement.

We can begin with the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, when the film industry was first nationalised.

Since then, Chinese filmmakers were retroactively and teleologically arranged into a chronological progression of generations, backdated to the 'First Generation' of silent pioneers. The newly nationalised industry then began operating under the strict control of the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) Ministry of Culture, who no longer viewed film as entertainment, art or business. As the Party began exploring cinema's political potentials, the production of films began to dramatically increase, albeit from pre-production stages through scripting, shooting, post-production and distribution it was now open to the scrutiny and demands of various censorship bodies (Zhang Yingjin 2004: 191). If film was to be an important political tool, it was recognised that it would first have to start reaching greater numbers of Chinese citizens. This was immediately addressed, and by the end of 1950, 100 million extra people were able to watch new nation-building films: courtesy of the CCP training armies of projection teams, opening new exhibition sites, and creating 15,000 mobile projection units designed to take cinema to the remotest regions (see Zhang Yingjin 2004: 190–2; Bordwell and Thompson 2003: 405).

Zhang Yingjin argues the first waves of national cinema typically took the form of war films like *The Bridge* (1949), designed to rewrite modern history 'as a teleological process' (or action-image qua Deleuze) wherein the CCP steers the people from one victory to the next into a bright and prosperous future (see Zhang Yingjin 2004: 193). This politicisation of the cinema coincided with an audio transformation, as the majority of Chinese films began uniformly addressing audiences in the official state language of Mandarin for the first time.[7] Qua Benedict Anderson, the use of a fixed and stable language within a prescribed national border can be understood as a strategy to help foster and maintain an imagined solidarity and national community. What is more, under CCP rule almost all previous Chinese films – specifically the Second Generation's Golden era movies – were banned. In 1956 the Beijing Film Academy (BFA) was founded, as part of an attempt to restrict the training of filmmakers and limit their work to approved ideology (Nochimson 2010: 388).[8] Third Generation directors were thereafter schooled to produce nationalist communist agitprop fashioned after a Soviet model of socialist realism.

Throughout the 'Great Leap Forward' Bordwell and Thompson trace how mainland filmmakers faced intermittent periods of tightening control followed by relative relaxation, until the chaos of the Cultural Revolution (1967–72) ground the industry to a veritable halt, with only a few highly regulated films such as *The Red Detachment of Women*

(1970) and *Breaking with Old Ideas* (1975) being produced. Around 1978 the BFA reopened for business amidst the implementation of Post-Mao reform programmes. As China began to reshape and adapt to this 'New-Era', a new wave of Fourth Generation graduates began producing a series of 'scar dramas' that obliquely explored the traumatic aftermath of these turbulent times. This New-Era is broadly outlined in terms of gradual incremental reforms in China's agricultural and service sectors, and as bearing witness to the emergence of an embryonic mass consumer culture within key urban centres.[9] By 1986 ongoing systemic reforms witnessed China's film industry come under the control of a new State Administration of Radio, Film and Television (SARFT), which immediately began tightening up control measures. The Fifth Generation's rise to prominence during this era thus schizophrenically coincided with China's ever-tightening domestic control on filmmaking practice and a period of international 'opening up' heralded as the 'march into the world' (Zhen 2007: 3).

Facing stricter domestic control, many young directors began embracing overseas investment to produce personal projects, or utilising foreign locations for the editing and post-production of festival films that would be deemed politically unsanitary. Accordingly many produced films that tackled controversial subject matter or employed 'avant-garde' aesthetics. Directors like Zhang Yimou and Chen Kaige famously began entering their films into international festivals without submitting them to SARFT for permission to release. Their politically charged films helped the Fifth Generation gain international prizes and prestige, but domestic bans on films – like Chen's *Farewell my Concubine* (1994) – and the temporary blacklisting of filmmakers helped 'tame' the Fifth Generation's subversive side (see Zhu 2003: 143). The government also began closing the bureaucratic loopholes which allowed films to escape the scrutiny of censorship bodies, and in 1996 a law was passed making it illegal to produce any film outside the state-owned studio system (Berry 2007: 129).

As the Fifth Generation predominantly worked within the state studio system, Zhang Zhen and Xiaping Lin argue their subsequent waves of 'lavish historical melodramas' and 'cultural allegories' (Zhang Zhen 2007: 23) became 'main melody' films (Lin 2009: 93), that helped re-establish a predominantly fictional national cinema within China. For many it was to be the nonstate or so-called Sixth Generation, working in an 'independent' or 'underground' context, which would finally challenge China's monolithic national cinema models. Filmmakers like Wang and Zhang began making no- or low-budget films (latterly with

foreign or private investment), originally distributing them domestically through nonofficial video, VCD or DVD networks. These began focusing upon a new alienated or marginalised generation and character that was increasingly lost or confused within a rapidly and radically transforming country.[10] On account of this, many like Zhang Zhen claim a new 'minor cinema'[11] surfaced, featuring characters which Sheldon Lu in turn argues began displaying a paradigmatic 'unmooring of identities', that shifted away from the nation or village – the traditional sources of cinematic identity (Lu 2007: 138).

This Sixth Generation is often discussed in terms of being the first to openly receive transnational investment to make low-budget films that do not get official domestic releases. These filmmakers are also often discussed in terms of being exposed (in differing degrees) to key foreign directors and critics whilst at film school. Bazin often appears as a source of inspiration too, being singled out in discussions and interviews as a key influence. Martha P. Nochimson and Matthew David Johnson note that besides Bazin, the Sixth Generation were also exposed to/influenced by Robert Flaherty and Frederick Wiseman's documentaries (see Nochimson 2010: 390; Johnson 2006: 65), whilst Tonglin Lu, Tian Zhuandzhuang and Zhang Yingjin specifically point to the appearance of Italian neorealist films in the BFA diet as another major influence (Zhang Yingjin 2006; Jaffee 2006; Tonglin Lu 2006). Accordingly, critics often tease out the new impulse's Bazinian aesthetic preference for long takes and a 'hyperrealist aesthetic' that helps foreground 'the rawness and emotional charge of social experience' (Zhang Zhen 2007: 7). Other temper such discussions by claiming they also drew upon 'the Chinese legacy of critical realism' (Zhang Zhen 2007: 7), however, or the work of the new Chinese documentary filmmakers who ran a parallel and at times intersecting path (see Zhang Zhen 2007: 17; Berry 2007).

Zhu argues that because the Sixth Generation had such a diverse range of foreign and domestic influences, they were the first generation of Chinese filmmaker to produce films that were more 'cinematic than dramatic' (Zhu 2003: 166). But on account of excluding or overlooking the work of talented Fifth Generation directors like Ning Ying, who also displays a comparable style, the 'Sixth Generation' label has increasingly proved problematic. In the first instance, if this new impulse truly demonstrates a break with the older national traditions, it is questionable whether or not we should maintain a chronological ordering that implies the same national teleology or continuity. Many simply opt to describe the new impulse as part of an 'amateur' movement

(Jaffee 2006: 81; Zhen 2007: 17), or in terms of displaying 'anti-art' or 'degree zero' aesthetics (Johnson 2006: 68) different to the official films. Others stick to the renewed desire for higher degrees of realism as the most defining feature, reflecting upon a preference for a 'on-the-spot-realism' (Berry 2007: 123), 'negative poetics' (Lai 2007: 205), 'stream of life' style (Chaudhuri 2005: 98), or 'urban realism' (Reynaud 2007: 265). The 'realism' proved problematic for many Chinese critics and directors too, though, so some opt to outline the new approach in terms of a distinctive attitude that cuts across different genres, styles and generations (see Braester 2007: 161).[12] Lai and Zhu similarly opt to describe a style marked out by a 'pervasive pessimism' (Zhu 2003: 166) or new 'urban attitude' (Lai 2007: 206). Chris Berry offers an approach that helps re-establish connections with Deleuze, by arguing that the new documentary and fiction filmmakers came to operate under a new imperative to *get real*. Which is to say, at once an aesthetic drive to represent the social in a new (Bazinian) realist way, whilst simultaneously inferring another shade of meaning invoking the Western slang phrase to 'wise up' and 'stop dreaming' (Berry 2007: 114). This latter meaning again becomes suggestive of a Deleuzian movement of mind that is introduced into the thinking-image.

Historically, no consideration of this era and its new cinema can be complete – in Western academic discourses at least – without also addressing the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre. Dror Kochan points out that it is near customary in Western discourses to link the new forms and characters to the aftermath of the brutal repression of democratic protesters. However, he also argues we must counterbalance this Western political obsession by paying attention to the wider Chinese context, and specific changes affecting a wider society as it came to terms with a profound crisis in its 'traditional' value systems and the loss of its cultural heritage (Kochan 2003). Indeed, this 'Post-New-Era' bore witness to an intensification of systemic transformations, which (contingently) heralded in a radical paradigmatic shift in China's future direction.

The famous Deng Xiaoping slogan 'To make money is glorious!' helps crystallise China's wider socio-political systemic reforms, which inexorably led toward the 'incursion of global capitalism' and the emergence of a 'ruthlessly advancing market economy' (Zhen 2007: 2–5). This marched in lock step with the largest human population shift the world has ever witnessed. And it arguably becomes in relation to these wider shifts, and the confusing experiences of suddenly confronting a new psycho-geography and overwhelming urban reality that many

of the (si)neo-realist films take as their subject. The title of Lin Xiaoping's book on Chinese Art and Film from this period, *Children of Marx and Coca-Cola* (2009), perfectly draws out the nature of the confusing material and ideological in-between space confronting this new generation of Chinese character, and hints towards the new disjunctive form of perception and action they must encounter and learn to understand. On account of these wider socio-geo-political transformations, many feel the new Chinese cinema is best approached through a critical lens of *postsocialism* (see for example Pickowicz 2006; McGrath 2007; Nochimson 2010).

Zhang Yingjin argues postsocialism should be understood as a specifically Chinese equivalent to Jean-François Lyotard's concept of *postmodernism*, and can be expanded to account for a diverse post-Maoist artistic-cultural landscape that includes a broad range of filmmakers hailing from 'different generations, aesthetic aspirations, and ideological persuasions [that] struggle to readjust or redefine their different strategic positions in different social, political, and economic situations' (Zhang Yingjin 2007: 50–2). Berry argues that postsocialism, like postmodernism, must be understood in terms of the stubborn persistence of grand myths (or narratives) long after any real faith in them has been lost (Berry 2007: 116). To bring back Deleuze momentarily, we could begin aligning this with his arguments regarding the modern cinema's playful awareness of the old clichés.

Before proceeding, we must take pause to highlight one significant industrial difference emerging between the Chinese and Italian film-histories. For in the Chinese context we cannot ignore the omnipresence of a parallel national (or nation-building) and commercial cinema that remains running alongside this alternative trend: as the production of epic clichés like *Founding of the Republic* (2009) attest. Against these ongoing official (action-image models) histories and archaeologies of the present, then, the (si)neo-realist films should be understood as recording and documenting an alternative history of the present or 'now'. That is, in difference and opposition to the complete demolition job that defines the before and after of the Italian neorealist impulse, the (si)neo-realist cinema is best understood in terms of a breakdown or partial architectural collapse, as if the ceiling and walls have crumbled in while the roof and façade remain standing.[13] This image of collapsing architecture serves to bring us neatly back to Deleuze's reading of the Italian neorealist movement, particularly regarding his discussions of the new mental relations introduced into the image

which emerged amidst the broken architecture and post-war rubble. But before returning to these, we should first examine how Deleuze's film-philosophy approaches differ from those offered by Bazin.

III. Neorealism and (Si)neo-realism: Bazin and Ontology

Film critics problematise any fixed definition of neorealism as a cohesive movement, by highlighting how there are so few 'pure' neorealist films (see Wagstaff 1989; Dyer 2006). David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson further remind us that neorealism had no manifesto: rather, it was only contingently conceptualised as a moralistic movement that focused on contemporary issues, and strove for greater levels of *social realism*.[14] In a manner reminiscent of the discourses surrounding the (si)neo-realist impulse outlined above, many settled for a definition that was more akin to a mode, attitude, or heterogeneous blend of realist and generic elements found within the work of various filmmakers hailing from different zones and 'generations'. Richard Dyer thus offers and incorporates Vittorio Spinazzola's illuminating distinction wherein neorealism appears to be an art cinema 'about the people' as opposed to a popular cinema 'for them' (see Wagstaff 1989: 72; Dyer 2006: 28). This distinction likewise becomes relevant to our understanding of the (si)neo-realist impulse, specifically with regards to how filmmakers began coveting domestic bans as a strategy designed to increase 'political capital' and appeal to foreign curators, critics and what Zhang describes as 'a respectable' (foreign art festival) audience (Zhang Yingjin 2006: 33), which is to say, the same form of European art cinema crowd that the neorealist directors sought half a century before. Thus, domestic bans, samizdat distribution networks and the films' clear ethico-aesthetic fit within foreign festival circuits illuminate how the Chinese films also cannot be considered a popular cinema for the people the narratives are about.[15]

Arguably Bazin's writing upon neorealism still displayed the most enduring impact and influence within Anglophone Film Studies. For Bazin was most attracted to neorealism's ideologically 'pure' form and content, and impressed by how directors like De Sica coupled their crusade for realism with a moral desire to draw out and expose the secret beauty of the 'everyday'. Bazin wrote passionately about the qualitative beauty of the father's and son's gaits in *The Bicycle Thieves*, for example, which the andante narrative form allowed to surface and unfold (Bazin 1999). Bazin also lauded the movement's aesthetic use of long takes and

deep focus, which unlike dialectical montage, played to the strengths of film's indexical photographic ontology, which is to say, cinema's ability to take a decal imprint from reality without the intervention of man or any ideological false consciousness. As already indicated, the (si)neo-realist directors often surface as autodidacts of the Bazinian-neorealists' impulses and political drives. Zhang Yingjin notes how Jia Zhangke is often credited within China for introducing a 'groundbreaking' use of the 'fixed-frame long take that minimizes the director's influence on the cast and environments', and exemplifies the new 'zero degree' style that marks the break away from China's 'literary' cinematic heritage (Zhang Yingjin 2006: 29).

Beyond their embrace of a new technological zero degree, though, Bazin also applauded the Italian directors for employing non-actors and types to flesh out their roles as this also called upon the actual character-types 'to be' rather than 'to act' (in a false theatrical manner). Problems with this notion aside, we can again locate strong ties between the neorealist and (si)neo-realist trends surfacing here via a shared attempt to differentiate the social and moral texture of their films from the surrounding web of national and commercial products, which typically employed known actors (professionals) and stars (commodities). Wang and Zhang began this trend by casting their friends, who *were* Beijing artists and singers, as self-proclaimed 'social outsiders' identical or comparable with themselves within *The Days* and *Beijing Bastards*.[16] Wang adhered to this 'realist' impulse as the new millennium unfolded, casting first-time actors Cui Lin and Li Bin within his most commercial 'overground' film, *Beijing Bicycle*. Interestingly, for this film Wang also employed two professional actresses, Zhou Xun and Gao Yuanyuan, to play the respective love interests. This mixing of non- and professional casting also finds parallels with neorealism, of course, but is here part of a deliberate strategy worked into the narrative tapestry, with both female characters surfacing as somewhat unobtainable movie star-like figures for the male protagonists. Both are clearly signalled as commodities or 'objects' to-be-looked-at and desired, often appearing framed behind large windows or frame-within-a-frame devices that highlight their quasi-cinematic status (appended to their upper-middle-class lives).[17] If the use of non-professional actors and types becomes another overt 'Bazinian' trope linking together a whole raft of (si)neo-realist films, though, we must turn to the fictional dimensions of the characters to see if these too also reflect what Deleuze valued in the neorealist movement. To do this we must first return to Deleuze's writing upon neorealism.

IV. Neorealism and (Si)neo-realism: From Bazin to Deleuze, or Ontology to Noology

Deleuze's engagement with neorealism suffered a satellite delay before impacting Anglophone Film Studies: partially on account of the first English translations of the *Cinema* books not appearing until 1986 and 1989, and appearing during an era when many had grown weary of *Theory*.[18] Deleuze was aware of Bazin's writing, reflecting upon how for him, the value of neorealism lay in a consideration of form *and* content: with 'real life' stories being conveyed by what Bazin called *fact-images*. Deleuze also describes how for others, neorealism was best defined by the unpredictable encounter, or its preference for fragmentary narrative structures that appeared ephemeral, lacunal and piecemeal. What is more, filmmakers moved away from focusing upon exceptional individuals that could marshal narrative resources, and instead began approaching the ideals of screenwriters like Cesare Zavattini, who expressed a desire to document the slow weary step of the unexceptional worker returning home … in all its raw and 'aristocratic beauty'.[19]

Deleuze doubted the most radical or valuable feature of the Italian movement lay in its drive towards ever-higher degrees of social or ontological 'realism' though. Instead, he argued the true value lay in a consideration of the new mental relations introduced into the image in films like *Piasà* (1946), *Germany Year Zero* (1948) and *Umberto D* (1952). For Deleuze, these films worked to stimulate different ways of perceiving (in the brain) and provoked viewers to think the new (Deleuze 2005b: 1). Thus, if Bazin was primarily concerned with cinema's ontological ability to reflect an already existing (social) reality, Deleuze demanded cinema do something else, which is, to bring forth a new vision of the world, or use new forms of visionary characters to renew our belief *in* the world. The unique value of Deleuze's approaches, then, lie in the manner in which they allow us to re-evaluate films from an alternative philosophical perspective, and to transcend discourses of socio-political realism and false consciousness to instead mount a positive creative critique of the present that sets out to immanently think the new. Or again, to understand (si)neo-realist films, like neorealist films before them, as being primarily concerned with restructuring perception and revitalising thought (see for example Kelso 2004; Åkervall 2008).

It becomes useful here to return specifically to Deleuze's writing on time-image cinema, which he understood as marking a crisis in the classical action-image, and wherein he identifies images beginning to

surface where time appears loosened from its subjugation to movement, knocked out of joint, or no longer slave to action. Although Deleuze actually described the time-image being invented by the Japanese director Yasujiro Ozu – to whom we will return in specific relation to Wang's work below – he demonstrates how it did not appear as part of a wider film tradition until it surfaced in the Italian films. At the end of *Cinema 1* (2005a) Deleuze accordingly asks why the time-image appeared in Italy first. Qua Martin-Jones, his answer becomes illuminating for its wider application to other world-cinemas, for he argues it ostensibly emerged because of an 'essential reason', or again, one external to cinema itself and linked to contextual factors; at once historical, technological, social, political, material (and aesthetic). For one, Deleuze argues that Italy could not claim the same rank or uphold any illusion of being a victor after the war like the French. He also observed how the Italian cinema was very different to that of the defeated Germany. Deleuze remarks:

> In contrast to Germany, on the one hand [the Italian cinema] had at its disposal a cinematographic institution which had escaped fascism relatively successfully, on the other hand it could *point to a resistance and a popular life underlying oppression, although one without illusion*. To grasp these, all that was needed was a new type of tale capable of including the elliptical and the unorganized, as if the cinema had to begin again from zero. (Deleuze 2005a: 215–16; my emphasis)

This stressed point highlights another significant parallel with (si)neo-realist films, which also appear to grasp for and privilege a new non-official perspective on China's changing and transforming reality, without upholding any illusion.[20] Wang's characters appear particularly emblematic of the wider trend in this regard, formulating disempowered outsiders, underclass migrant workers, deported illegal refugees, river workers and bewildered adult-children. Much like the Italian cohort of characters, these men are often left unable to act or react to a range of overwhelming situations surrounding them, and in this sense find yet more parallels with Deleuze's understanding of the mental disruption underpinning the neorealist films.

Deleuze ultimately identified five distinct tropes or characteristics that distinguished neorealism as a break-away cinema. As already discussed, he understood the modern cinema to be partially defined by its (postmodern) awareness of clichés. But neorealism was also discussed in terms of its embrace of dispersive situations; the emergence of deliberately weak links; harnessing andante ballade or stroll structures;

and the denunciation of conspiracy (for more on this see Kelso 2004: 4). Deleuze linked all of these to an essential or contextual situation appearing around and within the films. For after the war, Italy, like most of Europe, found itself materially and ideologically shattered. As the majority of early neorealist stories took place within derelict and rubbled cities, Deleuze strongly identified these spaces as key factors linked to the emergence of the new characteristics, and the newer forms of perception and thought. Indeed, Deleuze thought neorealist films were collectively marked by an increase in the number of situations characters no longer knew how to act or react to, in spaces we no longer knew how to describe (Deleuze 2005b: xi). These were any-space-whatevers (*espaces quelconques*), deserted but inhabited waste grounds, disused warehouses and rubbled lots within cities undergoing ongoing processes of demolition and reconstruction. Between the two *Cinema* books, these spaces are described not only as providing the neorealist films with a loaded and load bearing mise-en-scène, but as also serving to nurture a new race of character, a stirring mutant rendered unsure of how to move, act or react to what was around them. As we will see below, similar factors can also be identified at work within and across the (si)neo-realist spaces.

V. On Breakdowns and Construction Site Futures

The politico-economic shifts undergirding China during the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries led to a radical transformation and reorganisation of the nation's social structuring and geo-political topology. Nowhere was this more obvious than in the cities and urban centres, which became marked by huge material and social engineering programmes that bore witness to the ruthless demolition of old buildings (and lifestyles) and the unmitigated construction of a new urban psycho-geography and reality. As the ideological and material breakdown and reconstruction of China occurred concomitantly, Zhang Zhen points to how the historicity of the new (si)neo-realist impulse must be anchored to 'the unprecedented large-scale urbanization and globalization of China on the threshold of a new century': or in terms of dealing with urbanisation as a process (Zhang Zhen 2007: 25). The disappearing and transforming city/nation often becomes elevated to a character in its own right, or appears as a form of living landscape across the whole body of (si)neo-realist films. The non-studio locations and on-the-street shooting (often without permits or official permission) that define much of the trend's new political sharpness also often result in

Bazinian comparisons linked to a perceived moral impulse to capture and document a rapidly changing social reality. Ning's Beijing trilogy makes for an interesting case in point here, by displaying a truly Bazinian impulse to realistically mummify Beijing's rapidly (and traumatically) transforming time-spaces in a clear neorealist style. Ning, like Wang, is another Chinese director that has strong personal links with the Italian cinematic traditions (see for example Zhang Zhen 2004).[21] In *On the Beat*, Ning opens with a protracted scene tracking two policemen cycling past expansive rubbled lots within their administrative district. They are heard discussing 700 recently demolished houses as they pass expansive demolition sights/sites, and are heard mourning the replacement of their horizontal communities with newly planned vertical ones. As they turn into a narrow hutong they are forced to dismount to allow a steam-roller to move towards its next job. In *For Fun* she similarly focuses upon traditional spaces ear-marked for demolition or decommission, capturing an opera theatre, and traditional community spaces that, like the old men who populate them, have no clear place in China's new future. Accordingly, Ning's films work in a manner that becomes reminiscent of the ghostly and pregnant photographic images of Eugène Atget. Accordingly, for Zhang Zhen, these films stubbornly reveal the spots branded with social and historical traces, and document a past on the cusp of disappearance (Zhang Zhen 2007: 21).

Jia's *Pickpocket* and *The World* are also emblematic of these spatial trends, embedding old buildings marked with demolition symbols, rubbled lots and new construction sites as loaded spaces in which to set his stories. Yomi Braester argues that, because such images appear in so many (si)neo-realist films, and narratives often come to a turning point when characters discover buildings being demolished or literally cross the wreckage and debris, the movement should largely be understood in terms of employing 'demolition as a symbol': at once expressing a sudden 'need to chronicle the city's transformation', and as part of an attempt to stop or slow down the 'process of forgetting' (Braester 2007: 162–5). Zhang Zhen similarly describes the (si)neo-realists as a new breed of unofficial documenter or chronicler of 'the demolition of old cities, lifestyles, and identities and the construction of new ones' (Zhang Zhen 2007: 9). It is thus the actual space and time documented by the amateur actors and filmmakers that arguably becomes the main focus of the whole movement. For Zhang Zhen, these glimpsed images become incorporated into the films as part of a larger strategy to bear witness to a radical 'rupture and transformation of history' taking place before the lens (Zhang Zhen 2007: 18).

Beyond Bazinian readings, the depictions of demolition as a process contributes to a temporalisation of cinematic space that emerges concomitantly alongside a materialisation of changing mental relations: thus literally refolding the changing geo-political landscape with that of the material urban milieu. For Shohini Chaudhuri, similar features of the (si)neo-realist impulse thus begin to reveal a characteristic 'split or schizophrenic subjectivity' common to the era, 'which apathetically registers the shocks of endless historic reversals demanded by the "architects of one new China after another"' (Chaudhuri 2006: 99). Soviet-style socialism with Chinese characteristics; The Great leap Forwards; the Cultural Revolution; Post-Mao reforms; Opening up; the March into the world; the New-Era; the Post-New-Era; Deng's Capitalism with Asian values … or *Communism and Schizophrenia*?

Braester points to, but refrains from developing, Deleuze's concept of the any-space-whatever to help describe these loaded sino-cinematic spaces, which somehow always appear 'universal and suspended outside any power structure', yet 'reterritorialise ideological abstractions' (Braester 2010: 25). But beyond this signposting, we must ask; can we unproblematically link these Chinese space-images to those found informing Deleuze's time-image models in *Cinema 2*? To move beyond how such filmic-spaces merely (ontologically) bear witness to the destruction of the old, then, we must also engage with how they introduce or provoke a thinking of the new. To understand this, we must now consider the concomitant rebuilding or reconstruction linked to the complexities of China's modernisation process. For it is with regards to this that the (si)neo-realist films introduce new perceptual and mental relations into the image to help confront the emergence of unfamiliar places and spaces symptomatic of globalisation.

Taking this into account, we must concede that the Chinese *any-spaces-whatever* also display a unique pole altogether absent from the earlier Italian films and Deleuzian discussions thereof. To address this, I propose to imbricate Marc Augé's (1995) concept of the supermodern 'non-place', which is often discussed in terms of homogenous highways, airport buildings, international hotels and shopping malls that signal the spread of globalisation everywhere.[22] For it is these that begin to emerge out of the rubble of the old. We will momentarily return in more detail to these forms of place in specific relation to Wang's *Beijing Bicycle*, but in order to conceptually differentiate these forms of space from the Deleuzian neorealist models, I propose to introduce another new term – *any-now(here)-spaces* – which helps synthesise certain unique dimensions peculiar to the (si)neo-realist films.

VI. Fragmenting Forms, Any-now(here)-spaces and (Si)neo-realist Seers

At the turn of the new millennium, Sheldon Lu highlighted how the addition of new streets and neighbourhoods had become a regular phenomenon in China. In 2001 alone, the year *Beijing Bicycle* was released, there were over 300 new place names added to the Beijing map (Lu 2007: 139). This phenomenon is clearly reflected in Wang's film, which contains a proliferation of images which document the destruction of the old alongside the appearance of newer any-now(here)-spaces emblematic of the new global Empire (qua Hardt and Negri 2000). The transforming material space first surfaces as a pertinent theme in an early sequence that introduces a band of provincial migrant workers recently employed as Beijing couriers. The migrants are ordered by their boss to examine a huge map of Beijing that fills the entire wall of the depot, as he instructs them to 'learn every street name by heart', and 'memorise all the different intersections and winding hutongs'. The impossibility of their task initially provides the film with a light-hearted comedic moment, as the migrants eagerly scan the minute detail of the expansive cartographic wall with their eyes and fingertips. Throughout the film the idea of memorising Beijing is shown to be a doubly impossible task, however, in that even if they could memorise the extensive map, the material city beyond is always undergoing an intensive process of change and transformation. This is most overtly highlighted by the different spaces the film opts to set its loosely interconnected scenes: scraps of wasteland, building sites, skyscrapers in the process of construction, modern any-now(here)-spaces, or in older labyrinthine alleys already ear-marked with demolition symbols.

Significantly, narrative form begins to reflect mise-en-scène in these spaces, which is to say, in the broken rubble lots or construction spaces, both action and the action-image form appear to break down and re-compose. As if reflecting upon this at a performative level of action, Wang frames a series of shots of the bicycle gangs executing tricks within de/reterritorialising urban spaces (demolition/building sites). Here, the manner in which the bikes and riders move is stylistically defamiliarised, as instead of riding backwards and forwards in flowing movements, the riders bounce, jump and hop in a series of disconnected motions and staccato arabesque poses. In this manner, the de/reterritorialisation of space is directly matched by a de/reterritorialisation of regular movement and action, which plays out upon a variety of different levels including that of the large form action-image. Linked to similar phenomena,

Deleuze saw neorealism's deterritorialisation of movement-image drives lead to the introduction of purely optical and sound situations, and consequently, a focus upon a series of fragmentary or chopped-up encounters that helped destroy the dominant narrative structures of Hollywood, Soviet and Italian cinemas.

Lai explicitly picks up on comparable aspects as a defining feature of the (si)neo-realist stories, observing how their 'negative poetics' emerged alongside a new 'self-conscious choice of doubt and hesitancy' that defined their modes of narrative progression (Lai 2007: 227). Zhu draws explicit parallels between neorealism and the Chinese narratives by highlighting how both typically came to feature 'goal-bereft' protagonists embedded within loosely connected 'episodic' stories (Zhu 2003: 166). Chaudhuri too sees the protagonists being defined by an 'overwhelming sense of directionlessness', which she explicitly links to characters and forms (Chaudhuri 2005: 99). Berry adopts an explicitly Deleuzian language to describe the emergence of new fictional and documentary sequences that also began breaking away from dominant movement-image regimes, and increasingly embedded a distended temporal logic (Berry 2007: 124). It is also worth stressing here that the encounters with these spaces often leave the characters coated in the dust and dirt which sticks to their clothes, gets up their noses or into their eyes. The experiences thus often emerge as embodied and sensual ones too, which further tie into the depowering of the protagonists' ability to physically marshal the body through an action-image narrative time-space. Zhang Zhen invokes these features of the new impulse by linking the transforming context directly to the mode's new ethico-aesthetics. Here, the new cinema not only remains anchored to the social here and now (qua Bazin), but also creates an 'alternative cinematic space that is haptic rather than optic, sensuous and open rather than abstract and closed' in a manner suggestive of Deleuze's time-image models (Zhang Zhen 2007: 21).

This haptic quality of the Deleuzian any-space-whatever is literally tied to a complex temporal dimension of the (si)neo-realist city, then, as China increasingly appears disconnected and removed from its own history, politics and society, which increasingly appear in a process of erasure: for '[t]oday is centre stage; there is no yesterday' (Pickowicz 2006: 16–17). For Bérénice Reynaud this leads to the emergence of a distinctly temporal setting and surface that appears caught somewhere 'between the past and the future' (Reynaud 2007: 266), echoing in turn Lin's view of protagonists 'trapped in an intense present' (Lin 2009: 93). More recently Philippa Lovatt has explored how the use of sounds

in Jia Zhangke's urban films invokes multiple, divergent temporalities, linked to a disjunctive postsocialist feeling by using Derridean theories and coordinates, amongst others, to help describe and account for these confusing cinematic experiences (Lovatt 2012). Beyond Deleuze and Derrida, though, many critics introduce comparable temporal dimensions of the film movement via a wider set of philosophical coordinates. For example, Braester (2010), Reynaud (2007) and Shuqin Cui (2007) apply Ackbar Abbas's concept of *déjà disparu* or 'culture of disappearance' to better delimit and describe these complex images of material and mental transformation. For them, the depictions of space foster a form of 'reverse hallucination', which again finds significant overlaps with Deleuze's visionary neorealist models (Kelso 2004). But to better get at these issues, we must turn to the narrative forms that prompt a thinking otherwise of the new, and the visionary characters that must first become prey to the overwhelming present and confusing any-now(here)-spaces within it.

Indeed, the narrative encounters taking place across these liminal cinematic spaces offer up a litany of purely optical situations that again help draw out a Deleuzian link between the two historical movements. In both trends the in-between spaces often prevent characters from moving and acting in traditional action-image oriented manners. For such reasons, the narrative forms, character types and spaces all contribute to a deviation from existing mainstream standards, with part of the breakdown formulating a reaction against 'the demand for psychologically motivated characters [. . .] whose presence has an overarching influence over the state of events' (Lai 2007: 227). Wang's films again make for an interesting case in point as they overwhelmingly tend to focus upon bewildered characters moving within and through any-(now)here-spaces, in films that can collectively be understood in terms of unleashing what Martin-Jones calls hybrid-images: expressively de- and reterritorialising the movement- and time-image categories in an aesthetic attempt to reflect content and develop underlying themes linked to reinvigorating perception and thinking differently.

Beijing Bicycle toys with a motific de- and reterritorialisation of movement- and time-image categories, with cracks appearing in the action-image that are not prised fully apart. Part of this is reflected by using two dispersed and fragmented straight movement-image stories that draw together and apart in a manner that formally reflects the subterranean faults breaking apart and reconstructing the movement and the embedded material and ideological spaces. In an asymmetrical episodic section of the narrative following each of the boys' stealing or repossessing the bike from the other, it is possible to locate an interesting

Bazinian neorealist-esque shot that appears to playfully zigzag from a movement- to time-image pole and back (or from one action-image to another via a formal gap or fissure) in a manner conducive with Deleuzian models. The long take begins in the disorienting hutong labyrinth, with a mounted still camera framing a deep-focus shot of Jian beginning to stash his bike behind a series of objects and dust covers within a cluttered nook. During the protracted long shot a female extra enters the background, and begins hanging washed clothes upon a line strung across the alley. After Jian is satisfied his bike is well hidden he exits towards the shot's foreground. The camera thereafter lingers on the unfolding scene, and by refusing to cut, invites viewers to observe the woman and her washing. By degrees she completes her task and evacuates the shot, which continues, reflecting an Ozu-esque signature: the still life of a washing line. In this homage to the inventor of the time-image we can locate a clichéd deterritorialisation of the action-image form, with the shot beginning to nod towards, or suggest, an underlying time-image mode. However, after a protracted focus upon the evacuated scene of washing, another action-image reterritorialises as Guei pokes his head around the corner into the depths of frame. The unexpected action suggests he was hiding in the background all along, within the folds of the image, and his unexpected movement reactivates another action-image drive and sequence within the larger narrative framework.

In Wang's *Drifters* the action-image is deterritorialised further, aesthetically reflecting this film's intensified temporal themes and motifs. Wang strings together a series of long takes, focusing on Little Brother (Duan Long) just waiting around in moments in-between action, often doing very little or nothing. A relentless focus upon moments of stillness, inaction or waiting around highlights a literal destabilisation of narrative action, formally reflecting Little Brother's own disjunctive experience of being a migrant who has escaped China to the US twice, only to be deported back on both occasions. He surfaces as an inactive seer caught between two disconnected space-times, and by properly belonging to neither, becomes dislocated within a state of inaction and disjointed time. This is arguably Wang's most overtly (si)neo-realist film, with the concept of drifting between China and the US, a communist past and an unknown future (China's joining the WTO being a prominent subtext referenced via the television throughout) becoming expressively reflected and made manifest in the film's episodic ballade forms and refusals to cut.[23] For when the sensory-motor linkage has decomposed to such a state, Deleuze argues that a visionary mode takes over, and time itself surfaces as a theme.

Neorealist filmmakers such as De Sica and Luchino Visconti were observed by Deleuze to focus upon a new breed of 'mutant', who moved through 'cities in the course of demolition or reconstruction' (Deleuze 2005b: xi). These were the Italian band of seer and wanderer who no longer knew how to act: 'He shifts, runs and becomes animated in vain, the situation he is in outstrips his motor capacities on all sides, and makes him see and hear what is no longer subject to the rules of a response or an action' (Deleuze 2005b: 3). As discussed, the materially broken and ruined Chinese streets perfectly reflect and mirror the breaking apart of older ways of thinking, including those linked to the traditional sources of identity (clichés), but we find a toying with another cliché upon the level of form that unfolds differently in the new psycho-geography. For the lost migrant seer is not exactly new to Chinese cinema, and can be understood as part of a complex dialogue with the official overground cinema. Indeed, a focus upon disabused country peasants has always been a prominent feature of Chinese national cinema, even if there appears to be a significant difference in the casting and characterisation in the newer trend qua Bazin. Zhang Zhen touches upon this transformation by highlighting how the earlier national films typically focused on the 'mythic, larger-than-life icons of the repressed peasant', whereas the new trend tends to focus upon 'a motley crew of plebeian but nonetheless troubled people on the margins of the age of transformation' who no longer qualify as suitable icons for a national cinema (Zhang Zhen 2007: 3–6). Instead they formulate a band of 'aimless bohemians, petty thieves, KTV bar hostesses, prostitutes, and postmen to neighbourhood police officers, taxi drivers, alcoholics, homosexuals, the disabled, migrant workers, and others' (3). Or as Pickowicz acerbically renders the same change: in the old Chinese cinema identity was unproblematic because everyone was a patriot, a revolutionary, or one of Mao's little red soldiers; in the new cinema, however, everything has broken down and fragmented into specialised individualised identities:

> I'm homeless. I'm a prostitute. I'm a club singer. I'm a homosexual. I'm confused. I'm a drug addict. I'm a lesbian. I'm a migrant. I'm really confused. I'm a bohemian. I'm a con artist. I have AIDS. I'm a criminal. I'm crazy. I'm confused beyond imagination. (Pickowicz 2006: 15)

We can concede, then, that if it remains the same sort of character that becomes the migrant worker in this alternative (si)neo-realist impulse, the filmmakers are aware of the old clichés, and appear to have transplanted them into a hellish new any-now(here)-space that

render them confused by demanding new forms of action or reaction that they no longer understand. Linda Chiu-Han Lai accordingly identifies the new characters as non-action takers, very different from the previous breed of national cinema hero. They formulate aimless beings, condemned to 'wander around, withdrawn from conscious engagement with any productive, meaningful activities in the normative sense' (Lai 2007: 215). Surprisingly, Cui sees the new characters constitute freewheeling urban dwellers that the filmmakers harness as a form of wandering flâneur to help dissect the new situation (Cui 2007: 243). But one instinctively feels this position is too difficult to defend in relation to the entire movement, and that Cui unconsciously conflates the characters with the critics or art cinema audiences that (re)view them. Lai counters such positions best by pointing to how the characters are far from rational, self-driven or purposeful flâneurs. Instead they do very little, aimlessly wander around, digress into unplanned encounters, or let 'whatever comes by take them on the spot' (Lai 2007: 215). As these characters display too little certainty about their place, or invest so little effort into 'sorting out the mysteries that trouble them', Lai instead appends a more passive and pessimistic modality outlined as *derive*: linked to a decentred aimless drifting (205–20).[24]

Whatever the case, Deleuze's model of the mutant seer and wanderer appears productive for understanding the emergence of these character types, and for understanding their visionary encounters with paralysing situations that leave them unsure of how to act or react.[25] Such features arguably become most pronounced in the (si)neo-realist scenes that chart the migrant-mutants' confused passage into, or blockage from, supermodern any-now(here)-spaces. Several scenes throughout *Beijing Bicycle*, for example, depict the naïve migrant Guei's encountering unfamiliar spaces associated with China's embrace of globalisation and modernisation. In one Guei delivers documents to a plush (non-place) international hotel. We first find him having an overwhelming encounter with a glass and brass revolving door that literally leaves him paralysed; unsure of how to react, to or navigate through, the strange rotating machine. When he braves the mechanism he is unceremoniously spat into the foyer, where he is again left transfixed by the glittering mirrored ceiling and shiny marble reception. He is left further confused by the fact that the hotel staff are not expecting him, nor do they know who his parcel is for. In another scene he is mistakenly guided into the hotel's massage parlour with a package, where it is believed someone bearing the recipient's name is. En route he is mistakenly identified as a customer, by other (presumably) migrant staff, stripped naked, forced to shower,

and led into the massage area wearing a hotel robe. By degrees he is sent to a man in the process of getting a rub from a blind masseuse. Guei hesitantly approaches, again not knowing how to act or respond to the bewildering optical and sound situation unfolding around him. The blind masseuses are also of the same social status as Guei, but as literal non-seers they appear as decisive actors who contrast his hesitant and timid movements. Finally realising the man on the table is not the recipient, Guei is led back to the foyer to be castigated by the real client for being late. The receptionist also informs him he must pay for the shower and massage. Unable to pay, he bolts, only to be accosted by security and reported to his boss.

Observing similar themes of confusing 'everydayness' littering other (si)neo-realist narratives, Zhang Zhen introduces Harry Harootunian's notions of a fragmented and ceaseless 'new' associated with globalisation, which can also be neatly synthesised with our (si)neo-realist concept of the any-now(here)-space, and help understand a whole host of comparable seer scenes that expose the mutant migrants' being left unsure of how to react to an new alienating and unfamiliar 'now' or ever-changing present (Zhang Zhen 2007: 2). In this sense the proliferation of new supermodern and globalised any-now(here)-spaces outstrip the migrant characters on each side, at the same time as they signal a new form of socio-political reality that needs to be re-perceived and conceptualised. In this sense we begin to find the emergence of a proto-crystal image within the Chinese cinema, which also becomes literally reflected within the new any-now(here)-spaces and mise-en-scène. For everywhere reflections and doublings begin to appear and proliferate within and across these films. But these are typically bent, twisted, skewed or distended within strange glass any-now(here)-space architecture, and warped by neon lamps and refracting electric lights emblematic of a parallel and distant new reality.

Notes

1. An abridged version this paper was delivered at the 2012 International Deleuze Conference at Henan University in Kaifeng, PRC and appears as part of the collected conference papers (see Fleming 2013).
2. Since the early 1990s a variety of new terms have been tried or applied to this new impulse beyond Sixth-, Post-Sixth- or Newborn-Generation labels. Amongst others, Chinese and foreign critics have discussed the films in terms of belonging to a 'Post-wave' (Zhu 2003: 143), 'Postsocialist' (McGrath 2007; Zhang Zhen 2007), or 'post-sixth-generation' (Pickowicz 2006) of filmmakers. Many settle for the more popular and inclusive label of 'Urban Generation' or 'Urban Cinema', as a kind of catch-all for many of the aesthetic and stylistic features (see Zhang Zhen 2007; Berry 2007; Braester 2012). As part of an attempt to expand

the category even further, though, and move beyond previous discussions by using Deleuze, I opt to drop the 'urban realism' label too and create a new concept of (si)neo-realism. In the first place, this allows me to account for and include films like Wang's *Drifters*, which is clearly also part of the same impulse and style but does not focus upon specifically urban characters or issues and to allow for a wider range of directors and influences not typically considered part of the Urban movement.

3. Amongst others, Paul Pickowicz, Ying Zhu, Jason McGrath and Shohini Chaudhuri describe a complex and ever-changing relationship between Chinese censorship bodies and the so-called 'illegal' filmmakers. Pickowicz outlines this in terms of a complicated and dangerous 'dance' which Western critics typically misunderstand. He offers a 'velvet prison' model comparable to that encountered by Czechoslovakian New Wave filmmakers in the late 1960s. Although many of the films are often considered 'illegal' or 'banned' by foreign and domestic audiences, in matter of fact, neither the films nor the filmmakers are actually considered *real* political 'dissidents' as such (see Chaudhuri 2005: pp. 98–9; Pickowicz 2006; McGrath 2007). Rather, films that are not directly critical of the ruling Party are tolerated as an acceptable or allowable form of 'political' or artistic venting. What is more, both authorities and filmmakers are aware that in a global context of international film festivals, being perceived as an 'illegal' Chinese filmmaker, or having your film 'banned in Beijing' can be seen as a benefit, or tantamount to a good marketing: 'After all, a government ban would guarantee international attention' (Zhu 2003: 166) or else offer the filmmaker the required 'pedigree to get attention abroad' (Pickowicz 2006: 12). On account of this, Yomi Braester and Zhu argue that in a global context these filmmakers increasingly became 'self-packaged dissidents' who came to exploit or exercise a 'marketing strategy of wilful self-marginalisation to promote their products globally' (Zhu 2003: 166; Braester 2012: 357).
4. For an exhaustive list of films we can rhizomatically link to this movement see Cheng 2006: 209–44.
5. David H. Fleming, 'Deleuze and the (si)neorealist break?', Paper delivered at *Deleuze, Guattari and China*, University of Nottingham Ningbo China, 23 May 2012; Fleming 2014.
6. I have coined my own neologistic term here as part of a wider strategy to at once forge nomenclatural links to the Italian neorealist movement whilst at the same time tying the concept to a specifically sino-cinematic break or context. Besides employing this to erect links with a familiar historical movement and ethico-aesthetics, I also hope to introduce a new dimension of 'sin' related to illicit images of sex, drugs and deviant behaviour that was typically lacking from both the earlier Italian movement and previous waves of national Chinese cinema. This of course also relates to filmmakers' trying to covet official opprobrium and entice international curators and audiences.
7. There remained certain exceptions which prove the rule, with some musical opera films from regional studios producing films in different 'traditional' dialects or provincial languages (for more on this see Zhu 2003: 168; Zhang Zhen 2007: 20). It should also be noted that more genres appeared in Chinese cinema under CCP rule than ever before, and after the Cultural Revolution films about the Chinese ethnic minorities became popular. For a more detailed account of the complex history of Socialist cinema in China see Zhang Yingjin 2004, 2012; Clark 2012.
8. Zhang Yingjin notes that before the BFA there was a Beijing Film School which had been operating since 1951. Of interest to this paper, education-related projects saw the introduction of Italian neorealist films as early as

1954. Other foreign cinemas continued to filter in as part of specialised 'film weeks' and arguably influence these Chinese student-directors. In 1956 Japanese, French, Soviet and Yugoslavian films were shown, and thereafter Indian and Mexican films were known to be screened as part of film and culture exchanges (see Zhang Yingjin 2004: 201). Michelangelo Antonioni was also invited into China during the Cultural Revolution to make an epic documentary and controlled 'Chinese self-portrait' (see King 2010) *Chung Kuo, Cina* (1972). Although several scathing public reviews appeared bemoaning the traitorous and slanderous nature of the film, many Chinese filmmakers or viewers got to see parts of the finished product (see for example Yang 1974).

9. Yomi Braester notes that this era already began to bear witness to a range of 'urban films' (not yet an Urban Cinema) set in Guangzhou where Deng's economic reforms were targeted. He pinpoints how narratives such as Zhang Liang's *Yamaha Fish Stall* (1984), *Juvenile Delinquents* (1985), Zhang Zeming's *Sunshine and Rain* (1987) and Sun Zhou's *With Sugar* (1987) focus upon the ways in which the youth began 'coming to grips with a budding consumerist society, running unattached and often alienated lives, exploring sexual freedom and dabbling in avant-garde art'. These 'parables for modern existence' (Braester 2012: 347–8) can also be considered reflecting and anticipating the unfolding cultural event that results in the (si)neo-realist break. David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson note how Zhang Yuan's earlier film *Mama* (1990) also formulates part of a studio-sanctioned stylistic precursor to the later 'illegal' or 'underground' movement (Bordwell and Thompson 2003: 651).
10. For more on the specificities and complexities of the transnational and domestic funding or financing of these films see Pickowicz 2006 and Zhang Yingjin 2007.
11. The term 'minor cinema' is here simultaneously understood in terms of being a 'coming of age' youth cinema and a minoritarian cinema in relation to 'but also in dialogue with the officially sanctioned mainstream cinema' (see Zhang Zhen 2007: 2).
12. Satisfactorily labelling the new impulse proves complicated. Chinese filmmakers and scholars often displayed a desire to drop the use of terms like 'realism', due in part to the concept's long association with state-sponsored socialist- and revolutionary-realism (see Zhang Yingjin 2006). Foreign critics tend to favour labels like 'nonstate' or 'underground', as these help advertise the perceived subversive political dimension of the films. Both sides often use the label 'independent' (or *duli*), but Pickowicz is drawn to correct this misnomer and recalibrate the term to read 'in dependence': to better announce the strong reliance upon transnational funding bodies and foreign 'political capital' that allows the films to be made and screened (Pickowicz 2006: vii). I again use this as part of the desire to create a new concept.
13. It may also be helpful to consider another form of distinction wherein we can outline the Italian neorealist movement in terms of breaking clean from the past while the Chinese filmmakers are merely considered commenting or quoting this earlier movement in a postmodern or postsocialist gesture that signals a different form of postsocialist break (albeit whilst still remaining within the conventions of world art cinema). I would like to thank the article's reviewer for highlighting this interesting dimension.
14. David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson highlight how discourses of realism were initially appended on account of the stylistic contrast with previous waves of Italian and Hollywood cinema (see Bordwell and Thompson 2003: 360).
15. We are still forced to wonder to what extent the newly emerging ethico-aesthetics and drive towards greater degrees of 'ontological' realism relate to the Chinese filmmakers anticipating what would appeal to foreign art cinema audiences.

Many (cynically) argue that on account of a cultural deterritorialisation and capitalistic reterritorialisation, the films began to display a certain degree of formulisation, conventionalisation and quotidianisation (see for example Zhang Zhen 2007: 16; Kraicer 2009; Zhang Yingjin 2012: 66).

16. Demonstrating that these are not isolated cases, we can also find Ning Ying using actual Beijing policemen, migrants and taxi drivers to perform as fictionalised versions of 'themselves' throughout her Beijing Trilogy, and Jia employing non-professional actors to appear in his low-budget underground film *Pickpocket* and his higher-budget state-sponsored *The World*.
17. Judging females by their appearance is a complex and textured factor expressively toyed with throughout the film. Guei and his uncle voyeuristically leer/peer at what they think is a rich female housewife living in a posh apartment behind the hutongs. They watch undetected through a peephole, enjoying her pose in expensive gowns before a mirror whilst speculating as to why the rich never appear happy. This woman finally turns out to be a maid, however, yet another migrant worker like them, albeit one who takes an opportunity to dress up in her employer's clothes and make-up when she is not home.
18. David Bordwell and Noel Carroll's *Post-Theory* (1996) debates proclaimed the death of grand narratives such as Psychoanalysis or Linguistics as suitable tools for approaching or reading film. D. N. Rodowick's 'An Elegy for Theory' (2007), however, can be employed to bookend this period, marking a renaissance of film-philosophy that was in part linked to the Anglophone translations of Deleuze's *Cinema 1* (1986) and *Cinema 2* (1989).
19. From 'Ancora di Verga e del cinema Italiana' (published in the November 1941 edition of *Cinema*), Mario Alicata and Giuseppe De Santis reflect the views of the famous neorealist screenwriter Cesare Zavattini by arguing that the neorealist movement desired to take their cameras into the Italian streets, ports and factories and became 'convinced that one day we will make our most beautiful film following the slow, tired step of the worker returning to his home, narrating the essential poetry of a new and pure life that contains within itself the secret of its aristocratic beauty' (republished in translation by Ennio Di Nolfo 2002: 85).
20. Of course this can also be related to the Chinese context and the very real fear of imprisonment facing artists being directly critical of the Party or suggesting alternatives to the current hegemony and status quo.
21. Ning gives Wang a run for his money as a Chinese director with strong ties to Italian cinematic traditions. She encountered classic neorealist films alongside Bazin's writing whilst at the BFA, for example, and studied at the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia in Italy where she likewise acted as Bernardo Bertolucci's assistant director (see Zhang Zhen 2004).
22. Ronald Bogue 2003, amongst others, mistakenly suggested Marc Augé's notion of the non-space inspired Deleuze's original any-space-whatever. William Brown resolved this misunderstanding by demonstrating that Deleuze was really influenced by his own student Pascal Auger.
23. Besides these features, Wang's films can also be understood as reflecting the breaking down of the traditional modes of thinking and acting via the use of audio and sound situations. Like neorealism before them, many of these films began to appear audibly and ontologically distinct from the studio films by employing naturalistic on-location noises and sounds. As part of the break with these state traditions, and forging yet more links with neorealism, the (si)neo-realist filmmakers began employing actors, dialects and accents that sounded distinctly different. We could link these drives back to a Deleuzo-Guattarian minor cinema model, of course, by claiming this new audio impulse in part made the dominant cinematic language stutter, stumble and break down into

a series of non-official dialects, accents and slangs. This wider trope is also evidenced in the opening of *Beijing Bicycle*, where a group of non-actor migrants are interviewed in a montage of dislocated close-ups. The obvious accents and regional inflections often lead to confusion, or create comical misunderstandings between the migrants and their off-screen interlocutor speaking in Mandarin.

24. Pickowicz goes some way towards indicating how this trope can be traced to some of the restraints placed upon the filmmakers themselves; or at least their unwillingness to risk jail for directly criticising the state via characters, dialogue or plot. This can in part account for why it rarely occurs to these characters to 'connect their problems to trends unfolding in the larger society', and explains why they remain 'utterly uniformed' and have 'few or no political or social ideas' (Pickowicz 2006: 15).
25. Admittedly, we could also understand this transformation in terms of Deleuze's modern political cinema again, wherein the people are understood to be missing. The use of migrant characters (often with a political non-status) reflects the absent people of the modern political cinema. Like the powerless cart driver of Ousmane Sembène's *Borom Sarret* (1969), for example, the disempowered characters are often discovered lurking in the margins, wandering aimlessly amongst and between highly divided and codified milieus, reacting and adapting to chance encounters or opportunities, and struggling against new and bewildering power structures.

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A. N. Whitehead[1]

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Abstract

Two books on Whitehead, a major study by the noted philosopher of science, Isabelle Stengers, and a shorter one by Didier Debaise are reviewed, along with two earlier mathematical and scientific works by Whitehead himself, which have been re-issued. This provides the basis for a wide-ranging discussion of the relationships between Whitehead's love of poetry and Heidegger's approach to it, Whitehead's background in mathematics and theoretical physics and his attitude to empirical science and more general problems of the philosophy of the event, in particular how radical change can come about.

Keywords: Whitehead, Heidegger, poetry, philosophy of the event, philosophy of science, Marceline Desbordes-Valmore

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A. N. Whitehead (1861–1947) has a rather peculiar place in the history of modern Western philosophy. His books on mathematics and theoretical physics are still read by specialists in those fields, but his philosophical work has never really become part of the mainstream curriculum of the subject in Anglo-Saxon countries. Indeed analytic philosophers have sometimes regarded him as slightly 'loopy' and not entirely to be taken seriously.[2] It is mostly theologians and educationalists who have been attracted by his metaphysical ideas and have sometimes responded to him as a kind of cult figure. The situation is definitely better with regard to Francophone philosophy, where there has been a small but steady current of interest in his thought, starting with the seminal work by Jean Wahl, *Vers Le Concret*, where the treatment of Whitehead is remarkable, given the fact that it was published as early as 1932, that is only three years after the publication of *Process and Reality*.[3] The problem with Francophone philosophers is that they have had a tendency, at least until fairly recently, to subtly elide Whitehead's ideas with those of Bergson and Husserl. Of course, there are real affinities between the work of the three philosophers, all of whom started as mathematicians, and Whitehead does refer positively to Bergson, but there are also real differences. This is important, not only for the history of ideas, but also for precision of thought in any creative philosophy that draws on the work of any or all of these three thinkers.

Bergson, Husserl and Whitehead all started off as mathematicians, but the first two moved on to philosophy very quickly, whereas Whitehead was still producing works on mathematics and theoretical physics in his fifties. This is the key to understanding the difference between Whitehead and the other two thinkers. Both Bergson and Husserl tried to establish an autonomous, well-grounded mode of thought which was an alternative to positivist science. In Bergson, this mode of thought is intuition, and the contrast between it and science is unequivocal, but Husserl's mode of thought is ambiguous: he was trying to establish a type of science that did not depend upon objective fact external to consciousness. In later phenomenology, this became a primordial pre-scientific mode of thought, upon which scientific or logical modes of thought were necessarily based, but there were also tinges of anti-science. One can see why Bergson's ideas had such an enormous impact on the arts, while those of Husserl were immensely important for the social and human sciences.[4] By contrast, Whitehead continued to think like a mathematician throughout his career, and he never lost faith in science, which he greatly stretched from the empirical towards the speculative by

means of his mathematics. In a sense, he is not far from a philosopher of science such as Meyerson or Duhem or a philosophical mathematician such as Poincaré, even if there are clear divergences between their ideas and his. Whitehead's ideas can also be related to more theoretical and/or holistic currents in twentieth-century science, such as quantum physics, evolutionary development biology (Evo Devo) or ethology.[5]

However, there is another dimension to Whitehead which takes him beyond a subtle philosophy of science or a more holistic scientific practice. In 1932, another seminal work was published, this time in England: *New Bearings in English Poetry* by F. R. Leavis. In it, the author traced the marginalisation and decline of English poetry in the face of the modern industrial world in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and he saw Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot and Gerard Manley Hopkins as the initiators of poetic renewal.[6] Near the beginning of the second chapter of *The Concept of Nature*, Whitehead states that natural philosophers should consider everything perceived as being in nature, the glow of the sunset just as much as the molecules and electric waves used to explain the phenomenon.[7] A sense of poetic and scientific observations being equally valid as empirically based knowledge is bound up with the rejection of the bifurcation of nature, and Whitehead does indeed cite verses by Shakespeare or the English Romantic poets in support of his philosophical arguments.[8] Of course, he is going back to writers from before the decline noted in *New Bearings in English Poetry*, but Leavis' judgement, which could also be applied to other art forms in England, would not be relevant to poetry or other art forms of the same time in French- or German-speaking countries. Here, an autonomous, self-referential, aestheticising, proto-modernist culture exploring inner consciousness grew up, particularly in France after the *débâcle* of 1870–1 and in the Austro-Hungarian empire, where psychoanalysis originated, but there were clear tendencies in this direction, not simply in Austria and France, much earlier in the nineteenth century. This is the kind of shift in subjectivity that prepared the way for Bergson and Husserl and to which they greatly contributed.[9]

Except perhaps for Keats, the major English Romantic poets managed to more or less bypass the problematic subject bequeathed to Western culture by Descartes. Even if Coleridge became a drug addict and lost his poetic gift and Wordsworth a pompous bore, their achievement in the *Lyrical Ballads* – its first edition was in 1798 – was astonishing, even if one tends to forget this because of the familiarity of the poems. There is a limpid ease with which the subject encounters nature, other humans, both strangers and intimate family members, and its own thoughtful

self-reflection. The latter is deep and not infrequently troubled – this unproblematic subject is not a shallow one – but this trouble is never all-engulfing and can always be assuaged in a way that is spritually profound but not invested with excessive angst. Perception is direct, observation acute, nature is felt on a delicate scale, and language is transparent and simple. Of course, all this 'artlessness' comes from very complex art, as is made explicit in the fairly short 'Advertisement' to the original edition of the *Lyrical Ballads*, which became a greatly expanded 'Preface' in the later editions. 'Tintern Abbey' demonstrates very clearly the combination of a gentle but complex emotional chiaroscuro with a smooth movement across the boundaries of the body and mind within the subject, subject and nature, past, present and future of the subject and subject and other related subject, in this case Wordsworth's sister. The lines: 'And I have felt/ A presence that disturbs me with the joy/ Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime/ Of something far more deeply interfused,/ Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns/ And the round ocean and the living air,/ And the blue sky, and in the mind of man,/ A motion and a spirit, that impels/ All thinking things, all objects of all thought,/ And rolls through all things' shows the scumbled blurring of what could have been broken down into its discrete parts by a more rigourous, problematising analysis. This kind of intuitional, holistic empiricism will be very important for Whitehead.[10]

Yet there is a complexity in what 'Tintern Abbey' omits: one would never know from the poem that the Wye valley had been an important metallurgical centre since the sixteenth century and played an important role in the early Industrial Revolution. There is a real element of denial here, which will lead to Leavis' diagnosis of the marginalisation and decline of poetry in the course of the nineteenth century. There is an interesting contrast with a slightly later, major French writer, Nerval. Four works from the end of his life, that is from the early 1850s, involve quasi-autobiographical journeys to the north of Paris, where the author had partly grown up: *Angélique*, *Les Nuits d'octobre*, *Sylvie* and *Promenades et souvenirs*. They epitomise a problematic, disjunctive, fragmented subject, at times ironic, at times overwhelmed by intense emotions, at times on the edge of hallucination. All four works, especially *Sylvie*, contain impressive descriptions of nature and local customs – Nerval is much more 'self-projective' or immersed in these descriptions than Wordsworth – but there are also references to the railways that had only recently been built to the north of Paris in three of the works and to social changes that resulted from the railways in *Sylvie*.[11]

Nerval was strongly influenced by German literature, which, along with mental illness, brings him very close to two of Heidegger's poets: Hölderlin and Trakl. There are also interesting affinities between Heidegger and Whitehead, in that there is a similarly concrete quality to the relationship between the human subject and the world of objects in the former and the actual entity among other actual entities in the latter. Heidegger clearly focuses on poetry in a much more sustained way than Whitehead, but neither isolates it as aesthetic. Whitehead moves easily from the glow of the sunset to molecules and electric waves, from poetry to science, while Heidegger is well known for not reading poems as a literary critic or historian. Indeed his readings often feel like medieval biblical exegesis, with quasi-decontextualised utterances being turned into insights into the essence of being in his case or Christian spirituality in the case of the commentators from the Middle Ages. With Heidegger, this is part of a deliberate process of de-subjectivising and de-aestheticising artistic modernism in order to regain a primordial, authentic access to the essence of being, but there is a correlate: technology is rejected along with artistic modernism. Whitehead has no problems with technology, and he does not need to confront artistic modernism in English Romantic poetry. In a sense, Heidegger had to reject the technology to which modernism was reacting when he rejected modernism, while Whitehead was able to establish an undifferentiated creativity as ultimate in *Process and Reality*.[12] It also means that the latter's anti-Cartesianism is very nuanced: he does not so much launch a frontal attack on the problematic subject as conduct subtle operations that transform it, and he greatly enriches the notion of modern science that had Cartesian thought as its basis without completely destroying those foundations. This is why he was so drawn to Leibniz, who fully accepted the philosophy, science and mathematics of his age but maintained a highly fruitful, very critical dialogue with the ideas of Descartes, Locke and Newton throughout his career.[13]

Language and Frege's theory of meaning (or the philosophical tradition behind it) are central concerns in both analytic philosophy and Heidegger, even if they approach it in almost diametrically opposed ways. As has been shown, the latter extensively explores poetic language and is trying to uncover a primordial truth anterior to propositional truth, while the former uses simplified, clear statements, such as 'The present King of France is bald' to pursue an essentially Fregean programme. That the binary quality of subject and predicate, sense and reference in analytic philosphy reinforces the rigidity of Cartesian

subject–object relations is evident, but one could say that Heidegger never really succeeds in overcoming them, in spite of all his efforts to do so. Whitehead was not insensitive to language: indeed he is always a very precise and not infrequently a downright elegant writer, but he thought like a mathematician or geometrician, not in the narrow, reductive sense of the isolating of variables and finding a function to link them, in order to establish a numerical essence for reality, but in the infinitely expanding sense of continuously reframing mathematical problems in novel and illuminating ways. One is reminded of Emerson:

> Our life is an apprenticeship to the truth that around every circle another can be drawn; that there is no end in nature, but every end is a beginning; that there is always another dawn risen on mid-noon, and under every deep a lower deep opens. (Emerson 2003: 225)[14]

This enabled him to put subject–object relations into a new context, in which they could be opened out and radically rethought. Clearly, this was of immense importance for Deleuze: *Difference and Repetition* and *The Fold* are profoundly influenced by this aspect of Whitehead's philosophy.

However, there is an important distinction to be made here, in that one can argue as to how metaphorical Deleuze's mathematics are,[15] whereas the difficulty simply does not arise with Whitehead: he simply was a mathematician, and he published mathematical work. The problem, though, is that the mathematical work is difficult for non-mathematicians and can be separated out from the rest of his thought, so there is a tendency to ignore it. This is particularly true of the response to *The Concept of Nature*, where the geometric sections are usually skipped and the metaphysical comments are extracted as indications of how its author was to develop as a fully-fledged philosopher, but this is a profoundly mistaken approach, as it is precisely the grittiness of Whitehead's relational mathematical engineering that takes him beyond a vague Swedenborgian panpsychism, however mystical or poetical he sometimes is. This is why the paperback re-issue of *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Natural Knowledge* and *The Principle of Relativity with Applications to Physical Science* is particularly significant. The former first appeared in 1919 but had a second edition in 1925, while the latter was published in 1922: together with *The Concept of Nature*, which came out in 1920, they form a kind of interlocking trilogy.

An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Natural Knowledge covers much the same material as *The Concept of Nature*, but it is not

mostly based on lectures, as the latter book is: it is more like a well-organised textbook, broken down into a very clearly defined structure of larger sections and smaller subsections. This means that although it is more dense scientifically and has a fair sprinkling of reasonably complicated diagrams and equations, an attentive reading of it is an invaluable supplement to *The Concept of Nature*, where the long verbal descriptions and lack of diagrams sometimes make it hard to grasp Whitehead's four-dimensional geometry in a precise, concrete way, and the different concepts can begin to blend into each other in a kind of oral flow, even if there is a visionary element in compensation for this. Near the beginning of *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Natural Knowledge*, Whitehead deals with Berkeley in the same way that a mathematician would deal with another mathematician: he goes back to the problem behind the solution and recasts it in a way that transforms it. The gap between moment by moment perception and the world of objects is replaced, with some intervening input from Kant, by the relationship between perceptual experience and knowledge, with the latter only occurring within the former.[16] There are two mathematical systems elaborated in both *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Natural Knowledge* and *The Concept of Nature*: (1) extensive abstraction, which corresponds to the basis for scientific exploration and (2) a four-dimensional relational geometry of instantaneous space, which is a way of trying to understand ongoing, lived perceptual experience, with the former being derived from the latter. Hard work on these systems enormously enhances one's understanding of Whitehead's philosphy, even when it shifts from the relationship between perception and knowledge to that of perception and ontology in his more mature philosophical thought.

The Concept of Nature is pervaded by the theory of relativity or aspects of science, mathematics or geometry associated with it, but it is only mentioned specifically in chapter VIII, where Whitehead briefly explores the differences between his ideas and those of Einstein. This means that *The Concept of Nature* can to a certain extent be read in a relatively non-scientific way, even if such a reading is bound to be somewhat skewed, but this is definitely not true of *The Principle of Relativity*, which is a sustained contribution by a practising mathematical physicist to the extraordinarily rich debate concerning relativity in the scientific community around 1920, with important books by Weyl, Lorentz, Born and Pauli, all offering subtle developments and alternatives to Einstein's theories: even when these authors have ideas which are no longer accepted today, they are still

very thought-provoking. This is true of the most interesting divergence from the classic model in *The Principle of Relativity*:

> The possibility of other such laws [of gravitation], expressed in sets of differential equations other than Einstein's, arises from the fact that on my theory there is a relevant fact of nature which is absent on Einstein's theory. This fact is the whole bundle of alternative time stratifications arising from the uniform significance of events. (85)

As this quotation indicates, there are some serious alternative mathematics associated with this divergence in what is a very mathematical book, but the idea had already been explored *en passant* in *The Concept of Nature*. Here it emerges as a consequence of the four-dimensional instantaneous (as opposed to timeless) space configured around the event-particle. One could say that the event-particle and its spacetime relationship with the rest of the universe form a radically singular, momentary, indissoluable cluster, and that none of the elements of this cluster can be fully generalised to *any* other such cluster. What is beautiful about this thought is that it can be built into a world that sings with a deep harmony between interdependence and spontaneity: it is as if Leibniz's monads still reflected the other monads but had been put in Brownian motion.[17]

This network of related movement in spacetime, electromagnetic waves and gravitational pull, explored in an ongoing way by four-dimensional geometry and equations, the latter mostly coming from tensor calculus, is not without real emotional investment by Whitehead. The very first page of *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Natural Knowledge* contains a prominent dedication to Whitehead's youngest son, who was killed in action in France in 1918, and at the end of the 'Preface' there is a reference to the 'anxiety' during the war 'and at last the anguish which is the price of victory' (viii). The final section of the 1919 edition of the book, that is just before the 'Notes' added in 1925, concludes that 'the permanence of the individual rhythm within nature is not absolutely associated with one definite set of material objects', and then Whitehead quotes poetry from Tennyson and Wordsworth and cites Bergson's *élan vital* (199–200).

At the beginning of his beautiful essay, 'Wozu Dichter?', first delivered in 1946 after another world war, Heidegger speaks of the poet's ability to feel the traces of the departed gods in the abyss at the centre of the night of the world's misery, so that this abyss can become the ground of a change in direction for humanity. How is this done? One can avoid concentrating exclusively on poetry and therefore parallel the dual use

of geometry and equations in Whitehead's mathematics (and elsewhere in the theory of relativity) by comparing Trakl and Van Gogh, both of whom were very important to Heidegger. The poet and painter put objects on the paper or canvas in a way that is not aesthetic, emphasising their 'isness' or 'thingness', and compacting object and object or object and space together so that lines of force appear between and around those objects. These are the traces of the gods and of the future, but as Heidegger says near the end of 'Wozu Dichter?', these are not overt predictions of a future which is to come, but traces from the future which work best when their action is unconscious. The lines of force are also the 'Wesen', that is essence, of being, but 'Wesen' in Heidegger is never transcendent or eternal: it is always immanent and of the moment of perception and/or revelation.

Strictly speaking, mathematical physics does come close to making predictions, in that there is hope that what has been posited geometrically or in equations will eventually be observed empirically. This means that one should be very careful about crossing the boundary between the theory of relativity and philosophy, however stimulating the former may be to the latter, especially with regard to the nature of time. Furthermore, the theory of relativity does not necessarily lend itself to one particular type of philosophy: Cassirer's neo-Kantian, Marburg school approach to it is quite different from that of Whitehead, who is already beginning to speculate about its application outside physics in the very first sentence of the main text of *The Principle of Relativity* (3).

It is worth noting that the tensor calculus brought into the theory of relativity by Einstein is also used by engineers to determine the stresses and strains in solids and liquids, and this gives it a quality of an explorative-constructive instrument that has definite affinities with what is happening in Trakl's poems or Van Gogh's paintings. Even if Heidegger is a mystical philospher of poetic depths and Whitehead a mathematician of heuristic conceptual frames, both avoid the discrete, circumscribed object and resolve its finitude or transience in eternal, continuous process. One could argue that Deleuze brings these two visions together and adds a mediating surface between them, with *Logic of Sense* having a rather more interior quality than the very Whiteheadian *Difference and Repetition*. Derrida may refer more overtly to Heidegger, but there is a definite element of Heideggerian authenticity in Deleuze's concept of being worthy of the event, although the influence may have been felt indirectly via Sartre.[18]

Isabelle Stengers and Didier Debaise are both at the Université Libre de Bruxelles, which means that there is a certain family resemblance

between their two books – Stengers' *Thinking with Whitehead*[19] and Debaise's *Un Empirisme spéculatif* – even if the two works are rather different in scope. Stengers is a distinguished doyenne of the philosophy of science, and her book is her magnum opus, in which she exhaustively explores all of Whitehead's metaphysical work in relation to her own richly matured thoughts on science and ontology, while Debaise is a talented younger colleague and former student of hers who has produced an excellent but relatively limited study of a single text, *Process and Reality*. Nevertheless, there are a number of shared elements in the approaches of the two authors. First, an important problem in Whitehead scholarship is the degree to which there is a radical break or continuity between *The Concept of Nature* and the later metaphysics. Both Stengers and Debaise opt for nuanced continuity, with extensive passages in *Thinking with Whitehead* being devoted to *Science and the Modern World* and *Religion in the Making*, two understudied transitional works between *The Concept of Nature* and *Process and Reality*. Second, both authors also try to rectify the subtle assimilation of Whitehead's ideas to those of Bergson or phenomenology in Continental philosophy, while simultaneously establishing affinities with William James. There are excellent passages doing one or the other in both Stengers and Debaise, although hers are more extensive, as hers is by far the longer book. Third, Whitehead has a very distinctive, rather creative and not un-Deleuzian relationship with the philosophers from Descartes to Kant, even if, as Stengers says, he tends to treat them as other mathematicians, appropriating individual ideas and transforming them, whereas Deleuze is more in the mould of Gueroult, a radical but scholarly re-interpreter of the thought as a whole of significant figures from the philosophical past. There are many excellent passages detailing Whitehead's treatment of individual concepts in Descartes, Leibniz, Locke or Hume in both Stengers and Debaise, and the former comes very close indeed to cracking one of the key problems in Whitehead: how he scrambles the history of the philosophy of perception in the West and ontology in an interlocking and reflecting but complexly asymmetrical way.[20] Fourth, both authors mention Deleuze, but Stengers does not always clearly distinguish between the ideas of Whitehead and those of solo Deleuze or Deleuze and Guattari, while Debaise has a very interesting section in which he explores the differences between individuation in Whitehead and in Deleuze and Simondon. This contrast probably stems from the fact that Stengers is often discussing her own ideas with reference to other philosophers or thinkers who have influenced her at the same time as she is maintaining an ongoing dialogue

with Whitehead, who of course is the main influence on her. Fifth, both Debaise and Stengers are very good at dealing with the etymology or associations of important words in Whitehead, in particular the names he gives to concepts, types of entity or operations to which entities are subject. Stengers is also aware of subtle problems in the existing French translations of Whitehead, but obviously his texts are now given in their original English. Debaise is a little disappointing in this respect: he only cites these French translations of Whitehead, which are actually as competent as translations can be, and some of them do have running page references to the original English publications, but citations of both French and English texts would have been better. Sixth, Stengers demonstrates a quite exceptional mastery of Whitehead's work – from which she can pretty much quote at will – and the literature connected with it and with his creative process, but she has opted for a book without footnotes and a relatively limited bibliography, while Debaise has scholarly footnotes and an exhaustive and up-to-date bibliography of publications on Whitehead in both English and French. One should not allow the vast scale of *Thinking with Whitehead* to diminish the very considerable achievement of *Un Empirisme spéculatif*: in not that much more than 150 pages of main text, Debaise has managed to produce an admirably lucid, very concise, intellectually subtle and beautifully organised account of the principal themes of *Process and Reality*, a work that is renowned for its sprawling and rather inaccessible nature.

The central spine of Stengers' book is made up of extended and dense exegeses of Whitehead's most important works from *The Concept of Nature* onwards. She follows the twists and turns of thought from work to work in a way that respects individual moments of creativity in problem solving but also establishes a remarkably unified trajectory for Whitehead's overall philosophical journey. Broadly, it is a vision that combines a belief in traditional empirical science with elements of speculation, holistic thinking and inclusivity that prevent it from being reductive and an ontology that involves a very amorphous subject in a very interactive relationship with its world. What is missing is the kind of divided subject one finds in Deleuze, Lyotard or Derrida, and this is because such a subject is probably missing from Whitehead's philosophy and has to be added to it, but that may be a way of developing or expanding his work, which is something Stengers wishes to do. While a divided subject can seem too binary, as if it were simply two partial subjects instead of one, Stengers' amorphous subject can still seem too individualistic, only with more blurred boundaries and a less solid internal consistency. This is not to say that she is 'wrong' – there

is a great deal of validity in her approach – but that by eschewing the divided subject, she is forgoing the opportunities it gives as an operation for collapsing the subject from within and turning it into drives, which can be linked to external forces. For example, in Arnold's problem of whether the perimeter of a rectangle is increased by a sequence of folding and unfolding, one can relate the pattern of the folding and unfolding to the actions that have caused them and see the perimeter as something responding to continuities that cross it rather than the result of something within it.[21] The divided subject is probably associated with the types of thought that Stengers seems to be attacking in an oblique way throughout the whole of *Thinking with Whitehead*. It is difficult to be sure about what she is attacking – critical epistemology, something like Marxist critique and Rorty are alluded to *en passant* – but one assumes that deconstruction and poststructuralism would be part of what she is rejecting in favour of her very subtle but still rather traditional belief in the efficacy of empirical science. Again, she is not 'wrong', but as with Heidegger, there are aspects of Derrida and Lyotard that could be cross-phased in a fruitful and complementary way with Whitehead's philosophy.

However much one might disagree with certain aspects of the direction in which Stengers takes Whitehead's ideas, there is no doubt that her exegesis of his work is superb and that it benefits enormously from her being a creative philosopher in her own right. She begins with *The Concept of Nature*, concentrating on its metaphysical side and ignoring the extensive discussions of geometry, as is normal in Whitehead studies. This section of Stengers' book seems longer than it is: it takes up seven of the main twenty-five chapters, but these chapters are quite short, and there is quite a lot of quotation from Whitehead. Nevertheless, she distils the essence of *The Concept of Nature*: with mind as ultimate, it circumvents the bifurcation of nature. Everything – the glow of the sunset *and* the molecules and electric waves – is in the same boat. With due attention, one can extend one's perceptual capacity, so that one is not seeing a 'reality' behind 'appearance' but a further dimension of a reality that always remains undivided. A sort of *engrenage* or complementarity is proposed between respondent and world: there seems to be enough of a fit between what one can perceive and what is out there that one can in general rely on one's perceptions as a basis for knowledge and survival. Mind is still ultimate here, so that is why interlocking is closer to what is happening than fusion. Stengers introduces the image of the mountaineer climbing the mountain as a means of conveying what this relationship is like, and it turns

into the concept of having a hold on the world as she enters into a very long discussion of *Science and the Modern World*, a rather hybrid and confusing work that Whitehead specialists have tended to neglect. Stengers' thorough exploration of this text is a particularly original aspect of *Thinking with Whitehead*, and it very much provides the basis for the rich and convincing link she makes between *The Concept of Nature* and the later more purely metaphysical work.

It is now that the problem of misplaced concreteness is tackled. One can observe reality and isolate certain variables, say: velocity, frequency and wavelength, and then combine them into a function, in this case $v = f\lambda$, which can be tested empirically. Even if there continues to be no disproof of the function, and it remains 'true', it is still not 'out there'. To think so is misplaced abstraction, that is confusing the tool that one has used to come to grips with reality with something that is actually 'out there' and has been 'discovered'. There is an important distinction to be made between the fact that the universe appears to be mathematisable and human beings seem to be able to do it and the existence of a kind of 'mathematical fact' at the root of the universe. This is very much the way mathematicians think: they usually prefer to make ongoing contributions to as yet unsolved or perhaps insoluble problems, rather than just finding answers.[22] Stengers continually emphasises the way in which Whitehead thinks like a mathematician throughout the whole of her book. This means that it is particularly clear that the expansive quality of due attention in *The Concept of Nature* and the arguments against the reductive quality of misplaced concreteness in *Science and the Modern World* are two sides of the same intellectual coin and how much the holistic quality of their author's thought comes from his training as a mathematician.

Another key problem in Whitehead is how one moves from eternal objects to actual entities. He addresses this problem in a sustained way in *Science and the Modern World*, using God as ultimate, and Stengers closely tracks what one could call his 'rough workings' for the more finished achievement of *Process and Reality*, although even here, Whitehead was continuously fine-tuning his ideas by inserting new sentences into paragraphs which had already been written. Part of Stengers' purpose in making this detailed exposition is to show how Whitehead was driven by the logic of the problem, but what is perhaps more interesting is that it allows her to treat *Process and Reality* in a less monolithic way and to see what it says as in a certain sense provisional and therefore capable of further extension, something she herself does in the later chapters of her book. It also helps one to understand how

difficult ontology is, how difficult it is to understand the relationship between permanence and transience, how easy formulae or positions will not work and how the problem is perhaps insoluble but always open to fresh attempts at a deeper understanding by heuristic reframings.

God is replaced as ultimate by creativity in *Processs and Reality*, but he is still there in another very important role. How Whitehead uses God is a third key problem in the philosopher's work, and Stengers handles it very impressively. She does not simply 'block' at the word God and the religious vocabulary associated with him: she gets behind this to see what problem Whitehead is trying to solve and how he is using God as a concept in relation to it.[23] This is in fact an approach one could use with the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century philosophers that were so important to Whitehead, and it is not surprising that Stengers is particularly good at the difference between his notion of God and that of Leibniz. For the Whiteheadian, what is best for that impasse seems initially quite close to the Leibnizian best of all possible worlds, and both conceptions are trying to get hold of the fact that the universe somehow seems to 'work', but one involves omniscient divine foresight from the outside, while the other has God as a kind of operator within actuality inducing a certain overall positive directionality. Divine eternity becomes more about conserving what is transient by allowing it to somehow be incorporated into what is to come, rather than some permanent ground beyond or within the transient. Stengers' chapter twenty-four, 'God and the World', is a long, intellectually very disciplined and extremely beautiful exploration of the relationship between God, the world, creativity and actuality.

What one could call the other side of the intellectual coin of what is best for that impasse is the trick of evil. This is when the progress of actuality is forced, when something comes before its time, and it is undoubtedly an important Whiteheadian concept, but Stengers also emphasises it for her own reasons. Her resistence to types of thought such as critical epistemology and Rorty's philosophy is not unconnected with her antipathy to what one could call vanguard radicalism. By and large, one is happy to eschew along with her the 'I'm so left-wing, I wouldn't even suck milk from my mother's right breast' tendency, and Whitehead himself was probably a consensual progressive, as Stengers seems to be, but the very methodical nature of his system means that there is potentially much more room for spontaneity than she seems to allow. Indeed it is possible that she never quite succeeds in bringing together and defining properly the parallel leaps in speculative empiricism and in the movement from eternal objects

to actual entities.[24] The way in which the link between the methodical and the spontaneous can be developed in Whitehead can be explored in relation to Stanislavskian theatre technique, in which there has been a bifurcation between (1) the early Stanislavskian technique of emotional recall which was taken up in particular by Lee Strasberg in America but generally dropped in Russia itself and (2) the detailed scoring of the text, breaking the action down into beats and units, something that is done everywhere to a certain degree but can be done in minute detail in Russia.

When one puts these two strands back together, one can go well beyond the bourgeois naturalism or emotional self-indulgence often associated with Stanislavskian work. The present author played Mordecai in Lope de Vega's *Esther* as a Hasidic Jew in a production set in something like 1940s Hungary during the Horty regime. The theatre was small, with the audience on the same level as the actors, so close contact was possible between them. There was an intensely emotional scene in which Mordecai was told of the impending holocaust of the Jews, for which the present author used emotional recall based on a personal traumatic childhood episode, of course stitched into other elements of historical or mimetic research, but not in itself to do with being Jewish or the Holocaust. Such use of emotional recall is not an exploratory exercise, the results of which are later repeated by the use of motor memory, but the reproduction of the actual emotional experience every performance, with however the use of muscular controls, in the present author's case mainly learnt through isolation work with Ryszard Cieslak and biomechanics with Gennadi Bogdanov. It is as if one's body has become a map of muscles that can be pressed like the stops of a musical instrument to mould the palpable emotional flow one seems to be channelling. The key to Stanislavski is production from the inside, not copying from the outside, and such work has an 'authenticity' that can impact directly on the nervous system of audience members. In the case of 'Esther', a significant percentage of the spectators on certain nights were Jewish concentration camp survivors. On those nights, audience members began spontaneously to talk to Mordecai, to console him, and he began to have a probing, gliding motion, similar to African performers using masks to be spirits, with whom the present author had worked.

It is important to underline the highly personal and apparently 'irrelevant' nature of the emotional recall material. Plaited into the more 'objective' elements of the process, this material helps to create a kind of broad space, simultaneously low density and superconductive,

permitting slides between self and other, and higher density, solidifying, connecting them, but this could not happen if the material was not in some way a response to the text or the director's interpretation of it, however intuitive a leap it might be. The author played the older of two male characters in a shortish piece by Dostoyevsky ('Another Man's Wife or The Husband Under The Bed'), where the director (Anatoli Vasiliev) wanted to explore the bullying of the older generation by the younger one and a certain collapse of shared Enlightenment values in post-Soviet Russia. The author happens to be male to female transgendered, but has not had a sex change, and drew on an episode in what one would now call her female (or transgendered)[25] experience for a certain section. This choice was primarily triggered by a scene from a production of Lermontov's 'Masquarade' by Vasiliev which he showed in rehearsal, where the bullied character was female. This element of *clivage* in the preparation was the basis for a complex effect during a monologue in the section in question, where the author's character talked about his feelings as if he were someone else in the distance looking at the scene. The distance between the character and his 'double' was felt, but the two points were brought together, while the emotional moment was extended, mainly by controlling the muscles of the face. One seems very close here to the contraction of space and dilation of time that one finds in the theory of relativity and that underpin Whitehead's beautiful descriptions of the event, simultaneity and temporal thickness in *The Concept of Nature*.[26]

Stengers' first degree was in chemistry, and she is a distinguished philosopher of science, so she tends to turn to the natural sciences when she wants to explore her own ideas as a response to and development of Whitehead's thought. This happens throughout *Thinking with Whitehead*, but the roughly 140-page section of chapters nineteen to twenty-three does this in an especially concentrated way. Each of these five chapters uses exegeses of short passages from *Process and Reality* or *Modes of Thought* as a springboard for an extended discussion of a particular area. Chapter twenty-three, 'Modes of Existence, Modes of Thought', which moves from a relatively reductive but important biochemical model of life to a more holistic ethological one, is especially impressive, but chapter nineteen, 'Justifying Life?', in which the subtle Whiteheadian notion of a society is explored, and chapter twenty, 'The Adventure of the Senses', which involves a very sophisticated discussion of the problem of sensa, are also both extremely stimulating. Quantum physics is perhaps less successfully examined in chapter twenty-one, 'Actuality between Physics and the Divine': the connections

with Whitehead possibly are not established with sufficient precision. His ideas do 'feel' close to quantum physics because of his sustained engagement with the theory of relativity, but while the two approaches to physics are definitely 'cousins', in practice they tended to evolve separately from each other, so some bridging work needs to be done when one brings them together.

Another key problem in Whitehead is how his scrambling of the history of the philosophy of perception in the West and ontology is related to feeling in the broader sense: the holistic tendency in his thought is very much bound up with this relationship. Stengers deals as impressively with this problem as she does with the other ones, but there is a subtle difficulty here. Her predilection for the natural sciences induces, perhaps semi-consciously, a self that is rather autonomous, unfissured and slightly passive, that progresses evenly towards a richer understanding of the world, based on a sophisticated model of speculative leaps and empirical observation. She is so concerned to overcome the bifurcation of nature and to establish the *engrenage* between mountaineer and mountain and the hold that humans have on what is external to them that she does not sufficiently convey the real dangers of mountain climbing and losing one's hold and their effect on the psyche. Even her excellent discussion of negative prehensions and the scars they leave at the end of chapter eighteen, 'Feeling One's World', makes what is happening seem very safe. There is never the sense of disturbing disjunction of Rimbaud's 'Le Dormeur du val', a short but very intense sonnet from 1870 in which a young soldier appears to be sleeping in a delicately described landscape only for one to discover in the last line that he has 'deux trous rouges au côté droit'. Of course, Stengers is not 'wrong' in terms of a strict exegesis of Whitehead's thought: his obsessiveness probably betrays some kind of underlying disquiet or anxiety, but it is very much sublimated in mathematics, metaphysics and poetic beauty. He is more Upanishadic or Buddhist than tantric in his approach to evil, death or impermanence.

Nevertheless, one needs to look at activities which are more proactive, constructive or engaged, such as the arts, engineering, medical research or social or political action, to fully understand Whiteheadian creativity, even if one wishes to remain within the relatively smooth connectivity and progession of his universe. One could take team sports as a model, where there are moments of exceptional individual brilliance that completely change matches, but they are still very much bound into the rhythm of the team and the game as a whole. However, the structure developed by Whitehead is so strong that one can explore a much higher

level of fear and inner turmoil to be mastered in the self and much more radical and surprising transformations of the world, times when new heaven, new earth and new self all emerge together. Heideggerian authenticity and prophecy can be fused in a complementary way with Whiteheadian mathematics and cosmology, thus avoiding the perils of either 'going off the rails' or simply 'going with the flow'. There is also a real parallel between Whitehead's very Shakespearean sense of time and the event and Heidegger's use of *kairos*, an early Greek concept that was also very important in the Renaissance.[27] One could go even further and factor in poststructuralist or deconstructive techniques from Deleuze, Derrida and Lyotard, all of which enable desire to pick out latent strands from dominant ones and resculpt reality as a painter employs the strokes of his or her brush to pull and push colours into different shapes and textures.

The 1834 workers' uprising in Lyons was the second of two such uprisings in that city after the regime change that took place in France in 1830. The first one, which happened in 1831, had been more of a general workers' uprising, but the 1834 event was distinctly political, that is republican. By then, a large number of regular troops had been stationed in the city, and the insurrection was put down with great brutality and destruction. It was much closer to civil war or what is happening in Homs or Aleppo today than to large-scale urban rioting. Was it a trick of evil in the Whiteheadian sense, an action at the wrong time which led to nothing but bloodshed and chaos? It is very difficult to be sure about what was a trick of evil in the extremely fluid and conflictive politics of nineteenth-century France, out of which, however, a very serviceable democratic model did emerge. Which 'trick of evil' led to which component of that model? Was the *monarchie de Juillet* 'progressive' in the way that it allowed the bourgeoisie to establish its political power, or did it continue to betray the 'real' ideals of the Revolution? Were the *insurgés lyonnais* simply trouble-makers harking back to a Revolution that was in itself a 'trick of evil', or were they asserting a 'right' to take to the streets that their non-white French descendants could take up? The modern French state inherits from both sides in 1834, in that the bourgeoisie will never be in work camps, but barricades will always be a possibility.[28]

A major poet – Marceline Desbordes-Valmore (1786–1859) – was in Lyons throughout the 1834 uprising. She was working as an actress at the Grand Théâtre, but she also had three children with her who were still quite young: they had all been born in the first half of the 1820s. She wrote a number of poems in connection with the uprising, but two stand

out as being particularly significant: 'A Monsieur A.L.', which appeared in *Pauvres Fleurs* in 1839, and 'Dans La Rue', which no one dared to publish until after her death. The first poem is very intense emotionally and needs to be taken in slowly in order for its complexity to come through. Three images of birds are very beautifully deployed in it: (1) a swallow that returns to its young ones in its nest during a lightning storm in the first two stanzas; (2) a bird that is trying to hide from hunters in a forest in the third and fourth stanzas; and (3) a nightingale in the two penultimate stanzas that the poet can hear singing in the destroyed city until it is killed by an exploding shell. The deployment of the images is beautiful because the birds are simultaneously vulnerable creatures in peril imagined or heard by the poet, but they are also the poet herself staying in her house in Lyons, protecting her children and hiding from the soldiers brutally putting down the insurrection.

This link is established in the 'swallow stanzas' in a way that has all of the simultaneity and thickness of the event in Whitehead. Initially, the flight of the swallow is crossed by a lightning flash. This pulls the swallow back to the 'flatness' of the sky and makes the crossing of the two lines seem like an image seen by an observer in the distance. But the swallow is afraid and is flying to its nest to be with its eggs, which become hatched fledglings in the next stanza: this sudden shift from 'tendres oeufs' to 'le duvet dont se recouvre à peine,/ Leur petite âme nue et leur gosier chanteur' (Desbordes-Valmore 1983: 123) is an example of the quite magical effects of Desbordes-Valmore's language. Because the swallow in its nest 'becomes' the poet in her house in later stanzas, it is as if the swallow has flown into the observer's house and become her. A swallow's flight has a rapidly skimming, bobbing up and gliding quality to it that seems to fill up the space between the far-off image and the observer. There is a similar link between the bird in the forest hiding from the hunters and the poet in the house hiding from the soldiers and the nightingale singing its lament in the devastated city and the poet 'singing' the lament that is her poem. There is a beautiful movement here from being silenced by terror to crying out against injustice, which finds a parallel in the bold fifth stanza of 'Dans La Rue', where 'Les vivants n'osent plus se hasarder à vivre./ Sentinelle soldée, au milieu du chemin,/ La mort est un soldat qui vise et qui délivre/ Le témoin révolté qui parlerait demain . . . ' (144).

This network of interconnections acts as a kind of Whiteheadian four-dimensional instantaneous space, and they frame the central section of 'A Monsieur A.L.', which is the 'tableau' of the city's destruction through her window. Even here there is spatial ambiguity: the twice

repeated 'J'étais là!' (Desbordes-Valmore 1983: 124) can mean both 'I was in Lyons during the uprising' and 'I was out there when it was happening'. But now the extraordinary concrete, compacted, 'slam dunk' imagery makes Desbordes-Valmore one of Heidegger's poets that feel the traces of the departed gods in the abyss at the centre of the night of the world's misery. Lines such as 'Tuant jusqu'à l'enfant qui regardait sans voir,/ Et rougissant le lait encore chaud dans sa bouche . . . ' (124) and 'Et cousant au linceul sa livide moitié,/ Ecrasée au galop de la guerre civile!/ Savez-vous que c'est froid le linceul d'une ville!' (125) could be Trakl, and one can see why Nerval read Desbordes-Valmore, who does indeed feel the traces of the gods in the Whiteheadian event that fuses her fear as a vulnerable mother with her defiant empathy for the brutalised citizens of Lyons. One can still read her and hope for Homs and Aleppo, that their suffering is not in vain.[29]

One cannot really do this with a poem one could compare with 'A Monsieur A.L.' and 'Dans La Rue': Shelley's 'The Mask of Anarchy' written in 1819 in response to the 'Peterloo Massacre', which was of course a relatively minor incident compared with the Lyons uprising of 1834. Nevertheless, the authorities still behaved in a violent and repressive way. Shelley's poem is intellectually complex: it uses the double meaning of 'mask' as 'masquerade' and 'false disguise' to explore how the government and not the people are the real perpetrators of anarchy. This analysis of the ruses of power is astute, and it is achieved through subtle poetic means, but one does not really have the same sense of a swelling towards the future that one has in Desbordes-Valmore, even though parliamentary reform was eventually achieved, and over half of the poem is an address by Hope to the men of England. Shelley is in Italy, far away from what is happening – which he does acknowledge – but he increases that distance by his very rhetorical language, however strong some of the ideas and images may be.[30] Desbordes-Valmore is physically with the insurgents, and she is pushing language to express her emotional journey of fear, compassion and defiance. She is also on a more novel trajectory as a poet, emerging as a very distinctive female voice. She had already published the utterly sweet but rather thoughful 'Le Coucher d'un petit garçon' in 1830, and she was to compose the heartbreaking and profound *durcharbeitung* of 'Rêve intermittent d'une nuit triste', one of the most powerful of all poems in French, in 1846. In 1834, Lyons saw the cross-phasing of two emerging entities, intersecting like waves from two sources in a ripple tank, but this image is not enough. It gives a good idea of a Whiteheadian network, but it does not fully explore tapping

into the latent or virtual that one can find in Deleuze, Derrida and Lyotard.

Thinking with Whitehead is an exceptionally rich and deep book. It is not easy to take in on a first reading, but it does have to be read through from beginning to end to sense the overall compelling shape of its argument. It is also a book to return to on innumerable occasions. Whatever criticisms this author may have levelled at Stengers, they have always been a response to the stimulus of her well-sustained and vigorous mental energy, and it has always felt as if it was a privilege to review her work.

Notes

1. The ideas in this review have benefited from enormously stimulating and generous exchanges with James Williams.
2. A random example of this is Kneale 1949: 72–3, where the author adopts a distinctly patronising tone in his discussion of Whitehead's arguments against the unrestricted universality of natural laws.
3. See Wahl 2004. There are three studies in this book: one on William James, which is based on a reading of his letters; another on the speculative philosophy of Whitehead; and a third on Marcel's *Journal métaphysique*. The Whitehead study is remarkably scholarly: Wahl uses all of the solo works published by the philosopher up to 1929 and refers to innumerable reviews, books and articles that respond to them. The essay is quite balanced in the weight it gives to Whitehead as contributor to the theory of relativity, philosopher of science and metaphysician. There are also some interesting comparisons between his ideas and those of Heidegger.
4. Bergson deals most extensively with intuition as such in *La Pensée et le mouvant*, which has been re-edited with an extensive *dossier critique* by Presses Universitaires de France as part of its superb critical edition of all of Bergson's work: see Bergson [1938] 2009. There is an English translation of this text with the title *The Creative Mind*: see Bergson 1992. For Husserl's final, posthumously published statement on his phenomenology – the *Krisis* – see Husserl 1970. It is illuminating to compare what Husserl is trying to do in the famous appendix to this work, *The Origin of Geometry*, with Whitehead's extensive use of geometry in *The Concept of Nature*. Husserl considers geometry only in the context of the relationship between a specifically human consciousness and the world, and he seeks a primal, hidden geometry underneath or within the history of geometry, that is an imminent universal for any lived particular. Whitehead discusses geometry in a number of different ways, but he mainly develops it as a required spatial framework, embedded in the moment and not timeless, for exploring the implications of knowledge as ultimate, with nature not being bifurcated in relation to mind, that is an enabling structure permitting subject and object to be fused in a perceptual event without being abstracted from the infinite continuum. Of course, these two approaches do not have to be mutually exclusive. Merleau-Ponty was influenced by both Husserl, especially by his late work, and Whitehead. For the latter's influence on him, see Robert 2011 and the exceptionally rich and scholarly Hamrick and Van der Veken 2011.

5. For Whitehead and quantum physics, see Lacoste Lareymondie 2006. For a good recent book on evolutionary development biology, see Carroll 2006. The key idea in Evo Devo is that all the organs and appendages in all animals have evolved from a very limited number of basic genes, which means that fins, wings, arms and legs all come from the same primordial gene, for example. It would be interesting to connect this with the relationship between eternal ideas and the ongoing capacity for new singularites in actual entities in Whitehead. Of couse, the Deleuze who co-wrote *A Thousand Plateaus*, in which ethology is absolutely central, had already been deeply influenced by Whitehead.
6. See Leavis 2008.
7. Whitehead 1964: 29. It is worth noting that the choice of this example for exploring the bifurcation of nature almost certainly reflects the central importance of electromagnetic waves and the speed of light in the earlier special theory of relativity.
8. In particular, his lectures at Harvard were sprinkled with references to his favourite poets, Wordsworth and Shelley. Notes taken from Whitehead's lectures are being transcribed and made accessible online by the Whitehead Research Project at < http://www.whiteheadresearch.org > . Look under 'Research' and then 'Whitehead Lecture Notes'.
9. Obviously, the literature on poetry and other art forms in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in French- and German-speaking countries is vast, but see Richard 1955 for a very beautiful, now classic, phenomenological study of nineteenth-century French poetry, with essays on Nerval, Baudelaire, Verlaine and Rimbaud, and see Raitt 1981 and 1986 for excellent scholarship on Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, a very important figure in French symbolism. For Husserl and Freud, see Trincia 2008. Trincia is an Italian philosopher who has produced valuable work on the area between Husserl, Heidegger and Freud; he also publishes in English.
10. For a recent edition of the *Lyrical Ballads*, see Wordsworth and Coleridge 2006. For extremely perceptive remarks on Wordsworth within a number of different, fruitful contexts, see Man 1984, in particular the chapter on his poetry and that of Hölderlin (1984: 47–65).
11. There is an enormous amount of excellent criticism devoted to Nerval, but Chambers 1969: 168–219, 238–68, 307–42 and 1993: 83–117 are especially illuminating for the four works in question. See also Kofman 1979 and Kristeva 1992: 139–72 for extremely stimulating philosophical/psychoanalytic treatments of Nerval.
12. A certain amount of clarity is required in citing the English translations of Heidegger's works on poetry, as they did not initially correspond to the original German publications, as the French translations did. More recently, though, they have done so: Heidegger 2000 translates all of *Erlauterungen zu Hölderlins Dichtung*, while Heidegger 2002 does the same for *Holzwege*. Heidegger 1982 did translate all bar one of the essays in *Unterwegs zur Sprache* – the piece on Trakl is in this volume – but Heidegger 1975 includes the essay omitted from Heidegger 1982 and various essays from Heidegger's other German publications, including three pieces from *Vorträge und Aufsätze* and two from *Holzwege*. The introduction to Heidegger 1975 by the translator is short but excellent. Heidegger 1977 includes two essays from *Holzwege* and two from *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, one of which is 'The Question Concerning Technology'. Heidegger also gave three lecture series on hymns by Hölderlin, which have been published as volumes 39 (on 'Germanien' and 'Der Rhein'), 52 (on 'Andenken') and 53 (on 'Der Ister') in the *Gesamtausgabe*. Only the series on 'Der Ister' has been translated into English: see Heidegger 1996. For recent high-quality work

on Heidegger and poetry, see Lacoue-Labarthe 2007 and Stephens 2007, while Thomson 2011 is a valuable book that deals primarily with Heidegger and the visual arts.

13. For Leibniz and Descartes, see the very scholarly Belaval 1960, and for Leibniz and Locke, see the equally impressive Jolley 1986.
14. This quotation is from the end of the first paragraph of 'Circles', which is the tenth essay in *First Essays*. Emerson was a close friend of William James' father: James is the contemporary philosopher with whom Whitehead almost certainly had the greatest affinity. For Emerson and the James family, see James 2008: xv–xxxiv. For an important book of contributions by various authors on perspective in Leibniz, Whitehead and Deleuze, see Timmermans 2006.
15. It is mainly Badiou, originally trained as a mathematician, who has criticised Deleuze for not being genuinely mathematical: see in particular Badiou 2000. See Hallward 2003 for an excellent work on Badiou as philosopher *and* mathematician. Of course, Badiou deals with the philosophy of the subject and the event in a way that is quite different from Deleuze and is not especially Whiteheadian, although it would be interesting to explore Badiou's Platonic side in relation to the residual traces of Platonism in Whitehead.
16. It is not surprising that Whitehead had a sustained interest in Berkeley. The latter had anti-Cartesian and anti-Newtonian positions with regard to mathematics, motion, abstraction and scientific method. There has been an immense amount of excellent work on him in the last thirty or forty years. For his ideas on mathematics, see Jesseph 1993, and for two important general interpretations, see Winkler 1994 and Pappas 2000. André Breton was also interested in Berkeley, and Gueroult wrote on him: as with his beautiful work on Malebranche, he manages to combine an impeccable historical sense with the capacity to make the ideas as fresh as if they had been written yesterday. It would be interesting to compare Whitehead's, Gueroult's and Deleuze's treatment of late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Western philosophy.
17. See Whitehead 1964: 96–7, 176–9, 192. One cannot emphasise enough that an understanding of Whitehead and the philosophy of the event can be greatly enhanced by some serious reading on concepts of space and time in modern physics. Four books, none of which requires difficult mathematics, initially stand out. Born 1965 is a revision of the author's text first published in German in 1920 and is a deep but accessible work by a brilliant physicist, Davies 1977 is over thirty years old but is still fine for the classic model and is exceptionally clear, Sklar 1992 is a now classic work that combines physics and philosophy, while the more recent Ryckman 2005 does the same, but his book takes a different approach from that of Sklar: he focuses on what he sees as a transcendental idealist tendency early on in the theory of relativity as opposed to the logical empiricist one which eventually became dominant. Whitehead does not really fit into either of these categories: he was not Kantian and Husserlian in the way that Weyl was – Weyl was a major figure in the first tendency – but he was clearly not a logical empiricist. Reichenbach, a key influence on Sklar, is the main theorist for this second tendency, which is explicitly anti-metaphysical.
18. For 'Wozu Dichter?', see 'What Are Poets For?' in Heidegger 1975: 91–142 or 'Why Poets' in Heidegger 2002: 200–41; for Heidegger on Trakl, see 'Language' in Heidegger 1975: 189–210 and 'Language in the Poem' in Heidegger 1982: 159–98 – these are different essays; and for Heidegger on Van Gogh, see 'The Origin of the Work of Art' in either Heidegger 1975: 17–87 or Heidegger 2002: 1–56. For a recent discussion of Heidegger and Van Gogh, see Thomson 2011, especially ch. 3, 'Heidegger's Postmodern Understanding of Art', pp. 65–120.

For a valuable study on poetry and language that deals extensively with Heidegger, see Allen 2008. For an important work on time combining physics and philosophy, see Reichenbach 1999. For Cassirer's approach to the theory of relativity, see Cassirer 1953. For a book on tensor calculus and the theory of relativity that begins at a reasonably simple level mathematically, see Lowden 2002.

19. For the original French edition, see Stengers 2002. The English translation is excellent: it was done by Michael Chase, who has an Australian master's degree and a French doctorate in the history of philosophy, specialising in neo-Platonism. He has also translated at least five books by Pierre Hadot.
20. A second reading of Stengers' very long and dense book might show that she has in fact succeeded in doing this.
21. For 'the rumpled dollar problem', see Arnold 2005.
22. Arnold 2005 is a beautiful book by a great mathematician that exemplifies this approach, which does not of course have to be limited to mathematics. For example, the idea in Barthes that there can be multiple readings of a text comes to mind: see especially Barthes 1991.
23. Her exploration of how Whitehead uses God in various ways as a concept in *Science and the Modern World* and *Process and Reality* is enriched by her discussion of *Religion in the Making*, a neglected work by Whitehead that comes between the other two works. Both *Science and the Modern World* and *Religion in the Making* have recently been re-issued by Cambridge University Press.
24. Again, a second reading of her book might show that she does do this.
25. The present author lives full-time as female, but she used to do male roles in the theatre: hence the radical split in her experience she could draw on in this production. She no longer plays male roles, so the process would be different, although something similar would clearly be possible.
26. See Whitehead 1964, in particular pp. 52–6. The great twentieth-century Russian theatre practitioner/theorists treat performance problems in a way that brings them very close indeed to philosophical problems, such as identity, self and other, intention, agency, emotion, actions and events, even if the material is obviously not presented as philosophy. One has more substantial writings, occasional pieces, transcriptions of teaching and reported remarks. For Stanislavski, one is well served in English, and Michael Chekhov ended up in America, so the material connected with him was in English from the start. With Meyerhold, Tairov and Vakhtangov, one is better off in French, in which L'Age d'Homme has published complete editions of all three directors' writings. Meyerhold's ideas on actions and emotions are remarkably close to those of William James in *The Principles of Psychology*. Vasiliev (or Vassiliev when transliterated into French) has worked a great deal in France, so there is a great deal of material connected with him in French. He initially trained as a chemical engineer before moving on to study theatre. One should also not forget Lee Strasberg, who was American but is important, and Grotowski, who was Polish but trained in Russia.
27. See Sipiora and Baumlin 2002 for a volume of excellent essays on *kairos* at different periods in history and Dosse 2010 for an extremely wide-ranging discussion of the concept of the event in modern thought.
28. For the classic work on the Lyons uprisings, see Rude 2007, which was first published in 1982. The 2007 re-edition has a valuable postface by Ludovic Frobert. It is important to remember there were ex-combattants from the Napoleonic Wars amongst the insurgents, which meant that they were tactically aware. In 1834, they used a very successful combination of defensive barricades and attacking columns, while in 1834, they could be said to have founded

modern urban guerrilla warfare. In a real sense, they created a new 'physical language' of resistence.

29. Yves Bonnefoy's preface to this volume is very perceptive. For a good recent book on Desbordes-Valmore by the main specialist on her, see Bertrand 2009.
30. See Shelley 2009: 400–11, 759–62.

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Book Review

Craig Lundy (2012) *History and Becoming: Deleuze's Philosophy of Creativity*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press

As is well known, Deleuze and Guattari are notable for their eschewal of the word 'or' in relation to potential conceptual and creative encounters. It is always a question of 'and' as a means of propagating difference and becoming through a combination of rupture *and* affirmation, thereby circumventing the capture of signification, recognition and representation, binary structures which stymie the production of new subjectivities. It thus seems anomalous to discover in the Deleuzian canon as well as Deleuze and Guattari's later collaborations a stubborn predilection for opposing history and becoming as mutually incompatible, largely because the former is always identified with a capturing, *ex post facto* 'historicism' while the latter, because of its trans-situational potential, is the very stuff (as indeterminate excess) of philosophy. In *Negotiations*, for example, Deleuze unequivocally states that 'Becoming isn't part of history; history amounts only to the set of preconditions, however recent, that one leaves behind in order to "become", that is, to create something new' (Deleuze 1995: 171). *A Thousand Plateaus* continues the polemic, aligning history with a syntagmatic teleology: 'All history does is to translate a coexistence of becomings into a succession' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 430). Even worse, 'History is always written from the sedentary point of view and in the name of the unitary State apparatus, at least a possible one, even when the topic is nomads. What is lacking is a Nomadology, the opposite of a history' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 23). Becoming is always viewed as a productive, virtual force for change (*puissance*); while history/historicism is equated with power/control (*pouvoir*): the actual of the State. Deleuze even goes so far as to contrast history unfavourably with geography: 'We think too much in terms of history,

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whether personal or universal. Becomings belong to geography, they are orientations, directions, entries and exits' (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 2).

In his provocative new book, Craig Lundy subjects Deleuze and Guattari's uncharacteristic binary tendencies in reducing history to historicism to a form of immanent critique, in effect putting the 'and' back in the equation to create a hybrid, composite form that is neither pure history nor pure becoming, thereby folding the virtual into the actual and vice versa. Thus Lundy attempts to show that historical reality is always more than the actual through its productive, transmuting relationship with the virtual and incorporeal (and by extension the two different forms of Stoic temporality – that of Chronos and of Aion). The result is a history irreducible to both historicism and pure becoming – an 'in-between' composite that Lundy variously calls 'history/becoming' or 'historiophilosophy'. This entails the construction of a model of history that can be explained in five different ways (corresponding to Lundy's five different chapters), namely, the abyss of the intensive-depth (focusing largely on the corporeal intensities of *Difference and Repetition*); the dynamic surface (via the incorporeal event of *The Logic of Sense*); the nomadic of *A Thousand Plateaus*; the universal-contingent; and finally historiophilosophy itself through a detailed look at the use of conceptual personae in Deleuze and Guattari's *What Is Philosophy?*

In the final chapter of *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze sees creativity as a relation of depth and surface to the movement between them, a trial run perhaps for the subsequent transverse relation of chaoids to chaos in *What Is Philosophy?* Thus, as Lundy, echoing Deleuze's position, argues,

> all extensive reality is the product of an intensive process that comes from the depths and emerges at the surface. While the creative movement from depth to surface is referred to as a 'becoming', 'history' concerns the retrospective identification and representation of this productive process. Or does it? (10)

In attempting to rephrase this question in terms of history-as-becoming, Lundy draws on Deleuze himself, Henri Bergson, Fernand Braudel, Charles Péguy and Nietzsche to posit history as an intensive-depth that, far from being anti-becoming, is actually in productive relation with it, for 'if an intensive force is to move from depth to the surface, then the historical process of production will need to be enlisted, not overcome' (10). Significantly, in *On History* (1980), Braudel saw this as a *historical* process-in-depth, arguing that we can only come to know the life of an event by living with it, not by externally tracking its movement.

In contrast, in *What Is Philosophy?*, Deleuze and Guattari cite Péguy on the same lines but in terms of *philosophy*, not history:

> [T]here are two ways of considering the event. One consists in going over the course of the event, in recording its effectuation in history, its conditioning and deterioration in history. But the other consists in reassembling the event, installing oneself in it as in a becoming, becoming young again and aging in it, both at the same time, going through all its components or singularities. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 111)

Lundy convincingly makes the latter process compatible with history by turning to one of Deleuze's chief philosophical forebears, Nietzsche, who was never against history *per se*, only its 'timely' incarnations (the monumental and the antiquarian) as opposed to critical, useful history 'for life'. It is Nietzsche's critical scepticism that questions whether a philosopher could ever have 'ultimate and real' opinions, 'whether behind every one of his caves there is not, must not be, another deeper cave – a more comprehensive, stranger, richer world beyond the surface, an abysmally deep ground behind every ground, under every attempt to furnish "grounds"' (Nietzsche 1996: 229).

Deleuze of course sees these intensities as becomings, while history can only account for an extensive *recording* of intensities. This raises an obvious series of questions: can history be intensive? Is the latter a viable ontology and methodology of history? What would this alternative, creative history bring into being? Following Bergson, the identity of intensity is produced by a constitutive difference. Indeed, Deleuze is not concerned in *Difference and Repetition* with a difference predicated on spatio-temporal divisions such as past/present/future but, following Spinoza, speeds and slownesses, issues of level, temperature, pressure, potential – in short, difference of/as intensity. Far from being cowed, Lundy takes this as a challenge, arguing that history cannot be reducible to time alone but must also include space – that is, nomadology, topology, geophilosophy – which are all based on intensity-as-difference.

This produces an innate *aporia*, for if intensity/difference is to be conditioned and correlated in and through extensivity, it ultimately must put an end to itself: intensity is inherently suicidal. As Deleuze points out,

> Intensity is difference, but this difference tends to deny or to cancel itself out in extensity and underneath quality. It is true that qualities are signs which flash across the interval of a difference. In so doing, however, they measure the time of an equalization – in other words, the time taken by the difference to cancel itself out in the extensity in which it is distributed. (Deleuze 1994: 223)

A way out of this double bind is to show that history is itself constitutive. Taking his lead from far-from-equilibrium thermodynamics – which evades a radical finalism – Lundy attempts to show that intensive productivity can remain open and contingent, producing differentiated histories that can no longer be taken for granted: 'History becomes constitutive at precisely that point where the future becomes open [. . .] Thus to allow for the contingency of the event is to affirm the historical processes of production, not to deny them' (20).

It Is here that Lundy turns to Bergson's heterogeneous multiplicity of duration – an indivisible movement irreducible to a shared homogeneous space (epitomised by the race between Achilles and the tortoise, where each participant is placed on their own indivisible duration, thereby allowing Achilles to ultimately overtake his slower opponent) – in order to make history compatible with depth. Situating ourselves within the intensive depths entails placing ourselves within the past as it moves towards the present in order to make a composite of the two – as duration. Braudel ties this process directly to a history 'for life': 'Just like life itself, history seems to us to be a fleeting spectacle, always in movement, made up of a web of problems meshed inextricably together, and able to assume a hundred different and contradictory aspects in turn' (Braudel 1980: 10). Lundy argues that each form of history needs an appropriate explication of the different durations involved – of men and women, of societies, of worlds. Thus there can be no unilateral history, whether dubbed economic, racial or technological.

However,

> Whereas depth for Bergson, Braudel and Péguy is in many respects an historical depth that is intensively productive in relation to the present and future, for Deleuze depth is a realm of becoming that is in turn *overlaid* by historical extensities. How then are we to explain this discrepancy? (27)

Lundy argues that Deleuze repositions Bergson, Braudel and Péguy *against* history to emphasise the future orientation of his own philosophy-qua-philosophy. Yet the others are also future-oriented – so what is the creative role of history in this relation of depths of past to what is to come? 'My claim is not just that the empirical facts of history have an impact on what comes next', argues Lundy, 'but rather that the intensive features of history are productive of the empirical extensive facts of history (hence two kinds of history)' (29). In short, intensive-depths produce identities through their very difference, what Nietzsche called will to power. It is the affirmation of this becoming – as Being – that Nietzsche called the eternal return, for 'while the will to

power is the play of difference, the eternal return is the being of that difference – it is that which is said of difference' (32). Nietzsche's history is untimely, it acts "'counter to our time [...] for the benefit of a time to come"' (Nietzsche 1983: 60, cited in Lundy 2012: 35). Significantly, when Deleuze quotes this line he omits the first half of the phrase because of his vested interest in pitting the future against the past, contrasting becoming to history. Conversely, Nietzsche stresses the importance of both philology *and* history for life, for becoming is instrumental in creating that very history – it must be *made* experimental as a history for the future. In this regard Nietzsche is perfectly Deleuzian – he also attacks historicism – but *in the name of history*.

Shifting his attention to Deleuze's *The Logic of Sense*, Lundy extends this argument from a focus on the intensive depths to the incorporeal surface in an attempt to make this surface-becoming compatible with nomadology and the different chaoid planes of *What Is Philosophy?* Obviously, surface becoming is different than that of the depths and requires a different model: it is organised like a chessboard with a given plan. It has a logical organisation (the chaoid planes of immanence, organisation and composition) which is given all at once and stretches to infinite limits, in a constant state of renewal. This dynamic process of creation also spills beyond each level of systematicity as the dynamic process works transversally across and between planes and their different levels. As Lundy points out,

> The historical process that Deleuze describes and employs in the latter series of *The Logic of Sense* will thus lie somewhere *between* these two extremes of 'pure' becoming and historicism. It will also lie between the depths of corporeal bodies and the incorporeal surface, insofar as it is what generates the movement from the former to the latter through a process of historical creativity. (40–1)

Developmental becoming and historical progression cannot be reduced to the surface itself as this will negate the innate difference of the steps between and across the planes. This accounts for the key role of the 'between' in Lundy's methodology.

One of the innate shortcomings of the incorporeal surface is that it transforms the dynamic intensities of the corporeal depths into static states of equilibrium as a base for judgement and comparison by the intellect. Surfaces thus create actual things but these 'becomings' are also sterile and fixed: a form of 'static genesis'. The latter proceeds by processes such as prolongation, convergence, envelopment, stabilisation and limitation in much the same way that Bergson's perception-image is

extracted from an aggregate of images or Nietzsche's creation requires a modicum of limitation via forgetting and turning away from the abyss of becoming. In other words, static genesis requires a dynamic genesis to complement it, which for Lundy means that the logic of surfaces requires a *history of surfaces*, in effect a history of developmental becoming. True becoming can only unravel through the continually shifting relation between two different realms: the corporeal/incorporeal; states of affairs/pure events. They remain different despite their transmutations, which allows them to collude in the task of creation. As Lundy argues, 'The significance of developmental becoming thus lies in its unfinished and dynamically progressive nature, as opposed to the already delimited infinitives of various surface becomings' (48). Developmental becoming must not be equalised; it must be 'far-from-equilibrium' – a history open to the future.

Lundy's main metaphor here is the Herculean form, the mythic figure who moves effortlessly between the surface and the depths, as well as to the heights of the heavens: 'It is no longer a question of Dionysus down below, or of Apollo up above', notes Deleuze, 'but of Hercules of the surface, in his dual battle against both depth and height: reorientation of the entire thought and a new geography' (Deleuze 1990: 131–2). With Hercules, it is more a question of his return to the surface *from elsewhere* with his plunder – so that the surface is capable of refashioning height and depth into an immanent monism or productive composite. In other words, the surface is no longer just an enveloper, but it also moves in a dynamic way between dualisms – deep bodies and lofty ideals. This allows Lundy to overcome the opposition between history and becoming whereby the *between* is able to bring them together through an ontology of historical creativity. This move also takes Lundy to a new threshold and a harnessing of history to a new form of geography – nomadology – and the key equation of multiplicity. To avoid regression into an initial capturing dualism, we need to progress to a nomadic history whereby PLURALISM = MONISM.

As we noted above, the 'Treatise on Nomadology – The War Machine' in *A Thousand Plateaus* completely dismisses history as counter to nomadology. Indeed, if nomadology opposes history, it is due to its concern with space – territory, topology – rather than time. It is geographical, aligned with becoming. The question for Lundy then becomes: how can we excavate a Deleuzian philosophy of history from within nomadology, the very thing that seems to most malign it? The answer partially lies in nomadology's tendency towards metamorphosis and deterritorialisation rather than confining itself to

strict binary oppositions. Thus the apparent distinctions between the smooth and the striated, the war machine and State machine (and, by extension, pure becoming and pure history) are always mutually implicated, often by a mediating third term that breaks the dialectic. For example, the nomad/State dualism is split by a third element: the machinic phylum – the subterranean flow of pure becoming (Nietzsche) or universal aggregate of action/reaction (Bergson) that flows between them and on which they depend. As Deleuze and Guattari point out, the great phylum is what selects 'through the intermediary of assemblages' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 398).

The same is true for the smooth and the striated, for their key mechanism is the transmutation of form and how one part of the dualism migrates to the other – not just how transmutations occur between fixed entities of smooth and striated, but how they themselves metamorphose (that is, how the relation can differ from itself). Thus the nuclear submarine does not convert the smooth space of the ocean into a striated space but harnesses it for State control:

> the smooth is employed by the State *as smooth* for the purposes of striation. The smooth characteristics of the sea are thus maintained, but they are redirected by State powers to achieve a level of control that the State on its own would be incapable of. (79)

One thus can become the other while also remaining the same. 'Never believe that a smooth space will suffice to save us', warn Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 500). While revolutionary becomings can spawn micro-fascisms, conversely histories can be intensified as *history* for smoothing processes: the nomad and the State can be brought back together through a shared immanence: 'The smooth and the striated, in other words, are expressions of a machinic phylum that gives itself to both' (416).

While this might sound at first like a pragmatic compromise, one should note that it is not uncharacteristic, for Deleuze and Guattari invariably move towards a middle ethic of the 'between', for this is where everything happens – between pure being and pure becoming – tempered by prudence and caution.

> This is how it should be done: Lodge yourself on a stratum, experiment with the opportunities it offers, find an advantageous place on it, find potential movements of deterritorialization, possible lines of flight, experience them, produce flow conjunctions here and there, try out continuums of intensities segment by segment, have a small plot of new land at all times. It is through a meticulous relation with the strata that one succeeds in freeing lines of flight,

> causing conjugated flows to pass and escape and bringing forth continuous intensities for a BwO. Connect, conjugate, continue . . . (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 161)

For Lundy, this shows the immense importance of historical processes and relational mechanisms that link strata with lines of flight in order to produce that 'small plot of new land' (141).

Lundy then turns his attention to the problem of how history begins. For example, the question of when the State apparatus emerges cannot be found *in* history for it pre-exists and outlasts history – it is *suprahistorical*. Instead, Lundy calls for a contingent model of simultaneity and non-linearity where the virtual (pre-history) and the actual (history) co-exist: in short, universal history. This contingency has three lines of creativity: (1) it remains open to the future and change; (2) it is created by a presently existing power; and (3) it is approached non-linearly so that it can have an influence on what it becomes. In this sense, the traditional Marxist chronological development of State forms – for example, in the Asiatic formation the emperor-despot is always prior to private property; agriculture gives rise to State stock – is replaced by a non-linear simultaneity. Thus 'the archaic State did not come "before" the primitive development of a potential surplus, nor the opposite, for they both *coexist*' (108). Or, to put it in Deleuze and Guattari's language, social formations are defined not by modes of production but by the different social machines that produce those modes.

More importantly, these modes are as much virtual as actual, and indeed this virtuality has a concrete history: 'Universal history makes a composite out of succession and simultaneity from its ability to array an entire successive progression simultaneously' (116). Capitalism is the classic condition of this simultaneity as it determines the conditions and possibility of its own universal history via its twin functions: its superior power of decoding and deterritorialisation through exchange and the endless flow of capital; and its flexible axiomatic structure which allows it to set and then repel its own limits as well as account for all previous (and future) societies. It universalises because of its relativity (in contrast to the absolutism of schizophrenia which is an attempt to liberate the world from these axiomatics). As Lundy argues,

> Capitalism is able to occupy every point in history, for it has no point of its own; it is able to interpret every coding and overcoding throughout history, for it has no essential code or sign of its own. Like a spectre or faceless ghost,

> capitalism haunts all previous forms of society 'as their terrifying nightmare, [. . .] the dread they feel of a flow that would elude their codes'. (122)

Lundy concludes with a look at the role of history and becoming in Deleuze and Guattari's definition of philosophy, which leads him to historiophilosophy as a call for a 'minor' history. Deleuze and Guattari define philosophy as the art of forming, inventing and fabricating concepts which link together on the plane of immanence via their common consistency. At the same time, 'every concept always has a *history*, even though this history zigzags, though it passes, if need be, through other problems or onto different planes' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 18). These concepts are not represented by flesh-and-blood philosophers themselves – Plato, Descartes, Nietzsche – but rather their conceptual personae who fabulate on their behalf – Socrates, Descartes' idiot, Zarathustra, Dionysus. The latter encompass a certain geographical uniqueness – philosophy could only have come into being given the specific conditions of ancient Greece at that time – but also historically according to the concerns of different eras. Thus Plato's concepts of One, Being and non-Being, and the Idea (predicated on time as anterior) undergo a creative 'movement' via Descartes' 'cogito' (which expels time as anteriority in order to make it a simple mode of succession referring to continuous creation). 'Put simply, the novelty that is engendered by Descartes – his creative act – specifically occurs *with respect to* Plato's creation' (149), whereby the cogito is 'prepared' by the Greek plane that precedes it (even if it is not fully accomplished). This is surely a case of historical *puissance* rather than *pouvoir*.

Creative becoming is further exacerbated by the zigzag transverse movement that occurs between planes of consistency which is an inherently dynamic and nomadic movement combining intensive and extensive forces in each measure. For Lundy, it is clear that all these levels are directly susceptible to time (that is, it is a model of duration), 'But', note Deleuze and Guattari,

> if it is true that the plane of immanence is always single, being itself pure variation, then it is all the more necessary to explain why there are varied and distinct planes of immanence that, depending upon which infinite movements are retained and selected, succeed and contest each other in history. The plane is certainly not the same in the time of the Greeks, in the seventeenth century, and today . . . (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 39)

Thus planes pass into and out of existence in time, so that the logic of planes needs a history of planes. This does not necessarily have to be linear, for 'every plane is not only interleaved but holed, letting

through the fogs that surround it' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 51). Consequently, a singular feature cannot be isolated from the plane that gives it voice – the breath that suffuses the different/separate parts. Lundy concludes by calling for a historical version of what Deleuze and Guattari call 'stratigraphic time', 'where "before" and "after" indicate only an order of superimpositions' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 58). In this respect, far from being an apparatus of capture in opposition to becoming, '*philosophy necessarily becomes indistinguishable from its own history*' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 95; original emphasis), albeit holey rather than linear.

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